

February



2012



**WEST MOORS
PARISH MAGAZINE**

St Mary's Church WEST MOORS



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**Magazine Contributions for
MARCH 2012**

By, or before, Sunday 12th February

gillianmaryclarke@hotmail.com

CHECK OUR WEBSITE : www.stmaryswestmoors.org.uk

including contents of the monthly magazine – see the pictures in full colour!

FROM THE SIDELINES at ST MARY'S

Mike Bowler, Gillian Clarke : Church Wardens

Noel Moss-Holland, Jenny Winslade: Assistant Wardens



What a wonderful time we had at St Mary's over the Advent and Christmas season. Too many things to mention all of them here – but many happy moments are captured within the pages of this magazine and we give thanks to God for all that we share together. Thank you to all the people in our congregation who contributed their time and effort to make things happen. It was especially good to welcome so many visitors to all our different events – we do hope you'll come again.

Looking at the diary this month, we have much to look forward to. Lots of food to share – with Tea @3, Men's Breakfast and Soup and Pud Lunch; just check the details in the centre pages. The ever-popular Barn Dance, with Fish and Chips, of course, is sure to be great fun – but book early!

We are delighted to have pupils from St Mary's First School joining us with their families and friends and Mr Harrison, Head teacher preaching on Education Sunday. And we start the season of Lent, with the Imposition of Ashes at services on Ash Wednesday, 22nd February.

A new Venture is our ***INSIGHTS*** programme, a series of talks and visits exploring aspects of Christianity and other faiths. We begin with a talk from Dr Leslie Watkiss about 'The making of the Bible; how it all came together' on Tuesday 7th February at 6.30pm. We also have plans for a visit to a Jewish Reform Synagogue in Bournemouth, a talk about Canon Law, and a talk about the work of The Bible Society – look out for more details about these soon.

As many of you know, Alex and I enjoyed a holiday by train in India recently. It was quite an adventure and gave us much to think about. One thing which struck us was a sign beside the railway line between Kalka and Shimla: '*Tolerance of other faiths imparts to us true understanding of our own*'.



We hope that ***INSIGHTS*** will, as the name suggests, give us greater insight, and help us to develop a better understanding.

We certainly gained insights into other ways of doing things on our visit to India. Visiting a Hindu temple in Shimla, we were told how visitors to the temple ring a bell on entering – to let god know they are there. Here at St Mary’s, as in other Christian churches, we ring the bell to let people in the community know we are gathering to worship God (similar to the Islamic call to prayer by the muezzin from the top of the minaret.)



And we visited a Christian church in Shimla, Christ Church – it was so very English, a legacy from the days of the British in India!



But the Christian tradition here has been influenced in some ways by the surrounding culture and the ways of Muslims and Hindus when they enter their holy place. Yes, this was the first time I’ve had to take off my shoes before going into church! All insights which I think, in a very simple way, enabled me to reflect and so develop my understanding.

TEA @ 3 CHRISTMAS PARTY

Mary Keegan

We had a lovely festive tea party with music, quizzes and carols, which everybody thoroughly enjoyed.

If you would like to join us on the 2nd Thursday of the month at 3pm just come along to the Church hall and you will be made very welcome.



Dorothy and Elizabeth
Meetings in FEBRUARY

Mothers' UNION

Christian care for families

We always extend a warm welcome to non-members at these monthly meetings.

Afternoon Group

Wednesday 8th February - 2pm in the Church Hall
Iris Parker speaking about the MU theme for 2012,
'Your Gift? Discover and Celebrate'.

Evening Group

Monday 20th February - 8pm in the Church Hall
another visit by Sheila Soper to update us, entitled 'Return to Sudan'.

By the time you read this both groups will have held their A.G.M. and elected leaders and committees. Dawn and Elizabeth would like to thank the committees for all the support they have given us, and also everyone who so generously supports our MU events. We have another Soup and Pud Lunch this month on Saturday 25th; please come and support us as we raise funds for MU projects both at home and overseas.

*Lord, help us to discover the gifts you have given us,
then show us how to use them for your glory, in the service of others.*

Mothering Sunday 18th March

Would you consider giving an ethical gift this year to your mother or in remembrance of her? Make a Mother's Day with the Mothers' Union and change a life by donating via the web at www.makeamothersday.org or by using the catalogues at the back of the church. Thank you.

*If you work at love,
you will find love at work*



*When there is room in the heart
there is room in the house*



"It's either an appeal to youth culture
or the heating's playing up again"

IN THE SPOTLIGHT!

Leah Street

Once again COSMICs took the spotlight – quite literally – and presented their Carol Nativity as part of our Christmas preparations. The children took speaking parts and acted beautifully. The scene was set in ‘Zamir’s’ – a local hostelry, full of guests because of the busy time of year. Zamir the innkeeper became the narrator and told the special story of Christmas that had been handed down through his family. The story included Gabriel’s visit to Mary, the journey to Bethlehem (with Donkey from Shrek making a guest appearance for the second year running!), the wonder of the shepherds at the news the angels brought as they glided so gracefully up the aisle, and the message of love that we all carry with us today. Audience participation was also encouraged by the inclusion of carols for everyone to sing. After the play the children enjoyed a tea party complete with Christmas crackers to reward them for their hard work.



I felt quite moved during the performance and we should all be so proud of our children and the wonderful experience they gave us. Thank you to Isobel, Ailsa, Marc, Luc, Rebecca, Ellie-Louise, Sophie, Tasha, Oliver, Emily and Cameron for being the super-stars that you always are! And special thanks too to all the parents and helpers

who made everything happen and ensured children were in the right place at the right time – the play couldn’t have been the success it was without the ‘backstage’ help.

