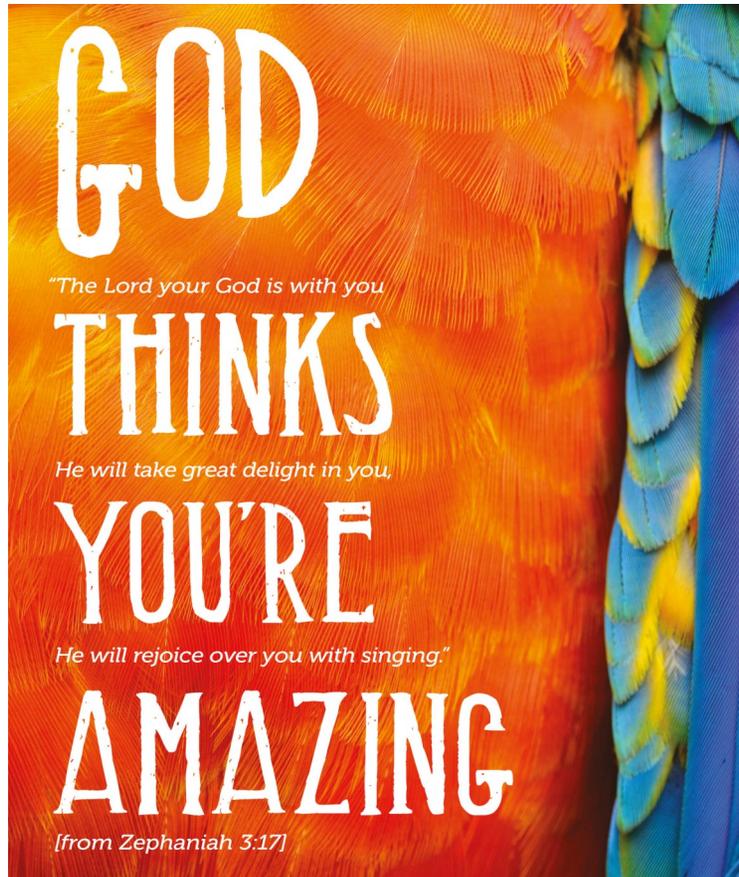


Monthly Newsletter



November 2021

Website: www.stbartholomews-wb.com

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Dear Friends,

*'In Flanders fields the poppies blow
between the crosses, row on row...'*

I have just got back from the formal opening of the Royal British Legion's Field of Remembrance at Lydiard Park in Swindon. It is situated in the Walled Garden, where row upon row of small wooden Remembrance Tributes, crosses and poppies are planted in the grass around the perimeter. During the short ceremony we remembered most particularly the hundreds of UK service personnel who lost their lives in the conflict in Afghanistan. Many of them, as you will recall, were repatriated through Bassett – accompanied by *the echoing of the funeral director's cane and the cascading of flowers*. And I am certain that the remembrance of their sacrifice has been made even more poignant this year by the withdrawal of all foreign troops from Afghanistan over the summer months.

The remembrance is still poignant however even when the loss is a long time ago. One of the guests at the Lydiard opening recalled the occasion she accompanied veterans to the battlefields of Belgium and France. These were men, full of regimental pride and a determination to stand for the National Anthem despite their frailty, who nevertheless shed tears for fallen friends.

A friend from a former parish of mine wrote of her own visit a few years ago.

'... sixty years further on, I walked among the 'rows on rows'. One forgets the time lapse in the immediacy of the ambience – something eternal and as relevant today as then. Searching for the grave of a relative killed in

World War One we found him in a cemetery on the edge of a quiet village near Arras, in a long line of the 10th Leicestershire's, all of whom died a fortnight before Armistice Day. Heart-breaking are the ages – those of my own grandsons – and poignant the stones engraved 'Unknown' or 'Believed to be...' They rest looking across the flat, peaceful Flanders fields and small woods with just the sound of the endless breeze.

Vimy Ridge with its tunnels and trenches; a moonscape of cordoned-off gigantic craters; and a breathtaking memorial where people were still looking for the name of a relative inscribed somewhere among the thousands of those with an unknown grave. A hundred years ago and still tears are shed there.

Dunkirk, and no longer history but for myself memories of bleak newscasts and a wartime childhood. Bray Dunes and the endless miles of bright white sands now ring the with sound of holidaymakers. But at low tide long-disintegrated wrecks from Operation Dynamo (the evacuation of the British Expeditionary Force and Allies) are embedded in the beach and have become hung with wreaths and small mementos for someone long lost. Done not in a mawkish sentimentality but a kind of collective sadness at man's inhumanity to man, which continues today in wars across the globe, creating a new generation of men and women to be honoured and remembered.'

