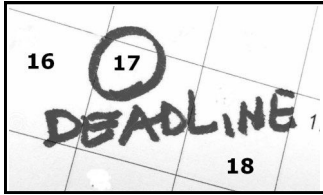




The deadline for material for the next magazine is **SUNDAY JUNE 17th**



We welcome contributions from everyone who has something to share.

BEING HUMAN Rowan Williams

Being Human is the completion of Rowan Williams' trilogy: *Being Christian* and *Being Disciples*. Rowan sets out to accessibly question what 'real' humanity in our culture, is. *Being Human* is a more demanding but a highly approachable, look at what makes a person.

He clearly and importantly explains why we as Christians, all have personal dignity or worth as persons. We may not be as bright as someone else, but we all have a meaning in someone else's existence. *Being Human* is a rather philosophical but practical approach to what makes us, human. Our mind is not seen as a way of reducing everything to a problem but its greatness, is the ability to imagine and see how it looks as a whole. Rowan Williams rightfully concludes with human maturity and our relationship with God through silence. He shows that we flourish as humans by our faith with God.

(‘A marvelous and moving work, theology at its very best’- Jonathan Sacks)

Christian Aid House-to-House Collecting-A (supposedly) true story.

On a sunny Sunday afternoon, two young church members were going door to door collecting for Christian Aid. When they knocked on one door, it was immediately clear the woman who answered was not happy to see them. She told them in no uncertain terms that she did not want to give, and slammed the door in their faces. To her surprise, however, the door did not close; in fact, it bounced back open. She tried again, really putting her back into it, and slammed it again with the same result -the door bounced back open. Convinced these rude young people were sticking their foot in her door, she reared back to give it a slam that would teach them a lesson. Then, one of them said quietly: "Ma'am, before you do that again, you really need to move your cat."

Dear Friends,

Last month i wrote about looking up and looking out. We have heard from our Link Missionaries Colin and Audrey Gibson and from Birmingham City Mission. We have also considered and been involved with Christian Aid Week and with Thy Kingdom Come. It is important that we continue to focus outwards both in loving service and in prayer for those who do not yet know or understand the love of Christ for them. There will be opportunity to continue with this occasional series of perspectives as the weeks progress.

This month, however, there is another focus. This is about who we are as disciples of Jesus and what we bring to the table in terms of our gifts and service to Christ, to one another and to the wider world. June 10th is RSCM Sunday and we are taking the opportunity think about what we do in the church community. At 10am we will be celebrating the gift of music with our choir and with a guest choir from West House School. This celebration will be a springboard from which each of us can consider the gifts we bring in the service of the church community. It will be a good point to consider your engagement with any of the task groups (see later in the magazine). But also to think about going on one of the rotas, reading, interceding, serving, Sunday Club, Messy church or the administration of the chalice or prayer ministry (these two require a little more discussion with me, but new people are welcome to join these rotas as well). There are also the practical rotas such as Stay and Play, Call in for Coffee and Coffee on a Sunday as well as many others.

On June 24th at we will shift the focus to what we do in all the time we are not in church. A recent Church of England report *Setting God's people free* looks at the ways that Christian people are salt and light in the places where they work, or their local neighbourhoods and friendship groups. I will be asking you to bring to church something which symbolises your Monday to Saturday life. It could be a nappy, a stethoscope, a set of tools, a diary or anything else. You will get it back after the service so don't worry about that!

As Christian people, seeking to follow Jesus we do that in every moment of our lives, whether working, socialising, caring for others or doing the housework. The question is how we display and share the love of Jesus.

We gather on a Sunday (or a Wednesday) to worship God but we are sent out from the service to continue our worship and service of God in the world Go in peace to love and serve the Lord

In the name of Christ, Amen.

Priscilla

Aspects of life at St Faith and St Laurence

Morning prayer – is normally said Monday to Thursday and Saturday at 8.15 am in the Lady Chapel. We use Common Worship Daily Prayer, all are welcome to come and join in.

Reflections A chance to meet together over a cuppa and reflect on the Gospel reading for the previous Sunday. A group meets on Mondays from 1.45-3pm Venues are listed in the Programme of the month.

Task Groups – The church has a number of task groups enabling areas of church life. These are listed in the magazine with the contact details of the chairs. If you would like to be a part of a groups please contact the relevant chair or Priscilla. All are welcome to join.

Stay and Play meets on Thursday between 9.30 and 11am in the Hall to give a chance for people with young children to meet and the children to play. All are welcome. Cost £1.50 per family.

Sunday Club meets on the first, third and fourth Sundays of each month except during the holidays. We hold an extra Sunday Club on days when there is a baptism. All are welcome to join in hearing and experiencing a Bible Story and learning together about what it means for our daily lives.

