

THE



LINK

*Joint Parish Magazine
April/May 2020*

Suggested donation 70p

COVID-19

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

During the
CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK
the

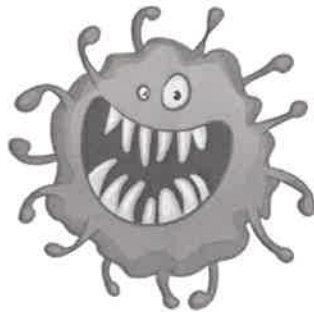
CHRIST CHURCH CRASH TEAM

is available for shopping or collecting medication if anyone is in self
isolation.

Please contact **Liz Cole (782886)** or
Jane Milsom (417776) with your requests.

For other information about church event cancellations etc. please see the
Church website.

www.ccwsm.org.uk/coronavirus-information/



COVID-19

Dear church family

I am writing this article on Thursday 19th March. It was only some 48 hours ago when I realised all my diary appointments – including preparing for Sunday church – suddenly dissolved and life was to become very different Having said that, life for many of you may have changed even more dramatically, if you need to be self-isolating in particular.



Many of my own plans for the next few weeks in church have had to be put to one side. That stripping back of my projects has made me realise how important the *basics* of our faith are. Something Archbishop Justin has talked about is the centrality of “love thy neighbour as thyself”. In times like these, the simple care we can offer one another can make all the difference – phone calls, errands run, time for a chat or practical help. This is extended to those down the street, family, church family and our community.

Thank you to those who are helping on our “crash team”, to those who have been phoning around our church family and all the other kindnesses that have been offered. Those now effectively confined to their homes have been calling and praying for others – thank you. I have found that really inspiring.

In these days to come, we will need each other’s support. Technology is a wonderful new development – do look at our website or Facebook page. Do let us have your e mail if you’d like the new “Connected” weekly sheet to be emailed to you.

Never recently has there been a more appropriate time to show our communities and each other kindness and practical care – a real opportunity to be Living God’s Love.

I am praying for you all

God bless

GARDENING AT EMMANUEL

The daffodils started to bloom in time for the succession of storms and heavy winds we have experienced this year so are looking rather sad. Unfortunately, the last Friday in February was so wet we were unable to garden. By the time the magazine comes out we shall have met again and hopefully dealt with some of the leaves and twigs that have been blown around. Do try and join us if you can, we could do with a few more “gardeners”, and hope to do some planting as the weather improves. We meet between 10am and midday on

Friday – 29th May

Friday – 26th June

*But we will follow the government guidelines

Carl Evans



THE CHILDREN’S SOCIETY ANNUAL BOX OPENING

3 MAY 2020

Our annual box opening should be on Sunday 3 May 2020 but due to the current situation where our church services are suspended, I think we will have to wait till later in the year to collect in the boxes.

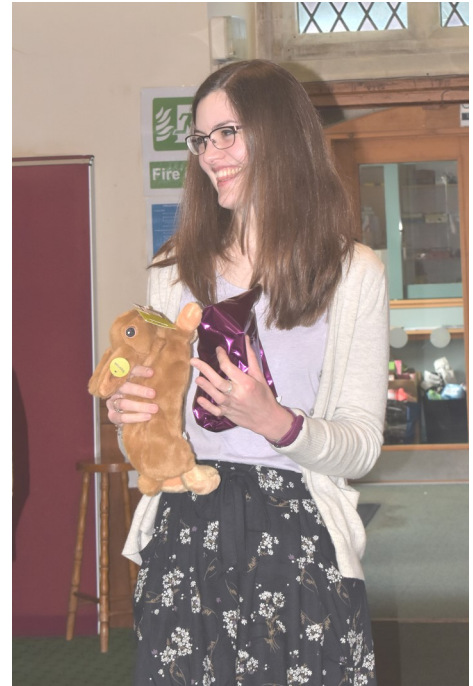
Do keep collecting money in the box you have as this will help our total when we do open the boxes. I will let you all know when we can collect the boxes.

Carl Evans – Hon Secretary



Many of you came to our farewell of Bekah on her final Sunday. It was a wonderful day with a huge amount to give thanks for in terms of her ministry with us. Saying goodbye has given me the chance to reflect on what she brought to us. As well as being a great colleague to work with, she has also taught me many things about the Christian life and faith . . .

One of those, which I think I mentioned on her last Sunday, was to do with how she prayed. It would be quite normal for the two of us to talk about a particular area and then to finish by praying about it together. Normally, after a brief pause, I would be the first to start saying a prayer out loud and then quite often there will be a silence. Now I've learnt with Bekah that, when we are praying, silences don't mean that nothing is happening! In fact, quite the opposite – she's usually stilling herself and taking time to hear God's voice and then praying out of that. In my experience, prayers are often considerably richer when we take that little bit of time. Of course, we've all got different personalities and will pray in different ways – but I think her way of going about things has reminded me to take that little bit of time before rushing into my prayer.



As we approach Easter, we remember Christ's death and resurrection reminding us that this God is alive and active. And when we take a moment before we pray, we remind ourselves to whom we pray – that we are speaking to a God who is there with us and can hear us. Not some far-off historical God but one who by his spirit comes very close to us and indeed helps us with the very act of prayer *"We do not know what we ought to pray for but the spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans"* (Romans 8:26).

