

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 19th September 2021 – Creation 3

Dear Friends,

This week's theme is 'need, not greed.' The readings juxtapose God's generosity with humanities' greed. If you ever watch one of those TV shows where 'experts' de-clutter someone's home, they usually challenge that person to be honest about what they actually need/ use, and what is just clutter. So much is purchased and never used. The commentary on today's readings says 'greed leads to hoarding and thus exploitation of one another.'

Nick Parish

THIS WEEK

Sunday 19th September – Creation 3

- 9.30am – Morning Prayer at St Stephen's – led by Howard Bluett
- 10.00am – Holy Communion with the Baptism of Imogen at St Martin's, in Church and live streamed – led by Andrew Haviland
- 6.30pm – Choral Evensong – (in Church and live streamed) led by Graeme Lodge

Monday 20th September

7.30pm Bible Study: Song of Songs 7

Wednesday 22nd September

10.00am – Holy Communion in the Lady Chapel– led by Andris Abakuks

Saturday 25th September

9am-12 noon EPSOM ECO FAIR In conjunction with **SUSTAINABLE
EPSOM&EWELL**
Our Eco Fair is a great opportunity to discover a wide range of local (and not so local) green groups, businesses and campaigns. Pop in at any time during the morning. The Eco Fair will provide:

INFORMATION: practical ideas about what we can do individually and as a community around climate change issues. For those who don't know where or how to start the stalls will provide an opportunity to chat to others and explore the opportunities

LINKS: there are amazing things happening, so it is good to meet like-minded people for mutual support

RESOURCES: a forum for climate-focused action groups

FUTURE SERVICES

Sunday 26th September – Creation 4 – Harvest Festival

9.30am – Holy Communion at St Stephen's – led by Andris Abakuks

10.00am – Service of the Word with the Baptism of Skye at St Martin's, in Church and live streamed – led by Nick Parish

Whilst our organ console is being renewed, music will be led a range of musicians – including members of our worship band - under the direction of Richard Dacey.

6.30pm – Evening Prayer – (in Church and live streamed) led by Ruth Foxcroft

Harvest Giving, Sunday 26th September

As usual, donations in goods and cash in thanksgiving for harvest will be most welcome.

If you are able, please bring food and toiletries preferably from the list from the Epsom and Ewell Food Bank further on in this newsletter, to the service on Harvest Sunday, for transfer to the Food Bank.

This year we would like to make a financial contribution to the charity Kids For Kids, sustaining life in Darfur.

Donations can be made by one of the following methods:

1. In Church by debit or credit card using the donation station and selecting "Giving at our Harvest Service"
2. Online by clicking the following link to our Harvest CAF Giving Campaign: <https://cafdonate.cafonline.org/17966> or scan this QR Code
3. If you are unable to donate via the above 2 methods you can drop in a cheque made payable to 'The PCC of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Epsom' and clearly label the envelope "Kids for Kids"



Thank you all in advance for your annual harvest gifts.

Laurence Impey

THE LIVESTREAM ON SUNDAY 12th at 10am

Many apologies for the technical error that led to some microphones not being linked to the youtube broadcast. The text of John's sermon is attached to this week's email.

DISCIPLESHIP /STUDY/ WORSHIP MEETINGS

Pilgrim

A Pilgrim group will be meeting on Monday evenings from 7.30pm starting on October 4th. This group is for those who want a chance to think about the Christian faith, including those who are curious, those whose journey is just starting, and those who want to revisit the roots of their faith once again. You can find out more about Pilgrim by watching this video <https://youtu.be/cNCxhrMiPt0> or at this website <http://www.pilgrimcourse.org/>.

The initial commitment to the course is for six sessions (up to and including November 8th). Its theme will be "Turning to Christ" and will explore the questions posed at Baptism. Each session will last about 90 minutes.

The Pilgrim group will be led by Graeme Lodge and if you want to know anything further you can contact him on 01372 741746, or graemelodge@hotmail.co.uk, or speak to him after church.

Please pass this on to anyone you know who may be interested.

Wednesday morning study group

This has resumed, after the 10am service, led by Howard Bluett.

Morning Prayer and Pastoral Support

Every Tuesday, Morning Prayer is held at 9.00am lasting between 20 and 30 minutes. From 9.30 am I shall be available in the church until 12.00 noon. If anyone wishes to talk to me about their worries or anything on their mind, please feel free to come for a chat which will of course be in total confidence. When I am not available for any reason another member of the Pastoral or Ministry Team will be there in my place.

