

Living the Good Life: Lent Talks

The bucolic scene Claude Monet conjured up in his painting *The Sheltered Path* can't help but evoke great longing in all who see it. During many of these dark winter days, who wouldn't rather be strolling along that sun-drenched path, enjoying the verdant countryside.



Image: Claude Monet, *The Sheltered Path* (1873)

Christians often speak of life as a journey – a pilgrimage, even – and Monet's painting shows one kind of journey we may travel during our lives. Though, even when our lives seem to be following a similarly picturesque path, uncertainty can still await around the corner.

The Sheltered Path may seem to depict a pastoral idyll here, however all is not untroubled. The browning leaves of the trees to the figure's left speak of the coming autumn, while the path slopes upwards and disappears out of sight. Who knows where it leads.

On the occasions when we find life to be an uneven path, we will benefit both from being prepared, and accepting whatever support we can get. Like walkers in the hills are always advised: we must not only keep ourselves fit, but also pack for any eventuality.

In the Christian journey, spiritual practices can bring such fitness and preparation as we travel along the path. These activities have helped many through the centuries on life's journey. During the sunny times, they help us – individually and collectively – develop our sense of who we are and what we are called to. When the weather turns, they help to sustain us and recover that sense of meaning and purpose.

In this year's Lent course, we will attend to some of the fundamental spiritual practices. How should I read the

Bible? How can I pray well? What is it to live well with others? How do I discern God's call on my life?

Much of the life of faith – a life that Jesus promises is truly "lived to the full" – deals with these questions. Each session will open with a parishioner reflecting on the ways they have benefited from that week's particular spiritual practice. A member of the clergy will then offer suggestions of how we might develop our own practices, before opening up wider group discussion.

Topics and dates for the talks are:

7 March – Reading Scripture – Fr Samuel

14 March – Personal Prayer – Fr Sam

21 March – Life in Community – Fr Samuel

28 March – Vocation – Fr Brian

We hope this convivial conversation and space to reflect will nourish us spiritually as we step out in faith over our journey of Lent and beyond. We will also be nourished in a very literal sense, with a delicious two-course meal with wine.

All are very welcome to as few or many sessions as you are able to attend, especially if you have not been to our evening events before. All sessions take place in the St Luke's vestry, beginning at 7.15pm for 7.30pm, and ending by 9.00pm. For catering purposes, please email the parish office parishoffice@chelseaparish.org if you plan to attend. We look forward to seeing you there.

SAM HOLE

The Creed

We continue our series exploring the various parts of our eucharistic liturgy

The church, as we know it, didn't just happen. In its earliest days it spread, rather Covid-like, along the routes and networks of social interaction. With communication being so tricky and slow, the churches, springing up in the first and second centuries were isolated from one another, so there grew a need for the church to be recognisably one, whether in Jerusalem, Rome, Antioch, Alexandria or even Iona.

From a very ordinary Greek term, meaning 'general' or 'whole', developed a crucially important word for the church, namely 'catholic' – which we might best say means 'universal'. So Bishop Ignatius of Antioch, writing to Christians in Smyrna (now Izmir, Turkey) in about 110 AD, assumes they understand the need for the church to be, like Brighton Rock, the same all the way through.

This hinged on three elements – first, agreeing what should be in the canon of scripture, what we call The Bible, which wasn't secured until 367 AD. Second, agreeing on the embodiment of authority in the church's ministers, particularly bishops, priests and deacons. Third, agreeing on creeds, the statements of belief.

The advantage of creeds – the word is just Latin for belief – is that they could be learnt by heart and didn't need expensive writing resources. They fenced in what the catholic church believes, standardising such belief, across hugely divergent cultures, languages and peoples.

There is evidence that new believers had to learn the creed verbatim before baptism (remember, in the early church, most of the baptised were adults!). We also find evidence of some basic credal statements in the epistles of the New Testament. Cer-

tainly as Christianity spread, the tone of the creeds became more assertive, both in response to growing diversity and in light of the persecutions Christians were enduring across the Roman empire.

The creeds of the early church stabilised by the end of the 4th Century and remained universal until the late 20th Century (just don't ask about the Filioque clause). It was then, as churches revised their liturgies to cope with a very different world and to be accessible to the majority who were 'unchurched', they needed to diversify and shorten their credal statements.

