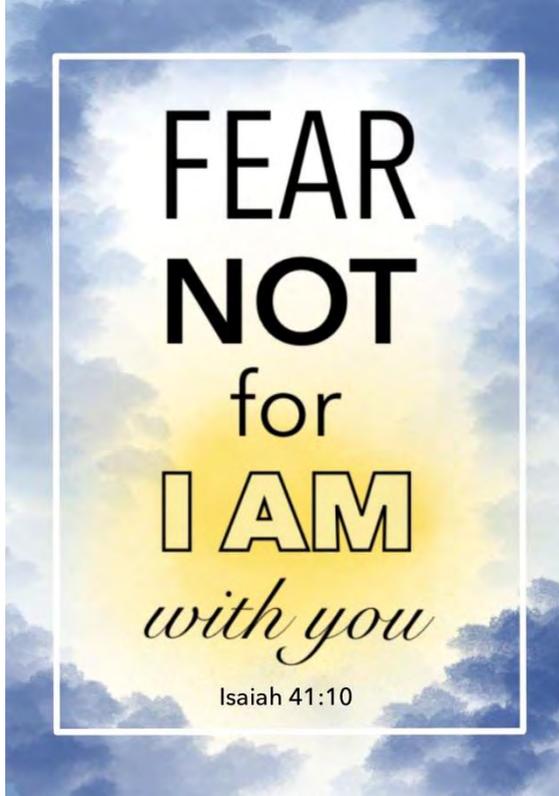




St Mary the Virgin

Boston Spa



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No 1776 ~ May 2020

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St Mary the Virgin in the Parish of Lower Wharfe

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Clergy Letter

Well, we come to the beginning of May 2020!

Writing this letter in April , not knowing what May will bring in the way of what is to be asked of us as a nation, I hardly know how to continue. I can assume that in global terms we are still going to be embroiled in the middle of a pandemic of monumental proportions and we will still be praying for those who are suffering and those who are tending to the sufferers in all manner of ways.



I am just going to reflect on what was being asked of us, in this country. There were people asked to step up to the line and volunteer; those who were asked to continue in their jobs in the face of great risk of contracting the dreaded virus and those who were asked to stay at home. Each group was asked to play their part in the nation's battle for health.

I am not sure which category you came into, but I trust you were one of the millions who did as they were told. The ones who listened to the bulletins from the government and health representatives and complied with their wishes.

It is a little like being a child again. The dos and don'ts of childhood felt almost as restricting at times and equally as frustrating at other times. Why was I not allowed to play in the street when others could; why did I have to pack up and go to bed in the middle of a good game? Why must I go and do errands for my mum and neighbours and yet not be able to go to the shops on my own with my pocket money? Why must I always remember to say please and thank you for everything?

I am sure you have as many tales of childhood rules and restrictions as I have and found them as aggravating as I did. And here we are having

our lives restricted again in adulthood! Instead of our parents teaching us how to behave to make us model citizens, we now have our government and health officials telling us how to behave to make us model citizens for the good of all.

As with all rules and regulations there are those who fly in the face of authority and test the boundaries. Did you notice those who chose to sunbathe instead of doing healthy exercise; those who gathered in groups to chat and those who gave abuse to shopworkers and other keyworkers? The newscasters seemed to make a point of showing us the 'naughty children'!

Well how good are you at keeping to the rules? There are so many laws, bylaws and directives that we should comply with that we are bound to slip up with something.

Jesus gave us all such simple but all-encompassing rules to live by:-

***'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart,
with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.'
And 'Love your neighbour as yourself.'***

All the different pieces of advice that suddenly became rules and regulations over the past few weeks, that felt like intrusions on our liberty are very easily seen to be covered by something Jesus gave us 2000years ago! If ,now in May, we are still being 'advised' by our officials, try looking at it as if God is asking us to love our neighbours as ourselves and if we are using all our souls, minds and strength to do God's wishes then all the other rules slip into place.

God loves us enough to keep things simple - love God with all your being and love your neighbour as yourself!

Keep safe and healthy!

