

# *August 2020 Magazine*

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The cover picture is a contemporary Icon of the Virgin Mary – “Blessed be the fruit of thy Womb”

*All Saints Scottish Episcopal  
Church  
Drymen Road, Bearsden*



## *Dear Friends*

Back when we celebrated Jesus' incarnation with carols and the church beautifully decorated, we had no idea what was in store.

All these months later after 4 months of lockdown we are easing out into a different world. We fool ourselves if we think things will ever return to how they once were, certainly before a vaccine is found, but even after that is circulating round our blood stream the impact of these past 4 months will shape lives, communities and societies for generations. How we worship will be a fluid thing for some time yet.

In the centre spread of this magazine you will see what you can expect should you choose to come to All Saints for a service when we are finally able to re-open (as there is not currently a plan for opening, these things might change but it gives you an indication). They are not be anything like they were when the church was closed back in March and, as more easing of lockdown occurs, it will change, as scientists, physicians and immunologists understand more about CoVid-19, it will change, if there is a second spike, it will change. How, when and what those changes will be we can but speculate, therefore the main Sunday service will continue to be held on Zoom for the time being, and might be joined by recordings of services held in the church which won't be live but will be able to be watched via the web site.

There is not yet a date for the re-opening of the church, however it is unlikely to be before September, at the time of writing the church has not yet had its deep clean, nor is there a risk assessment which is a requirement before planning can begin. The congregation will be informed when there is a date. The safety of everyone is the top concern, and the vestry will be investing in hand sanitising stations and PPE for the cleaner and Stewards.

Thank you to those who have already contacted either John Brooker or myself offering to help in the opening up of the church, if anyone else is willing please contact either of us, there will be training and PPE will be provided. You **must not** fall within the Scottish Government's list of those who are likely to be more at risk should they contract CoVid-19, even if you yourself are prepared to volunteer we are not able to currently accept your offer. (If you are not sure if that means you the base line is: if you are entitled to a free flu jab. There are others who will have also been informed by NHS Scotland that they should be careful about their interactions with others and should also wait until such guidelines have changed before volunteering.)

When we are ready to open the church, the congregation will be contacted with details including how to register should you wish to attend a service. In the meantime, if you would be interested in attending a mid-week said Eucharist receiving the Bread only, could you please let me know. There is no commitment either way at this stage, it is just to give me some indication of numbers who may be interested and assist in planning.

When the angels sang peace and goodwill on that hillside in Bethlehem, it was a song that still echoes down the centuries and was not just for that one place and time. In the years that have passed since those days, the world and its people have encountered many trials; through them all the light and hope that were birthed under that star have shone. The incarnation is a declaration that God is and always will be with us even when the unexpected strikes. As God has been with us during lock down, so God will continue to be with us as we ease our way out of it, and will be with us through whatever lies ahead.

*Blessings, Kirstin*

## **BLACK HISTORY EXPERTS CALL FOR CHANGES TO CURRICULUM IN SCOTTISH SCHOOLS**

Scotland's black history was the issue tackled by the panel of experts at Edinburgh World Heritage's 'in conversation with...' online event on 16<sup>th</sup> July, the fourth in a series programmed in response to the lockdown. Joined by a large on-line audience, the panellists were asked about a range of issues including why black history is poorly taught and understood in Scotland.

"There's an issue with Scottish history not being taught in schools adequately enough," said Lisa Williams, founder of the Edinburgh Caribbean Association. These concerns were echoed by Sir Geoff Palmer OBE, Professor Emeritus in the School of Life Sciences at Heriot-Watt, and human rights activist, who expressed his sympathy for Scottish people who ask, "why hasn't anybody told us this before?" Olivia Kanyike, ambassador for Intercultural Youth Scotland, explained how black history was completely absent from her education, "I had to learn it in my own personal time. It wasn't introduced at school or secondary school. It was never part of the curriculum at all."

Dr Melanie Newton, Associate Professor of History at the University of Toronto, tackled one of the main reasons for this absence, highlighting the

“erroneous narratives” that are constructed to exonerate nations from responsibility for slavery and the slave trade. “There is a bit of a game of white supremacy in which places like Canada and Scotland perpetuate a narrative in which the problem is always to the south, it’s England and the United States.”

Discussing the role of museums and heritage organisations in promoting black history, Lisa explained that “there’s an issue around co-curation that we’re really missing at this particular point.” Geoff argued that the problem does not lie in a lack of interest from the public. “The general public has taken an interest in this history through the media and have learnt a hell of a lot more than they learned in school or in university. It’s insulting to say that the Scottish people don’t want to hear their history, it’s not true.”