I hope 2012 brings exciting new opportunities for our COSMICs and their families and I wish you all well in everything you do. Love and peace always, Leah.

WOMEN’S WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

FRIDAY 3rd MARCH

10.30am

**at St Anthony’s Church
Pinehurst Road**

More details next month



A VICAR'S JOB IS NEVER DONE . . .



And the mince pies were a well-earned reward!

But Santa came to lend a hand with the cleaning!



COSMICS
share their
ideas
with us
in church

**St Mary's School and West Moors Pre-school come to church for a
CHRISTINGLE SERVICE**



**Jesus Christ
is the light of the world,
a light no darkness
can quench.**

Geraldine Cole

A very big thank you to the children of St Mary's School who attended the Christingle service held in our Church which raised £143.86. Thank you to everyone who supported this event and collected coins in the cardboard candles and also gave to the collection at our service.

Our Christmas stall in the Allendale Centre, Wimborne raised £259.70 together with the remainder sold here at St Mary's Church. Thank you to all supporters. The Christmas cards' money is separate and a total of £99.05 was sent to Head Office.

The Wimborne Committee has just met to plan ahead the Agenda for 2012 and we are encouraged because our fund-raising from April 2010 to March 2011 raised the sum of £7,157.02.

15th November 2011 – St Paul's Cathedral, London - launch of 'Runaways' campaign. Bishop Tim of Truro gave the address and the Duchess of Gloucester was in attendance as The Children's Society Royal President. The refreshments and presentation took place in St Paul's Crypt and the guest speaker was the actor Jenny Agutter. She has been involved with runaway children for the past 10 years and is "backing the campaign" and if you wish to sign a petition for the 'Runaways' campaign I have put one on the notice board in our church hall.

LOTS OF BARGAINS at the annual church Bazaar!





GEORGE HERBERT

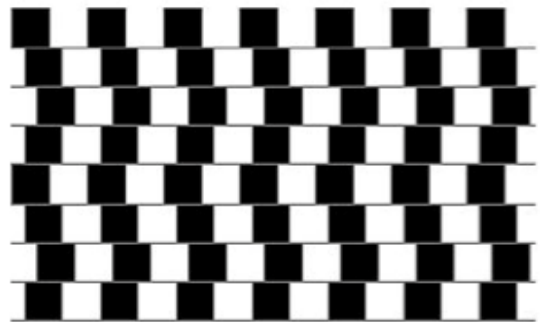
Born the seventh of 10 children in 1593, George Herbert grew up to be well known as a scholar and became a Member of Parliament. In 1630 he became a parish priest and spent the rest of his life in a small Wiltshire village. He preached, wrote poetry, helped rebuild the church and cared deeply for his parishioners who called him the 'Holy Mr. Herbert'.

He died aged 40 of tuberculosis, and perhaps we would never have heard of him were it not for his poems. He hid patterns and puns in his poems: in one called 'Easter Wings' the printed words look like the wings of birds soaring into the sky. A number of his poems became hymns, such as 'King of Glory, King of Peace', 'Let All the World in Every Corner Sing' and 'Teach me, my God and King'.



There is a window honouring George Herbert in Westminster Abbey, but he lives on in the words of hymns that are still sung today.

PUZZLES BEFORE YOUR EYES...



Do these lines go straight across or do they slope? Check them with a ruler to get the answer.



Roses are red
Violets are blue
Some poems rhyme
But this one doesn't!

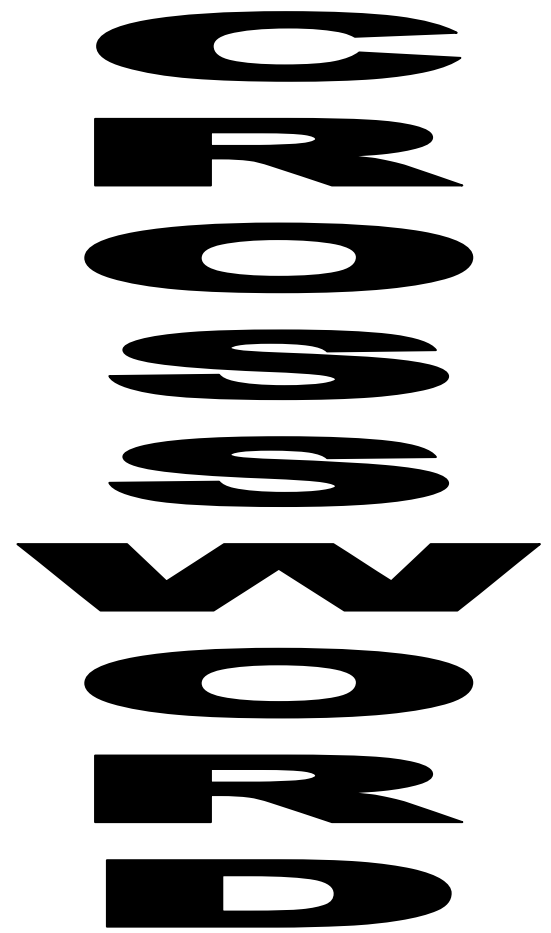
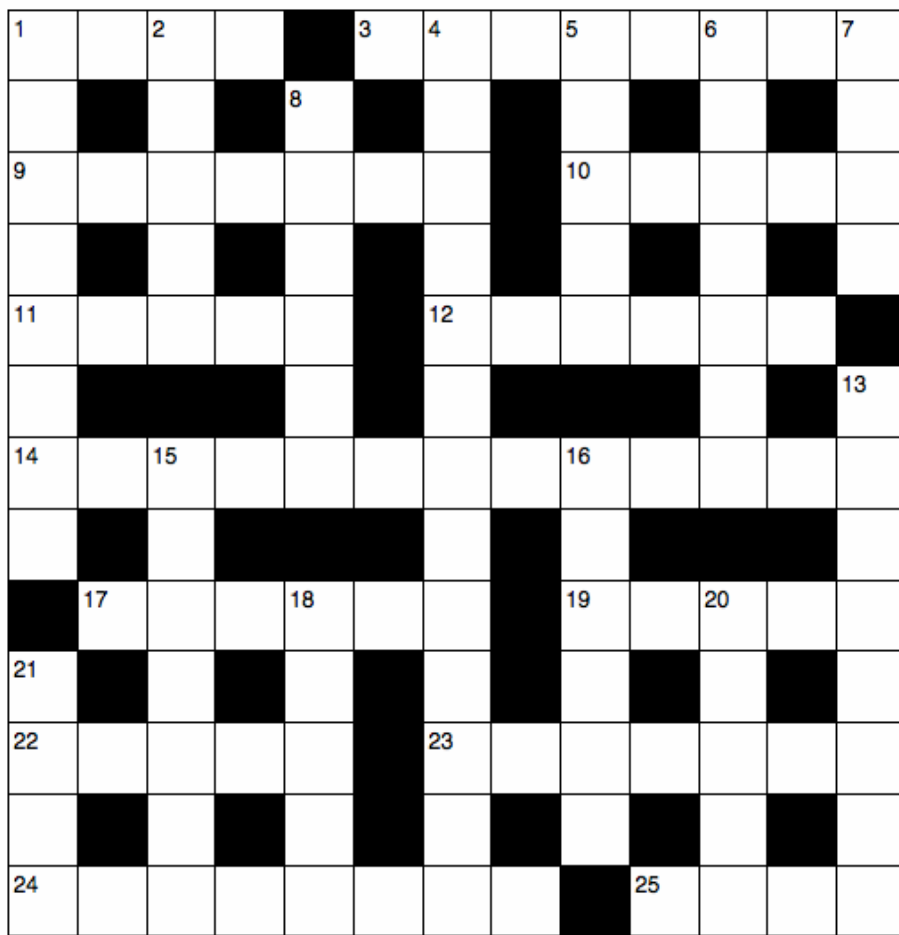


