



EWELL PARISH NEWS

The monthly newspaper of St Mary the Virgin Ewell

No. 592

May 2022

60p



Sharing the Love of Christ, the Light of the World, with the people of Ewell



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Mayfest

Dinner and entertainment

Saturday May 14, 2022

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Fr Mark Stafford writes

Spring has traditionally been the time for the Spring clean, getting rid of the old and welcoming in the new, shaking off the dust and putting a fresh shine on things.

This year the spring clean seems especially important as we unfurl from the hibernation of lockdown.

Over the past 2 years it seemed that everything slowed down, the days rolled into one, seasons passed unmarked and simple tasks became full blown, logistical exercises. In the rush of pre- lockdown Tea making used to involve dunking a bag in a cup, during lockdown we found time to warm the pot, spoon out leaves, mash straining and then compost the leaves. Shop bought bread became a luxury, instead households grew sourdough starters, bread machines were dusted off and we discovered the joy of baking our daily bread. Despite all the misery of lockdown, it was nice to have a little extra time to enjoy the simple things in life and to appreciate just how much we have.

Busy-ness is great, and we all need the adrenalin rush of a looming deadline from time to time, but for some the constant pressure of deadlines, performance reviews and ongoing assessments can be oppressive and all encompassing.

People are often on a treadmill that is racing so quickly that it has become impossible to slow down, let alone stop.

Many years ago when I was considering my call to priesthood and looking for a new way of being, I found this quote from Winnie-the-Pooh, very helpful "Here is Edward Bear, coming downstairs now, bump, bump, bump, on the back of his head, behind Christopher Robin. It is, as far as he knows, the only way of coming downstairs, but sometimes he feels that there really is another way, if only he could stop bumping for a moment and think of it. And then he feels that perhaps there isn't."

As we start to emerge from lockdown and dust off our lives, we are faced with some new challenges, new ways of thinking about how we do things and the things we do.

Do we revert back to doing things the way we always did, bump, bump, bump, or do we look for a different way?

Maybe we can try and embrace and carry on working from home from time to time, shopping less and making more, making time for exercise, contacting those we rarely see using Facetime, Skype and Zoom, or just simply making time to be grateful we are alive.

Spring is a time for letting go of the old and embracing the new, we have the opportunity to look at things afresh and see if what we were doing prior to lockdown was the right way of doing things, and maybe consider what aspects of this experience we would want to carry forward into our newly developing routine?

WHAT'S ON IN MAY

JAM (Jesus and Me) Throughout the Bible we are encouraged to ensure that children take an active role in

St Mary the Virgin EWELL PARISH CHURCH 020 8393 2643

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CLERGY

Vicar: Fr Mark Stafford 020 8393 1297

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Children and Families Worker

Position vacant

Safeguarding Officer

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THE PARISH OFFICE

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Mrs Lynne Yuille 020 8393 2643 (Office)

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The postal address is: St Mary's Ewell Parish Church, London Rd, Ewell, Surrey, KT17 2AY.

The Parish Office is on the south side of the church.

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the life and the worship of our Church, indeed in Mark 10:14-15 Jesus said 'Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.'

Prior to the pandemic St Mary's had an active children's ministry. As we come out of lockdown, we need to consider how we can refresh and revitalise this important work.

To this end the Children's ministry team and I have decided to combine the 11.15 All-age service and the 9.30 Children's hour to form a new Family service called JAM (Jesus and Me). JAM will start in Ewell Hall at 9.30am and end at about the same time that Communion is distributed in Church, to allow any children and families who wish to, to come to Church to receive Holy Communion. If you would like to be part of the Sunday support team for this service, please let me know. We also need to establish a group of people who can commit to pray for our Children's work, so if you would like to be part of the prayer team, please talk to me also.

Holy Spirit and Me As we move away from the fasts for Lent and the joys of Easter, the Church starts to look forward to the celebration of Pentecost and the gift of the Holy Spirit. As part of this preparation for Pentecost we will be holding a short 3-week study course looking at Spiritual Gifts, starting on Wednesday 18 May and finishing just before Pentecost Sunday on Wednesday 1 June (see calendar).

Ascension Day celebration on Box Hill After a break of 2 years the ASCENSION DAY deanery outdoor service at the viewpoint on Box Hill is back. It will be at **6:30 am on Thursday 26 May** (Not sure if the tea van will be open then) but it would be great to get everyone together to begin this year's Thy Kingdom Come octave in prayer.

For those who are able to join us, when we come back over the downs we would also pause to pray there in readiness for the Derby weekend and Platinum Jubilee celebrations.

In Church in the evening (8.00pm) we will be celebrating Holy Communion for the Feast of Ascensiontide.

