

St Martin of Tours

Epsom

St Stephen on the Downs

Langley Vale

The parish of
St Martin of Tours
with St Stephen-on-the-Downs

Weekly Newsletter
Registered Charity Number: 1134149

Sunday 6th June 2021 – First Sunday after Trinity

Dear Friends,

Summer arrived, appropriately, on the first day of the meteorological season. We now have the chance to moan about it being too hot again (unless we have exhausted our energy by moaning how cold it was last month). Moaning and complaining about the weather is an English pastime, but it also serves as an outlet for our deeper unhappiness. Famous for being emotionally reserved, English people are not immune from negative emotions, however stiff our upper lip might be.

St Paul implores us to 'not lose heart' today. Hope is a fundamental ingredient of positive emotion – if moaning is release, hope is true freedom.

Nick Parish

THIS WEEK

Sunday 6th June – First Sunday after Trinity

- 9.30am – Morning Prayer at St Stephen's – led by Howard Bluett
- 10.00am – Holy Communion at St Martin's, in Church and live streamed – led by Nick Parish
- 12.00pm Holy Baptism
- 6.30pm – Evening Prayer in Church and live streamed – led by John Padwick

Thursday 10th June

- 10.00am – Holy Communion, in Church and live streamed – led by Nick Parish

FUTURE SERVICES

Sunday 13th June – St Martin – Patronal Festival

- 9.30am – Holy Communion at St Stephen's – led by Andrew Haviland
- 10.00am – Holy Communion, baptism and admission to communion at St Martin's, in Church and live streamed – led by David Candlin
- 6.30pm – Choral Evensong in Church and live streamed – led by Graeme Lodge

The Patronal Festival is likely to be busy, with a larger than normal congregation expected. Please can you try to get to Church in good time, so that you can complete the track and trace form or use the smart phone app if appropriate, and sanitise your hands before taking your seat in Church. Last week, there was a queue outside the west door just before the service started and we want to avoid that happening again this week.

The Churchwardens

DISCIPLESHIP /STUDY/ WORSHIP MEETINGS STEWARDSHIP

Giving to St Martin's and St Stephen on the Downs

For general and stewardship giving you can give online giving via the Charities Aid Foundation.

Donations can be either a one-off donation or a regular donation using direct debit.

To make a donation either:

1. Click on the following link:

<https://cafdonate.cafonline.org/13377>

OR

2. Use your Smart Phone and Scan the QR Code below



There is also a "Donate" button on our website.

Thank you for your continued giving directly and via online giving.

OTHER NOTICES

Carers' Week June 7th – 13th

This coming week we should spare a thought for all those who give their time and energy round-the-clock to caring for loved ones. As a result of the coronavirus outbreak, more people have taken on caring responsibilities for their relatives and friends who are disabled, ill or older. It can be a challenging, exhausting and isolating experience.

We should also think gratefully of those who support these carers by allowing them a little time weekly to themselves.

St Martin's supports the local charity *My Time For Young Carers*, which provides respite from caring duties for children and teenagers. *Crossroads Care Surrey* is another charity, providing breaks for adult carers. Carers deserve an opportunity to relax, go out with friends, enjoy their hobbies or just chat without having to focus on the person they care for. They also need to be appreciated for the difficulties they are experiencing and respected for all they are doing.

In 2020 alone *Crossroads Care* helped 2,106 unpaid carers in Surrey by regularly lending a hand with care to 1,654 loved ones, so that those who care could recharge both physically and emotionally. But it is estimated there are 119,000 unpaid carers living in Surrey and around 900 currently on the *Crossroads Care Surrey* waiting list. Improving the quality of life of Surrey's unpaid carers is something we should all be ready to support. This week let us hold all unpaid carers in our prayers, and equally all who are caring for the carers.

If you are (or know someone who is) caring for a loved one and would benefit from support, or would like to donate in support of this work, please visit *Crossroads Care Surrey's* website.

Laurence Impey

Historic Safeguarding Incidents

The Diocese of Guildford is holding a serious case review of historic safeguarding incidents regarding any office holders (ministers/ wardens/ staff) at St Martin's.