Thus Common Worship (the Church of England's modern liturgy), for example, in addition to the traditional words, also authorises a question and answer creed, which we use at Baptisms, as well as some of those New Testament elementary creeds, very useful in Family services, or where the language of the fuller creeds seems too verbose or obscure.

I regard the creeds as rather like walking through a family portrait gallery in a stately home. Just as the family nose or chin is recognisable in the portraits, so too do we, the Christian community, recognise the core of our faith in all the types of creed we use.

Most Sundays we say the words of the Nicene Creed, endorsed by the Council of Chalcedon in 451, which sets out the substance of faith as taught by the apostles, recognising that the phrases are a mixture of language and thought from the Bible and the early christian communities, containing differing types of statement, some historic, some symbolic, some poetic. Woven together in this way, the creeds, in contemporary jargon, are the christian family's mission statement.

BRIAN LEATHARD

FROM THE CLERGY

SAMUEL RYLANDS

As the saying goes; failing to prepare, is preparing to fail. A common nightmare among perfectionists and those who are very conscientious is having an up-coming exam for which you are totally unprepared! I don't know how much I fall into those categories, but I can certainly attest to having this dream on more than one occasion. The relief upon waking and realising that I don't suddenly have to revisit GCSE French is palpable!

The feeling of being unprepared can be paralysing and we know the importance of giving time to prepare for something important. At the beginning of the Easter holidays we will be offering a space for young people aged 15 and older to receive tutoring in preparation for their summer exams. With all the disruptions and stop-start of COVID restric-

tions, we want to be able to support young people in the parish as much as possible in their preparation. We hope in doing so they can feel confident and assured when facing these examinations. This programme is called StepUP. Please contact me for further details.

This month we enter the season of Lent; a time of preparation and self-reflection before Easter. Yet, precisely because Lent is a time of preparation, it's a reminder that it's ok if we feel we're not quite ready! We mark the beginning of Lent by receiving ashes. "You are dust, and to dust you shall return" (Genesis 3:19). As Pope Francis said, 'the dust sprinkled on our heads brings us back to earth.' The cross marked in ash on our foreheads reminds us that we are mortal and finite. It reminds us that we are not God, but limited creatures.



Yet, we are dust that is loved by God. Dust that God gathers and breathes his life into (Genesis 2:7). Dust that God himself wears as a garment in Jesus Christ and transforms into the new creation, the promise of eternal life.

The preparation of Lent, therefore, is not like preparation before an exam, anxiously cramming and taking on knowledge to perform when the time comes. Rather, it is a preparation of stripping back and making space. In our Lenten preparations, we prepare by acknowledging that we do indeed fail, but that our failure is not final. Letting go of what we have given undue authority in our life, so that we are open to receive the fundamental truth and good news of Easter; that we are deeply and unalterably loved by God.

ST LUKE'S & CHRIST CHURCH CHELSEA

S.T.E.PUP

School Tutoring and Exam Preparation

What? This Easter we are hosting a revision week with free professional tutoring for ages 15+
A chance to study in a quiet space in preparation for summer exams.

Where? The Hut, 12 Alpha Pl, London SW3 5SZ

When? The first week of the Easter holidays.
Tuesday 5th April to Friday 8th April.

Open to all, but limited spaces.

Contact Rev'd Sam Rylands for further details:
samuelrylands@chelseaparish.org

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Bronze, But Going For Gold



As part of our Parish Action Plan, we committed as a parish to achieving a Bronze Eco Church Award by 2022. This is an award scheme run by the Christian environmental charity A Rocha, which assesses a church's environmental impact across five categories: 1) worship and teaching, 2) management of church buildings, 3) management of church land, 4) community and global engagement and 5) lifestyle.

(See, <https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/how-eco-church-works/>)



We have now achieved Bronze Eco Church status! Yet, we know that the issue of climate change cannot be solved overnight, and we still have a long way to go. Towards this end, we have appointed two parish "Eco Advocates:" Ros Holness (above on left) at Christ Church, and Alice Gilks (above on right) at St Luke's. In these roles, Ros and Alice will use their passion and gifts to help us reflect as a parish how we can take better care of God's creation. This is not something they can do alone, and it will involve all of us as a church community – so, please don't hesitate to be in touch with them if you have any ideas!

