

ALL SAINTS CHURCH BOYNE HILL MAIDENHEAD PARISH NEWS

www.all saints boynehill.org.uk

Issue 16

1 July 2020



Dear parishioners and friends of All Saints, Boyne Hill,

It is Monday morning as I write this introduction to the latest newsletter. I have just read the latest update from the Government concerning the opening of places of worship for acts of worship. It is clear that moving forward there will be a great amount of detail to cover before offering worship, that will be very simple in content. However, we still await the response of the Church of England and the Diocese to the government paper before we can say when we will be able to open for services.

Reflecting on Sunday when we opened for private prayer from 10.00am until 12 noon I would like to take the opportunity to thank the 20 people who came to pray for the way they followed the guidance. Everyone made sure they wore a face mask, cleaned their hands with gel on entry, used the prayer resources provided and their own wick to light a candle and sat in seating that had been prepared for social spacing. I would like to thank too the people who have been working hard to get the church ready for opening. This includes the PCC standing committee, John Bolodeoku and the nine members of the cleaning teams that have started weekly duties. Each member of that team has risk assessed and been given detailed information on cleaning the building so that it is as safe as possible for people entering the building. Thank you too to Ann, Ken and Stella for welcoming people and for taking details of who attended. The record keeping is important as we now have to inform all those who attended church should there be a case of Coronavirus within the building.

We are hoping that as long as we can safely risk assess and make the church safe for worship that simple services of the Eucharist will begin again in the coming weeks. However, we will not open for services before we are confident that we are following guidelines accurately. Moving forward we will be able to hold funerals and weddings in church but with greatly reduced capacity of 30 for those two services. Please watch for further information concerning the slow return to community worship at All Saints.

Bishop Steven has been offering reflections during this time of Lockdown. In this week's edition he has offered thoughts on the challenge for the church in re-opening and re-building for the future. He has asked us to think how we will offer physical services alongside virtual and recorded services for those feeling unable to return to church at this time. Bishop Steven has given an excellent talk based on Ezekiel Chapter 47 to help us with our thinking. (I do recommend that you listen to his talk found on our web-site) but here are my edited highlights from Steven's material and my own additions using the Easter vigil.

In 587 BC Ezekiel found himself in Exile in Babylon. The Babylonian people had destroyed the temple and God's chosen people found themselves in Babylon, many of whom would never return to their homes. Ezekiel reflects upon what has happened and where might hope for the future be found? Ezekiel has a vision of God that grows and deepens, and the prophet realises that God will raise up his people in new and remarkable ways. Bishop Steven points to three visions of the prophet.

1. From Ezekiel 36 we find that the people will receive a new heart and a new Spirit, and their hearts of stone will be removed. This is God's grace at work. We will become a spirit filled people.

2. Then in Chapter 37 of Ezekiel in verses 1-14 the story of the valley of the dry bones. The people will be alive with the spirit, creation will be renewed and if we see the climax of hope in the New Testament then we become a people renewed in Christ. These two readings some of you may recognise as readings from our Easter Vigil service at All Saints. This service reminds us of the journey with the prophets towards the hope that Jesus would offer his life that we might have new transformed lives. Steven does not make reference to this but when we follow the readings from the prophets and move to the Easter fire (A sign of the Holy Spirit and Pentecost) we are reminded that we are an Easter people called to follow our Baptismal promises to be members of the Body of Christ. We enter the church and renew those promises in the waters of baptism. We are adopted brothers and sisters in Christ called to then partake of the Body of Christ to become the Body of Christ in the World.
3. The third vision Steven reflects upon is of a new temple in chapters 40-47. There is says Steven, lots of detail (Like the health and safety documents we need to follow before re-opening) These documents will hopefully protect lives, but they will not, as Steven says, give new life. He returns to Ezekiel 47 and finds that Ezekiel notices a little trickle of water from the temple that flows into the desert and the Dead sea where nothing flourishes and yet the desert and the Dead Sea are overcome. The water goes from shallow to knee deep, to waste high to a river. Steven is making the point that from the temple or the place of worship and sacrifice New Life flourishes. We will have to face the hard work and detail to offer again places of worship where people can be the gathered spirit filled community.

Huge challenges are faced as we continue to face the threat of Covid19, the recession that will challenge us, the grief many have faced, and the memories of hurt people will carry. However, Steven using Ezekiel reminds us that it will be worth re-opening our buildings as new life flows from the gathered community fed and nurtured by the Trinitarian God of love. Like our ripple effect our acts of living Christ Like lives will be needed in the future as we seek to love God and neighbour.