Should you have any information that you have not previously reported please contact me by email so that I can discuss with you and report as necessary.

Thank you. vicar@stmartinsepsom.org.uk

Garden Party

Now that restrictions are lifting a little the Events Team have managed to hold a couple of outdoor, socially distanced meetings. We are busy planning a few events for the rest of the year, all subject to whatever restrictions are in place at the time.

We would like you all to “Save the Date” – **Saturday 10th July** – for a **Garden Party** to be held at 12 Worple Road, Epsom. Watch this space for more details nearer the time.



Events Team

Remember - Reflect – Restore 13 – 27 June 2021

As part of the fortnight when church will be focusing on offering a space for reflection and restoration, I will be playing the church's beautiful grand piano for half an hour on both Friday 18th and Friday 25th June, at 12.30pm. I'd like to play music that reflects people's experiences and hopes. Please let me know if there is any (easy!) piece you would like me to play, or a picture you would like me to consider through improvisation. These musical times will be streamed/online, so do be aware of that when choosing pictures. If there are plenty of requests I may have to take a selection, but I'll include as many as I can. Best wishes.

Helen Williams

Our fortnight of mission to our community involves activities both in the Church and churchyard, designed to help people reflect on their experiences over the past year. Part of this outreach is having members of the congregation available to welcome people to the church and host their visit. Thanks to all who have already signed up, but there is room for more, so if you are able to give an hour or two then please contact Howard Bluett on 077 888 25319 or via email howard.bluett@gmail.com.

PCC Governor vacancy – Volunteer role.

A vacancy has arisen for a PCC appointed Foundation Governor at St Martin's Church of England Voluntary Aided Schools, Epsom.

Foundation Governors in a Church school play a vital role in ensuring that the Christian character and ethos of the school is promoted and maintained in line with the original Trust Deed of the Church of England school, also known as its 'Foundation'.

Foundation Governors are committed to ensuring the school's Christian ethos. It is hoped to appoint someone with a background in finance who will be able to engage with the school management in offering a supportive challenge in this vital part of the running of the school.

Being a Governor is really worthwhile and rewarding, and if you are interested in this role, please do get in touch with

Nick Parish on vicar@stmartinsepsom.org

Robert Burns on rburns@stmartinsepsom.school

and copy your email to the Clerk to the Governors clerk@stmartinsepsom.school.

Applicants will be asked to complete an application form including a skills audit to support the appointment of the skills and experience needed by the school to support effective governance.

Our Financial Position – what do we all need to do to help?

At our recent Annual Meeting, we reported that we had ended 2020 with an annual deficit of £40,000 in our day to day income compared with day to day expenditure and that we were anticipating a further deficit of about £60K by the end of this year. More detail about these figures was set out in the newsletter last week.

At its last meeting, the PCC agreed that we needed to increase our giving income to realistically match our expenses. For this to work, and for us to be able to raise our income by £60K, we all need to join in and share the load between us.

Our income in an average year is comprised of three main sources:

1. Free will giving by our congregations 39%
2. Investment income 14%
3. Rental Income from Church House, the John Chandler Hall etc: 47%

As hirers slowly begin to return to using Church House, we are hoping to see some rental income in this year, though it is unlikely that we will see full hiring income until 2022 at the earliest. Investment income can go up and down dependent on interest rates and the state of the national and global economy as a whole. So looking at the three principal sources of our income, the only one that we have control over ourselves is our own free will giving, so this is the source of income that we need to increase and we are appealing to everyone to help to achieve this.

In round numbers, we need to increase our giving by £60K a year. There are over 120 people who are committed givers in the stewardship scheme, and if everyone in the stewardship scheme increased their giving by £10 a week, we would in a full year raise $£10 \times 52 \times 120 = £62,400$. This would not only eliminate our deficit, but also rebuild our finances so that we can face the future from a position of strength. (These figures assume that giving on a weekly basis; if you give quarterly or annually, then figures would be £130 per quarter or £520 per year).