SAMUEL RYLANDS

For over 30 years I have been a supporter – and more recently a trustee – of a wonderful little charity called The Young People's Trust for the Environment, or YPTE for short. The charity's website is a place where children and adults can find a vast amount of information and advice about environmental issues. YPTE also gives talks to schools, runs competitions and creates FREE lesson plans for teachers.

I don't consider myself an expert on the environment, but I try to keep myself open to ideas on how best to become more eco-minded and believe that every conscious eco act can make a big collective difference.

I have been asked by Father Samuel to choose five eco tips to share with everyone, so here they are:

1. Recycle. I know recycling doesn't always get the best press, and documentaries have shown incidents where our recycled goods end up transported to developing countries and dumped there. On the whole though, I feel we have to do our best in separating items that can be recycled and trying to support our local recycling schemes. I look forward to a time when this is made uniform, instead of having different criteria across the boroughs, which can make the whole business very confusing. Obviously, where possible, also use recycled products in the form of materials, glass, loo paper and kitchen roll.

2. Use utilities more thoughtfully. Don't leave taps running constantly when brushing teeth, don't leave devices like TVs on standby and unplug chargers for phones etc when not in use (I find this hard!), wash clothes at 30 to 35 degrees when possible – they still come out clean! Improve your home's insulation and make sure that, if you have a loft, it has insulation too, as a huge amount of heat

is lost through the roof. These actions will hopefully also help to save money on bills.

3. Stop buying single-use plastic. This is a major, world-wide problem with huge amounts of plastic being dumped in our oceans. If we don't do something, experts predict that by 2025 some 17.5 million tonnes of plastic may find its way into the oceans in that year alone. There are obvious ways we can help by not buying plastic bags at shops and taking our own shopping bags instead. But also remember that not all plastic is bad. Plastic that is going to be used for years on end, in the form of furniture, storage crates or electronic devices (for example) which can be recycled at the end of their lives is okay. But always think about the alternatives and consider glass, metal or sustainable wood where possible.

4. Buy second hand or vintage clothes and donate any unwanted items. There are great bargains to be had in charity shops. When it comes to moving clothes on, do remember that charity shops even accept rags, which should be put in a separate bag and labelled. They receive money based on the weight of these bags. If you have any warm clothes in good condition that you're happy to let go of, then please consider dropping them off at the parish office for distribution via the food bank at St Luke's. Details can be found in the weekly service sheet or the Parish Magazine. Also, use and regularly wash masks, as disposable ones are not recyclable.

5. Consider changing your car from diesel. This one is controversial and I'm not really sure where I stand on it overall. Many people, like me, bought a diesel car based on the advice given by the government at that

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Parish Retreat at Douai Abbey

Twelve of us from the parish went on the retreat at Douai Abbey, near Reading, in January. Some, like me, were old timers, while four others were new to the experience. As ever, we received a warm Benedictine welcome.

Retreatants are welcome to join, or otherwise, any of the normal pattern of worship at the Abbey with its sung psalms, hymns and canticles. Some of us – not me, I am afraid – were disciplined enough to make it to 6.15am Matins and Lauds, which I understand is very special, as the sun comes up.

Much of the singing by the monks, including Gregorian chant, is in Latin, though the evening service of Compline is in English. Father Oliver Holt also kindly gave some of us a tour of the fascinating library and archives.

The theme of this year's retreat was "The Missing Years; Celebrating Epiphanytide", led by Father Brian. There are remarkably few biblical passages about Christ's life from the Epiphany until the First Sign of Christ, the Marriage at Cana in Matthew, hence "the Missing Years" in the retreat's title.

Father Brian began each session with the Epiphanytide hymn's first lines, "Brightest and best of the sons of the morning. Dawn on our darkness and lend us thine aid", which I think I will now always connect with the retreat.

