



St John-in-Bedwardine Parish Magazine

June 2020

50p



Welcome to
St JOHN-IN-BEDWARDINE
The Parish Church of St John's

WEST WORCESTER CLERGY
clergy@westworcesterchurches.org.uk

The Reverend PHIL BRADFORD (01905 423794)

Day off

Friday

The Reverend SARAH COTTRILL (01905 426257)

Monday

CHURCHWARDENS
churchwardens@stjohninbedwardine.co.uk

Gordon Templeton (01905 749025), Joy Job (01905 423051).

SERVICES AT ST JOHN'S

The Archbishops of Canterbury and York have advised that public worship is suspended with immediate effect until further notice. All services across the West Worcester Group are therefore cancelled until this advice changes.

OTHER INFORMATION

PASTORAL CARE: The church's Pastoral Care Group offers support if you are lonely, bereaved, or unable to attend church. Please contact Sylvia Render (telephone 422654/email sylviarender@talktalk.net).

SAFEGUARDING: If you have any concerns about possible abuse of a child or vulnerable adult, please contact the PCC Safeguarding Representative, Jane Askew on 424811 or any member of the clergy.

PARISH OFFICE

The Parish Office is currently closed but can be contacted by email, post or telephone.

Postal address:
1a Bromyard Road
St John's, WR2 5BS

Tel: (01905) 420490
e-mail: office@stjohninbedwardine.co.uk

ST JOHN'S CHURCH ON THE WEB

Parish Website: www.stjohninbedwardine.co.uk
Facebook: www.facebook.com/stjohninbedwardine
A church near you: www.achurchnearyou.com/church/18634/
Group Website: www.westworcesterchurches.org.uk



The church of St John-in-Bedwardine is a registered charity, number 1152583.

A Word from the Editors

Welcome to our June magazine. It's another lockdown edition, still devoid of future events. However, thanks to our contributors, it is not devoid of interesting items.

As things could move with a bit more pace over the next couple of months, we have decided to forego our usual editorial summer break. There will be a July edition and an August edition rather than the usual combined July/August magazine. This will effectively be free to subscribers - although donations are (very!) welcome.

Our thanks to subscribers who have been receiving their magazine electronically; reducing the number of paper copies has eased the pressure on our distribution resources. If an electronic copy really does not work for you, please let us know and we will see what we can do. Paper copies of back issues will be available 'afterwards'.

We leave you with part of the collect for the 9th June:

*Almighty God, help your pilgrim people
to be strong in faith, sustained by hope,
and one in the love that binds us to you.*

Graham and Sue Evans

Important information

Email address: magazine@stjohninbedwardine.co.uk

Next edition (July): Deadline is Sunday 14th June. Distribution, towards the end of June, dependent on circumstances at the time.

Subscription form: Page 46.

Cover picture: Roger Job raises a glass at the church barbeque for our patronal festival 2019, photographed by Colin Nash. See also page 37.

Pictures in this magazine: Our thanks to those who have contributed photographs for this magazine including Phil Bradford, Alice Evans, Rob Little, Penny Marcés, Colin Nash, Amy & Chris Rees, and Sarah Wilkins.

Distribution (June 2020): This edition is sent electronically to as many people as possible, to reduce the burden on our delivery resources, but we have printed and delivered by post, etc, so as to reach, as far as possible, all our subscribers.

The magazine

We publish a Parish Magazine each month, except August.

Articles on all aspects of Christian and parish life, letters, jokes and anecdotes are welcome - do contribute if you can. If you have a story to tell, please make contact. Do include your name as anonymous contributions will not be considered. If you can, please use e-mail (address below left). The editors will always acknowledge items sent by email; please try again if you do not receive a response. Please send all written correspondence for the magazine to the Parish Office.

The magazine costs 50p to purchase and can be obtained from the back of church. Subscriptions are available at the discounted price of £5 per year; by subscribing you make things easier for our printing team as we know more closely how many copies to print.

You can subscribe by filling in the form on page 46 or by taking a subscription form from the rack (where the magazines are) at the back of the church. Please return the form and your payment to the parish office.

Opinions!

Opinions expressed in this magazine are personal opinions of the authors concerned and may not represent the views of the editors, our PCC or The Church of England. Such material is offered as a source of debate or reflection.

To advertise

Please see page 12.

From Phil Bradford

In one of those moments in the pub at theological college when discussion descends to the level of the bizarre, we once ended up wondering which Biblical characters might make good dinner guests. We swiftly realised that the answer was, 'very few'. One could imagine being preached to death by Paul or having plagues unleashed on the table by Moses, both of which might put a dampener on dinner. Few, however, would likely be as unwelcome around the tables of middle England as John the Baptist. The camel's hair clothing and general hygiene might put many off. Few would be keen to provide locusts and wild honey, assuming such items could be sourced. Above all, the conversation would not be comfortable, since few people enjoy being accused of being broods of vipers fleeing from the coming wrath over their risotto and glass of wine.



John is a profoundly discomfoting character. His habit of speaking the truth and confronting hypocrisy made him unpopular and ultimately cost him his head. People do not like to face up to their role in perpetuating injustice or accept unpleasant truths. Yet as the current crisis has worn on, I have wondered whether we need someone to confront our society in a similar way if we are going to change things for the better. In a world where deceptive, populist slogans substitute for policy, we have forgotten the need for that courage which refuses simply to go along with what everyone else says for the sake of it, which exposes mendacity and hypocrisy for what it is.

Hugely controversial though it is, I think the prime current example is the Thursday evening applause for carers. On the first occasion this happened, it was a nice gesture, something which acknowledged the appreciation of millions who were powerless to do it in any other way. Yet it left a bitter taste indeed when I saw pictures of the occupants of Downing Street joining in. Men who had laughed and cheered when the increase in pay for nurses was voted down by the Commons a couple of years ago, whose entire political ideology in power has been stripping the NHS by refusing to recognise the essential and skilled nature of foreign workers, who have systematically stripped back the NHS and privatised as much of it as they could, had the blatant hypocrisy to applaud something they have done so much to destroy and workers they have treated shamefully for years. As it continues, it is a depressing testament to the politics of ritualised empty gestures, although rather less so than when the health secretary bafflingly introduced some

modern adult version of a Blue Peter badge. NHS workers in particular, but all those who have been on the front line in various ways in this crisis, deserve recognition for the amazing job they have done, for showing courage in the face of considerable risk, for a humbling dedication to duty and willingness to make sacrifices at personal cost. The most important way to recognise this, of course, would be to give them what they need to do their job, and there is no greater indictment of a government whose leader ignored warning signs, avoided crucial meetings and acted far too late than the fact that it has left its front line workers with inadequate protection.