Sad news

Last Thursday morning Mike Ansell died at Wexham Park hospital following his incredibly brave battle with cancer. Throughout that battle Mike has been so positive in his outlook. Only three weeks ago he was telling me he was determined to live life to the best of his ability. Mike loved singing in the community choir and our own church choir. He enjoyed serving at the altar and Lorraine told me when she came with her family on Sunday for prayer that they both had so many happy memories of All Saints. One place that I know Mike adored and gained so much spiritual strength from was the annual pilgrimage to Walsingham. Mike found pilgrimage a deep meaningful way of seeing the Christian journey through life. I was privileged to hear him speak of his pilgrimage with Fr Kevin Scully to the Holy Land when he shared the stories with the Mothers Union now known as Senior Saints. Jeanette sent me a quote from Mike that he had shared with All Saints Friendship group that has been sharing on WhatsApp throughout the Lockdown. 'It's not our job to fix people or judge people, it's our job to love people for who they are.' As we journey forth as a community those words seem very powerful. May Mike rest in peace and rise in glory. We hold Lorraine and their family in prayer at this time.

Mike's funeral will be at 10.45am on Monday 13th July in church. Clearly there will be a limit on those able to attend, but I will attempt to find out numbers as soon as possible.

Resources

This week's resources include Revd Judith's sermon for the Fourth Sunday after Trinity as well as contributions from Brian with music and commentary, Sue Nordberg's prayers, Greg Hurst's reflection and Louise O'Dwyer Bernard's resources for use by families with children.

This week we will at least be open for private prayer on Wednesday and Sunday from 10-12 noon and possibly open for a simple service. This will depend on us being able to follow the guidelines set by the government and the church.

If you have internet access, please continue to use the Church of England and The Oxford Diocesan resources. The dialling for those without internet can be found on 01865 920930.

Night Prayer Thursdays 8.00pm – 8.30pm on Zoom

Why not join me for Night Prayer on Zoom? You can download Zoom for free, and you join Zoom Meeting

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/75976544021?pwd=Q1pJVTlpTytOdHg0VXhSRGxWRzlzZz09>

Meeting ID: 759 7654 4021

Password: 5rHziv

We'll be using the simple service from the Church of England prayer books we've been issuing. It begins on page 24 and finishes on page 30. Or use this link: <https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-parishes/coronavirus-covid-19-liturgy-and-prayer>

You should have received a copy of this helpful blue book but if you haven't please let me know.

The Texts this week will be Psalm 23, John 10:1-10 and the hymn the Lord's my Shepherd by Stuart Townend

Bishop Steven's Blog which I have used in this newsletter can be found at <https://blogs.oxford.anglican.org/>

For those using the Blue Church of England book for Morning Prayer here are the readings for this week.

Friday (St Thomas) Psalm 92, 2 Samuel 15:17-21, John 11:1-16

Saturday Psalm 76, Judges 12:1-11, Luke 17: 11-19

Sunday Psalm 55. 1-15, 18-22, Deuteronomy 24: 10-end, Acts 28: 1-16

Monday Psalm 80, Judges 13: 1-24, Luke 17: 20-end

Tuesday Psalm 89:1-18, Judges 14, Luke 18:1-14

Wednesday Psalm 119: 105-128, Judges 15: 1 – 16:3, Luke 18: 15-30

Thursday Psalm 92, Judges 16:4-end, Luke 18: 31-end

Prayer Intentions

We begin by remembering those who have died; Mike Ansell and Charles Pickett. We remember Lorraine Ansell and her family and Rene Wilson who was a close friend of Charles.

We pray for Nick Moss and his family, Louise, George and Lucy and give thanks for his continued improvement. We pray for all of Nick's family including Mike and Jan that they may continue to see Nick making progress on his road to recovery.

We give thanks for the wonderful news that Sue and Stanley Brown have a new granddaughter Poppy Rae who was born on the 16th June to William and Jennifer.

We continue to pray for our Funeral Directors within the town as they support people in times of bereavement.

We pray for our schools, for staff, parents and the children as they learn at school and at home. Within our parish we pray for Boyne Hill School, All Saints Juniors, Altwood, Larchfield, Claires' Court, Highfield and Desborough Schools.

