



free

## Seeking Sanctuary

What does it mean and what  
can we do about it?



### Unseen Warfare

What can a 16th  
Century book teach us  
about Spirituality  
and Prayer?

### Revelation Revealed

Looking at the  
Book of Revelation

### Shedding Light on the Past

A 19th Century  
photograph reveals  
more about  
St Mary's church

### PLUS

Details of services and events  
in July and August



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**Above:** All Saints' Peace Garden is flourishing in the summer

**Below:** St Mary's choir celebrates the end of the choir year



# CALLING ALL CARERS...

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### *From the editor...*

#### **A Year of *nottinghaminfaith***

In September *nottinghaminfaith* will have been going for a whole year. I hope that it has provided thought provoking articles as well as keeping you up to date on the life of the parish. Thanks to all those that have provided excellent articles, photos and news - it has all served to create a magazine that I hear many positive comments about.

The structure of the magazine might change a little in September, but I would urge you to keep sending in articles, letters and submissions - without your input we would be nowhere! Wishing you all an enjoyable summer.

*Ed Mills*

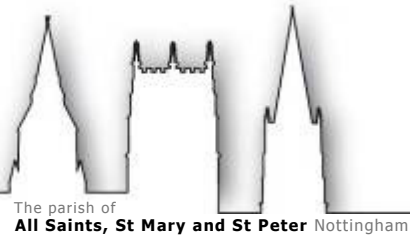
### **St Peter's Church Coffee Room**

**Open Monday - Friday 10.30am-2pm**

St Peter's Centre  
St Peter's Square  
Nottingham  
NG1 2NW

St Peter's Church Coffee Room offers a large selection of hot & cold drinks, homemade cakes, freshly cut sandwiches and light lunches, all prepared and served by friendly staff and volunteers.

If you would like more information about the coffee room, or are interested in becoming a member of the group of volunteers, please call the Parish Office on 0115 9483658 or email [office@nottinghamchurches.org](mailto:office@nottinghamchurches.org).  
<http://www.nottinghamchurches.org/parish-life/coffee>



## Welcome

Whether you have been worshipping in our parish for years, have just moved to Nottingham or are just visiting, we hope **nottinghaminfaith** will be of interest to you. If you would like to find out more about our churches, please contact the parish office (details below).

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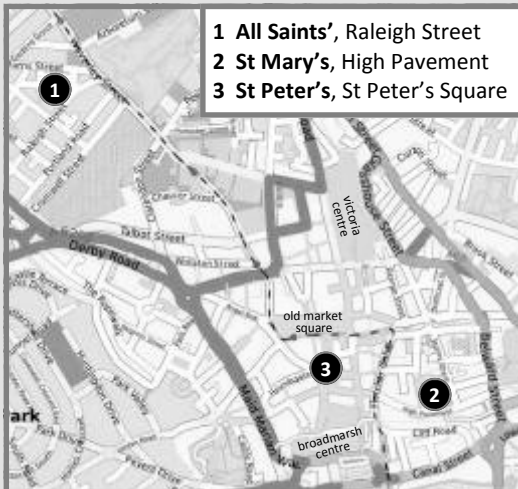
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## Where we are



- 1 All Saints', Raleigh Street
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- 3 St Peter's, St Peter's Square

## Getting in touch

Please contact the parish office (details below) if you have any queries about the churches, including church opening times, baptisms, weddings and home communion for the sick or house-bound.

If you need guidance on spiritual matters the parish office will be able to put you in touch with a member of the clergy.

Remember, if you urgently need to talk to someone, and can't get through to us, you could try The Samaritans on 08457 90 90 90 or Childline on 0800 1111

## Who we are

### Our parish aims to...

- live and proclaim the Gospel for the 21st century in our modern, challenging and fast-developing city
- develop ministry together in the city in a way that makes clear that all people are valued within the thought of God, and loved by God
- speak out together, wherever possible, on matters of justice and injustice, of inclusion and exclusion, of rights and responsibilities, of integrity and transparency

## Contact information

### The Parish Office

St Peter's Centre  
St Peter's Square  
Nottingham  
NG1 2NW  
E: [office@nottinghamchurches.org](mailto:office@nottinghamchurches.org)  
T: 0115 948 3658  
[www.nottinghamchurches.org](http://www.nottinghamchurches.org)

## Clergy

**Priest-in-charge:** Reverend Christopher Harrison  
**Lecturer:** Reverend Stephen Morris  
**Associate Priest:** Reverend Chrissie Little  
**Workplace Chaplain:** Reverend Alison Maddocks  
**Office Staff**  
**Parish Administrator:** Wendy Pearce  
**Parish Secretary:** Adele Charter  
**Finance Assistant:** Sarah Hopkin

## Contributions

Please send any contributions or suggestions for **nottinghaminfaith** to the parish office:  
[office@nottinghamchurches.org](mailto:office@nottinghamchurches.org)  
The copy deadline is the **10th** of the month prior to publication.  
**Editor:** Ed Mills

# News from the Churches

## St Peter's Church Choir visit York Minster

The choir of St Peter's, along with many supporters, enjoyed a fantastic couple of days in York on 31st May and 1st June. York Minster, which was last visited by the St Peter's Choir in 1991, provided a warm welcome, and an opportunity to sing some wonderful music in a beautiful building. Repertoire included Howells 'St Paul's' Service, Leighton Responses, and Morley's First Service.