What birds spend all their time on their knees?

Birds of prey.

What do you call a group of chickens playing hide-and-seek?

Fowl play.



Across

- 1 Salary (Isaiah 19:10) (4)
- 3 Jesus asked those healed of leprosy, 'Were not all ten — ?' (Luke 17:17) (8)
- 9 Wide, elevated level area of land (Joshua 13:9) (7)
- 10 'So you also must be — , because the Son of Man will come... when you do not expect him' (Matthew 24:44) (5)
- 11 '[He] said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He — — , and his hand was completely restored' (Luke 6:10) (3,2)
- 12 'Who has gathered up the wind in the — of his hand?' (Proverbs 30:4) (6)
- 14 Not born again (13)
- 17 'Again and again he — the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins' (Hebrews 10:11) (6)
- 19 Mails (anag.) (5)
- 22 'He — — here; he has risen' (Matthew 28:6) (2,3)
- 23 Defeated (Judges 20:43) (7)
- 24 Soldiers' quarters (Acts 21:34) (8)
- 25 'Pillars of marble' were how the Beloved described those of her Lover (Song of Songs 5:15) (4)

Down

- 1 Totally destroyed (Genesis 7:23) (5,3)
- 2 What the Philippian jailer was told to do with his prisoners Paul and Silas (Acts 16:23) (5)
- 4 Object of ridicule (Job 12:4) (8-5)
- 5 In most years, the month in which Easter falls (5)
- 6 For example, Caesarea, Joppa, Tyre, Sidon (7)
- 7 '[Jesus] was in the desert for forty — , being tempted by Satan' (Mark 1:13) (4)
- 8 'Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power — to our God' (Revelation 19:1) (6)
- 13 Mend dots (anag.) (8)
- 15 Purifier (Malachi 3:3) (7)
- 16 Attacked (1 Samuel 27:8) (6)
- 18 The good Samaritan to the innkeeper: 'When I return, I will reimburse you for any — expense you may have' (Luke 10:35) (5)
- 20 How Matthew described the crowds who followed Jesus (Matthew 4:25) (5)
- 21 For example, one of 25 Across (Judges 19:29) (4)

WEST MOORS SINGERS

Thank you to every one who supported us at our Christmas Concerts at the beginning of December. We hope you enjoyed the evening and felt that it contributed to your Christmas celebrations. We wish you all a very Happy New Year.



We have resumed now after the Christmas break, and have started preparing for our Spring Concerts where we will be performing musical numbers from Rogers and Hammerstein's OKLAHOMA and SOUTH PACIFIC and also Gilbert and Sullivan's IOLANTHE. It promises to be an exciting event as the music and songs from these shows are always very popular.

So please make a note in your diary. You have a choice of evenings as we perform three times. Wednesday, 23rd May at St. Anthony's Church, West Moors, and Friday and Saturday 25th/26th May at the Barrington Theatre, Ferndown.

If you enjoy singing and would like to join us, please contact the Hon. Secretary, Mrs Janet Roberts – Telephone 01202 892810 or email – bjmr@supanet.com

WHAT'S ORANGE AND STICKY AND WORTH PRESERVING?

This month sees the first ever National Marmalade Week (25th Feb to 3rd Mar). If you really want to celebrate, go to Dalemain Mansion and Gardens in Cumbria, where they will have dozens of samples on offer at a Marmalade Festival, and are even giving out awards.

If you like marmalade, ever wonder where it comes from? One tradition traces it to a storm-damaged Spanish ship which took refuge in Dundee Harbour in 1700. It was full of Seville oranges that the captain was desperate to sell before they went mouldy. A local down-on-luck merchant, one James Keiller, bought the lot. He didn't know what to do with the oranges either, but fortunately he had a resourceful wife. She set about turning a ship-load of Seville oranges into a preserve, and so the first marmalade factory was born.

