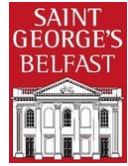


The Parish Church of Saint George



PARISH MAGAZINE

An open door in the heart of the City



MARCH 2025

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The Rev'd Graeme Pollock; The Rev'd Terence Dunlop

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People's Churchwarden: James Beattie Tel: 07375044433

Rector's Glebewarden: Tony Merrick Tel: 028 9042 7739

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ST GEORGE'S BANK DETAILS

Acc. Name: St Georges Parish Church

Sort Code: 98-00-10

Acc. No. 09028029



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St George's Parish Magazine is published on the Sunday nearest the first day of the month, except August and January. Please send contributions to the Parish Office - stgeorgesoffice@btconnect.com. Views expressed by contributors do not necessarily represent the views of the parish.

Editorial Team: William Odling-Smee, Selby Nesbitt, Tony Merrick.

From the Rector's Desk



Dear Friends in Christ,

Lent is almost upon us once more. Ash Wednesday will be on 5th March. There will be a celebration of the Eucharist with imposition of ashes at 10:30 AM, 1:00 PM, and 7:30 PM. The 7:30 PM Eucharist will be a Choral Service (Order 1 traditional language) with a sermon. As I will be away for a week from 26th February until 6th March, the services on Sunday, 2nd of March and Ash Wednesday, 5th March, will be covered by my colleagues, Fr Keith Suckling, Fr Graeme Pollock, and Fr Terence Dunlop. I am very grateful to them for kindly agreeing to preside at these services. While I am away, any pastoral emergencies will be covered by the Rector of St John's Malone, Canon Stephen Fielding. He can be contacted on 028 9066 6644.

As some of you may be aware, there was a fire in All Saints' Parish Church in Antrim recently and while not as devastating as the blaze at the parish church in Greenisland last year, there was nevertheless extensive damage to the interior. The Select Vestry has agreed that we will hold a retiring collection at all services on Sunday 16th March with the proceeds going to All Saints' Restoration Fund. Please do support this very worthwhile cause and show your solidarity with our fellow church members in Antrim.

St Patrick's Day falls on Monday 17th March this year. There will be a celebration of the Eucharist at 10:30 AM, with a cup of tea or coffee afterwards. That should still leave plenty of time to exit the city centre before the civic parade starts at 1:30 PM.

The Easter General Vestry, i.e. the AGM of the parish, will be held on Sunday 6th April at 12:30 PM, just after the end of the 11:00 AM Eucharist. Elections will be held for members of the Select Vestry and Peoples' Wardens. To stand for office or to vote, you must be registered. Registration forms are available on the table in the Narthex (porch) and can be filled in and signed up until after Evensong on Sunday 16th March.

We are now including the parish bank details in the magazine and on the Sunday service sheet to make it easier for parishioners and friends to make a donation electronically or to set up a Standing Order. This Select Vestry has recently been informed by the Treasurer that the regular weekly and monthly giving by parishioners has not only failed to keep pace with inflation, but has

actually declined over the past year. A small number of parishioners have increased their Standing Order or Free Will Offering (FWO), however most have not. All parish costs have gone up substantially in recent years, especially the cost of utilities, salaries, stipends and ongoing maintenance and repairs.

As many of you are aware, I do not like speaking or writing about money matters or making appeals to the congregation. However, the situation is now very serious in that we will incur a substantial deficit in 2025 and fail to pay our way with regard to the day-to-day running costs of Saint George's. We need to address this immediately. The Select Vestry is continually reviewing expenditure and our Treasurer has been extremely good at maximising our returns from various sources of investment. The truth is that many parishioners who set up a Standing Order 8 or 10 years ago, have not reviewed it or increased it since. About 20 or so who subscribe through a Standing Order have regularly increased their monthly Standing Order, but most have not. I review and increase mine at the beginning of each year. Please review and increase your Standing Order, if you have not already done so recently. If you do not have a monthly Standing Order and would like to have one, please refer to the form on page 6 of this magazine for instructions on how to set one up; these forms are also available at the back of the church. Should you wish to make a donation by Bank Transfer, please use the bank details as set out below. If you are a UK taxpayer, please sign up for Gift Aid so that we can claim the tax back from HMRC; (Gift Aid declaration forms are available at the back of the church). Gift Aid costs you nothing and doesn't affect your tax in any way. We need urgent action by parishioners on this issue. Please do not leave this to the usual 20 or so who do regularly review their subscriptions. We need every parishioner, friend and supporter of Saint George's to respond urgently and immediately, otherwise, the parish will end the year substantially in debt. I am sorry to end this month's Rector's Letter on such a gloomy note, but unless we all respond positively now, St George's could be in serious financial trouble within 12 months.



