

ST. LUKE'S & CHRIST CHURCH CHELSEA

The Parish of St Luke and Christ Church
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JUNE 2020 PARISH MAGAZINE ISSUE NO. 185

WWW.CHELSEAPARISH.ORG

HAVE YOU SEEN A PARISH ANGEL?

*Thank you to everyone who is helping, like angels, to make
God's love known in our parish.*

The Bible provides a wide variety of descriptions of angels. The prophet Isaiah describes the seraphim as six-winged creatures whose voice caused the doorposts of the temple to shake. The prophet Ezekiel describes cherubim as creatures with four faces and four wings, with lightning flashing out of them. Yet angels are also sometimes, in the Bible, indistinguishable from humans: just think of the 'young man dressed in a white robe' who announces Jesus's resurrection to the women at the tomb.



The Parish Office has heard no reports of terrifying creatures roaming the parish. Yet we are aware of many people performing wonderful acts of kindness and love.

Many parishioners have benefited from their generosity. If you have received a visit, maybe you have benefited from a parish angel!



Our photos offer a snapshot of just some of the wonderful things that have been going on in the parish in recent months. Julie and Tracy have been delivering meals to many of our parishioners each week, supported by generous donations from COOK. With our local PCSOs they also delivered cake to volunteers who have so far stitched 16,000 gowns for the Royal Brompton hospital. Many others of you have been delivering meals and baking cakes for neighbours and NHS workers. We have provided financial support to the Foodbank being run on the Sutton Estate by Dorinda Montgomery and SMART. One parishioner has been using her professional skills to make gowns for the NHS. And we have been delighted to distribute masks given to us by members of Central St Martins. □



Welcome to our second lockdown (and electronic-only) parish magazine. This month's edition is full of the creative and thoughtful ways that people have been supporting themselves and others over recent weeks.

While our magazine celebrates some of the 'highs' of recent weeks, we are well aware that this has been a difficult time for most if not all of us. We may all be facing the same 'storm' of the global pandemic, but we are not all in the same boat. Please do take care of yourself, and please phone the Parish Office if you would value a conversation or exploring what support may be available.

As we go to press, the church buildings remain closed. But the clergy are praying in St Luke's each morning for the parish and for the world. Please pray for our continued witness to God's love and hope, as we pray for you all. ☐

Café Portico reopens

We are delighted to report that Café Portico has now reopened for takeaways, on weekdays between 9am and mid-afternoon. Julie and her team have put all appropriate hygiene measures in place. Smoothies, fresh orange juice and ice creams are also now available to tempt the sun-worshippers in St Luke's Gardens! Why not stop by for lunch or a snack?

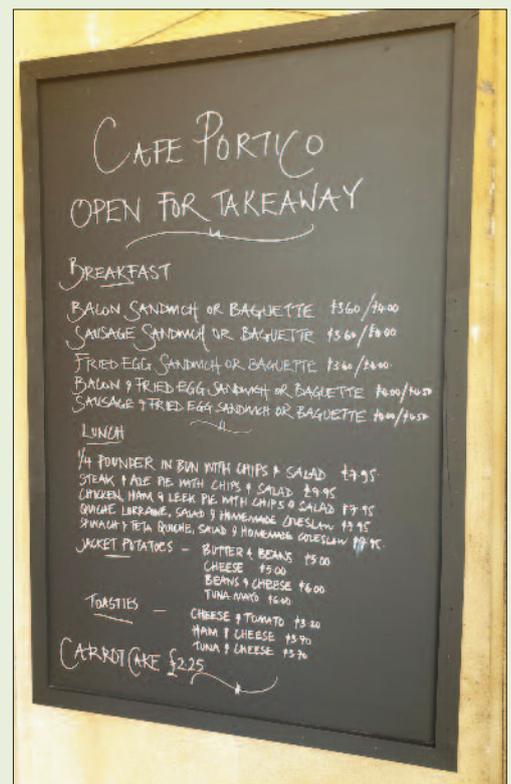


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EAT IN OR TAKE AWAY



Holy friendships

Who was the last person, not a member of your household, that you spoke to face to face? Quite possibly it was the postman, or a colleague at work, or a neighbour. But, unless they live nearby, it was probably unlikely to be a friend.