The question has been asked as to whether we could cover these deficits from our savings in the bank. In response, our auditors have calculated that we have about £420K in free cash in reserve but that with the current deficits we are running, we will exhaust this sum in about 5 years. So the only long term solution for the Church, is for all of us to increase our giving.

We would urge everyone who does not already do so, to give to the Church by means of a bankers order as this eliminates the handling of money. The Parish Office can process this for you.

You can also give online giving via our account with CAF, the Charities Aid Foundation.

If you are able to increase your giving on a regular basis, it will be a significant help to us. May we also thank you in advance for all your gifts which will help us manage this difficult situation.

If you have any questions about our finances and want to know more, please do not hesitate to contact the wardens.

The Churchwardens

Mission For June

HOME

The Church Mission Society is a non-denominational organisation serving the community with the purpose of reaching out to them with the gospel of Jesus Christ, to teach and train them how to study the Bible .

St Martin's congregation donates to support the work of Andrea Campanale working with CMS based in Kingston, Surrey. ***Meg Topley***

ABROAD

St Martin's Church continues to support Mercy Ships, who use hospital ships to provide free, life-changing medical care to some of the world's poorest people. They have touched more than 2.7 million lives, but there are many more people who need help.

For 40 years, Mercy Ships have relied on volunteers and supporters like St Martin's Church to provide free, life-changing surgeries to people in greatest need. Today Mercy Ships is focused on sub-Saharan Africa, where 93% of the population lacks access to safe, affordable, timely surgery.

Roughly 400 volunteers serve onboard our hospital ship at a time, putting their given talents to use in a variety of ways. In addition to our valiant medical staff, the volunteers serve in all sorts of roles needed to operate a floating city, such as:

- Cooks
- Engineers
- Hairdressers
- Clerks
- Carpenters

They are all unified by their desire to serve people in desperate need. They are critical to the Mercy Ships operation.

Further details will be put on our notice board at the back of St Martin's Church.

Thank you for your continuing support.

Peter and Julia White

Can you please hold these Mission areas in your Prayers – Thank you

CONTACT US

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KT17 4PX Phone: 01372 722567

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Email: vicar@stmartinsepsom.org

The Revd David Candlin – Curate - 07723 849 477

Email: revcandlin@gmail.com



EPSOM WALK/TREASURE HUNT

How well do you know your town?

Enjoy a gentle stroll around Epsom (about 45 minutes),
looking out for things along the way

Thursday 24 June-Wednesday 7 July 2021

£5 per teams of 2 or more

Email secretary@epsomrnli.org.uk for more details and
a copy of the questions

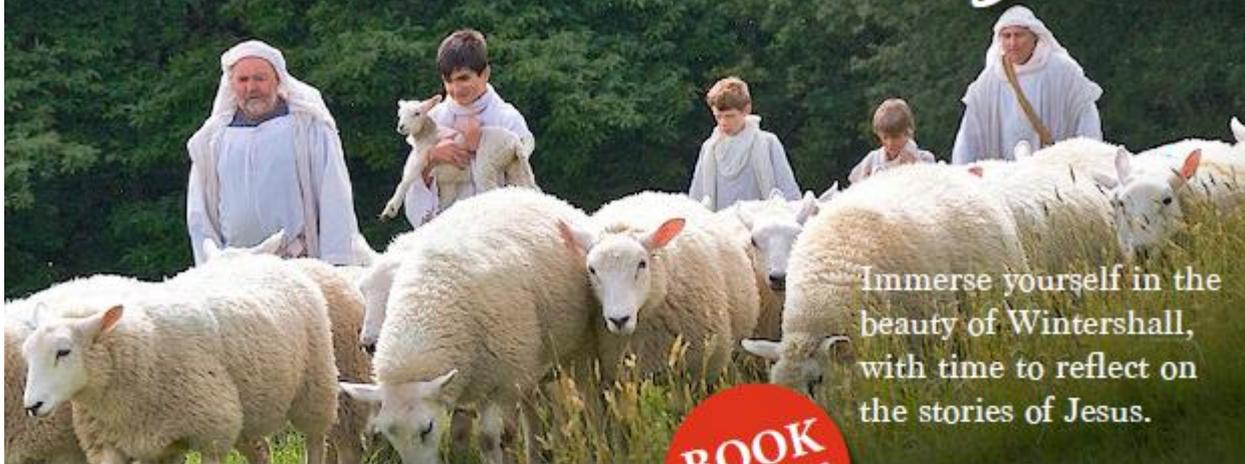
Prize for first correct answer drawn from a hat

