

the KEY

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News of Saint Peter and Saint Paul

BROMLEY PARISH CHURCH

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"Proclaiming the Word and Work of God"

Member of Churches Together in Central Bromley



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Hello Reader, and welcome to the August edition of the Key.

This month we have many contributions from Bromley parishioners—two sermons, one by Peter and one by Rev. James, three musical notices and a lovely ‘blessings’ article by Garvin.

There are also a number of activities for you to enjoy—illustrated Bible stories and puzzles—if you find yourself at a loose end during the summer holidays!

Whatever you are up to this summer, I hope you enjoy it!

With love

Lisa

This sermon has been kindly provided by Peter, delivered on 4 July. The reading it refers to is 2 Corinthians 12:2-10. Many thanks to Peter for allowing me to reproduce this in the Key for us to revisit.

So, I wonder what you were doing at 5.00 on Tuesday evening and again at 8.00 last night. Maybe you were defiantly watching Wimbledon, or even doing something resolutely non-sporting. But there is a fair chance that, like me, you were embracing the thrills and spills of an England match in the knock-out rounds of the Euros. A cliché it may be, but the expression *emotional rollercoaster* is about right, four-nil or not – anxiety, desperation, elation, it's all part of the footballing experience.

Not that I can claim to be in any sense a football fan. I come from a totally sport-free family, so much so that on the afternoon of the 30th July 1966, my mother thought it would be an ideal time to take me shopping. We wouldn't have to queue up anywhere, she said, and she was certainly right about that. In fact in Woolworths we could have helped ourselves to whatever we wanted, as the entire staff were in the office, gathered round a tv that maybe they had hired for the afternoon, cheering the England team to victory.

And so it is that, whereas most people who are over 60 can say *well I may be incredibly old, but at least I got to watch England winning the World Cup live on telly* that's one compensation of old age that I can't lay claim to. Maybe that's why I generally do watch England when they are in a major competition, even though I don't really understand any of the technicalities of the game.

But I do know that football really matters. When I was a student, I had a holiday job in Croydon and I can remember the boss announcing that his daughter was going to be getting married. *She's only gone and arranged the wedding for the day of the FA Cup Final* he said, and added *I hope she realises that if Palace are in it, I'm not going!*

There are of course a few Palace fans in our congregation and I know that for them a Palace victory is something to be savoured, simply because it is far from guaranteed. The same could not be said if you were, say, a Bayern Munich fan. Because Bayern are the only German team who can afford to buy the best players, they have won the Bundesliga every year since 2013 and will probably win it again next year, so for their fans there can't be much pleasure in winning, apart from in European competitions perhaps, and every defeat must be a severe disappointment. The passion with which supporters of Crystal Palace or England follow their team and the elation of victory come from a knowledge of their team's weaknesses.

This is often true in life. There isn't much to be said for moving from success to success with consummate ease – the things which fulfil us are simply so much more valuable, they mean so much more to us, if they have come against the odds

because we have struggled against personal weaknesses, frailties and failings of which we are only too aware.

This idea that our weaknesses can be something we can cherish is one which occurs quite a lot in the writings of the apostle Paul. When in today's New Testament reading from the second letter to the Corinthians he declares that *power is made perfect in weakness* and *whenever I am weak, then I am strong* he is taking this idea to a profound level indeed and one which goes way beyond any footballing analogies I may care to make.

Paul had all sorts of reasons to value his own weakness. In spite of his extraordinary achievements he never stopped regarding himself as the least of all the apostles, perhaps because of his background of persecuting Christians before his dramatic conversion on the road to Damascus. This kept him from self-aggrandisement and helped him always to remember that these were really God's achievements rather than his.

In some ways, Paul was not obviously suited to be the vessel in which the good news of Jesus was taken out in to the world. He didn't have wealth, social status or connections. As a Jew he was an outsider in the Hellenic world in which the churches were being established.

This was also a world in which intellectual status was valued above everything and so as a tent maker he didn't really fit in with that either. I am reminded of the bit in Exodus where Moses complains to God that he is far too tongue-tied to be chosen as leader, only to be told that he should not worry because God himself will provide him with everything he will need for every task that comes his way. And so it was with Paul.

Looking at the life of the apostle Paul, the spread of the gospel among the Gentiles does very much seem to be driven by his energy and determination. But when Paul himself saw the Christian communities being established one after another, he looked at this in the context of his own frailties and unsuitability, and then the power of the Gospel message became unmistakable. As one commentator eloquently puts it, *Paul's weakness made the grace of God visible*¹. This was particularly apparent in his work among the Corinthians – Corinth was a frantically busy commercial centre in which the inhabitants had the reputation of being hard-nosed cynics, totally focused on making money. If the Gospel of love and grace could take root there, it had the power to take root anywhere and in Paul's eyes it was the power of the message rather than the skill of the messenger that was driving it forward.

In this passage Paul also speaks of a more specific weakness, what he calls a *thorn in the flesh*, something that tormented him and which he asked God in vain to take away. We don't know what this was. Maybe it was a physical disability, or an illness, or bouts of depression or a recurring temptation. We just don't know. But it

may well be that Paul has deliberately withheld this information from us so that each of us can feel more connected to what he's saying, as for all we know his affliction may be the same as one of ours. After all, which of us is not held back by some sort of thorn in the flesh – maybe by several? Like Paul, we too can see our weaknesses in a positive light.

