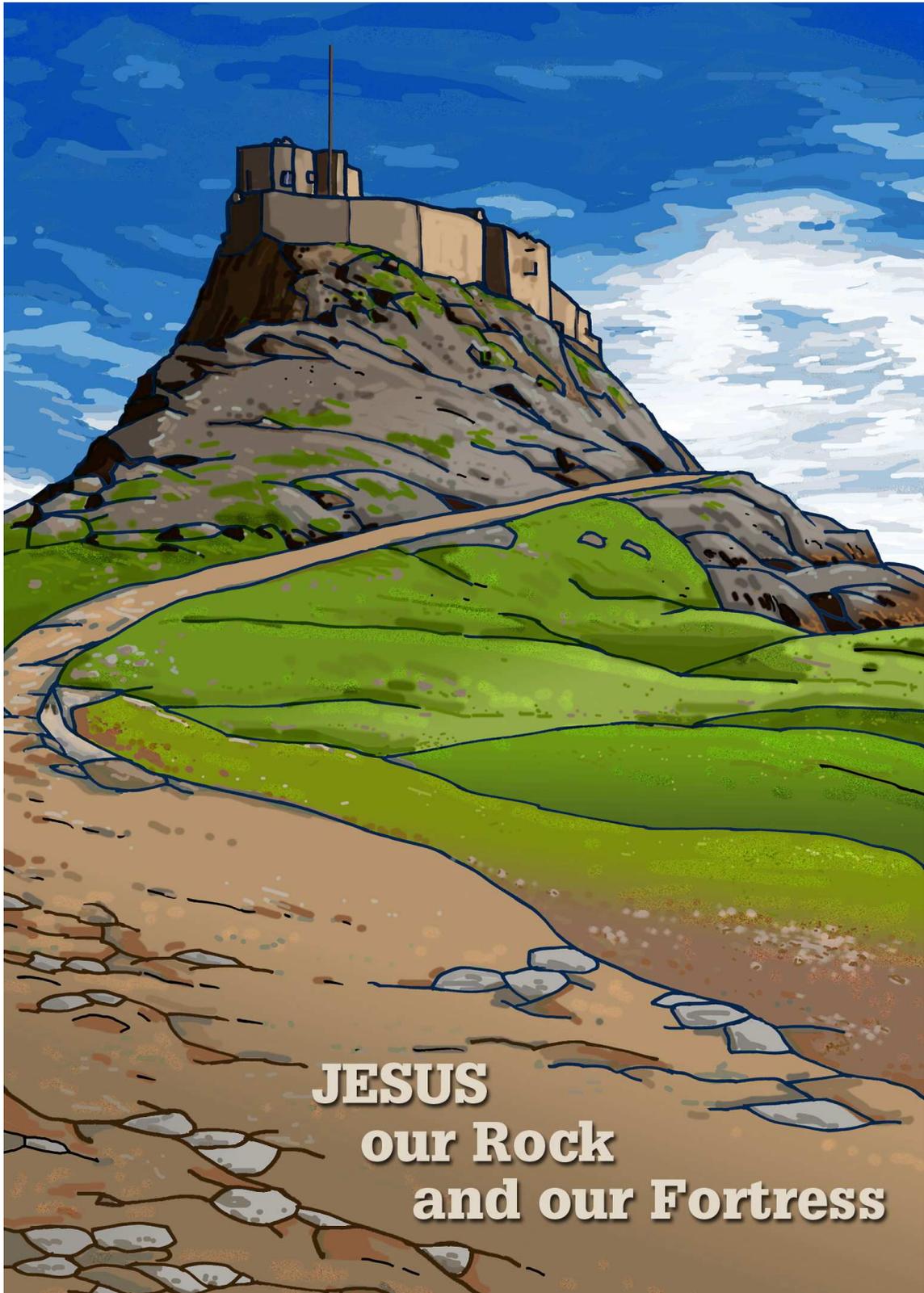


THE *Trinity* TIMES

The Parish Magazine of Holy Trinity Church, Henley-on-Thames



JESUS
our Rock
and our Fortress

Price 25p

July 2020

THE VICAR'S LETTER

Dear friends,

According to one survey, during the lockdown, a quarter of adults in the UK have watched or listened to a religious service and one in 20 have started praying. Perhaps people are realizing that, while the majority of people who contract Covid-19 do survive, we are still much frailer and weaker than we have got used to thinking.

The prophet Isaiah wrote:

'All people are like grass, and all their faithfulness is like the flowers of the field. The grass withers and the flowers fall, because the breath of the Lord blows on them. Surely the people are grass. The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God endures for ever.' (Isaiah 40:6-8).