Revd Trish

Streaming services from home



The recent guidance preventing clergy from entering their own churches, even to just livestream an act of worship, has prompted a series of imaginative alternatives.

“Not being able to use our church buildings is, of course, a huge loss to us all,” one says, but on the other hand, “streaming worship from home shows that we are alongside those who are having to self-isolate and those who are forgoing so many other things in their lives that they used to rely on.

“It also shows that we are facing up to the same restrictions as them and doing all that we can to take a lead in encouraging people to ***stay at home, protect the NHS and save lives.***

“Moreover, to pray from and in the home may help us to show that the Church is, as we all know, *us*, the people of God, not our buildings.”

We hope you have enjoyed our online services if you have been able to watch them.

Please keep checking our website for all our online services:
www.bramhambenefice.org

And also check out the Church of England resources here:

Time to Pray app (<https://www.chpublishing.co.uk/apps/time-to-pray>) which is free and has an accompanying daily audio offering on SoundCloud and iTunes.

Mental health reflections (<https://www.churchofengland.org/faith-action/mental-health-resources/supporting-good-mental-health>)

Christian Aid Week 2020



Christian Aid week is 10th to 16th May and all activities will now be online.

The Christian Aid Service for the Benefice, together with the Methodists, will be available on line through www.bramhambenefice.org as is now usual.

We would still like to do as much fund-raising as we can for Christian Aid, particularly because as an international organisation it is highly experienced in infection control in many countries. They will be providing us with fund raising ideas including “e-envelopes” to make donating easy!

At this stage we can only say look out for what we manage to implement to support Christian Aid to help other countries in the face of this pandemic.

Terry and Emily Gaussen

Ladies of the Benefice – a word from Revd Trish

Watching the course of the COVID 19 virus I am worried. As you can well imagine Revd Trish and Wydale Hall would not want any of you to come to harm. It would seem to make sense to postpone our retreat. Ahhhh!

I have not cancelled it, but in light of all the uncertainty I think it would be best to put it back to the end of September or the beginning of October.

I have not booked a date yet but wait a few weeks to see the lie of the land. I will give you all plenty of notice when I book the new dates.

Five Tips for Tackling Loneliness and Isolation

Tackling Loneliness and Isolation

The Church of England has published a leaflet giving five tips to help loneliness:

1. Pray. Light a candle, if safe, and pray for hope, faith and strength to keep loving and caring for each other during this time of struggle.
2. Talk about how you feel. This may be difficult if you are self-isolating, but do use the telephone, internet, and social media. If you need to contact a counsellor this can be arranged by your GP, or via local agencies, or privately. Samaritans are there 24 hours a day, every day, and it's free to call them on 116 123.
3. Focus on the things that you can change, not on the things you can't.
4. Look after yourself - physically, emotionally, spiritually. Plan in things that you enjoy at regular intervals during the day – a TV programme, a phone call, a book, a favourite dish, a game.
5. Look after others. Even if only in small ways, but do what you can: a smile, a kind word, writing a letter or an email.

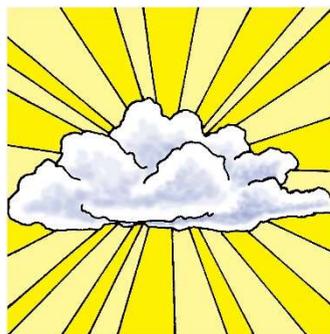
Go to: <https://www.churchofengland.org/faith-action/mental-health-resources/dealing-loneliness-and-isolation-five-top-tips>

Take exercise for just 1/2 hour a day!

Here is some good news for us all: if you are feeling low, get moving. A recent study at Harvard has found that even just half an hour of exercise a day can lower the risk of depression by 17 per cent. So – even though we are told to stay home at present, do a work-out in your living room, run around the garden a dozen times, or run up and down your staircase 20 times -anything to get your heart pounding and your body moving!