Marmalade has been at the heart of British breakfasts for centuries. Winston Churchill fought the Second World War on it (washed down with a flute of Pol Roger each morning). DH Lawrence wrote novels on it. Paddington Bear's sandwiches were all marmalade. If you want to get your fingers sticky, visit: www.marmaladeawards.com.

GOD IN THE ARTS - *The Rev'd Michael Burgess*

Treasures old and treasures new: Stephen Broadbent

In the 9th century the bones of St Werburgh were taken westwards to escape the invasion of the Vikings on the east coast. They rested at Chester and soon a church was built there to house her remains. That church grew into a Benedictine monastery after the Norman Conquest which flourished in the Middle Ages. Its dissolution at the Reformation led to the creation of the cathedral of Chester in 1541.



Visitors to the cathedral today see a building that was greatly restored by the Victorians, who put in many stained glass windows. But there is still much of the older history to explore, including the glorious carvings of the choir and the misericords from the 14th century.

In a talk given to the Friends of the cathedral, the sculptor, Stephen Broadbent, described the building as a firm foundation rooted in history. Through the centuries it has welcomed visitors and pilgrims to find again the God who speaks through history and through the splendour and stone of this building. Because of its witness to that eternal truth, he said, it is a delight and a joy to visit.

Certainly, when you leave the main building and enter the cloister garden, there is delight in abundance. The colours, the scents of the plants there invade the senses. And in the centre is Stephen Broadbent's own sculpture, 'The Water of Life.' It depicts the meeting of Jesus and the Samaritan woman at the well in St John's Gospel.

We hear the sound of water flowing out of the bowl, which is held by both Jesus and the woman, their hands touching as the water runs through them. There is a strength here, but also an intimacy as the two bodies are

united by this gift of water, and the woman's own life seems to flow out of the life of Jesus. In scripture we read of water, struck from a rock by Moses in the wilderness, to quench the people's thirst. In this Gospel the water flows from a well. But Jesus in chapter 4 talks of a third supply – a source that will quench an inner thirst and give a life that lasts eternally. The base of the sculpture quotes those words of Jesus in verse 14. No longer would the woman have to make that tiring journey to the public well, for Jesus says that this will be an unfailing water supply of her own.

As we ponder this intimate meeting of minds and hearts, we can think of the longing in every human heart. Each of us thirsts for something to satisfy it. We draw water from many wells: the water of praise to quench our thirst for self-esteem; the water of success to quench our thirst for importance; the water of pleasure to quench our thirst for joy. But we still thirst. Discovering God anew is like finding a spring within.

In the main building we can discover God in the beauty and grandeur of the cathedral, marking out a place of worship and prayer over many centuries. But as we pass from the cathedral to the cloister garden, we find another place to discover God as we look at the beauty of creation in the two elements of earth and water. We see the woman thirsting for that gift of new life promised by the Messiah, and we hear Jesus quenching that thirst with his words 'I am he.'

W	A	G	E		C	L	E	A	N	S	E	D
I		U		B		A		P		E		A
P	L	A	T	E	A	U		R	E	A	D	Y
E		R		L		G		I		P		S
D	I	D	S	O		H	O	L	L	O	W	
O				N		I				R		O
U	N	R	E	G	E	N	E	R	A	T	E	D
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**CROSSWORD
SOLUTION**



Our School Learning Values



In September 2010 we redesigned our school curriculum. The coalition government had just come into power and had rejected out of hand the previous Labour administration's revised National Curriculum. Michael Gove had promised a review of the curriculum but the results of this were some years away (currently 2013). The previous National Curriculum, introduced in 1999, was tired and outdated and failed to reflect the way learning and theories of learning had developed over the previous decade.

It was clear that something new was needed to stimulate our children in the 21st century. After a good deal of research and several false starts we settled on a curriculum based around the skills necessary for lifelong learning. We began to base these around a set of core learning values or principles that would support and underpin the content of the new curriculum.

These were based on the Effective Lifelong Learning Inventory (ELLI). The original research for this began at the Graduate School of Education at Bristol University in 2004. Their principal claim was that there are two outcomes when a child successfully learns.



They are:

- **Achievement** (knowledge, skills and understanding)
- **Personal Development** (dispositions, attitudes, values and motivation)

They noted that formal education tends to have a preoccupation with achievement – the testing, measurement, comparison, validation and quality assurance of levels of achievement.

They also noted that successful achievement signals the end of a process of learning, whilst personal development is an ongoing process associated with lifelong learning.

Through an extended process of testing with large populations of school-aged children the Bristol University team identified **seven dimensions of Learning Power**, dimensions that reflect seven characteristics or dispositions associated with successful lifelong learning.

The Seven Dimensions of Learning Power

- Changing and Learning (as opposed to being stuck and static)
- Critical Curiosity (as opposed to passivity)
- Meaning Making (as opposed to data accumulation)
- Creativity (as opposed to being rule-bound)
- Learning Relationships (as opposed to isolation or dependence)
- Strategic Awareness (as opposed to being robotic)
- Resilience (as opposed to fragility and dependence)



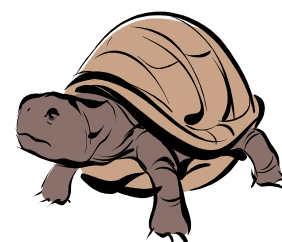
These were the attributes we wanted to foster in our children. However, as you can imagine we needed a more child-friendly approach.

To realise this objective the staff at St. Mary's developed the learning animals to allow the children to understand an abstract concept within a familiar context.