There was overwhelming support from the panelists for changes to the curriculum to tackle this problem, with speakers recognising the power of education. “Without education we’re not going to decolonise the curriculum,” said Olivia. “More needs to be done with the community of young people of colour who are students, they need to feel empowered and involved.” Lisa highlighted the importance of diverse historic sources, “it’s important to try to bring in as many different perspectives from historians who are looking at it through a different lens.”

Questions and comments were coming in via email and social media throughout the event, with one user joining with her 15-year-old daughter who “listened, asked questions and discussed points raised together.” One of the other points panelists tackled was the confusion between indentured slavery and chattel slavery. “Legally they are two completely different things,” explained Melanie. “Indenturedships are people who have made contracts for their labour and their passage to work for a planter, and in exchange for promises of land after their contracts were over.” The panel also discredited the idea that Henry Dundas, whose statue is in St Andrew Square, was an abolitionist. “He was a politician trying to prolong the slave trade. This is not an abolitionist,” said Geoff. His view was supported by Melanie who said that “there is no debate among people who actually do this research. No one sees him as an abolitionist.”

Bringing the conversation to a close, panellists were keen to emphasise that black history is about more than slavery. Olivia called for a celebration of “what we’ve contributed to society instead of the trauma and the sad stories.” Lisa drew particular attention to the story of Scotland’s Windrush. “900 men came from British Honduras during the Second World War and were stationed throughout Scotland. Hundreds stayed and married Scottish women and integrated into Scottish society. Their children and grandchildren are still

here.” Melanie stressed the need for “richer stories about the past that extend our understanding of what history is. We have to teach the full complexity of the human experience.”

You can watch the whole event on YouTube and you can also join in future events check out Edinburgh World Heritage web site at [ewh.org.uk](http://ewh.org.uk)

## VIRGIN MARY

On the 15<sup>th</sup> of August the Church celebrates the birth of the Virgin Mary. On the front of this magazine is an icon called; ‘Blessed be the fruit of her Womb’. A golden pear is one of the glyphs (artistic symbols) that are used to depict Mary. Nothing for sure is known of the parentage or her place of birth of the Mother of the Lord. According to the Gospel of Luke, Mary was a young Jewish girl living in Nazareth, engaged to a man called Joseph, when a messenger from the Lord announced that she was to be the bearer of the Son of God to the world. Her response, ‘Let it be to me according to your word’, and her life of obedience and faithfulness have been upheld ever since as a model for all who hear and obey God’s word. According to the Gospel of John, at the time of his death Jesus commended the care of his mother to the beloved disciple which may explain why in Christian tradition her final years are associated with both Jerusalem and Ephesus.

Julian of Norwich wrote this in Revelations of Divine Love:-

*With the same cheerful joy our good Lord looked down to his right and thereby brought to mind the place where our Lady was standing during his passion. ‘Do you want to see her?’ he said, saying in effect, ‘I know quite well you want to see my blessed Mother, for, after myself, she is the greatest joy I can show you, and most like me and worthy of me. Of all my creation, she is the most desirable sight.’ And because of his great, wonderful, unique love for this sweet maiden, his blessed Mother our Lady Saint Mary, he showed her to be rejoicing greatly. This is the meaning of the sweet words. It was as if he were saying, ‘Do you want to see how I love her, so that you can rejoice with me in my love for her, and hers for me?’ Here – to understand this word further – our Lord God is speaking to all who are going to be saved, as it were to all humankind in the person of one individual. He is saying, ‘Can you see in her how greatly you are loved? For love of you made her so exalted, so noble, so worthy. This pleases me, and I want it to please you too.’ For after himself she is the most blessed of all sights. But, for all that, I am not expected to want to see her physically present here on earth, but rather to see the virtues of her blessed soul, her truth, her wisdom, her charity, so that I can learn to know myself, and*

*reverently fear my God. When our good Lord had showed me this and said, 'Do you want to see her?' I answered, 'Yes, good Lord, thank you very much. Yes, good Lord, if it is your will.' I prayed this often, and I thought I was going to see her in person. But I did not see her in this way. Jesus, in that word, gave me a spiritual sight of her. Just as I had seen her before, lowly and unaffected, so now he showed her, exalted, noble, glorious, and pleasing to him above all creation. He wills it to be known that all who delight in him should delight in her too, with the same pleasure he has in her, and she in him. To help understand it better he gave this example. If you love one particular thing above everything else, you will try to make everyone else love and like what it is you love so greatly. When Jesus said, 'Do you want to see her?' I thought it was the nicest word about her that he could possibly have said, together with the spiritual revelation that he gave me of her. Except in the case of our Lady, Saint Mary, our Lord showed me no one specially – and her he showed three times. The first occasion was when she was big with child, the second sorrowing under the cross, and the third as she is now, delightful, glorious, and rejoicing.*

