



From the Rector's Study

No more Alleluias for a season. Tradition has it no flowers either, but with Sylvia Jenner's funeral in **Lent** we shall be keeping the flowers in church the Sunday following her service and since each Sunday is a day of Resurrection, that is right. I look forward too, to a rose Chasuble for Mothering Sunday. It is not all purple and penitence, therefore, but an eye to the future and to the resurrection.



As part of our Lenten disciplines we have the opportunity to attend to our Eucharistic devotions and on Fridays we can receive the sacrament, reflect with music, share a meal and then ponder the Stations of the Cross.

The Catholic heritage which is our gift, is rich in its provision not least at this time of the year. The season begins of course with Ash Wednesday when we shall ash our school community followed by a midday Mass in church and Ashing for the congregation and then I shall lead the town Ash Wednesday service at St Mary's at 8pm. So mark one of these services in your diary as a priority. The Passiontide liturgies, the music and the disciplines of sacrifice, giving and good works will define the season. Do consider booking an appointment to make your Confession and ask me for your copy of *Dust And Glory* — the CofE Lent resource.

There is a lot of **work for PCC** to continue this month. The faculty for the new chairs has been approved and we now must submit the paperwork for the work in the chancel - floor and remodelling. There is work to do on our Mission Action Plan and work to support our school.

I have also asked Fr Nick to take a lead in reintroducing our **Healing Ministry** and we shall be re-introducing the Ministry of Laying on of Hands after Mass. The dates of these will be advertised and Fr Nick reflects upon this in his article in this month's magazine.

This Lent let us all pray for the grace of God to inspire our worship, our good works and our desire to see God's kingdom grow and daily offer the Collect of Ash Wednesday:



Almighty and everlasting God, you hate nothing that you have made and forgive the sins of all those who are penitent:

create and make in us new and contrite hearts, that we, worthily lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness, may receive from you, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Fr Neil

The Stations of the Cross are on our website <https://www.saintnics.com/our-church1/lent-holy-week-easter/>

Location, location, location - Wisdom in the wilderness The other day, I was watching Ben Fogle in the TV series *Scotland' Sacred Islands*. In a personal pilgrimage to the remotest islands, he explores whether spiritual life is easier in a place with fewer distractions. As a long time devotee of the Scottish islands and someone who has enjoyed that tranquillity, be it in places like Iona or the even more remote islands, I have absolutely no doubt that there is a very deep sense of the tissue between earth and heaven being somehow thinner in the wildness and beauty of nature. The mere fact of being apart, freed from the constraints of daily lives or the demands of social media, news family, work and all the burdens associated with our daily lives provides space for re-creation. There is no doubt that it is a great privilege for those of us who have the ability, capacity and freedom to make such journeys to the wild edge. That said, for many people this is not an option, they do not have the



means, the wherewithal, the capacity or the opportunity to travel or find such spaces or travel to them. I'm mindful particularly of those trapped and confined in inner city areas or outer city estates, those living in poverty or housebound, but it is also true that you can be similarly trapped in countryside, and I am particularly mindful of those trapped in poverty in remote rural communities.

Some years ago with one of my colleagues, we began the process of praying in the streets of walking from place to place and stopping on corners to pray. This was an enlightening process, because it somehow deepened our consciousness of place and people in a particular context. It earthed our grasp of what our area was like for those who lived there. This is something you don't always get when you drive through or even walk through on your way to somewhere else, and lots of places are simply that for most of us; something we pass through or by. William Blake's poetical sketch on contemplation begins,

'Who is this, that with unerring step dares tempt the wilds, where only Nature's foot hath trod? 'Tis Contemplation, daughter of the grey Morning! Majestical she steppeth, and with her pure quill on every flower writeth Wisdom's name; now lowly bending, whispers in mine ear, 'O man, how great, how little, thou!'

However as you read on he writes,

'Vain foolish man, that roams on lofty rocks, where, 'cause his garments are swoln with wind, he fancies he is grown into a giant! Lo, then, Humility, take it, and wear it in thine heart; lord of thyself, thou then art lord of all. Clamour brawls along the streets, and destruction hovers in the city's smoke; but on these plains, and in these silent woods, true joys descend: here build thy nest; here fix thy staff...'

Clearly it is not an either or and there is beauty to be found in urban streets, but the deeper point as one of my colleagues used to say is that, *'you have got to blossom where you're planted.'* In particular, it is about finding beauty in brokenness, seeing the green and pleasant land in the desolation of the wilderness. This is not about self-delusion that everything is beautiful and that all is OK with the world when it clearly is not the case. Blake's sketch ends,

'I walked through dreary places with him, and in church-yards; and I oft found myself sitting by Sorrow on a tomb-stone.'

