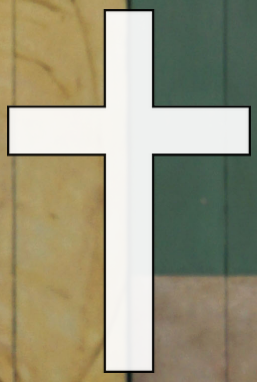
CHURCH OF LOW FURNESS

COMMUNITY MAGAZINE



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Spirituality of Creativity

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AUGUST 2020 Issue 8

CHURCH OF LOW FURNESS

COMMUNITY MAGAZINE - AUGUST 2020

ISSUE 8

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The views expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of the editorial and management team; none of the content is expected to cause hurt or upset, but rather enjoyment and stimulation. We cannot be held responsible for errors or omissions, nor for unintended human error; but we look forward to serving you well with our magazine.

EDITORIAL

It's not unusual for events to overtake the best laid plans, and it can be difficult to understand why that happens. Indeed, many question whether a loving God would allow that to happen at all, and take the view that such events are the work of the devil. I prefer to think of life as a journey through a series of doors, and some of those doors we open and walk through and some we don't. Whatever choice we make, that choice will never take us away from God's love, a reality described so eloquently and completely by Paul in Romans 8, and many of you may have enjoyed listening to Lucie's reflection on that passage in her podcast on the last Sunday of July.Many of the doors that we would have liked to have seen opening for us in recent months have seemed firmly shut, but that does not mean that we have been separated from God's love. When we received an offer on our house, the first in the nearly 2 years that it has been for sale, we were faced with a dilemma, inasmuch as it was a much lower offer than the agents had led us to expect. Should we close that door or accept it and walk through it. We decided to walk through it, but in the full knowledge that we would not be able to find a property locally in the Ulverston area that would meet our needs for the rest of our lives at a price commensurate with the value of the offer we had received. Yet within 10 days we had found a property in Alnwick in Northumberland that did - so another door had opened for us. That means that we will be leaving a lot of friends and a way of life that we have enjoyed for nearly 30 years, but we will be nearer to our remaining close relatives in the UK, we will be living in a suburban community with much closer proximity to neighbours and we hope and pray new friends. We will also be living much closer to those amenities that we may find it more difficult to access as we grow older if we stay in our current residence. So we hope and pray that we will find many more doors in the future, and we are confident that whichever ones open or remain closed, nothing will separate us from the love of God.

The theme for this month's magazine had been written long before I knew we were going to be leaving - it is on hands! It was fun to think about and to write, and I hope some of you may enjoy reading it. Our hands are perhaps the most useful adjuncts of our minds, and we all learn different skills with our hands, each skill adding something to the quality of life enjoyed by all those with whom we share our community. No single person, nor a single skill is more important than another and perhaps most importantly we all have a duty to share our skills - so each succeeding generation can build on the achievements of its predecessor - and hopefully move inexorably closer to creating God's Kingdom here on earth.





View from a Vicarage Visitor



It might seem that your editor is becoming an apologist for Lucie's work schedule - and in a sense that is true - but I feel no shame in doing that. When someone has a difficult work load that is physically, mentally and emotionally demanding, it is all too easy for onlookers to expect more from them than they can deliver. It is also equally easy for someone who senses, or thinks that they sense that they are not meeting the expectations of others to work longer than they should do. In doing so they can easily become oblivious to the suboptimal performance that occurs in failing to acknowledge one's own limitations, and none of us should be ashamed to say that enough really is enough. I had a socially distanced conversation with Lucie at the beginning of the month, and whilst I am sure that she would have written a piece for this slot, had I insisted, I felt that it would be wrong for me to ask that of her given everything else that was landing on her plate - so I didn't.

We both agreed that the coming months will be very challenging for God's Church due in part to the changes foisted on us by Covid-19, but that challenge is to think and pray about what people's spiritual needs are and how best we as a Church can help them to be achieved.

It is our firm belief that in the face of difficult times, more people do search for spiritual support, and the evidence for that comes from the numbers utilising a myriad of online offerings from all sections of our Church. Would those people have come to our church services if the societal challenge had not been one in which isolation of individual households was a key part of the strategy to protect the vulnerable? I don't know the answer to that question, but to assume the answer is yes is perhaps the most damaging mistake we could make. We must plan for a future which is different, we must try to make the vision of Church one which makes everyone welcome, and in the western world where so many have already had an experience which didn't inspire them, we have to think about why that is and how we need to change. I know from my conversation with Lucie that she will be thinking and praying about this. I hope this may be in your prayers too, so that we can all approach this with an open mind, but more particularly please pray for our Church, pray for Lucie and for all those who lead it. Prayer can lead to change, and if that change leads more people to find God it is change from which all will benefit. There will be change in the months to come and it won't be a change to what we call normality. It will be different, but we must work, hope and pray that the way in which we use and take advantage of that difference leads to more people in our community finding God; finding God in the people they meet, finding God in what they say, finding God in what they do and the love they show to others.





Where is your editor going?

Following the light to a new dawn?



Bible Verse of the Month

Psalm 98, 1 "[1] Sing to the Lord a new song, for he has done marvellous things; his right hand and his holy arm have worked salvation for him."

From lectionary for 25th August 2020.

There are times in life when we justifiably ask ourselves; what on earth has happened to us that should make us happy and that should make us want to rejoice? Yet, here in Psalm 98, the psalmist answers that question and encourages us to celebrate; to give thanks to God and to have a party! As we travel in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, we might well ask ourselves why we should rejoice and what is there to party about? In trying to answer these questions, you may, like me, ponder on the words of the English poet and hymn writer William Cowper, who wrote "God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform." The psalmist's invitation to sing to the Lord a new song, because he has done wonderful things with his right hand and arm and made us safe, may seem a bit too optimistic, and we might struggle to use Cowper's words to help us to understand how we have been made safe. The psalmist, here, is being prophetic and this verse foretells the coming of the Messiah, the coming of Jesus Christ. We know from Jesus' teaching that those of us who are already comfortable should not necessarily be expecting Jesus to be making us even more comfortable. In fact Jesus invites us to discard our comforts, to give to others and to trust that what we need will be provided; our reward is the fulfillment of that trust. In many instances, the effects of disease are more dire for the world's poor and for the underprivileged than for those who are better off, and there is no reason to suppose this doesn't apply to Covid-19. Disease doesn't bypass the better off, they are affected and they can and do help others, and there have been many examples during the Covid 19 crisis in which the values that Christ asked us to adopt have shone through. We have seen people providing meals for the poor in our community, we have seen a government respond to the overtures of a BAME footballer, who in recalling the relative poverty of his own childhood has campaigned to have those entitled to free school meals to receive the same provision through the school holidays. The incidents in the USA in which African Americans have been subject to unnecessary and unjustifiable brutality by law enforcement officers, has led to a world -wide wake up to ways in which racism can pervade society without us understanding what is happening and why. Shouldn't we rejoice that this time it is not only the BAME groups who are campaigning for change, but for the first time they have been joined by whites. The hand of God is still at work in our world, and the message hasn't changed, but more of us have started to heed the message, which is surely a reason to rejoice. We should, perhaps, recall the penultimate verse of Cowper's hymn: *The bud may have a bitter taste, but sweet will be the flow'r*. (Ed)

