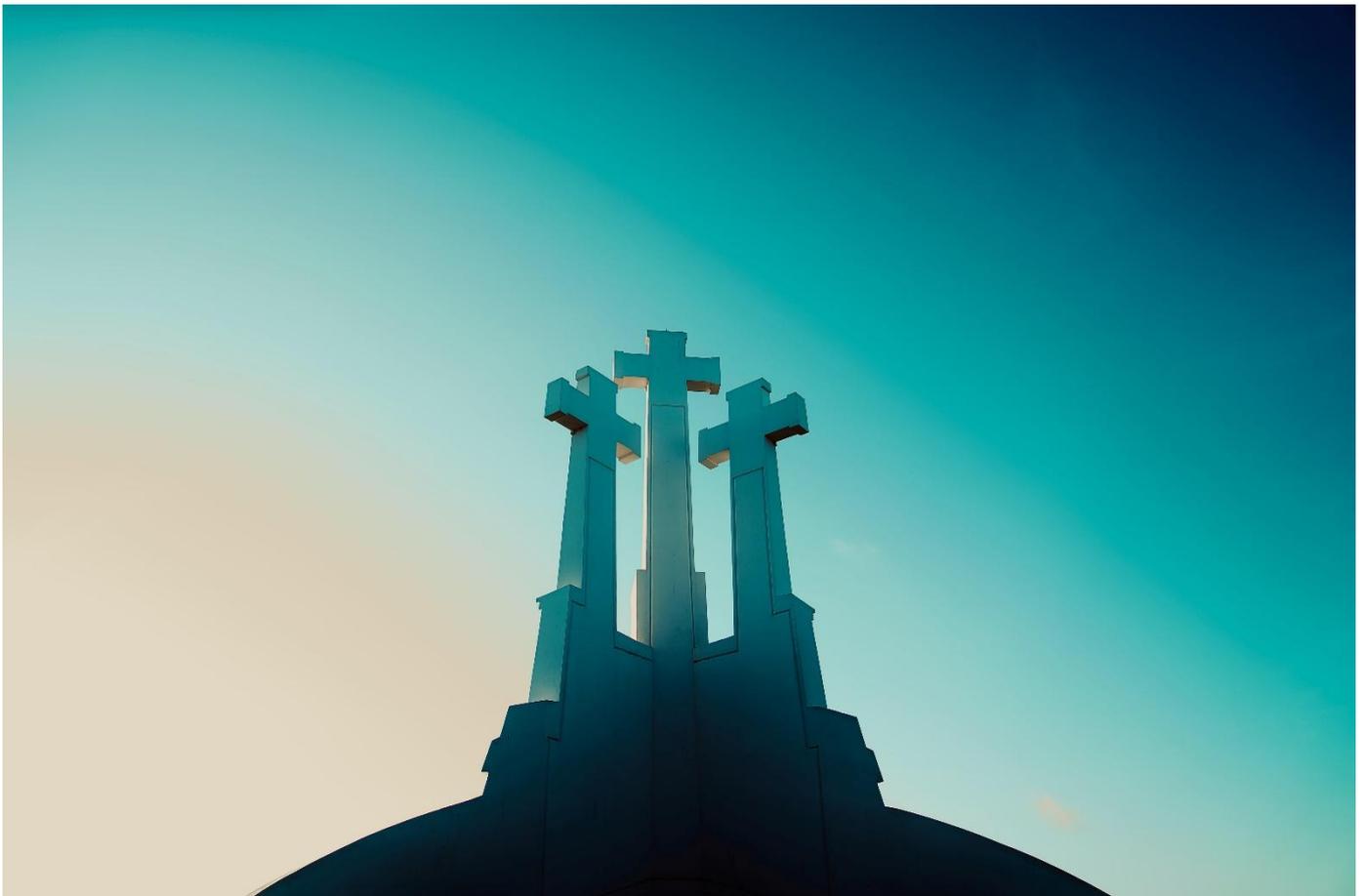


April and May 2021



GRIDIRON

The Magazine of the Parish Church of
Saint Laurence Upminster
£1



*In 2021 Good Friday is 2nd April, Easter Sunday is 4th April and
Pentecost is 23rd May.*

AT THE TIME OF PRINTING ALL IN PERSON WORSHIP AND PARYER HAVE BEEN SUSPENDED. PLEASE SEE THE WEBSITE OR CHURCH NOTICE BOARDS FOR THE LATEST INFORMATION OR CONTACT THE PARISH OFFICE OR REVD SUSANNAH.

Service times

Said Mass	Sunday 09.30	Wednesday 11.00
Said Evensong	Sunday	18.30 via Zoom
Private Prayer	Sunday	15:00 – 16.30
Private Prayer	Thursday	10.00 – 12 noon

IMPORTANT: Please pre-book your attendance at Mass in accordance with the following timings in order to be sure your request is received:

Email Joanne at: parish.office@upminsterparish.co.uk by 11am on Wednesday for the following Sunday, or by 12 noon on Monday for the following Wednesday.

Or if you do not have email, phone Deborah on 01708 609816 by 6pm on Wednesday for the following Sunday, or by 12 noon on Monday for the following Wednesday. Thank you.

Evensong via Zoom contact Revd Susannah for the login details at: susannah.brasier@upminsterparish.co.uk by 10am on Saturday for that Sunday.

There is no need to pre-book for Private Prayer but you may be asked to wait a while before entering at busy times.

NB: Due to the pandemic services and events may change at short notice. Efforts will be made to communicate changes as far in advance as possible.

Baptisms and Wedding Banns These are administered during public services. Please contact the Parish Office to make arrangements.

Confessions By appointment with the clergy.

Please inform the Parish Office, Revd Susannah or Fr Royof anyone who is ill or in need of a pastoral visit. See back pages for useful telephone numbers.



