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Online edition

# ***ST PETER'S CHURCH BRACKLEY***

***"Loving God, loving each other, loving Brackley"***



## ***Rev.d Sylvia writes***



Dear Friends,

I do hope you have coped well during the last few months which we hope will be the last lockdown and have enjoyed the further easing of measures in May. I trust that you are also looking forward with hope, to the lifting of the last restrictions later this month.

What are your hopes now for the coming months? Planning for the future surely comes with some uncertainty. For many, a holiday beckons, but we are told we must continue to be cautious. We do not know yet what the 'new normal' will be. Life is sure to be different for some time to come. One thing we can be certain of is God is with us and loves us.

Much as I prefer not to look back, many times during the last year news broadcasts have often included the phrase 'lessons will be learned'. This has led me to reflect on what, as Christian people, have we learned? What can we carry in to the future of our lives?

During Lent, I read the book 'Living His Story. Revealing the extraordinary love of God in ordinary ways'. We all have a story to tell, to pass on to others which gives an insight to the person we are, where we belong and how we relate to the world around us. Reading this book showed the ways in which, by sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ, by telling our story, we can encourage others to learn more. I learned afresh, that God is so often already at work in others and sometimes, in the telling of our own story of faith, is a further encouragement on a journey that perhaps has already begun.

Now many of us would find this approach rather daunting, but if we are to witness to our faith we have to have courage. We may need to show our vulnerability, but initial conversations are the starting point. During this pandemic many have questioned, 'why does a loving God allow such suffering?' For most, a difficult question for which the answer can be complex.

This book suggests, that questions are often a starting point for us to be able to say, 'I wonder, why you ask'. We need to listen to what may lay behind the question, what **their** story might be before we begin to answer. This is an approach that can apply to all of us as we seek to witness to the story of Jesus in the Gospels. The hymn 'We have a Gospel to Proclaim' gives us good encouragement to be witnesses. How great to sing it when we are able.

We are all called to this work, how do we respond? We respond when we **'go out'**, have conversations, listen to the stories others have to tell. How are we to do that? Where do we start? It can so often be a word or two spoken in the supermarket, a chance meeting, a small act of kindness. God will often provide the chance, the opportunity. We may never know of course, if that conversation will be fruitful, that is when we have to trust in the Holy Spirit. Conversations can always be continued, we just have to be watchful for the opportunities.

So my friends, perhaps the lesson for us, is that we must be open to opportunities the future will bring for us to let others know of Christ, that we can with courage, start those conversations or just listen. One thing I think we have all learned is that our communities have grown in love and support for each other. That has to be a positive start to the 'new normal'.

May the God of love be with you,

With my love and prayers,

From Sylvia

## Chuckle Time

A traffic cop pulled alongside a speeding car on the motorway. Looking at the car he was astounded to see that the elderly woman behind the wheel was knitting. The policeman cranked down his window and yelled at the driver 'Pull Over' 'No' the woman called back 'Cardigan'

## Church maintenance May 2021

The Quinquennial (5 year) inspection of St Peter's church by our architect is planned for 18<sup>th</sup> May. This will give us a good understanding of the condition of the building and the potential work we need to undertake to maintain the building to the "Glory of God" for now and future generations. The scaffolding towers erected at the east end are there so we can combine the inspection with some essential work on the Chancel and Lady Chapel roofs.

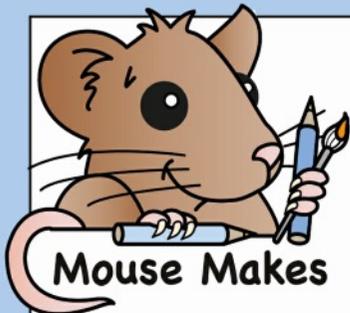
Shortly after we moved to Brackley in 1980 there was a major restoration of St Peter's. This included many items including replacing the castellations on the tower and retiling the Lady Chapel and Chancel roofs. The tiles were re-laid with new felt and about 40% new ones were required. Since, then there has not been any significant work to these roofs, and we will know after the close inspection the extent of any essential repairs to them.

Unfortunately, when the Church Hall was built a bad batch of stone tiles was used. This type of stone tile usually lasts 100 to 200 years but we have already had to replace 41% of the tiles. The roof over the kitchen / passageway deteriorated badly this February and we needed about £1,000 of lead soakers to maintain the integrity of that roof. This roof section will need replacing shortly but first we need to plan its renewal alongside other projects at St Peter's.

To eke out the life of the stone tiles it is critical to keep moss off them. Moss, on the tiles, even if dead, retains moisture within the tiles and when the tile freezes it accelerates delamination of the stone and the disintegration of the tile. The moss on the Church Hall roof is now almost gone but it has taken applications of Jeyes fluid and then "Wet and Forget", to finally see the moss now largely absent on most roof sections.