It was wonderful, for the organists and choir alike, to have the opportunity to make use of such a fantastic organ. As an ensemble, the choir has really missed the organ at St Peter's, which has been out of action for almost three years, a problem that is set to come to an end with the installation of a new instrument in November.

As is now tradition, the whole party enjoyed a marvelous meal together on the Monday evening, which included the announcement of the engagement of Richard Ward & Jennifer Barrow - congratulations to them! Thanks must go to the Director of Music and highly dedicated organists. The choir's travels continue during the summer, when we will be in residence at Winchester Cathedral, 30th August-5th September. All supporters will be very welcome!



Photograph: Mike Leuty

## The Final Push

The organ appeal remains some £10,000 short of target. Any contributions towards this exciting and crucial project will be very gratefully received. Please pick up a donation form from the parish office, St Peter's or visit [justgiving.com/stpetersorgan](http://justgiving.com/stpetersorgan). There will be a visit to the organ builders workshop in Swanton Morley, Norfolk, on Saturday 14th August, including an organ recital on their demonstration instrument. Everyone welcome. Please contact the parish office to book a place. Transport may be provided subject to numbers.

## Jane Todd Sparks Lively Debate

On 17th July a lively debate took place in St Peter's church following the address by Jane Todd, Chief Executive of Nottingham, on the theme 'Nottingham: a city for local people with a global future'. Jane described some of Nottingham's recent success stories, while also being realistic about the challenges faced by the city at this time of substantial cuts in public expenditure. She was keen to stress that the City Council wishes to listen to local people, and had personally been visiting community groups and other organisations in the city in order to do this. It was good to be given an overview of the Council's vision and aims from someone who is passionate about the flourishing of Nottingham, and who clearly cares for the well being of all its people.

## Scholars' Farewell

Choral scholars, Alex McPhee, Elisheba Stevens and Christina Horden sung their last services with St Mary's Choir on Sunday 13th June, having completed their final exams at Nottingham University. The parish wishes them every success in their future careers.

## Friends of St Mary's Coffee Morning

On Saturday 5th June a very pleasant morning was spent by a good number of people from all three churches at a Coffee Morning and Bring and Buy Sale at 2, Tennis View. The Mediterranean weather helped create a most enjoyable ambience as those present perused the many plants, crafts, gifts and other items. Almost £200 was raised for the Friends of St Mary's. Many thanks to all those who contributed items for the sale and to those who baked cakes and helped in other ways with the refreshments.



## From the Registers

### Baptisms

McKenzie Swan	- 6th June	- St Mary's
Kano Palmer	- 13th June	- All Saints'

### Weddings

Dong Xiao & Qiong Huang	- 9th June	- St Peter's
Alice Spolander & Adrian Austin	- 12th June	- St Peter's

### Funerals

Sandra Morton	- 8th June	- St Mary's
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## Evening Services during July & August

The pattern of evening services will change over the summer period. Wednesday Evensong at St Mary's will finish on 30th June and re-commence on 15th September. During August, the Sunday evening services across the parish will alternate between St Mary's and St Peter's as follows:

**Sunday 1st August** - Holy Communion with prayers for healing (St Peter's, 6.30pm) & Evensong (St Mary's, 6.30pm).

**Sunday 8th August** - Evensong (St Peter's, 6.30pm)

**Sunday 15th August** - Evensong (St Mary's, 6.30pm)

**Sunday 22nd August** - Evensong (St Peter's, 6.30pm)

**Sunday 29th August** - Evensong (St Mary's, 6.30pm)

At the beginning of September (Sunday 5th) Sunday evening services will resume in both churches.

## Heritage Open Days

11 September 10 am - 4 pm



This year St Mary's Church theme, for Heritage Open Day, is Lace. There will be an exhibition on the history of lace making in the Lace Market. Also there will be demonstrations of Bobbin Lace making with a display of lace articles, and an opportunity for people to try for themselves. The Tower will be open (weather permitting) giving people a chance to get a bird's eye-view of Nottingham, as well as to see the impressive Bells, courtesy of the Bellringers. Guided tours of the church will take place throughout the day and everyone can try brass rubbing at the Nottingham Brass Rubbing Centre in the church. Light refreshments will be available.

Similar activities will be going on at St Peter's church over the weekend.