Currently we have the following creatures;



- Sociable Bee
- Creative Unicorn
- Connective Spider
- Adaptable Chameleon
- Curious Cat
- Resilient Tortoise
- Planning Owl



Each animal has its own story written by the teachers and each possesses its own characteristics. Teachers often refer to these and children are praised in Friday's celebration assembly for demonstrating or putting into practice the learning values.

With a number of new staff recently joining our school we reviewed these on our January in-service training day and to reflect our Christian Foundation we have plans to introduce a new animal; The Spiritual Lion.

To date these have proved successful in enabling even young children to begin to acquire the learning values and attitudes that will help them to be successful lifelong learners.

If this article has inspired you to learn more about the ELLI project you may like to read the original research which is published in:

McGettrick, B (2002) Transforming school ethos: transforming learning Citizenship education in action (paper presented at Bristol University Graduate School of Education)

Deakin Crick R., Broadfoot P. & Claxton G. (2004) Developing an Effective Lifelong Learning Inventory: The ELLI Project, Assessment in Education



Diary Dates for February 2012

Please prepare for these acts of worship by reading and praying through these texts beforehand.

- Sunday 5 **THIRD SUNDAY BEFORE LENT**
Education Sunday - Mr J Harrison Head Teacher
At St Mary's CE VA First School will preach at 10am
8.00am Holy Eucharist (BCP)
10.00am Parish Eucharist (CW)
Readings: Isaiah 40:21-end.
Corinthians 9:16-23. Mark 1:29-39
- Wednesday 8 10.00am Holy Eucharist (BCPc)
2.00pm Afternoon MU in the Hall
Your gift - discover and celebrate by Iris Parker
- Thursday 9 3.00pm Tea @ 3 in The Hall
- Sunday 12 **SECOND SUNDAY BEFORE LENT**
8.00am Holy Eucharist (BCP)
10.00am Parish Eucharist (CW)
Readings: Proverbs 8:1,22-31.
Colossians 1:15-20. John 1:1-14
- Wednesday 15 10.00am Holy Eucharist (BCPc)
- Saturday 18 9.00am Men's Breakfast in Hall
- Sunday 19 **SUNDAY NEXT BEFORE LENT**
8.00am Holy Eucharist (BCP)
10.00am Parish Eucharist (CW)
Readings: 2 Kings 2:1-12.
2 Corinthians 4:3-6. Mark 9:2-9
- Monday 20 8.00pm Evening MU Group
Talk by Sheila Soper – "Return to Sudan"

ASH WEDNESDAY 22nd - IMPOSITION OF ASHES - LENT BEGINS

- 10.00am Holy Eucharist (BCPc)
7.30pm Holy Eucharist (CW)

Church members are asked to attend one of these two services

Saturday 25 12.00pm – 1.30pm, MU Evening Group
 Soup/Pud in the Hall
 7.30pm Barn Dance & Fish Supper - Memorial Hall
 Fundraising – tickets from Chris Wilson

Sunday 26 **FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT**
 8.00am Holy Eucharist (BCP)
 10.00am Parish Eucharist (CW)
 Readings: Genesis 9:8-17. 1 Peter 3:18-end
 Mark 1:9-15

Wednesday 29 10.00am Holy Eucharist (BCPc)



Advance Notices for your Diaries

Mothering Sunday is 18th March
 Palm Sunday 1st April
 Passover Meal 6pm Maundy Thursday
 April 5th in the Hall & **Easter Breakfast**
 and Dawn Service – Sunday 8th April
 06:28 Hrs followed by Holy Communion

IN FINE VOICE . . . at St Mary's in ADVENT



Christmas Carol Concert
 led by
**CANTAMUS CHURCH
 CHOIR**



'Night of Angels' Oratorio
 Church Choir and Sue Oldrey Singers
(Thanks to M Catford for photo)

CRIB SERVICE on CHRISTMAS EVE



*Loving God,
Help us remember the birth of Jesus,
that we may share in the song of the angels,
the gladness of the shepherds,
and worship of the wise men.*

The Way I See It : ALL YOU NEED IS LOVE

Canon David Winter. former Head of Religious Broadcasting at the BBC.

February is few people's favourite month, but it does contain a favourite date. Halfway through the month, on the 14th, it's Valentine's Day. It is, of course, beloved of the greeting card industry, but also of millions of romantically inclined men and women, otherwise totally sane, who take the opportunity to post a message of love in the hope that it will be reciprocated.



As the card is meant to be anonymous, this can lead to all manner of tricky misunderstandings, but (as we have observed before) hope springs eternal, and many a teenage heart has missed a beat or two on the morning of Valentine's Day. And for all I know, there may be millions of couples all over the world who owe their happy marriages to one of these heart-strewn, beribboned cards with their doggerel protestations of undying love.

Few of those who send or receive them realise that February 14th is actually the feast day of St Valentine. That's hardly surprising, as we know very little about the person the day commemorates. In fact, there were two Christian martyrs of that name, both living in the third century, one a soldier and the other a bishop. No one has ever successfully found any link at all between either of them and courting couples and their desperate hopes.

The most likely explanation of the association of this date with hopeful lovers is a very old tradition (at least as old as Chaucer) that birds begin to pair on February 14th - St Valentine's Day. As they noisily go about choosing their mates, young men and women pursue a rather subtler, if more circuitous route to the same end.

Whatever its provenance, Valentine's Day at least reminds us of the irresistible force of love. 'Love changes everything', as the song says - or, as the Beatles put it, 'All you need is love'. The problem then becomes interpretation. In English the one word 'love' covers everything, from sexual intercourse to motherly care, from close friendship to a lifelong partnership. Happily, the Greeks have more than one word for it. So the New Testament is able to establish that eros (sexual attraction), philadelphia (friendship) and agape (sacrificial love) are distinct qualities, yet all are part of the mysterious and wonderful chemistry of human love in its fullest sense.