It's a wonderful privilege to pray to God like that – and maybe something we could do with savouring and stilling ourselves so that we can all the better come in to his presence – and pray.

Wishing you all a very happy Easter

Tom

CARE FOR THE EARTH, for creation and for each other so that we are worthy stewards of God's creation for the good of all.

How can we therefore reduce the human impact on the planet? Let us not forget the words of Psalm 24: 1 "The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it ..."

The average UK household wastes £470-worth of food per year. Roughly 250,000 tonnes of edible food are unnecessarily wasted, which is equivalent to 650 million meals.

So how can we act on this? Well we can rescue it!

If you have a fridge of wilted vegetables or rock-hard bread in the cupboard, try these tips to revive them: -

Think carrots, celery, peppers, tomatoes, cucumber, potatoes, broccoli, lettuce & asparagus. Finely trim the ends off and dunk the ends into a bowl of ice water to help rehydrate them.



Heat soft biscuits, cereal or crisps in a low oven temperature for a few mins to crisp up. If you have some stale bread, pastries or wraps sprinkle with a little water first before heating.

Grate hard cheese before it goes mouldy and freeze to add to a cheese sauce later. Overripe bananas can also be frozen and used to make banana bread or blitz into instant ice cream.

The average UK fridge is set to 7°C. Reducing this temperature to 5°C or 6°C will increase the life of most foods by up to two to three days.

Please join me in this prayer: -

God of all creation, we pray that 'all things come from you and of your own do we give to you', forgive us for our greed, help us to reduce our demands on the earth, to not waste precious resources and to share generously with our neighbours. Amen

Hayden Taylor

MY JOURNEY OF FAITH: JOHN NEASEL - As told to Pat Allchorne

How long have you been a Christian?

I grew up in a church so I always had a kind of belief, but I think I was about 12 years old when it became more concrete.

Did you grow up in a Christian home?

Dad went to church till I was in my teens, but he wasn't a Christian until right at the end of his life. Mum came back to church after Dad died. It was easier for her with me being a Christian, as she was always sympathetic to my church activities. I grew up in a community village with two churches, so my parents knew a lot of church people.

How did you meet your wife?

I got involved in trying to set up a Youth for Christ centre in St Albans. Caroline was on the team, she was a Christian, we became friends - and the rest is history!

What led you to Emmanuel church?

I came to Bristol in 1987, six months before Caroline and I married, then moved to Weston in 2002. First we went to St Paul's, then Clarence Park Baptist, then I looked around lots of others once Caroline was unable to attend church. I found Emmanuel and was impressed with the warmth of the welcome.

What led to your wife being unable to attend church?

Caroline has ME, which she has had since before we married. She suffers from depression and so do I, and whilst it can be difficult as a Christian to understand why God doesn't always heal when we ask Him, our faith gives us strength.

What else helps you to cope?

Faith must come first – God is always teaching us new ways of coping which help us to grow in that faith. I pray throughout the day, whether out walking or at work; that constant leaning on the Lord keeps the communication lines open.

I work four days a week, which adds normality to life. Friends are a great support; I know they pray for us regularly. I also practice mindfulness, which is calming. Medication, following a diagnosis for my depression when I was in my 40s, has been very helpful. At about the same time I started making sure I got to bed at a sensible time which was also important! Time for relaxation too - I love my music.

REPAIR CAFÉ LAUNCH REVIEW

The 29th February saw the launch of our new community project at Christ Church; Repair Café, and what a great morning we had!

The repair side was buzzing with lots of community volunteers coming in to offer their skills and advice and a good number of people bringing “stuff” in for mending, including the Mayor (right) who had his favourite jacket repaired.



The café had some great coffee and cakes available, and did a roaring trade as well! There was a really friendly atmosphere about the whole event.

Not only have we started the Repair Café initiative as another small step in being environmentally aware, and to play our part in trying to protect God’s creation, but also as a community project where people from within the church and those outside can come together, do something useful, and make friends. With prayer support maybe this could lead to more people being attracted to the Gospel message, who knows?



For future Cafes please look out for dates when we will be able to hold the next Repair Cafe. So, why not come along, if you have something to repair then bring it with you, or just come for a drink and chat.

Chris Cole



CHRIST CHURCH HOLIDAY CLUB

Wednesday 22th July – Sun 26th July

Calling all who have or would like to help this year. We need all types of skills – working with children, crafts, tech, or helping out.

Do sign up, or speak to Tom if you think you would like to help.

WHO AM I?

I began my life in Clapham, London. However, I wasn't to stay there as my father had reason to keep our family moving from place to place for the next twenty-one years. It's no exaggeration to say that we must have moved at least once every year during this time! We eventually came to Weston-super-Mare because Dad had bought a hotel in the town.

As the war had just ended there was nowhere in Weston I could go to school, as they were full of refugees, and so at the age of nine, I was sent to a Roman Catholic boarding school in Ilfracombe where I spent five years. I loved going to church and enjoyed religious knowledge, which was always the first lesson of the day, every day!

When I returned to Weston, I went late to the grammar school where I excelled at swimming and became the school champion.

I was confirmed at St Pauls Church, which at that time had been badly bombed during the war. Very little of St Pauls could be used as most of the church had had its roof destroyed.

At the age of twenty-two I got married in a high Anglican Church which I attended for 18 years. I went on to have three sons. When my husband and I were separated, I ran a guest house.