After slowly reading the Epiphanytide biblical passages



Adoration of the Magi in the Snow is a 1563 painting by Pieter Bruegel the Elder, now in the Oskar Reinhart Collection Am Römerholz in Winterthur, Switzerland.

aloud, and distributing pictures of relevant paintings, he challenged us to consider some fundamental questions. This included the impact on us of what we were considering by way of the texts and paintings. For example, from the Epiphany story itself, (the Magi, Matthew 2. 1-12) are we more like Magi or Herod and his wise men? Where are we adoring Christ in our lives? How are we bringing our gifts to the Christ Child? Is Christ allowed in the ordinariness of our lives? Do we witness to Christ in our lives?

I can warmly recommend future parish retreats to anyone interested in attending. I should add that it wasn't all serious and we had lots of lively and fun conversations, on many subjects, throughout. Thank you very much, Brian.

CAROLINE HARRIS

Continued from page 4

time and now, due to pangs of conscience or ULEZ charges, have had to sell them. We're being encouraged to buy electric but it's not within everyone's budget and not everyone has access to a charging point. Also, the lithium batteries used to power electric cars are full of toxins that we can't afford to allow into the soil, and from there into our water. So unless we get proper systems in place for recycling electric car batteries safely, we'll be starting a new environmental crisis for ourselves in a decade or so. What's more, the carbon footprint of manufacturing one electric vehicle is huge with different components often coming from many different countries.

As with many of our attempts to be more environmentally aware, we have to consider our efforts a work in

progress – we should continue to educate ourselves and listen to the younger generation who are often better informed than we are.

Happy Spring and keep planting those bee-friendly flowers!

ROS HOLNESS

For more information about the Young People's Trust for the Environment visit <https://lypte.org.uk>, Instagram at [weareypete](https://www.instagram.com/weareypete) and Facebook.

Ros has been a member of the Christ Church family for over 20 years. She has been on the PCC, helped run the Sunday School and cooked at the Homeless Shelter. Her 23-year-old daughter, Lily Carr-Gomm, spent many happy years as a pupil at Christ Church School.

Alive... and no time to lose

Timothy Radcliffe OP, preached at St Luke's while Head of the Dominicans worldwide. He is a man of extraordinary profundity and humility and writes here, in a most significant way, of his recent experience of being in hospital for major surgery and how this has brought fresh insight to his faith in the incarnate Christ. Hold on to this article and share it with those who may be in a similar position. We thank The Tablet (01.01.2022) for permission to reprint part of the original article here.

It can take a brush with death and an experience of total dependency on others to open a window into a deeper sense of who we are and what we are here for.

I was admitted to hospital the day after the Assumption for an operation for cancer of the jaw. It took 17 hours. I was out, bar a minute or two, for 30 hours. Five weeks in hospital were eventually followed by six weeks of radiotherapy. But on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, I felt the first return of a hint of energy. There is still a long haul ahead but the corner has been turned. It is time to try to preach again.

The trauma of this operation, with the removal of several inches of my jaw and its replacement with bone and tissue from my leg, opened a small window on to the Incarnation, the embodiment of divinity. Is so much religion boring because we have shoved God back into heaven, remote from dangerous intimacy?

Aquinas asserted that "I am not my soul." If I stub my toe, it has no spiritual meaning, but surely every spiritual experience is bedded in our corporeality. Aquinas again: "Nothing is in the mind that is not first in the senses." Sickness plunges us into the messy confusion of our bodily life, where God embraces us, even if with infinite discretion.

Illness chipped away at the identity I had created and opened the door to a deeper one that was a gift to be discovered. Soon after I surfaced in the Blenheim ward of the Churchill Hospital in Oxford, a young doctor sat by my bed and asked simple questions, including: "Where are you?" I remembered the place was connected with Blenheim but it did not look like the palace. I could not answer. I hoped that he would ask



Photo: CNS/Presence, Philippe Vaillancourt

me who was the prime minister so that I could reply that I was not sure if Boris knew! Instead he asked me who was the monarch, the only question to which I gave the correct answer.

