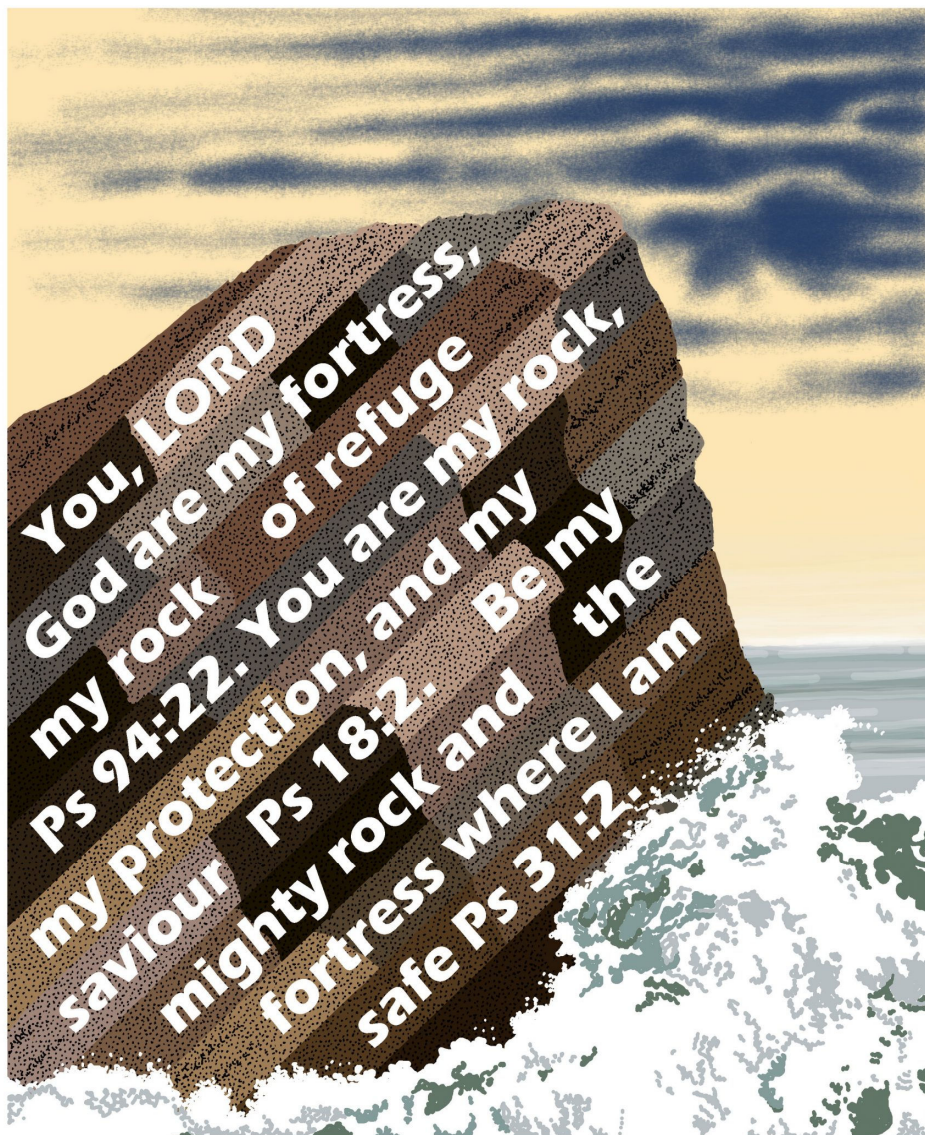




August 2020

# St Michael's, Oulton.



**You, LORD**  
**God are my fortress,**  
**my rock of refuge,**  
**Ps 94:22. You are my rock,**  
**my protection, and my**  
**saviour Ps 18:2. Be my**  
**mighty rock and the**  
**fortress where I am**  
**safe Ps 31:2.**

One of the bible passages, I often return to is Luke 10:38-42

As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him. She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said. But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him and asked, "Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!"

"Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "you are worried and upset about many things, but few things are needed—or indeed only one. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her."



The Rev. Helen Jary

As with all of Scripture, there is much here to guide, encourage and challenge. We're just emerging from a period of time when we have, for the most part, been forced to be less busy. However, as the lockdown is lifted, the pace of life is, once again, increasing. In general, before lockdown, many people seemed to be living busy lives, rushing from one appointment to the next, and fitting in friends and family in the in between..... or perhaps that was just me!

