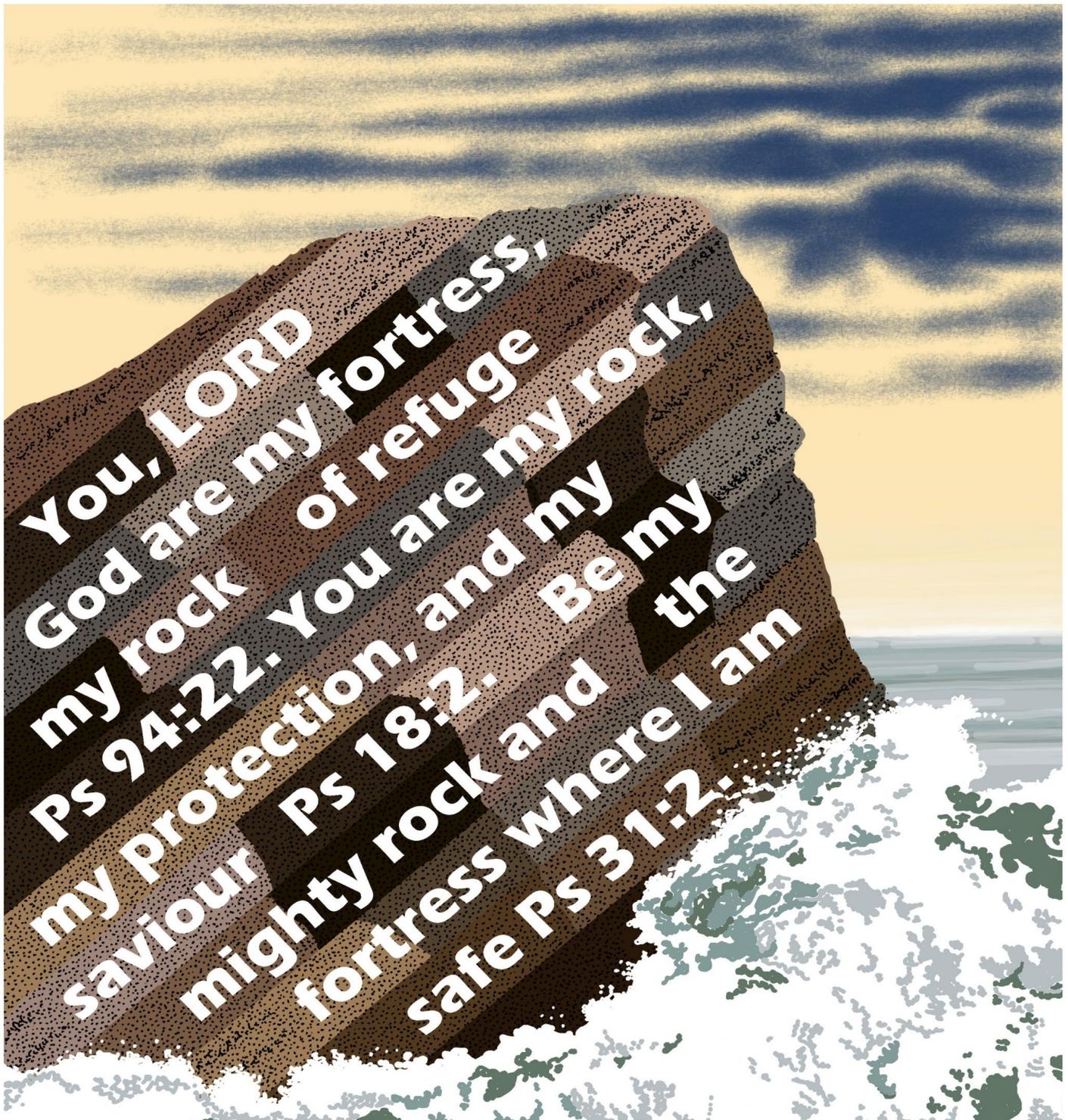


St Mary the Virgin

**AUGUST**

North Shoebury

**2020**



**THURSDAY 6TH AUGUST –TRANSFIGURATION OF OUR LORD**

**MONDAY 31ST AUGUST SUMMER BANK HOLIDAY**

## ***August 2020 – Feeding the five thousand***

*Matthew 14:16*

***And Jesus said to them, “They need not go away, you give them something to eat.”***

Matthew records the feeding of the five thousand as a way to let the disciples know that it will soon be the disciples who have to do things, Jesus will not always be with them.