Yours sincerely in Christ

ST GEORGE'S BANK DETAILS

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Sort Code: 98-00-10

Acc. No. 09028029

Standing Order Instruction

To Bank

Please set up the following Standing Order and debit my/our account accordingly

1. Your Account details

Account name Account number

Account holding branch Sort code

2. Payee details

Name of person or organisation you are paying

Payment reference (if known) - this will appear on the bank statement of the person or organisation you wish to pay

Sort code - the bank code of the person or organisation you are paying (*This is St George's*)

Account number - the account number of the person or organisation you wish to pay (*This is St George's*)

3. About the payment

How often are the payments to be made Weekly Two weekly Four weekly Monthly
 Quarterly Half yearly Yearly

Amount details
Date and amount of first payment (please allow 3 working days for receipt)

Date and amount of ongoing payments (If different from the first payment)

Choose one of the following two options
 1. **Date and amount of final payment**

2. **Until further notice** (payments will be made until you cancel this instruction)

4. Confirmation

Customer signature(s)

.....

Date

Please use this form to assist you in setting up a Standing Order. This form is available at the back of the church; please speak to a Churchwarden.

PARISH NOTICES

Easter Vestry - 2025

Please note, the **Easter Vestry will be held on Sunday, 6th April at 1:00pm** after the morning service. There will be a sandwich lunch before the meeting.

Soup and Cheese Lunch - A Date for your Diary

The Parish Lenten Soup and Cheese lunch this year will take place on **Sunday, 23rd March** in the Parish Hall following the 11:00am Eucharist. **The Lenten charity chosen for our support is JMECA** (The Jerusalem and the Middle East Church Association) which is a UK-based charity. Its sole purpose is to support the Province of the Episcopal (Anglican) Church in Jerusalem & the Middle East and the Province of Alexandria, which includes the Al-Ahli Arab Christian Hospital in Gaza. The Rector will request that any donation we make would be earmarked for the vital work undertaken at the hospital.

Genocide in Sudan

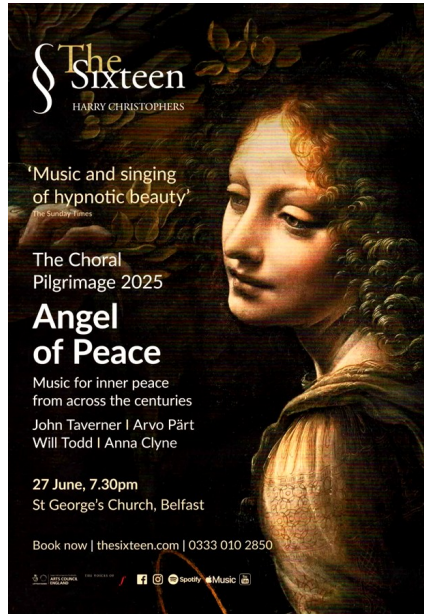
Sudan has been at war for decades. Since the most recent escalation of the conflict began in April 2023:

- i. 30.4 million people are in need of humanitarian support – near doubling in the past 18 months.
- ii. 14.6 million people have been forcibly displaced – making this the world's worst displacement crisis.
- iii. More than 25 million people are going hungry, with 775,000 suffering 'catastrophic food insecurity' – meaning people are dying daily from starvation.