Messy Church takes place on the first Saturday of each month, most months. A chance for children and parents/ carers to have an informal time of worship, and discovering about a Bible story through song, craft, listening, cooking and so much more. Dates are published in advance and all are welcome to come along.

Planned Giving helps people make giving regular. You decide how much you can afford to give. You can join the envelope scheme weekly or monthly or pay by Standing Order or annually by cheque. Income tax payers are asked to Gift Aid their giving, so the Church can reclaim the tax on their donations at no extra cost to the donors. For details, contact Jackie Taylor.

The Parish Giving Scheme is another way that you can give at no extra cost to yourself. It reduces paperwork and increases cash flow for us. Details are available from Geoff Bennett or Priscilla.

We support **Recycling**. We have a special collection on the first Sunday of every month when we collect ALUMINIUM cans and foil which can be sold and the money raised is donated to our Mission Partners in Chile (through USPG) . Local supermarkets have battery recycling facilities in this area. Pauline Sifford (427 7005).

To overcome this, the immigrants used a system from the West Indies called the *pardner* - a cooperative way of saving money to buy homes. The church was not as welcoming as it should have been either, hence the emergence of independent black churches.

Sad to say, over the last decade or so, the whole matter of immigration has become mired in other issues; Brexit, refugees fleeing from places like Syria, Islamic fundamentalism - even Russian 'dirty' money. In a short article like this, there is not the space nor is it appropriate to tackle those big issues. But the fact is that the Windrush Generation marked a turning point in British history - the Windrush pioneers, their children and grandchildren have played a vital part in creating the Britain of today.

For those of us who are Christians, community is central to our faith and hospitality is an important aspect of community life. The famous passage from Hebrews (Heb 13:2) comes to mind. 'Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it.'

Geoffrey Lowson

Supposing him to be the Gardener...

He lists gardening as one of his hobbies, but the green-fingered prowess of the Bishop of St Albans, Dr Alan Smith, so impressed an onlooker that he was given the chance to turn it into a full-time job. Dr Smith told his Diocesan Synod that, while visiting an aunt's house, he decided to sort out her somewhat messy garden.

He had spent the morning gardening, and while he was working, noticed a woman walking past a couple of times and watching his progress. Then the same woman's head popped up over the wall and said: "Excuse me, but I'm looking for a gardener."

He said: "So I suddenly feel my prospects are looking up, but I said to her, Thank you, it's very kind of you, but actually this isn't my full-time job. I have a full-time job."

"She says: 'Are you sure you can't fit it in?' "I said: 'No, I'm sorry?' "And she said: 'What do you do?' "I looked up, and said: 'Well, actually I'm the Bishop of St Albans'. "She looked at me in total disbelief, and said: 'Oh yes, and I'm the Queen of Sheba.'"

'London is the place for me'



This month marks a very significant 70th anniversary. On June 22nd 1948, a ship called the SS Empire Windrush docked at Tilbury having made the four and a half thousand mile journey from the Caribbean. The ship's arrival marked an important moment in modern British history, for she carried 492 West Indian immigrants - the first group of what became known as 'The Windrush Generation'.

Earlier that year, Parliament had passed The British Nationality Act. Put simply, that Act gave the right of British citizenship to all those in the British colonies and additionally, any who had some connection with the United Kingdom. Jamaica was one such colony. The Windrush - originally a German passenger liner - had started her journey in Australia, bringing troops back from the Far East, and she called to pick up passengers from Kingston, Jamaica.

A significant number of those passengers were ex-servicemen from the war; many hoped to re-join the services and others were looking for work - they knew workers were required because Britain was rebuilding after the war. In addition to the 492 listed passengers, there were several stowaways. One was a 25 year old seamstress called Averill Wauchope who was discovered after about a week. What followed is moving - the other passengers raised £50 which covered her fare with £4 pocket money to spare. When they arrived in London accommodation was a problem and so they were housed in a deep air raid shelter under Clapham South underground station. The employment exchange to which they were directed was in Brixton. Many intended to stay for only a few years, but in the end the majority remained and settled permanently.

About 200,000 people arrived from the Caribbean over the following years, finding work in the newly formed NHS, public transport and construction. It was not easy for them - many locals were not welcoming and even institutions such as banks refused them help.

Home Communion We have a team of lay people trained and able to bring Home Communion usually on a monthly basis. This is for those who are unable to come to church long term. If the situation is more temporary for example after an operation you can also receive communion, usually from Priscilla. In either case please contact Priscilla.

Traidcraft

Traidcraft sells a range of fairly traded food, cards, clothes and accessories. We use Traidcraft tea and coffee and everything we buy helps fight poverty and supports our church. You can order seasonal gifts through the church at Christmas time when catalogues will be available. Any questions, please ask Ruth Jeavons or Bronwen Jones.