APCM We will be holding our Annual Parish Church Meeting at 11.15 on the 29 May, following the 9.30am service. To attend this meeting you need to be on the Church Electoral Roll; if you would like to join the roll, please talk to Helen Crossley before 12 May. As ever, nominations for PCC members and for churchwardens are required in advance of the APCM and forms for this will be available in Church during May.

Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebration Although not strictly a May event, we are helping to host a street party to celebrate the Queen's Jubilee on Sunday 5 June. We have applied to close the High Street and will be setting out the Church trestle tables along the High Street for people to come and share a bring-your-own lunch. This is going to take a lot of planning and on the day we will need some help setting up, marshalling, cleaning up and taking down and putting away. If you are interested in helping, please contact Lucy at lucy.tyrer@googlemail.com It would be great if you could come and join the celebrations and for the lunch between 12.00-3.00.

Calendar Apart from those items mentioned above, do check out the Calendar on the back page to see the full list of services and events happening in May, such as the May-Fest on the 14th, which Lucy and I are looking forward to attending. Also particularly note the Quiz on Zoom on the 19th and the Celebrity Organ Recital on the 21st.

Every Blessing
Fr Mark



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AV/SOUND DESK AT ST MARY'S

We are still seeking volunteers to learn how to operate our AV/Sound desk and to join the team helping with livestreaming/videos at our various services – mainly Sundays but could be funerals and other services.

This is now a vital part of our outreach so if you think you may be able to help, please contact the churchwardens.

Finance Team Report: 2021 Review and 2022 look forward

We are in the process of finalising our 2021 accounts, which are currently with the independent examiner before being presented to the PCC followed by the congregation. They will then formally be submitted to the Charities Commission. As a result all figures mentioned in this report are draft and subject to finalisation.

Income during 2021

Total income in 2021 was slightly above 2020 levels at £123,581 (2020: £122,347).

- Donations and legacies were 11% down (£92,105) due to lower planned giving, loose plate collections and donations (and consequently gift aid recovered).
- Income from Church activities was 36% up (10,408) due to increased levels of recitals, concerts and social events in 2021 compared to 2020.
- Investment income was up 8% (£8,036) due to maturities and rate improvements.
- Other trading activities were up 300% (£13,032) as Church hall lettings increased.

Expenditure during 2021

Total expenditure in 2021 was 18% higher than 2020 levels at £213,585 (2020: £181,199).

Key increases in expenditure were in the following categories: (i) Diocesan Parish Share, (ii) Church running expenses, (iii) Church maintenance, (iv) Church hall running expenses, and (v) Church hall maintenance, which accounted for £35,985 more in 2021 compared to 2020. These categories included regular running costs (Parish Share, cleaning, insurance, utilities etc) as well as necessary maintenance works on the building (roof and guttering) and improvements to the Church hall to enhance its commercial attractiveness.

Net deficit and impact on Funds carried forward

We have long known anecdotally that the COVID-19 pandemic is having a profound impact on many charities. Research published by the Charities Commission in October 2021 shows that nearly all charities were impacted by the pandemic – over 90% told them that they have experienced some negative impact from Covid-19, whether on their service delivery, finances or staff.

Our expenditure exceeded income in 2021 by £89,621 resulting in funds held reducing 16% to £483,248.

2022 progress and objectives

The Finance Committee have met twice so far in 2022, in addition to the PCC and exchanged various emails and communications on financial matters. In terms of 2022 so far Church hall letting levels continue to be extremely positive but energy prices have increased from prior year pricing.

We have under 6 years of reserves to fund 2021 net spending levels (although there were a number of maintenance and improvement expenditure items that were one off in 2021) and focus remains on redressing the net deficit. Recent expenditure on the Church hall should see Church hall lettings continue to increase and improve income.

We look forward to working with Fr Mark Stafford, and the wider Church teams, on making the correct financial decisions for our Church, the congregation and wider community.

John Baker, Treasurer

FROM THE PARISH REGISTERS

HOLY BAPTISM

**One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism, One God
and Father of us all (Ephesians 4:5)**

2 April Mia Rose Wright

ADMISSION TO FIRST COMMUNION

**We who are many are one body, for we all
partake of the one bread**

17 April Hannah Louise Bishop
Max Adam Crean Jackson
Jocelyn Elizabeth Saville
Frank Douglas Skilton
Michael Victor Skilton
Kaspar Wolf Quantrell

REPORT FROM THE PCC

The PCC met on 22 March, with Fr Mark in the chair for the first time.

It was a very positive meeting, with him reporting that he has already made many local contacts, including with Ewell Castle School, where he attends a weekly staff prayer group. The school are hoping to come to church at Easter. Ewell Grove have assemblies booked and a meeting has been set up with Wallace Fields School. Cards had been sent inviting the Guides and Brownies to the 11.15 Mothering Sunday service.

