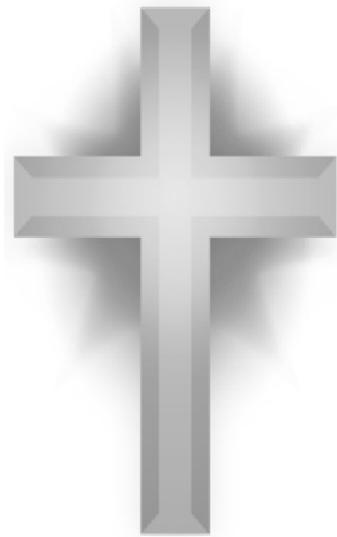
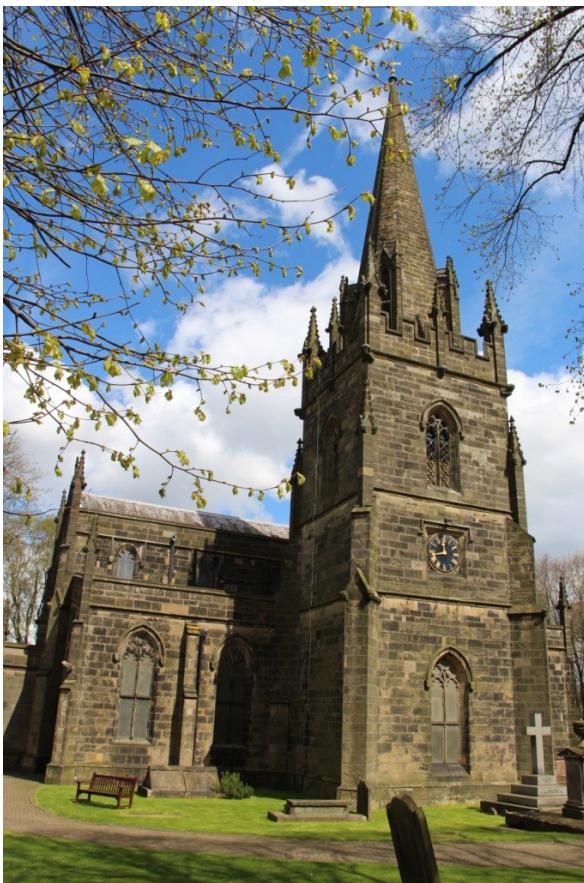


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50p

April 2021

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Team Vicar	Rev Catherine Mitchell	01902 677897
Licensed Lay Minster	Canon Jan Humphries	01902 661275
Ordinand and ALM	Claire Cox	07812 010108
Parish Safeguarding Officer	Barbara Baker	01902 882847
Pastoral Care	Tracey Bate	01902 880727
	Jackie Hewlett	01902 295164
Worship Leader	Sarah Parker	01902 885570
Youth Leader and Youth Group	Suzanne Bradley	01902 880055
Singing Angels	Laura Robinson	01902 678572
	Claire Cox	07812 010108
PCC Secretary	Kath Apperley	01902 663253
PCC Treasurer	Sheila Moss	01902 893570
Parish Office	Gail Griffiths	01902 540289
Web Editor	Martin Jones	01902 884461

St Peters

Parish Warden	David Moss	01902 893570
Parish Warden	Edward Grist	01902 682786
Treasurer	Sheila Moss	01902 893570
Children's Advocate	Suzanne Bradley	01902 880055
DCC Secretary	John Powell	
Uniformed Organisations	Please Contact David Moss	01902 893570

St Andrew's

Warden	Canon Jan Humphries	01902 661275
Children's Advocate	Carol Haynes	
Treasurer	Alan Turner	01902 670938
DCC Secretary	Rosemary Reed	01902 679007
Little Angels Baby & Toddler Group	Canon Jan Humphries	01902 661275
Singing Angels	Claire Cox	07812 010108

All Saints Who's Who

Vestry Clerk	Chris Williams	01902 672880
Parish Wardens	Keith Tomlinson	01902 673366
Treasurer	John Anderson	01902 677666
DCC Secretary	John Anderson	01902 677666
Caretaker	Pam Pugh	07860 256535
Junior Church	Barbara Price	01902 676591
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Youth Leader	Laura Robinson	01902 678572
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Mothers' Union	Liz Williams	01902 672880
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Noah's Ark		
Parent & Toddler Group	Linda Edwards	01902 672556