I plan another article when we have completed the Quinquennial inspection and am able to give a fuller picture.

John MacMahon



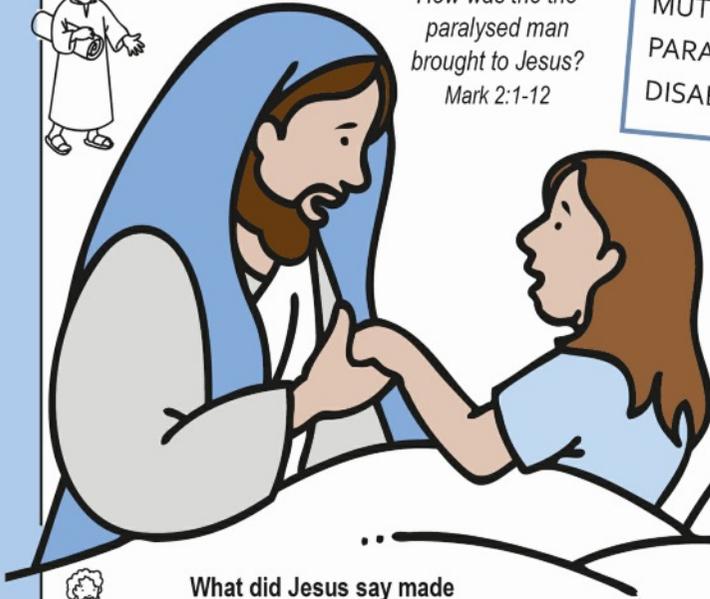
## JESUS HEALS

Who was the first person Jesus healed?  
*John 4:46-54*

Who did Jesus heal from fever?  
*Mark 1:29-31*

How was the paralysed man brought to Jesus?  
*Mark 2:1-12*

- Jesus **healed** and made the...
- |           |          |
|-----------|----------|
| SICK      | ABLE     |
| DEAD      | WALK     |
| BLIND     | FORGIVEN |
| DEAF      | ALIVE    |
| CRIPPLED  | SPEAK    |
| SINNER    | MOVE     |
| MUTE      | SEE      |
| PARALYSED | WELL     |
| DISABLED  | HEAR     |



Where did the demons ask Jesus to send them when he drove them out?  
*Mark 5:1-20*

How long had the man by the pool been disabled?  
*John 5:1-15*

What did Jesus say made the woman well?  
*Matthew 9: 20-22*



"There are **many** things that Jesus did. If every one of them were written down, I suppose the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written."

*John 21:25*

How many men were healed from leprosy?  
*Luke 17:11-19*



What did Jesus heal Bartemaus from?  
*Mark 10:46-52*

Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, how many days had he been buried?  
*John 11:1-45*

## Gardening really *is* good for you

According to a recent study conducted by the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) and two universities, people who garden every day have well-being scores 6.6 per cent higher, and stress levels 4.2 per cent lower than those who do not garden at all.

Dr Lauriane Chalmin-Pui, RHS well-being fellow and lead author says, "The evidence overwhelmingly suggests that the more frequently you garden, the greater the health benefits.

"In fact, gardening every day has the same positive impact on your well-being as undertaking regular, vigorous exercise like cycling or running.

"Gardening is like effortless exercise: it doesn't feel as strenuous as going to the gym, but we can expend similar amounts of energy."

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The computer swallowed grandma  
Yes, honestly its true  
She pressed 'control' and 'enter'  
And disappeared from view.



It devoured her completely  
The thought just makes me squirm  
She must have caught a 'virus'  
Or been eaten by a 'worm.'

I've searched through the 'recycle bin'  
And files of every kind  
I've even used the 'Internet'  
But nothing did I find.



In desperation, I asked Jeeves  
My searches to refine  
The reply from him was negative  
Not a thing was found 'online.'



So if inside your 'Inbox'  
My Grandma you should see  
Please 'Copy,' 'Scan' and 'Paste' her  
And send her back to me!

## 20<sup>th</sup> June      **Summer Solstice – longest day of the year**

June, of course is the month of the summer solstice, the month of the Sun. *Sol + stice* come from two Latin words meaning 'sun' and 'to stand still'. As the days lengthen, the sun rises higher and higher until it seems to stand still in the sky. The Summer Solstice results in the longest day and the shortest night of the year. The Northern Hemisphere celebrates in June, and the Southern Hemisphere celebrates in December.