We pray for our NHS and Care workers and give thanks for their dedication to caring for others. We remember John Bolodeoku, Helen Broad, Joanne Hawkes, Karen, Carole Nicholson, Richard Stafford, Eleanor Kershaw, Ricky and Dagma Powley, Magda Gozdek and Emmanuel.

We continue to give thanks for the Pastoral Care team making phone calls, emails, food shopping and offering other practical support and acts of kindness.

We pray for our Nursing homes of Boyne Grove Day Centre, Clara Court, Normanhurst and Larchfield. We pray too for our congregational members who are living in care homes.

We pray for our Tiny Saints, Tuesday Club, Young Saints, Tiny Saints and All Sorts. We give thanks for the commitment of the members and leaders.

We pray for all those who are suffering in any way as a consequence of the virus and Lockdown.

We pray for the Government and church leaders as they make difficult decisions at this time.

We remember the people of Reading still coming to terms with the fatal stabbings in the park last weekend.

Pray for those who live at Albert Street, Aldwick Drive, All Saints Avenue, Allenby Road, Altwood Bailey, Altwood Close, Altwood Drive, Altwood Road, Ashton Place, Audley Drive and Autumn Walk

Pray for churches and places of worship as we prepare to open our buildings for services.

Eucharist

Sharing as Receiving

In this chapter Geoffrey discerns what it might mean to 'Receive the Body of our Lord Jesus Christ which he gave for you'

Geoffrey tells of his experience in being offered millet by a Fulani Bush man in Niger on the edge of the Sahara. It smells of sour milk and looks like a muddy paste. Geoffrey asks himself whether he should eat it? 'we being many are one body because we all share in the one bread. He wonders in what sense he is with one with tis man? He looks at the awful brown sludge and wonders. Next Geoffrey reflects upon sharing the one cup at a nursing home.

Sometimes it is not easy to stop people dribbling or perhaps touching the wine with their fingers. Then he shares cakes with a man from the congregation who has found them in a dustbin!

I remember when I was a curate in Newport joining a group of people who went out at night to feed the homeless with soup and sandwiches. I got to know some of the people although I never wore my clerical clothes. One day walking over Newport bridge near the ruin of the castle some men called out to me. I went to see them and found the people who I took sandwiches to at night. They were drinking something from a bottle and invited me to join them. I was concerned on two fronts, one whether the drink was alcoholic and two I worried about people seeing me mixing with the men. What if someone from church saw me?

This is a difficult theme for most of us. It is probably easier to give, in many circumstances than it is to receive. When we give, we get the warm glow of feeling we have helped and to a certain degree we are in control. We the person with the ability to give. Geoffrey refused the millet. His ideal of oneness overtaken by the will to survive. I too rejected the offer on Newport bridge. These issues seem even more heightened now as we face the worries and fears of the Pandemic. 'We who are many are one body IF we dare to share the one bread.'

Bible Study

This week I am looking at passages from a book called 'Small Christian Communities' by James O'Halloran. This book looks at the church through the communion model but also notes the need for small supportive groups within a church community.

O'Halloran gives bible passages that look at community, commitment, discernment, diversity, creation, friendship and many other areas of church life.

I will begin by offering you his texts on Community and Eucharist for you to reflect upon. You don't need to use them all but perhaps one or two.

Luke 22: 14-23 – Do this in remembrance of me

John 6: 35-58 – I am the bread of life

1 Corinthians 10: 16-17 – we who are many are one body

1 Corinthians 11: 23-26 Do this in remembrance of me.'

May you all be blessed by God's presence this week.

Fr Jeremy

Worship for Sunday 5 July THE FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

Sounds of Worship

Brian Graves

Today's gospel contains the well-known verse "His yoke is easy, and his burden is light". This verse is also used as a chorus in Handel's "Messiah". It is significant that this chorus concludes Part 1 of "Messiah", which is the section that describes the foretelling of the coming of Jesus, the nativity and, in very short-order, his work on earth.

Thus, "His yoke is easy, and his burden is light" summarises the essence of Jesus' teaching. We see from the full gospel text, Jesus explains that through Him, God's mission is to be the "friend of tax-gatherers and sinners", which is basically, everyone who is prepared to acknowledge their sinfulness. Jesus also provides the hope that however hard are the travails and burdens of our lives, through faith in Him we will find peace and fulfilment.

This theme is explored in the hymns and anthem I have chosen today.