Lockdown has reminding us that, "only one thing is needed". And, when I begin each day with plenty of time to "sit at Jesus' feet", I find that everything falls into it's proper perspective and I live according to God's agenda, and not according to mine. I am less busy yet more productive. We must ensure that we continue to prioritise 'being with Jesus', however that looks for us, as we move forward from now. We have an opportunity to

proactively ensure that there is a positive shape to our 'new normal'.

But this story of Jesus' visit to the home of Mary and Martha does not solely challenge us in relation to the busyness and activity of our lives. As we scratch beneath the surface, by seeking to understand some of the language and social conventions of First Century Judea, a further story is revealed.

Why was Martha upset? On one level it was because her sister was not helping with the work but, on another level, she was upset because Mary was breaking with social convention. Mary "sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said." (Luke 10:39) To 'sit at the feet' of a teacher was to listen and receive instruction from a Rabbi. It was also a form of preparation for becoming a teacher yourself, as in Acts 22:3, which tells us of how the apostle Paul had received his own religious instruction 'at the feet of' Gamaliel.

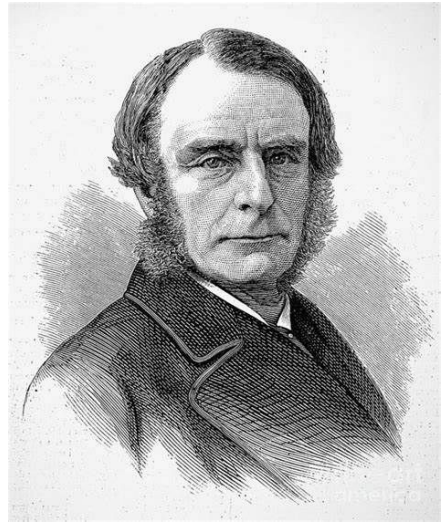
Martha was upset with Mary because she was breaking social convention. As she sat at Jesus' feet, receiving instruction, Mary was taking part in an occupation which was usually, and strictly, reserved for men alone. And, of her actions, Jesus says, "Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her."

As elsewhere in Scripture, this passage demonstrates the way in which Jesus was radically inclusive of those who were marginalised (which was the position of women at that time). And, by his words, Jesus affirms Mary as one worthy of instruction and as one worthy of being a teacher herself. It is the example of Jesus which informs our thinking and practice today. How can we be more inclusive of those who are sometimes marginalised by gender, ethnicity or economic circumstances?

With love and prayer—Helen

## Famous Christians - Rev. Charles Kingsley.

Charles Kingsley (12 June 1819 – 23 January 1875) was a broad church priest of the Church of England, a university professor, social reformer, historian, and novelist whose novels influenced social developments in Britain. He was a graduate of Magdalene College, Cambridge and was ordained in 1842. In 1844 he became vicar at Eversley, Hampshire where he spent most of his life. In 1859 he was appointed chaplain to Queen Victoria. In 1860, he became Regius Professor of Modern History at the University of Cambridge, and in 1861 a became a private tutor to the Prince of Wales.



As a founder member of the Christian Socialist Movement he was more interested in re-educating his own social class than changing political structures. He was a friend and correspondent of Charles Darwin and became one of the first churchmen to support Darwin's evolutionary theories. Disturbed by the Tractarian Movement, his novels, such as *Westward Ho!* (1855) and *Hereward the Wake* (1866) had an anti-Catholic slant.

Interestingly, Kingsley's novel *Westward Ho!* led to the founding of a village by the same name (the only place name in England with an exclamation mark) and inspired the construction of the Bideford, Westward Ho! and Appledore Railway.

He died of pneumonia on 23 January 1875 at Eversley, Hampshire, aged only 55 and was buried there in St Mary's Churchyard.

Quote: 'A man may learn from his Bible to be a more thorough gentleman than if he had been brought up in all the drawing-rooms in London.'

Charles Kingsley

## **Religious leaders condemn Beijing's new national security law for Hong Kong**

The former Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Rowan Williams, and Church of England bishops are among religious leaders who recently signed an international letter signed by hundreds of leaders around the world condemning Beijing's new national security law in Hong Kong.

It reads: "We, the co-signed, write to express grave concerns about the unilateral introduction of national security legislation by Beijing in Hong Kong.

"This is a comprehensive assault on the city's autonomy, rule of law, and fundamental freedoms. The integrity of one-country, two-systems hangs by a thread.

