

Saints ALIVE

*The magazine of:
All Saints, Leighton Buzzard
St. Nicholas, Hockliffe
St. Michael's, Eggington
St. Michael and All Angels,
Billington
The Good Shepherd, Sandhills*

May 2024

70p



Inside:

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why we will turn a chorister upside down on the Wilkes Walk on May 5th
Soggy, tired, with blistered feet, but happy - the St Albans Easter Pilgrimage

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The Major Prophets – Canon Don Brewin

Lots of events to look forward to including

Plant sales, Volunteering Fair, Christian Aid Week, Toddler Toddle ...

All Saints Leighton Buzzard

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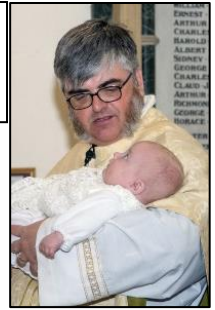
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The Three-fold Ministry

By Rev'd Dr. Bernard Minton



I have been thinking recently about a particular aspect of the Christian vocation: the threefold Messianic ministry. This is important to all of us because although the Messianic ministry is Jesus' ministry, because we are baptised into Him, each of us is called to embody it in our own life in Him.

Traditionally the Messianic ministry is described as having three parts: prophecy, priesthood, and kingship. Of those, one part we think we understand quite well; one part we don't understand much; and one part we have not even begun to really think about at all!

The aspect that we think we understand is priesthood. But even here, we are on shakier ground than we might think. Priesthood is something all of us share in Jesus, not just those ordained ministers whose particular vocation is to embody the Messianic ministry within the church. Priesthood is concerned with the vertical relationship between us and God. It involves a two-fold recognition of the sinfulness of creation – and specifically our own sinfulness as individuals and members of societies – and God's eternal unchanging love and holiness. The crucial thing to remember is that everything starts with God and His love: this is always the place to begin.

Then there is prophecy. We imagine this is about having a special, divine gift of predicting the future: it isn't! Prophets simply try to see God at work in the world around them. Prophecy is about looking horizontally, not vertically. While priesthood is about 'Being', you might say prophecy is about 'Meaning', or hermeneutical understanding. It is a vocation we all share, to look and see what God is doing in the church and world around us now. (Provided that we always first of all remember what God Himself looks like: which is where priesthood comes in, of course!)

Lastly, there is kingship. This is the part we don't understand at all: partly because, as Jesus Himself tells Pontius Pilate, He is not even really a King, it is simply the best word available for describing a living growing loving unity of embodied interrelationship. When Jesus promises to bring a peace that is different to the world's peace, 'kingship' is what He is talking about: an embodied, integrated holistic interrelatedness between all of us that allows us to be fully ourselves and completely loved and loving, like a creaturely version of the Holy Trinity Himself.

This is the purpose for which we were all created, and it should be dimly and imperfectly reflected in how we live together now, as we struggle together to build a better world we can all share, one more like the loving world God is bringing to birth.

Fr. Bernard

Our present pattern of services across the Ouzel Valley Team

All Saints

Sundays:

8am Holy Communion

9.30am Parish Eucharist

11.30am (usual pattern but can vary occasionally)

1st Sunday: Messy Mass

3rd Sunday: All Age Service

2nd & 4th Sunday: Holy Baptism

6pm Evening Prayer

1st Sunday: Choral Evensong

3rd Sunday: Sung with hymns
(NO choir) followed by Benediction

2nd & 4th Sunday: Said Evensong

Weekdays:

Holy Communion

7.30pm Tuesday

(Service of Healing on 3rd Tuesday)

10.00am Thursday

9.00am Saturday

St. Barnabas, Linslade

Sundays:

8am Said Eucharist

10am Parish Eucharist

6pm Evensong

www.stbarnabaslinslade.uk

St. Leonard's, Heath & Reach

Sundays:

8am: Holy Communion

11am Holy Communion (in church & via Zoom)

1st Sundays: Family Service

Tuesdays: 7pm Holy Communion

Morning Prayer via Zoom:

9.00am Monday - Saturday

www.saintleonardschurch.com

St. Michael's, Eggington

9.30am 1st & 3rd Sundays: Holy Communion

St. Nicholas', Hockliffe

9.30am 2nd Sundays: Family Communion

4th Sundays: Holy Communion

St. Michael's and All Angels, Billington

11.15am Holy Communion

Good Shepherd, Astral Park Sports & Community Centre, Johnson Drive, Sandhills, LU7 4AY:

Sundays at 9.45am:

1st Sunday: Holy Communion & CGS Juniors

2nd Sunday: 'In the Community', at Astral Park

3rd Sunday: Family Service

4th Sunday: Bring and share breakfast and Holy Communion

Free pop-up café every Sunday from 9.45am

Sunday Saints: for age 3+ year olds, meets during 9.30am Sunday service at All Saints.