Many selfless members of the public have recognised this and the stories of centenarians raising funds and people turning living rooms into sewing workshops to help out are truly heart-warming. The rainbows in windows, the very public recognition of the work being done, is reassuring, even if it has taken a crisis to make people realise what they have. Yet the NHS is a taxpayer-funded public service, not a charity. We must not allow the deserved applause for key workers and the heroics of volunteer supporters to conceal the fact that those key workers have been badly betrayed.

Nor can we avoid the acknowledgment of complicity. Too many of the electorate prefer cheap, empty xenophobic slogans to making our world more just and compassionate. Were he around today, I suspect that John the Baptist would hold a mirror to our society to force us to confront how badly wrong we have gone. Why are we idolising wealth and privilege when so many suffer and when so many hard workers struggle? It reminds us that our priorities have become inverted. When talking of John, Jesus reminded his listeners that the first shall be last and the last first. What recent weeks have taught us is that all those our money-idolising society have put first are nothing in an existential crisis compared to the lowly public servants, from nurses to teachers to bus drivers. If we are to learn anything from this crisis, if the clapping on Thursday evenings is not to be a meaningless gesture, then we must take this opportunity to change the priorities of our society and properly value the efforts of those who really keep it going. If we really appreciate and value these people, we will change things when the crisis passes. With his unpopular message, John foreshadowed a transformation in reality itself, the coming of an incarnate God who ripped apart the unjust structures of society. If he were to challenge us today, would we respond by looking for that transformation to bring about a society of love and compassion foreshadowing God's kingdom?

Phil

In Memoriam June

Eva Stanton	1 June 1987
Stanley Frederick Smith	2 June 1983
Theresa Dedicott	3 June 2008
Ronald Cantrill	5 June 2014
Doris Allen	9 June 1995
Andrew David Brunyee	11 June 1995
Thomas Alec Brown	12 June 1981
Kenneth Edward Cole	12 June 1988
Sophie Perry "Auntie"	13 June 1995
Pete Gleadall	19 June 1996
Henry Frederick Charles Owen	24 June 1985
Arnold Colley	27 June 1991

Additions to In Memoriam are not automatic but must be specifically requested via the clergy.

In memoriam items are included until the fortieth anniversary.
An extension may be requested by family or friends of those named.

Information from the church registers will be published when the lockdown ends.

Sundays and Principal Feasts in June

Sunday 7th June: Trinity Sunday

Sunday 14th June: The First Sunday after Trinity

Sunday 21st June: The Second Sunday after Trinity

Wednesday 24th June: The Birth of John the Baptist

Sunday 28th June: The Third Sunday of Trinity

Monday 29th June: Peter and Paul, Apostles

See page 33 for Phil's look through the liturgical calendar for June.

Collect for the Festival of the birth of St John the Baptist

Almighty God,

by whose providence your servant John the Baptist was wonderfully born,
and sent to prepare the way of your Son our Saviour

by the preaching of repentance:

lead us to repent according to his preaching

and, after his example, constantly to speak the truth, boldly to rebuke vice,
and patiently to suffer for the truth's sake;

through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,

who is alive and reigns with you,

in the unity of the Holy Spirit,

one God, now and for ever

Prayer in our churches

Following the announcement by the Church of England that private prayer by the clergy and worship leaders could resume in our churches, Phil Bradford was in St John's church on the morning of 10th May and captured the moment for us.



Meanwhile, Philip Evans (pictured below) was at St Michael's church, Sarah Cottrill was at St David's and Chris Rees was at St Clement's (see page 10). I said Evening Prayer at St John's that day. The following week, all the churches were again prayed in, including Rob Little at St John's who also streamed the service.



Graham Evans

Reflection from Sarah Cottrill

“I will remove disaster from you ... when I restore your fortunes before your eyes, says the Lord.”



Seldom has an assurance like this one, found in the final few verses of Zephaniah, been more needed than it is today. Friday, 22nd May and as I write, we have passed another major Christian festival, (Ascension Day), in lockdown and face the fact that Pentecost, (May 31st) will be the same.

It is becoming increasingly hard to imagine that life will ever return to how it was. Increasingly hard to hold on to hope and not be plunged into despair and hopelessness. But: “I will remove disaster from you” God promised and although these words were spoken to another people in another time, we can still claim that promise today.

This time will pass and God will help us through it – not only through it, but with new friendships forged and new strengths discovered through the acts of kindness which have been performed and received by so many over recent months. As people in communities have helped each other in so many ways, some good has been seen to come of even the worst situations.

This is in so many ways a time of disaster. Bereavements have been suffered – from Covid-19 and other causes – and the normal rituals of bereavement, with the comfort they offer, have been denied those who mourn. Strict limitations on visiting patients in hospital have caused additional anguish for both patient and family members. Businesses and livelihoods have been jeopardised and isolation and loneliness have had massive impact on the mental and emotional health of many. A senior lecturer at Worcester University told me of the grief her final year students feel at missing out on the “rites of passage” of balls and graduation ceremonies. Trivial? Not when it’s something you’ve worked towards and anticipated for several years!

And yet, there are, amongst all of this, glimmers of hope. Some children will be returning to school at the beginning of June and although this is not universally accepted as a good idea, it is, nonetheless, an indication that things might slowly be returning to normal. Greater freedom is already allowed in terms of going out

and there is speculation that we'll see holiday homes, campsites and hotels reopening in July. Personally, I was delighted to see that the birth of a baby girl to a Worcester couple pushed Coronavirus off the front page of the local paper today!

But let's return to that opening quotation: what will it look like for us as a Christian community, when God removes disaster from us and restores our fortunes before our eyes? Will life simply return to how it was before? At the moment that seems doubtful, but is it desirable?

Yes, of course, we want some aspects of life to return to normal. We want the freedom to visit friends and family; we want to be able to join together for worship and all the social aspects of Church life; but do we want to return to the days when pastoral work was carried out, on the whole, by the members of the committees set up for that purpose? Isn't it better that it should continue as it is now, with chat groups established on the internet; neighbours looking out for one another; people phoning each other?

Do we want to go back to gridlocked roads or would it be better to walk and cycle more – as people have been doing during this crisis. Climate change, we've been told, has slowed down in recent months with less pollution etc. Perhaps this is part of the restoration of our fortunes God has in mind; the restoration of a healthier, more sustainable planet. With World Environment Day fast approaching (June 5th) perhaps this is something about which we should be giving prayerful consideration: how can we, as individuals and a church, work to protect and nurture God's world? How can we work with God to restore the fortunes not only of ourselves, but of our planet?

Thursdays have become established as "Clap for the NHS" night and although I don't imagine this will continue post-lockdown, I hope the spirit of gratitude will. We have been forced to recognise the tremendous dedication and hard work of our health professionals. This is not something new; it hasn't come about because of Coronavirus – they were always this dedicated; we have just come to a greater appreciation of them. Again, perhaps this is something God wants us to take into our restored fortunes – an appreciation of the blessings we have and less of a tendency to undervalue and complain.

