



Holy
Trinity
WATERHEAD

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March 2022

holytrinitywaterhead.co.uk

Services at Holy Trinity Church

Sunday 11:00 am Parish Worship
Wednesday 7:00 pm Family Communion
Baptisms and marriages by arrangement with the Vicar.

Please submit items for the April magazine by 15 March.
You can e-mail files to paulmonk111@gmail.com

People at Holy Trinity Church

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Parish Hall Manager	Daniel Reilly	(07788) 860 764
Sunday School	Yolanda Ryder	
Rainbows	Sarah Wilson and Natalie Morris	
Brownies	Val Lees and Moira Belcher	
Guides	Karen and Lisa Cannon	
Beavers and Cubs	Lee Thompson	(07907) 907 354
Scouts	Mark Dickinson	(07976) 666 512

Letter from the Vicar

In some ways it was an odd day. But it was very typical.

First I answered my emails then collected the post. All this time, the phone was ringing and people came to the door. Eventually, I could tick off one or two items on my 'to do' list. I even found time to plan for events the following day. I finally stopped, drew breath and realised that I was so busy doing what was urgent that I'd not even started doing those tasks that were important.

One of the aims of Lent is self-examination. We use this period between Ash Wednesday and Easter to look dispassionately at ourselves. We ask serious questions about commitment and outward expressions of the Christianity we strive to live. It is wise to do so. But it's also important to look at our drives and priorities. Perhaps we could state that distinction by saying, 'Let's look at who we *are* rather than what we *do*.'

More self knowledge can bring huge improvements to everything from our health to our relationships. And, because our relationship with God lies at the heart of our faith, it can help us grow closer to God.

The surest way to make a relationship grow is to spend time with a person. We get to know them and find out who they are, what they are like. We start to get behind the façade. We can grow to know God in exactly the same way. What could be more important? We could therefore use Lent this year as a way to spend more time with God.

Lent is approaching. We could use it as an opportunity to lose weight—no chocolate for six weeks, no wine, no cake! We could use it as a way of learning more, for example by reading more. Or we could really get to the heart of things and try to enter into a deep and satisfying relationship with God. Let's stop doing what looks urgent and do something that couldn't be more important: seeking God.

Wishing you a Lent of deep love and joy and peace:

PAUL

Dates for your diary

Wednesday 2 March	7:00 pm: Service for Ash Wednesday , including ashing.
Saturday 5 March	10:00–11:00 am: Ward Surgery at St Barnabas.
Tuesday 29 March	7:30: meeting of the Parochial Church Council .
Sunday 3 April	12:15 am (approx.) Annual Parochial Church Meeting
Sunday 10 April	11:00 am: Service for Palm Sunday
Thursday 14 April	8:00 pm: Service Maundy Thursday
Friday 15 April	11:00 am: Service for Good Friday
Sunday 17 April	11:00 am: Service for Easter Day



The water-to-wine miracle also made for an excellent April Fool's Day prank (with apologies to John 2:1–11)

Bible readings for March

Sunday 27 February

Sunday before Lent

First: Exodus 35:29–end
Epistle: 2 Corinthians 3:12—4:2
Gospel: Luke 9:28–36

Sunday 6 March

First Sunday of Lent

First: Deuteronomy 26:1–11
Epistle: Romans 10:8b–13
Gospel: Luke 4:1–13

Sunday 20 March

Third Sunday of Lent

First: Isaiah 55:1–9
Epistle: 1 Corinthians 10:1–13
Gospel: Luke 13:1–9

Wednesday 2 March

Ash Wednesday

First: Joel 2:2–2 12–17
Epistle: 2 Corinthians 5:20b—6:10
Gospel: Matthew 6:1–6

Sunday 13 March

Second Sunday of Lent

First: Genesis 15:1–12, 16–18
Epistle: Philippians 3:17—4:1
Gospel: Luke 13:31–end

Sunday 27 March

Mothering Sunday*

First: Exodus 2:1–10
Epistle: Colossian 3:12–17
Gospel: Luke 2:33–35

* British summer times begins on Sunday 27 March



**Be thankful often.
Be thankful for anything.
Be thankful for everything.
Thankfulness is a soil
in which pride does not easily grow.**

Archbishop David Hope

A cross on Ash Wednesday

Ash Wednesday receives its name from the ancient custom of drawing a cross on the foreheads of those who attend a special service to kick-start Lent. The cross is drawn in ash, and is applied by a priest who says the words,

Remember that you are but dust,
and to dust you shall return.

Turn away from sin and be faithful to Christ.

The ash used as 'pigment' when drawing the cross is made by burning the palm crosses distributed during the previous year's Palm Sunday service. There are two reasons:

Between Palm Sunday and Ash Wednesday, we can hold a physical cross in our hands. It is visible and tangible. We can see it, feel it, and use it to aid our prayer and meditation. Having burnt the palm-leaves of the cross and applied the ash to our foreheads, we are internalising the cross. No longer do we use an *external* aid, merely looking at a cross, but have *internalised* it. We have applied the cross to ourselves.