An awareness of our weaknesses and failings can certainly help us to avoid becoming conceited, just as the thorn in Paul's flesh prevented him from allowing the elation of his spiritual experiences to make him think of himself as being a specially chosen one.

And this awareness of our faults and failings also exposes us to the healing and forgiveness of God's love. Above all, it shows us that we cannot redeem ourselves. Our difficulties are redeemed by God alone. No acts of heroic righteousness on our part can make him love us more, nor can any of our faults and failings make him love us less. The thorns in our flesh point away from ourselves and towards Christ and through a humble recognition of them we learn the powerful truth of the words *Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of God*². The poor in spirit – those who are fully aware of their own insufficiency and their absolute reliance on God's grace. They are the heirs to the kingdom and not the great and good who wallow in their own abilities and virtues.

This awareness of our faults and failings reminds us of the rather ambivalent view of humanity which the Christian faith often seems to present. As human beings we are limitlessly valuable to God, in some significant ways made in his image, given a divine purpose on this earth, called by him by our name. And yet we are also a prey to temptation, fundamentally weak and unstable. We may be limitlessly valuable, but we are also limitlessly needy. If an awareness of our faults and weaknesses can bring us closer to an understanding of who we are in God's eyes, that's more than just a good thing – in fact it's absolutely essential.

When Paul writes that God has said to him *My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness* he is pointing to an idea which is at the very heart of our faith. After all, power made perfect in weakness is a compelling way of describing the redeeming work of Christ on the cross. In the letter to the Philippians, Paul speaks of Christ emptying himself for our sakes³. And in the next chapter of 2 Corinthians, he will write that *Christ was crucified in weakness but lives by the power of God*⁴.

That picture of Christ on the cross, the epitome of weakness and powerlessness and yet at precisely the same moment overcoming all the barriers of sin which block our path to communion with God is indeed power made perfect in weakness. When I want to remind myself of the basics of the faith, I sometimes turn to the website which is the legacy of Rowan Williams' time as Archbishop of Canterbury

and which contains a very short and simple introduction to Christianity. In it, he writes:

[Jesus Christ] has let himself be betrayed and rejected, executed in a humiliating and agonising way, and yet has not turned his back on us. Death did not succeed in silencing him or removing him from the world. He is alive; and that means that his love is alive, having survived the worst we can do. Nothing [...] can separate us from this love. [...] Once we know that God is 'for us', we open up to the gift that God wants to give us - which is a share in his own love and freedom and mercy.⁵

My grace is sufficient for you says God to Paul. And so it was for Jesus' disciples – in this morning's gospel we see him sending them out two by two, in pairs to give each other mutual support, but also telling them to take nothing for the journey⁶. God's grace is sufficient for them as it is for Paul. And so it can be for us too. Because we know that even our most debilitating weaknesses can be a contact point for God's grace, opening us up to his limitless love and mercy. We need not worry that in our lives we don't glide from success to success like Bayern Munich winning the Bundesliga year after year, but instead we can be confident that through the grace and mercy of God, all our weaknesses, sufferings, faults and failings can be overcome and as a result we can truly know ourselves to be nurtured, cherished and redeemed.

References:

1. Jerome Murphy-O'Connor: *1 Corinthians* (BRF), p. 18
2. Matthew 5:3
3. Philippians 2:7
4. 2 Corinthians 13:4
5. <http://rowanwilliams.archbishopofcanterbury.org/pages/christianity.html>
6. Mark 6:8

After missing the sermon out from the last edition, here we have a second one from July to make up for it! Many thanks to Rev. James for sharing this, it was delivered at the BPC service on 11 July. The readings were:

2 Samuel 6.1–5, 12b–19

Ephesians 1.3–14

Mark 6.14–29.

Our gospel today deals with the outfall of John the Baptist calling out the wrong and irresponsible sexual behaviour of someone powerful in government. I wonder if you can think of a convenient modern example I could use to illustrate it?

Much as we can enjoy the schadenfreude of a minister being caught in that classic tabloid phrase 'a steamy clinch', we can't ignore the reality of the pain caused to the immediate families caught in this, to those who have borne other losses over the last 18 months and who feel that the suffering is made more sharp by what feels like the hypocrisy on display. Indeed it is that charge of hypocrisy and abuse of power that did for him rather than moral outrage over his unbecoming conduct.

The question which runs through this episode and through our reading today is about power – who has it, what do we do with it and what does it do to us and others in the process.

How do we define power? Perhaps as simply the ability or capacity to do something or act in a particular way. But that freedom and ability often is predicated on denying or limiting that same ability in others.

We see this played out in a number of ways through the characters on display in the gospel reading.

Firstly Herod Antipas, one of the tetrarchs of Israel, top of the pile, who at first appears a total tyrant, able to say that he had John executed as if it were nothing.