However, it is about recognising what is around us and starting there. It is about anchoring ourselves in reality and looking for inspiration in our surroundings. Should we then have the opportunity to experience another horizon, so be it, but if not, let us make new horizons a possibility for those amongst whom we live, even in the bleakest wilderness. Is not that what churches are for?

There is the story of a man who lived in the middle of a desolate and ravaged housing estate surrounded by destruction and mayhem, bereft have any visible beauty. Each day he would take a bucket and set out to find some freshwater which he would bring home and then pour on the ground around his little hut. Weeks later shoots began to come up and in time his dwelling was surrounded by beautiful wild-flowers.

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus.' Isaiah Ch.35 v1. I wish you a fruitful Lent wherever you may find yourself. **Fr Nick**

Revd Steve Chalke, founder of the Oasis Charitable Trust:

Never measure the prosperity of a nation by its number of millionaires. What really matters is the absence of poverty, the prevalence of health, the inclusion of its education system, the care of its most vulnerable members, and the equality of opportunity it extends to all. *Sent by Sally Lowe*

State of the organ The organ at St Nicolas is in a sorry state. For decades organists have tried to deal with the growing list of deterioration and problems. More recently the choir and other musicians are



acutely aware of the issues, and in the last few months even many in the congregation can't ignore such things as notes missing, cyphering (notes sounding when not wanted), and many of the pipes gasping for air because the valves can't open sufficiently. The 'key action' has become extremely stiff, seizing up to the point of requiring almost herculean force to play many of the keys. Short, fast notes are almost impossible, and simply don't sound. The stop controls constantly don't work at all, to the



extent that only 3 of the 21 'speaking stops' on the keyboards for the hands can be relied upon. 25-30% of standard choral music and half of my repertoire of organ music is now unfeasible on our organ.

When the present St Nic's building was erected in 1875 the parish opted for the very best: Henry Willis and his artisan craftsmen built our organ in 1876. One-hundred fifty years later "Father Willis" is still highly revered as the finest organ builder of his time. Willis was obliged to hide the organ out of sight around the corner, behind massively thick walls supporting the tower.

At the time that was often common practice, causing the blocked sound to struggle to adequately reach people in the nave; congregations were

encouraged to merely, reverently, 'observe' the priest and choir up front. Then when the Lady Chapel was partitioned off the arched opening into the North aisle was sealed up and the organ tone was further muted. To try to compensate for the entombed sound in 1913 a second-rate organ firm added a few stops and 'modernised' bits of the mechanism. Seventy years after that a soon-to-close, a minor firm did a misguided 'restoration', but failed to properly design or execute things, cutting many corners, and leaving a Heath Robinson-combination. They added partly electrically-operated stop controls, which even in 1984, were far from State-of-the-Art. Fast forward to now and the massive timber 'soundboards' have split and cracked causing air leaks, leather components are crumbling, tiny wooden parts are seriously out of alignment, failing to work properly or at all. The once aristocratic instrument is a musical shamble. Over the decades the PCC has spent many thousands paying for minor, inadequate repairs and hoping a 'sticking plaster' approach could postpone serious expenditures.

An imperfect analogy is that of a Victorian purchasing a smart carriage from a posh retailer in London's Regent Street, to be pulled by his pair of matched horses. Forty years on his well-meaning grandson sells off the stables and horses, using the worn leather harnesses to strap an early sputtering petrol engine to the carriage. He adds a paraffin lamp and a highly polished brass steering wheel. Three generations later the descendants 'restore' the once elegant carriage by replacing rotten wood with cardboard, one of the wheels with one with a bicycle wheel missing some spokes and fitting crude iron rims on the other wheels. But they clamp on a second-hand battery to power a headlight. Finally, their proud grandchildren hope the vehicle can safely cope with modern speeds on the motorway.

