

The Beckington Group of
Parishes



Beckington
Berkley
Lullington & Orchardleigh
Rodden
Woodlands

Network

May 2024

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Treasurer	Lorna Wheeler	Contact details as above
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The appointment of Rev Jo Robinson will be commencing from 23rd May 2024

Reader	Dr J. Beaven	830535
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Beckington Web Site

www.beckingtonbenefice.org

Beckington School Web Site:

www.beckingtonandmellsfederation.co.uk

Berkley School Web Site:

www.berkleyschool.co.uk

Springmead School Web Site:

www.springmead.com

Beckington Memorial Hall

Sara Coffield 01373 710210

beckingtonmemorialhall.org.uk

Beckington Parish Council

Clerk: Paul Russell

parishclerk@beckingtonparishcouncil.org.uk

Berkley Parish Council

Clerk: Janet Harvey 01373 832303

Bell ringing practice

at St. George's is every Thursday

from 7.30 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Tower Captain: J Ball 830419

johnagball.51@gmail.com

Beckington Group Mothers' Union

Branch Leaders: Jenny Ayrton 01373

830208 & Glenys Brown. Meets 1st

Wed in the month except August.

Beckington Tower Lighting

Mary Hickling 01373 830274

Beckington Pre-School

beckingtonpre-school.co.uk

Please submit items for publication in the **June 2024 issue** to: beckington.network@gmail.com to arrive no later than **12 noon on May 20th**

For Network Advertising: Mrs. J Eveyry
Please call after 4pm during weekdays
07540 133396 Julie@eveyry.net

Minister's Page

Powerless to change the world?

As we look at our own country's various ailments, the challenges facing our world and the conflicts raging in it, it would be easy to feel a sense of powerlessness. One American feels his country's prospects with the two main candidates is so bleak that he has changed his name by Deed Poll to 'Literally Anyone Else,' to enter the race for president!

We face crises in social care, the NHS, our prison system and elsewhere without obvious spare funds in the economy to try and fix them, and from a human point of view it is not easy to see things getting better or to be hopeful. Sometimes we need change closer to home, too, but no change seems possible.

We are now in the season between Easter and Pentecost. The historically well-referenced rising of Jesus from the dead at Easter is a reminder of God's power, and His desire to bring hope, forgiveness and change to mankind; the events of the day of Pentecost, when a motley group of Jesus' followers were transformed from cowering in fear to boldly proclaiming his risen power, bear witness to the transforming power of the Holy Spirit of God on ordinary human lives.

I did not expect to see peace in Northern Ireland, nor imagine a day when Gerry Adams would shake hands with our late Queen. Neither could I have foreseen the extraordinary work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa, but I do know that Christians earnestly prayed for those situations for many years and that extraordinary changes occurred.

There is hope.

Edmund Phillimore, a Beckington resident for many years and a Reader at St George's, often used to remind us of the time when Nazi forces had swept through Europe and it looked as if the British Army might be annihilated at Dunkirk. King George VI called the nation to a day of prayer and the miracle of Dunkirk' was one step towards a victory, thanks to which we live in freedom today.

Pentecost reminds me that God has the power to transform what we cannot, and that some steps forward can only come when we start 'on our knees'.

John Beaven, Reader



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St. George's Beckington

Floodlighting

The church tower was floodlit on 15th January for

Joshua James Vesey.

Taken before his day dawned.

The church tower was floodlit on April 15th

In loving memory of Eileen and Arthur (Bill) from all their family

If you would like the tower to be floodlit, please contact: Mary Hickling

maryhickling@btinternet.com

or 830274 - Suggested cash donation of £10.00 please.

Thank you.



Preparing To Welcome Rev Jo Robinson

We are very much looking forward to Rev Jo Robinson's celebration service (licensing) on **Thursday 23rd May at 7pm**, which is taking place in St George's Church, Beckington.

Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) of the Parish of Beckington with Standerwick

St George's APCM will be held this year on **Sunday 12th May 2024** after the morning service and will be held in the Church-School hall. This is the occasion when the activities and finances of the Parish for the

previous year are presented and elections take place for Churchwardens and PCC members for the coming year. All who live in the parish are very welcome to attend the meeting, but only those on the Electoral Roll may vote. If you are interested in joining the Electoral Roll (the church rather than the civic parish), please contact the Electoral Roll Officer, Jenny Ayrton 01373 830208

St George's Church cleaning

Many thanks to all who helped to tidy and spring clean the church in March.