Fr Mark has also been liaising with the organiser of Ewell Yule about local events to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and has discussed road closure for 5 June with Cllr Woodward.

Ian Burgess reported that Greenfield Estate Agents have produced a 360 degree video of Ewell Hall and the facilities available to clients. This has now been uploaded to the Ewell Hall website.

Volunteers are still needed to operate the AV desk for online services.

The Children's Group reported that they had been discussing attendance at the 11.15 services. Parents who were canvassed stated that they preferred the 9.30 timing. A decision was taken to trial a children's all age service in the Hall at 9.30 every week, from the Sunday after Easter.

With no Village Fair planned for this year again, members suggested several ideas for ways to raise funds, especially important as the Parish Share is set to rise by 5.8%.

Treasurer, John Baker, pointed out that some savings were being made by not currently having a Children and Families Worker, nor a Social Media Officer in post. Fr Mark reported that he has a meeting set up with the diocese to discuss the possibility of offering a young person, considering ordination, the opportunity to have a year shadowing our 3 clergy. They could help work with children and families and would probably also be good at social media. St Mary's would have to pay a stipend but would not be responsible for housing costs.

Liz Divall, PCC Secretary

ON PIGEONS & DOVES

Readers may recall an earlier article in which I discussed pigeons and doves, and what the difference is between them. Briefly, there is no difference except one of nomenclature: on the whole, 'pigeon' tends to refer to the larger species, while 'dove' is used for the smaller kinds. Of linguistic interest is the word 'dove', which is an old English name. 'Pigeon' only came in with the Normans.

I have the impression pigeons are under-rated birds. We are all familiar with them, aren't we? Epsom and probably every town in the country has them. Dedicated bird watchers have little time for them, and avid listers disregard them altogether. They are often called by disparaging names such as 'rats with wings' Yet there is a lot to admire about pigeons some of which I shall attempt to show. As a result, you may still dislike them but perhaps just a little bit less!

Technically known by the Latin name *Columba livia*, pigeons' natural habitat is cliffs and mountains especially close to the sea. If you visit remote parts of Ireland and Scotland, you may see pigeons flying around the cliffs. These are Rock Doves and they are the ancestor of all domestic pigeons. Many centuries ago it was discovered that they not only lay eggs and make good eating, but their homing instinct made them useful as messengers. Land-owners kept a number of pigeons and built dove-cots (sometimes spelled dovecotes) to house them in; a few dovecotes still survive, cared for by the National Trust. Entire families, therefore, would depend on pigeons for their livelihood, with the menfolk employed to look after them. As to their colour, feral and domestic pigeons are probably responsible for more misidentification than any other species of bird! That is because they can come in virtually any colour. If you see a mystery bird, the chances are that it is just a pigeon. For instance, a flock can look like waders; a single bird flying away with its swept-back wings can resemble a bird of prey; conversely, a Jackdaw in flight can look like a pigeon. They are the same size. A useful rule of thumb is white. Feral pigeons nearly always have some white somewhere, whereas a Stock Dove - which is the same size and a related species - lacks any white.

For comparison purposes, quite a number of Stock Doves are resident in the borough and can be found in the Hogsmill Local Nature Reserve, at Bourne Hall, and other places where there are deciduous trees. On the whole, these are solitary birds.

All pigeons, no matter what their size, have the same body shape, most marked perhaps in the Wood Pigeon, but all typified by small head and portly chest. Herein lies one final reason for admiration. That portly chest derives from a greatly enlarged keel or breastbone. All birds have a keel - vital for flight - but that on pigeons is bigger. After all, the fact that humans can eat them also means they are a prime target for birds of prey. Rapid escape flight has evolved over time. Watch a Wood Pigeon take off. It is impressive how such a heavy bird is capable of near vertical escape flight. Hence strong muscles are required which means a breastbone that can bear phenomenal strain.

TT

Prayer for May



As this Springtime begins to unfold, we pray -

Creator God fill each one of us with love for the whole of your creation. As we see the beauty of trees and plants all around us springing back to life, more than ever, awake in us a thirst and energy to work tirelessly to maintain the world as you would wish it to be.

Help us to consider the lost lilies, the disappearing sparrows; teach us not to squander earth's precious resources; help us to value habitats: seas, deserts, forests and seek to preserve this world in all its diversity.

Help us to remember that in the beginning you moved over the face of the waters. You brought life into being - the teeming and diverse life that finds its way through earth and sea and air, that makes its home around us, everywhere. You know how living things flourish and grow, how they co-exist, how they feed and breed and change. Help us to understand those delicate relationships, value them, and keep them from destruction.

Help us to find ways to use earth's resources wisely and to find a path to good, sustainable living in peace and harmony with all that populates this world, both humankind and all living things around us. **AMEN**

ST. MARY'S ON-LINE QUIZZES



We hold monthly on-line quizzes using Zoom. These have proved very popular and are fun for all the family, so why not join us?