From the Rector

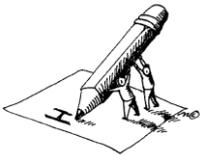
Hopefully, by the time you read this, some lockdown restrictions will be easing, and Spring will have well and truly arrived. Many of us probably have the sense that in some ways, Spring 2020 seems like an eternity ago, and yet in other ways, like only yesterday. It has been a strange year, with so little happening in some respects, and yet also so much change, uncertainty and adjustment. Hopefully we are now entering a better phase of the pandemic, where widespread vaccination will be allowing a greater possibility of returning to a way of life that is more 'normal'. Yet this will be another change and adjustment – and as with any major disruption in life, some things may never be the same.

In the Gospel accounts of the first Easter we see Jesus' followers having to come to a realisation that the Resurrection has changed everything. Jesus rising from the dead does not mean that life just continues as normal and they all go back to following him around Galilee. Instead, Jesus prepares them to be sent out, to go far beyond what they have known and find comfortable, to tell others the good news. He ascends into heaven, his followers become his messengers, and a new era begins. Jesus' followers become inhabitants of a new immediate reality, where they have different tasks and focus from before, and the purpose of this new immediate reality is to point to a new deeper reality, where sin and death have been dealt with and where humanity can be fully reconciled with God.

Obviously, emerging from the pandemic is a very different situation; the pandemic has not been a positive act of God, but a horrendous scenario through which many have suffered greatly. Yet the Christian response is still the same: the underlying truths of Christian faith mean that those who trust in those truths cannot simply return to life as it was before after such a difficult year which has had so many widespread impacts. For some, changes in our lives will mean that is impossible anyway; while for others, life may not have changed that much in the long-term. Everyone's situation is somewhat different. Yet, whatever our situation, the liberation offered by God through Jesus' death and resurrection means that God is present even in very difficult situations. Those may be our own situations, or they may be the situations of others with which we are called to engage – close at hand or across the world. There will be much that is different in the world after this pandemic, and in

some ways as a society or as individuals we will be seeing things from new perspectives. The difference made by Jesus can help us to engage with that difference – to see where new opportunities can be opened up, to see what can be done to help those in need, and to be present for one another in hard situations.

With my prayers and good wishes
Susannah



From the Editors

Dear Readers

How can it be over a year since we started the first lockdown? Luckily for us we have been able to go to church for some of that time and the church has also been open for private prayer. Personally, I have really missed being in church every week.

‘In the day when I called, you answered me, and strengthened me with strength in my soul.’ (Psalm 138.4) God hears us, and *always* does something – He gives us strength which we did *not* have, before we asked Him for it.

Hopefully, fingers crossed, by the time this issue is published we will be able to get back in to the church for private prayer and worship.

Despite the difficulties Susannah, Roy, Deborah and lots of ‘behind the scenes’ people have kept us connected to God through their YouTube videos, Zoom coffee mornings and prayer sessions and phone calls.

Let’s hope that by the time the next issue is published life will look a little more normal.

Arlette Wiggins, Editor

June and July Magazine Deadline

Items for inclusion in the June and July edition of *Gridiron* should reach the editorial team by **Friday 7th May**. We would prefer to receive items by e-mail at gridiron@upminsterparish.co.uk. Paper copy is acceptable but should be submitted to us as early as possible. The **June and July Magazine** will be on sale from **Sunday 30th May**.

We Want to Hear from You!

Do you have

- a favourite book or a favourite poem?
- a special piece of art?
- a story to tell or a memory of Upminster past or, say, a favourite holiday destination?
- a question to ask about St Laurence Church, or more generally about the Church of England, or indeed the worldwide church?

All contributions to Gridiron are most welcome - this is your magazine and we want to hear from you. We can guarantee the same top rates as paid to all the editorial staff!

St Laurence Church Building Improvement Fund

The above is not a snappy title but it does describe precisely what we are trying to do. We are going to make our church building more accessible to all ages and abilities. It's a slow process, slower now due to Covid closing everything down, but it is coming on. Raising the money is going to be an even greater challenge, as a result of Covid having such an impact on many people's finances, as well as those of businesses. On top of that, many other projects will be wanting support from the many and various grant-making bodies to which we will apply. Please remember our project in your prayers.

If you wish to donate, you can do so online

at:<https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/stlaurencerestorationproject>

As and when the church is open again, there will be envelopes for donating to this project. Cheques should be made payable to St Laurence Church Restoration Appeal.

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Looking at God

The Revd Canon Paul Hardingham looks back on the year that changed the world.

One Year On

It was just over a year ago that the WHO (World Health Organisation) discussed the coronavirus that was starting to spread around the world. None of us could have foreseen the devastating effect on our world, with over 80 million people infected and nearly two million deaths. How has the pandemic challenged our faith, as we look back over the last year?

Firstly, it has forced us to face up to the **reality of our situation**. We cannot underestimate the health, social and economic effects of the virus on our lives, churches and communities. We have learned how to do church online, but the future shape of church life is uncertain!

As the apostle Paul writes: *'We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus'* (2 Cor 4:8-10).

The pandemic has challenged so much of what we take for granted, but also demonstrated that God is alongside to help us in these circumstances.

Secondly, alongside the fear and uncertainty of this year, we have also learned to find **new faith and hope in Jesus**. The experience of Jesus' death and His resurrection provides a pattern for us in facing the future: *'so that His life may also be revealed in our mortal body. So then, death is at work in us, but life is at work in you.'* (2 Cor 4:10-12).

During the season of Lent, as we anticipate the events at Easter, it's good to focus on the promise of sharing in the death and resurrection of Jesus. As we consider our present struggles, are we ready to surrender them to Jesus? May the hope of Easter Day take us forward into the coming year.

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from as little as £11.00 per issue.
Please contact Maureen Gourley
01708 640747 mlgourley@talktalk.net**

Chocolate Selection

by Penny Edwards

There is nothing quite like indulging in some chocolate. Most people love it, many give it up for Lent. Perhaps you have your favourites and those brands that you save as a treat.

