

Shirley Parish Magazine



May 2020

SHIRLEY PARISH GUIDE

CLERGY

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facebook.com/@AdventureinFaithB90

Due to the Coronavirus, all public worship is currently suspended and our church buildings are closed. The resources for 'Worship at Home' and 'Messy Church at Home' are being sent out by email, in the post or hand delivered where email is not available and are on our website.

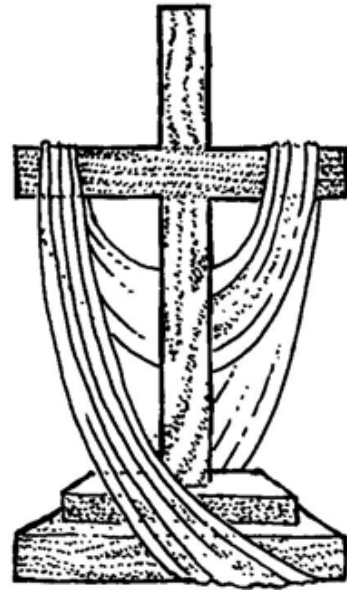
We have asked some key people in each church to keep in contact with a number of other church members on a regular basis. We hope we have included everybody in this but if you know someone who hasn't received a phone call, please let us know. Likewise if you or someone else needs some help, please let us know.

A PRAYER FOR THOSE AFFECTED BY CORONAVIRUS

Keep us, good Lord,
under the shadow of your mercy.
Sustain and support the anxious,
be with those who care for the sick,
and lift up all who are brought low;
that we may find comfort
knowing that nothing can separate us from your love
in Christ Jesus our Lord.
Amen

OUR PARISH PRAYERS

Give to us your people, living God,
 A renewed faith and a bold vision
 that we may proclaim
 the Good News of your Son
 with faith that your kingdom will come,
 with hope for our community
 and with love for Him
 who died and rose again
 to save us, Jesus Christ our Risen Lord
 Amen



God of Mission, who alone brings growth to your Church,
 send your Holy Spirit to give vision to our planning,
 wisdom to our actions, and power to our witness.
 Help our church to grow in numbers, in spiritual commitment to you,
 and in service to our local community.
 Through Jesus Christ, our Lord.
 Amen

A PRAYER WHEN WE CANNOT RECEIVE COMMUNION

Thanks be to you, Lord Jesus Christ, for all the benefits you have given me,
 for all the pains and insults you have borne for me.
 Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally,
 I ask you to come spiritually into my heart.
 O most merciful redeemer, friend and brother,
 may I know you more clearly, love you more dearly,
 and follow you more nearly, day by day.
 Amen.



**“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.
 Be still, and know that I am God.” Psalm 46**

FAREWELL FROM REVEREND PETER

When Archdeacon Jenny and I began discussing my retirement a few months ago and considering a date for it to take effect, none of us knew that Easter this year would take place in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic. So as I write this my final contribution to the Parish Magazine as your Vicar, I hope you will join me in continuing to give thanks for the wonderful and sacrificial efforts of all those who are at the sharp end of dealing with the virus and its devastating effects. Uppermost in our minds are NHS staff: doctors, nurses, all the many others who make this unique and wonderful service work deserve our heartfelt thanks – and our efforts to ensure that they receive the resources they need and deserve, not only to deal with the pandemic, but in order to develop a service that will allow them to put their considerable skills and dedication to the most fruitful use!

Many of you will be helped by other carers, whether at home or in one of the many residential homes that cater for the needs of the frail and vulnerable. We are all helped by those who dispose of our household waste, deliver our mail and other necessities; those who work in our shops and supermarkets – the list is very long and every one of these people deserves our utmost gratitude and support. So too do those whose livelihoods have been affected or disappeared altogether.

We may not be able to meet in person, but in our homes, and perhaps participating via the Internet, we can all join our prayers with those of people of faith everywhere. One way of doing this might be to think about what Easter can mean in a national lockdown. During Holy Week, and in the Easter events, much is made of Jesus' isolation, of his sense of the absence of the Father. Recalling this in current circumstances can help us appreciate its significance in a new and powerful way and to be confident in the promise that is at the heart of the Christian faith. We experience the reality of hope, the presence of God's Kingdom, and sometimes it seems very near, at others remote. But the Resurrection of Jesus offers a promise of restoration (to Peter at the lakeside), of assurance (to the disciples at Emmaus), of the gift of faith (to Thomas) and in His Ascension the promise to return so that all who are open will ultimately experience the gift of unconditional love.

During my time in Shirley, as Team Rector and as Vicar, I have experienced the reality of this love in many ways. What has at times been a difficult journey for us all was made bearable by the many wonderful signs of this openness to the promptings of God's grace. I have always given thanks for the privilege of serving in this wonderful parish and will continue to offer prayers of thanksgiving for each and every one of you as I begin my retirement. So may the God of all grace fill you with all joy and hope in believing. May the living God, Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer, bless you and keep you, now and always. Amen.

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING (APCM)

You will have seen in the April magazine that our APCM was scheduled to take place on 22nd April. As this was not possible Bishop David has given permission to extend the deadline for this year's APCM's to 31st October 2020. He very much hopes that existing office holders will be willing and able to continue in office for the extended time, however he will understand if this is not possible.