Our next quiz will be on Thursday 19 May at 8 pm. You need to register beforehand. You can use links provided in the Weekly Notes or you can register by emailing

zoom@stmarysewell.com.

Marion Ethel Rao

4 September 1934 - 9 February 2022

I have had the privilege of knowing Marion for the past 74 years. Her mother, Ethel, was my dad's big sister and that was an important relationship for him. Consequently Marion and her parents were frequent visitors to our house in Balham and we to their's in Tooting. Annoyingly, since I was a sports enthusiast rather than a swot, Marion was quoted to me as an example of academic diligence & excellence, being one of the few in her cohort to pass the new 11+ exam which gained her entry to Greycoat Hospital School in central London. Her favourite subjects were music, languages and drama; thus she became a fair violinist, an accomplished pianist, a fluent French-speaker (she spent a year as a language assistant at a school in Brittany) and a devotee of Shakespeare.



Her most loved plays were Lear and Othello, often quoting Lear's 'nothing comes of nothing', whilst teasingly she claimed that she played Desdemona to Ramaya's Othello, happily without the presence of an Iago.

Given her successful experience in the French lycée, she took a teaching certificate upon her return to London. However large class teaching proved a grim reality. She became increasingly aware that she was not able to take the dominant role in the classroom, for she was a gentle soul, ready to see the other's point of view, eschewing authority and supporting rebels wherever they might be found.

She was a keen observer. Later this would be through the medium of photography but before then it was via her jottings and written sketches. Evacuated during the blitz, she was fascinated as a young girl by her vicar host and his formidable, Dickensian housekeeper who kept him in order as much as she did the evacuees. This experience gave her a life-long interest in matters ecclesiastical, from the Barchester novels of Trollope, to the vicars in P G Wodehouse, particularly of course, The Great Sermon Handicap. Her photography was eclectic, ranging from posed portraits to random passers-by and textural, rain drops, feathers, shafts of sunlight. But it was also disciplined and she was immensely proud of her diploma from the Royal Photographic Society. She loved the visual arts and gained pleasure from the knowledge that the Pre-Raphaelites had used Horton Park as a base to develop many of their important works.

She took great comfort from Anglicanism, enjoying the liturgy and the language (regarding the Book of Common Prayer and the King James Bible - 'why did they have to change perfection' she would ask) but above all the music.

St Mary's was a source of great happiness to Marion from the ministry of Russell, Sue and Patrick to her delight in singing in the choir directed by maestro Jonathan seated at the magnificent Father Willis organ which we are enjoying today. Indeed she gave thanks to St Mary's by recently giving a large sum to contribute to the musical life of this church.

Her move to Ewell coincided with her marriage to Ramaya in 1962 in Christ Church, Epsom and they cared for her mother at their new home in The Rise. She had left teaching and had begun a long and successful spell as a careers adviser, a move recommended by Ramaya. She brought to the job her passion for helping youngsters and her humour. She very much appreciated the life-long friendships

she made during her time in the careers service.

Fairly soon after Ramaya's death in 2011 after a brief illness, Marion developed ovarian and colon cancer. She had excellent treatment at the Royal Marsden in Chelsea and made a full recovery. However the intestinal surgery left long-term problems resulting in several further hospital admissions locally. Subsequently she gradually developed vascular dementia (incurable and untreatable) which limited her mobility, her memory, her confidence. Then tragically in August 2020, after increasing weakness and several falls, she was diagnosed with multiple myeloma, a blood and bone cancer, and atrial fibrillation. She chose to be nursed at home and from that point on she was permanently bed-bound yet she faced the situation with stoicism and humour. The initial prognosis had given her but a few months to live but her will and the care she received gave her a longer lease. She was happily unaware of her incurable, terminal condition and the dementia paradoxically did much to ameliorate her condition.

My darling wife Ella and our three great sons: Louis, Jack and David, have provided considerable help and comfort to Marion over the past 11 years with the boys acting as live-in carers over the last 17 months - thank you. She was also very well supported by the care teams from Flow Health Care, by Dr. Sumathy and her colleagues at Spring Street Surgery, by the expert palliative care nurses at the Princess Alice Hospice and by the local district nurses. As a family we are also grateful for the visits Marion received from Bridget, Peter, Laura and the two Jackies, and the letters and phone calls from Mary and Enid. I also appreciate the kindness and support offered by Russell Dewhurst and Sue Ayling - thank you.

