

And let us not grow weary of doing
good, for in due season we will reap,
if we do not give up.

GALATIANS 6.9

WORTH PARISH MAGAZINE



£1.00 October- November 2020

ST BARNABAS', POUND HILL
ST NICHOLAS', WORTH
Reg. Charity No. 1131090

CLERGY SERVING THE PARISH

Rector	Fr Michael Boag	rector@worthparish.org	01293 882229
Associate Vicar	Revd Sarah Upchurch	vicarstb@worthparish.org	01293 524804
Assistant Priest	Revd Gordon Parry	gordonmwparry@btinternet.com	07802 432398
Curate	Revd Greta	curate@worthparish.org	

REGULAR SERVICES

Our regular services are shown below; a calendar at the back of this magazine details special services, groups and events happening throughout the next two months.

	St Nicholas', Worth	St Barnabas', Pound Hill
Sundays	08.00 Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer, 1662) 10.00 Said Eucharist (Common Worship)	10.00 1st, 2nd and 3rd Sundays - Eucharist 10.00 4th Sundays Child- friendly Eucharist
Tuesdays		10.30 Eucharist
Wednesday		
Thursdays	10.30 Eucharist	
Saturday		

And here's what's happening in the café each week:

St Barnabas' Cafe RH10 7DY		
Tuesdays	10.30 - 12.00	Closed
Thursdays	14.00 - 16.00	for
Fridays	10.30 - 12.30	the
	12.30	time
Saturdays	10.30 - 12.00	being

CONTACT US

If you have a Baptism, Wedding or general enquiry, please call the office on 0300 111 8150 or email [**office@worthparish.org**](mailto:office@worthparish.org)

To contact Fr Michael, please phone 01293 882229 Tuesday to Sunday or email him at [**rector@worthparish.org**](mailto:rector@worthparish.org)

To contact Revd Sarah, please phone 01293 524804 Tuesday to Sunday or email her at [**vicarstb@worthparish.org**](mailto:vicarstb@worthparish.org)

To contact Revd Gordon, phone 07802 432398.



www.worthparish.org



0300 111 8150



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All gatherings
of six (7) or more

Shall henceforth be
against the law

with NO exceptions
to these rules

(except, that is,
for work and schools) AND CHURCH SERVICES !

A note from your Ed

Well.... I was rather hoping that we might have a new editor by now, but no-one has come forward so, in order to keep our advertisers happy, I have agreed to do two more. If we could find a volunteer to sort the advertising (mainly in Jan and a little during the year, all by email) and a volunteer to chase for copy, so that it would only take me a weekend to do (as this one has) then I could be persuaded to continue..... come on, if you have enjoyed reading this then surely this is not too much to ask???



Sue x

Rector's Rubric

The aspect of autumn I generally find hardest to get used to isn't the drop in temperature but the reduction in daylight. It catches me every year. One moment there's a lingering twilight long enough to enjoy in the garden, next it's cut short like a suddenly switched-off light.

Light and dark are recurring themes in John's Gospel. In chapter nine, Jesus happens to meet a blind man. St John emphasises that 'he is blind from birth'; that is to say, it is not a temporary condition or one he could have avoided. Without being asked to, Jesus heals the blind man. Perhaps he does so in order to correct the disciples' casual assumption that the man's lack of sight is a symptom of either his, or his parents', sinfulness. Jesus uses the metaphor of darkness, of blindness, to illustrate that he is the light of the world, sent by God to shine the light of God's love, mercy and truth into the darkest corners of human existence.

Light is a good, easy metaphor to use. When you see light, you don't need any additional confirmation. You know it is light. It is obvious what it is. When there is light in the room, it's not hard to find the source. Nor do we talk of the presence of darkness. Darkness is the absence of light. When we turn on the light, darkness disappears.

Jesus makes mud from the dust of the earth with his saliva; a direct reminder of the creation of man in the book Genesis, when the Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground. So it is Jesus who gives new light, new life, to one who has never seen the beauty of God's creation.

Darkness is the other metaphor. Nowadays we don't often spend much time in the real dark. Even in sparsely populated areas there'll be some street lights or headlights to help us find our way. But at times it can be very dark indeed in our minds. Circumstances can seem hopeless. We can sink into depths of depression, which can be a very dark place. And yet however dark the darkness, God's light continues to shine, and it is his will that it should, shine into each and every kind of darkness we experience.

The story of the man born blind works on a number of levels. The very mud of creation, the same earth to which we will one day return, Jesus uses to bring sight and a new life. The man's eyes gradually open to sight. With his eyes now open, the man learns to see and his new eyes see prejudice and ignorance around him. He sees the darkness of false judgment. He also then begins to see he has been brought into a new vision of the world and the gift he has received has come from the one who is the Light of the World. The one he now sees and believes in. As he says to the questioning and disbelieving around him: 'One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.'

In the darker months of the year, getting outside when the sun is shining, and in the evening lighting candles, helps me adjust to the longer nights and reminds me to thank God for the light of his love, shining all around.

If I say, 'Surely the darkness shall cover me,
and the light around me become night',
even the darkness is not dark to you;
the night is as bright as the day,
for darkness is as light to you.

Psalm 139 vs 11-12

Fr Michael

TIMES PAST & CURRENT



mothers union
Christian care for families worldwide

MOTHERS' UNION CARAVANS (get away from it all)

Mothers' Union has two caravans, for families who would find it difficult to have a holiday, one at Winchelsea Beach and the other at Selsey. This is one of the local charities that Worth and Pound Hill MU support by having coffee mornings, raffles and cream teas.



Normally during term time others can use them for £20 a night to help pay for the upkeep. Since Covid 19 both sites have been closed and bookings had to be cancelled including a two-night stay in June which David and I had booked. The sites reopened at the end of July and MU were trying to re-book people.

We had a two-night stay at the end of August at the Winchelsea site. The seas were grey and very rough; you could hardly stand up walking along the shingle embankment.

