

THE CLARION

The Magazine of The Parish of St Mary The Boltons

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

February 2017

Lent at St Mary's

How the months rush by. Christmas is long gone, and the weeks of Epiphany nearly over, and Lent is almost here. Ash Wednesday is on 14 February, and I hope that this year our Lenten discipline will help us all to prepare to celebrate Easter with joy and energy. So often Lent is a solitary sort of season and our observance based on personal whim: what do I give up? What do I take on? But Lent was originally a communal season, as those preparing for baptism at Easter engaged in a time of fasting and instruction, and those who had fallen away were encouraged in acts of public penance. As time went on the whole church community joined those people in communal acts of penitence, renewal and mutual encouragement.

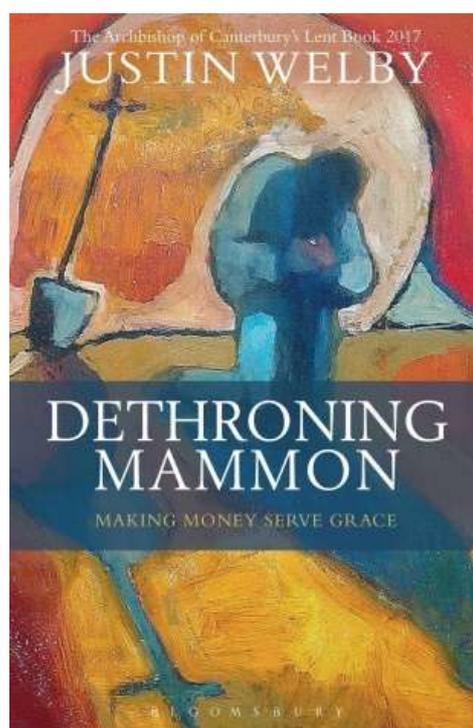
It is in this spirit of encouragement that I invite us all at St Mary's to begin our Lent together well, firstly by coming along to the Vicarage for a Parish Pancake Party on Shrove Tuesday, 13 February (details to be found elsewhere in this issue), and then coming to church on Ash Wednesday for one of the celebrations of the Eucharist, with the traditional blessing and imposition of ashes. Services will be at 12 noon (a said service preceded by Silent Prayer at 11am) and at 7pm. We hope that everyone will do their best to join one of these services to make a good start to the season together.

We shall also be offering two Lent groups, one on Wednesday evenings in the Vicarage and one on Sunday mornings after the main service in church. Both groups will look at Archbishop Justin Welby's book *Dethroning Mammon*, which he wrote for Lent last year. I am happy to order books for those of you who wish to attend as well as for any who will not be joining

a group but would like their Lent reading to keep time with those who are. It is readily available at Church House Bookshop in Westminster. Venues to be confirmed, and offers of hospitality will be welcome.

Lent is also traditionally a time for practising a discipline of sacrificial giving. It has been the practice at St Mary to invite members as part of their Lenten giving to give generously to our Charitable Pot, which is the means by which the local Church community is able to give out of our own abundance to people in need. St Mary's generosity makes a huge difference to small charities, both local and further afield. The charities we decided to support in 2018 were described in the last issue of the *Clarion*.

We are once again inviting households and individuals to take this part of the Lent discipline seriously: by filling jam jars with your 'spare' change ; or hosting charity suppers or coffee mornings, or by simply giving on a Sunday morning to the retiring collection, on



top of your weekly giving for the church's ministry. The Pancake Party will include a donations plate, in aid of the Charitable Pot, to get things going.

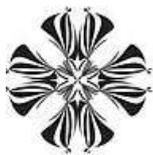
It may of course be that you plan to 'give something up' for Lent. Why not share the money you save on wine, expensive coffee, chocolate* etc. to the Charitable Pot? It may be even better for your body and your soul to abstain from alcohol or chocolate* for a time, if in the end some good can be done for others as well.

The most important aspect of keeping Lent together is easily overlooked: it's not about doing something special, but about trying to do what we already do more faithfully. What about coming to church more regularly, arriving early to have time to sit quietly before the service; looking at the readings beforehand in order to listen more attentively; taking advantage of weekday services of Morning and Evening Prayer, and Holy Communion, either here at St Mary's or near your place of work?

Above all, though, I hope we will all be encouraged by the idea of keeping a good Lent together, and allow the 40 days to be a time of deepening our attention to God.

*It is said that Pope Pius V, in 1569, refused to ban chocolate in Lent because he considered a cup of hot chocolate too disgusting to be enjoyable.

Jenny Welsh



Lent Programme at St Mary's

Tuesday 13 February Shrove Tuesday

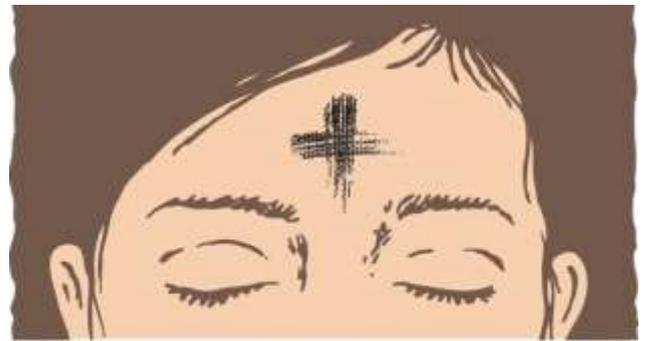
Pancake Party 6.30-8.30pm at the Vicarage, 24 Fawcett Street, SW10 9EZ. Adults and children welcome. Please let the Vicar know if you would like to attend, or sign up on the sheet at the back of the church.

