



Issue 17, 10 September 2020

Dear Reader, welcome to issue 17 which appears just as the easing of lockdown goes into reverse! What that will mean for church services will be made clear (we hope) by Monday 16 September when the new restrictions come into force. In the meantime keep your eye on the C of E Coronavirus (COVID-19) Guidance, which is accessible from the home page of our website.

Guide Dog Marley: June 2011 - August 2020

Very sadly Marley died on Sunday morning 30th August. Nine weeks ago the vet found a massive tumour on his spleen and emergency surgery confirmed that it was malignant. He recovered extremely well from the surgery and we had him for seven wonderful extra weeks. He died quickly and peacefully at home with both of us by his side. It has left an enormous hole in our hearts and in our lives and we are very sad. He was only nine so he had another year before he retired and we had hoped he would live for considerably longer. I am rather lost without him and the house is so empty. Thank you all for your kind messages of sympathy. Love *Thelma and David*.



These Shoes - A Poem by Julia Robinson

These shoes are lockdown.
They are long woodland walks, just chatting.
They are mini garden adventures.
They are the proud owners of two guinea pigs

These shoes have stamped, scuffed, tripped.
They shod small feet, with ever growing legs
Attached, smudged with small bruises,
And the odd scab.

These shoes have journeyed
To new beaches and fields.
Trode on pebbles, grateful for their soles,
And returned happily salty-wet, soggy, sagged.

These shoes have sat on sun-baked stones, drying.
Crumpled, faded, but still wanted.
These shoes have been cast aside, lost, misplaced.
These shoes have been shouted for,



The indignant yell of the owner
With no intention of looking for them
When I am there to do it

These shoes speak our story of this strange time.

Tomorrow, they will be left behind
As we travel forward through this year,
This twenty-twenty,
And the small feet will be transformed.
Smart, polished, ensconced.

Separated, I will cast a glance at
These shoes
As I sit at my all-too-familiar table,
Teams-ready.
No fear of interruption now.
And I will remember our summer.

Beverley & Geoff Howard sent me this:

"Yesterday my husband thought he saw a cockroach in the kitchen. He sprayed everything down and cleaned thoroughly. Today, I'm putting the cockroach in the bathroom." (Thank-you for this advice on 'involuntary' cleaning! - Ed).



Joking apart, Beverley & Geoff have been active in supporting the community during lockdown. Last Saturday they held a third successful, socially-distanced coffee morning in their back garden. In all, around 30 people have attended and also contributed to charity. Sadly, the latest announcement means there will be no more



for some time. They have also recorded a reading for 'Seven Holy Places: A Virtual Pilgrimage' (Whitby Abbey) which can be viewed on the Eltham Virtual Church YouTube channel - <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLjCJtpPIZshURix11w8Ap0wB3JQ7iOoX5>

Revd **Anne Hoad** recently enjoyed a 'virtual retreat'. "Have a retreat at home! That was what I was forced to do as Covid 19 prevented us from gathering during my eight day retreat. A pattern emerged with Morning and Evening prayer daily and a Eucharist once a week online from the chapel of St Andrew's Community, Blackheath. What I missed most of all was praying together with other people and its sense of companionship. Sister Marie Christine, my guide, and I met online for half an hour each day and that was really inspiring. I explored biblical texts suggested by her from Romans, Hosea and excerpts from the Gospels - much food for thought and refreshment. The whole experience worked well and left me renewed - I would be happy to repeat it."

Imogen & Rafe were keen to show us the family runner bean wigwam recently. With a magic wave, Imogen managed to make a seated Rafe appear - leaving Sophia and Theo to their studies in the house. Jack was nowhere to be seen; presumably he had gone off to tend to his own beanstalk in Covent Garden!



Linda Robins emailed - "I've finally got around to reading Keep Connected and just wanted to thank you for compiling it. It's good to have news of folk at church as I'm a bit out of it here in Sidcup. Beryl does bring me up to date when I speak to her. My computer doesn't behave at times and I don't have a clue where that's concerned. I too have a Mac & many a time it nearly got thrown out of the window!! I'm looking forward to 4 September, as I'll be able to discard my boot (broken ankle protection). It is quite uncomfortable at times and feels like I'm wearing a size 11 welly! I hope Alison & yourself are keeping well. Keep up the good work!



Eliza & Rosa having a girls' day out - trampolining followed by lunch and mini-cinos!

Birthdays: Laura Baugh recently celebrated her birthday, Val Witcombe was 70 on 26 August and Ray Andrew celebrated his 80th today. Eliza Robinson will celebrate her sixth birthday on Sunday 13 September. Happy Birthday to you all and apologies to anyone I have omitted!



Garden Team working at St Andrew's yesterday. Thank you Tessa, Beryl, Diane, Alison & Ray!

For the next issue Anne Piper says it would be interesting for people to share their experiences of a covid-19 holiday - so if you've had one please let me know! I hope Julia Robinson's suggestion of a 'back to school' feature will also appear. In the meantime and with the announcement that APCMs in Southwark Diocese can be delayed until next Spring, I leave you with this cartoon from this week's issue of the Church Times!

St Gargoyle's



The A.P.C.M. was as popular as ever