

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 5<sup>th</sup> September 2021 – Creation 1

Dear Friends,

A new season begins today! Our Choir return, the Ark returns, young people are going back to school – you can almost smell the polish on the floors. September is always a time where a new rhythm replaces the summer. These social seasons reflect the changing seasons of the earth, as we move into autumn. It is a good time to celebrate creation and reflect on our stewardship of our environment.

Today we also say 'farewell' to David and Nancy Candlin, as they prepare for their move to the Midlands. We thank God for them, and ask His blessing on their future.

*Nick Parish*

### **THIS WEEK**

#### **Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> September – Creation 1**

- 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 David Candlin
- 12.00pm – Holy Baptism – Arthur Knox
- 3.00pm – Story time for grown-ups at St Martin's Church, as part of the season of Creationtide and Harvest.

Come, hear and be inspired by the story of "The Man Who Planted Trees" by Jean Giono which will be followed by a discussion for those who want to stay. There will be refreshments after the story. Free event - and all welcome; most suitable for those 12 years old up to 80, 90, 100...'

6.30pm – Evening Prayer (in Church and live streamed) – led by Judith Mitchell

#### **Monday 6<sup>th</sup> September**

7.30pm to 9.30pm Bible Study: Genesis 1.  
A chance to explore the seven days of Creation.

#### **Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> September**

10.00am – Holy Communion in the Lady Chapel– led by Nick Parish

## **FUTURE SERVICES**

### **Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> September – Creation 2**

8.30am – Holy Communion – led by Nick Parish

9.30am – Holy Communion at St Stephen's – led by Nick Parish

10.00am – Choral Morning Prayer at St Martin's, in Church and live streamed – led by Graeme Lodge

6.30pm – Holy Communion – (in Church and live streamed) led by Nick Parish

**Morning Prayer** will be said, **Mon – Fri**, at **9am** in the Lady Chapel.

### **New Log-In Details for Zoom Evening Prayer**

Evening Prayer will continue on Zoom at 5pm so that those who are unable to get to church can join together to worship and pray for all those in need in our parish, our community and in the world. Please note that the Zoom joining instructions for Evening Prayer changed from 1st September so do contact me directly or via the Parish Office for the new details if you would like to join us. You don't need to commit to coming every day, just come when you wish to or are able, but we would be pleased to welcome newcomers.

***Judith Mitchell***

## **DISCIPLESHIP /STUDY/ WORSHIP MEETINGS**

### **Our ministry for children.**

Ark will resume regular meetings from today during the 10am service on a fortnightly basis. Please pray that they will prosper and nurture faith in the youngest members of our congregation.



The children's ministry to those who have outgrown Ark will begin after Creationtide on Sunday October 17th. Volunteers for this group are still needed so if you feel called to help please contact Graeme at [graemelodge@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:graemelodge@hotmail.co.uk)

### **The Pilgrim Course**

Starting in October, this will be led by Graeme Lodge. Described as a 'discipleship course' it is for anyone who wants to explore Christianity and life following a Christian way. Full details soon.

### **Wednesday morning study group**

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

### **Morning Prayer and Pastoral Support**

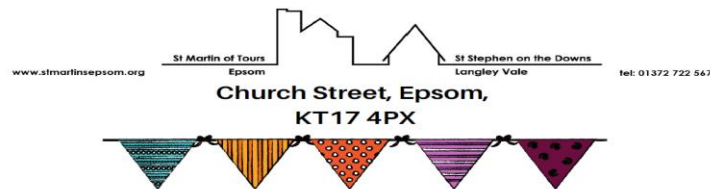
Every Tuesday, starting on 7<sup>th</sup> September, Morning Prayer will be held at 9.00 lasting between 20 and 30 minutes. From 9.30 am I shall be available in the church until 12.00 noon. If anyone wishes to talk to me about their worries or anything on their mind, please feel free to come for a chat 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***

## Beacon Teas

We shall be resuming the Beacon Teas soon, after a long absence because of the pandemic. They will be hosted in the Church by Mary and Elaine from the Pastoral Team on the second Sunday in each month between 3.00pm. and 5.00pm. and the first will be on 12<sup>th</sup> September. We look forward to seeing again those of you who were regulars at this event, and also anyone else who would like some companionship, sandwiches and cake. You can decide which of these is the most important! If anyone is willing to donate the occasional home-made cake we would be most grateful.