Wednesday 14 February Ash Wednesday

11am Silent Prayer

12noon Holy Eucharist with Imposition of Ashes (said service)

7pm Holy Eucharist with Imposition of Ashes (sung service)



Lent Study Groups

Two groups, meeting in parallel for 5 sessions, reading Justin Welby's *Dethroning Mammon: Making money serve grace*, a book about money and our relationship to it, which invites us to engage in the question of how but the world of money should be a subject of central theological importance and a key indicator of spiritual values

It's hoped that having two groups meeting at different times will enable a wider range of people to take part. Even if you cannot make it to either session, why not read along with us, and engage with the issues Archbishop Justin raises.

Wednesday evenings 7.30-8.30pm, at the Vicarage

Sundays after the main service, 12 noon – 1pm in church.

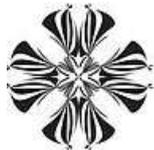
Flyer and signup sheet at the back of church.

Summer Fair 2018 (yes!)

Put the dates in your diary now:

Sunday 25 February: the first planning meeting after the 10.30 service

Saturday 16th June: The Summer Fair



The Christmas Stories 2

This is a sequel to Christmas Stories 1 (Clarion November 2017), which was omitted due to a misunderstanding between author and editor. In Christmas Stories 1 Hugh treated the birth narratives in the Gospel of Matthew.

We turn now to Luke's account of these events. It could hardly be more different. The setting is no longer the comfort of Joseph's home, but a makeshift lodging in the part of a stranger's house shared with animals. Jesus' mother wraps him up and puts him in a feeding-trough. (Luke mentions this detail three times). Angels appear, but only as news-bearers, in no way dictating the action. The visitors are no longer astrologers from the east but local shepherds. There are no prophecies, dreams, magical stars or any other trappings of a legendary nature, only the most bureaucratic of events, a census.

'It happened that a decree went out at this time from the Emperor Augustus that the whole world should be registered; this register was the first one made during the time when Cyrinus was governor of Syria. All must go and give their names, each in his own city; and Joseph, being of David's clan and family, came up from Nazareth in Galilee to David's city in Judaea, the city called Bethlehem, to give his name there. With him was his espoused wife Mary who was then in

her pregnancy; and it was while they were still there that the time came for her delivery. She brought forth a son, her first-born.' (2:1-6)

In theory this should make Luke's account more believable. In fact it has fared badly at the hands of historians. The Romans were a pragmatic people. It makes no sense that they would have asked people to travel long distances, to the home of their remote ancestors, in order to register. The aim of the exercise was to create an up-to date tax base. The census-takers wanted to connect people with their current properties and places of work. By Luke's account, Joseph owned no property in Bethlehem and never worked there.



There is also a problem over dates. Luke makes it clear that the conception of John the Baptist (and therefore of Jesus six months later) took place during the reign of King Herod in Judaea (1:5 and 26). King Herod died in 4 BCE, so by this reckoning the census must have taken place no later than 3BCE. But Cyrinus was never governor of Syria while Herod was alive. A census did indeed take place under his governorship, ten years later in CE6, but it applied only in Judaea, Samaria and Idumea, not in Galilee. It was a novelty so shocking for the Jews that it provoked a major uprising. Perhaps because there had also been riots in 4CE at the time of Herod's death, Luke has conflated the two. Both in his Gospel and in Acts he was normally faultless on dates, names, titles, places etc., but this would be a comparatively minor

error for someone writing without archives, or even a standard calendar, some eighty years after the event. The most likely explanation is that Luke, thinking he had found evidence of a census at the time of King Herod's death, chose to elaborate the event so that it became a reason for Joseph and his wife to travel from their home in Nazareth to Bethlehem. (see E. P. Sanders, *The Historical Figure of Jesus*, Penguin Books, 1993, pp 85-89. Geza Vermes, *The Nativity: History and Legend*, Penguin Books, 2006, pp 89-97)

The question is, does any of this matter? If these two chapters in Matthew and Luke were to be treated as unhistorical, would anything be lost? Theologically I believe not. Yet in terms of Christian culture the loss would be incalculable. Over the centuries these stories have inspired paintings, mosaics and sculptures, music, poetry, and drama, not to mention sermons innumerable. Some of this has been of the highest quality. It is the stuff of Christmas celebrations in every parish: of carols, nativity plays and the crib scenes invented by St Francis. (The 'ox' and the 'ass' are as fictional as the 'kings' adorning Matthew's story. The folk in question kept sheep and would hardly bring any livestock on an impromptu visit to the city by night, let alone when paying their respects to someone of great consequence.).

