

August Newsletter

We welcome you to this month's publication, which we hope will be something to lift your spirits and be thought provoking too! There are printed copies available in Lady St Mary Church and these can be picked up at the 10am service and taken to people who do not have the internet and so if you can share it by posting a copy to a neighbour, but please be careful to practise all necessary precautions.

News from the Ministry Team ...

Dear Friends,

I wonder what you associate with the month of August? Is it family days on the beach, or relaxing with friends, or trying to entertain family as the rain streams down, or long weary days on your own at home while everyone else seems to be out having fun? I suspect that August will be different for most of us this year, either because of restrictions, or the need to protect ourselves or family members from risk of infection, or simply because we were not able to make plans earlier in the year. Emerging from lockdown somehow seems to be bringing even more uncertainties.

So how as Christians can we flourish during such times, rather than simply survive?

St Paul wrote to the Christians in Philippi that he had learned to be content in whatever circumstances he found himself, whether in need or in plenty (Philippians 4:11-12). He wrote these words while imprisoned and in chains, a more extreme lockdown than any of us have experienced. He does not explicitly tell us how he has learnt this lesson but there are quite a few clues.

First of all, there is the fact that we have his words preserved today. While he was in prison, he kept busy writing letters, sending messages, and praying for his fellow Christians in many different places. He was outward looking, seeking for ways in which he could further the kingdom of God despite his situation. Who might we be called to contact and encourage?

Then there are two clues in the same chapter of the letter to the Philippians.

Verse 5 tells us, 'Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.' So that, in the next verse, 'the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus'. Whether we are stuck at home and bored, or too busy doing things, if we find time to pray about the things that concern, worry, or frustrate us, God will give us his peace as we trust in him.

The very next verse (7) advises us to think about the things that are true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent, and praiseworthy. To do so will lift our mood and help us to be grateful to God. Each of us has been blessed with many things in this life, even if it is the simple things such as water to drink and air to breathe. But more than that, we are offered the spiritual blessing of a relationship with the creator of all that is. As A. W. Tozer wrote in his book *The Knowledge of the Holy*, "The whole outlook of mankind might be changed if we could all believe that we live under a friendly sky and that the God of heaven, though exalted in power and majesty, is eager to be friends with us."

But I suspect that Paul's biggest secret to living a contented life is that he did not consider his life as something to be lived for his own benefit, but rather as something to be offered up to God in love and gratitude for what God had done for him. So, he wrote to the Corinthians, 'And he [Jesus] died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again (2 Cor 5.15).

If this August gives us any extra space, let us use it to reflect on what changes we might make to help us put Christ's interests ahead of our own. For in living for Christ and not for ourselves, we will find true contentment and peace in our hearts and be a blessing to those around us as well. Jesus said, 'For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it' (Matthew 16.25).

May God bless this month to us.

Helen.

Faithful or Reckless - Coming out of Lockdown

You may have heard me tell of the Missionary Doctor who visited the theological college Linda and I attended to encourage those present to think about serving God abroad. He had served in Uganda for many years and had retired three times, but God and the people kept calling him and his wife back. He talked enthusiastically about the wonderful ways in which he had seen God at work and how he had seen the Lord provide. At the end of his talk, he asked if there were any questions. One of the students asked if it would not

be rather irresponsible for him to go to Uganda with his wife and young family, after all at the time, AIDs was prevalent and healthcare rather basic and some areas were rather dangerous for Europeans to live in. The Doctor looked the student straight in the eye and said, “Your child could get run over tomorrow here in London. Remember this, there is no place safer on this earth than where God wants you to be.” It was a lesson to us all, and Linda and I have lived by that lesson ever since.

As restrictions are lifted and we begin to come out of lockdown the Ministry Team has had to think long and hard about what that might look like in the parish. What does God want us to do? Interestingly, the first Sunday after this emancipation the church celebrated the martyrdom of Saint James, the first apostle to die for his faith in Christ Jesus. Reading the Acts of the Apostles this happens after the death of Stephen when the Church suffered persecution by King Herod. It would have been very easy for the early church to go underground and keep their heads down until the danger had passed but instead, they did the opposite. They shouted more loudly about the good news of Jesus, and they went out of their way to show their love for others in practical ways as famine throughout the empire was prophesied (Acts 11:28).

I am sure that there would have been some who thought this reckless but for the Apostles reaching out in this way was an expression of their faith in Jesus. Keeping our churches open for worship during the lockdown was seen by some as reckless but for others meeting together to worship and pray was an important statement of faith to our community, in a time of national (and global) crisis. The Ministry Team believed; therefore, it was important to give people the opportunity to worship and pray in our church buildings whilst making sure that online and telephone services were available as well.