Funerals

4 th March	Norma Suzanne Bosly -	Gornal Wood
4 th March	Alice Maud Worton –	All Saints
10 th March	Joan Smith –	All Saints
12 th March	Jack Hall –	Gornal Wood
12 th March	Gwendoline Mary Millinson –	Gornal Wood
16 th March	Rita Brothwood –	Gornal Wood
17 th March	Dennis Arthur Fellows –	Gornal Wood
19 th March	Edna May Rubery –	Gornal Wood

THE BEACON

If you are interested in having the magazine delivered to your home on a regular basis please contact:

Karen Evans: 01902 678056

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admin@allsaintssedgley.co.uk

by

Friday 23rd April

and needs to be in Arial typeface, size 18.

Do not send files in pdf format

WEBSITE: www.gornalandsedgley.org.uk

To Magazine Deliverers

Could you please get email addresses for all the people that you deliver to and let either Gail Griffiths or Karen Evans know .

St Peter's District Church magazine

St Peter's also publishes a magazine which is more particular to Upper Gornal. If you would like to receive that magazine (which is not available electronically), in the first instance please contact a St Peter's Church warden details on page 2 of this magazine.

There will be no Vestry Hour at All Saints' to deal with wedding and baptism enquiries. We are having to re-arrange those weddings and baptisms disrupted by the current situation so, regrettfully, cannot consider any enquiries for baptisms until further notice,..

If you wish to enquire about a wedding for 2021 or 2022, please contact

Chris Williams chriswilliams550@btinternet.com.

Looking forward with hope

from Guy Hewlett

Christ is Risen! He is risen indeed, halleluiah!

We are continuing to go through the most extraordinary times but yet many are beginning to look forward with a greater hope now that the vaccine is rolling out.

We have marked the first anniversary of the first lockdown on the 23rd of March. Our churches in the Gornal and Sedgley team opened again for public worship on Easter day the 4th of April. For many this has been a wait that has felt far too long and for others it feels like a change which is far too soon. But we are moving forward.

However, our country is going through a huge national crisis in the economy and in education. Our National Health Service is exhausted, our carers too. We have a housing crisis; many have lost their livelihoods and many fear losing their livelihoods. Huge numbers of people have been bereaved in the most tragic of circumstances.

Most of us have had quite enough of this pandemic, thank you very much!! The pandemic has removed the paper over the cracks. There is huge stress and strain. Yes, we have had enough, thank you very much! We yearn to find rest for our souls.

What is the answer for us, for the church? One response could be that we try and work even harder. But that is not the best answer. Our work is to draw closer to Christ. It starts with God and our love for each other. We need to do what we are able to do to the best we can and leave the rest to God.

In Matthew's Gospel, chapter 11, Jesus says:

²⁸ 'Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.'

The burdens of the world can feel overwhelming. But Jesus's yoke is easy, and his burden is light. On that first Easter day when Jesus rose from the dead, he conquered death once and for all, and opened the gates of heaven. He has gone ahead of us to prepare a place for us. One day we will see him face to face.

For now, because of all that God has done through Jesus, we can live in hope and faith for a better future. This truth can transform our present. Let's try our best to be close to Jesus, and let our greater hope be in him. Let's enjoy the gifts of love in our lives, the beauty of the creation; lets continue to give thanks and pray for all who care for us and all who are in need, and let's look forward with faith in God.

Have a safe, happy and blessed Eastertide.

Christ is Risen! He is risen indeed, halleluiah!

We are reading more books

More than 200 million print books were sold in the UK last year, according to an estimate from the official book sales monitor Nielsen BookScan.

It was the first time since 2012 that the volume of physical books sold has exceeded 200million, and it was the biggest volume rise in the books market since 2007, says The Bookseller magazine

The coming Judgement Day

As the Nicene Creed puts it, “He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and His kingdom will have no end.” This phrase echoes numerous passages in the Bible. Here’s one: “I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books.” We get one go at this.

In the British legal system, there is an unusual provision for the Court itself to appoint a Counsel to represent a defendant who doesn’t have one and is facing serious charges.

