



*We can't bring you GRAPEVINE but we
can bring you an Offshoot*

Welcome



Issue 4

Poynton Parish Church



Dear Friends,

We live in a world full of choices... you've made a choice to read this edition of Offshoot! In the complexity of ordering a cup of coffee or deciding which television channel to watch... through to the more serious choices about where live and whom we share our lives with.

The film director Woody Allen goes as far as to say "We're all faced throughout our lives with agonizing decisions, moral choices. Some are on a grand scale, most of these choices are on lesser points. But we define ourselves by the choices we have made. We are, in fact, the sum total of our choices."

We may feel at the moment that our choices are being limited – either by lockdown rules and travel restrictions, or by our own anxieties about our health and loved ones. But even in the midst of a global pandemic, those of us who are living here in Poynton have choices to make. How we live, we might say how we respond to difficulty, is both a witness to a life that is transformed and a catalyst for ongoing change.

The Apostle Paul writes to the Ephesian church:

"Be very careful, then, how you live – not as unwise but as wise"

We are encouraged to be 'very careful' or to 'look carefully' at how we live. We need to take stock, to reflect, to see how we are doing. We are called to wisdom, wise living. This isn't something we can sign up to once and then not think about again – King Solomon in the Old Testament was given the opportunity to ask God for anything... and he asked for wisdom, his wisdom became famous, but later in his life he didn't always act in line with that wisdom.

Where do we need to recognise wisdom? It probably wasn't Mark Twain who said: "When I was a boy of fourteen, my father was so ignorant I could hardly stand to have the old man around. But when I got to be twenty-one, I was astonished at how much he had learned in seven years."

We who live transformed lives are called to be wise through our whole lives, and to take every opportunity to shine the light of God's good ways into our world.

What are the choices that you will make today? How can you encourage others to be wise, and seek God's wisdom?

Yours in Christ,

Matthew

PLEASE PRAY FOR:

These who have recently been married:

Matthew Stephen Hollingsworth and
Alice Rose Fitton 5 September

The family and friends of those who have recently died:

Beryl Fairhurst	25 August	aged 92
Anne Christine Washington	2 September	aged 73
Margaret Tew	7 September	aged 83



Battle of Britain

Having commemorated the end of the War in Europe in May and in the Far East in July, September reminded us of the crucial Battle of Britain. A commemorative service was held in London and followed by a Spitfire flypast.

The loss of life among pilots and aircrew was enormous and many still remember the words of Winston Churchill; "Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few".

Susan Warrington



As we remember the final end of the Second World War this year, we remember also the many people throughout the world who still suffer from the effects of war, famine and disease and pray for them and for those who spend their lives trying to help them.



‘Dear Lord, we pray for those who work for peace. For those who take enormous risks to help those who are victims of war. For those who sacrifice their own comfort and security for the sake of those who have no one to care for them. For those whose words or deeds bring hope to those crushed by their experience of life. For those who give little thought to their own needs because they see only the hurt of others.’



Luminary Bakery

Before starting my degree in Food Science and Nutrition at Nottingham University, I had the privilege of spending nine months at Luminary Bakery. Having started from humble beginnings in various church kitchens, to having a bakery, café and training centre in Hackney, before opening a second bakery in Camden, Luminary is a social enterprise, run by an incredible all-female team of Christians. Motivated by the love Jesus showed for the least and the lost, the goal of this special bakery is to train and empower women from socially- and economically-disadvantaged backgrounds through baking. Each woman is taught the basics of baking, from traybakes to fine patisserie, as well as receiving a food hygiene qualification, and having access to counselling and entrepreneurship training. Over six months, women have the space to begin to process their past experiences, whilst learning key skills to enable them to jump onto the careers ladder, and rebuild a future for themselves and their families.