It was not until recently that I was aware of the bitter side of the chocolate industry. It is a huge and profitable business, for some. For others, our small joy of eating a square of chocolate can mean for others a life of poverty, child labour and environmental destruction.

Ethical Consumer writes (I have summarised slightly): “A major report on child labour in cocoa farming released in 2020 and funded by the U.S. government estimates that around two million children are engaged in ‘hazardous’ child labour in Ivory Coast and Ghana – using machetes and toxic chemicals and carrying excessive loads.

This amounts to 43% of all children living in cocoa-producing areas and demonstrates there has been no progress at all since companies signed the Harkin-Engel Protocol, which promised to tackle child labour, nearly 20 years ago.

The report is positive about anti-child-labour interventions, finding that when actions to improve livelihoods are coupled with awareness raising and community monitoring, they reduce child labour significantly.

This report didn’t look at forced labour. But the Global Slavery Index estimates that around 1% of the child labourers are being forced to work, by someone other than their parents, and that around 13,000 adults were also forced to work on cocoa farms between 2013 and 2017.

Forced labour involving violent restraint is rare. But much more common are things like threats or promising payment which doesn’t ever materialise.

Child labour in cocoa is tied up with poverty. Cocoa farmers resort to using their children because they can’t afford to employ adult labourers. And the poverty is linked to the prices paid by the multinational buyers who supply our chocolate bars.”

In addition to this, there is the ongoing problem of deforestation and damage to the environment, including the continued use of palm oil. Poor farming techniques, linked to poverty, lead to the soil becoming exhausted. This leads to more land being cleared. *Ethical Consumer* quotes “About 40% of Ivorian

cocoa is estimated to have come from inside protected forest areas, technically making it illegal.”

Some initiatives are being taken. “In November 2017, the Governments of Ivory Coast and Ghana and many of the major cocoa and chocolate companies signed the Cocoa & Forests Initiative agreement. As part of this, they have all committed to establish a unified traceability system to map supply chains back to producer farms and have created action plans to do so.

Less promisingly, the US campaigning organisation Mighty Earth reported at the end of 2019 that, since the agreement, deforestation in the two countries has actually increased.”

Does this matter to us? Is there anything we can do? I believe there is. There are online petitions, campaigning for the big hitters in the chocolate industry to take a stand against child slavery. More and more independent companies are producing ethical chocolate. As a family we have been testing them – delicious!

Consumer choice can be a huge influencer for change. The chocolate is more expensive; however the cheaper chocolate comes at a far greater cost.

For a list of ethical chocolate, visit slavefreechocolate.org, and have a look at Ethical Consumer’s latest research and list. If you would like to look at the online magazine (subscription only), please get in touch with me.

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Bunyan was viewed with suspicion as a Puritan sympathiser. He was ordered to stop preaching in public, but refused. He was convicted and altogether spent 12 years in prison. They turned out to be the most fruitful years of his life, for he took up the pen, and in the end reached far more people than he could ever have done by preaching locally.

The poem appears in 'Pilgrim's Progress' at the point where Christiania and her four sons meet and help Mr Valiant-for-Truth on the road. They wash his wounds, give him food and drink, and learn his story. Mr Valiant-for-Truth was on his way from the City of Destruction to the Celestial City. He relates the obstacles and battles along the way, and then launches into 'Who would true valour see...'

The poem/hymn has been praised as 'calculated to inspire the most doubtful spirit; the most disconsolate soul and to rekindle the fire of zeal and enthusiasm for the pilgrim journey.' It was born out of Bunyan's own struggle to be a pilgrim. And it is the same faith, in the same Lord, and the same journey, that keeps millions of Christians in the persecuted church of today strong and looking forward... to the Celestial City!



Grinling Gibbons - Celebration of a Craftsman Extraordinary

by Rob Brabner

August 2021 marks the 300th anniversary of the death of the UK's best skilled, and certainly best known carver: Grinling Gibbons.

He was born in 1648 in Rotterdam, possibly with an English father, but little is known of his early years. He moved to England in the 1660s and swiftly attracted attention for the quality of his wood carving and was awarded his first royal commission in 1675, when hired by Charles II to produce decorative carving for Windsor Castle. Over the next 25 years he was to complete important commissions for Whitehall Palace, St Paul's Cathedral, Hampton Court Palace and Blenheim Palace. In 1693 he was appointed Master Sculptor and Carver to the Crown by King William III.

Gibbons pioneered a highly distinctive style, carving in a very high relief with exceptional naturalistic detail. His trademarks were cascades of fruit, leaves, flowers, foliage, fish and birds. His work is today represented in the Royal Collection and Historic Royal Palaces, as well as in museums, country houses and churches. Mostly his creations are in wood, although some are in stone.

Gibbons' work includes carvings of the peapod, his 'signature'. A myth states that he would include a closed peapod, only carving it open once he had been paid. If it was left shut it meant he had never been paid! Perhaps a subtle message for his accountant!

As in St Paul's Cathedral, the City church of St Mary Abchurch has a fine reredos (wooden backing to the altar). This has exquisite limewood carving of fruit and flowers and in the centre, a gilded pelican in piety. St James, Piccadilly, also has a reredos by Gibbons. Indeed this is as he intended it to look: light coloured limewood carvings mounted on darker oak panels. These have been described as 'breathtaking, spectacular and awestruck' - truly beautiful work. Both these churches are normally open during the daytime, although as I write these are not normal times.

A number of events are planned for the tricentenary. One confirmed event in London is an exhibition running through August. *Centuries in the Making* will explore the influences that shaped Gibbon's vision, skills and technique. It will also feature the stylistic and cultural influences he brought to this country and how he inspired his contemporaries and ongoing craftsmen and women in the next 300 years.

