

TO MY FRIENDS

Writing this on the second Sunday of Easter I have noticed over this weekend a mixture of national feeling and mood. There continues to be fear in all its manifestations, a genuine concern for wellbeing, many are beginning to realise the novelty of staying at home is beginning to wear off, but perhaps uppermost now is the sense of thanksgiving. I too am thankful, thankful to all those who in spite of these difficult and life-threatening circumstances are continuing to work to keep us safe. I am grateful for those in our own communities who have been shopping, phoning and supporting each other in different ways. The outpouring of gratitude is entirely right on the national stage and even more appropriate for those locally to be shown our appreciation.

The frustration of being in lock- down may have caused you to feel that you want or even need to do something practical to help, but for various reasons are not able to be out and about. You can of course stay in touch and make a few phone calls to others as a way of community support and in doing so keep your own wellbeing in good shape. But we can also engage in prayer. Prayer is a ministry in itself as we hold others before God. The prophet Ezekiel explains that we stand in the breach between heaven and earth, between God and others to plead their case. The common word used in church for this type of prayer is “intercede”, a word that literally means go between. Far from being an easy task, a prayer method, it involves entering into relationship; a disciplined relationship with God and a costly relationship with the world around us. The former archbishop Michael Ramsey suggested that intercession was, *“standing before God with the people on your heart”*. This is really getting involved in others’ lives, in the pain and frustration, in the suffering and sense of loss, but also in the joy and celebration and thanksgiving. Because it is to do with our heart it often produces tears and emotions in us that costs us. This is hard work, but it is vital work in our everyday and especially during these difficult times. If you feel you want or need to do something to help and have to remain indoors then I urge you to pray. Make a list of people you know or think of a hospital, care home or frontline service near you and hold them in your heart before God, it is such important work.

With my thoughts and prayers especially at this time.

Jeremy

WARMLEY WARBLINGS

We remember in our regular prayers, those of our church family who have been unwell, thinking in particular of Mervyn and Lil Little, Martin Pullin, Margaret Hill, Kath Palmer, John Eames, Roger and Pauline Newman, we wish them all well.

As usual, we remember all of our friends who are in residential or nursing homes at this time, Grace Watson, Eileen Penny, John Short, Marjory Cox and Rita Jones.

This has been a really difficult month for all of us as we struggle with the impact and the restrictions imposed on us all by the Coronavirus outbreak. All of us are in lockdown but for some with underlying health conditions and who have received their instructions from the government to stay at home for three months, it is particularly challenging and worrying. However, like many others, St. Barnabas is a family and I am delighted to report that many of our really vulnerable church family are saying how much help and support they have received. This has come in the form of support with shopping, delivering medication and just as important, particularly for people on their own, receiving phone calls from clergy and other church members. This contact makes such a difference to those people and is only to be encouraged as much as possible.

FROM THE EDITOR

The May magazine will be published but sadly, not printed and thereby, not delivered to our readers as usual. For those who are fortunate enough to have access to the internet, the May magazine will appear on our website at www.warmleychurch.org

Brian Draper

75 YEARS ON - BOYHOOD MEMORIES OF VE DAY

Sadly the VE 75 Street Party in Church Road has to be postponed. But it has taken my thoughts back to 1945. With my parents, sister and brother I spent the war years in Bath. We lived on Wellsway just where Entry Hill forks left.

On Monday 7th May there was a buzz of excitement – could the war in Europe which had broken out just before my 4th birthday really be coming to an end? Just a year earlier I stood for hours at our gate watching an unending convoy of military vehicles heading up Wellsway for the south coast. And in September 1944 the sky was filled with a mass of planes towing gliders heading for Arnhem though of course no civilian knew their destination at the time.

Bedtime arrived and I wondered what the next day would bring. In earlier years on going to bed Christine and I had hoped that the sirens would sound an air raid warning because that meant the excitement of going down to the basement and crowding into the Anderson steel table shelter. It also signalled the production as if by magic of our favourite siren sweets.