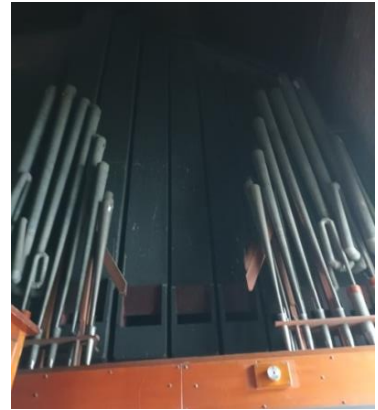
Though most of the complex mechanics are well beyond reliable use, thankfully over a thousand of the original Willis sound-producing pipes from 1876 are wonderful quality and tone and worth retaining. Pipe organs are usually the most expensive appointment in a church building and it could run into six-figures to properly deal with the organ. Fr Neil has wisely appointed a small committee to investigate, research, and take sound advice about what to do, and then raise the funds to see the project through. There are no quick-fix or temporary solutions, and the project will take some years to complete, which is why we must begin the process. While organs are not strictly necessary for any church to survive, they are more than just 'expected equipment' for traditional churches, they play a major role in Anglo-Catholic worship of

Almighty God. Hopefully we will be able to have an organ that is an investment for our generation and those of the future for another one-hundred years, serving the St Nic's community, Guildford, and the whole of West Surrey. **Rick Erikson**



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Curry and Questions has produced such a big response that I have decided to host our Curry night in the Parish Centre Hall. Jo Radley has kindly offered to cook up the fare - curry, rice, poppadoms, naans and the works and I will make sure that there is plenty of liquid refreshment. Please let us know of any food allergies so we can plan

accordingly. At £10, the cost of the evening will be significantly less than going to a restaurant. The topic of our discussions will be **The Bible** - what is it? Is it the word of God? Does it have authority? We plan to meet on Thursday **9th March**. If you are coming we need to know by Sunday 5th March. **Fr Neil**





We 1	St David	9 Morning Prayer, The Lady Chapel 12 Angelus and Mass
Th 2		9:30 Morning Prayer, The Lady Chapel
Fr 3		930 Morning Prayer, The Lady Chapel 11 Mass and Angelus, St George's Chapel, Concert & Lent Lunch
Sa 4		
Su 5	Lent II	830 Mass 10 Mass 630 Choral Evensong
Tu 7		9 Morning Prayer, The Lady Chapel
We 8		9 Morning Prayer, The Lady Chapel
Th 9		9 Morning Prayer, The Lady Chapel
Fr 10		930 Morning Prayer, The Lady Chapel 11 Mass and Angelus, St George's Chapel, Concert & Lent Lunch
Sa 11		
Su 12	Lent III	830 Mass 10 Mass
Tu 14		9 Morning Prayer, The Lady Chapel
We 15		9 Morning Prayer, The Lady Chapel
Th 16		930 Morning Prayer, The Lady Chapel
Fr 17		930 Morning Prayer, The Lady Chapel 11 Mass and Angelus, St George's Chapel, Concert & Lent Lunch
Sa 18		
Su 19	MOTHERING SUNDAY Lent IV	830 Mass 10 Mass
Tu 21		9 Morning Prayer, The Lady Chapel
We 22		9 Morning Prayer, The Lady Chapel
Th 23		9 Morning Prayer, The Lady Chapel
Fr 24	The Annunciation (trans)	930 Morning Prayer, The Lady Chapel 11 Mass and Angelus, St George's Chapel, Concert & Lent Lunch
Sa 25		
Su 26	Lent V Passion Sunday	APCM 830 Mass 10 Mass
Tu 28		9 Morning Prayer, The Lady Chapel
We 29		930 Morning Prayer, The Lady Chapel
Th 30		9 Morning Prayer, The Lady Chapel
Fr 31		930 School Easter Service 11 Mass and Angelus, St George's Chapel, Concert & Lent Lunch



Members of the Junior Church blowing feathers, symbols of the Holy Spirit, all the way up the aisle



Junior Church taking part in the 10am Sunday service

Please see more information about Lent concerts at Friday lunchtimes further down in the Newsletter.





The Ministry of Healing at St Nicolas There has been a long tradition of services and prayers for healing at Saint Nicolas. Covid and changes in the life of the church in recent times have led to a pause in the provision of laying on of hands and anointing with prayer after the mass. However now that we are returning to 'normal' Fr Neil has asked me to restore this practice on a regular basis once a month as advertised.

There is also a Healing Group which looks after the list of those who are sick and which meets regularly for prayer and the people to contact are David Greenwood, Hilary Fletcher and Jana Philips.

So, what are we talking about when we speak of healing in the church? The best expression is to be found in the Letter of James chapter 5, *'If any among you is sick. let them call for the elders of the church and let them pray over them anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayers of faith will save the sick and the Lord will raise them up and if he has committed any sins he will be forgiven.'* These words make the important connection between wholeness and healing, putting our prayers in the context of the whole life and well-being of the person.