There is no need for these two chapters to be disavowed. Professor Pagola*, who relegates what he calls these 'infancy gospels' to a footnote, writes: 'rather than biographical narratives they are Christian compositions, written in the light of faith in the risen Christ. They were not collected to give information on the actual events (about which probably little was known) but to proclaim the Good News that Jesus is the Davidic Messiah that Israel was waiting for and the Son of God born to save humanity'. (José A. Pagola, *Jesus: an Historical Approximation*, Margaret Wilde trans. Convivium Press, 2009, p. 55, Footnote 1).

Accepted and entered into on those terms – taken with a pinch of salt, so to speak – these stories can only do us good.

The translators of the King James Version make this clear: 'And it came to pass in those days that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed'.

(Luke 2:1)

Hugh Beach

*José Antonio Pagola is a professor at St. Sebastian Seminary and at the Faculty of Theology of Northern Spain. He has served as rector of the diocesan seminary and Vicar General of the same diocese. He has dedicated his life to Biblical studies and Christology and has done research on the historical Jesus for more than 30 years. Having been challenged by conservative critics his book has been confirmed by the Roman Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith as free from any doctrinal error or heresy, and has become a best-seller.



Public Events

St Paul's runs many public events exploring the challenges, contradictions and joys of being a Christian in the 21st century, such as Saturday workshops and Sunday forums. Some are free and others fee-paying. Check details at adultlearning@stpaulscathedral.org.uk 020 7246 8337

Jesus of Nazareth:

Searching for the Historical Jesus

Helen Bond

Saturday, 10 February, 2.30-4.00pm, £15

Around the year 30 AD, in an insignificant province of the Roman Empire, a Jewish prophet, teacher and healer met with a shameful and brutal end on a Roman cross. 2,000 years later, this obscure figure has over two billion followers and is acknowledged as

the most influential person ever to have walked the earth.

As people of faith, we know Jesus through the Gospels. But scholarly enquiry into the historical figure of Jesus has brought new insight and illumination, and in this study afternoon we will look at Jesus in his historical context: his Jewish heritage, his message, friends and enemies, his execution, and ask what difference this understanding makes to us as Christians in the 21st century.

Professor Helen Bond is Professor of Christian Origins at the University of Edinburgh. She has contributed to a number of BBC TV documentaries, and her books include *Jesus: A Very Brief History* (SPCK 2017) and *The Historical Jesus: A Guide for the Perplexed* (T&T Clark 2012).

Confirmation preparation 2018

Confirm O Lord your servant, with your Holy Spirit...

This year we are glad to be preparing several of our youngsters to be presented for Confirmation at Eastertime. The group will include children from year 5 at school and older, and we hope it will be a way to help them learn about the life of faith, and affirm for themselves the promises made on their behalf when they were baptized. We hope, too, that it will encourage them to engage with the life of the church as they mature. If your child would be interested in this preparation, please speak with the Vicar.

The children's course will last 8 weeks, beginning this month, meeting on Sunday afternoons at 4pm at the Vicarage. It will cover a range of topics, including the Story of God's people; the life of Jesus and what it means to be a disciple and a member of the Church.

It may be that there are adults in our congregation who for some reason have not been confirmed yet; it is not just a rite for

children, but something that adults can receive as well. Adults will, of course, approach it with a different sort of commitment and expectation, and that is no bad thing. If you would like to explore this for yourself, speak with the vicar, who will be glad to prepare you too, in a different setting, of course.

The confirmation will take place at St Paul's Cathedral at the Easter Vigil service on Holy Saturday, 31 March, beginning at 6pm. This means that our own Vigil service at St Mary's will not take place, and it is hoped that instead, our congregation will come along to the Cathedral for this wonderful service, not just to support our candidates, but also to experience the vigil in that grand setting, with hundreds of other Christians from around the diocese. The presiding Bishop will be the Bishop of Willesden, the Rt Revd Pete Broadbent.

The names of the candidates will be remembered in the Intercessions each week; I hope that as they prepare for this great stage in their Christian lives, you will keep them in your personal prayers as well.

Jenny Welsh



Even non-believers pray

A recent poll conducted for the Tearfund Christian aid charity found that just over half of all adults in the UK pray at least sometimes. Only one in three of these people say they still regularly pray at a place of worship, as most people pray before going to sleep or are increasingly likely to call on God for help when engaged in activities such as cooking or exercising or while travelling. Although a third of those who prayed said that they had done so in places of worship, fewer people attended church or worship regularly: nine per cent of people surveyed said that they attended at least

once a month, compared to 30 per cent once a year. More than half of those who attended church regularly used the Bible to help them pray, while one in five used printed prayer resources, such as prayer sheets. Just seven per cent used online prayer resources such as a prayer app or diary.

The poll covered all UK adults and every main faith, including Christians, Muslims, Jews, Sikhs, Buddhists, Hindus, those of no religion, and 'other'. More than half (52 per cent) said that they had prayed in the past. Of these, 55 per cent said that they were most likely to pray in a crisis. More than half of the respondents — 1065 — identified as Christian, of which 73 per cent said that they had prayed in the past. The frequency of prayer varied from several times a day (seven per cent), to hardly ever (ten per cent), or only in times of crisis (13 per cent). Of all people who identified as Christians, 27 per cent said that they had never prayed.