Mary Gilbert, Pastoral Team

Churches Together in Epsom Monthly prayer meetings:

Following a well-attended and enjoyable social gathering, 'in person', by CTiE reps, at the Old Moat Café, we decided to alternately locate the monthly prayer meetings to 'Zoom online' or 'in person', for a trial period. We were able to pray at the end of our social gathering at the Old Moat Café and received a positive response. The Old Moat Café has a covered outdoor area which should prove a Covid-safe environment. The gatherings will start at 9.15 on zoom and at 10 am for the 'in person' meetings.

Dates of our monthly prayer meetings for Autumn 2021 are:

- Friday October 8th: 10-11am at Old Moat Café
- Friday November 12th: 9.15-9.45am on Zoom
- Friday December 10th: 10-11am at Old Moat Café



Old Moat Garden Centre Café is in Horton Lane, Epsom

[Find Us — The Old Moat Garden Centre & Cafe](#)

Thank you for your kind words and generous gifts

Heartfelt thanks from us both for all your kind messages of support as we move to Bloxwich. Thank you also for your generous farewell gifts, which will come in so very useful as we kit out our new home. We are moving on Friday 1st October and my installation by the Bishop of Lichfield will take place at 5pm on Saturday 9th October. Everyone is very welcome to attend and I think there is already a small contingent of intrepid travellers planning to make the journey from Epsom! Refreshments will be available when you arrive and afterwards - please let me know if you plan to come.

David and Nancy Candlin

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.



Cheques to St Martin's

If give a cheque donation to St Martin's Church, please can it payable to:
'The PCC of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Epsom'

Donation Station

If you wish to give via contactless payment, please us the donation station in Church. You can give a pre-set amount or choose one. You can also gift aid your donation.

Creationtide at St. Martin of Tours, Epsom

A programme of events in church to celebrate God as the Creator and Sustainer of life and to explore the challenges facing the natural world.
All are welcome to these events.

Sunday 19th September

10am Holy Communion: Need, not greed.

Guest speaker Katie Williams, UK Youth Climate Coalition

Sunday 19th September

3pm Keynote Debate: Question Time on the environment with a panel of local politicians

Monday 20th September

7.30pm Bible Study: Song of Songs 7

Saturday 25th September

9am-12 noon EPSOM ECO FAIR In conjunction with

SUSTAINABLE
EPSOM&EWELL

Sunday 26th September

10am Harvest Festival with Holy Communion: Water of life.

Guest speaker Alison Moulden, Diocesan Environmental Adviser

Monday 27th September

6.30pm Speak up for the Planet.

A public speaking competition giving young people a voice on the environment

Sunday 3rd October

10am Holy Communion: Saint Francis of Assisi.

Guest speaker Rachel Hill, Eco-lead at Saint Martin's School

If you have any questions about these events please contact Helen Williams (helen@canossa.co.uk) or Graeme Lodge (graemelodge@hotmail.co.uk)

Volunteers for Eco Fair

Dear congregation, the Eco Fair is almost upon us (Saturday 25th September, 9am - 12 noon) and I'm hoping some of you may be able to volunteer for a few things:

Light Work - helping on the St Martin's stall - welcoming people to church, talking to them, taking any donations for produce. Using the clicker to count the number of people attending the fair.

Hard Work - helping move about 16 tables from Church House to church on Friday 24th in the morning; helping move the nave chairs to the sides of the building/into Northey area/between the choir stalls between 5pm and 7pm on Friday 24th. Moving it all back after 12 noon, once the fair is over. 5 -10 people would be a good number for helping with the chairs.

In addition, please bring along plants (see Jean Wright for more details), any pots/jars of preserves you can spare from the Christmas Fair. Homemade biscuits or individual cakes (labelled with ingredients) would be welcome for the refreshment area (donations rather than selling), as we are serving drinks.

THANK YOU in advance!

Helen Williams

Radio Interview on the Eco Fair

Helen Williams was asked to do a radio interview about the Eco Fair. Here is the link if you would like to hear it: <https://ucb.lightcast.com/player/31342/400462>

OTHER NOTICES

The Memorial Garden

This much appreciated space is beginning to get a little cluttered with memorial items. We understand people wish to put these items near the place where their loved one's ashes have been interred, but after an appropriate period of time, if they are not removed we will place them at the foot of the Church wall. Thank you. ***Nick Parish***

Volunteering at St Stephen's

As our churches come out of the pandemic and get back to normal, there are two jobs at St. Stephen's that we need to find volunteers for:

- Gardening: We need a gardener to maintain the gardens of the church in a clean and tidy state. This should take no more than about 1 hour a fortnight or so.
- Cleaning: We need a volunteer to clean the church once a week after Sunday service. This is mainly vacuuming the carpets and should take not more than about 30 minutes or so each week

If you are able to carry out one or other of these jobs, please let the office know.

