

THE CLARION

The Magazine of The Parish of St Mary The Boltons

rooted in faith • open in thought • reaching out in service

February 2016



A Rule of Life

Some of you may have heard of the book *The Purpose Driven Life* by Rick Warren. Published in 2002, it has sold over 30 million copies and presents what Warren says is a 'blueprint for Christian Living'. It is divided into 40 short chapters, one to be read each day, and the chapters are divided into six major sections, with the following titles:

- What on Earth Am I Here For?
- Purpose 1: You Were Planned for God's Pleasure (Worship)
- Purpose 2: You Were Formed for God's Family (Fellowship)
- Purpose 3: You Were Created to Become Like Christ (Discipleship)
- Purpose 4: You Were Shaped for Serving God (Ministry)
- Purpose 5: You Were Made for a Mission (Mission)

You may also have heard of its companion volume *The Purpose Driven Church*, in which Warren makes the case, with examples and evidence, that the reason some churches do not flourish as much as they might is because they are weak in one or two of the areas above.

The Purpose Driven Life aims to make the same sort of point with the lives of individuals, and so, while it may take certain liberties with scripture and does not contain Rowan Williams-level theology, it does offer a useful assessment tool for our Christian lives.

This tool, among other things, including a spiritual director, may help in developing what is known as a 'Rule of Life'. This is not supposed to be an onerous burden, but a life-giving structure to bring freedom and direction to our spiritual lives, and Lent is a good time to consider making or reforming the patterns of our spiritual lives. As we approach the start of

Lent, therefore, I am using the headings from Warren's book to demonstrate the opportunities already available at St Mary's and beyond, to help us all to grow and flourish.

Worship

We have a 'Turn up and Sing' Choir that you are welcome to join, and you could ask to be included on their email list even if you are not sure how well you can sing, so you can practice the hymn tunes before a service. Worship is, of course, not simply about singing: you can contribute to worship in many ways, including reading, leading intercessions or arranging flowers, and by simply being expectant of, and open to, an encounter with God's presence.

Fellowship

I have heard of people using the '3-minute rule' in their churches: for the first three minutes after the end of the service to deliberately talk to someone they don't know, or don't know well. Do stay and get to know people over coffee, and our (nearly) monthly Parish Lunches are great fun and an excellent way to get to know others in the church. You might also want to join one of our small bible study groups, and do consider signing up for the Lent Course.

Discipleship

Discipleship is another word for Formation: the process by which we are changed to become more like Jesus. They say "You can tell a person by the company they keep": our companions change us, which is excellent news for our spiritual formation. We will be changed for the better if we just spend time with Jesus through worship, studying scripture and prayer. *Morning and Evening Prayer* is said at 8.30am and 5.30pm each day at St Marys from Mondays to Thursdays, and there is *Holy Communion* on Wednesdays at 12noon. Reading and reflecting on scripture, or, for example the Lent book, alone and with others is another way we can

grow. Being part of the planned giving scheme is also an important part of both our worship and discipleship.

Ministry

Much has been said about 'Belonging before Believing': the idea that some people come to church unsure about faith, and through serving have been drawn both more deeply into the fellowship of the church but also into fellowship with God. Learning to serve affects our worship, and there are many ways in which we can put our time and talents at the disposal of our local churches. Even if you cannot make it to St Mary's every week, you may still be able to help on the rotas; a good place to start is to become a sidesperson, or to join the reading or coffee rotas.

Mission

This Lent, those who were on last term's 'Exploring Christianity' course are going to be using a brand new resource called 'Faith Pictures'. This is a video-based course that teaches how to share our faith with others: you may wish to join the group, or simply, along with the Diocese of London's Ambassadors, to start praying for seven people you know that you might have an opportunity to share your faith with them. There are other ways to reach out to others, of course: there are opportunities to go to St Cuthbert's school to help the children with their reading, or help at the St Luke's foodbank, or you might consider volunteering at the Chelsea and Westminster Hospital. After Easter we will be visited by a Tom Newbold of Credit Champions who will speak about their work and also give us an opportunity to make a difference by joining a local Credit Union.

Reading about these five areas is challenging: there are always places in our spiritual lives where dust has begun to settle. It may be that it seems there is too much to tackle all at once, but I am certain that Jesus' yoke is easy and his

burden is light, even if I do not often wait to ask him how he might help! Before we embark on any life changes, let us ask for God's guidance to know what is the *one* thing we might do differently or next! *Sarah Archer*



Pancake Party, Shrove Tuesday 9 February at The Vicarage

Sarah will host a pancake party for all parishioners at 24

Fawcett Street. Children are particularly welcome! This will be at on Tuesday 9 February, 6.30pm – 8.00pm. If you would like to attend please put your name on the sign up sheet at the back of church or call the parish office.

The recipe for Pancakes is a tried and true Delia Smith formula and consists of:

110g plain flour

2 large eggs

200ml milk and 75ml water mixed

A drop of vegetable oil and a pinch of salt.

