

Shirley Parish Magazine

THE LORD BLESS YOU
AND KEEP YOU; THE
LORD MAKE HIS FACE
SHINE UPON YOU,
AND BE GRACIOUS TO
YOU; THE LORD LIFT
UP HIS COUNTENANCE
UPON YOU, AND GIVE
YOU PEACE.

July & August 2020

SHIRLEY PARISH GUIDE

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facebook.com/@AdventureinFaithB90

Due to the Coronavirus, all public worship is currently suspended.

The resources for 'Sunday at Home', 'Everyday at Home' and 'Messy Church at Home' are being sent out by email, in the post or hand delivered where email is not available and are on our website.

We are keeping in touch with church members on a regular basis. We hope we have included everybody in this but if you know someone who hasn't received a phone call or their magazine please let us know.

SHIRLEY PARISH



KNOWING CHRIST
MAKING HIM KNOWN

A PRAYER FOR THE PARISH

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

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 THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

 Faith in Later Life

CONNECTIONS

OUR PRAYER FOR GROWTH

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

PRAYING DAY BY DAY

I wonder, do you pray each day – either at the start or at the end of the day?

And if you do, what prayers do you use?

Maybe the Church of England Morning or Evening Prayer -

<https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/join-us-service-daily-prayer>
maybe something from the Franciscan tradition; maybe something from one of the 'communities'.

We sometimes use the prayers from the Northumbria Community -

<https://www.northumbriacommunity.org/offices/morning-prayer/>

Or perhaps you use your own prayers, or ones that you have gathered together over time.

I recently saw a prayer that someone had written for Wednesdays, the day in the middle of the week, the day which they call the "hump day". The prayer goes like this:

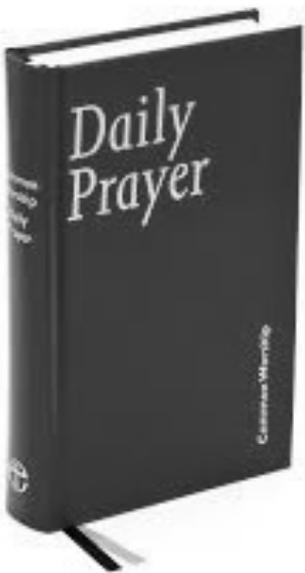
God of my beginning, middle and end,

*half of the week is behind me,
and half before me.*

*In some things I have done well;
in others I have fallen short.*

*Bless the work that I have done,
and the work I have yet to do.*

*In all that happens,
may I walk in your ways
and delight in your presence,
serving you and you alone for
whatever may come my way. Amen*



And this set me wondering whether we could put together a Parish Prayer Book – with a special prayer or two for each day of the week. If you fancy a go at writing a prayer for a specific day of the week or month or, in fact, for any occasion that we can include, then now is your chance.

Please email or post your offerings to me and we'll see what we can do!

Reverend Paul Day

BLACK LIVES MATTER

You are probably aware that a “Black Lives Matter” demonstration took place in Shirley on Saturday 13th June. There had been some concern locally in the week leading up to this about possible damage to the war memorials. However, I was at the protest and can say that it was good natured and peaceful – there was not a hint of any trouble. And it was a very poignant moment when the protestors bowed the knee in silence in memory of what happened to George Floyd in the USA.

I am writing this on Sunday 14th June and my sermon this morning is about Black Lives Matter – if you want to read the sermon take a look at the website <https://www.shirleyparishb90.co.uk/download-a-sermon>. If you’re not on the internet I am happy to send you a copy of the sermon. I talk about how everyone is made in God’s image and of equal value. I remind people of how Jesus made a special point of seeking out those on the margins and those rejected or badly treated by society, and of how we are to follow his example. I challenge us all to look at our own (sometimes deeply ingrained) attitudes.

Many people respond to the “Black Lives Matter” strapline by saying that all lives matter. That is certainly true, but in all areas of life we concentrate on what needs help and attention rather than everything.

If we recognise that a particular species of animal is under threat of extinction, and we set up a programme aimed at protecting that animal, it doesn’t mean we value other animals any less – just that they don’t need special help at this time. Jesus told the story of the shepherd who had lost a sheep. He went off searching for the one sheep that had got lost, leaving the 99. He didn’t say “all sheep matter” and stay with the crowd.

At this moment in time the focus is rightly on black people, particularly after some of the things that have happened in the USA, but also thinking of the sometimes hidden racism that is present in the UK.

As one of the placards on yesterday’s demonstration put it:

Equal rights for others doesn't mean fewer rights for you. It's not pie.

Reverend Paul Day



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ONLINE BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE OPENED AT ST PAUL'S

St Paul's Cathedral has launched *Remember Me*, an online book of remembrance for all those who have been living in the UK who have died as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. People of all faiths, beliefs or none are invited to contribute to *Remember Me*.

HRH The Prince of Wales, who recorded a video message, said: "This virtual book of remembrance is here not just to recall our loss and sorrow, but also to be thankful for everything good that those we have loved brought into our lives."

Family, friends and carers of those who have died can submit, free of charge, the name, photograph and a short message in honour of a deceased person via the *Remember Me* website. The deceased person must have been living in the UK. *Remember Me* will be open for entries for as long as needed. It is intended that the *Remember Me* site will become a physical memorial at the Cathedral.



<https://www.rememberme2020.uk/>

You can help! **#feedsolihull**





People in the borough are hungry. Please support the work of the 'Helping Hands' Food Bank at Renewal Centre in their efforts to feed people during this crisis

Visit - <https://renewalcc.com/helpinghands/> to find out more

THE CRUCIFIXION BIRD

For years, we have trying to encourage goldfinches to visit our garden and all attempts have proved fruitless. Our special bird feeder, regularly cleaned and refilled with nyjer seed, was ignored - until the Saturday before Easter Sunday. And there, looking in through our dining room window while pecking at the nyjer seed, was the long-awaited goldfinch.