Sudanese peacebuilders have been calling for the declaration of genocide by the global community for nearly two years. Now they need real, decisive action.

Eleanor Maynard

PARISH NOTICES



The Sixteen
HARRY CHRISTOPHERS

'Music and singing
of hypnotic beauty'
The Sunday Times

The Choral
Pilgrimage 2025






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MANY HAPPY RETURNS

To: Billy McArthur
and Betty Flynn

From: Us All

ALL THAT MATTERS

by Paul McLaughlin



I picked potatoes, stooped over in a Hopalong Cassidy “sloppy Joe” tee-shirt and baggy, khaki shorts, with the July sun over my head and my seven-year-old brother at my shoulder. He laughed as he scraped the burnt, brown soil from the spuds to reveal navy-blue fists of balls that shone like crystal.

“They’re beautiful”, he said, angling his head to mine and keeping the laugh in his voice; “Like Grannie’s Christmas decorations”.

His words tailed off happily as he dropped the blue-skins into the Hessian bag at his feet and forged ahead of me in a parallel furrow, humming to himself and the broad green leaves that brushed his cheek as he rose and dipped like a pecking cockerel.

I felt the ache in my spine and the earth under my fingernails, my hands ruddied with the week of sun and the flaking clay. I rubbed it between fingers and thumbs like the Warhorse tobacco that Mr Cunningham, our elderly neighbour, pared from a brownish, black block with his tortoiseshell penknife before filling his ancient pipe and watched as the brown and beige bits and blobs of heavy loam fell back to earth.

“Everything returns to the ground”, said Brother Maher our Physics master, “Everything that ever was, from the day God created it, is still with us, but first of all it goes into the ground”. He’d said it was the big law of Physics and the law must always be obeyed, especially God’s law.

My understanding of those laws, whether God’s or Isaac Newton’s, was as empty as the drills that stretched long and straight behind the heels of my mutton dummies and my ignorance as clear as the wide sky that sellotaped itself to the sea in a shimmering horizon far beyond the lighthouse at Cranfield point.

“Dinner hour, dinner hour” shouted Missus Digney from the half-door of the whitewashed cottage, as she rang an old, school handbell in time with her calling. Her voice was of the country with its lumbering vowels and consonants as round as the underbelly of Buttercup the milk cow. A voice that sounded sleepy and unrushed even in a temper, a voice that was to us as strange as it was familiar.

We ate boiled potatoes, “Like balls of flour these are”, she said, from biscuit coloured bowls with spoons that felt as big as shovels in our little soft, city hands and washed them down with cloying, creamy milk that had never seen a bottle.

“Good work this morning boys” she said, the crusty milk glistening on the shy line of silver hair on her upper lip and crinkling as she spoke;

“Your Daddy tells me your people were from Donegal. Sure, nobody is from the city at all, don’t you know.”

My brother laughed the innocent chortle of the peasant and rubbed the remains of his meal from his mouth with exaggeration. I watched as Missus Digney lit her clay pipe with a spill from the fire and sat back contentedly in the bleached discomfort of the high-backed, wooden kitchen chair.

Gypo, the border collie, the black and white waves of his coat catching the shafts of sunlight that broke through one window, chose a spot half in and half out of the beams and settled on the coolness of the large square-sets that floored the entire room. His sigh, after a meal of mashed oats and potatoes, was the sound of contentment itself. A morning’s work done to perfection, sheep who knew their master grazing peacefully in the meadow, a top-dog having his day. But Gypo was an old fraud. The sheep had been sold that Spring at the market in Ballynahinch to pay for the one hundred one things that would keep Missus Digney’s body and daily communicant’s soul together for another few years.

Daddy had told us that the old woman, with her dead husband and both sons buried under a simple marker in the hill cemetery at Mass Forth chapel, would need two strong men to harvest her potato crop and, despite his advice that “You must never volunteer for anything”, he smiled like a successful recruiting sergeant when my brother and I had shot up our arms and begged for the jobs.