All Saints Toddler Time: All Saints every Wednesday during term time, at 9.30am & at 1.30pm. £1.50 per parent / carer & child; 50p extra per child; refreshments included.

Leighton Young Singers Club: for children in Years 2-6, meets on Fridays at 6.30 - 7.30pm.

Bereavement Café: a support group offering friendship and understanding.

1st Sunday of the month, 2.30-4pm The Spire Coffee Shop, All Saints

Choir Practice: Friday evenings, 6.45 trebles; 7.30 adults.

Bellringers: Practice on Monday, 7.30 - 9.30pm.

Spire Coffee Shop: Tuesday, Friday & Saturday 10am - 2pm.

Contact Details on Page 2.



News Roundup

After many years as church florist, Kerry Sykes has decided to step down.

We would like to thank her for her hard work, dedication and wonderful flower displays. Also for her guidance, help and encouragement.

Thank you, Kerry.

The Flower Team

*** **



And a message from the Mothers' Union:

Many thanks to people who bought cards and crosses-in-my-pocket from the stall before Easter. We were able to donate £100 to Make a Mother's Day, the Mothers' Union's campaign to raise funds for global community projects which transform lives and communities every day.



Worth a smile

The following real-life answers to various exam papers explain why teachers need long holidays...

- *What is a nitrate?* – Cheaper than a day rate.
- *What did Mahatma Gandhi and Genghis Khan have in common?* – Unusual names.
- *Name one of the early Romans' greatest achievements.* – Learning to speak Latin.
- *Name six animals which live specifically in the Arctic.* – Two polar bears. Four seals.
- *How does Romeo's character develop throughout the play?* – It doesn't, it's just self, self, self, all the way through.
- *Name the wife of Orpheus, whom he attempted to save from the underworld.* – Mrs Orpheus.
- *Where was the American Declaration of Independence signed?* – At the bottom.
- *What happens during puberty to a boy?* – He says goodbye to his childhood and enters adultery.
- *State three drawbacks of hedgerow removal.* – All the cows will escape. The cars drive into the fields. There is nowhere to hide.
- *What is a fibula?* – A little lie.
- *Why would living close to a mobile phone mast cause ill health?* – You might walk into it.
- *Where was Hadrian's Wall built?* – Around Hadrian's garden.
- *The race of people known as Malays come from which country?* – Malaria.

Parish Registers

Holy Matrimony, March:

There were no weddings or baptisms in March

R.I.P. March:

4: John Spires at Crownhill; 6: Brian Avery at St. Barnabas; 11: Andrew Cooper at All Saints;
19: Gerry Beecroft at Bierton; 20: Jeanette Scott at Bierton;
27: Doreen Westwood at St. Michael & All Angels

'Everyone who lives and believes in me will never die'.

Years Mind, May:

2: Philip Meredith, Colin Sykes; 3: Dennis Duff; 5: Frederick Groom, Frederick Foskett;
6: Robert Molloy, Evelyn Garner; 7: Gwendoline Parris; 8: Victor Norman;
9: Valerie King, Margot Freeman; 10: Vera Elliott; 11: Marjorie Holroyd; 12: Percy Collor;
13: Kenneth Watts; 14: Aubrey Marchant; 15: Marion Butler, Patricia Scott;
17: Mollie Biggerstaff; 18: Michael Turrell; 19: Patricia Munroe;
20: Edith Sutton, Kevin Smith, June Audas, Iris Janes;
23: William Atkinson, Wingate Underwood; 24: Paul Reynolds, Norah Kaye, David Morris;
25: Patricia Olds; Karolyn Jones, John Watkiss; 26: Christine Roe;
27: Cyril Stratton, Olive Aris; 28: Ethel Gilbert, Eleanor Edgoose; 29: Amy Willett



LEIGHTON BUZZARD MUSIC

LIVE PROFESSIONAL CONCERTS

Looking forward to the 2024-25 Season

Dates for the Autumn:

14 September at *St Barnabas*
the superb wind quintet **Ensemble Renard**.

Then at the Library Theatre:

12 October: **Art Deco Jazz Trio**
With piano; clarinet; saxophone
26 October: **Rosie Hood Folk Quartet**
With vocals, guitar, melodeon, fiddle
23 November: **Vienna Mozart Trio**
Playing Mozart, Schumann, Brahms

Please note: Book via TicketSource or at the door.
Please see links on the website, www.lbmusic.co.uk
Leighton Buzzard Music is a registered charity no: 1183681



Pulford VA Lower School
Head Teacher: Rev'd Dave Heather, MBE
Office Manager: Mrs Alison Quick
Tel: 01525 372188
Website: www.pulfordschool.org

A church school for
a whole community



'Proms Praise 2024'
Tuesday 12 March at the Royal Albert Hall

After a 5-year hiatus due to Covid, Proms Praise returned to the Royal Albert Hall this year and Pulford KS2 children couldn't wait to be part of this year's production! Our year 3 and 4's united with over 2,500 young people from across 62 schools to form a mega choir to raise the roof with songs of praise in one of the world's greatest concert halls!