**Mary Gilbert and Elaine Snook,**  
**Pastoral Team**



## Beacon Afternoon Tea

Need Company? A Chat? Feel Lonely?  
Come along. All Welcome

**Second Sunday of the Month**  
**3.00pm to 5.00pm in Church**  
(12th September, 10th October, 14th November & 12th December)

Sandwiches, Cake, Tea & Coffee.  
Donations Welcome



Registered Charity No: 1134149

## Churches Together in Epsom

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> September at 8pm (refreshments from 7.30). It will be in Christ Church Epsom Common Parish Hall, the location of which is at:

<https://ctie.org.uk/index.php/47-how-to-find-us/61-christ-church-parish-hall>

## The meeting agenda is here

<https://ctie.org.uk/index.php/48-council-meeting-agendas/62-080921>

**All who worship at one of the CTiE churches are warmly invited to attend and contribute.**

Monthly prayer meetings:

Following a well-attended and enjoyable social gathering, 'in person', by CTiE reps, at the Old Moat Café, a decision was made 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 felt very encouraged by the positive response we received. We look forward to sharing prayer in this community setting in the future. The Old Moat Café has a sheltered covered outdoor area to meet 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, to avoid school traffic.

Dates of our monthly prayer meetings for Autumn 2021 are:

- Friday September 10<sup>th</sup>: 9-15 -9.45am on Zoom
- Friday October 8<sup>th</sup>: 10-11am at Old Moat Café
- Friday November 12<sup>th</sup>: 9.15-9.45am on Zoom
- Friday December 10<sup>th</sup>: 10-11am at Old Moat Café



Old Moat Garden Centre Café is in Horton Lane, Epsom

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

# 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 5<sup>th</sup> September  
10am Holy Communion: Love your neighbour

Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> September  
3pm Reading and Discussion: "The Man Who Planted Trees" by Jean Giono  
**Story time for grown-ups at St Martin's Church, as part of the season of Creationtide and Harvest.**

Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> September at 3pm - come, hear and be inspired by the story of 'The man who planted trees', which will be followed by a discussion for those who want to stay. There will be refreshments after the story. Free event - and all welcome; most suitable for those 12 years old up to 80, 90, 100...'

Monday 6<sup>th</sup> September  
7.30pm to 9.30pm Bible Study: Genesis 1.  
A chance to explore the seven days of Creation.

Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> September  
3pm Keynote Talk: Rt. Hon. Chris Grayling, MP for Epsom and Ewell speaks on his thoughts on the environment ahead of COP26 later this year.

As a symbol of prayer, love and encouragement to those at COP26, a motley 'Coat of Hopes' is making its way up to Glasgow, adorned with patches stitched by groups around the country. A patch will be arriving for members of St Martin's to stitch during September. Please contact me if you would like to join in.

Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> September  
10am Choral Matins: A living community

Monday 13<sup>th</sup> September  
7.30pm Bible Study: John 1

Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> September

4.30pm Music at Saint Martin's Recital: The Twilight Ensemble

A programme of music inspired by our beautiful planet and the wilds of nature including arias and songs by Rameau, Vaughan Williams, Rutter, Liza Lehmann, Schumann and Orlando Gough.

Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> September

10am Holy Communion: Need, not greed.

Guest speaker Katie Williams, UK Youth Climate Coalition

Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> September

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

Monday 20<sup>th</sup> September

7.30pm Bible Study: Song of Songs 7

Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> 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

Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> September

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

Guest speaker Alison Moulden, Diocesan Environmental Adviser

Monday 27<sup>th</sup> September

6.30pm Speak up for the Planet.

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

Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> October

10am Holy Communion: Saint Francis of Assisi.

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

*Additional services will be held throughout Creationtide on Sunday evenings at 6.30pm and Wednesday mornings at 10am. If you have any questions about these events please contact Helen Williams ([helen@canossa.co.uk](mailto:helen@canossa.co.uk)) or Graeme Lodge ([graemelodge@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:graemelodge@hotmail.co.uk))*

## 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.**

### Cheques to St Martin's

If you would like to give a cheque donation to St Martin's Church, please can you make the cheque payable to:

The PCC of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Epsom

### Donation Station

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

## OTHER NOTICES

### 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***

### EcoFair Plant Sale

To misquote the Bard "Now is the Summer of our discontent" but it is time to think about the Autumn tidy in the garden viz remove clumps, selfsown and other unwanted extensions. Your excesses will be good inputs for a plant sale - as a welcome outside church at the EcoFair on Saturday September 25th.