The winds were up to 80 miles an hour. The caravan is on the edge the site very close to the sea. It is very well equipped with crockery, cooking equipment and cleaning materials. Since the site has reopened, the MU are having the caravan deep cleaned and allow two days between guests.

I only cooked breakfasts. David had found a lovely pub in a village a few miles away where we had booked in for an evening meal. We brought local dressed crab and had it with salad on the next night which made our two nights very enjoyable.

The site has privately owned caravans mostly kept very tidy and well-looked after. The site was clean and tidy with 2 children's play areas and a large club house, indoor swimming pool and shop on site. These were closed because of the virus, but we were told that the club house normally serves basic meals and has a bar and, sometimes, live entertainment.

We went into Rye which has lots of quaint shops and cafes all following the rules which only allow so many people in at a time depending on the size of property. There are lots of interesting places that you can visit near the site. Further afield is Hastings with lots of history to explore. It was the first time we had been out since March except for our walks and shopping, and it stopped us feeling like hermits. Most people were obeying the rules and we now feel perhaps we can be a little bit more adventurous with our outings.



If you know of any families you feel would benefit from a holiday by the sea during school holidays, or anyone that would like to use the caravan outside holiday periods, please speak to Joan Tick or Mary Fry who then could pass on your details to the organisers.

Mary Fry

A View from a Pew

Many of us, but by no means all, are coming back to 'real' services. I have now adopted the 08.00 at St Nic's for my 'regular' service, fewer people and socially distanced (most of the time). I then pick up the 'beginning, sermon and end' of three other services – St Barnabas (of course), St Mary's in West Moors (one of the best in my opinion) and the newly added Gauzebrook Group, where Adam Beaumont has recently been appointed. It has been very interesting to listen to all the different sermons based on the same reading – having said that, this is my limit I am totally sermoned out after that and very ready to get my life back.

What are the rest of you doing? Perhaps you would like to give a different perspective – Copy date for the next mag is 19 Nov – inundate me!

Sue

St Nicholas' Circle



Before the virus a number of our members were saying how difficult it was to get out on dark and cold nights. Consequently, we were moving to only having talks from March to October. With lockdown we have been unable to meet since March and all talks into the future have been cancelled. As we enter the autumn and winter months it is becoming ever more challenging to see how we can restart the group in the current situation

However, we have the ability to become creative, we can embrace the situation, old dogs can learn new tricks and we can find ways that we can keep going. Anyone who has watched TV this year must have come across Zoom. We are able to organise talks over Zoom, with a follow-up discussion.

There will be a 'Desert Island Special' on Zoom on Thursday 3 Dec. Please contact the Parish Office on 0300 111 8150 or me on max.perry@datamax.co.uk to receive the link. Advance instruction can be given to anyone using Zoom for the first time, just ask. As we have found with our new virtual quizzes, distance is no longer a barrier, if you have friends or family further afield they will be very welcome to 'join us virtually' – I know that Sue's mum for one will be there and she is 89! All that will be different will be the venue and the need to provide your own coffee/tea and biscuits (or even G&T!).

In the future we can arrange a mix of speakers on Zoom (no travel expenses necessary!) if we can get an audience of 12+ people. The Circle is open to everyone and there has never been a better time to join. Membership fees have been suspended for at least 6 months. If there are any subjects about which you would like to hear, also please tell me.

Max

Ringling

The COVID-19 shutdown in March meant that there has been no ringing at St Nicholas' since then. Even with the easing of restrictions in July, ringing has not been practical for a number of reasons. Firstly, as you will probably have seen, the tower is shrouded with scaffolding. More than that though, under national rules, any ringing has to be socially distanced and for no more than 15 minutes prior to service. Social distancing (at 2 metres) is not very easy in our small ringing room. Without actually going up to measure it, I would guess that we could only ring three bells at best (after carrying out a mandatory and comprehensive risk assessment). Added to that, ventilation is not particularly good anyway!

Never mind that there was no 10:00 service to ring for anyway!

However, since the 10:00 Sunday morning service was re-introduced, the congregation has been welcomed back by the sound of Worth bells being rung! You may ask how this is possible given the above. Every Sunday morning since 16 August, you will have seen me sitting in the churchyard armed with a Bluetooth speaker and my phone, on which I have a recording of the bells from 1983, broadcasting the sound of the bells ringing for 20 minutes before the service. Oh, the wonders of modern technology! (After my first Sunday ring, I decided that ear defenders would be a good idea; and a crossword to keep me occupied.) One of our ringers has asked if they have been permanently furloughed, the answer to which is "no" – we plan to be back as soon as we can. In the meantime, we are doing what we can to provide some semblance of normality.



Using this approach we have also been able to "ring" for the two weddings which have taken place during lockdown. A wedding would not be complete without the sound of bells as the couple emerge from the West Door.

As for the ringers themselves, our fortnightly Zoom meeting continues, but with more chatting and not so much virtual ringing on the internet platform called "Ringing Room".

Neil Dobson

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE PARISH?

PCC 23 Sept 2020



The minutes of our last meeting, held in the Pastoral Centre on 29 January were circulated and because of the current COVID restrictions it was decided to hold the meeting by email. Papers and reports were then circulated among members and a week given for discussion and decision. Sheila proposed simplifying our accounts by closing or amalgamating similar funds, where there is no conflict of interest or purpose. The Thompson Trust, which is a bequest to maintain Thompson family memorials would be amalgamated into the churchyard fund, which is already a restricted fund to maintain the whole churchyard. The Income and Expenditure Statement distributed shows the Parish is running at an operational loss. While our building projects

have been very generously supported, the day-to-day running of the Parish, as of 19 September 2020 stands at a £7,102.00 deficit. We will be encouraging more regular giving, especially through the Parish Giving Scheme.

Gerald reported on recent projects at St Nicholas', including the new Garden of Remembrance, which will be completed in time for the Bishop of Chichester's visit on 4 October and we noted with delight the visit by Bishop Ruth, the new Bishop of Horsham, on 27 September, to ordain Greta Sawyer, the first woman to be ordained in Worth church and ordained by a woman, who herself was consecrated this summer by the first woman Bishop of London. *Fr Michael*

St Barnabas' Refurbishment

There is not a great deal to add since my last report featured in the July/August/September magazine.