Having grown up in leafy Surrey, the thought of moving to London, particularly Hackney, was a frightening one, especially since I was taking a gap year because I didn't feel ready for University! However, as cliché as it sounds, I fell in love with my internship at Luminary from day one, and two weeks later, I was living with a church family in North London. Each week, I would spend a day in the bakery, café, office, and with the women on the course. Having started my internship with a love of baking, I soon developed the art of making a perfect latte, cultivating patience and efficiency in baking, and learning how to tackle those tricky customers. But, the greatest joy of the whole internship was forming relationships with not only the team, but the four wonderful women I was co-training. Never have I seen stronger, more resilient, wiser women, with such trust and faith in me, even though they had been abused by others in their past. Over the six months, I (who was at least half their age) became 'Aunty Jess', and we had frequent conversations about faith, and our dreams for the future. Each of their stories is wonderfully unique, heart-breaking, but incredibly hope-filled too.

Amongst this growth in me and the women, Luminary was also growing and thriving whilst I was there, and it was such a joy to be a part of it. I had the privilege of attending many pop-up events in Central London, and creating my own celebration cake for Easter, but the most exciting news came about a month before I was due to finish my internship: Luminary was writing a recipe book! Just over a year later, and 'Rising Hope' has just been released. My recipe, for a Banoffee Birthday Cake, sits amongst delicious recipes from staff, trainees and volunteers past and present, as well as inspiring stories from Luminary graduates. It's still a bit of shock that my little Luminary now has a recipe book, and has been in the news up and down the country, but I couldn't be prouder of all they have achieved through the power of baking!



Choices

My concordance has several pages of references to Choice and Chosen. Some are references to choices we make ourselves, but more remind us of the choices made by God himself and by Jesus in His ministry.

Proverbs chapter 16 has a message for us in verse 16 "It is better, much better, to choose wisdom and knowledge rather than gold or silver" and the Psalms remind us that the writer of Psalm 119 tells us that he "had chosen to be obedient and paid attention to God's judgements".

Jesus himself in Luke 6 v12 "went up the hill to pray and when day came he called his disciples together and chose twelve from among them, whom he named apostles. In John 13 v18 Jesus says "I know those I have chosen" and John 15 v16 emphasises the point "You did not choose me. I chose you and appointed you to go and bear much fruit, the kind of fruit which endures".

Paul is told by Ananias in Acts 22 "The God of our ancestors has chosen you to know His will, to hear His righteous servant speaking". Later, in Paul's letter to the Ephesians, v4 he tells his listeners "Even before the world was made God had chosen us to be His through union with Christ" and reminds the Colossians in Chapter 3 v 12 "You are the people of God. He loved you and chose you for His own".

So, as Christians we all have choices to make and we remind ourselves that God knows us and calls us to go and bear fruit for His sake.

Susan Warrington



WHICH SERVICE WOULD BE YOUR CHOICE?

A church decided to have four separate worship services each Sunday.

There was one for people new to the faith, another for regular members who preferred a more traditional form of service, one for those who had lost their faith and wanted to get it back, and one for those who had had some unsuccessful experiences with other churches and were apt to complain about it.

The four divisions were named: Finders, Keepers, Losers and Weepers.

From "A Bundle of Laughs" J. John and Mark Stibbe (Monarch Books)

Reasons for Returning to Church Services

Whilst I have really enjoyed the online Service, my reason for wanting to return to the Church for the albeit shortened Communion Service, is because I like to worship with other members of the congregation as a body in the Church building and to receive Communion, and the shortened Service is still meaningful.

Gordon Lees

Why I choose not to go back to church for now

I love being part of the church family at St Martin's. My faith is constantly strengthened by knowledgeable teaching and wonderful fellowship, and I feel very close to God in that place. But, COVID has made me very wary of being with groups of people, and although I know that every effort has been made to make the services COVID secure, I know that if I went, I would spend too much time worrying about the consequences of being in a group of people, when in the rest of my life, I am avoiding that. So, I will wait, until circumstances change, hopefully with a vaccine next year, and we can perhaps return to normal services once more. I can still pray, and read, (and even sing hymns!) at home, and I can join in the online services, so I don't feel that my spiritual life is neglected. I don't feel any less of a Christian because, temporarily, I don't go to church. My faith is very important to me, and wherever I am, God is always with me.

