

The Vicar Writes...

Dear Friends

"Jesus answered them, it is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick". *Luke 5.31*.

Contact with Jesus is two way. Immediately after Jesus invited Matthew to join him, Matthew invited him to his home. Jesus' initiative was balanced by Matthew's. As he calls us to share his life, he awaits an invitation to share ours.

When Jesus sat down to eat with him and his friends, the critics thought that he was condoning Matthew's behaviour. Jesus was neither ignoring, nor accepting the way Matthew had lived, but was underlining that Matthew's only way out to something better was with Jesus. He didn't say, "Matthew change your life and then I will think about taking you on". He offered his help to Matthew, there and then, held out an invitation to him to examine and change his life. If Matthew was to be kept on the edge of acceptance until he changed, there would have been no change. Change depended on his growing nearer to Jesus, and Jesus risks his own name and reputation to rescue him.

He made no excuses for Matthew's past life. He didn't say, "everybody's doing it, it doesn't matter". In answering the critics, he said quite clearly that there were things in Matthew's life that were wrong, that he was sick, and needed the healing that only Jesus could give. A healing that would penetrate every corner of his life and bring a wholeness and a balance that would transform him.

God doesn't keep us at arm's length until we are good enough to meet him. He takes us just as we are.

With all good wishes
Andrew

THOMAS TRAHERNE: LOVER OF NATURE

(10th October)

Thomas Traherne (1636 – 1674) is a good saint for anyone who loves our planet, and who wants to preserve Creation. This 17th century poet and clergyman wrote extensively about his love for nature, seeing in it a reflection of the glory of God.

Traherne was not of a literary family, for his father was either a shoemaker or innkeeper in Hereford. But Traherne did well at the Hereford Cathedral School and went on to Brasenose College Oxford. From there he became rector of Credenhill near Hereford in 1657, and ten years later was appointed to be the private chaplain to Sir Orlando Bridgement, the Lord Keeper of the Great Seal to King Charles II, who lived at Teddington.

Throughout his years at Credenhill and then Teddington, Traherne led a simple and devout life, and his friendliness drew people to him. He was described as “one of the most pious ingenious men that ever I was acquainted with”, and being of “cheerful and sprightly Temper”, ready to do “all good Offices to his Friends, and Charitable to the Poor almost beyond his ability”. Aside from his beloved books, he seems to have possessed very little.

Instead, he poured his energy into his writings, which had an intense, mystical, metaphysical spirituality. His poems and prose frequently mention the glory of Creation, and his intimate relationship with God, for whom he had an ardent, childlike love. Traherne has been compared to later poets such as William Blake, Walt Whitman and Gerard Manley Hopkins, and his love for nature has been seen as very similar to the Romantic movement, though he lived two centuries earlier.

He is best known for his *Centuries of Meditations*, which has been described as "one of the finest prose-poems in our language." Lost for many years, and then finally first published in 1908, it was a favourite of the Trappist monk Thomas Merton, the Christian humanist Dorothy Sayers, and the writer C.S. Lewis, among others. C.S. Lewis considered *Centuries of Meditations* "almost the most beautiful book in English."

Traherne died in 1674, and is buried in St Mary's Teddington, under the church's reading desk. Today he is counted as one of the leading 17th-century devotional poets.

TO MAKE YOU SMILE

A Sunday School teacher had just concluded her lesson and wanted to make sure she had made her point. She said, "Can anyone tell me what you must do before you can obtain forgiveness of sin?"

There was a short pause and then, from the back of the room, a small boy spoke up. "Sin?"

