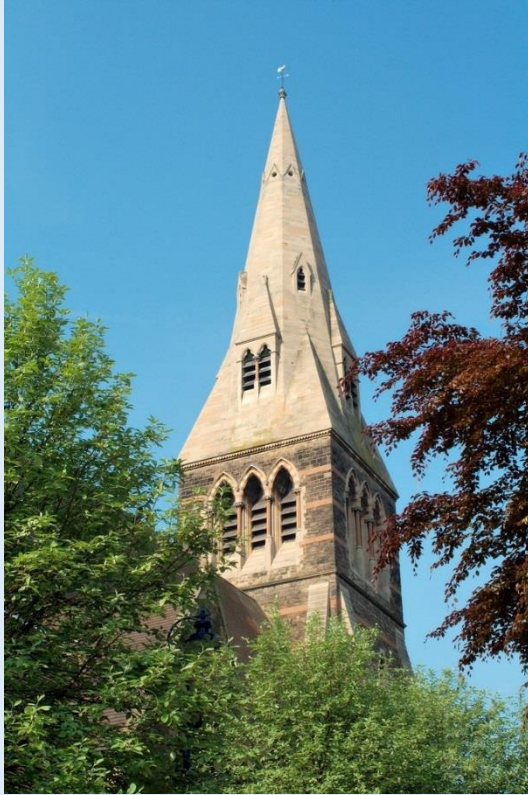


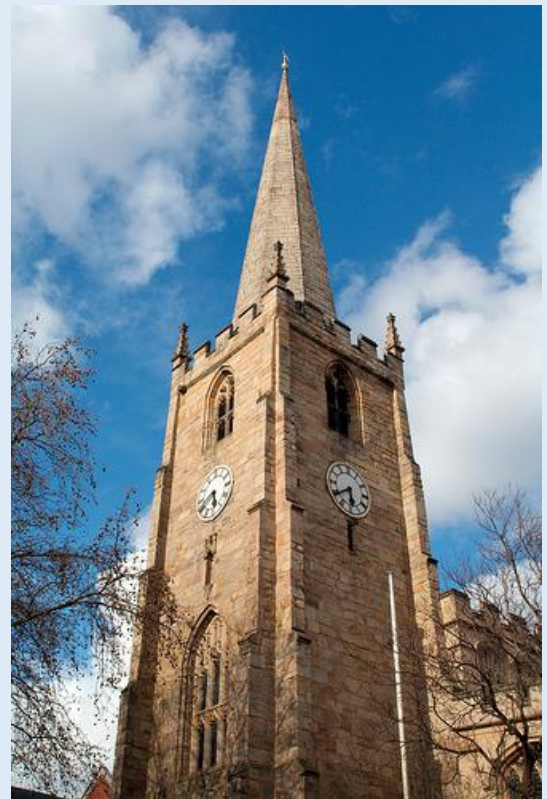


ST PETER & ALL SAINTS NOTTINGHAM



April 2020

Parish Magazine



*This magazine is provided free of charge,
but donations are invited to help cover costs;
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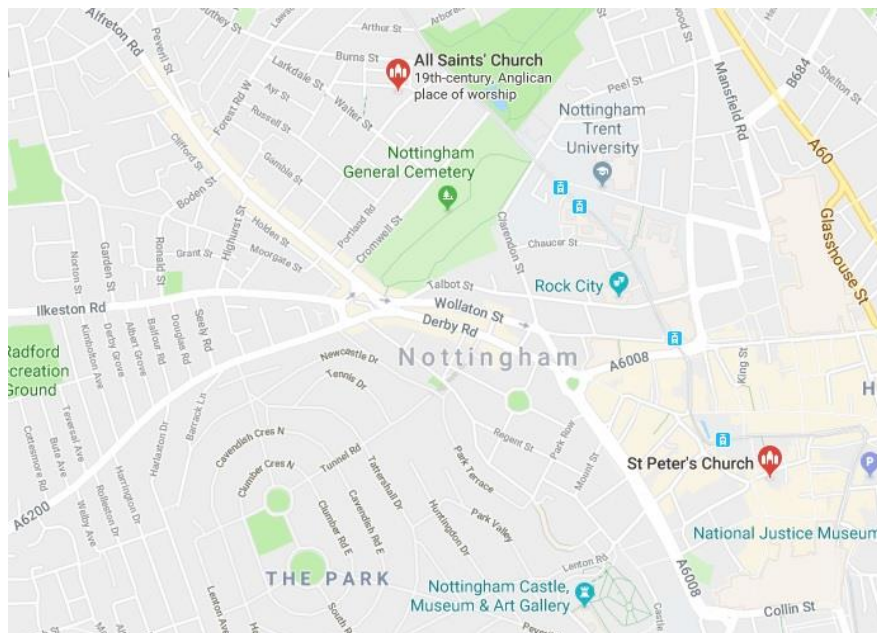
THE PARISH OF ST PETER AND ALL SAINTS, NOTTINGHAM