On Easter Sunday, I told my sister-in-law, a keen and knowledgeable bird-watcher. She paused for a moment and then told me the story below, which I have also since found on the Internet.



“The common or garden goldfinch is featured a great deal in paintings of the Madonna and Christ Child and there are several accounts of its importance in terms of Good Friday. The most common legend has it that a goldfinch alighted on the cross and tried to remove thorns from the head of Christ with its beak (hence the bird has a face stained with the blood of Christ). Then again, the bird appears, as above, with the infant Christ as a prophetic symbol of what is to come.”

We haven't seen the goldfinch since his Easter appearance!

Chris & Ray Speakman

NEWS FROM DENISE & GRAHAM

I have been asked quite a bit lately of how I am coping with Graham and his illness, so I will try to explain how I go about giving not only my time for Graham but how I find time to be "me".

Since we have been in lockdown and I have not had to think about how I am going to work my shifts around hospital appointments, church and family, it has made me also stop and think about myself and just what I need.

I found the first few weeks of lockdown extremely hard as not being able to go out at all on the advice of the consultant and our own GP as Graham, with his terminal diagnosis, meant he was in the very high risk category, so handing over a shopping list and finding things to do at first was rather a bit too easy. I have sorted cupboards and drawers and got rid of the things you hang on to just in case, but after that I then sorted the garden then came to a halt.

Unfortunately, I then had a week where all I seemed to be doing was talking to doctors and nurses over FaceTime as Graham had a mini stroke, known as a TIA.

I am pleased to say he has recovered but he does now need more help and he gets very frustrated at things he could do easily before, that he now struggles to do.

So, this is when I started to realise I need to start taking time out for me.

Luckily that week the doctor had decided that now the social distancing was well in place at supermarkets I could now go and get my own shopping. I could also go on a short walk.

So I started looking at YouTube and doing some exercises as I realised I needed to get supple again. I do that before Graham even thinks about getting up which also gives me time after for my morning prayers in silence.

I will admit my morning prayers had started to slip into mid-morning so that felt like a small but well-deserved pat on the back.

I have also been reading some books that I had started and never seemed to get past the first chapter - I usually read in the afternoon when Graham has fallen asleep.

Then just last week the doctor gave permission for Graham to go out for a daily outing if he felt the need, as long as he wore a mask. As I make sure I only go shopping once a week and he has only come once I think to see for himself how the supermarket has put measures in.

NEWS FROM DENISE & GRAHAM continued

The children bought him a mobility scooter which is great because not only is he in charge of this, it gets him out in the fresh air and keeps him socially distanced from people (mind you the speed he goes at I think people are more socially distancing themselves from him). I walk behind him which also is good for me so it's a win win.

On the days where we have lost lots of sleep I tend to go upstairs and lay on the bed when he is downstairs on his hospital bed snoring. Some things never change?

But I have been learning things too by joining in with all the church services, Zoom coffee and meetings and the reflections. I feel this has been a learning curve as I really am not very technically minded.

I find writing letters also takes my mind off from what doctors and nurses have said and makes me think of others and how they are coping.

All in all, I think I cope fairly well, but I am now faced with the "how does our future look" as I am beginning to be more aware that my chance of going back to work is looking rather bleak, as Graham needs more care than ever now. So, I am constantly asking God for strength and where do I go from here and how.

So, as I wait to see what the next chapter of our lives will be, I thank God for being here on this journey with us.

Love and thanks to you all for your prayers, phone calls and offers of help. It keeps me going.

Denise Smith (Reader)

St John's are going virtual ...



Wednesday 8th July at 10.30am

join the video call with your coffee & biscuits and enjoy seeing and catching up with everyone

Saturday 11th July from 2pm



join the video call with a cream tea

** Raffle * Competitions
* Cakes & preserves sale
* show us your garden, your prize plant or what you have been making*

Please contact Gill Hanton for the Zoom and 'Just Giving' links

THE FRAILITY OF LIFE

According to one survey, during the lockdown, a quarter of adults in the UK have watched or listened to a religious service and one in twenty have started praying. While the majority of people who contract Covid-19 survive, it reminds us that we are much more frail and weak than we like to think. As the prophet Isaiah says:

'All people are like grass, and all their faithfulness is like the flowers of the field. The grass withers and the flowers fall, because the breath of the Lord blows on them. Surely the people are grass. The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God endures for ever.' (Isaiah 40:6-8).

Isaiah's words really resonate at this time. In more normal times we can avoid facing up to our vulnerability, but this pandemic has forced us to recognise our weakness and fragility.

However, this shouldn't lead us to despair or fear; rather it is an opportunity to worship and praise for His constancy and care. In Peter's first letter he quotes this passage from Isaiah and says, *'For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God'* (1 Peter 1:23). Peter contrasts our mortality with the eternal Word of God, which brings us new birth and life through the power of the Spirit. Jesus died for our sins and rose again to make us right with God, so that through faith in Him we can know eternal life. We don't need to be afraid of our frailty, for God is a dependable foundation on which to build our lives and face eternity.

'We blossom and flourish as leaves on the tree. And wither and perish, but nought changeth Thee.' (Immortal, invisible, Walter C Smith).

'BEATING THE BOUNDS' 2020

Well done to all those who walked our Parish Boundary on Bank Holiday Monday, especially to Paul and Kate who completed all fourteen miles.

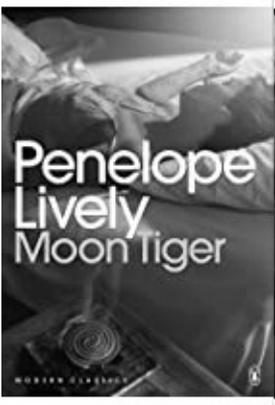
We prayed for the parish, and those who live and work in it, as we walked.