Another finding from the poll is that one in five (20 per cent) of the 869 non-religious people surveyed said that they had prayed in the past. Of these, most prayed in times of personal crisis or tragedy or on the off-chance that an element of their life or circumstance might change. Almost a quarter said that they had prayed as a 'last resort', or to feel comforted or less lonely. Other reasons given for prayer included belief in God (39 per cent), or the belief that prayer can bring about change (32 per cent).

A third of people surveyed said that they prayed in bed, before sleeping, or first thing in the morning. Henry, 64, said he prays every night, kneeling by his bed, despite not being religious. 'I worry about it quite a lot – is it some kind of an insurance policy, is it superstition or is it something more real?' Asked if he believed in God, he said: 'I don't know but I would describe myself at the sceptical end of agnosticism. I certainly wouldn't classify myself as religious.' Henry, who

requested anonymity, starts by silently reciting the Lord's Prayer and then asks for his loved ones to be kept safe and well. 'Sometimes I include other specific people or suffering groups. Then I have a fuzzy moment about me – not concrete thoughts, and I don't ask for specific things.' He said he had no idea if God heard his prayers, and said the act of praying did not make him feel better. 'I wonder why I don't stop doing it. Sometimes I feel it's a kind of hypocrisy.'



The amount of prayerfulness varies considerably by Christian denomination. Only 42 per cent of Catholics say they pray regularly, while 13 per cent say they never pray at all. The figures are even worse for mainline Protestant denominations. Just 23 per cent of Anglicans pray regularly, and nearly a third say they never pray even in times of crisis. In the United Reformed Church, 44 per cent say they pray, while 17 per cent pray regularly. In comparison, members of Evangelical and Charismatic Protestant churches pray much more regularly, including 86 per cent of 'independent' Protestants who pray at least once a week. Just under half of those who pray said they believed God hears their prayers, which suggests a slim majority feel their supplications are not answered. Four in ten go further, saying prayer changes the world; a similar number say it makes them feel better. Among the non-religious, personal crisis or tragedy is the most common reason for praying, with one in four saying they pray to gain comfort or feel less

lonely. The most popular topics of prayer included the family (71 per cent); thanking God (42 per cent); healing (40 per cent); and friends (40 per cent). Prayers for global poverty or natural disasters were less common (24 per cent), though the youngest and oldest generations (18-24-year-olds, and 65-year-olds plus) were more likely to pray for these issues.

The results echo a study by the Benedict XVI Centre for Religion, which found a quarter of non-religious Britons pray at least occasionally.

www.tearfund.org/en

Anthony Williams



‘My Life Story’

Introduction to my Life

Date of birth: 16 June 1927
Place of birth: Calgary, Alberta, Canada

Family

Mother’s name: Pearl M. Hutchinson
Father’s name: James William Durno
Position in family: unknown
Names of siblings: unknown

Nieces and nephews: Nanci Donohue
Alexandra Hull
Sandra Hull
Bonnie Ruhland

My Childhood

Bill was born in a children’s home in Vancouver, BC, run by the Kirkpatrick family; his mother left him there and he never saw her. Bill is aware of having a younger brother at the children’s home, but no name is known of him. Bill remembers when he was about six that one day a person, who he thinks was his mother,

came and took his brother away, leaving him in the home.

At some stage, the children’s home either changed into a care home for elderly people, or the Kirkpatricks run two homes. From an early age, Bill helped around the home for elderly people, doing the laundry by hand and cleaning and cooking and other household chores.

When Bill was 14, he changed his name to William John Ashley Kirkpatrick. He told me that this was to honour the family that had brought him up. He usually told people that he was adopted, but from papers and documents found it is clear that Bill was neither adopted nor even formally fostered by the Kirkpatrick family and he changed his name of his own accord. Why he chose John and Ashley is not clear. He chose William in honour of his father.

It is impossible to know what constituted Bill’s early life, except that the loss of his brother and the deprivation of ‘belongingness’ have been deeply imprinted on Bill’s psyche. Throughout his life he tried on various occasions to trace his birth mother. The last attempt was in the 1990s when he in fact met with two women, neither of whom was willing to tell him if she was his birth mother. This too was a huge blow for Bill.

Bill has been in touch with members of the Kirkpatrick family, calling them his nieces. As far as can be ascertained, they were mainly the wives of ‘nephews’. He was close to one such nephew, the husband of Sandra Hull, who was a Mountie. This man shot himself on Christmas Eve 2005 and Bill only heard the news some weeks later. He was hugely disappointed that they had not asked him to conduct the funeral. It seems that the son of this man – who had wanted to be a Mountie – then also shot himself. These two events seemed significant in tipping Bill into psychosis as soon afterwards he was admitted to Kerhsaw Ward.

Sandra and Bonnie, two of the 'nieces', were/are hardly on speaking terms after some quarrel over a house sale. This caused Bill enormous grief because he was in touch with both.

Nothing is known about Bill's schooling, other than what is stated on the CV.