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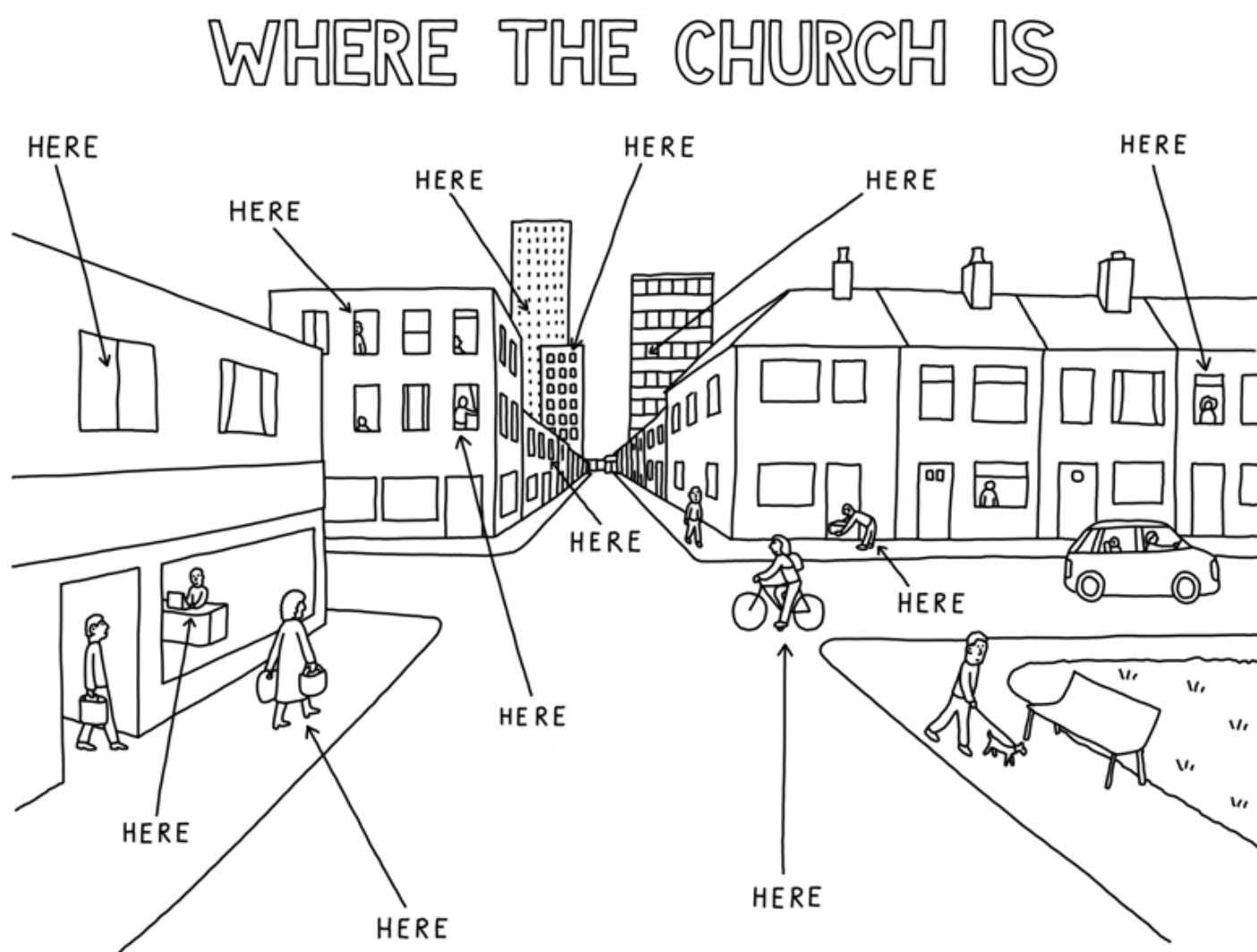
Contact Jason on 07789761412

WHAT IS THE CHURCH?

Way back in the Autumn of 2018 when no-one would have believed it could be possible that all the church buildings in the country would be locked, our Sunday sermon was on the subject of "What is the church". Have a look at the website and you can read the cracking sermon that Sarah preached which finished with the words *'We the church are the people who are lit by the Spirit, and we are commissioned to share that light with the world, through prayer, worship and in our relations with the wider community'*.

These last few weeks have underlined that the church is definitely not the building. Easter Day was the fourth Sunday in a row when we have been unable to gather together in St James' Church, St John's Church or in Widney School, the home of Christ the King Church. But the church is still worshipping and supporting and encouraging. The church is still learning and growing. The signs on the doors of the buildings may say that the buildings are closed, but the church is still very much alive and active and present in and around Shirley.

This cartoon from Dave Walker sums this up brilliantly:



WHAT IS THE CHURCH? continued

Talking to people across the Parish I sense a growing feeling of togetherness and belonging. More than one person has said to me that the video recorded services have allowed them to worship with their church for the first time in a long while as they cannot usually (for health reasons or whatever) get to the building on a Sunday morning.

