



Growing Together

Social distancing

It's an expression that we hadn't heard of a few months ago. Now it's a necessary way of life, to keep us and others safe. Furthermore, it's likely to be with us for some time to come. When our church building reopens, we'll have to respect social distancing in the way that we do things.

A few days ago I was reading a story about Jesus in which social distancing plays an important part. You can read it yourself in **Luke 7.1-10**. The story is about a Roman army officer who had a favourite slave who was ill, close to death. The Roman officer sent messengers to Jesus, asking him to come and heal his slave. Jesus agreed, and set off to go to the officer's house. But before he arrived, some friends of the officer met him. They told him that it was not necessary for Jesus to go into the house; he could heal from a distance. The Roman army officer lived under authority. He received and gave orders. He expected to obey and to be obeyed. He realised that, in the same way, Jesus had authority to heal, and did not have to be physically present in order to do this. Jesus was amazed at the Roman officer's faith, and when the friends of the officer returned to the officer's house, they found that the slave was completely healed. Social distancing is not a barrier to God. Jesus' power is not limited by our circumstances. The Roman officer had faith that Jesus could heal just by saying the word. Jesus still can.



This is an encouragement to us now. We may be unable to hug our family and friends, but that doesn't stop us praying for them, and our prayers will be answered. Some of Paul's letters were written when he was in prison, and they contain some lovely prayers for Christians that he was separated from or had never met. Here's one that we could pray for each other:

Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and by his grace gave us eternal comfort and a wonderful hope, comfort you and strengthen you in every good thing you do and say. (2 Thessalonians 2.16-17)

Or how about this one? Perhaps we can identify with it because Paul was missing other people.

May God our Father and our Lord Jesus bring us to you very soon. And may the Lord make your love for one another and for all people grow and overflow, just as our love for you overflows. (1 Thessalonians 3.11-12)

This month our new vicar, Karen Brady, starts work with us. We want to welcome her, but it's not going to be easy to do so. The big celebration that we were planning has been put on hold. But social distancing doesn't stop us from praying for her. So here's another of Paul's prayers, that we could pray for Karen.

So we keep on praying for you, asking our God to enable you to live a life worthy of his call. May he give you the power to accomplish all the good things your faith prompts you to do. (2 Thessalonians 1.11)

Looking forward to the time when we can all worship God together in church, and thank him for answering our prayers.

With love and Prayers,

Helen Browne

In GROWING TOGETHER THIS MONTH:

HUMOUR

PUZZLE PAGE

CELEBRATIONS

JUNE 1940 – a month to remember

June 1940 – 80 years ago – was a dramatic month in the Second World War, and one which saw two of the most memorable speeches in English. As the evacuation of Allied Forces from Dunkirk was completed, recently appointed Prime Minister Winston Churchill told the House of Commons on 4th June: “We shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills; we shall never surrender.” Surprisingly he did not broadcast it to the nation: it was not recorded until 1949, “for posterity.” When he spoke, the French had not surrendered, and the idea that “in God’s good time” the USA might conceivably have to ride to the aid of a ‘subjugated’ England actually depressed as many people as it invigorated. Two weeks later, on the 18th June, with the battle in France lost, Churchill did address the country directly with a rallying call in what must indeed have seemed a very dark hour. “The Battle of Britain,” he said, “is about to begin. Upon this battle depends the survival of Christian civilisation.” He concluded by saying that if Britain were to last a thousand years, people would still say, “This was their finest hour.”

What kind of stress do you have?