It was very spic and span for Easter. We all enjoyed a chat with coffee and biscuits also! We would like to clean the church again before the Induction of Rev. Jo Robinson and would be grateful if you could help on Monday 20th May from 2pm. Many hands make light work - so if you could give a short amount of your time, we would be so grateful. Thank you

Jenny Ayrton



St Mary's, Berkley

All Age Service

Everyone is most welcome to our All Age Service on **Sunday 5th May at 10am** where we will be joined by Berkley school.

St. Katharine's Church News. East Woodlands

The daffodils were in full Bloom along the road to the church for our Daffodil Service on 17th March. We all went home clutching our flower and thinking all goes right with the world.

We have been so grateful for the help of local vicars, retired or not, who have taken part in our monthly Holy Communion Services recently. Enormous thanks to Clarissa Shaw-Notice (what a glorious name!), Martin Weymont and Barry Davies, who also conducted a wedding ceremony on 19th April for us. Barry's wife accompanied him to each of his services and also deserves our thanks.

The Services on Good Friday and Easter Sunday were very well attended. It was so lovely to see so many folks able to join us. Their singing certainly helped the choir out!

One of our stalwarts in the congregation, Victoria Turner, belongs to the Good Afternoon Choir, which practices at Holy Trinity Church every Monday afternoon. Their recent concert and raffle at the Assembly Rooms raised a magnificent £457.00 towards repairs and renovations to our belfry and church bells, which have been silent for so many years. Victoria's efforts selling tickets and her husband, David, orchestrating the raffle made this a thoroughly enjoyable occasion. Thanks to all helpers, the

talented singers and their choirmaster for such a lovely evening of entertainment.

Victoria celebrates her 80th birthday in May and with David their 61st Wedding Anniversary in June. Who said being retired was dull?

Another birthday in May is that of our indefatigable Choir Mistress and Organist, Diana Carrington. I know she hates a fuss, so you must read this and forget it! However, without her leadership over many years we simply wouldn't have a four part harmony choir - or even a choir at all! We do appreciate all her hard work but don't often say so.

Thank you, Diana ❤️ 👍

Finally, we have a central heating oil consortium in the Woodlands area, which can spread to the area encompassing all churches receiving Network.

Quite simply, if you need a supply of heating oil, say in three weeks' time, you contact Chris Bennett in Friggle Street and say you would like, say, 500 litres. Don't leave it until the last minute.

He then contacts everyone on his list and they will say "no thanks, not this time" or request a certain amount. He then contacts all local suppliers for their best price for the total required, which means it's always cheaper than buying it direct and those small amounts of saving per litre certainly add up nowadays. He always lets us know the price he has obtained prior to confirming the final order.

Interested? Please contact him on Bennett.ffps@btinternet.com or mobile 07966 425437.

Winners of the recent 100 Club Draw:

£30.00 Roma Galpin
£20.00 Vera Crossman
£10.00 Mark Kaye

Pam Chapman
07715 673991

East Woodlands Village Hall

Friday, 3rd May at 7.00pm Pop up Pub

Saturday, 18th May at 7.30pm Quiz

Please book with Chris and Glyn Carpenter on 01373 462963.

Friday, 7th June at 7.00pm Pop up Pub

Saturday, 29th June Race Day - advance notice for your diary. Further details in the next couple of months.

Pam Chapman
07715 673991

Selwood Parish Council

Now that East Woodlands has become part of the Beckington benefice, much of the Selwood Parish Council boundary lies within the benefice. Contact clerk.selwoodpc@gmail.com

The parish held its latest meeting on Wed 17th April.

Planning application for the **Selwood Garden Community**.

It was resolved to oppose this application until satisfactory conditions were met.

Foxleigh Stables, Budge Lane

Possible illegal removal of hedge to be reported to police. Blocking of bridle path reported on the Rights of Way tool (ROAM)

Approval of reserved matters for the erection of a retail unit on **land**

North and South of Sandys Hill Lane

was opposed so as to address screening and access issues.

