

Brookfield News

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Responding Well to Domestic Abuse: Policy and Practice Guidance

Church communities are being urged to address the issue of domestic abuse and raise awareness of its impact on adults and children.

The updated practice guidance and policy from the House of Bishops, recently published by the Church of England, encourages churches to become places of safety where domestic abuse is taken seriously, survivors are believed and respected, and alleged or known perpetrators challenged. The updated document reflects legislative and other changes since the 2006 guidance.

Under the policy, Church leaders and Officers working with children, young people and vulnerable adults will be expected to undergo

domestic abuse training with the issue being raised in appropriate contexts within church life including youth groups, marriage preparation and ordinand training. They will also be expected to work closely with statutory and other specialist organisations.

Also published recently is the new House of Bishops Promoting a Safer Church statement which sets out the Church's commitment to making the church a safer place for all. This is a standalone policy statement, which was previously part of a wider document. Updated practical guidance to support this will be published later in the year. This policy and guidance applies to all Church bodies and officers and under new legislation all authorised clergy, bishops, archdeacons,

licensed readers and lay workers, churchwardens and PCCs must have 'due regard' to safeguarding guidance issued by the House of Bishops.

How do you boast to others about your importance?

It used to be done with yachts and exotic beaches, polo-playing or other luxurious lifestyles. Now, instead of impressing people with how indolent our lives are, we want to impress them with how constantly busy we are. Having no time to yourself seems to be the new way to succeed. According to recent research by Harvard University, urbanites are

This Month.....All we like sheep.....Page 10

Services

Sundays

11.00am Sung Eucharist

"Sunday Supplement" the children's activity takes place every Sunday in the sacristy during the service

Weekday Services

Said Eucharist

Wednesday 9.30am

Friday 7.30am

Saints' & Holy Days

Sunday 4th June Pentecost

11.00am Parish Mass and Baptism

Thursday 15th June Corpus Christi

7.30pm Sung Mass, Procession of the Blessed Sacrament and Benediction

Clergy Day off: Fr. Guy is off duty on Monday but don't hesitate to call him in emergencies.

The Vicar is usually available in the Vicarage, 85 Dartmouth Park Road, from 8:00pm until 9:00pm on Tuesdays for the purpose of interviews, arranging Baptisms, reading of Banns and Weddings etc. he is also available to hear confessions then or by appointment.

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boasting about their hectic lives as a way to prove that they are in demand.

As one American researcher put it: 'Signalling busy-ness at work impacts perceptions of status in the eyes of others' We tend to think that people who skip leisure and work all the time are of higher standing.'

Which way to Heaven?

The Rev Dr Billy Graham told of a time early in his ministry when he arrived in a small town to preach a sermon. Wanting to post a letter before the service, he asked a young boy where the post office was. When the boy had told him, Billy Graham thanked him and said, "If you'll come to the Baptist Church this evening, you can hear me telling everyone how to get to heaven."

The boy replied, "I don't think I'll be there... You don't even know your way to the post office."

Election 2017 Reflections by the Archbishops

The season of Easter invites us to celebrate and to renew our love of God and our love of neighbour, our trust and hope in God and in each other. In the midst of a frantic and sometimes fraught election campaign, our first obligation as Christians is to pray for those standing for office, and to continue to pray for those who are elected. We recognise the enormous responsibilities and the vast complexity of the issues that our political leaders face. We are constantly reminded of the personal costs and burdens carried by those in political life and by their families.

Our second obligation as Christians at these times is to set aside apathy and cynicism and to participate, and encourage others to do the same. At a practical level that could mean putting on a hustings event for candidates, volunteering for a candidate, or simply making sure to vote on Thursday 8th June. The Christian virtues of love, trust and hope should guide and judge our actions, as well as the actions and policies of all those who are seeking election to the House of Commons and to lead our country. This election is being contested against the backdrop of deep and profound questions of identity. Opportunities to renew and re-imagine our shared values as a country and a United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland only come around every few generations. We are in such a time. Our Christian heritage, our current choices and our obligations to future generations and to God's world will all play a shaping role. If our shared British values are to carry the weight of where we now stand and the challenges ahead of

us, they must have at their core, cohesion, courage and stability.