'easyfundraising'

Next time you shop online, think of St Faith and St Laurence and raise free donations with 3,000+ retailers:

<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/stfaithandstlaurence>

Women's Fellowship meets on the first Monday of the month from March to December. Meetings are held in the Committee Room 7.30 for 8pm. We have talks on a variety of subjects. See Programme of the Month for details.

Prayer Ministry Team

Prayer ministry is offered during the 10am Communion on Sundays. People can receive prayer for themselves or for any situation that is important to them. It takes place in the Lady Chapel during the distribution of communion.

Service with no name

This takes place on the first Thursday in the month in church at 7.30pm.

Foodbank

We collect food for the Quinton and Oldbury Foodbank. There is a box in church and food can be placed there at any time. The list of things that are needed is in church and in the hall. Food is distributed from St Boniface Church on Wednesdays and Paul and Barney's place on Fridays. Vouchers are required to receive food.

Choir and Music.

Choir Practice takes place weekly, normally on Thursdays 6-7pm. Anyone interested in singing in the choir should contact Simon Palmer, Organist & Choirmaster. (Contact details on page cover) We also like to encourage instrumentalists to perform in church, either in services or in concerts.

Call in for Coffee time together over a cuppa on a Wednesday morning from 10.30 -12.00. if needed we can arrange for someone to collect you and then take you home. Please ring Pauline Sitford (427 7005). If you are passing, do call in, or bring a friend, all are welcome.

Ways to get more involved

As promised in my letter at the front some details of the various Task Groups we have here which manage area of church life. Most meet roughly termly or quarterly, some more often as need dictates.

The **Mission Task Group** manages our links with our Mission Partners and provides thoughts, ideas and input towards mission within the parish as we share the good news of Jesus with our neighbours. Chair Pauline Sitford
The **Children and Young Peoples Task Group** looks after Messy Church, Sunday Club, Stay and Play, and other Children and Youth Ventures. Chair Ruth Jeavons

The **Socials Group** organises fundraising and fun events Chair David Glanvill

The **Education Task Group** plan quiet days, faith and learning sessions and other courses. Chair Vicky Miller

The **Finance and General Purposes Group** seeks to ensure that we are adequately resourced in plant and finance to do all that needs to be done. Chair Priscilla White

The **Worship Task Group** reflects on our worship and plans services
Chair Chris Terry

The **Communications Task Group** is relatively new and will be looking at all our communications, physical and virtual. Chair Priscilla White

Task Groups have on them both members of the PCC and members of the wider congregation. If there is something that interests you, and you would like to be involved then please do contact one of the chairs

If you would like to join one of the rotas for doing things in and out of services please approach either me or the person who looks after that rota.

8am Reading and sidesperson Michael Averill

10am Readers Peter Stokes

6.30pm Readers Diana Leadbeater

Servers Alison Keepax

Intercessions Caroline Mosley

Call in for Coffee Pauline Sitford

Coffee after services Helen Hayward

Flowers Anita Tippin

Stay and Play Hilary Shaylor

Messy Church/ Sunday Club Ruth Jeavons or Sally Griffiths

plus a whole host of things I have probably omitted (apologies)

EDGBASTON SLEEPOUT



A few weeks ago, a team from the Church of England - Birmingham joined folk from across the city and slept out on concrete at Edgbaston Stadium to raise money for charities who work with the homeless.

The team of 15 brave folk, including both the Bishop and the Dean of Birmingham, have managed to raise over £5,000 so far for St. Basil's, who tackle youth homelessness and the Birmingham Churches Winter Night Shelter; a community of churches and organisations that work together to provide food and overnight accommodation to men sleeping rough in Birmingham during the winter.

The event took place at Edgbaston cricket stadium, where Warwickshire Cricket Club Director of Sport and former England cricketer Ashley Giles introduced the evening to those present, who then heard moving stories from St Basil's and a word from Bishop David, speaking about how we flourish as we come together across the city region to make a difference for the common good.

Makeshift cardboard shelters, cold concrete and not much sleep was then the order for the night for most, and a sobering reminder that they could all go back to warm homes the following day, unlike the folk they were raising money for.

The whole event has raised around £20,000 so far.

This is my kind of church

*where God's presence and power are evident...
where Jesus is at the centre of all we do...
where the Holy Spirit leads and we follow...
where it is fun to be serving God with excellence...
where we love God's word and love to study it...
where worship is exuberant, inspiring and genuine...
where deep and lasting relationships are formed...
where family and family values are promoted...
where leaders lead boldly and people serve willingly...
where love is a tangible part of the atmosphere...
where prayers are answered in the name of Jesus...
where healings and miracles are normal...
where all generations are on fire for Jesus...
where everyone's gifts and callings grow
where we give generously because we love Jesus*

Anon

Jesus – no ordinary man

In biology, he was born without normal conception.
In chemistry, he turned water to wine.
In physics, he disproved the law of gravity when he walked on water.
In economics, he fed 5,000 with two fishes and five loaves of bread.
In medicine, he cured the sick and the blind
without administering a single dose of drugs.
In history, he is the beginning and the end.
In government, he is the Prince of Peace.
In religion, no one comes to the Father except through him.
Jesus is Lord of all things.