STEWARDSHIP OFFERINGS

To set up a direct debit for the Parish, telephone the Parish Giving Scheme on **0333 002 1271** with your bank account details and the name and reference number of the church. These are: St James the Great - 020 602 173, Christ the King - 020 602 220 St John the Divine - 020 602 174. Thank you!

SHIRLEY PARISH BOOK CLUB



Lying in her care home bed as an old lady, Claudia Hampton thinks back over her long life and remembers the moon tiger, a slow-burning green coil designed to repel mosquitoes which she used in her hotel room in Cairo during WW11. In the novel, that coil comes to represent memory and the inevitable passing of time. She says that 'there is no chronology inside my head ... the pack of cards I carry around is forever shuffled and reshuffled ... everything happens at once.' The novel won the Booker Prize in 1987.

As ever, with the Book Club, individual reactions to Penelope Lively's Moon Tiger novel were varied – mostly favourable, sometimes less so.

Here is some extracts from what people said:

'I enjoyed it more than I expected. I found that the shifts in the narrative from 1st to 3rd person, the unsentimental examination of motherhood, the unfaltering self-awareness and the evocation of desert war sat well with an understated love story.'

'The novel shows how we are a mixture of our inheritance and the influences we meet in our lives. Early on in the book I really identified with Claudia, a fascinating character, and how cleverly you get the essence of her through her memories and the few glimpses of other characters' thoughts!'

'This was quite an interesting and well-written book. The descriptions of Egypt were particularly good and felt authentic to me. The only character I really liked was Tom. I thought Claudia a little self-centred in her attitude to others.'

'I thought that the format of the book was interesting and the fluctuation of the story through time worked well. Tom was the only character for whom I felt some empathy. The quite simple way of recording Claudia's death was effective, although Tom's death was more moving.'

'I loved 'Moon Tiger' and the way that image of the grey ash which falls from the burning mosquito repellent reflects Claudia's past, particularly her relationship with Tom. Her memories are left in ashes. As another novelist, Anne Tyler, says of 'Moon Tiger' – 'It leaves traces on the air long after you've put it away.' A haunting novel.'

'Atmospheric, descriptive view of Claudia's life, as she lies half-conscious in a hospital bed.

Brother and sister always together. A wordy book, sad, funny, thought provoking, lovely use of words but I am not sure I liked it.'

... continued over the page

SHIRLEY PARISH BOOK CLUB *continued*

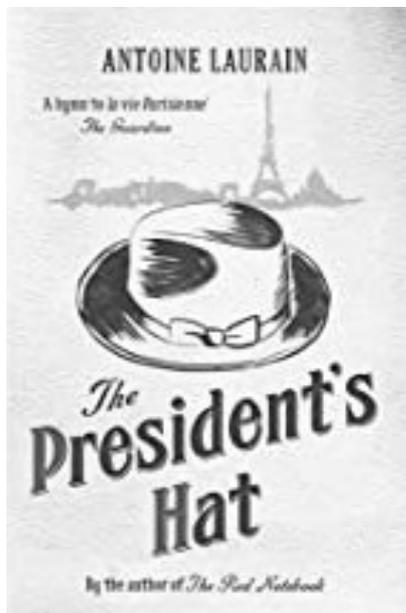
'I had expected to hate this book. But it was not like that. I found it an easy (but not facile) and enjoyable read. Because the bits in the past came more as flashbacks, because the self-centeredness was balanced by other characters' views of the same event it took me sailing over the expected hurdles. It is very well written, and the descriptions are vivid.'

'A haunting story of loss and desire. I loved it. Although I thought Claudia was not a nice woman, I admired her stoicism and sense of purpose. And her amazing intelligence. The conflict of time and memory are explored. You will be fascinated and enriched because she shared her life with you, the reader.'

'I enjoyed 'Moon Tiger'. Although Claudia is not all that likeable, I was intrigued by her life. Nothing about her life and experiences was straightforward and she was such an interesting character that I became involved with her thoughts about her life. That one period of happiness, with Tom, reminded me of 'Winter in Madrid'. Both novels were set in a time of conflict, and in both the central relationship ended sadly.'

'I'm not sure what I made of 'Moon Tiger'. At first, I found the style of writing difficult to read and follow until I made the effort to mentally pause at every full stop. Then I became absorbed by the descriptive pieces and the pictures they evoked.'

'Claudia's claim that she wanted to write a history of the world and her place in it, showed for me how fragile and momentary life is. History doesn't record the ordinary individual. It records the events and impacts of civilisations and their effects on other times. Claudia was trying to justify the importance of her life and actions when in truth, at the end, nothing endures. The last page of the novel records an empty bed in an empty room while the rest of life went on regardless. I didn't really warm to this book.'



'I'm also a bit weary of stories set in war time/conflict. I can't warm or relate to the central character, and I don't have that feeling of being desperate to find out what happens next which I usually get with a good book.'

'Only on chapter three and still cannot make top or tail of it, but I shall keep plodding on.'

The next Book Club read is, as they say, completely different. It's '**The President's Hat**' by **Antoine Laurain** and we're hoping to have read and reviewed it by **Wednesday 8th July**. We are told that it's funny, gripping, thoughtful – and short.

SHIRLEY PARISH BOOK CLUB *continued*

Despite lockdown, the Shirley Parish Book Club is still thriving – albeit via emails and telephone calls and maybe by Zoom meetings in the future. Who knows?

Everyone is welcome of course to read the books we are reading and then to write a sentence or two if the spirit moves – or not. Why not give it a go?

Ray Speakman

FLUSHED WITH SUCCESS!