Reflecting on war, sacrifice and the waste of human life, my friend nevertheless left there not depressed, but surprisingly more hopeful. Because standing in that little cemetery some lines from Gerard Manley Hopkins came to her. They are from his poem *God's Grandeur*. After deploring the mess man has made of the world, the poet continues:

BIBLE STUDY FOR BEGINNERS John 21: 1 to 14
Alan Taylor

*'And for all this, nature is never spent;
there lives the dearest, freshness, deep down things;
And though the last lights off the black West went
Oh, morning at the brown brings Eastwards springs –
Because the Holy Ghost over the bent
World broods with warm breast and with ah! Bright
wings.'*

Canon Jane Curtis

(with thanks to Lola Marlow, former Churchwarden
of St Peter's Church, Knossington in Leicestershire.)



Chapter 21 is the epilogue to St John's Gospel, for although the Gospel concludes at the end of chapter 20, there follows another chapter of resurrection appearances.

The journey of the disciples has come full circle. For just as Jesus began his public ministry by calling Peter and Nathaniel in Galilee, and went together as guests to the wedding in Cana of Galilee, now they return to where they began.

So at the beginning the disciples are given a promise of a new life, so now having returned home they experience the fulfilment of that promise, in this resurrection encounter with the risen Jesus.

Again they find it difficult to recognise Jesus. They again learn that by following Jesus' command to 'Shoot the net to starboard', that they will share the abundance of God's creation. Simon Peter hauls the 153 fish ashore and the net is not torn. Surely this symbolises the missionary success of bringing people into the one community of Christ. Here again it is the beloved disciple (John?), who is the first to recognise Jesus. Jesus' invitation to share a breakfast of bread and fish on the beach on a charcoal fire, reminds us of the charcoal fire that Peter warmed himself in the courtyard as Jesus was questioned by the High Priest.

So, in this passage we have many reminders of what has gone before in the Gospel.

In our human experience we make sense of all that hap-

pens to us, by calling on what has happened to us in the past. As such the events of our lives are interpreted by us in the light of past experience. Our lives as followers of Jesus both builds on all that has happened in our lives and at the same time breaks with it. The Gospel reading is true to this experience of continuity and discontinuity. Building on the past and breaking with the past.

So it is in this passage that the disciples are back where they began and yet they have been utterly changed by their journey with Jesus. Simon Peter may have warmed himself by a charcoal fire full of denial, uncertainty and despair, but now he is fed by Jesus on a similar fire having emerged from a freezing morning swim.

The Resurrection life that Jesus has made possible for us, both builds on our past experiences, good and bad, and calls us to a new future.

We may be back in our familiar stamping ground doing the things we know, and yet our relationship with this apparent stranger on the beach, who turns out to be our dearest friend, transforms our view of everything. This is the new life promised at the beginning of the Gospel that comes to fruition through Jesus' conquest of death. We are able to experience this change when we allow Jesus to feed us in the breaking of bread.

Advent Sunday



28th November

10.00am Parish Eucharist

4.00pm Advent Carols

The Advent Season

For Christians who observe the liturgical calendar, Advent is the Church Season before Christmas. For Roman Catholics, Orthodox, Anglicans and other Protestant denominations the observance of the Advent Season occurs over four Sundays before Christmas.

Our English word 'Advent' comes from the Latin word 'Adventus', which means arrival. In the Latin Vulgate of Jerome, this was the word used to translate the Greek word Parousia, which in the New Testament refers to the Second Coming of Christ.

So in Advent we take time to wait and reflect on two Advents. The first Advent is the Nativity, the birth of Christ and the subsequent Christmas celebrations and the joy that's brings us. We also focus our eyes on the Second Coming the time when Christ will return. As we know neither the time when our own lives will end, or when Jesus will return, we should always be prepared for these events.

Advent used to be known as a 'Little Lent' or St. Martin's Lent as early as the fifth century. Like Lent we use the colour purple to express repentance. You may visit the cathedral and see blue altar frontals, this is from the old English 'Sarum rite'; the time before uniformity was fashionable; our diocese had its own idea of seasonal colouring and blue was its colour of repentance. Our Advent wreath has three purple candles (for repentance), one pink, and one white for Christmas Day. The pink candle is for Gaudete (Joy) Sunday: rose-coloured vestments are worn for a bit of light relief from all that purple. It is also known as 'Rose Sunday'.

