

The vicar writes ~ Here's £20!

Those of you who were present at the AGM in March heard our Treasurer state the need for our giving to increase. So many churches are now having to merge because of not being able to pay the Parish Share. Our Parish Share this year is nearly £63,000. If you are able to increase your standing order or the amount you place in your weekly envelope, do please let Roger know this month. I'm afraid the only way St. Saviour's will remain a church in its own right is by being able to pay our Parish Share.

In the meantime, here's something totally different:

On Sunday 21st May we are going to be given £20 in the hope that over the next 6 months we will increase it. And then at the end of November we will bring our £20 back to church plus the extra we have made. This will not be made public I assure you!

There are lots of ways we can do this - here are a few suggestions:

Use the money to buy food and invite family or friends to a meal and perhaps charge them £10 or £15 a head - most of us would happily pay this for a night out!

Use the money to hire a film and buy popcorn etc. and charge your friends an entrance fee.

Use the money to buy materials and make things.

Use the money to purchase a spot at a car boot sale if you have things you no longer need.

Use the money to bake biscuits or cakes and sell them.

Use the money to buy car wash cleaning agent and clean cars!

I'm sure you can think of lots more way to increase your £20.

Please don't do what the person in the bible did - bury it in the ground!! Please ask members of your family for ideas or even to help you with it.

Thy Kingdom Come

The Archbishops of Canterbury and York are calling Christians of every denomination to join in with *Thy Kingdom Come*, a prayer initiative between Ascension and Pentecost (25th May to 4th June), to pray for the nation to know Jesus Christ. It is a time to seek the empowering of the Holy Spirit, that we may be effective witnesses to Jesus Christ.

Praying for others to know Jesus is one of the most powerful things we can do. Persistent prayer for others brings transformation to their lives. As Paul writes: *'Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should.'* (Colossians 4: 2-4).

As Paul says, consistent praying for others involves discipline (*'be devoted'*) and responding to what God is already doing in people's lives (*'being watchful and thankful'*). We can pray for *'open doors'* to point people to Jesus and what He can mean in their lives. We all have opportunities to do this, as even Paul prayed as a prisoner in chains!!

The Archbishops are encouraging us to choose five people who we can pray for regularly. Why not ask God to guide you, as you settle on five names and commit to praying for them daily, perhaps by using the following prayer:



'Loving Father, in the face of Jesus Christ your light and glory have blazed forth.

Send your Holy Spirit that I may share with my friends the life of your Son and your love for all.

Strengthen me as a witness to that love as I pledge to pray for them, for your name's sake. Amen.'

There is a Taize Service at Chester Cathedral on Thursday 1st June at 12 noon for the Stockport deanery as part of this event. It would be great to see you there!

Desert Island Discs by Dorothy Woffenden



1. How would you cope as a solitary castaway on a desert island?
2. Choose four pieces of music or hymns you would want to take with you, and one CD and please give a sentence of explanation for each.
3. What luxury item would you choose?

Here are Dorothy's answers:

The selection I have chosen to take with me to a desert island are not, with the exception of the Faure CD, my favourite pieces of music but when I think about them or hear them, memories are evoked of people, places and events.

The first piece I've chosen is, 'You get no bread with one meat ball' sung by the Andrew's Sisters. This transports me back to the small kitchen we had in London not long after the end of the war. My mother loved popular music and always listened to it on the Light Programme. The song reminds me of a happy time and evokes memories of us in that kitchen, the fire ablaze in the black range, just enjoying the simple things of life.

The second, 'Unchained Melody' takes me back to 1955. My best friend, Mary, who always bought the latest 'pop' song, took me with her to the local record shop to buy this latest 45rpm vinyl recording by Jimmy Young. I can still remember the thrill of being in that shop surrounded by all these records and then rushing back to her house to play it on her dad's record player.

Number three, Brahms' Lullaby (Cradle Song), will seem a strange choice as it takes me back to the saddest part of my life. It was played at our son's funeral. Ian died suddenly when he was eight months old. Although the music brings back sad memories it also reminds me of the power of love. The love that cannot be destroyed by death and the love and support shown to Andrew and myself when life seemed at its darkest.