We don't know how much longer this situation will go on for. It is presenting all of us, in different ways, with many difficulties and challenges. But it can also be a time of great opportunity; to reassess our values; to count our blessings and to look forward, in faith, to the time when God will restore our fortunes – and we may even find ourselves richer than we were before!

Sarah

Diddy Disciples

Hello everyone,

Diddy Disciples has been continuing through lockdown, first from our dining room and now from a different church each week!

We were all so excited to visit St Clement's on the 10th May, I didn't realise how much I'd missed that calmness that you get in church. Calm didn't last for long however as Abi and Tilda were also very excited to be back in church and showed their exuberance with lots of singing and running between pews!



Even though we've been filming Diddy Disciples for nine Sundays now (as of the 17th May) it's still strange. We love continuing our worship like this and helping our girls and other children to develop their faith and we adore seeing photos of families joining us from home but we'd much rather you were here with us!





It just goes to show that church is not a building. It's far more than that. It doesn't matter if we're having our service in St John's, St Clement's, St David's, St Michael's or the dining room! God is with us wherever we are and we, his children, are what make the Church. I hope that that's one thing we can all take away from lockdown.

*Love to you all,
Amy Rees (and family)*



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The Parish Magazine is published A5 in size, in black and white. There are eleven issues during the year, July and August being a combined issue.

An advert can be full-page, half-page or quarter-page in size and the booking can be from one month to one year.

If you are interested to advertise, please contact Sue Hussell on 01684 893397 or by email at sue.hussell@talktalk.net.



“No Man is an Island”

John Donne wrote these words in 1624 but they couldn't be more pertinent in 2020. Worcester Lions are a small charity group that concentrates on service opportunities. We raise funds from the Santa Sleigh that visits the streets of Worcester; among other fundraising activities, which is probably what we are best known for. Every penny raised is distributed to local charities and good causes either through our service activities or Windfall Scheme.

Due to the current storm, Worcester Lions were down from their usual 14 to just three active members, one of whom is a full time key worker, when we got a request from the Worcester Street Cafe for help. The charity provides a hot main meal and dessert with a packed lunch for the following day to approximately 40 homeless people, four days a week. Worcester Lions have contributed, cooked and served for them as much as we have been able in the past, so we said “Yes, of course we will! When? Where? And how many?” The answers to our simple questions filled us with horror:

“As often as possible please, as we have lost many of our permanent cooks due to the crisis.... We have had to move from our usual spot due to some issues with numbers and social distancing.... Please could you do 90 mains and desserts alongside lunchboxes. All need to be individually portioned into sealed boxes and served hot onto a table in the street”.

So, lasagne, wedges of garlic bread, assorted desserts and sandwich bags for 90 anyone? More than happy to help, but how? Two and half Lions to cook for 90!

Lions' families have lent their kitchens. Lions' friends have made sandwiches and cakes (huge hugs Sandra and Colin Nash) and offered shopping, which has been one of the biggest challenges. The family of Lions International have been there for us by extending a grant to buy food and large amounts of disposable cookware.

This piece started with the quote ‘No man is an island’ and no Lions Club is an island either. Without families, friends and friends of Lions we couldn't have even begun to consider doing this at a time when Lions service is needed more than ever. We all need support and our wider Lions family were there and we are forever grateful that we ‘are not an island’ but part of that world-wide family.

If you would like to know more about the work Worcester Lions do please contact me by email at nannyouse@gmail.com

We are always looking for new members to join us, so why not get in touch?

Tracey Ward



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New classes starting in St John's

Ouch!

Friends, I thought I would share a funny and touching story with you so you could have a chuckle but also be reminded that amidst all the sorrow that this dreadful virus has brought, there are still those acts of kindness and generosity that make us, as a society.

Picture the scene...it was a few weeks ago and my daughter's 18th birthday.

Typical 18th birthday plans were of course out of the window, but the sun was shining so we decided to go for a short walk along the River Severn. Now I love to walk and given the chance I would spend my days on the lakeland fells, but that experience was to be no help today. We reached a little cutting and after some debate we decided we would take the longer, but official route, rather than a shortcut. Going up the steps was fine and coming down the steps was fine...until...I slipped and heard a noise like a dry stick snapping.

For an instant I was puzzled, then I started to feel strange and I will confess a couple of rather industrial words slipped out as I sank to the ground in pain. My family was lovely as you'd expect, but a lady who was with her young son was the star of the show. With the calmest of heads, she convinced me that I really couldn't hop back home and needed to get to a hospital.

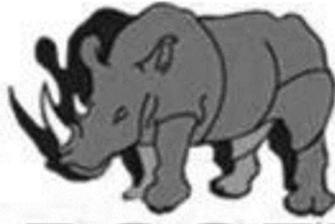


She knew the best place to get to and helped me get there so I could go to A&E. As we struggled along the bumpy path with me embarrassed and not wanting a fuss, she said something that will stay with me forever - "I'm not leaving you until I know you are safe".

Sometimes we may look at our world and wonder where is God? Other times, it really couldn't be more obvious. The Doctors and Nurses at A&E were as wonderful as you'd expect and diagnosed a fracture.

My penance for not watching my footing? A ridiculous big boot that I must wear for six weeks.... still, it gets me out of mowing the lawn.

Rob Little



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L'église - "au travail"- encore!

I'm currently away from St John's and residing at our house in France. Margaret and I are active members of our local church over here and I'm currently undertaking training to be a worship leader (rather like our ALMs).

On May 11th the first elements of changes to the "stay at home" regime here are to change. The country is divided into three zones: Red, yellow and green, with few changes in the red areas, some relaxations in the yellow ones, and the greatest changes in the green areas. Our department is in the green area so we shall have some immediate changes and some more as the month progresses.

The churches are currently closed to public worship, but not closed to the priesthood, deacons, and other assistants; we have been able to celebrate our services privately, but in the Lord's house! Preparations for future services have been able to go ahead, since the government proposes to allow public worship from 2nd June, whilst remaining consistent with social distancing. We are marking up the Nave and side aisles to show the places (maximum) where the public can sit. It may be essential to wear masks also. In the first instance numbers will be limited to 12 worshippers and only a single celebrant, irrespective of the nature of the service.

Fortunately, my first presentation of Vespers takes place on the 4th June, so will go ahead. Our version of Vespers is like elements of evening prayer & compline brought together. At least I am able to remember all of St John's folk in our Mass intentions, and I will do likewise in our Vespers too.