21st May - Ascension Day: 40 Days with the Risen Christ

40 days after Easter comes Ascension Day. These are the 40 days during which the Risen Christ appeared again and again to His disciples, following His death and resurrection. (*Matthew 28; Mark 16; Luke 24; and John 20.*)



The Gospels give us little of Christ's teachings and deeds during those 40 days. Jesus was seen by numerous of His disciples: on the road to Emmaus, by the Sea of Galilee, in houses, etc. He strengthened and encouraged His disciples, and at last opened their eyes to all that the Scriptures had promised about the Messiah. Jesus also told them that as the Father had sent Him, He was now going to send them - to all corners of the earth, as His witnesses.

Surely the most tender, moving 'farewell' in history took place on Ascension Day. Luke records the story with great poignancy: 'When Jesus had led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, He lifted up His hands - and blessed them.'

As Christmas began the story of Jesus' life on earth, so Ascension Day completes it, with His return to His Father in heaven. Jesus' last act on earth was to bless His disciples. He and they had a bond as close as could be: they had just lived through three tumultuous years of public ministry and miracles – persecution and death – and resurrection!

Just as we part from our nearest and dearest by still looking at them with love and memories in our eyes, so exactly did Jesus: 'While He was blessing them, He left them and was taken up into heaven.' (Luke 24:50-1) He was not forsaking them, but merely going on ahead to a kingdom which would also be theirs one day: 'I am ascending to my Father and to your Father, to my God and your God...' (John 20:17)

The disciples were surely the most favoured folk in history. Imagine being one of the last few people on earth to be face to face with Jesus, and have Him look on you with love. No wonder then that Luke goes on: ‘they worshipped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. And they stayed continually at the temple, praising God.’ (Luke 24:52,53)

No wonder they praised God! They knew they would see Jesus again one day! ‘I am going to prepare a place for you... I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.’ (John 14:2,3) In the meantime, Jesus had work for them to do: to take the Gospel to every nation on earth.

Loneliness at the Virtual Chelsea Flower Show, 19th – 23rd May 2020

All sorts of themes are chosen for the Chelsea Flower Show, but this year’s theme turned out to be scarily appropriate for the Spring of 2020: loneliness and mental health.

For, according to Sue Briggs, RHS Director General, “many feel they need gardening in their life now more than ever before, for their mental and physical wellbeing during this national emergency.”

Writing on RHS website (www.rhs.org.uk), Sue Briggs says: “This applies to everyone from those who are having to self-isolate to families planning, maybe for the first time, to grow their own food.”

And so, “for these reasons, and to do more to support the industry, the RHS will create a Virtual RHS Chelsea Flower Show, to celebrate our great horticultural industry and gardening heritage.” The Virtual Show will run from Tuesday 19th May to Saturday 23rd May.

Guy Barker, chief horticulturalist at the RHS said: “Nurturing plants can make you less lonely and release you from troubles.”

Editors Note

May is the month of flowers. I don't know about you – but I've been taking this opportunity to get on with gardening when we can't go out anywhere so my garden might look a little better than it usually does!

Why not email me your photos of your gardens at this most beautiful time of year? Perhaps you could choose a verse from the Bible to go with your photograph. We will publish them in the next magazine edition, and put some on the Bramham Benefice Facebook page too.

Please send them to bd4mag@msn.com

Care for Creation

How many of you followed the Church of England Live Lent journey this year? The hope was that we might engage in prayer, learn more about the remarkable world we have been given and build habits that last beyond the season to protect and honour the earth.

As part of that focus, we are continuing with these monthly tips from the Diocese of Leeds each month over the coming year.

May – In the bathroom

1. Spend less time in the shower. Spending one minute less in the shower each day will save up to £7 off your energy bills each year, per person. Heating water uses a lot of energy.
www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/home-energy-efficiency/energy-saving-quick-wins
2. Turn off the tap while cleaning your teeth. The clean water that flows out of your tap needs energy in many stages of processing and transport before it gets to the tap. Don't waste it!