All that was two or three years in the past but tonight before I got off to sleep there was a pounding on the stairs and Dad said ‘Get your dressing gowns and slippers. It’s on the news. The Germans have surrendered. We are lighting the Victory in Europe bonfire now’. Up Wellsway we headed to the Bloomfield Sports Club where for a week or more a bonfire had been growing in size. Crowds of cheering and clapping people surrounded the fire as it went up in flames complete with a straw filled Adolf Hitler on top. Soon it was home to bed but with the promise of more celebrations the next day.

On Tuesday 8th May the streets of Bath were filled with street parties. Long tables down the middle were loaded with good things hoarded in store cupboards through the years of rationing. Now was the time to enjoy them.

But even in 1945 Wellsway, as the route for the frequent number 3 and 4 routes, was not ideal for a street party so our family went down into Bath and found our way to Queen Square. Not only the centre of the square (accessible thanks to its metal railings having been requisitioned for the war effort 6 years before) but all the surrounding streets were packed with people many in uniform of every description.

Loudspeakers protruded from a first floor window and at each invitation to cheer the Royal Family, Mr Churchill, Field Marshal Montgomery and our soldiers, sailors and airmen there came a mighty roar.

Music for dancing was dedicated to every hero including at one point 'This next number is for our gallant Russian allies'. Everyone joined in singing 'Pack up your troubles' and 'The white cliffs of Dover'. And the dance of the evening was the Hokey Cokey 'You'll put your left leg in etc etc'.

It was a night to remember – many thanks for sharing it with me. I look forward to another equally great celebration as we emerge from lock down when, as Vera Lynn and more recently the Queen have said, 'We'll meet again'.

Ken Gibson

HOW BRITAIN CELEBRATED VE DAY

On 30 April 1945, Adolf Hitler committed suicide in a Berlin bunker. After his death, Reichspräsident Karl Dönitz took the reins of power and headed a new administration known as the Flensburg Government. On May the 7, Dönitz and his staff met with allied commanders in Reims, France to sign the formal act of military surrender ending nearly 6 years of total war in Europe.

Celebrations erupted throughout the world from Moscow to Melbourne. More than one million people took to the streets to celebrate and in London while crowds massed in Trafalgar Square and up the Mall to Buckingham Palace, where King George VI and Queen Elizabeth, accompanied by Prime Minister Winston Churchill, appeared on the balcony of the palace before the cheering crowds. Even Princess Elizabeth and her sister Princess Margaret were allowed to take part in the celebrations and wander incognito among the crowds.

On May 8th, exactly 70 years ago today, street parties were held in towns and villages the length and breadth of the country and local reporters were on hand to photograph and record the festivities.





*Our church warden is not letting
people into the church just now*

ALL IN THE MONTH OF MAY

It was:

200 years ago, on 11th May 1820 that the British Royal Navy sloop HMS Beagle was launched. This was the ship that took the naturalist Charles Darwin on his scientific voyage around the world (1831-36).

Also 200 years ago: on 12th May 1820 that Florence Nightingale was born. This Italian-born British social reformer and statistician saved thousands of lives and became the founder of modern nursing.

175 years ago: on 12th May 1845 that Gabriel Faure, the French composer was born.

125 years ago: on 20th May 1895 that R J Mitchell was born. This British aeronautical engineer designed the iconic Supermarine Spitfire fighter plane as well as several racing seaplanes.

100 years ago: on 17th May 1920 that the Dutch national airline KLM's first flight took place, from London to Amsterdam. Scheduled services began in 1921.

90 years ago, on 24th May 1930 that British aviator Amy Johnson became the first woman to fly solo from England to Australia.

80 years ago, 1940: WORLD WAR II

10th May: Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain resigned after losing the support of many Conservatives in the House of Commons. Succeeded by Winston Churchill.

10th-28th May: It what was called Case Yellow, Germany invaded Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg.

10th May: Germany dropped its first bombs on England, at Chilham and Petham in Kent.

13th May: Winston Churchill gave his first speech in the House of Commons, saying: "I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears and sweat."

