

THE PARISH CHURCH OF

ST JOHN



THE DIVINE

BROOKLANDS • SALE



50p

March 2019

From the Editor

Flowers are starting to appear. Snowdrops and crocus have emerged and soon we will see hosts of daffodils blooming across our Parish. Walkden Gardens falls just outside our boundary but is worth a visit at this time of year. And any other time of year too.

This month marks the 25th anniversary of the ordination of the first female priests. It falls, for me, into the 'it doesn't seem that long ago' category of events. For most of us it wasn't an issue at the time but strange to think that there are still pockets of our Church that have not accepted the decision.

Ash Wednesday falls on 6th March, marking the start of Lent. Many readers will make some sort of Lent observance and there is a piece discussing that with a link to a Lent prayer diary and a personal challenge. The resources and references are not from the Anglican Catholic Church so we've gone ecumenical. Hurray.

If you have walked through the city centre, you can't fail to have spotted the number of homeless people on the streets. We might argue whether they are all really 'homeless' but there is no doubt that it is a problem. There is a piece which includes a comment by Bishop David on the matter with some recent data and also a link to Greater Together Manchester, which is a group of churches that open their doors on a rota basis to provide a night shelter. There are some truly inspirational people involved and I've felt quite humbled by both guests and helpers.

Beyond that, we have most of the usual features and articles for your delight. My thanks, as ever, to contributors and distributors.

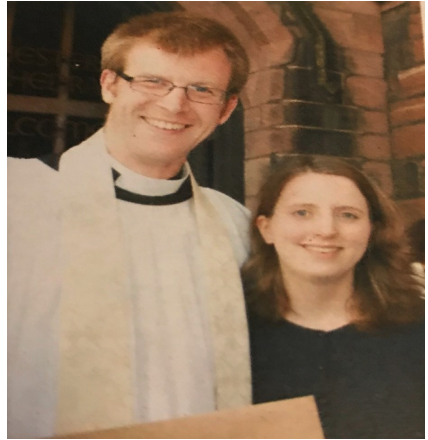
And for anybody who was remotely interested in the Apollo 8 piece (and who wasn't) you'll be delighted to know that March marks the 50th anniversary of Apollo 9. Only one more Apollo to go before the moon landing...

The Editor

LENT  2019

Richard writes...

Having grown up in South Wales I was tempted to focus this March letter on *Dydd Gŵyl Dewi* otherwise known as St David's Day. It is a day that reminds me of my childhood when we'd wear a daffodil to school and finish at lunchtime. In the evening we'd eat Welsh cakes which I am still partial to. Rather than focus on the 1st March I am going to focus on the event of the 31st March: Mothering Sunday!



Whilst the origins of Mothering Sunday were almost certainly pre-Christian, once Christianity was established in Britain, the focus of the day became a celebration of the Mother Church.

Mothering Sunday is quite distinct from Mother's Day. If you go onto the Wikipedia entry for "Mothering Sunday" there is a note at the top of the page saying emphatically, "Not to be confused with Mother's Day". I confess that when I first read this I found it intriguing, not least because I've been reading Stanley Hauerwas recently. Hauerwas is Professor of Theological Ethics at Duke University and I heard him speak when I was in Oxford a few years back. He is one of those people that, whether you end up agreeing or disagreeing with him, he always makes you think.

He once addressed a packed audience with the following words: 'I assume most of you are here because you think you are Christians, but it is not at all clear to me that the Christianity that has made you Christians is Christianity. For example,'. He then went on to give a few examples. What provoked me was when he said the following: 'how many of you worship in a church that recognizes 'Mother's Day'? I am sorry to tell you that your salvation is in doubt.' Perhaps that sounds quite a strong statement to make, surely there is nothing wrong with celebrating Mother's Day? Hauerwas continues:

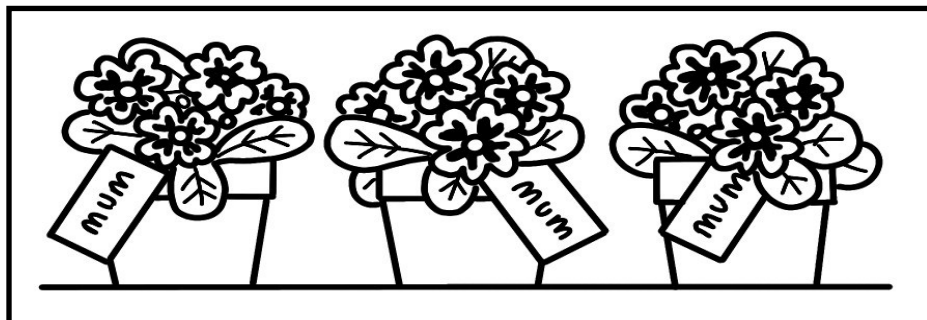
I have not made the claims above to shock you, but rather to put you in a position to discover how odd being a Christian makes you...consider how "Mother's Day" makes it hard to comprehend the plain sense of some of the stories of Jesus. In Mark 3:31-35 we find Jesus surrounded by a crowd. His mother and brothers were having trouble getting through the crowd to be with Jesus. Somebody in the crowd tells him that his mom cannot get through the mass of people to be near him. Which elicits from Jesus the rhetorical question

“Who are my mother and brothers?” which he answered, noting, “Here are my mother and my brothers! Whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother.” Even more forcefully Jesus says in Luke 14:26: “Whoever comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and even life itself, cannot be my disciple.” When you celebrate “Mother’s Day,” the only thing to do with texts like these is “explain them,” which usually means Jesus could not have meant what he plainly says.

Yes, this does reflect Hauerwas’ abrasive Texan style, but when we look closer at what he is trying to get at I really do think he has a point. As Christians, we tell time differently, our calendar is shaped by the liturgical calendar through which we retell and re-enact the life of Jesus. This is why I think that if we solely focus upon Mother’s Day, or if Mothering Sunday becomes for us a baptized Mother’s Day, and so ignore the ecclesial dimensions of Mothering Sunday, then we miss out something important. We give thanks for our mothers and those who have cared for us during our lives on Mothering Sunday, but it also provides us with an occasion to celebrate the life of the church.

The reason the Church is called a mother is because in his letter to the Galatians the apostle Paul describes the Church as being ‘our mother’ (5:26). This image works well since it allows us to build upon the picture of our natural mother being the person who grants us a physical birth, this symbolises the Church granting us new birth through the waters of baptism. In this way, the Church is the source of our new life in Christ. But more than that. Our joining and belonging to the Church through Baptism means that we have a new family. This does not negate the natural ties of family, but it does mean that our brothers and sisters in Christ are just as much our family as anyone else. Our relationships are reconfigured by baptism, blood relations are no longer primary. Baptism reconfigures our family. As it has been said: water is thicker than blood!

Richard



Lent

It's that time of year again when we think about what it is that we will be giving up. In my case, given that I always do the same thing, I don't have to think about it and just give up on baked goods. I did say at one time that it was wheat I was abstaining from until it was pointed out that some alcohol is wheat based; so just bread, cake, biscuits. No need to go too far is there? This does, for me, involve deep theological conundrums, for example is a flapjack ok to eat or a Ryvita? Rice cakes are obviously fine but as I don't like them that's not something that demands headspace. By Easter Sunday, the thought of a toasted hot-cross bun dripping in butter has me hyper-ventilating. But is what I am doing the right approach to observing Lent?

A couple of year's ago Nick Feist in one of his sermons pointed out that Lent wasn't to be used as a diet and was about spiritual rather than bodily health. I certainly feel a bit trimmer after my denial and it doesn't do me any harm to cut back for a while given I am still feeling the Christmas excesses around the middle. I can (I think) justify my abstinence because it makes me pause. I can't automatically reach for a slice of bread or a biscuit so, I either do without or think about alternatives and either action causes me to reflect.

In 2015, Pope Francis quoted the words of John Chrysostom, an early Christian mystic, "no act of virtue can be great if it is not followed by advantage for others. So, no matter how much time you spend fasting, no matter how much you sleep on a hard floor and eat ashes and sigh continually, if you do no good to others, you do nothing great." Pope Francis stressed the positive nature of Lenten observance, not the hair shirt and piety but the outreach.