John and David - Churchwardens

Volunteering at St Martin's

As we go through the autumn we need to find a volunteer to help keep the terrace outside the west door of the Church in a tidy state. The job entails sweeping up the leaves on a regular basis and disposing of them. This job is confined to the terrace and steps leading down to the car park only.

If you are able to help us with this, please contact the office in the first instance.

John and David - Churchwardens

Chris Hyde

Chris and Sue thank you for all your good wishes after Chris' small stroke. He is making steady improvement. Your continued prayers are much appreciated.

Afghan Emergency

Thousands of refugees from Afghanistan will need to be housed and integrated into our national life over the next few years. Talks are taking place with councils up and down the country seeking commitments of accommodation and support. The Epsom and Ewell Refugee Network (ERN) is in talks with our Borough Council to try and help them be part of this scheme. If you would like to encourage them to take part, please write to your local Councillor.

ERN are urgently looking for local landlords who will rent properties to refugee families under the Afghan Resettlement Scheme. Please encourage any landlords you know to get in touch, even if their property is not currently vacant. Jo Sherring of ERN, who rents two properties to refugees, can explain how it works, to the good of all.

If you know anyone who speaks an Afghan language, please encourage him/her to contact ERN.

Please look out any clothes, shoes, phones or other essentials that you might like to donate to Care4Calais, who are collecting in anticipation of a huge influx from Afghanistan. If you bring them to church or to the Parish Office, I will see that they reach the distribution hub in Ashford. Thank you.

Laurence Impey

MISSION FOR THE MONTH HOME

St Martin's supports by annual donations many local and national charities and agencies covering a wide range of needs, both practical and spiritual.

Local include: Epsom and Ewell Refugee Network, The Food Bank, PHAB, Street Pastors, Sunnybank Trust, Love Me Love my Mind.

National include: Through the Roof, Mission to Seafarers, Church Army, Children's Society, CMS England, Cross Rhythms (Christian Radio Station). Also included Harvest and Christmas donations and collections Please hold all these in your prayers.

Jill Chapman

ABROAD

Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF)

MAF is a Christian organisation that provides aviation, communications and learning technology to more than 1,000 Christian and humanitarian agencies as well as thousands of isolated missionaries and indigenous villagers in the world's most remote areas. There are three major operational centers one of which is situated in Ashford, United Kingdom. These centers provide operational support to programs in the Americas, Africa and the Asia Pacific regions.

Meg Topley

EVENTS AND MUSIC

**** **SAVE THE DATE** ****



St Martin's Christmas Fair will be held on **Saturday 27th November 2021** between 11.00 am and 3.00 pm. Please put this date in your diaries so that you can come and support us. The Christmas Fair is always very successful with lots of goodies to buy, food to eat and friends to meet. Watch out for more information in due course.

Thank you

Events Team



Beetle Drive – Saturday 16th October 2021



You are all invited to a **Beetle Drive** on **Saturday 16th October 2021** between 5.00pm – 7.00pm in Church House. We will be supplying tea/coffee and cake and all you need to play “Beetle” as well as little prizes for completed beetles! You need to provide a die and a pencil (we will have few spares if required). We will be seeking donations for this event with proceeds raised going to the church. If you would like to attend this event please sign up on the sheet provided in Church, before close of play on *Sunday 10th October*. If you are unable to do this, please contact Mary Holloway-Neville at mary.hollowayneville@sky.com or on 01372 723453 to let us know that you would like to attend. We will continue to follow the relevant COVID guidelines and be socially distanced although we cannot speak for the beetles! We hope that you will come, meet with friends, enjoy a slice of homemade cake and have a fun filled afternoon.