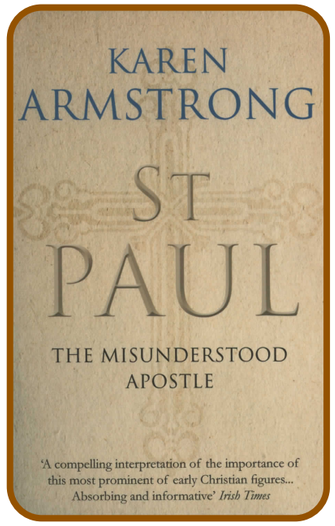
Common Worship & BCP Readings for August 2020 (Year A)

Date	*Day*	*1st Reading*	*2nd Reading*
Sunday 2nd August 2020 Green	Eighth Sunday after Trinity	Romans 9, Verses 1-5	Matthew 14, Verses 13-21
Sunday 9th August 2020 Green	Ninth Sunday after Trinity	Romans 10, Verses 5 - 15	Matthew **14**, Verses 22-33
Sunday 16th August 2020 Green	Tenth Sunday after Trinity	Romans 11, Verses 1-2a, 29-32	Matthew 15, Verses 21-28
Sunday 23rd August 2020 Green	Eleventh Sunday after Trinity	Romans 12, Verses 1-8	Matthew 16, Verses 13-20
Sunday 30th August 2020 Green	Twelfth Sunday after Trinity	Romans 12, Verses 9-end	Matthew 16, Verses 21-end
Sunday 6th September 2020 Green	Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity	Romans 13, Verses 8-end	Matthew 18, Verses 15-20



Hand stencils in the Cueva de las manos 35,0000 - 38,000 years BCE - Argentina

Christian writing, books and verse



TITLE: **St Paul** The misunderstood apostle
AUTHOR: **Karen Armstrong**
PUBLISHER: **Atlantic Books 2015**

Excerpt: "When Paul described his Damascus experience to his disciples in Galatia, he said only that God had chosen "to reveal his Son to me for the exact purpose that I might preach him among the gentiles."[54] When Paul saw the ritually defiled body of Jesus at God's right hand, he understood exactly why he had received this mission. He had chosen to live in the Holy Land because the gentile world was unclean. Jews tended to regard the non-Jewish nations as impure and morally inferior. But in raising Jesus, God had shown he did not judge by these earthly standards and that he stood by people who were despised and denigrated by the rules and laws of this world. God had no favourites. It was now time to bring the knowledge of the One God to the pagan nations." [54] Galations 1:15-16, as translated in Segal, *Paul the Convert,* 13

For me, Paul is in many ways the most iconic of the early apostles, not least because it was he who first saw and explicitly preached the Gospel of "inclusivity", the Good News that God was for all, not just the Jews, and was able to not only articulate those values that mattered and had been handed down through successive generations but also to distinguish them from those aspects of Jewish ritual which did not. Paul was also clear that we would be judged by God as to how we had endorsed those values in our hearts and in our daily lives, rather than judged by our fellow men about our adherence to ritual that bore no direct relationship to those key values set out by Jesus.

Karen Armstrong skilfully explores Paul's life; the influences that fell upon him and his teaching to the nascent Christian communities in Asia Minor. She brings out very clearly the tension between Jewish orthodoxy and the teaching of Jesus. Her narrative invites the speculation that if it was not for St Paul, the power of Christianity in a relatively pagan, gentile world might have withered and been subsumed into mainstream Judaism where it would have become a footnote in history, rather than the global church that it is today. She extensively references each section of the book and most of the references are scriptural, and only a few refer to other learned texts. For someone whose purpose is furthering their own understanding rather than an academic goal, I found this a great boon.

Much of the more learned literature on Paul seems to me to comprise a rather dry narrative about "righteousness" and "justification by faith". Whilst these concepts are no doubt important in their own right, they are not ideas that are frequently picked up by preachers, for which I am eternally grateful. For that reason alone I found this book by Karen Armstrong a cut above many others that I have dipped into, only to return them to the shelf unfinished. She makes the less flattering questions about Paul's teaching and beliefs such as the allegations of his misogyny, be seen in an informed and proper light. She reminds us that Paul's unique authorship of all his epistles is in considerable doubt, in particular those passages that appear to contradict his teaching on gender equality. She points out that the passage often cited (1 Corinthians 14, 34-35) may well have been inserted later by those copying his texts who wanted to ensure they conformed to norms of Greco-Roman behaviour.

Whilst I don't think this book will interest the casual reader, if you want to understand more about St Paul and are prepared to take time and consider some of the scriptural texts referenced then I would certainly recommend Karen Armstrong. (Ed)



Ancient Corinth - the plaque on the wall on the left may be the site where Paul spoke.



Putting your hand in your pocket for God's Church: to achieve what?

"Christ has no body on earth now but yours, no hands but yours, no feet but yours; yours are the eyes through which he looks with compassion on the world; yours are the feet with which he walks to do good; yours are the hands with which he blesses all the world."

Attributed to St Teresa of Avila 1515-82 - (*but attribution contested*).

There are some who challenge the notion that Christ has a dependency on us, and see those words attributed to St Teresa as implying such a dependency. But, perhaps that is the wrong way to perceive them. Man was made free and in exercising our freedom we can choose how to live our lives; we can choose whether we wish to live by God's will, or whether we prefer to live by the whim of human nature. We can choose whether to ignore the call of the Holy Spirit that speaks to each one of us irrespective of our personal creed, or whether to respond to it, whatever the difficulties that such a response might incur. The work of our hands is the outward expression of our response to the Holy Spirit, whether that is in the transference of our thoughts on to paper, providing clean water and food to the underprivileged, performing delicate surgical procedures, or creating things which improve the quality, not only of our own lives, but the lives of others too. When our hands do Christ's work, we are witnessing to others that Christ is in us, we are witnessing the unity of all that lives as a part of the body of Christ in the world. Paul has summarised this for us in Ephesians 4, 15 -16, where he says, "....speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does it work." The body that Paul speaks of is the Church, and the church only functions well as a body when all its parts are working together and responding to the call of Christ. That process is dependent on each one of us, because we are the hands, the feet, the eyes, the ears of that body, and whilst each part of a body has its own unique function, it is only through responding to Christ that the coordination of that body becomes efficient and effective. When that happens all who look at the church will be witnessing Christ in the love and the actions of individual church members. You may wonder what has suddenly led me to thinking and writing about this. Well, the answer is simply from pondering what each of us could and should be doing in response to those things that affect our lives today. One of the deadliest and perhaps most difficult side effects of the current Covid-19 pandemic is dealing with the economic, social and psychological consequences. The economic consequences are not simply a challenge