However as the story goes on that swagger and self assuredness becomes far less steady. Compared to his father Herod the Great, who ruled over the entirety of Israel, Herod Antipas is a far weaker character, ruling over a fourth of the country, there clearly as a client king for the Romans, estranged from his people in faith in many ways – marrying your brother's wife is scandal because it goes against the precepts of Leviticus 18 and 20 – then as now to a degree the scandal of sex goes a long way to denting your reputation, but especially with a religiously serious Populus. To make things worse in order to make this marriage, he had to end away his first wife who was the daughter of the Aretas of Nabatea – a conflict and disagreement that would eventually culminate in open war which would hasten Herod's fall from power and his exile. Already the seeds of his own destruction are sown even as he tried to make a better marriage to secure his prospects.

John is out there preaching to the crowds, calling Herod to truth - John has followers and a power of his own, albeit as a minority. He has the potential to start a revolt against Herod, such things were not that uncommon in those days and it only takes one determined voice to set things in train.

Seeing him off perhaps would seem to have a logic around it and that is what Herod at the top of the verse claims he does – decides to rid himself of the problem to maintain his grip on things.

Yet as you read through the passage today you see that it isn't quite like that. Herod is caught up in a moment and manipulated by other factors to make grand promises which he then has to keep. John is executed not in a calmly and coldly weighed action – but to save face after some rash solemn oaths Herod makes, perhaps having enjoyed his wine a bit much, in order to save face in front of his guests. John's death is made even more ignominious by the almost embarrassing way it comes about. However it doesn't mark any real victory for Herod – Mark uses a slightly unusual term when he describes it as Herod's birthday, which is more usually associated with the memorial of someone's birthday after they die- the suggestion is that executing John is predominantly what Antipas will be remembered for.

Herod shows us that our sense of our power and ability is often illusory, we are never as in control as we think we are, but that we want often more than anything to feel as if we are.

There is something called dunning -Kruger effect – a contested psychological theory that those who are most incompetent at a task are least able to recognise it and so are the most overconfident at rating their abilities – a sobering thought.

But even if we recognise the issues and challenges in a situation, it is always tempting to live up to the image that we are able to do more than we can - that we can say big things and make them happen. Government over the last 18 months has done this, the church isn't immune from this – discussion this week about planting 10000 new churches over the next decade – that is 3 a day every day for the next 9 years to be there. It's not going to happen. Yet as things slip away, leaping for that bold assertion of relevance and the ability to do things is ever more tempting.

Second point – lets look at Herodias. Wife of Herod, who is obviously not that impressed with John who has decried her new marriage as sinful and wrong, that dislike has curdled into something truly dark and rather Lady MacBeth-esque. That the assertion of ones own desires pressed regardless of the rights, wrongs and effects it has on others is perhaps seen as the ultimate expression of power – manipulating decision and situations takes skill, it takes courage as Herodias uses this situation to get what she wants. But ultimately it is self destructive- her power comes from her association with Herod, by weakening that and him she earns a pyrrhic victory, and the hastening of the loss of all she enjoys and the status she values in time.

Enjoying our power can risk us to be concerned only with the things that matter to us if we are not careful, and can reduce our concern for effects on others or even the moral dimension of the things we want and what we are willing to do in order to get them.

Third point, third character. The Daughter, traditionally named Salome who dances for Herod and gets him to promise anything, a scene reminiscent from the book of Esther. Salome is traditionally depicted as being full of eastern promise, alluring in her dancing. I could talk about the power of sex to sell, the pull of the erotic on our core desires.

Except- the alluring Salome we see in art of Titian and Caravaggio and in our

imagination probably doesn't really exist. It seems to be our construct we have read into the text based on some pretty far-fetched ideas of oriental opulence and decadence.

The text offers perhaps a slightly different view. Salome, though not named, is described as Herodias' daughter, and in some texts as Herod's as well. The pleasure Herod takes in her dancing isn't described as sexual in any sort of way nor does it have any connotations. Later Mark called her a *korasion* – young woman, the same term used elsewhere in Mark for a 12 year old girl. Therefore what we see isn't dance of an alluring woman using her wiles to entrap Herod but rather a doting dance of his adopted or biological daughter without agenda or intent but to please a father figure on his birthday. Something rather innocent which is cruelly misdirected towards something far darker, indeed it is the end of innocence as she carries that head in on a platter and with it enters the cruel realpolitik of the world she inhabits.

Power and desire can be misused to distort the reality of things – we see what we want- instead of the perhaps rather scared young girl who finds herself in something far out of her depth, we see the alluring older figure who uses her wiles to captivate and make Herod putty in her hands. We do it in all sorts of ways – be it big lies, the election was stolen, the virus doesn't exist etc or smaller ones – which hide inconvenient truths, there isn't a problem here, it's their issue not ours – we can create such things very easily and we can collaborate with those other creates when it is easier to.

So three characters, three points – illusory nature of power which we often hype up for ourselves, the corrosive effects that focusing on our desires has often for ourselves as much as anyone else, and that we often want to see things in line with what suits us or matches expectations.

Now here is the rub, power can do all of these things, but it is not something that is limited to health secretaries sexy time, to tetrarchs and their scheming wives, to the great ones of the age. It is something we all possess to one degree or another – remember that definition at the beginning of power being simply the ability to meet our ends or desires. It is something we all possess in different ways and to different degrees. We can make choices for our lives and the places we work, meet, socialise, worship. And we can fall into the temptations to make things work for us at the expense of others.

We all fall into the temptations to push for things that work for us.

And to silence or forget those who might feel different.

