

Brookfield News

May 2016
No 337
Price 50p



Church of England publishes prayers for Syria

The Church of England has published prayers for Syria as the fifth anniversary of the Syrian conflict has come and gone – and the fighting continues.

Prayer for peace in Syria

How long oh Lord? How long?
We have been crying to you for peace in Syria; for an end to killing and despair, an end to hostilities on all sides. We thank you for the current cessation of hostilities and pray it may turn into a long lasting peace.
We cry to you for humanitarian aid to reach those most in need.
We beseech you for the rebuilding of ruined homes, businesses and communities.

We long for the repairing of the breach and the restoration of streets where your children may dwell in harmony.

We cry out that justice, truth and love may prevail for all the people of Syria.

We pray in the name of the Prince of Peace, Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Prayer for those in camps, private homes, churches and communities

Father, we ask your blessing on those who have fled into refugee camps, private homes, churches and communities.

May they find the refuge they seek.
We pray for those offering welcome to relatives, friends or strangers

in their homes, churches and communities.

We ask your wisdom for those working in camps and among displaced people wherever they are. Through their care, may your gifts of patience, freedom and hope be shared with all.

We pray in the name of the Lord who is our hope, Jesus Christ.
Amen.

Prayer for refugees

O Lord, who sees all things, you know the needs of refugees in all lands.

We pray at this time particularly for those who have fled Syria and now live in homes, churches and camps in the region and across our

This Month.....The silent sermon.....Page 4

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

Tuesday 7.30pm

Wednesday 9.30am

Friday 7.30am

Saints' & Holy Days

Thursday 5th May. Ascension Day. 7.30pm Sung Mass

Sunday 15th May Pentecost 11.00am Choral Mass

Thursday 26th May Corpus Christi 7.30pm Mass at St Benets Kentish Town

100 Club Winners

Draw for March 2016

1st prize: Diana Dworetzky
2nd prize: Oliver Butt
3rd prize: Shirley Caton
4th prize: Rob Nesbitt

Draw for April 2016

1st prize: Rob Nesbitt
2nd prize: Tim Florey
3rd prize: Wendy Shale
4th prize: Robin Barter

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 enquiries of the Mr Mark Williams.

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.

Contents

100 club results.....	Page 2
Unstoppable power.....	Page 3
Wave of prayer.....	Page 4
Silent sermon.....	Page 4
From the Vicar's Desk.....	Page 5
The Ascension.....	Page 6
Crosses in China.....	Page 6
Joseph Stalin.....	Page 6
Keep Easter moving!.....	Page 7
Sustainable churches.....	Page 7
Trinity, The way I see it.....	Page 8
Dog's v Cats.....	Page 8
John and Charles Wesley.....	Page 9
Keep Calm.....	Page 9
He gave us eyes.....	Page 10
Top ten , Daniel.....	Page 10
Hymns and Readings.....	Page 11

continent of Europe.

Watch over them.

Give wisdom, generosity and boldness to all who make decisions about their welcome and their welfare, and to all whose hearts move them to offer help.

May all Syrian refugees find true refuge.

Amen

Prayer for the Church in Syria

Lord of the Church, we pray for your blessing on our sisters and brothers in Jesus Christ in the churches of Syria. Uphold and sustain them.

Keep them faithful to Jesus in the face of persecution, opposition, tragedy and turmoil.

May they know the power of your Holy Spirit to be your people in, and for, their land and nation.

We pray in the name of Jesus Christ the foundation and cornerstone of your holy church.

Amen.

The unstoppable power unleashed at Pentecost

Nine days after the Ascension of Jesus, and 49 days after his crucifixion, the Jews were doing what they always did this time of year, preparing for the Feast of Ingathering, or Harvest. It was held 50 days after the Passover, and with it, life in Israel looked set to return to normal, with Jesus well on the way to becoming just a memory.

So no one paid any attention to a small group of Jesus' disciples who had gathered in a house in Jerusalem. There were only about 120 of them, and they were quiet and kept to themselves. The Jews, if they thought about it at all, would have assumed they were still grieving their lost leader. But the disciples, far from grieving Jesus' death, were eagerly awaiting for him to send them a present.... Though they did not understand exactly what it might be.

All they knew was that Jesus was alive, and that before He had ascended to heaven, He had told them to go to Jerusalem and wait there together for "the gift my father has promised" (Acts 1:4) He had said: "stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high." (Luke 24:49)

These disciples, though they did not know it then, were already acting as the future church – the ecclesia, which literally means 'called-out ones'. For those disciples stuck together, together they waited for God's blessing.