Cohesion is what holds us together. The United Kingdom, when at its best, has been represented by a sense not only of living for ourselves, but by a deeper concern for the weak, poor and marginalised, and for the common good. At home that includes education for all, the need for urgent and serious solutions to our housing challenges, the importance of creating communities as well as buildings, and a confident and flourishing health service that gives support to all - especially the vulnerable - not least at the beginning and end of life. Abroad it is seen in many ways, including the 0.7% aid commitment, properly applied in imaginative ways, standing up for those suffering persecution on grounds of faith, and our current leading on campaigns against slavery, trafficking, and sexual violence in conflicts.

Courage, which includes aspiration, competition and ambition, should guide us into trading agreements that, if they are effective and just, will also reduce the drivers for mass movements of peoples. We must affirm our capacity to be an outward looking and generous country, with distinctive contributions to peacebuilding, development, the environment and welcoming the stranger in need. Our economic and financial systems at home and abroad should aim to be engines of innovation, not simply traders for their own account. The need for a just economy is clear, but there is also the relatively new and influential area of 'just finance', and there are dangers of an economy over-reliant on debt, which risks

crushing those who take on too much. Courage also demands a radical approach to education, so that the historic failures of technical training and the over-emphasis on purely academic subjects are rebalanced, growing productivity and tackling with vigour the exclusion of the poorest groups from future economic life.

Stability, an ancient and Benedictine virtue, is about living well with change. Stable communities will be skilled in reconciliation, resilient in setbacks and diligent in sustainability, particularly in relation to the environment. They will be ones in which we can be collectively a nation of 'glad and generous hearts'. To our concern for housing, health and education as foundations for a good society, we add marriage, the family and the household as foundational communities, which should be nurtured and supported as such, not just for the benefit of their members, but as a blessing for the whole of society.

Contemporary politics needs to re-evaluate the importance of religious belief. The assumptions of secularism are not a reliable guide to the way the world works, nor will they enable us to understand the place of faith in other people's lives. Parishes and Chaplaincies of the Church of England serve people of all faiths and none. Their contribution and that of other denominations and faiths to the well-being of the nation is immense - schools, food banks, social support, childcare among many others - and is freely offered. But the role of faith in society is not just measured in terms of service-delivery.

The new Parliament, if it is to take religious freedom seriously, must treat as an essential task the improvement of religious literacy. More immediately, if we aspire to a politics of maturity and generosity, then the religious faith of any election candidate should not be treated by opponents as a vulnerability to be exploited. We look forward to a media and political climate where all candidates can feel confident that they can be open about the impact of their faith on their vocation to public service.

Religious belief is the well-spring for the virtues and practices that make for good individuals, strong relationships and flourishing communities. In Britain, these embedded virtues are not unique to Christians, but they have their roots in the Christian history of our four nations. If treated as partners in the project of serving the country, the churches – and other faiths – have much to contribute to a deep understanding and out-working of the common good.

Political responses to the problems of religiously-motivated violence and extremism, at home and overseas, must also recognise that solutions will not be found simply in further secularisation of the public realm. Mainstream religious communities have a central role to play; whilst extremist narratives require compelling counter-narratives that have a strong theological and ideological foundation.

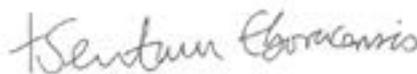
Cohesion, courage and stability are all needed in our response to the continuing national conversation about migration and refugees. Offering a generous and hospitable welcome to refugees and migrants is a vital expression of our common humanity, but it is not without cost and we should not be deaf to the legitimate concerns that have

been expressed about the scale of population flows and the differential impact it has on different parts of society. The pressures of integration must be shared more equitably.

These deep virtues and practices – love, trust and hope, cohesion, courage and stability – are not the preserve of any one political party or worldview, but go to the heart of who we are as a country in all of its diversity. An election campaign, a Parliament and a Government that hold to these virtues give us a firm foundation on which to live well together, for the common good.