SAILING THE CARIBBEAN

I have been very fortunate in my life to have enjoyed some wonderful experiences and sights of the natural world in which we live. One that comes to mind at the moment is the magnificence and grandeur of the sea, the sky, in other words, the natural elements. Back in 2004, Tessa and I had a holiday on a sailing ship in the Caribbean.....she was a proper sailing ship....originally built for E.V. Hutton the financier back in 1923, she was the "Mandalay" a 236 ft.long barquentine. For the technically minded, 3 masts, the foremast having square sails, and the main and mizen masts being rigged fore and aft. She had a crew of 30 and carried 80 passengers. The whole essence was relaxation, no shoes, no dressing up for dinner,very informal. There was no seating plan for meals, you sat with whoever you wished.

We set out from St. Georges in Grenada for 14 days cruise ending at St. Johns in Antigua. On the 3rd night, we were navigating the St. Vincent passage, a stretch of water between St. Vincent and Martinique, and the captain said it "may be a bit bumpy" At 0.15hrs I went on deck to be greeted by a sight I shall never forget. The full moon was up and so was the sea.....great hills of waves were marching upon the starboard bow, and Mandalay was doing her job for which she was built,dropping her shoulder into the waves, rather like a back row forward getting over the gain line in rugby. I dashed down to our cabin to wake Tessa "come up and see this incredible sight!" Together we made our way to the upper deck to enjoy the spectacle of a sailing ship in her full grandeur. It was a magnificent sight. The bow would slice into the wave, which would come sweeping along the



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windward deck, cascade all over the main deck, and sluice out through the leeward scuppers. Handlines were rigged at head height to assist in crossing from one part of the ship to another, and cross-netting had been hoisted at crucial positions along the side-deck. Apart from the thump of the bow into the waves, all other sounds were natural....the sigh of the wind in the rigging, the hiss of the sea running over the deck, and the heave of the waves....these sounds and sights have been in existence since creation, and we were privileged to witness them in these surroundings. I found myself thinking "who controls these elements" and all of a sudden, I felt my Creator near.

Nigel Yeoman

The Rectory
St James the Least of All

My dear Nephew Darren

Now you have got your new telephone system in the parish, I shall not be calling you again. I

refuse to wait for ten minutes every time I ring to have to listen to the cycle of 'press 1 for the vicar, 2 for the curate, 3 for the secretary', until we end with '12 for requests for prayer.' I was tempted to leave a message on 12 to ask that the wretched machine would break down, but then realised I would have to call a second time to leave a message on 13 for making a confession. And if I have to listen one more time to someone playing 'Thine be the glory' on one finger on an electric organ while I am 'on hold' I will have him excommunicated. At least you have the



grace not to ask me not to hang up, as my call is important to you. I would even warm to your system if a voice occasionally said that they couldn't care less whether I hung up or not, as my call was utterly irrelevant to them.

Those poor people who have to wait to reach 7 for leaving messages regarding marriages might as well leave a second message on 8 for baptisms, and save on a large phone bill in months to come. As for 9 for funerals, entire families could be born, marry and die before they reach that one. And may I suggest that your car parking attendant who stuck a note on my windscreen telling me not to park there again is given the number 666.

My own answerphone tells people firmly that the machine does not accept incoming messages, and that I only answer personally on Thursdays between 10am and 12 noon, provided nothing better has turned up. Alternatively, they could write me a letter which may (or may not) be answered, at my convenience.

As for the few who have got hold of my mobile number, my response is to say that I am just about to enter a tunnel and then to switch it off. Callers from other parts of the country now believe that the parish of St James the Least is honeycombed by mile-long tunnels, making communication all but impossible.

You can now be assured that your new system means you will be contactable at any moment, wherever you happen to be. But don't call me to complain and expect to receive sympathy; I shall be just about to enter a tunnel.

Your loving uncle
Eustace

St Luke – the doctor who brought good news

This month we remember St Luke (18th October), the author of the third gospel and the Book of Acts. Throughout his writing Luke makes clear that the good news of salvation is available to all people regardless of their gender, social position, or nationality. It is believed that Luke was a doctor, and he certainly sees the importance of healing in the ministry of Jesus and the Church. The signs of the presence of God's kingdom include the healing of sickness, hurts, as well as unforgiveness.