People may not be able to meet in person but there is a lot of talking and encouraging and praying being done over the phone. We are listening to and supporting each other in a way that simply isn't possible in the brief conversations over a cup of coffee on a Sunday morning.

So how will things look when we can worship in the buildings again? Will we just return to how it was before?

It's too early to answer of course, but I hope we will have learned some important lessons in this time of lockdown. I hope that we will be able to include people in our worship who have, unintentionally I am sure, been excluded from when we meet together. I hope the friendships and support networks will continue and I hope that we will emerge as a stronger and more committed church.

Of course, this is not to say that our buildings are unimportant. There is something very special about praying and worshipping in a place where worship has been offered for many years and centuries. I am a great believer that there are "thin places" where earth and heaven seem very close. But they are "thin places" not because of bricks and mortar and stone and statue but because of faithful people offering prayer and worship over the years to their faithful God.

What is the church? The church is the people of God wherever we are.

Reverend Paul Day



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“SERVICES THIS SUNDAY WILL BE ...”

It's increasingly hard to predict what is happening day by day, let alone weeks ahead as is required for the Parish Magazine. The April magazine contained details of all our Holy Week and Easter services – which of course never took place. So, what to put in the May magazine, writing as I am in the week after Easter?

The plan at the moment looks like this ...

As long as the lockdown continues and church buildings remain closed, we will be putting videos on YouTube for Sunday services and midweek reflections. The Sunday services will be following the lectionary readings and will be added to YouTube in time to be viewed on Sundays – and we suggest that we aim to do this together at 10am each Sunday.

The midweek reflections will be thinking about characters who met or experienced the risen Christ. These will be added to YouTube so that they can be viewed on Thursdays.

Thursday 16th April	Mary Magdalene
Thursday 23rd April	Thomas
Thursday 30th April	Cleopas and Companion (The Emmaus Road)
Thursday 7th May	Peter
Thursday 14th May	Stephen
Thursday 21st May	Ascension Day Service (details later)
Thursday 28th May	Saul/Paul

For those who have access to email, two emails will be sent each week with links to the videos.

We recognise that not everyone has access to the Internet, and so will be including both midweek reflections and Sunday sermons in our paper mailings which we will endeavour to deliver or post in time for you to receive them on Thursdays. The postal service is a little unreliable at present, so apologies if you do not receive them in time for Thursday.

If you have not been receiving information about services and sermons either by post or email and would like to, please contact the Parish Office on 0121 745 8896.

The videos are on the ShirleyParishB90 YouTube channel – links to this can be found on the Parish website www.shirleyparishb90.co.uk

Reverend Paul Day

LEAVE YOUR DANDELIONS ALONE!

When mowing your lawn, avoid cutting your dandelions. That is the advice of the president of the British Ecological Society, Professor Jane Memmott. It will help to save the bees.

She explains: “Dandelions are a fantastic source of pollen and nectar for the early pollinators in particular. If they were rare, people would be fighting over them, but because they’re common, people pull them out and spray them with all sorts of horrible things when they should just let them flower. If you leave the lawn to three or four inches, then dandelions, clover and daisies can flower and then you end with something like a tapestry, and it’s much nicer to sit there and watch the insects buzzing about.”

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WOULD YOU LIKE TO KNIT FOR THE NHS?

Emma Taylor, a midwife at Heartlands Hospital, has recently launched a project there to shine a little light in such a dark time by asking kind volunteers to knit angels for all job roles within the NHS and beyond. These NHS angels are gifted to the NHS staff on the frontline and beyond as a token of appreciation and also as a way for staff to feel closer to the angels and, if they are religious, then it’s a way of saying connected to their faith as they are unable to go to their place of worship at present.

There is a knitting pattern for a Nurse, a Surgeon and a paramedic but with a little imagination they could be created into any NHS job role! Emma can arrange the collection and distribution, this will all be done contactlessly so no one is put at risk.

If you use Facebook you can find out more by joining the group ‘NHS Knitted Angels, Birmingham, Solihull and Beyond’ or ask Gill Hanton or Reverend Wendy to send you the patterns.



FOOD BANK UPDATE

We have had to stop delivering donations and working at the Food Bank, at the strong urgings of our family, because we are in the 'vulnerable folks' class! We feel very badly at letting the Tyseley team down just when the number of clients is rocketing, and other volunteers have had to withdraw for similar reasons. But can we urge you to continue donating? either by the practical means of putting your offerings (of tinned fruit, tinned tomatoes, dried milk, boxes of fruit juice and tins of meat soup) directly into the collecting boxes at Waitrose, Tesco's or Sainsbury's – or by sending a financial contribution direct to the Food Bank itself?

Our intention is to return to our usual routines once this awful business is over but, in the meantime, 'thank you' for all the wonderful support you have given over so many years to the Food Bank through us.