I was, he said, disorientated. The separation of the world of my dreams and of woken reality became porous. I read in the eyes of the nurses that I had been difficult. This time of confusion only lasted a couple of days, but it touched the heart of who I thought myself to be: a teacher and preacher, a writer for whom a certain clarity of mind was of the essence. The brief fragility of my hold on reality disclosed the profound unity of body, soul and spirit, whose dramas are interwoven. The Word became flesh and embraced us in our moments of clarity and confusion. He knows who we are even when we have lost our bearings and are engulfed in fog. I was blessed to discover that I was a brother of those who struggle with mental illness.

I have always loved to be up early, eager for the tasks of the day, but in those early weeks I was deprived of all agency. I lay there, connected to myriad tubes, which pumped in a sugary drip 12 hours a day and carried away waste. I was constantly injected, tested, examined. Even when the tubes began to be removed, I could do nothing, not even wipe my own bottom. I worried endlessly whether anyone would get me a bedpan in time. So my identity as an agent was also lost for a while. The nurses and doctors did their marvellous best, always asking my permission before any procedure. My fragile sense of self was nourished by

their gaze and touch, their eyes and hands. We exist in the gaze others offer us.

This utter dependency was embraced by our God who became a helpless swaddled infant, incapable of anything, also needing his nose and his bottom to be wiped but held and beheld by his mother. He became the eyes and hands of God, gazing at edgy Nathaniel, at the argumentative Samaritan woman at the well, at the despised tax collector Matthew, and seeing God's friends and reaching out in touch to the sick. These nurses were ministers of the divine gaze and touch, as were my brethren who faithfully came and sat with me every day, even when I could not say anything.

Britain is a secular land, it is claimed, but the hospital was full of religion. A nurse showed me her favourite image of the Virgin. Another spotted my rosary and showed me hers. Others asked for prayers and promised them, whispering their allegiance to their God, Christian or Muslim. Most of them came from countries where religion is still part of the air they breathe. The NHS is said to be the religion of modern Britain, but it is a temple in which God is acknowledged and served every day.

A third challenge to my self-identity was in a sort of sensory deprivation. Like all of my family, I love my food and drink. Taste is a fundamental to the openness of the body to what is other and so one's sense of self. But for weeks I was "nil by mouth." I felt trapped within myself, and thought often of Hopkins' bitter lines: "My taste was me." When at last I could hobble around on a Zimmer frame, I loved to clean my hands with the sanitiser and smell the hint of alcohol.



I first woke with a raging thirst, which alternated with a panicky feeling that I was drowning in the liquid pouring down my throat. For weeks I was not permitted to drink anything, just to dampen my lips with a wet sponge. All I could think of was Israel's tormented desire for water as she wandered in the wilderness, not trusting in the Lord who brought forth water from the rock. I obsessively repeated the words from Psalm 81: "By the waters of Meribah I tested you." In this desert, one must trust in the Lord, for whom one thirsts. On feast days we sing those lovely words from Psalm 62:

*O God, you are my God, for you I long,
For you my soul is thirsting.
My body pines for you
Like a dry weary land without water.*

God became human to share our thirst and teach us how to live it well: a baby thirsting for his mother's milk, parched for 40 days in the wilderness, asking the Samaritan woman at the well for a drink, and finally dehydrated on the Cross.

The Hail Mary ends with asking for Mary's prayers "now and at the hour of our death." A previous bout of cancer had awoken me to my mortality. Now death had called to tell me that it was on the way. My consultant told me the survival rate for this operation is 60 per cent after five years. Is that a long time or short? I am not sure. I might live for much longer or less, but surely the summons is to live now. There is no other preparation for eternal life. Who are the people whose forgiveness I must seek? Who are those whom I love but have never told them? What are the acts of kindness that I must do today? There is no time to lose.

TIMOTHY RADCLIFFE

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Meet the Parishioner

Fleur de Villiers: 'I've been a political animal all my life'

Sitting in her living room in Caversham Street, just a short walk from Christ Church's doors, Fleur de Villiers is telling me about her extraordinary life. From becoming the first woman political correspondent in South Africa's parliamentary press box, to her role in setting up the secret talks that helped end apartheid. She reported on Watergate, became friends with Nelson Mandela and worked with the World Health Organization on tackling polio in conflict zones. Rapidly it becomes clear that an hour will not be nearly enough to cover her fascinating story.