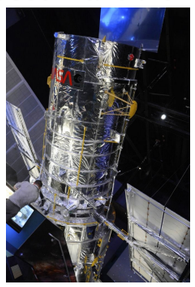
to those working in the travel and hospitality sectors of our economy, but they effect the ministry of the Church too. At a webinar organised by the Carlisle Diocese on July 3rd, someone asked whether the Diocese had a buildings strategy? The questioner had rightly put their finger on something that is all too easy to dump in the "too difficult" box, and move on to something else. Many churches in Cumbria, and doubtless in a lot of other dioceses too, have dwindling congregations, their Parochial Church Councils (PCC) struggle to recruit new members, monies donated to them are quickly consumed by the costs of keeping the heat in, the lights on and the rain out, but economic reality suggests that their closure is imminent. Yet before that happens the local community who love the building find the funds to carry out repairs, that sustain it for a few more years until the next crisis. The question posed at the webinar was answered, in my view correctly, by suggesting that this was a local matter, not one for a top down decision by the diocese. So this led me to ask, as a PCC Treasurer and Churchwarden, what I should be doing about this.

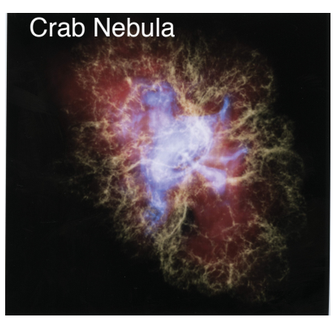
In answering that question I was aware that I stood the risk of making more enemies than friends, but I'll take that risk. My starting point is where I began, it is about whether we see the Church as a beloved building that we visit for the purposes of marriage (much less frequently in recent years) and funerals (both those of others and eventually our own). I don't think Paul's vision of the Church had anything to do with buildings, it was a unified body committed to showing the same love for others that Jesus Christ has shown for us, and doing that by bearing witness to his will. At present the day to day running expenses of the Church of which I am treasurer consume about half of our annual giving, more than a third of the regular congregation and half of the PCC live outside the parish, only two members of the regular congregation are below retirement age and there was only one community event last year organised by the Church. The parish offer last year was only 25% of what it was 5 years ago, and without new givers, those who remain would need to treble their annual giving in order to get back to where we were 5 years ago. On the other hand if we closed the church and worshipped at another local church and sustained current giving - then last year's parish offer could theoretically more than double. I am sure that the person who raised the question at the webinar was thinking along the same lines as me. We are all called upon to think and pray about whether it is God's will that we should continue to spend money on keeping the lights on and the building warm in winter (which costs more than the weekly giving at that time of year). Given that to do so will limit the funds available for ministry, might it better to consider whether it would serve God's purpose better if we were to drive to a different church, thereby increasing funds available for ministry without dipping into pockets that may not be very deep. The economic picture as I see it, although not spelled out in quite such stark terms by the diocese, is that if we don't address this question we will have lots of empty churches and no-one to minister in them. The alternative seems more attractive to me - that is fewer churches with larger, more active church communities and a sustainable economic future for ministry. Which model better bears witness to the love of Christ? As you strive to answer that question, which I hope you will, remember that Christ has no body on earth now but yours, no hands but yours,.....! (Ed)



Spirituality - of Creativity

Human creativity is not something that has evolved in the species Homo Sapiens in complete isolation. We know for instance that several other species have learned how to use objects readily available in their environment as tools. But the speed at which human creativity has evolved and the advances that have come from it do make me stop and think; think about two things in particular. The first thought is simply one of awe and wonder at the beauty, the skill, the thought and the creative desire that has gone into making something. My second thought is about the teamwork underlying that creation. Whilst you may, like me, experience a sense of awe and wonder, or possibly disappointment, when you see a work of art, listen to a piece of music, or just employ the latest technology to enhance your own life, I wonder how often we truly appreciate the teamwork. The great artists were dependent on patrons who valued their work, and the accomplished and acknowledged masters, themselves, led teams of artists, so the idea that work from their "school" is solely their own is completely false. Yet how much more so is that true today, when we think of things like the Hubble Telescope put together by teams of scientists, engineers and developers over many years and then delivering images like the one below. When you look at a facsimile of the Hubble telescope in a museum and then think about how the telescope was conceived, constructed, and then put into low earth orbit in 1990 and is still transmitting images today; it is just as awe inspiring as, for instance, Michelangelo's Creation of Adam (p25). Since 1990 it has been subject to a major optical adjustment in orbit 3 years after its launch in and has had intra-orbital servicing on 4 further occasions to date. The teams of people who have worked to achieve this give us insight into the spiritual drive that exists in all of us that allow us to achieve the seemingly impossible when we work together. The spirituality of creation is more about being a part of something much bigger than ourselves, than it is about self. When we reflect on our own small contribution to the final achievement, it is important to remember that what we achieve together will always be something that no individual can achieve on their own. An important part of the spirituality of creation is that acknowledgement, that what has been achieved together must be a shared joy,





a shared goal attained. The spirituality of that is not new, it has been appreciated by many people for thousands of years, but there will always be those who want to set themselves above others and not understand that, whatever the ultimate goal, the person doing the humblest of tasks is as pivotal to success as the scientist with the new idea. We often talk about God's Church as a "body", and how each part of the body is as important as the next, a concept all too easily forgotten in our everyday lives, and yet when faced with really difficult challenges we suddenly realise that we are all in this together.

The recent drive to develop a vaccine against Covid-19 could be viewed as something with the potential to make the successful developing team very wealthy, but at least one of those teams based in the UK has avowed that its goal must be to produce something that is available to the whole world as quickly as possible, not just those who live in the wealthy and developed parts of our planet. That goal is to be applauded and celebrated, it should inspire each of us. The notion that we see beyond what reflects on one or two individuals in the short term, but have a vision that is for the benefit of all mankind, no matter where they are born, takes us in a direction where we begin to re-establish trust in a fractured world. The true spirituality of creation is about trust in each other, the understanding that in working together we can achieve so much more than simply working for ourselves. The leadership that achieves this objective won't be found amongst the political classes on their own, it has to be a much bigger movement than that, a movement in which the common purpose, the common trust within and between communities, demands the values in their own local leaders that will achieve that.

