

All Saints' Cottenham: general contacts

Churchwardens Graham Appleby

A second churchwarden is to be elected at the APCM.

Email: rector@allsaintscottenham.org.uk

Assistant Wardens: Mike Marsh
David Woodcroft
Graham Maile
Lesley Maile

Bookings for All Saints' Hall: 01954 251137

Tower Captain: Simon Wilson 01954 251105

All Saints' News Team

Website: Graham Appleby

All Saints' Church website
<http://www.allsaintscottenham.org.uk>

Facebook: Erin Coppin

Magazine Editor: Jane Webster

Circulation: Jennifer Macbeth 01954 250021

Contributions for the next magazine are welcome.
Please email if possible to
editor@allsaintscottenham.org.uk

Spring 2017



All Saints' Cottenham

£1.50

The joy of Easter by Ken Hewitt

As winter is behind us we now look forward to new life emerging, giving us hope and expectations of a new dawn.

Each time I go to the garden I pass a shrubby honeysuckle (*lonicera fragrantissima*) in the border, and even if I fail to see it, the perfume reminds me of Easter as it blooms all through Lent. Simple signs like this shrub in its beauty after a winter of dead-looking twigs gives me a purpose for our existence on earth.

Easter is the culmination of events by which God has shown us the perfect life we should try to follow through the life and teaching of Jesus. Even if we fail miserably, we know forgiveness is a true promise.

With all the natural loveliness around us with all its blessings, I see death as just another step on our journey through life, which naturally comes to an end

at some point. Three score years and ten is the expected lifespan according to Psalm 90: 10, which means I have been on borrowed time for many years.



Continued on page 2

The joy of Easter continued from page 1

The Christian Faith promises life after earthly death which, if we believe in the story of the life of Christ, death is a victory. Jesus was born like us, lived and worked like us then suffered persecution but overcame death on the cross by rising in Glory at Easter.

Surely we are expected to follow the New Testament in a way God intended, to find hope and peace before we depart. With God's Grace I may see my honeysuckle bloom for another year or two. If not, perhaps someone else will and pick a flowering sprig to place on my grave.



From the Registers

We welcome into the family of the Church by baptism

9 April Arthur West Tom Pitcher
 Callum Rhys Webb

We rejoice in the marriage of

25 February Hannah Fryer and Simon Barber
15 April Emma Bricknell and Mick Moran

We commend into God's care those who have died

17 February Tony Cooke
21 February Betty Brownbill
8 March Diana Tebbit
10 April Paul Daw

Little Saints is a group for babies and pre-school children with their parents and carers. They meet in All Saints' hall on Thursday mornings in term-time, 10 am to 11.45 am. If you would like to know more, please contact Emma McCaughan (250827, emma.mccaughan@pobox.com).

There are currently two **Evening Discipleship Groups** which meet fortnightly on alternate Mondays and Thursdays from 7.45 to 9.30. We aim to encourage and support one another as disciples of Jesus in our everyday lives. The groups are always open to visitors on a one-off or regular basis. If you would like to know more, please contact Mick Lumsden (251371, mick@mplumsden.plus.com) or Lynda Unwin (250435 lynda.kingsfarm@gmail.com).

The **Daytime Discipleship Group** meets on Tuesdays at 1.30 pm. Anyone who is happy to study with small children present is welcome. If you are interested in joining, please contact Kirsten Burrows (kirsten.burrows@gmail.com).

The **Prayer Circle** meets on the last Thursday of the month at 2.30 pm in members' homes. We share a time of fellowship over refreshments followed by a time of prayer together, finishing around 4 pm. Everyone is very welcome to join us (please see pewsheet for venue). If you would like to know more, please speak to Jennie Steer (202026, dandj@steer.me.uk).

The monthly **Fellowship Tea** is an opportunity for anyone to meet for prayer and a chat over afternoon tea. It takes place on the third Monday of each month in the Community room at Franklin Gardens from 2.30 pm to 4.00 pm. If you would like to know more, or if you require transport to and from the tea, please contact Sue Hooks (250560) or Maggie Appleby (200035).

All Saints' Choir usually practises in All Saints' Hall on Fridays from 7.00 pm to 8.00 pm, but dates and times can vary. New members are always welcome. For more information, contact Frances Horgan (franceshorgan9@hotmail.com).

All Saints' Bellringers practise in the bell tower most Wednesday evenings 7.30 pm to 9 pm. New members are always welcome: if you would like to chat about it, call the Tower Captain, Simon Wilson (251105).

ATTIC is a youth group run by Christians Together in Cottenham for 11 to 16 year olds, aiming to provide fun activities with a short something-to-think-about spot. For dates and times please contact Steve Whyatt (01223 237874, steveuw@genr8.org).