This year's theme was all about King David - celebrating his amazing life and works - and also celebrating the king that David foresaw 10 centuries before his birth - Jesus Christ. All of the Pulford children prepared for this event by practising the songs for many weeks in worship time at school, inspired and led by the amazing Mrs Quick!



As you can imagine, the children were both excited and overwhelmed when we finally arrived and entered the concert hall. Their wide-mouthed faces were a picture! The experience of joining in with so many other church schools and taking in the beautiful sounds of the All Souls' Orchestra, is something that will stay with the children for years to come.

One of the song's lyrics sums up the central theme of the concert perfectly:

*'It doesn't matter what you look like,
It matters what's inside your heart.
Faith, hope and love are more important,
That's how it's always been from the start.'*

Pulford ethos and values in a nutshell!! What a blessing to be part of it.

Mrs. Borrelli





The Gentleman Gardener

Let your local RHS qualified gardener make your garden beautiful, from simple garden maintenance to redesigning your garden.

Please call Barry
01525 222451 or 07541 196384
to pop round to have a chat.

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Eileen M. Naples

BSc., AMCST

Ryecroft, Plantation Road, Leighton
Buzzard, LU7 3HT

01525 377384, or 07774 901293

email: eileennaples50@outlook.com

St Leonard’s Church Hall Heath and Reach

Refurbished Hall available for hire.
Regular or occasional bookings



Capacity approx 130
Easy access. Car parking
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stleonardheath@gmail.com



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Selections

*Pet, gift and garden.
Household, kitchen tools and
electrical items.
Calor Gas, DIY and repairs.
Memorial.*



selections_pet_garden

STEWKLEY SINGERS

with the choir of All Saints Church, Leighton Buzzard

PRESENT

VERDI REQUIEM

Saturday 18 May 2024, 7.30pm

All Saints Church, Leighton Buzzard

Jenny Morgan: Conductor

Sarah Helsby Hughes: Soprano

Sian Menna: Mezzo Soprano

Peter Davoren: Tenor

Edward Price: Bass

Wigmore Chamber Orchestra

Tickets £17, £8.50 (U18)

From Julia 01525 240671 or Room No. 9

Calendar of Events

1st May

Lunch Club in the North Transept, All Saints 1pm.
Tickets £6.00 available from the Coffee Shop.



5th May

Rogation Sunday Services as usual at All Saints including
Wilkes Walk following the 9.30am service;
Messy Mass 11.30am

Bereavement Support Café Coffee Shop, All Saints 2.30pm – 4pm



9th May

Ascension Day Holy Communion All Saints 10am,
Sung Eucharist 8pm



17th May

Crafty Natter All Saints 1.30pm - 3.30pm



18th May

Plant Sale All Saints 10am – 12.30pm

Verdi Requiem All Saints 7.30pm



19th May

Pentecost Services as usual including
All Age Communion All Saints 11.30am;
Team Confirmation at St. Barnabas 10am



All Saints Holiday Club
12th - 16th August
“Everyone’s a winner”

Application forms now available.





All Saints Church
Plant Sale

Saturday 18th May
10am - 12.30pm

Garden Plants - Fruit & Veg Plants
And Houseplants



Volunteering Fair LEIGHTON BUZZARD

SAT 8 JUNE 2024 10AM TO 2PM

FOLLOWED BY TALK BY PAUL ATKIN FROM CVS BEDFORDSHIRE
AND "BIG HELP OUT"/VOLUNTEERS WEEK

LEIGHTON LINSLADE
HELPERS.org.uk

CELEBRATION NETWORKING
2PM TO 3PM



ALL SAINTS CHURCH

📍 Church Square, Leighton Buzzard, LU7 1AE

**Opportunity to meet and engage with local charities
and community groups and learn more about
wide range of volunteering roles**

- free to attend
- refreshments available
- over 25 local charities and groups attending
- Town Mayor due to open event

Organised by

**Totally Leighton
Buzzard**



<https://linktr.ee/leightonbuzzard>

✉ totallyleightonbuzzard@gmail.com



Love Nature in the Churchyard



**Saturday 8 June, 10.30am – 2pm,
All Saints Churchyard**

This event celebrates nature and our beautiful churchyard which is recognized as a haven for wildlife and a wide range of wild plants and trees. Activities are free and suitable for adults and children and include:

- Make wildflower seedbombs to take home and grow
- Help with our Nature Count – part of a national audit of biodiversity in churchyards
- Play our wild nature bingo game
- Follow our tree trail and learn about the many different species

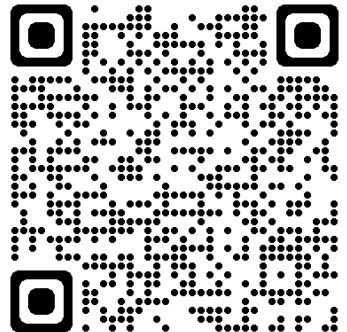
There will also be a range of pollinator friendly plants to buy at the plant stall.