We are all aware over human vulnerability in terms of physical and mental health, a fragility that can reduce our capacity, diminish our quality of life, and sometimes end our lives. Dealing with this on a day-to-day basis is a critical part of our life experience and thanks to the miracles of modern medicine and complementary services, extraordinary levels of healing are possible. However, our fragility remains, and it is essential that we devote our energy and attention to facing up to this when it arrives on our doorstep in addition to any therapeutic interventions.

We often speak literally or metaphorically of holding people, recognising their need, the basic human need to feel cared for secure loved and safe. We also speak of being not only in one another's hands, but also in the hands of God. It is this understanding of presence that we evoke when we speak of healing and laying on of hands. We reach out to one another and to God in the midst of our pain, suffering and vulnerability, in hope and in faith. What saves us is the knowledge that we are not alone that our burdens are shared and that we are cared for. In this way, we are better able to face what lies before us, to cope, to come to terms with our afflictions and to find peace.

It is appropriate to pray that the sick may be restored to health and that all among us may know God's saving power. By the same token, healing and wholeness take many forms and not always those we desire or expect in answer to prayer. Again, this is why it is important to speak of wholeness and not just healing, or else run the risk of disillusionment or disappointment if the healing we hope for does not happen. The key is that God is with us in the contingency and unpredictability of a world where we have free will. God shares our journey through the incarnation, that is by taking human form. Jesus takes away our suffering by entering into it. God does not cause or remove our suffering, he shares it with us.

So, what to expect in church. We invite people to join us in the Lady Chapel after the service and there following these words,

'We meet in the presence of God who knows our needs, hears our cries, feels our pain, and heals our wounds,' you will be invited to come to the altar rail, to indicate the nature of your request for healing for yourself or another.

This will be followed by a simple placing of hands up on your head with these words;

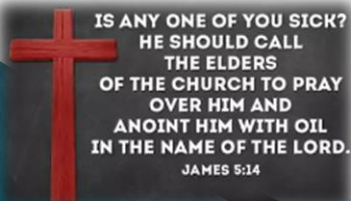
'In the name of God and trusting in his might alone, receive Christ's healing touch to make you whole. May Christ bring you wholeness of body, mind and spirit, deliver you from every evil, and give you his peace.'

Anointing with Holy Oil will follow with the words;

'I anoint you in the name of God who gives you life. Receive Christ's forgiveness, his healing and his love. May the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ grant you the riches of his grace, his wholeness and his peace.'

The first service will take place on the 12th March after the Mass. All are invited and welcome to join us both for the services and for prayer.

Fr. Nick





Walsingham How would you like to follow in the steps of Henry VIII? Probably not - but despite his later action against monasteries, he was earlier in his reign a devoted pilgrim to Walsingham even apparently following the tradition of walking the last mile barefoot. That was four centuries after the Virgin Mary had appeared to Lady Richaldis, the wife of the local squire and asked her to build a replica of the Holy House in which Christ had been brought up, thus giving rise to the tradition of England's Nazareth.

It is now a century since the Rev Hope Patten was appointed rector of the parish of Walsingham and was inspired to revive the devotion to Our Lady of Walsingham. He instructed an artist to make a statue of Our Lady using a picture incorporated into the seal of the abbey shrine. In 1931 the statue was moved to the Shrine church which had been built on land across the road from the old abbey shrine and placed in a replica of the Holy House included therein.

We have been most fortunate this year to be able to book our pilgrimage in Mary's month of May from 26th to 28th. The weekend will include processions round the Shrine grounds with the statue of Our Lady and the Holy Sacrament, intercessions in the Holy House and sprinkling with Holy Water from the spring which served the original abbey. The cost of £169 includes full board from supper on Friday to lunch on Sunday.

Elizabeth, Rosie and I have been going for nearly 30 years and still find it a wonderfully spiritually rewarding event. Do come and join us as it would be marvellous to have a really good number. If we have enough we could hire a mini bus and therefore save using too many cars. **Philip Hooper**



.....

To keep a true lent

Is this a fast, to keep
The larder lean ?
And clean
From fat of veals and sheep ?

Is it to quit the dish
Of flesh, yet still
To fill
The platter high with fish ?

Is it to fast an hour,
Or ragg'd to go,
Or show
A downcast look and sour ?

No ; 'tis a fast to dole
Thy sheaf of wheat,
And meat,
Unto the hungry soul.

It is to fast from strife,
From old debate
And hate ;
To circumcise thy life.

To show a heart grief-rent ;
To starve thy sin,
Not bin ;
And that's to keep thy Lent.