All the Parish toilets are now twinned and we already have some funds towards tap twinning - so vital for communities facing Covid-19 without the sanitation we take for granted.

Kate Crocker

MAKING FABRIC BAGS FOR THE FOOD BANK

So many of you have phoned to offer card for the fabric bag bases, fabric or made-up bags. Thank you all.

I am now able to collect fabric and card or drop off to doorsteps fabric kits and instructions for making the bags which are still very much needed by the Sparkhill Foodbank and its satellites.

We have continued to provide many fabric bags to give people in need something of their own to be proud of and re-use and to reduce the number of plastic bags needed to make up the food parcels. Please contact me on 0121 705 3580 if you can help.



Chris Speakman

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YARD TO OUTSIDE ROOM

Before the lockdown there had been a number of working parties in the area behind Church House. All the weeds had been removed, the laurels on one side removed and much of the topsoil removed and used to fill up the many holes in the church yard. This was in preparation for work to commence to make the 'backyard' an oasis of calm for all to enjoy.

Ten weeks on, nature has taken over and the area is covered in weeds and the one laurel has even started to sprout. All our work gone to waste?



However, at the side of the shed amongst the wheelbarrows and dustbin a Calla lily is flowering. The Calla lily was named after a Greek word for beautiful - calla. However, the most common meaning is purity, holiness and faithfulness. It is commonly depicted in images of the Virgin Mary.

This one beautiful flower made me think that amongst all the weeds in the area and the difficult time we are living through, God shows his wonderful power through his creation.

Linda Pitt

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THE FRIENDS OF ST JAMES 100 CLUB

Congratulations to the June winners
£50 Kate Crocker £25 Hilary Beere

YARD TO OUTSIDE ROOM

Great news!

Last Autumn, Linda Pitt had another of her wonderful ideas.

We had been forced to close off access to the area behind Church House because of rats (now departed!) and the area looked drab and overgrown. Yet the space was needed more than ever with the steady growth of Messy Church, the regular JimmyTots sessions, meetings for Rainbows and Guides and lettings for community events. Older users of Church House would also benefit from a courtyard garden with seating and so we started to think about a project to turn the shabby yard into an 'outdoor room'.

Some donations have started us off and recently, we received a grant of £2,000 from the Allchurches Trust. To keep costs down, working parties have done a lot of preparation, clearing rubbish, cutting back overgrown shrubs and recycling soil to the churchyard to fill potholes. We have ideas and outline plans, including a safe play surface, plants giving colour and scent and seating. We might even be able to brighten up the garage door with a mural!

Church House belongs to all three congregations and we are interested in everyone's ideas as we develop a detailed plan. One expensive element is the need to renew or repair the fencing and we still need to do some fundraising if we include this.

Until lockdown eases further we cannot progress this immediately, but we can finalise plans and costings so that we can start later in the summer.

Watch this space!

Kate Crocker

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GOING DEEPER

I started a three-year course at Aston University in 2013 with one module, Reflective Practice, to be studied in each year. While undertaking research for an assignment I came across the spiritual exercises of Ignatius of Loyola. Having received a convent education, I was aware of Ignatius as the founder of the Jesuit order and the impact the order had in establishing schools, colleges and seminaries. Although this was not relevant to my assignment, I added a few notes about him to my ever-expanding list of topics to learn more about when I would have time available to delve into areas which interested me. Consequently, five years later (another course took up another two years), I read more about Ignatius, his spiritual exercises and particularly the Examen.

The Spiritual Exercises are a compilation of meditations, prayers and contemplative practices developed by Ignatius to help people deepen their relationship with God. The Examen is one of these exercises. The Jesuits were required to practice the Examen twice daily, at noon and at the end of the day. While there may be some who practice this, I undertake it once at the end of each day. The exercise provides a simple set of five introspective prompts to follow to help you see where God was active in your day. It takes me about fifteen minutes.

There are variations of the prompts and even Apps these days, but the following are the ones I use:

- 1) Become aware of God's presence**
- 2) Review the day with gratitude**
- 3) Pay attention to your emotions**
- 4) Choose one feature of the day and pray from it**
- 5) Look forward to tomorrow**

I am not sure if it is the correct way to use the Examen, but I write my responses down in a small notebook. Often just a single sentence or a couple of phrases. Praying silently has been an issue for me since my diagnosis of tinnitus and I find writing requires a degree of concentration which ensures the noises in my head do not intrude too much on my reflection.

When I first started to use the Examen, I found it surprisingly difficult to remember all the particulars of my daily life and to judge when and how God was present. Effectively, the process requires praying backwards and searching for God amidst my day. Currently, because of Covid-19 and the lockdown, life has been less hectic, and I find recalling the events of each day easier. I am also noticing the points at which I believe God has been in my life more frequently.

GOING DEEPER continued

The longer I have used the prayer I have become more aware of God's presence during the day. This has had an impact on how I am thinking and behaving. Perhaps I have become, as the Jesuits like to say, "contemplative in action".

Judith Chivers (a member of St John's congregation)

Would you like to share something that you have found helpful in the next magazine? Please email - shirleyparishmagazine@gmail.com by Wednesday 12th August

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STRANGERS ARE FRIENDS WE HAVEN'T MET YET

Here's something I read on the Internet today – a story to cheer us up and inspire us to talk to each other ...

A young woman said ...

On Sunday a man in his 70's walked past our house while I was pottering in the front garden and my boyfriend was up a ladder cleaning the windows. The man's name was Matthew, and he said some nice things about my hanging baskets.

He said that he had just walked all the way to Morrisons (about 25 minutes walk each way) for some yeast for his bread maker, but they didn't have any. We gave him some of ours – enough to make a couple of loaves – and put it in a little plastic tub. He told us he was 74, and his wife had died last year so he was now living alone. His garden was his pride and joy, and had kept him busy through the lockdown.