That inability to see our friends has been very difficult for many of us, myself included. Whether we live alone or in a packed house, it is our perception of loneliness that is especially detrimental to our health. Zoom might help, but it feels very different from being able to spend a long evening chatting and laughing together.

What is it about friendships that makes them so important? Perhaps I should be saying that friendships image our relationship with God – just as Jesus tells his disciples that ‘you are my friends if you do what I command you’ (John 15.14). But Christian thinkers have found it difficult, in practice, to speak of us being ‘friends’ with God. We might speak of the love between us and God in romantic terms or with the language of kinship (‘heavenly Father’). But the language of friendship has not been so common. Perhaps – and maybe this

marks something about how we think of friendship today – God and I are just too different to be friends?

Perhaps we can start from a different point. While we speak of Christian ‘love’ a great deal, the commandment to ‘love our enemies’ can feel rather vague. Friendships are more particular: they are reciprocal, and with people we know. So when I have, say, a picnic with Tom and Emma I don’t just know a general kind of love – I know that they and I are in a friendship which is unique to us.

We might even speak of holy friendships. Maybe such exalted language makes you think of the friend who you ring in a crisis, who has been a shoulder to cry on and who gives wise advice in times of trouble. But holy friendships also exist when we do everyday things with people we enjoy spending time with. In the last few months I have missed those evenings when I was hoping to go to the theatre with Matt and Daisy, or to the pub with Jez.

What’s more, our recent crisis has reminded me that these holy friendships don’t simply exist



with the people we call ‘friends’, but also with colleagues, family members, neighbours, fellow parishioners and others. I have missed those moments in the Parish Office when we down tools to enjoy a snack together, and I have missed the time spent with you throughout the week.

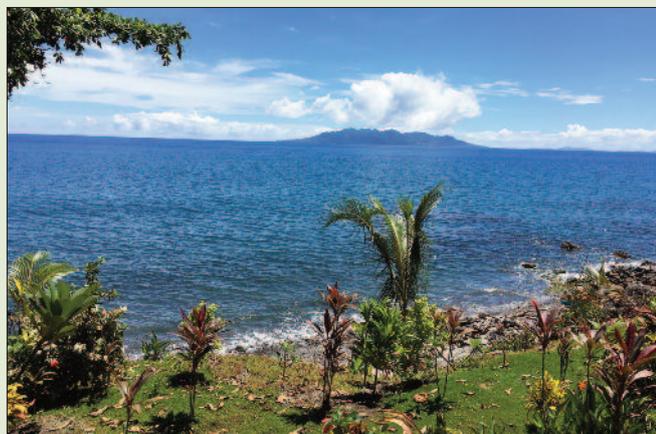
These are times with no agenda except enjoying the company of another person. They are moments when we enjoy the presence of another. We set aside whatever goals and plans we have. We enjoy knowing that we are not alone, but that part of who we are is that we are in relationship with others. These are holy friendships – and I hope we will soon be safely able to enjoy them again fully. □

Stranded in the Solomon's

By our incoming curate, Samuel Rylands

On Holy Saturday I arrived back to a much changed and much quieter London than the one I had left over a month before after my visit to stay with the Melanesian Brothers. Having confirmed my safe arrival in the Solomon Islands back in early March through an email exchange with the Melanesian Mission UK Executive Officer, who had been helping to organise my trip, she replied; "Now the adventure begins!" Neither of us knew at that stage how accurate her response would prove to be!