The council also approved additional signage for Longleat.

There is currently a vacancy for a councillor for the parish council.

Anyone interested please contact the clerk at the above email.

Springmead School

Before we broke up for the Easter holidays our Year 5's and 6's enjoyed a brilliant week at Kilve Court for their residential trip. Despite some ominous weather reports leading up to the trip the weather was kind throughout the week with rain only coming in short showers or overnight, allowing the children to enjoy the activities in better weather.

Over the course of the week the children have enjoyed a range of activities in small groups from Archery and rifle shooting to environmental art and pond dipping

to abseiling and grass sledging. The range of activities catered for every child's strengths whilst providing opportunities to try new things and push themselves out of their comfort zones. They were also able to experience some activities as a whole group, including a beach visit to look for fossils, a forest walk and team building exercises.

It was great to watch the children learn new skills, persevere with difficulties, thrive in unusual situations and form new or greater bonds with their peers. By the time it came to board the coach for our journey home, the children were glad to return to their families but they were also sad that this adventure had come to an end.

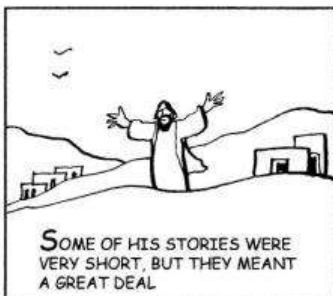
This Kilve residential trip provided our children with an unforgettable experience filled with learning, growth, and adventure. We are

immensely proud of their achievements and their behaviour during the trip, which as always, was commented on by both other schools using the site and the many instructors that worked with the Springmead children.



The tale of the Mustard Seed & the tale of the Yeast

JESUS OFTEN TOLD
STORIES WITH
HIDDEN MEANINGS

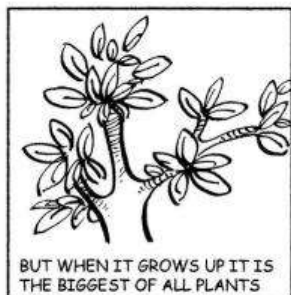


SOME OF HIS STORIES WERE
VERY SHORT, BUT THEY MEANT
A GREAT DEAL

ONCE JESUS EXPLAINED HOW
THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
WAS LIKE A MUSTARD SEED



IT IS ONE OF THE SMALLEST
OF SEEDS....



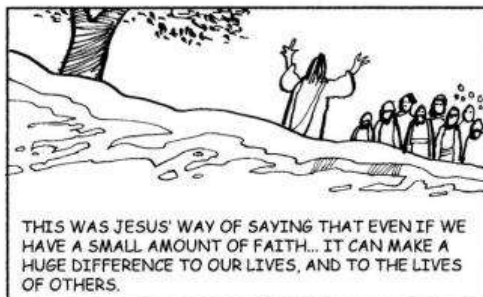
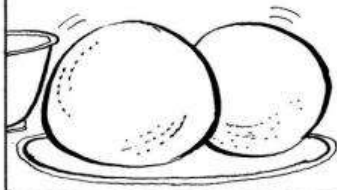
BUT WHEN IT GROWS UP IT IS
THE BIGGEST OF ALL PLANTS

IT BECOMES A TREE, SO THAT BIRDS COME AND MAKE
THEIR NESTS IN THE BRANCHES



JESUS ALSO EXPLAINED THAT THE
KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS LIKE YEAST.

EVEN THOUGH IT'S A TINY INGREDIENT,
WHEN IT'S MIXED WITH THE FLOUR,
THE WHOLE BATCH OF DOUGH RISES



THIS WAS JESUS' WAY OF SAYING THAT EVEN IF WE
HAVE A SMALL AMOUNT OF FAITH.. IT CAN MAKE A
HUGE DIFFERENCE TO OUR LIVES, AND TO THE LIVES
OF OTHERS.