"It is the genuine grievances of ordinary Hong Kongers that are driving protests. Draconian laws will only escalate the situation further, jeopardising Hong Kong's future as an open Chinese international city.

"If the international community cannot trust Beijing to keep its word when it comes to Hong Kong, people will be reluctant to take its word on other matters.

"Sympathetic governments must unite to say that this flagrant breach of the Sino-British Joint Declaration cannot be tolerated."

The coalition is being led by former Hong Kong Governor Lord Patten and former UK Foreign Secretary, Sir Malcolm Rifkind, and spans the political spectrum. The Bishop of Leeds, the Rt Revd Nick Baines, the Bishop of Coventry, the Rt Rev Christopher Cocksworth, Lord Alton of Liverpool, Fiona Bruce MP and former Cabinet Minister, the Revd Jonathan Aitken, are among the Christians to have signed the statement.

Meanwhile, the head of Open Doors USA, David Curry, has warned that religious freedom could be curtailed in Hong Kong under the new legislation.

"It's concerning, when you consider how much surveillance and pressure is being put on the church of China, to see Hong Kong Christians facing these same restrictions," he said.

"We are very concerned by China's restrictions on religious liberty and human rights. I believe that China is rapidly developing, implementing and exporting a blueprint of persecution that will drive further restrictions on the free practice of faith throughout the region and even the world."

*Editor: by the Revd Peter Crumpler, a Church of England priest in St Albans, Herts, and a former communications director for the CofE.*

## **Pandemic ‘transforms the Church into Netflix’**

The Covid-19 pandemic has “propelled the Church into the contemporary world,” says a new report from CPAS, an Anglican evangelical mission agency working with UK and Irish churches.

‘Everyone Welcome Online’ looks at the lockdown’s impact on churches and concludes, “Last month we were the Odeon, today we are Netflix.

“In the 1950s, the Odeon was okay, but then along came consumer choice, individualism and crowded complex lifestyles. Then came TV film channels, and now Netflix, Prime and others, where you can watch whatever you want, whenever you want, wherever you are on whatever you’ve got.”

The authors, Bob Jackson and George Fisher, say “The Government has shut our ‘Odeons’ down, so in response we have stumbled into ‘Homespun Netflix’ and it’s looking promising.

“Most churches going online have discovered that far more people are accessing their services than ever came to the building. What seemed initially to be a devastating blow to churches may actually generate growth.”

Bishop of Sheffield Pete Wilcox described the 26-page report as “An astonishingly thorough and perceptive overview of online church.”

The authors, who devised the popular ‘Everybody Welcome’ course published by Church House Publishing, include feedback from churches experiencing increased numbers of people logging in for online services, both live and recorded.

One church reported “We’ve had a huge number of hits, many more than the number of people in church on a Sunday, connecting with people who would not come to a regular service.”

The report analyses who is responding and detects groups ranging from friends and family of church members, to the housebound with links to the church, people linked by christenings, weddings or funerals, people who have moved away, occasional churchgoers and people who have found the church through a denominational or diocesan link.

The authors encourage churches to make contact with people who are 'dropping in' to the services, suggesting "Contact as many people as you can to say hello and how nice it was to see them connect with the church, and ask how they are and how the church can help them."

People are finding it easier to access church online because they can join in the services without feeling concerned about 'doing the wrong thing' – like standing or sitting at the 'wrong' time – they don't have to enter a strange building and meet new people and they can access the services at a time that suits them.

One church reported: "One previously non-churchgoer said that online she felt comfortable, fully part of the service and so more welcomed than if she had been in the building unsure of how to behave."

The report's authors are keen to hear from churches about their experiences during lockdown and ask people to contact them at [allarewelcome2020@gmail.com](mailto:allarewelcome2020@gmail.com)

The 'Everyone Welcome Online' report can be accessed free at: <https://www.cpas.org.uk/church-resources/understanding-christian-leadership/everyone-welcome-online/everybody-welcome-online/#.Xs-E7UBFxPY>

## **SMILE LINES**

### **Keep your distance!**

I never thought the comment, "I wouldn't touch you with a six-foot pole" would become national policy, but here we are!

### **All in a name**

I'm dyslexic, and recently attended a Zoom conference about the disorder with a friend. The speakers asked us to share a personal experience with the group. I told them stress aggravates my condition, in which I reverse words and letters when I'm tense. When I finished speaking, my friend blurted out: "Now I know why you named your daughter Hannah!"