The first hymn is "I cannot tell why he, whom the angels worship" AM 666. The first verse asks the question; "Why was Jesus sent to earth?" and references the nativity. The second verse dwells on Jesus' Passion and references the easing of our own burdens through his redemptive power. The third verse wonders how the gospel of Jesus the Saviour can be made-known throughout the world. The fourth verse calls us to praise his name. The poetic structure uses the formula of starting each verse with the words; "I cannot tell why/how" which leads into the posing a question and the second half of each verse has the words "But this I know" which is our call to action. Also, the final line of each verse summarises its theme and if placed together make a satisfying verse of their own:

And so the Saviour, Saviour of the world, is come,
for still the Saviour, Saviour of the world is here.
When he the Saviour, Saviour of the world, is known.
At last the Saviour, Saviour of the world, is King!

The author was William Young Fullerton (1857-1932) who was a Baptist evangelist, administrator and writer. He was born in Belfast, Ireland. As a young man, he was influenced by the preaching of Charles Spurgeon, who became his friend and mentor.

The hymn is set to the very well-known tune "Londonderry Air" ("O Danny Boy"). The origins of this tune are obscure. It was first recorded by Jane Ross of Limavady in the County of Londonderry, Ireland who submitted it to the music collector George Petrie who published it in "The Ancient Music of Ireland" 1855. However, no other collectors of Irish folk melodies encountered this particular tune. More recent research suggests that it is an amalgamation of two tunes clouded by a possibly idiosyncratic performance which Jane Ross recorded. However, there is no doubt that it is an ancient tune and one which stirs the hearts of people whether they are Irish or not.

1. I cannot tell why he, whom angels worship,
should set his love upon the sons of men,
or why, as Shepherd, he should seek the wanderers,
to bring them back, they know not how or when.
But this I know, that he was born of Mary
when Bethl'em's manger was his only home,
and that he lived at Nazareth and laboured,
and so the Saviour, Saviour of the world, is come.

2. I cannot tell how silently he suffered,
as with his peace he graced this place of tears,
or how his heart upon the cross was broken,
the crown of pain to three and thirty years.
But this I know, he heals the broken-hearted
and stays our sin and calms our lurking fear
and lifts the burden from the heavy laden;
for still the Saviour, Saviour of the world is here.

3. I cannot tell how he will win the nations,
how he will claim his earthly heritage,
how satisfy the needs and aspirations
of east and west, of sinner and of sage.
But this I know, all flesh shall see his glory,
and he shall reap the harvest he has sown,
and some glad day his sun will shine in splendour
when he the Saviour, Saviour of the world, is known.

4. I cannot tell how all the lands shall worship,
when at his bidding every storm is stilled,
or who can say how great the jubilation
when every heart with love and joy is filled.
But this I know, the skies will thrill with rapture,
and myriad myriad human voices sing,
and earth to heav'n, and heav'n to earth, will answer,
'at last the Saviour, Saviour of the world, is King!'

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=62wk5KvI7-w>

A choir anthem, which we often use is very relevant to the gospel and that is "Lead me Lord" by S S Wesley (1810-1876). The words are taken from Psalm 5, v8 and Psalm 4 v9

"Lead me, Lord, lead me in my righteousness, make thy way plain before my face.
For it is thou, Lord, thou, Lord, only, that makest me dwell in safety."

This short anthem is the final section from a longer Anthem "Praise the Lord, O my soul" which was written for the opening of the new organ at Holy Trinity Church, Winchester in 1861.

Samuel Sebastian Wesley was born in London, he was the eldest child in the composer Samuel Wesley's second family, which he formed with Sarah Suter having separated from his wife Charlotte. Samuel Sebastian was the grandson of Charles Wesley. His middle name derived from his father's lifelong admiration for the music of Bach.

After singing in the choir of the Chapel Royal as a boy, Samuel Sebastian embarked on a career as a musician, and was appointed organist at Hereford Cathedral in 1832. While there he married the sister of the Dean, John Merryweather. He moved to Exeter Cathedral in 1835. He subsequently held appointments at Leeds Parish Church (from 1842), Winchester Cathedral (from 1849) and Gloucester Cathedral (1865-1876). In 1839 he received both his Bachelor of Music degree and a Doctor of Music degree from Oxford. He became a Professor of Organ at the Royal Academy of Music in 1850. He died at his home in Gloucester on 19 April 1876 aged 65.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ugfhO01_1PY

The final hymn is "I heard the voice of Jesus say" AM 669 to the tune Kingsfold. The words were authored by Horatius Bonar (1808-1889) and first published in 1846 in Bonar's "Hymns Original and Selected". The first verse references today's gospel text directly. This hymn uses a similar structural technical as that used in "I cannot tell" where each verse starts with a statement to which there is a response in the second half of the verse.