3. If your toilet cistern holds more than 6 litres of water (likely if it was installed before 2001) put a Hippo Water Saving device (or a brick) in it to save water each time you flush (eg <http://www.hippo-the-watersaver.co.uk/>)
4. Fit a water efficient shower head (if you've got a shower that takes hot water straight from your boiler or hot water tank). This will reduce your hot water usage while retaining the sensation of a powerful shower.
5. Switch to eco cleaning products which biodegrade in the sewerage system and don't damage aquatic life in our rivers and seas. They also contain less harmful chemicals for us too.

BTO Garden BirdWatch Free Offer

During this current period of uncertainty, many of us are looking to our gardens to enjoy nature and be outdoors, to learn, and to improve our well-being. BTO Garden BirdWatch (GBW) offers a great opportunity to learn more about garden birds and other wildlife, and to contribute directly to BTO's important scientific research on the value of gardens for wildlife. The more we know about how wildlife uses our gardens, the more we can make our cities, towns, villages and individual gardens better for nature.

The survey involves simply keeping a list of the birds you see visiting your garden over the course of a week, and then entering this into the BTO's online recording system. You can also record other garden wildlife, such as butterflies and mammals.

GBW is normally membership only, with an annual fee of £17, which includes an ID book and a quarterly magazine. The generous financial

support of participants is what allows BTO to carry out its work monitoring garden wildlife and our scientific research.

However, we want to enable more people to get involved in garden wildlife recording under the current circumstances, to discover an enjoyable purpose in garden birdwatching, and to feel part of a community all working on the same project, even though all of us are confined to our own gardens. Therefore, we are offering free membership of the BTO Garden BirdWatch during the COVID-19 lockdown.

The free offer does not include the book or magazines and will be online only. It will include

- Access to the GBW online recording system.
- A regular e-newsletter with information on recording and identifying garden wildlife.
- Access the BTO's team of wildlife experts, to answer your questions.

The free membership will be valid for one year, after which it will expire or can be renewed at the normal rate. To take part in Garden BirdWatch, please visit <https://www.bto.org/science/projects/gbw/join-gbw>

Garden BirdWatch is designed to find out how, when and why birds and other animals use our gardens. Participants send in weekly lists of garden birds and other wildlife, which are analysed by scientists working under the BTO's urban and garden ecology research programmes, to investigate the links between changes in wildlife populations and factors such as garden management, food, weather and urban structure.

Mike Gray

gbwmike@gmail.com

Notes from Nature Walks

Since the beginning of March I have been taking an early morning walk every day to Brayton Barff Wood which is a short walk from our new home in Thorpe Willoughby near Selby. I have always enjoyed photography and I have a great love of nature especially plant life, but my interest in bird watching has been re-inflamed as this ancient woodland is alive with birdsong and activity.



Every day brings new life in nature and during these challenging times we need something to uplift us and to give thanks for. I feel extremely fortunate that I am able to get out each day to this now almost deserted beauty spot where I can reflect, pray and feel close to God. I started posting a few photos on Facebook several weeks ago and found the response was so positive that I now share pictures every day and now also on Instagram. Many people aren't able to reach open land or parks so if I can bring nature to others and bring a little joy then it gives me a sense of purpose.

If you can get out for a walk or go into your garden or sit by an open window, be still for a moment, listen to the birdsong, look closely at new blooms and watch the changing stages of trees and plants each day. May God keep you safe and uplifted through nature."

*Many thanks
Niki*

See some of Niki's lovely photos on the next page and also at:
Facebook: Niki Hampson Instagram: nikhampson_pulpitations



And a nature challenge for our younger readers

Bugs in Lockdown

Photo Competition

What Creepy Crawlies can you see in Your Garden?

Winners will be announced at the end of each month during lockdown.

For Under 12s & Over.

Upload to:

#bostonpabugwatch

or go to website:

www.bostongreengroup.co.uk/events/



Dates for your Diary

All social and fund-raising events are currently on hold. Please check on the website for up to date information, and we will hopefully be back up and running once government advice allows.





MOTHERS UNION

May

Theme for 2020 “Building Hope and Confidence”

Dear Members,

By the time you read this, we'll have been coping with the restrictions of COVID 19 for 6 weeks. Hopefully the country will be over the worst. I hope you are all well and sane! having perfectly manicured gardens and spotless homes. Myself and the committee have been keeping in touch with you, and I know we've all been supporting one another and our neighbours.