Two days of back-break and badly sung Beatle songs later, we had cleared the Digney field. The furrows lay as empty as Our Lord’s tomb on Easter Sunday. Bare like open wounds to the salt winds that blew across the one square acre from the dunes and beach and bitter tides to the east. Fierce battalions of purple-Busbied thistles stood guard at its edges, shifting from foot to foot as the breeze became a wind and then a gale, their heads bending and unbending in a dance of survival, their rhythm unbroken despite the swirls and eddies of an unseen music.

Gorse and best, butter-yellow crocus, prickly and bad tempered shared their ranks like unwelcome regiments, breaking the wind into gusting slivers and standing firm like a vanguard. Even the murderous crows who cawed away the hours like wild cuckoo clocks refused to sit with them.

“We’ll have to get you fellas paid”, said Missus Digney, walking to the oak fireboard, her bedroom slippers tired and dragging in little shuffling steps.

“No Missus,” I heard myself say; “My Daddy says that the big bag of spuds you gave us is more than enough.”

She smiled, directly under the glass-framed, sepia photograph of a

man in a naval uniform that was anchored firmly to the fireplace wall.

“Your dad is an old navy man himself and knows well that every sailor loves a wee treat.”

She placed the Free State sixpence, with the coursing greyhound facing upward, in my hand and then another in my brother’s and closed each with a warm and gentle finality that ended any argument.

“Get up before Eddie’s shop closes and spend that silver on yourselves – right now”.

We ran to the redbrick bungalow at the crossroads, where two lanes no wider than a Morris Minor encountered their own self-importance, our arms waving like wild men who shout to hear themselves, thinking of brightly coloured paper wrappers and the shinning, silver that insulated the dark smell and sweetness of chocolate.

The blue balls of flour were forgotten, the tired limbs revived, the old dog, the years cast aside, bounding ahead and expectant.

Brother Maher’s words would be remembered, of course. Unfortunately, not at the Physics exam where law-breaking took on a new dimension, but rather, twenty years later, under a July sky, facing the four distinct fonts on a simple family marker in a hill cemetery that had grown twenty more crops of grass.

I held tightly to my son’s hand and remembered. “Everything that was, remains with us, but first it goes back into the ground”, old Maher had said, “That’s all that matters in the end.”

WHEN MY LOVE TO CHRIST GROWS WEAK
BY THE LATE BILLY ADAIR

WHEN MY LOVE TO CHRIST GROWS WEAK”

John R. Wreford (1800-1881) and Samuel Longfellow (1819-1892)

At the beginning of the month of March, will have entered another season of Lent.

Unquestionably the Lenten hymns are the least popular in the entire book and the least known. It is perhaps even more surprising that in many Parish Churches they are largely ignored and seldom sung.

In one of my earliest appointments I was soundly berated by a visiting parson for having nothing but Lenten hymns on the list—and remember, it was Lent! He argued we Christians were lighting a war and suggested “Soldiers of Christ, Arise” or other equally militant hymns as being more appropriate. I pointed out that even soldiers got tired and needed to prepare for the next battle and Lent (with its appropriately helpful hymns) was the Church’s opportunity for rest and preparation, it was not a question of deserting the army, but of being the better equipped for the fight. I fancy I won that round!

A Lenten hymn largely used in the C of E, but almost unknown in the C of I is No. 117, “When my faith to Christ grows weak”, against which you may be surprised to find the names of two authors.

The original hymn was written by John R Wreford and appeared in the Unitarian Book of 1837. In that particular form it was not considered good enough for inclusion in Hymn Books of other denominations till Samuel Longfellow, recognising its merits, re-wrote it and in its present improved form, it got into several of the better- class books.

The Rev John R Wreford, DD was born in Barnstaple in 1809 and after a spell at Manchester College, York, entered the Unitarian Ministry. He became colleague-minister of the New Meeting, Birmingham in 1826, but 5 years later had to resign owing to voice failure. He opened a school at Edgbaston and wrote several books of devotional verse. It is interesting to recall that while Wreford was writing these hymns and poems, another great churchman, Cardinal Newman, was also busily engaged on his writings at the Oratory he had founded at Edgbaston. Dr Wreford’s latter years were spent in retirement at Bristol where he died in 1881.