John Eades

CONGRATULATIONS



Congratulations to Helen and Geoff Eggar, who were married at St. Mary's on 26 February

BACH RECITALS 11 January & 8 March

The series of Bach recitals by Jonathan Holmes continued, on **11 January** which fell in Epiphany. Two of the chorale preludes reflect the story of Simeon and Anna in the Temple. **Mit Fried' und freud' ich fahr dahin, BWV 616** means 'with peace and joy I depart'; it is a setting of the words of the Nunc Dimittis. **Herr Gott, nun schleuss den Himmel auf, BWV 617** ('Lord God, now unlock heaven') is also a 'Simeon' prelude: "I have suffered and fought, but now my life is at an end, and I can die in peace". Two more chorale preludes are considered to be early works, taken from *'the Neumeister Collection'* (1703-1707). The first was **Das alte Jahr vergangen ist, BWV 1091** ('The old year is now over'). The words of the next are familiar from the hymn "as pants the hart for cooling streams" but rendered in German, **Wie nach einer Wasserquelle, BWV 1119**. One more chorale prelude was **Von Gott will ich nicht lassen, BWV 658**. ('I will not forsake the Lord'). Part of this text includes the moving lines "After death we will be buried deep in the earth; when we have slept, we will be awoken by God". It is part of a set known as *'the Great Eighteen Chorale Preludes'* which are catalogued as BWV 651-658. Finally, a work dating from Bach's years at St. Thomas' Church, Leipzig. the **Prelude and Fugue in B Minor, BWV 544**. It is likely that Bach himself played this for the first time at the memorial service for the Queen of Poland, an auspicious occasion that took place in Leipzig.

The name Prince Johann Ernst von Saxe-Coburg has occurred a few times in the course of these reviews. This young man was Bach's employer at Weimar; it was he who travelled widely and brought home new music for Bach to play. He was also an amateur composer. Jonathan's recital on **8 March** began with a transcription Bach made for the organ of his piece (now lost): **Organ Concerto in C major (after Ernst) BWV 595**. Then three settings by Bach of the German text **Christ lag in Todesbanden**. This means 'Christ lay in Death's bonds' and is a Lutheran hymn about the Resurrection. First **BWV 718** which is a short chorale partita; then a **Fantasia, BWV 695**; lastly a Chorale Prelude, **BWV 625**. All three are short; equally short are two more works. **Wenn wir in hoechsten Noten sein BWV 641** ('When we are in utmost need') is highly ornamented and may have been one of those that gave rise to some adverse criticism Bach received, about the complexity of his organ accompaniment. Another chorale is: **In dich hab'ich gehoffet, Herr BWV 640** ('In thee, Lord, have I put my trust'). Scholars dispute the authenticity of some works attributed to Bach. One such is the final work today, the **Fantasia and Fugue in A minor, BWV 561** To my mind, this music shows all the technical panache typical of Bach especially in his early years. Whatever, it brought the recital to a positive conclusion.

TT

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PRAYER: Lord keep your arm round my shoulder and your hand over my mouth



From the Foodbank Website:

“Thank you to those who arrange supermarket deliveries directly last week, we really appreciate getting donations we need this way”.

Urgently needed this month*:

mayonnaise, hair conditioner, shaving foam, powdered milk, long-life sponge puddings, custard, rice pudding, instant mash, long-life fruit juice, long-life UHT milk (semi-skimmed and full fat only), packet soup, shampoo, adult tooth-brushes and nappies - size 6+.

Please no more of these items as we are fully stocked:

pulses, pasta, noodles, sweetcorn, rice, beans, porridge and hot chocolate.

You can donate in church, at the usual supermarket points, or bring donations to our car park (please wear a mask) at: Epsom & Ewell Foodbank, Generation Resource Centre, (Behind West Ewell Primary School), Ruxley Lane, Ewell, KT19 0JG. Donation drop off times: Monday to Friday 9am - 2pm. We are closed on Bank Holidays.

You can sign up to the Foodbank newsletter on their website at <https://epsomewell.foodbank.org.uk/>

*** Please make sure all donations are sealed, in date and do not contain alcohol ***

DRD



ST. MARY'S ECO GROUP

In this month's article we give some tips for reducing the use of energy in your home.

- ZERO's Green Home Zone has good advice on gas heating systems <https://www.zerocarbondguildford.org/>
- Turning down a thermostat by just one degree will make a difference
- Remember not to heat rooms that you are not currently using
- Switch to LED light bulbs which are considerably more efficient
- Do full laundry loads - and turn down the temperature if possible
- Unplug chargers - as soon as laptop, phone or appliance is charged
- Don't use standby mode on electrical appliances - switch them off
- Don't fill the kettle - boil just as much water as you need.

If you have an ECO tip, the Eco Group would love to hear from you. Please get in touch with Sue Ayling at: assistantpriest@stmarysewell.com or 020 8337 6347.

MAY FEST SPRING DINNER 14 May

An opportunity to dress up and savour the delights of another Spring Dinner at 6.30pm on the evening of Saturday 14 May in Ewell Hall.

