

Readings for this Sunday 31 January 2021
The Presentation of Christ in the Temple
(Candlemas)

Heb. 2. 14-end
Luke 2. 22-40



Photo courtesy of Nigel Hall

Parish Register

Funeral

16 February 2021 - Dorothy Margaret Holden
Landican Crematorium South Chapel at 1.30pm

Weekly Beacon



News from St Hildeburgh's
The Parish Church of Hoylake
Sunday 31 January 2021
The Presentation of Christ in the Temple
(Candlemas)

The Collect

Almighty and ever-living God,
clothed in majesty,
whose beloved Son was this day presented in the Temple,
in substance of our flesh:
grant that we may be presented to you
with pure and clean hearts,
by your Son Jesus Christ our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.



To the nation

 THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

26 January 2021

Dear friends

As we reach the terrible milestone of 100,000 deaths from COVID-19, we invite everyone in our nation to pause as we reflect on the enormity of this pandemic.

100,000 isn't just an abstract figure. Each number is a person: someone we loved and someone who loved us. We also believe that each of these people was known to God and cherished by God.

We write to you then in consolation, but also in encouragement, and ultimately in the hope of Jesus Christ. The God who comes to us in Jesus knew grief and suffering himself. On the cross, Jesus shares the weight of our sadness.

We therefore encourage everyone who is feeling scared, or lost or isolated to cast their fears on God. We also know that poorer communities, minority ethnic communities and those living with disabilities have been afflicted disproportionately and cry out for the healing of these inequalities. During this pandemic, we encourage everyone to do all they can to live within the guidelines and constraints given by government following the advice of the Chief Medical Officer and Chief Scientific Adviser. We show our

commitment, care and love for one another by ensuring we do everything we can to stop the virus spreading.

None of this is easy. Very many of us are experiencing isolation, loneliness, anxiety and despondency like never before. Many people have lost their livelihoods. Our economy struggles. Also, the necessary restrictions we live with have also prevented us from being alongside loved ones as they died, or even at their graveside. All grief profoundly affects us, but this pandemic grief is so hard.

Therefore, we need to support each other. We do this by following the guidelines. But we also do it by reaching out to each other with care and kindness.

One thing we can all do is pray. We hope it is some consolation to know that the church prays for the life of our nation every day. Whether you're someone of faith, or not, we invite you to call on God in prayer. Starting on 1 February we invite you to set aside time every evening to pray, particularly at 6pm each day. More than ever, this is a time when we need to love each other. Prayer is an expression of love. A number of resources will be made available at www.ChurchofEngland.org/PrayerForTheNation.

Finally, we write of hope. We are grateful for the hope we have because of the service of our NHS and social care staff. What a blessing and lifeline for our nation. We are grateful for the service given in local communities by clergy, other frontline workers and so many good neighbours. We are grateful for the hope of the vaccine. It is a testimony to the God-given wisdom and gifts of scientists and researchers. We urge everyone to take the vaccine as soon as it is offered to you.

continued.....

Most of all, we have hope because God raised Jesus from the dead. This is the Christian hope that we will be celebrating at Easter. We live in the hope that we will share in his resurrection. Death doesn't have the last word. In God's kingdom every tear will be wiped away.

Please be assured of our prayers. Please join us.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Justin Welby". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stephen Cottrell". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

The Most Revd & Rt Hon Justin Welby
Rt Hon Stephen Cottrell
Archbishop of Canterbury

The Most Revd &
Archbishop of York

VICAR'S 2PENCE – JANUARY 2021

If I was ever in any doubt about what friendships means I am certainly much clearer now because of this pandemic. I am sure like me you are missing the physical presence of your friends especially those who now seem so far away.

As many of you will know I have a good friend who before the lockdown last March I saw every week, he not only is my friend he is Gillian's too. Sadly, I did get to see him when I conducted his Mother's funeral and when he attended both my brothers' funerals. Scripture offers valuable guidance when it comes to choosing friends. God knows our desire to be known and to be loved! He made us for companionship.

It really does bring home to us the value of a good friend and how without even thinking about it we have taken our lives and our friends a bit for granted. The one thing that is constant is this, that the absence of seeing friends has not in any way diminished our love for them. I am reminded of those wonderful words from Colossians 3:12-13. *May I clothe myself in compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience? May I be patient with my friends, and may I forgive freely like you have forgiven me.*

This pandemic has made us more creative - last weekend for example, we zoomed some of our family and friends some as far away as Australia and time seemed to melt away as we talked and listened to each other. The phone has been working overtime and conversations have been continuing despite the restrictions.