Love Nature in the Churchyard comes at the start of Great Big Green Week – a nationwide celebration of action on climate change. Find other events in Leighton Buzzard at www.greatbiggreenweek.com/find-an-event/ or click the QR code.

We are also taking part in a national event called Churches Count on Nature which is a national audit of biodiversity in churchyards – it's easy to take part, you just count all the different wildlife or plants that you find and there will be guidance on the day.

If you would like to help or be involved on the day, or would like to join our Eco Church Group, please get in touch.

Katrina Grant





on ...

History all around us, shaping the worshipping community in The Ouzel Valley



The Wilkes Alms Charity also known as the Leighton Buzzard United and Almshouse Charity owns two sets of Almshouses in the town of Leighton Buzzard and make up part of the wider community of 35,000 Almshouses across the UK brought together under the umbrella of the Almshouse Association. Many Almshouses have an interesting history and were often bequeathed from an original benefactor often many centuries ago.

Wilkes Almshouses 'North Street'.

The Wilkes Charity was created in 1630 when Edward Wilkes gave 10 Almshouses to be occupied by ten poor widows.

In his will Edward Wilkes stipulated that ten shillings be paid for a sermon on the day of his funeral and that those living in the almshouses should "constantly repair to the church on Sunday ... if they fail, it shall be lawful for my said feoffees (trustees) to take part of my gift from her and give it to those who better deserve it".



A custom related to these Almshouses was that on Rogation Monday (26th April) the trustees of the charity, the town crier and ten boys from each church choir in the parish visited every property of the charity and at the boundary of each property, one of the boys was stood on his head while the clerk to the trustees read part of the endowment relating to the property! *(A tradition which this year will take place on May 5th.)*

The Almshouses

Leighton Buzzard



Pages Almshouses 'Church Street'.

Photo by Bob Walters

These Almshouses were built in Church Street in 1903 following the request in the will of Councillor William Sharpe Page. They are next to the site of St Andrews Church and are located on the site of the sandstone quarry used for the construction of the church.

The £1,200 bequest was for six almshouses: for two married couples, two single men and two widows or spinsters. A sum of money was set aside for the maintenance of the buildings.

Councillor Page also bequeathed a field to the town for use as a recreational ground, known as Page's Park. In addition to the Almshouse accommodation the charity also Advances the Christian Religion by, repairing, maintaining, and insuring the stained-glass window at the west end of All Saints Church and pays the vicar of All Saints Church a yearly sum of £50.

Finally, the objectives of the charity, also allow trustees to apply the income of the charity for 'charitable purposes for the benefit of the inhabitants of the Area of Benefit as the charity trustees see fit'. At the current time, the trustees delegate administration of grant giving to the Luton and Bedfordshire Community Foundation. The charity is governed by a board of volunteer trustees but its day-to-day management of its affairs is delegated to the Clerk and Estate and Resident Manager.

Jen Millard



Christian Aid Week: 12th – 18th May 2024



For about 70% of the population of Burundi, life consists of malnourishment & poverty making survival a daily struggle. Jobs and food are hard to come by and many homes have no electricity or running water.

Christian Aid can provide a lifeline, such as this:

Aline's Story

Aline had her first child at the age of 14. She was regularly violently abused by her husband and was eventually forced to leave the marital home when her husband married another woman. He prevented her from taking her children with her and Aline had to walk the streets asking anyone for a place to sleep. She was constantly hungry and often abused and scorned by people in the streets. Eventually she was able to participate in a three-day community workshop funded by Christian Aid. She was taught how to form a Village Savings and Loans Association (VSLA) which means that people like her can save for their future and borrow money to kickstart small rural businesses. It also gave Aline her confidence and self-respect back.

With a small start-up loan, she started trading avocados and peanuts locally. She bought a bicycle so she could transport her goods to markets further afield. Her hard work eventually paid off and she was able to rent a house and her three eldest sons were able to escape their abusive father and join her. She hopes to be reunited with her youngest children in the near future.

Today, Aline lives on her own plot of land. She bakes her own bricks and is building a home for herself and her children. She can afford food and clothes and healthcare for her family. She feeds her family with the food that she grows e.g. beans, vegetables and corn. She has also been able to purchase solar panels so her children can do their homework by electric light. Aline has become educated and self-sufficient and her life has been transformed thanks to the vital help that she received from Christian Aid.



Aline helping her son with homework in their new home

Please help people like Aline who was pushed to the brink of survival and poverty and separated from her 6 children.