Our Lent Book

Simply Christian by Tom Wright

This well-written and engaging book sets out to provide for our day an account of the heart of the Christian faith for thoughtful people, akin to C. S. Lewis' *Mere Christianity*—a book which did great service for the second half of the 20th century. The weakness of Lewis' book today is that not-yet-believers generally lack knowledge of the basic Christian claims, and are generally ignorant of the Bible—and Lewis (rightly, in his time) took much of this important background for granted. Tom Wright seeks to set out the central points in a way that will be accessible to today's not-yet-believers, and along the way provides lots of help to those who have been believers for a shorter or longer time.

Wright's approach is to begin with four 'echoes of a voice', features of life which he suggests point beyond themselves: the quest for justice, the hunger for spirituality, the desire for

relationships, and the recognition of beauty. He sketches each succinctly and suggests why Christians see them as pointing to a greater reality than this universe alone.

He then turns to outline the central features of the Christian faith, to 'stare at the sun' by considering who God is and how God has made himself known and knowable. Successive readable chapters consider what Christians mean by 'God', the story of Israel, the ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus, and the Holy Spirit. A key tool set up within this section is a threefold analysis of how people see the universe in relation to God: the idea that everything is God (pantheism or panentheism); the idea that God is not involved with the universe beyond having set it going (deism); and the idea that the spheres of this universe and of God interlock and overlap (traditional theism). At several points later in the book Wright helpfully returns to these three models in order to clarify the distinctiveness of the Christian faith. Here, he uses this analysis to show that the way Christians see God is not how they are widely understood to see God, for most modern westerners go for one of the first two options and thus misunderstand the nature of Christian claims—a sharp and helpful insight. Throughout this part, as elsewhere in the book, Wright has a great gift for relevant stories and illustrations which grab the reader's attention and direct it towards the central point he wants to consider.

The third part of the book looks at the Christian life, considering worship, prayer, the Bible, what it means to become a Christian and to belong to the church, and hope for the future expressed in present living. Each of these chapters is insightful and comes at ideas familiar to established Christians from fresh angles—for example, his brief discussion of baptism is simply brilliant, tracking the theme of water through the Bible and using each point to

illuminate Christian baptism. The book closes with some brief suggestions for further reading.

Throughout the book Wright expresses deep and complex ideas with great clarity; he frequently summarises big ideas (sometimes drawn from his own scholarly work) in a sentence or a paragraph with evident care and precision of wording. Occasionally this means his writing is a little dense, but those occasions are fairly rare. He constantly stays with the mainstream of the Christian faith, not majoring on minors. This is a book that could confidently be given to friends or family who want to explore the Christian faith for themselves and who are prepared to think. It would also be of great value to Christians who want to gain or renew a grip on the heart of their faith. I commend it most warmly.

Steve Walton, Professor, Faculty of Divinity, University of Cambridge

Lent Course

Based on the first four chapters of Tom Wright's *Simply Christian*, our Lent course will explore four echoes of the voice of God in our world.

Session One: The Longing for Justice

Session Two: The Quest for Spirituality

Session Three: The Hunger for Relationships

Session Four: The Delight in Beauty

Each echo points to a realm beyond the material and, according to Wright, join the more direct revelation of God to become "the voice of Jesus, calling us to follow him into God's new world—the world in which the hints, signposts, and echoes of the present world turn into the reality of the next one."

Come and join us as we explore these echoes:

Sundays after Church: 14, 21, 28 February and 13 March

Wednesdays at 10.30am: 10, 17, 24 February and 9 March



Lent Jam Jar Appeal

Thank you everyone who has provided clean jam jars for our new Jam

Jar Appeal. The time has come to fill them with our Lent Offerings.

The idea is simple. Collect a labelled jam jar from church. Then, whatever you give up for Lent, instead of putting the money you save back into your pocket, wallet or purse, we are asking you to put it into your jam jar. What you give up doesn't matter. It can be small or large, cheap or expensive. Perhaps it will be bars of chocolate or some sweets, coffee shop coffees, magazines, ice cream or maybe even champagne. It is entirely up to you. At the end of the six weeks, bring your jam jar to church for us to add the contents to our Charitable Pot. We do not mind counting cash, but if you prefer to give a cheque that is all right too. Please make it payable to St Mary's PCC.

There will be a single collection plate at the back of church for visitors and anyone who is not taking part in the scheme. The Sunday School pioneered a jam jar scheme last year, which was very successful. We hope you will help us to make the adults' version equally good at raising funds for the charities we are supporting. This year these are Arts4Dementia, Sound Seekers, Toilet Twinning and St. Cuthbert's Day Centre.

Anthony Williams on behalf of the Charity Committee

Prayers on the move

A letter from the Bishop of London

Dear Beloved in Christ,

Whatever our church tradition, we know that authentic prayer – listening deeply and responding obediently – takes time. Our busy

city life will eat up all available hours and it is a good discipline to remind each other of the importance of prayer by having deliberate seasons of waiting upon God.

With this in mind, I am very happy to be a part of 'Prayers on the Move', a campaign during Lent by SPCK to encourage prayer as part of London's daily life.