Teenage years

Other than that at age 14 Bill changed his first and family name, nothing else is known.

My Working Life

Somewhere in the 1950s Bill came to London, apparently to study music, but he did not have enough money for this. Instead he trained to become a nurse.

He also worked as flight steward on British Overseas Airways Corporation (BOAC), flying all over the world. His flight record book is extant, though not always accurately kept.

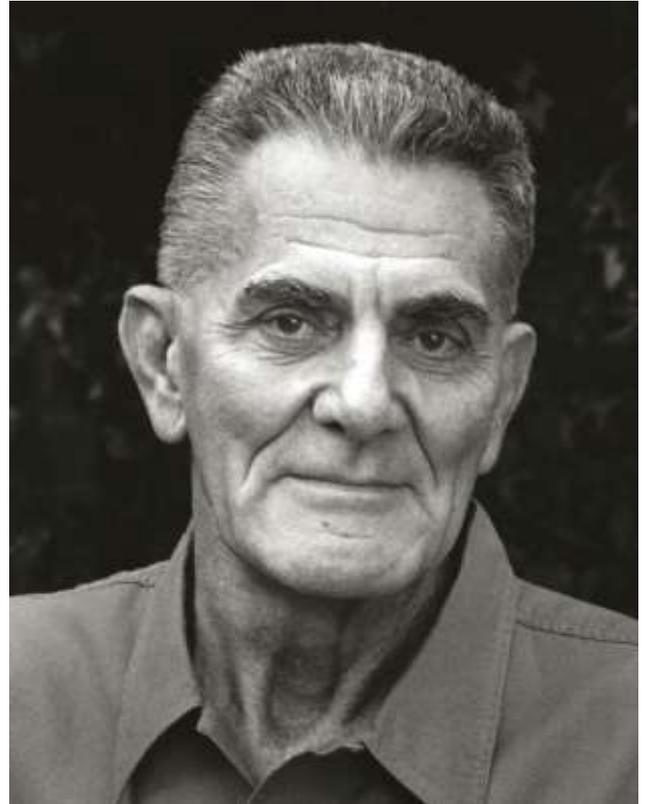
It was in the 1960s and as one of the first male nurses in the UK, that Bill rose to positions of authority. He clearly came into his own then. The idea of becoming a priest was suggested to him. At the time he was not even baptised. He had clearly been interested in mystical religions, not main-stream Christianity.

Bill often hinted that he did what other people suggested to him in his nursing career, and certainly with the suggestion to train for the (Anglican) priesthood. This may not be accurate, as by character Bill is also an opportunist and certainly was a good networker.

His theological training was short and possibly inadequate, as he never had a good grasp of doctrine or the Bible. However, he read vast amounts of books, seemingly often not finishing them because he found something else. He had

vast libraries – he had given away two libraries at some stage – mostly of 'soft theology'. His understanding of theology, and the main content of all his sermons, was always:

- we need to listen to each other
- we need to love all people equally, whoever they are



These beliefs and basic principles guided Bill's life and were probably fundamental to his work in social care, and especially in the voluntary social care sector.

Bill founded any number of voluntary organisations. If he saw a need, he would set up some means of meeting it.

In all this, he was hugely supported by Sir Maurice Laing (the building firm Laing). This was an interesting partnership, as the Laing family came from an extreme evangelical background, and Bill from the opposite end, being at home with ritual and ceremony, and a deep inclusiveness. The charitable arm of the Laing family, the Rufford Foundation, gave a great deal of money to Bill's many projects, although

their own brief is to support wildlife (lions). Without the Laing family, Bill could not have done so much voluntary work.

At some stage in the 1970 and while working at Centrepoint in Tottenham Court Road (where most of the various projects were located that Bill founded), Bill had a 'breakdown'. He has always played this down, but it seems that it was the end of his career at Centrepoint, and that he also spent about three months in a psychiatric hospital. He maintains that he had overworked; possibly a correct evaluation.

Bill moved back to London in 1979, when I first met him, and many of his present friends stem from that time.

He built up the work with young male sex workers in Earl's Court – Streetwise Youth – from listening to people in bars and cafés, where he would sit and watch for hours, at any time of day and night, to find out what the needs of the area were. By this time, the Laing family had bought a flat for him and supported him with a salary, otherwise he would not have been able to do this.

The AIDS crisis in the early 1980s was Bill's great work. He was tireless in helping where he could, and became the unofficial chaplain to the AIDS wards and clinic at the Chelsea & Westminster Hospital. He was often called at night and would sit with people for nights and days, never afraid of any possible risks to his own health. He was particularly good with people who did not fit any denomination or religion, and conducted over 800 funerals of mostly young men having died of AIDS and who would not fit into any traditional framework of religion. He was a part-time curate at St Cuthbert's Church in Earls' Court and regularly used the church for these funerals, with the tacit acceptance of the parish, who generously turned a blind eye to many of Bill's activities. However, Bill also established various clubs and

meeting places in the church buildings where people with AIDS could get help, information, food, some medical attention and also limited accommodation. Once AIDS was no longer a medical emergency, Bill's work gradually came to an end, and from then onwards he had no longer a specific focus for his life, though he continued to help his neighbours with shopping etc. However, it does seem that from about 2000 onwards, Bill became less sure of his role. This was the time when he wrote his last book 'The Creativity of Listening', finally published in 2005, and which is particularly autobiographical. The book is dedicated '...to my mother, Florence Kirkpatrick, Matron of the Kirkpatrick Nursing Home for the Elderly near Vancouver, BC, Canada, who nurtured me into a caring ministry, and all others who have shared to much of themselves with me'.