Regular services and groups

The 10.30 am Sunday service takes place every Sunday in church. One Sunday a month is an All-Age service, other weeks are Holy Communion. See All Saints' Diary for the schedule for each month. Services always include hymns and are followed by fellowship with refreshments in the church hall.

Sunday School, for children up to Year 2, meets in the hall during the 10.30 service (except when there is an All-Age service or a 9.30 service). There is no lower age-limit, and we have toys for tinies. Parents are welcome to accompany their children until they settle. We have stories, songs, games and craft activities, and re-join parents during Communion. For information contact: Sarah Ward (sarah@wardhome.me.uk). The **Samuel Group**, for Years 3 to 6, meets upstairs at the same time. For information contact Emma McCaughan (emma.mccaughan@pobox.com).

The 9.30 Service is designed for young families and takes place in church, usually on the last Sunday of each month. See All Saints' Diary for confirmation of the date. The service lasts about half an hour and includes songs, a story and prayers suitable for very young children, followed by refreshments.

The 8.30 am Sunday service takes place every Sunday in church. This is always Holy Communion without hymns. On alternate weeks the Book of Common Prayer is used.

Morning Prayer is held on most Thursdays at 9.15 am in church. The service lasts about half an hour.

Wednesday communion services take place at different locations in the village on a monthly pattern. We are aiming to continue all services during the interregnum. If it is necessary occasionally to cancel a service because no leader is available, people who attend regularly will be informed. If you want to check up before attending, please contact Janet Johnston (253478).

Tuesday Church is designed for families with children of primary school age, but anyone of any age is welcome. They usually meet fortnightly during term-time, with games, drinks and snacks from 3.15 pm. The service is from 4 pm to 5 pm and includes songs, a story, craft and prayers. For information, contact Emma McCaughan (emma.mccaughan@pobox.com).

Prayer at All Saints'

In March of this year a new initiative to offer one-to-one prayer was commenced. These prayer sessions are available at the side altar twice a month following Communion at the 10.30 services for everyone who would like personalized prayer either for themselves or for others known to them.

If you would like to be involved in offering prayer in this informal way please talk to Pam Lumsden who is co-ordinating these prayer sessions.

Individual prayer can also be requested at any time. Please contact Pam or any of the ALMs and a suitable time will be arranged to meet and pray with you.

During the interregnum there have been regular prayer meetings taking place to pray for both All Saints' Cottenham and All Saints' Rampton. These prayer sessions will continue for the duration of the interregnum, the pew sheet advising on dates. Please try to come along if you can; prayer is so important for our Churches at this time.

For more information please contact: Pam Lumsden 251371 or email pam@mplumsden.plus.com

Prayer for the Interregnum

Almighty God our heavenly Father,
whose beloved Son our Saviour Jesus Christ
commanded Saint Peter to tend your flock,
and Saint Paul to be your witness in all the world,
and have charged us at All Saints'
and with all the saints to make disciples,
send us, we pray, a priest
to lead, teach and pasture your flock at All Saints'
that we, abiding in Christ the true vine,
may serve and witness in our community
and bear much fruit to your glory,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The venomous Bead

Saint Bede of Jarrow (The Venerable Bede) has been given the job of looking after the parish of Cottenham during the interregnum. In the Winter magazine we read his letter to his old friend Trumwine,¹ asking for advice about his new role. This is Trumwine's response.

Dear Bede

I confess to having mixed feelings as I read your recent letter. I was, of course, delighted to hear from you and touched that you felt free to confide in me so candidly. On the other hand, I felt that you were not entirely enjoying your new assignment, but these things are sent to try us, I suppose.

Now I am sure you are aware that some things change over time and I am really excited by something which is now possible which was quite out of the question in our youth. It is now possible to obtain magnificent books consisting entirely of the most exquisitely drawn maps! I have acquired one of these and learned something of this obscure place Cottenham and the surrounding area.

Really, I find it hard to believe that things are as bad there as you imply. It was not helpful to remind me of old Cotta. Look at the present and the positive. It might feel remote to you but be grateful that you have not been sent to that far-away country where you would have been obliged to stand on your head.

The land surrounding Cottenham may be quite flat but my wonderful new book of maps tells me that there is a hill with a splendid cathedral built upon it barely half a day's walk from where you are. This place is called "Ely" (because of the eels available locally, I am led to believe).

Reading between the lines of your letter, I detected a heartfelt plea for help. Now I shouldn't have to tell you of all people that *Our Help is in the Name of the Lord*. Therefore, above all, you must pray *semper et ubique* and encourage others to do the same.

¹ Trumwine was Bishop of the Picts from 681 and later a monk at Whitby.

Church notice gaffes

The sermon this morning: 'Jesus Walks on the Water.' The sermon tonight: 'Searching for Jesus.'

The Fasting & Prayer Conference includes meals.