Tickets cost £15 for a three course dinner and entertainment and are on sale in church after the 9.30 Sunday service, with more information available for those wishing to come.

MAY CONCERTS AT ST. MARY'S

10 May 1.05 pm

Free Tuesday lunchtime Bach organ recital

Jonathan Holmes

21 May 7.30 pm

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Surrey KT17 1RX

A REVIEW OF THIS YEAR'S LENT COURSE

Our Lent course this year centred on the two themes of grace and grief. To help introduce and then explore these elements, our first evening was spent watching the film 'The Lion King'.

First released in 1994, the film was familiar to most of the group and has at its heart the concept of 'The Circle of Life'. It proved to be a very interesting and enjoyable vehicle to use to prompt and promote discussion. Most of the group were surprised to see how much religious and specifically Christian symbolism it contained. In the lives of the animals and their relationships with each other we also saw a number of important moral and ethical issues being played out in front of us.

The group found 'The Circle of Life' as presented in the film an optimistic and indeed inspiring theme which resonated strongly with the Christian Easter message. It seemed a really positive and engaging starting point for discussions and certainly helped hold our interest and attention through to the end. More than anything, it helped make the whole five week course fun!

Our second evening began by watching again the part of the film where the young Lion Simba, believing himself to be responsible for the death of his own father Mufasa – the leader of the Pride and king of all the animals – returns after a long period of self-imposed exile. However, Simba has to take on the challenge of wresting the leadership of the Kingdom from his evil uncle Scar. In successfully doing this Simba was able to rescue the kingdom from the darkness it had fallen into under Scar, and restore it to light, bringing back health, growth and new life to the kingdom.

We then broke into smaller groups to discuss and explore the main issues this part of the film had raised with Father Mark leading us. We looked at the battle between good and evil and darkness and light. We moved on to discuss some of the dilemmas we can be presented with when the differences between right and wrong are not so immediately obvious. Specifically, we looked at challenges of making decisions in situations that are not simply black or white, but where 'shades of grey' might make ethical or moral choices difficult.

After that we talked about what some of the signs of good and evil in the world might be; the role that forgiveness or making amends might play; how 'retreat and reflection' and love and prayer might help reconciliation. This area of discussion felt more difficult for some of us bearing in mind events in Ukraine. Finally, we looked at the role of the Ten Commandments in the world today and at the end, what might need 'refreshing' in terms of our nation, our church and our faith.

In our third week, we began by replaying the moment in the film when as a young cub, Simba was initiated or baptised into the pride. His forehead was marked or blessed with juice taken from a freshly broken fruit and he was then held aloft and presented to a gathering of all the animals so they could acknowledge their future king. Again, to see the similarities to our own sacrament of Baptism and symbolism in the ceremonies made a striking impression on the group.

This served as a wonderful introduction to the theme of week three, which was 'moving into grace'. Sue led us in our discussions. Having explored Baptism we then looked at our own church's definition of our seven sacraments – a visible form of invisible Grace – and discussed in groups how the sacraments, particularly Baptism and the Eucharist, have affected and influenced our lives as Christians. We also spent a moment in self-examination, looking at which of sacraments might have spoken most poignantly to us, when this might have been and why.

The fourth evening of our Lent course started with looking at

the part of the film that followed Simba's time in exile and the friendships he developed there with Timon the Meerkat and Pumbaa the Warthog. Because of the guilt Simba felt about the death of his father, he found it difficult to 'move on' and enjoy life. However, Timon and Pumbaa taught him about the philosophy of 'Hakuna Mutata' – to let things be and not to worry; to trust that everything will be alright in the end. We likened this philosophy to one of 'acceptance'. The importance of being able to accept or come to terms with what has happened in the past is something that we returned to in our final evening together.

Father Mark then read a passage from Matthew 'Therefore I tell you not to worry about your life, what you eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear... therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough troubles of its own'. This led us to look at how we might trust in God and have faith in his plan for the world. Here, the theme was of Grace entering the world and our lives and how we might respond to it. We moved on to ask what we could learn about trusting in God from the example of Jesus and how we might mirror some of the learning points in our own lives. The group then turned to look at our own church and where we might find examples of God's Grace at work; where challenges had been overcome or where solutions had appeared or been found to the problems our church was facing. The group was able to identify a number of important and significant examples of where this had happened.

Finally, we looked at how increasing our faith and strengthening our trust in the power of God's Grace, could help us reduce our anxiety and stress and at the same time give us the confidence and self-belief to meet the challenges of living in the modern world. Taking time out for prayer, and for retreat and reflection was again something the group felt we could be doing more of.