## The Rectory

### St James the Least of All



July 2020

My dear Nephew Darren

When the churches reopen for public worship (whenever that is!) I hope you will come and take Evensong one Sunday. But, thinking of your visit last August, I would prefer you used the pulpit when preaching. How could Colonel Brockle complete 'The Times' crossword and Miss Balmer her knitting with you constantly walking up and down in front of them? They found it most disconcerting, as out of politeness, they were obliged to listen to you. It was a unique experience they do not wish to repeat.

Those few who defy Anglican tradition and sit at the front of the church were also placed in the dilemma of trying to decide whether they should keep turning in their pews as you paraded down the nave and then rotating back to the front as you re-emerged up the side aisle. It did Lady Plump-tree's vertigo no good at all. It also allowed people to see that you were wearing suede shoes. For many of our worshippers, the most appalling of heresies are as nothing when compared to brown shoes under a cassock.

I appreciate you made heroic efforts and got your sermon down to 30 minutes, but that is still 20 minutes longer than they anticipated and 29 minutes longer than their attention span.

No, use the pulpit in future; that is the reason why stonemasons 600 years ago put twenty tons of marble in our church in the first place and it would be a shame to disappoint them. It also means that from a distance of 100 yards and a height of 20 feet, no one can tell that the glass of water I use liberally while preaching is in fact a gin and tonic.



I concede that our pulpit has its dangers. I have known several bishops come to grief as their robes wrap themselves around the newel post as they ascend the steps. One, unable to untangle himself, was obliged to preach while half-way up the steps and with his back to the congregation, while our vergers were dispatched to find a pair of scissors.

Perhaps, before your next visit, we may install a mechanical floor in the pulpit, so that after 10 minutes, it slowly lowers you into the crypt while the congregation can get on with singing the last hymn before getting home in decent time.

Your loving uncle,

Eustice.

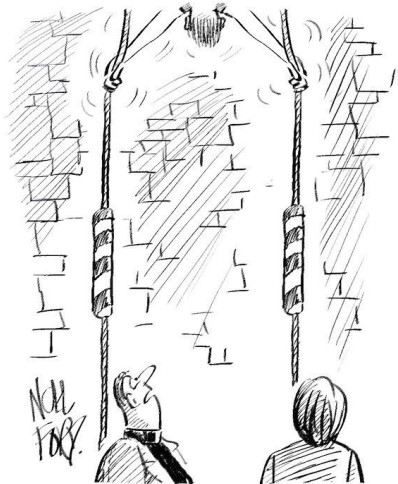
---

## Covid-19 and Bell Ringing.

We recently received an eight page Risk Assessment document for bell-ringers returning after Covid-19 issued by the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers, and as you might expect, it is a comprehensive guide which is to be implemented when the pandemic restrictions are lifted.

It stipulates that no peal of bells should be more than 20 minutes and the two meter social distancing rule must apply. This with our six-bell set-up would mean only three bells would be able to be rung at any given time.

Similarly only one ringer is allowed to ring one bell—no rotation of ringers which means that bell practice will be severely restricted. All of which means that the wonderful bells of St. Michael's will have to remain silent for a while yet.



*Eric took social distancing while bell ringing very seriously.*

## **Our Compassion Child**

You may know that over the past few years at St. Michael's Church, members of the congregation committed themselves to sponsoring a child through a charity called Compassion.

Our 'child' is actually a teenager, she is Rahel Julias Kuchela. Recently I received an update and more information about her that I can share with you for your prayers and financial support.

Rahel lives in Dodoma, Tanzania in Mpwapa District in Igoni Village with her mother, Suzana and two younger sisters, Winfrida and Witnes. One thing she loves to do is sing and in the future she would like to work in business.

Let's imagine for a moment, a teenager in the UK during the lockdown and pandemic: their feelings, their frustrations, their questions and their anxieties.

Now let's add those imaginings to what a teenager in East Africa might also experience. Although there are a relatively low number of Covid 19 cases, the issue of food becomes so much more than what's on the list to be delivered by Tesco (other supermarkets available). Earlier this year locusts and floods weakened the supply chain, many people face the terrible decision to risk infection to go to work. Families do not have savings to get them through a pandemic. It is difficult to follow health and sanitation recommendations. There is bad information spread on social media; for example, false cures.

The charity Compassion works with churches and other organisations to visit families, give supplies for hand sanitizing, and share good information about how the virus spreads and what to do to stay healthy. Prior to the pandemic, Rahel was attending College, and sessions held by the charity to help her grow in the Christian faith and talk about her future and her hopes.