The second and related reason is also symbolic. It's possible to think of ourselves as being a disciple because we once made a commitment (such as baptism, confirmation, or attending other services in the past). Burning the palm cross given at last year's service in effect emphasises the transient nature of commitment and invites us to find further opportunities to recommit our discipleship.



Receiving forgiveness

The prayer of absolution

Almighty God,

who forgives all who truly repent,

have mercy upon you,

pardon and deliver you from all your sins,

confirm and strengthen you in all goodness,

and keep you in life eternal;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

The Bible insists that God is so loving He will always forgive us. For example, St John in his first letter says, 'If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness' (1 John 1:9).

A priest says this prayer of absolution near the start of most Church services. It may be the priest who speaks but the forgiveness actually comes from God.

This pray is a useful way of reminding us that God does truly forgive us. To that end, some people find it useful to pray the prayer of absolution for themselves. They may say it silently or speak out loud saying, for example, 'Almighty God, who forgives me because I truly repent, have mercy on me, pardon and deliver me from all my sins ...' Other Christians prefer to insert their own name and say something like, 'Almighty God, who forgives Paul ...'

Prayer of the month

Updates

News from Church and Parish

We have received two grants toward the cost of a new kitchen in the Parish Hall:

£2000 from the Manchester Guardian Society Foundation.

£600 from the Duchy of Lancaster Benevolent Fund.



The Bishop of Middleton, **the Rt Revd Mark Davies**, came to our Church on Sunday 30 January to help kick-start our 175th anniversary celebrations.

From the parish registers

Holy baptism

Josie Denise Mellor
Halle Jones

Saturday 19 February
Sunday 20 February,
both at Waterhead Church

Holy Matrimony

Earl Matthews and Joanne Kerr on Saturday 5 February
at Waterhead Church

Christian funeral

Clarence Frain
Cyril Brathwaite

Thursday 3 February
Friday 25 February
both at St Barnabas Church



April fool!

Turning a phrase

Making sense of the Scriptures

Jesus spoke in a dialect of ancient Hebrew called Aramaic. His words would have been translated into Greek before the text we have today was preserved and later became the Bible. In fact, all the books and letters in our New Testament were written in Greek, because that was the most common language two-thousand years ago. We see a similar situation today when people in lots of countries know English even if it's their second or even their third language.

Almost all the Old Testament was written in Hebrew, with a few fragments being written in Greek. The writers of the Bible did not even know of England let alone English. Their texts were translated.

The word 'translation' comes from a Latin phrase meaning 'bearing across' which hints at the idea of relocating: when we translate, we take something from a far-away language and bring it closer to home.

Translating is like an arduous journey. And like a journey, we do not travel from one language to another in a straight line. The first line of the Lord's Prayer, for example, is literally, 'Father of us, the in the Heaven, holy the name of you.' With a little effort that long phrase becomes the simpler, 'Our father in Heaven, hallowed be your name.'

But some words and phrases are ambiguous which makes them tricky to translate. They might require an educated guess. Look at the these translations of the well-known Bible verse 2 Timothy 3:16:

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness.

New International Version

God has breathed life into all Scripture. It is useful ...

International Reader's Version

For all Scripture inspired of God is profitable to teach ...

Wycliffe Bible

Every Scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching ...

American Standard Version

Each translation gives a slightly different flavour: there's a spectrum from saying that all of Scripture is useful because it comes directly from God, through to a different stance, that some scripture is useful because it comes from God, but other scripture does not come from God and is therefore less useful. All are entirely correct translations.

Discussion questions

- To what extent does translating Scripture means it's 'from God'?
- How can we tell if a portion of Scriptures does not come from God?
- Should we read portions of Scripture that we decide are not from God?
- If a portion of Scripture does not come from God, should we read it aloud during a service in Church?