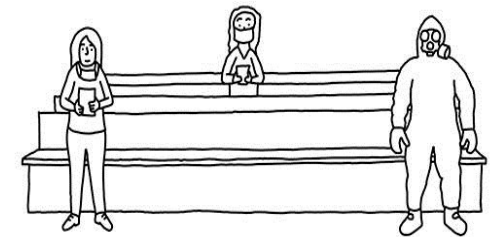
Shelley Huggett

THE FIRST SERVICE

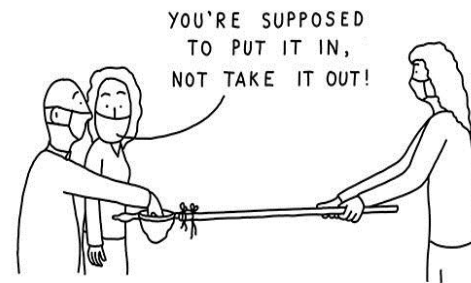
AFTER SEVERAL MONTHS AWAY



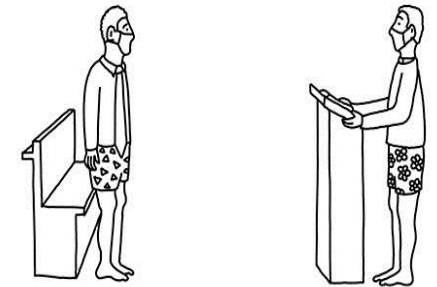
LOCKDOWN HAIRSTYLES



A VARIETY OF LEVELS OF COMMITMENT TO MASK-WEARING



PEOPLE WHO HAVE FORGOTTEN THE WAY WE DO THINGS



THOSE WHOSE ONLY INTERACTIONS HAVE BEEN VIA ZOOM

"Don't bother to give God instructions. Just report for duty"

Corrie Ten Boom

"You are free to choose, but the choices you make today will determine what you will have, be, and do in the tomorrows of your life"

Anon

A definition of clergy..."members of the community with high standards and low salaries"

"The Church is the only co-operative society in the world which exists for the benefit of its non-members."

Families Together Service

St Martin's, Sunday 20th September

The sun was shining and excitement was certainly in the air as eleven families from our church were able to meet, socially distanced, for a time of fellowship, bible teaching, prayer and worship together on the field behind St Martin's Church last Sunday afternoon.

Led by our vicar Matthew, curate Aled and youth worker Joe, the fun-filled hour together incorporated craft activities, creative "building challenges" and even a family quiz as we heard God's Word and learnt more about the story of Noah and God's faithful promise to us.

Although we were unable to sing together due to current government guidelines we were still able to listen to some favourite family worship songs and of course join in all the actions!

The story of Noah was a brilliant reminder of just how faithful God is to each and every one of us and our closing memory verse from 1 Corinthians 1vs9 "*God is Faithful. He is the One who has called you to share life with His son, Jesus Christ our Lord*" was a great take home message for us all.



The afternoon was a huge encouragement to the families, especially the children, who thoroughly enjoyed seeing their friends and having fun together whilst learning more about our amazing God. Many thanks to the Leadership Team and our Operations Manager Hannah Brackenbury for organising such a successful event.



Elizabeth Walker

Picnic for 6

The beautiful weather this September has been very welcome to many of us getting together for picnics! Following a similar format to the 'dinner for six' run by Erin King over the last couple of years, about 24 ladies signed up for the 'picnic for six' event. Four groups met in four different gardens to share fellowship and have a catch up. Thanks to those who hosted and to all who participated. It was really nice to actually see some people in the flesh for this event! We hope to organise more soon, complying with whatever guidelines we'll need to follow. Any ideas for events would be most welcome so please email in if you have any!



The Women's Events Team

Costa Rica – Covid – Cartmel

We have all had to make some difficult choices this year as we have learnt to live with the “new normal” and for us this has included a difficult choice regarding our holiday.

We were looking forward, with great excitement, to our long-planned trip to Costa Rica to experience what is one of the world’s greatest bio-diversities. But then along came Covid and we had to make a choice between cancelling or postponing. As an act of faith in the future we decided to postpone the trip until January next year.

Just as soon as lockdown was relaxed, we booked a cottage near Cartmel and as we were the first people in since last season, it felt quite safe. As we were taking our two dogs with us, who seem to have more luggage than we do, there was little room left in the car for provisions, so we counted ourselves lucky to be able to get a Tesco delivery to the cottage for when we arrived.