Arthur Miller

Sudoku Puzzle

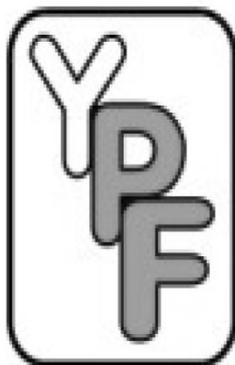
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		5	7					
							8	6

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The Power of Touch

Musings of a GP during lockdown

I love my job. It's busy, never boring, sometimes emotionally and mentally draining but immensely satisfying and there's nothing else I'd rather do. I love getting to know my patients, watching the children grow, and working with families through the ups and downs of life. At least a third of what I do is not strictly speaking medical, but it's the consultation with the lady about a small lump she's noticed which is actually about the problems she's having with her teenage daughter, or with the elderly patient who attends with knee pain but who is actually struggling with a recent bereavement that are perhaps the most important.

At the moment though everything we do has been completely turned on its head.

GP Practices all over the UK have been reorganised into zones, with remote consultations taking place in blue zones, patients with no respiratory symptoms being seen in amber zones, and patients with symptoms suggestive of covid-19 that can't be managed remotely being seen in red zones. In my Primary Care Network we have blue and amber zones in all our practices, and one practice which has been designated the red zone which we staff on a rota.

I've always done some telephone consultations, but now we're asked to deal with as many patients as possible by phone or by video consultation – if the patient has the technology to facilitate this of course. If I want to see a patient face-to-face then this has to be planned carefully. For most patients I just have to move to the amber zone, but once there I have to don a mask, gloves, apron and eye protection. Once I've seen the patient I have to clean the room down completely and change my PPE before seeing the next patient. I then have to wash thoroughly and change my clothes before I can go back through to the blue zone. If the patient has symptoms suggestive of covid-19 they are booked into the red zone where someone else will see them.

There are lots of things I miss about the old way of working: The walk between my room and the waiting room; seeing my regular patients in the waiting room when they've come in for blood tests – they often give me a wave and a smile; and the children I see regularly who generally come galloping up the corridor to my room with a big grin on their faces.

I miss seeing my patients in person. Video consultations are marginally better than telephone calls, but they're only really done if there's a rash/lump/skin lesion

to see, and there's so much more you get out of seeing a patient face-to-face, particularly in mental health consultations. You can watch their expression, assess their body language, and gauge their level of personal hygiene, often a key indicator of how well they're really doing.

But the thing I miss most is something we all took for granted – the power of touch. I miss being able to feel a rash or a lump or a tummy, reach out a hand in sympathy, or help someone back on with their coat – or their socks and shoes if needed! Although I've taught many patients how to take a pulse over the last few weeks it's not the same as feeling it myself. You get more than just a number from feeling a pulse, you can identify whether it's strong or weak, regular or irregular, and you get to feel the patient's skin, is it clammy, cool, warm, dry and so on... I keep trying to physically reach out to the patient, even when I'm on the phone.

Whilst I do not want to catch covid-19, I'm less worried about that than I am about the things which I am not seeing at the moment. The number of consultations booked has gone down dramatically, but there's no reason to suppose the problems aren't there. I'm worried about the numbers of cancers we're not identifying, I'm worried that people who are having heart attacks or strokes are not going to A&E, and I'm worried that people are sitting at home feeling unwell and not contacting their GPs because they don't want to bother us, or are too scared about the possibility of hospital admission and what that might mean in terms of their risk of catching covid-19.

We've had several patients who have ended up in hospital for various reasons who may have avoided admission if they had contacted us earlier. I'm also very worried about the socio-economic problems the lockdown is going to cause, and the subsequent mental health problems that are going to develop over the months and years to come. So, please:

- If you have regular blood tests/injections most of these are still going ahead and it's really important that they happen. Your GP practices will be doing everything they can to make sure these appointments happen in the safest way possible.
- If your children are due routine vaccinations then please attend for these, again, the GP practices will be making sure these are done as safely as possible.
- If you're feeling unwell or are worried about a new symptom and would normally contact your GP, then please, please do. You won't be able to book a face-to-face appointment in the normal way, but there will be a way for you to talk to a GP, and to be seen if needed.

- If you are struggling to cope with anxiety or low mood, then ring your GP. We can't change the situation, but we can provide support and, if necessary, medication.
- If you think you're having a stroke or a heart attack, or feel that your condition is life-threatening then call 999.
- If you think you've got covid-19 (new persistent cough; temperature; breathlessness; or a loss of, or change in, normal sense of taste or smell) then self-isolate as advised by the government. If you're not sure what to do then ring or contact NHS 111, and if you can't get through or are still not sure then ring your GP.

And the best bits of my job at the moment? The thanks we get from patients for speaking to them on the phone "Thank you for phoning doctor, I don't like to bother you, you must be so busy at the moment", their generosity – we've had a load of PPE delivered completely free by one of our patients "It's the least I can do for the years of care you've given to generations of my family" – and the camaraderie of the team at the Practice. We generally work well together anyway, but over the last two months we have really pulled together. But my favourite point in the week is on Thursday morning when I don my PPE and head into the amber zone to do the 8-week mother and baby checks. This is classed as essential work and at the moment is more important than ever as the Health Visitors aren't visiting the new mums very much at all, just supporting them by phone. The mums get reassurance that both they and their babies are fine, and I get a cuddle with a baby who has absolutely no idea about social distancing.

I long for the time when life will return to some form of normal and I can see patients properly again, but I suspect a return to our normal practices as GPs is a long way off, even once the current restrictions are lifted. In the meantime all any of us can do is follow the guidelines we are given (even if they seem confusing at times), and do all we can to love and help our neighbours in deed not just in word

Liz Forman

These are signs not symptoms...

On a delivery room door: "Push. Push. Push."

At an optician's practice: "If you can't see what you're looking for, you've come to the right place."

In a podiatrist's office: "Time wounds all heels."

On the doctor's door: If you are suffering from invisibility, I won't be able to see you today.

Clang-less Clangers

Here I sit in my garden listening to the bells strike 9am. It's Sunday and I don't jump up for a quick wash and brush up before dashing off to ringing. Instead I check my watch, yes they are on time, just a smidge behind the cathedral as always. They strike nine blows from the beautiful 15cwt tenor bell that floats away across the city.

We have all missed the bells, but never as much as during this week. We train, strain, pull and tug the ropes around all year to ensure that when we are needed to ring for special events, we are giving our very best. So V.E. Day dawned, and we all stayed at home, safely isolated against spreading the deadly virus that has robbed us of the opportunity to pay our tribute with the bells.

So, has it just robbed us 15 ringers of our hobby? No, it's robbed us of 15 friends! Like everyone, that has been the hardest part of our enforced isolation, missing friends and family. Well, we are all safe and keep in touch with emails and text messages, but when we return we may sound slightly more 'Clanger'-like than normal until we get our team up and running properly.