Community Coffee Morning



Standerwick, Berkley & Beckington W.I

At our monthly meeting on 4th April members enjoyed a talk by Laura Batt and her husband about Prickles Hedgehog Rescue Centre, Cheddar. Laura told us some interesting facts about hedgehogs for example, in the 1950's there were about 30 million of them in the UK. Now there only 1 million and they are on the red alert list. The Centre looks after about 650 hedgehogs a year. They live in the wild for 2 to 5 years and can have up to 44 sharp teeth! She advised us how we can help hedgehogs, including feeding them. Our next monthly meeting will be on Thursday 9th May at Beckington

Beckington Village Choir

Now recruiting new singers to join a friendly and welcoming mixed voice village choir. No audition required.

If you love to sing, please come along.

We practice on Tuesday evenings in Beckington Memorial Hall from 7.30pm till 9.15pm.

For more information, please contact Marianne Burke
07884185143

Village Hall starting at 7.30pm. It will be our AGM and there will be refreshments and a short quiz afterwards.

If you would like further details, please contact our secretary, Kathy Kingman kathy@btinternet.com

Local Riding for the Disabled Group - Coffee Morning & Bring & Buy

Saturday 15th June 10:30-12:30
Beckington Village Hall Coffee Morning and Bring & Buy Sale in aid of Local Riding for the Disabled Group and other charities.

Any other local Charity or Group wishing to book a table please phone Heather on 01985 213530. Saxon Group RDA Registered Charity 1187766

Friends of St George's

Save The Date! White Horse Opera will be performing at St George's on Friday 25th July with their popular "Top of the Ops" a selection of best loved operatic and show songs. Contact Jo Casey 07775 900047 for more details.



Friends of St George's

PLANT SALE

&

COFFEE MORNING

SATURDAY 18th MAY

10am – 12noon

at

Beckington First School

CAKES & RAFFLE



Do you have out of date and other foreign coins or bank notes, cluttering your house?

Friends of St George's will be happy to collect from you, or please leave in the Bell Jar in the Church. We can use the scrap value towards our funds, used to restore and maintain Beckington's beautiful church.

Further information from Jo Casey: 07775 900047/ 01373 830885



The Social Hub

The Social Hub in Lahs Place Community Room on Tuesdays (10.30-12.00) has proved to be a great success since it started in January. Each week 12-18 people from the village turn up and engage in animated conversation, help to make teas & coffees or play cards or dominoes. We'll continue during May then plan to take a 3 month break in the summer, restarting in September. Thanks to all those who help out, the Parish Council for some seed funding and St George's for taking overall responsibility. Andrew Kellett (Organiser) 07850 310547

For Sale / Wanted

Wanted To Rent

At least 3 bed house with a garage for family with 2 cats in Beckington or surrounding villages.

Predicted start date June/July.
Phone Tony on 07834391705.

If you would like an entry in this column, please send it to Julie Evemy (see inside front cover). A suggested donation of £2 towards Network would be appreciated which can be left in the slot in the wall inside St George's church when open or use the contactless donation screen. Private advertisements only please.



BECKINGTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Update On The Neighbourhood Plan For The Civil Parish Of Beckington, Rudge And Part Of Standerwick

Thank you to everyone who completed the **Residents' Survey**.

The response rate was around 38%, with 162 written surveys submitted and 84 completed online. We are now collating and analysing the results and will aim to share our conclusions in the next couple of months. From June, we will begin to seek the views of local services, clubs and businesses. We will then conduct follow up events to explore issues further before sharing the draft aims and objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan. Our aim is to ensure that the Plan reflects your views and has general endorsement from the whole community.

The **Prize Draw** will be made at the start of May. We will contact the winner directly and also announce

the result on the Beckington Facebook page and on our website. The Steering Group is very keen to have a representative from Rudge or Standerwick. If you would like to volunteer, please contact us at npsgbeckington@gmail.com or via our website at <https://www.beckingtonplan.co.uk>

Beckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Beckington Memorial Hall

The Pantaloons Theatre Company will perform

The Merry Wives of Windsor
Fri 9 Aug 2024 6:30pm - 8:30pm
OUTDOOR THEATRE SUITABLE
FOR ALL AGES

Tickets Adults £15.00 Children 16
and under £9.00

Tickets available online at
<https://buytickets.at/thepantaloons/1190997>

Pizzas, hot dogs, desserts, ice
creams and a bar.