14th May: The Home Guard was established, nicknamed Dad's Army as it was comprised of volunteers who were ineligible for military service, usually because of their age.

26th May-4th June: The Battle of Dunkirk. Allied forces launched a massive evacuation of troops from Dunkirk, France, across the English Channel to England after they were cut off by approaching German forces. Nearly 340,000 soldiers were rescued in a hastily assembled fleet of 800 boats.

75 years ago, 1945: WORLD WAR II

2nd May: The Battle of Berlin ended. Allied victory which led to the surrender of all German forces by 8th/9thMay, and the end of the war in Europe.

8th May: VE Day (Victory in Europe) – celebrated as a public holiday.

28th May: British-born Nazi propaganda broadcaster Lord Haw-Haw (William Joyce) was captured by the British Army and taken to Britain to face trial. (He was convicted of treason and sentenced to death on 19thSeptember and hanged on 3rd January 1946.)

70 years ago, on 13th May 1950 that the first Formula One World Championship race was held, at Silverstone in England. (This race is also known as the 1950 British Grand Prix.)

60 years ago, on 23rd May 1960 that Israel announced that Nazi Adolf Eichmann had been captured in Argentina. He was responsible for organising the mass extermination of Jews in WWII. He was tried, sentenced to death and executed in June 1962.

50 years ago, on 8th May 1970 that the Beatles released their final album, *Let it Be*.

40 years ago, on 5th May 1980 that Operation Nimrod took place, when the British SAS stormed the Iranian Embassy in London after a six-day siege.

30 years ago, on 22nd May 1990 that Max Wall, British music hall, stage, film and TV comedian, and actor died. Acclaimed for his serious roles as well as his comic talents.

20 years ago, on 3rd May 2000 that Ken Livingstone was elected as the first Mayor of London.

10 years ago, on 6th May 2010 that the British General Election ended in a hung parliament. A coalition government was formed by the Conservative Party and the Liberal Democrats, with Conservative Party Leader David Cameron as Prime Minister and Liberal Democrat Nick Clegg as Deputy Prime Minister.