Horatius Bonar was born at Edinburgh and educated at the city's High School and University. After completing his studies, he was "licensed" to preach, and became assistant to the Rev. John Lewis, minister of St. James's, Leith. He was ordained minister of the North Parish, Kelso, in 1837, but left the Established Church at the "Disruption," in 1848, remaining in Kelso as a minister of the Free Church of Scotland. The University of Aberdeen conferred on him the doctorate of divinity in 1853. In 1866 he was translated to the Chalmers Memorial Church, the Grange, Edinburgh; and in 1883 he was chosen Moderator of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland.

Bonar is noted as a very prolific writer of hymns with several hundred credited to him.

The tune “Kingsfold” is thought by some scholars to date back to the Middle Ages and is a folk tune set to a variety of texts in England and Ireland. The tune was published in English Country Songs 1893, an anthology compiled by Lucy E. Broadwood (1858-1929) and J. A. Fuller Maitland (1856-1936). After having heard the tune in Kingsfold, Sussex, England (thus its name), Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958) introduced it as a hymn tune in The English Hymnal (1906) as a setting for "I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say".

1. I heard the voice of Jesus say,
"Come unto me and rest;
lay down, O weary one, lay down
your head upon my breast."
I came to Jesus as I was,
weary and worn and sad;
I found in him a resting place,
and he has made me glad.
2. I heard the voice of Jesus say,
"Behold, I freely give
the living water; thirsty one,
stoop down and drink, and live."
I came to Jesus, and I drank
of that life-giving stream;
my thirst was quenched, my soul revived,
and now I live in him.
3. I heard the voice of Jesus say,
"I am this dark world's light;
look unto me, your morn shall rise,
and all your days be bright":
I looked to Jesus and I found
in him my Star, my Sun;
and in that light of life I'll walk,
till travelling days are done.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XUVCpF8-VuE>

I started with the reference to the chorus “My yoke is easy, and his burthen is light” from “Messiah” and it is entirely appropriate to use it as the concluding music for this Sounds of Worship.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WqlfmteN1_c

COLLECT

O God, the protector of all who trust in you, without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy: increase and multiply upon us your mercy; that with you as our ruler and guide we may so pass through things temporal that we lose not our hold on things eternal; grant this heavenly Father, for our Lord Jesus Christ's sake, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

OT READING **Zechariah 9: 9 - 12,**

Rejoice greatly, O daughter Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter Jerusalem! Lo, your king comes to you; triumphant and victorious is he, humble and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey. He will cut off the chariot from Ephraim and the war horse from Jerusalem; and the battle-bow shall be cut off, and he shall command peace to the nations; his dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth. As for you also, because of the blood of my covenant with you, I will set your prisoners free from the waterless pit. Return to your stronghold, O prisoners of hope; today I declare that I will restore to you double.

EPISTLE Romans 7: 15 - 25a

I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. Now if I do what I do not want, I agree that the law is good. But in fact it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me. For I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh. I can will what is right, but I cannot do it. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do. Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me. So I find it to be a law that when I want to do what is good, evil lies close at hand. For I delight in the law of God in my inmost self, but I see in my members another law at war with the law of my mind, making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. Wretched man that I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!

GOSPEL Matthew 11:16 - 19 & 25 – 30

At that time Jesus said, ‘To what will I compare this generation? It is like children sitting in the market-places and calling to one another, “We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we wailed, and you did not mourn.” For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, “He has a demon”; the Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, “Look, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax-collectors and sinners!” Yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds. I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him. Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.’

SERMON The Revd Dr Judith Thomas

“Return to your stronghold, O prisoners of hope: today I declare that I will restore to you double”

(Zechariah 9:12).

As a backdrop to the sermons that I have written for the Bulletin since the Covid lockdown, I keep hearing in my head a theme of my last actual preached sermon – ‘Crisis and opportunity.’ Now these Zechariah verses remind me that the circumstances which were forced on us by the pandemic can have strengthened and purified our faith. How wonderful to be called ‘a prisoner of hope’!

As we prepare to re- open churches for services and not just private prayer, the readings for today challenge us to be ready in more than just practical ways. They call us to be ready in three very definite ways. As individuals, as a community of faith, and lastly as members of a country.

Let’s begin with ourselves.

Would you call yourself a prisoner of hope ?