Robert Herrick
English priest & poet, 1591-1674



Ranmore Common on Ash Wednesday. Photo and poem sent by **Sally Lowe**

“Should coming to church be a spiritual experience?” may not be the usual response to a Sidesperson’s greeting on a Sunday morning. This was in dark, cold January, on one of those ‘what’s the point of it all’ days. “Let me think about it,” replied Sally and at the end of the service added, “it is the word ‘should’ that is worrying me, but I’ll be in touch.”

The fuller reply arrived a few days later:

I think I’d want to say: “I’m worried by the *should* and it all depends on what you mean by ‘spiritual’”. Human beings have a dualistic tendency to make a stark division between sacred and secular, with “spiritual” falling under the umbrella of sacred - which tends to mean “churchy”. As I understand it, Celtic and Franciscan theology (as well as some other world faiths) see things more holistically. Whether aware of it or not, we are all spiritual beings all the time, wherever we are – in church or out. George Herbert expressed it most eloquently in “Teach me, my God and King”.

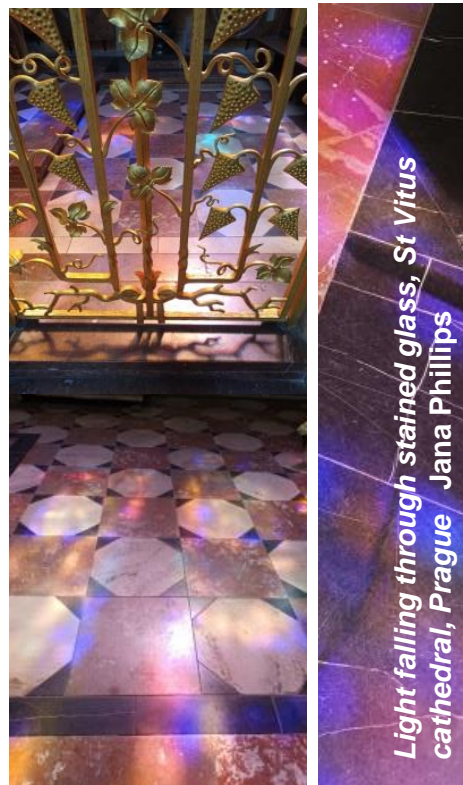
*Teach me, my God and King,
in all things thee to see,
and what I do in anything
to do it as for thee.*

*A man that looks on glass,
on it may stay his eye;
or if he pleaseth, through it pass,
and then the heaven espy.*

*All may of thee partake;
nothing can be so mean,
which with this tincture, "for thy sake,"
will not grow bright and clean.*

*A servant with this clause
makes drudgery divine:
who sweeps a room, as for thy laws,
makes that and the action fine.*

*This is the famous stone
that turneth all to gold;
for that which God doth touch and own
cannot for less be told.*



So what is a “spiritual experience”? Do we mean an overtly “religious” experience such as having a vision or speaking in tongues? I suspect whether we have experiences like that depends as much on our personality and temperament as anything else. I’m aware of having had very few what others might call “religious” experiences. (The one I recall most clearly happened in St. Nic’s on Gaudete Sunday 2008 and lasted about five seconds.) However, there can be times when we feel transported to somewhere else – music can do that for me – and it’s wonderful when it happens but there’s no “should” about it and it’s not the object of being in church.

A priest leading a retreat once said, “I invite you this weekend to simply accept whatever God offers you. Don’t try to make anything happen, just receive what God gives.” I’ve found those words helpful for decades – and they can apply to our prayer life and being in church just as much as to retreats.

I think the point is that anything that happens – in this case during worship – is God’s gift to us. We can’t contrive it, and shouldn’t even try – tempting though that can be if nothing much seems to be happening and we think God needs a nudge to provide us with more excitement. We can only try and remain open and attentive to what God is offering us, however mundane that feels.

People go to church for various reasons, one of which I believe is simply for a sense of belonging and feeling valued. At the risk of stating the obvious, I believe God’s love is usually manifested through other people. Someone might feel disappointed that they don’t experience heavenly fireworks. Yet, if God is love, the love shown to them by others surely comes from the same source, whether or not either party is aware of it. **Sally Lowe and Jana Phillips**



Again, as last year, St Nic's hosts lunch-time concerts in the church each Friday during Lent. The free concerts begin at approximately 11.45, following on from Mass and last approximately thirty minutes. A simple home-made hot lunch is available in the Hall after the concerts, although the public may also bring their own lunch to eat during the music, refreshing both body and soul. John Varney, our former organist will present the first concert on March 3. Then on March 10 and March 17 respectively, the offering is Kate Lowe, mezzo-soprano and Daniel Mahoney, classical guitar and tenor. They are known to many of us as they are professional Foundation Singers in St Nic's choir. Samantha Barnhart, a superb orchestral trumpeter, who played for services at St Nic's last Christmas and twice in the autumn, presents the concert on March 24, and Georgia Morse, a brilliant freelance cellist living in London plays the final concert on March 31. We are very fortunate to be able to enjoy the talents of such outstanding musicians. Come with your friends to enjoy an absolute treat.