## **A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE CREEDS IN THREE PARTS - PART 2: THE CONTROVERSIES**

It is very hard to be brief when writing any history of The Creeds, even more so when it comes to the question of controversies, this is only a very brief overview scraping the surface of only a few of the many which were around as people tried to understand and explain who Jesus was.

During the second and third centuries much of the worlds' philosophies stemmed from the 4th century BC and the Greek philosopher Plato. However, during the years, Platonism had been influenced by other philosophies and had acquired a strong theistic belief. This was due in no small part to the ideals of those known as 'Middle Platonists'. They defined God as the 'One', absolutely transcendent, changeless, passionless, and pure in Being. We may look at that statement and wonder what the problem was. However as we can see by this quote from the philosopher Celsus who shared those views, Christianity was contrary to them. At the end of the second century he attacked Christians views in his discourse against Christianity titled, On the True Doctrine. His basic claim was; "No god or son of god could or would come down."

The Platonists saw no connection between the world and the One, they believed that a subordinate demiurge created the world, and the supreme God, the One, could not and would not be involved in incarnation. Christians came into direct conflict not only with Jewish thought in claiming Jesus was

God's Son, but also with established thought of what and who God was and how God interacted, or rather did not interact, with the world. It was ascertained that Christians could not be monotheists if Jesus was God, and so the Jewish and Greek critics argued that Christians were di-theists, believers in two gods. Christians therefore found themselves not only having to explain who Jesus was and his relationship to God to their own confused believers who did not fully understand the Rule of Faith, (see last month's magazine) but also the Greeks and Jesus who they wished to convert.

Several solutions sprung up to explain this. Two in particular rose to the top as simple ways to understand the uniqueness of Christ; however both were wanting and rejected as heresies by the Church.

Justin Martyr was the main proponent of Adoptionism, one of the solutions. Justin took the Greek word Logos, meaning either reason or word, used at the beginning of John's Gospel as a title for Jesus, and developed an understand around it. At the time it had the advantage of being understood by the philosophers of the day as meaning a mediator, someone who spoke or reasoned on someone else's behalf. The use of Logos enabled Justin to claim that God was both a changeless, self-contained being and an active creator. However, Justin could not say that Logos was God and therefore spoke of Logos as 'a second God', inherent within God as God's reason and expressed as going out from God in creation and revelation, but never-the-less, not God. While there were those who didn't see this as any different from saying there was only 'The One', Logos was either divine and therefore could not relate to the world, or not divine and therefore creation, revelation and incarnation could not be of God.

The other solution was Modalism sometimes called Sabellianism. This view was that God is One and Father, Son and Spirit are simply aspects or modes of 'The One'. In other words that God was one but took different forms to act in ways that were not usually associated with God. Sabellius, its chief advocate was excommunicated around AD220 when he dismissed the new idea of the Trinity. While he argued for different forms he argued against different persons. His teaching however continued to be held by many in the church and it was Modalism that drove the desire to find agreement on the Trinity and how to explain it in a way which could be understood by all Christians. (It is arguable that this goal has never been reached.)

The relationship between the Father and the Son was developed by Tertullian of Carthage 155-240AD who introduced the word substance to the debate. He said that Father, Son and Holy Spirit shared the same substance without any division between the three. This view had been around since

Montanus introduced it in the late 2nd century and was named Montanism after him. Montanism stated that the Son is a projection from the Father, without being separated from the Father, and the Spirit then proceeds from the Son. This was later to be declared a heresy; however it heavily influenced the debate on the Trinity and has never really vanished and can be found in several hymns. Indeed, there are a surprisingly large number of hymns which contain heresies, but that is maybe for another series of articles at another time.

Tertullian wrote extensively and his influence was wide; he was searching for adequate language and terminology which could do justice to the unity and the plurality of the persons within the Godhead. He saw the Godhead as three, not in quantity but in a sequence, not in substance but in aspects, not in power but in manifestations. Such language has been used not just in aspects of theology but also maths and science and tell of his interest and background in Greek and Roman thought.