Will you all join me in praying for Rahel and her family and for the Compassion staff and volunteers who continue to support her.

Thank you, Lis Hayden

# The doctor and the ill person

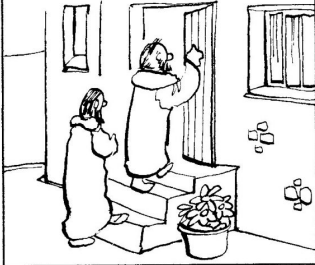


JESUS OFTEN TOLD STORIES WITH HIDDEN MEANINGS



ON ONE OCCASION JESUS CALLED MATTHEW - A TAX COLLECTOR TO BE HIS FOLLOWER.

JESUS EVEN WENT TO MATTHEW'S HOME.

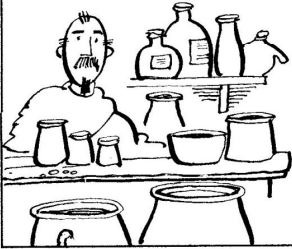


THIS SET PEOPLE'S TONGUES WAGGING. THEY THOUGHT JESUS WAS LETTING THE SIDE DOWN!

BUT JESUS EXPLAINED THAT IT WAS IMPORTANT TO TALK TO EVERYONE!

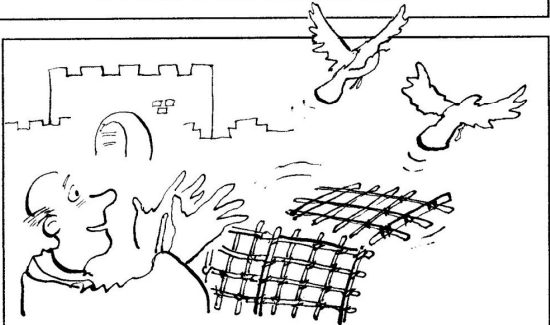


"PEOPLE WHO ARE WELL DO NOT NEED A DOCTOR"



"BUT ONLY THOSE WHO ARE SICK"

"IT IS KINDNESS THAT GOD WANTS"



"NOT ANIMAL SACRIFICES!" see Matthew Ch. 9 v.9-13

## A Strange and terrible Occurrence!

I was born on the edge of St Mary's churchyard in Bungay sometime way back in the last century. For those of you who know the area, St. Mary's church is literally across the road from the church of Holy Trinity. Historically St Mary's was the church of a Benedictine Priory before becoming the main parish church in 1536 following the dissolution of the monasteries. St Mary's is now under the care of the Churches Conservation Trust.

History tells us of a strange occurrence which happened here at St Mary's on Sunday the 4th of August 1577 and at nearby Blythburgh. A terrible thunderstorm struck the town, and the very devil incarnate, made his appearance, in the semblance of a large black dog. The following is a written account taken from the original tract which is held by the British Museum. The spelling is as it is written..



The Church of St. Mary, Bungay, Suffolk.

“On Sundaie the fourth of August, between the hours of nine and ten of the clocke in the fore noone, whilst the minister was reading of the second lesson in the parish church of Bliborough, a towne in Suffolke, a strange and terrible tempest of lightning and thunder strake through the wall of the same church into the ground almost a yard deepe, drauedowne all the people on that side aboute twentie persons, then renting the wall up to the vestre, cleft the doore, and returning to the steeple, rent the timber, brake the chimes, and fled towards Bongie a town six miles off. The people that were strikendowne were found groueling more than halfe an houre after, wherof one man more than fortie years and a boie of fifteen years old were found starke dead: the other were scortched. The same or the like flash of lightening and cracks of thunder rent the parish church at Bongie, nine miles from Norwich, wrong in sunder the wiers and wheels of the clocks, slue two men

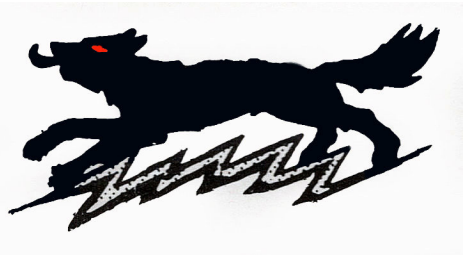
which sat in the befrieie, when the other were at the procession or suffrages, and scorched another which hardlie escaped.”