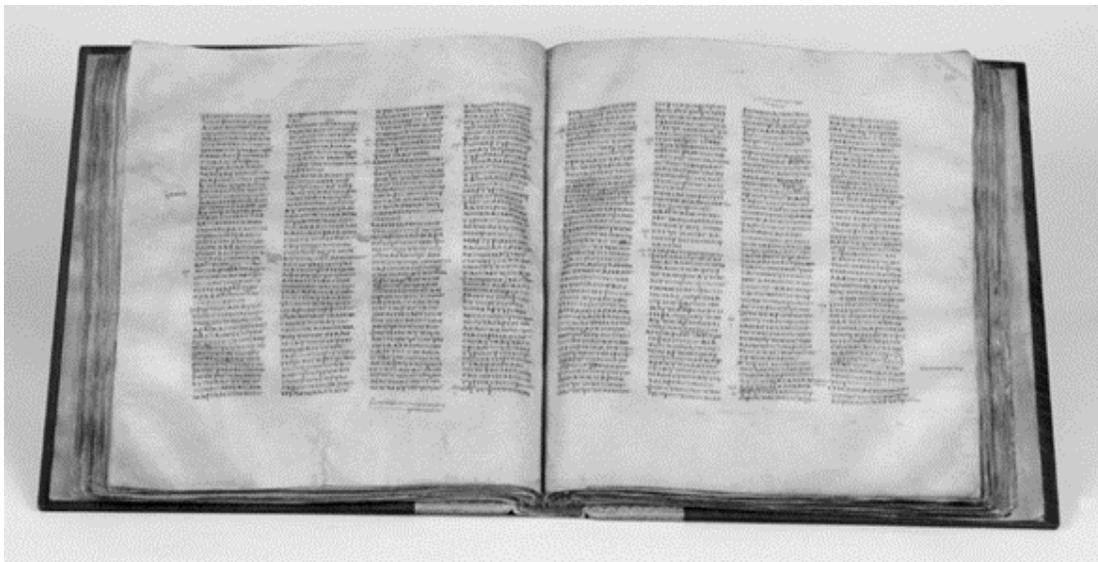
Further reading

<https://www.wycliffe.org.uk/stories/a-brief-history-of-bible-translation>

<https://translationjournal.net/journal/18bible.htm>

The oldest complete Bible is the *Codex Sinaiticus*, pictured left, which was produced in the fourth century AD. It takes its name from Mount Sinai in Israel: it was discovered in St Catherine's Monastery located on the higher slopes of the mountain.

We know of other, older Bibles but they're incomplete — for example they contain only the New Testament — or are badly damaged as a result of their extreme age.



The first episode of Doctor Who was broadcast nearly sixty years ago in 1963. From the very first episode, the Doctor demonstrated that he was a Time Lord by travelling through space and time in a spaceship, the Tardis. The Tardis could change its appearance. It did so to blend in with its surroundings. The Doctor Who scriptwriters thought it was a good joke that someone who consistently broke the rules should make his spaceship look like a police box.

In the 1960s, most major streets had a police box somewhere. The box was in effect a public telephone kiosk for police officers, or for members of the public to contact the police. Like an ordinary callbox, its telephone was located behind a hinged door so it could be used from the outside. The box interior was, in effect, a tiny police station and was used by police officers to read and compile reports, take meal breaks, and even temporarily hold detainees until transport arrived.

Our streets have changed beyond recognition in the sixty years since 1963. There are no police boxes anywhere, so the concept backfires: when the Tardis materialises, we recognise it instantly because it's the only time we ever see a blue, square box with a light on top. We need to explain to our younger friends what the box represents. And, when the Doctor lands anywhere in the universe, we straightaway see the distinctive box and its 'camouflage' before we see anything else.

In much the same way, some of the words of the English language have also changed greatly. When the Authorised Version of the Bible was first published in 1611, the language it used to address God was the same as the everyday language of the people in seventeenth century homes, churches, streets and taverns.

In 1611, it was natural to address a close friend as 'thee' and 'thou' rather than 'you'. Saying 'you' was intended to put distance between speakers: it meant formality, hierarchy, or animosity. By contrast, speaking to God with 'thee' and 'thou' was a subtle but widely understood way of emphasising that we can speak to God as freely as we speak to a close friend or family member. It implies that praying—speaking to God—should be as natural as speaking to a much loved parent. That's why the Lord's Prayer, which starts, 'Our Father ...', continues '*Thy* Kingdom come, *thy* will be done ...' rather than '... Your kingdom come ...'

But language has changed dramatically since then. Very few people today ever say 'thee' and 'thine'. These words are only ever spoken in a church-based context. That's why people sound out of place each time

they use these old-fashioned words.

We see an analogy: depicting the Tardis as a blue police box was intended as camouflage, making it blend in yet today it stands out and needs to be explained. Similarly, words like 'thee' and 'thine' were meant to emphasise close proximity to God, a blend of friendship and relationship, but today saying 'thee' and 'thine' creates a sense of distance: it makes God sound different and other. It makes the difference stand out.

That's why saying 'thee' and 'thine' can make God feel unapproachable. It's the exact opposite of what those who first translated the Authorised Version of the Bible wanted us to understand.

Perhaps we can learn from a time lord how to respond to the Lord who reigns over space and time about the way we can respond to Him as times and conventions change.