Isaiah's words really resonate at this time. In more normal times we can avoid facing up to our vulnerability, but this pandemic has forced us to recognize our weakness and fragility.

However, this shouldn't lead us to despair or fear; rather it is an opportunity to worship and praise God for His constancy and care.

In Peter's first letter he quotes this passage from Isaiah and says, *'For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God'*. (1 Peter 1:23).

Peter contrasts our mortality with the eternal Word of God, which brings us new birth and life through the power of the Spirit. Jesus died for our sins and rose again to make us right with God, so that through faith in Him we can know eternal life. We don't need to be afraid of our frailty, for God is a dependable

foundation on whom to build our lives and face eternity.

As the hymn says: *'We blossom and flourish as leaves on the tree. And wither and perish, but no-ught changeth Thee.'* (Immortal, invisible, - Walter C Smith).

Best wishes,

Duncan

The Reverend Duncan Carter

Reverend Duncan Carter

Holy Trinity Vicarage
Church Street
Henley-on-Thames
Oxfordshire RG9 1SE
Tel: (01491) 574822

The Vicar is always glad to see anyone needing help or advice. Talking through problems and praying with people are his top priorities. Do not feel worried about sharing your problems, whatever the concern, large or small. For your reference, his day off is Saturday.



Trinity at Four Face to Face

Dear friends,

The apostle John, finishing off his second recorded letter in the Bible, wrote: "I have much to write to you, but I do not want to use paper and ink. Instead, I hope to visit you face to face, so that our joy may be complete." (2 John 1:12). Nothing beats face to face. Not paper and ink. Neither even Zoom, FaceTime, emails or phone calls! God himself demonstrated that in the incarnation: messages through the prophets were not enough. Instead, he came 'in the flesh'; face to face. However, the apostle John realised that a letter was the next best thing, and sometimes the only option. So, whilst he longed to meet face to face, he still persevered with his writing.

Much the same could be said of these strange days. We long to meet together as a church family, face to face. But whilst that isn't possible, we do have a rather updated version of 'the letter'! Duncan and Michael's weekly emails come packed full of Christian encouragement and truth. Read them, and be encouraged and nurtured through them!

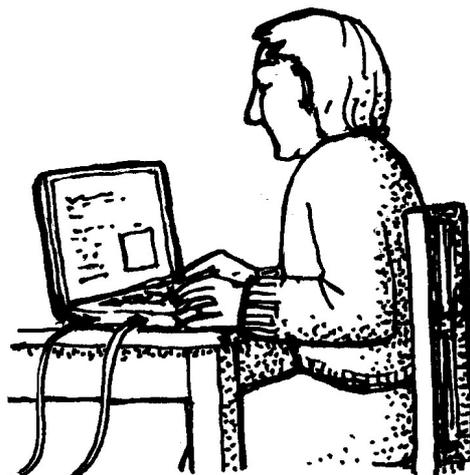
At Trinity at Four, we are running live services on Zoom. It has been a joy these last few weeks to be joined by a good number from Holy Trinity! A short 40 minute service, with a few songs, a Bible reading and a talk. And at the end everyone is 'zoomed' into small groups for an informal catch up- which now includes a Holy Trinity group. All are very welcome to get involved! All you need do is follow the Zoom link, which Duncan or I can supply, and which is also found on our Trinity at Four website (www.trinityatfour.org.uk).

Emails or Zoom may be a poor substitute to 'face to face', but they provide some sense of community and fellowship, as well as encouragement and teaching from the Bible. I'm sure the apostle John would have wholeheartedly embraced them, just as he did his letter writing. But always longing ultimately, for a proper face to face. Which, I trust, we are all praying for too!

With grateful thanks,

Sam

The Reverend Sam Brewster



Children's Pages

Saint Mary Magdalene, the woman with a past

It is easy to understand the popularity of Mary Magdalene over the centuries: she is the patron saint both of repentant sinners and of the contemplative life. Jesus drove seven demons from Mary, who came from near Tiberius in Galilee. Mary has also sometimes been identified with the woman who anointed Christ's feet in the house of Simon.

She became His follower to the bitter end. She followed Him to Jerusalem and was present during the crucifixion, standing heart-broken at the foot of the cross. Her love for Jesus did not end there, for she went to the tomb to anoint His body on the Sunday morning. Such faithful, humble devotion was richly repaid; it gave her a unique privilege among all mankind: she was the first person to whom the Risen Lord appeared on Easter Sunday morning. She thought He was the gardener at first.

Jesus told Mary to go to His disciples and tell them about His return to Heaven. She was obedient and became the first emissary of the resurrection. In those days, the witness of a woman was worthless. Despite ridicule, Mary had the courage to speak about Jesus in a place of great disbelief.