Rick Erikson

After each concert, home-made soup with bread & cheese will be served at the Parish Centre

**Free St Nicolas
Lunchtime concerts
this Lent**

3 March	24 March
10 March	31 March
17 March	all at 11:45am



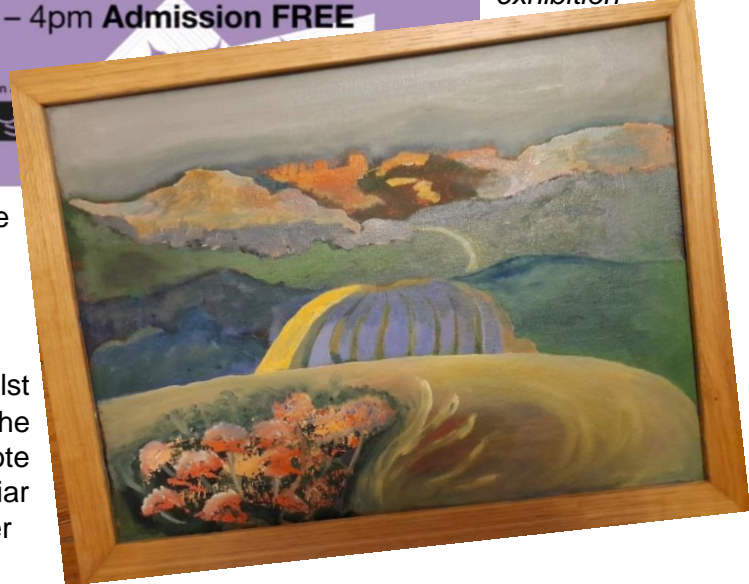
**ART & SCULPTURE
EXHIBITION 2023**

at **PRIOR'S FIELD** Prior's Field School, Priorsfield Rd, Godalming, Surrey
Saturday 1st to Saturday 15th April

Open daily 10am – 4pm **Admission FREE**



*Roussillon, a painting by **Grace Beckett** has been accepted for the exhibition*



Easter Art & Sculpture exhibition, to be opened by Soraya French. Further details from Evelyn Phillips AppArt Office: ephillips54@btinternet.com

A Right royal event Some years ago, whilst working at Loseley House, I was asked to run the Loseley stall at a fair in Stoke Park to promote Loseley. A young man who was vaguely familiar stopped at my stall. I gave him my best sales patter



and invited him to join us the following Thursday as the Red Arrows were visiting. He politely replied that unfortunately he could not attend as that was his mother's birthday and I suddenly realised his mother was the Queen! I did not recognise Prince Edward because we'd been living in Nigeria.

We both burst into laughter. I love the look on his private detective's face, the man standing behind the Prince, he couldn't believe the conversation!

Gill Williams



St Nicolas' Infant School

"Living life in all its fullness" John 10:10



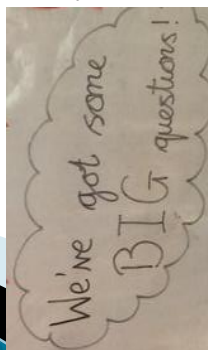
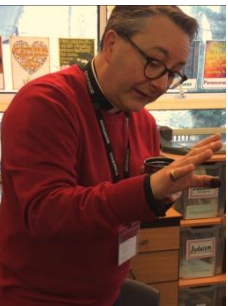
**Value This Half-term
Hope**

This half term our value is **Hope**, and we have begun learning on this in our Collective Worship. We began by linking this to the theme of '**be the change**', and we reflected on what this actually means. **The Climate Coalition** are encouraging people across the country to take action and tell leaders about the eco issues they want to see tackled using **green hearts**, so yesterday we wrote about the changes we wanted to see on our own green hearts in Collective Worship. We thought about how caring for God's world is part of hope, and how we can make a difference. The children were passionate about this and were very keen to write their ideas down—there were certainly lots of them!