The spirituality of that can only begin to be realised when you look closely at successful projects to understand how and why well functioning teams deliver, and how that of itself inspires others and assists progress. Creation is a word which tends to be associated with specific objects, usually artistic, but that is not the right way to look at creation. The constructs within which we conduct our daily lives are based on creations; creations of systems and processes as well as objects of beauty. As our technology evolves, the way in which we experience the awe and wonder of creation will change. Sometimes we fail to appreciate that which is most simple.and substitute it with complexity. For instance the t



theatre at the ancient Greek health spa developed by Aesculapius, son of Appollo, at Epidavros (left) was built for local people on the back of the health spa's success (300BCE). The man standing at the centre was reciting a speech from Shakespeare's Henry V, and each word could be heard where I was sitting when I took the photograph (without any amplification). It made me wonder why we go to listen to God's word in places where the celebrant can only be heard through a "Sound system"? I heard it suggested by a Bishop on "You Tube" that amplification takes the fire out of the sermon! Perhaps we need fire and passion to bring us together?(Ed)

FOOTSTEPS FORWARD AUGUST 2020

It's been a long time since Furness Footsteps last met – all the way back in February. It was actually a nice day. We've had many nice days (and some not quite so nice days) since then. Days when we could have spent time wandering around the lovely corner of God's creation we live in here in Furness. But there has been the awful Coronavirus that has affected us all, infected many, and, sadly claimed the lives of too many. Thankfully the virus is now much less prevalent than it was, but it's still lurking around and still able to wreak havoc again. So we are still unable to go out and enjoy the countryside. A place where all our walkers find peace, something we all need in the current crisis.

But the purpose of Footsteps is not just the go for a pleasant walk and find peace. It is to find God through His creation. The start of that journey for many may well be the peace and tranquillity that God's creation is inlaid with. And every journey has to start somewhere. So it is a real sadness that those journeys that started last year have been so badly interrupted. If the virus is held at bay we might just manage to meet as group again this year. Before that can happen we will have to do a 'risk assessment' just like we are having to do for returning to our church buildings for corporate worship. In the short term (and possibly the medium term too) we will have to take our own coffee/tea and snacks with us as most of the watering holes are either still shut or very restricted.

I'm hopeful that we can manage a couple of walks later – perhaps in autumn, but it will depend on the prevalence of the coronavirus at the time. I'll post updates on both the Church of Low Furness website and Facebook page and the Furness Footsteps Facebook page.

In the mean time stay safe and well

God bless

Graham

Watch the Church of Low Furness and Tarn News websites - if events are due to happen before the next edition you can read about it there - see page 28 (Ed)



Hands are so useful to us - and as St Paul said to the Ephesian elders at Miletus:

"...these hands of mine have supplied my own needs and the needs of my companions."



The hand and the mind - do we underestimate what we can do with them?

There is a common misconception that when we see people do things with their hands that we can't do, they must have been endowed with gifts that we haven't got. At the extremes of performance that is probably true, but for most of those skills that are based on the use of our hands, most of us can do more than we think, but regrettably we don't all have time to do everything. It took me well over 10 years from graduating as a doctor to becoming sufficiently proficient as a surgeon that I could perform most of the expected repertoire of procedures without supervision and direct guidance. I learned how to tie knots one handed. I learned to appreciate tension in a suture so that tissue was apposed without occluding the blood supply and would quickly heal without any risk of leakage of blood or gastrointestinal content. Whilst it is true that surgical skills don't immediately make me a proficient piano player, artist, or carpenter, on the other hand the notion that I couldn't do any of those things adequately if I put my mind to it, probably isn't true either. The thing we often ignore is that training the hands to accomplish tasks that we perceive rather more easily than we can deliver, is that delivering complex tasks requires motivation, self belief and the will to learn and to practice. One might easily jump to the conclusion that in a world in which we can build machines to do many of the tasks that were previously done by hand, even play music and undertake surgical operations, that manual dexterity will decline. If that assumption proves correct it will be because we let it happen. I think it is mistakenly believed that people who sit in front of a computer and play computer games have few if any hand skills. In fact that assumption is almost certainly incorrect; for many of these games there is a highly developed mind-hand skill set which may well be translational into other areas. Surgical robots don't work independently of surgeons, what they do achieve is the capability of a surgeon to make very fine movements accurately in a confined space in which it is difficult to access and visualise the key structures. By making instruments that move only one or two millimetres when the surgeons hand moves 1-2 cm makes a huge difference to performance of operations like total prostatectomy where access is also very difficult. These concepts show how we have moved tasks from being a perception of what we would like to do, to something that we can much better achieve when we use our minds in new and creative ways to assist our hands. We should also recognise that using machines like dishwashers and washing machines are but two examples of ways in which we are freed from the more mundane tasks of life and have time for a huge variety of other pastimes and sports. Cricket, basketball, table tennis, canoeing, angling and snooker are just a few examples of activities that we couldn't achieve without developed coordination of hand and mind. Perhaps the question we should be asking ourselves is what God calls us to do with this unique asset of hand-mind coordination that we all possess . (Ed)



It always seems to take much longer to integrate into a new community, a new job, a new club or society than it does to leave. Whether or not others share my experience I don't know. For me not only does joining seem to take much longer than leaving, but somewhat paradoxically joining also seems much easier than leaving. Being afraid of leaving, not wanting to leave because you fear that without you, all that you have done, all that you have built up may fall apart is both common and unfortunate. That fear stems, in part at least, because we tend not to work as effectively as we might as teams. At the highest levels of team sports, if someone falls ill, or sustains an injury, there is always someone who works and trains with the squad who can step into the vacated space. Yet in many other spheres of life, preparing for the unexpected, is woefully deficient, in fact it is so deficient that when someone leaves there is often a hiatus before a new appointee takes up the vacated role. This means that not only does their eventual replacement have to learn the ropes from scratch, but they also have to cover not just for what happens from the time of their appointment, but for what was left undone between appointments. If we think of the two hands at the top right of this page, it would be easy to conclude that God is always there, he never leaves us and so we should never leave our tasks either. But is that true? No it isn't true on several counts, but it does remind me of the way that junior doctors were treated when I qualified. It was a system of double jeopardy, both for the doctor and their patient. Prior to the confrontation between the then Secretary of State, Barbara Castle, and the junior doctors in 1975, they were expected to work up to 80 hours a week for their basic salary. If they worked over 80 hours they could ask their supervising consultant to sign a Payment for extra duties form, but many didn't for fear that the request would either meet with refusal and/or a poor reference that might create difficulties in career progression. New people bring new ideas, and progress is usually predicated by the quality of those new ideas. It might well be argued that the failure of the mainstream Christian Churches to provide an attractive and satisfying spiritual home for as many people as used to be the case is because we have all been far too ready to cling to what we have grown used to and not to embrace change. One change in the health service that has been very beneficial is the concept of induction, induction to a new working environment and preferably an overlapping and supportive handover. My first day as a consultant was heralded by a junior doctor, operating without supervision on a patient

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of a consultant who was absent. The Doctor had got into serious trouble both for himself and more particularly the patient because he had failed to understand the anatomy of the pathological structures on which he was operating. It was an injury that I had never encountered before, and fortunately have never done so since. I am pleased to say that the process of signing off trainee surgeons as competent to operate without supervision has improved beyond measure in the past 30 years and is now appropriately evidence based. But this brings us back to thinking about how we work in teams and the value of handover and learning from each other rather than the fear of creating a hiatus that will be hard to fill.