Our fifth and final week began by watching the moment in the film when towards the end of Simba's exile, he was joined by the wise old monkey Rafiki who cleverly helped Simba to confront all the questions and issues that Simba was having difficulty dealing with and keeping him in exile. Questions like 'Who am I' and 'what is my role or true purpose in life' - these were making it difficult for Simba to free himself from the guilt he felt about the death of his father. Rafiki helped open the door to Simba re-connecting with his father and coming to realise that in a very real way, parents live on in the lives of their children. Again, the parallels with the Christian message and the Easter story surprised us. This was a very positive, comforting and really quite inspiring moment for many of us on the course.

Simba now felt a renewed sense of confidence and self-worth. For the first time he was able to understand his true purpose in life and through this felt empowered to take on the challenge of returning to his kingdom and fulfilling the destiny given to him by his father at his birth and Baptism.

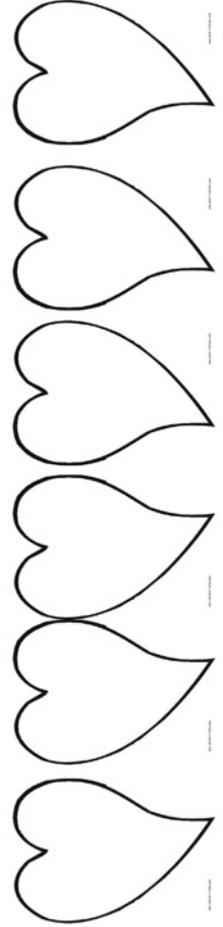
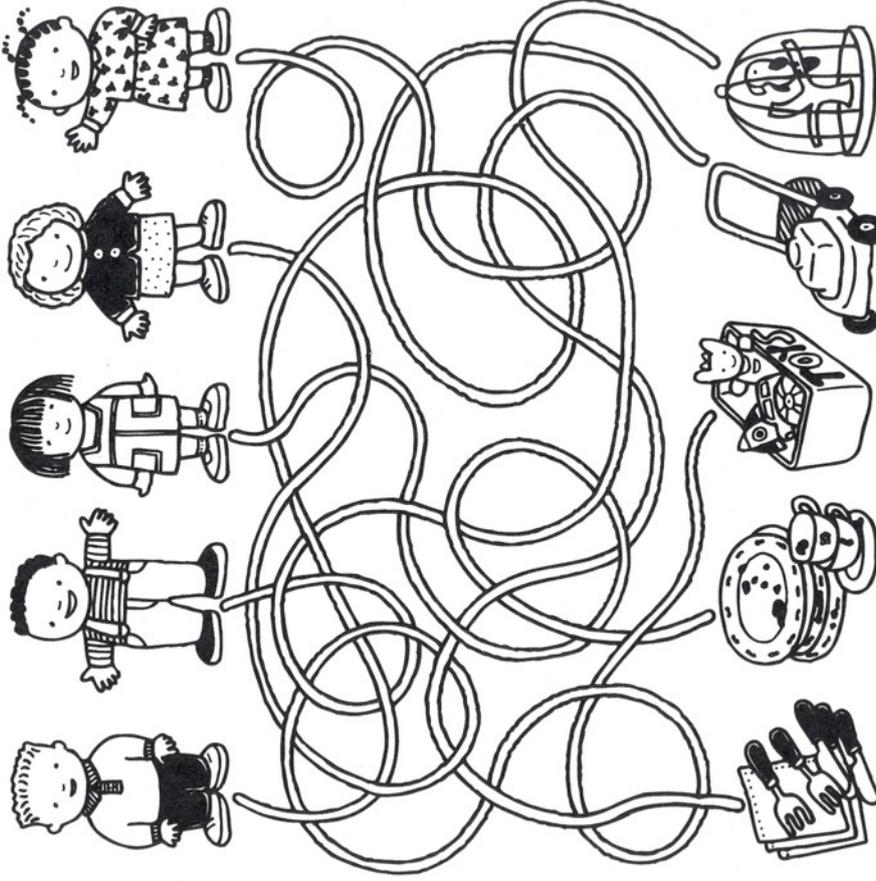
On this final evening Maggie led our discussion as we tried to address some of the same questions and issues that Simba faced. To help us do this Maggie gave the group a very useful handout which gave us a graphical representation of Grace and Grief as circles with a dynamic and a direction - very much in-line with The Lion King film and its theme of 'The circle of life'.

The five weeks were extremely thought provoking and for a Lent course, our discussions were very positive, constructive and often very forward looking. More than anything, using a film like The Lion King, made the course fun, rewarding and ultimately, very, very enjoyable for all of us.