The purpose of my visit was primarily to experience the life of the Anglican church and the shape of formation in a very different context before beginning my curacy. I was also particularly drawn to the Melanesian Brotherhood's recent history in their



pivotal role as peacemakers during the ethnic tensions at the turn of the millennium. Indeed, only last month was the memorial anniversary of the seven martyrs who gave their lives as part of this role as peacemakers.

I was initially intending to visit for a couple of months, throughout Lent, Holy Week and over Easter, with the aim of participating in and learning from the communal life and worship of the Brother's. Immersing myself in the community at Tabalia (the Mother House) as much as possible gave me a chance to experience their beautifully simple but varied life together. And I loved all of it— from daily attending the very early First

Office, (walking to the chapel in the dark, dodging frogs along the way!), to eating kasava and kakake (affectionately known as "swamp taro"), as well as several logging trips with the Brothers to collect

firewood— it was a real privilege to be welcomed in by the community and to be allowed to join them in their everyday lives.

However, throughout this time with the Brothers, I was also becoming increasingly aware of the spreading pandemic of COVID-19. Yet, because of the rapid speed at which things changed, and being without regular

communication to the outside world, I was not able to move my flights forward quickly enough to avoid becoming stuck in the Solomon's indefinitely, as Australia, and then the Solomon Islands too, closed their borders!

Being stranded in the Solomon's felt very surreal. On the one hand, I was in paradise with beautiful idyllic surroundings, as life continued pretty much as normal at Tabalia and across the Islands. Yet every time I would speak with friends and family back home, I would be updated on the worsening spread of this deadly virus. This led to a time of uncertainty, for me, but perhaps primarily for my family back home, as I had three flights cancelled in my attempt to return to the UK. There was an added sense of urgency in wanting to get back due to the wonderful news, which I found out the week before I departed, that Lily was pregnant!

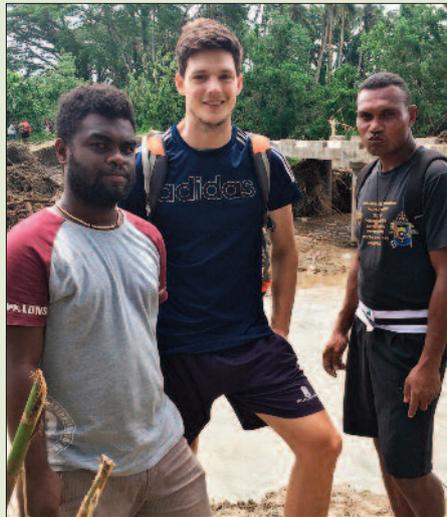
After several conversations with the British High Commissioner, however, it became clear that there was little that could be done in terms of arranging travel home other than praying and waiting for things to open up again. Ultimately though, it was hard to become overly-anxious about my situation partly because of where I was stranded (I remember one



Sunday afternoon messing around in the canoe in the sea with some of the Brothers, and just thinking how fortunate I was to be there!! But also, during this time the rhythm of prayer and worship at Tabalia really helped to provide a sense of peace, as well as learning from and being held by the Brothers own deep trust and reliance in God that all would be well.

Of course, we were also aware of the potential threat and impact of COVID-19 arriving in the Solomon Islands, not just on the limited health resources but also the social and economic implications. So part of my final time there was spent discussing with the Brothers how they might prepare practically in modelling good hygiene both for their own sake, but also for all the communities across the Islands.

Eventually, however, I was squeezed onto a US repatriation flight as the 200th and final passenger on the plane, which was only confirmed three hours before take-off once they realised they had counted an infant as an adult so there would in fact be space for me after all! The flight itself left Honiara (the first time there had ever been a plane of that size on the runway!) to head to San Francisco via Hawaii, before I caught my onward flight to London— so by the time



I arrived back in the UK I had completed a round the world trip, just not in the circumstances I had quite imagined!