Initially, conversation is drawn to a painting of Venice above the mantelpiece, in which the artist has caught the shimmering, ethereal light that often reflects off the canals early in the morning. "I love the light," Fleur says. "It reminds me of South Africa."

Growing up in South Africa, Fleur had always wanted to be a journalist, and after graduating, she joined the Pretoria News. "I had been hired to go to the newsroom," she says, "but much to my horror I was told that, as there was already one woman in the newsroom, they couldn't take any more. So I was sent to do features. It was frustrating."

She turned it into an opportunity and during the 1960s covered the arts as a critic. She remembers visiting the UK to write about the theatre scene, a trip that included seeing Laurence Olivier in *The Merchant of Venice* and a very young Maggie Smith "who," she smiles, "I occasionally bump into in M&S these days."

After 10 years, it was time to move on. "As a critic if the work is really bad, you can have fun with it. If it's really good, you can enjoy it. The thing that kills you eventually, is the relentlessly mediocre."

She moved to the newsroom on various beats which included investigative work and writing on economics, before leaving for *The Sunday Times* in Johannesburg in the early 1970s, when she was appointed political correspondent and, eventually, political editor. "I was the first woman political journalist in par-



liament in Cape Town," she says with a smile, "which was interesting."

As a travelling correspondent, she covered major political events across the world, including the Watergate scandal, two US presidential elections – Ronald Reagan won both – and broke a world exclusive about the Entebbe raid, where an Israeli commando squad had freed hostages from a hijacked airplane, using her contacts at the very top of the Israeli government.

Covering the political situation in South Africa, Fleur was among a small group of journalists invited by the nationalist government in the mid-1970s to see the conditions at Robben Island, the prison holding Mandela and other political prisoners. "I saw him in his cell. It was a difficult ethical position to do it, but I wasn't going to be subject to any constraints." The government tried to censor her but the paper printed anyway. "If you cherish freedom you have to fight for it," she says.

In 1986, exhausted by the political situation, Fleur decided to take a sabbatical abroad. "After all the years of covering politics in South Africa, always believing that apartheid would implode, I thought at that stage, with the accession of PW Botha, that hope was diminishing rapidly."

She came to the UK on a visiting fellowship at the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) and then decided to stay on in Britain, writing leaders for *The Times* in London and acting as a consultant.

It was through this consulting work that Consolidated Gold, a multi-national company with operations in South Africa, asked what could be done to find a peaceful resolution there, as international pressure grew on the country and those who operated in it. "I said the only thing that can save South Africa is if both sides start to talk. Secretly." She adds: "My passion has always been for conflict resolution."

Some years before, she had been a Nieman Fellow at Harvard, and had heard Roger Fisher, the key strate-

gist on the US side of the Cuban Missile Crisis, lecturing on that subject of conflict resolution – "if only more people would read his stuff," she says. It informed her approach to the proposed talks.

The company backed the secret meetings, which brought together Afrikaner nationalists with members of the African National Congress to try and find common ground. "And we were able to put together the Mells talks," Fleur says. The secret summits in Mells Park in Somerset, UK, were held between 1987 and 1991 and were so sensitive they weren't revealed publicly for more than a decade. For her work on those meetings, Fleur was awarded the Companion of the Order of St Michael and St George (CMG) in 2011.

When Mandela was released from Robben Island in 1991, Fleur was part of the BBC commentary team covering the historic event.

And the arrival of peace in South Africa was so special for Fleur. "I've been a political animal all my life, and my entire life's aim and objective was to see the dismantling of apartheid. I welcomed it hugely." She talks of being 10 years old, sitting up late with her father to hear the results of the 1948 election that brought in the National Party and subsequently the apartheid laws. On the announcement, her father, who was bitterly opposed to the party and its policies, said it was "the end of South Africa."

"There's nothing I hate more than populism, and Afrikaner nationalism was a form of populism," she says. "I've seen it up close and it's horrible. At the moment I just despair. I despair of Europe, of this country and as far as the US is concerned – a country I love dearly..." she pauses, before adding simply, "Populism is innately bad."