Although this is a well-known episode, it contains a complex message, and it is part of a much larger series of parables and examples contained in Matthew’s Gospel. Matthew uses examples of rural life a great deal in his Gospel, and many of us only have limited experience of what might be called “country life”. So we are called upon to “open our minds” and use our imagination.

As I write this, in the middle of July, the Gospel readings use seeds as examples. But what are seeds? Those of us who garden now that plants grow from seeds. All of the plants in our gardens are grown from seeds, they are the ones we intended to grow but there are also weeds. Where do they come from?

We know that from the seeds, the plants grow, then from the plants when the time is right, we have the harvest. These plants grow more seeds. Some of these seeds are saved for planting next year, but from the others, food is the result of the harvest.

Contained in this brief exchange is a message that is often missed. They have been used to relying on Jesus, but suddenly, he is looking to them and they have no idea what to do next. Just as Jesus asked the disciples to feed the five thousand, he looks to us to feed the multitude today. Do we know what to do?

1<sup>st</sup> August is Lammas Day. The day the bread baked using the early wheat harvest is presented in church, and people give thanks for a successful harvest. In many places, there will be a Lammas Day procession and bread paraded through the streets. But this is now a forgotten festival as our dependence on the fruit of the harvest is replaced by a visit to the supermarket where everything is available all year round.

We forget to be thankful.

As we come to terms with Coronavirus, are we thankful? As I write this, we are still being advised to be cautious, I think this advice will be needed for some time to come. But as we continue, to a greater or lesser degree, to lockdown or shield ourselves, maybe we could find time to consider what we might be thankful for. Maybe you might like to jot something down that could be used in the Parish magazine in the coming months.

Until next month, keep safe. Look after yourself and others. Keep in touch with those who may be feeling lonely.

**God Bless**

**David**

**\* David Pierce is Lead Minister at St Mary the Virgin**

### **Louis Pasteur – ‘father’ of microbiology**

A tiny invisible thing that brings disease and death .... where have we heard that before?! But Louis Pasteur, who died 125 years ago this month, on 28<sup>th</sup> September 1895, was not interested in a virus from China, but in tiny living organisms that brought disease and death in other ways.

Pasteur made some outstanding breakthroughs. He discovered the principles of vaccination, and then created the first vaccines for anthrax and rabies. His medical discoveries provided support for the germ theory of disease and nullified the theory of spontaneous generation.

But Louis Pasteur is best known for his invention of the technique of treating milk and wine to stop bacterial contamination, a process that was named after him: pasteurisation. In doing so, he saved the French beer, wine and silk industries.





**The Church garden work party this month will be on Saturday 22nd August from 2-4pm**



**With many thanks to Tony Pond who has kept up the churchyard throughout the lockdown.**

### **Meditation on the Good Use of Sickness**

Lord, you are good and gentle in all your ways; and your mercy is so great that not only the blessings but also the misfortunes of your people are channels of your compassion. Grant that I may turn to you as a Father in my present condition since the change in my own state from health to sickness brings no change to you. You are always the same, and you are my loving Father in times of trouble and in times of joy alike.

*Blaise Pascal (1623 – 1662), mathematician and scientist*



After the Bible, John Bunyan's wonderful Christian allegory, the Pilgrim's Progress, is one of the most celebrated and widely-read books in the English language. It has been translated into more than one hundred languages around the world and keeps its place as a Christian classic.

Names of people and places from its pages have been commonplace wherever English is spoken. We need only recall Mr Great-Heart, Mr Valiant-for-Truth, Giant Despair, Madame Bubble, the Slough of Despond, Vanity Fair, the Delectable Mountains, the Hill Difficulty and the Celestial City.

Bunyan was born on 28 November 1628, at Elstow, near Bedford, England, of a poor family. He had little formal education and his father taught him to be a metal worker. His first wife died young. His second wife, Elizabeth, helped him considerably with his blossoming literary career. His conversion was the result of reading the Bible, and the witness of local Christians. From that time the Bible became the great inspiration of his life. He wrote more than fifty books on Christianity. A Baptist by conviction, he had little time for the Established Church.