Ash Wednesday Fr Neil has led two Collective Worship this week. On **Ash Wednesday**, **Year 2 parents were invited to join us** to think about the start of Lent and what the ash crosses represented. Fr Neil talked about the ashes reminding us not to worry, and one of our Year 2 children

commented that the cross on our foreheads takes all the worry out of our brains and into the cross so God can take them away. The children were then invited to have an ash cross on their foreheads if they chose to. On **Friday** morning we welcomed **Reception parents** and thought more deeply about Lent as a time to think. The children also shared with Fr Neil some of the places they'd found God this week, including on the playground, in their families and even ways God had inspired them to help others.



Children & Families



**Saturday
4th March
Guildford URC
4 - 6pm
HEAVENLY HOPE
Crafts Food
Worship**

Free - donations welcomed




St Nicolas' Junior church Term-time, during the 10am Service on Sundays



St Nicolas' Café Play
(grand/parent & toddlers)
Wednesdays 10-11:30am
in the Parish Centre



Tuesday Group

Are you free at 10am on Tuesday mornings? If so why not come along to a Tuesday Group meeting at the Parish Centre hall. Recent meetings have included playing bowls on the hall carpet, (not!), a chat about wild birds in the garden in winter led by a keen ornithologist and enjoying excellent pancakes on Shrove Tuesday. Coffee or tea and biscuits are provided and the meetings last about an hour (but don't take place in the school holidays). **Philip Hooper**

All are welcome on a regular or drop in basis.



*photo by
Chris Goodwin.*

In the Dark

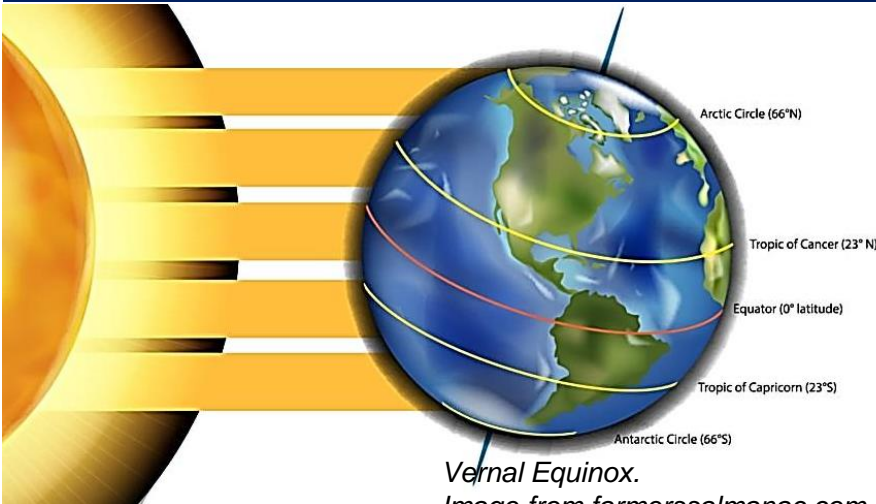
God said: Let the dark be dark.
Let the stars shine properly.
And let darkness with no stars
heal the damage caused by light.

Men said: Let there be light all
night through, where there is no-one
much or no-one at all, let
the gathered haze from street-lamps,
undying brand-names, full-blaze
unpopulated windows
stain the undersides of clouds
even when nights are cloudless.

God said: Light itself needs rest.
Some things are best seen, unseen,
in darkness unhindered by
Great Light. Me, for example.

Robin Fulton Macpherson
Scottish poet, b. 1937
sent by Sally Lowe

The sky in March Rory Fenner



Vernal Equinox.

Image from farmerssalmanac.com

sunset. **Mercury** and **Jupiter** will be close together on 27 March. The big event of this month is on Wednesday evening 1 March; **Jupiter and Venus** will be seen in the evening sky after sunset very close together, appearing 38 arc minutes apart, very bright, you can't miss them. (*arc minute = a unit of angular measure equal to one a degree, Collins Dictionary*). **Venus** is a brilliant evening object in the western sky after sunset and is getting better all the time.

Mars is still well placed in the evening sky in Taurus, fading from magnitude to +0.4 to +1.0 (*the higher the number the less bright*), as its distance from Earth increases it moves from Taurus into Gemini on 30 March, it is near to the open cluster of stars M35 in Gemini. **Jupiter** is a brilliant evening object at its closest to Venus on the 1 March.

Saturn is unobservable this month. **Uranus** will soon be coming to the end of its evening apparition and is very close to Venus on 30 March.