Origen of Alexandria 184-253 AD was influenced by Tertullian, among others. He was a teacher in Alexandria between 203-230 but forbidden to teach after his ordination and so moved to Caesarea. Origen was particularly concerned in addressing Christian and pagan intellectuals who were being attracted by Gnosticism. The name is used to cover various heretical sects who claim special knowledge or superior intellect, in all matters pertaining to God.

At this time Platonists were explaining God's relationship with the world in terms of a threefold hierarchy of beings. The One was ineffable and incomprehensible, second was Logos containing the Platonic forms or ideas and thirdly the World-Soul, emanating from the divine mind and mediating between it and the world of sense and experience. Each of these were called a hypostasis meaning independent entity. Origen steered a middle road between Modalism and Adoptionism, his theory was that the Father had his Son begotten by an eternal act, the perfect image of the Father although not a second God. The Holy Spirit existed as an independent hypostasis whose main purpose was to reveal the Son to Human Beings.

Origen's subordination of the Son was his great weakness and led to later heresies. During his life he managed to hold the two contrasting insights, however after his death theologians polarised and a bitter theological controversy arose. In AD 318 Arius a presbyter of Alexandria tried to maintain the unity of God by exaggerating the uniqueness and supremacy of God the Father and accordingly reducing the Godhead of the Son. He was convinced that the Son belonged to the realm of creaturehood and there was a time when the Son was not. The Holy Spirit hardly had a look in.

Meanwhile Alexander of Alexandria, Arius' bishop, said that there was not a time when the Son did not exist and the relationship of how God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit came about was indescribable and beyond understanding. The disagreement between Alexander and Arius soon spread throughout the eastern Church, the Arians strongly holding on to their belief that God cannot suffer, therefore Logos, the Son who took the place of the human mind and soul and suffered is not God. While their opponents saw this price of reduced Godhead also had a cost in reducing the saving act of the crucifixion. If it was not God who bore our sins and died on the cross then we cannot also share in the resurrection. Our salvation comes through the death and resurrection of God taking on the fullness of being human. As the debate grew both Arius and Alexander looked for and found support from the wider Church.

Next month, in the last part of this short history of the Creeds we will look at the Nicene Creed and the continuing debates about it.

## **A REPORT FROM YOUR LAY REPRESENTATIVE: MEETING THE BISHOP!**

Most of you will know by now that, after many months of waiting, we now have a new bishop. The Right Rev. Kevin Pearson became the Bishop of Glasgow and Galloway on 1st July. Since then, I can assure you that Bishop Kevin and his wife, Elspeth, have been very busy, although they are still living in Oban until the Bishop's House in Glasgow is ready for them to move into. Many of you will have enjoyed the Diocesan service that Bishop Kevin led on Sunday, 19th July, but another event you may not have been aware of was a meeting that the North-West Regional Council (NWRC) had with him the Wednesday before.

Bishop Kevin has been diligent in having meetings with all of the Regional Councils over the last few weeks, for the obvious reasons of getting to know the faces of church representatives and a feel for the issues facing charges throughout the diocese. The meeting was chaired by John Mitchell, Diocesan Secretary. After a brief welcome and some news updates from the Diocese, Bishop Kevin and his wife, Elspeth, introduced themselves. The various church representatives then introduced themselves to the Bishop. This was quite interesting for me too, as I found out many things that I didn't know about fellow NWRC members, such as the Rev Dom Ind's (St. Michael's, Helensburgh) equestrian past and some historical details about St. Mungo's, Alexandria. We also discussed some pressing issues like church finances, lessons learned during the lockdown and future plans for struggling charges in the region.

In other news, it is great to hear that the charge of St. Augustine's, Dumbarton has a new rector: the Rev Heller Gonzalez. We wish Rev Heller, his wife Montse, and the congregation well for the future. St. Mungo's, Alexandria remains vacant; the new Bishop will make a decision on its future. Also, the move to the new Diocesan Office has obviously been delayed due to recent restrictions but plans are still moving forward.

Bishop Kevin likes his tea in a cup and saucer, rather than a mug, has a fantastic sense of humour and a clear passion for improving our Diocese. We all look forward to working with him over the coming years.

David Simmons

## FINANCIAL REPORT FOR ALL SAINTS

We have now been under coronavirus restrictions for a full quarter of our accounting year, April to June. At the July Vestry (held using Zoom), I presented the accounts for this quarter, with comparisons to the budget we approved at the November 2019 AGM and to our performance at the end of the same quarter in the 2018-19 financial year. Here are the salient points of what I said.