Ladies, don't forget the rummage sale. It's a chance to get rid of those things not worth keeping around the house. Bring your husbands.

Don't let worry kill you off - let the Church help.

Scouts are saving aluminum cans, bottles and other items to be recycled. Proceeds will be used to cripple children.

The pastor would appreciate it if the ladies of the Congregation would lend him their electric girdles for the pancake breakfast next Sunday.

Next Thursday there will be try-outs for the choir. They need all the help they can get.

Thanks to Ken and Elizabeth Hewitt for this contribution.

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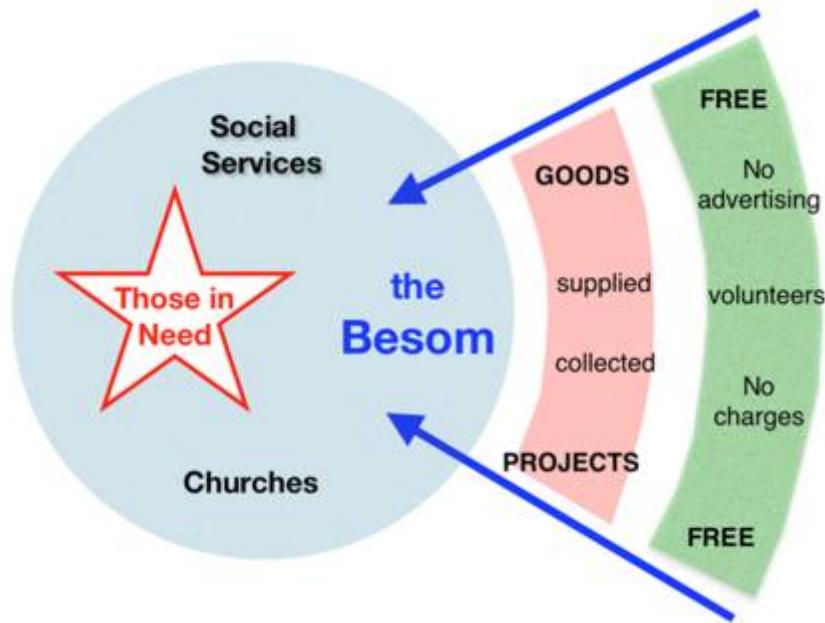


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The Besom Project in Histon

A besom is a broom. The Besom is one means to empower churches to help sweep away suffering in their local community.

There are more than thirty autonomous Besoms in the UK, including one in Histon which serves Histon, Impington and nearby villages. Pre-loved goods such as curtains, furniture, equipment, carpets, bedding, towels and kitchen gadgets are donated. Storage is provided by the Local Council. Referrals come through Social Services and Housing Officers. Work is carried out by volunteers, who also carry out projects such as decorating a room or clearing a garden to encourage the recipients.



Prayer is a vital part of the operations. On the first Wednesday of each month at 2.30 pm there is a short ecumenical prayer meeting at Histon Methodist Church, to pray for the needs of clients. Countless stories of answered prayer can be found on the Facebook page The Besom in Histon and Impington.

Of course, having prayed as if nothing else could possibly help, we must then get on with the work of improving things as best we can.

Therefore, as soon as I got your letter, I took it upon myself to pull a few strings and managed to organise some visits from a couple of bishops² for you. As you will have noticed, I could only get you small ones at such short notice but I do hope you found their presence helpful.

What else can I do for you? Pray, of course – and I will – but if there is anything else you can think of, do please let me know.

Ever yours in Christ, Trumwine

² The two small bishops were the Right Reverend David Thompson, Bishop of Huntingdon, who led our services on 15th January, and Bishop Sabiti of Watalinga in the Democratic Republic of Congo, who accompanied Canon Peter Wood on 12th February.

Bede's reply to Bishop Trumwine

My dear Trumwine,

I can't thank you enough for all the advice you have so kindly sent. It's at times like these that one finds out who one's real friends are!

Well, what a few months it has been! Christmas was extraordinary. I arrived in plenty of time for the carol service and I was still squashed in right at the back behind a pillar. The music was a bit of an 'ear-opener' I must say. Truly, I shall never get my head round harmony. If God had wanted people to sing in harmony, he would presumably



Continued on page 6

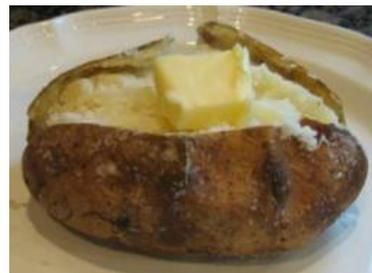
The venomous Bead continued from page 5

have created equal numbers of sopranos, altos, tenors and basses. Obvious nonsense!