The narrator Abraham Fleming went on to say: “This black dog, or the diuel in such a likenesse (God heeknoweth all who worketh all,) runing all along down the body of the church with great swiftnesse, and incredible haste, among the people, in a visible fourm and shape, passed between two persons, as they were kneeling uppon their knees, and occupied in prayer as it seemed, wrung the necks of them bothe at one instant clene backward, in so much that even at a moment where they kneeled, they strangely dyed.” Spectacular thunderstorms are a regular occurrence in the Waveney Valley, but in that superstitious age, many accidents and disasters were thought to be the work of the devil himself. There had long been a belief that a satanic black hound roamed the area, and so it was easy for people in the dark interior of the Church, to believe that this evil beast was responsible for this occurrence. It was also a perfect episode for the religious zealots to use as an example of what could happen if people strayed from the strict Christian doctrines of the day.

St Mary's Church still attracts regular visitors from across the globe, who come to see where this strange event took place, but whereas the door in Blythburgh Church still bears the apparent scorch marks of the devils claws, there is no similar evidence surviving in Bungay, as much of the buildings fabric was destroyed in the great fire, some 111 years later.

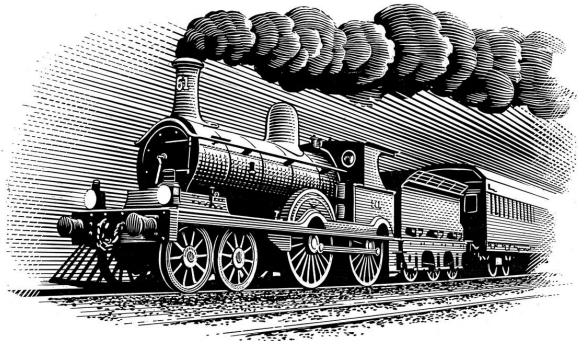
The story of the Bungay Black Dog has been handed down for generations, and the local football team takes the nick name the ‘Black Dogs’. It is also believed that the incident and other appearances of this devilish hound throughout East Anglia, was the

inspiration for Sir Arthur Conan Doyle’s famous Sherlock Holmes novel, *The Hounds of the Baskervilles*. Certainly, local rock band, The Darkness featured a track on their album, ‘*Permission to Land*’ called ‘*Black Shuck*’ which tells the story. It is amazing when you think about it, that in this day and age, we still use a satanic image as a town symbol!



## ‘Spiritual Railway’—A prayer.

Talking to Jeff Lewis on the ‘phone recently, our conversation eventually got round to trains and he informed he and his family had a long tradition with the railways, especially steam trains. He went on to say that following the passing of his father several years ago, he stumbled across the following prayer which was tucked inside his father’s bible. It is known as the Spiritual Railway and research shows that Nikolaus Pevsner transcribed the following lines from a memorial in the cloister of Ely Cathedral to two victims of an accident on the Norwich to Ely railway line in 1845. Pevsner finds it "eminently characteristic of the earnestness with which this new triumph of human ingenuity was still regarded"



### The Spiritual Railway.

*The line to Heaven by Christ was made,  
With heavenly truth the Rails are laid,  
From Earth to Heaven the Line extends,  
To Life Eternal where it ends.  
Repentance is the Station then,  
Where Passengers are taken in ;  
No Fee for them is there to pay,  
For Jesus is himself the way.  
God's Word is the first Engineer,  
It points the way to Heaven so clear,  
Through tunnels dark and dreary here.  
It does the way to Glory steer.  
God's Love the fire, his Truth the Steam,*

*In First, and Second, and Third Class,  
Repentance, Faith, and Holiness,  
You must the way to Glory gain,  
Or you with Christ will not remain.  
Come then poor Sinners, now's the time,  
At any Station on the Line,  
If you'll repent, and turn from sin,  
The Train will stop and take you in.*

It is interesting to note that the reference to an accident on the Norwich to Ely railway line probably relates to a 'fearful' railway accident that occurred within a mile of Thetford on Christmas Eve, 1845. The fully laden train which had departed earlier from Norwich came off the rails and plummeted down an embankment killing the driver and stoker. In its progress the tender broke away from the carriages and veered across the line causing the carriages to collide with it and to eventually stop them from plunging down the embankment so saving many life's. The newspaper reports that the stoker had leapt from the moving train and was struck by the advancing carriages. The driver was found deceased in the crippled train.

A report into the derailment was put down to excessive speed. The inspector estimated that the train was travelling at between 50 and 60 miles an hour descending a long gradient. The engine was a Stephenson 'long boiler' but this was discounted as a cause.