We keep in our prayers all those who are standing in this election and are deeply grateful for their commitment to public service. All of us as Christians, in holding fast to the vision of abundant life, should be open to the call to renounce cynicism, to engage prayerfully with the candidates and issues in this election and by doing so to participate together fully in the life of our communities.

In the Name of our Risen Lord,



Lesson in Lying

A minister told his congregation, “Next week I plan to preach about the sin of lying. To help you understand my sermon, I want you all to read Mark 17.”

The following Sunday, as he prepared to deliver his sermon, the minister asked for a show of hands. He wanted to know how many had

Cathedrals Working group

The Archbishops of Canterbury and York have set up a Cathedrals Working Group, CWG, in response to a request made by the Bishop of Peterborough in his January 2017 Visitation Charge on Peterborough Cathedral. He asked that a revision be carried out of the adequacy of the current Cathedrals Measure.

The CWG will review aspects of cathedral management and governance and produce recommendations for the Archbishops on the implications of these responsibilities with regards to the current Cathedrals Measure. It will be chaired by the Bishop of Stepney, Adrian Newman, the former Dean of Rochester Cathedral, and the Dean of York, Vivienne Faull, will be the vice chair.

The Working Group will look at a number of different areas of Cathedral governance, including training and development for cathedral deans and chapters, financial management issues, the procedure for Visitations, safeguarding matters, buildings and heritage and the role of Cathedrals in contributing to evangelism within their dioceses.

The Bishop of Stepney and the Dean of York said: ‘Cathedrals contribute uniquely to the ecology of the Church of England, and we are a healthier, stronger church when they flourish.’

read Mark 17. Every hand went up. The minister smiled and said, “Mark has only 16 chapters. I will now proceed with my sermon on the sin of lying.”

“Dear Friends...”

From the Vicars Desk

For some years now the sprinkling of Holy water at the start of the Sunday Mass has become a hallmark of the Easter season. Recently a couple of people have asked me why, so here is my answer.

After a prayer of blessing, the priest dips a sprinkler into a bucket, and processes through the church. His arm sweeps up, his fist punches the air, water flies in all directions, and everyone sings

Come flowing waters pure and clear,
God's Holy Spirit bringing near,
Let us praise him, alleluia!
Join one to all in peace and love,
With life you give us from above.
O Praise him, O Praise him,
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

The blessing and sprinkling of Holy water has evolved this way because of its connections with Baptism, the renewal of baptismal promises, and the custom of performing purification rites prior to prayer in fact, in Eastertide here at St. Mary's it replaces the penitential rite at the beginning of the Sunday Mass.

From the beginning of the church, Baptism was linked to a profession of faith. The renewal of baptismal promises gradually linked to the sprinkling of blessed water; belief and water went together. On the first Pentecost Sunday, 3,000 people who heard the preaching of Peter were baptized (Acts 2:41). By the second century, a verse was inserted into the story of the conversion of the Ethiopian eunuch; just before Philip baptizes him, this

version of the story has the eunuch say, “I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God” (Acts 8:37).

At the turn of the third century, the theologian Tertullian expected those to be baptized to renounce the devil, his works, and his angels, and to express belief in God and the Church. These early examinations of the candidates for Baptism led to the formulations of the faith known as the Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed. By reciting a creed, the faithful could renew their faith at any time. But in the early Church, they were asked about their faith, phrase by phrase, before they could be baptized, much like the version in today's Baptism service.

As we are sprinkled with Holy water we are reminded of our Baptism, and it stirs up baptismal grace in us. It also calls us back to our central identity as Christians, and it strengthens us anew as disciples of Jesus Christ.