After a year when we've been unable to do collections,
the RNLI needs your support and donations

The RNLI is the charity that saves lives at sea
The Royal National Lifeboat Institution, a charity registered in England and Wales (209603),
of West Quay Road, Poole, Dorset, BH15 1HZ

**WINTERSHALL**
Experience the story

WALKING THE *Parables of Jesus*



Immerse yourself in the beauty of Wintershall, with time to reflect on the stories of Jesus.

BOOK NOW!

Our powerful biblical outdoor drama takes you back in time to just after Jesus' death recreating his life changing teachings.

Walk from scene to scene through the beautiful grounds of the Wintershall estate with its lakes and ancient woodland, witnessing the re-enactment of the remarkable and unforgettable Parables of Jesus.

2 July 2021

10.00am - 2:30pm

3 July 2021

10.00am - 12:30pm

or 2.00pm - 4:30pm

each session on 3 July is followed by a 'bring your own' picnic in the grounds

Adult: £20

Student (19-25): £12

Child (3-18 yrs): £10

Family (2 adults and 2 children): £50

Due to the nature of this walking event, this is not suitable for audience members with limited mobility.

www.wintershall.org.uk



Wintershall CIO, Charity Number 1167111



BOOK NOW on our website for 3 July and to book 2 July please email admin@wintershall.org.uk or call 01483 892167

Latest message from Chris Shortt at Food Bank

We are so grateful to all of our wonderful supporters, every donation really does make a difference!

Thank you to those who arrange supermarket deliveries to us. This is a fantastic way for people to make a direct donation. If you want to arrange a delivery to us, please pick a morning slot with your chosen supermarket and drop us a message letting us know when to expect it.

You may prefer to make a small donation by text, details are at the bottom of this email.

A huge thanks, as always, for your continued support.

Wishlist:

This week we need help with:

Dog Food (urgent)
Hot Chocolate
Pulses
Biscuits
Tinned Meat
Tea (bags)
Tinned Tomatoes
Tinned Vegetables
Spaghetti in sauce
Pump Soap
Washing Up Liquid
Shampoo
Kids Toothbrushes
Female Deodorant
Male Deodorant

You can donate at the usual supermarket points, or bring donations to our car park (please wear a mask);

Epsom & Ewell Foodbank
Generation Resource Centre
(Behind West Ewell Primary School)
Ruxley Lane
Ewell
KT19 0JG

Normal donation drop off times: Monday to Friday 9am – 2pm. We are closed on Bank Holidays.

* Please make sure all donations are sealed, in date and do not contain alcohol*

Can't get to the shops? You could text to make a small donation, send us a supermarket delivery to the address above, or contact us about sponsoring some fruit & veg!

You can help by texting 70450 to donate:

Text **FOODBANKGIFT2** to donate £2
Text **FOODBANKGIFT3** to donate £3
Text **FOODBANKGIFT5** to donate £5
Text **FOODBANKGIFT10** to donate £10

Text **FOODBANKGIFT15** to donate £15
Text **FOODBANKGIFT20** to donate £20

Kind regards

Chris Shortt

COLLECT

O God,
the strength of all those who put their
trust in you,
mercifully accept our prayers
and, because through the weakness of
our mortal nature
we can do no good thing without you,
grant us the help of your grace,
that in the keeping of your
commandments
we may please you both in will and
deed;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

FIRST READING Genesis 3:8-15

A reading from the book of Genesis.

The man and the woman heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. But the LORD God called to the man, and said to him, "Where are you?" He said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself." He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit from the tree, and I ate." Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent tricked me, and I ate." The LORD God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you among all animals and among all wild creatures; upon your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will strike your head, and you will strike his heel."