You see the frustrations aren't that we can't ring bells, but that we can't meet up with our friends. So, we look forward to those Sunday mornings and hope everyone stays safe until we all meet again.

Tracey Ward

Tea on the green for the Queen (2017)



St John the Baptist, Maltese style

Graham told me that the June issue was going to have St John the Baptist as its theme and asked if I had any photos that would be appropriate. Last month I thought it would be difficult trying to find an image for the Ascension until I did some research and found that Great Witley church had an image of it and that I had taken a photo of it, so we had a front cover. But St John the Baptist? Well, I thought that would be more difficult and it was.

There are many churches dedicated to St John the Baptist in UK, but none that I had visited. Then I remembered that Sandra and I went to Malta in 2012 and visited several churches there. And guess what? There are two there dedicated to St John the Baptist. We had visited both and, better still, had photos of them.

The first is St John's Co-Cathedral in the capital, Valletta, built between 1572 and 1577 by the Order of St John. Its interior is described as 'extremely ornate' and, as you can see from the images, this is very true. Unfortunately, the pictures



of the Nave do not do it justice as the walls are all gold.

The backdrop to the main altar depicts the baptism of Christ and was finished in 1703. It is seen in the picture on the left, a close-up image of St John baptising Christ. The image on the right is part of a ceiling fresco of St John baptising Christ.

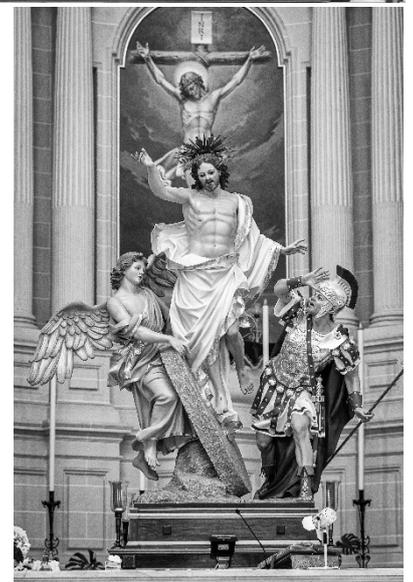


The second ‘St John’s’ is the Church of St John the Baptist, more commonly known as the Xewkija Rotunda, on the island of Gozo. And no, I do not know how to say “Xewkija!” It is another impressive church but nowhere near as ornate as the cathedral in Valletta.

It was built in the 20th century on the site of an earlier church and parishioners wanted it to be an impressive church. It is a spiritual seat for the Knights of Malta. The dome is 75m high and internally 27m across. It is the world’s third highest unsupported dome, weighing an estimated 45,000 tons. I didn’t know that when I was stood under it!



The top image shows the outside of the Rotunda with its dedication to St John. The image above shows the main nave with the altar. On the right is a close-up of the statue of the risen Christ with angels and a centurion behind the altar. Like the cathedral, and other most churches on Malta, it is a Catholic church and therefore very heavily decorated with some incredible lifelike statues.



Colin Nash

Marces Mailing - May 2020

Penny's covering email for the May Marces Mailing:

Dear everyone

No, this letter is NOT overdue!

We hadn't intended to write so soon after the last Marcés Mailing, but under the circumstances we would like as many people as possible to be praying for us all here. Having just seen on the TV that according to some chart which maps daily new cases of Covid 19 per capita, Peru ends up as the WORST country in the world, even though this can hardly be taken as a definitive statement since (speaking as an ex maths teacher) "you can prove anything with statistics", it does show that despite the two-month (technically) strict lockdown the situation here is hardly encouraging.

One reason the lockdown is not succeeding is that too many people HAVE to work in order to eat; the government subsidies may help large numbers but there are many who have NOT received anything. Increasing numbers are needing support. If anyone would like to help with this then please contact us.

On the other (more positive!) hand we give thanks to God for the encouragements we are seeing through the strengthening of relationships with people on the edges (eg parents of children in the Sunday School). God is definitely at work.

We are, of course, aware that other countries, including the UK, are suffering too, and we are praying for you also.

One more little thing. Many of you receiving this will be resending to others in your church. Unfortunately our CPU gave up and died a couple of months ago, and we had set apart Mon 17th March to get a new one - the day lockdown started - so we still have no CPU (computer repair shops not being considered essential shopping!) and the lists of contacts was on the old one - so please resend this to everyone you think may usually receive it.

God bless

With thanks and prayers

Juan Carlos and Penny

Marcés Mailing

May 2020



The LORD is with me;
I will not be afraid.
(Psalm 118:6)

Our Night-Blooming Cactus – this flowers during the night for one night about once a year and chose to do so, with 2 flowers right together, (first time that has happened), on our 30th Wedding Anniversary. Better than shop-bought flowers! (Photo taken 10.30 pm)

Please pray for:

Juan Carlos: Responsibilities in J el Nazareno and Social Help in the Diocese during the Covid 19 crisis

Penny: Responsibilities in J el N and Children´s Ministry

Bishop Jorge Luis: wisdom in leading the Diocese

Jesús El Nazareno: ability to keep in touch with the Lord and with each other

Country of Peru: President and Cabinet taking important decisions; economic stability in the current crisis; temporary Congress (Mar 2020 – July 2021)

Juan Carlos & Penny Marcés Reynaldo Morón 215,
Urb. Vista Alegre, Surco, LIMA 33, PERU
Tel.+51-1- 448 – 8264. Email: psmarcesinlima@gmail.com
Letter sent by: Mrs Alison Everness (Penny´s sister-in-law),
23 Glebe Road, Dorking, Surrey RH4 3DS (01306-882817)

Dear friends

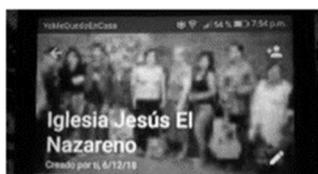
We didn't expect to write again so soon, but nor did we expect still to be in lockdown (and will be until at least 24 May). It really IS lockdown here, especially for children, who have not been out of their houses since lockdown began 8 weeks ago, but from 18 May they may go out for half an hour a day, within 500m of home. Apart from key workers, and soon-to-begin certain mining, fishing and food delivery services, the rest of us stay in (except for the essential food or medical supplies shopping, or visits to banks). Curfew, currently 6pm -4am each day (& all day Sundays), returns to 8pm on Mon; makes little difference to most of us at home anyway! We can't go to El Nazareno – 6km so hardly the local shops... Unfortunately, whilst this lockdown may well have slowed the rate of infection, the number of daily deaths is certainly not over its peak yet.