Following on from the DAC's (Diocesan Advisory Committee) approval of our project (early April) it is necessary for us to display a Notice of our intended works. We were advised to wait to do this until after the 'lockdown'. This Notice has now been displayed at St Barnabas', on the Parish website and on Facebook since the beginning of August. If anyone has any objections to our proposed work they had until 5 September to contact the Registrar and make these objections known. The request for formal approval and grant of the Faculty will follow in early September.

In early June, when it was evident that we do not currently have sufficient funds to complete the whole project, it was suggested that we could proceed with a phased approach, starting with the Pastoral Centre works. It was also suggested that we might consider a new more environmentally friendly heating system for the Pastoral Centre, the upstairs offices, the church and the downstairs meeting room. This would require a further

faculty application, but does not prevent the refurbishment of the Pastoral Centre from going ahead. Heating improvements are still under consideration.

On 20 August Sarah Goad, architect's technician, of Cowan's, our church architect, contacted two of the builders that had previously tendered for the whole project to re-tender for just the Pastoral Centre part of the project. We have now received revised prices and these are under discussion.

In July we received good news from Allchurches Trust – they have donated £3,000 to our project.

We still need much more funding so please do support us. Due to the coronavirus our fund-raising events have been put on hold for the immediate future. We welcome any financial gifts to the project.

If you are able to donate towards our project we would be hugely grateful. Our bank details are:

Worth PCC, Sort Code: 48-18-22 Account Number: 61223372 with the reference: "St. B project" *Phyl*

St Nicholas' New Garden of Remembrance



Work started on the St Nicholas' Garden of Remembrance on Monday 24 August. During the fortnight that followed, a new path was built and four semi-mature trees, along with some shrubs were planted. Then, on Thursday 10 September, tarmac was laid on the new path. Here's the team who did it, on day one, from left to right, Jason, Scott and Charlie, who were later joined by Raif, Connor & Ryan.

They cut the heart-shaped path in just one day, then barrowed several small mountains of aggregate and topsoil down from the lychgate. A metal edging was added to help keep the path intact and the four big trees planted: magnolia, cherry, crab apple and blackthorn. Also, planted were five white-flowering rosemaries (one for each of five oak benches), four white climbing roses (two at the entrance and two on the brick wall), a philadelphus and osmanthus, and to come will be a great many white-flowering bulbs to add interest throughout the year. At the end of the fortnight, 40kg of grass seed was sown and the top surface of the path, being laid next, will be of (permeable) resin-bound gravel. Five oak benches will be bolted down in the specially built bays beside the path.

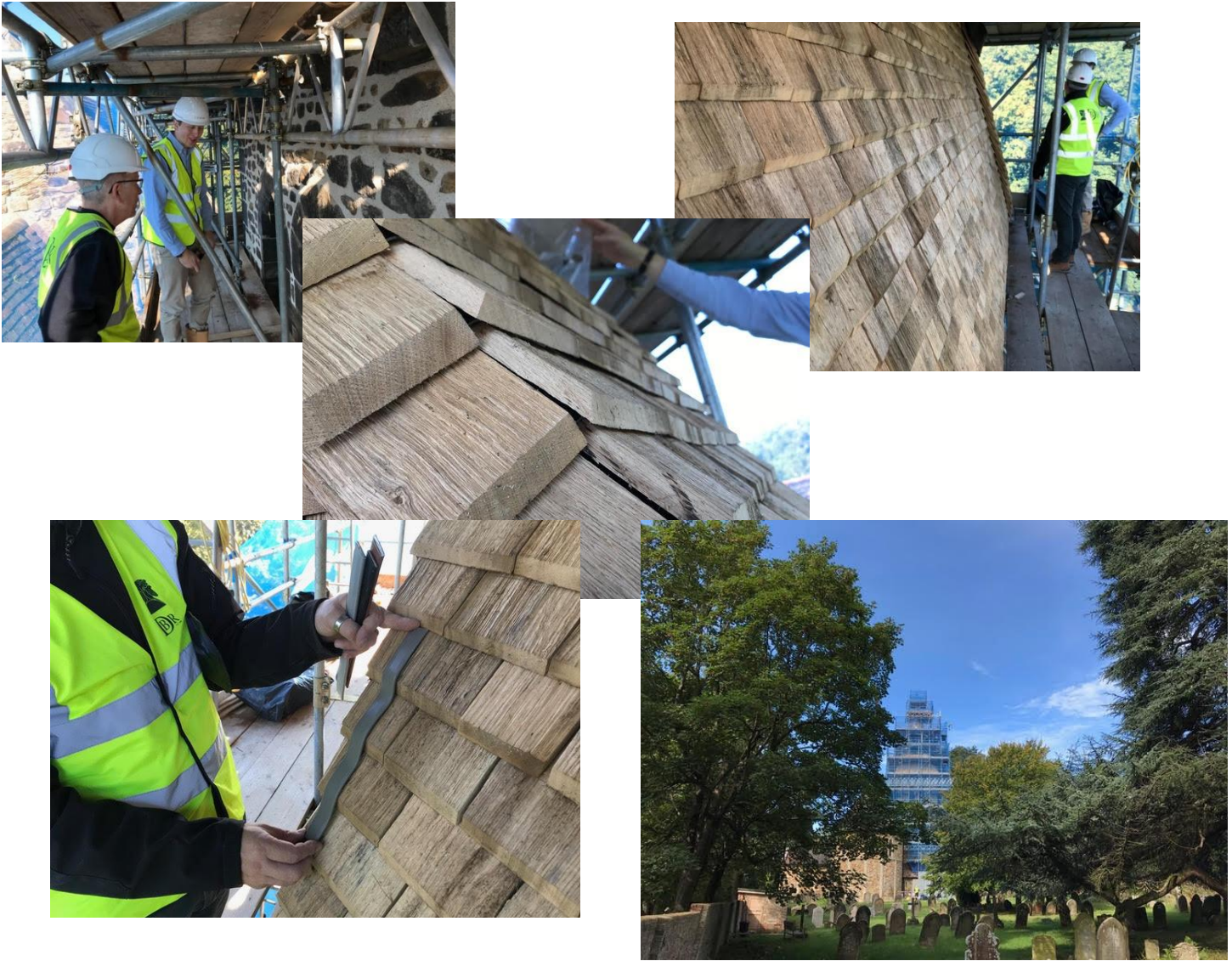
The new garden will become an extension to the old churchyard and so will be consecrated by the Lord Bishop of Chichester at a special service, to be held in the garden on Sunday 4 October, at 10:15. Everyone is welcome to attend and will be asked to stand on the path (and to keep off the new grass!) and in the meantime a lot of watering is needed...