Last week Peter highlighted Paul's conviction that faith is rooted in weakness- - which helps us recognise our need of grace of God, found not through our own power but by renouncing it. A call to remember our weaknesses and those of others both spiritual and physical.

As restrictions change, we will be navigating a world where we could feasibly do as much as we want. Personal responsibility language is really about our decisions, and our power – our ability to get what we need. It isn't always about other people and the effects our decisions have on them.

And so our challenge is to remember call to value the others and be for them. As we think about our church and how we navigate through the next months, we think not just of what we want from this place and the way we would like it to be, but we remember those who are not especially confident,, or those who are rendered vulnerable by decisions others have made. We need to think about our immunocompromised neighbour, our disabled neighbour, our unvaccinated child neighbour. Think about how, the choices we can make, and whether we risk harm to some, or willingly hold on to restrictions to create safe, accessible environments¹.

We all have power - can we use it or refuse it more wisely than our characters in the gospel today?

Reference:

1. Taken from http://naomilawsonjacobs.com/shut-out-of-church-again-covid-marginalised-christians-and-justice/?fbclid=IwAR0abJNbkyUJRXG1O_A_wD5m5EOZY8jD_TEM-vEW1XS_CdolUv4VtYmh_qg

Many thanks to Garvin for sharing these lovely reflections with us, what an excellent idea to have a 'Blessings' section in the Key! I echo Garvin's suggestion below—please do join in! Lisa.

Over the Past 15 months we have all experienced awful situations.

I wish to focus on a few blessings that I have encountered (God incidences).

Perhaps you may wish to share a Blessing with our church friends. Please contact the Editor....

Recently I have managed to visit our church garden, in the front of the church each day for one hour, part of my 'Keep fit' regime!

Often the sunshine has complemented my visits with aspects of nature all around.

Unexpectedly, I noticed two Robin Red Breasts (Peter & Paula) flying from the Garden of Remembrance to perch on the pole that supports our newly planted Japanese Crab Apple tree donated by the Thompson Family and in remembrance of Alec Thompson.

As a musician I have experimented in whistling the song of the robins, you wouldn't believe it, that I noticed, on several occasions that one of the pair would fly to a spot on the grass where I was seated on a garden seat dedicated to my 'Guru' Margaret Thompson one foot away from my toes!

I would regularly offer the robin a small Mc.D's chip which he, or she, would readily pick up, fly to the edge of the garden, eat and relish its taste.

Another God incidence I experienced was unexpectedly two days shortly after the planting of the tree, after many years and by coincidence, I met Margaret's two daughters Sarah and Rebecca with Margaret's granddaughter, Silvie.

Quite an uplifting experience. Fun as well!

Garvin



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Saturday Morning Concerts presents

Piano recital given by Constance Chow (Concert Pianist)

Saturday 11th September 11.30am



Admission Free

Retiring Collection

Our Saturday morning concerts continue on 11th September, at 11.30, with a piano recital being given by the concert pianist Constance Chow.

Born in Hong Kong, pianist Constance Chow (née Leung) moved to Britain in 2009. Hailed as the “Talented Pianist” (Eastern Daily Press, 2017), Constance makes frequent appearances on musical stages across the UK and Europe, as well as in Hong Kong. She has had the privilege to collaborate with world-renowned pianist Noriko Ogawa in a piano duet concert in 2016 and had been a concerto soloist with the University of Cambridge Philharmonic Orchestra in 2017. In 2018, she performed the London premiere of Grace Williams’ Sonata for Violin and Piano. Constance has performed for the British Military Services, as well as the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office at a number of countries including Russia, France, Germany, Finland, Denmark and Norway.

Venues at which Constance has appeared include the Milton Court Concert Hall, Blackheath Halls, Bishopgate Institute, St Edmundsbury Cathedral, The Church of St. Peter Mancroft, St. Bride’s Church Fleet Street, The Shaw Library at the London School of Economics, St. Clement Danes Church, St Lawrence Jewry, Hong Kong Arts Centre, Hong Kong Cultural Centre, and Blue Note at the Conservatorium van Amsterdam. She also performs for Music in Hospitals & Care.

Constance is a Master graduate of the Guildhall School of Music & Drama, where she studied piano performance under the tutelage of Paul Roberts. She has completed her undergraduate Music studies at King’s College London, where she also studied the piano with Tessa Nicholson at the Royal Academy of Music. Constance received a full scholarship to attend Music at Alagnac Piano Summer School in 2015. Whilst studying at King’s, she was generously supported by the Hong Kong Scholarship Fund. She was also a contralto choral scholar at the renowned college chapel choir, with whom she has performed both as a pianist and as a singer in the U.K. and abroad.

Constance is currently a London-based concert pianist, accompanist, and piano teacher. For more information, please visit her website www.constancechow.com.

**St Peter and St Paul Bromley
Bank Holiday Organ Recital**

Gary Sieling

Monday 30th August 11.30am

Free Admission, Retiring Collection

Refreshments will be available before the recital



*St Peter and St Paul is
observing social distancing.
Seats for the recital will be
laid out with a suitable
distance between each.*

Our Bank Holiday organ recitals continue on Monday 30th August with a recital given by Gary Sieling, who was a former Director of Music here at St Peter and St Paul.