This is evident when Jesus sends out the 72 disciples in Luke 10, a reading for St Luke's Day:

'The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field...When you enter a town and are welcomed eat what is set before you. Heal the sick who are there and tell them, 'The kingdom of God is near you.' (Luke 10:2,8).

What challenges do we find in these verses?

Firstly Luke, as a **Gentile** (a non-Jew) recognises the revolutionary way outsiders are welcomed into the faith community, e.g. Zacchaeus (Luke 19) and Cornelius (Acts 10). How can we engage with those who are outside the community of faith? We have to avoid the tendency to regard ourselves as insiders! As we reach out to those who are ready to welcome the gospel, we have an opportunity to share good news and healing in the name of Jesus.

Secondly, as an **Evangelist**, Luke wants us to share the love of Jesus with all those we encounter. However, as these verses indicate, this has got to be rooted in prayer, if we are going to be led by God in our response to others. *'Mission is seeing what God is doing and joining in'* (Rowan Williams).

The Rev'd Canon Paul Hardingham

THE FRIEND AT MIDNIGHT

This month we are looking at the Parable of the Friend at Midnight (Luke 11:5-8). It is found in a passage where Jesus is teaching His disciples to pray.

Pray Shamelessly:

The parable concerns a man coming to his friend at midnight and asking *'Friend, lend me three loaves, for a friend of mine has arrived on a journey, and I have nothing to set before him'* (5-6). Despite the hour, the rules of hospitality would mean this was not an unreasonable request.

But the friend refuses to help because everyone in his house is asleep. Jesus adds, *'though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet because of the man's boldness he will rise and give him whatever he needs'*. Jesus uses this parable to encourage us to come in *shameless boldness* to our heavenly Father with our needs. In contrast to the parable, God is not slow in responding to us. It's not God who is reluctant to answer, but we to ask. Do we pray with shameless boldness?

Pray Persistently:

Such confidence is the basis for persistent prayer: *'Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.'* All three verbs indicate a continual habit: *'Keep on asking...seeking...knocking'*. We will not be content simply to ask once and then move on. Jesus tells us to bring our prayers to God persistently. Do we give up too easily in prayer?

Pray Expectantly:

'For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened.' Do we pray expectantly, believing that God delights in answering your prayers? Why not begin this adventure of prayer today!

The Rev'd Canon Paul Hardingham

Real-life extracts from church bulletins and notices that didn't come out quite in the way intended!

The church will host an evening of fine dining, superb entertainment, and gracious hostility.

Harvest Supper Friday at 6pm. Prayer and medication to follow.

The Men's group will meet at 6pm. Steak, mashed potatoes, green beans, wine and dessert will be served for a nominal feel.

Jumble sale: The ladies of our church have cast off clothing of every kind. They may be seen in the basement on Friday afternoon.

Low Self Esteem Support Group will meet Thursday at 7pm. Please use the back door.



CALENDAR FOR OCTOBER

Fri 1 10.30 am

Coffee Morning in hall

TRINITY 18

Sun 3 8.00 am
10.30 am

Holy Communion
Parish Communion with
Baptism of Freddie Pelham
Choral Evensong

6.00 pm

Wed 6 10.30 am

Holy Communion *at St. Nicolas*

Fri 8 10.30 am

Mums and Toddlers

TRINITY 19

Sun 10 8.00 am
10.30 am

Holy Communion
Matins (*Sunday Club in hall*)

Wed 13 10.30 am

Holy Communion *at St. Nicolas*

Fri 15 10.30 am

Coffee Morning in hall

TRINITY 20

Sun 17 8.00 am
9.30 am
10.30 am

Holy Communion
Family Service
Parish Communion

Wed 20 10.30 am

Holy Communion *at St. Nicolas*

Fri 22 10.30 am

Mums and Toddlers

LAST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

Sun 24 8.00 am
10.30 am

Holy Communion
Matins

Tues	26	10.00 am	Craft Group
Wed	27	10.30 am	Holy Communion <i>at St. Nicolas</i>
Thurs	28	3.30 pm	Magazine collation