Bring something to sit on
Dress for the weather!!

All profits for the Play Area
renovations

So far, for the Play Area renovations, we have raised £9,288. Many thanks to all who have helped us to raise this superb amount. As many of you will have noticed we have already spent a large chunk of this money (£4,000) replacing the swings, the cargo net and some wooden treads on the ladder.

It's the flooring next, so please don't forget you can **sponsor a square metre of flooring** (£50 for a square metre) and have your name on our honours board which will be displayed in the playground. Go to Just Giving and search for Beckington Memorial Hall.

Many thanks to everyone who supported our **Easter Trail**. We are delighted to report that this enjoyable event raised £276.

GOOD NEWS!!

Thanks to the hard work of Suzanne and Robin Chillman and David Costello, we now have a Wi-Fi connection. The passwords are displayed in the Main Hall and the Clifford Suite, together with a User Policy. At the moment we can have a maximum of 32 users at any one time. Please let us know if you encounter any problems when using the internet, but be aware these will not be dealt with immediately as the responsibility for the speed and availability of the internet lies with the provider.

March 200 Club winners

The draw took place at the committee meeting on Monday 11th March

1st Prize £50 no. 46 Ros Carey
2nd Prize £25 no. 6 Phil Carey
3rd Prize £10 no. 78 Martin Cotterell

The Beckington Hall 200 Club is registered with the MDC Licensing Department Reg No LN/00940609

Beckington Village Choir presents



Spring into Song

At Beckington Memorial hall

Tuesday 14th May at 7.30pm

Director: Neil Moore - Accompanist: Alan Burgess

Come and enjoy a varied programme of seasonal musical pieces

Tickets £10 payable at the door - Buffet - Children Free

Herbs at Rode and District Gardening Club

Carrie Pakenham arrived early for the club's last meeting in the Village Hall before the Autumn because she had brought a large variety of plants to share with us in her talk about herbs. The many members and guests present browsed the club's sales table to pick up plants grown by members for the house or garden, and sales were brisk before the talk.

Averil Morrow reminded everyone to take a copy of directions to the gardens the club will visit this Spring and Summer, and to sign up early for the September trip to RHS Wisley before the trip is opened to others in the villages. A second board was seeking helpers on June

9th 11am -4pm for the Rode Open Gardens. Gardeners in Rode were encouraged to open their gardens and/or to help run the Stall selling visit maps and the plants on the day. People could sign up for two-hour slots.

Helen welcomed Carrie who comes from Rudge and has grown and sold herbs for many years. She passed around a bouquet with a wide range of flowers and foliage, which most members were surprised to learn were all herbs. Most people are familiar with culinary herbs, but herbs also provided the earliest medicines, dyes, and fragrances.

Herbs have a very long history of use. Some were used in pre-Christian religious ceremonies and have survived through to today like

bringing holly and mistletoe into our homes at Christmas.

She talked of the use of birch bark to ease pain from strains, and the collection of sphagnum moss during the First World War as it has antiseptic qualities and can hold large amounts of fluid, so was used on wounds. World War Two saw widespread collection of berries and rose hips to produce syrups to provide vitamins for children.

Modern day Chinese scientists are researching tree peonies for their possible medicinal uses.

Herbs are still used in this country to today to heal and treat medical conditions, but we were warned to consult an herbalist rather than use plants in our gardens. We were, however, encouraged to grow comfrey to make a tonic for our garden and save money. The green parts of the plant can be cut and added to water to soak for a few weeks. The liquid produced added to water will nourish growing plants. She also encouraged us to make jellies to preserve the flavours of fruits, herbs etc., as it is easier to make than jams.

Amongst the culinary herbs were several varieties of rosemary which can easily be grown from cuttings as Carrie demonstrated. There was so much useful information and a wide choice of reasonably priced plants to buy. Many people took home more plants to find a place to plant in their garden, or a jar of jelly to enjoy.

This month is our first garden visit. It is an afternoon trip to Forest Lodge at Pen Selwood, Wincanton meeting at 2:30pm on Monday 13th May. This is a 3-acre mature garden with a lake, bulbs, and flowering trees.

Guests are welcome but please let the club know you are intending to be there. Entry price to the garden is around £10. The willow workshop held in April was a huge success.