PSALM Psalm 130

*R With the Lord there is mercy
and plenteous redemption.*

Out of the depths have I called to you,
O Lord;
Lord, hear my voice;
let your ears consider well the voice of
my supplication.

If you, Lord, were to note what is done
amiss,

O Lord, who could stand?
For there is forgiveness with you;
therefore you shall be feared. **R**

I wait for the Lord; my soul waits for
him;
in his word is my hope.
My soul waits for the Lord,
more than the night-watch for the
morning,
more than the night-watch for the
morning. **R**

O Israel, wait for the Lord,
for with the Lord there is mercy;
With him there is plenteous
redemption,
and he shall redeem Israel from all
their sins. **R**

SECOND READING

2 Corinthians 4:13 – 5:1

*A reading from the second letter of
Paul to the Corinthians.*

Just as we have the same spirit of faith that is in accordance with scripture – "I believed, and so I spoke" – we also believe, and so we speak, because we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus, and will bring us with you into his presence. Yes, everything is for your sake, so that grace, as it extends to more and more people, may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God. So we do not lose heart. Even though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day. For this slight momentary affliction is preparing us for an eternal weight of glory beyond all measure, because we look not at what can be seen but at what cannot be seen; for what can be seen is temporary, but what cannot be seen is eternal. For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

GOSPEL Mark 3:20-end

*Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus
Christ according to Mark.*

The crowd came together again, so that Jesus and his companions could not even eat. When his family heard it, they went out to restrain him, for

people were saying, "He has gone out of his mind." And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem said, "He has Beelzebul, and by the ruler of the demons he casts out demons." And he called them to him, and spoke to them in parables, "How can Satan cast out Satan? If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. And if Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but his end has come. But no one can enter a strong man's house and plunder his property without first tying up the strong man; then indeed the house can be plundered. Truly I tell you, people will be forgiven for their sins and whatever blasphemies they utter; but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit can never have forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin" – for they had said, "He has an unclean spirit." Then his mother and his brothers came; and standing outside, they sent to him and called him. A crowd was sitting around him; and they said to him, "Your mother and your brothers and sisters are outside, asking for you." And he replied, "Who are my mother and my brothers?" And looking at those who sat around him, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers! Whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother."

POST COMMUNION

Eternal Father,
we thank you for nourishing us
with these heavenly gifts:
may our communion strengthen us in
faith,
build us up in hope,
and make us grow in love;
for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Sunday Homily

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

6 JUNE 2021

YEAR B

“He has Beelzebul, and by the ruler of the demons he casts out demons.”

Mark 3:22

Illustration

During a war, a plane transporting a group of boys out of danger crashes on an isolated island. With no adult survivors, the boys have to fend for themselves. Initially, they pull together and are resourceful, cooperative and democratic. They elect one of their number as their leader, and agree that their priorities are to have fun and attract attention. They light a fire using a pair of glasses, and take turns to keep it going. They then set about building shelters, finding water and gathering food. For a while it appears idyllic. But before long differences emerge, and a rival group – the “hunters” – is formed, led by the choirboy Jack. Fear and superstition soon start to take a grip on the boys, and some of the “littluns” become afraid of a “beast” that they imagine is lurking on the island. When they find what they suppose to be the beast, their terror intensifies, and any semblance of order quickly deteriorates, with shocking results.

At the heart of William Golding’s novel *Lord of the Flies* is the premise that, if you scratch beneath the surface of man-made culture, it’s not long before “civilisation” breaks down, and people regress to a primitive state of savagery.

Gospel Teaching

Today’s Gospel reading comes early in Jesus’ ministry, and it’s worth setting it in context. So far in Mark’s Gospel Jesus has been in a whirlwind of preaching and miracles. He has driven out unclean spirits, “convulsing and crying”. He’s cured Simon’s mother-in-law, cleansed a leper, healed a paralysed man and a man with a withered hand. And his magnetism and charisma are as astonishing as his miracles. Huge crowds have been gathering around him and, at his command, people are leaving everything to follow him, including the fishermen Simon and Andrew, and the tax collector Levi.