Something like that is implied in some of the biblical descriptions of Christ’s intervention on behalf of humanity: Jesus Himself is described as our Advocate: “But if anybody does sin, we have an advocate with the Father – Jesus Christ, the Righteous One.”

The late Lord Hailsham, a distinguished lawyer who became Lord Chancellor, was asked how he would face God when he died. “I will throw myself on the mercy of the Court,” he said.

On Good Friday, the most sacred day of the year, when God’s justice and mercy are intertwined, I take heart for myself and the whole human race by meditating on this text: “There is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself as a ransom for all people”. [I Timothy 2]

On Easter Day when church bells ring out to celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from death, we do not forget the immense cost of God’s perseverance with us, for Christ’s body continues to bear the scars of Crucifixion. Nor is this the end of the matter.

Was the trial of Jesus legal?

We have high expectations of the legal system. In criminal cases we want criminals punished and innocent people protected. I have been involved in many court hearings and all clients want a just result. Some disagree with the decisions, but few actually question the basic fairness of the legal system.

As a lawyer, I have thought about the legal trial Jesus faced. I find the biblical accounts of what happened on Good Friday challenging to read, not because the gospels differ a lot, because they are remarkably consistent; not only because the subject matter is harrowing. They are difficult because the subject matter is complicated.

The legal system was very different to ours. For a start, Jesus was in the centre of three different legal jurisdictions: the Jewish legal system with its council, the law of the occupying Romans and also that of King Herod, who ruled Galilee, where Jesus came from. There was not one trial, but several. One writer has counted six. There were at least two hearings before the Temple council, two procedures with Pontius Pilate and a hearing of sort with King Herod. These were interspersed with beatings and abuse.

Jesus faced two separate sets of legal accusations: one for blasphemy before the religious council and one of rebellion before Pilate. The Romans would not have been interested in the Jewish religion, but sedition meant trouble.

Very few of the participants come out of the story well. Many of them could have stopped at the different states, but they did not. The whole procedure was a setup, the illegal murder of an innocent man. So, what was illegal about it? Here are some points:

There was an unholy and unfair rush to accuse, convict and kill Jesus before Passover.

The judges had conspired to arrest and charge Jesus, the procedure was muddled, and they tried to fit the charge to suit the evidence. The judges were prejudiced and determined to kill Jesus. It is not the judge's role to find witnesses, but to be impartial.

It was illegal to try capital cases at night. By doing so the Sanhedrin broke the law. When a person's life was at stake, the trial could only be held during the day and they should have delayed judgment until the next day. It was illegal to try someone on the day before the Sabbath or before some holy day.

Jesus was forced to incriminate Himself, which was not allowed and not acceptable evidence. Jesus had no-one to support Him or given time to defend Himself.

The trial should not have taken place in anyone's home.

The whole thing was a travesty of justice. Jesus was illegally murdered. This is a very brief introduction to a complex subject. There are many websites which analyse this, written by much more learned people than me. Two books stand out which are readable authoritative and available:

Grieve, V, (1990), The Trial of Jesus, STL Bromley
F F Bruce, (1985) The Real Jesus Hodder & Stoughton, London

If you are in doubt about your legal position at any time, you need advice from a lawyer. If you are interested in knowing more about Jesus and His life, you could speak to a Christian friend or contact your church

Reflected Faith: with all your soul, strength and mind

This month I'm thinking about what we are all 'doing' in times of 'waiting'. It's very easy to just sit quietly and let the time pass by or just fill it in. Not exactly wasting time, but not using it for any useful purpose either.

But as Christians we live in expectation all the time, don't we? We live in the hope and promise of Christ's return – even though we don't know the 'when' or the 'where'.

Of course, there's waiting and there's waiting. I won't say I'm the most patient person I know! If the internet goes down or something mechanical takes a few seconds too long to process, you can often hear me chuntering. But there are other times when the waiting itself is precious. I'm thinking this month of when we receive the bread and wine at the distribution of Holy Communion.

Perhaps you have avoided church since the original lockdown in March, or been going but not receiving communion, or indeed you have been participating with an online service with your own equivalents at home. Whichever it is for you, cast your mind back to when you were last in that position – or indeed look forward to when we are all able to gather together again and we 'queue' to approach the altar.