Some 10 days after Mandela was released, she was having dinner with him in Johannesburg. "It was amazing, there were only eight of us there. I got to know him well." Mandela told her the Mells talks had "played a crucial role" in bringing peace in South Africa.

In describing Mandela, Fleur says, "He had boundless

humanity, and it was real." She adds, "What you saw with him was what you got. Real empathy, real love. He made connections with people wherever he went." She talked of organising a charity event at the Royal Hospital at which the Chelsea Pensioners gave him a guard of honour, all bedecked in glorious red. The start had to be delayed after he stopped and talked to each one of them.

Consulting on social responsibility led to another extraordinary episode: working with the World Health Organization – as well as with Lord Snowdon whose photographs documented the crisis and helped spread the message – on its campaign to eradicate polio. "They have come a long way on polio," she says. "There are still pockets, especially where there's conflict, but they've come a long way."

Fleur has now retired from writing and consulting. She was chair of the IISS for almost 20 years, stepping down in 2019. A member of the council of the Chelsea Society, she has lived in the house on Caversham Street since 1987, when her mother came from South Africa to live with her, and has long been closely involved with Christ Church, including being church warden from 2006 to 2012. She was also on the Diocesan Synod for many years, stepping down last year, and remains on the Bishop of Kensington's Advisory Council.

"When I started to go to Christ Church with my mum, it had been recently joined with St Luke's," she says. "There was still a sense of mutual mistrust, but Brian has done a fantastic job of creating a sense not just of a combined parish but of a united single parish – and it wasn't without blood, sweat and tears."

"It not only serves the people who go to church, but it does what a real functioning parish does: reaching out into the wider community," she says. "There is a strong sense of community in the church which radiates out... I can't pay tribute enough to what Brian has achieved, and what this community does."

NICK CLARK



Fleur with Nelson Mandela

YOUTH & CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES

"So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God." | Corinthians 10:31



Pancake Day, or Shrove Tuesday, is a feast day before the start of Lent on Ash Wednesday. This year it falls on 1 March. Shrove Tuesday marks the start of the 40 days leading up to Easter and has become a popular day in the calendar for adults and children alike!



The word shrove is the past tense of shrive, which means to confess. In the Middle Ages, this day was a time for people to go church and confess their sins and ask forgiveness. This allowed Christians to enter into the season of Lent and prepare for Easter with a clean spirit. They often returned home to have a feast, with pancakes among the popular dishes served. The reason for this was to use up foods such as fat, eggs and milk before Lent. And that tradition has continued today.

Parish Pancake Party on Shrove Tuesday, March 1, in St Luke's Vestry at 4.00pm. All are welcome and there will be activities for children. For catering purposes, please let me or the parish office know if you are planning to attend.

Mother Sunday Service 27 March, 9.30am, Christ Church

We shall be celebrating Mothering Sunday with a 30-minute family service for all ages. There will be no Sunday School provision in either of our churches as we will worship together. Please do come and join us for this wonderful occasion of honouring our mothers, and all women in our community, with daffodils given as a sign of our respect and love.

Here is a simple recipe that can be prepared and ready to eat in 15 minutes.

Ingredients:

3 eggs, 125g of white flour, 300ml milk, a pinch of salt, a pinch of sugar

Preparation:

In a bowl, beat eggs and stir in the salt and sugar. Add milk and stir again. Add flour and mix well.

Heat a frying pan and add a little butter or a drop of oil. Ladle in some of the pancake mixture and spread to form a circle. Slightly brown before flipping.

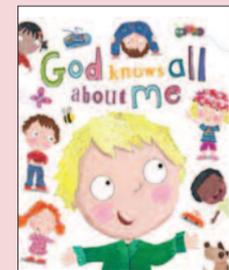
Place on a plate and add your favourite topping. Enjoy!

Send me a photo of your pancake-making experience!



Thank you and blessed Lent season!
Love, Anna

Bible Books for Children



God Knows All About Me

A sweet and charming book bursting with colour and life! God Knows All About Me is a book that addresses God's love for the little miracles that are children. It teaches us that no matter our mood or our being that He is always thinking about us and always loves us, no matter what. An important and comforting message to us all.

The colourful and inventive depiction of children having fun (while also being watched over by God) brings a lot of engagement and interaction, which makes this a wonderful read for both parent and child.