The Easter season has come to an end once again but there is one more reminder of the events of Holy Week still to come. The feast of Corpus Christi falls this year on Thursday 15th June. Again people have often pointed out that we celebrate the institution of the Eucharist on Maundy Thursday so why have another festival to commemorate it. While it is true that we celebrate the first and only occasion when Jesus instituted the breaking of bread and blessing of wine with some very special and new words, he did so and we recall

them under very solemn circumstances. The washing of the disciples feet and the procession to the Garden of Gethsemane (for us the altar of repose) inevitably become the main focus of the service. Yet the gift we are given in the Eucharist is one that is so important that we need another occasion to focus properly on what we are given week by week. It was in the Breaking of Bread that those first disciples recognised Jesus in the village of Emmaus. Their hearts were filled with joy as they became aware of his presence with them. We too recognise him week by week and our hearts are filled with joy and peace as we are fed and nourished through the Blessed Sacrament. So do come and join us as we rejoice in the power of the sacrament to heal and unite us to our Lord and Master.

Your Parish Priest

Take a nap ± and be happy

If you want to be happy and smarter, grab a 30-minute nap during the day. Recent research has found that a nap of that length is ideal for boosting your performance and your personal feeling of happiness.

‘No-nappers’ can struggle through the day, and ‘long’ nappers risk some health problems, but a nap of up to 30 minutes in length seems to be the perfect ‘down-time’ your body needs to get up and running again.

As one scientist put it: ‘Naps of under 30 minutes make you more focused, productive and creative... and you can also become happier just by taking a short nap.’ The study was carried out at the University of Hertfordshire.

Friday Focus

June 2 Come, Holy Spirit

Luke 1:35

When we pray, 'Come, Holy Spirit' we don't immediately think of Mary! Yet, when we reflect on this verse from Luke, it reminds us that praying 'Come Holy Spirit' will bring all sorts of changes and disruption into our lives! Yet, it is through Mary's welcoming of God's Spirit that transformation on a global, even cosmic scale, was enacted.

Loving God we pray, Come Holy Spirit! We trust you, and we want to open our lives and be willing to be changed and disrupted in the process. As we pray for your Kingdom to come, we ask that you would give us the humility and courage to receive and release your Holy Spirit. Amen.

Lynn Green, General Secretary, Baptist Union

June 9 Praying for Muslim communities

2 Corinthians 4:4-6

As Muslims worldwide continue in Ramadan, praying for a revelation from heaven, and praying daily that they will know the 'Right Way', join with millions of believers who will also be praying each day for Jesus to be unveiled to them in dreams and visions, and through meeting believers who love them.

Father, thank you that you are revealing yourself to millions of Muslims worldwide. As they daily seek the 'Right Way' for their lives, will you reveal yourself to them as 'Isa Al Masih' (Jesus the Messiah), who is the Way, the Truth and the Life. Forgive us for our fear, and fill our hearts with love for them.

Gordon Hickson, Mahabba Network

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June 16 Pray for five: people we meet

Acts 12:5-17

The believers in Acts 12 prayed 'earnestly' for Peter who was in prison, but when they heard he'd miraculously escaped, they responded 'You're out of your mind!' Let's pray for opportunities to share Jesus with the people we'll meet today and in our daily lives.

Our God and Father, we thank you that you already know the people we will meet each day. Help us to pray daily for opportunities to share Jesus with those we encounter. Grow our faith so that we pray with expectation, having our eyes and hearts open, and let's expect God to move.

Lucy Olofinjana, Evangelical Alliance

June 23 Discipleship

Romans 12:2

The apostle Paul gives us an interesting insight on discipleship. It does not begin in the will but in the mind where we store our beliefs and values. One area for discipleship is our missionality; how we reach out to other people, and this also begins in the mind.

Heavenly Father, so often I respond to people on the basis of what I see and I don't see people as you see them. I ask that you enlarge my heart and mind that I might see each individual, whatever their background, as beautiful and wonderful, created in your image.

Laurence Singlehurst, Cell UK and HOPE

June 30 Prison Chaplains at work

Isaiah 58:6

Being a Prison Chaplain is like no other ministry I know of. Every day they work tirelessly to offer hope, support and care to some of the nation's most vulnerable people and

those who keep them in custody. Every day they get the opportunity to see Jesus in the eyes of the prisoner. Do you know a chaplain at a prison you could pray for?