Fr Michael



The A Team

What's happening up the tower!



Twin that Bin!

You have probably heard of Toilet Twinning – indeed there are a few around the parish. Here is a related idea: Bin Twinning.

Almost a quarter of the world's population, about two billion people, have no waste collection facilities. It is estimated that someone dies every 30 seconds from diseases associated with poorly managed waste. Rubbish is often burned, or dumped in streets or waterways.

This campaign, launched by Tearfund, supports waste-collection projects in Haiti, Pakistan and Uganda. You are asked to donate £45 and get a "bin twin" sticker for your own bin.

To find out more, visit bintwinning.org

It's a rubbish idea!

Graham & Sue



How goes the Parish Finances?

In the past I have often been asked “How are we doing?” in relation to church finances. This hasn’t happened for some time for reasons of which all are aware.

I am addressing only the routine Parish Income and Expenditure and not the “Restricted Funds”. The answer, as I predicted in the little leaflet I drafted earlier in the year, is not very well.

The good news, and I always like to start with that, is that our routine “giving” in 2020 is only £1,000 down against the previous year. There have been a number of very generous donations to the Parish and many thanks to those who have “put their hand in their pocket”. Thanks have been passed to all those I have identified and thanks again to them and also those who, perhaps, I have failed to identify.

The bad news is that we have taken a considerable “hit” to the income normally received from the hire of the Parish Hall and Pastoral Centre. In the eight months to the end of August this income is some £20,000 less than in the same period of 2019.

All I can say is that your Parish badly needs your support and any donations or, perhaps, an increase in regular giving will be gratefully received.

Stuart

Parish Stewardship Officer

jstuartsharpe@aol.com or phone the Parish Office.

Virtual Autumn Quiz

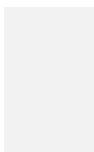
Hot off the Press



Team Taffy the Great after a celebratory brunch at the Missing Link Brewery

Last night we hosted our second Parish Quiz on Zoom. We had made a note of the areas which needed tweaking after the first quiz and this one started promptly at 8pm and after a hard fought battle of 6 rounds, by 10pm our bell-ringers’ team, Taffy the Great, had won the trophy by two points. As we now have some families joining us, we added a couple of alternative Junior questions to each round so that the youngsters could feel more included and this went down well too.

We are still awaiting the final total as we had a few extra donations as well, but over £130 was raised for the Parish.



Can you answer these questions?

Sport & Leisure

Senior: Before Usain Bolt who won the 100m, 200m double at the Olympic Games?

Junior: Which country does Lego come from?

Next Virtual Quiz – Saturday 30 January 2021
The perfect way to spend a cold winter evening!

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Chichester Cathedral: Consultation & Restructure

A statement from The Dean of Chichester, The Very Reverend Stephen Waine, and Communar & Chief Executive David Coulthard on Staff Consultation & Restructure.

Over the past 900 years Chichester Cathedral has experienced turbulence and disruption on a number of occasions: from the devastating effects of the Civil War, to the collapse of the Spire. Our present turbulence brings into greater focus our eternal hope – in Jesus Christ, who is the same yesterday, today and for ever (Hebrew 13.8) and our sure foundation, our rock and refuge.

Our life here has been significantly damaged by the effects of Covid-19. Sharp reductions across almost all our principal streams of income continue to limit our operations and all the indications are that there will be no sudden return to normality: our pattern of life will be very different here for the foreseeable future.

The outcomes we have agreed in response to the Consultation announced in June (outlined below) are a source of pain and regret for us. The posts and people, as well as the activities that we are scaling back, have been an important part of the Cathedral's life and we would not have imagined, only four months ago, that we would be making these difficult decisions today.

For now, however, we continue to ask for your prayers and especially for those whose posts are being made redundant as part of this restructuring.

As the Cathedral testifies to the mystery of the Cross and Resurrection, so we have hope that, not only can nothing separate us from the love of God in Christ, but also that new possibilities can emerge from what seem like the darkest of times. We are already beginning to discern this, for example, in the ways in which our digital communication can be a means of teaching and encouragement and Chapter is beginning a deeper process of discernment, rooted in the prayer of St Richard, to consider our mission afresh in a world that is much-changed.

Café

We have made the difficult decision not to re-open the Café.

With the increase of local competitors and decreasing footfall in Chichester resulting in a steady decline of patrons, the café was already an area of concern. Despite making significant changes to the way it was run, the summer months had to subsidise the winter months and overall the Café was close to losing money.

With the huge impact of the pandemic, and long-term social distancing meaning reduced capacity and footfall for the foreseeable future, the existing model for the Café is no longer sustainable. To keep it open in these circumstances would cost a substantial amount and running a heavily subsidised Café is not the right thing for the Cathedral to do. The Cathedral will continue to provide a hospitable welcome to visitors and worshippers, but will not itself be able to provide refreshments.

Shop

The shop, in its current format and location will close. It will return in a new form when the time is right, when the Cathedral is once again welcoming a substantial volume of visitors.

When it re-opens it will be relocated into the Cathedral and we plan for it to be volunteer-led with support from a reduced team in the office.