In a Manner of Speaking

A vicar once said to the actor David Garrick, 'Why is it that I, who speak great truths, deliver them to a half-empty church once a week, while you who speak merely fiction can fill a theatre every night?'
Garrick replied, 'Because you speak truth as though it were fiction; whereas I speak fiction as if it were the truth'.

Report of PCC Meeting of May 8th

The first PCC after the April APCM began with a short communion service to mark the beginning of a new year working together. The agenda included:

Elections and appointments. Priscilla White continues as PCC Chair with Bronwen Jones as Vice-Chair. Gill Hubble and Geoff Bennett both kindly agreed to continue their roles, respectively, as Secretary and Treasurer. Geoff Bennett will relinquish his role as Treasurer in two years' time. The Standing Committee comprises Vicar, Churchwardens, Secretary, Treasurer plus David Arkell and Peter Thomson. PCC members were appointed to Task Groups. Due to vacancies on the PCC, Priscilla is seeking to co-opt people from the congregation – nominations will be welcomed.

Action Plan: priorities for 2018. The PCC discussed our current (updated) plan. Communication and Education are ongoing priorities, to which various Task Groups will be asked to contribute.

People and Places. Using a paper from the Bishop's Council, Priscilla gave an overview of this strategic programme looking at the long-term viability and sustainability of Birmingham parishes, their mission and ministry. Consultations have taken place at different levels and proposals developed for a new Common Fund Method and Ministry Deployment Framework. People and Places will have significant implications for us but, as yet, exactly what will happen at an individual parish level is still being worked out.

Other matters. The Treasurer's report was received, along with reports from the Communications, Finance & General Purposes, Socials and Children & Young People Task Groups. Priscilla reported that Clive Hamilton, an Ordinand, will join us between 24 May – 18 June 2018. Malcolm reported back on the Working Party on Saturday 5 May and thanked all the volunteers who tidied, cleared, weeded, fixed and generally made the church and grounds safe and sound.

If you have questions or would like to know more about any of these matters, please get in touch with Priscilla or any member of the PCC.

Bronwen Jones

Prayer of the Month

In a world where violence forces thousands of families to flee for their lives each day, the time is now to show that the global public stands with refugees. On World Refugee Day, held every year on June 20th, we commemorate the strength, courage and perseverance of millions of refugees. This year, World Refugee Day also marks a key moment for the public to show support for families forced to flee. ***On this World Refugee Day, we call upon those who follow Jesus to set aside 6 ½ minutes to pray for the 65.6 million forcibly displaced men, women and children in the world. Perhaps you could join us in praying the following prayer:***

Father in heaven, we pray for the tens of millions of men, women and children in our world today who have been uprooted by persecution, war and violence.

We pray for the children who make up over half of the global refugee population. We especially pray for unaccompanied minors and the fatherless. They are among the most vulnerable people in the world. Reveal yourself to them as their loving Father, their Protector and their Provider. As the Good Shepherd, go before them and lead them on their journey. Hear their cries and rescue them.

We pray for the displaced women in our world – grandmothers, mothers, wives, sisters, daughters. We pray especially for single women and single mothers among them. You know that they are unprotected and face many dangers and challenges. Protect them from those who would try and take advantage of them. Surround them with supportive community. Renew their strength and hope today. Hear their cries and rescue them.

We pray for uprooted men – grandfathers, fathers, husbands, brothers, sons. Their fellow refugees often rely on them for leadership, help and protection. Grant them wisdom. Renew their strength and hope today. Reveal yourself to them as the Good Shepherd and faithful Provider who has walked with many displaced people throughout history. Hear their cries and rescue them.

We pray for the refugee church – our brothers and sisters. Remind them today that they are in the company of many of your children who were forcibly displaced in years past. Remind them today that you, yourself, were forcibly displaced along with your family shortly after your birth. May they know your faithful presence with them. Renew their faith. May they extend supportive community to their fellow refugees. Hear their cries and rescue them.

COVER STORY

BE STILL, AND KNOW THAT I AM GOD

Spoilt for Choice

In the past decade we have been hit with an extraordinary explosion of choice in almost every area of our lives. Fancy a coffee? Is that cappuccino, latte, flat white, Americano or espresso; skinny, full-fat, double or single shot, small, medium or large?

Want to watch some television? On Freeview you have over a hundred choices; many more than that on cable. You will find programmes you never dreamed of, even in your worst nightmares.

Do you like computer games? The choice is endless. What about music on your iPod? You can download more music than you will ever have time to listen to in your lifetime.

Want to play with your laptop or iPad ? There are hundreds of thousands of ‘apps’ you can choose from...