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CHURCHES

St Peter’s Church, St Peter’s Square, Nottingham NG1 2NW
 All Saints’ Church, Raleigh Street, Nottingham NG7 4DP



From the Rector...

The Reverend Christopher Harrison

We are still near the beginning of what may well be a prolonged period of considerable disruption to our lives, as individuals and families, as church members, and as citizens of a world which has not seen anything like this for many decades. We wait anxiously to see just how serious the spread of coronavirus will be in this country, and what the casualty levels will be. More and more of us now know people who are suffering from this illness, or who have suffered from it. I'm sure many of us know people who are involved in the massive response which the NHS is organising; some members of our churches are themselves directly involved. Our thoughts and prayers should be with all these as we enter increasingly demanding times.



It has been remarkable, however, to see the speed and the depth of the response to the crisis on the part of communities and all those who have offered support to friends and neighbours, sometimes also to those whom they don't know very well. Within our churches there has been a concerted effort to ensure that everyone who might have particular needs is remembered, and that the challenges arising from self isolation and the wider requirement to stay at home, for large numbers of people, are able to be met. **If you, or someone you know, have any practical difficulties arising from the coronavirus outbreak, do not hesitate to contact the parish office or someone you know within the churches.** Whilst the office is now closed to visitors, the normal email contact details continue to apply, or you can leave a telephone message and someone will return your call as soon as possible.

It has not been easy to see our church buildings closed, not just for Sunday services, but also during the week. We did our best to keep them open as long as possible, but have now received instructions from the government as well as from the Church authorities to the effect that we are no longer able to do this. It is deeply sad that the opportunity for people to come into our churches for prayer, reflection and meditation, even whilst meeting the requirements of social distancing, is no longer possible. We are aware that the closure will also affect some of the most vulnerable groups in Nottingham who usually meet at St Peter's and All Saints', including the drop-in sessions for homeless people on Mondays and Wednesdays, the Gateway drop in for those with mental health needs, and the Women of Faith asylum seekers' group. Support is being continued for the Women of Faith, as far as is possible, and Emmanuel House, whilst being closed to service users, is using other methods to ensure that support can still be offered to homeless people.

We have been trying, as far as we can, to continue various aspects of the life of our churches through alternative means. Do follow our recorded Sunday services through the link which is on the home page of our parish website. This has already proved to be a most encouraging means for us to remain connected whilst many of us are largely confined to our homes, enabling us to continue to worship God together in spite of the difficult circumstances. I would like to thank Peter and Adele Siepman in particular for all they have done to make this possible. The Lent discussion group meetings, on the theme of 'Who is my neighbour?' began in the Coffee Room but have subsequently moved to a weekly online discussion. We have found it valuable to be able to share our thoughts and responses to a very powerful series of paintings chosen from the collection held by the National Gallery. The theme of the series has proved to be especially relevant to the current crisis, as we have increasingly seen neighbourly acts emerge from unexpected sources and as some of us have ourselves experienced acts of kindness shown by others. The 'Fragile Earth' reflections and discussions have moved online as well, as have the discussions of the theology group, which is reading a book by John Habgood about what it means to be a person and how we understand personhood in today's world.

I urge you to continue to keep in touch with one another by telephone, email or by whatever other means are possible. This may even be an opportunity to make contact with someone from the churches, or from the local community, whom you do not know very well but who might appreciate a conversation. It may be a time for renewing old friendships or indeed for putting aside past differences and rebuilding a friendship which had become less strong than it might have been. And let us pray for one another regularly, especially for any people we know whose situation is especially difficult. When we say, in our Eucharist, that we are the Body of Christ, we are not members of his Body any the less when we have to be temporarily apart from one another.