Actually, we don't 'queue'. We 'process' to the altar. We join the procession – a line of like-minded people with a similar intention to receive Christ. A time of physical movement and spiritual anticipation for holding those elements of Christ Himself: God being placed into our hands. How amazing is that

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The good news about your forgetfulness

You know the scenario – you go into the lounge, and then wonder what you wanted. Or you need to make a phone call but can't find the phone. You go to the cash point and forget your pin number. Or your car keys are lost in the kitchen, but even when you find them and go shopping, you forget stuff on the list.

If at times you find yourself living in an annoying brain-fog, the good news is that it is not because you are ill or getting old. To varying extents, everyone does it.

A recent study at the University of Edinburgh has found that forgetfulness is as common in people in their 20s as it is in people in their 50s. Although some of the people in the study were worried about getting dementia, a neuropsychiatrist at the university reassured them:

“People think that if you are starting to forget things – something like misplacing your keys – that is something to worry about. But it is normal.”

Good reasons for forgetting things range from the fact that too much was happening in your life at the time, you were stressed about something, not paying attention to what you were doing, or just too busy thinking about something else entirely

Divine Intervention?

A little boy was playing outside with his mother's broom in the garden. That night his mother realised her broom was still missing and asked her son to go out and bring it in.

When the little boy confessed he was afraid of the dark, his mother tried to comfort him: ‘The Lord is out there too, don’t be afraid.’ Hesitantly, the little boy opened the back door and peered out. He called softly: ‘Lord, please will you pass me the broom?’

Mothers' Union

I want to thank all who have supported our two appeals in last month's magazine.

Make a Mothers' Day

We had £100 in donations which has been 'match funded' by Worcester Diocese Mothers' Union.

Mary Sumner House has sent a big 'thank you' to its members who, overall, have raised the amazing sum of £71,302 for the appeal.

Needs at the Refuge

MU members and members of the congregation have been very generous providing hand and bath towels and tea towels which I took to the Refuge before Easter. They were thrilled with the collection and sent their thanks to you all.

Branch Meeting

We were due to have our first branch meeting on Tuesday 13th April but due to the present situation this is not possible. Realistically we are looking now at meeting for the first time on Tuesday 6th July. The thought is that members can bring their own 'Cream Tea' and we can enjoy each other's company in safety. HOPEFULLY!

The Hope of Spring

As I write this we have just had two lovely Spring days. The sun has shone and it has been good to feel its warmth on our backs while out walking. The gardens are waking up and we have cut (Chris actually!) our lawn for the first time and experienced that smell of newly-mown grass again. The snowdrops have faded to be replaced by a glorious display of golden daffodils and delicate white, mauve and pink hepaticas. The red and white currant bushes are in flower and the forsythia is just beginning to burst forth.



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IF I CAN'T DO THE JOB, I KNOW A VAN MAN WHO CAN!

While out for a walk last week, in a wooded area nearby, we could see the clumps of green leaves covering the ground, heralding the arrival of the bluebells in May. This brought back memories of, as a child, gathering a handful to take home for Mum – not now, rightly so, allowed.

Passing a small pool reminded Chris of how, as lads, he and his friends would go searching for those jelly-like globules with embryonic black dots - frogspawn, ending up with lots of tiny frogs in their gardens! I was reminded of the school Nature Table as we passed some catkins, affectionately referred to as lambs' tails. We were encouraged to bring in items for the table after being out for a family walk at the weekend and would go laden with our items on Monday morning. During these uncertain times when our moods swing from optimism to despondency and back again we only have to look around us to see the signs of God's work....and hold tight to HOPE.

As a footnote for those who may wonder what has happened to our wren. He disappeared for a few weeks, possibly still with relatives at the Wren's Nest, but is now back gathering moss from a hanging basket to build his nest. I apologise if he is a she!

Wishing you all a Blessed and Peaceful Easter and a Hopeful Spring.

Liz

True story

My curate friend had to preach his first-ever Easter sermon, and was very nervous about it. However, he prepared hard, and when Easter day came, he strode into the pulpit and thundered through his sermon, only to crash at the closing line.

He pounded the pulpit and shouted: "Yes...it is all true! Jesus rose...and then He died again! Hallelujah!"