Wishing you all good health, stay safe,

David and Elizabeth Paice

THE FOODBANK WAYS YOU CAN HELP IN 2020



FIND OUT
WHAT IS
NEEDED



PICK UP EXTRA
ITEMS WHEN
YOU SHOP



SORTING

THEY DO A
GREAT JOB AT
THE FOODBANK



GOSSIP
POSITIVELY

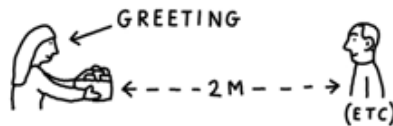


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MONEY



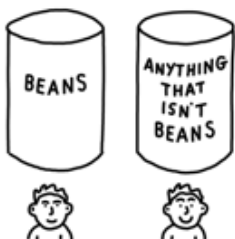
FUNDRAISE

MIGHT
HAVE
TO BE
ONLINE
NOW



VOLUNTEER
(REALLY IMPORTANT AS
MANY VOLUNTEERS OVER 65
AND NOW SELF-ISOLATING)

WHY IS THE
NEED FOR
FOODBANKS
INCREASING?



[BUT
CHECK
LOCALLY]



ASK PEOPLE FOR
FOODBANK DONATIONS
RATHER THAN PRESENTS



LIKE THE
SOCIAL MEDIA
PAGE



ASK AWKWARD
QUESTIONS

LITTLE NICK - IN SELF-ISOLATION

Sarah made me sit down and listen. ‘You and Bernard will need to self-isolate, so no going out for twelve weeks’. ‘Hang on a bit’, I said ‘I’m not so old’. ‘You may think you are an eternal kitten’, she said, ‘But I know better. Self-isolation for you’. So here I am at home.

It is all a bit strange. The house is less dusty than usual and there is a strong smell of soap. Seriously I have to hold my nose as I scamper past the bathroom door. The lawn has had its first mow of the year without accompanying groans from the person pushing the mower. Sarah seems to have decided not to wear any clothes less than 10 years old, or which actually fit properly. I wouldn’t be surprised to find Worzel Gummidge sitting in the back garden. When I complained about a lack of exercise, I was directed towards a dusty bike in the garage – until that was, the pedal fell off. Sarah told me not to worry because the nut to hold it on is there, somewhere.

The phone keeps ringing and they are making calls. There are video meetings and lots of emails. I had to laugh the other day when I found Sarah carefully positioning the laptop so that she would have rows of books behind her during a video meeting. Her defence? Looking like the news people and politicians reporting from home. I just hope no one was close enough to read the titles.

It is hard to tell which day of the week it is except for Sunday. We went online to join in with the service that Paul had recorded on YouTube and the things he had e mailed with it. Thank you for that and the things that have arrived for Holy Week. I know that we will be using them every day.

Meanwhile Bernard is working his way through a pile of jigsaws. For now, they are on the spare bed. Perhaps when he has done them all we will be able to have someone to stay. Sarah is reading through a big pile of books which for some reason she keeps in an old fermenting bin in the corner of the bedroom. She has dug out the cross-stitch picture she started about five years ago and is heading for completion. I reminded her that somewhere she has a part finished sampler to commemorate a royal wedding ... don’t ask me which one. My lips are sealed.

With my love to you all, stay safe

Nicodemus Penfold - Parish Raconteur



SHIRLEY PARISH BOOK CLUB

***Once Upon a River* by Diane Setterfield**

Our March novel takes place in the late nineteenth century and is set along the more remote stretches of the River Thames. Like the river itself, the story is full of tributaries and diversions. It begins with the discovery of what appears to be a child's body in the water, but then the child after appearing dead, mysteriously comes back to life. She is unable to speak, so the novel becomes an intricate search for her identity and the identities of her parents.

Diane Setterfield says, 'A river no more begins at its source than a story begins with the first page' – and this proves to be the case with *Once Upon a River*. From the wide range of characters who drink and tell stories in the local pub, three main plot lines emerge. One concerns a wealthy landowner who is in a marriage that has faded since the kidnapping of his two-year-old daughter; the second is about a successful mixed-race farmer and his trouble-some stepson, and the third follows the frightened, simple maid of the local parson. Is the drowned and then revived girl in the river the kidnapped two-year-old, or is she the daughter of the farmer's wayward stepson, or is she the sister of the simple housemaid?

Once book club members got past the early intricacies of the plotting, and the plethora of characters, they responded with considerable enthusiasm for the novel. Even though we have become a virtual book club, not meeting face to face in the name of social distancing – an overwhelming majority of our members responded with 'I loved it' in their emailed reports.

Here are some phrases from individuals:

'... gripped by the mystery of the girls and the richness of the descriptions of the places'

'... intrigued by the multiple story lines.'

'... loved the characters, especially Mr Armstrong and Lily.' (The mixed race farmer, and the parson's maid).

'... drawn to the Oxfordshire setting and the variety of characters.'

'... thought it was beautifully written with lots of twists and turns, and with excellent descriptions of the characters.'

'I would rate this novel as second only to *A Gentleman in Moscow*. I loved the stories of each of the characters. It's another book that I would be happy to read again.'

'I loved this book. An intricate story, beautifully written. The power of the river was evocative and the whole story had a satisfactory ending'.

SHIRLEY PARISH BOOK CLUB continued

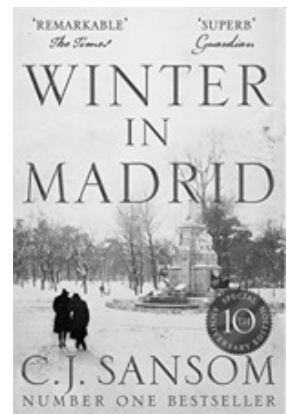
'There are a number of truly good people (in the novel) who keep you believing in humanity and the mystery of how the Thames links them all together.'