There will be many ways for us to be involved in this endeavour. The adverts on the Tube will provide an opportunity for Christians to talk to their friends about prayer. Parishes may wish to organise a related outreach event, hold a prayer vigil, walk or flashmob near their local Tube stations or distribute prayer leaflets.

Prayers on the Move will launch on 9 February and the adverts will be in trains for the last two weeks of February. Resources to support churches in engaging with the campaign will be available from www.prayersonthemove.com.

With thanks for our partnership in the Gospel

The Rt Revd & Rt Hon Richard Chartres KCVO
DD FSA

An invitation to 'Come and Sing' at St Mary's

The Come and Sing Choir at St Mary's offers a refreshing alternative to a traditional Parish Choir for singers of all ages and abilities. If you like singing but are not able to commit to a weekly choir practice, you are very welcome to 'Come and Sing' at St Mary's on occasional Sunday mornings. The group's aim is both to lead and support congregational singing at our Sunday morning worship, and also to perform one or two simple items or choral music, numbers permitting.

There is no voice test; no-one is asked to sing solos or singled out in any way; neither is there an implication or expectation of commitment; if you come along one time, and decide it isn't for you, no-one will badger you to come again!

Given the casual nature of the group, there is of course no need for prior registration.

However, if you do let me know beforehand that you plan to come, details of the music (including links to YouTube etc.) will be sent out in advance so you have an opportunity to familiarise yourself with it. Please email me on boltonsmusic@gmail.com to express an interest and join the mailing list.

Dates for the next six months are:

Candlemas	31 January
Mothering Sunday	6 March
Palm Sunday	20 March
Easter 5	24 April
Pentecost	15 May
3 after Trinity	12 June
6 after Trinity	3 July

We rehearse for just 40 minutes before the Sunday service, 9.40-10.20, so it is very helpful to arrive promptly.

I look forward to seeing and hearing you soon.
John Ward, Director of Music

Women's World Day of Prayer

This year the interdenominational service of the Women's World Day of Prayer (WWDP) will be held at the Servite Church, Fulham Road, London SW10 on Friday 4 March at 11 a.m. Women's World Day of Prayer is an international ecumenical prayer movement that invites women from a different part of the world each year to prepare a service through which their hopes and fears for their country may be brought before the whole world in prayer.

For the 2016 service the Christian women of Cuba have prepared the text and music. On Friday, 4 March 2016 an estimated three million people in over 170 countries and islands will gather to observe the day of prayer. The service has been translated into over 60 languages and 1000 dialects. In the British Isles alone over 6,000 services will be held. The day begins as the sun rises over the island of Samoa and continues until it sets off the coast of American Samoa, some 35 hours later.

The theme this year 'Receive children, Receive me' reflects St Mark's Gospel, chapter 10 verses 13-16, which is the focus of the service and a reminder that everyone is a child of God and equally worthy of love and respect.

The Republic of Cuba is the largest Caribbean island at the entrance of the Gulf of Mexico. Cuba suffered a great deal due to the economic embargo imposed upon it in 1960, but the island has found strength within itself to move on and overcome many of its problems. Now Cuba has a health care system that is in many ways the envy of the world. Cuba has 83,698 doctors; one for every 133 people, which is the highest ratio in the world and there is one nurse for every 122 people.

The Kensington and Chelsea branch of the WWDP would like to welcome everyone to attend the service, which lasts approximately one hour and is followed by light refreshments. The mayor of Kensington and Chelsea and a representative of Cuba will be in attendance. We would be delighted if you could also join us.

Anne Swift (St Mary The Boltons WWDP representative)

One Day to explore why Later Life Matters With their long and proud history of serving older people, MHA (Methodist Homes for the Aged) recognises that loneliness and

isolation is an increasing challenge that affects many as they age and it is manifested both physically and emotionally.

With their roots in and commitment to social justice, MHA want to enable this support to reach the millions who are affected by loneliness every year. This conference will explore current and future ideas to combat this issue. The conference will be chaired by Dame Denise Platt DBE (one of MHA's patrons) and our confirmed key note speakers include Anna Dixon, Chief Executive of the Centre for Better Ageing, Alison Holt, BBC Social Affairs Correspondent and Dame Esther Rantzen DBE, television presenter and founder of The Silver Line.

For more information visit
www.mha.org.uk/oneday/.

Date: 29/02/2016 From: 1230-1745hrs

Location: Central Hall Westminster, Storey's Gate, London SW1H 9NH

Cost: £90

Contact: Rachel Walker 07528 184169

**Royal
Trinity
Hospice**

Light up a Life – Kensington

Royal Trinity Hospice held its annual Kensington Light up a Life carol service at St

Mary's on 3 December 2015. This is their report:

Around 200 guests from the local community came together in remembrance and celebration of their loved ones and to support their local hospice. The congregation lit candles, sung carols and enjoyed readings from a variety of special guests, including prize-winning author, Marion Coutts and acclaimed actor Sir Timothy Ackroyd.