Go to [www.heritageopendays.org.uk](http://www.heritageopendays.org.uk) for the full programme.

## Forthcoming Organ Recitals

**St Mary's** - Adam Brakel (Palm Beach Cathedral, Florida) will give a recital at St Mary's on Sunday 4th July, 2.45pm. Entrance is £5.00 and all are welcome to attend.

**All Saints'** - Anthony Wilson (St Mary's, Knighton) will give a 'coffee break' concert on Saturday 31st July, 11am at All Saints'. Admission by donation to the St Peter's Organ Appeal.

## Visit to Royal Crown Derby and Derby Cathedral

The Friends of St Mary's are organising a visit to the Royal Crown Derby Factory and Derby Cathedral on Tuesday 3rd August. The party will arrive at Royal Crown Derby at 10.30am for a guided tour of the factory (at a cost of £5), followed by a guided tour of the Cathedral at 2.00pm (free).

Everyone is more than welcome to attend this event. If you are interested in taking part in this trip, please put your name on one of the sign up sheets at the back of the three churches. For more information, please see Yvonne Harriss.

### Date for your diary...

Wednesday 15th September - Parish Supper. More details to follow.

### Prayers for July & August

*Please remember to include the following in your prayers this month:*

Rest, refreshment and safe travelling with lasting benefits for those going away for their main holidays. Good opportunities for relaxation for those unable to do so.

Wisdom and fairness for those who are marking examinations; patience for those awaiting their results and for wise assistance in dealing with choices when results come in.

Those being married in our churches (and elsewhere) during this time.

Children and youth workers in church holiday clubs. Parents, foster carers, grandparents and others during the school holidays and for all those responsible for child safety.

People who are anxious for their jobs or businesses and the consequences for their homes and families as well as those entering the 'jobs market', searching for opportunities.

The new Diocesan Ecumenical Officer (part time) taking up his role on 1st July.

*Revd Stephen Morris*

## All Saints' Open Day

Everyone is welcome to All Saints' church, Raleigh Street, for an open day on Saturday 31st July, which will include:

- Organ recital by Anthony Wilson at 11.00 (come earlier for coffee etc)
- Peace Garden open in the afternoon, with refreshments etc
- Displays, music - and (it is hoped) volleyball on the lawn
- Barbeque in the evening in collaboration with the Hostels Liaison Group - let's give a welcome to those from our community who are homeless or living in hostels.

## Parish Barbecue

The parish barbecue will take place on Sunday 25th July, 12.30pm at St Peter's Church. All are very welcome to attend. Gail Phillip, our former CMS Mission Partner, will also be preaching at St Mary's at the 10.45am Eucharist that day.