Significant relationships

Bill has hundreds of friends. He had, however, kept everyone separate, rarely giving anyone a name of someone else. This was part of his concern for confidentiality.

It was only in about 1980 that Bill finally 'came out' as a homosexual person. He was then in partnership with Richie McMullen, with whom he published the first book. Richie died in the early 1980s. Bill had one other, earlier partner, called Jim. How long that partnership lasted is not known, but Jim died in approx. 2000, then living in the USA. Bill conducted his funeral.

As far as I know Bill never actually lived with his partners.

Bill's capacity of making everyone feel special because he was able to listen deeply and 'be' with people, meant that he made friends with everyone he met.

Significant places in my life

Bill never gave up his Canadian passport, and Vancouver drew him regularly.

In later years he was always looking for solitary places. He spent about six months in a hermitage in New Zealand some years ago and dreamed of becoming a hermit, but realising that with increasing age, this was less achievable. However, he referred to himself as an 'urban hermit'. For Bill, many significant places were those where he was alone.

Social Activities and Interests

Bill was a very good cook and enjoyed entertaining people. His generosity meant that he met with numerous people most weeks, and often travelled long distances to meet people.

Significant Life Events

It is difficult to know these as Bill was very secretive.

One event that marked him was a kind of 'vision' that was possibly the trigger to the suggestion that he should become a priest. He described looking at a red jewel – possibly at an exhibition – that became 'alive' for him and he saw a beating and bleeding heart.

The death of his nephew was a huge blow, including also the sense of rejection by the family in not telling him immediately, or asking him to conduct the funeral. Bill had experienced so many rejections in his life, that this event compounded the sense of worthlessness even harder.

Later life/Retirement

His main work was clearly during the decade when HIV/AIDS was a large medical 'event'. As this came to an end, Bill's *raison d'être* also faded and he was looking for opportunities to be of service to people. I believe that this was partly why he found it increasingly difficult to keep hold of life, as during the last few years his memory declined. One of Bill's friends pointed out that many facts and names are wrong in his last book. The Rufford Foundation supplied him

with computers, but he found them difficult to manage. He became frustrated because increasingly he found household appliances – toaster, washing machine – unable to use as he lost the ability of knowing how to use them. Living alone, it was probably easy to hide these difficulties, as he would tell one thing to one person and another thing to another person. It is only possible with hindsight to put various events and statements together and understand them.

My Life Now

What is important to you about your appearance?
Bill has always lived very simply. He bought his clothes in charity shops, made do with simple things, never liking excess. His only extravagance was buying books.

While Bill lived simply, he was also very particular that he looked decent. His clothes were always clean, hair tidy, nails cut.

While in Kershaw Ward he would comment on the nurses' tidiness or lack of it and disapprove of untidiness as a lack of respect for patients.

It is clear that Bill responds better to men caring for him. He seems to suffer when he looks untidy and unshaven, but finds it difficult to be told about personal care as this seems to touch on his present inability to care for himself, which he resents.

What types of music do you like to listen to?

Bill enjoys classical music and knows it well. He always loathed casual or modern music.

I have often offered Bill to bring him books, as he used to read such a lot, but he has always refused. He usually blamed not having reading-glasses, but in fact he has several pairs (and hearing aids) but is probably no longer able to cope with either.

The People who Matter

Bill has many friends. From snowballing and old address books, I have now a list of about 80 people (50 e-mail addresses and 30 mailing addresses) to whom I send regular updates. Among these people are members of his 'family', though only one of them has ever responded.

In my updates I have given his mailing address and encouraged people to send occasional cards. When I ask Bill about friends, he is always elusive about names or if he has received mail. Many of the people on these lists are elderly too and possibly unable to have more contact. Some people find it difficult to visit Bill given his mental health, when in the past he had very likely been their support in times of their own difficulties.

Verena Tschudin
13 March 2009



PCC Meeting 16 January 2018

The Vicar looked back at our Christmas services and the wonderful music we had enjoyed. There had been a slight increase in attendance, except for the Midnight Mass, which had mainly served tourists, most likely as a result of leafleting local hotels. The hospitality at the Advent Carol Service had been a great success. Looking forward, the Vicar outlined her plans for a full Easter programme starting with a Pancake Party at the Vicarage, two Ash Wednesday services, then two Lent study groups and special services throughout Holy Week, and this was greatly welcomed.

Three significant decisions were taken at this meeting that will be of great benefit to St

Mary's in the coming months. Approval was given to proceed with the design phase for the replacement of the church lighting, which is proving costly to maintain and does not use low-energy lamps. When an acceptable scheme is agreed the necessary work can be tendered and then commissioned. The full cost will be covered by a legacy we have received.