MAY CROSSWORD CLUES

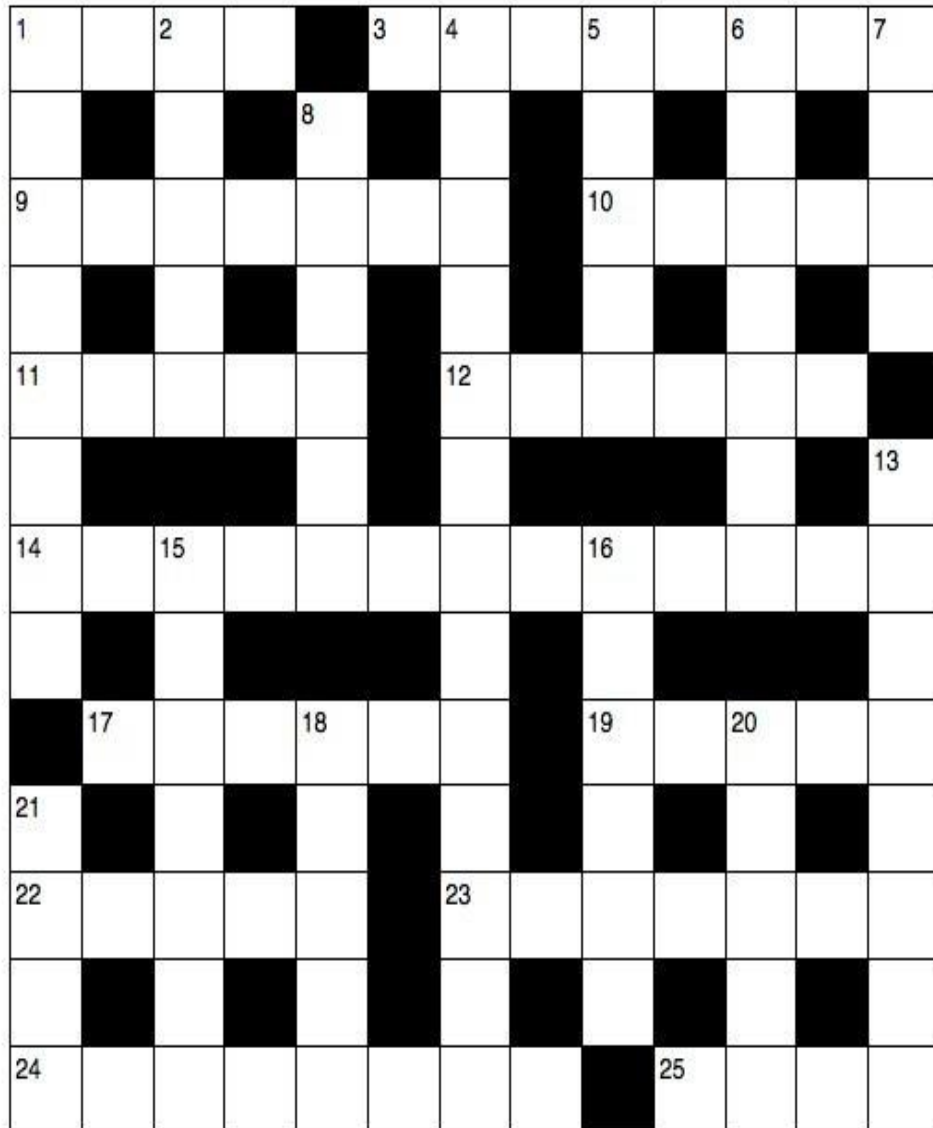
Across

- 1 'Therefore let us — passing judgment on one another' (Romans 14:13)
(4)
- 3 'I — — these persons here present' (Marriage service) (4,4)
- 9 According to a prearranged timetable (Numbers 28:3) (7)
- 10 Group of eight (5)
- 11 The cell into which the Philippian jailer put Paul and Silas (Acts 16:24)
(5)
- 12 — Taylor, pioneer missionary to China (6)
- 14 Otherwise known as the Eucharist, Breaking of Bread, the Lord's Table
(4,9)
- 17 'So that after I have preached to others, I — will not be disqualified for
the prize' (1 Corinthians 9:27) (6)
- 19 Attend to (3,2)
- 22 Approximately (Acts 4:4) (5)
- 23 Tea rite (anag.) (7)
- 24 Rule of sovereign (8)
- 25 Test (anag.) (4)

Down

- 1 The name of the street where Judas lived in Damascus and where
Saul of Tarsus stayed (Acts 9:11) (8)
- 2 'The playing of the merry — , sweet singing in the choir' (5)
- 4 'We have been saying that — — was credited to him as righteous'
(Romans 4:9) (8,5)
- 5 Dr Martyn — Jones, famous for his ministry at Westminster Chapel (5)
- 6 Port at which Paul landed on his way to Rome (Acts 28:13) (7)
- 7 Observe (Ruth 3:4) (4)
- 8 Minister of religion (6)
- 13 'I am — of this man's blood. It is your responsibility' (Matthew 27:24)
(8)
- 15 'Greater love has no one than this, that he — — his life for his friends'
(John 15:13) (3,4)
- 16 Archbishop who calculated that the world began in 4004BC (6)
- 18 'No one can — the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the
Spirit' (John 3:5) (5)
- 20 Establish by law (5)
- 21 Product of Gilead noted for its healing properties (Jeremiah 46:11) (4)

MAY CROSSWORD



21st MAY – ASCENSION DAY

40 days after Easter comes Ascension Day. These are the 40 days during which the Risen Christ appeared again and again to His disciples, following His death and resurrection. (*Matthew 28; Mark 16; Luke 24; and John 20.*)

The Gospels give us little of Christ's teachings and deeds during those 40 days. Jesus was seen by numerous of His disciples: on the road to Emmaus, by the Sea of Galilee, in houses, etc. He strengthened and encouraged His disciples, and at last opened their eyes to all that the Scriptures had promised about the Messiah. Jesus also told them that as the Father had sent Him, He was now going to send them – to all corners of the earth, as His witnesses.