Although we were expecting to see some of the wonderful exotic creatures for which Costa Rica is famous, we were not disappointed with what Cartmel had to offer. So OK, there were no howler monkeys or red eyed tree frogs but then Costa Rica doesn’t have the famous Carmel Racecourse or the Priory that has been a Christian witness in that place for over 800 years, nor does it have a small village with no less than two Michelin star restaurants. And for those of us who are familiar with Cartmel from our Parish Weekends at Abbot Hall – well, we don’t need to mention the famous Sticky Toffee Pudding Shop, do we!



The wildlife was no less wonderful for its cottage, complete with their five ducklings; carp grebe; buzzards; red squirrels and my own the road. These magnificent gentle horses were increasing in popularity for riding and in harness.

Although tempted to eat out, we restricted side. All the shops, restaurants and cafes safety of their customers. There is such a lot to and walk up the Knott; the southern Lake District Ulverston.

Although the holiday was not the one we had re-discover the wonderful countryside so close to

The one thing that didn’t match up with Costa Rica though, was – the weather!!! However, the area wouldn’t be as beautiful as it is without the rain so we must accept this as just another one of God’s wonderful gifts.



familiarity. There were mallards on the pond by the in the stream; herons; some colourful early butterflies; special favourite - the Black Friesian horses at the farm up once used by knights in the Middle Ages, but are now

ourselves to eating in at the cottage, just to be on the safe appeared to have gone to a lot of trouble to ensure the do in the area – a train ride across the estuary to Arnside is only a short drive away, as is the coast around

planned, it was a great opportunity to be able to home.

Choices: Llandudno or (L)anzarote?



Our holiday in Lanzarote with Samuel 12 and Isaac 11 was cancelled about two weeks before we were due to fly. (No choice). A great disappointment as we've taken them away each of the previous 4 years without their parents and have promised to do the same until they no longer want to go.

Do we try for something else or just accept no holiday with them this year? (One choice but breaking the promise). The decision was taken out of our hands, Isaac and Samuel's other grandparents have a little terraced house in Llandudno, used by family and were kind enough to offer the use of it for 11 days between family visits. The boys it seems were taking us on holiday this year. (Their choice)

Of course, from the outset we knew it would be quite different, no sitting by the pool for us whilst the boys played in the wall to wall sunshine. We certainly weren't naive enough to expect glorious weather

in Llandudno for the whole holiday. It did change everything. Granda usually does the planning of our outings, (No Choice) and although he still did some, the boys have been to Llandudno regularly over the last few years and knew what they would like to do, where they would like to go etc. (Their choices). They did their research about booking and prices, Covid19 made it impossible to just turn up almost everywhere without a booking, so quite a bit of forward planning required. Wetsuits were packed and used to have fun in the breakers off the South beach; Granda and I could have strolled along in the water as we would have in Lanzarote but decided (a great choice!) it was too chilly and windy to be enjoyable.

The boys love climbing the Great Orme, it's part of the holiday with Mum and Dad but were adamant Bomba wouldn't manage it, or I could manage but it might make me suffer the next day. They climbed part of it twice to play pitch and putt with Granda and to queue for the toboggan run, but unfortunately after a 90 minute wait it began to rain and the ride was closed. Lanzarote would have been a volcano visit in sunshine.

All in all a great holiday as we played quite a few table games, some of them new to both us and the boys and Granda got to read most of the final Harry Potter book in readiness to watch the films at a sleepover at our house.

Next year? Well we're planning to drive to the South of France, but the choice may be taken from us again in these strange times.



Ann McClelland

Spiced Autumn Soup

This recipe was sent in by Margaret Goode for inclusion in the Parish Cookbook, published in 2000. Sadly the Cookbook is no longer available, but some, perhaps battered and grease stained, are still on the kitchen shelves of some members of the congregation.

These words of the Book of Wisdom (Ecclesiasticus, chapter 31) in the Apocrypha were part of the Foreword written by John Thompstone.