Thy Tardis come

**Jesus, Thou art all compassion,
pure unbounded love Thou art;
Visit us with Thy salvation,
enter every trembling heart.**

Charles Wesley



Lent wordsearch

H	K	Y	G	N	I	T	S	A	F	L	F	P	W	Z	Z	Y	L	G	Y
F	L	T	T	Y	P	L	N	Y	G	Z	R	R	C	D	F	G	Z	X	T
T	R	W	R	R	H	H	Q	N	Q	Q	T	R	Y	N	L	N	K	N	
A	S	H	E	S	A	M	T	L	P	M	M	R	A	G	K	C	K	J	O
Y	V	D	H	Y	Y	C	K	D	J	E	D	D	Z	E	H	X	P	S	I
W	Z	L	J	J	E	P	K	K	D	R	S	H	E	P	X	R	N	A	T
M	P	Z	W	P	R	R	T	I	K	E	X	W	R	K	E	W	O	C	A
M	L	E	K	T	M	T	T	D	N	X	Y	M	T	P	O	D	I	R	I
M	M	Q	N	L	N	A	Z	D	X	L	J	F	A	R	C	R	X	I	L
G	M	Y	G	A	T	F	E	H	O	R	M	R	R	T	P	Q	I	F	I
Z	N	K	C	I	N	W	Z	H	W	X	E	O	K	P	Q	C	F	I	C
H	B	I	O	R	H	C	P	V	P	L	S	Z	Q	B	N	F	I	C	N
T	Y	N	V	S	M	Q	E	L	X	K	Y	F	T	W	F	X	C	E	O
N	K	C	A	I	H	D	T	K	T	T	Q	K	B	N	V	C	U	Q	C
T	K	S	T	P	G	W	B	S	T	W	T	L	P	M	L	Z	R	L	E
W	B	T	P	L	K	S	L	W	S	W	C	Z	W	B	C	F	C	X	R
R	T	N	V	R	T	L	M	Z	N	O	C	R	N	N	T	G	P	D	N
G	N	E	K	Y	I	R	W	L	F	O	R	G	I	V	E	N	E	S	S
Y	N	L	K	H	N	N	C	T	A	G	T	C	R	Q	R	B	T	M	V
D	N	K	J	K	L	D	G	R	E	T	S	A	E	Z	N	X	C	V	G

Colour this page

This picture shows the annunciation, when the Archangel Gabriel told Mary that she would have a son, Jesus.

This image is drawn in the conventions of an old Greek Orthodox icon.

Can you find these words in the grid above?

Alms giving, Ashes, Ash Wednesday, Cross, Crucifixion, Easter, Fasting, Forgiveness, Holy Week, Lent, Meditation, Penance, Prayer, Prepare, Reconciliation, Sacrifice, Sorrow, Spring.

The book of Leviticus is the third of the five books of Moses, the Pentateuch, that start the Hebrew Scriptures (what we today call the Old Testament). In some ways, it's the central book in these five. In Leviticus, the people of Israel are instructed how to worship God, how to become a 'holy nation,' and learn what it means to live with others. Ironically for a book with such a poor reputation, it is here we find the famous summary of the law: 'you shall love your neighbour as yourself' (19:18).

The name 'Leviticus' takes its name from its old Greek title, *Levitikon*, meaning relating to the Levites. Although the Levites are never mentioned, it probably reflects an association of the Levites with the priesthood, and so communicates the priestly nature of the book. That's why its ancient Hebrew name is *torat kohanim*, the 'priestly instruction.'

In fact, the book not only describes the special duties of the priests, it is so named because so much concerns the service of worship at the tabernacle, which was

conducted by priests who were the sons of Aaron, assisted by many from the rest of the tribe of Levi.

Leviticus is therefore, firstly a manual of regulations to enable God to set up His earthly throne among the people of His kingdom. It explains how they are to be His holy people and how to worship Him in a holy manner. In this sense, holiness means to be separated from sin and set apart exclusively to God and for His glory. The key thought of the book is therefore holiness. In Leviticus, *spiritual* holiness is often symbolised by *physical* perfection. That's why the book demands perfect animals for its many sacrifices (chapters 1–7) and requires priests without deformity (chapters 8–10)—ideas we would strongly question today.

After God made His covenant with Moses on Mount Sinai, Israel was to aim to be the earthly representation of God's kingdom with God as its King. God established His rule over all of Israel's life. Israel's religious, communal, and personal life was regulated so to establish them as God's holy people, translating that holiness into practice.

The book pays great attention to Israel's religious ritual. The sacrifices were to be offered at an approved sanctuary, which would symbolise both God's holiness and His compassion. The people were to be led and controlled by the priests who, by care and instruction, would preserve them in purity and teach their meaning to the people.

Although Leviticus lays out laws of worship and behaviour, they are set within the narrative framework of the exodus and God's revelation to Moses on Mount Sinai. It is closely linked to the account of the construction of the Tabernacle (Exodus 25–31), which is required for the rituals and sacrifices

The Day of Atonement in Leviticus 16 is the central ritual and forms the climax of the book. On this day the sins and impurities of all Israel over the preceding year were dealt with by a unique set of sacrifices and the ritual sacrifice of the scapegoat.