Surely the most tender, moving 'farewell' in history took place on Ascension Day. Luke records the story with great poignancy: 'When Jesus had led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, He lifted up His hands – and blessed them.' As Christmas began the story of Jesus' life on earth, so Ascension Day completes it, with His return to His Father in heaven. Jesus' last act on earth was to bless His disciples. He and they had a bond as close as could be: they had just lived through three tumultuous years of public ministry and miracles – persecution and death – and resurrection! Just as we part from our nearest and dearest by still looking at them with love and memories in our eyes, so exactly did Jesus: 'While He was blessing them, He left them and was taken up into heaven.' (Luke 24:50-1) He was not forsaking them, but merely going on ahead to a kingdom which would also be theirs one day: 'I am ascending to my Father and to your Father, to my God and your God...' (John 20:17)

The disciples were surely the most favoured folk in history. Imagine being one of the last few people on earth to be face to face with Jesus, and have Him look on you with love. No wonder then that Luke goes on: 'they worshipped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. And they stayed continually at the temple, praising God.' (Luke 24:52,53)

No wonder they praised God! They knew they would see Jesus again one day! 'I am going to prepare a place for you... I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.' (John 14:2,3) In the meantime, Jesus had work for them to do: to take the Gospel to every nation on earth.

31st MAY – DAY OF PENTECOST, WHIT SUNDAY

Pentecost took place on the well-established Jewish festival of Firstfruits, which was observed at the beginning of the wheat harvest. It was seven weeks after Easter, or 50 days including Easter.

A feast day to celebrate the country's wheat harvest does not sound exactly world-changing, but that year, it became one of the most important days in world history. For Pentecost was the day that Jesus sent the Holy Spirit – the day the Church was born.

Jesus had told His disciples that something big was going to happen, and that they were to wait for it in Jerusalem, instead of returning to Galilee. Jesus had plans for His disciples, but He knew they could not do the work themselves. They would need His help.

And so, they waited in Jerusalem, praying together with His other followers, for many days. And then on that fateful morning there was suddenly the sound as of a mighty rushing wind. Tongues of flame flickered on their heads, and they began to praise God in many tongues, to the astonishment of those who heard them. The curse of Babel (Genesis 11: 1- 9) was dramatically reversed that morning.

That morning the Holy Spirit came to indwell the disciples and followers of Jesus. The Church was born. The Christians were suddenly full of life and power, utterly different from their former fearful selves. The change in them was permanent.

Peter gave the first ever sermon of the Christian Church that morning, proclaiming Jesus was the Messiah. His boldness in the face of possible death was in marked contrast to the man who had denied Jesus 50 days before. And 3,000 people responded, were converted, and were baptised. How's that for fast church growth!

Of course, Pentecost was not the first time the Holy Spirit had acted in this world. All through the Old Testament there are accounts of how God's Spirit guided people and strengthened them. But now, because of Christ's death and resurrection, He could INDWELL them. From now on, every Christian could have the confidence that Jesus was with them constantly, through the indwelling of His Holy Spirit.

LIFE IN QUARANTINE

Full marks to Jamie Oliver for his Channel 4 series, 'Keep Cooking and Carry On'. He showed us how to make tasty meals with basic ingredients and a minimum of fuss.

The pandemic prompted other encouraging responses. One mother in the 'at risk' category said her adult children thought she was immortal until now. Now they ring her every day to see how she's getting on. An elderly clergyman had offers to shop from two new neighbours whom he hardly knew. The whole nation stopped taking the National Health Service for granted and started showing gratitude. Telephone, television, the internet and email prevented many from going stir-crazy. Some even tried the cryptic crossword, though newcomers should be warned it takes years to learn its secrets!