It will soon be Holy Week, which will take us through Christ's arrest, trial and crucifixion to the tremendous celebration of Easter. We may well be feeling, along with many others around the world, that in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic the reality of suffering is much more uppermost in our minds than the new life and fresh hope which are brought by Easter. As we do our best to support those in need, and as we face whatever challenges the epidemic brings our way, let us nonetheless keep the love of the risen Christ at the centre of all that we do, and remember that we have strength from God even when our own resources seem to be at their limit.

May the peace and blessing of God with you all as we journey together through these most troubling times.

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Service Webcasts

Adele Siepmann

During these unprecedented times, for the Church and the world, it is difficult to know how to respond – and how, as a parish, to keep up the important work of supporting our congregations when we aren't able to meet in person.

On Tuesday 17th March, a statement from the Archbishops of Canterbury and York was released, informing us that public worship was to be suspended until further notice. Whilst this was to be expected at some point, under the circumstances, the sudden change came as somewhat of a surprise – and we had to think quickly about how to keep the life of our churches going.

Luckily for us, we are living in an age where technology is present in almost every household. And so the idea of Sunday morning Webcasts was born, with the first service online on Sunday 22nd March, Mothering Sunday.

At this point, we weren't confined to our houses, so two members of the choir were able to meet in St Peter's (at a social distance, of course!) to record the first movement of Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater* as the anthem, and Peter recorded a hymn and organ voluntary. Knitted together with recordings of other parts of our normal Sunday services, a simple but very effective service was created, and appreciated by many members of our congregations. We were blown away by the number of supportive and thankful messages from people – we were very grateful and pleased that people enjoyed it so much!

"Brilliant! A wonderful experience of sharing and helpfully calming in these worrisome times. Thank you. We look forward to the next one."

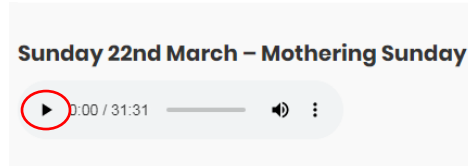
"This service is simply beautiful! What a wonderful way to stay connected."

"Thank you so much for the service today - we found it very helpful and comforting."

We plan to present a service every Sunday until we are able to resume our normal church gatherings, as well as special services for Maundy Thursday and Good Friday (more about the musical aspects of future services below). To access these services, and the archive of previous ones, simply visit:

www.nottinghamchurches.org/webcasts

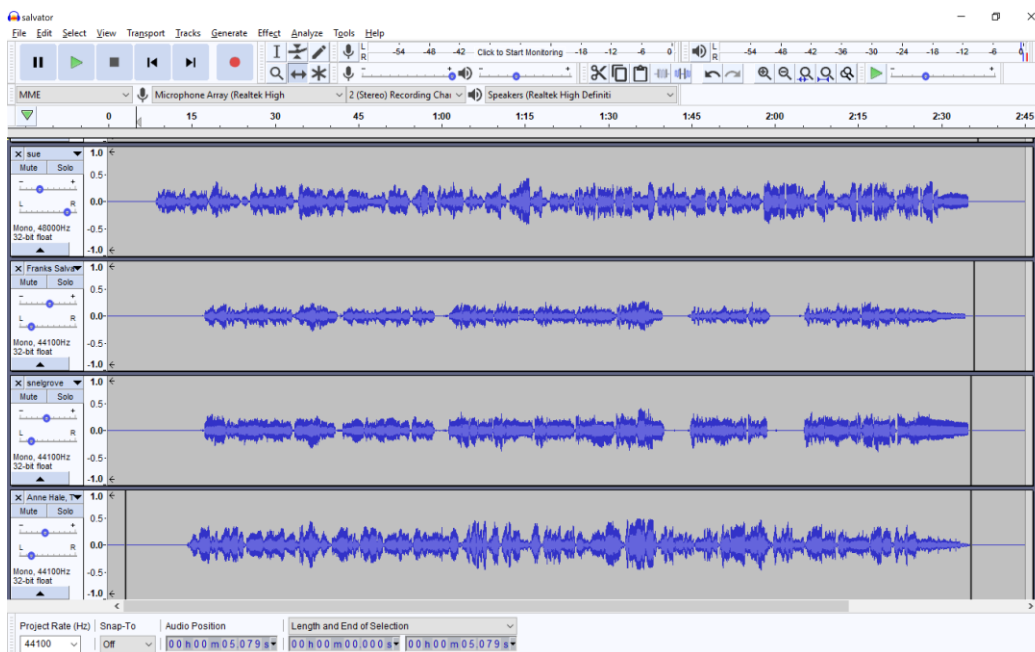
You will find a service sheet for each service (available as pdf), and 'play' button:



We hope that these offerings bring you some peace and stability during these strange times.