I've earmarked items in the church garden for this purpose including Michaelmas daisy, helleborus, hypericum, crocosmia. Which may give you ideas for searching your patch. These orphans don't need posh pots to go to their new homes and recycling is very IN at the EcoFair. Our prices will be low-to-go - this whole idea was motivated by seeing a clump of crocosmia, in flower, at Dobbies - for £9.99!

You could start bringing offerings from next week Sept 15th and place them in the trays I will have put on the wall with the two potted hydrangea (by the door to the tower). Please name your plants - with helpful horticultural hints if you wish.

If you would like more info please contact me at [wrightjean09@gmail.com](mailto:wrightjean09@gmail.com)

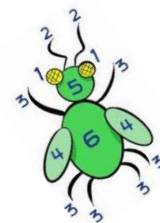
Many thanks.

***Jean Wright. Head Gnome***



## Beetle Drive – Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> October 2021

You are all invited to a **Beetle Drive** on **Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> 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 10<sup>th</sup> October*. If you are unable to do this, please contact Mary Holloway-Neville at [mary.hollowayneville@sky.com](mailto: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**



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

**St Martin's Christmas Fair** will be held on **Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> 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**

## 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*

### Latest message from Food Bank

Wishlist: This week we need help with:

Urgent:

Nappies & pull-ups: Size 5 & 6

Crisps, snacks, chocolate bars and treats for kids

Cooking sauce (not pasta sauce), Bags for life

Wanted:

Long life sponge pudding, Powdered milk, Meat pies

Tinned vegetables, Mayonnaise, Tomato ketchup, Spaghetti in sauce

Honey

Noodles (such as egg or rice noodles), Peanut butter

Sugar 500g bags), Longlife fruit juice

Meat (hot dogs, meatballs etc – not spam or corned beef)

Nappies & pull-ups: Size 6+, Training pants and pull-ups

Shaving foam

Baby wash, Pump soap, Shampoo

Washing up liquid, Washing powder and pods (bio and non-bio), Shower Gel

No more: pasta, tampons, sanitary towels, marmalade, cat/dog food, spam/corned beef, 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





## Walk for 'Kids For Kids' on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> September

On Harvest Sunday this year we will be hoping to raise money for **Kids For Kids**, a charitable organisation that sustains life in Dafur, Sudan.

If you would like to make an early donation of £5 and at the same time enjoy a 4 mile walk around the beautiful Holmwood Common south of Dorking, organised by Dorking Rotary, please consult the Rotawalk'21 website. Walkers may start out on the trail at any time between 10am and 3pm.

Happy hiking!

Laurence Impey

## RotaWalk'21 – Step with us for Sudan! September 12 @ 9:00 am - 5:00 pm

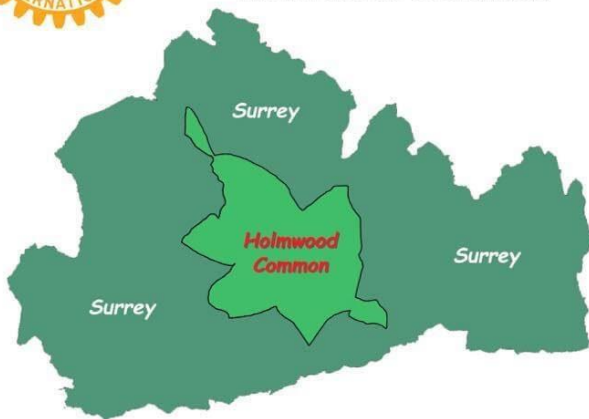
September 12 @ 9:00 am - 5:00 pm

Blackbrook Road, Dorking, RH5 4NX United Kingdom [+ Google Map](#)



## Rotawalk'21

Sunday 12th September 2021  
Holmwood Common



Join us for this year's RotaWalk'21, organised by **Rotary in Dorking** which will take place on Sunday 12th September 2021, on the National Trust land of Holmwood Common, due south of Dorking.

Help us raise desperately-needed funds for the children of Darfur by raising sponsorship and challenging yourself to complete this 4 mile circular route with family and friends around the beautiful Holmwood Common. The route is a flattish, cinder-based all-weather circuit, suitable for all ages, and easily

negotiated with push-chairs and mobility scooters.

Enjoy the countryside and perhaps do a bit of bird-spotting too!