After a further 14 days of self-isolation back in the UK, Lily and I have since been happily reunited! We are now awaiting the lockdown to ease as we prepare and look forward to joining you all at St Luke's and Christ Church in July (even if this is virtually initially!). So please do be praying for us with our move and all that is ahead, as we continue to pray for you all throughout this difficult time. But please also be praying for the Brothers and the people of Melanesia as they continue to prepare for the virus there.

I cannot thank the Brothers enough for their generous hospitality and kindness during such uncertain times. I have learned a great amount from them, and I'm sure this experience will shape my own faith and ministry for a long time to come. Though perhaps what has struck me most is the community's deep trust that whatever comes their way, God is with them— and that in this trust, their life together reflects the light of Christ shining in the darkness. Or as the Pijin version of John's Gospel beautifully puts it; "nao matta stay dark... erytime get light." ☐



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Golden Charter  

Lockdown lifelines

We asked you for details of your lockdown lifelines, and you did not disappoint! Here are some of the activities that have kept your minds, bodies and spirits alive over recent weeks.



Chasing squirrels



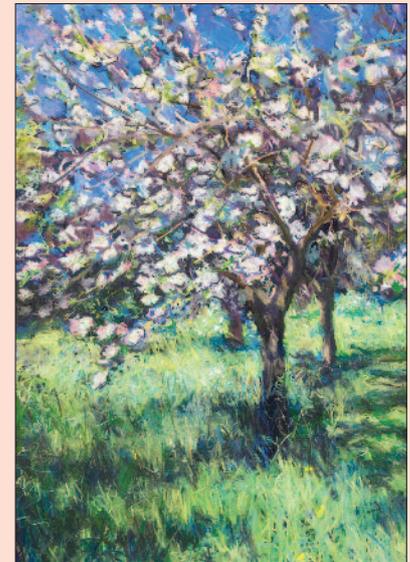
Martha honing life skills



Lots of baking



A socially distanced VE Day party on Christchurch Street



Pastels



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CHRIST CHURCH SCHOOL NEWS

Avis and her staff at Christ Church and Holy Trinity have been working hard over recent weeks to create a sense of 'normal in the abnormal' for the children in the federation. They have sought to provide all children with a comparable quantity and quality of learning experiences as they are used to in school. This has meant sustaining the many subjects that comprise the rich education offered by the school – not simply core curriculum subjects such as English and Maths but also subjects such as PE, music, and art. Fr Brian has been recording assem-

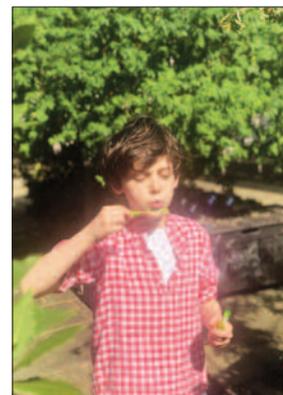
blies for students to view virtually, and the annual Year 6 Shakespeare play is even going ahead as usual – though it remains to be seen if this will be virtual or not!

Our enormous thanks to all at the school for their hard work in these difficult times.

As we go to press, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 are returning to school on 1 June. Other year groups will likely follow, as government advice changes over coming weeks. ☐



Iona's rainbow tree



Blowing bubbles for Ascension Day



Thomas doing schoolwork.



Celebrating VE Day



Hector baking.



BROMPTON VETERINARY CLINIC
 90 Fulham Road
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Kevin Clifford and his team have been providing a personal and caring service for the pets of Chelsea since 1993. The new clinic has been completely refurbished to offer spacious and comprehensive facilities for all your pets' needs. Do pop in and visit us!



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VIRTUAL SUNDAY SCHOOL _____ ANNA STAMENOVA



“This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.” Psalm 118:24



The day to remember - birthdays are a time to celebrate God's gift of life.

Birthdays are happy and memorable days and a great time to say “I love you,” but also say, “God



loves you,” and “Jesus loves you.” We used to spend them with family and friends, perhaps going to Church too, to give thanks for the life God gave us, to say a prayer and receive His blessings.