The Rev Samuel Longfellow, MA, who re-wrote this hymn was born in Portland, Maine, and spent all his life as a Unitarian minister in the U.S.A. He was a younger brother of the famous poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, and himself wrote several hymns, including No. 406, “Holy, Spirit, Truth Divine.”

1. "When my faith in Christ grows weak.
When for deeper faith I seek,
Then in thought I go to thee,
Garden of Gethsemane.

2. There I walk amid the shades,
While the lingering twilight fades,
See that suffering, friendless One
Weeping, praying there alone.”

The end of a well-known song runs; "One Is nearer God's heart in a garden, than anywhere else on earth" and it contains at least an element of truth.

Nearing the end of the drama, our Lord left his three closest friends Peter, James and John to watch whilst He went into the Garden of Gethsemane to pray and plead with His Father. We get a glimpse of this scene in the Gospels where we read that he prayed so earnestly that the sweat dripped off him like great drops of blood. (How many intercedes for others like that?) The hymnwriter invites us to go in thought back to that awful scene and to witness what love of sin and lack of love and weakness of faith cost the Son of God. So, each year, on Maundy Thursday from 9:00pm until midnight a little band keeps this watch of the Passion in the Chapel at St Mark's, Dundela - a chapel decorated to represent that same Garden, and there try to visualise the suffering, weeping, friendless, praying Saviour of the World. An evangelistic chorus puts these feelings this way:

*O make me understand it,
Help me to take it in,
What It meant to Thee, the Holy One,
To bear away my sin.*

3. When my love for man grows weak,
When for stronger faith I seek,
Hill of Calvary I go
To thy scenes of fear and woe.
4. There behold his agony,
Suffered on the bitter tree:
See His anguish, see His Faith,
Love triumphant still in death.

Here is a much needed reminder. Love should be twofold, firstly to God, then to man. In the Ulster situation in 1974, perhaps more than ever we pick and choose the sections of our society in whom we wish to interest ourselves. Sometimes we are so intent in condemning the I.R.A. and the "Catholics" in general or the bombers and murderers from whichever side they operate, that we forget entirely the poor and the old and the lonely who so desperately need help and compassion. But on Calvary's Cross none were forgotten or left out or overlooked. Christ died for the ungodly and that pretty well covers the lot!

Every time we come to the Blessed Sacrament and kneel at the altar rails, we are really at the foot of the Cross on Calvary's Hill. Each time we receive the Sacred Elements we receive Christ, His Body broken, His Blood outpoured, and in addition His power of His Holy Spirit to see Him more clearly, to love Him more dearly and follow Him more nearly day by day. With that goes the power to carry out the equally difficult task of loving our neighbour as ourselves, for the love of God invariably overflows into love for His creatures, our fellows.

5. Then to life I turn again
Learning all the worth of pain,
Learning all the might that lies
In a full self-sacrifice.
6. And I praise with firmer faith
Christ, who vanquished pain and death;
And to Christ, enthroned above
Raise my song of selfless love.

It is much easier to be light-hearted and happy when the sun is shining and it is easier to feel "good" in the atmosphere of the Holy Communion. If only we could retain this feeling and transpose it into daily life. On the Mount of Transfiguration Peter, James and John felt just the same. They had seen Jesus in all His Glory and here on the mountain top, so near to God, they wanted to remain. It was not to be so, for their real work was in the plain down below where pain and sickness was already awaiting the Master. This hymn is saying so it is with us. We may watch with Him in the Garden and kneel at the foot of His Cross but then we must turn again to life, and to all that life means in the world, having heard Him pray in the Garden and having seen Him suffer and die on the tree, we learn what love and self-sacrifice really is and means. It is then our task to put His wonderful example into practice in our worship and daily living.

In the Christ we see One who is not only Victim but Victor, One who is enthroned above and who ever lives and intercedes for us in Heaven.

W.A.