Coming back to Michelangelo's Creation, and the thought that God never leaves us, that may be true in Spirit, but in the life of Jesus Christ 2000 years ago man witnessed God in human form. That witness in the flesh, as opposed to the Spirit, was confined to the period of Jesus' ministry and was probably no more than 3 years. Jesus knew the problems that his death, his leaving would cause, so in order to mitigate those problems as much as possible, much of Jesus' ministry was focused on teaching and developing disciples in the skills and faith required to continue his mission and ministry after the crucifixion. So it might seem strange and a cause for reflection as to why, when handover and support was such an important part of Jesus ministry, that we continue to neglect its importance in our own lives as Christians today. We need to think about how we develop supportive teams and learn to work both with, and for, each other in ministry.

As the numbers in stipendiary ministry decline, that role will be increasingly difficult and unsatisfying if we just leave the incumbent to do everything and fail to design an appropriate support team around that leadership. It is of course a two way street; just as members of the Christian community must be prepared to support mission and ministry, the leadership must understand both the need for and the skills to develop a supporting team. This process involves Trust, Trust of each other by the whole Christian Community and Trust on the part of those who have been trained to lead it. It needs to be a trust that inspires those who are called to serve, and a trust that inspires many to want to serve. I firmly believe that it is only by working as an effective team that mission will lead to more people coming to know God in their own lives. It is this open and outward demonstration of trust, support and love that will remove the fear of leaving and make joining a safer step that many more will aspire to. Leaving will then be as easy as joining and we can all share in the rewards of new beginnings. It is the spirit that I think is enshrined in the words of Christ: "*Go and preach. "The Kingdom of heaven is near! " Heal the sick, bring the dead back to life, heal those who suffer.... and drive out demons. You have received without paying, so give without being paid.*" (Matt. 10, 7-8) "*Go, then, to all peoples everywhere and make them my disciples: baptise them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit and teach them to obey everything I have commanded you. And I will be with you to the end of the age.*" (Matt. 28, 19-20).

(Ed)

Farewell..... and Thank you

Some folk, and I must number myself among them, become so fixated on what they do, both in their careers and in their free time; that these activities become the centre of their lives rather than their own families. Quite where I stand on that spectrum I don't know, but it may be that some of the people that have had the greatest influence in my life so far have unwittingly been role models that have encouraged me to pick up their less good traits as well as their better ones. The Headmaster of my School, whom I continued to write to and meet with, even after he suffered a stroke in1997, until he died in 1999, almost certainly was amongst those role models. I had written to him for his guidance after I had been asked to lead worship in Dendron, and he sent me a copy of a sermon he had recently given at Trent Church in Dorset in February 1996. It was based upon Amos 3 and Matthew 26, 31-56 and his theme was balancing our responsibilities to everyone and neglecting no-one. This conflict, which can easily seem impossible to resolve, was one on which he was noble enough to reflect upon in his own life and admit where he had gone wrong. His words have often challenged me and still do:

"It is when the conflict is within the family that decision becomes even more difficult. I still look back with remorse on a night near the end of term in the early sixties. It was about midnight. I was doing reports, or whatever headmasters do at the end of term. My ten year old daughter, who had been orphaned a couple of years earlier, entered the room and said she could not get to sleep. I told her I was busy, settled her on the couch and got on with my job. It was only years later that she told me she had been longing for me to take her in my arms. But I put my work first. Definitely wrong! But it is not easy, as I am sure some of you have found, to resolve the conflicting claims of business and family."

When I retired, Lalik was still busily and conscientiously occupied in a number of roles in the voluntary sector which took a significant amount of her time, so I quickly accepted invitations to do different things as well. As a consequence our lives remained governed by external commitments which sometimes made it very hard to find time to spend with each other. I have been retired for 4 years now, Lalik has reached the end of her various commitments, and due to Covid-19 can no longer sing with the West Gallery Choir in Lancaster of which she has been a member for 18 years. So it seemed appropriate to take a deep breath and ask ourselves what we want to do with the rest of our lives. Our only close living relatives in this country are my brother and our younger son and grandson who live in Dunfermline and Edinburgh respectively. We did want to live somewhere where we might see more of Alastair and his son Angus, but also much closer to amenities than we are in our current house in Woodhead, about half a mile along the road between Urswick and Dalton.

continued from page 19

Initially we had thought that we might find something in Ulverston and stay local. However, the problem with that becomes that much of what I do isn't with Lalik and the constraints of Covid-19 which has restricted what everyone does had meant that we had more time with each other and we both enjoyed it and noticed the difference. What has also become apparent is that the type of property we were looking for was not reaching the market in Ulverston and the agents estimate of what we might get for our property was over-optimistic. In consequence when we did get an offer that was significantly less than we had originally been led to expect, we looked at property in Alnwick, Northumberland which was our choice of location to be nearer to Edinburgh, but also to live in closer proximity to neighbours, shops and other amenities. It was evident that we could find what we wanted in Alnwick. So in a nutshell, we have accepted the offer on our house and have found a property that meets all our requirements in Alnwick. A new home in a new place will be a project in its own right that we will both enjoy, and we will gradually find ways in which we can be part of a new community and do things predominantly together rather than solo. As yet we are not sure when we will be leaving for our new home, but it is likely to be between mid October and mid November this year if things go according to plan. That means that I must give notice in respect of my roles of Churchwarden and Treasurer at Dendron as well as Editor of the Church magazine - and I have already told Lucie.

It would be wrong to say that I have regrets, I don't. I have hugely enjoyed all the things I have done in Furness over a period of nearly 30 years, which is the longest period of time that I have lived anywhere by a margin of over 60%. On the other hand both of us have become excited by a new opportunity. Not only will be leaving behind our commitments but also the accumulation of "stuff" that we have made in that time for which we will not have room in our new home. It has the space we need with a large Family/Dining Room and Kitchen, a Living Room and a study on the ground floor, a further study on the first floor and four bedrooms. So we have far too much furniture for "reception rooms" and not enough for the smaller space we will live in that has more bedrooms! One of the things we need to do in ensuing weeks will be lto decide what we want to take and want we won't have room for, and then find a new home those things that might be of value to others and to be in a position to do that quickly, once the sale process has reached a point where it can safely happen.