As with them, so with us today: even though each conversion is intensely personal, we are not converted to be alone in our faith. Far from it! We are not saved to soli-

tude, but to a life in the fellowship of the Church. Jesus has ordained that His followers, TOGETHER, be His family on earth, His witness to the world.

But it has never been a family built on likeness – the believers in the house that day came from very different backgrounds – from right-wing conservatives (Matthew) to radical left-wing zealots (Simon). There were some straight-forward fishermen and even women, for good measure. From the day of its birth, Jesus' family would include all kinds of people who would find their unity in Him.

The first thing the disciples did was to get down to the business of praying. They did not try and unite themselves by long discussions with each other. It was the "joining together constantly in prayer" (verse 14) that brought them together.

The 19th Century London pastor FB Meyer expressed well what awaited those disciples "The task that awaited that little group was one of unparalleled difficulty. ... They were to disciple all nations, speaking different languages, scattered over the vast Roman Empire, which extended from the Atlantic to the Far East. ... They were to substitute Christianity for paganism, as the foundation of a new type of civilization. ... In fact, humanly speaking and without exaggeration, it depended on that tiny group of unknown and ordinary men and women, whether the Incarnation and Death, the Resurrection and Ascension, of the Son of God would obtain the audience and acceptance of mankind."

Today the Christian Church faces the same challenge – of making Christ known. We can do "business as usual" in our strength and by our resources. But great manifestations of God's saving, healing and restoring power come only as God's people "stay for the Spirit" and "wait for the gift" as Jesus commanded (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4).

Each of us would do well to "ask, seek and knock" for God's fullness day by day, if we are to enjoy His full anointing of power on our lives and ministry. We all 'leak', and need the continual in-filling that comes from abiding, persistent prayer.

It was out of the context of prayer that this incipient church in Jerusalem was preparing for the coming of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost. For God's fullness in our lives and awakening in our church today we must believe that He is able and willing to fulfill His highest purpose for us. He wants to give us His "good gifts," namely, His Holy Spirit in fullness.

That day in Jerusalem, when the Holy Spirit arrived in all His fullness, Peter stood up and preached the first ever Christian sermon to the astonished Jews in the city. So - the Jesus their rulers had crucified at Passover was not dead after all! That Jesus WAS the Messiah, and He was alive! 3,000 were converted that same day. In the power of the Spirit, the Church was born – and growing fast!

Children's exam papers

What was Sir Walter Raleigh famous for?

He is a noted figure in history because he invented cigarettes and started a craze for bicycles.

Archbishops call for 'great wave of prayer' for evangelism during Pentecost

The Archbishops of Canterbury and York are inviting churches to pray for the evangelisation of the nation during the week leading up to Pentecost Sunday. The Archbishops have written to every serving parish priest in the Church of England expressing their longing "to see a great wave of prayer across our land, throughout the Church of England and many other Churches" from 8th-15th May.

The week of prayer will culminate in 'Beacon events' around the country over Pentecost weekend, where people will pray for the renewal of the Holy Spirit and the confidence to share their faith. In their letter the Archbishops said: "At the heart of our prayers will be words that Jesus Himself taught us - 'Thy kingdom come, thy will be done.'

"It is impossible to overstate the life-transforming power of the Lord's Prayer. It is a prayer that is reassuring enough to be on the lips of the dying and yet dangerous enough to be banned in cinemas. It is famous enough to be spoken each day by billions in hundreds of languages and yet intimate enough to draw us ever closer into friendship with Jesus Christ. It is simple enough to be memorised by small children and yet profound enough to sustain a whole lifetime of prayer. When we pray it with sincerity and with joy, there is no imagining the new ways in which God can use us to His glory."

The Archbishops are suggesting various ways churches can engage with the week of prayer. These include holding a day or week of con-

tinuous '24/7' prayer as parishes, teams or deaneries; saying special prayers in Sunday worship; prayer walking; or handing out a novena prayer card to every congregation member.