These are stressful days. The towering storm clouds of coronavirus and financial trouble are casting a long shadow over all of us. Many of us deal with our stress by expressing it. Loudly! We lose our temper, swear, shout and even throw things at our loved ones. We over-react to various personal setbacks because we can’t retaliate against the virus or the stock market. But some of us do the opposite: we under-react. We display ‘quiet stress’. “We quietly hold our stress within: we don’t speak up about how we feel. And crucially, we become inert. We don’t act on situations that require action.” So warns Jillian Lavender of the London Meditation Centre. “We stay in unhappy relationships and unfulfilling jobs. We feel overwhelmed, yet we ignore important admin tasks. We procrastinate. Quiet stress creates an emotional paralysis that keeps us ‘stuck’ in unhappy situations. Inaction is just as much of an inappropriate response to stress as over-reaction is” A further danger of ‘quiet stress’ is that instead of taking positive action, people can withdraw into themselves, and turn to comfort eating or drinking too much. This further lowers their immune system.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

June Birthdays



Congratulations to Daphne Withington who celebrates her birthday on June 7th, to June Betton who celebrates her birthday on June 12th, to Tom Rose who celebrates his birthday on June 14th, to Bryn Knott who celebrates his birthday on June 22nd and to Olga Gregory who celebrates her birthday on June 27th.

IMPORTANT

As you will know by now, there will be no church services, meetings or groups at St Michael’s until further notice. The Churchwardens will keep you updated as and when we get any information. We will put this information on our Facebook page, Website and in Patchwork. If you want to ask any questions please contact the Churchwardens, their details are on the back page or you can email them on warden@runcornstmichaels.org.uk

**Thank you
Colin & Rosemary**

BIBLE READINGS FOR JUNE

7th June

2 Corinthians 13: 11-14
Matthew 28: 16-20

14th June

Romans 5: 1-8
Matthew 9: 35 - 10.8



21st June

Romans 6: 1-11
Matthew 10: 24-39

28th May

Romans 6: 12-23
Matthew 10: 40-42





"Mike composes all his sermons on his iPhone – he uses something called Predictable Text..."

Beware soft drinks

Having just one soft drink a day in middle-age could increase your risk of suffering a heart attack or stroke. Recent research has found that the sugar-laden drinks raise cholesterol levels, increasing the risk of clots that cut off blood supply to the heart or brain. It was found that daily consumers of soft drinks were 53 per cent more likely to have large amounts of a fat called triglycerides, that collects in vessels and arteries, compared with people who rarely touch sugary soft drinks. The study was done at Tufts University in Boston, Massachusetts. Cardiovascular disease is the UK's number one killer, claiming 170,000 lives a year. It is responsible for one in four premature deaths.



7th June Trinity Sunday, celebrating our God who is Three Persons

Trying to explain the doctrine of the Trinity has kept many a theologian busy down the centuries. One helpful picture is to imagine the sun shining in the sky. The sun itself – way out there in space, and unapproachable in its fiery majesty – is the Father. The light that flows from it, which gives us life and illuminates all our lives, is the Son. The heat that flows from it, and which gives us all the energy to move and grow, is the Holy Spirit. You cannot have the sun without its light and its heat. The light and the heat are from the sun, are *of* the sun, and yet are also distinct in themselves, with their own roles to play. The Bible makes clear that God is One God, who is disclosed in three persons: Father, Son (Jesus Christ) and Holy Spirit. For example:

Deuteronomy 6:4: 'Hear O Israel, The Lord our God, the Lord is one.'

Isaiah 45:22: 'Turn to me and be saved... for I am God, and there is no other.'

Genesis 1:1-2: 'In the beginning God created.... and the Spirit of God was hovering...'

Judges 14:6: 'The Spirit of the Lord came upon him in power...'

John 1:1-3: 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through Him all things were made; without Him nothing was made that has been made.'

Luke 24:49 actually manages to squeeze the whole Trinity into one sentence. Jesus tells His disciples: 'I am going to send you what **my Father** has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power (**the Holy Spirit**) from on high.'

In other words, the sun eternally gives off light and heat, and whenever we turn to its brilliant light, we find that the warmth and life are there as well.