'Almost Dickensian in terms of the huge variety of characters and intricate plots, but not quite. I lost myself in that strange, late Victorian world and I am sure there will be aspects of the novel that will haunt me for quite a while'

As well as all of the above comments, another of us enjoyed the book, even though they had to keep going back over sections to double check, but '... sometimes it got rather confusing ... somehow the characters didn't seem real, even those who were meant to be real, not ghosts of the river.'

Two of us were very much drawn to the setting having spent part of their lives living in a rural setting alongside the River Thames, with all its tributaries and folklore. One or two found untangling the plots and characters a bit too much – and too unsettling, haunting, even - and a couple were deflected into other novels – most notably Hilary Mantel's latest and very long, *The Mirror and the Light*.

And so, the Shirley Parish Book Club goes on, even in these strange and disjointed times. When Sarah Penfold recommended *Once Upon a River*, one or two of us were probably nervous about its length, but then were thankful for the absorbing intricacies of its story lines. By coincidence, our next choice – from Jeanne Ison – is ***Winter in Madrid* by C.J. Sansom**, is another long and enthralling story (I am hooked already) set in Spain during the first years of the Second World War.



In our varying degrees of isolation, we are all thankful for the Book Club and how the stories we read, like this one by Diane Setterfield, never really begin or end. They just flow on forever, like the River Thames. Just as we hope we will.

Ray Speakman



THE FRIENDS OF ST JAMES 100 CLUB

During the present situation, the 100 Club will continue to be drawn on the first Sunday of each month.

The winners for April were - £50 William Toddington & £25 Jan Dalton



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OLD AGE

Old Age. What's that! I rarely think of myself as old. Nor do I feel old. Now I have arrived at this stage of my life I realise that in many ways it is better.

For the first time in my life I do not have to prove anything to anyone least of all to myself. Does it really matter if I put on a few extra pounds by eating chocolate or cream cakes or even going out for a delicious three course meal or even buying something outrageous to wear – no-one can see me drifting around the house in a brightly coloured caftan nor can they see me if I dance around the house to some catchy tune. And what's more I can stay in bed all morning. The rest of my life is my own and I can choose to wear, act and do as I like. Old age may be visible to people, hair turns white, wrinkly skin, arthritis. I do not feel any older inside my head, still the same as when I was eleven and had to be evacuated miles from home and with complete strangers. It taught me to appreciate my parents at home. Old age; it really is in the mind.



Extract taken from Grace Magazine and shared by Margaret Foreshew

Mothers' UNION

During these unprecedented times Mothers' Union is committed to ensuring that we continue to support our membership and the communities we are part of. We know that our work and experience in re-building communities and supporting family life is going to be more important than ever once the threat of COVID-19 subsides.

As many of us face being indoors and unable to socialise as we would normally, Mothers' Union have produced a wide range of resources. From craft, prayerful reflections, bible studies and practical guides on how to stay in touch - we have something to interest everyone!

Visit <https://www.mothersunion.org/> to find out more

FABRIC BAGS ARE STILL NEEDED PLEASE



If anyone is willing and able to continue making sets of three fabric bags and / or fabric to make into the kits, please let Chris Speakman (0121 705 3580) know your contact details. She will try to deliver to your doorstep and collect from your doorstep once completed. Thanks so much on behalf of the Food Bank who are in greater need than ever now.

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JUNE 2020 PARISH MAGAZINE

DEADLINE FOR INFORMATION & ARTICLES - Tuesday 12th May

PUBLICATION DATE - Saturday 30th May

VE DAY – THE END OF WORLD WAR II IN EUROPE

VE Day (Victory in Europe) – was celebrated 75 years ago this month, on 8th May 1945, marking the end of World War II in Europe. It was marked with a public holiday.



The previous day the formal act of military surrender had been signed by Germany, and celebrations broke out when the news was released. Big crowds gathered in London, impromptu parties were held throughout the country, and people danced and sang in the streets. King George VI and his family appeared on the balcony of Buckingham Palace, and Churchill made a speech to huge applause. The two princesses Elizabeth and Margaret mingled with the crowds outside.

Many went into churches to give thanks – and to pray for those still involved in the war in the Far East, because the real end of the war, Victory over Japan, would not happen until 15th August. At St Paul's Cathedral there were ten consecutive services giving thanks for peace, each attended by thousands of people.

The celebrations masked the fact that so many had lost family and friends, as well as possessions and homes. But for the moment normal social conventions broke down, strangers embraced, and love was in the air.

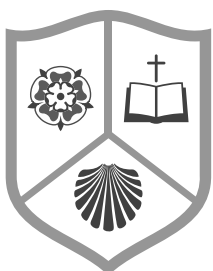
Visit <https://www.veday75.org> to find out more about what is planned for the day and get ready to sing 'We'll Meet Again' at 9pm.