Our Mothers' Union meetings and programme are understandably on hold, but I would just like to remind you that our "Wave of Prayer" is celebrated during the first week of May. Please pray for all members of the Mothers' Union, remembering especially the work of our diocesan overseas links in Congo, Uganda, Nigeria, Ghana and Guyana. Every Branch worldwide prays at 12 noon, meaning there's a continuous wave of prayer throughout the day.

Prayer is an integral part of our ethos and even more so in today's situation, don't underestimate it's value.

Keep safe and well,
Best wishes,

Ruth Boswell. Branch leader.

Golden Wedding Celebrations

Congratulations to Su and John Wilkinson who celebrated their Golden Wedding on 4th April. We send our love and very best wishes for many more years.

Su Wilkinson, Branch Secretary

Mothers' Union National

Mothers' Union knows that these are very difficult times for families.

“We know that our work and experience in re-building communities and supporting family life is going to be more important than ever once the threat of COVID-19 subsides. Our members will be ready and be some of the first in line to support those around them.” Until then, it welcomes people to stay connected with MU on social media.

More details at: <https://www.mothersunion.org/get-involved/our-response-covid-19>



Even though we can't meet in person, our MU@Toms group remains active on Facebook, sharing news, prayers and encouragement with each other. Please let Kate Kennedy, Alison Talboys or Penny Stables know if you'd like to join the group.

Our Groups for Children and Young People

St Mary's Ark

When we last met on Thursday 5th March and made some colourful rainbows, little did we realise that it would be our last session for a while.

You may have seen on social media that people are putting pictures in their windows

so when children or those feeling lonely leave their homes for their daily walk they can hunt for rainbows and hopefully it will bring a smile.



If you missed our session why don't you get your children to make a rainbow and display it in your window, I have seen lots displayed on my daily walk around the village?

The Mothers' union website suggests we add an encouraging bible verse as well with the words **Faith, Hope, and Love, but the greatest of these is Love**. Please make as many rainbows as possible!

If you are missing the Ark, and we are, why don't you make one out of an old shoe box and have your own short service at home. Remember to keep singing "Faithful old Noah" and try and learn some new animal sounds!

Remember our prayer-

Dear God,
Wide as the world
Deep as the sea
High as the Sky
Is you love for me

Don't Forget to do the actions !

Good News!

We have two new members of the Ark.

Congratulations to Tara Skinner and her husband on the arrival of Giles at the end of February and to Sarah Chate-Taylor and her husband on the arrival of Josh who was born on Sunday 22 March. We look forward to welcoming them when we next meet, but I fear that won't be for a quite a while.

With love to you all and take care of each other

Janet McBride and the Mothers Union team.



Discoverers

Our Discoverers Group has also been suspended during this time.

However, we distributed activity packs to all of our Discoverers children before Easter.

These included a Palm Cross, Easter Activity booklet from the Diocese of York, and an Easter Egg. The Easter Activity booklet had activities for each day in Holy Week, and there was an Easter Garden to make. Here's an Easter Garden made by one of the Discoverers children - Lena.

We also did a series of videos for children (Kate, Phil and Sandra) which told the Easter Story from Palm Sunday through the Last Supper, Good Friday to Easter Sunday. These are all available on Youtube.





Young Life is our group for young people in Year 7 and above. Our aim is to provide a place for young people to grow spiritually; to make friends that could last for life; and to provide opportunities to lead and serve in the local church.

We had our first online YL meeting on Friday 3rd April – it was a lovely way to catch up with all of our group using the Zoom app. We had a scavenger hunt, game of Empires, and a reflection on Palm Sunday and finished with a prayer. We are planning to continue with these sessions until we are able to meet again.

If you'd interested in joining our Young Life group then please contact Phil Baraniak (07578 289011) or Kate Kennedy on 07801 536425.

Easter Holiday Club

Unfortunately we had to cancel our Easter Holiday Club. Watch this space for details of our next Holiday Club - we will let you know as soon as we have confirmed details.