The garden on the south side of the church suffered considerable damage during the installation of the telephone equipment in the tower, to the extent that remedial work is beyond our normal maintenance capabilities. Our garden is the only open space in the area. It is visited by many people who spend time in it and it is greatly appreciated by the local community. It also provides a lovely setting for the church itself. It was therefore decided that we should commission a design for the renewal and restoration of the whole of the church garden. The design, which is expected to be delivered by the middle of next month, will enable the necessary work to be put out to tender and funding sought. Plans are in place for the entire cost of the project to be met without calling on any church resources.

Music plays a very important part of our worship and is greatly appreciated and valued by visitors as well as members of the congregation. Our Director of Music, John Ward, has put forward a proposal for us to engage four choral scholars to support our Come and Sing Choir and enhance our music on other Sundays. Choral scholars are trained singers starting out on their professional careers. Potential singers have been auditioned and funding was approved for four scholars to be engaged for an experimental period of six months commencing in February.

Lastly, the Summer Fair date of 16 June was confirmed and the Boltons north garden has been booked.

Anthony Williams

Christmas letter from Jane Dass

It has been a very long year that has still managed to whistle by. Many a wrangle and a particular trouble to work through, but in the end we are clear of it all; it has been a year of treading water.

I was surprised to find out that Preston and I have been married for 21 years and therefore together for 26 years. We both forgot our anniversary again.

As Preston says the trick to staying married is not to get divorced.



Eventually we had the roof fixed. When you looked through the loft hatch there was the sky, lots of blue where there should have been none. The builder's lad came back down saying "You have a tiger up there" "Really" I said nonplussed. Then he produced his phone and we actually did, a really big one. Here he is when he came down, he had to be carried.

And so we are free to start some work on the house, now that all things are resolved, in January. We will start by having the fireplaces repaired/ replaced. Some are just gaping holes, and the chimneys will have to be swept too.

The Sweep is suddenly of this morning coming next Wednesday, which will be interesting given that he will have to struggle with his equipment up the stairs that are decked out with baubles and tinsel. No holding onto the banisters for him, and come to that the Christmas tree will be in the way too. "The guy doing the fireplace work looks exactly like Bill Bailey the comedian, he could be his twin.

Preston is delighted as he is frozen, not that a comedian is doing the work. Amelia is happy as he gave her a smoke bomb.

I really cannot be bothered to take anything down as I have only just put it up, I do so like

to keep it all up until Candlemas to eliminate January completely.

I think I can possibly slide the tree away from the fireplace if someone hangs onto the trunk. The house is full of dust and dried mud anyway and I am sure Dick van Dyke has swapped his brushes for more modern equipment.

We have tentatively fiddled about with the house, throwing out floorings and making it even colder, Preston sitting there in the middle of the mess reading newspapers from 1954 that were under it all, with the soot and filth. Interesting that they were all from the year he was born.

Dolly is still the gift that keeps on giving; I have made so many friends from walking her. We had her spayed earlier this year, here she is resplendent in her Elizabethan cone, and she hated it. It was on for a week and a day. The operation was a terrible shock for her, who would have thought an animal could complain in so many different growls/whines/yelps and howls "Do not expect me to have any more children" I told Preston after the first day of looking after her.

The house may be not much further along, but the garden is.

(I am lying; it is a quagmire of frozen mud out there at the moment. Only Dolly likes it)

I planted many things in the spring, I turned the house into a greenhouse, trays of seedling slung everywhere, most things grew, some things alarmingly, Nasturtiums never stop, they are like bind weed, and they are still at it now, in the frost, cantering across the lawn towards the back door.

The Cosmos grew into unwieldy tree like plantations, and in the end we had to hack them all down, they only produced about 3 flowers, rather like the strawberry bed that gave us 5 strawberries, and sent out so many runners

underneath and round the vegetables that when I dragged the old beans up I found I had a strawberry field under my feet.

Home grown peas and beans may look lovely growing up high but ours tasted revolting and like wood.



Oh yes, we are farming types now. The radishes flowered, very pretty, but where did the edible bits go? It did all get a bit out of control. Dolly took to sneaking out and dragging up the garden canes and crunching them into pieces, and then moved on to digging up the toppled plants.

Next year I shall get a grip, next year I will be growing mainly Tomatoes and Sweet Peas, and we will see what the Jasmine, Clematis and Roses do this coming year, if Dolly doesn't do something to them first.

I finally got my hair cut; it was trailing along the ground. I managed to avoid that popular Brighton look for the lady of a certain age that is so popular "Bright pink" saying "I'm a free spirit" Mine looks normal and as no one noticed it is to my mind a success.

I also broke my phone, you don't seem to be able to clean an oil filled phone with gin. I was cut off for a week, but it was not especially noticeable.

We have been making gin, well flavouring it, it's festering in a cupboard as we speak, and that will be us poisoned for Christmas.

The new phone seems to operate in only Spanish, not a language I know very well at all. "Amelia, Ola! what has happened this year?"

cualquier cosa divertido , anything at all?" she just looked at me and said "actually I turned 18. And she did in August and it was lovely "Thank heavens for that" I remember thinking at the time "We have got her to adulthood in more or less one piece."