The isolation was tough for many. Isolated families had to get used to each other's company and foibles for long periods, away from the park or beach. Couples were parted from each other by distance or illness. Those living alone were cut off from visitors and communal activities. Churchgoers missed Holy Communion at Easter for the first time. That should help us identify with millions of Christians across the world who have to pray in secret because their neighbours would persecute them if they did so publicly.

Alone-ness, rather than loneliness, can be productive. Albert Einstein valued time alone, when he could "go for long walks on the beach so that I can listen to what is going on inside my head." Isaac Newton's greatest discoveries began when he escaped the effects of the bubonic plague, by returning home to the family farm in Lincolnshire. He had time to observe what was going on around him and, yes, that did include watching the famous apple fall.

When the bubonic plague was at its peak, the Reformer Martin Luther wrote: *"I shall ask God mercifully to protect us. Then I shall fumigate, help purify the air, administer medicine and take it. I shall avoid places and persons where my presence is not needed in order not to become contaminated and thus perchance inflict and pollute others and so cause their death as a result of my negligence. If God should wish to take me, He will surely find me and I have done what He has expected of me, and so I am not responsible for either my own death or the death of others."*

THE WISDOM OF AFTERNOON TEA

My wife and I were at one time missionaries with the Overseas Missionary Fellowship. We joined them in 1975 after a period of training at their headquarters in London. While we were there, we met the hostess of the Mission Home, a matronly lady who had herself served overseas. She was a formidable person, but with a soft heart, and a depth of spiritual wisdom.

I remember her offering to our group of would-be missionaries this piece of sage advice: "The missionaries who stay the longest on the field are those who have their afternoon tea." It struck me then as being very profound, and it is a life rule that I have followed ever since, with great benefits.

This practice of course is typically British, but valuable none the less. For us, a cup of tea is the answer to everything. "Let's make a cup of tea," we say in any crisis. It soothes and refreshes and helps us get things in perspective. Somehow things seem much brighter when you have had a cuppa, especially if shared with friends or colleagues.

But there is more to the custom of afternoon tea. This little ritual gives us permission to stop in the midst of a busy day and rest a while. It enables us to make contact with others, and to step back from whatever is filling our mind at the time. And over time, these little oases are the way we care for our souls as well as our bodies.

We read that Jesus, when He was tired, sat down by the well at Sychar (John 4:6). He gave Himself permission to stop and have a break. I like to think on that basis He would heartily approve of afternoon tea.

A LITTLE HUMOUR

Why Jesus walked on water

A tourist, planning a trip to the Holy Land, was aghast when he found it would cost £50 an hour to rent a boat on the Sea of Galilee. “Goodness,” he objected to the travel agent. “In England it would not have been more than £20.”

“That might be true,” said the travel agent, “but you have to take into account that the Sea of Galilee is water on which our Lord Himself walked.”

“Well, at £50 an hour for a boat,” said the tourist, “it’s no wonder He walked.”

Baby sitting

We encouraged our 18-year-old daughter to find a job to help pay for her college education. One day she came home with five applications, and later that evening we read them. Under ‘Previous Employment’, she listed ‘Baby sitting’. And under ‘Reason for Leaving’ she wrote, ‘They came home’.

Good and kind

The retiring sidesman was instructing his youthful successor in his Sunday morning duties. “And remember, my boy,” he said, “that we have nothing but good, kind Christians in this church – until you try to put someone else in their pew.”

Asleep

A young man fell asleep in the Sunday morning service, and soon began to snore. The preacher stopped and impatiently motioned to the young boy beside the man to wake him up. The boy said: “Wake him up yourself, you put him to sleep.”

Water

The Bishop was coming to speak at Deanery Synod and everything that could be done to make the evening a success had been done. There were fresh flowers on the table, and coffee and cakes prepared. When the Bishop arrived, however, he was in a crabby frame of mind. Looking around, he beckoned a nervous vicar over. “I would like to have a glass of water in front of me on the table, if you please,” he said.

“To drink?” was the vicar’s idiotic question.

“Oh no,” was the sarcastic reply. “When I’ve been speaking half an hour about parish shares, I do a high dive.”