Kate Kennedy

From the Archives

“This extract from early 1940 has a familiar ring for us all today. The work of the Church never ceases as we try to support all in need. Then as now, there are financial challenges for St Mary’s and the Diocese.”

VICAR'S NOTES.

The Diocese.—In spite of the War the work of the Church goes on, and the Report of the Diocesan Board of Finance shows that the Churchpeople of the Diocese are trying hard to keep up their support in money. The full Parochial Quotas are estimated at about £12,000, and of this about £9,927 was received for 1939, and £9,684 for 1940; about three-fifths of the amount lacking is from the Archdeaconry of the E. Riding, at which, remembering how much some of its parishes have suffered, we cannot be surprised.

The expenditure was drastically cut down in the budget prepared for last year, so that there is a credit balance of £830 on the year's working, as about £600 on the previous year—this is being carried forward as a War Emergency Fund, and may prove most valuable. The Archbishop adds a note, “I hope no one will regard the existence of this fund as a reason for withholding or reducing the payment of quotas.”

The Archbishop in his Foreword to the Report says:—“The story of the past year shows a constancy of spirit in the Church as in the Nation, which is a source of great encouragement. These figures when compared with those of previous years, show a splendid spirit of devotion and faithfulness in the Churchpeople of the parish as a whole. I trust that both Clergy and Laity will continue to feel it an obligation to supply the Diocese with this support as evidence

of their sense of membership with one another in the Christian fellowship, and loyalty to the Christian faith, on which the future of the world depends.”

War Damage Insurance.—The effort to raise £30 for the insurance of all the ornaments and furniture of the Church has made some good and encouraging progress; so far forty contributors have given £16 11s. 0d. But we shall probably need several more forties in order to complete the sum. There are a large number of families, who have been attached to the Church all their lives, and are now probably better-off than ever before; we should welcome their half-crowns, florins, shillings and sixpences. The gifts for the clock and bells, which we suggested last month might well secure the support of a still wider circle of parishioners, have so far amounted to £1 13s. 6d. of the total (of which £1 comes from a share in the profits of a sale held by the M.U.), but we are grateful for the welcome help of the few, and hope it may encourage others among the general parishioners, most of whom have used the clock all their lives; the clock was going in the old Church before it was rebuilt in 1874 and later years.

The Mothers' Union.—By the kind welcome of Mrs. Selkirk, the Branch was able to hold a special Garden Meeting, with a Tea contributed by the members, at Woodside, on June 12th, during which a Bring and Buy Sale was in operation and produced £4 16s. 9d.,



Boston Spa Guides – Volunteer with Us

Boston Spa Guides are looking for volunteers. We're a happy lively unit of girls aged 10-14 years who meet on Monday nights. Do you want to do something amazing and help give girls in your local community more opportunities for fun, friendship, challenge and adventure.

There are lots of ways you can volunteer with Girlguiding, it's flexible and can fit around busy lifestyles. You can even learn new skills and receive training while making a real difference.

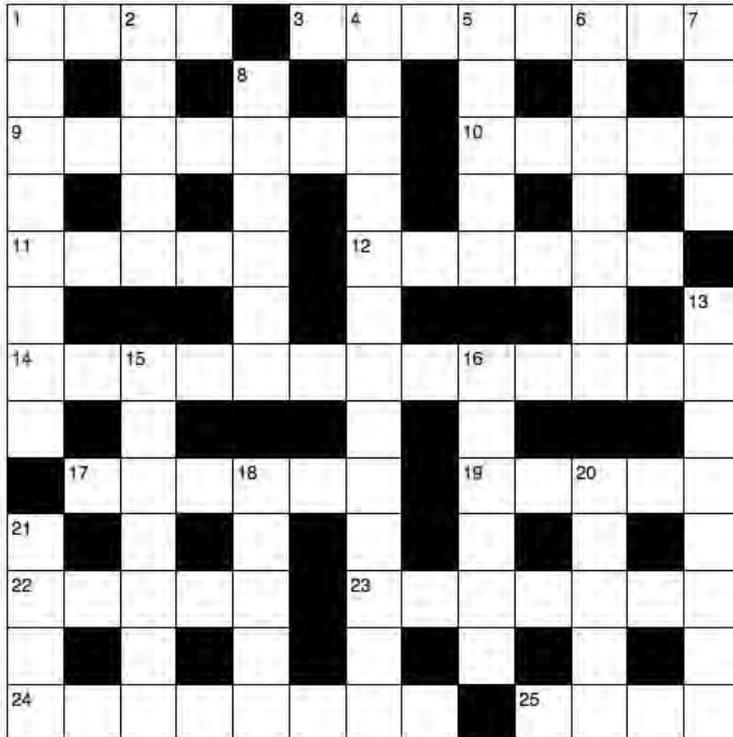
Contact :- <https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/get-involved/become-a-volunteer/register-your-interest/>