THE CANDLE INDOORS - By Gerard Manley Hopkins

Some candle clear burns somewhere I come by.
I muse at how its being puts blissful back
With yellowy moisture mild night's blear-all black,
Or to-fro tender trambeams truckle at the eye.
By that window what task what fingers ply,
I plod wondering, a-wanting, just for lack
Of answer the eagerer a-wanting Jessy or Jack
There God to aggrandise, God to glorify.

Come you indoors, come home; your fading fire
Mend first and vital candle in close heart's vault:
You there are master, do your own desire;
What hinders? Are you beam-blind, yet to a fault
In a neighbour deft-handed? Are you that liar
And, cast by conscience out, spendsavour salt?

Submitted by Geoffrey May



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MUSIC LIST March 2025

Sunday 2nd March **Transfiguration** **The Sunday before Lent**

11:00am Choral Eucharist **Parish Choir**

Processional Hymn 271
Setting Stanford in Bb and F
Psalm 99
Gradual Hymn 494
Offertory Hymn 343
Communion Hymn 296
Motet O nata lux - *Tallis*
Recessional Hymn 377

5:00pm Choral Evensong **Parish Choir**

Responses Rose
Setting Stanford in C
Psalm 89: 5-12
Motet Jubilate Deo - *Britten*
Hymns 494, 436

Wednesday 5th March **Ash Wednesday**

7:30pm Choral Eucharist, Order 1 **Parish Choir**

See separate booklet

Setting Mass for 5 voices - *Byrd*
Anthem Wash me thoroughly - *Wesley*

Sunday 9th March **First Sunday of Lent**

11:00am Choral Eucharist **Parish Choir**

Processional Hymn 67
Setting Byrd Five Part Mass
Psalm 91: 1-2, 9-16
Gradual Hymn 70
Offertory Hymn 385
Communion Hymn 296 (Tune 1)
Motet Ave verum - *Byrd*
Recessional Hymn 383

MUSIC LIST March 2025

Sunday 9th March

First Sunday of Lent
Choral Scholars

5:00pm Choral Evensong

Responses	Plainchant
Setting	Moore 2nd Service
Psalm	119: 73-88
Anthem	In Pace - <i>Lassus</i>
Hymns	216,74

Sunday 16th March

2nd Sunday in Lent
Parish Choir

11:00am Choral Eucharist

Processional Hymn	343
Setting	Little organ mass - <i>Haydn</i>
Psalm	27
Gradual Hymn	238
Offertory Hymn	159
Communion Hymn	292
Anthem	Deep river - <i>Tippett</i>
Recessional Hymn	413

5:00pm Choral evensong

Chamber Choir

Responses	Ayleward
Canticles	Gibbons short service
Psalm	135: 1-14
Anthem	The Spirit of the Lord - <i>Elgar</i>
Hymn	200, 368

Sunday 23rd March

3rd Sunday in Lent
Parish Choir

11:00am Eucharist

Processional Hymn	148
Setting	Collegium Regale - <i>Howells</i>
Psalm	63: 1-9
Gradual Hymn	234
Offertory Hymn	76
Communion Hymn	276
Anthem	God so loved the world - <i>Stainer</i>
Recessional Hymn	473

Sunday 23rd March

5pm Choral Eucharist

Setting Merbecke
Hymns 339, 234, 94

3rd Sunday in Lent

Mens' voices

Sunday 30th March

Mothering Sunday

4th Sunday in Lent

11:00am Choral Eucharist

Parish choir

Processional Hymn 185
Setting Darke in F
Psalm 32
Gradual Hymn 480
Offertory Hymn 63
Communion Hymn 275
Motet Ave Maris Stella - *Elgar*
Recessional Hymn 336

5:00pm Choral Evensong

St George's SSA

In place of Compline

A Lenten meditation with readings and music. Works by Gibbons, Brahms, Pergolesi et al