*"If you are sitting at a grand table,
Do not lick your lips and exclaim, 'What a spread!'
Remember, it is a vice to have a greedy eye.
Do not reach for everything you see,
Or jostle your fellow guest at the dish,
Eat what is before you like a gentleman,
Do not munch and make yourself objectionable.
A man of good upbringing is content with little,
And he is not short of breath when he goes to bed.
The moderate eater enjoys healthy sleep,
He rises early feeling refreshed,
But sleeplessness, indigestion and colic
Are the lot of the glutton."*



Serves 8

2 oz butter	2 tsp mild curry powder
2 large onions coarsely chopped	3 pt chicken or vegetable stock
2 potatoes coarsely chopped	2 x 13 oz cans chopped tomatoes
2 carrots coarsely chopped	2 dessert apples, peeled and chopped
3 garlic cloves crushed	1 tbsp. dried basil
Pared zest & juice of an orange	Salt and pepper

- Melt butter in large pan, add onions, potatoes, carrots, garlic and orange zest and cook gently stirring for about 5 minutes.
- Add curry powder and cook, stirring for 2 minutes.
- Add stock, orange juice, tomatoes, apples, basil, salt and pepper. Bring to the boil, simmering for about 30 minutes until vegetables are tender.
- Discard orange zest. Purée soup in a blender, return to pan & re-heat

Serve at once with croutons or crème fraiche to garnish.

4th October

St. Francis - and the Life of Simplicity

Just about the only thing most people know about Francis of Assisi is that he talked to the birds. Churchgoers also know the popular hymn based on his famous prayer, 'Make me a channel of your Peace', which was sung at the funeral of Princess Diana.



However, Italy's patron saint, whose feast day is this month (the 4th) was a more complex, and some would say controversial character. His life spanned the end of the twelfth and beginning of the thirteenth centuries. He was born into a very wealthy family, but after what he called his 'conversion' standing before a crucifix. He renounced all his possessions. In fact, he stripped himself of his of his wealthy garments in a public square in his hometown, Assisi.

For the rest of his life he and his followers, including his feminine counterpart. St Claire longed, prayed and worked for a life of simplicity – a lifestyle without luxury or privileges. For the Franciscan brothers and the Poor Claires this meant no private possessions at all. Francis saw that many poor people without these things, actually seemed to live happier and more fulfilling lives than the ambitious rich. He spoke of a simple life not shaped by money or power but by love and mutual concern. As his hymn says, 'it is in giving of ourselves that we receive'.

Of course, poverty in our modern western world is seldom a matter of blissful simplicity, as present-day Franciscans recognise. For too many it is a matter of poor diet, over-crowded rooms, rough sleeping and unemployment. The call of today's followers of Francis and Claire is that those who are better-off should 'live more simply, so that others can simply live'. Christians follow a Master who said that he came with 'good news for the poor'. They believe that many of us today can be that good news.

Why is a Conker Called a Conker?



This is the time of year when children start to search for the conkers falling from the horse chestnut trees around the village. The one outside the Post Office is usually a good place to begin. For more than two centuries children used to choose a good sized one for conker matches but these days Health and Safety seems to frown on this age old pastime.

Even adults, including me, try get a few just to hold them and admire their shiny shell. They are supposed to be effective at keeping spiders at bay but I can't say I've ever put them to a proper test; I just like to keep some on the window sill and handle them.

It is thought that the name comes from the French 'conque' (a shell) and that the game was originally played with snail shells.

Records from the sixteenth century tell us the fruit of the chestnut tree (the conker) used to be used as a medicament for horses with a cough or other disease. I wonder if vets still use them!?

Susan Warrington



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Bible
They lie on the table side by side
The Holy Bible and the TV Guide.
One is well worn and cherished with pride.
Not the Bible, but the TV Guide.

One is used daily to help folks decide.
No, not the Bible, but the TV Guide.
As the pages are turned, what shall they see?
Oh, what does it matter, turn on the TV.
So they open the book in which they confide.
No, not the Bible, but the TV Guide.
The word of God is seldom read.
Maybe a verse before they fall into bed.
Exhausted and sleepy and tired as can be.
Not from reading the Bible, from watching TV.
So then back to the table side by side,
Lie the Holy Bible and the TV Guide.
No time for prayer, no time for the word,
The plan of Salvation is seldom heard.
But forgiveness of sin, so full and free,
Is found in the Bible, not on TV.

Taken from 'A Barrel of Fun'