Learning and Engagement

Following the Consultation, Chapter accepted that there would be a substantial reduction in the work of the current Learning and Engagement team and that the four existing posts should be made redundant. However, in order to maintain important relationships with schools and visiting families, a new post to sustain and develop the Cathedral's work in this area will be established. This decision is to support the Cathedral's long-term financial sustainability, and also lay foundations for future ministry and engagement with fewer resources.

Looking to the future, a new working group will be developed, in association with key partners, to explore how we can support the wider region. A School of Theology and Prayer will also be formed, serving the Diocese and beyond in equipping people for their apostolic life.

We will continue to work with partners and charities and, while the pandemic may initially prevent some gatherings, we will host a revised schedule of events and activities if health and safety permits. This includes working with inter-faith partners, Amnesty International, and Stonepillow, to name but a few examples.

We thank those who submitted responses to the initial Consultation announcement.

Mount Sinai

If you have been on holiday to Jordan, or maybe taken a trip from Sharm el Sheikh, you may have visited St Catherine's Monastery in South Sinai. There, you may have seen Jabal Mûsâ (Egyptian Arabic جَبَل مُوسَى – the Mountain of Moses, also known as 'Mount Sinai' or the 'Mount of the Law'). It would be hard to miss, towering 7,497 feet above the valley; although you may not have had the time, or the energy, to climb the roughly 8,500 steps to the summit.

Even before the Christian era, Jabal Mûsâ was believed to be the place where Moses hid in a cave from the presence of God and then received the Tablets of the Law (twice: Exodus 19 & 34). Later, Elisha also hid in a cave there before receiving instructions from God (1 Kings 19).

Anchorites settled around this area, known as Horeb, during the very early Christian period, constructed a small chapel on the summit of Jabal Mûsâ, and another at the site of the Burning Bush (Exodus 3), now within the Monastery. The Monastery developed as a focus and a centre of safety for these hermits. The major development came in the mid sixth century when the Emperor Justinian created the Monastery much as we see it today, and also a large basilica on the summit of Jabal Mûsâ. Not a great deal survives of the mountain-top basilica, following various earthquakes, although its foundations are still visible.

The Monastery was originally dedicated to the Virgin Mary but, following the discovery of the body of St Catherine, miraculously transported from Alexandria following her martyrdom, on an adjacent and slightly higher peak nearby (Jabal Kathrin), her remains were transferred to the Monastery now dedicated in her name. Her skull survives there, although most of the rest of her body went to various shrines across Europe. In the beautiful and accurate print by David Roberts (1839), above, the Monastery is in the foreground, Jabal Mûsâ in the centre, and Jabal Kathrin behind to the left.

Jabal Mûsâ has been a place of veneration not only to Christians, both Orthodox and Western, but also to the other Abrahamic faiths: Judaism and Islam. Following the Arabic conquest of Sinai in the seventh century, a mosque was built on the summit of Jabal Mûsâ, and another within the Monastery. It is notable that the Monastery has welcomed pilgrims, scholars and tourists of all these faiths, and none, throughout its history. Its hospitality has sometimes been abused: its most valuable treasure, the *Codex Sinaiticus*, containing the earliest version of the Gospels was 'borrowed', presented to Tsar Alexander II of Russia, and never returned.

The biblical events commemorated on Jabal Mûsâ were often accompanied by fire, lightning, thunder and earthquakes. These can be interpreted as the violent magnetic storms which occur on these peaks. Volcanic activity has also been reported but, while the rock of these mountains is volcanic, there have been no eruptions in historical times.

The attribution of Jabal Mûsâ to the biblical events has not gone unchallenged, particularly in the nineteenth century, and debate continues, but on the basis of long tradition and physical evidence it does seem the most likely location. As part of this debate the Ordnance Survey conducted its first survey outside the UK, of South Sinai, in 1869.

Jabal Mûsâ and the Monastery continue as spiritual places and the focus of pilgrimage and tourism. The mountain now has a small Orthodox chapel on its summit (right) together with a small mosque and cisterns collecting rainwater. The caves (perhaps of Moses and Elijah) can still be seen in this impressive spiritual landscape. Worth a visit!

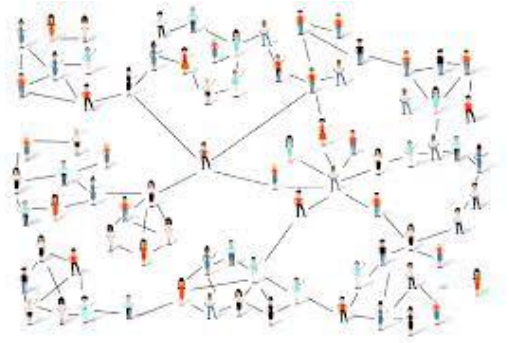
Church Mouse



Who is my Neighbour? **Six Degrees of Separation**

At a recent virtual church coffee morning, I was struck by how many people, who know each other very well, discovered personal links of which they were previously unaware: places they had worked or taken holidays, or mutual friends. “It’s a small world” we say.

This idea of a small world can be expressed as ‘Six Degrees of Separation.’ It is based on a simple research idea. You are given an envelope addressed to someone, somewhere else in the world. Assuming you do not know that person, which is likely, your task is to send the envelope to someone you know personally who might be able to get the envelope nearer to its destination. You ask them to repeat the process.



How many ‘steps’ will it take for the envelope to arrive at its destination? The surprising answer is, on average six, hence Six Degrees of Separation between any two people in the world. Very occasionally the number of links is less, or more, and there are some exceptions (remote tribes without contact with the ‘outside world’) but extensive research has shown the finding generally to hold. It is a measure of social connectedness in the Global Village.

The idea, initially proposed in 1927, but developed by the psychologist Stanley Milgram in the 1960s, has entered into popular culture and features in a number of plays, films (Babel; Six Degrees of Separation), television dramas, popular music (No Doubt; Scouting for Girls; Miranda Lambert) and games (Six Degrees of Kevin Bacon). ‘No Degree of Separation’ was the Italian entry in the 2016 Eurovision Song Contest. Social networking sites also embody the idea and both LinkedIn and Twitter will tell you your social separation from another individual.