Almighty God, we pray for Prison Chaplains who are today ministering faithfully with the recently bereaved, the suicidal, victims and perpetrators of violence, those without hope, and those with hope recently reborn. May they experience a renewed revelation of you in the midst of their ministry, which today reminds them of the glorious hope by which they were called.

Bob Wilson, Free Churches Faith Advisor to NOMS and Prison Hope

Some simple tricks to help you eat less this summer

Drink more water – especially a glass about 20 minutes before each meal.

At home, keep as much food as possible out of sight – 'out of sight' can really help with keeping food 'out of mind'.

Use smaller plates. Large plates encourage large portions.

Split your portions up – cut the pizza or cake into six pieces, and put only one on your plate at a time.

If possible, eat in front of a mirror – it helps you acknowledge how much you are eating.

If you eat in front of your TV, beware: you will probably eat 15% more.

*Some of these tips come from *Gastrophysics*, by Charles Spence, Penguin.

Church of England joins forces with academia & City to shape education

A leadership development programme for Chief Executives of Multi Academy Trusts has been launched, drawing on expertise from the Church of England, academia and the City.

The Church of England Foundation for Educational Leadership programme for Chief Executives of Multi-Academy Trusts will be delivered in partnership with UCL Institute of Education, working with Deloitte.

The programme has been shaped

to draw on the Church of England's involvement in education over 200 years, to include UCL IOE's deep expertise across the education system, including academies and leadership, and to learn from Deloitte's business knowledge and practical experience of working in the education sector.

The Church of England recently launched its vision for education, which will feature heavily in the programme, informing sessions on strategic leadership, finance, marketing and school improvement.

Sleeping is not to be ashamed of

Do you try and live on little sleep? It is not a good idea. Just one night without proper rest quadruples your risk of catching a cold, because your immune system is suppressed. You will also face the day with less motivation, less empathy with others, slower reaction times, poorer concentration, and feeling far more hungry!

For constant gnawing hunger can be caused by lack of sleep. Researchers at Pennsylvania State University found that less than six hours a night causes levels of the hormone ghrelin, which signals hunger, to rise, and levels of leptin, the sense of fullness hormone, to drop. So when you are over-tired, you will feel hungry, but never full.

Also, too little sleep can have grave long-term effects. Harvard Medical School found that less than five hours a night increases the risk of certain cancers, diabetes, Alzheimer's, obesity, cognitive decline, depression and heart disease. As one expert puts it: 'There is not one single good thing about poor sleep, yet we live in a society that at best disregards it, and at worst, views getting by on very little as a badge of honour.'

Bad sleep ages your brain. Good sleep 'shampoos' your brain. During sleep, the space between brain cells actually expands 60 per cent, allowing the brain to flush our built-up toxins.

"Under-sleeping is the next sugar scare – it's a health time bomb.' So says Dr Sara Gottfird, a sleep expert.

St Alban ± British martyr under the Romans

On June 22nd the Church remembers St Alban, who was put to death on that day in 250AD, on the site of the town in Hertfordshire that now bears his name and has a splendid cathedral which houses his shrine.

Christianity was struggling to survive in third century Britain under Roman rule. In the middle of the century there were two periods of specific and ruthless persecution. During one of these Alban, who was not a Christian himself, gave shelter to a Christian priest who was being hunted down by the authorities.

During his stay with Alban the priest greatly impressed him with the depth and integrity of his faith, and he sought instruction and then baptism. Eventually, however, the soldiers tracked the priest down and he would have been taken away and killed.

Alban, however, put on the priest's

robes, so that when the soldiers arrived they assumed he was their prey. The priest was able to continue his ministry, but Alban was taken away, interrogated and eventually charged with promoting a banned religion. All through, he refused to say anything that could implicate anyone else, but (according to an account by the Venerable Bede) boldly confessed his faith in Christ. He was tried, sentenced to death, and executed.

He is widely recognised as the first British martyr, though two Christians were martyred in Wales during the same persecutions. Alban's body was buried near the site of the present town and later became a major place of pilgrimage.

Motoring holiday

Lost Husband: Where are we now?