Advent has historically been a time for reflection and prayer to prepare for the Messiah's birth in Bethlehem. It

is his coming into the world that will save us from our sins as his death and resurrection accomplished. The scriptures tell us that Jesus has promised to return (John 14: 1-3), 'To judge the living and the dead', and 'Whose kingdom shall have no end'. Let us therefore prepare for this coming celebration by readying our hearts and lives for him.

Advent is the official start of the church's yearly calendar. In Advent it can be a struggle to remain focused on the Advent theme of expectant waiting, as the preparations for Christmas start to overwhelm us from early in September. We are assaulted everywhere we go with gaiety, jingles and exhortations to purchase 'stuff'; and indeed to 'stuff' ourselves. The Christmas dinner becomes as almost a vexed question as for a Jewish family eating the Passover – whose house this year? These things will distract us from our spiritual preparations if we allow them to. However, there is a lot of literature available to take us daily through the season of Advent, to help us stay focused on preparing for Christ's coming.

We start off the Advent season with a '*Songs of Praise Service*' on **Sunday 28th November 2021 @4pm**. Or you could join us on weekdays for Morning Prayer at 9.15am for a quiet time of prayer and reflection before the day's shopping starts. (Wednesday 10.30am communion service). We can always take 'a little extra' into our prayer life as we await the Messiah's birth.

When it arrives may you all have a Blessed Christmas and a Happy and healthy New Year.

Michael Page LLM

THE FRIENDS have been unable to hold any events since the last Coffee Morning in October 2019 because of Covid and lockdowns. To keep the membership on course I have endeavoured to collect as many subscriptions as possible during the last year for 2020 /2021. This has been challenging to say the FRIENDS have been unable to hold any events since the last Coffee Morning in October 2019 because of Covid and lockdowns. To keep the membership on course I have endeavoured to collect as many subscriptions as possible during the last year for 2020 /2021. This has been challenging to say the least because we were all being very cautious where contacts were concerned. I was not successful in collecting all the subscriptions, some of which were as late as July.

The Friends of St Bartholomew's will be holding their Annual General Meeting on Sunday 7th November 2021 in the Church as soon as possible after the 10.00 am Service.

Editor: Canon Paul Hardingham considers the horrors of war.

Lest We Forget

'In Flanders' fields the poppies blow between the crosses, row on row, that mark our place: and in the sky the larks, still bravely singing, fly scarce heard amid the guns below.'

This is the first verse of John McCrae's poem, first published in Punch magazine in 1915. It soon came to symbolise the sacrifice of all who died in World War One. Today, the poppy remains a tangible symbol for those who have sacrificed their lives in war, especially as we remember those who died in Afghanistan. But why do we remember?

'They will beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore.' (Micah 4:3). Writing 700 years before Christ, Micah spoke at the time when Samaria fell due to the aggression of Assyria. However, he prophesied a future of hope, a world where nations come together in peace rather than war. His words are fulfilled in the kingdom of God established by Jesus.

Our understanding of *peace* is more than simply the absence of conflict. It is about building relationships between people, communities and nations, founded on love and justice for all. As we remember those who died in war, we should look practically at how we can build such relationships, beginning with our own families, colleagues

and neighbours. *'We will walk in the name of the Lord our God for ever and ever.'* (Micah 4:5). Let's ask God's Spirit to make us people of peace, justice and compassion for today's world.

'They shall grow not old as we that are left grow old: Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn. At the going down of the sun and in the morning we will remember them.'

1 November All Saints' Day – the feast day of all the redeemed

All Saints, or All Hallows, is the feast of all the redeemed, known and unknown, who are now in heaven. When the English Reformation took place, the number of saints in the calendar was drastically reduced, with the result that All Saints' Day stood out with a prominence that it had never had before.

This feast day first began in the East, perhaps as early as the 5th century, as commemorating 'the martyrs of the whole world'. A Northern English 9th century calendar named All Hallows as a principal feast, and such it has remained. Down the centuries devotional writers have seen in it the fulfilment of Pentecost and indeed of Christ's redemptive sacrifice and resurrection.

The saints do not belong to any religious tradition, and their lives and witness to Christ can be appreciated by all Christians. Richard Baxter, writing in the 17th century, wrote the following:

He wants not friends that hath thy love,
And made converse and walk with thee,
And with thy saints here and above,
With whom for ever I must be...

As for my friends, they are not lost;
The several vessels of thy fleet,
Though parted now, by tempests tost,
Shall safely in thy haven meet....