The exhibition opens at Bonhams, New Bond Street on 3rd August and runs until 27th August. It will be a rare chance to see the master carver's work in one place, as usually you will need to visit lots of different buildings to see the work *in situ*.

Credit: much information from website: lanvisits.co.uk

Ever heard of Church football?

by Rob Brabner

In 1349 the game of football, together with handball, hockey coursing, cockfighting, the throwing of stone, wood or iron and any 'idle games' were prohibited by Royal Decree.

The edict was made due to the concern that it distracted people from practising archery, essential to 14th century warfare and, consequently, to the strength of the King's army, which was already badly affected by the Black Death.

Medieval football was a little different to today's game. Shrovetide, Mob or Folk football were very popular among the common man. Rules were few and far between and really it was a loosely organised chaos with lots of players – and, of course, no VAR! Often neighbourhood towns and villages would play matches against one another, with the aim of kicking or punching an inflated pig's bladder into the opponent's church by any means necessary. Teams could be huge in number, goals could be miles apart and violence, even death, was part and parcel of the whole experience. In many ways, it was like a miniature rural war, so it is unsurprising that the country's rulers were not very enamoured with it. Edward II, Edward III's predecessor, had banned football from the streets of London in 1314.

Mob football can still be seen today, generally played on Shrove Tuesday. Scoring the Hales takes place every year at Alnwick, Northumberland, as does Royal Shrovetide Football at Ashbourne, Derbyshire, with other Shrove Tuesday football games being played at Atherstone, Warwickshire and Corfe Castle in Dorset, to name but a few.

Information from www.historic-uk.com and The History Channel website

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'Den'

by Chris Mowat

I was interested to read in the February/March edition of Gridiron the extract from the 1933 blotter book kept in Upminster Tithe Barn and the question as to anyone having any old photos of the "dens" etc.

Well I don't think I have any photos but I can confirm the location of the dens. We have to remember that until the mid-1970s, the Rector lived in what is now known as St Laurence House and all the land surrounding it was part of the Rector's garden. This all disappeared when the Rectory was sold with the land and Gridiron Place was built together with the houses, flats and the new Rectory as we know it today.

I can remember the Scout dens very well, having been a member of the 2nd Upminster Troop in the 1950s/60s. There were 6 dens in all, each one for a particular patrol, plus a store in which all the camping equipment was kept and the drums from the old Scout band. One came down a gravel driveway towards the Rectory, bore left and on the right was the old stable block for the Rectory, a Scout war memorial to one's left and then the dens and store. The stable block housed the Rector's car and various pieces of paraphernalia which were used for the annual Summer Garden Party held on the lawn in front of the Rectory.

There was also a Rover Den for the "senior" members of the Troop and behind that a Guide Hut.

To assist with the location, I attach an extract from a plan of 1973 which is actually from the Tree Preservation Order of 1973 relating to all the trees in the churchyard and its surrounding area. On the plan I have marked the position of the dens etc

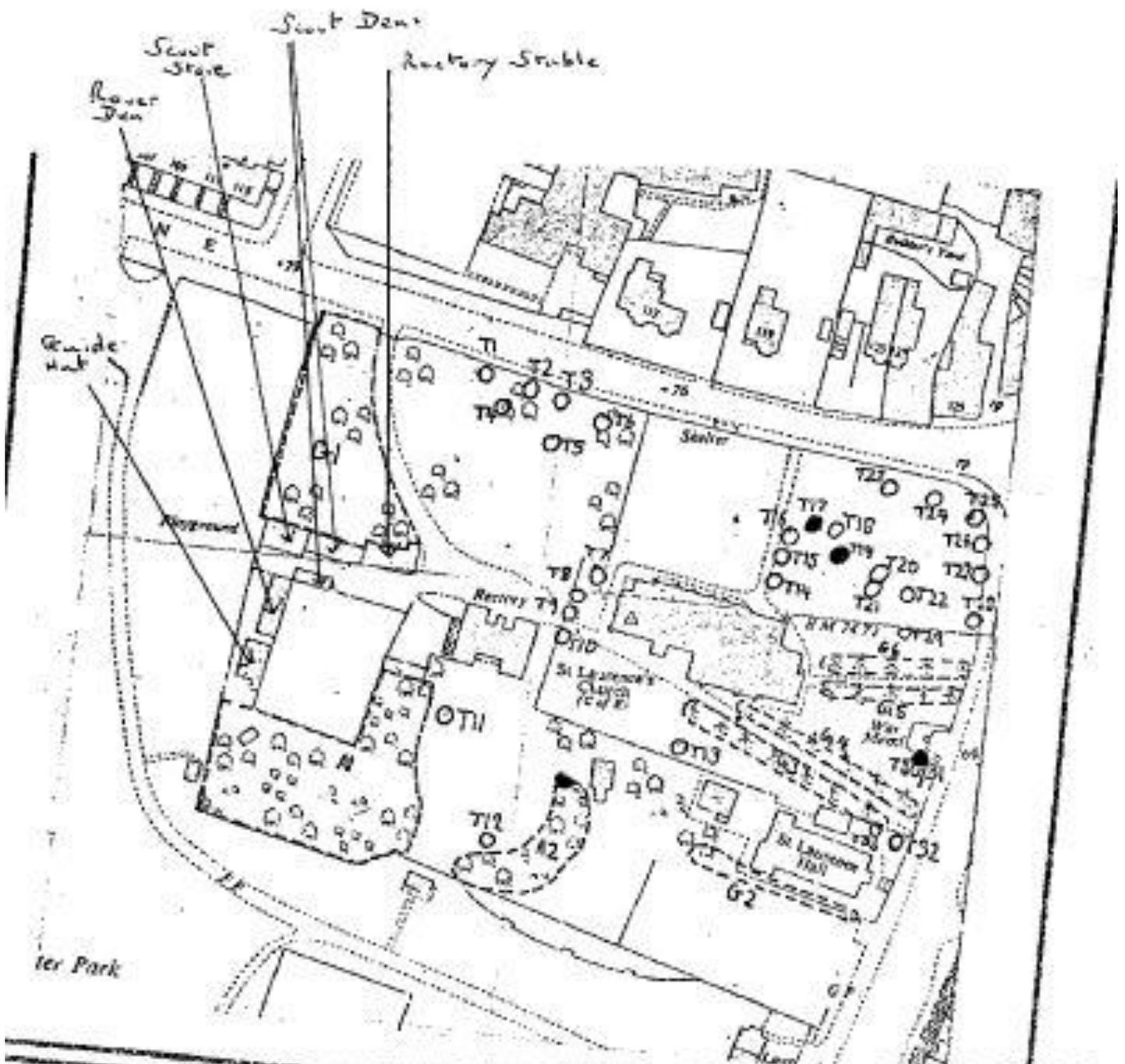
Lastly, I regret I have no records or knowledge of the Hacton Mission Church - it was before my time!!