We would like to thank everyone we have got to know through the Church Community in Low Furness, for their friendship and their support. If anyone wants to take on the magazines then I would be happy to facilitate a handover, including equipment if required. However I should exercise a note of caution here, in that I think the way of the future is digital, and whether the cost of a paper magazine can be met in the medium or long term is doubtful, especially in the case of the Tarn News. I think the pattern for the Church Magazine that has been foisted upon us by lockdown - digital by email to those requesting it (consistent with GDPR) and downloadable from a website by anybody - then printing no more than a dozen or so copies for those requesting one because they don't have a computer and internet access.

So I think that this will be the last full edition of the Church Magazine that I will have time to write. I will try to produce a limited edition for September - October - but the edition after that (November), will depend on the availability of a new editor. If you do have a new editor, please support any changes they make. Editing a magazine like this, depends on the things that appeal to the editor, because apart from contributions by Lucie and Graham the design and format reflects the editor and the support from the incumbent. Nothing is more dispiriting to a new editor than people saying it's not what it used to be. It won't be, and it shouldn't be, what your'e used to so please accept and support any changes that may evolve. The same may well be true of the way our churches relate to each other, and I would urge you to support change and work to a new future. We would like to thank you all for your friendship and support and we wish you all every blessing, and may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit may be with you all.

George Newgrth.



HANDS IN ART: WHAT ARE THEY SAYING TO US?

I saw the gateway opposite (p 23) that is on the front cover of this edition of the magazine (in a cropped version) while walking around a small town in Provence just over 3 years ago. Quite how the owner of the gates managed to transfer copies of different hand images ranging from one originally created by his forebears at least 30,000 years ago, through to those of Leonardo da Vinci, Albrecht Durer, Michelangelo and then MC Escher (1948) onto his yard doors, I know not. On the other hand it does make us think about how important our hands are, and that without our hands, much of the achievement of our highly developed minds might be severely limited. Those who handed down orally and eventually wrote down the stories that are embodied in our Scriptures seem to have been so impressed with the power of hands, that the works of God are frequently attributed to the might of God's "right hand". It perhaps escapes our notice all too easily that God's own son spent most of his life in Nazareth, Galilee learning a manual trade. Jesus Christ was an artisan; a skilled manual worker: a carpenter, whose "yokes were easy". But in spite of this as a society we often overlook the value of those who are skilled with their hands; how much more valuable today are the works of Leonardo, Durer and Michelangelo than they were when they were created? That observation is a shameful testimony to the fact that throughout history higher social status has been accorded to those with wealth, those who don't work with their hands, but whose wealth has usually been the product of the skilful hands of their fellow travellers in this life. Interestingly, when HV Morton was retracing Paul's first missionary journey and travelling from what is now the port of Iskenderun on the south east Mediterranean coast of Turkey to Larnaka in Cyprus (Paul went from Seleucia to Salamis, but both those ports have since silted up) he met a former English Schoolmaster who stayed in Cyprus after World War One as a citrus fruit farmer. He entered into an intense conversation with this man about St Paul, and there is a part of their conversation which has stuck with me:

He [the former schoolmaster] held out his hands with a broad grin.

"Look at 'em!" he said. "They weren't like that when I was a schoolmaster. You remember how Paul, when he said goodbye to the elders at Miletus, held up his hands and said - what was it? 'Look how these hands have ministered to my necessities!' It's seemed to me that Paul was never brought up to be an artisan. No workman thinks it's marvellous that his hands have ministered to his necessities. That's what they're for. But I do; and so did Paul." (from *In the Steps of St Paul, HV Morton 1936, Methuen*)

After reading this I went back to Acts 20, 13-35, and re-read Paul's farewell to the elders of Ephesus for myself. Paul goes on to conclude with a further reference to the work of his hands, in which he says:

"In everything I did, I showed you by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' "

So it would seem to me that the importance of our manual skills remain sadly undervalued both then and now. My version of the NIV allows you to to trace passages associated with certain key words. If you look up "Hands" as your search criterion; this passage in Acts is not among those listed, yet it seems to me to one of the most important! An observation which makes me wonder whether there isn't inherent bias somewhere?



It is all too easy to forget that there are many prehistoric cave paintings in France, the most famous of which is Lascaux; but Lascaux is relatively light in hand stencils. However there are other prehistoric caves with related art elsewhere in France. One that is quite close to our doors in Pernes Les Fontaines, is at Chauvet-Pont-d'Arc in the Ardeche Dept. no more than 100 km away. Their website shows a hand stencil which I have reproduced below, this is a right hand, and has a very similar suggestion of syndactyly between the middle and ring fingers - which is probably an artefact of the stencil technique rather than real.


Chauvet Cave

Prehistoric hand stencils

The panel in the lower left of the doorway was the one that gave me the most difficulty in accurate identification. It is almost certainly a prehistoric hand stencil, and the ubiquity of these images from the Cueva de las Manos in Argentina to caves on the Indonesian island of Sulawesi are testimony to the societal importance of the hand in pre-history. But what makes this one unusual is that it is a right hand. The technique of stencil painting was to blow pigment from a fine tube, such as a quill, onto wet rock around the non-dominant hand, palm down. As the majority of people, then as now, had left brain dominance and were therefore right handed, images of the left hand are much more common than images of the right. If you look at the hands from Cueva de las Manos, they are nearly all left hands.


Cueva de las Manos

Left Handed Artists

What many of you will already know is that Leonardo was left handed, but did you know that Durer, Michelangelo and MC Escher were also left handed? It is thought that Leonardo was in fact ambidextrous, and the evidence that Durer was left handed depends as much on hearsay as reliable evidence, but it would seem potentially likely that the owner of the doors has deliberately chosen left handed artists, as the prehistoric cave painting from Chauvet was probably done by a left handed person using his right hand as a template while he manipulates the tube containing the dye with his dominant left hand.

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The Hand in Renaissance Art

Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519), Albrecht Durer (1471-1528) and Michelangelo (1475 -1564) were effectively contemporaries, but the relationship between them was not one of productive cooperation. Leonardo was the firstborn of the trio and shared with the others an interest in anatomy and how the human form could be best portrayed by the artist to convey subtle nuances of movement and emotion as well as form, and this extended to the hands as well as to the face. Leonardo's talent was recognised by his primary tutor; the Florentine artist Verrocchio, whilst the other two were still infants. The hands that are drawn by Leonardo and have been reproduced on the doors in Pernes are thought to have been completed around 1490 and are in fact two separate studies of crossed hands in which the depiction of one is dominant, and it is thought may have been a preparatory drawing for his portrait of Cecilia Gallerani entitled a Lady with an Ermine. That painting which now lives in the National Museum in Krakow, Poland, shows the delicacy of touch that an artist can portray and has arisen from Leonardo's study of both technique and anatomy. If your interest is aroused, then the hands of infants are given the same treatment in Leonardo's Virgin of the Rocks. The hands of the Mona Lisa also form an important part of Leonardo's most famous painting just as those of Cecilia Gallerani do below.