Pray this Christian Aid Week that people find the strength and opportunity to fulfil their hopes and ambitions.

Christian Aid envelopes will be available in Church from 12th – 18th May 2024. Please contact Pauline Lyon if you need any further details. 07968 746618.



Following the success of the Toddle last year, Mothers' Union members with the help of Toddler Time organisers, are holding an event this June. It will probably be on June 8th, coinciding with the Volunteering Fair and Eco Church "Love Nature in the Churchyard" events, but keep an eye out for dates and times. (Older siblings are very welcome to come and toddle too!)

This is an opportunity for the little ones to do their bit to help families in the diocese via two projects run by the Mothers' Union:

1. The Away From It All holidays project provides holidays and days out for families in need of some fun time together.
2. MU also supports 4 women's refuges in the diocese by providing start up packs of bedding, pots and pans, kettle, toaster, cutlery etc when residents are ready to move into new accommodation. They have also supplied advent calendars, Christmas presents, Easter eggs, a coach for a day out, and entertainment too.

Alison Dobbie



Away From It All (AFIA) is a Mothers' Union holiday scheme, primarily funded by our members, to give the opportunity of a break to those who may be experiencing stress or difficulties in their family life.

On average, we help 2,500 people to have a holiday each year. Families are able to spend time together away from their stressful situations at home, engage in activities together and have fun. They often experience healing in their relationships by spending this quality time with each other.

One AFIA Holiday participant said this:

"I never thought that Mothers' Union would consider me but they gave me the chance to see my first grandchild and that meant so much to me. It has changed my view on what I thought was a group of 'God-ladies' to a group of ladies that show God cares for people like me."

[Quote from the Mothers' Union website and AIFA news.]

Good Shepherd, Sandhills

Vicar: Rev'd Steve Marsh

Tel: 01525 838450

Churchwardens:

Stuart Blofeld; Katharine Reedy



**CHURCH of the
GOOD SHEPHERD**

Wednesday morning drop in

About 18 months ago, we started a drop-in at Astral Park on Wednesday mornings jointly with the NHS Social Prescribers from the Leighton-Linslade Health Connections team. At first it was closely associated with the Warm Spaces initiative in the town, and we received some funding from the Town Council and the Diocese to support it.

Over time this has developed away from being specifically Warm Spaces (especially in the Summer!) and now welcomes a variety of different people who drop in between 10 and 12 each Wednesday.

Some of the original group are still with us, often playing a game of Scrabble together. During the school holidays we have run some very successful Lego, Crafts, Snacks and Hot Chocolate drop-ins with school-age children, getting up to 80 adults and children. There's not much going on for children that's free and with household budgets being squeezed, being able to offer something that people can just come to for a small donation has been really appreciated.

This year we have started a 0-4s Music, Movement and Rhyme session during school terms led initially by a member of our church, Glenda. We're getting about a dozen pre-schoolers along and, when Glenda isn't around, our NHS colleagues are helping out with leading the sessions.

We've built up a collection of toys and Lego from different sources, including donations from people we've met in town when putting leaflets about the drop-in into various shops. We now have plenty of Lego and toys so we don't need any more!

What's been really lovely is how these three different groups have come together.



At our recent Easter holidays sessions, we've had a table of adults playing Scrabble, a play mat and soft toys in one corner with the pre-schoolers and some tables of Lego for the older children.



Yes, small children running around can be noisy, but people of all different ages mingle together and chat around the refreshments. We've had some significant conversations with people, including one that started with 'I'm not the religious type but I know this is run by a church' that led on to a discussion about faith in our everyday lives.

If you're around on a Wednesday morning and can get to Astral Park Community Centre (there is a bus that drops off nearby), you'd be very welcome to join us.

Frank Reedy

St. Nicholas, Hockliffe

Vicar: Rev'd Noel McGeeney

Tel: 01525 237633

Churchwardens:

Brian Speller: 210565; Tom Ware



On 1st May, the church celebrates the Feast Day of the Apostles Phillip and James. They with the other apostles gathered in the upper room in Jerusalem as they awaited the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. We however outwardly live the joy of the Resurrection knowing that we will celebrate the empowerment of the Holy Spirit afresh this Pentecost, at the end of the great fifty days of Easter. The Church celebrates the Feast of Pentecost on 19th May this year. Once again we will remind ourselves of the fruits of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Inspired by the Holy Spirit we wait for so many things to come to fruition in our lives. The Holy Spirit is also known as the 'Comforter' and a 'Helper'. As a church family at St Nicholas, this sense of comfort and help from the Spirit is the inspiration we are now yearning, as we seek fundraising opportunities. It is those fruits of the Spirit that we endeavour to nurture as a community of faith outwardly amongst the community within which we minister.