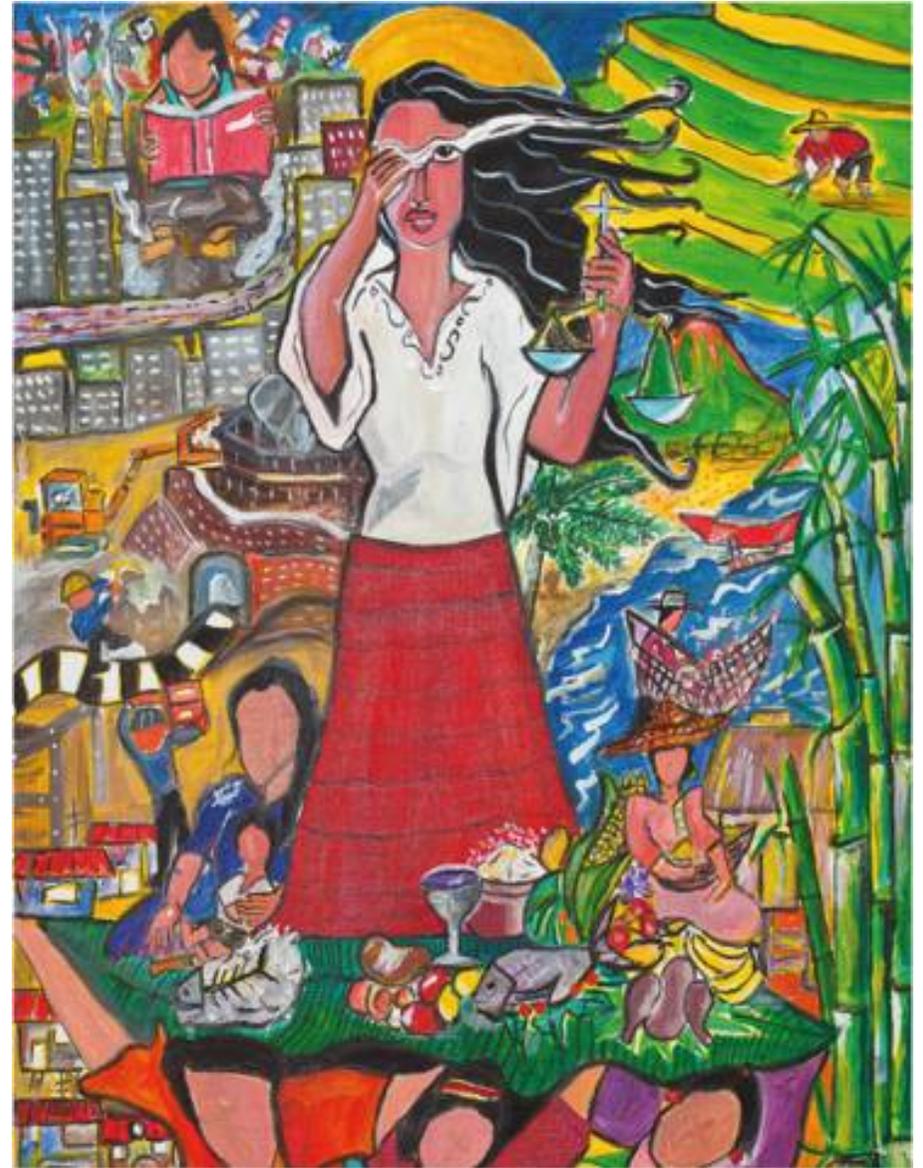
As you suggested, I have made a conscientious effort to get to as many meetings as possible. It would clearly have been quite *impossible* to attend them all. By Odin's beard (sorry – that just slipped out) these people can *talk!* More to the point, they seem to enjoy it. The general approach appears to be: why utter only one sentence when you can get away with half a dozen?

Still, I suppose it's better than fighting. I've amused myself in quite a few meetings by imagining how Wilfrid³ would have reacted to some of the suggestions made. I can see him now, veins throbbing in the temples, fists clenched, wishing he had a sword handy. There has clearly been progress over the last thousand years.

When they are not talking, the parishioners are mostly eating. In fact, they often do both at the same time, which I always find rather shocking. A silent meal accompanied by biblical reading is *so* much better for the digestion. I popped in briefly to the Shrove Tuesday supper, which was a very noisy affair. The really interesting thing, however, was the menu, which consisted largely of *potatoes*. Have you ever seen a potato, Trumwine? A most remarkable vegetable – hideously dirty and ugly on the outside, but all bright and white and crisp within, and capable of being cooked in all sorts of delicious ways. Really, quite a metaphor for the Christian life. In fact, I feel a prayer coming on:



³ Wilfrid of Ripon, protector of St Etheldreda, known for his quarrelsome disposition.



Women's World Day of Prayer

On 3rd March, All Saints' church hosted the Cottenham ecumenical service for Women's World Day of Prayer. The service was led by Cheryl Lowe and Erin Coppin using material prepared by Christian women in the Philippines on the theme "Am I being unfair to you?"