Events Team

Music Recitals

Payment for the admission for attending a recital as part of Music @ St Martin’s can be made by either :

1. Using the Donation Station in Church and select “Giving at a Recital at St Martin’s”
 2. Put the following link into your web browser:
<https://cafdonate.cafonline.org/14629>
- OR
3. Use your Smart Phone and Scan the QR Code



MUSIC@ST MARTIN'S

AUTUMN RECITALS RETURN 2021



Sat 18 Sep 4.30pm
TWILIGHT ENSEMBLE
music by Rameau,
Vaughan Williams,
Rutter and Schumann

Sat 23 Oct 4.30pm
TAILLEFERRE ENSEMBLE
music by Brandon,
Burton, Stolzel,
Samuel and Dring



Sat 20 Nov 4.30pm
OXBRIDGE ORGAN DUO
music by Briggs, Tomkins,
Wesley and Stravinsky



www.stmartinsepsom.org

ST MARTIN'S CHURCH, EPSOM KT17 4PX

Registered Charity No 1134149

Admission £10 Children £5



SING WITH ST MARTIN'S CHOIR, EPSOM

St Martin's Choir, Epsom provides music for Sunday services throughout the year. Our wide repertoire from the great Anglican tradition includes music by Byrd, Handel, Brahms, Mozart, Wesley, Stanford and Howells as well as newly composed works. We welcome new members of all ages who like to sing heavenly music and share in the following:

- Complete the RSCM Voice for Life Programme
- Sing regularly in regional cathedrals
- Perform in concerts and make recordings
- Enjoy our social events

Contact Richard Dacey, Director of Music

Tel: 01372 722567

www.stmartinsepsom.org

Latest message from Food Bank

Wishlist: This week we need help with:

Urgent:

- Long life sponge puddings
- Meat pies
- Sugar (500g bags)
- Tinned vegetables
- Rice
- Tomato ketchup
- Mayonnaise
- Washing powder & pods (bio & non-bio)
- Peanut butter
- Jam
- Rice pudding
- Shaving foam
- Baby wash
- Washing up liquid
- Shampoo

Bags for Life - we urgently need these

Please, no more donations of the following items at this time:

- pasta,
- baked beans,
- porridge,
- baby shampoo,
- tampons & sanitary towels,
- marmalade,
- cat/dog food,
- adult toothbrushes

You can donate at the usual supermarket points, or bring donations to our car park Epsom & Ewell Foodbank, Generation Resource Centre, (Behind West Ewell Primary School), Ruxley Lane, Ewell, KT19 0JG

Donation Drop Off Times: Monday to Friday 9am – 2pm

To give:

You can help by texting 70450 to donate:

Text **FOODBANKGIFT5** to donate £5

Text **FOODBANKGIFT15** to donate £15

Text **FOODBANKGIFT10** to donate £10

Text **FOODBANKGIFT20** to donate £20

Epsom & Ewell
foodbank
HELPING LOCAL
PEOPLE IN CRISIS



**A free course to
help you manage
your money better
and learn to budget,
save and spend well.**



budget. save. spend.

Tuesdays // 7th, 14th, 21st, 28th Sept // 7:30pm
Signup at www.epsomvineyard.org/cap

PEER

SUPPORT GROUP IS BACK FROM 15 OCTOBER

This ongoing group is non-judgemental, an environment where we are learning from others and supporting others. The sessions will help you to improve your emotional health, wellbeing and resilience.



Start Date: Fridays
Duration: Weekly
Times: 11am-2pm
Venue: Brickfield Centre, Portland Place, Epsom, KT17 1DL

MFT supports adults in Surrey to improve and maintain their mental wellbeing through one-to-one support, courses, groups and activities.

MEDITATION WITH SOUND HEALING

Our 4-week course will help you to learn tools to reduce your stress, worry and anxiety. It will be delivered by Litsa, a qualified yoga and meditation teacher.



From Friday 29 October 2021
12pm to 1.30pm
at the Brickfield Centre, Portland Place, KT17 1DL, Epsom

MFT supports adults in Surrey to improve and maintain their mental wellbeing through one-to-one support, courses, groups and activities.

To book your place, you will need to register with MFT first and then contact: 01372 375400, text 07929 024722, email info@maryfrancetrust.org.uk or visit www.maryfrancetrust.org.uk



Registered Charity 1055113

To book your place, you need to register with MFT first and then a Zoom Link will be given to you: 01372 375400, text 07929 024722, email info@maryfrancetrust.org.uk or visit www.maryfrancetrust.org.uk



Registered Charity 1055113

WOMEN'S CRAFT AND SEWING GROUP IS STARTING AGAIN

This term time group will help you to discover how to achieve greater confidence, a more balanced life and improved emotional health, wellbeing and resilience.

There will be guidelines in place to keep people 'as safe as possible' from covid. Wearing a mask will be optional. Sessions will be a small group of 8 people until December 2021. To attend you will need to book a place Mondays each week by texting Parvin on 07380857701. To allow the maximum numbers of attendees, places will be given on a rotation basis to allow everyone the opportunity to benefit from this group.