I am conscious of the Black Christian spiritual practice of tarrying which answers 'yes' to the question Jesus once asked his disciples. Whether in the vibrancy of music or singing, or in hushed silence, people of all ages actively wait for an encounter with God that will transform what we know, what we feel and what we experience day to day. This was the background to my Lenten reading of the Archbishop of Canterbury's Lent Book this year – 'Tarry Awhile' by Selina Stone – wisdom from Black Spirituality for people of faith. I sense that there are parallels to be drawn from this for church congregations struggling with weekly attendance whilst they cannot afford to maintain the building they worship in. In chapter 4, she writes: '...Pentecost represents a moment that Christians in every generation might hope for and seek after. Each individual might experience what it is for the Spirit to come to make her home within them. Each person might receive their own personal Pentecost, sometimes with the gift of speaking tongues as evidence that they have received this presence of God in their lives. For such people, each Christian is empowered by the Spirit for living a holy life, sharing the gospel and exercising spiritual gifts and callings. They might then share in the miraculous life of the Acts 2 church in the contemporary world, especially through praying for healing and deliverance.

So, we pray that 'our sons and our daughters shall prophesy, and our young men shall see visions, and our old men shall dream dreams.'

Dates for your diaries:

Saturday 11 May - Cream Teas from 2 to 5pm at the church

Sunday 12th May - APCM in church at 3pm

Geoff Marchant

St. Michael & All Angels, Billington

Vicar: Rev'd Steve Marsh

Tel: 01525 838450

Churchwardens:

Sandra Brewin 373644; Julia Haviland 850380



We are delighted to say that Italia Day is coming back to Billington after a few years of disruption, mainly due to Covid. Jean Albertella is the instigator of this hugely popular event (originally introduced by Peter), and it is necessary that every able-bodied person thinks out how they can chip in to make the day a success. Jean's phone number is 01525 379621; Italia Day will be on Saturday 29th June in the Village Hall.

Some years ago, taking our grandson back to London, we inadvertently made a grand tour of the city taking 5 hours to reach our destination. We had no prior information that we would hit "Ride London", a 100-mile sponsored cycle ride for anybody who can ride a bike. Every available road was blocked.

This year, on 26th May, Kester Brewin and his son Elias will be attempting this challenge to raise funds for the London-based charity known as the Amos Trust. Amos was the prophet who wrote "Let justice roll down like waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream". The Amos Trust has been working for many years in support of people who are desperately in need of justice but are overcome by more powerful nations.

Kester is aiming to ride the whole route of "Ride London" and is looking for sponsorship to aid the people of Palestine in restoring their war-torn land, to bring hope to those families who still remain there and to bring restoration and reconciliation with the state of Israel. If there is any way you feel you could sponsor him, please go to [just giving.com](http://justgiving.com) and search for **Kester Brewin**.



If that's difficult, do phone me, on 01525 373644. There are many ways to give.

Sandra Brewin



St. Michael's, Eggington

Vicar: Rev'd Noel McGeeney

Tel: 01525 237633

Church Officers:

Carol Hart 384634; Paul Brown 751861

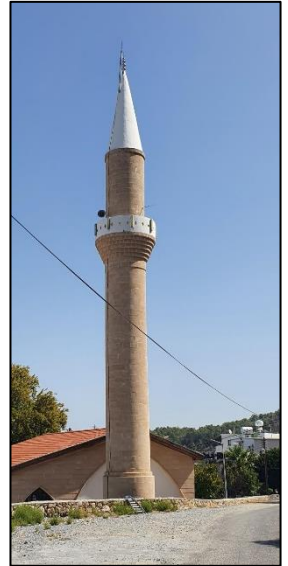


We have recently returned from a lovely holiday in Cyprus, but not the energy filled Ayia Napa or Protaras in the European Cyprus. We stayed in a small village area in the mountains above Lapta which is west along the northern coast from the ancient city of Kyrenia (now known as Girne in its native Turkish language). The traditional religion is Muslim, and so the call to prayer is a regular and unusual sound several times each day.

There are five different calls through the day known as adhan, and each announces a new period of prayer throughout the day.

- The Fajr prayer happens right at dawn, before sunrise.
- The Zuhr prayer happens at noon, or when the sun begins to descend after its highest point.
- The Asr prayer occurs when the sun is halfway through its descent.
- The Maghrib prayer is at sunset.
- The Isha prayer is when the sun's light disappears and night sets in.

We were on holiday for the change to the clocks which also happens in Cyprus, springing forward one hour. Because the clocks moved forward by one hour, the time of the calls also changed, because of the position of the sun at that particular time. Sitting in the sunshine either with a cup of coffee in the morning, or a refreshment in the middle of the day, or a glass of wine as the sun is setting; all are framed with the sound of the "adhan" from the various mosque towers around the area ringing out not quite in sync!



The sudden call echoing across the district becomes very normal and day by day actually calls you to take stock and think about what time it is and how your day is going. This may be the case for residents and visitors alike and therefore gives a sense of belonging and community within. Much as I enjoy listening to our church bells ringing out on a beautiful sunny day, I am not sure the same can be said for them, either for myself or visitors to our green and pleasant land!