Sadly, that is not the reality this year, but people are still finding imaginative ways to celebrate. While we might be physically apart today, doesn't mean that we forget each other and can't spend the day together! In our new world technology plays big part - Zoom call, followed by a Google Hangout, a FaceTime, a Skype session, and then top off the day on Instagram Live together! We send cards full of virus-free hugs and kisses, just to let know how much we love and missing each other.

So, things have changed, but God's love for us is the same. He brought us close to each other and His love helps to overcome the difficulties of this current situation. That's why it's right to celebrate the dedication of Christ Church, for many of us our church, where we found comfort and where our prayers are heard.

For 181 years, people have come to Christ Church, to sing, to pray, to read the Bible, to share the bread and wine. Thousands of children have studied at the school, and worshipped in the church. Let give thanks to God and look forward to our Christ Church birthday on 26 June with the hope that maybe, just maybe we will be able to at least visit it even for 5 minutes and share with God our deepest desires. And gladly and joyfully sing Happy birthday Christ Church.

*With love,
Anna*



I ndoors – which is boring
S tay safe at home
O bservation of the world
L ove one another
A ttached by corona virus
T eamwork together
I 'm missing the 9th Chelsea scouts
O ffering food to the elderly
N HS

By Mack



Aemilia



Magnus and Liberty



Aemilia and Nicholas



Artemis



Welcome to the Middleton family, Hugo!



Max and Myah flip flops



Victoria and Yeon



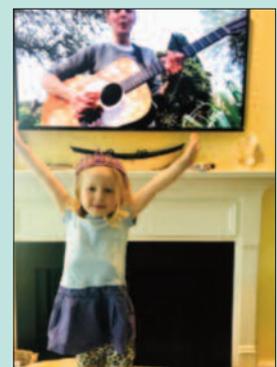
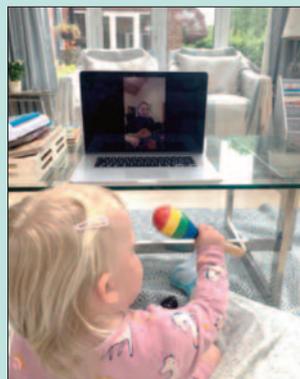
Noah



Annabelle and Olivia



Jisoo



Left to right: Margot, Emily and Harper enjoying music from Gemma Hayes

CONTACT PARISH OFFICE : 020 7351 7365

Rector: The Revd Prebendary Dr Brian Leathard
brianleathard@chelseaparish.org

Associate Vicar: The Revd Dr Sam Hole
samhole@chelseaparish.org

Operations Manager and Bursar: John McVeigh
johnmcveigh@chelseaparish.org

General Enquiries
Parish Administrator/ receptionist: Tracy Best
parishoffice@chelseaparish.org

Property Administrator: Alicia Hilliard
(Direct Line: 020 7351 6133)
hallbookings@chelseaparish.org

Children's Administrator: Anna Stamenova
annastamenova@chelseaparish.org

Enquiries re baptism, confirmation (adults and children), marriages, funerals and home communion visits please contact the clergy via the Parish Office. Also for the Planned Giving Schemes for both churches.

ST. LUKE'S
Sydney Street,
London SW3 6NH



Churchwardens: Jamie Gibbs 07803 596 256
Charles Combe 07747 796 124
Director of Music: Jeremy Summerly 07956 801 223

CHRIST CHURCH
Christchurch Street,
London SW3 4AS



Churchwardens: Aidus McVeigh 020 7223 8591
Nick Smith 07889 369 060
Director of Music: Gareth Wilson 07939 378 759
Organist: Samuel Ali

Safeguarding Officers:
(for any safeguarding issues in the Parish)
Guy Tobin (Mob: 07979 596 009)
Lizzie Watson-Steele (Mob: 07855 455559)

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