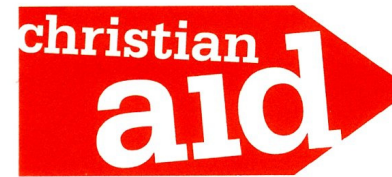
Number four is one that takes me both to the heart of the Christian gospel and to the church family at St. Saviours. It is our choir singing "Only a shadow", accompanied by our organist, David. The chorus is: The Love I have for You my Lord is only a shadow of your Love for me." I just love this message of grace, of unconditional love and of the assurance that our life is in God's hands.

The CD that I would take with me, is Faure's Requiem. Listening to this I am reminded of two dear friends, Janet and Ron, both of whom are no longer with us, who gave me this recording as a gift.

How would I cope on this island? Probably not too badly, as I know from experience that I can turn my hand to most things, although I don't think I could kill anything to eat.

As for a luxury can I please have a comfortable chair to enable me to sit in the shade, enjoy the view and listen to waves lapping gently on the shore as I work out what on earth to do next?!

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**14th - 20th May**

It's better to die in a refugee camp than to die in a war. To risk your children's lives in a plastic dinghy. And to leave everything you know behind.

When the alternative is terror, bombs and bullets, almost anything is better.

This is the terrible choice facing tens of millions of people worldwide - fleeing conflict and disaster, making dangerous journeys in search of safety.

Christian Aid Week was set up 60 years ago to support the work with refugees in Europe following the Second World War.

Let's act again now, to help relieve suffering and build a world where everyone has a safe place to call home.

This amazing charity would be immensely grateful for anything we can put in the attached envelope to go towards its work with refugees, and please bring it to church on Sunday 21st May.

Thank you!

## Gunjur Project

Andy has returned from Gunjur, Gambia, having taken all your wonderful gifts of exercise books, paper, pens, pencils and pencil sharpeners, socks, gloves, children's underwear, and beanie hats.

*Andrew says: "I would like to give you all at St. Saviour's Church my heartfelt thanks for your kind and very generous donated gifts and I can assure you that all items were taken to Gunjur and are still being distributed to children, young people and families who have been identified by the Gunjur Project as being in great need.*

*Our charity is called "Live" and is based in Chester. We support children, young people and adults with disabilities.*



*Distributing your gifts to the children  
(Apologies for the poor quality of the photograph!)*

## All in the month of May

It was:

100 years ago: on 21<sup>st</sup> May 1917 that the Commonwealth War Graves Commission was founded. It records and maintains the graves and places of commemoration of Commonwealth military service members who died in WW1 and WW2.

90 years ago: on 20<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> May that the American aviator Charles Lindbergh made his historic first non-stop solo transatlantic flight from New York to Paris, aboard the *Spirit of St Louis*.

80 years ago: on 12<sup>th</sup> May 1937 that the coronation of King George VI took place. This was also the BBC's first official outdoor television broadcast.

75 years ago: on 4<sup>th</sup> May 1942 that Germany bombed Exeter, destroying the city centre. Several weeks later, on 30<sup>th</sup>-31<sup>st</sup> May, more than 1,000 British Royal Air Force bombers carried out a 90-minute air raid on Cologne.

50 years ago: on 28<sup>th</sup> May 1967 that the British sailor and aviator, Sir Francis Chichester, became the first person to complete a true solo circumnavigation of the world from west to east, via the clipper route and great capes.

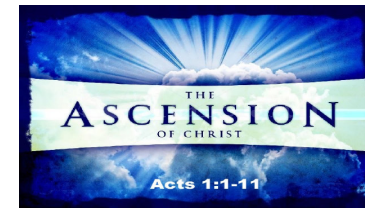
30 years ago: on 11<sup>th</sup> May 1987 that Nazi war criminal Klaus Barbie ('the butcher of Lyon') went on trial in Lyon. He was sentenced to life imprisonment for crimes against humanity.

20 years ago: on 1<sup>st</sup> May 1997 that the Labour Party won the British General Election in a landslide victory, ending 18 years of Conservative rule. Tony Blair, aged 43, became Britain's youngest Prime Minister since 1812.

15 years ago: on 30<sup>th</sup> May 2002 that a solemn ceremony was held to mark the end of the cleanup operation at Ground Zero in New York City, after the 9/11 attacks.