# Services and events in July and August

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<b>4<sup>th</sup> July</b> <b>All Saints'</b> 10.30 Sung Eucharist  <b>St Mary's</b> 10.45 Sung Eucharist (Obit service)* 6.30 Choral Evensong* <b>St Peter's</b> 8.15 Holy Communion 10.45 Sung Matins* 6.30 Holy Communion with prayers for healing	<b>5<sup>th</sup> July</b>  <b>St Peter's</b> 1315 Meditation	<b>6<sup>th</sup> July</b> <b>All Saints'</b> 1000 Holy Communion  <b>St Peter's</b> 1315 Holy Communion	<b>7<sup>th</sup> July</b> <b>All Saints'</b> 0900 Morning Prayer  <b>St Mary's</b> 0800 Holy Communion	<b>8<sup>th</sup> July</b> <b>All Saints'</b> 0900 Morning Prayer  <b>St Mary's</b> 1315 Holy Communion  <b>St Peter's</b> 1100 Holy Communion	<b>9<sup>th</sup> July</b> <b>All Saints'</b> 0900 Morning Prayer	<b>10<sup>th</sup> July</b>
<b>11<sup>th</sup> July</b> <b>All Saints'</b> 1030 Choral Eucharist*  <b>St Mary's</b> 1045 Sung Eucharist* 1830 Choral Evensong* <b>St Peter's</b> 0815 Holy Communion 1045 Sung Eucharist 1830 Choral Evensong*	<b>12<sup>th</sup> July</b>  <b>St Peter's</b> 1315 Meditation	<b>13<sup>th</sup> July</b> <b>All Saints'</b> 1000 Holy Communion  <b>St Peter's</b> 1315 Tuesday Talk	<b>14<sup>th</sup> July</b> <b>All Saints'</b> 0900 Morning prayer  <b>St Mary's</b> 0800 Holy Communion	<b>15<sup>th</sup> July</b> <b>All Saints'</b> 0900 Morning Prayer  <b>St Mary's</b> 1315 Holy Communion  <b>St Peter's</b> 1100 Holy Communion	<b>16<sup>th</sup> July</b> <b>All Saints'</b> 0900 Morning Prayer	<b>17<sup>th</sup> July</b>
<b>18<sup>th</sup> July</b> <b>All Saints'</b> 1030 Morning Worship  <b>St Mary's</b> 1045 Sung Eucharist* 1830 Choral Evensong* <b>St Peter's</b> 0815 Holy Communion 1045 Sung Eucharist* 1830 Taize Service	<b>19<sup>th</sup> July</b>  <b>St Peter's</b> 1315 Meditation	<b>20<sup>th</sup> July</b> <b>All Saints'</b> 1000 Holy Communion  <b>St Peter's</b> 1315 Holy Communion	<b>21<sup>st</sup> July</b> <b>All Saints'</b> 0900 Morning Prayer <b>St Mary's</b> 0800 Holy Communion	<b>22<sup>nd</sup> July</b> <b>All Saints'</b> 0900 Morning Prayer <b>St Mary's</b> 1315 Holy Communion  <b>St Peter's</b> 1100 Holy Communion	<b>23<sup>rd</sup> July</b> <b>All Saints'</b> 0900 Morning Prayer	<b>24<sup>th</sup> July</b>
<b>25<sup>th</sup> July</b> <b>All Saints'</b> 1030 Sung Eucharist <b>St Mary's</b> 1045 Sung Eucharist* - <i>Gail Phillips, Preacher</i> 1830 Evensong* <b>St Peter's</b> 0815 Holy Communion 1045 Sung Eucharist* 1230 Parish barbecue 1830 Choral Compline*	<b>26<sup>th</sup> July</b>  <b>St Peter's</b> 1315 Meditation	<b>27<sup>th</sup> July</b> <b>All Saints'</b> 1000 Holy Communion  <b>St Peter's</b> 1315 Tuesday Reflection	<b>28<sup>th</sup> July</b> <b>All Saints'</b> 0900 Morning Prayer <b>St Mary's</b> 0800 Holy Communion	<b>29<sup>th</sup> July</b> <b>All Saints'</b> 0900 Morning Prayer <b>St Mary's</b> 1315 Holy Communion  <b>St Peter's</b> 1100 Holy Communion	<b>30<sup>th</sup> July</b> <b>All Saints'</b> 0900 Morning Prayer <b>St Mary's</b> 1930 Nottingham Youth Orchestra Concert	<b>31<sup>st</sup> July</b>  <b>All Saints'</b> 1100 Coffee break Concert – Anthony Wilson, Organ All Saints' Church and Community Day  1430 All Saints' Summer Fair
<b>1<sup>st</sup> August</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> August</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> August</b>	<b>4<sup>th</sup> August</b>	<b>5<sup>th</sup> August</b>	<b>6<sup>th</sup> August</b>	<b>7<sup>th</sup> August</b>

1 August All Saints' 1030 Sung Eucharist St Mary's 1045 Sung Eucharist 1830 Evensong St Peter's 0815 Holy Communion 1045 Sung Matins* 1830 Holy Communion with prayers for healing	2 August St Peter's 1315 Meditation	3 August All Saints' 1000 Holy Communion St Peter's 1315 Holy Communion	4 August All Saints' 0900 Morning Prayer St Mary's 0800 Holy Communion	5 August All Saints' 1000 Holy Communion St Peter's 1315 Holy Communion	6 August All Saints' 0900 Morning Prayer St Mary's 1315 Holy Communion St Peter's 1100 Holy Communion	7 August All Saints' 0900 Morning Prayer
8 August All Saints' 1030 Choral Eucharist* St Mary's 1045 Sung Eucharist 1830 Evensong St Peter's 0815 Holy Communion 1045 Sung Eucharist 1830 Evensong	9 August St Peter's 1315 Meditation	10 August All Saints' 1000 Holy Communion St Peter's 1315 Tuesday Talk	11 August All Saints' 0900 Morning Prayer St Mary's 0800 Holy Communion	12 August All Saints' 0900 Morning Prayer St Mary's 1315 Holy Communion St Peter's 1100 Holy Communion	13 August All Saints' 0900 Morning Prayer	14 August
15 August All Saints' 1030 Morning Worship St Mary's 1045 Sung Eucharist 1830 Evensong St Peter's 0815 Holy Communion 1045 Sung Eucharist*	16 August St Peter's 1315 Meditation	17 August All Saints' 1000 Holy Communion St Peter's 1315 Holy Communion	18 August All Saints' 0900 Morning Prayer St Mary's 0800 Holy Communion	19 August All Saints' 0900 Morning Prayer St Mary's 1315 Holy Communion St Peter's 1100 Holy Communion	20 August All Saints' 0900 Morning Prayer	21 August
22 August All Saints' 1030 Sung Eucharist St Mary's 1045 Sung Eucharist St Peter's 0815 Holy Communion 1045 Sung Eucharist* 1830 Evensong	23 August St Peter's 1315 Meditation	24 August All Saints' 1000 Holy Communion St Peter's 1315 Holy Communion	25 August All Saints' 0900 Morning Prayer St Mary's 0800 Holy Communion	26 August All Saints' 0900 Morning Prayer St Mary's 1315 Holy Communion St Peter's 1100 Holy Communion	27 August All Saints' 0900 Morning Prayer	28 August
29 August All Saints' 1030 Sung Eucharist St Mary's 1045 Sung Eucharist 1830 Evensong St Peter's 0815 Holy Communion 1045 Sung Eucharist*	30 August BANK HOLIDAY St Peter's The St Peter's Choir begin a week's residency at Winchester Cathedral	31 August All Saints' 1000 Holy Communion St Peter's 1315 Holy Communion	1 <sup>st</sup> September All Saints' 0900 Morning Prayer St Mary's 0800 Holy Communion	2 <sup>nd</sup> September All Saints' 0900 Morning Prayer St Mary's 1315 Holy Communion St Peter's 1100 Holy Communion	3 <sup>rd</sup> September All Saints' 0900 Morning Prayer	4 <sup>th</sup> September