- The comparison of expenditure over the quarter with the budgeted figure shows that it has been much as expected. However the income figure was some £7320 less than the budget sought. If the residual Hall income for the quarter, which will not be repeated in the coming quarters, is taken out, the nominal deficit rises to £8160, or £2720 per month.
- If we compare the income from Congregational and Hall donations together in the April-June quarter with that from the preceding financial year, the former is lower by about £5800 or around a third, consistent with the figure for the deficit with respect to our budget.
- If we were to incur a whole year of coronavirus lockdown under the current rules, the overall shortfall in income would likely be around £30,000, around a third of our overall budget in recent years. Much of this deficit, though not all, would arise from the lack of Hall income.
- Given this difficult situation, the Vestry reviewed our expenditure and identified a number of potential savings. However, given that the majority of our costs are for categories under which we cannot easily make savings, the Vestry accepted that we would need, in the autumn, to set a deficit budget for the year 2020-21, and use our reserves to make good the shortfall. I will present a budget along these lines to the Vestry and to the Congregation in the autumn.

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## What to Expect if you come to All Saints for Worship

This is intended to give you an indication of what to expect should you come to All Saints when we re-open. This is for phase 3, when the Scottish Government move us to phase 4 it is expected that there will be changes.

Numbers attending services are restricted by the Scottish Government. the



maximum for any Church, regardless of size is 50, however 2 meters also needs to be maintained. All Saints will not be able to hold that maximum number.

The maximum for funerals is currently 20.

You must keep 2 meters from anyone who is not a member of your household at all times, both inside the church and in the church grounds.



You will be met at the door and may have to wait outside if others arrive at the same time as you do, please observe 2 meters distance should anyone else also be waiting with you.

Wearing a face mask in church will be compulsory for the duration of your visit. Please bring one with you, a few will be available should you have forgotten yours.



We are required to collect your name and contact details should a case of CoVid-19 be linked to an attendee at church. Such lists will be kept securely and disposed of 21 days after your visit.

You will be required to use gel when you arrive and leave the church and also before and after receiving communion. Gel stations will be provided.



Stewards will direct you to your seat and when to move from it. Should you see someone who you wish to greet please do it by waving rather than leaving your seat.

Books will not be handed out, you may bring your own in digital form or have your own printed copy which you bring and take away with you. The screen will be used for the liturgy.



Communion will be available in Bread only.

A one way system will be in place which you are requested to observe.



Please do not bring shopping into church. You will not be able to leave it, or indeed anything else, at the back of the church.

The coat hooks at the back of the church will not be available for use.



No toilet facilities will be available, and you will not be able to access the halls.

There will be no parking available in the car park at the church.



There will be no singing and the collection plate will not be passed around but rather available at the back of the church when you arrive. You are encouraged to use BACS or SO if possible.



While these guidelines may seem very constraining, they are required if the church is to be opened. The safety of everyone is the top priority.

The church will remain out of bounds apart from services. This is vitally important now we are opening up as anyone going into the church could unwittingly have a negative impact on the strict cleaning protocol which needs to be in place.

### Financial Report (continued)

One further topic – can I remind you all about the details for making regular Free Will Offering (FWO) donations at the moment. The way to do this, if you do not want to set up a Bankers Order, is to send me a monthly cheque through the post to 1, Kilmardinny Grove, Bearsden, Glasgow G61 3NY. It should be made out to “Vestry of All Saints Church Bearsden”. Please send a note with your FWO (green envelope) number on it with the cheque, so that I can record it. I am not sending out receipts, and I am collecting cheques to put them into the Bank in Bearsden every fortnight. So it may take up to 3 weeks or so for your cheque to clear and appear on your statement.

Andrew Long

## **THE DIVINE IMAGE (WILLIAM BLAKE 1757-1827) A PERFECT POEM FOR OUR TIMES**

To Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love,  
All pray in their distress:  
And to these virtues of delight  
Return their thankfulness.

For Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love,  
Is God, our father dear:  
And Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love,  
Is Man, his child and care.

For Mercy has a human heart,  
Pity, a human face:  
And Love, the human form divine,  
And Peace, the human dress.

Then every man of every clime,  
That prays in his distress,  
Prays to the human form divine,  
Love, Mercy, Pity, Peace.

And all must love the human form,  
In heathen, Turk, or Jew.

Where Mercy, Love, and Pity dwell,  
There God is dwelling too.