Sharman Flindall

Nature and science meet faith in stunning new Baptist-led films

'God Saw That It Was Good' is a four-part film series that aims to reconnect people with the wonder of the natural world and a sense of the divine within it - and inspire a renewed vision of creation care.

The four short films focus on environmental issues around themes of coasts, sky, trees, and life, weaving stunning visual imagery with a narrative entwining science and faith.

They are written and presented by the Revd Dr Dave Gregory, a Baptist minister and former meteorologist and climate scientist at the Met Office and European Weather Centre.

He says, "In our visual age, people are captivated by stunning images of our world and cosmos seen in nature and science programmes streamed to our TVs and phones. They are entranced by the wonder they see, yet often left with a sense of mystery and asking is there more to know?"

"The God Saw That It Was Good

films take people deeper in the wonder and mystery of the world. They enable viewers to encounter the wonder, playfulness, and connections in creation that science reveals, and through which God may be encountered.”

Parish Pump

A Challenge Offered

There’s a fascinating exercise I’ve often undertaken with roomfuls of church members. I’ve asked them the question ‘To what age do you trace back the beginnings of your Christian faith?’ The results are almost always the same. About 40% of us think that our Christian journey started at some point before the age of four. Another 40% of us trace the beginnings of our faith back to when we were less than eleven. A further 20% say before we were eighteen. While only one in five of us report having embarked on the journey of faith as adults.

The findings I’ve described should give us all pause for thought. For most people, the start of our Christian journey (even if we’ve dropped out for a while in adolescence and early adulthood) starts in childhood.

So, if we want to grow our churches and transform our communities this suggests that it’s into the faith development of children and young people that we should be putting our energies, priority and resources.

Our data suggests that more than half our churches have no young

person worshipping with them on a Sunday morning. I realise, of course, how hard it is for churches to compete with the demands of football, seeing the extended family, doing any of the many things that are otherwise crowded out of busy family lives. Yet experience shows that when we offer worship at other times and in formats that are attractive to children, young people and families they do come.

This year I’m challenging all our benefices to grow their average weekly attendance by one child (net). If we could sustain such an achievement over a number of years the impact would transform our churches, our lives and our experience. The support services of our diocese offer extensive assistance to enable local churches to think what could work with the resources you have, the passions and skills you possess and the reality of the situation where you are. Do ask for their help.

Are you willing to take up the challenge I’ve offered?

Michael Beasley
Bishop of Bath & Wells

Return of DailyHope

A free telephone line that provides spiritual support for older people has been relaunched.

The DailyHope telephone line serves many people in later life unable to participate in person with church life in the community, either in the long term, or temporarily due to sickness or medical treatment. It was launched during the Covid pandemic.

The recorded phonline provides a vital spiritual resource aimed at the around six million UK people aged over 65 who are either unable to use the internet safely and successfully or are not online at all.

The organisation [Faith in Later Life](#) announced earlier this year that the line would have to be suspended because of a lack of funding. It came as many churches were being encouraged to 'grow younger' and put an emphasis on reaching younger people.

Now their chief executive officer Alexandra Drew has announced that the phonline is back in action.

She said: "Closing the DailyHope line was an extremely heart-wrenching decision to make. I know that it's been a lifeline to many older people, especially those unable to

attend church in person, and without access to spiritual comfort."

Now additional funding has been secured, DailyHope has been relaunched, with a drive to find new content and content-providers.

Alexandra Drew said: "We're looking forward to welcoming new callers, as well as content providers and funding partners, to help us to continue to bring DailyHope to older people, and others who are staying at home."

Broadcaster Pam Rhodes, an ambassador for Faith in Later Life, said: "DailyHope has brought Christian fellowship through the landline into the homes of so many, filling their hearts and souls with God's presence and comfort through word, prayer and song.

"It's no wonder that DailyHope has remained so popular – and the thought that this vital service may have been lost to those who value and rely upon it brought real despair. But now, we're thankful to God that DailyHope has been saved. This is wonderful news."

The DailyHope free telephone service is available on 0800 804 8044.