Wife: Halfway between Paris and Marseilles, dear.

Husband: Don't bother me with details. What country are we in?

Important Notice ± but when do we tell you?

“Then the Curate shall declare unto the people what Holy-days, or Fasting-days, are in the week following to be observed. And then also (if occasion be) shall notice be given of the Communion; and Briefs, Citations, and Excommunications read. And nothing shall be proclaimed or published in the Church during the time of Divine Service, but by the Minister...”

“Are there any notices?” the minister asks after welcoming everyone to the service, and sometimes someone shyly explains that the Tuesday meeting is now on Wednesday of this week, and the Wednesday meeting is now on Monday and...oh well.. it is all on the notice sheet. Then another person jumps up to say there is a mistake on the notice sheet!

Ever wonder when this all started? The above quotation is taken from the notes to the prayer book service written in the Seventeenth Century. It is interesting that even then there were notices to give out.

In those days, Notices could only be announcements of holy days, days of fasting or celebration or what was approved by the bishop or monarch. A “brief” was a letter to a community on a point of discipline and a citation was news of a court case probably a church court case. Notices were for important church or state business only. These were the days before newspapers, so church notices would be the main source of news.

So when is the best time to have them today? If you have them at

the beginning of the service, it can be a bit of a let-down, welcoming people to your service of praise and thanksgiving - but don't forget the fish and chip supper next Saturday is at 6 pm not 8 pm, in the village hall not the church hall, and also, the flower arranging has been re-arranged, and Mrs Boggins' leg is much better.

Or you can have them at the end, just as some folk are shooting off to see if the roast has burnt (only to find they forgot to put oven on), and everyone is dying for a cup of tea.

Perhaps notices work best in the middle of the service – like a commercial break. It avoids spoiling the welcome, and yet gets them in while people are still interested. Perhaps you can prepare a notice about it?

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Why ministry and discipleship are not the same

Rt Rev'd Robert Patterson

Service and servanthood are part of the DNA of every Christian disciple and of the Church, but during the last couple of generations, the buzz word in church has been 'ministry' (which literally means the same thing) and quite a trade was established in making Christians feel guilty if they weren't 'ministering', while fewer people outside wanted to join in this energetic ecclesial activity. Thankfully we are shifting our attention to helping Christians to be Christians by the power of the Holy Spirit.

The more our talk revolves around 'ministry', the more we devalue and disable Christian disciples whose calling is not to do something for the benefit of the church but to be Christians. Put simply, discipleship is what all Christians are called to – we are all disciples of the Lord – whereas ministry is a summons by the Lord to some activity and, in particular, an activity for and/or on

behalf of the Church.

The concept of ministry has a range of interpreters. At one end of the scale are those who divide the Church into the few who minister and the majority who don't; at the other end are those who assume that every Christian is a minister with at least one ministry. A couple of generations ago we were at one extreme and ministry normally meant ordination; then opinion swung to the other extreme, and ministry came to mean activities every Christian should engage in, calling each little act of service 'our ministry'. Both are fatal traps into which we easily fall. 'When all is ministry, ministry fades away.' (T.F. O'Meara: *Theology of Ministry*, Paulist Press, 1983)

Ministry is always the servant of mission. God's mission is the outgoing love of God the Holy Trinity for His creation expressed in the mission of the Son: namely the incarnation, life, death, resurrection and ascension of our Lord

Jesus Christ in whom God has reconciled the world to Himself and through whom the Holy Spirit has been given. That mission Christ has committed to His Church as a royal priesthood in making disciples, baptising, teaching and being His body in the world. (Matthew 28:19,20; John 20:21,22, Romans 1:16,17)

Good, called, well-trained, accredited, commissioned and accountable ministers in many areas of witness are vital to equip the Church for the mission of God. Despite the few who scorn the use of the word 'mission', it is where God starts and ends.

Both mission and ministry serve the purpose of drawing people into a relationship with God the Holy Trinity through faith in Jesus Christ so that all may enjoy reconciliation in His love, and that life in our communities, churches and as individuals may be enriched by the Gospel and reflect the joy of the Kingdom of God.