For more information, go to:

<https://www.biblestudytools.com/leviticus>

<https://www.sots.ac.uk/wiki/leviticus>

Leviticus

Being an eco-Church in March

- As the days become longer and warmer, remember to adjust the timer on your heating controller.
- Leave the first mowing till as late as you can—early wildflowers in the lawn provide essential nutrients for insects.
- Please don't pull up (or mow) dandelions until they finish flowering—they are a rich source of early nectar for bees.

Pause for thought

What if the blasé religiosity of most people is not the result of poor communication but the result of excellent communication—of a watered-down gospel so devoid of God's self-giving love in Jesus Christ, so immune to the sending love of the Holy Spirit that it might not be Christianity at all?

What if the church models a way of life that asks, not passionate surrender but ho-hum assent?

What if we are preaching moral affirmation, a feel-better faith, and a hands-off God instead of the decisively involved, impossibly loving, radically sending God of Abraham and Mary, who desired us enough to enter creation in Jesus Christ and whose Spirit is active in the church and in the world today? If this is the case—if theological malpractice explains our half-hearted religious identities—then perhaps most people ... reject Christianity because this is the only 'Christianity' they know.

Extract adapted slightly from Almost Christian: What the Faith of Our Teenagers is Telling the American Church, Kenda Creasy Dean.



Are those the new generation of tables that don't need WiFi, have left-to-right scroll capability, that charge in 10-minutes ...
(with apologies to Exodus 34)

Charles Wesley was born 1707, in Epworth, Lincolnshire. He was the eighteenth child of an Anglican minister, Samuel Wesley. His mother, Susanna was the first person to teach the Christian faith to her children.

Charles was educated at Westminster School then went to Christ Church College, Oxford. There, he helped form a prayer group in 1727, and soon led and moulded it according to his own convictions. They focused on studying the Bible and living a holy life. They celebrated Holy Communion each week, which was considered bizarre at best. Other students mocked them, saying they were 'Sacramentarians'—a 'Holy Club.' And they were called 'Methodists' to reflect the methodical, detailed nature of their disciplined lives and Bible study. John Wesley later joined the group as did the preacher George Whitefield.

Charles was ordained in 1735 and soon left (with his brother John) to evangelise Georgia in America. He returned a year later after the venture failed. A key experience occurred during one of their sea voyages: a strong storm arose which caused great panic among both the crew and passengers. Only a small band of German Christians, Moravians, remained calm: they prayed quietly and sang hymns till the storm abated. Charles greatly envied them their deep faith.

After his return to England, Charles taught English to a Moravian pastor, Peter Böhler, who prompted Charles to look at the state of his soul more deeply.

Charles had a conversion experience in 1738, three days before his brother John's more famous 'Aldersgate experience'. Charles felt his strength renewed to spread the gospel to ordinary people. The brothers preached whenever possible. He eventually submitted to 'be more vile' and do the unthinkable: to preach outside a church building. He did so because he was unwelcome inside parish churches. The brothers were soon travelling throughout Britain, converting followers in the so-called 'Methodist' revival. The epithet implied they worked to a method, a carefully planned approach that involved preaching in everyday language and singing hymns that taught theology to the illiterate and were sung to strong, well-known tunes.

Charles' brother John is usually considered the organisational genius behind the founding of Methodism, but Charles' hymns were central to the movement's rapid spread. We still sing many of Charles nearly 9,000 hymns, including, 'And can it be', 'Christ the Lord is risen today', 'Hark! The herald angels sing', and 'Lo! He comes with clouds descending'.

More information

<https://www.christianitytoday.com/history/people/poetas/charles-wesley.html>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_Wesley

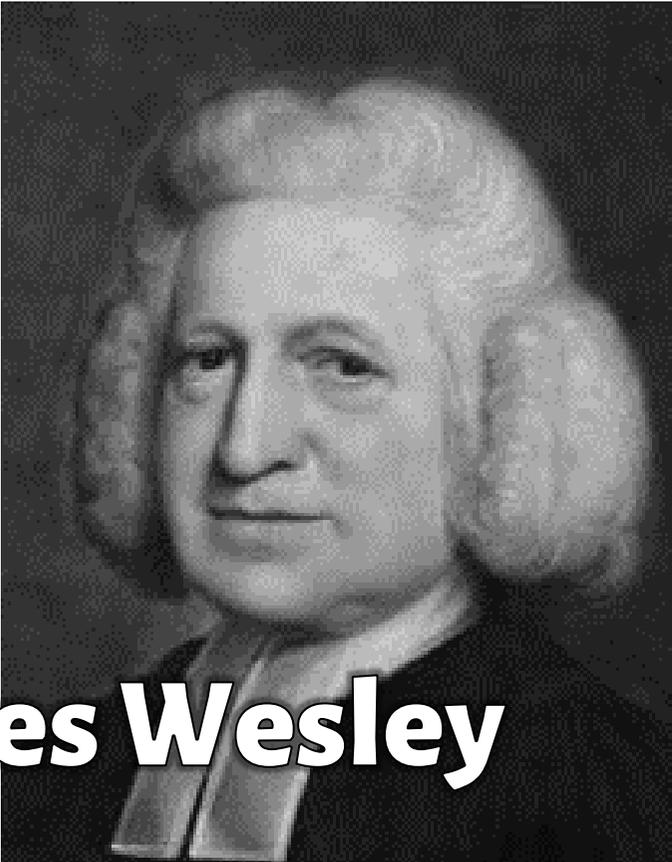
From 1740, John and Charles were the joint leaders of Methodism. They evangelised widely causing opposition from many Anglican clergy when Methodist lay preachers preached without permission. These clergy often organised mob violence to stop them. Charles responded by creating the first formal 'Methodist Society' in Newcastle in 1742.