He warned against the 'globalisation of indifference' in his 2015 Lenten Message. "Usually, when we are healthy and comfortable, we forget about others (something God the Father never does): we are unconcerned with their problems, their sufferings and the injustices they endure... Our heart grows cold," he said. "As long as I am relatively healthy and comfortable, I don't think about those less well off." Today, this selfish attitude of indifference has taken on global proportions, to the extent that we can speak of a globalisation of indifference. It is a problem which we, as Christians, need to confront." He continued: "Indifference to our neighbour and to God also represents a real temptation for us Christians. Each year during Lent we need to hear once more the voice of the prophets who cry out and trouble our conscience."

So, what does that mean to us. It isn't intended as a prohibition against some sort of fasting, as long as that isn't intended just to make us feel guilt or do as a badge of honour. Matthew 6:18 says it is just something between you and God. It should though be about doing something positive. Doing good to others not just oneself. Whether that is working at a shelter; visiting a neighbour; biting your tongue every time you start sounding negative, it doesn't matter as long as it is positive. Pope Francis also commented that he "distrusts a charity that costs nothing and does not hurt". So this isn't about throwing an extra tin of beans in the food bank collection, it's about doing something that takes time and effort.

One option is to use the 40acts Generosity Challenge. This is designed both for churches and individuals. The individual track provides a daily email with reading, reflection and challenge. You can sign up at 40acts.org.uk I'll still be passing on the biscuits but will also be trying to take a break from indifference and having a go at the 40 acts challenge. So be positive this Lent.

PS Alternatively try this as a prayer resource <https://cafod.org.uk/Pray/Lent-Calendar>

A Message from David and Wendy Higgins

David and Wendy would like to thank Revd. Richard Sherratt and all our Church Family at 'St John the Divine', for their prayers, kindness and good wishes for David's recovery, following a stroke in December.

We are thankful to report David is now making steady progress at home and is hoping to return to Sunday worship as soon as possible.

New Electoral Roll

The process of preparing a new Electoral Roll takes place every six years. The process was last undertaken in 2013 which means it is necessary to do this again in 2019. If you wish to have your name entered on the new Roll please apply for enrolment by completing an enrolment form and return it by **7th April**. Forms can be located at the back of church and are to be returned to Mike Lawrence, our Electoral Roll officer.

Concern for the homeless on our streets

The Bishop of Manchester, Dr David Walker, has said that the level of street homelessness in the city is now worse than anything he has seen in his lifetime.

The Bishop said that in the past the reasons for people to be homeless seemed to have been relationship breakdown or mental-health issues. But now the main reason seems to be simple poverty. He has met numerous people in night shelters who are actually holding down jobs, but still unable to afford anywhere to live.

Rising rents and welfare cuts have together “just torn holes in the safety net and too many people are falling through... we have... lots of people visibly sleeping rough on our streets, and these numbers continue to grow.”

The section that follows is an edited version of an update provided by Greater Together Manchester, which operates rolling shelters across Manchester and Salford based in church premises. The rough sleeper count is an annual activity. Each Local Authority completed its count between 1st October and 30th November. The Greater Manchester Local Authorities completed theirs in early November.

Most of the winter shelters were open between 22nd October and 1st November, with more shelters opening in December. GTM's Rolling Shelter opened on 31st October and our Static Shelter opened on 20th December.

Simple stats:

4,677 people were counted sleeping outside

Manchester Local Authority is now the 3rd highest in the country with 123 people counted. The previous year was 4th with 94 people counted

Gender - 84% male; 14% female; 2% unknown

Nationality - 64% are UK Nationals; 22% are EU Nationals; 3% from outside the EU; 10% Nationalities unknown

AGE - 80% are aged over 26; 6% 25 or under; 14% age unknown.

The biggest age bracket reported in Greater Manchester including those people in shelters, is the under 35 group.

Interestingly, this count has been deemed a ‘success’ by many as the figures show a decrease in rough sleepers of 74 people.

Unfortunately, many charities and front-line organisations would disagree with this and as we see there has been an increase in Greater Manchester.