Mary
patron
repentant
sinners
contemplative

life
seven
demons
Tiberius
galilee

anoint
feet
follower
end
Jerusalem

Crucifixion
foot
cross
tomb
body

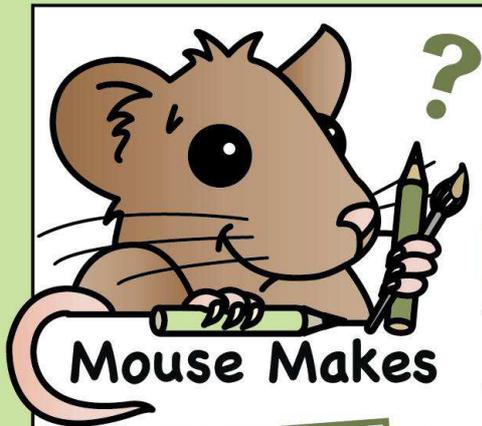
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morning
faithful
humble
devotion
privilege

mankind
risen
appeared
easter
gardener

disciples
return
obedient
resurrection
witness
courage

Children's Pages



WHO AM I?

The last letter of one name is the first letter of the next name.

P L

- Wrote 13 New Testament letters
- He wrote the third Gospel

 m

- Mother of John (Luke 1:3)
- Sarah's servant (Genesis 16:21)

 R

- Joseph's mother (Genesis 29:35)
- His wife turned to salt (Genesis 11:31)

 T

- Paul's friend (2 Corinthians 8:27)
- A brother of Jesus (Matthew 13:55)

 N

- Ruth's mother-in-law. (Ruth 3:1)

IT'S A PUZZLE!

God sent 9 plagues on Egypt...

What were they?

Change each letter to the one after it in the alphabet to find out.

AKNNC
EQNFR
FMZSR
EKHDR
CHRDZRD
OKZFTD
GZHK
KNBTRSR
CZQJMDRR

FIND THE MISSING HUSBANDS

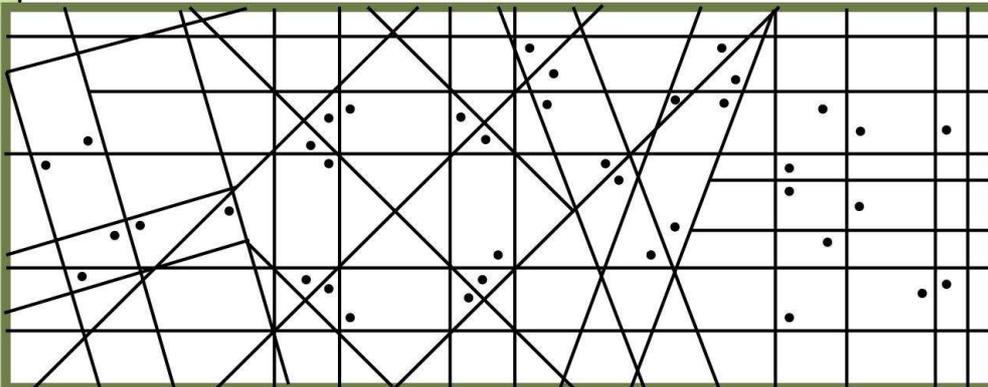
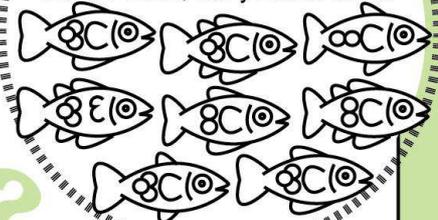
Match the wife to their husband

- | | |
|-----------|-----------|
| MARY | BOAZ |
| SARAH | JACOB |
| RUTH | ZECHARIAH |
| REBEKAH | JOSEPH |
| RACHEL | ABRAHAM |
| ELIZABETH | ISAAC |



FIND THE FISH

The Disciples have been fishing and have caught TWO fish the same, can you find them?



Colour in all the shapes with a DOT to find out what Jesus wants us to do

In a Word

“Could you explain Christianity in two minutes?” What a question to be asked! I racked my brains for a simple verse that I might share and said “Yes, of course I can.” I wasn’t expecting the response...“Well why then do you go on for twenty minutes every Sunday?!”

I’m not going to explain the reasons why preaching – letting God speak to us through His word in the Bible week by week – is as important for Christians as the food we eat. But, it did make me think. How few words would I need to sum up the Christian faith?

Can it be done in one word?

Some would choose the word – **GO!** Many see Christianity as an eviction order – an order to quit. As these people see it, Jesus Christ came into the world to condemn sinful men and women. He exposes Man’s sinfulness and the way in which we keep God at arm’s length. It’s as if Jesus is saying “Go!” and sending people away...and if Jesus has never said that directly, then it is still the experience people can have of his church today.