Clare Elwen clare.elwen@talktalk.net

Catharine Auty catharine.auty@btinternet.com

Crossword

We don't have as many news and events items as usual, so here are a couple of challenges to keep you entertained instead.



Across

- 1 'Therefore let us — passing judgment on one another' (Romans 14:13) (4)
- 3 'I — — these persons here present' (Marriage service) (4,4)
- 9 According to a prearranged timetable (Numbers 28:3) (7)
- 10 Group of eight (5)
- 11 The cell into which the Philippian jailer put Paul and Silas (Acts 16:24) (5)
- 12 — Taylor, pioneer missionary to China (6)
- 14 Otherwise known as the Eucharist, Breaking of Bread, the Lord's Table (4,9)
- 17 'So that after I have preached to others, I — will not be disqualified for the prize' (1 Corinthians 9:27) (6)
- 19 Attend to (3,2)

- 22 Approximately (Acts 4:4) (5)
- 23 Tea rite (anag.) (7)
- 24 Rule of sovereign (8)
- 25 Test (anag.) (4)

Down

- 1 The name of the street where Judas lived in Damascus and where Saul of Tarsus stayed (Acts 9:11) (8)
- 2 'The playing of the merry — , sweet singing in the choir' (5)
- 4 'We have been saying that — — was credited to him as righteous' (Romans 4:9) (8,5)
- 5 Dr Martyn — Jones, famous for his ministry at Westminster Chapel (5)
- 6 Port at which Paul landed on his way to Rome (Acts 28:13) (7)
- 7 Observe (Ruth 3:4) (4)
- 8 Minister of religion (6)
- 13 'I am — of this man's blood. It is your responsibility' (Matthew 27:24) (8)
- 15 'Greater love has no one than this, that he — — his life for his friends' (John 15:13) (3,4)
- 16 Archbishop who calculated that the world began in 4004BC (6)
- 18 'No one can — the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit' (John 3:5) (5)
- 20 Establish by law (5)
- 21 Product of Gilead noted for its healing properties (Jeremiah 46:11) (4)

Sudoku

8				4				5
5		7			8		6	
	4			5			2	
					9	3		2
9				1				7
4		1	7					
	8			9			7	
	7		2			5		6
1				7				9

Crossword Answers

ACROSS: 1, Stop. 3, Call upon. 9, Regular. 10, Octet. 11, Inner. 12, Hudson. 14, Holy Communion. 17, Myself. 19, See to. 22, About. 23, Iterate. 24, Monarchy. 25, Stet.

DOWN: 1, Straight. 2, Organ. 4, Abraham's faith. 5, Lloyd. 6, Puteoli. 7, Note. 8, Cleric. 13, Innocent. 15, Lay down. 16, Ussher. 18, Enter. 20, Enact. 21, Balm.

Sudoku Answers

8	9	2	1	4	6	7	3	5
5	1	7	3	2	8	9	6	4
6	4	3	9	5	7	8	2	1
7	5	8	4	6	9	3	1	2
9	3	6	8	1	2	4	5	7
4	2	1	7	3	5	6	9	8
2	8	5	6	9	4	1	7	3
3	7	9	2	8	1	5	4	6
1	6	4	5	7	3	2	8	9

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