What has been your hope in these last weeks and months ? Has it been a wishy- washy idea that soon all will blow over and we return to ‘normal’ ? Perhaps during this time a loved one has died and it is the Blessed Hope of the resurrection that fills you - of being with that person again at the heavenly banquet. Is it the hope that God will fulfil His purpose for you in a plan that is beyond all imagining ? It is not a vague hope but a firm conviction that bears fruit.

Notice the words again that Zechariah uses –‘prisoners of hope’. I have never visited a prison but over the years I have spoken to many in various countries who have been prisoners. Prisoners because of their faith, prisoners of war, prisoners caused by hatred. Victims of traumatic circumstances yet with hope – they have clung to something beyond themselves, something bigger. something that becomes part of their very being and shines in their hearts despite what goes on around them. We all know, in our own experiences, people like that. ‘Shine’ is indeed the word. Read again that sentence from Zechariah, verse 12 - ‘Return to your stronghold, o prisoners of hope’ The problem is that many of us have no stronghold. Remember the parable of Christ about building on sandy

foundations as opposed to solidness. Our stronghold *must* be God and His word. People will let us down wittingly and unwittingly. We are but frail humanity needing to be dusted down by God and put on our feet once again, to be forgiven 'seventy times seven.'

If you read the Zechariah quote in its entirety, you will be reminded of the verses of how Jesus rides into Jerusalem – 'Lo your king comes to you triumphant and victorious is he, humble and riding on a donkey'. (verse 9) To be' a prisoner of hope' we must soak ourselves in God's word so that it become part of us.

Reflect again on the words prisoner of hope – for in our second reading, Paul speaks of imprisonment of a different kind There it is, loud and clear in all is starkness. St Paul declares,

'For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want, is what I do.' (verse 19)

He goes on, 'so then with my mind I am a slave to the law of God but with my flesh I am a slave to sin. '(v 25).

Which expression sits best with you - 'prisoner of hope' or ' slave to sin ' ?

The problem happens when neither touches you and a numbing indifference has seeped in.

This brings me back to our starting point of my sermon that the Covid pandemic has provided both crisis and opportunity.

First- looking at ourselves as individuals. All of our readings challenge us *to look at ourselves*.

How have we changed? What have we learned about ourselves during these months? How have we moved in faith? If we are still the same person as pre- lockdown we have a problem!

Point two-the verses in context as a community of faith.

As we return to our places of worship, where do we need, as a community of faith, to repent ? The very mention of 'sin' can be seen as a few emptier but it is foundational. We declare ' Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.' As a community of faith we need to ask some searching questions. ? Who did we not welcome before ? Where did we fail to proclaim the saving love of Christ in our community ? Where were we introspective as the gathered people of God and failed to see that to which God was calling us ? Repentance is part and parcel of sitting again in a pew before God, as individuals and as the Body of Christ.

In our gospel reading, from Matthew chapter 11, Jesus looks at his surrounding circumstances and passes comment. He reminds us in verse 19 that the way of the cross involved criticism and death. He declares that ' The Son of Man came eating and drinking and they say 'Look a glutton and a drunkard a friend of tax collectors and sinners'.

Christian discipleship, by virtue of its very nature, will lead to opposition as it did in Christ's own ministry. Therefore, in their missions, churches must examine that which is furthering the kingdom. There must be much prayer and discussion, soaking in scripture. We are not called to the safe option. Our Lord spoke about the narrow way- not a tarmacked, smooth drive! The Church worldwide is meant to be missional. It is meant to seek the lost, to proclaim the gospel of salvation to all.

It is a powerful question that all churches must ask of themselves – who will come to the newly opened doors who were not here before ?

We have looked at our individual journey, our journey as communities of faith and now we look at ourselves as part of a country.

Church and country. An established church can be a fettered church - or not. What should churches be saying to our country ?

Over and over, expressions like 'systemic evil' abound. It is in the fabric of our world. Demonstrations, statues toppled, violence, shootings, stabbings -something is radically wrong. The Church, in all its fullness, has something to say to this. It can preach the 'comfortable or it can seek to be the yeast. The verses at the end of our gospel reading speak of 'comfort to the burdened' and yes, that is what a loving God pours out in abundance when we open our lives to Him. 'Come to me', come to me' (v 28) We will indeed find rest for our souls.