The following statement was published on 1st January

"I am of the opinion that the engine was in perfect repair at the time of the accident, and that the part of the railway where it occurred was in good order; and therefore I must again repeat, that I consider the chief cause of the accident to have been the reckless speed to which the driver had urged his engine, for which there was no necessity on this or any other portion of the Norfolk Railway."

In researching the above incident it became apparent that railway safety 175 years ago was pretty awful. Accidents on the rails became an almost weekly occurrence. Thankfully our rail infrastructure nowadays is much safer.

## 6<sup>th</sup> August The Transfiguration - a glimpse of Jesus' future glory

The story is told in Matthew (17:1-9), Mark (9:1-9) and Luke (9:28-36).

It was a time when Jesus' ministry was popular, when people were seeking Him out. But on this day, He made time to take Peter, James and John, His closest disciples, up a high mountain. In the fourth century, Cyrillic of Jerusalem identified it as Mount Tabor (and there is a great church up there today), but others believe it more likely to have been one of the three spurs of Mount Hermon, which rises to about 9,000 feet, and overlooks Caesarea Philippi.

High up on the mountain, Jesus was suddenly transfigured before His friends. His face began to shine as the sun, His garments became white and dazzling. Elijah and Moses, of all people, suddenly appeared, and talked with Him. A bright cloud overshadowed the disciples.

Peter was staggered, but, enthusiast that he was - immediately suggested building three tabernacles on that holy place, one for Jesus, one for Moses, and one for Elijah. But God's 'tabernacling', God's dwelling with mankind, does not any longer depend upon building a shrine. It depends on the presence of Jesus, instead. And so a cloud covered them, and a Voice spoke out of the cloud, saying that Jesus was His beloved Son, whom the disciple should 'hear'. God's dwelling with mankind depends upon our listening to Jesus.

Then, just as suddenly, it is all over. What did it mean? Why Moses and Elijah? Well, these two men represent the Law and the Prophets of the Old Covenant, or Old Testament. But now they are handing on the baton, if you like: for both the Law and the Prophets found their true and final fulfilment in Jesus, the Messiah.

Why on top of a mountain? In Exodus we read that Moses went up Mount Sinai to receive the sacred covenant from Yahweh in the form of the Ten Commandments. Now Jesus goes up and is told about the 'sealing' of the New Covenant, or New Testament of God with man, which will be accomplished by His coming death in Jerusalem.

That day made a lifelong impact on the disciples. Peter mentions it in his second letter, 2 Peter 1:16 - 19 - invariably the reading for this day.

The Eastern Churches have long held the Transfiguration as a feast as important as Christmas, Epiphany, Ascension and Pentecost. But it took a long time for the West to observe the Transfiguration. The feast starts appearing from the 11th and 12th centuries, and the Prayer Book included it among the calendar dates, but there was no liturgical provision for it until the 19th century.



## Point to Ponder

Have you ever wondered where you might find the word Gospel in a verse from the bible without seeing the word in full? Well yes you can in that wonderful verse of John 3 v 16.

‘For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life’.

So if you take the first letter of the following words:- God, Only, Son, Perish, Everlasting, Life, you will find the word GOSPEL in the verse.

Submitted by Jeff Lewis.

## Whatever happened to Christopher Robin?

One hundred years ago this month, on 21st August 1920, Christopher Robin Milne was born. He was the only son of the author A. A. Milne and appeared as a character in his father’s Winnie-the-Pooh stories and verses – a role he enjoyed at first but later found difficult to handle.

The characters in Winnie the Pooh were based on his own soft toys or items purchased later. The setting was inspired by Ashdown Forest in East Sussex: his family owned nearby Cotchford Farm and spent weekends and holidays there.

His relationship with his nanny, Olive ‘Nou’ Brockwell, was close and continued into adult life, but when he went to boarding school near Guildford in 1930 he was bullied because his father’s work was well known: one poem, Vespers, brought him “toe-curling, fist-clenching, lip-biting embarrassment”. He married a cousin, Lesley de Sélincourt, in 1948 and opened a bookshop in Dartmouth. He was close to his father but not to his mother, Daphne, who did not see him during the last 15 years of her life.

Milne had one child, Clare, who had cerebral palsy. He himself had myasthenia gravis in his later years and died in 1996; he was described by one newspaper as a ‘dedicated atheist’.