Our walk will start at 10:00 am from the Northerly point close to the car park at Inholms Lane and North Holmwood Church. We will finish at this same point, where we will check-in to confirm we have safely completed the route. En route, there will also be a waystation at 'The Viewpoint' where you can relax, enjoy the view and sample the drinks and cake on offer – yum!

**We're asking for a minimum donation of just £5 entry per adult walker. Children under 16 are more than welcome to join too and will be free!**



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](http://www.epsomvineyard.org/cap)

epsom  vineyard church

## CONTACT US

### *Parish Office:*

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

***E-mail: [stmartinsepsom@btconnect.com](mailto:stmartinsepsom@btconnect.com)***

***Website: [www.stmartinsepsom.org](http://www.stmartinsepsom.org)***

**The Revd Nick Parish – Vicar – 01372 743336**

**Email: [vicar@stmartinsepsom.org](mailto:vicar@stmartinsepsom.org)**

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

**Email: [esdaileadrian@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:esdaileadrian@yahoo.co.uk)**

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

### COLLECT

Almighty God,  
whose only Son has opened for us  
a new and living way into your  
presence:  
give us pure hearts and steadfast wills  
to worship you in spirit and in truth;  
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 Isaiah 35:4-7a

*A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.*

Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you." Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water.

### PSALM Psalm 146

**R** *You open wide your hand, O Lord, and satisfy our needs.*

Alleluia!  
Praise the Lord, O my soul!  
I will praise the Lord as long as I live;  
I will sing praises to my God while  
I have my being. **R**

Put not your trust in rulers,  
nor in any child of earth,  
for there is no help in them.  
When they breathe their last, they  
return to earth,  
and in that day their thoughts  
perish. **R**

Happy are they who have the God of  
Jacob  
for their help!  
whose hope is in the Lord their God;  
Who made heaven and earth, the  
seas,  
and all that is in them;  
who keeps his promise for ever;  
Who gives justice to those who are  
oppressed,  
and food to those who hunger. **R**

The Lord sets the prisoners free;  
the Lord opens the eyes of the blind;  
the Lord lifts up those who are bowed  
down;

The Lord loves the righteous;  
the Lord cares for the stranger;  
he sustains the orphan and widow,  
but frustrates the way of the wicked. **R**

The Lord shall reign for ever,  
your God, O Zion, throughout all  
generations.  
Alleluia! **R**

### SECOND READING

**James 2:1-10 [11-13] 14-17**

*A reading from the letter of James.*

My brothers and sisters, do you with your acts of favouritism really believe in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ? For if a person with gold rings and in fine clothes comes into your assembly, and if a poor person in dirty clothes also comes in, and if you take notice of the one wearing the fine clothes and say, "Have a seat here, please," while to the one who is poor you say, "Stand there," or, "Sit at my feet," have you not made distinctions among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts? Listen, my beloved brothers and sisters. Has not God chosen the poor in the world to be rich in faith and to be heirs of the kingdom that he has promised to those who love him? But you have dishonoured the poor. Is it not the rich who oppress you? Is it not they who drag you into court? Is it not they who blaspheme the excellent name that was invoked over you? You do well if you really fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, "You shall love your neighbour as yourself." But if you show partiality, you commit sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become accountable for all of it. [For the one who said, "You shall not commit adultery," also said, "You shall not murder." Now if you do not commit adultery but if you murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. So speak and so act as those who are to be judged by the law of liberty. For judgement will be without mercy to anyone who has shown no mercy; mercy triumphs over judgement.] What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but do not have works? Can faith save you? If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, and one of you says to them, "Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill," and yet you do not supply their bodily

needs, what is the good of that? So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead.

### GOSPEL Mark 7:24-37

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

Jesus set out and went away to the region of Tyre. He entered a house and did not want anyone to know he was there. Yet he could not escape notice, but a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit immediately heard about him, and she came and bowed down at his feet. Now the woman was a Gentile, of Syrophenician origin. She begged him to cast the demon out of her daughter. He said to her, "Let the children be fed first, for it is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs." But she answered him, "Sir, even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs." Then he said to her, "For saying that, you may go – the demon has left your daughter." So she went home, found the child lying on the bed, and the demon gone. Then he returned from the region of Tyre, and went by way of Sidon towards the Sea of Galilee, in the region of the Decapolis. They brought to him a deaf man who had an impediment in his speech; and they begged him to lay his hand on him. He took him aside in private, away from the crowd, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spat and touched his tongue. Then looking up to heaven, he sighed and said to him, "Ephphatha," that is, "Be opened." And immediately his ears were opened, his tongue was released, and he spoke plainly. Then Jesus ordered them to tell no one; but the more he ordered them, the more zealously they proclaimed it. They were astounded beyond measure, saying, "He has done everything well; he even makes the deaf to hear and the mute to speak."

