

St Mary's News

July/August 2022



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Being a Disciple

They say the difference between the Sea of Galilee, which is fresh water and teeming with fish, and the Dead Sea, which is too salty to support life, is because water flows both in and out of the Sea of Galilee whilst the river Jordan flows into the Dead Sea and has nowhere to escape. In other words, the Sea of Galilee gives out from what it receives whilst the Dead Sea retains everything and then as the water evaporates becomes saturated with salts to such an extent that it cannot sustain life.

It is a parable from which we can learn much as disciples of Christ and as a church. Being a disciple or follower of Jesus is a lifelong journey of discovery and learning. We grow when we study God's Word, when we pray, learn from those who are wise and mature in the faith, when we have fellowship with one another and deepen our understanding of God. The reason why many Christians don't grow is because they become unteachable, in other words they have become comfortable or satisfied with what they have, and their minds have become closed to learning more and taking their faith to a deeper level. They have blocked the inlet and stemmed the flow of the life-giving water that fills and sustains us. Other disciples have stopped growing not because they don't pray and study God's Word but because they keep it all to themselves. They lack an outlet. They are not sharing their faith, the Good News with others.



At the beginning of July, we rejoiced as Phil and Ash were ordained priest in the Church of England and Cath was ordained deacon and left to become a curate in Harpenden. From a church perspective they have been a wonderful inlet and a great asset to the church. Now they have become an outlet that brings new life to other churches (we mustn't forget they have also been an outlet prior to coming to St. Mary's). Other members of St. Mary's have moved away from Watford in recent times and amongst them some great servants to this church over many years. It is gratifying to learn how they are now making a contribution to the local church in their new surroundings, and no doubt a wonderful answer to prayer. As Bishop Alan has said to us in the past, 'God blesses us so that we might be a blessing to others.'

Another important geographical feature we might associate with the Holy Land is that of the well. The well is not only a source of drinking water, essential in hot and arid countries such as Israel, but also a place of meeting. We will no doubt be familiar with the story of the Samaritan woman who encounters Jesus at the well. Jesus is thirsty and the woman draws water from the well. From the ensuing conversation we know that life has not always been kind to the woman, but as her life story unfolds, she discovers that Jesus is the Messiah, and she goes back to her village and tells everyone that she has seen the Messiah. We are also told that many become believers because of her testimony.

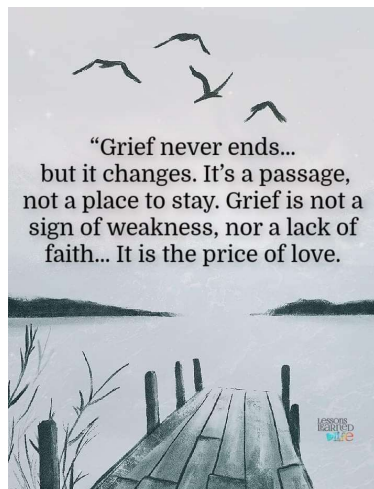


Did you know that St. Mary's is built on the site of an ancient well? As society changes Watford is becoming an increasingly transient place and in recent times, we at St. Mary's have seen many pass through, perhaps only staying with us a matter of weeks or just a few years. Often or not, they come at a critical time in their lives. Like the Well at Sychar, I hope St. Mary's continues to be a place of encounter, of discovery, of healing. I hope that those who pass through leave not only with our blessing but strengthened by their

experience of St. Mary's perhaps encouraged, enabled, equipped, affirmed, with a greater sense of purpose. Perhaps like the woman at the well they have found peace with themselves. More than anything they will have drunk from living water that is Jesus.