"That's not fair" is a cry often heard, from playground, through school, into workplace or political corridors. The service gave us the opportunity to reflect on what this means to us as individuals and to our world, using the words of women in different situations, songs, Bible reading Matthew 20: 1-16 and the artwork opposite.

On the artwork we see fairness, balance and justice reflected. It's a very busy, colourful picture; the more you look at it the more you see. There seem to be two contrasting sides – on the right bright, colourful images; on the left, predominantly dark and dull colours, showing the imbalance of life.

The right side suggests lush vegetation, beautiful beaches, blue seas and plentiful harvests. The left side suggests grey, high-rise buildings and the changing face of industry. The woman appears forlorn and the child reading is alone. The three women in front hold up a banana leaf on which there is an abundance of food unevenly distributed. All the good food is on the right hand side, while on the left are only fish bones. The woman in the centre is covering her right eye, so that she cannot see the destruction and poverty beside her. She holds a pair of scales weighted towards the plentiful harvest.

Through the service we reflected on both sides of the picture whilst holding to the truth that God is a fair and just God.

The service concluded in the traditional way with the hymn *The day thou gavest*, reminding us that Christians throughout the world are continually turning to God in prayer and worship.

"Lord, make me like unto a potato. Peel off my ugly, earthbound skin. Boil me, roast me . . ." you get the idea. But perhaps they might find that a bit irreverent.

The interregnum is progressing well on the whole. The congregation has appreciated the *smorgasbord* of visiting clergy, and the bishops you provided were particularly well received.

For my own part, I'm extremely impressed by the amount of sheer hard work involved, and by the fact that it is always done by the same people. I think one of my projects for the next few weeks must be to get out and about in the parish with my prodding stick. A gentle dig here, a nudge there, an occasional hefty kick in the billowy portions . . . something might be achieved, I think.

As I sign off, I will just mention that I am becoming more reconciled to the landscape. The spring flowers are shining in the sun, birds are building their nests, and there's a very promising magnolia by the church door. Hope is in the air, my dear Trumwine, and who are we to resist?

Ever your own, Bede



Photograph by Erin Coppin

Anzio Consolation by Tony Cooke

A poem written by our much-missed friend, Tony Cooke, in March 1944 when he was a Lieutenant in the North Staffordshire Regiment serving in Italy. It was read by one of Tony's granddaughters at his funeral on 17th February.

**In the midst of war there is beauty,
If only the eye can see.
It relieves the grimness of duty,
If only by seeing a tree.**

**How oft have you stood in your trenches
And seen the glory of dawn?
In your nostrils the stench of battle
And even your face is drawn.
Have you noticed the infinite colours:
The darkness chased by the sun?
Have you read this message of hope
As the light gradually won?**

**All day you have cowered in fox-holes,
With shells crumping outside,
When along comes a wandering sunbeam
To shine its pure gold inside.
Did you watch the gold dust dancing?
Or, while smoking a cigarette,
Puff smoke clouds into its brightness,
Watch the soft waves pirouette?**



A couple of generations later, the Wesley family were still adding to the Anglican and Methodist hymn books, with the musical contributions of Charles' grandson, Samuel Sebastian Wesley. Samuel's father (another Samuel) became the personal organist to the Royal Family of the day, and was acknowledged as one of the most accomplished musicians in the world, being known as 'the English Mozart'.

Samuel Sebastian was a prolific composer in the field of Church music, with numerous orchestral works, anthems and hymns, including two of his grandfather's which we still sing today: *O thou who camest from above* to the tune *Hereford* (Samuel Sebastian was organist at Hereford Cathedral) and the lesser known Communion hymn *Author of life divine* to the tune *Gweedore*.

The origin of this tune's name has me puzzled: Gweedore is an area in County Donegal, a well-known centre of Celtic Irish culture – and I can't find any clues to any close connection between the Wesley family and Ireland. The folk group *Clannad* were formed there, and it was the birthplace of the lovely Irish folk singer Enya. I know I've wandered off the track here, but can anyone offer an answer?