Every day we see images on the news of refugees from Syria, Yemen and North Africa, those who have suffered disasters as in Lebanon, Bangladesh or California, or are subject to persecution and ethnic cleansing. We may feel compassion and concern, and may even donate to relief efforts. But the people affected can still seem remote from our own lives.

‘No man is an island entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main... any man’s death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind.’ (John Donne).

So, who is my neighbour? It is worth remembering that no-one in the world is more than ‘six doors’ away. Every person in the world is now my neighbour.

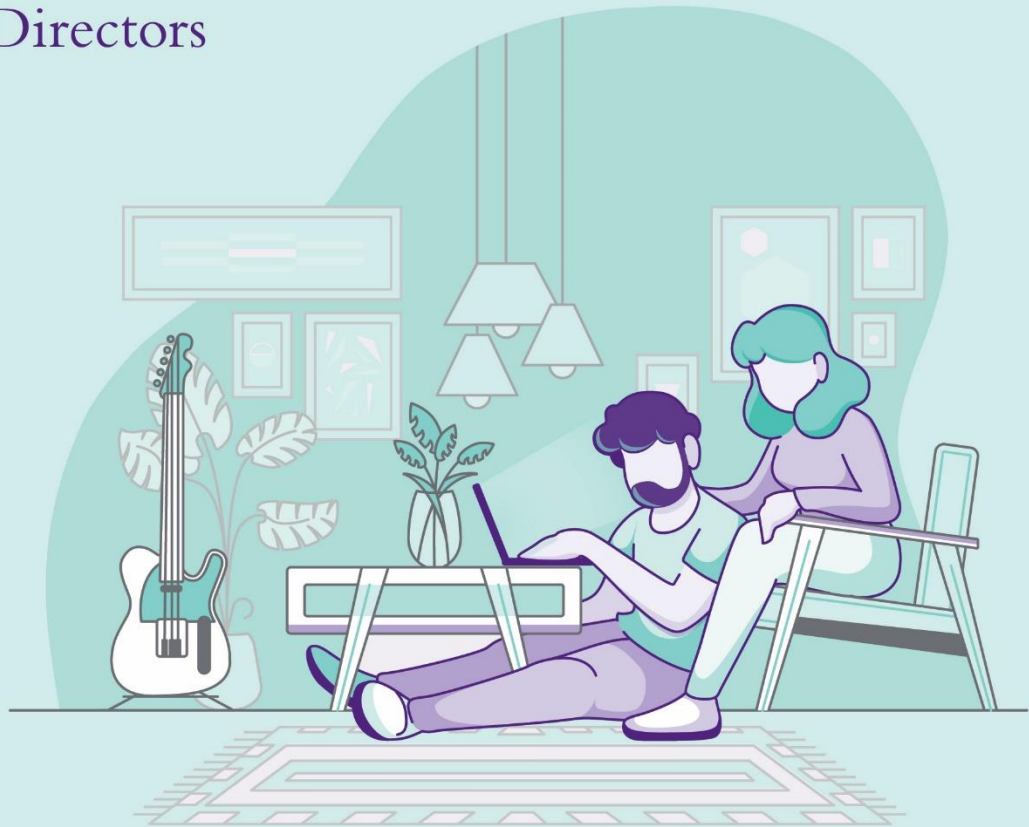
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Vanishing Religions [3]: Zoroastrianism

Well, not quite vanishing but under considerable pressure. Zoroastrianism (better described in its early history as Mazdaism) is a very ancient religion; probably the first of the monotheistic religions, and the first to have a major prophet: Zoroaster (or, in Persian, Zarathustra), and the first to be based on a moral code. It also embodies free will. It is the origin of many of the world's great religions: including Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. An offshoot, Mithra, popular with the Romans, had a significant influence on early Christian beliefs and practices (a messiah, miraculous birth, date of Christmas, baptism, salvation).

The beliefs of Zoroastrianism are attractively simple: 'Good Thoughts, Good Words and Good Deeds'. Zoroastrians believe in a winged Lord of Truth (Ahura Mazda), and also Ahriman, an embodiment of lies, darkness and evil. Six immortal angels embody animal life, plant life, metals and minerals, earth, fire and water, matched by six evil spirits.



There are archangels, including Vohu Manu, a sacred bull. Ahura Mazda, as the Lord of Light, can confer an aura, which is where we get our depiction of a halo.

It is almost impossible to date the origins of Zoroastrianism (although adherents suggest 6,000 BC) and even the date of Zoroaster is disputed. Current thought places him at about 1,200 BC. Some of the uncertainty results from the fact that there are no written scriptures (the Avesta) until shortly before the Christian era, and then written in Avestan, which is notoriously difficult to translate. Interestingly, Aramaic was used in ancient Persia for administration and commerce, and Arabic never caught on. An expanded Arabic alphabet was used for Persian (Farsi) and there are close links to Urdu and Sanskrit.

Zoroastrianism was the state religion of Persia/Iran up until the Islamic conquest in the seventh century AD after which it was tolerated but under threat. Over the following centuries many Zoroastrians fled east to North West India and a significant population, known as Parsis, (Parsees) now live in Gujarat. Parsis are noted for their honest dealing, responsible conduct and hard work.



The modern focus of the religion is in North East Iran at Yazd. The practice of Zoroastrians is centred around fire temples, where a flame is kept eternally burning, and the Zoroastrian hymns are chanted. Offerings are made to the fire, and to the other elements. Priests wear a form of face mask to prevent their breath polluting the fire. Their disposal of the dead is unusual. Not wanting to pollute the earth by burial, or the air by cremation, the corpse is laid on a platform at the top of a large circular Tower of Silence (dakhma) where it will be picked clean by birds and wild animals.

There are now about 100,000 Zoroastrians worldwide, mostly in Iran and India, with perhaps 2,000 in the UK. A problem for the survival of the religion is that strict Zoroastrians do not accept converts, and Zoroastrians must marry other Zoroastrians. The result is a plethora of websites in India and the Middle East where Zoroastrians can advertise for marriage partners.