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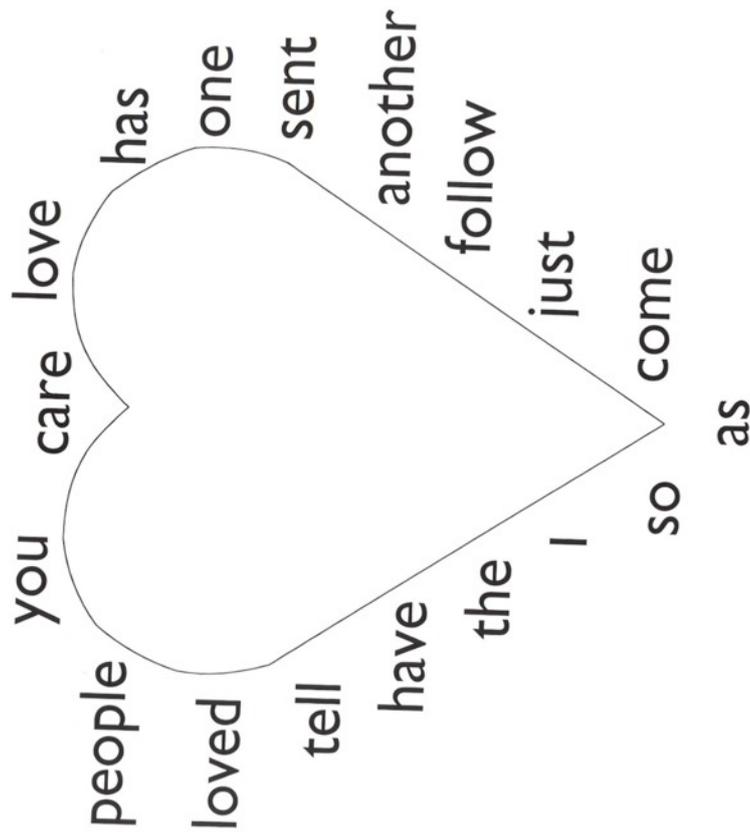


Young Church Mag

15 May 2022, the Fifth Sunday of Easter; John 13:31-35

Jesus gave us a new commandment which would mark us out as his disciples. What was it?

Begin at the word love. Moving clockwise, write down every other word





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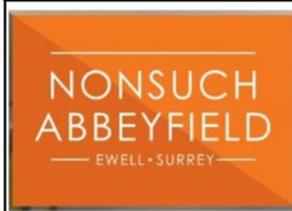


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Calendar for May

S 01	EASTER 3 Second after Easter
0930	JAM (Jesus and Me) (Hall then Church)
0930	Sung Eucharist
T 03	0900 Morning Prayer
	1000 Said Holy Communion (Side Chapel)
W 04	0900 Morning Prayer
Th 05	1000 St Mary's Toddler Group (Hall)
S 08	EASTER 4 Third after Easter
0930	JAM (Jesus and Me) (Hall then Church)
0930	Sung Eucharist
	1115 Choral Mattins
T 10	1000 Said Holy Communion (Side Chapel)
	1305 Lunchtime Bach Organ Recital
Th 12	1000 St Mary's Toddler Group (Hall)
S 14	0900 Morning Prayer
	1830 for 1900 'MAYFEST' Spring Dinner (Hall)
S 15	EASTER 5 Fourth after Easter
0930	JAM (Jesus and Me) (Hall then Church)
0930	Sung Eucharist
	1730 Choral Evensong
M 16	0900 Morning Prayer
	1930 PCC Meeting
T 17	0900 Morning Prayer
	1000 Said Holy Communion (Side Chapel)
W 18	0900 Morning Prayer
	2000 1st of 3-week course: Holy Spirit and Me (Coffee 19.30 Parish Room)
Th 19	0900 Morning Prayer
	1000 St Mary's Toddler Group (Hall)
	1445 Bereavement Café (Hall)
	2000 Quiz on Zoom
S 21	0900 Morning Prayer
	1930 Celebrity Organ Recital
S 22	EASTER 6 Fifth after Easter - Rogation Sunday
0930	JAM (Jesus and Me) (Hall then Church)
0930	Sung Eucharist
	1115 Morning Prayer and Holy Baptism
M 23	0900 Morning Prayer
T 24	0900 Morning Prayer
	1000 Said Holy Communion (Side Chapel)
W 25	0900 Morning Prayer
	2000 2nd of 3-week course: Holy Spirit and Me (Coffee 19.30 Parish Room)
Th 26	ASCENSION DAY
	0900 Morning Prayer
	1000 St Mary's Toddler Group (Hall)
	2000 Holy Communion for Feast of Ascensiontide
S 28	0900 Morning Prayer
S 29	EASTER 7 - Sunday after Ascension Day
0930	JAM (Jesus and Me) (Hall then Church)
0930	Sung Eucharist
	1115 APCM
M 30	0900 Morning Prayer
T 31	0900 Morning Prayer
	1000 Said Holy Communion (Side Chapel)

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