My oven to bin ratio of cooking has been good for once, though last week it got so burnt we had no supper at all. Preston does like to walk through the door at the end of the day to be bowled over by Dolly hysterical over his amazing return from the outside world, and find the wafting scent of cooking food.

He wouldn't want to be bowled over by her after today's lengthy morning walk, she always looks as if she has been on a quite different walk to any other dog in the park, she is often sodden before we have even got to the park, today was worse than most, she came home dripping wet and with leaves and twigs stuck to her, quite filthy. The only way to give her a bath is to run the garden hose from the kitchen sink hot tap up vertically up through the banisters to the bathroom and tie it to the tap, and fill the bath that way- We have to use a piece of wood to block her into the turquoise shower under the stairs. It is a challenge.

And that is why my Christmas present this year is a "Dog Blaster" It's a hair dryer for dogs that looks like a Hoover, it is unfortunate that she is scared of the Hoover, but never mind, needs must.

Salute, and Christmas blessings. Love Jane xxx

Silent Prayer

The Silent Prayer meetings continue in church on second Wednesdays of the month, 11am to 12md.

Future dates are:

14 February

14 March

11 April

These meetings are designed to give an opportunity to join with others for silent prayer and meditation. The space behind the altar is a perfect setting, having a quiet air of spirituality, silence and serenity. We begin with a short reading, then two sessions of twenty minutes in which we sit quietly in prayer or meditation with a short break between. If you are practised in meditation or simply wish to join others for the first time, you are welcome.

As we enter into the centre of our being, there is no time, no before and no after, there is only now, for us to be.

Ann Tait



Year's Mind February

Christopher Merse

Mary Pilkington

June Brudenell

Gwyneth George

Bella Callan

Roderick Owen

Readings for February 2018

Sunday 4 Feb., Second before Lent

10.30am Prov. 8. 1, 22-31

Col. 1. 15-20

John 1. 1-14

Sunday 11 Feb., Next before Lent

10.30am 2 Kings 2. 1-12

2 Cor. 4. 3-6

Mark 9.

Wednesday 14 Feb., Ash Wednesday

12.00md Joel 2. 1-2, 12-17

2 Cor. 5.20b-6.10

John 8. 1-11

7.00pm Matt. 6. 1-6, 16-21

Sunday 18 Feb., First Lent

10.30am Gen. 9. 8-17

1 Pet. 3. 18-end

Mark 1.9-15

Sunday 25 Feb., Second Lent

10.30am Gen. 17. 1-7, 15-16

Rom. 4. 13-end

Mark 8. 31-end



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 and Evening Prayer at 5.30pm, except Public Holidays. The weekday Eucharist is on Tuesdays at 1pm in the chancel.

St Mary's Church Bank Details:

Account name: PCC of St Mary with St Peter &
St Jude

Account number: 80692190

Sort code: 20-80-14

Parish Office

St. Mary's Church House 020 7835 1440

The Boltons, SW10 9TB

www.stmarytheboltons.org.uk

Vicar

Revd Jenny Welsh 020 7835 1440

07864 807959

vicar@stmarytheboltons.org.uk

(Day Off Thursday)

Parish Administrator

Max Noak 020 7835 1440

Mon to Thu 9am-2.30pm, Fri 9am-12noon

office@stmarytheboltons.org.uk

Verger/Caretaker

David Ireton 020 7244 8998

(Day Off Thursday) 07881 865386

Churchwardens

Antony Bryceson, 020 7937 1055

Edward Quinton, 020 7373 6094

Members of the PCC

James Bell

Leo Fraser-Mackenzie (*Deanery Synod Representative*)

Margarete Geier (*Deanery Synod Representative*)

Sheila Gibbs

Joanna Hackett (*PCC Secretary*)

Brian Hallock

Ann Mulcare (*Deanery and Diocesan Synod Representative*)

Katrina Quinton

Katrin Roskelly

Camila Ruz

Ann Tait

Kelly Webb

Anthony Williams

Director of Music

John Ward 07853 406050

boltonsmusic@gmail.com

Treasurer

Carolyn Stubbs 020 7835 0074

Assistant Treasurer

Bill Gallagher 020 7384 3246.

Electoral Roll Officer

Fiona Parsons (call Parish Office)

Gift Aid Secretary

Philip Bedford Smith 020 7937 3626

Clarion Editor

Verena Tschudin 020 7351 1263

Reading at St Cuthbert's and St Matthias' School

Sheila Gibbs 020 8788 9744

Social Secretary

Margarete Geier 020 7373 1639

Sunday School

(call Parish Office)

Safeguarding Officer

Safeguarding at St Mary's

The St Mary The Boltons' Safeguarding Officer is Clair Gordon. 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 Clair on 07850 944 834. In the event of Clair not being available, Kelly Webb may be contacted at 07971 552 014.

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

Contributions for the March Clarion should be sent to the Parish Office by 26 February 2019.

The PCC of St. Mary with St Peter & St. Jude, West Brompton is a Registered Charity, No 1133073