Around Baku in Azerbaijan fire spontaneously escapes out of the ground as a result of oil and gas shale deposits. It is the site of one of the most famous fire temples (*right*). It is, perhaps, a symbolic irony that the natural source of fire for the temple has failed, and it now has to be supplied by the town's gas supply.



For more information, see 'Heirs to Forgotten Kingdoms' by Gerard Russell (2014); the book which inspired these articles.

Church Mouse

Stuart King (1922-2020)

Flying for Life since 1945

A former RAF Flight Lieutenant, Stuart King was one of the first pioneers to take aircraft to the remotest parts of the developing world in the aftermath of WW II.

Highly skilled, tenacious and dedicated, Stuart gave up his career as Chief Technical Officer at RAF Duxford to pursue a vision of using aircraft to bring help, hope and healing to those in need.

Struck by the isolation of countless people living behind physical, economic and political barriers, Stuart joined fellow Christian airmen to establish MAF in 1945 with the aim of reaching the earth's most remote communities using aviation and technology.

His determination and sense of adventure led him on a survey flight across eastern and central Africa in 1948. Stuart and his colleague, former RAF Squadron Leader Jack Hemmings, flew a tiny 2-seater Miles Gemini all the way from Croydon to East Africa 4,000 miles away. With little more than a map and a compass, the fearless pair plotted a route across Libya, Egypt, Sudan, Kenya and the Belgian Congo, using the River Nile as their guide.

Paving the way for a new type of Christian mission, they miraculously survived a mountain crash in Burundi which threatened to end the charity almost before it had begun.

Following their initial survey flight, Sudan was identified as the African nation most in need of MAF's services. Stuart based himself in southern Sudan and many adventures followed — each one bringing its own unique blessing as MAF planes and partners helped sow a million Gospel seeds.

In 1951, while repairing a crashed plane in Abaiyat in the Sudan, Stuart met American missionary Phyllis Bapple and a relationship gradually developed; he married Phyllis in Khartoum in 1952. Phyllis acted as secretary and accountant to the first MAF programme in Sudan — ordering aircraft parts and even keeping a spare propeller under the bed! "For 51 years, Phyllis and I were totally involved together in all that we did. She was God's gift to me, to our three children — Rebecca, Cilla and John — and to their children, too. We all miss her terribly. But she has left us, and many others, a very rich heritage through her godly life and example." (Stuart)

Led by Stuart as General Director, MAF's work developed across Africa. As the organisation continued to grow, Stuart returned to the UK to oversee MAF's operations in Folkestone, Kent.

In 1987, Stuart handed over the leadership of MAF UK after more than 40 years' service, although still remaining very much involved. As President Emeritus he regularly visited MAF's Folkestone office to provide encouragement and advice.

In 2016, Stuart was honoured by the French Government for his work during the Normandy Landings. He was appointed to the rank of Chevalier in the Ordre National de la Légion d'Honneur for his 'acknowledged military engagement and [...] steadfast involvement in the Liberation of France during the Second World War.'



In 2019, Stuart's name was added to the list of inspiring men and women who have used aviation to write history, receiving the Award of Honour from the Honourable Company of Air Pilots for his outstanding and enduring contribution to aviation.

From small and struggling beginnings in post-war Britain, MAF now flies to more than 1,400 remote locations across 26 developing countries — more destinations than any other airline in the world. The aim— now as then — is:

To see isolated people physically and spiritually transformed by God's love.

Thanks to Stuart's lifetime commitment to reaching the lost, the lonely and the languishing, MAF has gone from strength to strength. Forever more, it will be his legacy to the world.

Thanks to Stuart Sharpe for sourcing this article from MAF, and Graham for making it fit on one page!



Book Reviews

Jesus: A Pilgrimage

James Martin SJ (Harper One, 2014)

This is a book that I can very highly recommend. Part memoir, part historical document, part spiritual retreat, and part travelogue, *Jesus* is “a love letter to the first-century Jewish radical Martin has devoted his life to following.”

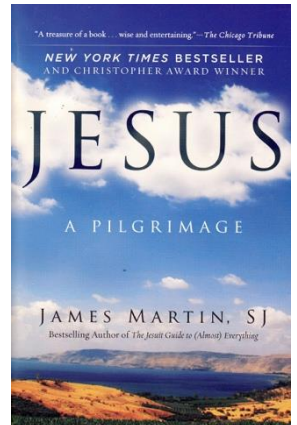
This may sound all very serious, but it is an easy, entertaining, insightful and engaging account of a journey to the Holy Land – his first – by a noted Jesuit writer and theologian in the company of a Jesuit friend.

Even if you have been lucky enough to visit the Holy Land, this is sure to provide new insights. To demonstrate that it is not too serious, they go to stay in a Franciscan hostel and are amazed to discover 5 star rooms. “Sister,” I said. “These rooms are incredible.” “What did you expect?” she asked. “Well, you’re Franciscans,” I said, “so I expected something ... simpler.” “Father, we are Franciscans,” she said. “Our guests are not!”

But the book is mostly an illuminating re-presentation of the Gospel stories in clear and insightful fashion, mixed with personal reactions and meditations in the actual locations where Jesus lived and conducted his ministry.

It is a great read; do give it a try.

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Pound Hill Toddlers

Toddlers closed down in March as did everything. We have been unable to re-open under the current guidelines. We would need to ensure social distancing of both children and adults as well as clean each and every toy/piece of equipment to a Covid clean standard between each use.

We are sorry that this important support for under threes and their carers of all ages is unable to function at this time but hope we will be able to do so safely in the future.

Jenny

Sunday School

Although not back to what we used to do, we have some packs made up to entertain our youngsters during the service at St Barnabas.