Revd Peter Crumpler

God in Music - The Stabat Mater

May is traditionally the month of Mary, the mother of Jesus. When we read of Mary in the Gospels, we sense the heartache and trial of much of her life: a teenage mother giving birth in a stable, fleeing with her new-born baby and Joseph to Egypt, losing the child Jesus while on pilgrimage to Jerusalem, following her son on His ministry but always in the background, and there at the foot of the cross as her son is crucified. It is then Mary must have thought back to that occasion in the temple when Simeon took her child and told her that a sword would pierce her own soul.

That sense of heartache and the sorrow it brings is poignantly expressed in a beautiful poem of the Middle Ages called *Stabat Mater*, which pictures Mary at Calvary and that sword of desolation and sadness that pierces her soul. We are not sure who wrote this poem. It is ascribed to Jacopone da Todi, who became a Franciscan friar on the death of his wife in the 13th century. The contemplation of Mary's sorrows in the *Stabat Mater* has inspired many composers, and there are wonderful settings by Palestrina, Rossini, Dvorak, Verdi and Poulenc.

Let's focus on a very simple setting, but one that captures those searing pangs of sorrow at the heart of the poem. It is by Antonio Vivaldi, who was born in Venice in 1678. In 1703 he was ordained a priest, but by then he had made his name as a

skilled violinist and composer. He continued to compose throughout his life: a vast amount that includes some 40 operas (though only 18 survive), 400 concertos, and over 100 choral works. In 1730 Charles de Brosses described him as 'an old man with a prodigious fury for composition.' For much of his life Vivaldi was music director of the Ospedale della Pietà, a music school for girls. Then in 1740 he left Venice hoping for preferment in Vienna. That was not to be, and his final days were marked by poverty and neglect, and in 1741 burial in a pauper's grave.

Most of us know Vivaldi through the brilliance and colour of 'The Four Seasons' and his setting of the Gloria. The tone is more restrained in his setting of the *Stabat Mater*. There is a very fine CD recording entitled 'Vespers of Sorrow' where the work is linked to a sonata, a psalm setting and the Magnificat for an imagined celebration of our Lady's feast.

The *Stabat Mater* is a long poem and Vivaldi restricted himself to setting eight verses for contralto and strings: the solo voice standing for Mary as she sings of the despair and agony as the mother of Jesus. The opening verse, 'At the cross her station keeping' captures the intensity of emotion with the throbbing rhythms of the accompaniment – that mood recurs throughout the work. And then with the verse, 'Eja Mater, fons amoris' (O thou Mother! Fount of love!) the violins and viola accompany without any bass instruments. It is a pivotal

point in the work as the solo voice cries out 'Mater' across the heights and depths of the music, leading into the prayer that the love of Mary will touch all human hearts. The final verse set by Vivaldi begins 'Make me feel as thou hast felt,' and so Mary stands for all mothers who have lost loved ones: perhaps sons killed in Afghanistan, perhaps daughters dying through disease.

Mary's love for Jesus, her son, touches the hearts of them and of all parents. Hers was a protective, sacrificial love that led her to the foot of the cross, where Jesus gave His mother and John, the beloved disciple, into the care of each other. The sacrificial love of a mother mirrored in the sacrificial offering of her son in death.

Julian of Norwich meditated on this motherly love in her Revelations. In chapter 60 she wrote, 'A mother's caring is the closest, nearest and surest for it is the truest...As we know, our own mother bore us only into pain and dying. But our true mother Jesus, who is all love, bears us into joy and endless living. Blessed may he be!' So, the protective care of mother Mary cries out to us in Vivaldi's setting of the Stabat Mater. The closing lines of that poem look to Christ's maternal love like Mother Julian:

'Christ when Thee shall call me hence, Be my mother, my defence, Be thy Cross of victory.'

The Revd Michael Burgess



May
the
Lord
of
Peace
himself
give
you
Peace
at all
times
in
every
way

The text is arranged in a vertical, calligraphic style. The words 'Lord', 'Peace', 'Peace', 'times', and 'every' are written in a large, elegant cursive script. The words 'May', 'the', 'of', 'himself', 'give', 'you', 'at all', 'in', and 'way' are in a smaller, simpler sans-serif font. The text is decorated with several olive branches with green leaves, and a white dove is positioned between the words 'at all' and 'times'.