Leonardo da Vinci - *A study of a woman's hands* and *A lady with an ermine (Cecilia Gallerani).*

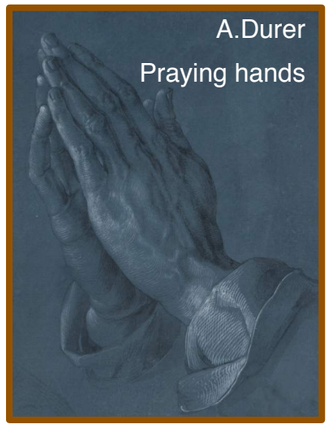
The hands of Adam and God painted by Michelangelo on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel must be the most frequently reproduced image of hands in human history. It is believed to have been completed between 1508 and 1512, and challenges many previous held ideas about the nature of God. Adam on the left is naked and is portrayed with a strong muscular physique, but that physique is also shown to be weak. Adam's arm is supported by his left knee and his hand is drooped downwards at the wrist. It is a pose which strongly implies that Adam, or mankind if you prefer, is about to receive a gift of new life and strength, and it may even have been in Michelangelo's mind to suggest the transference of the Holy Spirit. By contrast the portrayal of God is not someone surrounded by the trappings of wealth and power, but an older, yet vigorous man who is clothed in a very simple tunic. God requires no assistance to support his outstretched right arm and index finger that suggest the moment before touch is achieved. This painting conveys God's strength, but also God's love for His creation, and the vigour of God is one of enthusiasm and support rather than domination. Michelangelo has portrayed God as someone who is accessible, someone of this world rather than someone who is aloof and remote in



The Creation of Adam

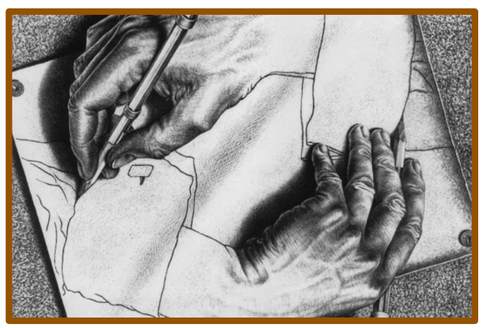
by Michelangelo, which occupies the central ceiling panel of the Sistine Chapel in Rome

in a faraway heaven. The way the hands have been portrayed is a key part of the painting's message, which is probably why they are reproduced so frequently, but to understand the significance of the whole the hands alone are insufficient. If you are interested in some further interpretations of this famous painting, there are some Italian neurosurgeons who believe that the shape of the shell surrounding God and his supporters as well as the disposition of God himself are based on the structures of the human brain, and Michelangelo, of course, did, like Leonardo, study the anatomy of the deceased. Whether Michelangelo was simply searching for a way of portraying God and felt that to do this by placing God in a shape that suggested a spiritual presence in the mind of man achieved what he wanted I wouldn't wish to speculate.



Albrecht Durer painted these praying hands in the early part of the 16th century, on blue paper that he made himself. In terms of their anatomical detail they represent work of very high quality. Why Durer chose to paint them is far from certain. One theory is that they were done to promote his skill and to encourage potential patrons to visit his studio and to order further commissions. On the other hand, there is another belief that they were preparatory work for an altarpiece, and more recently a third suggestion has been made that the drawing is of his brother's hands. That story suggests that his brother worked with his hands in the mines so that Albrecht could study and develop his artistic talents, the idea being that he would then work so that his brother could study too. Unfortunately, because of the damage to his hands working in the mine the brother could never have become an artist, but Durer drew them as a tribute. The problem with this story is the lack of supporting evidence. The hands that Durer drew are not hands injured from mine working and there is nothing to corroborate it from other sources.

Escher is a 20th Century artist who had a great interest in making objects appear 3 dimensional. This drawing of hands shows each emerging from the paper to draw the other, any spirtual significance would I suggest be in the eye and the mind of the beholder. (Ed).



M C Escher Drawing Hands (1948)

CROSSWORD AUGUST 2020 : HANDS - in Scriptures - see clue for scriptural source.

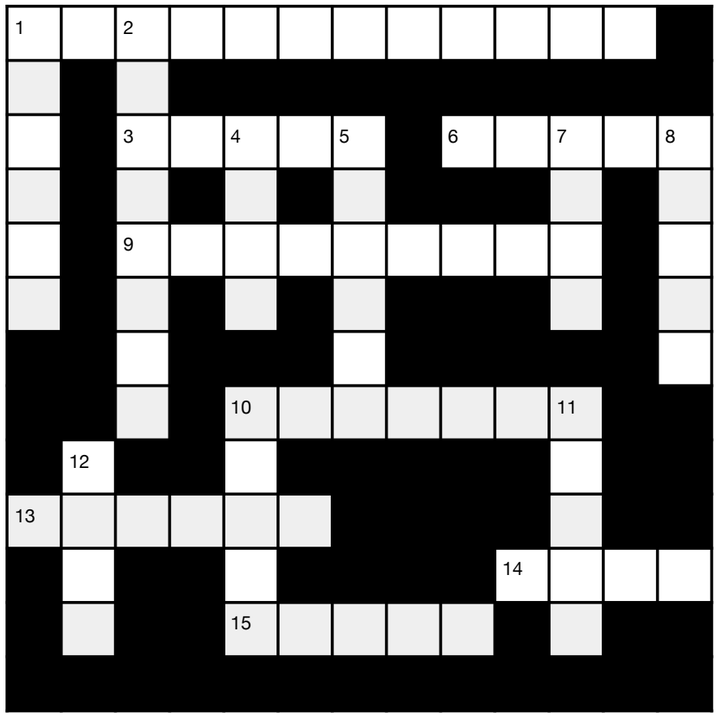
June-July "HYMNS" CROSSWORD

ACROSS: 4. CREATIONS
6. HID **7.** NAME **10.** AGES
11. ISLES **15.** DIED
16. SINGING
17. SWEETNESS **18**. RISE

DOWN: **1**. PRAISE **2.**MOONS
3. WATERS **5.** TONGUES
8. MUSIC **9.** DAVIDS
12. WOUNDS **13**. WESLEY
14. ANGELS

CORRECT ANSWERS:

Joan Rough, Aldingham



ACROSS

1. Instructions from God we should tie as symbols on our hands. (12) Deut. 6
3. The hands are the hands of Esau, but whose voice is it? (5) Gen. 27
6. The child's hands in the viper's nest, plays near whose den? (5) Isa. 11
9. Moses & Israelites sing, "Your right hand Lord __?__ the enemy". (9) Ex. 15
10. Place Paul spoke to Ephesian elders of the work of his hands.(7) Acts 20
13. "Who has measured the waters in the __?__ of his hands?" (6) Isa.40
14. "… lead a quiet life: … you should __?__ with your hands" (4) The. 4
15. and **10 down**. Paul describes what his hands supplied. (2,3 (10 down) 5 (15 across)) Acts 20

DOWN

1. The Lord tells Gideon that to defeat Midian the 300 men drinking with __?__ hands will be sufficient. (6) Judg. 7
2. How the song of Moses describes the Lord's right hand in power. (8) Ex.15
4. Action of people's hands to king's son crowning by Jehoida (4) 2 King. 11
5. Place at which Jereboam's hand stretched out to seize a man of God and shrivelled. (6) 1 King. 13
7. Paul tells how a part that is not a hand is still part of what? (4) 1 Cor. 13
8. Structure Jereboam constructed that split in two after his hand shrivelled. (5) King. 13
10. see 15 across
11. Name of sorceror who offered money for gift of healing with hands. (5) Acts 8
12. Part of an extremity, not a hand, used by Paul to illustrate integrity of whole being. (4) 1. Cor 13

WISDOM and WIT .....