In praise of the afternoon nap

A short nap in the afternoon improves your memory and keeps your brain more agile.

People who nap tend to speak more fluently, have greater mental agility, and remember things better than those who do not break up their day with sleep.

Even a five-minute nap can offer your brain a chance to down-time and replenish itself, so that it is ‘good to go’ again.

If you want longer than five minutes, try to stop at 40 minutes, before you enter the deepest stage of sleep. If you do carry on, sleep for two hours, which is a full sleep-cycle. The study was published in the British Medical Journal.

Average age of churchgoers

The average age of a pre-Covid churchgoer in 2020 was 50, whereas the average of a person living in England as a whole was 41. So, churchgoers are almost 10 years above the average in age. It doesn’t vary hugely by gender – in 2020 male churchgoers were 48 on average and female 51. In Scotland in 2020 folk were slightly older – the average male churchgoer was 53 and women were 55. These are against a population average of 42, so Scottish churchgoers have a larger gap. We don’t have the same information about Welsh churchgoers or those in N Ireland, though their average population ages in 2020 were, respectively, 42 and 40 (making the overall UK rate 41).

The graph shows that Scottish churchgoers have consistently been older than English churchgoers over the last 40 years. Almost certainly this is partly because England has seen huge numbers of immigrants, asylum seekers, workers, students coming to the country since the 1980s, a number of whom come from Christian countries and presumably would join a local church.

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MAGAZINE ARTICLES

* Is there an article you would like to write about and put in our monthly magazine???????

* If you have the magazine delivered or are on our newsgroup we would love to hear from you.

* Anything from recipes, walks you have done, programmes you have watched, new hobbies you have taken up.

* From next month we will be running a book review page, please email me : admin@allsaintssedgley.co.uk or if you do not have use of a computer please post it to me at:

* Parish Office
* Ladies Walk
* Sedgley
* DY3 3UA

* Look forward to hearing from you.

* **Gail**

Red light

A woman was found guilty in traffic court and when asked for her occupation she said she was a schoolteacher. The judge rose from the bench.

'Madam, I have waited years for a schoolteacher to appear before this court.' He then smiled with delight. 'Now sit down at that table and write "I will not run a red light" one hundred times.'



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Romans 1:20

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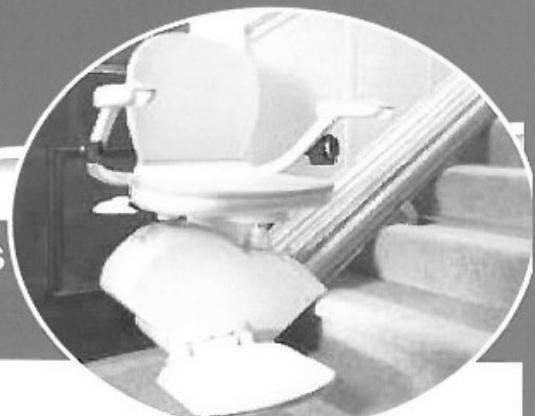
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Thought of the day

A cook once said ‘it is bad meat which will not take salt’

Salt which can sting if it gets into a wound, will also enhance the flavour of a cut of meat.

Of course, some meals are beyond the power of condiments to save.

Likewise, we might suggest it is a poor sort of person who won’t take criticism. Critical words (not maliciously spoken) can sting our pride when we first hear them. But they might also contain truth and wisdom we can benefit from and be enhanced by.

May we never be so tough we refuse to accept a little salt (or well-meant criticism) in our lives.

A friend of mine said to me only this week, as long as at the end of each day we can look ourselves in the mirror and know we have done our best then that really is good enough.

Stay Safe and Happy Easter Everyone

Gail

Claire Cox.

We have been blessed to support Claire Cox in her journey as an Ordinand as she trains for ordination. Claire is coming to the end of her first year of three years study at Queens Theological College in Birmingham. As part of her training, she is to go on various placements in different locations.

We will lose Claire and her family from our parish from Easter day until September as she goes on a parish placement to St Peter’s Pedmore & St Andrew’s Wollescote.

Please continue to pray for Claire and her family.

Give your house an M.O.T.