The Beacon events will take place in the following places: St Paul's Cathedral (Saturday 14th May) - hosted by the Bishop of London, the Rt Revd Richard Chartres, and Pete Greig, founder of 24/7 prayer, with sung worship led by Tim Hughes and Jake Isaac. Durham Cathedral (Sunday 15th May) - with sung worship led by Lou Fellingham. Coventry Cathedral (Sunday 15th May) - with sung worship led by Noel Richards. Winchester Cathedral (Sunday 15th May) - with sung worship led by Matt Redman. St Michael le Belfrey, York (Sunday 15th May) - hosted by Matthew Porter & Miriam Swaffield with sung worship led by Tom Holmes. Canterbury Cathedral (Sunday 15th May) - hosted by Archbishop Justin Welby and Pete Greig, with sung worship led by Tim Hughes.

Archbishop Justin will send a message via live video link to other Beacon events taking place at the same time as the Canterbury event. Partners in the week of prayer initiative include 24-7 Prayer, HOPE, the World Prayer Centre, the Neighbourhood Prayer, Network, and the National Day of Prayer and Worship. For more information about the initiative, visit: www.thykingdom.co.uk

The silent sermon

A member of a certain church, who had previously attended services regularly, stopped going. After a few weeks, the priest decided to visit him. He found the man at home all alone, sitting by a blazing fire. Guessing the reason for his priest's visit, the man welcomed him awkwardly, and led him to a comfortable chair near the fireplace and waited.

The priest made himself at home, but said nothing.

In the grave silence, he contemplated the dance of the flames around the burning logs. After some minutes, he took the fire tongs, carefully picked up a brightly burning ember and placed it to one side of the hearth all alone. Then he sat back in his chair, still silent.

The host watched all this in quiet contemplation. As the one lone ember's flame flickered and diminished, there was a momentary glow and then its fire was no more. Soon it was cold and dead.

Not a word had been spoken since the initial greeting. But now the priest chose this time to leave. He slowly stood up, picked up the cold, dead bit of coal and placed it back in the middle of the fire. Immediately it began to glow once more, with the light and warmth of the burning coals around it. With that, the priest smiled at his host, and quietly let himself out.

How does Romeo's character develop throughout the play?

It doesn't, it's just self, self, self, all the way through.

“Dear Friends...”

From the Vicars Desk

Most of you know that I spend a great deal of my time on Church Schools in the Diocese. On Maundy Thursday the Bishop of London took as the major theme of his sermon to the Clergy and Readers of the Diocese the value of our Church schools. I therefore quote here part of what he said in the context of rebuilding community in our city.

There are often suspicions that the Church is involved in education for our own selfish purposes. Schools like William Perkin (a newly opened secondary school) give the lie to such slurs. Admissions favour the local community and there are no religious tests with the result that the pupils represent the diversity of the community in Greenford. The Church has always sought to care for the health and wellbeing of the whole community nationally and locally.

A respect and welcome for multi-cultural diversity has enriched London and our church life but we can only flourish and derive the maximum benefit from diversity if there is a strong framework within which we can co-operate for the common good and learn to appreciate one another. In a challenging national and international situation, anxieties about extremism are one sign that the framework needs reinvigorating. With the atrocities in Brussels and Paris very much in our minds it should be obvious that you cannot exorcise the Satanic by creating a spiritual vacuum.

The insistence on individual human rights was a valuable emphasis in the post war context as we recovered from the experience of totalitarian regimes and confronted a surviving totalitarian regime in the Soviet Union. Now a new balance has to be established which involves a fresh appreciation of the vital importance of the communities and institutions which mediate

between the individual and the State. Families, schools, professional bodies, unions, and churches all have a part to play in equipping individuals to play a responsible part as citizens. The civility and mutual respect, and the ability to compromise, essential for the functioning of a mature democracy, are incubated in such intermediate bodies. When such an education is not available then democracy degenerates into an “ochlocracy”, a crowd of atomised individuals, stirred by short term media induced frenzies, incapable of holding on to the bigger picture and instead reacting piecemeal to a succession of single issue campaigns. A mature democracy which respects minorities and develops policies in complex areas which involve long term planning is not compatible with the kind of bumper sticker politics most obvious in the highly partisan American political arena.

In these circumstances we are committed to supporting schools which equip young citizens to play a creative part in British democracy.

Our motivation for being involved in education is not self-serving but it is explicit. Every single school whether connected to a religious body or not is a faith school in the sense that there is implicitly or explicitly a view of human nature and an understanding of what is worthwhile in life which shapes the curriculum and the culture of the school. At a time when so many people seem to think that the “economy” is the crucial reference point for our lives and that fitting young people to be productive units in the economy is the paramount task, it is especially important for there to be genuine pluralism in the education system.