Email from Mrs Pat King

I found the page that was reprinted from the 1933 blotter book interesting and I copied it out and sent it to a friend in Hampshire. We were both in the 6th Upminster Guides at St Laurence Church which was formed by Elizabeth Murrell and went on to become Rangers. My friend married one of the Rovers and I thought that he might have some photographs (he didn't).

During our time, the guides met in the Guide Hut which was reached by turning left out of The Rectory and going straight down to the railings which bordered the park. Then you turned left again and the Guide Hut was on the left hand side. In fact, it was more like a small hall because we were able to play some games in it and I suspect that it was a later vintage than the various dens which were sited in the old stables.

The Rector, Father Hyla Holden, kept bees in the back garden of The Rectory and you could sometimes see them rising up and down if you walked through Upminster Park. I don't remember the beehive.



All Because

by The Edwards family



Are you sitting comfortably? Then we will begin:

In November 2020 our hearts sank when so many people chose to ignite fireworks in their gardens. Not only did the explosions carry on for days, many of the fireworks were of display standard: beautiful to watch, too big and too loud for a domestic garden. (Silent fireworks are becoming more popular; less distressing for both domestic and wild animals.)

Our dog, Otto, has always struggled with loud bangs, despite us employing many and varied strategies.

The intense noise was just too much for him when the fireworks were directly behind our house. His panic resulted in an injury to his ear which, in turn, led to a lockdown operation and multiple visits to the vets. We were unable to accompany Otto into the consulting rooms and we were so grateful for the kind and understanding staff at Wylie's.



Otto's ear healed well and he now has a rather 'loved teddy bear' look about his wonky, floppy ear.

Why are we telling you this? Well, whilst in the garden at Wylie's, we noticed two garden benches languishing on the compost heap. Whilst they were in obvious need of some TLC, they looked as though they could enjoy a second chance of life. Immediately, we thought of the churchyard.

Members of the congregation and community regularly rest on the benches in the churchyard. The seating areas provide a place to contemplate and also encourage visitors to come and in and stay a while. They give a visual welcome.



With Susannah's approval, we approached Wylie's who were pleased to donate the benches for church and community use. They understood the importance of having access to places of tranquillity, especially in these difficult times. An enormous thank you for their generosity.

Inspecting the chairs proved that a lot of work was

required. Over a few weeks they began to take shape and are now restored and installed in the churchyard. The benches are not fixed in position, so can be moved to change the aspect. We hope everyone will enjoy sitting and appreciate the peace or partake in a little people-watching ... whatever takes your mood.



Two benches repurposed and saved from landfill providing welcome seating *all because* our neighbours made a decision to set off inappropriate fireworks.

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A Historian Looks at the New Testament *by E.M. Blaiklock*

The New Testament tells a story that was to change the course of all subsequent history. The four Gospels, describing the active years of Jesus, are set in various levels of society in Rome's most turbulent province, highlighting the imperial administration and clearly indicating the situation which led, in AD66, to Rome's most awful provincial war.

The Acts of the Apostles picks up the theme. It is a narrative written by an educated Greek, a major historian in his own right, and shows the triumphant spread of the movement which was to change the world.

That movement was shaped by one who can justly be called the first European - the educated rabbi Paul, who was thoroughly at home with Greek literature and philosophic thought (as the Areopagus address demonstrates) and who was also a Roman citizen, supremely conscious as his plan of evangelism demonstrates, of the worth, the power, and the significance of the Empire and the Roman Peace.

Test Luke on detail, as archaeology has demonstrated he can be tested, and he emerges as a man of meticulous accuracy. Read him at length, and see Ephesus and Corinth come to life. Pick single words - 'proconsuls', for example, the *plural*, in the Ephesus riot story - and see a small fact of history accounted for...(Acts 19: 23-end).

Paul's letters, in the full stream of ancient correspondence, are just as historically illuminating. Corinth, vicious, cosmopolitan, pseudo-philosophical, polygon, disordered, argumentative, controversy-ridden, comes to life in the letter to its turbulent church, into which the restless spirit and urban vice of the place had infiltrated.

Or turn to the poetry of Revelation - the last New Testament book - a riot of symbolism, which this age above all should richly appreciate. Here is Rome as seen nowhere else - through the eyes of a bitter provincial foe. Rome, tyrannous, drunk with blood, madly persecuting... and doomed.

Anyone who knows the New Testament in its context, and against its background, has an open window into the mind, the society, the problems, the spirit of the 1st century. Its brewing storms - the last Jewish Revolt, for example - are visible. Its fumbling administration in the East which set the stage for disaster, is clear to view. Its experimentation with puppet kings, its repressive legislation, its patches of anachronistic city rule, its frontier life

(as, for example, Lystra), its philosophic divisions, its collaborating groups, the obvious symptoms of coming catastrophe - the New Testament reveals them all.