Please pray for the work of Greater Together Manchester and its shelters. You can find out more about their work here <http://greatertogethermanchester.org/homelessness/>

Mary Webster Writes

It was cold wet, windy and miserable outside when everyone arrived at our Beetle Drive. However, once we were together it seemed as though the sun was shining, or maybe it was just that the heaters that were working well. Whichever it was it brought smiles to our faces.

For once I was semi-organised, well at least the beetle game sheets, pencils and dice were on the tables. I even managed to take part myself and did we enjoy ourselves, you batcha!

The games seemed to be fast and furious and, with the top scorers from each game moving on the next table, it gave us the chance to talk to one another. Eventually Dianna had the top score and was presented with the champion's trophy whilst Georgina who is a great sport had to make do with a wooden spoon from my kitchen drawer.

Well I did say I was only semi-organised and the Trophy Shop had run out of wooden spoons. Strange that, as the lady in the shop said that the wooden spoon trophy was one of the fastest selling trophies. Mind you, I nearly got the wooden spoon instead of Georgina, there were not many points in it.

On 27 March the title of our meeting is 'From Manchester to Mayuge' and we will welcome Alistair Bryce-Clegg who will tell us about setting up a school in Uganda. To my shame, I confess to minimal and indeed sketchy knowledge of what is likely to be involved but I look forward to meeting Andrew and learning more on the subject.

I will post a copy of our 2019 Programme on our Noticeboard and would love to welcome any of you ladies out there to join us either for an evening or indeed the rest of the year.

Please don't worry that you may not know anyone as we are a happy bunch of ladies who will be only too pleased to see you. I am almost always in attendance and, although I can talk the hind legs off a donkey, I also love meeting new people and getting to know them.

Well this is off to the Editor with a couple of days to spare. Take care and enjoy the slightly warmer days as they come along.

LENT  2019

The day that women first became priests in the C of E

It was 25 years ago, on 12 March 1994, that the first 32 women priests in the Church of England were ordained.

It happened in Bristol Cathedral, and Bishop Barry Rogerson ordained them in alphabetical order; so Angela Berners-Wilson was considered the very first woman to be ordained. The daughter of a priest, *she is now chaplain at the University of Bath and Prebendary at Wells Cathedral.*

The youngest was Karen MacKinnon, now spiritual care manager at Southampton Hospital.

The legality of the ordination was challenged unsuccessfully in the courts by Anglo-Catholic the Rev Paul Williamson. Ten years later, one in five priests was a woman.

The first Anglican province to officially permit the ordination of women was Hong Kong and Macao in 1971. Florence Li Tim-Oi had been unofficially ordained there in 1944.

The idea of women priests began to be discussed in the 1920s. In 1978 a meeting chaired by Dame Betty Ridley agreed to set up what eventually became the Movement for the Ordination of Women (MOW).

Of the 542 candidates entering training this year, more than half (274) are women, which is 19 per cent more than last year - a record rise.



LENT  2019

Church Flowers

If you would like to make a donation for church flowers in memory of a loved one, a birthday or an anniversary, please contact Ruth Shaw on 973 9255 or Lynda Tattersall on 973 7140. A typical donation would be the equivalent cost of a bouquet delivered to someone's home.

5th January Jean Logan for Alice Spencer

11th February Jean Logan for Alan Spencer



Pancake Party

All Welcome

Tuesday 4th March

3-5.00pm

Proceeds to Christians
Against Poverty

Not just for children!!

Upcoming Events



4.30 every
Sunday.

Informal
worship
followed by a
light tea.

A photograph of a young woman with long, straight red hair, smiling warmly. She is wearing a dark top. The background is slightly blurred, showing other people in a social setting.

Try Alpha
Wednesdays, 7pm
Starting on 6th March
St John's Church, Brooklands

You're invited
Join us #TryAlpha

The Alpha logo, which is a red, stylized letter 'A' with a circular cutout in the center. Below the logo is a small red circle containing the word "Alpha" in white.

From Around St John's



Hello everyone. I hope you are all well, hopefully by the time you read this , some signs of Spring will be around.

Our February meeting, was our annual Bring and Buy in aid of our overseas funds. Many thanks to everyone who bought tickets, attended and donated. We raised in the region of £200. In March we shall have our AGM, along with a game of Beetle. Do come along, all are welcome. The date is 13 March at 2.30.