No one is still these days. We surf, we text, we email, we listen to iPods. We may all live in the same house, but we seldom sit and share an experience together; instead we roam around the house, each absorbed and tapping at our electronic devices.

We all seem to be living in a state of permanent distraction, and some dislocation from those physically closest to us. We can find anything on the internet, but we can’t find time to appreciate it. We have 400 friends on Facebook, but how many true friends in the flesh? We pay more attention to our emails than members of our own family...

The Bible urges us to take time to ‘Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations; I will be exalted in the earth’. *Psalm 46:10.*

Chris Price

Wild Goose

In modern Celtic tradition, the Holy Spirit is represented as a bird, but not the peaceful and serene dove landing on Jesus at his baptism.

The Wild Goose tells a different side of the Holy Spirit. To begin with, wild geese aren’t controllable, you can’t restrain a wild goose and bend it to your will. They’re raucous and loud, unlike the sweet and calming cooing of a dove, a goose’s call is strong, challenging, strident and unnerving - and just a bit scary. In much the same way the Spirit of God can be demanding and unsettling and at times even a little scary.

FRIENDSHIP CIRCLE FUND RAISING EVENT

SKITTLES WITH FISH AND CHIPS

SATURDAY, 30TH JUNE AT 7PM

PRICE £10.00

(please bring your own drinks)



ST. FAITH & ST LAURENCE CHURCH HALL
ALL PROCEEDS WILL GO TO FISHER HOUSE

Tickets are available from:-

HELEN HAYWARD - 422 5724 and PAT JONES - 426 3647

Numbers are limited to 50 so get your tickets early - you will need one to get in.

Quiz Evening and Supper for St Mary's Hospice

This was held on 27th April, at St Mary's Parish Centre.

On behalf of Harborne Fundraising Group I would like to thank the congregation of St Faith and St Laurence, for their tremendous support once again.

Three teams from church took part. The result was very close with only one point between the top three teams. The team 'TDHs' came third after a tie break questions. The other teams from the church did very well too. The evening was very enjoyable and raised over £1000 for St Mary's Hospice.

Julia Reid



Thank you to everyone for your cards, kind thoughts and sympathy on the loss of my husband Bob. Also to Priscilla for the lovely service and comforting visits which I have received.

Margaret MacKensie

We pray for refugee-producing countries in our world – especially those generating the largest number of forcibly displaced people: Syria, Afghanistan, South Sudan, Somalia, Sudan, D.R. Congo, Central African Republic, Myanmar, Eritrea, and Burundi. We pray for peace and justice to take root. We pray for the people living in these troubled nations. Hear their cries and rescue them.

We pray for the nations providing refuge to people – especially those hosting the largest number of refugees: Turkey, Pakistan, Lebanon, Iran, Uganda, Ethiopia, Jordan, Germany, D.R. Congo and Kenya. May your blessing be upon these nations as they provide safety and refuge to desperate people. Increase their capacity to care for the refugees within their borders. Bless them with political, economic, and social stability.

Father, we pray as did the psalmist thousands of years ago:

Some are wandering in desert wastelands, finding no way to a city where they can settle. They are hungry and thirsty, and their lives are ebbing away. They are crying out in their trouble, O Lord. Please deliver them from their distress. Lead them by a straight way to a city where they can settle.

Let them give thanks to the Lord for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for mankind, for he satisfies the thirsty and fills the hungry with good things.

Psalm 107:4-9

It is in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ that we bring our prayer before you.

Amen.

Vicky Miller

Why pray?

Pray because God is listening.

Pray because God understands.

Pray because God cares.

Pray because God is great enough to carry us through all we have to endure. Pray because talking with God eventually brings that sense of the wholeness of God surrounding us and comforting and settling us, as a parent holds a child with loving arms and gives the reassurance of caring.

Pray. God is waiting to hear you.

Marjorie Dobson

A Song for Peace - further reflections

We were 32 pilgrims, and our purpose in visiting the Holy Land was to sing with Palestinian Christians, and to hear from those Christians, Muslims and Jews, whose lives have been, and continue to be blighted by suffering.

We began in Nazareth, no longer the rural village that it must have been in Jesus' time, but now flooded with tourists and pilgrims. We visited some of the holy sites, and many of us felt closest to the New Testament events around the Sea of Galilee. This is now disastrously receding, and the shortage of water is a major concern for Palestinians, who all have to have tanks on their roofs to which water is pumped infrequently. Not so for the Israelis in the illegal settlements, for whom water is plentiful enough to service swimming pools, garden sprinklers etc.

We celebrated eucharist at a beautiful, peaceful spot overlooking the Lake at Tabgha. This is the site of Jesus' third appearance to his disciples after his Resurrection, when he tested and commissioned St Peter as leader of his Church. We sailed on the Lake, and in the evening listened to Nael, the Anglican priest in Nazareth who talked about the tensions in living with four identities- as a Palestinian, an Arab, a Christian and an Israeli citizen. We sang a Liturgy for Peace the following evening in his Church.