Start Date: Wednesday 20 October 2021
Duration: Term Time
Times: 10.30am -12pm
Venue: Creche room, King Church, Longmead Rd, Epsom KT19 9BU

MFT supports adults in Surrey to improve and maintain their mental wellbeing through one-to-one support, courses, groups and activities.

To book your place, you need to register with MFT first and then contact: 01372 375400, text 07929 024722, email info@maryfrancetrust.org.uk or visit www.maryfrancetrust.org.uk



Registered Charity 1055113

ARTS & CRAFTS

This ongoing group will help you relieve stress, meet new people and boost your confidence and self esteem. The sessions will be supported by a qualified ceramist.



Start Date: Tuesday 19 October 2021
Duration: Weekly
Times: 2pm -3pm
Venue: Banstead Youth Centre, The Horseshoe, SM7 2BQ

MFT supports adults in Surrey to improve and maintain their mental wellbeing through one-to-one support, courses, groups and activities.

To book your place please contact: 01372 375400, text 07929 024722, email info@maryfrancetrust.org.uk or visit www.maryfrancetrust.org.uk



Registered Charity 1055113



We are all in this
together

Epsom Mental Health
and Well-Being Festival
9th - 16th October 2021

www.epsommentalhealthweek.org.uk



Follow us @
lovemelovemymindepsom
lmmepsom



Epsom Mental Health and Well-Being Festival is organised by Love Me Love My Mind, a charity dedicated to promoting understanding about mental health issues. Registered charity no: 1177683

CONTACT US

Parish Office:

**Church House, Church Street, Epsom,
KT17 4PX Phone: 01372 722567**

E-mail: smartinsepsom@btconnect.com

Website: www.stmartinsepsom.org

**Opening hours are Mondays, Wednesday, Thursdays & Fridays
9.30am to 12.30pm**

The Revd Nick Parish – Vicar – 01372 743336

Email: vicar@stmartinsepsom.org

The Revd Canon Adrian Esdaile - Priest in Retirement - 01372 723770

Email: esdaileadrian@yahoo.co.uk

**(available for Contemplative Prayer, Counsel,
Spiritual Direction and the Healing Ministry)**

COLLECT

O Lord, we beseech you mercifully to hear the prayers of your people who call upon you; and grant that they may both perceive and know what things they ought to do, and also may have grace and power faithfully to fulfil them; 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

Either **Wisdom of Solomon 1:16 – 2:1. 12-22**

A reading from the book of Wisdom.

The ungodly by their words and deeds summoned death; considering him a friend, they pined away and made a covenant with him, because they are fit to belong to his company. For they reasoned unsoundly, saying to themselves, "Short and sorrowful is our life, and there is no remedy when a life comes to its end, and no one has been known to return from Hades. Let us lie in wait for the righteous man, because he is inconvenient to us and opposes our actions; he reproaches us for sins against the law, and accuses us of sins against our training. He professes to have knowledge of God, and calls himself a child of the Lord. He became to us a reproof of our thoughts; the very sight of him is a burden to us, because his manner of life is unlike that of others, and his ways are strange. We are considered by him as something base, and he avoids our ways as unclean; he calls the last end of the righteous happy, and boasts that God is his father. Let us see if his words are true, and let us test what will happen at the end of his life; for if the righteous man is God's child, he will help him, and will deliver him from the hand of his adversaries. Let us test him with insult and torture, so that we may find out how gentle he is, and make trial of his forbearance. Let us condemn him to a shameful death, for, according to what he says, he will be protected." Thus they reasoned, but they were led astray, for their wickedness blinded them, and they did not know the secret purposes of God, nor hoped for the wages of holiness, nor

discerned the prize for blameless souls.

Or **Jeremiah 11:18-20**

A reading from the book of the prophet Jeremiah.

It was the LORD who made it known to me, and I knew; then you showed me their evil deeds. But I was like a gentle lamb led to the slaughter. And I did not know it was against me that they devised schemes, saying, "Let us destroy the tree with its fruit, let us cut him off from the land of the living, so that his name will no longer be remembered!" But you, O LORD of hosts, who judge righteously, who try the heart and the mind, let me see your retribution upon them, for to you I have committed my cause.

PSALM Psalm 54

R *The Lord sustains my life.*

Save me, O God, by your name; in your might, defend my cause. Hear my prayer, O God; give ear to the words of my mouth. **R**

For the arrogant have risen up against me, and the ruthless have sought my life, those who have no regard for God. Behold, God is my helper; it is the Lord who sustains my life. **R**

Render evil to those who spy on me; in your faithfulness, destroy them. I will offer you a freewill sacrifice and praise your name, O Lord, for it is good. For you have rescued me from every trouble, and my eye has seen the ruin of my foes. **R**

SECOND READING

James 3:13 – 4:3. 7-8a

A reading from the letter of James.