There is no admission charge for the recital but there will be an opportunity to contribute to a retiring collection. It will not be necessary to prebook seats on this occasion and we are hoping to provide refreshments, served outside, before the recital.

Gary Sieling was born in Bedfordshire and educated at Dunstable Grammar School. He read for his BMus degree at the University of London, Goldsmiths' College and while a student played for the debut of the London Cantata Choir with whom he is still associated. He studied organ with Peter Moore, Nicholas Danby at the Royal College of Music, Dr Peter le Huray at St Catherine's College Cambridge, and Jane Parker-Smith. He was awarded FRCO in 1981 and MA in Performance from Anglia Ruskin University in 1997, studying organ with Nicholas Kynaston at Caius College Cambridge.

Gary was organist of Dunstable Priory and then Assistant Master of Music at Peterborough Cathedral. During his time there he was Conductor of the Peterborough Philharmonic Society, Director of the St Peter's Singers, and Founder and Associate Conductor of the City of Peterborough Symphony Orchestra. He also taught organ and piano at Oundle and Stamford Schools. Gary played for the Cathedral Choir on two tours of America in addition to regular TV and radio broadcasts and recordings.

After 6 years in London as Director of Music at Bromley Parish Church and All Saints Blackheath, Gary relocated to Reading to join the music staff at the Abbey School and take on the post of Director of Music at St Mary the Virgin, Henley-on-Thames. He directs the chamber choir 'FineChants' and works as a freelance organist, harpsichordist, conductor, adjudicator, and examiner for the Royal College of Organists. Gary spent the summers of 2009 and 2011 as the Music Adjudicator to the Sri Lanka Performing Arts Festival.

Gary's CD recordings include one for Priory Records from Chelmsford Cathedral featuring the major organ works of Stanley Vann, sometime organist of Peterborough Cathedral, and the 'Kenneth Leighton Memorial Album' which he compiled and published. Gary also recorded a CD of harpsichord and organ music at Bromley Parish Church. Organ concert venues in this country include St Paul's, Canterbury and Westminster Cathedrals, King's College Cambridge and Westminster Abbey. He has made 10 international concert tours visiting Denmark, Germany, Italy and USA.

6th August: The Transfiguration of Jesus

It's an unusual story. One day, Jesus is with three disciples on a high mountain in Galilee, when His appearance dramatically changes. Also, Moses and Elijah suddenly appear, and from a cloud comes the voice of God. What is this all about?

This event was witnessed by James, Peter, and John. They were close friends of Jesus. In the future, they were to become prominent leaders in the Early Church. They needed to see something special that would help them remember Jesus in the difficult years ahead. They had a glimpse of Christ in His divine glory. His face shone like the sun and His clothes turned white as light.

While this was an extraordinary sight for the disciples, it served to encourage Jesus who once had glory and majesty in Heaven. One day He would have it again. But firstly, He had to fulfil His mission: to suffer on the cross and die.

Why were Moses and Elijah standing with Jesus? Moses was the giver of the Law and Elijah represented all the prophets. They had pointed people to the promised Messiah. Jesus was about to complete God's plan of salvation.

God's voice was heard to remind Peter there was no need to build shelters. They were not going to stay on the mountain. God spoke to get the disciples to fix their attention on Jesus. The wonder of the Transfiguration was a short interlude before Jesus had to return to His work and subsequent death on the cross.

This story is a reminder that our times of spiritual blessing have to be followed by down-to-earth commitments and responsibilities. In the same way that Jesus gave His friends a glimpse of His awesome glory, to help them face challenging and traumatic times ahead, our special times in His presence are provided to encourage us and equip us for the trials we may have to face.

Our journey through life may sometimes rise to the peaks but we can't stay on a 'high' all the time – no matter how much we want it! We have to descend to face everyday challenges if we are to fulfil our calling in Christ. From *our* mountain-top experiences we all need to find a balance between times alone with God and serving Him in the company of others.

Please use this space to pass messages on to the Church community – whether it is a prayer request, a thank you, a craft idea, a recipe...

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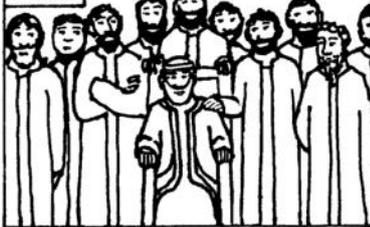
Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in
2 Sam 15, 16:15-19, 17:4-22, 18:1-12, 33, 19:1-8

King David had many wives and children. He loved his sons so much that he never punished them or told them off if they did wrong.

Also David had not said who would be king after him.



His son Absalom was very handsome, and he made friends with everyone.



People began to prefer him to David.



Absalom gathered an army of supporters and they headed for Jerusalem.



David and his supporters had to flee.



A few stayed behind to be spies and to give bad advice.



David was able to get away.

The two armies fought in a rocky wooded place.



Absalom was riding through it when his hair got caught in a tree.



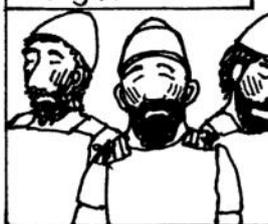
Joab and his men killed him.

When David heard Absalom was dead, he was so upset...



My son!

..his soldiers were ashamed they had won.