Keep an eye out for the elderly

When did you last see your elderly neighbour? Seriously: are they okay? During this time of social distancing, it is all too easy to assume that the elderly person you never see is simply safe indoors. But are they? Isolation can be dangerous: it is too easy for them to have had an accident and be unable to call for help. Why not arrange a system with them whereby you agree that you will give them a quick ring once a day, or even stand outside their house and wave? It only takes a few seconds to make sure they are still on their feet, and that all is well. If you have several elderly neighbours, why not ask a few of your local friends to help you keep in brief touch with them each day?



In the Day of Trouble

There is a God who answers prayer
Who intercedes before the throne
The Son of God who ever cares
Who walks with us, we're not alone.

Though flood and pestilence should come
He sees the path that we now tread
His rod and staff will comfort us
He knows the days that lie ahead.

We trust in Him who knows all things
And lift our prayers to heaven above
Our confidence is all in Him
Encompassed by unfailing love.

By Megan Carter

CONGRATULATIONS

to

**Matt & Claire Roth
who are celebrating their
Wedding Anniversary
on
8th June**

**Colin & Angela Keam
who are celebrating their
Wedding Anniversary
on
11th June**

**to
Tom & Shelia Rose
who are celebrating their
Wedding Anniversary
on
17th June**

**These two members of our congregation
are celebrating a milestone in their marriage**



CONGRATULATIONS

to

**Stan & Wendy Sefton
who are celebrating their
Golden Wedding Anniversary
on
11th June**

CONGRATULATIONS

to

**George & Barbara Done
who are celebrating their
Diamond Wedding Anniversary
on
18th June**



Lipstick

Every morning, a little girl would go in the bathroom to watch her mother as she was putting on her makeup to go to work. But during coronavirus, the mother stopped bothering with makeup, much to her daughter's confusion. "Mummy," she cried early on in the lockdown: "Come back! You forgot to kiss the toilet paper

**BIRTHDAY
CELEBRATIONS**



**On June 14th one of
our congregation hits a
milestone, his 80th
Birthday.**

So happy birthday Vince Whitehead



Charles Dickens - prolific writer with a social conscience

Popular Victorian novelist Charles Dickens died 150 years ago, on 9th June 1870. His books include *The Pickwick Papers*, *A Tale of Two Cities* and *David Copperfield*. He died of a stroke in Gad's Hill Place, his country home in Kent, when halfway through writing *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*. The last novel he completed – most of them were written in regularly released parts – was *Our Mutual Friend*, in 1865. He had been born in Portsmouth in 1812, the second of eight children. His family were relatively poor, and his mother wanted him out at work, so he never received a formal education. Nevertheless, he edited a weekly journal for 20 years and wrote 15 novels, as well as many other stories, articles and letters. He was also a staunch social campaigner, particularly for children's rights and education. As could be deduced from one of his most loved works, *A Christmas Carol*, he was a firm believer in Christian elements such as compassion and redemption, and he loved the New Testament, while having little time for the Old or for organised religion. His parents were nominal Anglicans. He is said to have wanted his stories to be seen as 'parables' emphasising the teaching of Jesus.



Little Old Churches

I love little old churches
With stories to tell;
With coloured glass windows,
A tower and a bell.

Those hidden away
For long years where they stood
Often lonely, forgotten,
In lanes or a wood.

Those with old barrelled ceilings,
A small font and door,
That have just enough room
For about twenty-four;

Where bats roost in the rafters,
And only birds sing;
Where a deep sense of peace
Pervades everything.

There are churches I know
Both majestic and tall,
But these smallest churches
I love most of all.

They were much more important
To those few who came,
Who walked there for miles
Through woodland and lane.

And each little church
Has surely been blessed
By those simple souls
Who once loved them best.

Dawn Lawrence

Some photographs of Parishioners Gardens

I have extended the competition till the 22nd July, because I have not had enough pictures emailed to me. So can the congregation who read the magazine email some photos of your garden to keamc@hotmail.co.uk please.