Now we need to consider again the way forward. There are those who would like us to stay as we are for the foreseeable future, until the danger passes (does it ever?), and there are others who would like us to abandon all the restrictions of the past year and a half with immediate effect. Instead, we are proposing a sensitive and gradual easing out of restrictions as follows:

- Although face masks are no longer mandatory, we would recommend that our worshippers are sensitive to the needs of those around.
- If worshippers, out of necessity or preference, feel they need to remain masked at all times we suggest that they sit near the back of the church, nearest to the open doors.
- We suggest that, if possible, people wear their mask when singing hymns and songs as this is the time when water droplets are most likely to be spread around.
- In Lady St Mary church, we intend to keep alternate pews taped off to allow for some social distancing.
- We suggest that there is no physical contact when sharing the peace with those around.

- We will not be reintroducing the sharing of wine in the chalice, but instead we will intinct the communion wafers with some wine so that communicants can receive in both kinds.
- In Wareham we are hoping to reintroduce after-service coffee in and around the Parish Hall, as of Sunday 25th July (TBC), and maybe on the Parish Green, weather permitting, on other summer Sundays.

The above have primarily been formulated for Lady St Mary church but can be adapted and applied to the other churches of the team as appropriate.

We cannot please all the people all the time, but we hope that we can please the majority by these initial steps, which we will review at the end of August. At the end of the day, I think all of the above can be summed up by us using common sense and having due regard for those around – this goes for our meeting in church buildings and in the wider community.

I wish you health and happiness.

Canon Simon Everett – Team Rector.

St Edward's Way – A Dorset Pilgrimage

On 18th March 978 King Edward met his end at nearby Corfe Castle. It is claimed he was murdered by his stepmother Elfryda in order to put her own son Ethelred (the unready! Edward's half brother) on the throne. He was quickly buried in Wareham within minimal pomp in order not to draw attention to what had taken place. However, a year later in AD 979 his body was removed from Wareham for reburial in Shaftesbury, and later around AD 1001 he was reburied in the Abbey with a service led by the Bishop of Sherborne!

To commemorate this a cross-country walk from Wareham to Shaftesbury has been devised and waymarked by the Dorset Ramblers. Originally the inaugural walk was to have taken place last March to coincide with St Edwards day but due to the Covid lockdown this had to be postponed. With the lifting of restrictions, it is now planned to take place starting on Thursday 2nd September, led by the Bishop of Sherborne, the Rt Revd. Karen Gorham.

Bishop Karen hopes that she will be joined by people from all the parishes she passes though, whether they join for a section, a day, or the full distance. The plan is to walk around 10 miles a day, starting at Lady St Mary church, Wareham at 9.30am (although bacon butties will be available in Not Just Sundaes from 8.30am!). It will finish on Saturday afternoon with a short service in the Abbey. Before then Bishop Karen hopes to circulate some leaflets giving more details and an email link for booking. Why not give it a go?

The route is planned to pass:

Day 1 (Thursday, 2nd September) Lady St Mary church, Wareham/Wareham Forest/Lunch at Bloxworth/Winterborne Kingston.

Day 2 (Friday, 3rd September) Winterborne Kingston/ Lunch at Winterborne Stickland/Turnworth/ Shillingstone

Day 3 (Saturday, 4th September) Shillingstone/Child Okeford/Pass through the back of Fontmell Magna/lunch at Bedchester Crossroads/ Shaftesbury

It is hoped that this can be a fun event as well as a time of prayer and reflection, so please pray for dry weather for the duration! S.E

Dorset Historic Churches Ride and Stride

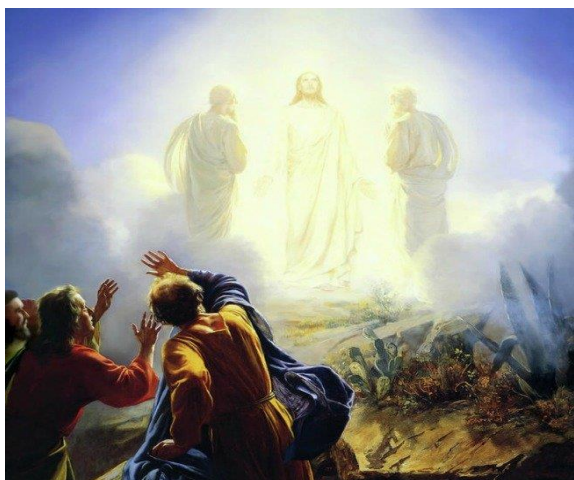
The St Edward's way walk is just a week before the annual Dorset Historic Churches Trust (DHCT) Ride and Stride, so why not use it as warm up for this fundraising event. The Ride and Stride, always takes place on (or around) the second Saturday of September and raises funds for the preservation and repair of the historic churches of the county. Indeed, the churches of our Team have received grants and loans from this august body, which have helped enormously over the years. Sponsor forms will be available from the Parish Office from the middle of August and whether you choose to cycle, walk, run, or ride a horse you can go as far as you like. The idea is to visit as many churches as you can, but do not let that put you off – the idea is to have a good fun day out, whilst raising much needed funds. If you are unable to take part, you might consider sponsoring a friend or one of the clergy. Half the proceeds go to the fabric fund of the local church and the other half to DHCT.