In 1749, Charles married Sarah Gwynne, who was half his age. Their marriage was extremely happy despite only three of their many children surviving infancy.

Charles himself suffered frequent illnesses so, from 1756, his ministry became more static and he ministered in first Bristol then London.

Charles and John often disagreed on matters of faith. In particular, Charles strongly opposed any idea of Methodism breaking away from the Church of England into which the brothers had been ordained.

Charles Wesley died in 1788 at the age of 80. We still feel his influence today. The Church—Anglican as well as Methodist—continues to teach many doctrines that he fought for: the so-called 'Arminian' view that all people can be saved (as opposed to the idea that we are predestined for either eternal life or eternal death and/or hell); the personal indwelling of God the Holy Spirit and the sanctifying work of the Spirit; and humanity's personal accountability to God.



Charles Wesley

The light

I imagine that I walk into the Church at night, to adore Jesus.
At first, the candles on the altar are the only source of light.
I rest my eyes on Jesus, who stands clear and glowing white against
the darkness.

He is like a magnet, for he draws my eyes and being
toward himself as to the centre.
Most of my life I focus on the outer surface,
but here I gaze into the very heart of things,
the centre of my being and of the world.

As I look deep into Jesus, a silence falls upon me.
All thinking quietens down and fades away.
The silence of Jesus seems to seep into my body,
and from there it spreads throughout the whole Church,
so everything inside me—and around me—is stilled.

Then as I look, he begins to send out rays of light that enter me,
and I am grateful, for I know that these rays will flood my mind
and my unconscious,
cleansing me from all that is self-centred, and perverse and grasping
and afraid.

And while the darkness of the Church is undisturbed
the darkness in my heart is put to flight
and all of me is made transparent.

The rays now bring with them a holy energy
that soaks into my body
and fortifies my spirit to face up to the challenges of life.

And with this energy, a fire spreads all over me
to purify my heart
of hatred, bitterness, resentment, and gives me the power to love.

So I avidly expose my heart to this life piercing sun,
that shines out at the centre of the dark and silent Church.

Anthony de Mello

Did you know?

As soon as it was morning [on the first Good Friday], the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council. They bound Jesus, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate. Mark 15:1.

The Romans controlled everything in ancient Palestine including the apparatus of the Jewish legal system. They controlled the courts and only the Romans had the power of life and death.

The Jews regarded the Passover as central to their religious rites, because it was the day when the High Priest entered the Holy of Holies to make atonement for the people. The High Priest had to follow the letter of the Law perfectly if God was to approve the atonement sacrifices. And he had to wear the correct robes:

- **Priestly robe** A sleeveless, blue robe, the lower hem of which was fringed with small golden bells alternating with pomegranate-shaped tassels in blue, purple, and scarlet.
- **Ephod** A richly embroidered vest or apron with two onyx engraved gemstones on the shoulders, on which were engraved the names of the twelve tribes of Israel.
- **Breastplate** A rigid garment with twelve gems, each engraved with the name of one of the tribes. It was fastened over the Ephod.

He ministered barefoot when he was serving in the Temple.

The Romans knew how to keep order. They knew the Day of Atonement was the highpoint of the Jewish year, and the way everything depended on the High Priest performing the Law. So they kept the High Priestly robes under lock and key. That way, they could veto the Passover celebrations if they wanted to; stated another way, in the days before the Passover, the Romans had only to *suggest* they might not cooperate and the Jewish authorities became very pliable. It was simple blackmail and it always worked. The Jewish leaders would agree to anything to ensure the Passover went ahead without discernible hitch.



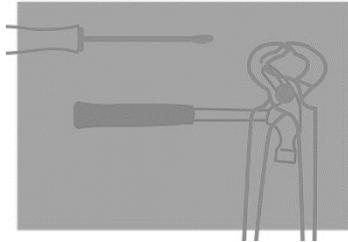


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I happened to be standing

I don't know where prayers go,
or what they do.

Do cats pray, while they sleep
half-asleep in the sun?