Later I met my present husband, and the most important thing about our coming together was that we started to attend Christ Church. In under a year we had both accepted Jesus as our Lord and Saviour. This was because Jesus and the true gospel was, and is preached there, in Christ Church.

I had loved going to church before, but somehow, I didn't really learn much about the Christian Faith. I couldn't blame the Convent, or the High Church, it was probably because I hadn't been ready to receive the Truth.

I have lived in ten different homes since first being married, so all in all, I've lived in thirty-one different places.

I must finish by saying I find moving house much more fun than going on holiday! It probably stems from the many moves I had as a child.



Who am I?



THE HEALING MINISTRY OF TODDLER GROUPS

I came across this article on Facebook, shared in one of the Toddler Group Leaders Networks. It's from the Church Times. I shared it with the Christ Church Baby and Toddler Group Team because I wanted them to see, firstly how important their work is and secondly to be encouraged that so much of what was suggested in the article was already happening in our church! It was suggested that I share it with you.... Our church Baby and Toddler Group is so much more than chair moving and toys!

PICTURE the scene: a busy, crowded room, toys strewn across the floor, babies huddled together on play mats, toddlers running around. A group of mothers are having a cup of tea in the corner, snatching bits of conversation while ensuring that Charlie doesn't bop Emily on the head again with the plastic rolling pin.

Church toddler groups provide a backbone of support for parents who are desperate to escape their four walls and another episode of Paw Patrol. Churches are one of the main providers of such groups in the UK, especially with the closures of government-run Sure Start centres.

To the average mother, the toddler group provides an opportunity to meet friends and an additional way to socialise their children. But for some - especially those silently suffering from mental illness, or on low incomes - the groups can provide a lifeline.

In recent years, mental illness among parents of young children in the UK has grown significantly. The Government estimates that one in five parents suffers from some form of mental illness during pregnancy or after having a baby, and suicide is now a leading cause of death within that first year. Cases of pre- or post-natal anxiety, pre- or post-natal depression, obsessive compulsive disorder, and post-traumatic stress disorder related to birth are increasing.

In addition to mental illness, food poverty is another, often hidden, struggle among parents of young children. The Trussell Trust estimates that one in five parents skips meals to feed his or her children. This means that, in an average

toddler group of 20 families, between four and eight parents may struggle with either their mental health or their food provision.

IN SMALL but significant ways, church toddler groups are well-placed to be a first line of defence in the fight against parental mental illness and food poverty.

The article goes on to suggest ways in which toddler groups can help in signposting parents and carers to services such as debt-management courses (CAP – for example) and to our local Foodbank. We have a range of leaflets and information available at our group.

Another suggestion was to try to keep the entrance cost down so as not to exclude anyone – this is something we have always tried to do, knowing that right on our doorstep, families are living in poverty.

And finally, one of the most important parts of the toddler group ministry was highlighted in the article...

Volunteers are invaluable, especially if they do not have their own children to look after. They can help to serve the tea and coffee, hold a crying baby while parents have a drink, play with a child for five minutes to give the parents a break, or be on hand to listen. The ministry of putting a hot cup of tea into a mother's hands should not be undervalued: it may be the only time that week when she feels cared about. Who knows the challenges that she may face at home and which she has not disclosed to anyone else?

...Volunteers should check in with people if they have been to a meeting with their GP, for instance, after a previously tearful week. They should be aware that some conversations within the group might be painful: for example, when a mother had a traumatic or difficult birth, or who struggled to bond with her baby.

Compassionate, reflective listening is an incredibly healing ministry.

I am so thankful to be part of the Toddler Group Ministry of this church. It's an amazing, joyful place to be each Wednesday morning and has helped many families in many ways, not least in showing them the love that comes from our amazing God!

Nicky Boardman



THE STORY BEHIND THE SONG

‘NEARER, MY GOD, TO THEE’

Not a great deal is known about its origin, but it is best known for its relationship with one of the most famous maritime disasters of the following century because it is the song that was played by Wallace Hartley, band leader on the Titanic as the ship went down.

"Nearer, My God, To Thee" was also sung by the crew of the SS Valencia when the ship went down off the coast of Vancouver in January 1906.

"Nearer, My God, To Thee" started life as a poem by Sarah Flower Adams, who died in 1848. It is said to have been inspired by or based loosely on the Biblical reference to Jacob's dream, as was the Rush track "Jacob's Ladder" a century-and-a-half later.

The poet wrote the words at her home at Loughton, Essex, and initially it was set to music by her sister, Eliza Flower, but it has also been set to the tunes of "Horbury" (1861), "Propior Deo", "St. Edmund" (by Arthur Sullivan in 1872) and most often by the 1856 "Bethany", composed by Lowell Mason.

Jacob's dream is presented in Genesis 28:11-19. Let's take a look at how the hymn's lyrics match up with the story.

By this time, Jacob is on the run from his twin brother, Esau, who vowed to kill Jacob for taking his birth right and stealing his blessing from their dying father.

*Though like the wanderer, the sun gone down,
Darkness be over me, my rest a stone;
Yet in my dreams I'd be nearer, my God, to Thee.
As he settles down to rest on his journey, he dreams of a ladder coming
down from heaven with angels ascending and descending upon it.
There let the way appear, steps unto Heav'n;
All that Thou sendest me, in mercy giv'n;
Angels to beckon me nearer, my God, to Thee.*

God appears and promises that the land around him will belong to Jacob and his descendants. "Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done that of which I have spoken to you," He says. When Jacob awakens, he names the land Bethel, meaning House of God.