Bunyan became a popular preacher, but because of his opposition to the Established Church and because he did not have a Church of England preaching licence, he was imprisoned in 1661. It was in prison that he wrote Pilgrim's Progress. It was not only Bunyan's greatest book but was destined to become one of the most popular Christian books in the world.

Pilgrim's Progress is an allegory, using the names of people and places from the Bible to teach spiritual lessons. The vivid and unforgettable imagery in the Pilgrim's Progress covers the whole Christian gospel from sin and condemnation all the way through faith, repentance, grace, justification, sanctification, and perseverance to heaven itself.

Bunyan died on 31 August 1688. His portrayal of the death of Mr Valiant For Truth is Bunyan at his allegorical best. This brave old soldier of Jesus Christ had received his summons to 'go home.' Calling his friends together he says, *'My sword I give to him who shall succeed me in my pilgrimage ... My marks and scars I carry with me, to be a witness for me, that I have fought His battles, Who will now be my rewarder.'* ... *So he passed over, and all the trumpets sounded for him on the other side...*



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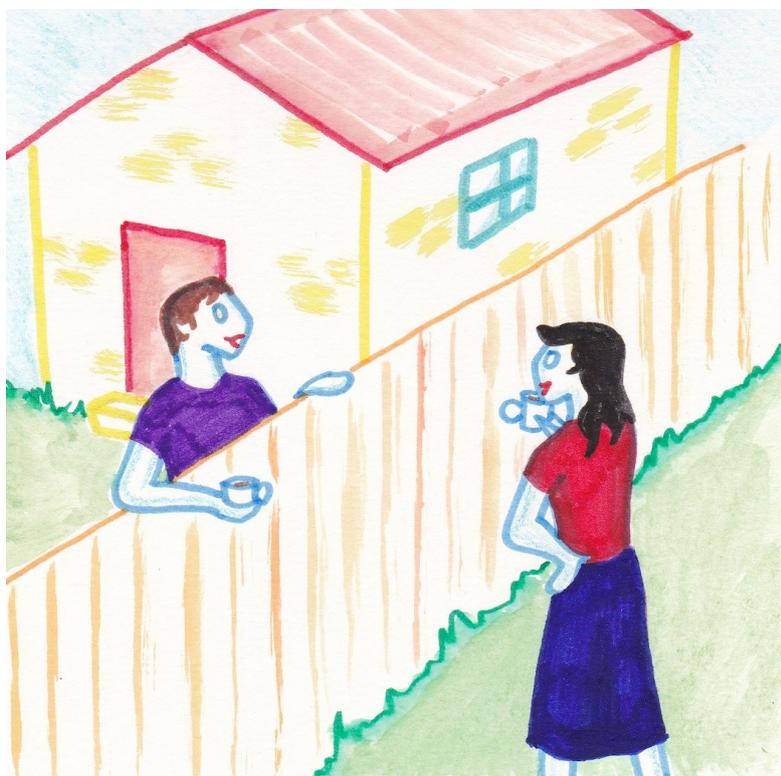
## Getting to know next door

This time last year, how well did you know your neighbours? Around one in five of us have since admitted that we had never even spoken to them.

What a difference a pandemic makes. Now twice as many of us have talked to our neighbours in the past week as compared with last year. A further one in three of us have also done something to help a neighbour. This works out to 33 million people having talked to a neighbour in the past week, and 15 million of them even helping one during lockdown.

Seven in 10 of us also said that people in our area are now more likely to stop for a chat, and three quarters of us want their new-found friendliness to continue.

The survey was commissioned for the Big Lunch, a National Lottery-supported initiative from the Eden Project.



If you want your neighbour to know what Christ will do for him,  
let the neighbour see what Christ has done for you. – *Anon*