Joab came back from the battle and found David crying



You should be ashamed! You care more for your disloyal son than for those who risked their lives for you!



d	a	v	i	d	p	h	e	a	r	d	g	w
e	s	c	a	p	e	r	s	k	l	s	o	y
f	h	h	w	o	o	d	e	d	e	g	o	r
q	a	i	r	l	n	j	f	f	n	b	r	j
j	m	l	n	e	a	r	m	i	e	s	a	o
x	e	d	i	s	l	o	y	a	l	r	t	a
x	d	r	v	o	g	r	i	d	i	n	g	b
s	f	e	u	n	c	g	r	j	t	t	r	s
p	u	n	i	s	h	e	d	k	r	z	o	w
i	l	k	i	b	a	t	t	l	e	m	l	o
e	q	a	f	g	i	l	o	v	e	d	t	s
s	u	p	p	o	r	t	e	r	s	r	b	w
l	q	h	a	n	d	s	o	m	e	w	i	l

sons

crying

king

hair

tree

spies

escape

armies

children

supporters

punished

handsome

Jerusalem

disloyal

prefer

loved

battle

Joab

ashamed

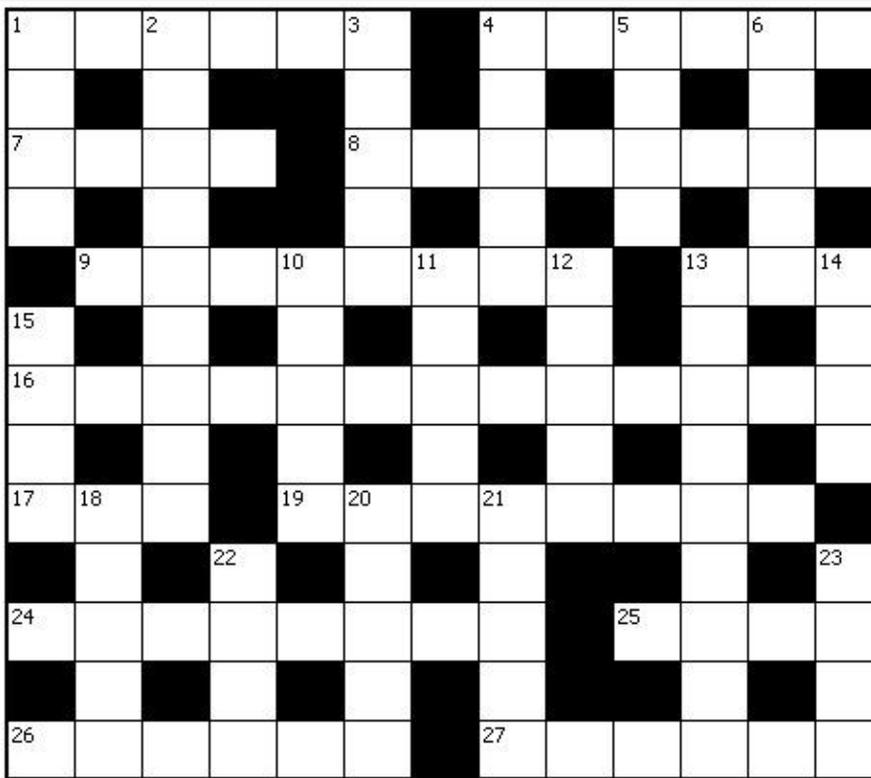
heard

friends

wooded

David

riding



Answers:
ACROSS
 1 Mosaic; 4 Scales; 7 Cana; 8 Claudius; 9 Sadducee; 13 SLM; 16 Self-confident; 17 Sad; 19 RADIUS; 24 Shepherd; 25 Bind; 26 Astern; 27 Arthur
DOWN
 1 Mock; 2 Sandalled; 3 CICCUCU; 4 Share; 5 Aide; 6 Equal; 10 Décor; 11 Caned; 12 Elihu; 13 Sherebiah; 14 Moth; 15 Uses; 18 Ashes; 20 ASEAN; 21 India; 22 Apse; 23 Eder

Across

- 1 Of Moses (6)
- 4 'You have been weighed on the — and found wanting' (Daniel 5:27) (6)
- 7 Where Jesus performed the first of his miraculous signs (John 2:11) (4)
- 8 Roman emperor who ordered all the Jews to leave Rome (Acts 18:2) (8)
- 9 Member of a conservative Jewish party in the Sanhedrin which believed there was no resurrection (Acts 23:8) (8)
- 13 South London Mission (1,1,1)
- 16 Sure of one's own ability (2 Corinthians 11:17) (4-9)
- 17 'At this the man's face fell. He went away —, because he had great wealth' (Mark 10:22) (3)
- 19 Airs used (anag.) (8)
- 24 'The Lord is my —, I shall not be in want' (Psalm 23:1) (8)
- 25 'He has sent me to — up the broken-hearted' (Isaiah 61:1) (4)
- 26 At or towards the rear of a ship (6)
- 27 Cross-carrying evangelist and world traveller, — Blessitt (6)

Down

- 1 Ridicule (Luke 18:32) (4)
- 2 Encased in strapped-on light shoes (Song of Songs 7:1) (9)