A few days later I saw some yeast in a shop and bought a pack just in case I saw him again. Today he popped by to return the tub, and told me it was a South African tradition when returning a borrowed container to fill it with good things. (see picture as to how the container was returned).

He had moved to the UK in the 1960s to be with his partner who had visited friends in South Africa, met Matthew and fallen in love with him. They had been together for 54 years.

We have now arranged to go and sit in his garden – and I can't wait to find out more about him and his life.

So perhaps strangers are simply friends we haven't met yet – and what a wonderful tradition about returning borrowed containers!

And here's the box as returned!

Reverend Paul Day



SMILE LINE

Customer: "I've been ringing you on 0700 2300 for two days. Why didn't you answer?"

Travel agent: "Where did you get that number from, sir?"

Customer: "It's there on the door to your Travel Centre."

Operator: "Sir, they are our opening hours."



WHAT SHOULD A CHURCH YARD LOOK LIKE?

People have different ideas. Some favour a formal, very tidy appearance, with closely mown grass and trimmed edges. This is quite hard to achieve, since not many graves are regularly tended and even if volunteers can mow between the (irregular) rows of headstones, there is no capacity to rake or edge around individual monuments. Floral tributes and Christmas wreaths look beautiful when fresh but sad and faded within a few weeks.

Another view is that churchyards could be left to go wild and so benefit wildlife and reducing maintenance to one strimming and raking session in August. When wild grasses are high and flowers in bloom this can look attractive but access to families is more difficult and long grass conceals uneven ground, creating a trip hazard. Also, untended can look as if we don't care.



The answer is probably a mix. It is nice to have tidy paths and formal gardens. Our mowers and strimmers keep much of the churchyard grass short. This year we have left an area to grow unchecked until August so that wildlife is undisturbed.

By the time we were able to access the churchyard after lockdown, the area to the west of the church was very overgrown so we are trying to strim paths to give safer access to tended graves while leaving the rest of the area to nature. Will this work? They look inviting, I think.

We need to keep experimenting, to arrive at a plan that is sustainable and balances the need of those wishing to visit graves with the opportunity to encourage wildlife.

Many thanks to all those who have worked so hard to tidy the churchyard post-lockdown.

Kate Crocker

SEPTEMBER 2020 PARISH MAGAZINE

DEADLINE FOR INFORMATION & ARTICLES - Wednesday 12th August

PUBLICATION DATE - Saturday 29th August

HELPING THOSE IN NEED

HOMELESS APPEAL: Your generosity has filled our car three times over with donations of bedding, towels, ward clothes and toiletries for Nurse Jackie's "lads" as she calls them – the homeless people (usually men) admitted to Heartlands and Solihull Hospitals over the past months when the usual resource and charitable centres have been closed. A huge, huge 'Thank You' – you should pride yourselves on having taken the opportunity to tidy all those airing cupboards and drawers! Nurse Jackie was overwhelmed by the amount she collected from us. Including a small fridge, vital for a diabetic lad being rehoused where the Landlord insisted that he should provide his own fridge.

FOOD BANK: as you may recall David and I no longer work at "our" Food Bank though we still send the material bags made by you, plus the bags of food which folks leave on our doorstep. Numbers of clients have increased dramatically these past months as more folks lose their jobs and transfer (eventually) onto Universal Credit. (Nearly 40% of clients have serious benefit delays or problems: the rest are where low wages do not cover essential items such as food and rent.)

A trial run has been undertaken at St. John's satellite Food Bank with the distinctive red application vouchers being replaced where possible by online applications. The Trussell Trust has supplied each of the satellite Food Banks with a Tablet and through these the Referral Agencies, such as Midwives, G.P.'s, Clergy, Teachers and Social Workers, can send the details of their clients and their needs; the clients then get a code which they quote when going to pick up their parcels. This is a completely new way of working and would be marvellous if it reduces paperwork and vouchers being lost. The warehouse in Tyseley has been reorganised too, with more racking and greater streamlining of the labour-intensive task of dating and packing.

We have worked for the Food Bank for many years, even before it was formally adopted and financed by the Trussell Trust and feel quite frustrated that we cannot help at a time of great need. Maybe the time will come when we work there again, who knows in this very uncertain world?

But in the meantime, an appeal for the usual shortages – tinned fruit, small bags of sugar, UHT milk (full fat), Long Life fruit juice and tinned rice pudding. The collecting bins at Tesco's, Sainsbury's and Waitrose are still receiving your donations - otherwise, feel free to leave them with us and we will send them on.



HELPING THOSE IN NEED continued

ADAVU: Liisa and her team have been trying to support their traumatised clients through phone calls, emails and letters. Not only are there physical health problems being battled but very serious mental health ones have appeared too, which, in normal times would be supported by professionals. I think back to the happy day we had giving them their Christmas party last year, distributing your donations from the Gift Tree and producing big, very big, supplies of cakes for their enjoyment. I have usually started to secrete a few small items in the bottom of my wardrobe by now but ... who knows what situation we shall be in by then?



Thank you for your support, now and in the past, Elizabeth Paice

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I'VE LEARNED ...

That the best classroom in the world is at the feet of an elderly person.

That when you're in love, it shows.

That just one person saying to me, 'You've made my day!' makes my day.

That having a child fall asleep in your arms is one of the most peaceful feelings in the world.

That being kind is more important than being right.

That you should never say no to a gift from a child.

That I can always pray for someone when I don't have the strength to help them in any other way.

That no matter how serious your life requires you to be, everyone needs a friend to act goofy with.

That sometimes all a person needs is a hand to hold and a heart to understand.

That simple walks with my father around the block on summer nights when I was a child did wonders for me as an adult.

That life is like a roll of toilet paper - the closer it gets to the end, the faster it goes.