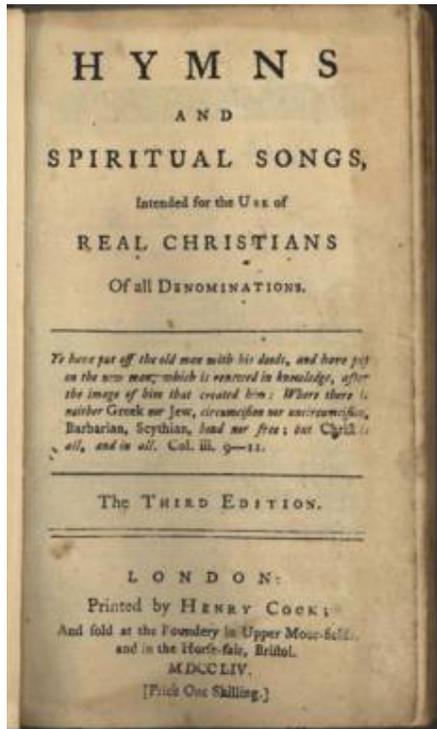
Gweedore in County Donegal

The Wesleys continued from page 19

It was a tough assignment, as most of John's 'parishioners' were smugglers, an activity which he disapproved of so strongly that he gave up drinking tea – one of the most lucrative tax-avoiding commodities. One of his lady followers was once found with a large quantity of smuggled gin hidden under her bed! I'm not sure that he ever found out about that!

Coming from the flat lands of Lincolnshire, he found travel in the hilly lands of the north quite daunting. On one occasion, on his leaving Robin Hood's Bay I was amused to read his diary entry – "I took horse and rode over the huge mountains – to Scarborough" !

On 21 October 1738, brother Charles experienced his true conversion. Opening his Bible at random at Psalm 40 verse 3 he read "He hath put a new song in my mouth" – and that was the inspiration for his very first hymn – *And can it be that I should*



gain / an int'rest in the Saviour's blood? Then followed an outpouring of worship at the rate of an average of three new hymns every week – some of the best known being: *Forth in thy name O Lord I go, Jesu lover of my soul, Love divine, all loves excelling, Author of life divine, Ye servants of God your Master proclaim, Soldiers of Christ arise, O thou who camest from above, the rousing O for a thousand tongues to sing* (a real West Gallery example of eighteenth century church music) – and – did you know he wrote the words to *Hark, the herald angels sing?*

**You have marched through shell-torn cities,
With rubble choking the road,
And the desolate shattered buildings
Have only increased your load.
But did you notice, in passing,
A bitch suckling her pups?
And the untouched part of a garden,
Bright yellow with buttercups?**

**I know you have crouched in dugouts,
Heard the whistle of bombs in bed;
And the droning throb of the engines:
Small rest for your weary head!
How long will your nerve withstand it?
Oh, what will the future hold?
Will you march to the front tomorrow?
Be wounded, or dead and cold?**

**Oh soldier, relax a minute
And rest your troubled mind.
If only your eyes behold beauty,
A consolation you'll find.**

Lectio divina: Divine reading by Erin Coppin

I first came to *Lectio Divina* when I was looking for a short retreat. I wanted something not too demanding but not completely unstructured. In my Googling, I happened upon a Christian and Buddhist retreat being held at Turvey Abbey, a Benedictine house in Bedfordshire about an hour's drive away. This not only appealed to my interfaith leanings, but also to my inherent laziness – I hardly had to travel at all. I didn't really know what *Lectio Divina* was but it sounded appealing: reading sacred texts slowly with meditative prayer, in a group setting where I could be supported as I learned and share a little if I wanted.

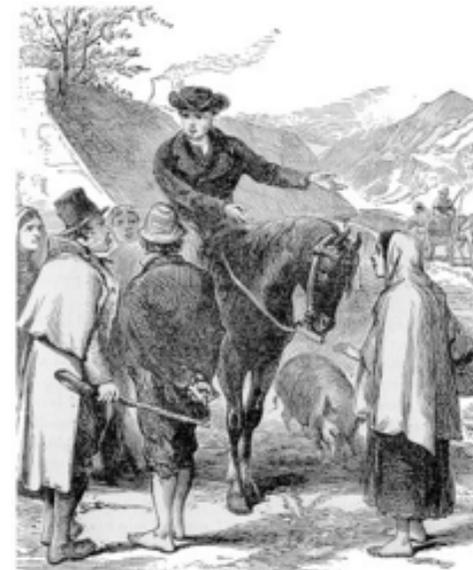
I quickly grew to love the *Lectio Divina* method and have been on other retreats to continue my learning. It combines slow scriptural reading, meditation and prayer in a lovely harmony that allows for deep connection with God. Some have called it ruminating on the Word like a cow chews on the cud, to gain maximum nourishment for our souls. I'm quite taken by that image, unflattering as some may find it! It was established as a monastic practice by St Benedict in the sixth century, and the four-step method outlined below was formalised in the twelfth century. It can be conducted in solitude but I love practising in a group. I hope to lead a few group sessions over the next few months so please come along if you are interested.



St Benedict painted by Herman Bieg in 1926

their highly organised way of living. They both spent some time in America, hoping to convert groups of settlers, but they were not popular or successful, and so returned to England.

Charles spent most of his time between London and Bristol, while in the warmer half of each year John got on his horse, and in the course of his lifetime travelled over a quarter of a million miles on his 'Northern Journeys' preaching at every place he stopped. (Presumably he changed his horse occasionally!) He was not always welcomed, and many of the buildings where he had preached were later burned down, so he resorted to preaching out of doors – in all weathers, which did not do his health, or that of his followers, too much good.