*Then, with my waking thoughts bright with Thy praise,
Out of my stony griefs Bethel I'll raise.
So, by my woes to be nearer, my God, to Thee.*

While there are many interpretations of Jacob's Ladder, many Christian scholars believe the ladder represents Jesus Christ as the connection between man and God, citing John 1:51: "And he (Jesus) said to him, 'Truly, truly I say to you, you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man.'"

*There in my Father's home, safe and at rest,
There in my Saviour's love, perfectly blest;
Age after age to be nearer, my God, to Thee.*

* * * *



**Father Flynn wouldn't tolerate sword
play with the Palm crosses**

MISSION SPOTLIGHT

Mike and Helen Morrissey

One of the privileges of being in an administrative role is that it gives Mike the chance to support multiple Bible translation projects in a variety of ways. Most recently, he has been instrumental in making contractual and financial arrangements in order for a new translation programme to be able to begin in the Gusilay language. The Gusilay are an unreached people group of about 20,000 from the south of Senegal and until now, not a single verse of scripture has been available to them in their language.



As with any project, it was important that the project leader, David, made the best choice possible of translators. In order to do so a workshop was held at the start of January where a group of nearly a dozen local people went through the process of translating passages from Genesis with a particular focus on Genesis 28:10-22. These were men and women who

speak Gusilay as their first language but also have a good ability to read and write in French. The hope was that those with a particular aptitude to the task of translation would make themselves known across the nine days of the workshop and so by the end David would have two or three people who could be hired to begin the work, which is where Mike became involved.

There are several steps which any translation team has to go through as they translate a passage, and David was keen that these be replicated as best as possible during the workshop. First, they had to make sure that each person present had properly understood the passage, so copies of the passage were printed out in different French Bible translations, and commentaries were also referred to where necessary. Next, they had to close their Bibles and work in pairs to retell the story orally in Gusilay, to check that they had properly grasped the story and to ensure that their translation sounded as natural as possible.

Once the group had listened to each pair's rendition, they typed up the translation that everyone thought was best into a specially designed computer programme. They then worked together as a group with David to ensure that this version was as close as possible to the original Hebrew, and that they had used the best means of explaining things in Gusilay as well.

At this point, it was important to bring in some people who had not participated in the workshop and were not familiar with the Bible story so that the passage could be tested to see if 'real' people could understand it. Once this had happened and the necessary changes made, other members of the community were asked to translate the Gusilay text back into French so that a trained translation consultant could review the team's work. This is a vital step in all translation processes, which involves the consultant raising questions, giving expert advice and suggesting changes.

Although for the purposes of this workshop the translation process stopped here, with the translation consultant giving some helpful feedback and encouragement to everyone, if the team were really preparing a passage for translation then some more final checks and testing would be required before a translation could be approved for publication or recording.

By the end of the workshop, David was able to identify three people who were all willing and able to commit to this work for at least the next couple of years until the book of Genesis – with various supporting audio and visual materials – is completed.

Our prayer is now that the impact of this work will be both broad and deep in bringing speakers of this language to a knowledge of the living God.

The Morrissey's





~ BOOK REVIEW ~



ONE FOR ALL: THE FOUNDATIONS: THE IMPORTANCE OF UNITY IN A FRACTURED WORLD MALCOLM DUNCAN

*“How very good and pleasant it is
when kindred live together in unity...”*

*... For there the Lord ordained His blessing,
life for evermore.”*

Psalm 133

Written by one of the leadership team for Spring Harvest, this book is based on one of Jesus' last prayers. In the mental turmoil of knowing that the cross was imminent, still He turned to His Father to plead for us that we may be as one in the way He and His Father are one. He asks that the love with which God the Father loves God the Son may be in us also.

If it was that important to Jesus in his last hours, it can be of no less importance to us. Duncan starts his first chapter with an old African proverb: *“Where there is no enemy within, the enemies outside cannot hurt you.”*

The chapters cover many aspects, but start with the point that we are family. Sensitive subjects such as sexuality are covered, but overall he states that, while we may disagree with other Christians on some issues, the disunity should be over the issues and not with the Christians themselves, as it is not up to us to decide whether or not others are indeed Christians if they differ from our interpretation of the Bible; we are still to love them in the Lord, for *“love seeks the well-being of the other person, not just the defence of our own position.”*

The quotation from A. W. Tozer sums up succinctly how we are to strive for a God-given unity:

“Has it ever occurred to you that one hundred pianos all tuned to the same fork are automatically tuned to each other? They are of one accord by being tuned, not to each other, but to another standard to which each one must individually bow. So, one hundred worshippers met together, each one looking away to Christ, are in heart nearer to each other than they could possibly be, were they to become ‘unity’ conscious and turn

their eyes away from God to strive for closer fellowship. Social religion is perfected when private religion is purified. The body becomes stronger as its members become healthier. The whole church of God gains when the members that compose it begin to seek a better and a higher life."