'All that I am I give to you', the couple say to each other in the wedding service. What a thing to promise! And yet what a testimony to the deepest possible understanding of the love of God for us, and (in our better moments) of human love in all its tenderness, commitment and unselfishness. So physical attraction plus true friendship plus self-giving love add up to - well, everything that the Bible means when it says that 'those who live in love live in God, and God lives in them'(1 John 4:16). Happy Valentine's Day!

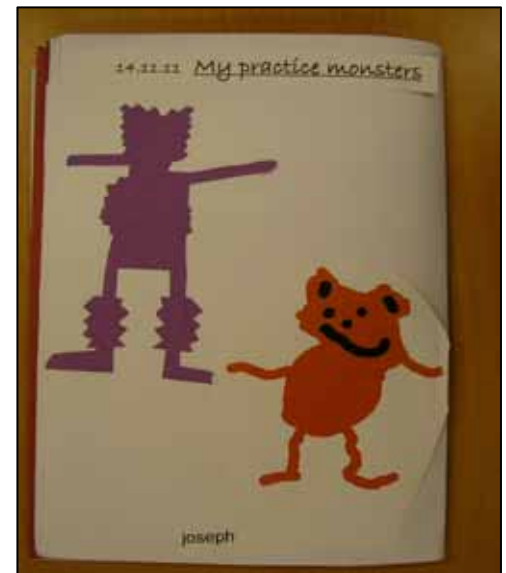


All About Oakhurst Community First School

Year 1 Willow Class

Year One have been designing and making calendars for their Design and Technology project. They talked about how scary a calendar should be and based them on monsters. We read 'The Monster Shop' for some inspiration and looked at various calendars.

We practiced making some monsters on the computer and using paper for a collage monster.



Then, we designed our calendars. We thought about who we wanted our calendar to be for and where they would hang it. We had to think very carefully about how our monsters would look.

We used the computer to draw one of the monsters and we made the other one out of paper.

We chose what colour backgrounds we wanted our calendars mounted on and practised using the guillotine safely. Mrs. Terry made us check all our fingers afterwards to make sure we still had all ten. (A bit of maths as well!)



We also did some calendar investigations to help us recognize the months of the year and the days of the week.

After that we had to evaluate our calendars, thinking about what was good, and what we might do differently next time. We were all very pleased with our calendars and so was Mrs. Terry. We hope the people we give them to will like them as they are a present for Christmas. Don't tell them!

Christian Concepts

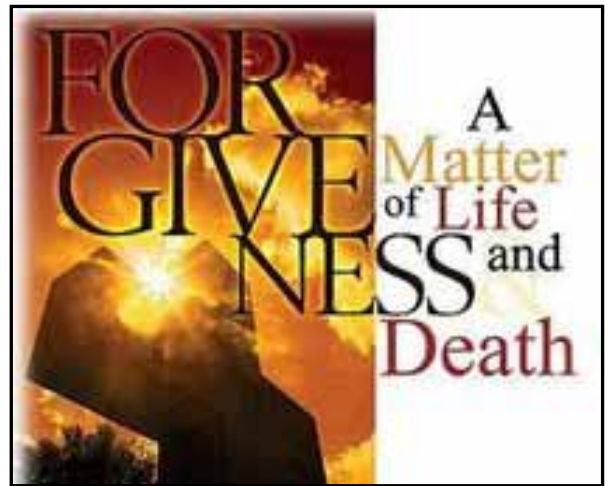
A series of articles on Doctrine

6. Guilt, Sin & Forgiveness

Christians believe that God created everything for his good purpose, yet things are far from perfect. Saint Paul wrote “For the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay...” (Romans 8:20,21a). The imperfections are mankind’s moral responsibility. Morality itself stems from a belief in *the other*. I would argue that without God there is no morality – there is only self-centredness. I was taught by Bishop Banit Chui that all the *futility* that we are subjected to is a result of a lack of faith in God. God is sovereign over all things and has a providential care for all creation and hopes that it will be set free from its bondage. In spiritual terms we are enslaved to sin – we are immoral and fall far short of God’s ideal. (Rom 3:23). In legalistic terms all are guilty and are condemned. Even if we are punished in some way, the guilt remains. Guilty sinners face eternal death (Rom 6.23). It you were to kill someone and be caught you would be convicted of manslaughter/murder and be imprisoned. Under secular law your life would continue and you would probably be released in time. Your victim would still be dead. You might be freed but would still be guilty – the punishment has not removed the guilt. You remain responsible for your criminal action. It is the same in spiritual terms, but the judge is God, he cannot tolerate sin. He has however established a means of pardon. Forgiveness is necessary to be released from the bondage of sin.

Forgiveness is a pardoning of a wrongful act. The punishment has ended – not the guilt though! The spiritual consequence of sin is death. God’s divine forgiveness is release from guilt and deliverance & cleansing from sin. In sin humanity is estranged from God and that is eternal death. In forgiveness we are reconciled to God and that is eternal life. This is really serious. Forgiveness is for all, those who accept it are those who will be saved. God by his foreknowledge knows already if that is you and me!

What Christ has achieved for humanity in his death and resurrection is atonement for human sinfulness. This is salvation! The covenantal relationship is restored. The proclamation of forgiveness is a vital part of the Christian faith. All too often moral people are afflicted with a sense of guiltiness and just cannot move forwards. Many others are amoral; they don’t have any notion of their guilt, they are blind to their condition.



Spiritually all sinners are dead in their trespasses, they are dead because they are estranged from God. Saint Paul's teaching in his epistle to the Colossians is quite clear and worthy of reading carefully on this subject.