Who is wise and understanding among you? Show by your good life that your works are done with gentleness born of wisdom. But if you have bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not be boastful and false to the truth. Such wisdom does not come down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, devilish. For where there is envy and selfish ambition, there will also be disorder and wickedness of every kind. But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy

and good fruits, without a trace of partiality or hypocrisy. And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace for those who make peace. Those conflicts and disputes among you, where do they come from? Do they not come from your cravings that are at war within you? You want something and do not have it; so you commit murder. And you covet something and cannot obtain it; so you engage in disputes and conflicts. You do not have, because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, in order to spend what you get on your pleasures. Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you.

GOSPEL Mark 9:30-37

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

After leaving the mountain Jesus and his disciples went on from there and passed through Galilee. He did not want anyone to know it; for he was teaching his disciples, saying to them, "The Son of Man is to be betrayed into human hands, and they will kill him, and three days after being killed, he will rise again." But they did not understand what he was saying and were afraid to ask him. Then they came to Capernaum; and when he was in the house he asked them, "What were you arguing about on the way?" But they were silent, for on the way they had argued with one another who was the greatest. He sat down, called the twelve, and said to them, "Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all." Then he took a little child and put it among them; and taking it in his arms, he said to them, "Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes not me but the one who sent me."

POST COMMUNION

Almighty God, you have taught us through your Son that love is the fulfilling of the law: grant that we may love you with our whole heart and our neighbours as ourselves; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Sunday Homily

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

19 SEPTEMBER 2021

YEAR B

“Whoever welcomes one such child in my name
welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes
not me but the one who sent me.”

Mark 9:37

Illustration

One of the many things which has changed dramatically over the centuries is the way in which we treat our children. It is a popular misconception that children have always been treated as separate entities within the family or community, or that a period of infancy is followed by a childhood without any responsibility leading to carefree youth and a rebellious adolescence easing them into adulthood.

But this does not accord with history. Children have usually been valued as extensions of the family, ensuring the continuation of the family line, more especially in the case of a son.

But as with some cultures today, children in first-century Palestine had no economic or social status. Though loved and cherished by their extended families, they had no special treatment partly because so many of them died in infancy. They became a viable part of the household when they could begin working, tending flocks, fetching water etc. Their education, usually only for boys, entailed becoming a good Jew, learning the Torah, the Jewish Law. Girls assisted their mothers in learning the skills they would need in running a household. Not for these children the toys, fashions and accessories which are designed for children today. Children were at the very bottom of the pecking order, occupying a minor area of activity with no voice.

Gospel Teaching

The disciples were assailed by confusion and misunderstanding, seeming unable to grasp their role within their own group, let alone in the wider community. They were concerned with questions of status and role because much of what Jesus taught confused the accepted social and religious rules of the day, as well as turning the (then) class system on its head.

For example, rich people were understood to be not just lucky or clever, but especially blessed by God, richly rewarded for their “good” life. But Jesus taught that God loves everyone equally, even the poverty-stricken and sinners.

The disciples ached to discover where they fitted into it all. In using a little child to illustrate his point about his disciples' service to the community, Jesus was choosing a stratum of society which had no voice, no influence, no material wealth, no power: the littlest people in all respects. But this is not sentimentality. To be his disciple, then and now, means serving the needs of those who have nothing to give back, for which there is likely to be no reward, except from the "one who sent me".

Jesus also makes another point. Elsewhere he refers to his disciples as "little ones" and "my children". He is not being patronising but not only describing the fact of their innocence of life's potential but showing them clearly how, in choosing them, God has already chosen the humblest: these are the ones whom God will uplift to greater things, beyond their imagining. But still the message remains the same. Even while being exalted by their new learning, experiences and miracle-working, they not only remain the "children" whose simplicity is so pleasing to God, but they must continue to serve the humblest, among themselves and in the wider world. Because this is Jesus' model for the new Church: being, and serving, the humblest.

Application

Being childlike is different from being childish. Children accept God easily and trustingly. God our parent longs to teach us what we need to be happy, to become fulfilled and authentic human beings. But children are also Jesus' metaphor for those whom society regards as at the "bottom of the heap": asylum seekers (whether economic migrants or not), drug addicts, people who sleep rough, who sell sex, etc.