CALENDAR March 2025

Mar 2

THE SUNDAY BEFORE LENT

9:30 am

Eucharist: Rev'd Terence Dunlop

11.00 am

Choral Eucharist: Rev'd Keith Suckling

Preacher: Rev'd Keith Suckling

Readings: Exodus 34: 29-35; 2 Corinthians 3: 12 – 4: 2;
Luke 9: 28-36

Reader: *Wardens*

Intercessor: *Pam Tilson*

Servers: *Jonny Calder, Steven McQuitty, Tony Merrick*

Tea and Coffee: *Eleanor, Catherine Hunter*

5.00 pm

Choral Evensong: Rev'd Terence Dunlop

Lessons: Exodus 3: 1-6; John 12: 27-36a (*Janet Sandikli*)

Mar 5

ASH WEDNESDAY

10:30am

Eucharist & Imposition of Ashes: Rev'd Keith Suckling

1:00pm

Eucharist & Imposition of Ashes: Rev'd Graeme Pollock

7:30pm

Eucharist & Imposition of Ashes: Rev'd Terence Dunlop

Mar 9

THE FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT

9:30 am

Eucharist: The Rector

11.00 am

Choral Eucharist: The Rector

Preacher: The Rector

Readings: Deuteronomy 26: 1-11; Romans 10: 8b-13;
Luke 4: 1-13

Reader: *Janet Sandikli*

Intercessor: *Fr Tom Layden*

Servers: *Agape Laoye, Janet Sandikli, Mark Claney*

Tea and Coffee: *Valerie Roberts, Holly Ferres, Shanin Bahreini*

5.00 pm

Choral Evensong: The Rector

Lessons: Jonah 3; Luke 18: 9-14 (*Geoffrey May*)

Mar 12

10:30am

Eucharist: The Rector

Mar 16

THE SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT

9:30 am

Eucharist: The Rector

11.00 am

Choral Eucharist: The Rector

Preacher: The Bishop

Readings: Genesis 15: 1-12, 17-18; Philippians 3: 17 – 4:
1; Luke 13: 31-35

Reader: *Anne McBride*

Intercessor: *Janet Sandikli*

Servers: *Omolewa Akinyele, Agape Laoye, Tony Merrick*

Tea and Coffee: *Brenda Claney, Judith Fawcett*

CALENDAR March 2025

Mar 16

THE SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT

5.00 pm

Choral Evensong: The Rector
Lessons: Jeremiah 22: 1-9, 13-17; Luke 14: 27-33
(*Eleanor Maynard*)

Mar 19

10:30am

Eucharist: The Rector

Mar 23

THE THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT

9:30 am

Eucharist: The Rector

11.00 am

Choral Eucharist: The Rector
Preacher: The Rector
Readings: Isaiah 55: 1-9; 1 Corinthians 10: 1-13;
Luke 13: 1-9
Reader: *Brenda Claney*
Intercessor: *Janice Carruthers*
Servers: *Banji Akinyele, Mark Claney, Jonny Calder*
Tea and Coffee: *Yvonne Doherty, Linda McConnell*
Choral Eucharist: The Rector
Lessons: Ephesians 5: 1-14; Luke 11: 14-28 (*Paddy Sloan*)

5.00 pm

Mar 26

10:30am

Eucharist: The Rector

Mar 27

1:00pm

Eucharist: The Rector & Fr Graeme Pollock
The Walsingham Group meets at this Eucharist – all welcome

Mar 30

THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT

9:30 am

Eucharist: The Rector

11.00 am

Choral Eucharist: The Rector
Preacher: The Rector
Readings: Joshua 5: 9-12; 2 Corinthians 5: 16-21;
Luke 15: 1-3, 11b-32
Reader: *Paul McLaughlin*
Intercessor: *The Rector*
Servers: *Banji Akinyele, Jonny Calder, Tony Merrick*
Tea and Coffee: *Keith Suckling, Steven McQuitty*

5.00 pm

Choral Evensong: The Rector
In place of Compline, there will be a **Lenten Meditation** with readings and music. Works by Gibbons, Brahms, Pergolesi et al.