# St Mary's Church Hall – Regular Hirers/Activities

<b>Monday</b>	<p><b>Strollercise</b> Strolling to 50's music 6-7,000 steps (3 miles) Fun, friendly, all ages, no gym kit required £4 per hour - No need to book 10 -11 am 11.15am -12.15pm Contact: Karen/Tracy 07745 154065</p>	<p><b>Barling &amp; Lt. Waking Women's Institute</b> 1<sup>st</sup> Monday of month, 2 pm Contact Phyl Wickenden 01702 582185</p>	
<b>Tuesday</b>	<p><b>Rachel's Story, Rhymes and Activity Time</b> Toddler Group at 10am except 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday Contact: Rachel 07780 374991</p> <p><b>U3A – Local History</b> 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of month 10.15 am to 12.15 pm Contact: Mick 01702 622356</p>	<p><b>U3A – Crafting</b> 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of month 1.30pm to 3.30pm Contact Janet 07810 879673</p>	<p>Private booking 5.30 – 7.30 pm</p> <p><b>Southend Wado Kai Tengudojo Karate</b> 7.30 – 9pm Contact: Tony 07874 854494</p>
<b>Wednesday</b>	<p><b>U3A Ukelele Improvers</b> 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of month 10 am to 12 noon Contact: Roni 07584 660096</p>	<p><b>U3A Knit &amp; Natter</b> 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of month 2 – 4pm Contact Pat 07476 078570</p>	
<b>Thursday</b>	<p><b>St Mary's Community Coffee Morning</b> 10.30 am to 12 noon All welcome</p>	<p><b>U3A Floristry</b> 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of month 1pm – 3.30pm Contact Jane 07743507511</p> <p><b>Sweaty Mama</b> Female Bootcamp 7.30 – 8.30pm Contact: Kellie 07847 249618</p>	<p>Private booking 5.45 – 6.45 pm</p>
<b>Friday</b>	<p><b>Diddi Dance</b> 9.15 – 10.15 am Funky pre-school dance class for boys and girls. Contact Jennifer Ripton 07756 407162</p>	<p><b>Marriott's Tai Chi</b> 11am – 12.00 pm Contact Tracey Cain 01702 290461</p>	

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# St James the Least of All

## On how to survive a weekend away with the young people

The Rectory

St James the Least of All



My dear Nephew Darren

I think your idea for both our Confirmation groups getting together for a weekend away – socially distanced, of course - was excellent and our meeting last week drew most of the plans together. We didn't take any minutes, so let me record the decisions I believe we made.

Since all of us have to sleep far apart at the centre, I am prepared to spend the nights at a local hotel. By chance, I have found that there is a four star one only a few miles away, so I have booked myself in.

As the dining area in the youth centre may be cramped, I am also willing to have dinner each evening at the hotel, thereby creating more space for the rest of you. An additional sadness is that, since breakfast at the hotel is not served until 8am, I will not be able to join you either for your pre-breakfast dip in the nearby stream. It would be grossly unfair to expect you to pack lunch for me, so I will arrange for the hotel to provide me with a picnic hamper for one which I can have while you all enjoy your cheese and pickle sandwiches.

I think it will be an excellent learning experience if you prepare all the teaching sessions yourself, but be assured that I will always be on hand to give the advice of experience. That large armchair near the fire in the common room seems to be the best place for me to sit, so I can keep an eye on proceedings, while I take on the responsibilities for stoking the fire. This reminds me; do make sure that the young people are encouraged to saw enough logs each morning for me to fulfil my obligations.

Naturally, my arthritis will prevent me being able to accompany you on your afternoon hikes, but I will cheerfully park my car wherever you leave the minibus, to provide a second vehicle in case of emergencies. I do not mind in the least waiting all those long hours until you get back; I have already found an attractive tea shop in the village.

I am fully aware that not sleeping or dining at the centre, not being responsible for preparing the teaching, nor being involved on the walks will mean that my contributions will be ever so slightly limited, but these are sacrifices I gladly make in order to give you further experience in your ministerial career.

Your loving uncle,  
Eustace

*Editor: The Revd Peter Crumpler, a Church of England priest in St Albans, Herts, and a former communications director for the CofE, reports on a recent warning from the Trussell Trust.*

### **Churches warned to prepare for ‘tidal wave of poverty’**

Church leaders are being urged to be ready to respond to the lasting impact of the pandemic on the country’s poorest people.

The effect on urban, suburban and rural communities is likely to be severe with many thousands of jobs being lost and livelihoods threatened. The poorest in society may find themselves hardest hit.

Churches are being encouraged to respond to the devastating impact of the pandemic and to build on the numerous social projects already in place.



The Trussell Trust that supports around 1200 UK foodbanks is warning of a 'tidal wave of poverty' poised to engulf the country.

Chief Executive Emma Revie has called on church leaders to talk to their congregations about justice and compassion and to work to address the root causes of poverty.