How do our priorities as individuals and as a community of faith, align with the country in which we live, and beyond – to a world in need ? The process of transforming the world is a constitutive element of preaching the gospel. We cannot squeeze the gospel to voice our community's lifestyle and values as if the values of the community were the gospel and the local lifestyle were the Kingdom of God. "Thus says the neighbours" is not the same as 'Thus says the Lord ' !

The original hearers of Christ's sermons were shaken out of their sandaled feet when challenged to consider a Samaritan as their neighbour. The Church needs to be reminded that the mission field includes many people who do not believe at all what we believe.

A return to a church service will indeed be a joy, but it will also be a tremendous challenge - not in the nitty- gritty of cleaning, not in the not singing or the not shouting of responses and all the other small observances of safety - but in the very important aspects of personal and corporate repentance.

It will be in the asking – ' Who is *not* in this place with us?' Covid has indeed seen us metaphorically 'on the same sea' but churches must address the situation of inequality in our world., As one commented –'Some on that same sea are in seven bedoomed yachts and others in leaking dinghies'! The Church worldwide as the Body of Christ is to be *prophetic*.

A return to churches in worship is indeed an opportunity for repentance, both personal and corporate. The return can see a new determination to preach the gospel in all its fullness that- as in Christ's declaration - *all* may come as beloved and accepted children of God, that *all* may find rest for their souls. Amen.

YOUNG SAINTS AT HOME

We have put together another lesson plan, including a story and activity, for parents or carers to lead a session with their children. This lesson is called *Love in Every Colour* and **the plan is attached to the newsletter**. If you have downloaded any of these lessons for your children do let us know by contacting Jenny Wilks at jwilks@jwa-consultancy.co.uk or Louise O'Dwyer Barnard at lodwyerbarnard@hotmail.co.uk. We really would value your feedback!

THE GALILEE PROJECT (FLOOR UPDATE)

The coronavirus pandemic has occupied a major part of our thinking and concerns for so long now that it has been easy to forget that the clock continues to tick on the major project in which the PCC and congregation are engaged, namely the Floor Restoration Project. Work has continued without cease all this time and it is possible to report that significant progress has been made. In brief:

The faculty for the work has been agreed by the Chancellor of the Oxford Diocese.

Tenders for the work were invited from three flooring specialists and we have a successful outcome – the winner being Cliveden Construction. Cliveden has worked on several National Trust and English Heritage buildings, and also on other prestigious buildings such as Blenheim Palace. Cliveden was a major contractor for the restoration of Clandon Park after the devastating fire there.

A particularly good piece of news is that the resulting quotation plus fees was lower than expected, meaning that the gap between your donations and pledges is about £40,000 smaller than we thought we had to raise. So now we need to find £91,000 over your donations and pledges of £151,000.

Applications to a number of grant giving trusts have continued and it is pleasing to record that we have been offered £10,000, their maximum grant, from Berkshire Churches Trust, so our overall gap is now £81,000 and we await news from six outstanding applications.

The Ground Radar Survey, to look for possible chasms under the floor, has now been completed and we are waiting for the results.

What will be very visible to you on entering the church is that all the old lino has been removed and it is very pleasing to be able to report that the tiles underneath are sound, except that there are areas covered by adhesive which Cliveden say can be removed.

Ken Smith, Churchwarden

PRAYERS FOR THE 62nd ANNIVERSARY OF THE NHS & FINAL CLAP FOR CARERS

3rd July is the 62nd anniversary of the founding of the NHS. Download some prayers here:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/topical-prayers/prayers-anniversary-nhs>

At 5.00pm on Sunday 5th July join in the final Clap for Carers.

INSPIRATIONS

What a tremendous relief it should be - to discover that we don't have to prove ourselves to God. God's love and compassion are given freely and without measure, they are not earned. The religious leaders thought that Jesus was proclaiming a thoroughly disreputable God with very low standards – any Tom, Dick and Harry, Mary and Jane would soon be jostling with the prim and proper ones. Stupendously that was true ... God is like the good shepherd who goes out looking for the lost sheep (Luke 15:4). We are misled by the religious pictures which depict Jesus as the good shepherd carrying a cuddly white lamb on his shoulder. A lamb will hardly stray from its mother. It is the troublesome, obstreperous sheep which is likely to go astray, going through the fence, having its wool torn and probably ending up in a ditch of dirty water. It is this dirty, smelly, riotous creature which the good shepherd goes after, leaving the good, well-behaved ninety-nine sheep in the wilderness, and when he finds it, why, he carries it on his shoulder and calls his friends to celebrate with him.