As a collection of historical documents, the New Testament is unique.

Taken from 'The Lion Handbook to the Bible', third edition - paperback, published 2002.

Maundy Thursday, time to wash feet *from Parish Pump*

Maundy Thursday is famous for two things. The first is one of the final acts that Jesus did before His death: the washing of His own disciples' feet (see John 13). Jesus washed His disciples' feet for a purpose: "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another." His disciples were to love through service, not domination, of one another.

In Latin, the opening phrase of this sentence is '*mandatum novum do vobis*'. The word 'mundy' is thus a corruption of the Latin 'mandatum' (or command). The ceremony of the 'washing of the feet' of members of the congregation came to be an important part of the liturgy (regular worship) of the medieval church, symbolising the humility of the clergy, in obedience to the example of Christ.

But Thursday was also important because it was on that night that Jesus first introduced the Lord's Supper, or what we nowadays call Holy Communion.

Jesus and His close friends had met in a secret upper room to share the Passover meal together - for the last time. And there Jesus transformed the Passover into the Lord's Supper, saying, 'this is my body' and 'this is my blood' as He, the Lamb of God, prepared to die for the sins of the whole world. John's gospel makes it clear that the Last Supper took place the evening BEFORE the regular Passover meal, and that later Jesus died at the same time that the Passover lambs were killed.

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Kerry Shipley is a minister at a the Church of the Good Shepherd, Collier Row, and a leader of the current Course in Christian Studies. The following is from her collection of ponderings and poems 'Thoughts along the way'.

The Lord's Supper

*We gather at this table to celebrate Life:
the life of God in the world,
made flesh and blood in Jesus,
embodied in us.*

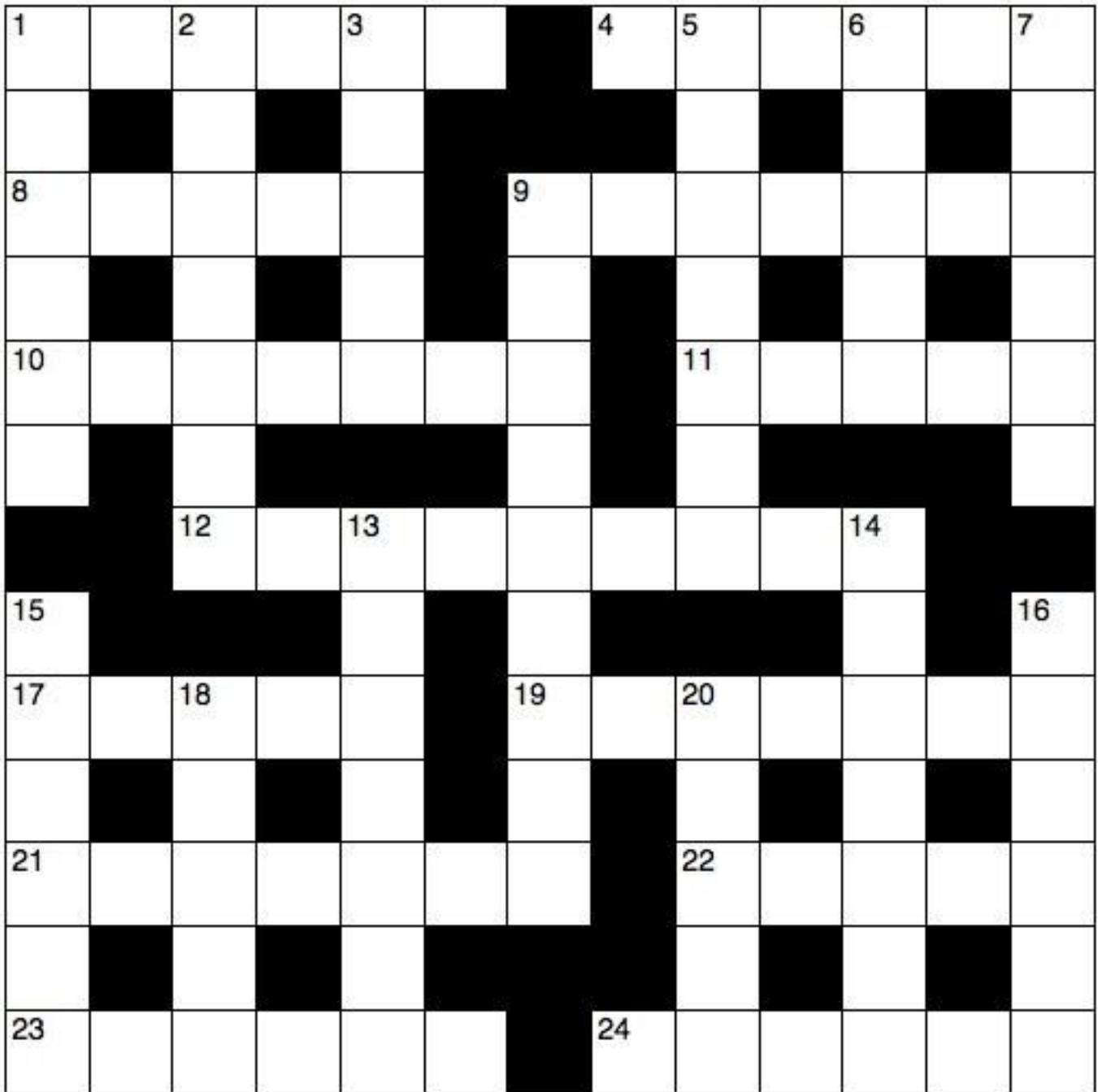


We come to re-member the body that was broken:

*the hands that touched the untouchable,
healed the hurting and did no violence;
the feet that got dusty along city streets
and at the lake's shore;
the arms that welcomed the stranger
and embraced the outcast;
the legs that entered homes and synagogues
and danced at celebrations;
the eyes that blazed against injustice,
knew how to cry
and saw the potential in everyone;
the belly that shared table with
unexpected people and shook with laughter;
the lips that wove stories
and painted pictures of a new community
and a better world.*

*This blessed body that was broken, abused and rejected,
we come to re-member,*

for we are called to be the body of Christ.