It'll take more than self-isolation and the suspension of public worship to dampen the enthusiasm of St Peter's choristers! As part of the parish's series of Sunday webcasts, some of the choral contributions to these services will be the result of our new 'virtual' church choir. You can see more about this project on sites.google.com/view/stpeterschurchvirtualchoir, but the essence of the process is as follows:

- I create a 'click track' for a particular piece of music, that will keep everyone in time as they sing. This can all too easily sound rather robotic if one is not careful, and so I have tried to include in the track a little bit of flexibility to the 'beat', as we would do naturally when singing live.
- Each singer listens to this track whilst recording themselves singing their part (most commonly using the Voice Recorder function on their phone)
- I combine all these files together into a single 'multi-track' recording (you can see what this looks like in the screenshot below - each track is one singer):



The initial results of this project have been very thought-provoking. Though it is great fun for me to have such fine-grained control over balance (I could even edit individual contributions if that were necessary!), the process has, more than anything else, made us all reflect on the nature of choral singing, and how singing as part of a live group is such a very different experience to singing in isolation in so many ways. How we long for the day when the choir can sing together - in person - once again! But until then, I hope readers will enjoy the performances of the virtual choir.

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Parish Office

The work of the Parish Office continues, albeit not in the building itself. We are able to respond to answer phone messages (0115 9483658) or email - office@nottinghamchurches.org (Adele) / admin@nottinghamchurches.org (Alan).

Please be assured that we are doing all we can to keep the parish running as smoothly as possible. We will still produce a monthly magazine, which will be online rather than printed - so please send any material to Adele by 20th of the month, as usual. Any enquiries, or concerns, please get in touch - we're here to help!

Community environmental initiative

Steph Lax

Keep calm and carry on thinking about the environment

Recycling at St Peter's and All Saints':

- Foil: metal foil/foil trays only, not silver plastic film or foil coated plastic e.g. tablet packs. We have also been advised that this should be compacted into 'golf-balls' to get them through the sorting process. Otherwise, your local Sainsbury's may well have a hopper for metal, also tetrapacks (e.g. juice cartons), if that's easier for you.
- Plastic bottle tops
- Dental: toothbrushes, paste tubes and packaging, but not pumps, bamboo brushes or electronic toothbrushes. For recyclable e-toothbrush heads: <https://www.livecoco.com>.
- Baby food pouches: St Peter's only.



surveymonkey.com/r/5TXQDN6

Want to comment but not online? Please drop a note to Stephanie Lax c/o the Parish Office.

Prayers for April

Reverend Dr Helen Hall

A Prayer for Kindness

Christ who knew the ministry of angels, but welcomed with joy the care of human friends: a woman and a jar of perfume, a meal shared and a joke understood. Teach us never to underestimate the treasure of kindness. We thank you for the people we encounter whose warmth brings comfort and brightness, whether they are strangers, acquaintances or those close to us. Inspire our hearts and imaginations to touch the lives of others in our turn, to give the gift a smile, encouraging words or practical help. **Amen.**

A Prayer for Human Stewardship

From the depths of a crisis, we see so much ugliness and injustice, and yet so much hope and potential, we pray for the courage to look with honest eyes at uncomfortable truths, but also for vision and energy to build on the beauty, richness and love which surrounds us. Suddenly, it is harder to close our eyes to the filth we leave in rivers, the cruelty which we inflict on animals and the ease which we overlook the homeless and destitute, keep us mindful of lessons learnt when this pandemic has passed. Help us to become better stewards, to treat our fellow creatures and the Earth which you have created with compassion and respect, to share more fairly with our human brothers and sisters, and to remember with awe the bonds which bind us, as your children and the works of your hands. **Amen.**

A Prayer for Service

We hold before you in gratitude the many and varied ways in which we serve one another, and pray in thanksgiving for our brothers and sisters. We think of those who provide healthcare and security at this time, doctors, nurses, police-officers and many in supporting roles. We remember men and women working to keep food supplies, essential services, childcare for key workers and transport running. We also bring to mind those whose work in creative industries or hospitality, who bring so much joy, colour and relaxation to others, but face uncertain times at present. And we recall with gratitude those whose contribution is outside the realm of paid work, but who are carers, homemakers or who are otherwise a source of prayer, kindness and support in the world. The offering of each person is unique and precious, and we you to strengthen all, and comfort any in sickness, anxiety or distress. **Amen**

Book of the month

By 'Bramcote Book Worm'

'The Salt Path'

By Raynor Winn

A string of emails from a friend- full of praise and affirmation for 'The Salt House'- drove me to Waterstones. There an equally enthusiastic assistant found me a copy. On arriving home I discovered to my deep disappointment that I had bought 'The Salt Path' and immediately, against my better nature, ordered the "The Salt House' from Amazon.