True – he does expose our selfishness, but he never served an eviction notice on anyone. It was not He who turned people away – it was they who turned away from Him. They weren’t prepared to be honest about themselves or turn away from sin and let Him lead their lives. The Danish theologian, Soren Kierkegaard, wrote “it is hard to believe, because it is so hard to obey.” By contrast Jesus said,

“God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through Him.” (John 3:17)

Others would use the word – **DO!** For them Christianity is a crash course in morals, a DIY kit in good-living. Jesus came to give us a pattern, which it’s up to us to follow. Their favourite bit of the Bible is The Sermon on the Mount. There’s even a religious version of this – going regularly to church, reading the Bible, saying prayers.

True – the real Christian wants to follow the example of Jesus, worship God with other believers, and read the Bible etc. But, not to earn a ticket to heaven. That’s impossible! If we could earn a place in heaven it would be hell...we’d all be talking about how much we’d done to get there!

I think I would choose the word – **COME!**

One of the regular ways Jesus spoke about his kingdom was to describe it as a party. Christianity is an invitation to that party (read Luke 14:17). I remember reading a book called “Jesus spells freedom” by Michael Green. He writes, *“I find it absolutely astonishing that the God I have disobeyed and neglected and snubbed and wronged should issue me with an invitation like this. In the word ‘come’ I see to the real nature of God. He is not, after all, a cold judge saying ‘go’ but a great lover saying ‘come’.”*

A unique invitation – found only in Christianity. A free, undeserved invitation to come home to God. The gospel affirms that God loves sinners, not when they clean themselves up and make themselves respectable, but just as they are, in all their dirt and alienation (or, what is much more difficult – in their air of respectability and self-righteousness).

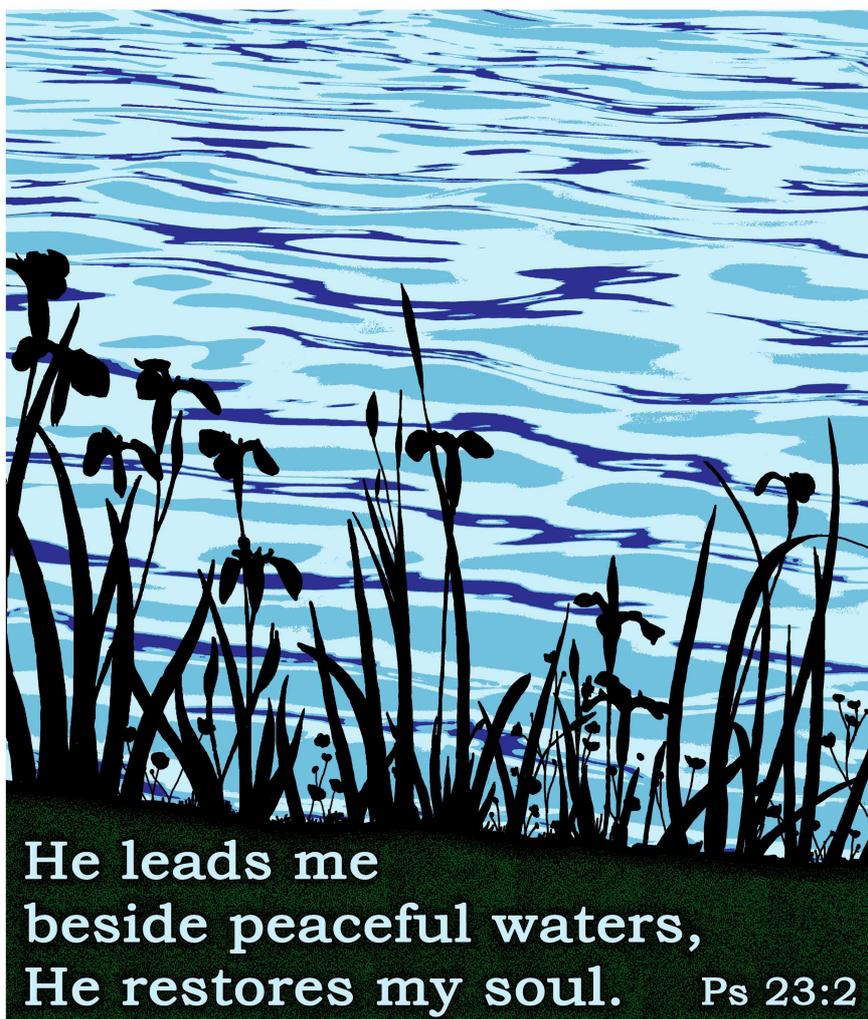
An open invitation – open to us all, though not all are wise enough to accept it. Jesus offers a feast of good things to those who turn to Him – forgiveness, a purpose here, and a future hereafter, along with the friendship of God's son

An urgent invitation. It's for this world as well as the next. His longing is for us to start a friendship with him now. And if we put that decision off, remember no one can say 'no' to God and get away with it. One day we'll reap the consequences, and we'll only have ourselves to blame.