It's Spring, and time to venture outside – to take a really good look at your house. How has it survived the winter? A spokesman for the National Home Improvement Council says: "For most of us, our homes are our biggest single investment. We need to look after them well." There are a number of things to look for:

Roof space: Venture up into your loft and check for signs of leaks through tiles or roof linings. Check timbers are sound, dry and free from woodworm.

Walls: Are your airbricks clear? Are there any cracks in your brickwork? Check for crumbling bricks, often caused by frost and loose rendering.

Chimneys and flues: If you don't fancy climbing up onto your roof, why not beg or borrow a pair of binoculars off someone and check for broken pots, missing pointing and loose chimney seals. Make sure your flues are clear from debris.

Gutters and pipes: Make sure that all your gutters and pipes are clear of twigs and leaves. You'll be surprised where last year's fallen leaves have ended up! Also, check for leaks in downpipes, as these can cause damp patches.

Floors: Many of us now have timber floors. Check for undue springiness – which can be a sign of rotting or weakened joints. Inspect your skirting boards for rot and woodworm.

Doors and windows: Check for rot or corrosion, missing putty and flaking paint. Make sure they open and close properly and are not warped. Check your locks for wear.

Paths: Finally, wander around the paths outside your house. Check for loose paving or broken slabs – a potential hazard. If you find problems, lay new paving – soon!

Most of these checks are things that you can carry out yourself. But if in doubt about your roof, your heating or your electricity, it is far better to call in an expert.

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Opportunities for learning and exploring

Stepping up: three workshops

If you're thinking of helping out in your church, if you've already put your name forward, if you've had your arm twisted, or even been doing one or more of these for a while, then these workshops could be for you. All three workshops are led by Doug Chaplin, Discipleship and Lay Training Officer.

Stepping up: Reading the Bible

When and Where: Monday 10 May, 7.30pm on Zoom

It sounds straightforward, but reading in public is different from reading on our own. Never mind our anxieties about being heard, getting our pronunciations right, or coping with the microphone, when we read the Bible in church, we are also trying to help other people understand the reading. To do that, we need to understand it ourselves, and let's be honest, the books of the Bible are not always the easiest pieces of writing to understand.

This workshop aims to explore the practice of public reading of scripture. There will be opportunities to explore what people find helpful, but beyond that the workshop will look at the importance of public reading, offers an orientation to understanding the Bible, and gives some practical hints and tips for those who read it.

Book via Eventbrite: <https://bit.ly/3q643ec>

Stepping up: Leading the intercessions

When and Where: Monday 24 May, 7.30pm on Zoom

Praying is an important part of the Christian life. Leading other people in prayer is seen as one of the key privileges of the newly confirmed disciple. But how do we go from reading prayers that others have written, to putting things in our own words. What are the right things to pray for, and what are the better ways to phrase our requests and thanksgivings?

Shaping the Church of the Future

This workshop builds on the experience that we all have as people who have been helped or hindered to pray by the ways others lead prayer. It will draw out some of the principles of leading clear intercessions, and offer a path by which people can grow in their experience.

Book via Eventbrite: <https://bit.ly/2OOrqsu>

Stepping up: Leading Worship

When and Where: Monday 14 June, 7.30pm on Zoom

Sometimes a congregation or churchwarden can be dropped in it at the last minute owing to a minister's sickness. Then either someone else leads, or the service gets cancelled. This workshop is for those who want to be prepared to lead worship when a rota falls apart on a Saturday night or Sunday morning.

The C of E's rule book spells it out for when there's no authorized person available: "some other suitable lay person, may, at the invitation of the minister of the parish or, where the cure is vacant or the minister is incapacitated, at the invitation of the churchwardens say or sing Morning and Evening Prayer." Canon B11.1

This workshop is not a replacement for an ALM or LLM calling. Instead, it offers a toolkit, so that if you do get caught by a last-minute cancellation or sickness, you'll have something to fall back on. It will be particularly useful for churchwardens, and those who know they may be first in line to get so invited.

Book via Eventbrite: <https://bit.ly/384k4Lz>

Other Workshops

Everyday Faith in Work

Where: Online

When: Either **May 19 2021, 7.30– 9.00pm**

or June 10 2021, 7.30 – 9.00pm

How do your faith and your work connect with each other? A lot of what is said and written about faith in the workplace is about relationships: treating people well, finding opportunities to share appropriately what we believe, bearing witness through our character and behaviour to the difference God makes in our lives.