*While the Druids worship at Stonehenge and elsewhere, here are some Christian alternatives that honour the Creator rather than the created.*

### ***A Cantic for Brother Sun***

Praised be You, My Lord, in all Your creatures,  
Especially Sir Brother Sun,  
Who makes the day and enlightens us through You.  
He is lovely and radiant and grand;  
And he heralds You, his Most High Lord.  
St Francis of Assisi

### ***God in All***

He inspires all,  
    He gives life to all,  
He dominates all,  
    He supports all.  
He lights the light of the sun.  
    He furnishes the light of the night.  
He has made springs in dry land.  
    He is the God of heaven and earth,  
    of sea and rivers,  
    of sun, moon and stars,  
    of the lofty mountain and the lowly valley,  
the God above heaven,  
    and in heaven,  
    and under heaven.

*A prayer of St Patrick*

**4<sup>th</sup> June**

**St Petroc, the founder of Padstow**

If you would like to be in Cornwall this summer in search of peace and quiet, Petroc is the saint for you. Especially if you used to find Padstow a bit too crowded for your liking! He would have sympathised.

This 6<sup>th</sup> century abbot is Cornwall's most famous saint. Petroc set sail from South Wales, landed at Haylemouth, and founded a monastery at Lanwethinoc – now called Padstow, after him (Petroc's Stow).

Padstow must have been popular even in those days, because about 30 years later Petroc, in search of some peace and quiet, moved on to build another monastery at Little Petherick (Nanceventon). Here he must have decided to try some 6<sup>th</sup> century equivalent of 'Fresh Expressions', because he engaged with his local community by building a mill and a chapel.



In time, Petroc began feeling crowded again. So he tramped off to the remote wilds of Bodmin Moor, where he lived as a hermit – until some 12 monks turned up to join him. Firmly, Petroc kept them all housed in a monastery on a hilltop, while he enjoyed his private space in a cell by the river.

But even here Petroc was not alone. One day a terrified stag came rushing through the woods, pursued by the hunt. Petroc flung open the door of his cell, and the panting animal took refuge. When the huntsmen arrived on the scene, they did not dare to argue with the famous holy man, and went their way. The stag's gratitude made him tame, and Petroc would come to be portrayed with a stag as his special emblem.

Petroc was buried in the monastery in Padstow but in c.1000 his shrine and relics, including his staff and bell, were translated to Bodmin. Here they have stayed ever since, except for a short, unplanned trip to Brittany in 1177, when they were stolen and carted off by a naughty Canon of the Church. Henry II intervened, and everything but a rib of Petroc was eventually returned.

## Heaven in Ordinary

As we reach June we enter, what in Church circles is often referred to as “Ordinary Time”.

Wouldn't that be nice?!

Nothing seems to be ordinary anymore and we seem to have exhausted our supply of words to describe the “unprecedented” circumstances under which we have been living.

Nevertheless, all being well, this month should see a further lifting of restrictions and some sense that we can ‘breathe’ again; meet, gather and simply be human with one another once more. There are no grounds for complacency of course and after a year of false dawns and misplaced optimism, it's important that we take small, measured, incremental steps on the path to ‘normality’.

... And for all that we are impatient to recover lost ground, rebuild our congregations, re-engage with our communities, nevertheless we should beware of simply seeking to recreate life before the pandemic. It would be easy to return willy-nilly to the “known” ways, the (allegedly) comfortable certainties of the past. Many of them were perhaps not as life giving or fruitful as we may have persuaded ourselves they were.

There is surely a need as well as an opportunity to re-evaluate our priorities.

Hence this “ordinary” month is actually scattered with the celebration of some extraordinary people who invite us, in their different ways, to consider how the transforming power of Christ is at work in the world.

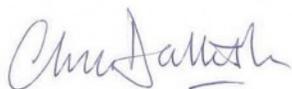
There is John the Baptist, whose birth we celebrate on 24<sup>th</sup> June. John called the people of his own day to examine their hearts and minds and lives in the light of the one who was coming after him – soldiers, tax gatherers, the religious leaders were all called to repent, to turn around to face in a different direction and walk in the Way of the Messiah.

There is the Apostle Barnabas, “son of encouragement” who sold his field and gave the proceeds to enable the work of the church; generous in spirit as well as in material matters who sought to reconcile Jewish and Gentile Christians, affirming that whatever your background we all find our true identity in

Christ. What an important message in an age of fragmentation and uncertain identity.

Then on the 28<sup>th</sup> June we remember Peter, the Cathedral's principal patron saint, who so wanted to please his Lord and Teacher and promised the earth, but who, when the chips were down and his own life at stake, denied he even knew him, ...and yet, and yet found in Christ such forgiveness and such grace that he would be empowered to boldly proclaim the resurrection, lead the nascent church and ultimately find the courage to die a martyr's death.

Ordinary people made extraordinary by God's grace, who didn't cling to the past but prepared the way of the Lord and sought to live it out in ways of self-sacrificial generosity, simplicity of life and radical forgiveness. Can it ever really be ordinary time with the amazing God we serve?

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Chris Dalliston". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line under the name.

The Very Revd Christopher Dalliston  
Dean of Peterborough

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