POETS CORNER

DOPPELGÄNGER

My twin
if I had one
identical
or a doppelgänger
confusingly alike
my twin or mirror image
could make life easier for me
joking on TV
putting up with draughts
lugging books about
cooking
practising
In exchange
he could acknowledge applause
reap rewards titles decorations
be recognised in the street
charm ladies
smile coyly
or exude optimism
One would need
to keep him happy though
lest he steal my socks
overdraw my account
blurt out my secrets
or even
try his hands at Beethoven sonatas
Heaven forbid
he might even
drive people like me
out of business

Alfred Brendel
(From poem collection *One finger too many*)

Submitted by Francis FitzGibbon

ENDPIECE by Jeffrey Johnston

GLADYS AYLWARD, PARLOUR MAID, MISSIONARY IN CHINA, WAR HERO.

Gladys was born in north London. She left school when 14 and went into service in one of the big houses in Belgravia. Her main duty among others as parlour maid was to serve afternoon tea to the family and visitors. However in her teenage years she developed a very different ambition, - to be a missionary to China.

After some ten years in service, she discovered that the Chinese Inland Mission College was seeking students to train for service in China. She was delighted to apply, was accepted and found that the studies were based mainly on the Chinese language. Sadly, after three months of study, the college Principal called her in and told her his staff felt that she had not made the progress expected. She was not suitable for the training they offered.

Gladys was not daunted by this setback. A week or two later she went into a travel agent. She asked the elderly clerk two questions: what did a train journey across Europe to Vladivostok cost and could she pay the amount weekly? He said the cost was £47.50 and, though it was unusual, she could pay it off weekly. However, he added, the line was no longer viable because of an undeclared war between China and Russia.

Over the next year Gladys made a weekly payment to the travel clerk. So in October 1930 having bought her ticket, Gladys set off from Liverpool Street station on a journey that would take her on the Trans-Siberian Railway. It was a journey full of hazards. As she travelled through Russia, she found there were fewer civilians and more soldiers on the train. Then a station inspector put her off the train because the next station, he said, was a war zone.

She diverted south, only to be detained in a hotel by Russians, who wished to force her to become a factory worker of which there was a shortage in soviet state. With the help of a girl who befriended her, she was able to evade the Russians and was put in touch with a Japanese sea captain. He was willing to take her, without any fare, as a passenger to the east coast of Japan. From there a train brought her to Kobe. From there a steamship took her after a three-day trip to Tientsin. At Tientsin there was a large mission. They provided her with a guide who would take her the rest of her journey into the wild and mountainous area of Shansi, where Mrs Lawson

had a small mission. The journey took nearly a month. It began on trains and ancient buses but could only be completed by many days' travel by mule on mountain tracks.

When Gladys reached Shansi she joined an older missionary, Jeannie Lawson, who she was to work with. They decided they needed to earn some money so as to be self-sufficient.

To do this they opened an Inn to accommodate the muleteers and mules that passed their home every day on a busy trail. They called it the Inn of the Eight Happinesses. They waited for customers but few came, until they took advice from Yang, their cook. He ran out to the main trail, grabbed the first mule he saw by the bridle and dragged it into their courtyard and other mules followed. The mules had carried their load all day and now they wanted fed, watered and rested. Once a mule was in a courtyard, nothing would get it back on the trail, so they and muleteers stayed. Now they had customers.

So the Inn prospered and a custom grew up that Gladys was happy with; after her guests had supper they were content to hear stories from the Bible that she told them.

Sadly, after Gladys was some months in Yangcheng Jeannie, her colleague, had a fall and died, leaving Gladys on her own.

Shortly afterwards, a surprising development; she had a visit from the Mandarin. He had heard of her and wanted to appoint her his foot-inspector. For generations in China, the custom had been to bind young girls' feet, to make them small so the girls would be more marriageable. The result was women grew up with deformed and painful feet. The government had decided to ban the custom. The Mandarin gave her authority to visit all the villages in the mountains in his area to inspect girls' feet. She would unbind any feet that she found bound. Two soldiers would go with her as bodyguards. This gave Gladys a golden opportunity to visit many villages, tell Bible stories and spread the Christian faith wherever she went.

(To be continued.)