Lockdown, you and IT

How are you getting on with technology? The coronavirus pandemic has driven hundreds of millions of us to use it more than ever, as we sit at home in frustrated isolation. If you are used to digital meetings and Zoom, it is not a problem, but for millions of grandparents wanting to see their families, or non-techie people wanting to see their friends, it has been quite a learning curve. So, is there a patron saint of computers and electronics and all the difficult stuff? Some people say **the patron saint of the internet should be Saint Isidore of Seville, a Bishop and scholar in the Seventh Century who wrote a book called *Etymologies* or *The Origins*, in which he tried to record everything that was known. That seems to be a good basis for sainthood, or at least for the internet. Another candidate is Saint Eligius who lived about the same time. He is quite busy already as the patron saint of goldsmiths, metalworkers, vets, the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (REME), horses and those who work with them. His main qualification seems to have been his ability to make things. My suggestion is Zebedee. No, not the character from *The Magic Roundabout* but the father of James and John. After all, consider this: “*James the son of Zebedee, and his brother John...were in a boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets, and He called them. (Matt. 4:21)*” Ok, it is not *the* internet, but Zebedee knew about mending a net which would have had both good and bad stuff all over it. Certainly, whenever I get in an IT muddle during this lockdown, I would welcome any patron saint that was willing to help me!**



We can claim the gift of sleep

Many of us have had our sleep patterns disturbed in recent weeks. After all, a pandemic, lockdown and growing financial crisis are hardly conducive to relaxation. But the fact is that, whatever is happening out there, we desperately need our sleep. It is vital for the proper functioning of our brain and heart. Anyone who has ever been deprived of sleep for a period will remember their ever-diminishing ability to perform complicated tasks. Sleep can also help us solve problems. We go to bed struggling with a decision to make or a relationship to resolve, and we wake up to find a solution presenting itself. The old advice to ‘sleep on it’ is true: we see things more clearly after sleep. The Bible considers our sleep as a blessing from God. As Christians, we can calmly commit ourselves to His loving care, secure that He who watches over us “will neither slumber nor sleep” (Psalm 121:4). Knowing that God is with us, we can let ourselves go. If you are having trouble sleeping, why not memorise one of the verses below, and repeat it to yourself as you lie in bed tonight?

‘I lie down and sleep; I wake again, because the Lord sustains me.’ (Psalm 3:5)

‘In peace I will lie down and sleep, for you alone, Lord, make me dwell in safety.’ (Psalm 4:8)

‘In vain you rise early and stay up late, toiling for food to eat—for He grants sleep to those He loves.’ (Psalm 127:2)

‘When you lie down, you will not be afraid; when you lie down, your sleep will be sweet.’ (Proverbs. 3:24)