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CHRISTIAN AID WEEK - MAY 10th to 16th

Dear supporters

As all of our thoughts are on the Covid-19 situation, we wanted to share an update on Christian Aid's response. We value our volunteers enormously and want to ensure you all keep safe when fundraising for Christian Aid Week. The health and safety of our community, including loyal supporters like you, is of the utmost importance to us, and we are monitoring the situation on a daily basis.

Many of you will have been planning house-to-house collections and events. Under the current circumstances, sadly, house-to-house collections and delivery-only collections should not go ahead.

Instead, Christian Aid Week is moving online! We are building a vibrant, virtual Christian Aid Week so you can take part with our online community. We would love you to join in to show love for our neighbours near and far, as a global family.

It's more important than ever that we come together as a community to worship and to share fun and fellowship. That's why during Christian Aid Week we will be live-streaming worship each day, and hosting a fun daily quiz to join and raise funds.

Christian Aid and our partners already have experience of limiting the spread of infection during the Ebola crisis, and we will build on this experience to continue to stand together with communities living in poverty during this period. If infection rates start to develop as they are in Europe, then people in poorer countries will be hit even harder. Many are already living with reduced health resilience because of extreme poverty, or in overcrowded humanitarian camps and in countries which do not have the healthcare infrastructures needed to combat widespread disease. We will be working on the ground to help prepare communities to limit the impact of Covid-19. Please pray for us in this vital work, and support us where you can by making an online donation.

We are praying for all those affected by this new virus, both in Britain and overseas, for all those working on the frontline and for wisdom for our leaders. We will continue to monitor the situation as it evolves. During this challenging time, we all need to take seriously the science and advice being offered, remaining calm but vigilant.

I am keeping you all in my prayers.

With every blessing,

Amanda Khozi Mukwashi
CEO



To find out more visit <https://www.christianaid.org.uk>

THY KINGDOM COME 2020

“Thy Kingdom Come....”

Three little words sitting quietly in the first part of the Lord’s Prayer. We probably pray them most days, certainly we will say them as part of our church services.

But, God’s Kingdom? What’s that all about then? Is it a bit like the United Kingdom - a geographical area, led by the Queen and her government, populated by citizens living according to the laws of the land?

Well, kind of – but not quite. It has citizens, and a leader, but God’s kingdom has no geographical boundaries. It is found wherever people look to God as their leader, their King, and consider themselves part of God’s family. It’s around us everywhere, and we are part of it. We live in God’s way of love and justice, truth and mercy. We love God and our neighbours. We care for the creation. And because we do, we make a difference in the world.

So, when we pray, “Thy Kingdom Come” we are praying that more people will come to know and love God, and become part of the family. And that all those lovely Kingdom values will spread, the world will become a better place, and God will be glorified.

Once again, the Archbishops of Canterbury and York are encouraging us all to pray “Thy Kingdom Come” during the time between Ascension Day and Pentecost, **21st to 31st May**. Here in Shirley Parish we will be joining in with those prayers. We will have a reflection, a prayer and/or a simple action for each day; and we will be praying for our friends and neighbours in the parish.



Paul and the ministry team will produce resources for us to use every day; and we hope that everyone will also pray for the street in which they live, and for at least one other street in the parish, maybe one that they don’t really know very well.

So, whether you are a regular pray-er or not, please get involved and join in. May God’s Kingdom come in Shirley Parish – whether we are locked down or not!

Kate Day

MAY 21st - ASCENSION DAY - FORTY DAYS WITH THE RISEN CHRIST

Forty days after Easter comes Ascension Day. These are the forty days during which the Risen Christ appeared again and again to His disciples, following His death and resurrection. (*Matthew 28; Mark 16; Luke 24; and John 20*)

The Gospels give us little of Christ's teachings and deeds during those forty days. Jesus was seen by numerous of His disciples: on the road to Emmaus, by the Sea of Galilee, in houses, etc. He strengthened and encouraged His disciples, and at last opened their eyes to all that the Scriptures had promised about the Messiah. Jesus also told them that as the Father had sent Him, He was now going to send them - to all corners of the earth, as His witnesses.



Surely the most tender, moving 'farewell' in history took place on Ascension Day. Luke records the story with great poignancy: 'When Jesus had led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, He lifted up His hands - and blessed them.'

As Christmas began the story of Jesus' life on earth, so Ascension Day completes it, with His return to His Father in heaven. Jesus' last act on earth was to bless His disciples. He and they had a bond as close as could be: they had just lived through three tumultuous years of public ministry and miracles – persecution and death – and resurrection! Just as we part from our nearest and dearest by still looking at them with love and memories in our eyes, so exactly did Jesus: 'While He was blessing them, He left them and was taken up into heaven.' (Luke 24:50,51) He was not forsaking them, but merely going on ahead to a kingdom which would also be theirs one day: 'I am ascending to my Father and to your Father, to my God and your God...' (John 20:17)

The disciples were surely the most favoured folk in history. Imagine being one of the last few people on earth to be face to face with Jesus, and have Him look on you with love. No wonder then that Luke goes on: 'they worshipped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. And they stayed continually at the temple, praising God.' (Luke 24:52,53)

No wonder they praised God! They knew they would see Jesus again one day! 'I am going to prepare a place for you... I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.' (John 14:2,3) In the meantime, Jesus had work for them to do: to take the Gospel to every nation on earth.