It all puts me in mind of the physical separation that exists between the physical presence of Christ and his mystical presence in our lives. The Bible tells us one day we will see him face to face (1 Corinthians) but until that time we are connected to him through prayer and the faith to which we hold dear. It is amazing that no matter what is going on in the world, even this pandemic St Paul assures us that nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus.

Throughout our childhood we are taught to see Jesus as our friend, a friend that is loyal and true and has always got our back. I believe that right now in 2021 Jesus is standing alongside us and just a prayer or thought away. Real friends never leave us or let us down and I know that the Lord will be there throughout all of time no matter what and in all things protect your friends and stay safe.

Again, I am reminded of the words from 1Peter4 8-10 *'Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms.*

I would like to finish this 2Pence with the words of prayer for friendship for those of us who are **missing** our friends.

Lord Jesus, Thank you for giving me such a vibrant community of friends to do life with. I praise you for the people you have blessed me with, the ones who have come alongside me to love, encourage, support, and uplift me through all the twists and turns of life. I'm so grateful that I do not have to go through life alone, but that you have shown me examples of your love through my dear friends. Amen

Your friend Rev Paul

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Due to the pandemic situation, services in church have been suspended for the time being until further notice. The church remains open for private individual prayer as follows:

Mondays to Thursdays and Sundays from 10am to 12 noon
The church is closed on Fridays and Saturdays.

Services are available to view on line on our website. Please visit our website for up to date information as the situation changes. www.sthildeburgh.net and on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/sthildeburgh>

You can also access our online services on a smart TV:

You need to have a modern/"smart" TV set - these all come with **YouTube** as a built in application. Turn on the TV and select the "**YouTube**" app. From the menu that appears when the YouTube app opens, using your remote control, click on the search option (the search menu icon usually looks like a magnifying glass). Using the remote control, select the letters on screen to form the words "**St Hildeburgh**", then click on "Search" All our videos will appear in a list - with the most recent service film first. Click on this film using your remote control -the video will play full screen on the TV

Sad News

Dorothy Holden, a member of our church family for many years, has passed away peacefully at Hoylake Cottage Hospital.

Dorothy's funeral will take place at Landican Crematorium South Chapel on 16 February at 1.30pm.

Our prayers are with her family at this difficult time.

A Scrumptious Surprise!

Last week Revd Paul took delivery of a large carton of handmade shortbread from The Shortbread House of Edinburgh.



These delicious treats were donated after staff at the office of Princess Beatrice and Princess Eugenie mentioned our outreach work to the company.

The shortbread will bring smiles to a lot of faces throughout the parish.

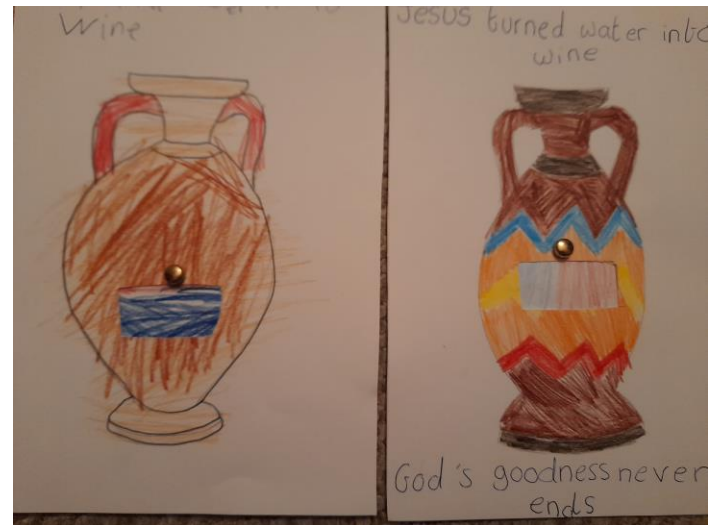
VOYAGERS AT HOME

This week in Voyagers we read the story of the miracle at Cana.

It reminded us that God welcomes us into his kingdom, which is like a big celebration. Jesus's miracle, turning the water into the best wine the guests had tasted, is an amazing picture of how God's goodness never runs out!



"Blessed are you, Lord our God, King of the Universe, who feeds the entire world in his goodness - with grace, with kindness and with mercy."



Love and prayers,

Christine

Wirral Foodbank

Thank you for your donations of food which have now been delivered to the Foodbank. The work of the Foodbank continues and your donations are needed more than ever.

Please leave your donations in the porch at
The Vicarage, 1 Stanley Road, Hoylake CH47 1HL.

Thank You!

MESSY CHURCH AT HOME



Peter Ham writes:

One of our favourite Messy Church activities each Winter, is to take part in the BIG GARDEN BIRDWATCH organised by the RSPB. Google it to get an online identification chart absolutely free and get your binoculars out. Make some toast with lashings of jam and a mug of warm chocolate to drink and see how many different birds you can spot in an hour this weekend. Submit your results online to the BGB 2021 to help research into birds and why they are in decline.