Where he *was* welcome, however, he founded little groups of devoted followers, and made a point of returning regularly to meet and pray with them. His journals are still available in print, and are a real insight into the different types of communities he visited. He visited Robin Hood's Bay (which was my home for over forty years before I came to Cottenham) almost every year.

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The Wesleys depicted in stained glass in a church in Georgia, USA

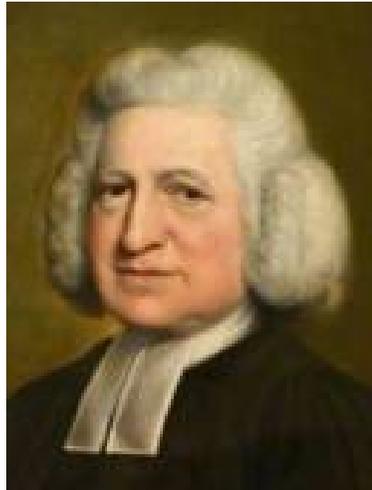
The Wesleys: Charles Wesley (1707-1788) and Samuel Sebastian Wesley (1810-1876)

Introducing a new series by Pat Labistour on our favourite hymn writers

When you start to think about Hymn writers, you will most likely come up with Charles Wesley, who, as the author of just short of nine thousand hymns, must be the most prolific of all. In our *Hymns Old and New* there are just twenty-one, most of which are still sung with gusto to tunes in the old 'West Gallery' style of music which was prevalent in the eighteenth century.

Charles was born in Epworth, Lincolnshire, in 1707, the eighteenth of nineteen children born to Samuel, Rector of Epworth, and his wife Susannah. His older brother, John, became famous, too – but not for writing hymns, as he was too busy composing sermons. We are lucky to have both of them, as there was a disastrous fire which destroyed the thatched vicarage in which they were born. John was only five years old and Charles a babe in arms. The numerous brood gathered outside, where Susannah did a head-count – double checked when she found she was one short! "Where's John?" she shouted. A terrified little face appeared at an upstairs window, silhouetted against the flames, clumps of burning thatch dropping closer and closer. He never forgot his miraculous rescue, believing he was saved by God in order to carry out his evangelical work. "A brand saved from the burning" was how he described the event in his famous *Journal*.

Both the brothers were educated at Oxford University, where they formed 'The Holy Club', a group of like-minded students who became known, rather derisively at the time, as 'Methodists', due to



Charles Wesley painted by John Russell in 1771

First, one must select a passage to read. There is no goal of covering a set portion of text, such as trying to get through a book of the Bible in a month. I prefer short passages but some people use lengthy Psalms. It is up to you. I like to use a Bible app* to have a pre-selected verse of the day, or I select a passage the night before, because otherwise I get caught up in looking for the best passage and sometimes never get round to actually praying at all!

Then, we prepare ourselves for *Lectio Divina* by calming ourselves and focusing our attention on the task at hand. We can pray, light a candle, or use other methods of preparation that we find helpful. When I'm on my own, I like to write out the passage by hand. In a group, I like to do a short relaxation exercise to release tension and get comfortable. There's no requirement to avoid fidgeting during meditation, but why be distracted by discomfort right from the outset?



Then, the four steps of the *Lectio Divina* method are as follows:

Lectio: to read

Meditatio: to meditate

Oratio: to pray

Contemplatio: to contemplate



* a device in my mobile phone which chooses Bible verses automatically

Continued on page 12

Lectio: to read.

During this part of the method, we are reading the Word aloud very slowly and carefully, and listening reverentially. St Benedict encouraged us to “*incline the ear of your heart.*” This is not reading for analysis, or reading for a story. We try to turn off the bit of our brain that is always trying to put the Bible into historical context or understand the wider social implications for today.



Instead, this practice is about entering deeply into Scripture to find out what God has to say to us today. Sometimes the ‘still, small voice’ is very small, so we must listen very carefully. I like to read the chosen passage slowly through twice. I read aloud even when I practise on my own, as I find it helpful. In a group, it is good to have two different people read aloud as the different voices help us to hear different aspects of the passage.

Meditatio: to meditate.

During this part of the method, we meditate on the passage for a few minutes and continue to listen with our hearts. I usually repeat the whole passage to myself several times over while trying to breathe steadily.



Sometimes I try to memorise it, but not always. Obviously my mind wanders and I start to think about my to-do list or the argument I had the other day: this is normal! I just use the

Emma Davies, one of our newest recruits, was originally to be part of the band but was unwell and thanks are due to Gerald for stepping in at short notice.