Travelling down the Jordan valley, where we renewed our baptismal vows by the river Jordan, we were struck by the beauty and barrenness of the desert into which Jesus went after his baptism. On to Bethlehem to hear from a third generation inhabitant in the Dheisha Refugee camp. It was heartbreaking to see the keys to their homes which those Palestinians evicted in 1948 took with them, in the expectation of returning home within days - or even hours. They never went back. Many of their homes have been demolished, or are now occupied by Israeli families.

In the camp we danced with the children- or, rather, attempted the complex movements - and sang two South African liberation songs "Walk with me for the journey is long" and "Freedom is coming". They do not lose hope- but at the moment freedom seems a long way off.

We heard from members of the Parents Circle, a Palestinian and an Israeli, both of whom had lost children in the conflict and now work for reconciliation. We heard from the son of the Palestinian, who lost his sister and who has slowly come to see reconciliation as the only option. An older Israeli spoke of the pain of losing his daughter. "I cannot forgive" he said, with great honesty, "but I know that violence begets greater violence - and there is no future in that".

All in the month of JUNE

It was....

405 years ago: on 29th Jun 1613 that the original Globe Theatre in London, built and owned by Shakespeare's company of players, was destroyed by fire.

180 years ago: on 28th Jun 1838 that the Coronation of Queen Victoria took place.

155 years ago: on 7th Jun 1863 that Franz Gruber, Austrian organist and composer, best known for composing the Christmas carol 'Silent Night', died.

105 years ago: on 15th Jun 1913 that Trevor Huddleston, British Anglican bishop and anti-apartheid activist; President of the Anti-Apartheid Movement, was born.

105 years ago: on 19th Jun 1913 that South Africa passed the Natives Land Act, establishing reserves for blacks and forbidding the transfer of land between races.

80 years ago: on 4th Jun 1938 that Austrian psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud moved to Britain to escape Nazi persecution.

Also 80 years ago: on 9th Jun 1938 that London's Trooping the Colour ceremony was televised for the first time.

70 years ago: on 24th Jun 1948 that the Soviet Union began a blockade of Berlin, cutting off all routes between West Germany and West Berlin. The Allies launched a massive airlift to take in supplies.

65 years ago: on 2nd Jun 1953 that the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II took place at Westminster Abbey, London.

55 years ago: on 5th Jun 1963 that the British Secretary of State for War, John Profumo, resigned after it was revealed he had lied to the House of Commons about his affair with Christine Keeler.

Also 55 years: on 26th Jun 1963 that US President John Kennedy visited West Berlin and made his famous declaration 'Ich bin ein Berliner' (I am a Berliner) to demonstrate the USA's support.

35 years ago: on 9th Jun 1983 that Margaret Thatcher won her second term as British Prime Minister with a landslide victory in the General Election.

30 years ago: on 11th Jun 1988 that Nelson Mandela's 70th Birthday Tribute took place at Wembley Stadium, London. (He was still in prison, and was released in February 1990.)

20 years ago: on 1st Jun 1998 that the European Central Bank was established in Frankfurt, Germany.

Also 20 years ago: on 11th Jun 1998 that the death of Catherine Cookson, Britain's most widely read novelist, took place.

15 years ago: on 26th Jun 2003, that Sir Denis Thatcher, British businessman, husband of former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, died.

Saint of the month– June 9th
Columba of Iona (c. 521-97) – Missionary to the UK

2013 marked the 1450th anniversary of the arrival of Christianity in the UK. It was brought by St Columba from Ireland to Iona – a tiny island off Mull, in the Western Highlands.

Columba was born in Donegal of the royal Ui Neill clan, and trained as a monk. He founded the monasteries of Derry (546), Durrow (c.556) and probably Kells. But in 565 Columba left Ireland with twelve companions for Iona, an island off southwest Scotland. Iona had been given to him for a monastery by the ruler of the Irish Dalriada. Why would a monk in his mid-40s go into such voluntary exile? Various explanations include: voluntary exile for Christ, an attempt to help overseas compatriots in their struggle for survival, or even as some sort of punishment for his part in a row over a psalter in Ireland. Whatever the reason, Columba went to Iona and spent the rest of his life in Scotland, returning to Ireland only for occasional visits.

Columba's biographer, Adomnan, portrays him as a tall, striking figure of powerful build and impressive presence, who combined the skills of scholar, poet and ruler with a fearless commitment to God's cause. Able, ardent, and sometimes harsh, Columba seems to have mellowed with age.

As well as building his monastery on Iona, Columba also converted Brude, king of the Picts. Columba had great skill as a scribe, and an example of this can be seen in the Cathach of Columba, a late 6th century psalter in the Irish Academy. In his later years Columba spent much time transcribing books.