An invitation that needs a response. The only question is that response. Have we accepted his call to 'come' to him – and turned to Christ and handed over the leadership of our lives to Him? If so, we can enjoy the feast of good things God gives to those who join his party. And we can share the invitation with others too!

So, that's my gospel in one word... and it still took me two pages to explain things!
You can't hold the preacher back!

Duncan



Ten Little Churchgoers

Ten little churchgoers went to church when fine,
but it started to rain and then there were nine.

Nine little churchgoers stayed up very late.
One overslept and then there were eight.

Eight little churchgoers on the road to heaven;
one joined a rowing club and then there were seven.

Seven little churchgoers signed up for Netflix;
one got a box set and then there were six.

Six little churchgoers kept the place alive.
One bought an iPad and then there were five.

Five little churchgoers loyal to the core –
the vicar upset one and then there were four.

Four little churchgoers argued heatedly
over something stupid, and then there were three.

Three little churchgoers sang the service through –
got a hymn they didn't know and then there were two.

Two little churchgoers disputed who should run
the next parish social and then there was one.

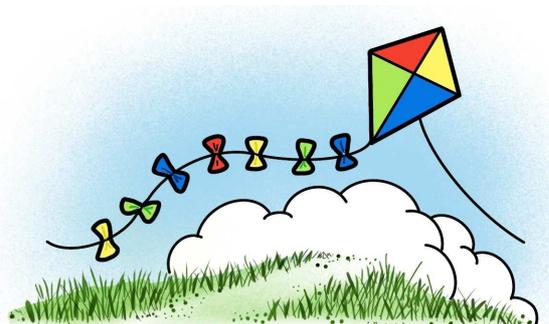
One faithful churchgoer knowing what to do
Got a friend to join her and then there were two.

Two sincere churchgoers each brought in one more.
So, their numbers doubled and then there were four.

Four sturdy churchgoers simply couldn't wait
till they found four others, and then there were eight.

Eight eager churchgoers searching round for souls;
praying, working, witnessing, drew others in by shoals.

Shoals and shoals at every service, cramming every pew,
O God supply this grace and zeal in our parish too!



DC

15th July

Saint Swithun (or Swithin), saint for a rainy day

Saint Swithun is apparently the saint you can blame for rainy summers. It is said that if it rains on his special day, 15th July, it will then rain for 40 days after that. It all began when Swithun was made Bishop of Winchester in 852 by King Ethelwulf of Wessex. It was an important posting: Winchester was the capital of Wessex, and during the 10 years Swithun was there, Wessex became the most important kingdom of England.

During his life, instead of washing out people's summer holidays, and damping down their spirits, Swithun seems to have done a lot of good. He was famous for his charitable gifts and for his energy in getting churches built. When he was dying in 862, he asked that he be buried in the cemetery of the Old Minster, just outside the west door.

If he had been left there in peace, who knows how many rainy summers the English may have been spared

over the last 1000 years. But, no, it was decided to move Swithun. By now, the 960s, Winchester had become the first monastic cathedral chapter in England, and the newly installed monks wanted Swithun in the cathedral with them. So finally, on 15th July 971, his bones were dug up and Swithun was translated into the cathedral.

That same day many people claimed to have had miraculous cures. Certainly everyone got wet, for the heavens opened. The unusually heavy rain that day, and on the days following, was attributed to the power of Saint Swithun. Swithun was moved again in 1093, into the new Winchester cathedral. His shrine was a popular place of pilgrimage throughout the middle ages. The shrine was destroyed during the Reformation and restored in 1962. There are 58 ancient dedications to Swithun in England.

Parish Pump

Services may resume from the 5th of July but please look on the websites and at the notices in church for further details.

We will probably have Morning Worship at 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. since we can't do communion. Trinity at Four will have three back-to-back services in the afternoon to allow for social distancing.

Private prayer in the church is possible.

We are planning to open the church on Wednesdays from 2:00 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. as a start – or people can give me a call on 01491 574822 or knock at the vicarage for an appointment at some other time. Currently, safety concerns do not allow us to leave the church open and unattended.

22nd July

What do we really know about Mary Magdalene?