\*Indicates that the service is accompanied by choir

## The Mysterious Flower Flourishes

**Pauline Miller** further investigates a flower depicted in the stained glass of St Mary's and finds that is still flourishing.

The April edition of *Nottingham in Faith* carried an interesting story by Isla Keys about a piece of St. Mary's 15<sup>th</sup> century stained glass which bore the image of a mysterious yellow flower. The likely plant to be represented in this glass was said to be Herb Bennet (*Geum Urbanum* or *Wood Avens*). I was fascinated by the story, particularly when you consider that, even in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century Nottingham was still a small town surrounded by gardens, farmland and woodland. I set off on a mission to find samples of this woodland plant – a mission which included a meeting with the Friends of Bestwood Country Park and the Park Ranger.

The St. Mary's we know, one of England's Greater Churches, was constructed between 1370 and 1475 – in a great urban church-building surge funded by the wealthy merchants of the era, said by some to have been inspired by an overwhelming gratitude by those who had been spared the dreadful consequences of the Black Death in the 1340s.

In 1534 antiquary John Leland visited St. Mary's and famously described it as "excellente, newe and unyforme yn worke, and so manie faire windows yn itt that no artificer can imagine to set more there."

The transepts were then filled with altars, chantry and guild chapels. The new rood screen, completed in 1512, stretched across the nave between the great west piers of the tower. When the first English Prayer Book was authorised in 1549 the rood screen was still standing. In 1559 Alderman William Heskey willed to be buried before it. However, later in that year the Commissioners, under Archbishop Sandys of York, pronounced the chancel to be in great decay and the windows without glass.

St. Mary's, which we know would have offered us an insight into the lives of our predecessors with many examples of medieval brass; of Nottingham's great medieval industry, alabaster carving and of beautiful examples of medieval coloured glass, had been stripped of many of its wonderful treasures by iconoclasts who went around destroying many works of great medieval art in our churches because they believed they were idolatrous.

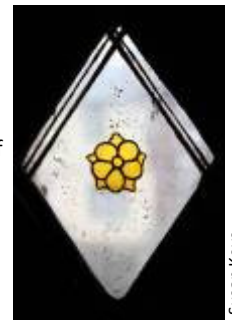
However, many fragments of our treasured glass were carefully preserved and some are to be seen on the south side of the Lady Chapel, including the picture of the little yellow flower.



Above: Herb Bennet

We discovered that Herb Bennet appeared as early as May but could flower throughout June. After the long cold winter we had no luck but I couldn't wait to see this significant little flower in bloom. Then, on the 7<sup>th</sup> of June, I was hanging out the washing when I noticed that, under the bushes on the shady side of the garden a distinctive little yellow face was peeping out at me. Not only had I found my flower but when I poked around our local hedgerows, I found many of them shyly poking their faces out of the greenery.

Thank you Isla for this lovely little story which connects the people of the 15<sup>th</sup> century with those of us today who are privileged to be part of the extended family of St. Mary's.



Susan Keys

## A Christian Classic

**Norman Todd**, retired priest and member of the congregation at All Saints' church, considers what the 16th Century book *Unseen Warfare* can teach us about spirituality and prayer

One of the lesser known Christian spiritual classics, at least in England, is 'Unseen Warfare'. It was originally written in Italy by a Roman Catholic priest, Lorenzo Scupoli, in the 16th century and enlarged by him in subsequent editions. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century it so impressed Nicodemus, a monk on the famous Mount Athos that he translated into Greek and added many references from his own Orthodox tradition. It was a great success. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century the Greek text so impressed a Russian spiritual guide, Bishop Theophan, that he translated it into Russian and added material from his own tradition.