- 3 Cambridge Inter-Collegiate Christian Union (1,1,1,1,1)
- 4 'Father, give me my — of your estate' (Luke 15:12) (5)
- 5 Assistant (4)
- 6 On a par (John 5:18) (5)
- 10 Credo (anag.) (5)
- 11 Beaten with a rod (5)
- 12 The fourth of Job's 'comforters', who deferred making his contribution because of his junior status (Job 32:6) (5)
- 13 Chosen as a temple attendant, he was described by Ezra as 'a capable man' (Ezra 8:18) (9)
- 14 'Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where — and rust destroy' (Matthew 6:19) (4)
- 15 Employs (4)
- 18 Associated with penitence for sins, along with sackcloth (Matthew 11:21) (5)
- 20 Association of South-East Asian Nations (1,1,1,1,1)
- 21 Sub-continent to which Baptist missionary pioneer William Carey devoted his life (5)
- 22 Recess at east end of a church (4)
- 23 One of the nine sons of Beriah (1 Chronicles 8:15) (4)

8		4	3					9
	7		1					
	6			8		2	3	
4	5	6		1	8	3		7
	9		5		3		2	
3		8	7	9		1	5	4
	3	5		2			6	
					5		1	
9					1	5		3

Sudoku:

Insert numbers 1-9 into each row, column, and 3x3 box

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		9	1					4
4	2					6		
		1	2	4			8	
	7							
1	3		6		2		9	7
							6	
	6			5	1	9		
		3					1	5
2					9	7		

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The Big Bash!



JESUS OFTEN TOLD STORIES WITH HIDDEN MEANINGS



ONE STORY WAS ABOUT A RICH MAN WHO DECIDED TO HAVE A PARTY

HE SENT OUT LOTS OF INVITATIONS

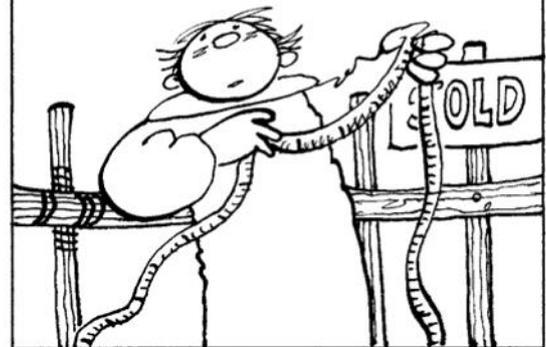


OH!
NO!!



BUT PEOPLE STARTED MAKING EXCUSES

ONE MAN SAID HE HAD BOUGHT A FIELD, BUT NEEDED TO MEASURE IT



ANOTHER MAN SAID HE NEEDED TO TEST DRIVE THE OXEN HE HAS JUST PAID FOR



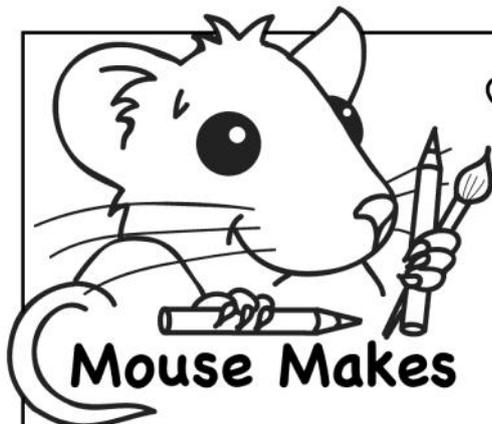
ANOTHER MAN SAID HE HAD JUST GOT MARRIED - AND HIS WIFE WOULDN'T LET HIM OUT!

SO THE RICH MAN INVITED ALL THE POOR AND NEEDY INSTEAD.



YES - I CAN COME TO YOUR PARTY

THE PARABLE MEANS WE SHOULDN'T MAKE EXCUSES FOR NOT FOLLOWING JESUS.



IN THE BEGINNING ...

What did God create in the beginning?

___ V ___
and ___ H

What was the first thing God said on the first day?

"Let there be ___ G ___"

What did God separate on the second day to create heaven?

___ T ___

How many great lights did God create in the heavens?

What grew on the dry land?

___ N ___ and ___ E ___

READ
Genesis
1:-31

B S E A S O N S S
E D A Y F L W O M A N
D L A N D O I A N A C I F
S T H R E E U G T E N R A I O
M V S K Y N R H E A V E N S F
U G O O D I T T R E U A I H R
L Y S I X G W F I V E T M G U
T E A R T H O P S E A I A R I
I A W C A T T L E N A O L O T
P R V E G E T A T I O N S U F
L S X U M O R N I N G E E N U
Y U K F R U I T H G O D E D L
X H U M A N S O B I R D S
F O O D Y H T R E E S
C R E A T U R E S

What did God create to fly above the earth?

___ D ___

What did God make after all the creatures?

