



Connecting faith and daily life

# Watered by the Spirit



Caroline Hodgson *reflects on* Jeremiah 17:5-10; Psalm 1 and Luke 6:17-26

It seems so clear, from reading the Old Testament and psalm today, that it's preferable to be a tree planted by water than a shrub in the desert. So why do we so often end up resembling the latter?

Today's Gospel reading gives us a clue as to why our faith lives might wither and wilt. This passage, sometimes known as the sermon on the plain, comes early in Jesus' ministry – the first time he preaches after choosing his disciples. The people who throng around want "to be healed" and are "troubled" – and he cures them. Thirsty for healing, they recognise Jesus' power and crowd around to touch him, as the woman with the issue of blood would later do.

Given such desperation surrounding him, it might be perplexing that Jesus' sermon is anything but comforting. He talks of those who are poor, hated, reviled and defamed, and those who weep. Yes, he tells them that they will be blessed, although in context it might seem a small reward for a life of suffering and rejection. On the other hand, those who are rich, well fed, who laugh and are well spoken of, have already "received your consolation", and can expect to be hungry, to mourn and weep.

Perhaps it's little wonder that we more often resemble a desert shrub than a well-watered tree. Nobody said it would be easy, and Jesus spells out just how hard, but ultimately rewarding, it is. Amazingly, enduring the hard part of faith will give cause to, "Rejoice... and leap for joy!" 🌞

Oh Lord, whose presence brings healing and whose word quenches our thirst, prepare us to meet life's challenges head on, sure in the knowledge of our reward in heaven. Amen.

## Apprenticeship Week

by Diane Sherwood

Have you ever tried something new, a musical instrument perhaps, only to become quickly convinced that it's impossible – that whoever is teaching you must have some mysterious magic formula that you will simply never be able to tap into? I feel like that in my pottery classes, yet over time my hands have learnt to feel when the clay is centred, my eye picks up any irregularity and even my ear is attuned to the sound of the

wheel – and somehow, sometimes, I produce a pot that I'm pleased with.

The relationship between master and apprentice is reminiscent of Jesus with his first disciples, and a model for Christian discipleship. The master shares skills, wisdom, knowledge, stories, strategies and encouragement with the apprentice. In return the apprentice is asked to stay engaged, active, curious and humble – willing to listen, watch and learn – and to keep learning and trusting that, when something appears complicated or even impossible, with time, patience and practice it can be mastered. 🌞

## The chaplain's blog

by Marcus Bull

As I write this, the Independent Inquiry into Child Sex Abuse hearings have not long concluded its investigations into the Anglican Church's failure to protect children in our churches. More disclosures will come, we are told. Transparency, honesty and repentance are required.

Many things vie for top priority in the life of a busy academy, and we

are sometimes accused of making exam results most important. But the single most important thing that schools, and staff in schools, do is keep children safe – protect them from harm and abuse.

Matthew records Jesus' words: "If any of you put a stumbling-block before one of these little ones... it would be better for you if a great millstone were fastened around your neck and you were drowned..." Churches, even more than schools, should be the safest possible places for children. Safeguarding must be central to everything we do. Not an optional extra. 🌞

“ God never said that the journey would be easy, but he did say that the arrival would be worthwhile.

Max Lucado, Christian author and preacher

## Prayer

### Prayer and Healing Ministry

As a Church Family, God calls us to "pray without ceasing" for one another and for our neighbourhood. With this in mind, a Calendar of Prayer covering the whole of The Parish Of Three Saints has been drawn up. Each Sunday we will be highlighting a particular road or street, plus an organisation or group of people in our Parish or Diocese and encouraging you to pray for them during the week. The Calendar of Prayer will also be available in the prayer corners of each of our church buildings.

This week please pray for....

- Those living in Ham Road and Brent Road, Brent Knoll.
- Our Reader, Nikki.
- Kevin and Chris, as they make preparations to move into our parish.

### Don't be afraid to ask for Prayer!

If you or a loved one are going through a difficult time and would like prayer, please contact our Prayer Group Co-ordinator Gwen Hatton 01934 750416. The Friday Prayer Group will support you in prayer for as long as you need it and everything is absolutely confidential.

Alternatively, if you or a loved one would like to be included in this public prayer list in the Sunday Link and prayed for by the whole Church Family, please contact Carole in the Church Office 01278-769082 or Ginnie Soffe 01278-769117. Please ask for the person's permission beforehand.