Thanks to Kylie and to Ralph Carpenter, we have found more information about Sidney Peters and his family. Kylie found in the Parish Records the following entries of baptisms:

Baptised in All Saints on 26th October 1894, Sidney Charles Peters, aged 1 year and 11 months and Bertie Edward Peters aged 6 weeks, sons of Charles (labourer) and Annie Peters of Corbetts Lane Cottenham.

Ralph recalled that Bertie was a tailor in Rook Street and remembered taking a pair of trousers to him to be tapered as was the fashion in the early sixties! Bertie was in his fifties when he married and had no children. Sidney was a bachelor when he was killed.

Thanks to Kylie and Ralph for this information.



The bellringing team: above - Matt Audsley, Pete Brown and Steve Howie: below- Ben Ricketts, Gerald Walker and Ben Morgan.



In memory of Private Sidney Charles Peters

An article by bellringer Steve Howie

The Cottenham ringers had wanted to ring to commemorate the one hundredth anniversary of the Battle of the Somme and when we heard that a fellow ringer at this tower was a casualty we decided to investigate further. With the aid of the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers, we learned that Private Peters was killed on the 26th September on the Somme, so the hundredth anniversary of this sad event seemed the best time to do so. In 2016 this date was a Monday so for that week alone we rang three times during the week – Sunday, Monday and at our practice evening on Wednesday.

As you may know, as a token of respect we ring the bells half muffled on Remembrance Sunday and we felt that this was the appropriate thing to do on this occasion. The bells are quiet on one stroke out of two. We wanted to make this ringing session special, so we rang a quarter peal as follows:

Ely Diocesan Association

Cottenham, Cambridgeshire

All Saints

Monday, 26 September 2016 (15–2–12)

1260 Reverse Canterbury Pleasure Place Doubles

1 Matt Audsley

2 Gerald Walker

3 Steve Howie

4 Ben Morgan

5 Ben Ricketts

6 Pete Brown (C)

Rung half muffled to commemorate the death, on this day 100 years ago, of Private Sidney Charles Peters, ringer at this tower and resident of this village.

It is in this format the notice of the quarter peal was recorded in ringers' journal of record, *The Ringing World*.

passage as an anchor and keep coming back to it as I notice my mind wandering.

As I repeat the passage to myself several times, I listen for a word or phrase to stand out for me. Sometimes this is very obvious: certain words sound different or louder in my mind as I repeat the passage to myself. Or, I visualise the words on the page and one section might look as if it is highlighted or zoomed in. Sometimes, it is very subtle. Sometimes, I just choose a bit to concentrate on. I then meditate on just the word or phrase that resonated for me by repeating it over and over again in my mind. In a group setting, people can then share aloud the word or phrase that spoke to them (but only if they wish to). I then like to read the whole passage through again twice, slowly (again with different voices if possible).

Oratio: to pray.

During this part of the method, we focus on our response to the passage. To me, this means lifting up whatever is brought to mind by the passage and taking it to God, including all kinds of distractions, mental pictures, and



trips down memory lane. Some people ask themselves questions as prompts here: "How can I reply? What does this passage invite me to do or become?" We are invited to enter into a loving conversation with God, in which we speak and listen in turn.

One monk described this process as like a pendulum, swinging gently back and forth between us and God. There is no need to be strict with exactly when we respond and listen, but we do both.

We allow God's word to speak to our whole being, and we lift up our whole being to God, warts and all.

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Contemplatio: to contemplate.

Finally, we end by simply resting in the presence of God. We don't have to do anything, we just have to be. It isn't the goal of the practice as such, just the final natural stage. In a group setting, we can finish by sharing our response from the *Oratio* section (if we wish to), and then saying a closing prayer. Most people find the whole *Lectio Divina* process a peaceful and uplifting experience, and of course the meditative aspect of the practice can gradually help us to learn better control of our thoughts.



Although I love the *Lectio Divina* method, I don't practise it as often as I'd like. I struggle with self-discipline like many people. I would like to practise more in a group setting, so I will be leading some sessions on an occasional basis over the next few months. (Dates will be advertised in the pew sheets nearer the time.) Doing it is much better than reading about it, I promise, so please come along if you are curious.

For the technophobe by Tony Huddleston

I was interested in Ken's article in the winter magazine, *Who will get the message* about the pitfalls of careless messaging.

I haven't got a computer but, having talked to my friends about Facebook and Twitter, I am trying to make more friends by applying the same principles.



Every day as I walk down the street I tell passers by what I have eaten, how I feel, what I have done the night before and what I will do for the rest of the day. I give them pictures of my wife, my daughter, my dog and me gardening and spending time by the pool on holiday.

I also listen to their conversations, tell them I like them and give my opinion on every subject that interests me, whether it interests them or not . . . and it works! I already have four people following me! Two police officers, a social worker and a psychiatrist.

To me this is the positive side of communication that keeps an old man like me going from day to day.

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