That money doesn't buy class.

That it's those small daily happenings that make life so spectacular.

That under everyone's hard shell is someone who wants to be appreciated and loved.

That to ignore the facts does not change the facts.

That when you plan to get even with someone, you are only letting that person continue to hurt you.

That love, not time, heals all wounds.

That the easiest way for me to grow as a person is to surround myself with people smarter than I am.

That everyone you meet deserves to be greeted with a smile.

That no one is perfect until you fall in love with them.

That life is tough, but I'm tougher.

That opportunities are never lost; someone will take the ones you miss.

That when you harbour bitterness, happiness will dock elsewhere.

I'VE LEARNED ...

That I wish I could have told my Mom that I love her one more time before she passed away.

That one should keep his words both soft and tender, because tomorrow he may have to eat them.

That a smile is an inexpensive way to improve your looks.

That when your newly born grandchild holds your little finger in his little fist, you're hooked for life.

“No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted.”

-Aesop

That everyone wants to live on top of the mountain, but all the happiness and growth occurs while you're climbing it.

That the less time I have to work with, the more things I get done.

By Andy Rooney and shared by Ann Blackford

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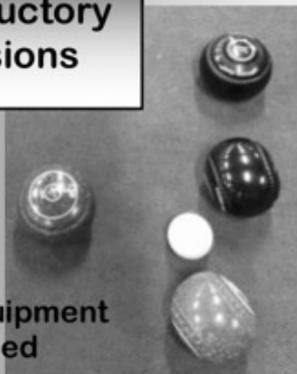
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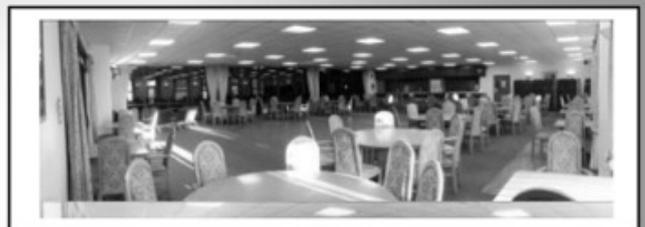
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FRENCH VEGETABLE SOUP

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INGREDIENTS *(for 4 portions)*

25g/1oz butter
 225g/8oz leeks - chopped
 225g/8oz potatoes - chopped
 225g/8oz carrots - chopped
 salt & freshly ground black pepper
 1 litre/1¾ pints water or vegetable stock
 chopped fresh parsley - to garnish



METHOD

1. Melt the butter in a pan, then add the leeks, potatoes and carrots. Stir for 2-3 minutes to coat the vegetables, season, then add the water or stock and simmer for 20 minutes.
2. Transfer to a food processor or blender and process until blended but still with some texture. (It can also be served without liquidising, if you prefer.) Spoon into bowls and sprinkle with parsley.

Can be frozen for up to one month.

Shared by Jill Abbey

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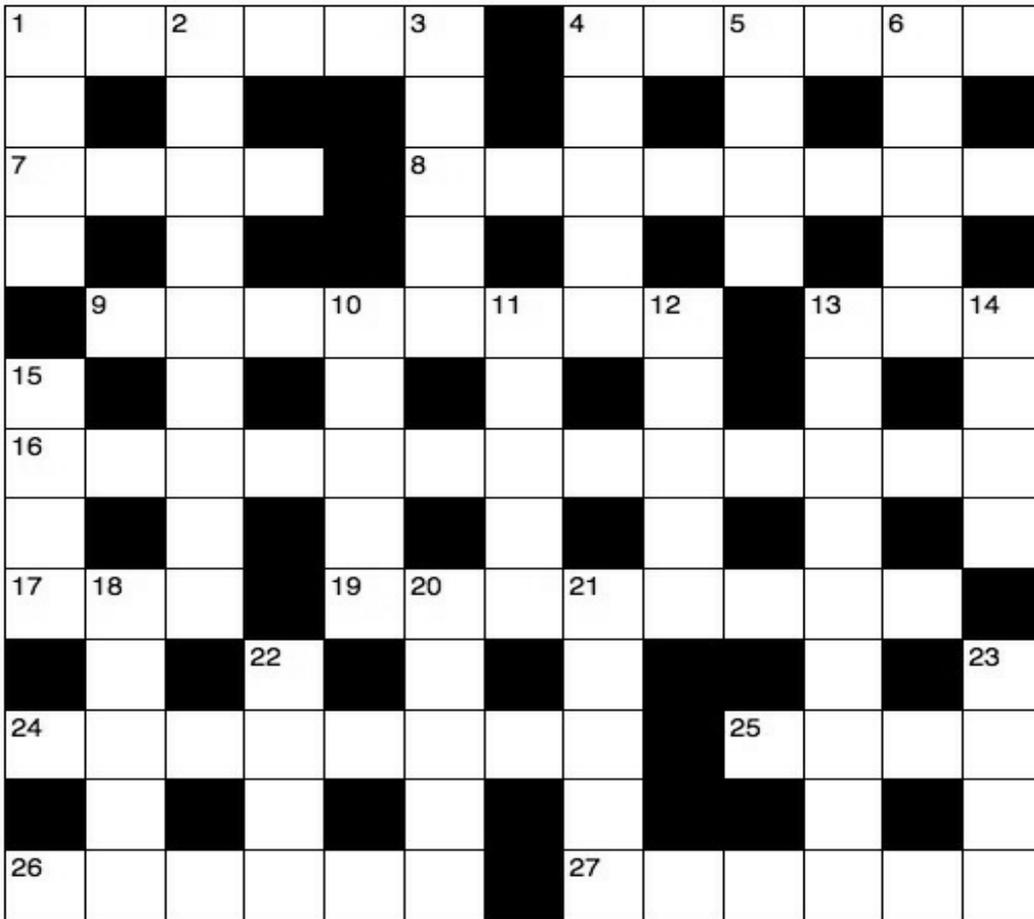
Across

