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The Online Link St. John's Hillingdon



No. 59 Sun 9th May - Sat 15th May 2021
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Your Sunday Service Link (10.30 am):

Click on the church image above from
Sunday 10am or on

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89481452808>

Church Administrator: Nikki Bell

Email stjohnshillingdon@gmail.com

Text/Phone 07972 618584

Vicar: Alan Bradford

Email abradford@hotmail.co.uk

Emergencies Text/Phone: 07847672599

St. John's Church,

Royal Lane, Uxbridge UB8 3QP

www.stjohnshillingdon.org.uk



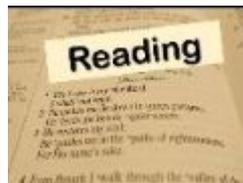
Writing assignments for college, with its insistence on referencing, seems to be having an effect on me. Therefore, I must give Anne the credit for noting in her blog last week that this time between Easter Day and Ascension Day is called 'Eastertide'. She also referred to it as being a 'between time' and I don't know about you but I find these times of transition difficult spaces to

inhabit, where nothing feels quite settled. After more than a year of learning to live through a pandemic you might think that's a feeling we're getting quite used to! To be honest with you this Eastertide I still find myself stuck in the sorrow and pain of Good Friday, the weather seems in agreement with me too, refusing to acknowledge that Spring is here as the calendar tells us, as I write this with the heating on, accompanied by the sound of the wind and the rain hammering against the window. So many of us have experienced sorrow and loss this year and I don't profess to compare or contrast mine with anyone else's. As individuals we can only ever react to our own personal circumstances. Last week we lost our dear Molly, our family's much loved little dog. One of Molly's favourite places to walk was through the churchyard (especially in her younger squirrel chasing days) and it's the churchyard that for me is helpful in thinking through transitioning from sorrow and loss to hope and renewal.

The story of the churchyard and gardens is in itself a glorious testament to renewal but in particular I think back to this Good Friday. We had a very simple, moving service in the Garden of Remembrance which took place in the shadow of the cross. I stood where I always seem to find myself in there, next to the cherry tree planted in memory of our dear Tony Sheffield, which enabled me to look over to where the ashes of my beloved step-dad Tony are, surrounded by other members of our church family that we have loved and lost. As I heard again the story of how Jesus chose to suffer and die for us, whilst reflecting on how much I miss those I've lost, you might at this point be thinking this is the most miserable blog you've ever read BUT as I stood there that Friday afternoon, the sun came out. In fact it shone so brightly I even had to take my jacket off! The pain and sorrow of our Good Fridays, in whatever form they take for us, is only made bearable by the fact that we live in the knowledge of Easter Sunday- resurrection is coming. We live in the warmth and reassurance of these familiar words from John 3:16 'For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.' In Corinthians 13, Paul tells us that love never fails, while prophecies may cease and even knowledge pass away, three things will remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love (vs13). I believe in a God that invites us to love and be loved in a whole variety of ways but how this love expresses itself best is through relationships. It's the model that God chose to express just how much he loves us and through the person of Jesus we can have a relationship that outlasts death and loss. It was in a garden that Mary Magdalene came to mourn the loss of her dear friend only to find him alive and calling her by name. Love is eternal because God is love and is without end. I'm holding onto that love to haul me out of my Good Friday melancholy knowing that Easter Sunday transforms suffering into triumph and despair into hope. I'm thankful that I too can call Jesus my dear friend and I give thanks for all the love shared in my relationships over the years. To love and be loved in return is a glorious thing, no less so than when the subject of that love is a rather scruffy little Westie called Molly. **Caroline**

Theme for this week and forthcoming weeks:

My Faith Story



Reading

Matthew 9:35-38

35 Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. 36 When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.

37 Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. 38 Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."



**Willesden Area
Creation Care Champions Event**
(all who are interested are welcome)
Tues 11th May
7.25-8.30pm on Zoom

- Meet other parish CC Champions.
- Be inspired by local stories.
- Hear about new resources & ideas for parishes.
- Get first access to a new £100 Archdeacon of Northolt Support grant for parish Creation Care projects.
- Please register for the event:
<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/147785878541>



Creation Care Champion event on May 11th

I am not sure if I have mentioned this, apologies if I haven't. Although we have the Eco Group with 3 Eco Champions at St Johns, it would be good to have more of you involved and this event may help to encourage some of you to join us.

This is the invitation from the Diocese Eco Action Group as it has been sent out to churches, many of which do not have anyone in this role.

One thing we are inviting every church to do is to find someone who has some passion for this subject and appoint them as your Creation Care Champion (previously called Eco-champions).