There’s a palpable sense of excitement, bewilderment and fear in the first three chapters of Mark. For some people it’s an opportunity to seek healing, while for others, particularly the Jewish “establishment”, it’s very alarming. Jesus has started to meet the authorities head-on, challenging their entrenched ideas

about the sabbath. By the time we catch up with him in today's reading, the beleaguered scribes have started a whispering campaign, saying: "He has Beelzebul." Beelzebul, by the way, means "Lord of the Flies".

Application

Often when we read the Gospels, we characterise the authorities' attitude towards Jesus as a simple power struggle. And it's true that, through heavy-handed application of the laws and petty bureaucracy, the scribes and Pharisees carved for themselves a cosy little niche, which brought them a sense of moral superiority and financial benefits.

But there's much more to it, because Jesus represents a threat on many levels. He is becoming dangerously associated with the underclass, with madness – and with convulsing, crying demons. It's terrifying stuff. And if we'd been there in the crowd, no doubt we'd have felt it too. It's that strange combination of attraction and terror that compels us to stare at a car accident, or gawp at the sight of a celebrity in "meltdown". Because Jesus is, in fact, consorting with chaos, and scratching the surface of anarchy that lies beneath civilisation. And there's something at once irresistible – and very, very frightening – about it.

So not only are the scribes afraid of having the power balance disrupted; they're also downright terrified of the turmoil that Jesus is unleashing. You can bet some of them had nightmares. And they do what many of us do – they batten down the hatches and go into defensive mode. So desperate are they to hang on to this "civilisation" which they've created around them, that their response is to become even more controlling and authoritarian.

In William Golding's novel, the "beast" turns out to be the corpse of an airman – in other words, something human. And nowadays we tend to interpret demons in the Bible as inner demons – the dark side of human nature. Because when we're up against it, we all have within us the capacity for chaos.

It's telling that, in *Lord of the Flies*, it's the formerly angelic chorister, Jack, who descends furthest into savagery – perhaps because he, like the Jewish authorities, has furthest to fall. That's not to say that we should become anarchists, but that we do well to acknowledge our own capacity for chaos. So spare a thought for the tight-lipped authorities, battling with terror in the face of demons – both external, and internal.

MONDAY

7 JUNE

2 Corinthians 1:1-7

Psalm 34:1-8

Matthew 5:1-12

TUESDAY

8 JUNE

2 Corinthians 1:18-22

Psalm 119:129-136

Matthew 5:13-16

WEDNESDAY

9 JUNE

2 Corinthians 3:4-11

Psalm 78:1-4

Matthew 5:17-19

THURSDAY

10 JUNE

2 Corinthians 3:15 –

4:1. 3-6

Psalm 78:36-40

Matthew 5:20-26

FRIDAY

11 JUNE

Barnabas

the Apostle

Job 29:11-16

or Acts 11:19-end

Psalm 112

Acts 11:19-end

or Galatians 2:1-10

John 15:12-17

SATURDAY

12 JUNE

2 Corinthians 5:14-

end

Psalm 103:1-12

Matthew 5:33-37

REFLECTION

Romantic break-ups are often heralded by the words, "It's not you, it's me." Cliché or not, a loving relationship does depend on both parties giving their all. This week's readings suggest how this applies to our relationship with the God of love.



As we celebrate on Friday how Barnabas and Saul/Paul were chosen to minister to the Gentiles, Jesus stresses that even if we don't immediately choose him, he chooses us. Hinting at his forthcoming sacrifice, laying down his life for his friends, Jesus asks them, and us, to love one another, perhaps by behaving as he teaches on Thursday.

On Tuesday he tells us to let our light shine, so people can see God through us, our behaviour, our attitudes. We call Jesus the light of the world, yet Jesus tells us that we are! Psalms this week urge us to bless the Lord, yet on Monday Jesus tells us about human beings who are the blessed ones.

Each reciprocal theme of choice, blessing or light reinforces the amazing message that God needs our commitment to make the relationship work.

"It's you and it's me." Are we ready to give our all?