The verse is from “Aprendo con Pedro” – “I learn with Peter”. Realising that Holy Week would be in lockdown, we started sending teaching each day to children via WhatsApp; they had time since although a few were getting online teaching, most were not, and couldn't even revise previous work this school year since state schools still hadn't started the school year. Easter took place; we decided to continue. Most families receiving this do not have a computer, but DO have a mobile, so each day they receive a sequence of photographed pictures, video clips of Bible story & songs on the day's theme, linked with audios by Penny. At the end there are activities. Over the weeks older children have increasingly had more online schoolwork, & in some cases there may be 4 children trying to share one mobile for schoolwork, so there is not much time left for Bible teaching. But the latest commitment is that I send it before 7am, so they are encouraged to start the day with the Bible. Apart from our JEN children, many in other Church groups or individuals, including some in N Argentina, receive these materials.



Please pray; it takes longer than anticipated to find appropriate videos, activities etc and put it all together, 7 days a week. However, how encouraging when sent a video of Mum (only exposure to Church was Messy Church on one occasion) helping her 6 year old, telling the story whilst he acted it out with the finger puppets he had just made.

Our work with the families seems to be more effective now than when we tried visiting, since people are at home! Is it easier for them to pray for the first time over the phone where no one is looking, than with you there physically? It was wonderful to discover yesterday that Julio (recently returned to God after an emergency operation) and his wife were praying together about a family concern – it's good to have things to praise God for. Please pray for Julio, wife Susy and children & granddaughter.



Carrying out services etc with limited technological possibilities for most is challenging. Between Zoom, WhatsApp groups and WhatsApp chats, and with some people using borrowed phones, we succeed in a Bible study, prayer meetings and Sunday service. Apart from Church members, there are “Friends of the Church”, invited to Zoom meetings (sometimes attend) & sent WhatsApp chats. Prayer meetings and services are immediately followed by WhatsApp group alternatives; two phones here gives a possibility of another 6 phones taking part. The most successful service format is WhatsApp chat - a sequence of audios and video clips.

As may be imagined, economic repercussions were felt here almost immediately, since a large proportion live from day-to-day. The Cabinet announced handouts for the most vulnerable at the beginning, which they did eventually receive; most of them are now in the process of receiving a second quota. For independent workers a second list was prepared; they too are currently receiving their 2nd quota. HOWEVER some people did not receive either. Also, an increasing number no longer have jobs; the govt has schemes to pay a certain rate to some for 3 months, but the high level of informality in “contracts” means many do not comply with certain legal requirements on terms of employment. In

addition, apart from food, finding the gas cylinder is empty is a major problem, to say nothing of needing to pay rent. Thankfully, we have been able to give help to some families, thanks to gifts from here and overseas. In JEN this began by sending “vouchers” (by the oh-so-



valuable WhatsApp), for use at a grocery stall in the market owned by the family of Karla (one of our young people); they had literally opened this stall the day lockdown was announced and it has proved a real God-send. The recipients show the voucher (of which Karla has also received a copy) to acquire what they want; part may be given in cash in order to buy veg etc, No one in Karla’s family has a bank account, but our treasurer DOES, so she takes £50 at a time (the max possible from an agent; no ATM near). Some of this help is shared with others in the wider Diocese; both of us are involved in both trying to find support for the Diocese (which includes how to pay clergy stipends), and how to distribute gifts that come. A challenge that will last for some time. Sad details come to light on the family situations – eg the discovery that in one case the family of 5 children (from 4 different fathers) are NOT all currently with the mother since the 3 oldest (aged 11, 14 and 17) have been sent to respective fathers /paternal grandparents – none of whom really wants them but nor does the mother.....

Has Covid 19 affected many we know? Someone from a nearby Church was amongst the first 100 deaths, making it very real in El Nazareno. Juan Carlos follows up her son who has psychological problems. JC has also been contacted by others, contacts from years ago, who no longer attend any Church, but seek guidance as they face different situations, health being one cause but family dysfunction usually also a significant factor.

Our children? Jonny is working from home, as is Becky (in Leeds). Lizi (also in Leeds) currently has no job. Juan Carlos' mother Hilda continues with one of his brothers, but may come here at some point.



- those coming closer to God –
- strengthened relationships with parents of children in the area
- technology to continue communicating the Gospel
- ability to help with material needs

Please pray.....



Weekly activities in Jesús el Nazareno

Sun-Sat (every day): WhatsApp children's devotional – pray for inspiration & practicalities

Sun: 6.30 pm Zoom service
7.45 WhatsApp groups

Tues: 7.30pm Zoom Bible Study (Ephesians)

Thurs: 7.30pm Zoom prayer meeting

General prayer requests

- Coronavirus emergency:
 - health (workers, supplies, etc)
 - economy (provision of govt funding or other help for all who need it)
 - attitude of population towards respecting measures taken
- Becky (Leeds), Lizi (Leeds), Jonny (Lima), Hilda (JC's mum – Lima)

Thank you for your fellowship with us; you too are part of what happens in Jesús el Nazareno, in the Anglican Church in Peru, and in Peru, . Please keep in contact, by email or WhatsApp at +51-942612987

God bless and protect you, now and always

Juan Carlos & Penny

Penny sent us this further update on 18th May. We've edited out some duplication with the main Marcés Mailing.

Greetings from Peru! The state of emergency here, which began on 16th March, is due to end 24th May. There has technically been fairly strict lockdown, with all except key workers being confined to our houses except for outings for essential food or medical supplies, or visits to banks. On Sundays there's been a total curfew.

After 2 months confined to home, children under 14 are now allowed out for 30 minutes a day. "Technically" because in many places people have not respected this. Unfortunately, whilst these measures may have flattened the curve at the beginning of the outbreak, the number of daily deaths is currently increasing, and rapid tests done on vendors in some of the markets reveal that over half are Covid-positive (but asymptomatic), so contagion continues.

We work in the area of El Nazareno, a poor area in the south of Lima. This is 6km away, meaning that visiting has not been possible. However, like nearly all churches here, we thank God for technology; there are some people who don't have running water but can attend a Zoom meeting from their house. (Internet certainly not guaranteed though!). Whilst a few of our congregation have Zoom, WhatsApp is far more effective and we therefore have a Zoom service but also send out a WhatsApp version with video links to the same songs, and sermon and confession etc on audio links. WhatsApp groups are sometimes excellent for prayer meetings; it is a great encouragement for people to be able to pray together.

As may be imagined, economic repercussions were felt here almost immediately lockdown began, since a large proportion live from day-to-day. The Marcés Mailing talks about the government handouts, and the practical help we have been able to give with vouchers to use at Karla's grocery stall. This help is now shared with others in the wider Diocese; most Anglican Churches are in less affluent areas and are hard hit by the present situation. Clergy here are also badly affected, since Diocesan income has dropped considerably.