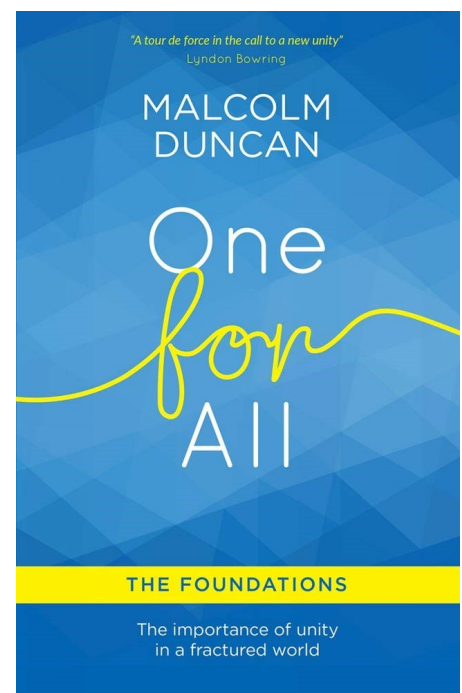
Jesus told His disciples that they should love one another as He has loved them, so that people will know that they are His disciples by the love they show. How can we witness to a fractured world if we constantly dispute with each other? Our disunity is off-putting to those who struggle to understand the concept of a loving God. John tells us in his first letter that if we do not love, we cannot know God, who is love. Paul's letters contain many urgings for the new Christians to love, bear with one another, be humble and gentle - *"making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace,"* so disunity was prevalent from the very beginning of Christianity. He isn't asking for them to seek unity, but to maintain it. He assumes that, as brothers and sisters in Christ, we already have unity because we are of one body.

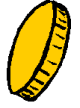
Duncan makes the point that denominational distinctiveness is not wrong, as it provides variety and colour; but it becomes wrong when it takes precedence over our allegiance to Jesus as Lord. We do not have to compromise our core convictions in order to work with other Christians. Duncan is convinced that if the church in the UK was to "get out of the way and let the gift of unity that God has given us flow through us", it would be unstoppable. *"What would it look and feel like to be part of a church where all of these traits (the fruits of the Spirit listed in Galatians 5) were visible in all of the people?"*

A. W. Tozer is purported to have said that if the Holy Spirit was withdrawn from the church today, 95% of what we do would go on and nobody would know the difference; but if He had been withdrawn from the New Testament church, 95% of what they did would stop, and everybody would know the difference

"As You, Father, are in Me and I am in You, may they also be in us ... I in them and You in Me, that they may be completely one."

Pat Allchorne





EMMANUEL TREASURER'S REPORT

Our income for January and February 2020 is shown below:

ENVELOPES & STANDING ORDERS	£1,400.00
CASH	£818.93
TOTAL	£2,218.93

We received a donation of £100 from Rowena Yarde in memory of her mother Mabel Blackburn who passed away in November 2016 with thanks expressed to Meg and Dina who visited her in the Residential Home; and a further £30 from Donna Pilgrim's friends.

Expenditure included the compliance test to our lightning conductor £48.00; repair to the damaged hall pipe £80.00; electrical repair to a faulty church socket and replacing the faulty emergency light in the Disabled Toilet £166.00; all the boilers were serviced last year but the invoice was slow in getting to me and cost £390.42; periodic inspection of our Fire Alarm system and new bulkhead light £234.84 and a cover for our new refreshment counter in church which cost £15.60.

Car Park Fund – We are still awaiting the final couple of invoices covering the work on our car park and at present the account has just under £6,000.00.

Carl Evans – Treasurer

REGISTER:

We give thanks for the life of:

Claire Winser	Aged 49
Michael Ford	Aged 73
Beryl Hallett	Aged 83
Peter Norman	Aged 93
Eileen Wirth	Aged 84
Edna Cole	Aged 82
Pamela Appleyard	Aged 82



Youth and Family Ministry Prayer update

March 2020

FYCM Team

In light of our current situation **please pray** for all our leaders in the church, for those overseeing the ministry for youngest to the oldest, that we can continue to support one another and learn together in new ways and continue to grow in faith.

Please pray that as an FYCM team, alongside the leadership of the church, we can continue to connect and provide for our children, young people and parents/carers.

Please pray for Hayley as, amongst all of this, she has to complete her degree and think about moving on. Pray for focus and clarity of thought and a peace that all of this is in our amazing God's hands.



Young people (Energize, Vineyard and Meeting Point groups)

Please pray for our young people and young adults whose exams and tests have now been cancelled. **Pray for clarity** for all (mainstream, private and home educated) students over college and university placements and how their required qualifications will be achieved. **Pray** that they know that God holds them close, loves them, and sees them in all of this chaos. **Please pray** for the questions and concerns our young people have in light of all that is happening right now.

Youth Church

As we move into a phase of being the gathered church in a new way, **pray for** our children and young people and their parents as they do 'faith at home'. A shorter 'service' will be put on our website for people to watch at home. We will continue to produce material based on the Bible passage for the younger members of our church family and we will get this to families to use each week. **Please pray** for the logistics of this and that families will see the importance of helping each other to grow as part of God's family.

Toddlers



Our group, like so many others came to an abrupt end and we have had to think of different ways in which we can support each other. **Please pray** as Nicky attempts a weekly Facebook Live session of a story, songs, birthdays and craft ideas to try to keep our group in touch with each other.