ALL SAINTS

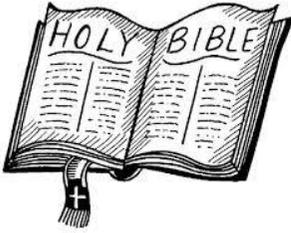
Sun	31	8.00 am	Holy Communion
		10.30 am	Parish Communion
		6.00 pm	All Souls' Service
Wed	3	10.30 am	Holy Communion <i>at St. Nicolas</i>

ALL SOULS SERVICE - On *Sunday 31st October* at *6.00 pm* we will be holding our annual All Souls Service at which candles will be lit by those who wish to remember a loved one. We will be writing to families of the recently bereaved to invite them especially, but this service is, of course, open to anyone who would like to come.

There will be lists at the back of church if you wish to add the name of a loved one to be remembered.

CHRISTMAS FAYRE
 SATURDAY 4TH DECEMBER
 11.00 am - 1.00 pm

More details next month



SUNDAY READINGS **IN OCTOBER**

Sunday 3rd October: Trinity 18

OLD TESTAMENT: 2.1-10

Satan attacks Job's health, giving him loathsome sores to test him.

NEW TESTAMENT: Hebrews 1.1-4; 2.5-12

Jesus who was made a little lower than the angels is now crowned with glory and honour because he has died for us.

GOSPEL: Mark 10.2-16

Jesus is questioned on the subject of divorce.

Sunday 10th October: Trinity 19

OLD TESTAMENT: Job 23.1-9, 16-end

Job is longing to find God in his suffering. He complains that God feels distant and absent.

NEW TESTAMENT: Mark 10.17-31

Jesus speaks with the rich young man and tells him to sell everything and follow him.

Sunday 17th October: Trinity 20

OLD TESTAMENT: Job 38.1-7

God talks to Job of how he had created the world and laid its foundations.

NEW TESTAMENT: Hebrews 5.1-10

As high priests were selected and represented people before God, so Jesus has become for us the great High Priest.

GOSPEL: Mark 10.35-45

The request of James and John who asked to sit on the right and left side of Jesus in his glory.

Sunday 24th October: Last after Trinity

OLD TESTAMENT: Job 42.1-6,10-end

Job confesses his presumption and lack of knowledge and repents before God. Job's friends are rebuked and Job is vindicated. He is blessed and received by his friends again.

NEW TESTAMENT: Mark 10.46-end

Jesus was leaving Jericho when he comes across a blind beggar called Bartimaeus. This event took place a week before Jesus' death, so it is the last miracle that Mark records in his Gospel.

Sunday 31st October: All Saints' Day

OLD TESTAMENT: Isaiah 56.3-8

God's house will be a house of prayer for all nations, not just the nation of Israel.

NEW TESTAMENT: 1 John 3.1-3

These are words of encouragement written to a community that is troubled by schism. One of the primary aims of 1 John is to persuade the remaining community members that they have good reason to hold on to their faith.

GOSPEL: Matthew 5.1-12

In the beatitudes from the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus makes it clear that the kingdom of God belongs to the poor in spirit, the lowly and the persecuted.

HARVEST TIME



Harvest Festivals usually take place in September or October when we give thanks to God for the fruits of the earth and the sea. In 1980 I was living in Waterbeach, north of Cambridge. This was a very flat, heavily agricultural fenland area of

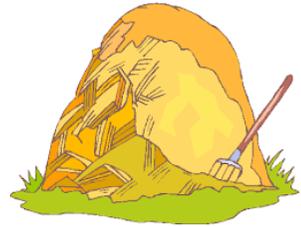
East Anglia, with enormous skies and endless farms. The vast majority of our congregation were totally dependent on the harvest. Weather was a bit factor, and crops a constant source of conversation. The land and what it produced was of paramount importance to their livelihood. Thus the Harvest Festival and supper took on a far deeper significance.