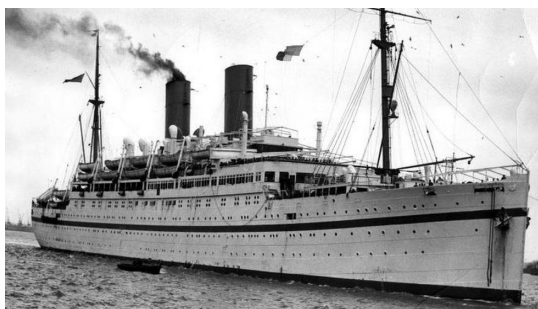
Not only will Cath be moving on, but we also know that Josh's curacy will be drawing to a close and he is likely to be moving on. We can with confidence say their contribution has been enormous, but we also know their time at St. Mary's has been formative and we hope will enrich their future ministry. Let our church be a place where we model healthy Christian living. Let us rejoice in what God wishes to give to us in new people. Let us also bless those who move away, praying they may flourish wherever God may send them. Let us receive from God all that he wishes to give to us in learning and insight and may we use that to benefit others. May the Living Waters of Christ flow freely, making us life giving and not life taking.

The Revd Tony Rindl



Celebrating the Windrush Generation!

On Tuesday 22nd June 1948, the Empire Windrush docked in the UK carrying around 500 members of the Caribbean community who were set to begin their new lives here. They marked the first of thousands from the Caribbean who accepted the invitation to move to the UK.



They were invited to the UK to be part of its rebuilding after the Second World War and yet in coming they faced extreme intolerance not just from wider society but also from the Church. Many from the Caribbean who were Anglicans came expecting the church to be a place of refuge and welcome and instead often found a hostile environment, some were even barred entry into the church itself.

There is a deep shame the church carries for this. And indeed, it has been acknowledged and apologised for. The Archbishop of Canterbury described in 2020 how “We’ve damaged the church, we have damaged the image of God, most of all we have damaged those we have victimised”. Windrush Day is celebrated every year on 22nd June. A day to celebrate the impact and contribution of the British Caribbean community but also a day for the Church to remember and acknowledge its failure to offer the welcome, hospitality, and loving home Jesus commands us. A day for us to ensure we never fail in that way again.

But to celebrate Windrush this year our mid-week Communion service had a distinctly Caribbean feel, it’s probably not often we hear Bob Marley in a church service! It was an opportunity for us to learn, think, pray and celebrate the contribution of that generation for all they have done and brought to this island. Not just those who came between 1948 and 1970 but



also their descendants too. And that includes me! Because I am a descendant of that generation.

My grandmother and mother came over from Jamaica like so many others from the Caribbean on a ship, theirs was called the *Askania*.

They came to start a new life in the UK. For my mum, who was about 9 at the time, it was a lot of change! She remembers coming to England and her first impressions were all negative. Not only had she left friends and family she loved behind in Jamaica, but she also arrived in a place which she described as “cold and grey” like nothing she had ever experienced before! When compared to the sunshine and warmth of Jamaica it was horrible. She felt different, her accent setting her apart whenever she opened her mouth. But my mum was also fortunate because the lightness of her skin meant she didn’t face any of the racism that so many others who came from Jamaica and other islands in the Caribbean did.

I remember my grandma speaking about her experience of coming over and telling us a story which highlighted the casual racism which was so prominent. I remember so clearly how she told it because she laughed as she did. She chose to respond to the ignorance of some of the people in the UK by teasing them. She said how people, and they did, would ask her when they met her where her tail was, and so she would tell them cheekily that there was a special room they were taken to where they chopped them off before they could enter the country!

The stories of those who made the journey to the UK are all different, all unique and I am so grateful for these people. Because had they not made the journey, had my mother and her family not made that journey, then I would not be here! My mother would never have met my English father and I would never have been born! And the Jamaican side of me is something I am deeply

thankful for. Although I was born here and have lived here in the UK most of my life, part of me is very much Jamaican and proud of it. My mixed cultural heritage meant that who I am is tied up in both Jamaican and British culture, it's tied up in Sunday roasts and rice and peas, in reggae and indie music, in childhood stories about Anancy the Spider Man (folk stories with their origins in West Africa) and in Winnie the Pooh, in white sandy beaches and dense urban London. It's all tied up in me as the blood of both islands runs through me.

So, I celebrate the impact of my Caribbean brothers and sisters, of my grandmother's generation and those before, for all they have done and contributed to not just this country and our society but also for me! And if you wonder what the Windrush Generation brought, well they had a huge impact on all areas of life in this country. They came and were doctors and nurses, they were teachers and soldiers, they were transport workers and artists, they were politicians and athletes. All spheres of work benefited from this generation. As too did the impact they had on Music and the Arts. You will find that much of the music of today for the younger generations can find influence and roots in the styles and musical influences these generations brought and gave the UK.