One commodity that many have at the moment is, of course, time. In the Marcés Mailing I've talked about "Aprendo con Pedro". Intended for children, the mothers are the ones who have the mobiles to which the materials are sent, so in many cases are also involved - wonderful since none of them go to church.

We give thanks for God's help in keeping in touch with our congregation, and pray for material provision, as well as spiritual upholding for all those involved.

Keep praying for us all here!

God bless, Penny.



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Many Colmans but no mustard

June is another busy liturgical month.

It opens with Justin, often known as Justin Martyr, a notable early Christian intellectual and apologist who was (unsurprisingly) martyred at Rome in the mid-second century. On the 2nd, those with Welsh blood may want to remember Blandina and her Companions, martyred in Lyon in 177, although the Church of Wales is the only one in the UK to include them in the calendar. We recall the Martyrs of Uganda on the 3rd, from two separate incidents in 1885-87 and 1977.



4th June takes us down to Cornwall to remember Petroc, abbot of Padstow and patron of many churches in Devon and Cornwall. The 5th sees us reflect on Boniface of Crediton, born Wynfrith in the Devon town before changing his name when he became a monk, after which he went as a missionary to Frisia, Hesse and Bavaria, becoming known as the apostles of Germany prior to his martyrdom in 754. There is a choice on the 6th between Jarlath of Tuam in Ireland and the more historically verifiable Ini Kopuria, founder of the Melanesian Brotherhood, in England.

The Irish are busy at this point, because the 7th sees them commemorate Colman of Dromore, although as the list of Irish saints contains up to 200 Colmans it is not really clear who this one is, when he lives or what he did. However, as a preacher, this is definitely preferable to what we are meant to celebrate that day, Trinity Sunday, the imposition of which (to celebrate his consecration) is one of the many reasons I dislike Thomas Becket.

The 8th takes us into the seventeenth century to remember Thomas Ken, a hymn writer and a non-juror, deprived of his bishopric of Bath and Wells in 1689 for refusing to renounce his oath to the deposed James II.

On the 9th we commemorate Columba, an Irishman who was the founding abbot of Iona and died in 597; his seventh-century biography contains the first account of an encounter with the Loch Ness Monster.

Barnabas' feast day is celebrated on the 11th; we recognise him as an apostle, although he does not feature in the gospels and his work was alongside Paul in Acts.



Continued on page 35

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Continued from page 33.

After a couple of days off, on the 14th we reach the First Sunday after Trinity, a date which would otherwise be Richard Baxter, a Puritan minister in Kidderminster during the civil war period and author of the hymn ‘Ye holy angels bright’.

On the 16th we journey to Sussex and Richard of Chichester (although he was born near here, in Droitwich), the thirteenth-century bishop of that diocese, best remembered today for the prayer ascribed to him, which includes the famous petition that, ‘we may know you more clearly, love you more dearly, and follow you more nearly, day by day’.

Then follows a trio of minor commemorations: the nineteenth-and twentieth-century social reformers Samuel and Henrietta Barnett (17th); Bernard Mizeki, the apostle of the MaShona in modern-day Zimbabwe, martyred in 1896 (18th); and Sundar Singh, an Indian holy man (19th).



The Second Sunday after Trinity falls on the 21st. Our attention shifts to Hertfordshire on the 22nd, as we remember Britain’s first recorded martyr, Alban, slain in the mid-third century in what was then the Roman city of Verulamium but which came to take his name as St Albans, home to a major medieval abbey housing his remains.

On the 23rd we make the short journey from there to the Fens as we commemorate Etheldreda, a seventh-century abbess of Ely.

The 24th should be a familiar date as it is our patronal festival, the Birth of John the Baptist (not to be confused with the Beheading of John the Baptist on 29th August).

Two notable teachers of the faith from the early church then follow. Cyril of Alexandria, who died in the pleasingly memorable year 444, a defender of orthodox doctrines of the Trinity and the nature of Christ, is remembered on the 27th. Were he not this year displaced by the Third Sunday after Trinity, Irenaeus would occupy the 28th, a second-century bishop of Lyon whose writings torment theological students to this day.

Finally, the 29th brings a choice of either Peter and Paul or just Peter; as Paul already has a feast day (his conversion on 25th January), I tend to prefer to keep Peter alone. Known historically as Petertide, this is the period when most ordinations now take place.

Phil Bradford



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Church get-together

A reminder of times when we could socialise together. Thank you to Colin Nash for this panorama view of the church barbeque for our patronal festival in 2019.



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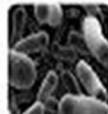
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Extracts from Wendy's 1982 scrapbook

June 3rd - At Maureen's. I did it. "In the year that King Uzziah died"

June 4th - Did not go to early service.

June 6th - Jim preached about the triangle. Very hot day.



Tuesday 8th June - big polythene sheets taken out of the church, piles of planks and rubble left in North Aisle.

9th June Bishop's course, super. We talked about the early church eucharist and what we have lost today. Too often, not often enough, which rite? Time, attitude. Need it for strength. Much good discussion.

Friday 11th June - A truly moving Communion service led by Frank. I read the Job lesson and Judith read the Acts lesson, St Barnabas. Would that we had his spirit of generosity and love, be generous in our judgement of others.

June 13th - Frank preached a very good sermon about peculiar people. We need to be prepared to stand out and be peculiar. Jesus was crucified not for what he did but because he was God's peculiar person. We have to be different in the world.

June 16th - Last Bishop's course this term. Miss Harriet Hesketh has been very good with Saint Luke.

Continued on page 41

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Continued from page 39

June 18th - Lovely communion service conducted by Owain Bell.

Sunday June 20th Peter Pollock from Holt and Grimley.

Thursday 24th June Frank asked me to read at the communion service. 8 present. Frank thanked me on the way out.

Friday 25th June - 6 months since our accident. Frank conducted a beautiful service. Frank said how lovely to see you.

Sunday 27th June - Lovely sermon by Frank on the other man's responsibility. Jim Leverton ordained at the cathedral.

Poster for the 1982 Church Fete

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**From the June parish magazine
(clippings included in the scrapbook).**

Please remember in your thoughts and prayers

PETER JAMES AUSTIN LEVERTON, our assistant curate, who is to be ordained priest by Philip, Bishop of Worcester, in the Cathedral on Sunday 27th June 1982 at 10.45a.m.

He will celebrate the Holy Eucharist for the first time on St. Peter's day, Tuesday 29th June at 7.30 p.m., in the Parish Church of St. John-in-Bedwardine.

Please also pray for Marney, and for their children Nicholas, Andrew, Elizabeth and Susan.

The ordination is on the last Sunday of June, friends are welcome at the Cathedral, but services at St. John's and at Manor Park School will be as usual.

.....
ST. JOHN'S DAY & THE PATRONAL FESTIVAL

St. John's Day is Thursday 24th June, Holy Communion will be celebrated at 10a.m. in the morning and at 7.15p.m (said) in the evening.