No church school in the Diocese of London yearns to replace the study of evolution with dogmatic creationism. We respect the developments in em-

pirical science as the themes chosen for our new secondary schools attest. William Perkin was both a man of faith and an experimental scientist and the partnership with Imperial College is a vital part of the ethos of the school but in all our Diocesan schools we strive to offer a wider curriculum designed to enrich life in all its fullness.

The nakedness of the land has recently been illuminated by the attempt to enlist schools in the communication of “British values” as a way of combatting “extremism”. Merely invoking universal abstractions like tolerance, fairness and civility cannot generate one iota of the energy needed to build a community and transform individual lives. Such virtues have to be embedded in a narrative and a community and exemplified in the lives of role models if they are to have substance and transforming power. The dramatic narrative found in the Bible and the community of interpretation constituted by the Christian churches and other religious bodies are a priceless asset in the struggle to build a cohesive society with sufficient positive conviction and energy to resist the siren calls of divisive ideologies which are hugely attractive for impressionable young people in search of a meaningful personal identity. Any education to equip young people to face the promise and peril of life in the 21st century must include a commitment to religious literacy, ethical clarity and spiritual awareness. These themes should pervade the curriculum not least in music, art and sport rather than being corralled into some demarcated area. The business of the State is to ensure that the living traditions in our pluralist society have space to flourish without the State itself being drawn into the role of an ideologically driven Big Brother, profligate with ever more detailed regulation.

A recent article in the Economist entitled “Battlefields of the Mind” concludes with this comment – “One Prevent Officer in London jokes that *concluded on page 11*

Making sense of the Ascension

This month we celebrate Ascension Day. Although somewhat neglected, as it takes place on a Thursday, it is still an important Christian festival. The New Testament tells us that Jesus ascended to 'God's right hand' (1 Peter 3:22). But how should we understand this?

Sitting at God's right hand Jesus occupies a position of power and authority at the 'oval office' of the universe, 'exalted to the right hand of God' (Acts 2:33). This position was secured by his death and resurrection and enables us to experience the life of heaven ie eternal life, forgiveness, healing and the power to transform lives and communities. Is this our expectation and experience?

Standing at God's right hand Our experience of heaven is only partial, as we also know the reality of suffering and disappointment in our lives. Stephen, the first Chris-

tian martyr, saw Jesus 'standing at the right hand of God' (Acts 7:56) as he was being stoned to death. Do we recognise that Jesus is on the throne and has a purpose for our lives, when we are in the middle of setbacks and difficulties? As a result of Stephen's death, the Church grew and the apostle Paul was transformed. Where is the fruit of the suffering in our lives?

Praying at God's right hand Finally, we are told that Jesus is 'interceding for us' at God's right hand (Romans 8:34 & Hebrews 7:25). Jesus is on our side at the heart of the universe and fully knows our needs when praying for us. He is on our side, even when we feel defeated by the wrong things in our lives.

So where has Jesus gone? Because He is in heaven, the Ascension opens up the possibility that we can experience the life of heaven, both now and in eternity.

Chinese government tears down more church crosses

China has torn down more church crosses in Zhejiang, raising fears that soon no Christian crosses will be left standing on churches throughout the province.

Release International, which supports persecuted Christians worldwide, is concerned that this campaign of growing intolerance towards Christians in the coastal province of Zhejiang could even spread on throughout China.

Release's partners report another 49 crosses have been torn down

since the start of the year. Where churches are refusing to demolish them themselves, the authorities are cutting off their water and electricity. So far, around 1850 crosses have been removed.

Release International has recently launched a petition calling on China's president Xi Jinping to release the jailed Christian human rights lawyer Zhang Kai, who mounted a legal campaign to challenge the cross removals. To sign the petition, search for Zhang Kai on change.org

Remembering Joseph Stalin ± trainee priest who ruled Russia

Joseph Stalin, who became Premier of Soviet Russia 75 years ago after having already been in control of the country for nearly 20 years, was raised in the Greek Orthodox Church and trained for the priesthood. His father was a drunken cobbler, who believed in beating his son excessively.

Stalin's real name was Ioseb Besarionis dze Jughashvili, and he was born in what is now Georgia. During most of his time in charge of Communist Russia he espoused atheism and launched a campaign to destroy churches and religious property, and to persecute and kill church officials. Under Stalin, the Russian Orthodox Church was reduced from 50,000 to 500 open and operating churches.