Moving back to Eggington, we have our annual plant sale and coffee morning taking place on Saturday 18 May at the churchyard and village hall. Please do come along to buy your summer plants. Both fruit and vegetables are normally available just in time to plant for beautiful displays and tasty salads! Proceeds go partly to the church funds but may be shared with other charities.

Anne Sheppard



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Easter Monday Pilgrimage Walk from Leighton Buzzard to St Alban's Cathedral



On Easter Monday a large group from All Saints embarked on a pilgrimage walk to St Alban's Cathedral. Despite an early set off time of 5am, spirits were high as we embarked on the 24-mile journey to the heart of the Diocese.

Led by Mother Kirsty and joined by friends in Dunstable and Rebourn, the journey took us through several areas of outstanding natural beauty including Kensworth Quarry and the old Dunstable railway line.

Despite a few rather muddy patches and a huge water hazard about three miles from the Cathedral, the group made excellent time and arrived at about 2:30pm in time for the 'All Things New' service at the Cathedral, celebrating our renewed hope in Christ and His resurrection.

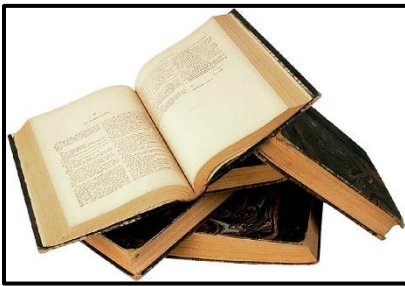
It was good to see so many people who joined us for all or part of the journey and several members of the Church who worshipped with us in the Cathedral, including Father Olof and our Swedish friends.

Our eternal thanks go to Mother Kirsty who was our guide – both geographically and spiritually – and to Stacey and her lovely team who brought bacon sandwiches to us along the route. Although the journey was tough and there were more than few blisters and sore toes by the end, it was a wonderful voyage allowing us to remember that the path we follow Christ in can be tough, hazardous and sometimes even dangerous, but along our way we can still appreciate so much of the wonderful nature that God has given us and the promise of eternal life at the end of our journey.

Abby Clark



*There was no way across
except through the waters!*



Biblical Genres

*A series exploring
the different kinds of writing in the bible.*

This month:

The Major Prophets ... by Rev'd Canon Don Brewin

This title usually refers to Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel – but singling them out, and describing the others as “minor” is not meant to diminish them at all. These four (in fact “Isaiah” may have been written by three different people) are singled out primarily because of their length.

Prophets in the Old Testament were described as “Men of God”, “Seers”, and “Those who were called”. Moses is the characteristic prophet of the Old Testament: called by God into His presence, so that he could then stand before earthly rulers, to speak out to them of “the signs of the times” – God’s movements in history, social and moral issues, and proclaiming God’s word for the present and the future.

Isaiah – the author of the first part of the book (up to Chapter 39) – was a resident of Jerusalem, maybe of royal blood. His call to prophesy came as a result of a prophetic vision when Assyria began to molest Israel. He is given a vision of God (in Chapter 6) which led him to proclaim judgment on Israel because of the people’s sin, although Jerusalem itself will be protected. In the following chapters, Isaiah is given a prophecy of “Emmanuel” (Chapter 7) – which Christians see as referring to the birth of Jesus – and the birth of a new Israel after their defeat by the Assyrians.

Chapters 40 to 66 are focussed more on the defeat of Jerusalem by the Babylonians, and the carrying-off of many of the Israelites into exile. The main purpose is to eliminate a weary state of mind, where a sense of God is absent; and to revive a consciousness of God, which can deal with this despair by expounding a new view of God’s calling of His chosen people, and their mission to live out their relationship with God. Key elements in this are the “Servant Songs” – within which the figure of The Servant must shape the people and be willing to suffer on their behalf.

Then we come to Jeremiah. My maternal grandfather (who sadly died before I was born) was a minister in the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland. He was fascinated by Jeremiah (maybe because, like Jeremiah, he was born on a small island, and ended up being minister of an influential church), and wrote a book about him. Here is a quote from the Preface:

“The story of the diffident, sensitive lad who was summoned from the obscurity of his native village to assume, at so critical an hour in the national life, the overwhelming responsibilities of the prophetic office, ranks among the most moving records of human history.”

Jeremiah cried out to God's people on the brink of exile, and pleaded for their repentance. Jeremiah's attempt to save the people of Judah from the consequence of their rejection of God was not heard; and as a punishment they went into exile. Lamentations, also written by Jeremiah, presents a dirge as the exile became a reality. We need to listen to his words now, as our country – like so many others – is going on the same road.