Because of the ordination the following Sunday we shall be keepin Sunday 20th June as Patronal Festival. The preacher at 10a.m. will be The Venerable Peter Coleman, Archdeacon of Worcester.

At 6.30p.m. The preacher at Evensong will be the Revd Peter Pollak, Vicar of Grimley with Holt. Instead of finding someone to substitute for him at Holt that evening he is hoping to bring with him some of their people. I hope we will be able to arrange some light refreshments after both these services



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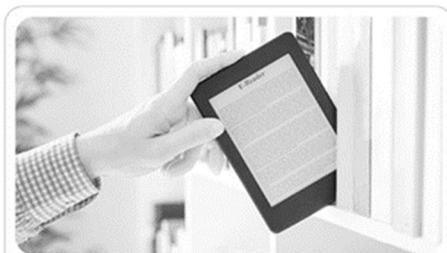
To support social distancing and prevent the spread of infection from Coronavirus (COVID-19), all Worcestershire Libraries (including the mobile library service) will remain closed until further notice.

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Enjoy our online library events and activities and stay connected while you remain safe at home.

Digital Events:

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Events include: Storytime at Home, Rhyme Time online, Author-led Storytime, Poetry in Motion, Wacky Wednesday, Library Lego Club online, Virtual Coding and Computing Club (7-17 year olds and their families), Minecraft Challenge, Digital Readers Group for Adults, Digital Readers Group for Young Adults, Virtual Italian Language Café, Business Book Group .



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From the magazine archive (June 1953)

THE PATRONAL FESTIVAL OF ST. JOHN BAPTIST

THE dedication of our ancient parish Church falls on St. John Baptist Day, Midsummer Day, June 24th. It should be an important day for us. In our Church for many hundreds of years have people great and small come searching for the knowledge of God's will, and for the strength to do it. This fine old church stands here as a witness to the living faith of our fathers.

Let us therefore, old and young, keep commemoration of our Patron, St. John Baptist, and make this Festival a memorable one in our worship of Praise and Thanksgiving.

A special order of service will be arranged for the Festival.

The services will be:

WEDNESDAY (St. John Baptist Day)

Holy Communion, 7.30 a.m. and 10.30 a.m.

SUNDAY, JUNE 28TH

Holy Communion, 8 a.m., 10 a.m., 12.15 p.m.

Matins and Sermon, 11 a.m. Preacher: The Rev. Romily Craze, Vicar of St. Peter's, Worcester.

Children's Flower Service, 3.15 p.m.

Evensong and Sermon, 6.30 p.m. Preacher: The Rev. Gideon Davies, Rector of St. Andrew's, Droitwich.

THE REV. CHRISTOPHER PILKINGTON

ON Sunday, 7th June in the Cathedral, Mr. Pilkington will be ordained to the Priesthood. He will be remembered in our prayers on this great day in His Ministry. Some of us might wish to be present at this Service which begins at 10 a.m.

Mr. Pilkington has done much good service for us in the Church and parish during his Diaconate. He is a most acceptable colleague, and we wish him every blessing in his future work in St. John's.

Please subscribe to the magazine

Why subscribe to the Parish Magazine?

- You'll only need to pay once a year.
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- You'll have a guaranteed copy.
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(£5) I live in St John's and need my magazine to be delivered.

(£14.50) I live outside St John's and need my magazine to be posted.
Postage and Packing costs £9.50 (based on Large Letter, 2nd class postage which costs 83p from March 2019).

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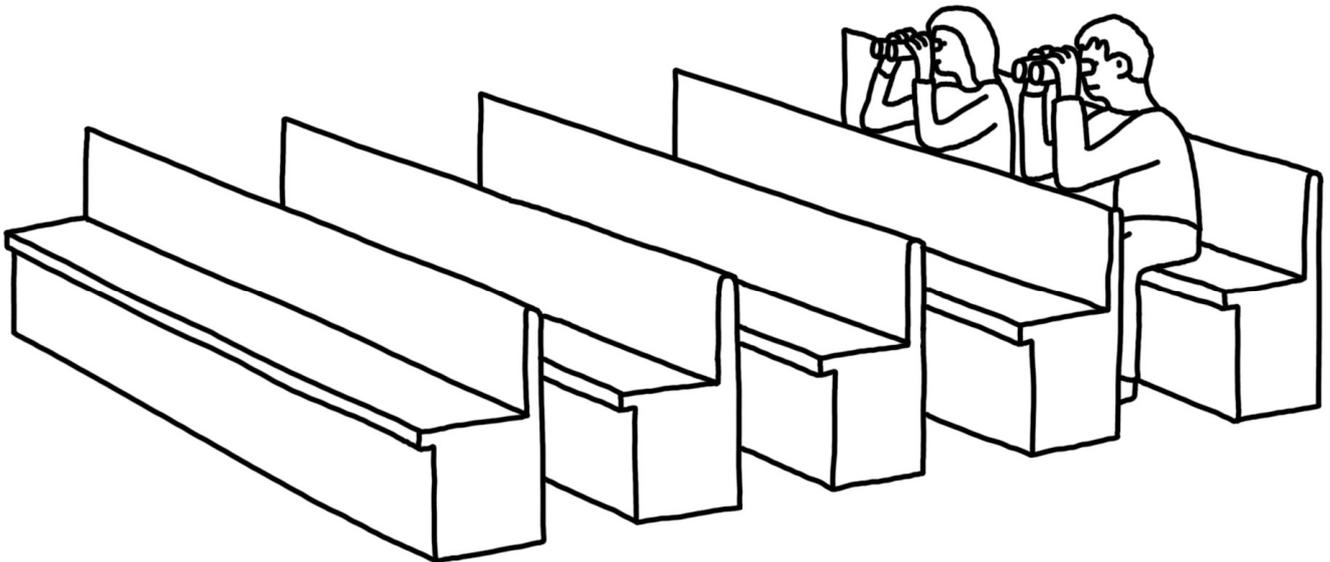
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Puzzle solution

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

And finally....



*Freda and Jim had come well prepared for
socially-distanced worship*

Image: CartoonChurch.com

Caption: Graham Evans

26th May 2020

At the time of writing, all churches remain closed for both public worship and private prayer. Clergy and authorised lay ministers are now permitted to use church buildings for private prayer. All four churches in West Worcester are being prayed in each Sunday by a minister and members of their household.

The situation is confusing and changing rapidly, and it is possible that the Church of England will revise its guidelines at some point during June.

It is unlikely that any services will resume until July at the earliest and there are likely to be considerable restrictions involved for some time thereafter. Please consult the website or Facebook page for any notices about changes to advice.

Phil Bradford and Sarah Cottrill