We walked through the dark to a farmer's candle-lit barn, with bales of hay to the roof on three sides, and sacking hanging from the remaining wall.

The adults sat in a semi-circle at trestle tables with their backs to the hay bales, and the children - mine included - at a table in the middle.

Grace was said, and a large homemade loaf of bread was blessed by our vicar, broken in half, and

passed around to be shared by the adults and children alike. We had a very simple meal ending with apple pie. Favourite old songs which everyone knew were loudly enjoyed ... "10 green bottles", "Clementine", etc. and a hilarious rendition of "There's a hole in my bucket".



My elderly mother-in-law (who seldom praised anything), was with us and, to my astonishment, said it was by far the most meaningful Harvest Supper she had ever attended -

and she must have been to a huge number through her long life. As for me, it was an unforgettable experience, and gave a far deeper meaning to our traditional Harvest hymn "We plough the fields and scatter the good seed on the land" and reinforced how dependent we all are on "God's Almighty Hand".

Anna Castley

P.S. I don't think they ever mentioned the Harvest of the sea - it was all too far away from middle England!!

GARDEN OF REMEMBRANCE

We have run out of space in the area for the internment of ashes at the Church of the Transfiguration and are in the process of getting permission to extend this.

This is not as easy as it sounds as the ground is on a hill and so we will have to tier the land and have steps up to the new ashes area and paths to access it. It is hoped that once this is done it will give us many years of use before we need to think about it again.

We are also hoping to improve the look and feel of the existing area with the addition of perhaps planted urns and decorative stones.

We are waiting for faculty approval and have cleared some of the ground, but it will take a while before we can make a start.

If you would like to donate towards this project please see Andrew.

Dear All

It has been a great pleasure to spend the last three and a half years ministering with and among you, but as you no doubt saw in last month's Parish Magazine, Sarah and I will be saying our goodbyes in the near future. It is very likely that my final Sunday with you all will be the 21st of November, with a licensing date of the 20th of December in the evening at St. Bartholomew's, Burwash, to which you are all very welcome if you wish to join us.

Many thanks for your friendship, advice and tolerance – I hope you will all stay in touch,

Every blessing,

Tom

THE THIRTY NINE ARTICLES CONTD.

XXV. OF THE SACRAMENTS

SACRAMENTS ordained of Christ be not only badges or tokens of Christian men's profession, but rather they be certain sure witnesses, and effectual signs of grace, and God's good will towards us, by the which he doth work invisibly in us, and doth not only quicken, but also strengthen and confirm our Faith in him.

There are two Sacraments ordained of Christ our Lord in the Gospel, that is to say, Baptism, and the Supper of the Lord.

Those five commonly called Sacraments, that is to say, Confirmation, Penance, Orders, Matrimony, and extreme Unction, are not to be counted for Sacraments of the Gospel, being such as have grown partly of the corrupt following of the Apostles, partly are states of life allowed in the Scriptures; but yet have not like nature of Sacraments with Baptism, and the Lord's Supper, for that they have not any visible sign or ceremony ordained of God.

The Sacraments were not ordained of Christ to be gazed upon, or to be carried about, but that we should duly use them. And in such only as worthily receive the same they have a wholesome effect or operation: but they that receive them unworthily purchase to themselves damnation, as Saint Paul saith.

We once again delve into some quite famous reformation arguments in this article –and indeed, once again an issue which is also ‘live’ – another reason I

am convinced that the articles, for all their situation as a document of the past still bear a lot of relevance today.

The Roman Church acknowledges 7 sacraments; The Lord's Supper, Baptism, Confirmation, Penance (the sacrament of confession), Orders (the ordination of ministers), Matrimony (marriage), and extreme Unction (the final rites before death).