If you look back to Messy Church at Home last year, you will see how to make a bird feeder out of yoghurt pots, to attract more birds. Here is one in action in my garden.



Of course, let's give God the glory for His wonderful creation. The beauty, to me, isn't just in the appearance of these birds, but in the habitat and environment that encompasses them. Encourage youngsters you know to take an interest, for it is they who will be the stewards in the future. We are commanded - "Be responsible for fish in the sea and birds in the air, for every living thing that moves on the face of the earth." Genesis 1, v28 (The Message Bible).

FLOWER OF THE WEEK: IRIS

38th in a series

Text by Peter Surridge.

Springtime irises look spectacular in the herbaceous border but there are species that produce their blooms in winter and add fragrance to those other qualities. The earliest is *Iris unguicularis*, also known as *Iris stylosa* or the Algerian iris, a vigorous perennial spreading by rhizomes. It is followed from winter to early spring by *Iris reticulata*, which grows from bulbs. This species may not flower so fully, because only one bloom is produced by each bulb and then the bulbs sometimes split after flowering and take a year or two to reach flowering stage again. Despite that, both species are worth growing for the way they defy British weather, despite originating around Greece and the eastern Mediterranean. *Iris* is named after the Greek goddess of the rainbow while *unguicularis* relates to the plant's claw-like rhizome and *reticulata* refers to the netting pattern on the bulb's skin.

The blooms of both may seem disproportionately large, 5cm-10cm (2in-4in) wide on very short stems, so they look as if most of the stem is still underground. But they have redeeming qualities of grace, beauty – they range from pale blue to purple, with yellow and white markings – and sweet scent. Among the *Iris unguicularis* varieties, one of the first to flower is 'Walter Butt' with large pale lavender – almost grey – blooms bearing a heavy scent.



First to flower – *Iris unguicularis*

The variety 'Alba' is almost as beautiful, carrying creamy-white flowers with a yellow line down each of the three lower petals (called the falls). There is a delightful dwarf form, the subspecies *cretensis*, only 10cm (4in) tall. Unfortunately, both of these can be susceptible to frost but are normally secure in pots in a cool greenhouse or glazed porch. The blooms of *Iris reticulata* vary from pale to deep purple with a golden ridge. Varieties include 'Cantab,' pale blue, 'Harmony,' large and dark blue and 'Katharine Hodgson,' with pale blue stripes and yellow markings.



**Colour and fragrance –
Iris reticulata.**

Another winter species, *Iris danfordiae*, is not so shapely but provides a splash of yellow in the border, made more interesting by the petals' brown speckles. All grow like well-drained, reasonably fertile soil in a sunny position. Protect the young shoots from slugs and snails. To propagate, divide clumps in spring after flowering.

A FEW WORDS OF APPRECIATION...

...of the Weekly Beacon contributors.

For the Voyagers' reports: Wonderfully uncomplicated messages and I love the drawings.

For Peter Ham's ornithological observations: Last week's piece about waders reminded me when I saw no fewer than five grey herons around the Dovepoint rocks (20 years ago, when cycling to play squash at New Brighton Rugby Club – happy days!)

For Peter's Messy Church at Home: From last week's moving Corinthians passage, I would have to choose "Love is patient", something of which impatient people like me should remind themselves frequently.

And for Jill Rawcliffe, who produces the WB with unfailing dedication.

Peter Surridge.

(Thanks also to Peter for his contributions! Jill)

Citizens Advice Wirral

Citizens Advice Wirral are pleased to continue to deliver information and advice to Wirral residents.

Our **Ask Us Wirral information and advice** service is being delivered by phone or email and includes specialist benefits, debt and housing advice.

To access Ask Us Wirral phone **0300 33 00 111** Please note the phone lines are likely to be busy and you may need to leave a message and our team can get back to you. If you can't get through on our local number, you can try national Citizens Advice number **03444 111 444**

You can also fill out our **webform** www.askuswirral.org.uk/enquiry-webform/

For **Information** about sick pay, your rights if you are off sick, self-isolating or home working and other useful information about what Coronavirus what it means to you go to www.citizensadvice.org.uk/health/coronavirus-what-it-means-for-you/

If you have now become unemployed or are self-employed but your income has dropped, please call our Help to Claim team on **0800 144 8 444**

Wirral Foodbank Vouchers

If you need **Foodbank** Vouchers, please contact Citizens Advice **Wirral** on 0808 278 7848 or **Wirral** Council 0151 666 5050 (selecting option 1)

Contact St Hildeburgh's

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Weekly Beacon

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