It brought Plum and me happiness in the knowledge that it is human and normal to have a range of emotions and feelings, and that this is perfectly fine because God knows who we are and how great we are... He loves us through everything. I know that we will have a lot of enjoyment revisiting this book time after time!



Clementine McGaw,
mum of Plum

FROM OUR REGISTERS



Rev'd Samuel Rylands baptising his son Josiah (right) and his nephew Gabriel (left) together at St Luke's



Lucia McMullen's baptism at Christ Church



The baptism of Clara Fletcher-Flood, with her family at St Luke's



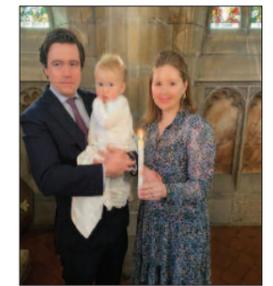
Effie Matthews with her parents at her baptism at Christ Church



Athena Lethbridge's baptism at Christ Church



Felix Lethbridge's baptism at Christ Church



Clementine Neave and her parents - baptised at Christ Church



Zaria Jazbinsek baptised with her son Sky Axl at St Luke's

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Golden Charter
Small Thinking For Large Life

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

Curate: The Revd Samuel Rylands
samuelrylands@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

For enquiries regarding 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.

Follow us on   

ST LUKE'S

Sydney Street,
London SW3 6NH



Churchwardens: Jamie Gibbs and Liz Brutus
Director of Music: Jeremy Summerly 07956 801 223
Organist: Rupert Jeffcoat

CHRIST CHURCH

Christchurch Street,
London SW3 4AS



Churchwardens: Jonathan and Louisa Price
Nick Smith
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)

SUNDAY SERVICES

0800 Holy Communion	St Luke's
1030 Sung Eucharist	St Luke's
1100 Sung Eucharist	Christ Church
1500 Choral Evensong	St Luke's

MORNING PRAYER

Monday	0900	Christ Church
Tuesday - Friday	0900	St Luke's

YOUTH & CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES

Children's Ministry Administrator Anna Stamenova:
Please contact Anna for any enquiries about children's groups, registrations and schools via the parish office, or annastamenova@chelseaparish.org

Children's Groups During Sunday Services

Sunday School at St Luke's (10.30am) and Christ Church (11.00am).

A crèche is available at both churches.

Youth Events for 11+ please contact Samuel Rylands for more details: 020 7351 7365, samuelrylands@chelseaparish.org

ABC Club During Term Time

Thursdays 1000-1130

Parent, carer and toddler group.

Uniformed Organisations all at St Luke's Hall

The Rainbows contact is 10thchelsea.rainbows@gmail.com. They meet at 5pm to 6pm on Tuesdays.

Brownies contact is 10thchelsea.brownies@gmail.com. They meet at 6pm to 7.30pm on Tuesdays.

Guides for girls 10 years to 14 years and **Rangers** 14 years to 18 years
Their contact is 10thchelseaguides@gmail.com. They meet at 6pm to 7.30pm on Tuesdays.

Beavers are the youngest part of the Scout movement. For 6 to 8 year olds it gives them a taste of what it means to be a scout, preparing them for the move to becoming a cub when they turn eight. They meet between 5.00pm-6.30pm on Thursdays.

Cubs are for boys and girls aged 8 to 10½. They meet between 7.00pm-8.30pm on Thursday evenings.

Scouts are for boys and girls aged 10½ to 14. They meet between 7.00pm-9.00pm on Friday.

Explorers are for boys and girls aged 14 to 18. They meet between 7.00pm-9.00pm on Monday.

Contact for Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Explorers is wolf2872@gmail.com

All events take place in St Luke's Hall

PARTY VENUES FOR HIRE

The Hall of Remembrance, Flood Street, St Luke's Hall, St Luke's Street, and The Hut, Alpha Place. All are available to hire for children's parties, workshops, rehearsals and public or private meetings. All halls are light and airy, on the ground floor with high ceilings. For more information contact tel: 020 7351 6133.

OPEN FOR PRAYER

St Luke's is open for prayer from
0900-1530 Monday to Saturday