But the real beauty is that this is an ongoing story because of the impact of things achieved and done then, but also through descendants like me for whom the UK has been and continues to be home. Here at St Mary's, we are so lucky to have people from across the world who have come and added to our community and our story. We have such a gift in our diversity which we should celebrate. Jesus calls each of us to love our neighbour and we should be so thankful that we are all so lucky to have beautiful neighbours who bring so much to our community. Let's not wait for just one



day a year to be thankful and celebrate the contribution of certain communities but instead make it part of our worship to God! A church family that celebrates the impact and journeys of so many of our brothers and sisters and rejoices in the shared home we seek to build together where all are welcome!

Best,

Josh



Report of Parochial Church Council

The newly elected PCC met in person on Monday 20th June 2022. The meeting began with Holy Communion in church.

Business continued in the Church Centre. Peter Dean was elected as Vice Chair, Annafrida Kadzura as Treasurer, and Marcus Jones as Secretary and Minute Secretary.

There was a discussion on membership of PCC Committees: Finance, Buildings, Pre-School, Staffing, Pastoral – members of PCC were encouraged to offer membership of one committee – non-PCC members can also be co-opted.

PCC meetings going forward will be on the second Monday of each month and dates were available.

PCC accepted the Resolution put to the APCM to establish a Climate Emergency Committee to develop St Mary's response to the climate emergency. Roger Courtney was proposed at Chair.

Safeguarding – those PCC members who do not have a DBS check or have not undertaken safeguarding training were asked to do so. Once all checks and training have been completed Lesley Gray will be appointed as Parish Safeguarding Officer.

Following Cath Da Costa's leaving as Children and Family Worker a letter had been received showing concerns going forward. This would be discussed at the next PCC meeting.

Peter Dean had compiled evidence to offer the Deanery an argument to lower the deanery share factor for St Mary's. PCC were told that the deanery had agreed and this resulted in a reduction of £3,000 pa.

Peter Dean said income, especially planned giving, was down on budget for the first quarter of the year; expenditure was on budget. He suggested an appeal to cover day-to-day expenditure. Finance Committee was encouraged to look into obtaining a card reader.

PCC agreed to the publication of the Scourfield Financial Review (*it is available on the website*).

There was a discussion on floodlighting, bearing in mind previous discussions on the climate emergency.

One member asked if St Mary's can continue to give away 10% of lettings income in the light of previous discussions on reduced income. Members were asked to think about this and it would be discussed at a future meeting.

Tony gave an update on what he had been doing since returning from sick leave.

There was a discussion on how to show the church's appreciation of Cath Da Costa's excellent work in St Mary's. It was agreed to give her a token.

Ordinations – Petertide 2022



Ash David is serving at Broxbourne with Wormley. He was ordained priest on Friday 1st July 2022 at St Augustine, Broxbourne by the Bishop of Hertford.

Phil Macauley is serving in Sandy. He was ordained priest on Sunday 3rd July 2022 at St John's, Hatfield by the Bishop of Bedford.



Cath Da Costa will be serving in Harpenden. She was ordained deacon on Saturday 2nd July 2022 in St Albans Cathedral by the Bishop of St Albans.

Services

The Church is usually open each week

Monday to Friday between 9.30am and 3.00pm
and on Saturday between 12.00noon and 2.00pm

Sunday

9.00am Holy Communion (said) in church
on 1st, 3rd & 5th Sunday only each month;

10.30am Morning Service in church and via Zoom
every Sunday;

5.30pm Encounter in church and via Facebook Live
on 1st Sunday of month only

(preceded at 5.00pm with refreshments)

Wednesday

12.30pm Holy Communion in church

(for Zoom links please contact Church Office)

Thought for the Week

on our website and on Facebook - based on a bible verse or passage,
it is a short reflection by one of the leadership team
for us to think about during the week.

It can be downloaded and listened to whenever and wherever.

Please keep up to date with what is on offer
via our Facebook page
or the website www.stmaryswatford.org

Who's Who at St Mary's

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