This column makes a point of making recommendations rather than criticisms; suffice it say that 'The Salt House' - which I dutifully read for friendship's sake- did not justify the amount of negative emotion I had expended on finding the wrong book in the Waterstones bag. Seeking consolation, I picked up 'The Salt Path, and couldn't put it down.

Days after Raynor learns that Moth, her husband of 32 years, is terminally ill, their home and livelihood is taken away. With nothing left and little time, they make the brave and impulsive decision to walk what to them becomes The Salt Path. They are homeless, impoverished and looking the grim reaper in the face and yet this is the story of a remarkable achievement, an honest and life affirming account of coming to terms with the unthinkable and the unspeakable, of healing and of the hope of love. They have almost no money for food or shelter and must carry only the essentials for survival on their backs as they live wild in the ancient, weathered landscape of cliffs, sea and sky. Yet through every step, every encounter, and every test along the way, their walk becomes a remarkable journey.

The eponymous Salt Path is the 630mile South West coast path which runs from Minehead in Somerset to Poole in Dorset taking in some of the most amazingly varied and stunning landscapes' to be found in these islands. Raynor describes the challenging terrain with a sense of awe and wonder. For her nature is of the essence. As a former farm child Winn says: 'being in nature was like my safe place, something I understood, and at that point I didn't understand much at all.' A medley of wildlife is found on the salt path- from lady birds to peregrine falcons and kestrels, from a badger sighting to the double take of seeing a tortoise on a lead. All feral life is here. Although a tortoise on a lead is strictly not wildlife.

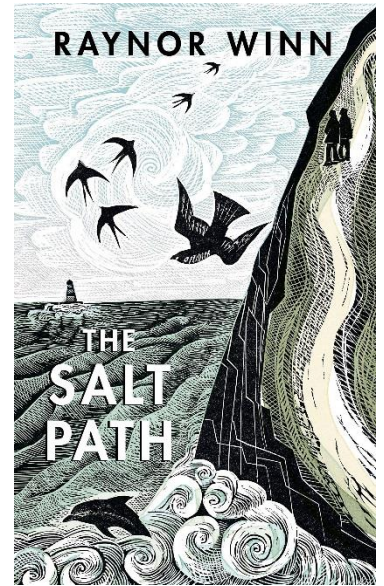
This book is, however, something much more than nature writing. It is an account of a relationship, or a monumental struggle and of survival at the most basic level. Days after Raynor learns that Moth, her husband of 32 years, is terminally ill, their home and livelihood is taken away. With nothing left and little time, they make the brave and impulsive decision to walk what to them becomes The Salt Path. They are homeless, impoverished and looking the grim reaper in the face and yet this is the story of a remarkable achievement, an honest and life affirming account of coming to terms with the unthinkable and the unspeakable, of healing and of the hope of love.

The Salt Path is an honest and life-affirming true story of coming to terms with grief and the healing power of the natural world. Ultimately, it is a portrayal of home, and how it can be lost, rebuilt, and rediscovered in the most unexpected ways.

Raynor describes the situation when they reach Land's End. Amidst the wind and storm and the horizontal rain, she and Moth have to decide whether or not to carry on:

"There was just me and Moth on the edge of the Atlantic, with a Mars bar and a few pounds in our pocket, and two wet sheets of nylon between us and Canada. It could have been the most awful depressing moment in our lives, but it was a moment when we realised we were completely free in a way we'd never allowed ourselves to be before. In that moment, we knew that we could start to reinvent our lives in our way, how we wanted."

Talking to my friend recently she asked me if I had enjoyed 'The Salt Path.' She had never read 'The Salt House'. Serendipity. Like just discovering that Raynor Winn has just published another book this year- 'The Wild Silence'.