Across

- 1 Relating to the whole universe (6)
- 4 The disciple who made the remark in 8 Across (John 20:24) (6)
- 8 'Unless I see the nail marks — — hands, I will not believe it' (John 20:25) (2,3)
- 9 He urged King Jehoiakim not to burn the scroll containing Jeremiah's message (Jeremiah 36:25) (7)
- 10 Baptist minister and controversial founder of America's Moral Majority, Jerry — (7)
- 11 'Look, here is — . Why shouldn't I be baptized?' (Acts 8:36) (5)
- 12 Repossessed (Gen 14:16) (9)
- 17 Port from which Paul sailed on his last journey to Rome

- (Acts 27:3–4) (5)
- 19 'Moses was not aware that his face was — because he had spoken with the Lord' (Ex 34:29) (7)
- 21 Roonwit, C.S. Lewis's half-man, half-horse (7)
- 22 Grill (Luke 24:42) (5)
- 23 'The lot fell to Matthias; so he was added to the — apostles' (Acts 1:26) (6)
- 24 'I was sick and you looked after me, I was in — and you came to visit me' (Matthew 25:36) (6)

Down

- 1 Coastal rockfaces (Psalm 141:6) (6)
- 2 Academic (1 Corinthians 1:20) (7)
- 3 Publish (Daniel 6:26) (5)
- 5 For example, the Crusades (4,3)
- 6 11 Across is certainly this (5)
- 7 He reps (anag.) (6)
- 9 Liberator (Psalm 18:2) (9)
- 13 Man who asked the question in 11 Across was in charge of all her treasury (Acts 8:27) (7)
- 14 They must be 'worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine' (1 Timothy 3:8) (7)
- 15 The human mind or soul (6)
- 16 'O Lord, while precious children starve, the tools of war increase; their bread is — ' (Graham Kendrick) (6)
- 18 'We played the flute for you, and you did not — ' (Matthew 11:17) (5)
- 20 Bared (anag.) (5)

Answers to the February and March crossword:ACROSS:8 Cross-examined. 9 Ash. 10 Apocrypha. 11 Sci-fi. 13 Typical. 16 Visited. 19 Offer. 22 No account. 24 RAC. 25 Sovereign Lord.**DOWN:**1 Oceans. 2 Hophni. 3 Islamist. 4 Exhort. 5 Omar. 6 On spec. 7 Add all. 12 CBI. 14 Plotting. 15 Awe. 16 Vanish. 17 Starve. 18 Daub it. 20 Furrow. 21 Recede. 23 Cure.

Cobwebs!

Anyone who spots cobwebs in the church, please kindly report these to the sidesperson on duty. Sometimes cobwebs can only be seen when the light through the church windows strikes at the right angle. The church does have an impressive "tickling stick" which we feel would have to be approved by the late great Ken Dodd, and fortunately we do have a very large extension pole to enable us to reach most areas in the church - so no dozing during sermons!

Nelson

by Rob Brabner

Nelson's Column has a major maintenance review every 25 years. I was a working lad in 2008 and, as part of my job with the London Team, English Heritage I was invited to see the ongoing work with a few of my colleagues.

Admiral Horatio Nelson, mortally slain at the Battle of Trafalgar 1805, lived just long enough to have been assured that the sea battle was won. Nelson's bold and courageous plan to attack the opposing combined fleet of French and Spanish by splitting their linear formation was revolutionary. The result of the battle ensured that British dominance of the seas would not be seriously challenged until the Battle of Jutland in 1916, 111 years after Trafalgar, an astonishing achievement.



What of the man? For many these days, Admiral Nelson is merely the name of a pub, or perhaps he is just known for his scandalous relationship with Emma Hamilton, whose husband, Sir William Hamilton, was the British Envoy to Naples.

Nelson came from humble origins, son of a Norfolk clergyman and certainly not from a particularly privileged background. The sixth child of eleven, he went to sea at the age of 12, and became a captain at 20. He rose through the ranks of the Royal Navy on merit.

Throughout his career he was known as a leader who looked after his crew, and indeed this was reciprocated. Those who served him were proud to be with Nelson, and they knew they were fortunate. Not all crews were so blessed.

There are those who accuse of Nelson of having links with slavery. These links seem somewhat tenuous. The family of Nelson's wife Frances had made money from slavery, and Nelson had 'friends' in the upper classes who were involved and were pro-slavery, and yet again he had friends in the same upper classes who were certainly 'anti'. As a serving Royal Navy Officer he would have been bound by the government to protect British trade shipping. Napoleon's European wars had been a major factor in delaying the anti-slavery fight in the British Parliament. William Pitt the Younger, the Prime Minister, and a great friend of William Wilberforce, was also anti-slavery, but had had to

direct all his resources towards protecting Britain in the war. One of the beneficiaries of this was, of course, the Royal Navy; without this investment Britain would have been invaded.

Back to Nelson. Certainly Nelson was ambitious, not surprising for someone who had risen so far. He was courageous in battle, sustaining wounds which lost him an arm and an eye. He believed in his abilities and he was vain. Despite this, he was liked by his fellow officers and he was a fair man, which won him universal respect. By the time of Trafalgar he was a national hero from his past victories, and Nelson's death was probably mourned as much as the victory of Trafalgar was celebrated.

There is one side to this man that may not be acknowledged by history. The Nelson Letters Project was undertaken for the 200th anniversary of the Battle of Trafalgar. Fourteen hundred unpublished letters revealed aspects of his religious faith. We should not forget his childhood spent in the household of the Rectory at Burnham Thorpe, Norfolk.