Trinity's Light up a Life Appeal hopes to raise £50,000 to fund a specialist Trinity nurse for a year. We would like to thank everyone who donated to the collection on the night, which raised **£2,600** to support the vital work of Trinity's nurses.

Trinity would like to thank The Brownie Box, Maison Blanc and Gail's Bakery for their generous donations of mince pies, and Davy and Co. for the wine enjoyed by all after the service. A special thank you goes to Susan Metcalfe Residential for sponsoring the event and to the Bousfield School choir and London Concert Choir for their fantastic performances on the evening.

Trinity would like to thank everyone who attended or donated to this vital appeal. You can still donate on
<https://www.royaltrinityhospice.london/Appeal/light-up-a-life-2015>

Thank You!

At Christmas we collected £572 in cash and gave four turkeys to the Earls Court Community Project (ECCP). They used the kitchen at St Mary's and they fed around 160 people over 3 days. Thank you to all who helped support the outreach of the ECCP.
Margarete Geier

Brompton Cemetery's Good News



A multi-million pound cash injection from the National Lottery will transform one of the UK's most unique cemeteries into the best example of its kind.

The Royal Parks (TRP) has secured nearly £4.5million Parks for People funding from the BIG Lottery Fund and the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) to protect the future of the historic and nationally important Brompton Cemetery in the heart of London. As well as this grant, TRP will invest a further £1.2million in the project with an additional £500,000 coming from The Royal Parks Foundation, the charity for The Royal Parks.

The 39 acres of green space is one of the oldest designed Grade I cemeteries in the country and houses some unique and historic monuments including its picturesque chapel, which was designed in a similar style to the setting around St Peter's in Rome.

Among the 205,000 people buried there are notable figures from history including suffragette Emmeline Pankhurst, Queen Victoria's surgeon Sir Thomas Spencer Wells as well as thousands of former Chelsea Pensioners.

Now, thanks to this £6.2million project, the cemetery will undergo a major facelift which will help recreate the vision that Benjamin Baud originally designed in 1840.

The project aims to reflect the needs of a wide range of visitors while protecting the wildlife and retaining the unique character of the cemetery.

It will involve:

- turning the North Lodge into a visitor centre, shop, cafe and accessible toilets with two small pavilion extensions.
- restoring the majestic chapel, central colonnades and catacombs
- conserving the historic landscape, buildings and monuments

- wildlife conservation to maintain and improve existing habitats
- improving the community use of the cemetery with facilities and activities
- a volunteering programme to help conserve and interpret the cemetery,
- improving the funerary business to reinvigorate it as a working cemetery where families can lay their loved ones to rest; and
- presenting the 19th and 20th century history of the site in a 21st century way.

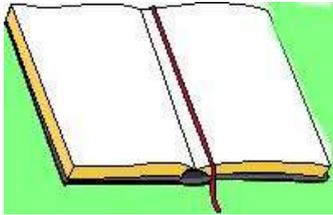
Greg McErlean, the Director at The Royal Parks who is leading the project, said: "This project is focused on transforming a superb but relatively little known Victorian cemetery into a vital 21st century community asset that delights visitors from further afield and serves as a source of inspiration for other cemetery managers.

Arthur Tait, the Chairman of the Friends of Brompton Cemetery, said: "The project will help bring a new lease of life to the cemetery; from conserving the landscape and buildings to providing visitor, volunteer and information facilities. It will be a hub for volunteering, training, and a place of relaxation for children and families while still being a haven for those who want peace, quiet and beauty."

To donate to the Brompton Cemetery appeal please visit the Royal Parks Foundation website www.SupportTheRoyalParks.com or call 020 7036 8060.

As well as funding, the project is also calling out for volunteers who will play a huge part in the future management and enjoyment of the cemetery. To find out more about volunteering opportunities contact The Brompton Cemetery Project Office on bromptonproject@royalparks.gsi.gov.uk,

telephone 020 7349 8161 or write to The Partnership and Community Engagement Office, c/o The Chapel Office, Brompton Cemetery, Fulham Road, London, SW10 9UG.



Daily Bible Reading Guides

Sarah our vicar writes: "I found out that Philip had done an excellent article about bible reading notes a couple of years ago in the Clarion, and so I asked him if he would kindly rework it to incorporate the online resources that are now available. This he has done to great effect so I encourage you to read on!"

Here is a personal selection of what I found, chiefly from St Paul's Books & Media in Kensington High Street, an excellent place to find a good range of publications, but also adding a few links to on-line sources.

Personally I prefer reading notes in the traditional typed format, and all the ones I saw in the shop were attractively presented, typically a day to a page, and were easy to read.

New Daylight

This is familiar to a number of people at St Mary's. Published by the Bible Reading Fellowship, each four-month issue contains sections by a variety of regular contributors who write either on a theme or else on a series of Bible passages. Some contributors are better than others, but this is probably a matter of personal taste, and I found some to be excellent. Each day's text is set out in full at the top of the page to make it easy to use.

Go to <http://www.biblereadingnotes.org.uk/new-daylight/> for a helpful introduction to New

Daylight and other BRF publications, together with samples.