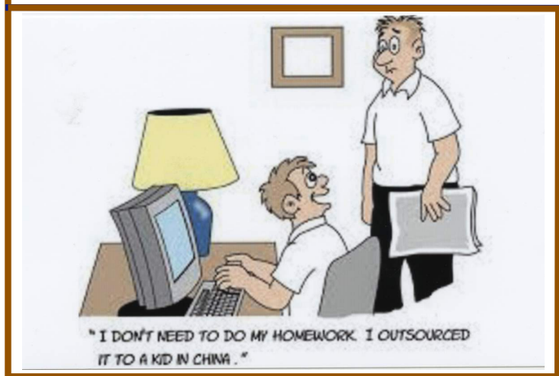
THE FUTURE

This very remarkable man
Commends a most practical plan:
You can do what you want
If you don't think you can't
So don't think you can't think you can.

BELIEF

I believe in the sun even when its not shining.
I believe in love even when I don't feel it.
I believe in God even when he is silent.
Jewish Graffito in a Cologne Cellar 1946









CHURCH

A Church that can feel as its own all that is human, and wants to incarnate the pain, the hope, the affliction of all who suffer and feel joy, such a Church will be Christ loved and awaited, Christ present.

Oscar Romero 1916 - 1980

How churches have been doing things differently.....

Because of the Covid -19 outbreak, our churches are currently closed, but that does not mean that nothing has been happening. A summary of what has been happening and where you can find further information is given below. **At present there is no indication from the Government as to how and when the current restrictions on communal activities will be lifted. But when it is the response to that announcement will be outlined electronically on church websites, diocesan and Church of England websites long before the re-appearance of paper versions of Parish Magazines** - So if you have access to this electronic version of the Church of Low Furness Magazine and hence to our websites - please use them and share by telephone the relevant information with anyone you know who may not have internet access.

LOCAL websites

Church of Low Furness: http://www.churchoflowfurness.org.uk click here

Tarn News: http://www.tarnnews.org click here

Facebook: Church of Low Furness Page - either use direct links from Church of Low Furness website **or** if you have a Facebook account search for this Page from your own account.

Rev.Lucie and Ramsay Lunn have live streamed and recorded an array of short services, reflections and prayers in recent weeks including Holy Week. Details of further events can be found on the Church of Low Furness website, and its Facebook Page.

DETAILS OF CHURCH OF LOW FURNESS ON LINE

CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 32 AS WELL AS THE CHURCH WEBSITE

REGIONAL & NATIONAL websites

Many of you may have enjoyed and joined in with services that have been live streamed via the Church of England's and the Archbishops' websites and Facebook Pages. They are available for access subsequently from these sites (see below).

Church England: http://www.churchofengland.org.uk click here

Archbishop of Canterbury: http://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org click here

Archbishop of York: http://www.archbishopofyork.org click here

Diocese of Carlisle: http://www.carlislediocese.org.uk click here

Facebook: Church of England Page, or Carlisle Diocese Page - either use direct links from the appropriate website above **or** if you have a Facebook account search for this Page from your own account.

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Vanessa Rydzewska 01229 582286

Local Lay Ministers

Mrs Anne Cowley Tel: 01229 586075
Mr John Imlach Tel: 01229 582053
Mr George Nasmyth Tel: 01229 465636
Mrs Georgina Sherwood
Tel: 07587 080709
Mr Martin Sherwood Tel: 07900 681097
Mr Graham Tate Tel: 01229 833150
Mrs Margaret Tate Tel: 01229 833150
Mrs Brenda Webster Tel: 01229 821561
Mr Jim Webster Tel: 01229 821561

Pioneer Lay Minister

Mr Graham Tate Tel: 01229 833150

Community Pastor

Ms Sonjie Marshall Tel:01229 587369

EMAIL addresses

to contact Low Furness Churches

for Administration and prayer:

ADMIN:

lowfurnesschurch@gmail.com

PRAYER:

lowfurnesschurchprayer@gmail.com

NEW WEBSITE

<churchoflowfurness.org.uk>

SUNDAY WORSHIP - PODCAST

Sunday Worship in Church has not yet resumed in Low Furness, but in the meantime Lucie has produced a Worship at Home podcast each week which you can receive by email if you request it from Lucie, (for contact details please see page 29). It is also available below and on the Tarn News website Church of Low Furness Page.

Link: click here

CURRENT PROPOSAL FOR RESUMPTION OF SUNDAY WORSHIP IN CHURCH:

Venue: St Mary & St Michael, Urswick

Date : Sunday September 6th 2020 at 10.30am

Details of further services in September will be circulated in due course.

Covid-19 restrictions on social distancing apply

2 metres apart

controlled entry and exit

hand sanitisation on entry and exit

no singing

no books or service sheets

masks may be worn - at present not mandatory (but this may change)

Initial plans are for Resumption of Sunday Services in Urswick Church only with resumption in other venues or multiple venues being determined in the light of demand that may not be met by one Church alone and also the local support required and available for safe opening and compliance with Government and Church of England Guidance in each venue.

Church of Low Furness

ONLINE



Daily Prayer

Join us on our Church of Low Furness Facebook group for live Morning Prayer, we will be using the Common Worship Daily Prayer, available on the Church of England website (a link will be posted ahead of our live posts) or the *Daily Prayer* app.

Monday - Wednesday 9am.



Monday -Wednesday 9am

Centering Prayer

Join us for a Centering Prayer Session on Thursday mornings, delivered on Facebook Live on the Church group. The session incorporates an introduction, period of silent prayer and closing prayer.

Thursday 10am

Compline

Our Order for Night Prayer service, also known was Compline, is delivered on Saturday evenings on Facebook Live. A link to the service will be posted every week and is also available on the Church of England *Daily Prayer* or *Time to pray* apps.

Saturday 8pm



Saturday 8pm

Sunday worship is available on local and national radio and online. Ask for recommendations or details. See also www.churchoflowfurness.org