Sharon

Saint Felix of Dunwich

Felix was a Burgundian, who became Bishop to the Angles. While Honorius was Archbishop of Canterbury, Felix arrived, asking to preach to the Angles. He was granted his request, when the Christian king Sigebert, of the Angles returned home. Felix set up his See in Dunwich and founded a school, on the Gaulish model. This proved to be very successful. A monastery was also set up at Soham, where Felix died and was buried. His relics were later translated to Ramsey Abbey.

Felixstowe, in Suffolk, is named after him.

Feast day 8 March

And in case you thought there were no funnies...

Grannie

After church, the mother asked her young son if he had enjoyed Sunday School. "Oh yes," he replied. "My new teacher is pretty cool - she is Jesus' grand-mother."

Startled, his mother asked what made him think that. "Obvious, she never stops talking about Jesus," he replied.

Mix-up

What do you get when you cross an atheist with a Jehovah's Witness?

Someone who knocks at your door for no apparent reason.

Hair-cut

A minister, known for his lengthy sermons, noticed a man leave during the middle of his message. The man returned as the service concluded. Afterwards the minister asked the man where he had gone. "I went to get a hair-cut," was the reply.

"But," protested the minister, "why didn't you do that before the service?"

"Because," said the man, "I didn't need one then."

Board meeting

"There will be a meeting of the Board immediately after the service," announced the minister one Sunday morning. So after the service, the Church Board gathered at the back of the church. To their surprise, there was a stranger in their midst. "My friend," said the minister, "didn't you understand that this is a meeting of the Board?"

"Yes indeed," said the visitor, "but after today's sermon, I'm just as bored as anyone else who has come along..."

Happy

Never miss an opportunity to make others happy, even if you have to leave them alone in order to do it.

Moses and IT

When you think about it, Moses was the first one to download files from the cloud, using a tablet.



HANDMADE
CRAFTS



Crafty Chat Club

If you like to make things & enjoy
getting to know others,
this is the afternoon for you.



Bring along your own craft project,
use materials provided
or simply watch & chat.



No previous skills are needed.
The chat is as important as the craft.

Everyone is welcome.

St John's Church Hall, Brooklands Road, Sale.

**EVERY 1ST & 3RD WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH.
2.00 – 4.00PM.**

**£1.00 PER MEETING
INCLUDES TEA / COFFEE & BISCUITS**



Sanctuary Guild

*Volunteers in the Sanctuary Guild take
turns to clean the brasses in church, such as
the altar cross, candlesticks, offertory
plates and lecterns.*



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1 st	Mrs S. Marlow	Miss L. McCaw
15 th	Mrs R. Shaw	Mrs P. Tallis
29 th	Mrs M. Hopkins	Mrs S. Grimley

Parish Diary March 2019

3rd *The Sunday Next Before Lent*

- 8.30 Holy Communion
- 10.30 Family Communion
- 4.30 Café Church
- 6.30 Evensong

- 6th 10.00 Ash Wednesday Communion Service
- 2.00 Crafty Chat
- 6.00 Ash Wednesday Communion Service

10th *1st Sunday of Lent*

- 8.30 Holy Communion
- 10.30 All Ages Together
- 4.30 Café Church
- 6.30 Evensong

- 13th 10.00 Holy Communion
- 2.30 Mothers' Union

17th *2nd Sunday of Lent*

- 8.30 Holy Communion
- 10.30 Family Communion
- 4.30 Café Church
- 6.30 Evensong

- 20th 10.00 Holy Communion
- 2.00 Crafty Chat

24th *3rd Sunday of Lent*

- 8.30 Holy Communion
- 10.30 Family Communion
- 4.30 Café Church
- 6.30 Evensong