Every Day with Jesus

Published by Crusade for World Revival (CWR), the author Selwyn Hughes had many years' experience in the counselling and healing ministry, and this gave him an unrivalled insight into human nature and our habits of thinking, allied to a comprehensive knowledge of the Bible, which he handled with great wisdom. These notes, which he wrote over a period of several decades, have proved so popular that since his death in 2006 they have been and are still being re-issued.

I have benefited greatly from these notes over the years, and although Selwyn Hughes has his own particular style, which is not for everyone, I would recommend them to anyone who wants to move forward in the Christian life and does not mind being challenged along the way.

Cover to Cover

Also published by CWR, this publication has different authors and basically goes through a book of the Bible at a time. Typically an OT book alternates with a NT book, each for a month, and a Psalm at weekends. Each day's commentary has plenty of cross-references. This is a good one to go for if your chief aim is to deepen your understanding of the Bible.

Go to <http://www.cwr.org.uk/store/t-sub.aspx> for an introduction to these and other CWR publications. I do not think you can get a free sample but you can access other free resources.

Daily Bread

Published by Scripture Union, this gives a straightforward explanation and application of each day's Bible passage. I would recommend this to anyone who wants to start reading the Bible regularly for the first time or feels they are at a basic level.

Scripture Union also publishes *Encounter with God*, a three-monthly collection of daily notes from a panel of contributors, which is more meaty and mentally stimulating.

Go to <http://www.scriptureunion.org.uk/Shop/1029.id> for a helpful look at examples of these publications.

Bible Alive

A Catholic publication (by Alive Publishing), written anonymously but with a named Publishing Board. The latest issue follows the church calendar through the seven weeks of Lent up to Easter. Each issue also contains a couple of interesting short articles. I have been impressed by the quality of the commentaries, which are written by people who are obviously both knowledgeable and truly spiritual. This publication has a certain authority to it, I found.

If you go to <http://www.alivepublishing.co.uk/publications/> you will see various articles, some of which feature in *Bible Alive*, but you do not get a sample of the daily notes without buying the latest issue.

Church of England

The CofE offers daily prayers and readings in the context of Morning and Evening Prayer. Refer to <https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-worship/join-us-in-daily-prayer.aspx>. You get a choice between traditional and contemporary language, the services being taken from the Book of Common Prayer and Common Worship respectively. Each day's readings, psalms and canticles are set out in full.

Many of you reading this are perfectly capable of reading the Bible without any aids of the kind I have described. However, when it comes to keeping up a regular discipline, it is very easy to let it fall victim to the pressures of other things,

and this is where a structure of daily readings, together with short notes and prayers, may prove helpful.

I do my best to maintain a daily practice of prayer and Bible reading, usually with the help of one or the other of the above notes, and it has helped me enormously in my Christian life. I am grateful for all the reading of Scripture I have done in years past; as one friend put it at the time, 'stocking up for future experience'. I believe there is a surprising richness, depth and diversity of content in the Bible waiting to be discovered.

Philip Bedford Smith

Les Misérables at St Mary's

On Christmas Day my sermon included the following:



"Music alone and words alone can be powerful, but occasionally they combine to produce something far greater than the sum of the parts. I remember going to see *Les Misérables* when I was a student and being totally bowled over by it. Of all the wonderful music I heard that night, one song above all others remains with me 20 years later. It is the anthem of the barricades, the song of angry men.

'Do you hear the people sing? Singing a song of angry men?

It is the music of a people who will not be slaves again!

When the beating of your heart echoes the beating of the drums

There is a life about to start when tomorrow comes!'

The words of the first verse go like this:

‘Will you join in our crusade? Who will be strong and stand with me?

Beyond the barricade, is there a world you long to see?

Then join in the fight that will give you the right to be free.’

I found it stirred up great emotions connected with all the many stories of those who have fought injustice and tyranny over the centuries. It also stirred up a desire to be part of the fight to bring freedom for the captives and light for those who dwell in darkness. It is a song of great hope that speaks of the final victory of good over evil and that whatever the risk or cost, a victory that is both right and assured. In *Les Misérables* nearly all those who sang that song ended up dead at the barricades. *Les Misérables* is well named.

Yet if you look at France now, while it is not perfect, the life of poor people has been transformed since the early 19th century when *Les Misérables* was set. The credit for that transformation does belong to those who have worked and campaigned for justice over the years. Even though some people ended up dead on the barricades, their cause was just and their hope justified.”

I was using the song from *Les Misérables* to illustrate the combined power of music and words in Christmas Carols as they tell the great story of the start of God’s rescue plan in Christ. What I did not know was that a member of the congregation that morning was Karen, who had sung that very song from *Les Misérables* during its recent filming. The photo pictured is a shot of the film set, which Karen sent in. It was a reminder that you can never know who might be sitting in the pews of St Mary’s!

Sarah Archer

Art and Theology

Short Course at Ripon College

This short course is designed to give participants the opportunity to both engage with religious art and to reflect through class presentations and discussion how religious art is perceived. Each day will balance theoretical input with visits to see religious art in the churches, galleries, and chapels in Oxford. We will examine the contexts in which religious art is viewed, suggest ways of how we may reflect theologically on contemporary art, and look at the place of art in churches and other places of worship.