The heavenly hosts, world without end,
Shall be my company above;
And thou, my best and surest Friend,
Who shall divide me from thy love?*

1,255 ancient English churches were dedicated to All Saints - a number only surpassed by those dedicated to

10 November Leo the Great – Pope who rescued the doctrine of the Incarnation

How do you think of Jesus? As the Lord of lords in glory? Or as a human baby soon to be born in Bethlehem? November brings the glorious climax of the church year with the Sunday of Christ the King on 22nd November – only to begin a new ‘year’ a week later, with Advent. So, the ways in which the Church speaks of Jesus this month could not be more dramatically different.

How can Jesus be both God and Man? Trying to get your head around the Incarnation is not easy, and so this is a good month to remember Leo the Great (d 461). In the 5th century, he ‘rescued’ the doctrine of the Incarnation at a time when the Church was really struggling with the onslaught of various attacks.

Leo, a deacon of Tuscan descent, became Pope at a time when Rome was reeling under repeated assault by the barbarians. As well as trying to patch up the material and spiritual damage they had done, Leo faced an even more deadly attack: the Church was being torn apart on the inside. There were various heresies raging, each trying to claim that their view of the person of Christ was the only right one.

Between the barbarians on the outside and the distortions of Manichaeism, Priscillianism, and Pelagianism on the inside, Leo was not in for an easy time. Yet this man of indomitable energy and devotion to duty pressed on. Leo was pope for 20 tumultuous years, but undoubtedly the

most important contribution that he made was at a famous church council.

It was the Council of Chalcedon, in 451 – often regarded as a highlight in Christian history. Leo presented a dogmatic letter (or Tome) to the Council. He wrote with remarkable clarity of thought and understanding. Jesus Christ, said Leo, is one Person, the Divine Word. In Jesus the two natures, the divine and the human, are permanently united without confusion or mixture.

When the Council read this document, it was exclaimed: ‘Peter has spoken by Leo.’ Leo’s understanding was seen to encompass all the Bible teaching on the subject of who Jesus was. It became thenceforth part of the official teaching of the Christian Church.

Love your trees: 27th November – 5th December

National Tree Week is the UK’s largest annual tree celebration, marking the start of the winter tree planting season (November to March each year). This year, it runs from Saturday 27th November to Sunday 5th December. It is a good time to both celebrate your current trees, and to plant more trees in your area. You don’t have to necessarily hug a tree to prove your appreciation; there are plenty of other ways to support them. Visit:

<https://treecouncil.org.uk/take-action/seasonal-campaigns/national-tree-week/>

Bishops demand climate action at COP26

Bishops join leaders of other major faiths to demand climate action at COP26 in Glasgow

Faith leaders have been joining together to demand climate action ahead of the COP26 meeting in Glasgow (1st - 12th November).

Graham Usher, Bishop of Norwich, and lead Bishop on the Environment for the Church of England signed the letter alongside leaders of every major Christian denomination and representatives from Baha'i, Buddhist, Hindu, Jain, Jewish, Muslim, and Sikh communities.

The declaration states: "We remind governments of their commitments made in Paris in 2015 to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees, and of Article 17 of the Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights to protect the environment, the biosphere and biodiversity.

"We call upon them to take the urgent action needed to avert the loss, damage, and forced migration threatened by climate change.

"Across our doctrinal and political differences, we know that we must change our ways to ensure a quality of life which all can share, and we need to provide hope for people of all ages, everywhere, including future generations.

"To offer hope in the world we need to have confidence that those in power understand the vital role they have to play at the Glasgow COP26."

The Glasgow Declaration pledges a response to the

challenge set by the climate emergency through being "advocates for justice by calling on governments, businesses and others who exercise power and influence to put into effect the Paris agreement; to make the transition to a just and green economy a priority; and to commit to science-based targets that are aligned with a healthy, resilient, zero-emissions future."

One million downloads for Daily Prayer podcast

Hundreds of thousands of people have discovered the ancient monastic cycle of daily prayer through a Church of England podcast which has received more than a million downloads in just six months.

The Daily Prayer podcast, which is integrated into the free Daily Prayer app, brings listeners together twice a day for short traditional services of Morning and Evening.

The podcast, available both via the Daily Prayer app as well as all major podcasting platforms, has had just under a quarter of a million unique listeners since launching.

The services follow the pattern of the C of E's Common Worship services, with readings recorded by people around the country and music from one of the choirs of St Martin-in-the-Fields in London.

The podcast, which was launched in March 2021, has around 8,000 people listening each day. Find it at:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/join-us-service-daily-prayer/daily-prayer-app-and-podcast>

All in the month of NOVEMBER

It was:

200 years ago, on 11th Nov 1821 that Fyodor Dostoevsky, the Russian novelist, short story writer and journalist was born. Best known for his novel Crime and Punishment.