The **Sun** moves from Aquarius into Pisces on the **20 March**, giving us the **Vernal Equinox**. The Sun crosses the Equator at precisely 21.25 UT (*Universal Time, same as BMT*). That day, day and night will be of equal length all over the world and after this day, our days will get longer and the nights shorter, hooray!

Mercury goes through Superior Conjunction on the 17 March. It may be seen in the evening sky on 24 March, setting 40 minutes after



*Venus and Jupiter in February sky,
space.com*

Important information about Voter ID

From 4 May 2023, voters across England will need to show photo ID to vote at polling stations in some elections, such as Local elections and Police & Crime Commissioner elections. From October 2023 it will also apply to UK General elections.

If you do not have an accepted form of ID (for example, a UK Passport, a UK driving licence or a Blue Badge), you can apply for a 'Voter Authority Certificate' using the government portal, it is free to apply.

All you'll need is:

- a recent, digital photo of yourself
- your National Insurance number.

You can still apply if you do not have a National Insurance number. You'll need to provide other documents to prove your identity, for example a Birth Certificate, Bank statement and Utility bill.

Find out more and apply here <https://orlo.uk/KBU3E>

Another option to consider is to apply for a postal vote. Further information can be found on the Guildford Borough Council website <https://www.guildford.gov.uk/postalvote>

As always, you're welcome to contact me - or any of your three borough councillors - if you have any questions about this.

Angela Goodwin Surrey County Councillor, Onslow and Friary & St Nicolas wards

Angela.goodwin@surreycc.gov.uk 07913 909121 / 01483 824616



Eco news The Guildford Library of Things at Guildford library Borrow, don't buy!



The Guildford Library of Things is a partnership between Surrey Library Service and **Zero Carbon Guildford**, and houses a small but useful collection of tools and other items which can be borrowed by library members. It includes a sewing machine, power washer, spot carpet cleaner, drill (and three collections of drill bits), gardening tools and DIY tools, amongst other items.

How to borrow items You need to be over 18 and a library member. If you are not currently a library member, you can join for free; if you have an email address and live in Surrey, you can **join online in minutes**.

If you work or study in Surrey you will need to visit the library and bring one piece of identification with your name and address on. You will also need to complete and sign a Borrower Agreement on your first visit and agree to the terms and conditions. You can reserve items in advance by finding the item you want on the library catalogue and reserving it just like a book. You'll receive an automated message saying when it is available to be collected, and you can pick it up during Guildford library opening hours. There is no charge for borrowing items.

The Library also operates a Warm Welcome Hub.



At Guildford URC



Monday to Friday
9.30am onwards

Guildford United
Reformed Church
83 Portsmouth Road,
Guildford, Surrey,
GU2 4BS



*Irresistible, spring flower
Marie Curie fundraisers last
Saturday. Photo with their
permission!*





matrix

with young people, for young people

Are you passionate about children's wellbeing and mental health? Would you like to make a difference in the life of a child here in Guildford, helping to build their self-esteem and resilience?

Our 'School Transition Project' needs your help in supporting children who are struggling with the transition from Primary to Secondary School.

Can you spare two hours a week to be a coach to a young person?

If you are interested please contact Harriet Dewey for more information.

harrietdewey@matrixtrust.com

07458 099912

www.matrixtrust.com

Recent national research indicated that the decline in young people's wellbeing and mental health over the adolescent period was linked to the transition to secondary school at age 11, highlighting the need for targeted support that safeguards children against mental health decline during this transition from Primary School.

We are passionate about helping children before their needs advance and become unmanageable. Our 'School Transition Project' supports children one-to-one, giving those that are vulnerable and at greater risk of struggling an opportunity to do well, decreasing the likelihood of early Secondary School drop-out or mental health struggles later in life.

Guildford Chamber Choir
Registered charity no: 1074661
MASS IN B MINOR
J S BACH

Saturday 18 March 7.30pm Holy Trinity church, Guildford. For details see David Greenwood or go to www.guildfordchamberchoir.org.uk

St. Nicolas Parish Church, Bury St, Guildford, GU2 4AW saintnics.com
Rector Fr Neil Roberts rector@saintnics.com
Parish Administrator Cath Anderson
tel 01483 564 526 parishoffice@saintnics.com
Editors Fr Neil Roberts & Jana Phillips



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Please continue to send articles on matters that interest you and you would like to share. Email or telephone your material to: janagp@btinternet.com, mob.07970 934325 or give to Fr Neil or Jana at church. The next **copy deadline is 19 March.**