- 1 'I pray that out of his glorious — he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being' (Ephesians 3:16) (6)
- 4 'Saul's father Kish and — father Ner were sons of Abiel' (1 Samuel 14:51) (6)
- 7 'Praise the Lord, O my — ' (Psalm 103:1) (4)
- 8 See 5 Down
- 9 Laws (1 Kings 11:33) (8)
- 13 'Who of you by worrying can — a single hour to his life?' (Luke 12:25) (3)
- 16 Artistry (Exodus 31:5) (13)
- 17 'Your young men will see visions, your — men will dream dreams' (Acts 2:17) (3)
- 19 How David described his Lord (Psalm 19:14) (8)
- 24 'If this city is built and its — — restored, you will be left with nothing in Trans-Euphrates' (Ezra 4:16) (5,3)
- 25 'The holy Scriptures, which are able to make you — for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus' (2 Timothy 3:15) (4)
- 26 Intended destination of arrows (Lamentations 3:12) (6)
- 27 Eve hit (anag.) (6)

Down

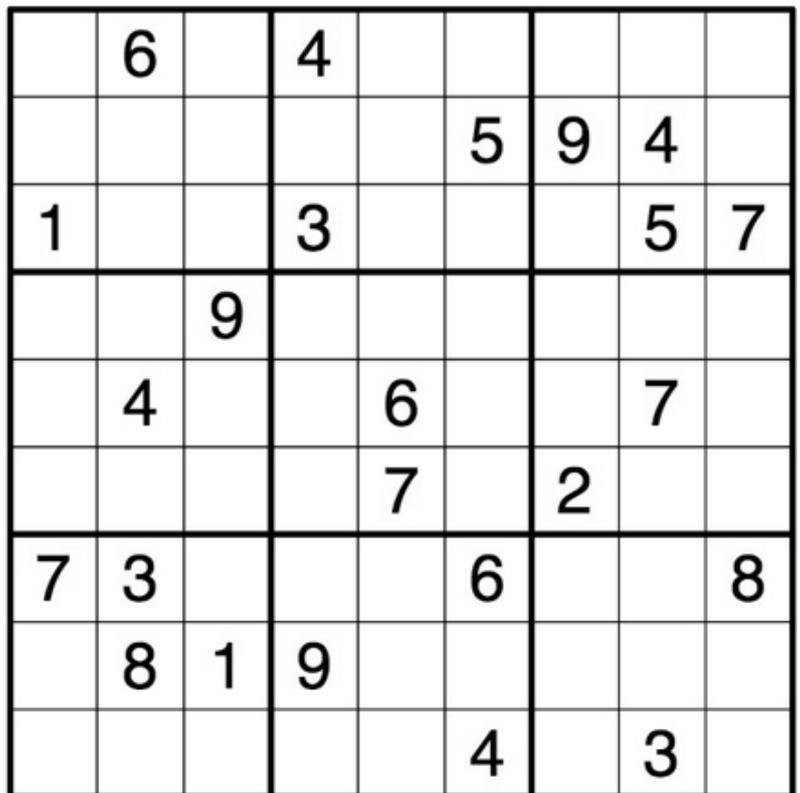
- 1 'For I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find — for your souls' (Matthew 11:29) (4)
- 2 Where Peter was when he denied Christ three times (Luke 22:55) (9)
- 3 Remarkable early 20th-century Indian evangelist, a convert from Hinduism, — Sundar Singh (5)
- 4 'Now the king had put the officer on whose — — leaned in charge of the gate' (2 Kings 7:17) (3,2)
- 5 and 8 Across The Lover describes this facial feature of the Beloved thus: 'Your — is like the tower of Lebanon looking towards — ' (Song of Songs 7:4) (4,8)
- 6 'Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled — your waist' (Ephesians 6:14) (5)
- 10 Trout (anag.) (5)
- 11 Easily frightened (1 Thessalonians 5:14) (5)
- 12 The ability to perceive (Ecclesiastes 10:3) (5)
- 13 One of the clans descended from Benjamin (Numbers 26:38) (9)
- 14 "It is one of the Twelve," he replied, "one who — bread into the bowl with me"" (Mark 14:20) (4)
- 15 Resound (Zephaniah 2:14) (4)
- 18 Traditional seat of the Dalai Lama (5)
- 20 Precise (John 4:53) (5)

THIS MONTH'S CROSSWORD & SUDOKU



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Answers are on page 31

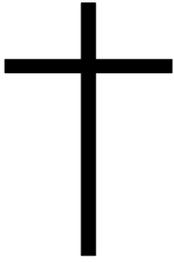


21 Build (Ezekiel 4:2) (5)

22 Beat harshly (Acts 22:25) (4)

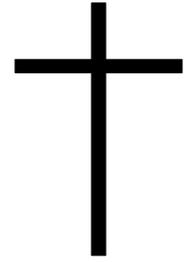
23 Darius, who succeeded Belshazzar as king of the Babylonians, was one (Daniel 5:31) (4)

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WORDSEARCH - MARY MAGDALENE - JULY 22nd

It is easy to understand the popularity of Mary Magdalene over the centuries: she is the patron saint both of repentant sinners and of the contemplative life. Jesus drove seven demons from Mary, who came from near Tiberius in Galilee. Mary has also sometimes been identified with the woman who anointed Christ's feet in the house of Simon.

She became His follower to the bitter end. She followed Him to Jerusalem and was present during the crucifixion, standing heart-broken at the foot of the cross. Her love for Jesus did not end there, for she went to the tomb to anoint His body on the Sunday morning. Such faithful, humble devotion was richly repaid; it gave her a unique privilege among all mankind: she was the first person to whom the Risen Lord appeared on Easter Sunday morning. She thought He was the gardener at first.