The course will be led by Art and Christianity Enquiry (ACE) trustees Graham Howes, Sophie Hacker and Charles Pickstone and their esteemed colleagues.

Everyone is welcome to attend, lay and ordained.

Sunday 10 to Wednesday 13 April 2016; the all-inclusive cost of this residential is £225.

To book on the course please go to:

<http://www.rcc.ac.uk/courses-programme/art-and-theology-booking-form>

‘CPAS Ventures’: Life Changing Holidays for 8 to 18-year olds

I have been involved with Venture holidays for the past five years and thought I would like to spread the word about these wonderful Christian holidays for children. It may be that among our congregation and Sunday School we have children and grandchildren who would really benefit from an action packed, fun filled, thoroughly exhausting holiday this summer.

The Church Pastoral Aid Society was formed by Lord Shaftesbury and others in 1836. One early celebrity backer was Charlotte Brontë, who mentions the Society in her novel *Shirley*. Charlotte had actually married her father’s

curate who had been sent to help the overworked Revd Patrick Brontë, paid for entirely by CPAS.

In the 21st century CPAS is still providing mission training across the UK and through their Ventures programme over 4,000 children and teenagers experienced a Christian holiday last year. The holidays are run entirely by volunteers and take an enormous amount of planning, form filling, organisation and enthusiasm, but the teams are all made up of amazing Christian people who will usually tell you that leading a Venture holiday is nearly as much fun as being on one.



To describe my venture (for want of a better word) into Ventures, I contacted CPAS a few years ago, spurred on by a friend who had mentioned her recent holiday experiences:

- Olympic sized swimming pool
- amazing food 24/7
- night walks
- midnight feasts

Where was this amazing experience to be found? The Bahamas, South of France? No, of course it was volunteering with Ventures. I realised early on that this was actually less participation and more:

- lifeguarding
- cooking
- first aiding
- dormitory cleaning

But undaunted I signed up and have never looked back.

Venture holidays are divided by age group, theme and location with in excess of 60 different holidays being offered in 2016. In terms of volunteering there are dozens of roles available from Bible teaching, worship leading, music, kitchen staff, arts and craft, sports and everything in between.

I myself started as a kitchen hand on a 'Taster' holiday. These are four night holidays for the 8s to 10s and for many children it is the first time they have been away from home. I am now lead cook on Maidwell Taster, a wonderful holiday that takes place in the second week of August each year when we take over a beautiful prep school at Maidwell, Northamptonshire.

Despite the long hours in the kitchen it is a joy to be involved on the Venture. The quality of the Bible teaching and all the activities are second to none and the children enthuse about everything from the accommodation, the facilities and even our food. Some children return year after year and it is so wonderful to count them as friends. Many return with a friend or cousin in tow who they have convinced are missing out by not experiencing Ventures. Sometimes we even have a whole Sunday school class of ten or so children signing up en masse.



Please have a look at <https://www.ventures.org.uk/> for further information and I also have hard copy holiday brochures available. It can be worrying letting children away from home for the first time, but the upsides will always outweigh the downsides and if children wish to see a familiar face while on holiday, you could always sign an 8 to 10 year old up for Maidwell Taster, where they will see a lot of me, usually up to my elbows in sponge and custard etc.

If you think your child or grandchild would benefit from the experience of CPAS Ventures please do speak to me after church and I can evangelise about it further. Bursaries are available for helping with costs.

Joanna Hackett

Christ Crucified (I)

In a series of articles last year I tried to set out and to reconcile three ways in which men and women experience God: as creator of the universe and of life on earth; as the ground of our being and the companion of our deepest prayer; and as the power that shapes our lives, intervenes in our crises and watches over us daily. In this group of three articles I will examine what the crucifixion of Christ means for Christians.

Almost the only incident in the life of Christ to be attested independently by Roman historians is his death. Tacitus says that he was condemned by the governor Pontius Pilate during the reign of Tiberius Caesar (*Annales*, 15,44,3). Flavius Josephus adds that this was because of an accusation lodged by Jewish leaders and that he died on a cross (*Jewish Antiquities* 18,3,3). The crucifixion of Christ is a central fact for Christian believers. It provides a defining symbol, forms the core of Christian theology and sets out the direction by which Christians try to live their lives. Its distinctiveness is crucial for Paul: 'Here are the

Jews asking for signs and wonders, here are the Greeks intent on their philosophy: but what we preach is Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Gentiles mere folly; but to us who have been called, Jew and Gentile alike, Christ the power of God, Christ the wisdom of God'. 'I had no thought of bringing you any other knowledge than that of Jesus Christ and of him as crucified' (1 Corinthians 1: 23-25 and 2:2). 'God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world stands crucified to me and I to the world' (Galatians 6:14.) How and why did this come about? At a certain stage Jesus decided to change his ministry from one of preaching, teaching and healing to one of challenging the authorities. There is a strong tradition that on the way up to Jerusalem Jesus warned the disciples of the painful and humiliating death that awaited him (Mark 8: 31; 9:30; 10:33,4; Matthew 20: 18,19; Luke 18:31,32). John has Thomas saying to his fellow disciples 'Let us go too and be killed along with him (John 11:16).