This lovely poem is one of Blake's Songs of Innocence. His subject is mercy, pity, peace and love which he describes as 'virtues of delight'. To these, he says, we all pray in times of trouble and later give our thanks. These virtues are God, but are also man who is his child. Each one appears to us as a human quality: in heart, face, form and dress. But what is human is also divine, and in times of trouble it is to this that we pray. So, Blake tells us (in words of another age) that we must love every human being, irrespective of nationality or faith, because this is where the virtues live, and, where they live, God lives too.

Some critics argue that Blake is saying that man has created God from these virtues rather than the other way around. In other words God is man's creation to explain the virtues and, therefore, He does not exist. I am sure Blake's words don't mean this. The virtues do indeed appear in human form – how else could they? – but to me they hold a mirror to the very nature of God rather than create it.

This poem has been a favourite of mine for many years especially in times of sadness and fear. I am sure that the mercy, pity, peace and love we see in the eyes and words of a caring friend reflect the love of God, and He is there too.

It is a perfect poem for our times.

Brenda Hadcroft

## READING DURING LOCKDOWN - CONTINUED

In the July magazine Andrew asked us to reveal what we have been reading during lockdown. I have selected 3 very different books.

The first is *The Alchemist* by Paul Coelho. This tells the story of Santiago, an Andalusian shepherd boy, who travels alone from his home in Spain to Tangiers and onward through the Egyptian desert. He is following his heart and his dreams and ultimately the path that God has chosen for him. The author writes "If you believe yourself worthy of the thing that you fought so hard to get, then you become an instrument of God, you become the Soul of the World and you understand why you are here" A thought provoking read.

The second book is *All The Light We Cannot See* by Anthony Doerr. A very moving and bittersweet novel of wartime and the parallel lives of two young people. One a French girl blind from the age of 6 and the other a German boy orphaned at an early age. He hears her voice coming over the radio from Paris to his orphanage in Germany and thus their lives inevitably become intertwined.

Finally something completely different, a true story of hope triumphing over despair. *The Salt Path* by Raynor Winn tells of how she and her husband Moth (suffering from a terminal illness) were made homeless. With little time left together they decide to walk the 630 mile South West Coastal Path from Somerset to Dorset. The book is inspirational, detailing the highs and lows of their journey and the ultimate redemptive power of nature and love over adversity.

Gill Hamblen

## PURPLE EDGE



Susan Gilmour, of Purple Edge, has been having a busy Lockdown and is now restocking the shop after 4 months closure. Meantime she has not only been providing a splendid service for All Saints by printing and packing the magazine for posting, but she has also been redecorating the shop. I'm sure Aimee has been helping!

Many thanks to Susan for her help.

Janet Stack



## KNITTED HATS FOR SEAMEN (CONTINUED)



Following the example set by Sheena and Elaine I decided to knit some hats for the Mission to Seafarers. I managed to recruit a couple of fellow golfers to knit and several others who scoured cupboards for suitable wool.

The result is as shown. I posted off 15 hats of assorted colours having been reassured by the letter to Elaine that there are now ladies on board! I hope they enjoy wearing the more flamboyant offerings!!

Gill Hamblen

## KATHLEEN'S PEKINESE STORY OR KOW-TOW FOR A BOW-WOW

Mum told me this story a few weeks ago, having had her memory sparked by a news story you may possibly remember. It concerned some new discoveries about the tragic (and heroic) sinking of one of our aircraft carriers, HMS Glorious, and its destroyer escorts, Ardent and Acasta, on their way home from Norway in 1940. Mum was reminded by seeing this story of the eldest son of the family living next door, when she was growing up during the war in Workington in Cumbria. He very tragically was killed while serving in the navy,

though in 1939, not in the incident covered in the news story. In fact he was serving on the WW1 era battleship, HMS Royal Oak, when a German submarine managed to get into Scapa Flow and sink it with terrible loss of life. This was the disaster that led to the creation of the Churchill Barriers in the Orkneys. A sad enough memory, but it sparked a much more cheerful one!

Young Gordon Sandham had evidently joined up well before the war and had served on other ships, as HMS Royal Oak (I checked – surprisingly easily!) never visited the Far East during the interwar years. It was on some posting to the China station – I can't discover which ship and exactly when, that our hero decided to get a present to bring home for his mother (he was a nice lad).