His death was apparently foreseen by his community, and even, it seems, sensed by his favourite horse. He died in the church just before Matins, and it is a tribute to this man that his traditions were upheld by his followers for about a century, not least in the Synod of Whitby and in Irish monasteries on the continent of Europe. He left behind a flourishing network of monasteries, giving Iona a central place in the Celtic Church, which continues today.

Here is a prayer of St Columba:

Christ With Us
My dearest Lord,
Be Thou a bright flame before me,
Be Thou a guiding star above me,
Be Thou a smooth path beneath me,
Be Thou a kindly shepherd behind me,
Today and evermore.

Staying in Bethlehem meant that we had to go through the checkpoint to get to Jerusalem. Not a great problem for us in a tourist bus, but for those Palestinians who work in Jerusalem, every day it means queuing from 4 am. in order to get through the lengthy 'security' process. I cannot imagine how they cope with this daily demeaning and dehumanizing process.

In Jerusalem, we sang at the Arabic Eucharist in St. George's Cathedral, where we taught the congregation a refrain to the beautiful setting by Bernadette Farrell of Psalm 122. "Shalom, shalom, the peace of God be here". This provoked a walkout from three Palestinians. Perhaps we should have used the Arabic "salaam". It is easy to make such apparently trivial mistakes, but the response indicates the sensitivity and the pain.

On to St. Anne's church, one of the beautiful Crusader churches by the Pool of Siloam, where we sang another Liturgy for Peace, including a setting of "O pray for the peace of Jerusalem". Those of us who are singers, would love to take the acoustic of St. Anne's everywhere we go - even the most ordinary voice sounds like the voice of an angel there!

On Sunday evening came a talk from Sami Awad, the Director of the Holy Land Trust. He told how, pre-1948, people of different faiths lived alongside one another as friends. In his grandfather's village were Christians, Jews and Muslims - his father was in and out of his Jewish friend's home all the time. When the Nakba (the eviction of Palestinians from their homes in 1948) came, in the chaos Sami's grandfather went to help his Jewish neighbour, and was shot dead. Sami's grandmother responded to this by saying that as a family they would not seek revenge, but would seek peace- and that has led to Sami's work for reconciliation. He spoke with passion about the pain of the Palestinians and with understanding about the Israeli sense of being permanently "victims".

Apparently young Israelis at the age of 16 are taken to Auschwitz and are told "this must not happen again". We would all say "amen" to that- but it seems that in its determination to defend itself at all costs, Israel has lost the ability to see the humanity and the suffering of those whom it oppresses.

On the Monday, after walking down from the Mount of Olives to the Garden of Gethsemane (where we sang amongst the ancient olive trees) and followed the Via Dolorosa, we drove to Ramallah to sing other Liturgy for Peace in the church there. The highlight for many of us were songs composed and sung by two Palestinian women-laments for their lost land which moved us to tears. "O God, we pray for justice and peace. O God, grant us security and, in Jerusalem, grant us our rights! Its walls remind us; its alleys cry out "Al Quds is Arab, Al Quds will never die" (Al Quds being the name for Jerusalem).

(Concluded over page)

On our final day, back in Bethlehem, we visited the Wi'am Centre for Reconciliation, right under the separation wall, with teargas canisters and rubber bullets strewn around in the garden. There we sang on the roof, and we heard the Director talk about the work of the Centre. Most movingly, he described the dilemma he had when taking his children on holiday recently within the West Bank, which necessitated passing through two checkpoints. His 7-year old son cried and said "they will shoot us- my school friends have told me so". It brought home to us the hell of uncertainty and fear that Palestinians living in the Occupied Territories must feel every day.

We visited the "Walled off" Hotel (look it up on the internet), where they guarantee the worst view in the world - looking out onto the Separation Wall, with its watchtowers at regular intervals from which Israeli soldiers oversee the movements of Palestinian citizens going about their daily lives. There is a museum in the hotel, and in this museum a video presentation in which former Israeli military personnel talk about coming to terms with the horror of what they had done to other human beings. One man spoke of the terror on the face of a 10-year old Palestinian girl that changed his life. There are Israelis who recognize the injustice of what is happening and who speak out for justice- please pray for them.

On our final evening, we sang in the chapel of Bethlehem University with a group of Muslim students (trained by the wonderful Sister Patricia, a Maltese nun who has been in Bethlehem for many years) and the next morning celebrated our final eucharist at Nicopolis, one of the traditional Emmaus sites.

These reflections are, of course my personal reflections. I'd like to end by saying, as always, music added a new dimension that words alone could not express. As hymn writer Fred Pratt-Green wrote,

*How often, making music, we have found
a new dimension in the world of sound,
as worship moved us to a more profound
Alleluia!*

Please remember the people of Palestine in your prayers.