When the party got close to Jerusalem Jesus chose to enter the city on a small donkey, while his supporters cheered him on (Luke 19: 35-40). This humble entry was in mocking contrast to the triumphal processions organised by Rome. Jesus was seeking a reign of peace and justice, not an empire built on violence and oppression. His 'anti-triumphal' entry was an acted satire that clearly caught the people's mood. As a public act proclaiming a nonviolent anti-kingdom it could have been enough in itself to lead to Jesus' execution.

Worse was to follow. According to Mark, Jesus made straight for the Temple, where 'he surveyed all that was about him' (Mark 11: 11). Next day he returned to where 'the sellers of oxen and sheep and doves and the changers of money [were] sitting. And having made a scourge of small cords he drove them all out of the temple, both the sheep and oxen; and he

poured out the changers' money and overthrew the tables' (John 2: 13-15). This was a clear challenge to the temple authorities. They insisted that the Temple dues should be paid in the *shekel* of Tyre (probably because it was the strongest currency), and provided an exchange for the convenience of worshippers. They also provided a market selling the animals needed for sacrifice. These 'booths of Annas' were hated, but they had the sanction of long custom. The 'scourge of small cords' was an offensive weapon, if a rather feeble one. Jesus' action was a violent demonstration, clearly illegal, and designed as a direct provocation to the priestly ruling class. What was Jesus' point? The money-changers and the live-stock dealers were doing nothing illegal in itself. Their functions were necessary ones, assisting in the fulfilment of religious duties, but they were transacted at extortionate rates, with a handsome slice of the profits no doubt destined for the temple coffers. (William Temple, *Readings in St. John's Gospel*, 1949, Macmillan, p.39) What made Jesus angry was not the trade as such, but exploitation of the worshippers by extortion, making God's house a 'den of thieves' (Mark 11:17 quoting Jeremiah 7:11). As told by the synoptic Gospels this episode led directly to the decision by the authorities to do away with him. 'And the chief priests and the scribes heard it and sought a way to destroy him; for they feared him because all the multitude was astonished at his teaching' (Matthew 21:12, Mark 11:15-18, Luke 19:45). To succeed, the authorities needed to devise two things: a way to arrest Jesus that would not risk public disturbance; and a charge to bring before Pilate that would ensure a death sentence. As to the first, Jesus plainly collaborated, with Judas Iscariot acting as go-between. Having arranged for the arrest to be made at a familiar meeting place on Thursday night, Jesus told Iscariot to 'be quick on thy errand' (John 13: 27). He led his party to the place and, despite his obvious horror at what

was to come, decided to go through with it (Mark 14: 32-42). When the guard arrived, Jesus 'knowing well what was to befall him, went out to meet them' and identified himself as the wanted man (John 18: 3-5). Of the trial before Pilate, Luke gives the most plausible account. The charge was: 'that this man is subverting the loyalty of our people, forbids the payment of tribute to Caesar and calls himself Christ the King'. All were untrue, but when Pilate asked him 'art thou the King of the Jews?' Jesus replied 'Thy own lips have said it' (Luke 23: 2-3). 'King of the Jews' was a dangerous title, and Jesus' failure to deny it was fatal. His criticism of the powerful, his defence of the oppressed people and his insistence on radical change added up to a powerful challenge to Rome. Pilate's job was to prevent any disruption that might endanger public order in Judea. He sentenced Jesus to death.

Crucifixion was the most dishonourable death imaginable. It killed in a way that was particularly slow, painful, humiliating, and public. The normal prelude was scourging, which caused the victim to lose a large amount of blood, approaching a state of shock. He then had to carry the cross-beam to the place of execution, where the upright was permanently embedded in the ground. The 'nails' were tapered iron spikes driven into the wrists and feet. Hanging from the arms for any length of time is painful. Once the muscles give out it is excruciating. Shoulders separate from the sockets and the overall arm can lengthen by inches. Most people would try to support themselves by their feet, but with their legs bent and their feet nailed, it was only a matter of time before their legs also gave way. Most experts agree that what ultimately killed a crucified person was suffocation. The length of time could range from hours to days. Jesus, already half dead from scourging, died unusually quickly.

I have twice witnessed the passion play at Oberammergau, in 2000 and 2010. There is a wrenching moment when the mother of Jesus, speaking to him on the cross, says 'Und was dir sagen, da du es selbst getan hast?' ('What can I say, since you yourself have done this'.) While not scriptural, this comment is plainly true. Why Jesus chose to act in this way will be explored in the next article.