PRAYER

God of love, in your Son you gave your all for us,
in his life of service and his sacrifice on the cross.
Help us to give ourselves, our love, our lives,
in the service of others,
and find that this deepens our own relationship with you.

PART VI – WHEN WORDS FAIL

Andrew Lyon concludes his series about church music.

The Franciscan priest Richard Rohr prefers the drum over the organ as a “religious” instrument, and has used drumming in retreats. In many cultures throughout history, people have drummed together and through a repetitive, rhythmic action have found a deeper level of spiritual awareness and connection.

Instruments play an important part, not only in accompanying our singing, but also in providing liturgical music of their own. The most obvious example is the music at the end of the service accompanying the departure of the priests and people. But there are other occasions, such as the Gospel procession or the Offertory, where a musical interlude of sorts seems appropriate.

But music should never be thought of as mere filler, rather as an accompaniment for the liturgical movement. There is a certain amount of “theatre” in the way that we move liturgically and the appropriate music, in the right mood or style, can combine with the liturgical action to produce something truly numinous.

Like the music itself, no particular instrument is inherently good or bad and used sensitively all are worthy of incorporation. Instrumental music on its own can be an act of worship in and of itself. Within the liturgy this shouldn't be a performance or glorify the musician any more than a choir should attract attention to the singers. But listening to a well-chosen piece can provide an opportunity to reflect more deeply on the message of the scripture readings, for example, or the sermon.

Silence is another tool at the liturgical musician's disposal. The moment before the Post-Communion Prayer is a case in point. For it is in these moments of quiet reflection, such as during the breaking of the bread, where a little space can enable us to appreciate that we are coming face to face with the Lord. A musician's skill lies not only in choosing the hymns, but also in crafting the musicality of the whole liturgical experience. It is just one more way in which “good” church music is able to deepen our worship and enrich our faith.

LIVE the WORD

SUSTAINING YOU
THROUGH THE WEEK

Edited by
Caroline Hodgson
and
Heather Smith



First week after Trinity

Monday 7 June to
Saturday 12 June
2021

WEEK

Who's in charge?

Gillian Cooper *reflects on* 1 Samuel 8:4-20

God's people want a king. The land is in chaos, as tribes join together under a charismatic leader, and then separate again. The people look at the stability of the nations around them, and want it for themselves. So they go to the prophet Samuel and ask him for a king.

There are things they have not noticed, however. They have not noticed how kings set limits on people's lives, or how they demand taxes from their subjects, or how they take the young men to fight their wars. And there is another, much more important, problem with their request. They have forgotten that they already have a king. He is the Lord their God, who rescued them from slavery, gave

them a land, and appointed judges and prophets to guide them. "They have rejected me from being king over them," God says to Samuel. On God's behalf Samuel points all this out to the people. But the people are adamant, and they get their king.

All this may seem very distant from us. However, this story reflects an ongoing dilemma for communities of people of faith. Do we choose settled structures, with hierarchies of carefully chosen leaders, with buildings and rules, or do we go the way of the Israelites in the wilderness, following a charismatic leader, listening for the voice of God? Both have their merits, and both their dangers. We shall see in the coming weeks how well Israel's choice turns out. ☺

Guide us, Lord, when we make choices about how we live and worship together. Help us to build communities of faith, in which we can love and respect one another, always acknowledging you as our king and our God. Amen.

Fruits of the Spirit

– a meditation on Galatians 5:22-23

The goodness of the fig

by Caroline Hodgson

In Deuteronomy 8:8 the Land of Plenty is mouthwateringly described as: "a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive trees and honey". In 1 Kings 4:25 we are told that "Judah and Israel lived in safety... all of them under their vines and fig trees", to denote peace and prosperity. By contrast, in Matthew 21:18-22 we read about

an unproductive fig tree which withers under Jesus' reproach.