Does the opossum pray as it
crosses the street?

The sunflower? The old black oak
growing older every year?

I know I can walk through the world,
along the shore or under the trees,
With my mind filled with things
of little importance, in full
self-attendance. A condition I can't really
call being alive.

Is a prayer a gift, or a petition,
or does it matter?

The sunflowers blaze, maybe that's their way.
Maybe the cats are sound asleep. Maybe not.

While I was thinking this I happened to be standing
Just outside my door, with my notebook open,
Which is the way I begin every morning.
Then a wren in the privet began to sing.
He was positively drenched in enthusiasm,
I don't why. And yet, why not.
I wouldn't persuade you from whatever you believe
Or whatever you don't. That's your business.
But I thought, of the wren's singing, what could this be
if it isn't a prayer?

So I just listened, my pen in the air.

Mary Oliver

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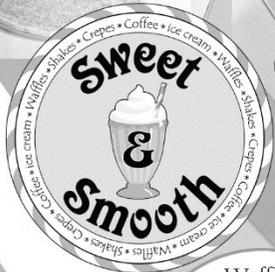
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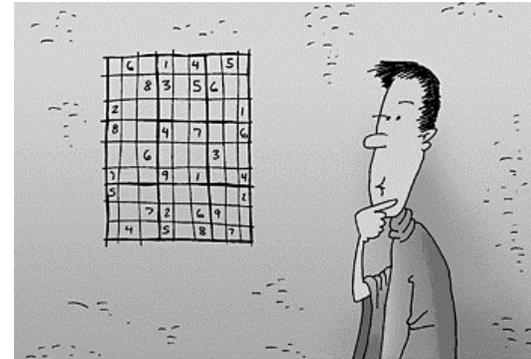
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Daniel contemplated
the Sudoku on the wall
(with apologies to Daniel 5)

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I spent my early years a short distance from the church of St John the Baptist, Hey, and was always attracted to the River Medlock which ran behind the cotton mills there. On fine evenings my dad would take me for a

walk along the stream where we would sometimes be buzzed by large and men-acing-looking (but harmless) brown dragon-

Evidence

flies. It seems that an old name for these was 'devil's darning needle'. Small fish swam there, able to survive the pollution caused by slow-moving slicks of waste oil and grease descending from the mill and pink-flowered willow herb grew lush in the microclimate generated by the masses of constantly running machinery.

Today the site is rough and post-industrial looking but the water is clean and a lot of trees have been planted where the mills have been cleared away. Handsome ferns thrive in the rubble and green mosses brighten the gloom of winter. A visit on a relatively mild recent day after a violently

stormy night revealed a wide selection of common birds. A grey heron, a bird more usually seen standing in water, was in a tree, body scrunched down to the size of a large pigeon. After a while it shifted to wipe its beak on some moss and then again to strop the beak against the bark of the branch on which it was perched. This while standing on one leg.

As a reminder that spring is not too far off, a pair of blue tits was executing a delightful courtship display above the stream, flitting and hovering like butterflies. As proof that the water is clean enough to support aquatic insect life a dipper, dependent on such life for food, bobbed up and down on a submerged stone while displaying a snow-white front.

Rivers attract much bird-life and pausing quietly here and there it was apparent that many species inhabit this small valley. A sparrowhawk made a neat turn overhead and a bullfinch whistled softly in the distance. A loudly chattering wren appeared. I don't know many of the scientific names of birds but I can always remember that of the wren: *Troglodytes troglodytes*—meaning cave dweller (or curmudgeonly eccentric).

As a shower of hail brought the temperature down my expectations of seeing much of interest were low, but as the hail ended and light levels increased more birds could be seen : grey wagtails - very elegant, coal tits and long tailed tits—fast moving and dainty, blackbirds—premier league singers and a goldcrest—smallest European bird. By 3 pm in the afternoon it was snowing and I wondered yet again how such tiny birds survive the winter.