New Sound System for St Peter's Church

Christopher Harrison

Many readers will be aware that we have been experiencing more and more frequent problems with the sound system at St Peter's. The PCC has therefore decided that the time has come to replace it, since it is not economical to keep repairing it.

The new system will include 12 speakers in the main body of the church, as well as two speakers mounted on the rood screen, supplying sound to the choir, and also speakers in the corridor and St James' room. There will be a new loop system for those who use hearing aids. The new system will give high quality audio with increased clarity, and will have controls located just behind the rood screen.

The total cost of the system will be around £10,400. We are therefore launching an appeal for contributions towards this cost, and would be very grateful for your support. Cheques should be made payable to 'St Peter & All Saints PCC', and sent to the Parish Office. If you can Gift Aid your contribution, this will enable us to claim back the tax which you have paid on your donation.

Please do consider whether you can help with this important project, which will benefit worshippers and other users of St Peter's church for many years to come.

When all this is over...

Ann Parker

When all this is over - and my flat is unrecognizably spotless, I will have a party. I reckon there will be lots of parties.

I am sure I know my own age group is confined to barracks, but I am supposing the rest of the world is carrying on as usual. It is weird to think of everything closing down and, on the wider scale of things, one wonders why. We are told it is to stop the spread of infections, but as everything clangs shut and we realize the world is stalling, is something truly big going to happen? The Voice of God saying, 'Now I have finally got you attention. . .' and then what? The big bang? Does that end the world as well as start it? If it really did. It is humans who go in for bangs. I suppose God is behind volcanoes but they aren't everything.

What else can we say? The usual 'this is happening today, I am going, meeting, expecting - all that made up life as we knew it and what we told others, and suddenly it's not happening. What are we supposed to do??? Pray? I don't think I want to right now. In fact, I'd rather find a nice safe boulder and hide behind it before God sees me - which is going back to being a cave man - or woman. There were also cave women although never in my history books. Maybe in pictures but not in words. As ever was. And maybe, after all, now our distractions have stopped we are not in such a clever and forward intelligent world after all, At best, all most of us can do, or want to do is hide behind a rock and hope to God there will be enough rocks. Hope to God. . .It's difficult isn't it?

I remember my mother saying how spring 1940/1941? was a particularly wonderful one. So much blossom. They had come through the blitz and this was like God's reward or blessing. But this spring I am seeing it differently too. It is not abundant as such, but there is the sense of creation in its right place - except for this lunatic human race which has been going faster and faster and, suddenly been forced to stop, is perhaps now wondering if all this speed was so much panic without awareness. Where do we think we were going? And why were we in such a hurry to get there?

Such spring flowers as I have in my scruffy garden, aubretia doing well, slowly. Daffs daffing everywhere, tulips coming out, forsythia has survived the winter and inexpert pruning. The plum tree is in blossom which is both good and clever of it. It has had a hard first seven years, only fruited timidly twice, and last year wasn't one of them, but they are all doing their right thing in their own time and place and there is nothing to stop them. Here is sunlight, good enough soil, water (fortunately not too much of it here, although a trough on my balcony is transforming into a pond which is interesting). All they need without microwaves, computers, jacuzzies, three different cars; one each and one for the dog!

So far politicians and people on the panic machines are talking about Afterwards, when we go back to normal, economic growth, when we can Get On. Perhaps we are never going any further. We have gone far enough. Let's find our roots and learn the philosophy of rockery plants or fruit trees and see what happens.

Fragile Earth

Liz Marsh

The Trees

The trees are coming into leaf
Like something almost being said;
The recent buds relax and spread,
Their greenness is a kind of grief.

Is it that they are born again
And we grow old? No, they die too,
Their yearly trick of looking new
Is written down in rings of grain.

Yet still the unresting castles thresh
In fullgrown thickness every May.
Last year is dead, they seem to say,
Begin afresh, afresh, afresh.

Philip Larkin

A prayer for hope in springtime

*We thank you Lord for the beauty of your creation,
For the birds that sing in the springtime;
For the flowers beginning to bloom.
And as this new season brings with it a time of uncertainty and
pain,
We pray that you, Lord, will grant us hope;
Bring healing to those that are sick;
Companionship and community to those that are isolated;
And security to those who face financial hardship.
Let us hold fast to our faith and hope in you,
And to our relationships with one another.
And may you begin all things afresh.
Amen.*

There is a wonderful recording of the poem available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EM6n3SXSyeA>

This poem captures so much of what I am feeling at the moment. The weather has turned over the last couple of weeks, and as I write this it is a beautiful spring morning: I am sitting in my little study with the window open and I can hear birds singing; the flowers in my garden have started to bloom; it is even warm enough to sit outside and read. I wonder what signs of spring all of you reading this are seeing in your own gardens or outside your windows? As Larkin's poem suggests, spring is a time of renewal; to me, it feels as though the world is waking up from sleep and all sorts of things suddenly feel possible.