150 years ago, on 10th Nov 1871 that Welsh journalist and explorer Henry Morton Stanley located the missing missionary and explorer Dr David Livingstone near Lake Tanganyika in present-day Tanzania. He might or might not have greeted him with the words: "Doctor Livingstone, I presume?"

125 years ago, on 16th Nov 1896 that Oswald Mosley, British fascist politician, was born. Imprisoned for three years in 1940 for founding the British Union of Fascists.

100 years ago, on 11th Nov 1921 that Remembrance poppies were sold for the first time in British and Commonwealth countries to commemorate military personnel who died in war. In the UK they are sold by the Royal British Legion to raise funds for current and former members of the British Armed Forces. Around 30 million poppies are sold each year.

90 years ago, on 30th Nov 1931 that the Crystal Palace in London was destroyed by fire.

80 years ago, on 13th Nov 1941 that the British aircraft carrier HMS Ark Royal was torpedoed by a German submarine in the Mediterranean Sea near Gibraltar. It sank the following day.

65 years ago, on 5th Nov 1956 that Premium Bonds went on sale in the UK. They were designed to encourage people to save, and they offered cash prizes instead of interest.

50 years ago, on 14th Nov 1971 that NASA's Mariner 9 spacecraft (launched that May) reached Mars. It was the first spacecraft to orbit another planet. Mars was engulfed in a planet-wide dust storm at the time, but 85% of the surface was eventually imaged. Mariner 9 was deactivated in October 1972.

40 years ago, on 12th Nov 1981 that the US Space Shuttle Columbia was launched on its second flight into space, becoming the world's first reusable manned spacecraft.

30 years ago, on 5th Nov 1991 that Robert Maxwell, Czech-born British newspaper publisher, media proprietor and politician, was found dead at sea off Tenerife. Following his death, he was found to have fraudulently misappropriated the Mirror Group's pension fund.

Also 30 years ago on 18th Nov 1991 that the Church of England envoy Terry Waite and American educator Thomas Sutherland were released by Islamic Jihad in Lebanon after being held hostage since January 1987 and June 1985 respectively.

25 years ago, on 30th Nov 1996 that England officially returned the Stone of Scone to Scotland after 700 years. It was the coronation stone of the Scottish and (later) English and British monarchs. Scotland agreed to loan the Stone to Westminster Abbey for future coronations.

20 years ago, from 12th to 13th Nov 2001 that the Afghanistan's ruling Taliban abandoned the capital without a fight, as a coalition of US/NATO and Northern Alliance forces entered the city.

Also 20 years ago, on 29th Nov 2001 that George Harrison, British rock guitarist, singer and songwriter with the Beatles, died.

15 years ago, on 13th Nov 2006 that Google acquired the video-sharing site YouTube.

The Church was floodlit

For Bidy Gough

For Bidy and Tim.
In loving memory
of Don Gough on
his anniversary

For the Boraston Family

Happy Birthday
Stephen. Forever in
our hearts and minds

For Elaine Darmody

Never forgotten, Noel
my big brother

Worship with St Bartholomew and All Saints'

On Sundays

10am Holy Communion in church (and available on YouTube at: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC2mwesD4RZxknsWth-Qb0vg>)

Songs of Praise at St Bart's - monthly via YouTube at: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC2mwesD4RZxknsWth-Qb0vg>

A chance to sing-along to some of your favourite hymns. Hymn suggestions and requests all welcome!

On Wednesdays

10.30am Holy Communion in church

Morning Prayer via Zoom – Monday to Saturday

Email vicar@stbartholomews-wb.com to find out how to join in our prayers via Zoom Monday-Saturday at 9.10am. We use the order of service found here: <https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/join-us-service-daily-prayer>

Worship via the 'phone

- For those without access to the internet **Daily Hope** free dial-in worship phone-line is available 24 hours a day on 0800 804 8044 and offers music, prayers, reflections and full worship services from the Church of England at the end of the telephone line
- Or for a short prayer service over the 'phone please contact us to find out more about our local **Phone Church** network: 01793 853272

Item for Monthly or Weekly Newsheet or Website

If you would like to include an item in one or more of these please contact us by email on:

publish@stbartholomews-wb.com

Please indicate where you would like the item to appear and it will be forwarded to the relevant person. If you do not have email the Parish Office will; be very pleased to accept contributions in other formats.

N.B. We reserve the right to edit items submitted and to decline any items which do not conform to our publishing policies.

Publication of all items is subject to space limitations. In any of these cases, we will let you know by email or telephone

Are you or someone close to you celebrating a special birthday or anniversary? Why not mark the occasion by having our beautiful church floodlit? Application forms are available by the church door or from the Parish Office