S.E.

Holy Days

6th August: The Transfiguration of Jesus



It is an unusual story. One day, Jesus is with three disciples on a high mountain in Galilee, when His appearance dramatically changes. Also, Moses and Elijah suddenly appear, and from a cloud comes the voice of God. What is this all about?

This event was witnessed by James, Peter, and John. They were close friends of Jesus. In the future, they were to become prominent leaders in the Early Church. They needed to see something special that would help them remember Jesus in the difficult years ahead. They had a glimpse

of Christ in His divine glory. His face shone like the sun and His clothes turned white as light.

While this was an extraordinary sight for the disciples, it served to encourage Jesus who once had glory and majesty in Heaven. One day He would have it again. But firstly, He had to fulfil His mission: to suffer on the cross and die.

Why were Moses and Elijah standing with Jesus? Moses was the giver of the Law and Elijah represented all the prophets. They had pointed people to the promised Messiah. Jesus was about to complete God's plan of salvation.

God's voice was heard to remind Peter there was no need to build shelters. They were not going to stay on the mountain. God spoke to get the disciples to fix their attention of Jesus. The wonder of the Transfiguration was a short interlude before Jesus had to return to His work and subsequent death on the cross.

This story is a reminder that our times of spiritual blessing must be followed by down-to-earth commitments and responsibilities. In the same way that Jesus gave His friends a glimpse of His awesome glory, to help them face challenging and traumatic times ahead, our special times in His presence are provided to encourage us and equip us for the trials we may have to face.

Our journey through life may sometimes rise to the peaks but we cannot stay on a 'high' all the time – no matter how much we want it! We must descend to face everyday challenges if we are to fulfil our calling in Christ. From *our* mountain-top experiences we all need to find a balance between times alone with God and serving Him in the company of others.

15th August: 'Shall we not love thee, Mother dear?'



The Church responds with a resounding 'Yes' to that question, as we celebrate the Blessed Virgin Mary on 15th August. (Usually, her feast day is on the 16th.) An ancient name for this day is the transition of Mary – her crossing over to eternal life – or the assumption of Mary. But her story begins in the Gospels, in Nazareth and Bethlehem.

At the Annunciation, Gabriel announces the good news to Mary. She becomes a mother and embarks on a journey that takes her to the temple in Jerusalem, a wedding feast at Cana, the Cross of Calvary, and the upper room of Pentecost. Through Christian history her story has spoken to people in every age and culture and land.

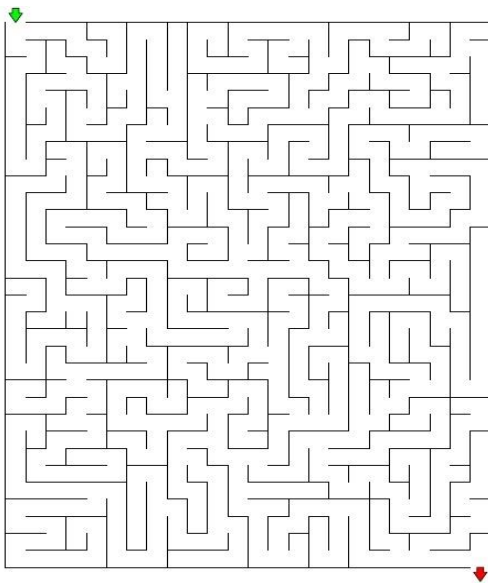
As we look at her life now, there are two qualities that stand out. The first is thanksgiving. Mary came from a people that realised the importance of thanking God, and her response to the good news is to raise her heart in the words of the Magnificat. 'My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, and my spirit exults in God my saviour.'