JaM Club

Having had a great term with the children, JaM Club came to an abrupt end due to coronavirus. We wanted to continue to provide spiritual input for these wonderful children so each child has been given a JaM Club at Home pack with 5 Bible stories, puzzles, colouring picture and a craft to go with each story, as well as a special Easter leaflet. We've also given them links to some of our favourite songs online so they can sing along at home. This will take the children up to Easter if they do one story a week and we plan to produce another pack for what would have been the next school term. The first packs were delivered via Christ Church School but now that the school has closed future packs will be hand-delivered or posted. **Please pray** that although we are not able to meet together we'll be able to encourage the children and they will continue to travel on their journey with Jesus.

Christ Church Finance report covering Jan – Feb

I would like to start this report expressing my thanks to Helen Brain for her excellent handover to me as I took on the role of Treasurer once again in January. Preparation started in November with research and planning which has resulted in a new software package being used, designed especially for churches in our circumstances and the introduction of the ability to take payments and donations contactlessly as well as through the website.

Back in 2019, Helen, Tom and I met to set the budget for 2020 and after discussions and a few tweaks this was approved by the PCC in January. We expect Christ Church to need to spend £153,000 from its General Fund this year. The actual spend for 2019 was £149,500. This works out at about £3,000 per week. The General Fund covers all costs except large items of maintenance and funding the Family Ministry Worker, Nicky Boardman, and the Trainee Youth Worker, Hayley Bridges. The largest item of expenditure is our Diocesan Parish Share * which is now £89,704 per year, 58% of our budget. This is an increase of about £5,000 on last year and a significant factor in our requirement to increase our income in 2020. In order to set a break-even budget, one planned to just cover our costs, the PCC agreed that we would need to see a 6.6% increase in collections in 2020 compared to 2019. We realise that these are challenging times for individuals as well as the church and Tom has written more about this in his letter issued on 9 March. At the end of February, income from collections (the offering plate, bank standing orders and envelopes) was £16,800 against a budget figure of £17,600, 95% of our target. Overall General Fund income for the period was £26,900 and expenditure was £25,000, 3% under budget. If you would like to see the 2020 budget summary, you can find it at ccwsm.org.uk/budget.



The Family Ministry Worker and the Trainee Youth Worker are funded from separate restricted funds. These funds have come from grants, one off donations and regular monthly donations from some church members. As things stand, the fund for the Family Ministry Worker will empty in June this year. This is an area of great concern and new funds will be needed to continue the work. The church is in the process of applying for new grants but the work really needs to be underwritten by the church itself; another area covered in Tom's letter. Once Hayley's time with us comes to an end this summer, we expect there to be about £600 left in the fund that meets her costs.

The final accounts for 2019 have been produced and are now waiting to be signed off by our independent examiner and the PCC. You can find them at **ccwsm.org.uk/2019accounts** and I would encourage you to look through them at your leisure. If you have any questions, please pass them to me as soon as possible and I'll do my best to answer them. I can be contacted by email at **finance@ccwsm.org.uk**.

Back to the new technology, donations can now be made by credit / debit card in church. This isn't aimed mainly at regular church members, although they are welcome to use it, but more at visitors both on Sundays and in the week. There is an additional card reader on the information desk which can now accept card payments for church events. Donations and payments can also be made on the website at **ccwsm.org.uk/give** and **ccwsm.org.uk/pay** respectively. If you are organising an event which involves payment, please speak to me so I can set online payment facilities up for your event.



We would encourage all church members who give to Christ Church and are tax payers to give through bank standing orders or the envelope scheme. This enables us to increase the value of donations by a 25%. In 2019, the Gift Aid scheme produced an extra £20,800 for the General Fund. Please speak to me or Dave Wilkes, the Gift Aid coordinator for further details.

It would be great if you could also spare a minute or two to sign up to a website that will donate a small percentage of your online shopping bill to Christ Church. It'll cost you nothing and it's easy to set up. It's administered by Give As You Live. You can find details and watch an explanatory video at **ccwsm.org.uk/gay1**.



Give as you Live®

Donate

For many years Christ Church has always given 10% of its collection income to mission. This continues and in 2020 the mission budget is £12,689. You can see how it is planned to be allocated at ccwsm.org.uk/mission.

While we are facing pressures in several areas, we also have so much to be thankful for in material terms, let alone spiritually. We have a building dating from 1855 which is in very good condition, having had major work carried out when needed; we have a Spire Centre that allows for a variety of activities to take place; we have some funds put aside for some future maintenance issues e.g. church heating system. Let's continue to prayerfully and practically take responsibility for good stewardship for what we are blessed with and the opportunities that are presented to us.

David White: Christ Church PCC Treasurer

** All CoE churches will pay their Diocesan Parish Share into the dioceses' Common Fund which covers such things as clergy stipends, housing, pension contributions and training for the clergy. Through Parish Share, each church is given the opportunity of contributing towards the financial cost of ministry in the entire diocese. Larger and wealthier parishes are asked to make greater contributions so that stipendiary ministry can be provided to less wealthy areas that otherwise might not have been able to afford it.*



WESTON STREET PASTORS

I'm sure you remember the devastating fires in Australia earlier this year. I remember thinking about all those people who had lost everything they owned materially, as well as friends/family that are gone forever. We know that fires are not unusual in those areas of the world, and within a couple of months we saw the miraculous signs of new growth - little shoots of new life on trees and plants. What an amazing world we live in, what an awesome creator God. We can rely on His plan for a future.