Fake news is not new. Perhaps one old example is the assertion that Mary Magdalene was a prostitute. Back in the 6th Century, Pope Gregory is said to have confused her with two other women in the Bible. Medieval Bible scholars also attempted to name an unidentified sinful woman who had washed and anointed the feet of Jesus. As Mary Magdalene is mentioned in the next chapter, they regarded her as the same person! After this, many classical artists painted Mary in various states of undress, perpetuating a falsehood.

So what do we really know about Mary? The Gospels tell us that she came from Magdala, a town in Galilee, and Jesus healed her by casting out seven evil spirits. After this she followed Jesus, with other women, on His ministry providing resources. Later, Mary watched Jesus die on the cross, and having cared for His needs while He was alive, wanted to care for Him after His death.

It was when Mary went to anoint the body of Jesus at the tomb that the risen Jesus appeared to her. He told Mary to go to His disciples and tell

them about His return to Heaven. She was obedient and became the first emissary of the resurrection. In those days, the witness of a woman was worthless. Despite ridicule, Mary had the courage to speak about Jesus in a place of great disbelief. We have to ask ourselves, do we have the same courage as Mary? How prepared are we to stand our ground to share Jesus with others in the face of those who mock and scoff at us?

Although we usually associate Mary with the Easter story, this month on 22nd July, the Church celebrates her Feast Day. In this snapshot of Mary's life we know she had experienced great distress and suffering. After Jesus healed her, Mary expressed her gratitude by being utterly committed and devoted to Him.

Jesus can give everyone a new start; a new purpose and direction in life. Like Mary we can thank Him for blessing us, loving us and forgiving us and moving into practical forms of service. Only Jesus can transform our lives so that we can glorify God in all that we do.

Parish Pump



The Reasons for Going to Church

Strange times we are living through. The future consequences of coronavirus are going to be challenging, to say the least. How will our churches fare when our buildings are allowed to re-open?

One could say that the reasons for churchgoing can be put into three slots, 'Culture', 'Faith' and 'Community'. Many churchgoers would probably recognise in themselves elements of more than one.

Culture is for those who feel comfortable in church. They like the history, the language, the buildings, the liturgy and the music, which have probably been a part of their lives since they were children. All hold comforting memories.

Faith is a link with the meaning of life and its eternal promise, somewhere to seek guidance through worship and sacrament, and on which to lean in times of trouble. A belief in the words of Jesus that they are not on their own, even if sometimes it feels like it in this world.

Community is for those who like coming to church or being associated

with it as a flying buttress (a phrase of Winston Churchill, who described himself as someone who supports the church from the outside). They don't have to have a commitment to the faith of the Church but are sympathetic and don't mind being with those who do.

It is likely that the 'old normality' will not be the 'new normality' and this provokes a few thoughts:

- * How many people, now out of the habit of regular community worship, will wish to return to it?*
- * How many people on the periphery of church life, will come back to it, at least in the short term?*
- * How many of those who have had a regular commitment to the church, for example by serving at the altar or in its refectories, singing in choirs, doing flowers, ringing bells and polishing brasses will feel that this is a good time to make a break and do something different?*

As church people, we must consider where we go from here. The Church, everywhere in the infected world, will need to know our answer to its call. To thrive, it needs us back.

Parish Pump



Buttercups – Treasure in our Countryside

Buttercup! What a delicious name! Rumour has it that, as they were frequently to be found in meadows where cows grazed, they were responsible for butter's yellow colouring. So the name was an obvious choice.

However, since buttercups are poisonous and therefore are avoided as far as possible by our four-footed friends, this is somewhat unlikely. But surely, we all remember having a buttercup held under our chin to see whether the reflection proved that we liked butter! The shiny surface of the petals actually has two real purposes. Firstly, to help attract insects and secondly to act as a kind of mirror to aid the temperature regulation of the plant's reproductive organs.

We are fortunate that buttercups do not suffer from the same unpopularity as other poisonous plants, because if eaten, not only do they taste nasty, but the poison will also cause blisters in the mouth of the consumer.

Extensive handling can also damage the skin, but presumably the size of a bunch that many of us picked as children did not count as 'extensive'. Fortunately, Health and Safety experts do not yet seem to have forbidden this source of pleasure for little people. Incidentally, the poison is reduced as the plant dries, and hay that includes buttercups is safe for cows and horses to eat.

Buttercups help form the traditional view of the British countryside. Differing varieties range in height from small to quite tall and although at their peak in early summer, the golden blooms can often still be seen in mid-autumn. Jan Struther, who wrote 'Lord of all hopefulness' also wrote a children's hymn entitled 'Treasure' It starts:

*Daisies are our silver, buttercups
our gold:*

*This is all the treasure we can have
or hold.*

Parish Pump



Beware the Spell-checker on Your Special Service Sheets!