But what about the nature of the work itself? If we are employees, what are the aims and purposes of the companies we work for? Is the business about making money or making useful products, and where does the balance lie? How does my workplace serve the economy, or build up the common good? How does its structure promote just and equitable treatment of employee and customer alike? How much of a pay differential should there be between CEO and the lowest paid?

Whether I am employed or self-employed, where do I, on a personal level, feel most fulfilled in my work and why? Do I see my work as a vocation to which God has called me? How does my faith help when things go wrong at work? These are more difficult questions, having no cut and dried answers, no obvious connections with what the bible has to say, nor any straightforward moral prescriptions.

This workshop is for people to come together to explore these and other questions, and how they might relate to their own work and workplace. There is no fixed agenda, other than an agreement to meet together and explore these kinds of questions, in the hope such a conversation will be supportive and stimulating. If enough people are interested, there may be opportunity to plan a continuing conversation. The workshop is convened by Doug Chaplin, Discipleship and Lay Training Officer for the diocese and Dick Johnson, lead chaplain for Faith at Work in Worcestershire and lead chaplain to the Police and Fire Services.

Book via Eventbrite:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/everyday-faith-in-work-tickets-144389941201>

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Gail.

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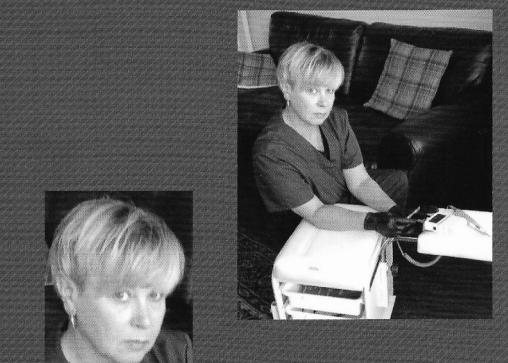
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What is the purpose of the Church? Is it a social institution or there to serve the Kingdom of God? Are we a gathering of people there to share the Good News or a group of individuals on our own journey of exploration? Are each of these ideas always compatible with the other?

Our Church is a very human organisation, which God also shapes, nurtures and sustains in its life. When we are thinking about the calling of the Church, we don't always have the same knowledge as our trained ministers, and it can be hard to make connections between big ideas and down-to-earth practicalities.

These sessions, under the title "Shaping the Church of the Future", offer a chance to explore "a theology of church for beginners". How does our understanding relate to the practicalities of mission and ministry in our parish, deanery and diocesan contexts? Each session looks at two ideas that offer different and complementary ways of understanding our Church and how these shape our life together.

Week 1 (17 May): Social Institution and Servant of the Kingdom
balancing the needs of the church with the needs of the world

Week 2 (7 June): Herald of Good News and Pilgrim People
having a message and being on a journey of exploration

Week 3 (21 June): School of Discipleship and Field Hospital
learning holiness and obedience, acknowledging sin and woundedness

All three sessions will take place 7.30 – 9.00pm, on Zoom, and will be led by John Fitzmaurice, Director of Vocations and Ordinands, and Doug Chaplin, Discipleship and Lay Training Officer.

Book here on Eventbrite for all three sessions:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/shaping-the-church-for-the-future-tickets-146570639729>

Chatting with Revd. Guy Hewlett

What is your guilty pleasure?

Biscuits, Cake and Crisps (not at the same time!).

What simple thing sparks joy in you?

Our Grandchildren.

What advice would you hand down?

You can only do your best and your best is different on different days.

What do you do to relax?

Walking.

What household item could you not do without?

The kettle.

If you could meet a famous person (alive or dead) who would it be and why?

Jesus, just because He is Jesus ...

What is your helpful daily mantra?

Trust God, keep going; all will be well.

Expensive boat

A vicar was planning an Easter pilgrimage to the Holy Land, and was aghast when she found it would cost her £50 an hour to rent a boat on the Sea of Galilee. She protested to the travel agent that the cost was ridiculous. ‘That might be true,’ replied the travel agent, ‘but you have to take into account that the Sea of Galilee is water on which our Lord himself walked.’