But when he became Premier, and during the Second World War he allowed tens of thousands of Russian Orthodox churches to reopen, adopted an official policy of tolerance toward Muslims, and re-established the hierarchy in the Russian Orthodox Church.

It was suggested that he reconsidered his own personal relationship to religion during a "mysterious retreat" in 1941 – the same year he became Premier. Nevertheless it has been estimated that during the period 1928-1954 the USSR suffered 56 to 62 million unnatural deaths, with 34 to 49 million linked directly to Stalin.

A response to the Vicars comments in last months magazine!

No doubt about it. Easter is Untidy. Positively slovenly. The very idea of an observance that ought to be nailed to its proper time and station wandering haphazardly all round the calendar like a drunken motorist in the dodgems - or dodgems, whichever you prefer - is enough to bring on glossalalia in the rationally minded.

No, we have to get our ideas sorted out. A modern calendar. Which will allow us to plan our holidays in advance round a predetermined date and so guarantee being out of the Vicar's reach when he wants to pin us down for some foot-washing nonsense or coming out on Unnatural Days for Church attendance. Friday? What's God got to do with Friday, for God's Sake? Sunday's His day, and if we can pin it down to one particular one, we can clear all the other ones out for more important things like barbering the lawn and exercising the new car.

Indeed, on further reflection, the reformers have not yet grasped the full implications of this logical thinking. For a start, Advent as presently constituted embodies a tiresome element of tautology, not to say a degree of schizophrenia. It must surely start with the Feast of the Annunciation, and the rest of the Christian year following from Christmas be fitted in prior to the next of those.

Right. Here it is. An Easter for the 21st Century. Pentecost, fixed on the 24th of March - nothing in Acts II about that taking place on a Sunday - and Easter Day therefore the 14th of February. Whichever day of the week that may be. Incidentally, Leap Year and the

anomalous 29th of February will have to go, in this commitment to rationality. (Proposals of marriage henceforth an exclusively male prerogative.) The ten days from Candlemas (necessarily the 2nd) until then remain available for Epiphany; and doctrinal observances such as Trinity, Corpus Christi, All Saints, All Souls, may be taken wheresoever in the year it suits worshippers'/parish priests' convenience, holidays or inclinations.

Subsidiary matters in need of tidying up in the course of this comprehensive improvement :

Candles? When we've got electric lights to do that job? They're out, for a start.

Likewise, dressing up in special clothes that keep on changing colour, to everybody's bewilderment. In an egalitarian age, clergy need to look like the rest of us.

Vain repetition. Everyone knows that vain repetition is an idle and insincere thing. So - two or three separate readings in the same service - preposterous. Hymns and psalms? Sort your ideas out, chaps!! Do you want it metric or don't you? They're all pretty much interchangeable with the readings in any case - all this can be shovelled up into a lectionary that goes a chapter a day (whether or not anybody's in church that day) from "In the beginning God" (Annunciation) until New Pentecost, then start over. Admittedly this means that the New Testament doesn't actually get a liturgical look in : that, plus readings that have some relevance to individual feast days, can be left to private devo-

tion. Also verbiage that doesn't mean anything except to scholars of ancient Hebrew - no more public Alleluia-ing.

Incidental benefits to bakers and retailers. No more superfluous effort making and stocking eggs or rabbits out of chocolate at unpredictable seasons, for pity's sake, or identical buns some with and some without white stripes. Either dispense with all the unnecessary trouble of inscribing a selected quota of those, or crucify the lot. What more topical?

Published by the Keep Easter Moving campaign.

Government's English Churches and Cathedrals Sustainability Review welcomed by C of E

The Church of England has welcomed the Chancellor's recent announcement of an 'English Churches and Cathedrals Sustainability Review'. It will be the first time Government has brought together experts to consider the future of England's magnificent church heritage.

For the Church of England is the largest steward of England's built heritage, through its network of 16,000 parish churches. Among these are 45% of England's grade I listed buildings.

As these buildings are crucial to the present and future of local communities, the recent Church Buildings Review was set up to identify ways in which new and different models of care, openness and sustainability could be implemented.

The Way I See It : Three in One and One in Three by David Winter

A story is told of a Jewish man who collapsed in the street with a heart attack. A passing Roman Catholic priest rushed over and knelt beside him. "Would you like to have your sins forgiven?" he asked. The man nodded weakly. "Right," said the priest. "Do you believe in God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit?"

The Jewish man rolled his eyes and moaned, "I'm dying, and he's asking me riddles!"