Jesus told Mary to go to His disciples and tell them about His return to Heaven. She was obedient and became the first emissary of the resurrection. In those days, the witness of a woman was worthless. Despite ridicule, Mary had the courage to speak about Jesus in a place of great disbelief.

WORDSEARCH - MARY MAGDALENE

ANOINT
APPEARED
BODY
CONTEMPLATIVE
COURAGE
CROSS
CRUCIFIXION
DEMONS
DEVOTION
DISCIPLES

EASTER
END
FAITHFUL
FEET
FOLLOWER
FOOT
GALILEE
GARDENER
HUMBLE
JERUSALEM

LIFE
MANKIND
MARY
MORNING
OBEDIENT
PATRON
PRIVILEGE
REPENTANT
RESURRECTION
RETURN

RISEN
SEVEN
SINNERS
TIBERIUS
TOMB
WITNESS

*Answers are
on page 31*

E	N	E	M	S	J	B	D	B	E	E	R	E	S	T	Y	L
E	O	I	H	A	E	W	I	F	S	V	I	G	N	N	E	G
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PUZZLE ANSWERS

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2	7	9	8	4	3	5	1	6
5	4	8	2	6	1	3	7	9
6	1	3	5	7	9	2	8	4
7	3	2	1	5	6	4	9	8
4	8	1	9	3	2	7	6	5
9	5	6	7	8	4	1	3	2

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T	R	L	X	B	D	E	L	P	D	G	O	C	W	O	E	I
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I	I	L	R	M	E	R	H	G	A	R	D	E	N	E	R	T
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T	T	T	R	O	S	E	V	E	N	A	D	N	D	S	K	R



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PARISH FUNERALS - JUNE

4th	Gail Allport	61
5th	Beryl Ager	87
11th	Cecilia Keeble	93
15th	Jean Rogers	91
15th	Anthony John Hinett	86
16th	Eileen Mary Moore	95
16th	Dennis Arthur Ayres	91
19th	Michael Pinnick	85



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A TRIBUTE TO THELMA FROM ST JAMES' CHOIR

Thelma Challens, who died on 8th May, was a faithful member of our choir for many years. Her sweet reliable voice reflected her personality and we missed her presence when ill health caused her to stop singing with us.

A wise and calm woman, she had a knack of knowing what people needed and would often find something from her life to share with others.

She showed great fortitude when her health was failing but still cared with patient love for Ben, her partner and friend.

May she rest in peace.

Fond memories from Kevin, Kate, Mary, Jill, Ann Randall, Ann Leonard and Carol.



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SHIRLEY PARISH GUIDE *continued*

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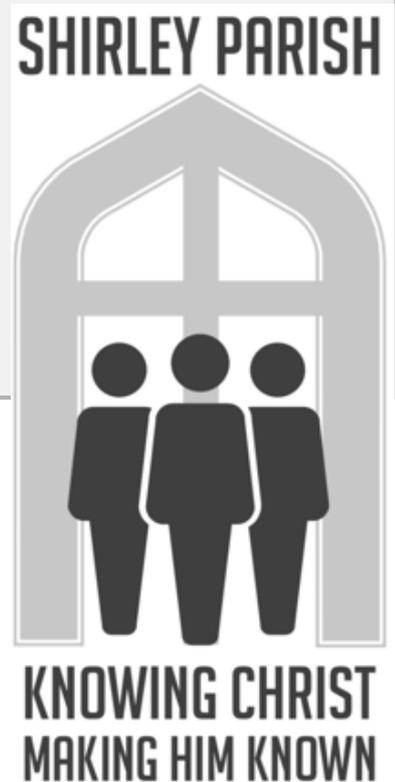
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Deputy Wardens - Christ the King Church
 Denise Smith Graham Smith
 Tel: 01564 822606 Tel: 01564 822606

Deputy Wardens - St John the Divine Church
 Linda Alford Sue Barnard
 Tel: 0121 430 4785 Tel: 0121 430 4453



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 Colin Baugh
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Organist & Choirmaster - St James the Great Church
 Kevin Gill
 Tel: 0121 705 0987

Organist - St John the Divine Church
 Shirley Beedon

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 Tel: 0121 745 8896 (c/o Parish Office)

SAFEGUARDING Tel: 0121 745 8896 (c/o Parish Office)

Registered Charity number 1131912



C Bastock Ltd

FUNERAL DIRECTORS

Independent Family Owned Funeral Directors since 1856

Shirley Funeral Home

100, Stratford Road
Shirley. B90 3BH
0121 726 2626

Solihull Funeral Home

67-71 Warwick Road,
Solihull. B92 7HP
0121 706 4040

Yardley Funeral Home

112 Church Road,
Yardley. B26 8UX
0121 784 3230



Whether you have a traditional, contemporary or eco funeral in mind our family are here to help you. Our dedicated team will guide you through the choices and decisions to ensure a unique and befitting funeral.

Specialist provider of Pre-Paid Funeral Plans
Peace of mind with secure affordable options

Free, no obligation help and advice.

www.cbastock.co.uk



Bastock & Bruce Ltd

FUNERAL DIRECTORS



A partnership between C. Bastock Ltd and Bruce Bragg

Bruce is now the only remaining member of the Bragg family still in the industry following the sale of the family business in Shirley. This partnership brings a family business to Knowle with generations of experience ensuring the truly personal service you would expect from an independent business.

Knowle Funeral Home

Brisker Court, 1685, High Street, Knowle. B93 0LN

01564 335577 (24 hour)

Serving all the surrounding areas

If Knowle is difficult to get to we will happily visit you at home or you can meet Bruce at any of the Bastock funeral homes.

www.bastockandbruce.co.uk