### POST COMMUNION

Lord God, the source of truth and love,  
keep us faithful to the apostles'  
teaching and fellowship,  
united in prayer and the breaking of  
bread,  
and one in joy and simplicity of heart,  
in Jesus Christ our Lord.

# Sunday Homily

## FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

5 SEPTEMBER 2021

YEAR B

“He has done everything well; he even makes the deaf to hear and the mute to speak.”

Mark 7:37

### Illustration

Most of us take our five senses for granted. We cannot remember what it is like to be without the forms of communication which we learned so early on. Going abroad and being unable to speak the language returns us to our infantile state as we struggle to make ourselves understood. We again become vulnerable and exhausted with our efforts and understand better the trials experienced by those living with disability.

But God’s miracles extend into our scientific age to assist those more permanently disabled by their sensual loss. For example, there are now cochlear implants which allow some deaf people to hear through a series of electronic impulses. There is the possibility that one day retina implants will enable those blind from birth to see, even if only for a short time: time to see their loved ones’ faces and some of the wonders of which they have only heard.

God’s miracles are all around us: gifts that delight us and guide us towards a greater understanding of his love. This reassurance frees us to become more fully the people he made, whether or not our bodies or minds are physically complete.

### Gospel Teaching

During Jesus’ ministry the miracles he performed always pointed beyond themselves. At a straightforward level he heals. Not just by what he says but by what he does. He is not afraid to touch people and puts his fingers in the man’s ears, touching his tongue with his own spittle. He gives of himself, physically and in terms of concentration and energy, and, as a result, the man discovers the freedom of hearing and speech.

At another level this process illustrates the concern which Jesus has to free the hearing and speech of all who listen to him, whether or not they experience disability, including us today. It is only when we hear him clearly that we can, in turn, live out and proclaim the truth of his message.

Some people are disabled by poverty or by discrimination against outsiders or foreigners, like the Syrophenician woman, alien to Jewish culture. But yet it was she who recognised Jesus' true status. When she challenged him with her depth of faith he realised that his ministry was for all people. Both she and the deaf man were completely open to Jesus, vulnerable in their total faith. Unlike the cynical, well-informed Pharisees, they did not presume they had the answers to life's questions.

We are sometimes hampered by our complicated knowledge: it can blind and deafen us. True wisdom is being conscious of what we do not know and remaining open to being taught. Jesus works hard to clarify our hearing and our sight, our understanding and our insight, so that with or without perfect physical senses our discipleship is of the best, God's truth is heard and God's will is done.

## **Application**

Deafness and blindness are not necessarily physical conditions. The scribes were deaf to the full meaning of Jesus' teaching while hearing his words perfectly. Some of Jesus' disciples were blind to events which seem obvious to us in retrospect.

We are more likely to develop our sense of God and his working through us if we can recognise how deaf to his word we can become. When people believe they have all the answers, a monopoly of the truth, there is a danger that they reinforce their blindness and inability to hear.

Jesus will free us today, just as he freed the deaf man in the Gospel, when we are open and vulnerable, available to be approached and do not assume that we know everything. Jesus told us that to love God well we must become like little children; not childish, but childlike. With their ability to trust implicitly, children listen with open ears and see with unclouded vision.

And when we recognise our poverty, our littleness and our need for God, Jesus can work in us: to heal us in all our disabilities, to include us despite our differences and foreignness, and to teach us what we need to know in order to hear the word and act upon it.

These gifts are given to those who ask. This is how the kingdom of God is extended upon earth – by disciples attentive to their master. We are those disciples and Christ's Church relies upon our wisdom, insight and vision.