Speaking at a Bible Society webinar she encouraged church leaders "increasingly to talk to their congregations about God's concern for justice and compassion to characterise the structures of our society: the way our benefit system works, the way our economy functions, people's employment conditions and wage levels.

Emma Revie said that the Trussell Trust was "very clear that food banks are not a solution to poverty" and the charity wanted "to see people experiencing fulness of life and not being trapped by poverty."

She praised the vital role played by churches in running foodbanks and encouraged congregations "That when we pray for our foodbanks, that we would also allow ourselves room to lament the injustices that make them necessary in the first place and seek wisdom about how we might be part of bringing about change.

"Because if we don't concern ourselves with these things, the tidal wave of poverty is going to be too high and too powerful for us to respond to and we will see many more people being swept into destitution in the UK."

At the webinar 'Mission during lockdown and beyond,' the Bible Society published research showing that church leaders are expecting increased demand for food banks, poverty relief, mental health work, bereavement support, relationship counselling, as well as courses such as Alpha that introduce people to the Christian faith.



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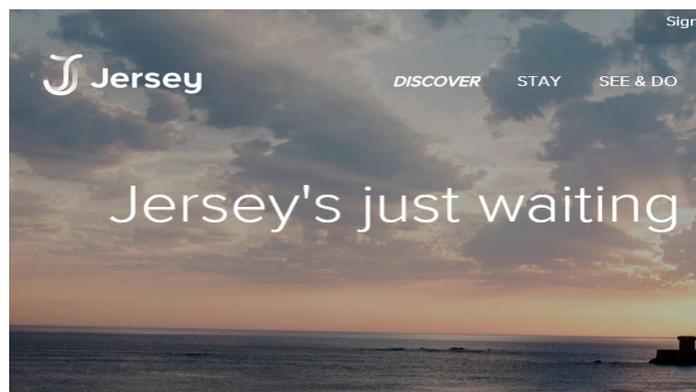
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## **CPO - helping churches and Christians reach their communities during lockdown**

Churches across the UK have been finding different ways to worship God, care for their communities, and express their faith during this unprecedented pandemic – and many of them have turned to the Christian agency CPO to provide specific resources to help.

The company's website offers a wide variety of posters and digital downloads reminding communities that their church is still alive and well and that they are supporting key workers with prayer and a rainbow. All the coronavirus resources are together here: <https://www.cpo.org.uk/catalogue.aspx?cat=80329>

There are also postcards from HOPE, and for those who are not online, posters advertising the daily telephone worship service offered free by the Church of England (<https://www.cpo.org.uk/range.aspx?range=6073&cat=80329&prod=C6073MP&pt=10>), plus cards offering help to those who are shielding (<https://www.cpo.org.uk/product.aspx?prod=C6051IC&cat=80329>).

Many churches have advertised their online services and found them an exciting new way of engaging with people who might never have come into their building. Yet it's been a steep learning curve for many churches, grappling with video technology, ways to connect over the video conferencing app Zoom, and how to offer Christian teaching, worship and community in as effective and attractive way as possible.

To help, there is a valuable crowdsourced handbook for churches at <https://covid.churcheshandbook.co.uk/> which includes advice, tips, know-how and training on everything from live streaming to crisis management, church admin to mental health, prayer to exiting lockdown, evangelism to community aid, youth and children's work to how to handle your giving.

You'll also find lots of free know-how at <https://www.cpodigital.org/toolkit> - handy ideas, resources, ways of doing things that will help your church grow, develop and serve your communities, and a growing list of churches offering online worship services (<https://www.cpodigital.org/church-live-streams>).



"But did they plough the fields  
and scatter at a safe distance?"

Fools rush in where fools  
have been before.

It's called 'take home' pay  
because you can't afford to  
go anywhere else with it.

Success is relative – the  
greater the success, the  
more relatives.

If at first you succeed, try to  
hide your astonishment.

### Mid-week services

<b>Monday</b>	9:00am	<b>Morning prayer</b>
<b>Thursday</b>	9:00am	<b>Morning prayer</b>
	10:00am	<b>Communion</b>

### HAVE YOU ANYTHING FOR THIS MAGAZINE?

Thank you to David for his  
contributions this month. If you have anything which would be of  
interest, please contact the editor, Craig Hunter early in the month,  
so that your space can be reserved.