- 27th 10.00 Holy Communion
- 7.30 Evening Prayer and Women's Fellowship

31st *4th Sunday of Lent* **Mothers' Sunday**

- 8.30 Holy Communion
- 10.30 Parade Service
- 4.30 Café Church
- 6.30 Evensong

E&M

GARAGE

DOORS

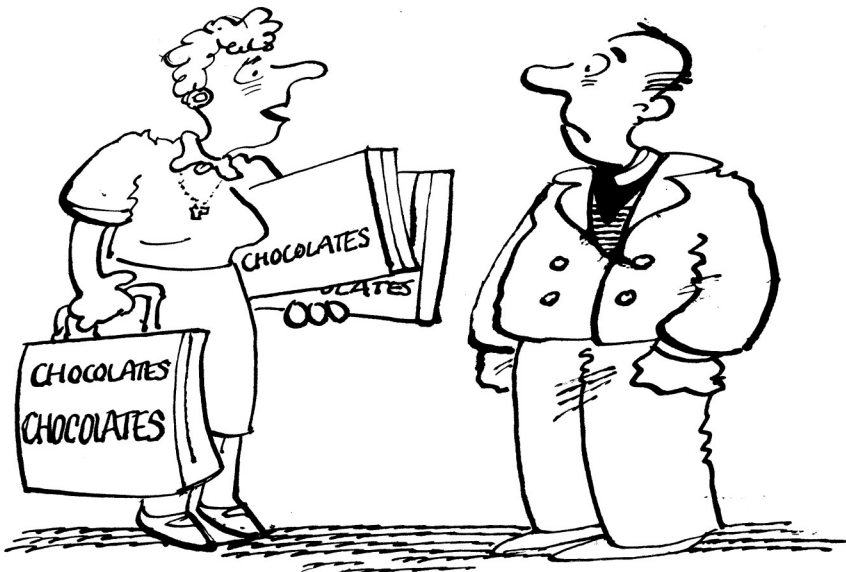


Phil & Gill Etherington

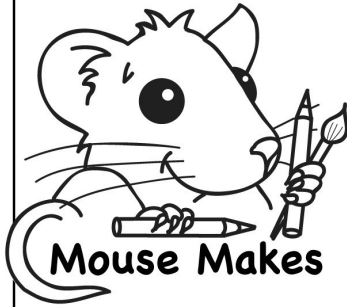
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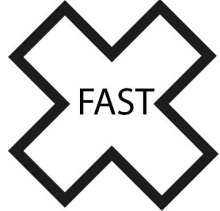
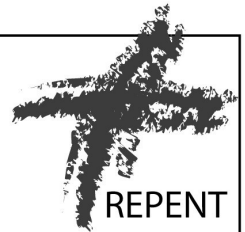


I am stockpiling, just in case...



During Lent read through the Gospel of Luke and each day pray for God to help you become more like Jesus

Lent is the name given to the **40 days** before Easter and is a time to *pray*, to *read* the bible and to *turn* to God. The first day of Lent is **Ash Wednesday**, a day to *repent* and say *sorry* to God for the wrong things we have *said* or *thought* or *done*.



P W R P W O R D O R G F
 I S C R I P T U R E O O
 T O O A L R E A D F D R
 E R K Y D I T H E L P T
 M R E M E M B E R E R Y
 P Y F O R G I V E C E D
 T S L E N T N R J T P A
 A S H W E D N E S D A Y
 T W O R S H I P U E R S
 I E J E S U S E S N E D
 O F A S T H I N K Y E Y
 N I B I B L E T G I V E

Can you find these words in the word search above?

- LENT • ASH WEDNESDAY • FORTY DAYS
- JESUS • WILDERNESS • TEMPTATION • PRAY • FAST
- DENY • REPENT • SORRY • FORGIVE • GIVE • HELP
- PREPARE • REFLECT • THINK • READ • SCRIPTURE
- BIBLE • WORD • REMEMBER • WORSHIP • GOD

"Have you a computer problem? If so, I am local and here to help..."

Here are just a few of the services I can offer

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- Training & support
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The Parish Church of *St. John the Divine, Brooklands*

*In the Deanery of Withington, In the Diocese of Manchester,
In the Province of York*

Website: www.stjohnsbrooklands.org.uk

SUNDAY SERVICES

8.30am Holy Communion
10.30 am Family Communion
(Second Sunday of the Month All-Age Worship)
5.30pm Choral Evensong

Holy Communion is celebrated on Holy Days and Saints Days as announced.

POINTS OF CONTACT

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