2 Thessalonians 3:16

Prayer for May 2024

Dear Lord,

May, the loveliest of months – and this year, as we welcome the blossom and the beauty of late Spring, we also welcome Your Holy Spirit afresh, as we celebrate Pentecost.

May we open our hearts to receive Your Spirit, as Your people did on that first Day of Pentecost. May we be filled and empowered and emboldened to witness to Your goodness and love.

May we be transformed by Him and reflect Your transforming grace to the broken world in which we live. May people who meet us ask, “What does this mean?” May they turn to You and hear You speaking in ways they can understand.

Without Your Holy Spirit we can do nothing. With Him living in us, we can do all things. Come Holy Spirit, come to us, we pray,

In Jesus’ name.
Amen.

Daphne Kitching

Christian Aid Week 12th – 18th May

Christian Aid is urging its supporters to ‘push back against poverty this Christian Aid Week’ by bearing in mind the coming General Election.

The charity says that people hoping to represent us in the next UK Parliament will soon be on our doorsteps, vying for our vote.

Christian Aid says that these would-be MPs will: “be in listening mode, keen to hear what makes the voters in their community tick.” And so, urges the charity, Christians can use this opportunity to “show them that your church cares about poverty, and tell them that you expect them to act on poverty too, if they are elected.”

This year the charity has launched the ‘70K Challenge for May’, encouraging its supporters to do a sponsored “Move 70km during May. Walk, run, cycle, however you move is up to you.” Details <https://fundraise.christianaid.org.uk>

Day of Pentecost Whit Sunday 19th May

Pentecost took place on the well-established Jewish festival of Firstfruits, which was observed at the beginning of the wheat harvest. It was seven weeks after Easter, or 50 days including Easter.

A feast day to celebrate the country's wheat harvest does not sound exactly world-changing, but that year, it became one of the most important days in world history. For Pentecost was the day that Jesus sent the Holy Spirit – the day the Church was born.

Jesus had told His disciples that something big was going to happen, and that they were to wait for it in Jerusalem, instead of returning to Galilee. Jesus had plans for His disciples, but He knew they could not do the work themselves. They would need His help.

And so, they waited in Jerusalem, praying together with His other followers, for many days. And then on that fateful morning there was suddenly the sound as of a mighty rushing wind. Tongues of flame flickered on their heads, and they began to praise God in many tongues, to the astonishment of those who heard them. The curse of Babel (Genesis 11: 1- 9) was dramatically reversed that morning.

That morning the Holy Spirit came to indwell the disciples and followers of Jesus. The Church was born. The Christians were suddenly full of life and power, utterly different from

their former fearful selves. The change in them was permanent.

Peter gave the first ever sermon of the Christian Church that morning, proclaiming Jesus was the Messiah. His boldness in the face of possible death was in marked contrast to the man who had denied Jesus 50 days before. And 3,000 people responded, were converted, and were baptised. How's that for fast church growth!

Of course, Pentecost was not the first time the Holy Spirit had acted in this world. All through the Old Testament there are accounts of how God's Spirit guided people and strengthened them. But now, because of Christ's death and resurrection, He could INDWELL them. From now on, every Christian could have the confidence that Jesus was with them constantly, through the indwelling of His Holy Spirit.

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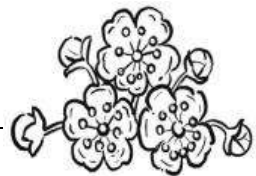
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<p>5th May</p>	<p>10am Matins (*) Beckington 10am All Age Worship Berkley 11am Holy Communion (*) Lullington 11.15am Holy Communion East Woodlands</p>
<p>12th May</p>	<p>10am Holy Communion Beckington 6pm Evensong (*) Rodden</p>
<p>19th May</p>	<p>10am Holy Communion Berkley 11am Matins (*) Orchardleigh 11.15am Morning Worship East Woodlands 6pm Connect Service Beckington</p>
<p>26th May</p>	<p>10am Morning Worship Beckington 11am Matins (*) Lullington 6pm Holy Communion (*) Rodden</p>



(*) Traditional language using Book of Common Prayer - BCP