Finally the Russian version was translated into English and published by Faber and Faber in 1952 with a long very valuable

introduction by an Anglican layman, Professor H. A. Hodges.

The Warfare of the title, according to Staretz Nicodemus, 'is not the art of visible and sensory warfare, and speaks not about visible, bodily foes but about the unseen and inner struggle, which every Christian undertakes from the moment of his (sic) baptism, when he makes a vow to God to fight for him, to the glory of His Divine Name, even unto death.

One paragraph may whet your appetite. 'Labour in the work of prayer, praying now with set prayers, now with your own, now with short appeals to the Lord, now with the Jesus prayer, omitting nothing which can be of help in this work. And you will receive what you seek. I

remind you of the words of St. Macarius of Egypt: God will see your work of prayer and that you sincerely want to succeed in prayer – and He will give you prayer. For you must know that, although prayer done and achieved by one's own efforts is pleasing to God, yet that real prayer, which comes to dwell in the heart and becomes constant, is the gift of God, an act of Divine grace. Therefore, in your prayer for all other things, do not forget to pray too about prayer.' (Page 219)

### Read More

*Unseen Warfare* by Lorenzo Scupoli, edited by Nicodemus of the Holy Mountain and revised by Theophan the Recluse, published 1989, is available at [www.eden.co.uk](http://www.eden.co.uk) at £13.50. (ISBN 9780913836521)

## Seeking Sanctuary — The genuine plight of asylum seekers



Rev'd Christopher Harrison  
Priest in charge

One of the most contentious issues of the recent general election campaign was immigration. This is understandable, especially in a time of recession. It is said that Nick Clegg's surge in popularity came to an end when he said that he was in favour of an amnesty for all immigrants who had been in this country for ten years or more and were still waiting for their cases to be heard.

There will always be attempts by those wishing to live in this country to enter illegally, but these are a small minority of the total number of immigrants.

Unfortunately, however, abuses of the immigration system tend simply to fuel the common belief that all those who resort to desperate measures to enter this country are unworthy of being here, and are simply out to get all they can from this country for themselves. We were reminded recently at St Peter's church of how far this is from the truth, when the asylum seeker from the Congo whom we are supporting spoke out strongly in a Sunday service about the horrendous sufferings endured by the people of his country during the civil war of recent years. He had personally managed to flee from imprisonment and torture. His family, however, remain there, and this separation while his case is heard is enormously difficult for them all.

The civil war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo has claimed some 6 million lives, and has been called Africa's World War. Several neighbouring countries have been involved, including in particular Rwanda and Uganda. Millions have had to leave their homes, and the violence – including widespread and severe abuse of women – has been extreme. One of the main factors in the war has been the struggle by neighbouring states and local tribal groups to take control of the vast mineral reserves of Eastern Congo, fuelled

by the demand by European and American companies for rare minerals such as coltan (used in computers, mobile phones etc), as well as gold and diamonds. Our friend from the Congo has challenged us to look into the involvement by UK companies in this kind of murky trade, and the parish overseas committee will try to take this further.

One especially sad aspect of the civil war in the Congo, which for many decades has been a largely Christian country, is that more and more people are apparently concluding that traditional Christian teaching about peace and non-violence simply leads to weakness. It seems that attitudes towards violence and revenge, even among some Christians, are hardening. That being said, there are also churches which are trying desperately hard to keep to the teachings of the gospel, and some missionary organisations which are managing to maintain their support for the Congolese Church in spite of all the risks and dangers.

We may understandably be disturbed when we have to focus on the world's most extreme problems, involving such terrible and widespread suffering and the treating of human beings as if they were worthless. We may be unsettled by the thought that our mobile phones may contain rare elements which have been bought with human blood. This may leave us feeling that we want to do something, but are powerless to make any difference. We can start somewhere, however, even if our first steps are small. We can begin by not assuming that all those who have fled to this country for sanctuary are bogus. We can listen to the stories of those in our midst who are caught in such terrible situations, and try to support them. We should not ignore or dismiss the accounts about the questionable origins of some of the components in the appliances we use.

Change often takes time to achieve, but it begins with attitudes. Maybe, little by little, the voices of those who are working for a fairer asylum system will be heard, and the efforts of those who have taken on the hugely difficult task of campaigning for peace in the Congo will bear fruit. There is a long Biblical tradition of showing hospitality to the stranger in our midst,

and for long periods the people of ancient Israel were also refugees in foreign lands.

I am most grateful to all those who have contributed to the support fund for our friend from the Congo. Further contributions are always welcome – at present, until a new appeal has been lodged on his behalf with the Home Office (and there have been various delays in this), he gets no support at all from any source other than well-wishers. And, if you do nothing else in respect of this hugely difficult situation, at least remember to pray!