Well, it's Trinity Sunday later this month, so if you go to church you may well hear the preacher trying to explain the riddle. Most church-goers know that it's part of orthodox Christian faith, and

like singing about it in hymns, but haven't any idea why it's so important. Surely, they think, there's only one God, so why make it so complicated?

Yes, it is complicated, but not incredible. Over the last century scientists have discovered that almost everything is more 'complicated' than we had thought. It seems, for instance, that pretty well nothing we know is a simple unity.

Think atoms, and then protons and neutrons. Energy and activity flow from dynamic relationships. So doesn't it make sense that the Creator God is a Relationship – the source of all energy and activity – rather than a simple 'unity'? Thought of like that, a God who is 'Father' (Source), Son (Action) and

Spirit (Application) makes good sense. The Father made us, the Son loves us and the Spirit 'sheds that love abroad in our hearts'. Makes sense to me.

The merits of owning dogs instead of cats

Cat lovers won't purr over this survey: apparently it has 'been found' that dog owners are more sociable and earn bigger salaries than cat owners. The survey for VetPlus also found that dog owners are more likely to have paid off their mortgage and to have 'stressful' jobs. By contrast, cat owners prefer to live alone or with their parents, and at a slower pace of life.

Other findings: cat owners have an average of 50 online friends; dog owners have an average of 60. Cat owners earn on average £24,000 a year; dog owners earn on average £27,000. 55 per cent of cat owners are married; 60 per cent of dog owners are married.

On the plus side for cat owners, it is 100 per cent guaranteed that their pet will never beg for a walk in the rain!

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John and Charles Wesley - evangelists and hymn-writers

John and Charles Wesley were the founders of Methodism. Two of nineteen children born to Samuel and Susannah Wesley of Epworth Rectory in Lincolnshire in 1703 and 1707, their father was the local rector, while their mother was a spiritual inspiration to her many children.

Both John and Charles went to Christ Church, Oxford (1720 and 1726). John was ordained, and Charles and some friends formed a "Holy Club" while still at college. It consisted of men who dedicated themselves to Bible study, prayer, fasting and good works. Such regular disciplines soon earned Charles the nickname 'Methodist'. The name stuck.

Both Charles and John felt called to the mission field, and so in 1735 they sailed to Georgia. Their time among Indians in America was not a success – they struggled for any real spiritual authority in

their ministries. Feeling failures, they returned to England in some depression. John summed it up: "I went to America to convert the Indians; but, oh, who shall convert me?"

Then the Wesleys made friends with some Moravians. They stressed that salvation cannot be earned, but must be received by grace through faith in Christ. Charles was the first to experience this 'true' conversion, when on Pentecost Sunday, 21st May 1738, he wrote that the Spirit of God "chased away the darkness of my unbelief."

Only three days later, on 24th May, 1738, it was John's turn. As he wrote in his journal: "In the evening I went very unwillingly to a society in Aldersgate Street, where one was reading Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God

works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed."

John and Charles Wesley then devoted the rest of their lives to sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ – and turned England upside-down. When the established Church threw John out, he took to the fields, preaching to coal miners and commoners. His itinerant evangelism took him 250,000 miles on horseback and to preach over 40,000 sermons. His small "societies" attracted some 120,000 followers by the time of his death.

Charles became the most prolific and skilled hymn-writer in English history, writing hymns that are sung widely today, such as "Love Divine, All Loves Excelling." In all, he wrote nearly 7000 hymns.

The legacy of the two brothers lives on. As well as Methodism, their teaching has widely impacted the holiness movement, the Pentecostal movement, and the charismatic movement.

Keeping calm and carrying on

by David Winter

On May 10th 1941 I was safely asleep in bed in my grandparents' home in rural Wales. My parents, on the other hand, were making their beds in the air raid shelter in the back garden of our home in north London. Right on cue as darkness fell, the sirens wailed. It would be another night of the 'blitz', with its incessant noise of anti-aircraft guns, the drone of the German bombers and the terrifying explosion of their bombs.

As dawn came and the enemy

raiders departed, my parents got some breakfast and dad went off to work. That had been the routine for more than a year. What they didn't know was that May 10th was to be the last night of the blitz. The morale of the civilian population, the courage of the RAF night fighter pilots, firemen and air raid wardens had finally persuaded Hitler that he would not win the war that way.