As our society becomes richer, more and more weak, vulnerable or demanding groups are relegated to the back of our minds. But just as we have a duty to our children, so, Jesus tells us, do we have a duty towards the less fragrant members of society. He gives us no escape from his example. He consorted with outcasts just as despised as our list. His clarity of vision of the kingdom remained constant in its simplicity, his trust in his Father was absolute. Jesus modelled childlike love and uncritical service. Children are integral to the present and future Church, but then so are we and so is everyone we meet, however demanding or smelly.

MONDAY**20 SEPTEMBER**

Ezra 1:1-6

Psalm 126

Luke 8:16-18

TUESDAY**21 SEPTEMBER**Matthew, Apostle
and Evangelist

Proverbs 3:13-18

Psalm 119:65-72

2 Corinthians

4:1-6

Matthew 9:9-13

WEDNESDAY**22 SEPTEMBER**

Ezra 9:5-9

*Canticle: Song of
Tobit or Psalm*

103:1-6

Luke 9:1-6

THURSDAY**23 SEPTEMBER**

Haggai 1:1-8

Psalm 149:1-5

Luke 9:7-9

FRIDAY**24 SEPTEMBER**

Haggai 1:15b – 2:9

Psalm 43

Luke 9:18-22

SATURDAY**25 SEPTEMBER**

Zechariah 2:1-5.

10-11

Psalm 125 *or**Canticle:*

Jeremiah 31:10-13

Luke 9:43b-45

REFLECTION

The theme of revelation seems to run through this week's Gospel readings, giving us a lot to think about. Firstly, Jesus tells us that



there is nothing secret or hidden away that won't be revealed by God's light. Then the Pharisees disapprove of Jesus mixing with the wrong sort of people, failing to understand that he is in fact mixing with those who know they need him. Who do we mix with? Do they include those who need God's love and mercy?

The disciples are empowered to take God's good news to distant strangers. Are we ready to follow their example?

Herod wonders who Jesus is. Do we need to spend more time getting to know Jesus better and then to proclaim that he is indeed "the Messiah of God," who saves us by his love?

The disciples don't understand what Jesus says about his suffering and death, and they barely hear what he says about rising again. And what about us? Do we live in the blazing light of resurrection or are we still trying to keep things hidden? Do we remember that Jesus comes to us in his mercy, because we need him and he loves us?

PRAYER

Lord Jesus, we thank you for coming to us in our need.

Thank you for loving us and teaching us to live in your light,

the light that cannot be overcome by darkness.

Keep us close to you and keep us trusting always in your love, truth and mercy.

PART XXXVII – HAGGAI – A BOOK ABOUT REBUILDING AND RESTORATION

Georgina Byrne continues our book-by-book series about the Bible.

“The latter splendour of this house shall be greater than the former, says the Lord of hosts; and in this place I will give prosperity.” Haggai 2:9

What does it say about the faith of a nation when its primary place of worship is in disrepair? This is the question underlying the short book of Haggai. The answer is a call to rebuild and restore.

Haggai, a prophet about whom we know nothing beyond this book, speaks to a very particular time and context. Large numbers of the population had been taken from Judah into exile in Babylon in 597 BC and again in 586 BC. Nearly fifty years later, in 538 BC, King Cyrus had allowed the exiles to return home. It is implicit in the text that this return was not the glorious triumph they had hoped. After many years away from home, the people had set about rebuilding, but they were not flourishing. “You have sown much,” Haggai says, “and harvested little; you eat, but you never have enough; you drink, but you never have your fill.”

Understandably, perhaps, they have put their energies into their homes, but God’s house still stands in ruins. God, Haggai tells them, is not impressed. Indeed, Haggai says that as long as God’s house is so dishonoured, their harvests will be poor and prosperity will elude them.

Haggai brings together state and religion to rebuild the Temple. Zerubbabel is the governor of Judah and Joshua is the high priest. Together they are to stir the people to action. God will work with them, shaking the heavens and the earth and the land and sea, so that treasure may be found. The house will gleam with silver and gold and will, God promises, be even more glorious than the old Temple they remember.

The intimation that a splendid temple will lead to national prosperity might be troubling for us, especially after the calls for justice rather than worship in earlier prophetic texts. But Haggai is really reminding his hearers to honour the presence of God in their midst. Their true comfort will be found in renewed faithfulness to the covenant.