**MONDAY**  
**6 SEPTEMBER**

Colossians 1:24  
– 2:3  
Psalm 62:1-7  
Luke 6:6-11

**TUESDAY**  
**7 SEPTEMBER**

Colossians 2:6-15  
Psalm 8  
Luke 6:12-19

**WEDNESDAY**  
**8 SEPTEMBER**

Colossians 3:1-11  
Psalm 15  
Luke 6:20-26

**THURSDAY**  
**9 SEPTEMBER**

Colossians 3:12-17  
Psalm 149:1-5  
Luke 6:27-38

**FRIDAY**  
**10 SEPTEMBER**

1 Timothy 1:1-2.  
12-14  
Psalm 16  
Luke 6:39-42

**SATURDAY**  
**11 SEPTEMBER**

1 Timothy 1:15-17  
Psalm 113  
Luke 6:43-end

REFLECTION

This week's Gospel readings offer us a sort of manifesto for the kingdom of God. We see what can happen there. Sick people are healed and those taken over by their personal demons are freed. The power of Jesus restores withered lives and his authority quells his enemies.



We hear the promises Jesus gives about his kingdom: the needs of those who experience poverty and hunger are met, and weeping gives way to laughter. And if we want to be part of that kingdom we can learn how to live according to its values, but that's quite a challenge.

On Thursday let's try reading each of the verses slowly, several times, then pause and reflect on what it would be like to follow each commandment fully. Then on Friday we could read back over those verses and reflect, honestly, on how we need to change and grow to become more mature "children of the Most High".

On Saturday let's look back over the week, read again the Kingdom's Manifesto and resolve to check the foundations on which we are living our lives. Is there too much sand or are we already living on a good, strong and solid rock?

PRAYER

Lord Jesus, help us to learn how to live more fully in your kingdom.  
Bring us back to your paths of righteousness when we go astray.  
Show us how to love and forgive others, as you always love and forgive us, because we are your children.

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# THE THEOLOGY OF ST PAUL

## LIVE the WORD

SUSTAINING YOU  
THROUGH THE WEEK

### PART III – THE LETTERS OF PAUL

**B**ecky Mynett continues her series about the life and theology of St Paul.

Paul's letters were written to specific groups of people for specific reasons. Usually he was writing in response to news about some sort of problem within an early Christian community. He did not intend to write either scripture or a theological treatise. As a result, reading Paul's letters is like reading someone else's post or listening to one end of a telephone conversation – we sometimes have to think carefully in order to work out what is going on. We also have to remember that Paul lived in a society that in many ways was very different from our own.

So what can we learn about Paul's theology from his letters?

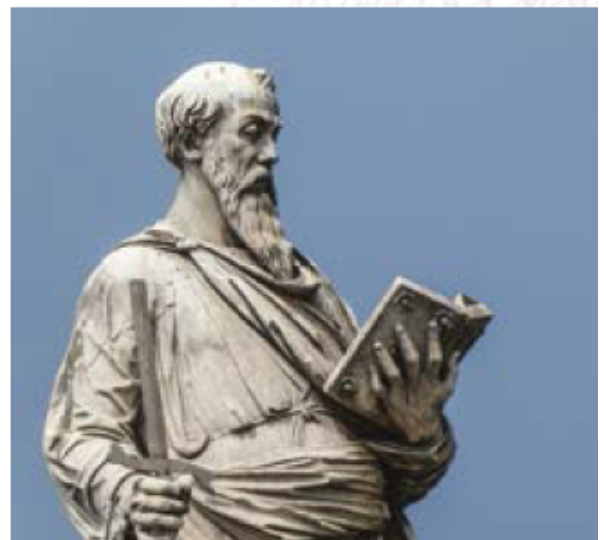
Firstly, his understanding of God and Jesus was based on his experience of meeting the risen Christ. Having been a persecutor of the Church, he became convinced that Jesus had been sent by God. As a Pharisee, Paul already believed that when God rescued Israel from bondage, the dead would be resurrected. He saw Jesus' resurrection as proof that he was from God and he expected Jesus to return soon to raise all who were faithful to God. In 1 Corinthians he explains that everyone, whether still alive or already dead, would have a new spiritual body. In his earlier letters, especially 1 Thessalonians, Paul clearly assumes that this will happen in his lifetime.

Secondly, we learn that there was a controversy about how Gentiles should follow Jesus. Did they need to become Jewish, be circumcised and obey the Law? In Galatians, Paul is clear that this is not necessary.

Faith in Jesus (rather than adherence to the Law) puts you right with God and enables you to participate in the resurrection of the dead. As Christians, Jews and Gentiles are equals and the whole Law is summed up in loving your neighbour as yourself.

Although Paul did not set out to write theology, his most theological letter is that to the Romans, and we will look at that next week.