It is God in Jesus Christ who pays the price of sin; he lives a perfect life and yet sacrifices his life for the sake of peace & reconciliation. Humanity has done nothing deserving of forgiveness and yet God, because of Jesus allows us to 'stand in his presence'. We who are unworthy are made worthy in Christ. Forgiveness is not just about being pardoned. It is about moving forwards with life itself. Forgiveness truly is a matter of life and death! We have to trust in God that we are delivered from the bondage, futility, decay, enslavement, hopelessness, imprisonment of sin.

Once we are convicted of our sin by God's Holy Spirit at work in us, we are just a short step from being convinced of our reconciliation with God, whether we are weighed down by sin, or blissfully unaware. There is a simple prayer that I invite you, reader, to pray sincerely now.

Lord Jesus Christ, I am sorry for the things I have done wrong in my life (pause and examine your conscience). Please forgive me. I now turn from everything I know is wrong. Thank you that you died on the cross for me so that I could be forgiven and set free. Thank you that you offer me forgiveness and the gift of your Spirit. I now receive that gift. Please come into my life by your Holy Spirit to be with me forever. Thank you, Lord Jesus. Amen.

By God's Grace we are 'ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven' in the words of the hymn, 'Praise My Soul the King of Heaven'. Also we are changed, for transformation is the result of salvation. Now please pray the Lord's Prayer, slowly, fully understanding perhaps for the first time what it might mean to ask God to forgive you your sins/trespasses as much as you are prepared to offer forgiveness to those who have wronged you.

The world can thus be transformed with one act of kindness and one act of loving forgiveness at a time. It isn't always easy, but it is radically life bringing, conversely remaining upset and angry will never right a wrong or absolve a sin, what it will bring is a bitterness of heart & mind upon you.

The essence of authentic Christianity is forgiveness. It is certainly not judgement and oppression – that is fleeting as we move on in freedom. Jesus proved that loving forgiveness is the most powerful divine weapon against evil and oppression; Martin Luther King wrote, "Forgiveness is not an occasional act, it is a permanent attitude." They died not in vain.

To err is human, to forgive is divine. Yours in Christ, Andrew.
(Guilty of much, but forgiven and thus free to sing God's praises aloud!)

FUND-RAISING NEWS

Chris Wilson

Our next event is the popular Parish Barn Dance at 7.30 pm on Saturday 25th February at West Moors Memorial Hall. Once again the caller will be Rob James. This is an enjoyable evening for young or old. You can join in the light hearted dancing or just relax and enjoy the fun. A Fish and Chip Supper will be included with tangerines or apples to follow, but please bring your own drinks and glasses.

Tickets are now available from Chris Wilson on 890098 or Peter Dunning on 871616. £10 each for adults or £5 for children under 12.

Please make sure you get your tickets early as they usually go quite quickly.

ADVANCE DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

21st April - AUCTION OF PROMISES AND SHARED SUPPER

Church Hall 7.30 pm

2nd June - NEON MOON COUNTRY AND WESTERN BAND

With general dancing and Line Dancing [including instruction]

West Moors Memorial Hall 7.30pm

Please help to publicize these events, if you can, by displaying a poster, distributing flyers and telling your friends and relations all about them.

Thank you.

THANK YOU . . .

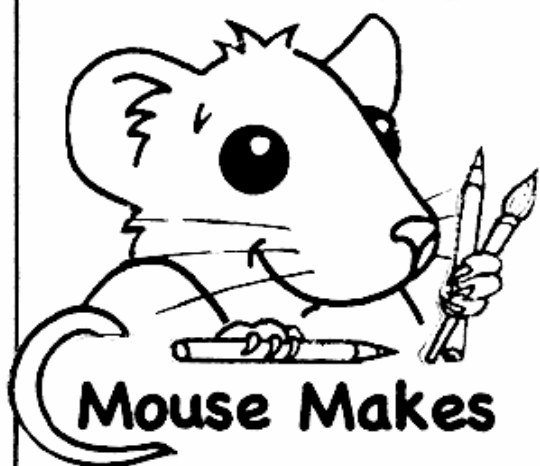
from Sue Oldrey

Baird and I would like to say a very special thank you to everyone for all your prayers and wide ranging practical help in the lead up to Christmas when I was trying to cope with extreme pain and Baird so tragically lost his brother in New Zealand. We have been supported and helped in so many practical ways it reinforces to us just what a caring community we live in.

One thing that I would like to share with you. When my pain levels started to drop sufficiently that my brain kicked in and I started to fret over the recent events, I suddenly found I wanted to cry - often for no obvious reason. This was frustrating and hard going for Baird. One day in my despair I called, 'Oh Lord, please help me. I don't feel strong and can't seem to stop crying, when I know I should.' (very British!!)

Back came the answer, very clearly. 'I gave you tears!'

I feel much better now!