If we don't receive spiritual nourishment our souls, like the unfruitful fig tree, will be unproductive. A good start is to plant ourselves firmly in our church community. As the writer Frank Cottrell Boyce says: "Every parish has the potential to be a neighbourhood utopia." Being part of any community can be fraught with difficulties, but if we grow in a spirit of prayerful cooperation, we make the ground a bit richer, a more fertile place for the word of God to flourish and produce fruit. ☺



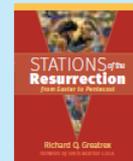
The history of the Eucharist

Part I, biblical times

by Richard Greatrex

When Jesus celebrated the Last Supper on Maundy Thursday, the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark and Luke) tell us it was the annual Passover meal. John's Gospel has a different symbolic focus, suggesting that Jesus' death occurs on the day the Passover lambs were sacrificed, placing this communal meal a day earlier. Either way, Passover provides a key context for the Eucharist. While both are meals

centred upon a redemptive experience, when God saves a community, they are much more than mere remembrance. Transcending re-enactment of an historical moment they, in some indefinable, mystical way, become the event itself. Time and space are broken open: we are in the Hebrew people's Egyptian homes, dressed ready for exodus, Jesus blesses and shares his last meal with us. God's saving action is ongoing, effective in the past, present and future. ☺



Richard Greatrex is a parish priest, freelance writer and author of Stations of the Resurrection

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“Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord my whole life long.”

Psalm 23:6



Sunday 6 June 2021
 Mark 14:12-16. 22-26
 The Most Holy Body and
 Blood of Christ (Corpus Christi)

My name is _____

IN THE GOSPEL TODAY

Jesus sends two of his friends to find a place where he knows they can have a meal together, to celebrate the Passover. The friends go there and get everything ready for the meal, which they will have with Jesus and his special friends. During the meal, Jesus blesses the food and then takes the bread and wine and shares it with everyone.

A SHARING MEAL

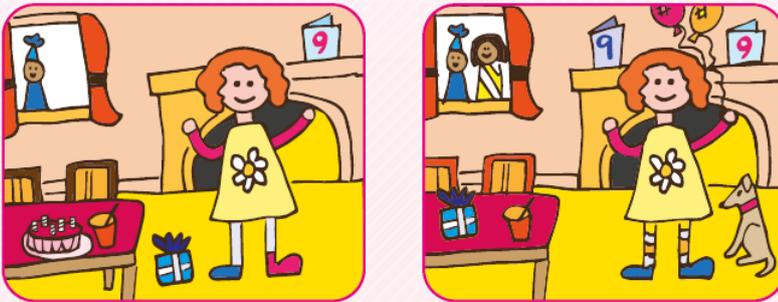
See the special meal Jesus and his friends shared together by joining the dots.

Use the words around the picture to finish the sentence.

J _ _ b _ _ the b _ _ and
 w _ _ , then s _ _ _ them with e _ _ _ .

Getting ready for a special meal

Eva is getting ready for her birthday party and is looking forward to her friends coming to share it with her.



Can you spot **ten** differences in the pictures?

Sharing with others

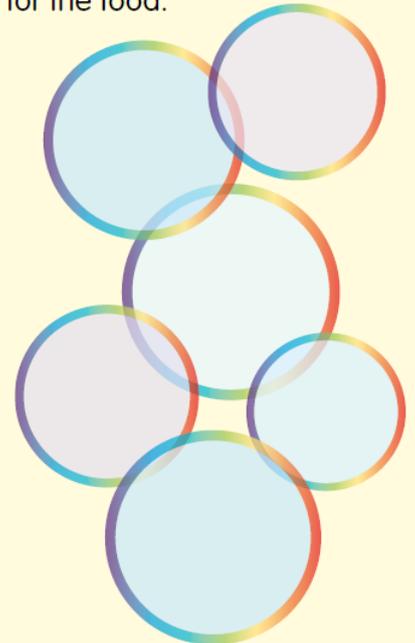
Harry has been busy! He has a pile of clothes that are too small for him, some tins of food and some empty plastic bottles.



Follow the paths to see where he takes them.

Thank you God

Jesus thanked God for the food.



Write, or draw, some of the things you can say "thank you" for in the bubbles.

A PRAYER TO SAY

Jesus, you showed us how to share what we have with others. Please help me to share too. Amen.