Pentecost - a day that changed history

People call it 'Whitsun' because once upon a time it was a day for wearing white and going on church processions. The church, however, calls it 'Pentecost' and it's on June 4th this year. It is a crucial date in the Church calendar – in some ways the birthday of Christianity as we know it.

After the crucifixion the followers of Jesus took to meeting in an 'upper room' in Jerusalem, with the doors locked 'for fear of the Jewish authorities'. It was here that the risen Christ appeared to them several times, as well as on a few

occasions in other locations when they ventured out. Eventually He told them that He was 'going back to the Father', but that they should stay in the city until they received the spiritual resources to do the job for which He had called them – to take His message to the world. They did as they were told, about 120 men and women, Luke tells us, including the mother of Jesus.

Then it happened, on the Jewish feast of Shavuot, which was 50 days after the Passover. Pentecost was a spiritual experience which transformed their lives. Embold-

ened, they emerged from the upper room and started preaching on the city streets. They continued to do so even when ordered to stop. What had happened to bring about this transformation? The answer was two words: Holy Spirit. If that sounds very elusive and vague, think of it in its basic meaning in the Greek of the New Testament: Breath – the very source of life itself, the most precious gift of God. At Pentecost the handful of believers were brought to new life because the Holy Spirit of God breathed upon them. The Church was born. Two thousand people were baptised. Wimps became witnesses!

The stately, silent Queen of Sheba

In this series we are exploring the wealth of stories and colourful characters in scripture – Noah and Samson, David and Daniel, for example, whose adventures show God working in their lives. There are other, more intriguing characters who appear for a short time only and then are gone: Melchizedek, the wise men, and this month, the Queen of Sheba.

With Handel's wonderful music ringing in our ears, we read of the arrival of the Queen at Solomon's court in 1 Kings 10. She comes to find out about his wisdom and to exchange gifts. After 13 verses she returns home, and the story ends.

But this exotic character lived on in the imagination of the Jewish people, and Jesus mentions her in the Gospels. He tells the scribes and Pharisees wanting a sign, that even though the Queen was aware of Solomon's riches and grandeur, there is something greater than

Solomon in front of their eyes. In the Middle Ages the Golden Legend wove other stories around that visit. Its purpose was to see a branch of the tree of life in Eden that Solomon had made into a bridge. She tells him of her vision that one day that very wood would be used for the cross of the Saviour.

In the 15th century Piero della Francesca painted frescoes on this saga for the church of St Francis in Arezzo. He imbues the scene where the Queen meets Solomon with a stately, statuesque beauty: silence reigns as she bends her head, aware of the true importance



of this wood. Somehow the Old Testament prefigures the New for that tree in Eden has stretched out its branches across their world as it will across other ages to root itself on Calvary. For all the legend, we capture something in this painting of the mysterious movement of salvation working in the characters of the Old Testament and pointing us to its fulfilment in the New, where we find that a greater than Solomon is truly there.

THE WAY I SEE IT: Objects are not cruel; people are

Once upon a time a terrorist needed a gun or, preferably, a bomb. We were constantly urged to keep our eyes open for people acting 'suspiciously' or carrying suspicious-looking things. Now, it seems, that era has given way to an even more sinister one. This year's chosen terrorist weapon is a motor vehicle.

The people walking across Westminster Bridge on that March afternoon could not possibly know which of the ordinary cars or lorries rolling past them was 'suspicious'. There were no sensible precautions they could have taken. And then, from nowhere, it seems,

they were the victims of a major terrorist attack. A week or two later much the same thing happened in Stockholm, as it had done in Nice a few months earlier. Suddenly the motor-car, which stands innocently outside almost every house in Britain, and the lorry which brings food to our supermarket, have turned into vicious weapons of assault.

I thought of this over Holy Week this year, when several of our hymns speak of the 'cruel nails' which pinned Jesus to the cross, or the 'cruel tree' on which he died. But of course the nails weren't cruel – just ordinary ones, that

could have been mending someone's fence. The 'tree' was totally innocent, cut down from a nearby forest where it had offered shade and comfort. Objects aren't 'cruel' or 'evil' of themselves. People are. Just laws and effective security will help to restrain evil actions, but in the end you change the world by changing people.