___ A ___

Find the answers to the questions in the word search then find all these words too:

- CREATION
- ONE
- DARK
- DAY
- NIGHT
- EVENING
- MORNING
- SEA
- VEGETATION
- LAND
- SEEDS
- FRUIT
- THREE
- SEASONS
- YEARS
- FOUR
- SKY
- FISH
- FIVE
- CREATURES
- CATTLE
- ANIMALS
- GROUND
- HUMANS
- WOMAN
- FRUITFUL
- MULTIPLY
- FOOD
- SIX
- GOD
- SAW
- GOOD



Please keep JusB in your prayers as they continue their work with vulnerable young people across the Bromley borough

Prayer Points for August

1. Our summer programme is now in full flow. Please pray that all activities will run smoothly and that the young people will benefit from new experiences. It's also a time to recruit new members
2. We hope to restart all activities in September, pray that we continue to deliver an exciting and challenging programme.
3. Unfortunately, due to a number of young people having to isolate, the youth performance at BLT which some of our young members were performing in was cancelled last month. It is hoped to be rescheduled for this month. Please pray that this will be able to happen as it's a great experience for our members
4. Please continue to pray for all the staff as we still juggle a very challenging environment, both in delivering services and in running the charity.

www.jusb.co.uk

After September JusB will no longer be able to collect stamps and other items in their orange boxes. They send their thanks to all who have donated over the years to help raise over £3600.00 for the charity. If anyone has items to donate to JusB please bring them into the church office by Sunday the 5th of September

For anyone who is learning about trust in God....

The Slide

As I watch

She climbs the steps steadily,

Holding the handrail,

Her two-year-old feet following each other

Rhymically, unhesitatingly

To the platform at the top

Where she sits down

And freezes.

Holding tight to the sides,

Knees up, feet flat

She judders down a little way

Then looks up.

Her eyes meet my smile, my outstretched arms –

And she takes her hands off the edge of the slide,

Shooting forward with a squeal of delight,

Trusting the love she knows.

Lord, I have climbed so steadily,

I have come so far, in my own strength,

Holding on, holding back,

Sometimes freezing.

But I am Your child,

Today I will lift my eyes

And meet Your smile, Your outstretched arms,

I will lift my juddering feet -

And take my hands off the edge of the slide

Released to ride, by Your Spirit,

Into the freedom of Your will,

Trusting the Love I know.

By Daphne Kitching

Prayer for the new day

Dear Father,

In this strangest of summers, with its traffic-light travel restrictions and on-going concerns about Covid 19, help us to remember that You never change. Your light is constant. Your love continues. Your presence is assured, whether we stay at home, or travel within the UK, or further afield. There are no restrictions on Your Holy Spirit.

Thank You, Lord, for the gift of each new day, wherever we may be. Thank You that by Your grace, we share all our days with You, secure in all circumstances, when we put our trust in Your precious son, Jesus Christ. In His name we pray. Amen.

By Daphne Kitching

Peace, perfect peace

Dear Jesus

When we pray for Your help and blessing, we remember the words, “be still in the presence of the Lord”. Fill us with the peace of mind and serenity which only You can give, and restore us once again. May we remain safe and content, knowing Your peace will continue to dwell in us.

By Terence Trimmer



Sunday 1st August**Ninth Sunday after Trinity**

9.00am Family Breakfast Club in the church garden

10.30am Parish Eucharist

1.30pm Baptism

Monday 2nd August

5.00pm Wedding rehearsal Frankie and Roisin

Tuesday 3rd August

7.30pm Bell ringing practice by arrangement with Tom Hinks

Wednesday 4th August

10.30am

10.30am Prayer during the Day - online

12noon wedding Frankie and Riosin

Thursday 5th August

10am -11am Healing Prayer meeting, prayers will be said from homes for the sick and those in need.

Sunday 8th August**Tenth Sunday after Trinity**

10.30am Parish Eucharist

Tuesday 10th August

7.30pm Bell ringing practice by arrangement with Tom Hinks

Wednesday 11th August

10.30am Prayer during the Day - online

12noon – 2pm Church open for private prayer

Sunday 15th August**Eleventh Sunday after Trinity**

9.00am Family Breakfast Club in the church garden

10.30am All-age Worship with Communion

Tuesday 17th August

7.30pm Bell ringing practice by arrangement with Tom Hinks

Wednesday 18th August

10.30am Prayer during the Day - online

12noon – 2pm Church open for private prayer

8.00pm Standing & Finance Committee

Saturday 21st August

10am-12noon BPC Gardening Club

Sunday 22nd August**Twelfth Sunday after Trinity**

10.30am Parish Eucharist

Tuesday 24th August

7.30pm Bell ringing practice by arrangement with Tom Hinks

Wednesday 25th August

10.30am Prayer During the Day - online

12noon -2pm Church open for private prayer

Thursday 26th August

2.00pm Fellowship Summer Party

Sunday 29th August**13th Sunday after Trinity**

10.30am Parish Eucharist

12noon -5pm Organ practice

Monday 30th August

11.30am Bank Holiday Organ Recital, Gary Seisling

Toddler Praise, our Tuesday morning group for parents and toddlers is taking a break for the summer and will return in September.

Choir practice is also taking a well deserved break during August re-suming on the 2nd of September.

Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer are said daily from homes at 8.30am and 5.15pm, do join in if you can.

Church is open on Wednesdays between 12noon and 2pm for private prayer when consecrated bread is also available for those who wish to receive.

Updates to services and events will be posted on our website

www.bromleyparishchurch.org

Follow [this link](#) to find the pew sheet with meeting details for events taking place on Zoom and links to book tickets.

To book a place for public worship visit our website www.bromleyparishchurch.org and follow the link on our homepage or call the church office on 020 8464 5244. Here you will also find the link to join in with our services from home via our YouTube channel.

Face masks are required inside the building unless exempt.