MAY 31st - DAY OF PENTECOST : WHIT SUNDAY

Pentecost took place on the well-established Jewish festival of Firstfruits, which was observed at the beginning of the wheat harvest. It was seven weeks after Easter, or fifty days including Easter.

A feast day to celebrate the country's wheat harvest does not sound exactly world-changing, but that year, it became one of the most important days in world history. For Pentecost was the day that Jesus sent the Holy Spirit - the day the Church was born.

Jesus had told His disciples that something big was going to happen, and that they were to wait for it in Jerusalem, instead of returning to Galilee. Jesus had plans for His disciples, but He knew they could not do the work themselves. They would need His help.

And so, they waited in Jerusalem, praying together with His other followers, for many days. And then on that fateful morning there was suddenly the sound as of a mighty rushing wind. Tongues of flame flickered on their heads, and they began to praise God in many tongues, to the astonishment of those who heard them. The curse of Babel (Genesis 11: 1- 9) was dramatically reversed that morning.

That morning the Holy Spirit came to indwell the disciples and followers of Jesus. The Church was born. The Christians were suddenly full of life and power, utterly different from their former fearful selves. The change in them was permanent.

Peter gave the first ever sermon of the Christian Church that morning, proclaiming Jesus was the Messiah. His boldness in the face of possible death was in marked contrast to the man who had denied Jesus fifty days before. And 3,000 people responded, were converted, and were baptised. How's that for fast church growth!



Of course, Pentecost was not the first time the Holy Spirit had acted in this world. All through the Old Testament there are accounts of how God's Spirit guided people and strengthened them. But now, because of Christ's death and resurrection, He could INDWELL them. From now on, every Christian could have the confidence that Jesus was with them constantly, through the indwelling of His Holy Spirit.



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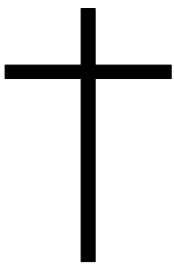
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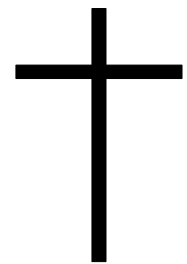
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Across

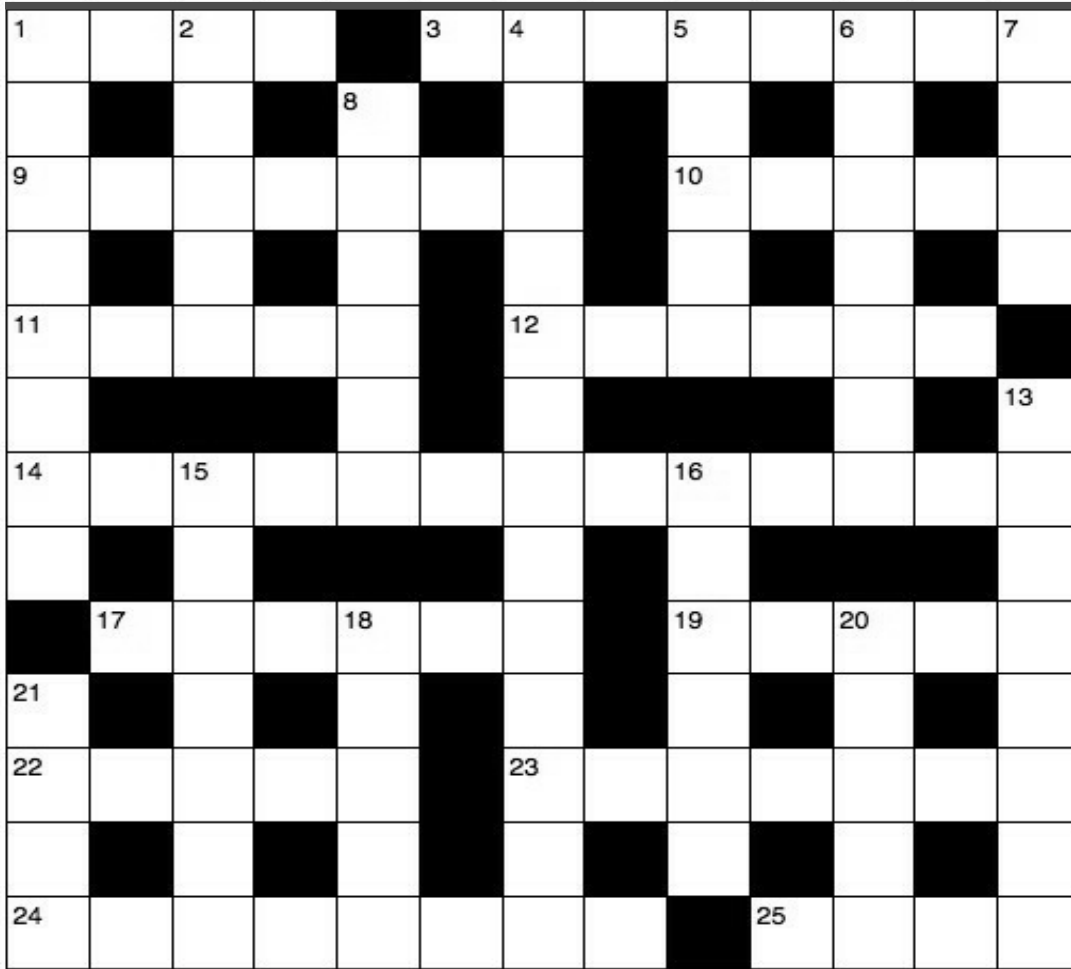
- 1** 'Therefore let us — passing judgment on one another' (Romans 14:13) (4)
3 'I — — these persons here present' (Marriage service) (4,4)
9 According to a prearranged timetable (Numbers 28:3) (7)
10 Group of eight (5)
11 The cell into which the Philippian jailer put Paul and Silas (Acts 16:24) (5)
12 — Taylor, pioneer missionary to China (6)
14 Otherwise known as the Eucharist, Breaking of Bread, the Lord's Table (4,9)
17 'So that after I have preached to others, I — will not be disqualified for the prize'
 (1 Corinthians 9:27) (6)
19 Attend to (3,2)
22 Approximately (Acts 4:4) (5)
23 Tea rite (anag.) (7)
24 Rule of sovereign (8)
25 Test (anag.) (4)