## 'It Wasn't Like That In My Day'

Tell me, is it a sign of impending old age when young people apportion everything that is wrong in the world to us oldies? I recently found myself and others of a similar age, smarting at the suggestion that us seniors are not fully acquainted with all those worldly issues that seem to rightly concern our young people. Yes, race was mentioned, and our archaic stance on sexuality which normally ends with them looking at you askance and saying in disbelieving tones, 'You can't say that granddad!'

Feeling quite chastened and hurt that our views are deemed to be 'old fashioned' - I later settled down and found myself pondering on my own youth, those crazy hedonistic days of the 1960's. I contemplated our own youthful stand against what we found to be totally unacceptable; the war in Vietnam, the Cold War and grave concerns over the Cuban Missile Crisis. We rallied at the numerous protest songs that proliferated the hit parade of the day. Bob Dylan's immortal song 'Blowin the Wind', Barry McGuire's, "Eve of Destruction" and Buffy Sainte-Marie's - Universal Soldier. The list is endless.

Then there was our stand for the civil rights movement. Pete Seger's 'We shall Overcome' springs immediately to mind. Written as a gospel hymn by a Methodist minister in 1900 and originally adapted during a tobacco worker strike in 1945, "We Shall Overcome" came to represent defiance, endurance, tenacity, and sheer determination. This anthem of the Civil Rights movement sums up the courage and conviction that underscored African Americans' demand for equal rights and opportunities.

Nearer to home there was the release of Ralph McTell's "Streets of London", first recorded for his 1969 album Spiral Staircase. It was not released in the

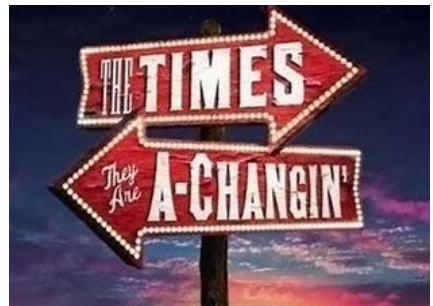


United Kingdom as a single until 1974 and became a song representative of the homelessness in London and other cities throughout the UK.

Thinking about it, us post war kids had a lot to say about what we found to be socially unacceptable, and with hindsight the youngsters of today are no different. Many young people are making a positive stand at poverty issues both at home and abroad; youngsters like Greta Thunberg have passionate concerns over climate change. Recently 22-year-old footballer Marcus Rashford caused a government U-turn when he successfully moved that all pupils qualifying for free school meals in England will be given supermarket food vouchers to cover the six-week summer holiday. I think it's fair to say that our young people have taken up the torch of injustice which might even include some issues that may not sit comfortably with us.

In retrospect I am reminded of Bob Dylan's 1965 protest song, 'The Times They are A Changin'

Come mothers and fathers  
Throughout the land  
And don't criticize  
What you can't understand  
Your sons and your daughters  
Are beyond your command  
Your old road is rapidly aging  
Please get out of the new one  
If you can't lend your hand  
For the times they are a-changin'



This was a song that had so much meaning to me and other young people of the day. Maybe now, 55 years later, its message is now directed at me!

## **Sick of preaching**

Our new vicar had just been prescribed bifocals. The reading portion of the glasses improved his vision considerably, but the top portion of the glasses didn't work so well. In fact, he was experiencing dizziness every time he looked through them. He tried to explain this to the congregation on Sunday: "I hope you will excuse my continually removing my glasses. You see, when I look down, I can see fine, but when I look at you all, it makes me feel sick."

## International 'Cry For Peace'

As you will no doubt be aware, we had to cancel the 'Ringing Out for Peace' for VE Day on 8th May due to the corona virus. Bruno Peek, the Queen's Pageant Master is organising an international 'Cry for Peace' on the 75th Anniversary of VJ Day on the 15th August.

St Michael's have been invited to take part in this shared moment. The declaration will take place outside the church at 11.10AM: Following the 'Cry for Peace,' one member of the St Michael's

Bell team will be ringing ONE Bell 75 times, one for each year since VJ Day - 15th August 1945.

We, of course, welcome this initiative as a simple way Churches can still take part, even though we still social distancing. If you would like to come along to this simple act of commemoration and celebration then please come along and join us at 11:10 am on Saturday 15th August.

If you have any contributions for the next monthly edition of the 'Pew News' please send your material to Robin Keightley

[robinkeightley175@btinternet.com](mailto:robinkeightley175@btinternet.com)