Please also contact us if you would like to remain on this list as we are currently looking to update it. Many thanks.

At present please continue to pray for Caroline, Mervyn, Nathan, Luke, Iona, Ben, David, Carole, Kathryn, Peter, Silla, Carol, Sue, David, Pam, Di, Bob, Richard, Jodie and Marcus.

## Diary

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>17th February</b> 08.00 St Christopher's Worship of the Word  10.00 St Michael's Parish Eucharist	<b>18th</b> 16.00-17.30 Alzheimer's and Dementia Carers Group Brentcombe House, East Brent.	<b>19th</b> <u>Half Term</u> No Toddlers	<b>20th</b> 08.45 Coffee Time St Mary's  19.00 PCC Meeting Brent Knoll Methodist Church	<b>21st</b> 14.30 Comfort Group  19.30 All Sorts Choir St Mary's	<b>22nd</b>	<b>23rd</b>
<b>24th February</b> 08.00 St Mary's Worship of the Word  10.00 St Christopher's Parish Eucharist  18.30 St Michael's Evening Prayer	<b>25th</b> 09.00-10.30 Emmaus Brentcombe House, East Brent	<b>26th</b> 10.30 Toddlers Brent Knoll Methodist Church	<b>27th</b> 08.45 Coffee Time St Mary's	<b>28th</b> 14.30 Bereaved Friends Group  19.30 All Sorts Choir St Mary's	<b>1st March</b>	<b>2nd</b>
<b>3rd March</b> 08.00 St Christopher's Worship of the Word  10.00 St Christopher's Parish Eucharist  19.00 Quiz at Brent Knoll Inn	<b>4th</b>	<b>5th</b> 10.30 Toddlers Brent Knoll Methodist Church	<b>6th</b> 08.45 Coffee Time St Mary's  14.30 Emmaus Church Office	<b>7th</b>  19.30 All Sorts Choir St Mary's	<b>8th</b>	<b>9th</b>

## Contacts

Reader	Nikki Burns	reader.tpots@gmail.com	Tel: 01278 760860
Church Administrator	Mrs Carole Carter	office.tpots@gmail.com	Church Office, Church Road, East Brent, Somerset. TA9 4HZ Tel: 01278 769082

For further contact information please see our parish website - [www.theparishofthreesaints.org.uk](http://www.theparishofthreesaints.org.uk)

If you would like to submit anything for the Sunday Link please email it to Carole at [office.tpots@gmail.com](mailto:office.tpots@gmail.com) by **Thursday**. Please also send anything for **The Parish of Three Saints** website to the same address.

## Bible Readings

### Hebrew Scripture

#### Jeremiah 17. 5-10

Thus says the Lord:  
Cursed are those who trust in mere mortals  
and make mere flesh their strength,  
whose hearts turn away from the Lord.  
They shall be like a shrub in the desert,  
and shall not see when relief comes.  
They shall live in the parched places of the wilderness,  
in an uninhabited salt land.

Blessed are those who trust in the Lord,  
whose trust is the Lord.  
They shall be like a tree planted by water,  
sending out its roots by the stream.  
It shall not fear when heat comes,  
and its leaves shall stay green;  
in the year of drought it is not anxious,  
and it does not cease to bear fruit.

The heart is devious above all else;  
it is perverse—  
who can understand it?  
I the Lord test the mind  
and search the heart,  
to give to all according to their ways,  
according to the fruit of their doings.

### Blessed Thought

"We speak of 'God', but this is only a name for  
this inexpressible Mystery"

(from Lost in Wonder by Bede Griffiths 'Return to the Centre').

### Gospel Reading

#### Luke 6. 17-26

Jesus Teaches and Heals

He came down with them and stood on a level place, with a great crowd of his disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea, Jerusalem, and the coast of Tyre and Sidon. They had come to hear him and to be healed of their diseases; and those who were troubled with unclean spirits were cured. And all in the crowd were trying to touch him, for power came out from him and healed all of them.

Blessings and Woes

Then he looked up at his disciples and said:

'Blessed are you who are poor,  
for yours is the kingdom of God.

'Blessed are you who are hungry now,  
for you will be filled.

'Blessed are you who weep now,  
for you will laugh.