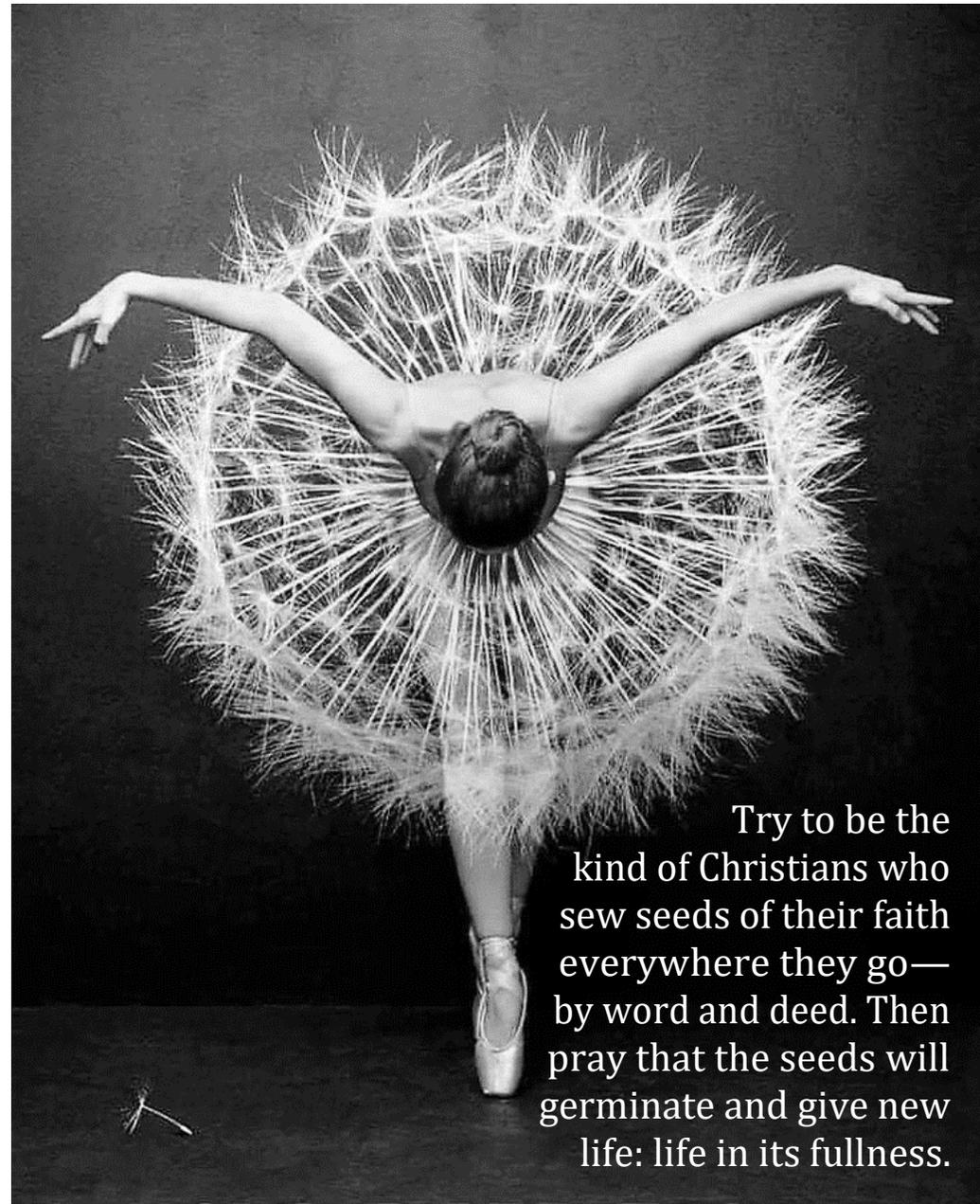
Grey heron



Eddie was not keen on driving out evil spirits, because they never gave him a tip.

From the memorial book

- 1 Birthday memories of **Michael John Allen** who died on 8th April 2013. We miss you Michael – Mum Clara and family
- 3 **Harold Norton** died this day 1992. 'Remembered with Love.'
Mary Gorton died this day 1996 aged 89 years. 'Her life a beautiful memory, Her absence a silent grief.'
- 4 **Dr Ada Shaw, nee Aspinall**, wife of the Vicar, was buried this day, 1958. 'Full of Good Works.'
Esther Wolfenden died this day 1995. Loved and Remembered Always.
- 6 **Gladys Jennie Tattersall** died 1959. Wife of **Frank Harrison Tattersall** who died 21st October 1966.
Robert (Bob) Kirkpatrick born this day 1909, passed to higher service 6th August 1998. 'Rest eternal grant unto him, O Lord.'
- 9 **Clarice Fitton** died this day 1982 aged 82. Former Secretary and Enrolling Member, Mothers' Union.
- 13 **Florence Buckley**, a dearly loved mum, grandma and great grandma. Died this day 1988 in her 90th year. Treasured memories of you Mum. Remembered and loved always. From all her family.
Edith Graham died 2005 aged 89 A dear Mum, Grandma and Great Grandma. Loved and remembered every day.
- 14 **Joseph Flynn** died this day 1989, aged 78 years.
- 15 **Marjorie Connell** died this day 2014 aged 92. Always remembered.
- 23 **George Henry Taylor M.M. (Harry)** died this day 1947. Beloved Husband of **Hannah Elizabeth (Annie)** died April 20th, 1956. Loving parents of Norman and Ivan. Dearly Remembered.
- 25 **Fred Belshaw** died 1989. 'Sleep in Heavenly peace.' Remembered always by daughters Audrey and Joan.



Try to be the kind of Christians who sew seeds of their faith everywhere they go—by word and deed. Then pray that the seeds will germinate and give new life: life in its fullness.



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