Weston Street Pastors have had a number of retirements in the last year, as well as some walkers who have been unwell for some months and unable to walk. Once again, we are in need of more volunteers and it's easy to become despondent and end up worrying about whether God wants us to continue. We trust in God to lead us. We pray personally and corporately for guidance and try not to feel discouraged about needs and how we can replenish our pool of volunteers. However, if we look to our faithful heavenly Father, pray and trust in Him, time and again we see new green shoots.

We have a new co-ordinator who is taking over from me. Cath is our newest Street Pastor, and she felt God calling her to offer her time and perfect skills for the job. She was obedient to God's call and we are delighted. Recently we have received three emails from people asking about how to become a Street Pastor. We are in no doubt that God wants Street Pastors to continue in Weston-super-Mare. We are so thankful for God's provision and look forward to recruiting new Pastors.

Praise the Lord!

Jane Milsom

Letter from the Right Reverend Ruth Worsley, Bishop of Taunton

Time to show our care for all As we reflect on the Easter story this month I'm reminded of the sense of 'touch'. It was Passover, a religious festival, and as Jesus was laid in the tomb, Sabbath was upon them. So the usual burial rites were not attended to by the women who were closest to Jesus. It would have been improper to touch the dead body. Hence their early arrival on that resurrection morning.



In the following days, in attempts to dispel disbelief, Jesus' followers had opportunity to not only talk with him, eat with him, but also touch him as he came among them. Thomas's doubt was dispelled as he was invited to place his hand in the wounds of Christ.'

As I write this we are wondering what Covid 19 might have in store for us in the UK. We hear now that Italy has taken drastic action in hoping to contain the virus. I don't know what further precautions we in the UK may have taken by the time you read this.

Currently we are all taking greater care with our personal hygiene in washing hands and ensuring we use and bin tissues. Today, along with the rest of the Church of England, we in Bath and Wells, have recommended that we only receive bread or wafers at Holy Communion and refrain from touching, through blessing, sharing the Peace or prayer through laying on of hands.

There will be various responses to the concerns raised by the Government and the media. Some may feel anxiety or fear about the nature of the virus whilst others may wonder if the emergency planning appears over-reactive. Our response as a Church must be that we do what we can to ensure we stay safe by taking all precautions recommended. And that we do all we can to reassure people who may feel vulnerable and worried by staying calm and showing compassion and care for all.

But how do we express such care? I've realised that touch plays quite an important part in showing we care for someone. When I was training as a nurse for a brief period many years ago, I recall being shown some research on touch. It was an eye-opener! Even the briefest of touches can cause people to feel better, cared for and happier.

But the presence of Coronavirus means that we are having to withdraw touch to prevent the possibility of infection. So how might we try to replace touch with other signals of our care and value? What might that look like?

As folk may find themselves ‘self-isolating’ due to potential symptoms of the virus we have the opportunity to find new ways to show our care. Phone calls and cards, food deliveries, creative use of social media and streaming of worship services may all be ways to stay in touch and help people to know they are not alone. Rather than finding ourselves paralysed by the situation let us discover how we can create new opportunities to strengthen our relationships and communities.

May our actions be the reassuring, life-affirming ‘touch’ of the risen Christ this Easter!

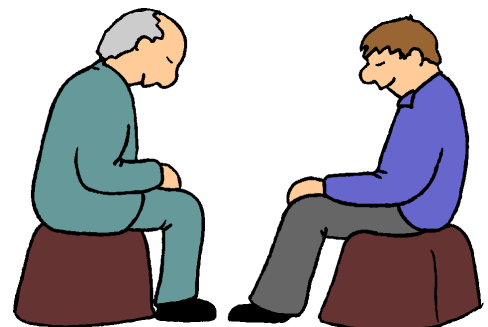
Easter blessings

The Right Revd Ruth Worsley
Bishop of Taunton

~ Prayer ~

Loving God,

We pray for all those who are suffering because of the coronavirus, may they know your healing power.



When we are afraid for ourselves and our loved ones, give us your strength and courage.

When we feel alone and isolated, reassure us with a sense of your presence.

Give wisdom to those in authority and may our community work together for the good of all.

We give thanks for those who care for others and ask you to bless them in all they do.

We ask this in the name of Jesus, healer and physician.

Amen

DIVINELY ABSURD

A cross as a gift?

Absurd!

This instrument of torture,
of death wrapped up
like it was Christmas.

A rough-hewn tree,
timber and nails
reduced by perverse alchemy
into a prettiness of silver
or gold!

A cruel place
where necks were hung,
live bodies pinned,
becoming a gift around
a neck, a pin to symbolise,
commemorate!

Absurd!

Or for recognition.

Of what?

A token of love?