Hugh Beach

February Year's Mind

Edward Lidderdale
 Mary Pilkington
 Peter Hamilton-Davies
 Robert Priest
 June Brudenell
 Thomas Spicer
 Anthony Clives
 Storm Larkins
 Thomas Barclay
 Anjoli Fernando-Kleinsorge
 David Hancock
 Simon Perkins
 Lily Dwight
 Lynette Hopper
 Gary Marshfield
 Derek Pilkington



Quaint Saints

February must be the month with the most quaint names of saints: Ia (3rd), Mel, Paul Miki (6th), Kew (8th), Huna (13th), Modomnoc (13th), Fintan, Loman (17th), Eustochium Calafato (20th),

Jurmin, Willigis (23rd), Leander (27th).

Ia (Hya, Ives), patron of St. Ives in Cornwall, according to local tradition, was an Irish virgin who sailed across the Irish sea on a leaf. It is said that a life of her existed at St. Ives, which made her a noble of St Barricus; a church was built at her request by Dinan, a great lord of Cornwall. Breton tradition, however, makes her a convert of Patrick the Older: she came to

Armorica with 777 disciples and was martyred there. She is the eponym of Plouyé, near Carhaix.

She should not be confused with Ives of St Ives, Hunts. Fest: 3 February and 27 October. Farmer DH. *The Oxford Dictionary of Saints*. Third ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

SUNDAY SERVICES

8.00am Eucharist, 10.30am Sung Eucharist
The meeting room at the back of the church is available for people with pre-school children.
There is a baby changing facility in the wheelchair accessible toilet in the hall.

WEEKDAY SERVICES

Usually Morning Prayer is said daily at 8.30am & 5.30pm: except Public Holidays. Wednesday 12noon Eucharist.

Wednesday 3 February 12 noon
 Eucharist with Prayers for Healing *Isaiah 52. 7-10; Mark 6. 1-6a*

Sunday 7 February Sunday next before Lent

Readings at 10.30am *Exodus 34. 29-end; 2 Corinthians 3. 12-4.2; Luke 9. 28-36*

Wednesday 10 February 12 noon Ash Wednesday

Isaiah 58:1-12, John 8:1-11

Sunday 14 February First Sunday of Lent

Readings at 10.30am *Deuteronomy 26. 1-11; Romans 10. 8b-13; Luke 4. 1-13*

Wednesday 17 February 12 noon
 Eucharist Janani Luwum, Archbishop of Uganda
John 12. 14-32; Luke 11. 29-32

Sunday 21 February Second Sunday of Lent

Genesis 15. 1-12, 17-18
 Readings at 10.30am *Philippians 3. 17-41; Luke 13. 31-end;*

Wednesday 24 February 12 noon
 Eucharist
Jeremiah 18. 18-20; Matthew 20. 17-28

Sunday 28 February Third Sunday of Lent

Readings at 10.30am *Isaiah 55. 1-90; 1 Corinthians 10. 1-13; Luke 13. 1-9*

Wednesday 3 March 12 noon
Eucharist with Prayers for Healing / *Timothy 6. 11b-16; Mark 5. 17-19*

Parish Office

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boltonsmusic@gmail.com

Verger / Caretaker

David Ireton 020 7244 8998
(Day Off Tuesday) 07881 865386

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Ann Mulcare 020 7937 2005

Members of the PCC

Mr Leo Fraser-Mackenzie
Mr Richard Brudenell
Mrs Tania Cauberghs
Ms Julie Crutchley
Mr Craig Drake
Miss Margarete Geier (Deanery Synod
Representative)
Miss Joanna Hackett (PCC Secretary)
Mrs Ann Mulcare (Deanery Synod
representative)
Mr Edward Quinton
Mrs Judy Rydell
Mrs Katrin Roskelly
Ms Camila Ruz
Ms Kelly Webb

**Contributions for the March Clarion
should be sent to the Parish Office by 20
February 2016.**

Safeguarding Officer

The St Mary The Boltons' Safeguarding Officer is Julie Crutchley. Her role is to help us to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and adults at risk. She is the first point of contact for children, adults at risk and other members of the congregation regarding suspicions of abuse and other safeguarding concerns.

If you have any concerns, please contact Julie on 07764497413. Alternatively, speak to: Sheryl Kent, Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser: 020 7932 1224

Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS) helpline: 0845 120 4550
Family Lives: 0808 800 222 (Previously Parentline) Childline: 0800 111

Children's Champion

The St Mary The Boltons' Children's Champions are Chris and Katie Fowkes. Their role is to ensure that the voices and needs of the children and young people are heard and reflected in parish life. They can be contacted via: Katie.Fowkes@talktalk.net / 07810 831505
Treasurer Carolyn Stubbs 020 7835 0074

Assistant Treasurer

Bill Gallagher 020 7384 3246.

Electoral Roll Officer Fiona Parsons

Gift Aid Secretary

John Barker 020 8571 0737

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Margarete Geier 020 7373 1639

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Verena Tschudin 020 7351 1263

Readers & Intercessors Rota

Mary Meeson (call Parish Office)

Reading at St Cuthbert's and St Matthias' School

Sheila Gibbs 020 8788 9744

Thursday Monthly Lunch

Ann Tait 020 7352 5127

Social Secretary

Margarete Geier 020 7373 1639

Sunday School Parish Office