‘Well, at £50 an hour for a boat,’ she replied, ‘I am not surprised!’

Sarah Powell

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The Rectory

St James the Least of All

My dear Nephew Darren

So, your vicar has introduced staff appraisal for all the officers who work for your church, including yourself. It seems a very dangerous innovation; as far as I am concerned, ministry is only successful when parishioners have no idea what the clergy get up to.



I imagine that he will look at the number of services you take in a year. Funerals can only be increased if you resort to murder, which is likely to be frowned on – although I have been sorely tempted during endless church council meetings. Perhaps if you take a flask of water wherever you go and if you find a baby unattended, you could resort to a spontaneous baptism. That would get your numbers up, even if returning mothers may marvel at the highly localised and brief shower that seemed to have taken place over the pram.

Visiting targets are easily increased. Compile a list of when parishioners will be out and call on those days; a card through their letterbox will prove to your vicar that you were there. Should they happen to be in, mention that you are collecting for the organ fund and they will immediately excuse themselves for an important appointment. You are then free to move on to clock another visit.

Your vicar is also bound to want to see the congregation increasing. This is not sustainable, and you should put a stop to such ambitions at once. It is easily done. All you have to do is to approach your friends at the local football club and bribe them with your homemade beer to come along to church several Sunday mornings in a row. If you give them enough beer BEFORE the service, they will be likely to make just enough muted disruption as to leave your vicar a bit rattled, and thinking that perhaps after all, ‘less’ is ‘more’ when it comes to the congregation.

But whatever you do, make sure that you never preach a better sermon than he does. You don’t want anyone thanking you at the door for your ‘so interesting sermon’ in front of him, when they have been sleeping through his sermons for years. If you offend the vicar this way, he will take swift revenge, and ask you to organise the parish summer fete.

Your loving uncle,

Eustace

Chocolate – food of the gods!

The botanical name for the cocoa bean is *Theobroma* – which means ‘food of the gods.’ Millions of us obviously agree – half a million tons of it are consumed in Britain each year alone.

Chocolate makes us feel better. The chemicals it contains trigger the release of endorphins similar to those we naturally produce when we fall in love.

But nutritionists warn against using chocolate as a pick-me-up, especially in the evening. Chocolate eaten before bedtime can cause blood glucose levels to plummet during the night, which will disrupt your sleep. Chocolate eaten in quantity every day can lead to mood and energy swings, weight gain and poor immunity. If you have mad cravings for it, you could have a problem with blood sugar, or a deficiency in magnesium, copper, zinc or iron.

But occasional consumption of cocoa can provide medical benefits. Chocolate containing 60 per cent or more cocoa solids is rich in essential trace elements and nutrients such as iron, calcium and potassium, and many vitamins. Cocoa is also the highest natural source of magnesium.

Good as all this may be – most of us enjoy chocolate simply because of its high sugar and caffeine content. Chocolate simply gives you an instant sugar hit, providing a sudden burst in energy, unfortunately followed by a slump and the desire for another sugar-fix.

Lot’s wife

A father was reading Bible stories to his young son. ‘The man named Lot was warned to take his wife and flee out of the city, but his wife looked back and was turned into a pillar of salt.’

His son looked up, concerned. ‘What happened to the flea?’



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SERVICES VIA ZOOM

THURSDAY 1ST APRIL 6.30PM COMMUNION

FRIDAY 2ND APRIL 2.30PM STATIONS OF THE CROSS

FRIDAY 2ND APRIL 6.30PM COMPLINE

SATURDAY 3RD APRIL 8PM HOLY SATURDAY VIGIL

Please book in for the following services with Gail, remember services may need to be postponed.

Sunday 4th April

8am – All Saints – Communion

9.20am – St Andrews – Communion

10.30am – St Peters – Communion

10.30am – All Saints – Communion

Sunday 11th April

9.30am – St Andrews – Worship Together

10.30am – St Peters – Communion

10.30am – All Saints – Communion

Wednesday 14th April

10am – St Peters – Communion

Sunday 18th April

9.30am – St Andrews – Worship Together

10.30am – St Peters – Communion

10.30am – All Saints – Communion

Sunday 25th April

9.30am – St Andrews – Worship Together

10.30am – St Peters – Communion

10.30am – All Saints – Communion