The second quality is trust. Rowan Williams has written that despite the years of controversy about the place of our Lady, we still need to hold out our hands

to her for guidance and succor. "For at the very least she is the first person to put her trust in God who is shown in Jesus." Through all that happened to her – the amazing news of Gabriel, no room at the inn, the worry over wine at the wedding – Mary ponders and trusts. To the servants at Cana, she says, "Do whatever Jesus tells you. It will be all right. You will see."

Thanksgiving and trust: easy enough to see in our Lady, but perhaps more difficult to own for ourselves. Yet Mary assures us that with God all things are possible. Holding on to that faith, we can journey with her Son through life and death to eternal life.

Puzzles



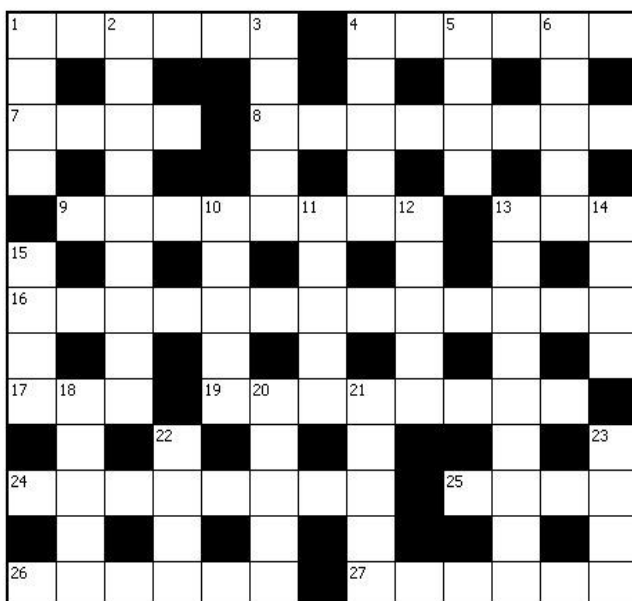
The Maze

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4	2					6		
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1	3		6		2		9	7
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	6			5	1	9		
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Sudoku

Crossword



Across

- 1 Of Moses (6)
- 4 'You have been weighed on the — and found wanting' (Daniel 5:27) (6)
- 7 Where Jesus performed the first of his miraculous signs (John 2:11) (4)
- 8 Roman emperor who ordered all the Jews to leave Rome (Acts 18:2) (8)
- 9 Member of a conservative Jewish party in the Sanhedrin which believed there was no resurrection (Acts 23:8) (8)
- 13 South London Mission (1,1,1)
- 16 Sure of one's own ability (2 Corinthians 11:17) (4-9)
- 17 'At this the man's face fell. He went away — , because he had great wealth' (Mark 10:22) (3)
- 19 Airs used (anag.) (8)
- 24 'The Lord is my — , I shall not be in want' (Psalm 23:1) (8)

- 25 'He has sent me to — up the broken-hearted' (Isaiah 61:1) (4)
- 26 At or towards the rear of a ship (6)
- 27 Cross-carrying evangelist and world traveller, — Blessitt (6)

Down

- 1 Ridicule (Luke 18:32) (4)
- 2 Encased in strapped-on light shoes (Song of Songs 7:1) (9)
- 3 Cambridge Inter-Collegiate Christian Union (1,1,1,1,1)
- 4 'Father, give me my — of your estate' (Luke 15:12) (5)
- 5 Assistant (4)
- 6 On a par (John 5:18) (5)
- 10 Credo (anag.) (5)
- 11 Beaten with a rod (5)
- 12 The fourth of Job's 'comforters', who deferred making his contribution because of his junior status (Job 32:6) (5)
- 13 Chosen as a temple attendant, he was described by Ezra as 'a capable man' (Ezra 8:18) (9)
- 14 'Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where — and rust destroy' (Matthew 6:19) (4)
- 15 Employs (4)
- 18 Associated with penitence for sins, along with sackcloth (Matthew 11:21) (5)
- 20 Association of South-East Asian Nations (1,1,1,1,1)
- 21 Sub-continent to which Baptist missionary pioneer William Carey devoted his life (5)
- 22 Recess at east end of a church (4)
- 23 One of the nine sons of Beriah (1 Chronicles 8:15) (4)

Contact information

Parish Office

The Parish Office has now reopened to answer all face to face enquiries, telephone and email enquiries Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. At all other times enquiries and queries can be made by email and they will be dealt with as soon as possible.

Contact details: www.warehamchurches.org.uk

Tel: 01929 550905, Email: parish.office@warehamchurches.org.uk

Address: Parish Office, Church Green, Wareham BH20 4ND



Members of the Team are available for confidential help, support, and advice. Please contact:

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