The last two major prophets, Ezekiel and Daniel, spoke and wrote to the people in exile, encouraging them to remember that God was still in control and would eventually restore the spiritual fortunes of His disciplined nation.

Although some commentators think that the book Ezekiel was written by several different authors, the majority view is that it was written by one man, laying bare the iniquity of his people, who deserved their exile in Babylonia.

He adopts a teaching method which enforces a truth on the present audience, by calling to mind and addressing an absent one. Some commentators draw parallels with the New Testament book of Revelation, by setting forth the unmitigated terror of God's wrath, using all kinds of illustrations. His own personal story is seen as part of that wider story – the death of his wife (recorded in Chapter 24) is seen as part of God's judgement on the nation.

The final "major prophet", Daniel, contains many stories that children will remember from Sunday School – especially the miraculous salvation of the three men – Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, from the fiery furnace. Daniel gains status with the emperor of Babylon by interpreting his dreams. But the main importance of Daniel's prophecies – which are recognised by Jesus Himself – is that he fearlessly speaks the word of God to the successive emperors under whose rule the people of God were in exile. In particular Daniel prophesied that the exile in Babylon would only last 70 years.

Before we leave these "major prophets" let us remember that the gift of prophecy is still available today, with three functions: "forth-telling" – speaking the words that come from God; "fore-telling" – warning the Church of dangers to come, and encouraging the Church to remain firm; and "discerning the secrets of the hearts" so as to counsel with directness and realism.

All prophecy must be tested, in two ways: "Is it consistent with the written Word of God?"; and "Is it confirmed by the Body of Christ as a whole?". At a time when so many aspects of life in our world, and our Church, are under threat, we need this gift more than ever.



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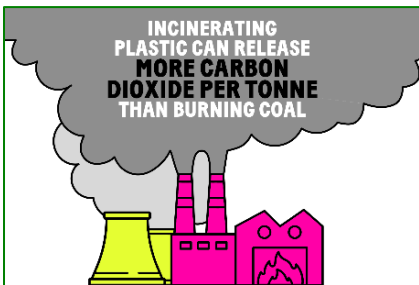
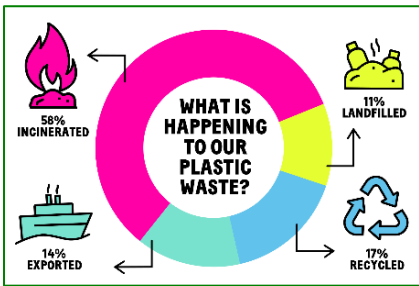
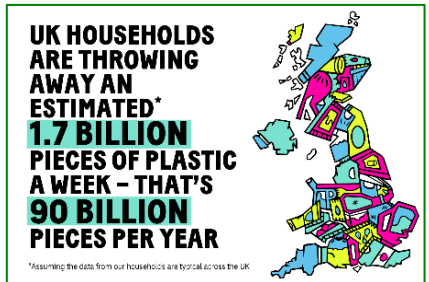
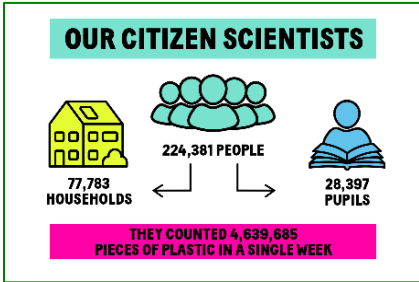
THE BIG PLASTIC COUNT

An update and some conclusions



In March the Big Plastic Count involved one in every 300 people across the UK counting their plastic waste. 224,381 people signed up and they counted 4,639,685 pieces of plastic in 7 days. Find out more on <https://thebigplasticcount.com>

Here are some of the statistics, and messages from the Big Plastic Count research:



RECYCLING ALONE WON'T FIX THE PROBLEM

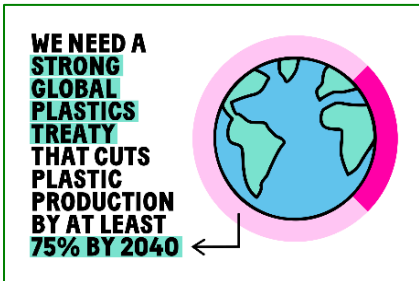
Even when plastic gets recycled, it ultimately ends up in the same place as unrecycled plastic.

Plastic quickly degrades when it's recycled and can only be re-processed once or twice before it's landfilled, exported or incinerated.

DISPOSE

RECYCLE A FEW TIMES

EXPORT, INCINERATE OR LANDFILL



Governments have now started UN negotiations for a Global Plastics Treaty which will set a global target to reduce plastic.

The Global Oceans Treaty was agreed in 2023. It is the biggest conservation win in history, with the potential to protect 30% of our oceans by 2030. Together, we can make history again.



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- March 23rd
 - April 27th
 - May 25th
 - June 22nd
 - July 27th
 - September 28th
 - October 26th
 - November 23rd
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