10 years ago: on 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2007 that the Scottish Parliament General Election saw the Scottish National Party (SNP) win by a single seat, and form a minority government. Alex Salmond took office as First Minister on 16<sup>th</sup> May.





# Summer Fair

## Sat. 22nd July 11 am - 1 pm

Donations for the following stalls will be greatly appreciated. Please can you let the Stall-holders have your gifts **well before the day so that items can be priced up.** Many thanks.

|                              |                      |
|------------------------------|----------------------|
| Bottles containing anything! | Ashley (MENSSA)      |
| Kiddies Summer Toys/Games    | Choir (Sylvia & Aly) |
| Sweets & Chocolate Tombola   | Trisha               |
| Plants                       | Pauline & Linda      |
| Summer Gifts                 | Angela               |
| Pet Gifts                    | Sarah                |
| Jigsaws                      | Vicar                |
| Cakes, Preserves & Biscuits  | Cathy & Sue (MU)     |
| Raffle                       | Pam, Rena & Karin    |
| Refreshments                 | Glenys               |

Thanking you in anticipation of your much valued support.

40 days after Easter comes Ascension Day. These are the 40 days during which the Risen Christ appeared again and again to His disciples, following His death and resurrection: In the Upper Room, on the road to Emmaus, by the Sea of Galilee, in houses etc. He strengthened and encouraged His disciples and at last opened their eyes to all that the Scriptures had promises about the Messiah.

Surely the most tender, moving 'farewell' in history took place on Ascension Day. Luke records the story with great poignancy: "When Jesus had led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, He lifted up His hands - and blessed them."

As Christmas began the story of Jesus' life on earth, so Ascension Day completes it, with His return to His Father in heaven. Jesus' last act on earth was to bless His disciples. He and they had a bond as close as could be: they had just lived through three tumultuous years of public ministry and miracles, persecution, death and resurrection!

Just as we part from our nearest and dearest by still looking at them with love and memories in our eyes, so exactly did Jesus: "While He was blessing them, He left them and was taken up into heaven." He was not forsaking them, but merely going on ahead to a kingdom which would also be theirs one day: "I am ascending to my Father and to your Father, to my God and your God..." (St. John 20:17)

The disciples were surely the most favoured people in history. Imagine being one of the last few people on earth to be face to face with Jesus, and have Him look on you with love. No wonder then that Luke goes on: "they worshipped Him - and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. And they stayed continually at the temple, praising God."

No wonder they praised God! They knew they would see Jesus again one day! "I am going to prepare a place for you... I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am." (St. John 14:2,3) In the meantime, Jesus had work for them to do: to take the Gospel to every nation on earth.



For months – indeed for years, apart from the ‘Bake off’ phenomenon - Britain’s most popular television programme by some distance has been the Sunday night ‘Call the Midwife’. The competition for top spot encompasses the whole range of human obsessions: comedy, drama, murder, rape, quizzes, food, fashion and sport – something for every taste. Yet a homely drama about some midwives working with an Anglican order of nuns in London’s East End 60 years ago beats them all. The BBC clearly recognises its value – several more series have been commissioned. I think it’s worth wondering why.

The first two series of ‘Call the Midwife’ closely followed the best-selling books by Jennifer Worth about her experiences as a young midwife in precisely those circumstances. Someone recommended the first book to me and I found it compelling reading, and said so in print. To my surprise, I got a letter from the author, answering a question I had posed. She told me that the example of the sisters in the Order and their unquenchable faith amidst the squalor and poverty of the area in those post-war years eventually led to her embracing the Christian faith herself.

Sadly, Jennifer Worth died just as the first series was being aired, and I feared the story line might lose its authenticity. But it hasn’t. These are stories of some nuns and midwives struggling to help people in need. Without ever being preachy, it faithfully depicts a very mixed group of people putting faith into practice. I think the nine million viewers, most of whom are probably not regular churchgoers, appreciate seeing prayer, faith, hope and love at work, even if not every practitioner is saintly, not every sick baby saved, nor every human problem solved.

*Canon David Winter*



## You and your ageing parents

Do you or your partner have elderly parents? How involved are you in their lives and care? Do they live with you? Do you visit them each day or only at weekends? Or perhaps only when you can’t avoid them?