Down

- 1** The name of the street where Judas lived in Damascus and where Saul of Tarsus
 stayed (Acts 9:11) (8)
2 'The playing of the merry — , sweet singing in the choir' (5)
4 'We have been saying that — — was credited to him as righteous'
 (Romans 4:9) (8,5)
5 Dr Martyn — Jones, famous for his ministry at Westminster Chapel (5)
6 Port at which Paul landed on his way to Rome (Acts 28:13) (7)
7 Observe (Ruth 3:4) (4)
8 Minister of religion (6)
13 'I am — of this man's blood. It is your responsibility' (Matthew 27:24) (8)
15 'Greater love has no one than this, that he — — his life for his friends'
 (John 15:13) (3,4)
16 Archbishop who calculated that the world began in 4004 BC (6)
18 'No one can — the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit'
 (John 3:5) (5)
20 Establish by law (5)
21 Product of Gilead noted for its healing properties (Jeremiah 46:11) (4)



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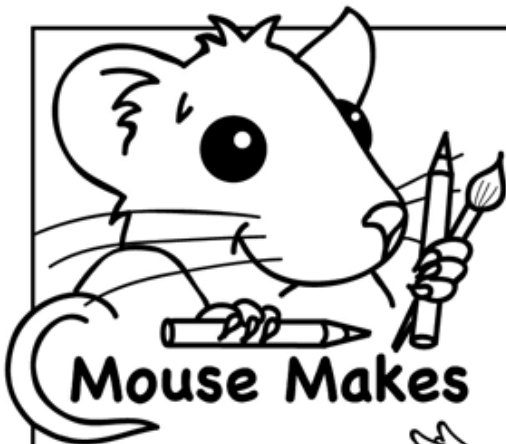


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9				1				7
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	7		2			5		6
1				7				9

Answers are on page 27



"The fruit of the Spirit is
 love, joy, peace, patience,
 kindness, goodness, faithfulness
 gentleness and self control.

If we live by the Spirit, let us also
 behave in accordance with the Spirit"



Read
 Galatians
 5:13-26

How many
 other words can you find
 using the letters from:

**FRUIT OF
 THE SPIRIT?**



U O
 N T R V
 G R A C E G O D
 B T H E L P E A C E
 T P A T I E N C E I
 J G T R U S T R J
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 J E E E A P O

Which
 symbol goes
 with which fruit?



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 GOODWILL • GENEROSITY • GOODNESS • HONESTY • INTEGRITY
 FAITHFULNESS • LOYALTY • TRUST • GENTLENESS • CONSIDERATE
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MAY WORDSEARCH

This month the Church celebrates the Ascension of Jesus, the sending of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, and the fact that our God is a Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. After the Resurrection, Jesus was seen on the road to Emmaus, by the Sea of Galilee, in houses, etc. He encouraged his disciples, and said that He was sending them to all corners of the earth, as his witnesses. Forty days after Easter, Jesus ascended into heaven; his work on earth was done. The disciples returned to Jerusalem, and on the fateful morning of Pentecost, there was suddenly the sound as of a mighty rushing wind. Tongues of flame flickered on their heads, and they began to praise God in

many tongues – to the astonishment of those who heard them. That morning the Holy Spirit came to indwell all those who believed in Jesus: the Church was born.

And so we have a triune God:
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.



Answers are on page 27

G	E	N	N	T	F	N	E	L	W	E	E	A
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ASCENSION
BLESSED
CONFUSION
DISCIPLES
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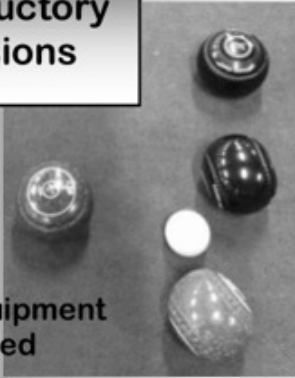
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