Those last few hours on Good Friday show it taking place. The soldiers who drove in those nails were forgiven. Their officer recognised in the man on the cross a 'son of God', and the penitent thief found paradise. The agent of it all was a dying man, the one we call 'Saviour'. It still is.

Hymns and Readings

4th June Pentecost

Readings Acts 2: 1-21

Psalm 104

1 Corinthians 12: 3b-13

John 20: 19-23

Hymns 139 Come thou Holy Spirit come
143 Spirit of mercy love and truth
137 Come down O love divine
140 Holy Spirit come confirm us

Sidesperson: Rob Nesbitt

Readers: Ian MacGregor , Ruth Godwin

Intercessions: Nicky Pittam

11th June Trinity Sunday

Readings Isaiah 40: 12-17 & 27-end

Psalm 8

2 Corinthians 13: 11-end

Matthew 28: 16-20

Hymns 146 Holy Holy Holy
Three in one and one in three
343 Bright the vision
373 How shall I sing that majesty

Sidesperson: Elizabeth Oyedemi

Readers: Lucy Boyd, Nicky Pittam

Intercessions Carol Kenning

18th June Trinity 1 proper 6

Readings Exodus 19: 2-8a

Psalm 100

Romans 5: 1-8

Matthew 9:35-10: 8

Hymns 232 Awake my soul and with the sun
477 Ye that know the Lord
486 We have a Gospel to proclaim
408 Love divine

Sidesperson: Monica Sarpong

Readers: Oliver Butt, Carol Kenning

Intercessions: Bill Saunders

25th June Trinity 2 proper 7

Readings Jeremiah 20: 7-13

Psalm 69

Romans 6: 1b-11

Matthew 10: 24-39

Hymns 360 Firmly I believe and truly
74 O for a heart to praise my God
351 Come ye faithful raise the anthem
Lord Jesus Christ

Sidesperson: Irada Fracassi

Readers: Jenny Kauntze, Nick Bethune

Intercessions: Ian MacGregor

Waterloo Festival 2017

Throughout the month of June, Waterloo is celebrating its seventh annual festival with the most ambitious programme yet. Centred at St John's Church, one of London's most active community churches, just yards away from Europe's busiest transport hubs and the South Bank, the programme includes two art exhibitions, lunchtime and evening concerts, dance performances, poetry and its first sustainable flower festival.

This year's theme is SACRED SPACES and as festival chair Giles Goddard explains "Our artists, performers and visitors will explore what makes a space sacred, and how Londoners share their experiences of those spaces they treasure. This year our festival will involve music, art, dance and the environment."

St John's Church and garden on the south end of Waterloo Bridge is opposite Waterloo Station and beside the IMAX and close to the Southbank. Full programme: www.waterloofestival.com

100 Club Winners

Draw for April 2017

1st prize: Sarah Dann

2nd prize: William Longland

3rd prize: Vita Bethune

4th prize: Carol Kenning

Congratulations to you all and thanks for your support each month.

If you would like to purchase a number in this monthly draw please do make inquiries of the Mr Mark Williams.

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For your prayers

PRAYER CALENDAR FOR MONTH OF JUNE 2017

4th Churchill Road
11th College Lane
18th Croftdown Road
25th Dartmouth Park Avenue

SAINTS & HOLY DAYS

1st Justin Martyr
3rd Martyrs of Uganda
4th Pentecost
5th St Boniface of Crediton
8th Thomas Ken

9th St Columba
11th Trinity Sunday
13th St Anthony of Padua
15th Corpus Christi
16th St Richard of Chichester
18th Trinity 1
22nd St Alban
23rd The Most Sacred Heart of Jesus
St Etheldreda of Ely
24th Birth of St John the Baptist
25th Trinity 2
27th St Cyril of Alexandria
28th St Irenaeus
29th Ss Peter and Paul