'Blessed are you when people hate you, and when they exclude you, revile you, and defame you on account of the Son of Man. Rejoice on that day and leap for joy, for surely your reward is great in heaven; for that is what their ancestors did to the prophets.

'But woe to you who are rich,  
for you have received your consolation.

'Woe to you who are full now,  
for you will be hungry.

'Woe to you who are laughing now,  
for you will mourn and weep.

'Woe to you when all speak well of you, for that is what their ancestors did to the false prophets.

### Christian Scripture

#### 1 Corinthians 15. 12-20

The Resurrection of the Dead

Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say there is no resurrection of the dead? If there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised; and if Christ has not been raised, then our proclamation has been in vain and your faith has been in vain. We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified of God that he raised Christ—whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised. If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. Then those also who have died in Christ have perished. If for this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied.

But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have died.

### Count your blessings.



Put your faith into action this Lent through daily reflections and challenges.

If you wish, please take a Christian Aid Lent booklet from the back of church. They will also be available in St Mary's and St Christopher's.



**Sunday 3rd March at 7pm  
at Brent Knoll Inn, East Brent.  
Up to 5 in a team. £3.00 per person.**

### Psalm

#### Psalm 1

The Two Ways

Happy are those  
who do not follow the advice of the wicked,  
or take the path that sinners tread,  
or sit in the seat of scoffers;  
but their delight is in the law of the Lord,  
and on his law they meditate day and night.

They are like trees  
planted by streams of water,  
which yield their fruit in its season,  
and their leaves do not wither.  
In all that they do, they prosper.

The wicked are not so,  
but are like chaff that the wind drives away.  
Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgement,  
nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous;  
for the Lord watches over the way of the righteous,  
but the way of the wicked will perish.

## What's On



### Our Vision for the Parish of Three Saints

*Our desire is to deepen our spiritual awareness and relationship with God so that we can serve our communities more effectively as His hands and feet, and also to develop our sacred spaces to make them welcoming, flexible and suited to the broad ranging needs of our communities.*

(Taken from The Parish Profile 2018)

[office.tpots@gmail.com](mailto:office.tpots@gmail.com)

[www.theparishofthreesaints.org.uk](http://www.theparishofthreesaints.org.uk)

### A Welcome and Licensing Service for our new priest, Rev Kevin Wright,

will be held

**at 7pm on Thursday 21st March at St Christopher's, Lympsham.**

This will be a very special occasion for Kevin and his wife, Chris, as we welcome them into our church family. Refreshments will be served afterwards in the Manor Hall.

If you can help by providing sandwiches, cakes or nibbles,  
please contact Gwen Hatton on 01934 750416

**Please Note the change of venue.**

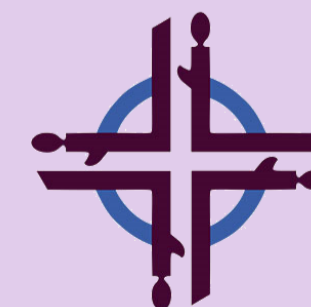
**Kevin's first service will be on Palm Sunday, 14th April, at 10.00 am at St Michael's, Brent Knoll.**

### Women's World Day of Prayer

**Friday 1st March**

**10.00am**

**Please join us for a service at  
Burnham On Sea  
Methodist Church,  
entitled "Come! Everything is ready"  
A service put together by the  
women of Slovenia.**



**Blessed are you, Lord God of all Creation; through your goodness we have this money to offer.....  
to do your work in the world.**

During our worship an offering will be collected. If you wish to join with our offering there is a yellow envelope nearby for your contribution or you can, of course, simply add your donation to the bag that will be passed along the pew during our first hymn. Many of our Church Family make a regular contribution to the running and work of the Parish by Standing Order. If this is something you would like to find out more about, please see one of the Stewards or a Churchwarden.



### Urgently needed!

**2 Churchwardens  
1 Deanery Synod rep  
PCC members**

We are seeking people of faith to take on the ministry of Churchwarden in both St Mary's and St Christopher's.

You can be a Churchwarden of any of our three church buildings, no matter where you live. Our current Churchwardens, Mike, Gwen, Frances and Kathy will gladly chat with you and explain what is involved.

To find out more about being a Deanery Synod rep or a member of the PCC, please speak to Carole Carter, our Parish Administrator, or Max Bashford.

Please prayerfully consider whether God might be calling you to any of these Godly responsibilities.

Thank you.