Before each voyage, Nelson obtained Bibles and Prayer Books from the SPCK for his ship's company. In 1803 in one of his letters he writes... 'I know no reason why our Men fight better for the supply of these books, but of this I am sure; that a ship where divine service is regularly performed is by far more regular and decent in their conduct than where it is not.' He added 'Notwithstanding we are so orderly and quiet, I believe the Victory as fit to fight any French ship as any ship out of England.'

Once Nelson became an admiral in 1797, he made sure he had a clergyman with him in his flagships, always someone he had appointed himself.

One of these, Revd Alexander Scott, remembered that Nelson listened carefully to his sermons and spoke to him afterwards if he felt any of them too 'learned' for the sailors. In fact Nelson sometimes lent him sermons that he thought appropriate. Scott also reported that Nelson said his prayers every morning and night.

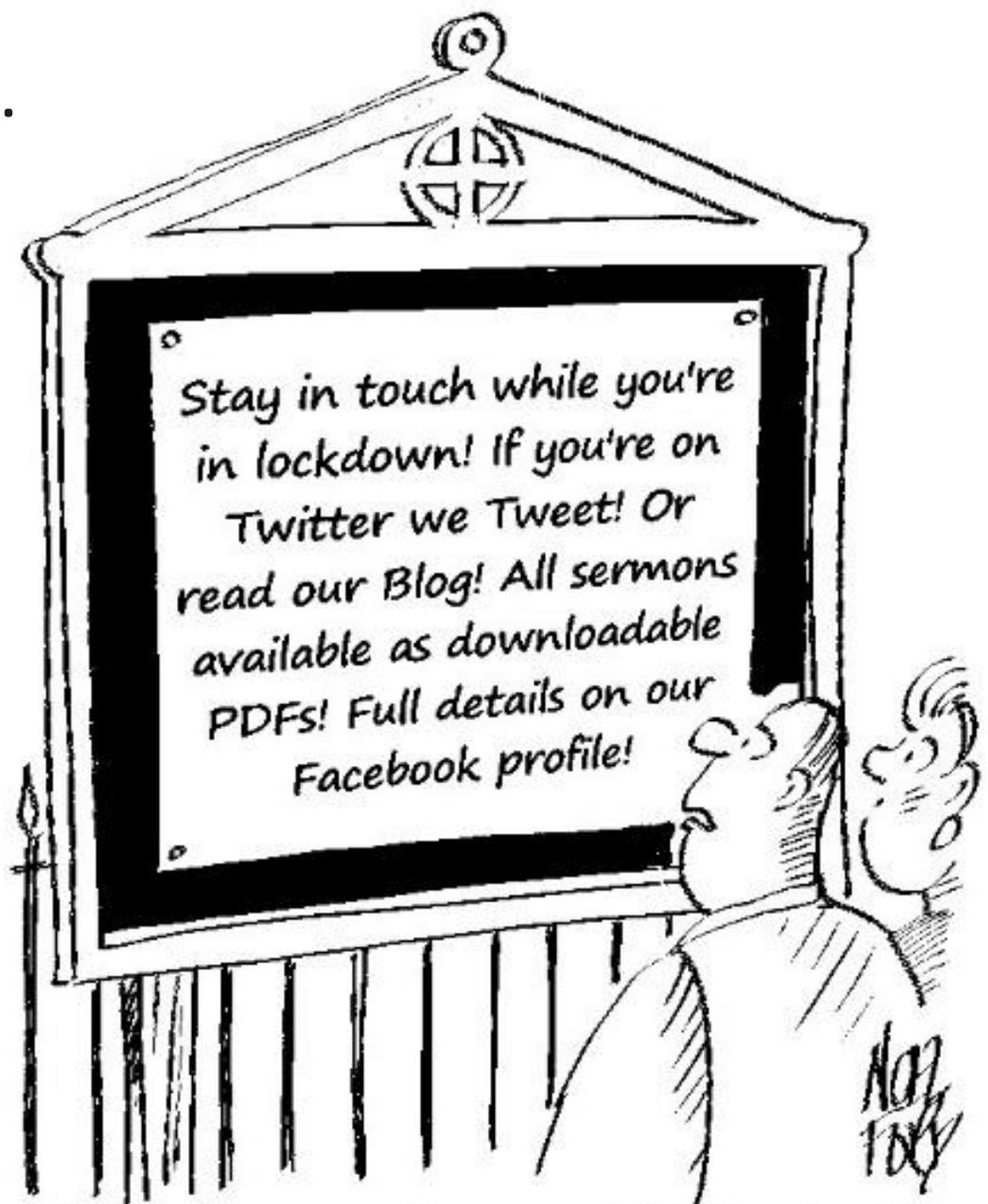
It is about 3.30pm on 21st October 1805, below decks on the Victory. Scott is with Nelson as he dies, struck down by a French bullet. Despite the appalling pain, which Scott is doing his best to relieve him by rubbing his chest, and saying short prayers with him when the anguish eases enough to allow him to speak. As Nelson slips away we should remember his great prayer, composed earlier that day.

Nelson wrote this great prayer, now known as The Trafalgar Prayer, as his fleet sailed into action. The prayer is read out each Trafalgar Day as an act of remembrance on the quarterdeck of Nelson's flagship HMS Victory.

May the Great God, whom I worship, Grant to my Country, and for the benefit of Europe in General, a great and Glorious Victory; and may no misconduct in any one tarnish it; and may humanity after Victory be the predominant feature in the British fleet. For myself individually, I commit my life to Him who made me, and may his blessing light upon my endeavours for serving My Country faithfully. To Him I resign myself, and the Just cause which is entrusted to me to defend. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Information: Church Times 14th October 2005 'Nelson: the man of prayer'—
Dr Colin White

And Finally....



"...and we used to grumble about not understanding archaic church language!"



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