Desmond Tutu Hope and Suffering

In normal life we hardly realise how much more we receive than we give, and life cannot be rich without such gratitude. It is easy to overestimate the importance of our achievements compared with what we owe to the help of others. Judging others makes us blind, whereas love is illuminating. By judging others we blind ourselves to our own evil and to the grace to which others are just as entitled as we are.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Pastor, theologian, executed by the Nazis

He either fears his fate too much, or his deserts are small, who dares not put it to the touch to win or lose it all.

James Graham, Marquis of Montrose

May your choices reflect your hopes, not your fears.

Nelson Mandela

Love is a language to be learned, a musical instrument to be practiced, a mountain to be climbed via some steep and tricky cliff paths but with the most amazing view from the top.

Tom Wright After you Believe

Don't count the days. Make the days count.

Mohammed Ali

Prayer is the key of the morning and the bolt of the evening.

Mahatma Gandhi

Please keep sending them to nordbergjs@aol.com or Sue Nordberg, Twelfth House, Ray Mead Rd, Maidenhead SL6 8NJ

REFLECTION by Greg Hurst

It's been 16 weeks since my lockdown started; I began working exclusively from home a fortnight before the nation was grounded.

Many adjustments have been required, physical and mental. But I forced myself to adapt, working hard but in a different way from home while my professional orbit shrank from a global city to a suburban town.

What's surprised me, four months on, is how normal this has become.

We received an email this week inviting us back to work in London for one or two days a week, if we wished – entirely optional. I have missed the collegiality of our office. But last week a colleague who had reason to visit shared some photographs of our reconfigured desks. Most are sealed off with red “closed” notices, like a crime scene. Green “open” desks are far apart. Capacity has been drastically cut.

I began step-by-step calculations of what returning to work would entail and potential coronavirus complications. Normally my working day begins with a cycle ride to Maidenhead station (low risk), pressing on the platform with a throng of fellow commuters (moderate-to-high risk), and a train ride to London (variable). It then involves crossing the concourse at Paddington station and queuing for the underground (variable), a Tube ride (higher risk) and a second Tube ride (similar). On arrival at my office I would take a lift (medium risk) before walking to my desk (low risk).

Will I take up the option? Probably. What’s been clear, however, is that it will involve another mental gear shift of a similar magnitude.

Foodshare Needs

The Maidenhead Advertiser always has a list of things most needed each week, and there are food drop-off points all over Maidenhead; **see attachment foodshare drop-off on Newsletter Issue 8** to find one near you.

On the Web + YouTube

There is a growing library of music to be accessed through our website. Please save this link in your browser

<https://www.allsaintsboynehill.org.uk/information-children-and-familie/services/holy-week-2020-easter-services-use-home/>

And if you’re missing the church why not take a virtual tour by going to

<http://www.allsaintsboynehill.org.uk/welcome-about-all-saints/3d-virtual-tour-all-saints-church/>

Catch up with Fr Jeremy videos at:

<http://www.allsaintsboynehill.org.uk/welcome-about-all-saints/what-we-believe/fr-jeremys-video-reflections-vicarage/>

All Saints YouTube Channel at:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCnPQFuQQ-Yb0ffFuT1Mjv8A/>

There are now twenty recordings plus six music tracks in the channel.

Raise donations for All Saints Church, Maidenhead, at no cost to yourself, whenever you shop online:-

A few years ago, All Saints signed up with easyfundraising who collect small donations from selected on-line shopping, at no cost to the shopper.

During this time the Church has raised £256 and has 15 registered supporters.

If you have not registered please do consider doing so, especially with the current amount of on-line shopping taking place – it is very easy at:-

<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/allsaintsboynehill/>

A wide range of on-line shops are signed up to this. More information can be found above or on our website at:-

<http://www.allsaintsboynehill.org.uk/welcome-about-all-saints/giving/easy-fund-raising/>

A big thank you to those who are already registered and contributing, at no cost to themselves, we hope that more people will join.

Rod Broad Treasurer

PS from the post-Covid frontline

This Friday will mark one hundred days since our son, Nick, was taken by ambulance into Stoke Mandeville Hospital suffering from Covid-19 and placed on a ventilator. Seven weeks later he came off the ventilator and has since then been recovering in hospital. We are hopeful that next week he will be able to continue the long recovery process in his own home, able to have face to face contact with his wife and children. His final mission in hospital is to conquer a small flight of stairs, going both up and down. Things most of us take for granted Nick has had to learn again from scratch.

Mike & Jan Moss