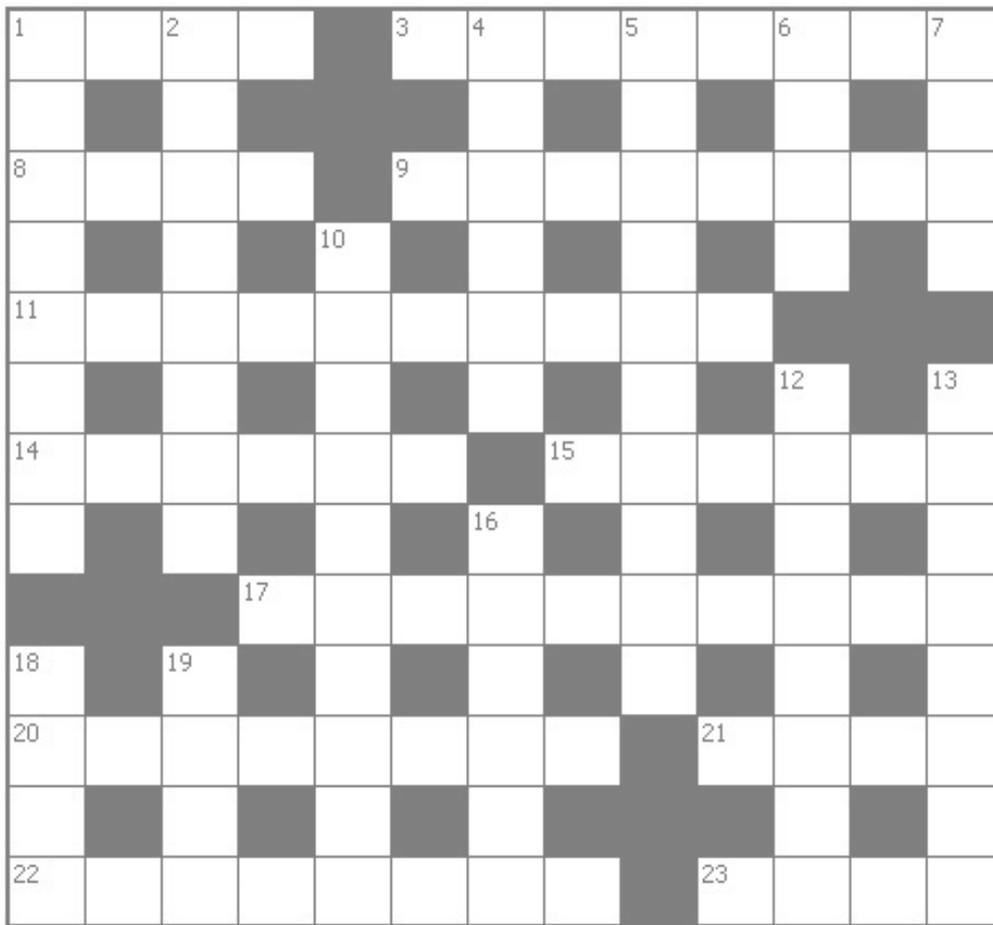
‘I will refresh the weary and satisfy the faint.’ (Jeremiah. 31:25)

As the writer George MacDonald so aptly put it: “Sleep is God’s contrivance for giving man the help He cannot get into him when he is awake.”

Dandelions!

Many of us actually like dandelions. Their amazingly cheerful colour always brings a smile to our faces. The not-so-neat-and-tidy gardeners among us can simply enjoy flowers where they grow. The name 'dandelion' apparently derives from 'dent de lion' – lions' teeth, owing to the tooth-like shape of its leaves. There are many different varieties of dandelion, but they all have the toothed leaves arranged in a rosette around the single flowers, each one made up of up to *two hundred* [yes, really!] tiny florets on a smooth stem, that when picked, releases a milky substance known as latex. The golden heads, which close up at night, in wet weather, or if picked to go in a vase, give way to the seed-heads we all know as clocks. Who cannot remember proclaiming the time as a child, having blown the seeds away, counting each breath as an hour? And who, if this happened in the garden, remembers the reaction of a parent, or grandparent, to the efficient dispersal of the seeds all over the vegetable patch or flower bed! In the past, dandelion drinks and concoctions have been valued for their medicinal powers in combating a variety of complaints, and the Victorians used to cultivate them in order to fill sandwiches with the young leaves. Fizzy drinks manufacturers still produce a variety known as Dandelion and Burdock, and intrepid wine-makers can use the flowers to concoct a heady brew. The roots, some say, can be dried and ground up for use as a coffee substitute. It is those same roots, long and strong, that our grandmothers would water carefully, to the amusement of onlookers, in order to pull them up completely. To many of us, dandelions are one of Nature's joys.





CROSSWORD CHALLENGE

See how you get on with this crossword. There is no prize, but whoever gets it back to the Editor by June 22nd will be entered on a Roll of Honour in the next edition of *Growing Together*.