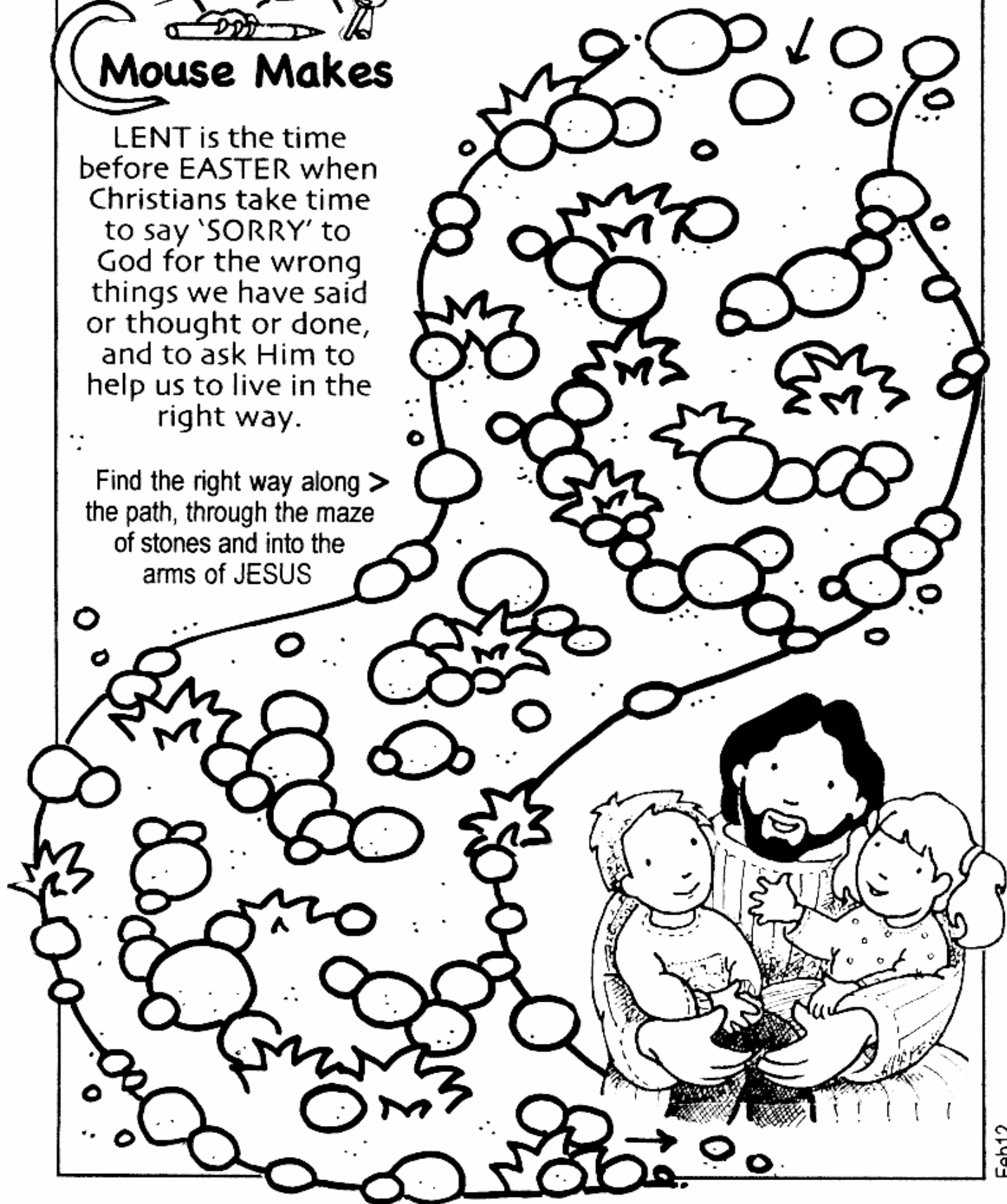


"Teach me how to live,
O LORD.
Lead me along
the right path..."

Psalm 27:11

LENT is the time
before EASTER when
Christians take time
to say 'SORRY' to
God for the wrong
things we have said
or thought or done,
and to ask Him to
help us to live in the
right way.

Find the right way along >
the path, through the maze
of stones and into the
arms of JESUS



Vicar's Vista

A Letter from America

Good evening (that's how Alistair Cooke always started). I'm in America and yet aware that the Parish Magazine deadline draws near from afar!



From my viewpoint the Episcopal Church of The Ascension and Saint Agnes that stands right across the street from my apartment block is undergoing some refurbishment. "Open for business as usual", declares a very large sign on the building. The contemplation of church as a *business* on first consideration seems to strike a clashing note as loud as the trash collection service that rudely awakened me and the whole block far too early this morning. Didn't Jesus berate the turning of 'My Father's House' into a business concern? Then, on reflection, I considered how so many words here in the USA have different meanings or connotations to their usage back in Blighty, where the Queen's English is still spoke proper. 'Business' might actually mean that the church is still busying itself with its primary function - even though the building is having some repair work done. Now that's a heartening thought - that the people are not constrained by the building and are keen to advertise this. (I wonder how they got permission for such a sign when we cannot get permission for a modest new noticeboard).

I pray that the church might always be busy and that there may be lots of *signs of life*. Ah, but what is 'usual' for the church across the road one might ask? That, Dear Listener, I am yet to experience, but *all shall be revealed that once was hidden* as Sunday draws near and the street far below my present 'high-rise view' of Massachusetts and 12th will be crossed by this *Pilgrim Father*. What kind of a *New World* might I discover? What I can tell you is that each Sunday they publish an A4 (that's double the size of our Magazine) Order of Service and Parish News. It contains all the liturgy (which is 1928 Book of Common Prayer) hymns, bible readings, prayers, news and all. Someone is definitely busy putting that together every week! My son informs

Bible Sketchbook

God provides!

To get rid of sin
A sacrifice was needed.
Abraham was willing
To sacrifice
His only Son.
But God substituted
Another life instead.
In the same way
God substituted
Jesus - his only son -
As a sacrifice
For our sins.
The key: obedience;
The result: countless
Blessings in the
Holy Spirit!

Read more in Gen 22:1-18;
Mk 10:45; Heb 6:13-14



Abraham obeyed God and God provided a ram!

Parish Barn Dance and Fish & Chip Supper



Saturday
25th February 7.30 pm

West Moors Memorial Hall

All proceeds in aid of St. Mary's Church Funds

£10.00 adults
£5.00 children under 12

Bring your own drinks and glasses

Telephone 890098 or 871616 for tickets