- The Willesden Creation Care Action Group are running an event on zoom for anyone who is interested in finding out more on Tues 11th May 7.25pm- 8.30pm.
- We would love as many churches as possible to be represented at this Event. You will be able to find out what a Creation Care Champion is and hear about what other churches are doing. So please choose as many people from your church as want to attend.
- Just by attending you will find out how to get your hands on a new £100 support grant from the Archdeacon of Northolt for any creation care project you want to do in your church.
- So I do hope someone from your church will come along, at least to get your hands on £100 if nothing else!

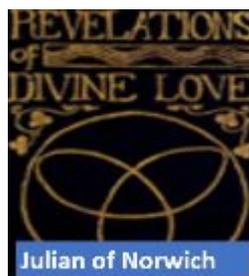
Please register for the event so we know how many people are coming.

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/147785878541>

Then on Sat 26th June we hope to have an in person morning event at a church in Hillingdon which has already got an Eco Church Silver award to learn from them. Hopefully this event will take place at St Johns. If you would like to become a Creation Care Champion and you feel that this is where God is leading you the meeting on the 11th May help you to decide.

The Willesden Group have also suggested a short Commissioning Liturgy for the appointment of each Creation Care Champion to give thanks and mark the commitment. **Christine Rodrigues**

Psalm 104: 24 *How many are your works, Lord! In wisdom you made them all; the earth is full of your creatures*



Julian of Norwich. (Part 1 of 2)

What or who springs to your mind when you think about Norwich? If, like me, you are of a certain age and watched a lot of telly in the 1970's it might be Sale of the Century with its memorable opening phrase "And now, from Norwich, it's the quiz of the week!" Or just maybe you might have heard something about Julian of Norwich, even if like me you just had a vague notion of her saying something about all being well and yes, you read that correctly Julian is a she. This is a safe space to allow yourself an acknowledging smile if, as I did for many years, think Julian was a he! In fact Julian's book *Revelations of Divine Love* is recognised as the first to be written in English by a woman. We actually know very little personal information about Julian, not even her real name.

In 1373, at the age of 30, Julian believed herself to be dying, a priest was called and the Last Rites were administered to her. At the moment the crucifix was held out to her, she experienced a series of extraordinary visions. These showings, as she called them, centred on very vivid images of Jesus' wounds and sufferings as he hung on the cross but ultimately speak to us of love, hope and acceptance. Shortly after recovering from her illness, Julian wrote an account of these revelations and soon after took up a life of prayer and contemplation as an anchoress attached to the church of St Julian in Norwich, from where she most likely assumed her name. An anchoress was sealed in a small cell with a window opening onto the church and one open to the outside world, where people would come to ask for prayer and spiritual guidance. It was in her cell that Julian would spend the next twenty years contemplating her showings and reflecting on the meaning of them, not just for herself but for all who might happen upon her writings.

So some 650 years later how might Julian's ideas relate to our faith and the circumstances we find ourselves in? As I write this, a year into a global pandemic that has seen us all confined to our own 'cells' with, if we're lucky, the virtual window of 'zoom' or other forms of technology serving as our windows out onto the world, I feel the centuries between us and Julian fall away. She was living through the pandemic of the 'Black Death', the terrifying bubonic plague that took the lives of at least half of the population of Norwich alone. This was a woman who knew loss, fear and sickness. Yet it seems to me that although she chose to make her surroundings very limited, her understanding and experience of God grew ever larger.

One of the aspects of Julian's writing that I find so appealing is the very real and honest dialogue she has with God and the sometimes surprising and unexpected 'homeliness' of how God responds to her. She uses the Middle English word *homely* to describe how God spoke in a friendly, simple and direct way. Maybe you're thinking that this all sounds very wonderful for Julian but that may be very far from your experience of God. What about all those times when praying is just so hard and you feel you may well be just talking to yourself. One of the reasons Julian made a written account of her showings was that she passionately believed that God wanted everyone to know of the depth of his love for all humanity and that her revelations were not intended for her alone but for us too. **Caroline Reed**

NOTICES

**The
Children's
Society**

**No child
should feel
alone**

For April's edition of The Children's Society Newsletter including a youtube video link for you to hear directly from young people about how the pandemic has impacted their lives [Click Here](#).

How to join the Sunday service from your landline/mobile (without Internet)

- Dial **020 3481 5237** or **020 3051 2874**.
- Enter meeting ID Code **894 8145 2808** then the # key
- You will be asked to enter your participants' ID. Ignore this, and just press # key
- There is no password. If you are asked for one, then just press the # key.

CHEQUES

Payable to:
Hillingdon Parochial Church Council
St. John's Church
Royal Lane
Uxbridge
UB8 3QP

STANDING ORDER

Set up a Standing Order with your bank or building society using these details:
Barclays Bank, 142 High St,
Uxbridge, UB8 1JX
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