It’s curious: we would never see our children less, just because they had great need of us. So why do we do it to the other side of our family, the older generation? It is because we always assumed that growing up was all about US preparing for OUR lives, instead of preparing to take our place of responsibility and care for ALL the lives in our immediate family?

These are uncomfortable questions, but they need to be faced, because, as one Local Government Association has warned: the UK’s social care system is in ‘grave danger of falling apart’. Many senior citizens are really struggling.

When you care for your older parents, however trying they might be, and however time-consuming, consider this: you are training your own children in how to care for YOU – when the time comes. As it will.

Ephesians 6 urges us to: “Honour your father and mother” - which is the first commandment with a promise - “so that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.” When we take care of our parents, God’s blessing is upon us.

## **Julian of Norwich: a voice from a distant cell**

*(Canon David Winter)*

Many years ago, studying English literature at university, I was intrigued to be introduced to the work of Julian of Norwich. She was writing at the end of the fourteenth century, when our modern English language was slowly emerging from its origins in Anglo-Saxon and Middle English.

Our lecturer was mainly concerned with her importance in the history of the language (she was the first woman, and the first significant writer, to write in English). But I was more intrigued by the ideas she was expressing. She was an anchoress – someone who had committed herself to a life of solitude, giving herself to prayer and fasting. St Julian's, Norwich was the church where she had her 'cell'.

Her masterpiece, *Revelations of Divine Love*, reveals a mystic of such depth and insight that today up and down Britain there are hundreds, possibly thousands, of 'Julian Groups' who meet regularly to study her writings and try to put them into practice.

She is honoured this month on the 8th May in the Lutheran and Anglican Churches, but although she is held in high regard by many Roman Catholics, her own Church has never felt able to recognise her as a 'saint'. This is probably because – over 600 years ago! – she spoke of God as embracing both male and female qualities. *Revelations* is an account of the visions she received in her tiny room, which thousands of pilgrims visit every year.

Her most famous saying, quoted by T S Eliot, is 'All shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of thing shall be well' – words that have brought comfort and strength to many a soul in distress.



**Also this month on the 24th we honour John & Charles Wesley: Evangelists & hymn-writers.**

John and Charles Wesley were the founders of Methodism. Two of 19 children born to Samuel and Susannah Wesley of Epworth Rectory in Lincolnshire in 1703 and 1707, their father was the local rector, while their mother was a spiritual inspiration to her many children.

Both John and Charles went to Christ Church, Oxford (1720 and 1726). John was ordained, and Charles and some friends formed a "Holy Club" while still at college. It consisted of men who dedicated themselves to Bible study, prayer, fasting and good works. Such regular disciplines soon earned Charles the nickname 'Methodist'. The name stuck.

Both Charles and John felt called to the mission field, and so in 1735 they sailed to Georgia. Their time among Indians in America was not a success – they struggled for any real spiritual authority in their ministries. Feeling failures, they returned to England in some depression. John summed it up: "I went to America to convert the Indians; but, oh, who shall convert me?"

Then the Wesleys made friends with some Moravians. They stressed that salvation cannot be earned, but must be received by grace through faith in Christ. Charles was the first to experience this 'true' conversion, when on Pentecost Sunday, 21<sup>st</sup> May 1738, he wrote that the Spirit of God "chased away the darkness of my unbelief."

Only three days later, on 24<sup>th</sup> May, 1738, it was John's turn. As he wrote in his journal: "In the evening I went very unwillingly to a society in Aldersgate Street, where one was reading Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed."

John and Charles Wesley then devoted the rest of their lives to sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ – and turned England upside-down. When the established Church threw John out, he took to the fields, preaching to coal miners and commoners. His itinerant evangelism took him 250,000 miles on horseback and to preach over 40,000 sermons. His small "societies" attracted some 120,000 followers by the time of his death.

Charles became the most prolific and skilled hymn-writer in English history, writing hymns that are sung widely today, such as "Love Divine, All Loves Excelling." In all, he wrote nearly 7000 hymns.

The legacy of the two brothers lives on. As well as Methodism, their teaching has widely impacted the holiness movement, the Pentecostal movement, and the charismatic movement.