The blitz became part of British folk-lore. Our towns and cities were pock-marked with bomb sites. The casualties had been appalling – that last night of the blitz 75 years ago 1,300 people died. But

ordinary men and women simply 'kept calm and carried on', as the famous slogan said. While we marvel at their fortitude, it may also help to put our present troubles into perspective.

Walking out

"I hope you didn't take it personally, Reverend," said an embarrassed woman after a church service, "when my husband walked out during your sermon."

"I did find it rather disconcerting," the preacher admitted.

"It's not a reflection on you, sir," insisted the church-goer. "Ralph has been walking in his sleep ever since he was a child."

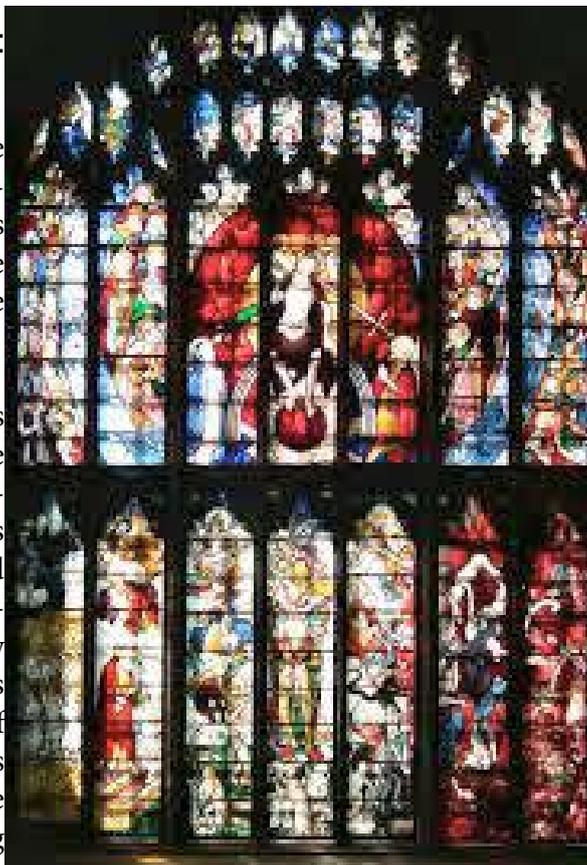
'He gave us eyes to see them' ± Stained Glass windows

You may know the story of the little girl with her family during a guided tour around a cathedral. As the bright sun streamed through one of the windows, she asked the guide who were the people depicted there. 'Those are the saints,' he replied. Later that evening the girl told her mummy, 'I know who the saints are.' 'Do you, dear? Who are they?' the mother asked. The little girl replied: 'They are the people who let the light shine through.'

When the summer sun rises, its light catches the east window of a church I look after. It shines through the figures and colours of the Annunciation scene to bathe the chancel in a warm glow. Later as the sun sets, it shines once again through the west window showing Christ surrounded by angels, with the same wonderful effect. They are two stained glass windows by the Victorian designer, Kempe. But in St Mary's Church, Fairford

in Gloucestershire, there are an incredible 28 windows of medieval glass that have survived the centuries and continue to astonish the visitor.

As the sun catches this array of windows, the colours take on a new, vibrant life. We see scenes in the life of our Lord and our Lady, Old Testament prophets, New Testament apostles and the communion of saints. The eye moves round and we reach the west window portraying Christ in majesty and the day of judgement. This great work has been attributed to the royal glazier, Barnard Flower, who was influenced by the late medieval illuminated prayer books. The windows are a living witness to his skill and faith.



George Herbert has a poem that calls us to shine out like the church windows. It is easy, he says, to be 'brittle crazy glass', but in God's good grace we can become like a window where colours and light, belief and life can combine and mingle to radiate out into the world.

The top 10 Bible stories: no. 9: Daniel in the Lions' Den

This month's Must Know Story is Daniel in the lion's den (Daniel 6). The leaders in Babylon, under King Darius, wanted to get rid of him. However, Daniel was a powerful person in the kingdom, because he was committed to God. How did Daniel respond to the opposition?

He chose Character over Comfort Although his opponents tried to find fault with Daniel (4), they were unable to do so, because he was 'trustworthy, neither corrupt nor negligent'. Are there things in our own lives that fail to please God and spoil our witness? Let's bring

them to God and ask him to help us overcome them.

He chose Discipline over Distraction A law was passed that declared anyone praying to a god, apart from King Darius, would be thrown in the lion's den. As soon as Daniel heard this, he went to his room to pray (10). He consistently maintained a discipline of prayer three times a day. Like Daniel, do we maintain such a daily discipline of prayer and reading the Bible, especially in the difficult times?