However, of these 7 the Church of England – following many other reformed churches - only acknowledges 2 of them to be full sacraments, that is to say, actions which, to quote the article are *witnesses, and effectual signs of grace, and God's good will towards us, by the which he doth work invisibly in us, and doth not only quicken, but also strengthen and confirm our Faith in him.* The main difference between the 2 which the articles accept and the remaining 5 are that the sacraments of the Lord's Supper and Baptism were both ordained by Christ himself, and both have 'signs' whilst the others lack both sign and ordinance. The sign for Baptism is being washed in water, whilst the signs for the Lord's Supper are the bread and wine (and the consumption of the bread and wine, the action of eating and drinking is just as much a part of the sacrament as the elements).

A sign is something which points to something else – in the case of the sacraments, they are signs which point to the grace of God, but they are also ways of 'effecting' that grace – making it present and real. The sacraments are not just nice things to have, therefore, but integral parts of the Christian life and witness, and they are not just something that should be treated casually – as the end of the article makes clear, following Paul in 1 Corinthians 11:29-31; *For those who eat and drink without discerning the body of Christ eat and drink judgment on themselves. That is why many among you are weak and sick, and a number of you have fallen asleep. But if we were more discerning with regard to ourselves, we would not come under such judgment. Nevertheless, when we are judged in this way by the Lord, we are being disciplined so that we will not be finally condemned with the world.* But just as much as they are not to be treated casually, nor should they be exulted – 'gazed upon or carried around' refers to the Roman practice of Benediction, where the priest held up the consecrated bread ("host") and blessed people with it, adoration of the host (often in a special container called a 'Monstrance') or procession with the host around the church or parish. This is because they are signs of God and not God himself – although, as we will see later, there are some nuances to this bit of theology.

XXVI. OF THE UNWORTHINESS OF THE MINISTERS, WHICH HINDERS NOT THE EFFECT OF THE SACRAMENT

ALTHOUGH in the visible Church the evil be ever mingled with the good, and sometimes the evil have chief authority in the Ministration of the Word and Sacraments, yet forasmuch as they do not the same in their own name, but in Christ's, and do minister by his commission and authority, we may use their Ministry, both in hearing the Word of God, and in receiving of the Sacraments. Neither is the effect of Christ's ordinance taken away by their wickedness, nor the grace of God's gifts diminished from such as by faith and rightly do receive the Sacraments ministered unto them; which be effectual, because of Christ's institution and promise, although they be ministered by evil men. Nevertheless, it appertaineth to the discipline of the Church, that inquiry be made of evil Ministers, and that they be accused by those that have knowledge of their offences; and finally being found guilty, by just judgement be deposed.

How can you be certain that the sacrament you are receiving is actually a sacrament? What if the minister wasn't worthy or wasn't properly consecrating the elements? This article simply notes that even though the church universal is of course made up only of saved Christians, the visible church – the people you might find in church on a Sunday - is a mixture of all sorts of people, and some of them are not always good – even the ministers! But even an 'evil' minister who says the right words in the name of Christ is still able to lead true sacraments, so we can always be sure that the sacraments we receive are true and effective.

However, the article finishes by noting that the church should do its best to hold ministers to discipline to try and avoid the above scenario where possible.

The Rev'd Tom Pelha

FROM THE REGISTERS

Wedding

5th September Matthew Bennett & Claire Hill

Funerals

15th September Angela Elliott (67)
23rd September Jean Mildred Wiggins (89)
28th September Paul Grey Parsons (82)
28th September Elizabeth Vinski Hood (101)

ALTAR FLOWERS

Sunday 3 rd October	Wendy Bales
Sunday 10 th October	Wendy Bales
Sunday 17 th October	Grace Martin
Sunday 24 th October	Grace Martin
Sunday 31 st October	Gillie Bourne



MAGAZINE DEADLINE

The deadline for the November issue of the
Church Magazine is
Friday 22nd October