LIVE the WORD

SUSTAINING YOU
THROUGH THE WEEK

Edited by
Caroline Hodgson
and
Heather Smith



Sixteenth week
after Trinity

Monday 20 September
to Saturday
25 September 2021

WEEK

Everybody equal

Richard Greatrex *reflects on* Jeremiah 11:18-20, James 3:13 – 4:3. 7-8a and Mark 9:30-37

A short while ago, through Peter, the disciples hailed Jesus as Messiah, then immediately denounced him for trying to teach them that messiahship was about sacrifice, not martial victory. Requiring them to clearly understand the true cost of his mission, and consequently of discipleship, Jesus travels with them away from the crowds. Nevertheless, they still fail to comprehend his words, retreating into traditional fantasies of victory, arguing over who deserves the highest honours.

Both Jeremiah and the author of James have cause to castigate those who prefer disputes and one-upmanship over listening to, or following, God's ways. Life, both Jeremiah and James argue, is diminished, becomes unholy, when we prioritise our wants over God's vision.

Jesus reasserts his authority, gathering the disciples around him like pupils of a rabbi. They fall silent, perceptive enough to realise their conversation was inappropriate. Having regained their attention, Jesus forcefully restates his countercultural position: the last shall be first; children, seen as "non-persons" in the society of the time, are, he claims, of equal value as the Messiah and consequently, God.



Arguments over precedence have no place in God's kingdom; they sap its strength, drawing us away from striving for equality. To achieve God's vision requires a preference for the least powerful, those who are marginalised, the "non-person", alongside each of us choosing to reject selfish ambition in favour of loving, willing service. 🍷

The books of the Old Testament

"God working through and against nature" – *the book of Exodus*

by Gillian Cooper

What exactly happens to the Red Sea? Is it blown back by the wind, or divided to form two walls? Exodus has both. It takes every story that has ever been told about Israel's escape from Egypt and puts it all together. The overall effect is dramatic and meaningful. God works through nature and against nature, whatever it takes, to rescue Abraham's family, the people God has chosen. Exodus is first and foremost a story of salvation.

It takes a lot to make a people. They have to be persuaded to leave Egypt, which despite its hardships is at least familiar. They have to learn to trust that they will not starve. They have to dare to wait at the foot of a volcano for God to speak. They have to commit themselves to a relationship, a covenant, with Yahweh their God who has rescued them. It takes a long time and much effort on the part of God and of Moses, the miraculous child whom God calls to be the hero of this book. 🍷

“He became what we are that he might make us what he is.”

Athanasius of Alexandria (died AD 373), bishop of Alexandria

Living Lord, by our arguments we wound you, each other and those who most need care. Teach us to reject envy, partiality and hypocrisy, and to embrace the life of loving service you offer through your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

Baptism Part II – *baptism in a secular world*

by Heather Smith

Baptism symbolises someone's separation from the world and their union with Christ, but at the same time it is about being received into a worldwide community, a family that has God at its centre, where someone can grow into the fullness of Christ. Acts 16:33 describes the baptism of the

whole family of the Philippian jailor. It is unusual to see infants and adults baptised at the same service, but when it does happen it is a powerful occasion that brings together God's work in different situations, enriching everyone's experience.

Many parents bring their children for baptism without themselves having much of a church connection, and it may come as a surprise to find that their child is also welcomed into a church community which is keen to help him or her discover their true identity within Christ. Finding the language to convey this exciting prospect is a challenge that local churches need to grasp. 🍷



Sunday 19 September 2021
 Mark 9:30-37
 25th Sunday in Ordinary Time

My name is _____

IN THE GOSPEL TODAY

Jesus' friends are arguing about who is the most important. Jesus explains that if they want to be important, they must put other people first. Following Jesus means helping and serving others. When we do, we will be happy and full of Jesus' love.

WHO IS JESUS?

Maze

Jesus travelled through Galilee to Capernaum. Can you help him find his way to the house there?



Welcome mat

Design a doormat to show everyone that they are welcome in your home.



Unscramble the letters to see who else you welcome when you welcome someone to your home.

SSUJE _ _ _ _

Word search

FIRST CARE
 BEST HELP
 LAST SERVE

F	I	R	S	T
L	B	E	S	T
A	C	A	R	E
S	E	R	V	E
T	H	E	L	P

Jesus shows us love

Jesus shows us how to love. He shows us how to put other people first. When we put others first we are being like Jesus. Here is a rosette for the winner of a first prize. Colour it red.



How do you think you could win this rosette? Draw a picture to show how you are going to help someone today. You could draw Jesus giving you the rosette.

A PRAYER TO SAY

Jesus, I want to be like you. Help me to be happy by serving other people, just like you did. Amen.