## Meditation

### Imogen Rex introduces the meditation sessions at All Saints'

Those who cannot make the Monday Meditation at 1.15 in St. Peter's church may be interested to know that we have begun a similar session on a Friday on the All Saints campus. It is at 5 pm in a lovely warm room in the YMCA complex. All curious souls are welcome; just bring your body and mind. It is on the tram line and there is parking nearby.

We seek inner awareness (or God within) for a variety of reasons: to attain stillness of mind and a lower blood pressure, to heal hurtful memories, to gain consciousness of self and our world, to find depths of being, spiritual fulfilment and ultimately, if we are graced by the Holy Spirit, a one-ness with God.

Essentially it is a process of becoming a child of God experientially as opposed to just believing that we are. It is putting what Jesus taught us into practice so that we feel and know that it is God who is breathing us, not we ourselves. Prayer can be as simple as breathing in and out and for me that transports me into gratitude - another wonderful state!

To find out more ring Richard Evans 0115 925 3249 or Imogen Rex 0115 9470220. I should add that there is no charge and you don't have to fold your legs into a pretzel - we sit on chairs.

# Vision, beasts, women and cities

Clarence Rickards, Licensed Reader at All Saints' church, takes a look at the book of Revelation



## What is the Book of Revelation?

You may think that the Book of Revelation is, at best, a book of oddities; at worst, a kind of chamber of horrors kept in decent

obscurity at the back of the Bible. Many Christians have shared this view; in the early church, and again during the Reformation, its place in scripture was disputed. D.H. Lawrence devoted his last days to writing a fierce polemic, *Apocalypse*, against what he saw as the values of the book. As one modern scholar says, "Revelation opens the door to a world which most prefer not to enter".

Nevertheless, the book of Revelation is deeply part of our history and culture. Many books have been written on the influence of Revelation on Western Art, from the catacombs to Picasso's *Guernica*. Similarly, in music, Walton's *Belshazzar's Feast* uses extracts from Revelation 18, and Louis Spohr's *Last Judgement* was, in the nineteenth century, as popular as *Messiah* or *Elijah*. In our common speech "apocalyptic" – from the Greek word for revelation – has come to mean prospects both epic and terrible.

## Why has Revelation been neglected?

One reason for our relative neglect of the book of Revelation is its appeal over the centuries to the marginalised in both Church and State, including the Montanists (a charismatic movement in the early Church), medieval millennial movements, the radical wing of the Reformation and more recent utopian movements. In turn the Church has marginalised Revelation - it is never read in the liturgies of the Eastern Orthodox Churches, for example.

## How do we view Revelation today?

Today, the 'liberal' Church rejects Revelation's vivid pictures of natural disaster, mass destruction and cruelty. Such Christians find its story of absolute good against absolute evil, which leads to complete bliss for one and total annihilation for the other, to be simply an expression of vengeance which contributes

little or nothing to Christian understanding. Conservative Christians, or some of them, on the other hand, beg to differ. They interpret Revelation's symbolic language as a form of divinely inspired code which discloses the inevitable direction of history to those who have the key to it. So, for example, the great beast of Revelation 13 is said to be the Pope, Hitler, Stalin, Ayatollah Khomeini, Saddam Hussein, World Communism, Arab oil nations and so on. More broadly, chapters 4-22 are said by such people to provide the clue to God's great end-time plan from the present onwards, culminating in the destruction of the Antichrist and his hordes, the conversion of the Jews and the thousand year rule of the saints who have been preserved from these horrors.

Before we dismiss all this as nonsense, and dangerous nonsense at that, remember that at least part of Revelation's intention is to comfort and sustain Christians in a world full of deception, danger and suffering. Also, while the record sales of Hal Lindsey's *The Late Great Planet Earth* (1971) and similar works may be worrying, we ought to engage with such views, not ignore them.

More positively, those engaged in the struggle for civil rights in the USA, and human rights in South Africa and Latin America, have been able to use Revelation to help to articulate their present suffering under evil powers in the light of God's liberation and a vision of justice.

## Criticism of Revelation

A number of women have criticised the patriarchal and male-centred feminine imagery of Revelation, and also the dynamic but dangerous image of the whore (chapter 17), which is contrasted with the passive images of the women clothed in the sun (chapter 12) or the bride (chapter 21). Some have gone beyond this to discuss sexism in the context of social and economic oppression and injustice.

Some recent critics have attempted to reconstruct the social situation of the original readers of Revelation, and others have examined the rhetorical methods of persuasion used in the book.

All these critical approaches help us engage with a book that emphasises God's transcendent power and believers' access to him in Christ through the Spirit, the interaction of worship and self-sacrificing witness in the world, the transitory nature of this world and the political implications of Christian living in the power of a vision of hope amidst suffering.

## Study Group

I am currently leading a Bible study group exploring these topics. There are two remaining sessions in July, on 5<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> July. They will cover:

Strange visions: a selective look at the imagery of Revelation.