Somehow or other he obtained a Pekinese puppy. At this time it was illegal to remove the Pekinese from China as they were still considered imperial dogs. Obviously by the late 1930s the country was in deep chaos so possibly it wasn't all that difficult. How he then managed to smuggle a puppy all the way home on one of his majesty's warships remains a mystery, but that is what he did, and presented the imperial exile to his dog-loving mother.

She was called Beauty, and Mum tells me that she was amiable, though extremely stand-offish. If she liked you she would condescend to be politely petted; otherwise she simply ignored you. This was no doubt to be expected from one of imperial heritage.

Mr Sandham senior, the husband of the new keeper of the imperial pooch, was himself a dog-owner, but he liked a spot of shooting and his dogs were working retrievers. On one memorable day he went for a walk and unusually took Beauty in company with the other dogs. At some point Beauty strayed or lingered unduly when he called her, and in a moment of absentmindedness, or possibly lese-majeste, he said to one of the gundogs, "Fetch Beauty". The well-trained and obedient hound promptly did his job and brought Beauty back, physically quite unharmed of course, but by the scruff of her neck.

Beauty was mortified. In fact, she felt so humiliated by this outrageous treatment that she turned her face to the wall, refused to eat and went into a rapid decline. In desperation the vet was consulted, and, whether seriously or not, he suggested that it would be appropriate to apologise in what might now be called a culturally sensitive manner. Mr and Mrs Sandham therefore prostrated themselves in front of the offended young aristocrat, and begged her forgiveness. It worked.

The moral is presumably therefore that if you offend a member of the Chinese imperial household, however furry and four-legged it may be, you must kow-tow before it.

Mairi Ross

## **A DIAMOND WEDDING CELEBRATION – ALEX AND JEAN STIRLING**



**Then....**



**Now..... Meg's present to Granny and Grandpa**

Jean writes:

We celebrated our Diamond Wedding Anniversary on July 8th. It was a great occasion although we were small in number due to the virus. We managed to have a garden event. We would have been eligible for a card from the Queen but she was not sending them out this year!!

*Many congratulations Jean and Alex from us all – Editor*

## **A LETTER FROM THE FRIENDS OF VELLORE, UK**

We support the Vellore Hospital (CMC) in India regularly. Here is an extract from a letter from the Friends of Vellore describing how they are coping under the onslaught of the coronavirus.

### **.....CMC Vellore Coronavirus Update**

Cases of COVID-19 are rising fast in India and it now has the 3rd highest number of cases of any country in the world. CMC have now treated nearly 2,000 patients. They have set aside about 720 beds for COVID isolation (including 168 just opened at the new hospital at Kannigapuram). When I was last informed a couple of weeks ago, all the ICU beds were full and the isolation beds were about 80% full.

CMC is incurring a lot of additional costs in procuring PPE, converting existing wards and ICUs and setting up new facilities for COVID care. Meanwhile their regular income from patients has dwindled to less than a fifth of what it was prior to the COVID lockdown.

The government policy is to keep anyone testing positive in hospital, to reduce the chance of spread. However, this brings another set of expenses incurred in providing hospital care. Many of these people have no money to pay for their isolation care, and so need subsidies. The nationwide lockdown which began at the end of March resulted in many, particularly migrant workers, without jobs. CMC have been delivering medicines directly to the homes of patients with chronic disease unable to come to the hospital. They are also supplying food to individuals and families in particular need, with help of donations from staff and others. They are wonderfully demonstrating the love of Christ in very practical ways.

Friends of Vellore UK have sent over £20,000 to CMC to help them cover the costs of equipping new ICU beds, PPE, patient care and outreach work. This is in addition to the funds we are sending to support current projects. If you want

to make a donation towards the costs of COVID 19 at CMC, or to any of our other projects, you can do so by clicking on the website below:

**Have you visited our website recently?**

Our website: [www.friendsofvellore.org/](http://www.friendsofvellore.org/) contains updates on most of our current projects demonstrating the difference they are making in the lives of the people they serve. It is updated regularly with news items and has lots of information on different ways you can get involved with the work of the charity.

Yours faithfully,  
Ruth Tuckwell, Administrator

## **REFLECTIONS DURING THE LOCKDOWN.**

In the course of my theology studies I have been reading Paul's letter to Rome. A seemingly neglected few verses struck me afresh: In Romans 8:19-22 Paul speaks of the created universe waiting with eager expectation for God's children to be revealed. He speaks of the whole created universe in all its parts groaning (v 22 REB). This all seemed incomprehensible to me.

Paul was writing in the context of Life through the Spirit and in the light of the cross and all it entails. That humanity is involved seems obvious, but what about the created universe? Why should it be involved?