Across

- 1 See 23 Across
- 3 Where the thief on the cross was told he would be, with Jesus (Luke 23:43) (8)
- 8 Invalid (4)
- 9 Blasphemed (Ezekiel 36:20) (8)
- 11 Adhering to the letter of the law rather than its spirit (Philippians 3:6) (10)
- 14 Shut (Ecclesiastes 12:4) (6)
- 15 'This is how it will be with anyone who — up things for himself but is not rich towards God' (Luke 12:21) (6)
- 17 Mary on Isis (anag.) (10)
- 20 Agreement (Hebrews 9:15) (8)
- 21 Native of, say, Bangkok (4)
- 22 Deaf fort (anag.) (5-3)
- 23 and 1 Across 'The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of — to work it and take — of it' (Genesis 2:15) (4,4)

Down

- 1 Struggle between opposing forces (Habakkuk 1:3) (8)
- 2 James defined this as 'looking after orphans and widows in their distress and keeping oneself from being polluted by the world' (James 1:27) (8)
- 4 'The one I kiss is the man; — him' (Matthew 26:48) (6)
- 5 'Be joyful in hope, patient in —, faithful in prayer' (Romans 12:12) (10)
- 6 St Columba's burial place (4)
- 7 Swirling current of water (4)
- 10 Loyalty (Isaiah 19:18) (10)
- 12 'God was pleased through the foolishness of what was —, to save those who believe' (1 Corinthians 1:21) (8)
- 13 Camp where the angel of the Lord slew 185,000 men one night (2 Kings 19:35) (8)
- 16 'There is still — — — Jonathan; he is crippled in both feet' (2 Samuel 9:3) (1,3,2)
- 18 David Livingstone was one (4)
- 19 Driver and Vehicle Licensing Authority (1,1,1,1)



May
Crossword answer

ROLL OF HONOUR

Two people got the crossword answer to me and they were Stan & Wendy Sefton & Jim & Shelagh Goffin



June 2020

Christians help by donating to foodbanks



Many churches around the country have responded to the crisis by either running their own foodbank, or helping supply a local one. The need is all too clear: recent figures from a

YouGov poll done for the Food Foundation suggest that since the lockdown began, 1.5 million people in the UK have gone one whole day without eating, and 7.1 million have been forced to skip meals. The Government has recently given £3.25million to food-redistribution organisations who have been struggling to obtain surplus food, as restaurants and cafes have shut.

ARTICLES

News or articles for the next edition of *Growing Together* should be given to Colin Keam by June 22nd. I am looking for articles for the newsletter like people's Birthdays, Wedding Anniversaries, praying for people who are sick or in hospital or any interesting or funny anecdotes.

THANK YOU

INFORMATION

Until our vicar is licenced, any enquiries to the Churchwardens please. See below for details

Churchwardens

Colin Keam 01928 576293

Rosemary Lunt 01928 569863

e-mail: warden@runcornstmichaels.org.uk

**If you want to book a wedding, baptism or funeral please phone this number
07722470940
and ask for Robbie**



Please Pray



Please remember the following people in your prayers throughout this month.

Romy & Linda Tiongco

José Colley

Liz Adams

Graham & Nicola Aylett

Norah Gamon

Maureen Holden

Robbie Littler

Dorothy Lees

also to the people who are at home or in hospital with the coronavirus or are self isolating. St Michaels would like to ask you to pray for all the key workers out there on the frontline especially the Doctors and Nurses in NHS.

If you would like us to pray for someone close to you please let the Vicar know. Or if you would like the Pastoral Care Team to visit someone at home don't hesitate to let them know.

...and the recently bereaved, especially any families known to you

All Saints Parish Church Runcorn Bell Restoration Appeal

The bellringers of Runcorn are appealing for your help in the full restoration of the eight 1851-cast bells. The overhaul will cost around **£75,000**.

The ringers have already raised (and spent!) nearly £2000 on new pulleys, but this will only help in the short term. The bells will fall silent in just a few years if they are not rehung by specialists, so your support would be much appreciated.

Contact Us

If you would like more information or to make a donation, please contact either:

Rich Westman (Ringing Master):
27 Dale Street, Runcorn, WA7 5PF
rich.westman@gmail.com,

Bill Allman (Tower Captain)
10 Curzon Street, Runcorn, WA7 4PG



(Please make cheques payable to Runcorn Parish Bell Ringers)

Or "Like" us on Facebook
at www.facebook.com/runcornrestoration