The Rectory
Saint James the Least of All

My dear Nephew Darren

When producing material for your magazine or church services, beware the computer spell-checker. We once let our own system check a Christmas carol sheet and, on the night, found ourselves obliged to sing “away in a manager”, mangers apparently being unknown to our machine.

If you use special sheets regularly, it seems a law of nature – as with metal coat hangers – that they all intermingle while no one is watching. Thus, on Easter Day, half the congregation will have been issued with sheets for Harvest, which will only become obvious once the service begins. The first hymn will be entirely lost while sidesmen scuttle about looking for replacements only to find that there won't be enough of them anyway, and then the second hymn will be lost while others helpfully wander about church donating their sheets to those looking helpless and then trying to find someone to share with.

Never, ever, print on them ‘Do not take home’ as this will only ensure everyone does so. I have sometimes wondered if the instruction ‘Take this sheet home

for reference’ would ensure that they stayed neatly arranged in the pews after the service. And if it is a service where babies are likely to be present, be assured that many of the copies will be returned half chewed and coated with bits of whatever the infant had for breakfast. There must be a market for paper treated with a child-repellent flavour for such occasions.

Anyone who thinks we are an unimaginative nation should visit a church after a special service to see how many places members of congregations can invent to hide the booklets: under kneelers, neatly folded and hidden inside hymn books, among flower arrangements and behind heating pipes so that no one can quite reach them. They then lurk there reproachfully for the next ten years until mice solve the problem.

No, stick to large, hard bound books. They are resistant to teeth and are too substantial to be hidden in pockets. Their only drawback is that they tend to fall victim to the pull of gravity at the quietest moments.

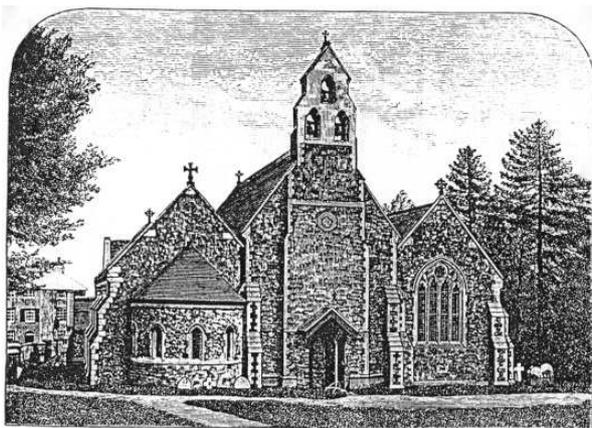
Your loving uncle,

Eustace

Parish Pump



PARISH JOTTINGS



Parish lockdown eases

The lockdown restrictions may have eased, but the risk of catching the virus infection remains, if to a lesser extent. People in the vulnerable groups must continue to exercise the utmost care. Our church endeavours to be active in all the ways that it can, and is considering the possible options for opening its doors again in the near future. In the whole of our church's history, since it first opened in 1848, apart from the period of its enlargement during 1890/91, our church has never been closed before, not even during the two world wars.



In the parish during the lockdown, only essential shops have been allowed to remain open. Now the other shops are starting to open once again, together with dentists and hairdressers, providing they can comply with the lockdown restrictions of social distancing and other stringent requirements. More people are now on the streets, and the town is slowly starting to take on-board its new way of life within a new realisation.