Nicky and Caroline x



Holy Baptism

August

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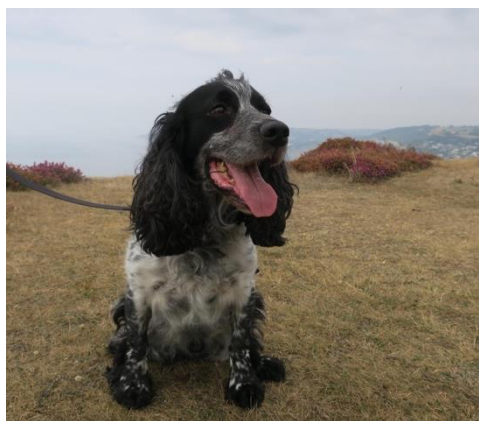
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Shadow's Blog



Hello. It's me! You can see by the title that at last my humans have seen sense and given me my own blog, so I'm no longer the Ordinand's Dog, I'm me, The Kardan Shadow (but you can call me Shadow). I'm a blue roan, 9 year old Working Cocker Spaniel (although I like to act like I'm a lot younger). This is my blog where I can share all the things I get up to, as well as possibly the odd view on parish life. It's been a difficult few months with nothing seeming as it should be, but one highlight was my wonderful holiday down in Devon. Now my humans don't often take me away with them (I don't know why, but it may have something to do with my desire to dismantle things - see the photo in the last edition of the Mag), but this year they did. What fun I had swimming in the sea and running

along the cliff top, although I did wonder why they insisted on having me on the lead when we were near the edge ... it was as if they didn't trust me not to take a flying leap. Actually ... when I think about it, maybe they know me better than I know myself. It's a good job I didn't argue when they had my best interests at heart, but the view of the sea from the cliff top was so enticing ... especially now I know that I can swim! Hopefully, as I was so well behaved (well I didn't dismantle anything) I'll get to go away with them next year too!!

Must go ... it's dinner time.

Shadow



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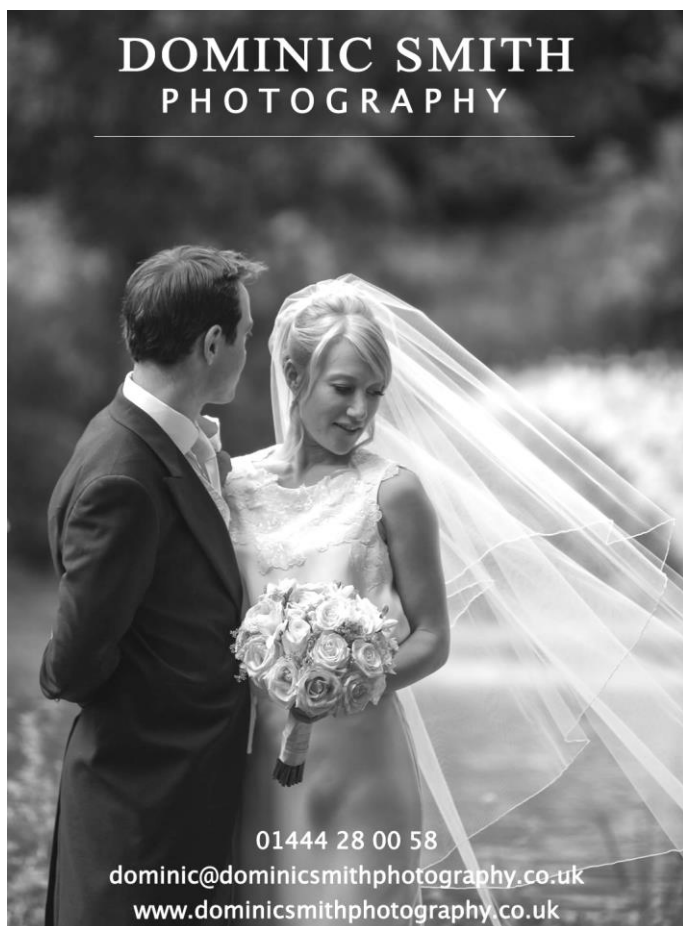
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We may not be able to meet face to face, but we have been trying to keep our stories and crafts going via our Messy Messenger which is being emailed out every month. If you are not on our Messy mailing list and would like to receive this every month please email Stuart justuartsharpe@aol.com;

As we seem to be going into a second wave I foresee that it will be 2021 before we are functioning as we would wish. In the meantime
Keep safe



Sue x



USEFUL NUMBERS

Altar Servers (St Barnabas')	David Anderson
Altar Servers (St Nicholas')	Jenny Dobson
Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals	Parish Office
Bellringers	Neil Dobson
Bookings (Hall, Meeting Rooms, Café, Church)	Revd Sarah
Buildings and Facilities	See Churchwardens
Children's Society	Ann Lane
Choirs (Worth Church and Festival)	Alex Hiam
Church Cleaning (St Barnabas')	Jane Stanford
Church Cleaning (St Nicholas')	Jill Freeborn
Churchwardens (St Barnabas')	Sheila Dring Phyl Pennell
Churchwardens (St Nicholas')	Gerald Sandwell Colin Smith
Co-ordinator (Parish)	Sue Perry
Events	Jane Stanford
Families, Youth and Children's Work	Caroline Formby (Lay)
Flower Arranging (St Barnabas')	Jane Stanford
Flower Arranging (St Nicholas')	Noreen Oxlade
Friends of St Nicholas'	Colin Smith
Giving (Donations etc)	Sheila Dring
Julian Group (St Barnabas')	Don Hewerdine
Julian Group (St Nicholas')	Linda Eells
Knit and Natter	Val Rudd
Magazine	Sue Perry
Messy Church (not running during the pandemic)	Sue Walshe
Mothers' Union	Mary Fry
Office (Parish) (manned or ansaphone 24/7)	
Office at St Barnabas' (not generally manned)	
PCC Chair	Michael Boag
PCC Secretary	Liz Gallagher
PCC Electoral Roll Officer	Jane Stanford
PCC Treasurer	
Prayer Group	Linda Eells
Safeguarding Officers	vacant
Social Media	Elizabeth Whyman
Stewardship Officer (St Barnabas')	Stuart Sharpe
St Nicholas Circle	Max Perry
Sunday School	Caroline Formby
Toddlers (not running during the pandemic)	Jenny Dobson
Website	Elizabeth Whyman
Weddings	Parish Office

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