And yet, at this time, in our second week of lockdown, and as Coronavirus has, in the space of just a few weeks, changed almost every aspect of our daily lives, spring feels bittersweet. I am sure that many of us, myself included, are feeling anxious, isolated, and uncertain about what is going to happen next. Even as spring begins, there is a kind of grief for our normal lives, for all the things that we might yet lose. The speed at which everything has seemed to change over the last two weeks has been utterly surreal, and is made only more so by the fact that we must all retreat indoors just as we would normally be heading outside. We don't know how or when this crisis will come to an end, but what feels certain is that some things will never be the same again.

Importantly, though Larkin ends the poem not on a note of despair, but one of hope. He reminds us that life extends far beyond the present moment, that spring will come again, and with it another new beginning. We don't know how or when this pandemic will end, but we do know that it will and one day we will be able to meet in person; walk in the park; go to our favourite cafe; share together in the Eucharist. Larkin isn't writing from any particularly religious perspective, but I think it's also important to remember the way in which faith can give us hope at a time like this. People sometimes invoke hope in God in a way that is very naive, simply suggesting that if we trust in God, then everything will be ok.

The truth is, of course, a bit more complicated than that. But I don't think that this means that we cannot find hope in God at all, even in the bleakest and most uncertain of times. We know that God has promised to come and restore the world at the end of time, but, theologically speaking, this restoration is not something that is merely limited to the future, but rather something that is already at work in the present. We will not see the fullness of this restoration until Christ comes again, but God is already at work in the here and now, working to bring hope and healing. God calls all of us to participate in this according to our gifts and abilities, and I think we have already seen this happening in the midst of the present crisis. On a national scale, thousands of people have signed up as volunteers to support the NHS; more locally, communities are coming together and working hard to support their most vulnerable, and within our own congregation, I know that many of us are keeping in touch with one another and offering support even though we cannot be together in person. In a moment of crisis such as this, it is easy to feel entirely consumed by the present, but I think our faith in God, in all that God has done and promises to do, helps us to step back from the present and remind us that it is not forever, and that even while it lasts, we can call upon God and one another. And someday, things will begin afresh, afresh, afresh.

Regular Activities in our Churches

All currently suspended during the closure of our church buildings

All Saints'

- Community Coffee Morning (part of the Places of Welcome network): Tuesdays from 10.30 am – 12.30 pm
- Women of Faith activities and lunch, first Thursday of every month from 11.00 am – 1.30 pm
- Mothers' Union: Third Saturday of every month, 10.00 am – 12.00 pm
- The All Saints' Drama Club meets from time to time to prepare and present short dramatic items
- Series of 'Saturday Matinee' film showings take place at 2.00 pm from time to time
- The Nottingham University Society of Change Ringers (Bell Ringers): Tuesdays in term time, 7.00 – 8.30 pm
- The Nottingham Enlightening Word Church (Chinese) meets in All Saints' Church on Sundays from 2.00 - 4.00 pm and on Friday evenings from 7.30 pm.
- The Bridge Community Gospel Choir meets for rehearsals on the 1st & 3rd Sundays of each month from 5.00-6.30pm.

St Peter's:

- Rough Sleepers' Drop-in: Mondays (women only) from 10.30am – 12noon; Wednesdays from 11.30 am – 12.30 pm
- Gateway Drop-in for anyone with particular mental health needs: Wednesdays from 1.30 – 3.30 pm
- The Thursday communion service at 11.00 is followed by coffee and fellowship
- Bible Study group: Thursdays from 12.15 – 1.00 pm
- St Peter's Bell Ringers: Thursdays 7.00 – 9.00 pm

The Parish Overseas Committee meets every other month; the Caring for our Common Home working group also meets on a regular basis. Please contact the Rector if you would like to know more about these. Our churches also support the work of the Mount Zion foodbank at Bobbers Mill; collection boxes for gifts of food are available in the churches.

PARISH OFFICE

ST PETER'S CENTRE

ST PETER'S SQUARE

NOTTINGHAM

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