Peter Stokes



SUN 17 THIRD SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

	8.00 am	Holy Communion <i>Ezekiel 17.22-end; 2 Corinthians 5.6-17; Mark 4.26-34</i>	
	10.00 am	Family Communion <i>Readings as at 8am</i>	
	6.30 pm	Evensong <i>Psalms 39 Jeremiah 7.1-16; Romans 9.14-26</i>	
Mon 18	1.45 pm	Reflections	143 Balden Road
Wed 20	10.30 am	Call in for Coffee	Committee Room
	11.00 am	Holy Communion <i>2 Kings 2.1,6-14; Matthew 6.1-6,16-18</i>	Lady Chapel
	7.15 pm	Deanery Synod Meeting	TBA
Thu 21	9.30 am	Stay and Play	Hall
	6.00 pm	Choir Practice	Church
Sat 23		Parish Picnic	

SUN 24 FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

	8.00 am	Holy Communion <i>Job 38; 2 Corinthians 6.1-13; Mark 4.35-end</i>	
	10.00 am	Family Communion <i>Readings as at 8am</i>	
	10.30 am	Cluster Confirmation Service	St. George's
	6.30 pm	Evensong <i>Psalms 49 Jeremiah 10.1-16; Romans 11.25-end</i>	
Mon 25	1.45 pm	Reflections	143 Balden Road
Tue 26	7.00 pm	FGP Task Group Meeting	Committee Room
Wed 27	10.30 am	Call in for Coffee	Committee Room
	11.00 am	Holy Communion <i>2 Kings 22.8-13, 23.1-3; Matthew 7.15-20</i>	Lady Chapel
Thu 28	9.30 am	Stay and Play	Hall
	6.00 pm	Choir Practice	Church

Lesson in Lying

A vicar told his congregation, "Next week I plan to preach about the sin of lying. To help you understand my sermon, I want you all to read Mark 17." The following Sunday, as he prepared to deliver his sermon, the vicar asked for a show of hands. He wanted to know how many had read Mark 17. Every hand went up. The vicar smiled and said, "Mark has only 16 chapters. I will now proceed with my sermon on the sin of lying."

PROGRAMME FOR JUNE

Sat	2	10.30 am	Messy Church	Hall
SUN 3 FIRST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY				
		8.00 am	Holy Communion	<i>Deuteronomy 5.12-15; 2 Corinthians 4.5-12; Mark 2.23-3.6</i>
		10.00 am	Family Communion	<i>Readings as at 8am</i>
		6.30 pm	Evensong	<i>Psalms 35 Jeremiah 5.1-19; Romans 7.7-end</i>
Mon	4	1.45 pm	Reflections	<i>143 Balden Road</i>
Tue	5	8.00 pm	Team Meeting	<i>Vicarage</i>
Wed	6	10.30 am	Call in for Coffee	<i>Committee Room</i>
		11.00 am	Holy Communion	<i>Lady Chapel 2 Timothy 1.1-3,6-12; Mark 12.18-27</i>
		3.30 pm	After School Club	<i>Woodhouse Primary Academy</i>
Thu	7	9.30 am	Stay and Play	<i>Hall</i>
		6.00 pm	Choir Practice	<i>Church</i>
		7.30 pm	Service with no name	<i>Church</i>
SUN 10 SECOND SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY				
		8.00 am	Holy Communion	<i>Genesis 3.8-15; 2 Corinthians 4.13-5.1; Mark 3.20-end</i>
		10.00 am	Morning Praise	
		6.30 pm	Sung Eucharist	<i>Readings as at 8am</i>
Mon	11	1.45 pm	Reflections	<i>143 Balden Road</i>
Tue	12	7.15 pm	PCC Meeting	<i>Committee Room</i>
Wed	13	10.30 am	Call in for Coffee	<i>Committee Room</i>
		11.00 am	Holy Communion	<i>Lady Chapel 1 Kings 18.20-39; Matthew 5.17-19</i>
		3.30 pm	After School Club	<i>Woodhouse Primary Academy</i>
		7.30 pm	Edgborne Cluster Meeting	<i>St. George's</i>
Thu	14	9.30 am	Stay and Play	<i>Hall</i>
		6.00 pm	Choir Practice	<i>Church</i>



FROM THE REGISTERS

Holy Baptism

April 29th William Borer

Funeral in church

May 4th Robert (Bob) MacKensie

FACTS AND FIGURES

Week Beginning	Communicants	Loose Plate £	Planned Giving £	Gift Aid £
April 22	77	88.77	194.43	36
April 29	86	80.18	195.00	
May 6	83	52.76	364.95	15
May 13	49	82.70	131.25	40
Standing Orders			N/A	N/A
Parish Giving			N/A	N/A

Straplines

Prayer is important when things get hard and you find it difficult to keep going. It's also worth remembering it's often the last key in the bunch that opens the lock.

The smallest action is better than the greatest intention.