The lockdown restrictions world-wide have brought changes - cleaner, clearer air, revival of animal life, and heightened awareness of the natural world have been apparent to many. Paul's universe had a far more restricted meaning than it would for us today, with the big bang, black holes and remote galaxies familiar concepts to us. Paul would have had the mandate of Genesis 1: 28 in mind – the creation of which he would have been aware.

The destruction of the environment, eradication of wild life and forests, pollution and climate change are mainly the consequences of human actions, and therefore not God's intention. Did Jesus' death put these consequences right as well as restoring humanity's relationship to God?

The lockdown has made many aware of our environmental impact and cautioned some against a return to 'normal.' Greta Thunberg, David Attenborough and responsible climate change activists have a case that is made more pressing by the decisions likely following lockdown. Should our churches not be more vocal and united in pressing for positive action to reassess the race to 'life as before'? We are all involved, not just our church leaders.

David Wheatley

## **LEARNING SOMETHING NEW IN LOCKDOWN.**

When I left school at the age of eighteen I left with a good knowledge of the Arts but my knowledge of Science, with the exception of Human Physiology was very rudimentary. David decided early on in April that I might enjoy learning more Chemistry after a very interesting BBC programme by Jim Al – Khalili on the discovery of the Elements. David purchased three books and I am currently reading Periodic Tales by Hugh Aldersey-Williams: the curious lives of the elements. It is proving fascinating and made me recall my earliest interest which started on Saturday mornings at the end of an intensive week of study when I first started Nursing.

During our time spent in the PTS, the 12 weeks of preparation before being allowed into a ward to start learning and practising on real patients, we received intensive training both in the classroom and the practical room. Forty five of us lived together at Manor House, next door to Charterhouse School in Surrey. I shared a very large bedroom with 3 others during this time, our beds widely separated by the size of the room. A bell rang at some early hour and we leapt out of bed and stripped it of bedclothes placing them on 2 chairs at the foot. After hastily washing and dressing we went down for a substantial breakfast dressed in uniform but minus apron. Two people at each table served the rest of the table of 8 including the tutor, of which one presided at the head of each table and who said the Grace. After the meal, another bell rang and we all scurried off to don aprons and make our beds in pairs before carrying out half an hour of cleaning which we were allocated for the week. Another bell told us to take off our aprons and wash our hands and proceed with books and pens to the classroom for the morning lessons in Anatomy and Physiology by Sister PTS.

After lunch we had lessons in the practical room where we practiced on each other. This included giving each other a bed bath, where we were stripped naked but covered by a sheet at all times except for the part being washed and everything was washed. You can imagine how red our faces were especially when the more intimate part of our anatomy was cleansed but this was a valuable lesson in how it feels when one is a patient and we always remembered it. It ensured empathy. We had a few hours to ourselves during the day which were mainly taken up with study or further practice. I thought I would have to give up when I couldn't get the knack of shaking down a mercury filled thermometer or of filling a waterpillow so that it remained silent. Both are now long obsolete and confined to museums.



Eventually, the weekend arrived and we were allowed freedom from Saturday lunch until 8pm on Sunday.

As a finale to our week it was thought that, as we would only receive a half day, and a full day off when we reached the wards this would be our off duty pattern now, so on our Saturday morning a lecturer from the Medical School in London came down to teach us some general science. These talks were very lighthearted and amusing and consisted in what most of us thought of as conjuring tricks. Chemical reactions surprised us as lights appeared to demonstrate the properties of electrolytes and brilliant colours appeared in flasks to demonstrate the presence of a reaction between one element and another. How much we gained in knowledge is doubtful but it gave our tutors the full weekend off and fulfilled Matron's orders that we should be there on a Saturday morning.

After lunch, some went home, if their homes were nearby, but many of us had to remain and enjoy the extensive garden and visits to Godalming or Guildford and the very beautiful Surrey countryside, and each other's company. There was attendance at Church on Sunday for the Eucharist as we had all been confirmed as Anglicans, a requirement of the Nightingale School. It was a very happy time in our lives even though many thought it was just like being back at school. Life long friendships were formed in those first few months when we felt isolated from the outside world and our family – not dissimilar to lockdown in some ways.

Mary Stott

## VIEWS TAKEN DURING LOCKDOWN EXERCISE

Our area is a beautiful one, particularly in a dry and sunny Spring. On the back page are some views of the area taken on my phone during lockdown walks. See if you can work out where they are taken from (no prizes). *Editor*