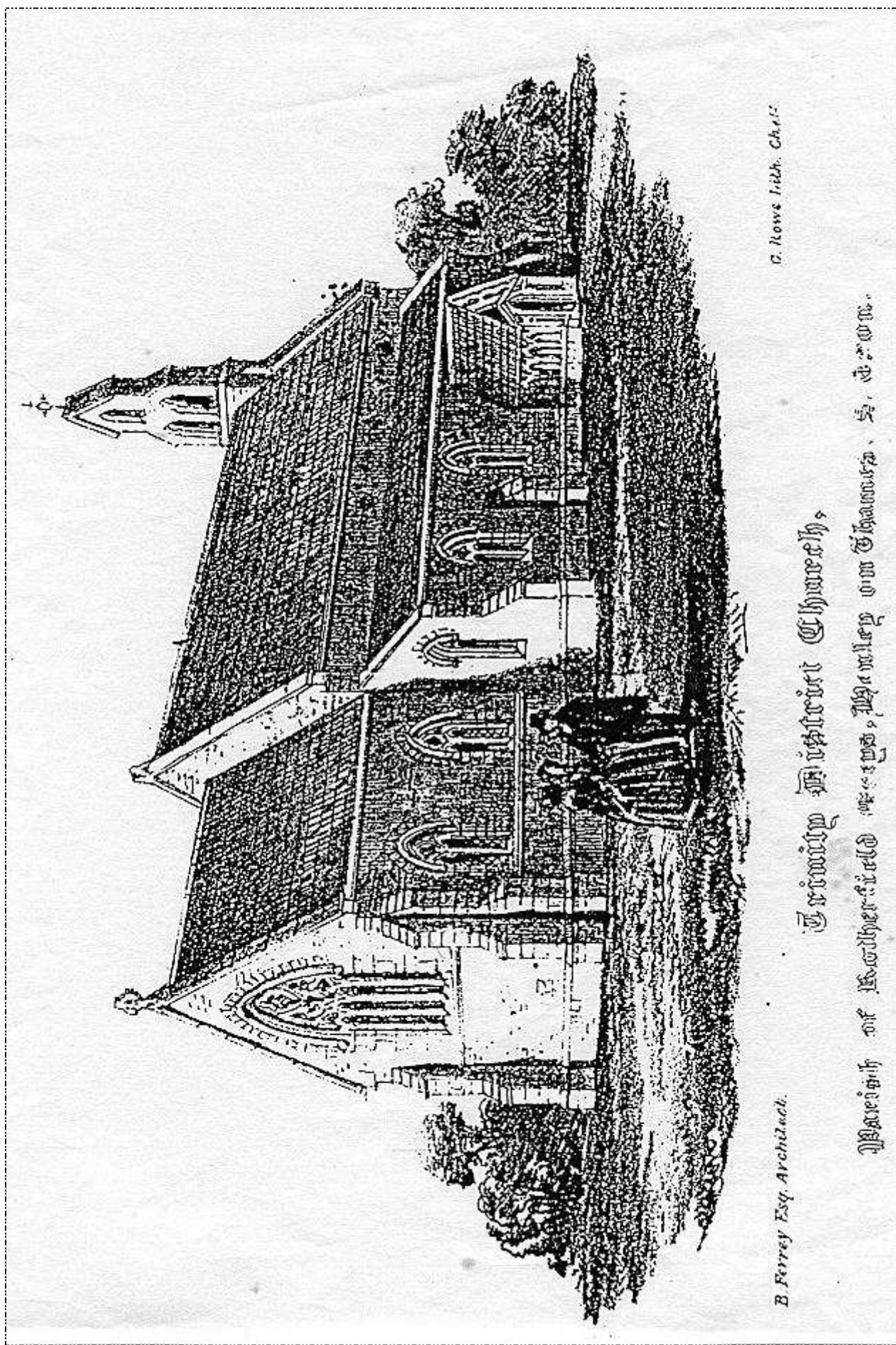
Trinity School is planning a phased reopening for some of its pupils. In the south of the parish, the open spaces of Mill and Marsh Meadows next to the river have remained open, but the children's playgrounds are still closed. In the town, and not all public conveniences are open. Many of Henley's main annual events will not take place, including the Royal Regatta, the Henley Festival, and the Thames Traditional Boat Festival.



At the Thames Traditional Boat Festival, an 80th anniversary event for the 'Dunkirk Little Ships' was to take place. With this in mind, we recall a former member of our congregation, the late Eric Garside. In 1940, he took part in 'Operation Dynamo', when hundreds of boats and ships raced across the English Channel, to the shores of Dunkirk in France, to evacuate the stranded BEF and other allied forces, to save them from being captured by the advancing German army.



JB



G. Rowe Lith. Chert.

B. Ferrey Esq. Architect.

Trinity Episcopal Church,

Parish of Washington, D.C., 1848.

The original Holy Trinity church built in 1848, before its enlargement in 1890/91

THE *Trinity* TIMES

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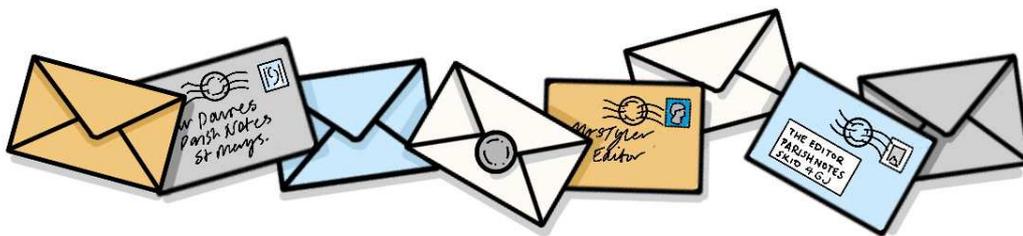
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Readers are invited to contribute articles, features, notices, etc., for publication in the Trinity Times. Submissions should be delivered to Richard Young, 11 Saint Mary's Close, (Telephone 578422), or may be e-mailed to the Trinity Times mailbox at 'magazine@holytrinityhenley.info'.

For inclusion in the next magazine, submissions must be received by Sunday the 12th of July.