City of God, city of men: a close look at chapters 18-22.

All are welcome to attend—all you need to bring is a Bible. The venue is 18 Huntingdon Drive, Nottingham NG7 1BW (the home of Anne Hardy).

In the meantime, try reading the intriguing book of the Revelation to St John the Divine!

## A Quick Look at Revelation

**Author:** The apostle John

**Audience:** Seven churches in Western Asia Minor

**Date:** Around A.D. 95

**Context:** Roman authorities were beginning to enforce worship of the emperor, leading to increasing hostility against Christians and causing some to advocate a policy of compromising their faith.

**Theme:** John writes to encourage the faithful to stand firm against persecution and compromise in the light of the imminent return of Christ to deliver the righteous and judge the wicked.

Adapted from the Zondervan NIV Study Bible, 2008 edition (edited by Barker, K)

# Illuminating history

## Andrew Abbott describes the oldest known photograph of the inside of St Mary's church

Perhaps the oldest known photograph of the inside of St. Mary's was recently obtained from Ebay. The Carte de Visite dates from between 1863 and 1871, and shows the front of the nave and chancel. The eagle lectern and wooden flooring in the nave are recognisable, but there are many familiar items not seen, for instance, the screen, choir stalls, reredos, and chapel. The pulpit is a predecessor for our current one, which was given by the Church Congress in 1871.

There are also some surprises, notably the trees either side of the chancel entrance. Perhaps the photograph was taken at Christmas? The most striking feature is the gas corona hung from the tower crossing. Will we see the like again in the near future? The gas lighting in the church must have made the atmosphere uncomfortable. The organ builders constantly complained in the 1870s and 1880s of the damp in the church causing corrosion in the organ.

The photograph can be dated confidently between 1863 and 1871 due to the clearly visible east window installed in memory of Prince Albert in 1863, and the absence of the Bishop and Starr organ of 1871 which occupied the north side of the chancel.

The back of the Carte de Visite is printed with the details of the publisher, A.W. Cox, Portrait & Landscape Photographer, St. James' Street, Nottingham.

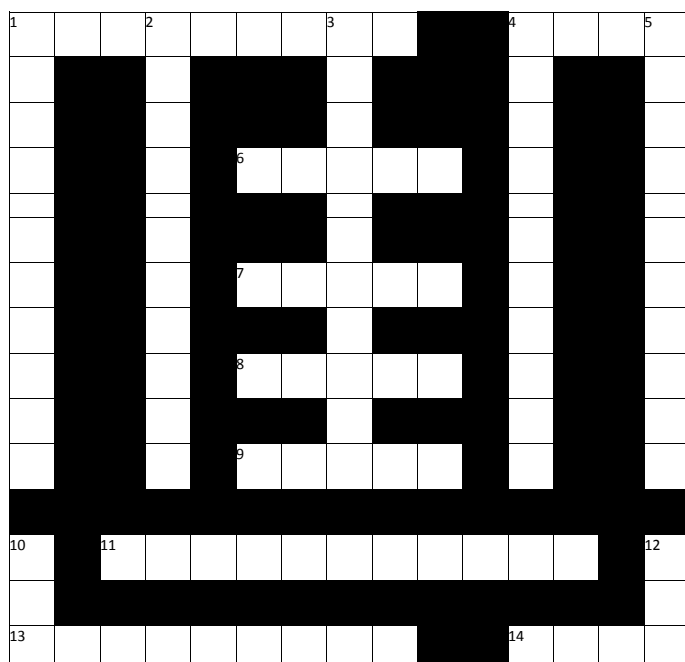
Only one other photograph of this date is held by the church in the Nottinghamshire Archives Office, and this was taken by Richard Allen and Son, Caxton House, Nottingham, and this dates from ca. 1869. All additions to our archive will be most welcome.



### Update

The viability of installing a modern-day corona is currently being investigated. Various funding sources are being looked into and additional fundraising will probably also be needed.

## Crossword Set by Hubert Gale (Grid by Dennis Lord)



### ACROSS

1. Cousin of 4 across (9)
4. First singer of the Magnificat (4)
6. Shoulders the earth – then maps it (5)
7. To cause shame or destroy confidence (5)
8. When women wore long skirts, men admired a 'well-turned' one (5)
9. Tease or nettle (5)
11. Sells dress accessories and sewing goods (11)
13. Very finely sliced (5, 4)
14. Stern, tight-lipped, ominous, worrying (4)

### DOWN

1. Essential equipment for the concert-goer, and player (3, 3, 5)
2. Walking aid (6,5)
3. Serviette (5, 6)
4. Devious, intricate plot (11)
5. Of all ages (5, 3, 3)
10. Wise, pithy, proverbial saying (3)
12. A son of Noah – or a bad actor! (3)

*The solution will be printed in September's edition*

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