What could make this instrument

Of dying,

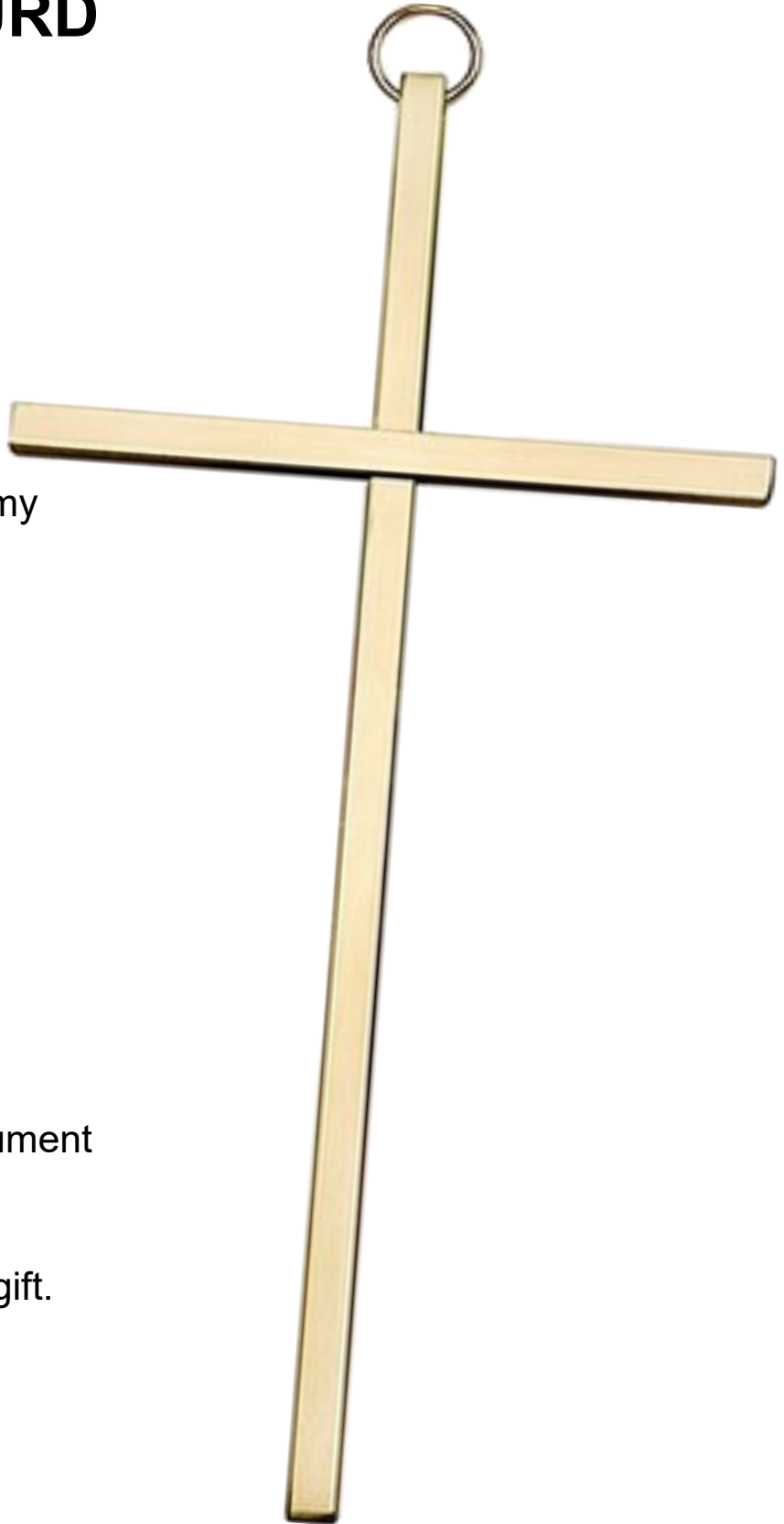
a gift of undying love?

Yet the empty cross was a gift.

The place of dying love.

Divinely absurd.

Brian Kellock



CHRIST CHURCH REGULAR WEEKLY EVENTS

Sunday Services times - 10.30 a.m. and 6.30 p.m.

MONDAY:	2.30pm	Ladies Together
	4.30pm	Meeting Point in Spire Centre (term time)
WEDNESDAY:	9.30am	Prayer Morning - in Vestry
	10.15am	Baby and Toddler group
	2.30pm	Men's Group
THURSDAY:	2.30pm	Craft and Chat
	3.30pm	JaM (Jesus and Me) Club
FRIDAY:	9.30am	Church cleaning
	6.00pm	Energize
PRE-SCHOOL:		Contact Sarah Quick - 419441
LIFE GROUPS:		See board in Church
YOUTH CHURCH:		All ages - Details from the Church Office

EMMANUEL REGULAR WEEKLY EVENTS

Sunday Service time - 10.30 a.m.

In the Church:

TUESDAY:	9.30am	Parish Prayers in Church
WEDNESDAY:	10.30am	1662 Holy Communion
2nd SUNDAY:	3.00pm	Deaf Church + tea.

In the Hall:

SUNDAY:	7.30pm	Winter Warmth
TUESDAY:	12.00pm	The Beacon have lunch and discussion time
2nd WEDNESDAY:	2.30pm	Mothers' Union
THURSDAY:	2.30pm	Welcome Group

New Dawn Counselling use the offices in the upstairs hall,
Mon-Fri & Sat. morning

* * * * *

The next Link magazine will be out on Sunday 31st May 2020

'Who am I' is Shirley Hunt

Christ Church and Emmanuel

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Church Wardens:
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Beverley Hall (626590)

Prayer Chain contacts:
Sandra Crocker (707442) Pam Waters (628586)

Emmanuel

Church Wardens:
Pat Blake (251316)
Donna Pilgrim (625793)

Reader: Meg Hill (413125).

Prayer Chain contacts:
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