07932503644; [chunter2009@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:chunter2009@hotmail.co.uk)

## CONTACT DETAILS

For all enquiries, including weddings, baptisms, blessings etc. please, in the first instance, contact the Churchwarden.

Phone numbers are all area code 01702 unless stated

<b>Lead Minister</b>	<b>Revd. David Pierce</b>	07305 710265 david@revdavidpierce.net
<b>Churchwarden</b>	<b>Craig Hunter</b>	07932503644 chunter2009@hotmail.co.uk
Hall Bookings	Phyl Wickenden	582185
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	Phyl Wickenden	582185
Readers, Chalice Assistants & Sides persons Rota Parish Magazine	Church Wardens Craig Hunter	0793203644 chunter2009@hotmail.co.uk
Churchyard Cleaning co-ordinator	(Vacancy) Pat Fitch	585289

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*This series is written by Dr Ruth M Bancewicz, who is Church Engagement Director at The Faraday Institute for Science and Religion in Cambridge. Ruth writes on the positive relationship between Science and Christian faith.*

## **A Scientist Reflects: Suffering and the Image of God**

As I write, volunteers are distributing food to people who have been deprived of their usual ways of earning an income during the lockdown in a Majority World country. I became involved in raising money for this initiative very recently, and saw videos from the first people to receive packages. There were expressions of happiness, hope, quiet sadness, resignation, desperation – most often a mixture of several of these feelings at the same time.

I believe that our cries for answers at times like this, and our deep longing for things to be better, kinder, more just, less painful and chaotic, are a sign that we are made in the image of God. The Bible describes God creating men and women, instructing them to rule over the earth, and giving them the freedom to choose what they will do. The world God made was described as “very good”, but human wrongdoing caused a rift between people and God, and also between us and the rest of creation.

From a scientist’s perspective, it seems that the *potential* for accidents, disease and death – for both animals and humans – may have been part of God’s very good creation, and there was a real threat of famine, albeit far rarer than in our current mismanaged version of creation? How would we have managed life in what Genesis describes as an un-subdued world if our relationship with God hadn’t broken down, and evil hadn’t been unleashed? Maybe painful experiences would have been experienced as challenges that brought us closer to each other and to God, rather than bringing us the experience of suffering (which I would define more particularly as involving distress, isolation and fear)? Of course, these are theoretical questions that no one can answer, but perhaps they are worth exploring.

God has already responded to suffering at a root level by taking it on Himself. Through His death and resurrection, Jesus broke the power of sin and death. We do not yet see the final results of those decisive actions – the end of suffering for all those who trust Him – but we can already feel their impact. For example, many people have experienced the wonderful effect, either in their own lives or by receiving kindness from others, which is described by these words: “I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh” (Ezekiel 36:26).

Some of the people who received food yesterday were, in the words of the community team leader, “really desperate”, but yet they still trust God to meet their needs. My hope is that the worldwide Church will, with God’s help, be part of the answer to their prayers – demonstrating our true status as people made in the image of God.

### **All in the month of August**

**100 years ago**, on 21<sup>st</sup> August 1920 that Christopher Robin Milne was born. He was son of the author A. A. Milne, and he appeared as a character in his father’s Winnie-the-Pooh stories. (Died 1996.)

**80 years ago**, on 13<sup>th</sup> August 1940 that the main phase of the Battle of Britain began. The German Luftwaffe launched raids on RAF airfields and radar installations. On 29<sup>th</sup> August Winston Churchill paid tribute to the Royal Air Force in a famous House of Commons speech, saying, “Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few.”

**75 years ago**, on 6<sup>th</sup> August 1945 that the US Army Air Forces dropped an atomic bomb on the city of Hiroshima, Japan. The centre of the city was totally destroyed, and 80,000 people were killed immediately. A further 60,000 died by the end of the year. It was the first city in history to be hit by a nuclear weapon.

**Also 75 years ago**, on 9<sup>th</sup> August 1945 that the US Army Air Forces dropped an atomic bomb on the city of Nagasaki, Japan. 40,000 people died immediately and about 33,000 more by the end of the year. It was the second (and last) city to experience a nuclear attack.

There was a man, though some did count him mad,  
The more he cast away, the more he had.

– *John Bunyan*



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