He chose Love over Life When Daniel was found praying to God

by his opponents (11), he was reported to the king, who threw him into the lion's den. However, Daniel chose love for God over seeking his own comfort and security. He trusted God, who shut the mouths of the lions! As a result, King Darius issued a proclamation that everyone in the whole kingdom should worship the God of Daniel. Because of the choices he made, Daniel prospered (28). In what ways do we see our choices for God resulting in blessing?

As the song challenges us, 'Dare to be a Daniel! Dare to stand alone! Dare to have a purpose firm! Dare to make it known!'

Hymns and Readings

May 1st Easter 6

Readings Acts 16: 9-15
Psalm 67
Revelation 21: 10 & 22- 22:5
John 14: 23-29
Hymns 346 City of God
366 God of mercy God of grace
353 Dear Lord and father
415 O for a thousand tongues

Sidesperson: Elizabeth Oyedemi
Readers: Joe McKenzie, Denise Sealy
Intercessions: Bill Saunders

May 5th Ascension Day

Readings Acts 1: 1-11
Psalm 47
Ephesians 1: 15-end
Luke 24: 44-end
Hymns 130 Hail the day that sees him rise
128 Eternal Monarch King most high
134 The head that once was crowned
with thorns
332 All hail the power of Jesu's

Sidesperson: Bill Saunders
Readers: Tim Florey, Ruth Godwin
Intercessions: Nicky Pittam

May 8th Easter 7

Readings Acts 16: 16-34
Psalm 97
Revelation 22: 12-14, 16-17, & 20-end
John 17: 20-end
Hymns 349 Come let us join our cheerful songs
499 Thy kingdom come O God
388 At the name of Jesus
352 Crown him with many crowns

Sidesperson: Monica Sarpong
Readers: Rob Nesbitt, Carol Kenning
Intercessions: Lucy Boyd

May 15th Pentecost

Readings Acts 2: 1-21
Psalm 104
Romans 8: 14-17
John 14: 8-17
Hymns 139 Come thou Holy Spirit come
143 Spirit of mercy truth and love
137 Come down O love divine
140 Holy Spirit come confirm us

Sidesperson: Nick Bethune
Readers: Stephen Nicoll, Ray Evans
Intercessions: Carol Kenning

May 22nd Trinity Sunday

Readings: Proverbs 8: 1-4 & 22-31
Psalm: 8
Romans 5: 1-5
John 16: 12-15
Hymns 146 Holy Holy Holy
Three in one and one in three
373 How shall I sing that majesty
466 Thou whose almighty word Sides-

person: Irada Fracassi
Readers: Nicky Pittam, Lucy Boyd
Intercessions: Bill Saunders.

May 29th Trinity 1

Readings 1Kings 8: 22-23 & 41-43
Psalm 96
Galatians 1: 1-12
Luke 7: 1-10
Hymns 52 O worship the Lord in the beauty of
holiness
213 Eternal gifts of Christ the King
148 The God of Abraham praise
349 Let all the world

Sidesperson: Mark Williams Readers: Rosie Price
Timmins, Nick Bethune
Intercessions: Ian MacGregor

more students should be encouraged to study theology. Why not? In a battle of ideas, knowledge is the most powerful of weapons." The Wisdom of God which we see in Jesus Christ is an even more powerful weapon of peace.

We are in the second decade of a century of great promise and great peril. We shall play our part in London resilience in the event of a crisis but more significantly in our day to

day work as ambassadors for Jesus Christ we are making our contribution to engendering hope and building the city that is to come, the City of God which is founded not on blood taken but as we remember this Holy Week on blood given. May God bless you as you open the door to His future in your work and worship this Easter.

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For your prayers

PRAYER CALENDAR FOR MONTH OF MAY 2016

1st Lissenden Gardens
8th Mortimer terrace
15th Spencer Rise
22nd Twisden Road
29th Wesleyan Place

SAINTS & HOLY DAYS

1st Easter 6
2nd St Philip & St James
3rd Rogation Day
4th Saints and Martyrs of the
Reformation

5th Ascension Day

8th Easter 7

14th St Matthias

15th Pentecost

19th St Dunstan

20th Alcuin of York

21st St Helena

22nd Trinity Sunday

25th The Venerable Bede

26th Corpus Christi

27th St Augustine of Canterbury

28th St Lanfranc

29th Trinity 1