Edited by  
Caroline Hodgson  
and  
Heather Smith



Statue of St Paul by Paolo Romano.  
Ponte Sant'Angelo, Rome

Fourteenth week  
after Trinity

Monday 6 September  
to Saturday  
11 September 2021

WEEK

# Part of the family

Richard Greatrex *reflects on* James 2:1-10 [11-13] 14-17 and Mark 7:24-end

One of the Bible's major themes courses through all of today's readings, regarding the treatment by the rest of society of those deemed poor, sick, outcast and alien. Scripture resounds with the belief that God stands in solidarity with those who are broken, lost and lonely, yet the author of the letter of James still needs to upbraid fellow Christians for their failure to put this into practice. Their faith is lacking if it does not lead them to follow God's way, to act mercifully.

Turning to the Gospel it initially looks as if Jesus may have fallen into the same mindset. Travelling into Gentile territory for a break from demanding Galilean crowds, he finds his popularity has preceded him. When a Syrophenician woman begs him to help her possessed daughter, he tartly reminds her that his mission is firstly to Israel. But when her response uses his own language against him, Jesus graciously admits the validity of her argument. Declaring her daughter healed, he treats this Gentile woman as his equal, enacting God's preference for those who are marginalised. Both he and the woman need to cross boundaries created by religion, ethnicity and gender, to do what is right.

Today we are called to overcome many of those self-same barriers to keep building Church as a holy kingdom where all are welcome as equal members of God's family. 🌈

**God of mercy, teach us to see you in each other; embolden us to tear down barriers which create misunderstanding, distrust and despair. Give us grace to admit our mistakes and courage to embrace all as equal in your sight. Amen.**

## St Paul

### Part III

by Becky Mynett

*Becky continues her series about the life and work of St Paul.*

The New Testament contains thirteen letters traditionally thought to have been written by Paul. Biblical scholars agree that he definitely wrote seven of them. These are the earliest surviving Christian scriptures and pre-date the Gospels. The first, 1 Thessalonians, was probably written in around AD 50 and the last, Romans, about eight years

later. Between these, Paul wrote to the churches in Galatia, Corinth and Philippi, and to Philemon.

As for the rest, scholars disagree whether they were written by Paul or later followers, although the vast majority think it unlikely he wrote the letters to Timothy and Titus. It is now thought they were written after his death in around AD 64, and the same goes for Ephesians, 2 Thessalonians and Colossians.

It was common for letters to be written in the name of a respected teacher, so we should not think of them as forgeries. And of course, although they may not have been written by Paul, they are still valuable early Christian documents. 🌈



## Finding God on the smallholding

by Jeni Parsons

Whatever the weather the year moves on and I start assessing the flock of rare breed sheep. The lambs are almost ready to leave their mothers and move to live in the next field with the old ewes, who will keep them close and break up the inevitable

scrapping for dominance. The breeding ewes now have a chance to regain their condition after feeding their lambs for five months and I can assess who should be in the breeding flock when the new ram arrives.

My judgement has to be a tender one. I'm looking to bring out the best traits so the breed flourishes. It's that flourishing that I learn from the God in the creation stories of Genesis. "Behold it was good" is the refrain in that scripture and as I stand in the field watching sheep, I can say too, "behold it is good". 🌈

“ Let us then pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding.”

Romans 14:19





# IN THE GOSPEL TODAY

My name is \_\_\_\_\_

A deaf man who has difficulty speaking is brought to Jesus. Jesus lays his hand on the man, touching his ears and his tongue. The man's ears are opened and he can speak clearly!

## LISTEN AND HELP!

**Maze** ★  
 Jesus travelled a long way healing people and telling them how much God loved them. Help Jesus make his way through Sidon to Lake Galilee.

It is a long journey over hills and down valleys!



## Helping hands



My hands help when ...

Jesus touched the deaf man when he healed him. I can use my hands to help people too. Draw or write your ideas in this hand.

## Sign language ★

People who are deaf are often better listeners than those of us who can hear. They use sign language or lip-read and have to pay close attention to what is being signed or spoken.



Perhaps you already know some sign language. Add the letters to see what these signs mean.

## Who does God love?

Starting with **e** write down every 2nd letter.



God does not have any favourites. God loves each one of us the same.

e \_\_\_\_\_



Make this face look happy with the good news!

## A PRAYER TO SAY

Open my ears, Jesus, and help me to hear your message of love. Help me to use my tongue to speak kindly to everyone I meet today.