



ST. PANCRAS CHURCH



## St Pancras Newsletter – Summer 2022

*Dear friends,*

**Warm greetings from St Pancras this summer. We're experiencing record-breaking heatwaves, tennis players were back at Wimbledon (some of them), and the summer barbecues are happening again (mostly). At St Pancras we've been glad to host a number of events. Read on and you'll see some glorious photos from the Platinum Jubilee celebrations and our first wedding since the beginning of the pandemic. These summer photographs are helpful reminders to me to give thanks and to pray for the people in them. I hope this summer provides each of you with some similar photos.**

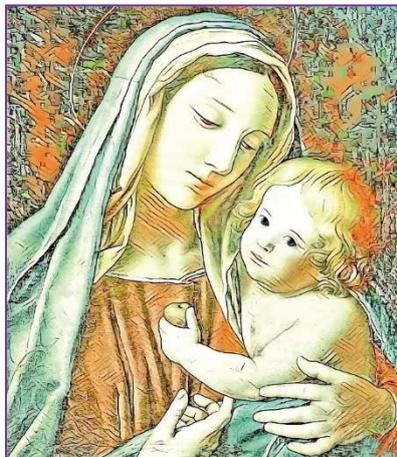
I sometimes wish that we had photographs of people and events in the Bible. Wouldn't it be amazing to have pictures of the great moments of the parting of the Red Sea or the feeding of the five thousand on the living room wall? What a reminder for thankfulness and prayer!

We don't have photos, but we do have some wonderful scenes painted in words for us in the Bible. At a recent conference, bishop Emma Ineson spoke of three of these each involving a different Mary and Jesus. The name Mary was, and remains, a very popular girl's name across the Middle East, so it's not surprising that there were so many Marys connected with Jesus.

Picture the first scene, which involves Mary of Nazareth. A young girl, on the edge of becoming a woman, Mary was very ordinary and came from nowhere important. 'A nobody from nowhere', as bishop Emma put it. But God seeks out Mary, sending an angel to speak with her. Many of the painters who have painted the encounter, imagine Mary involved in the ordinary household tasks of washing and cleaning. The angel speaks of God's loving favour and promises toward her. And Mary is willing to say 'yes' to God, even when she is uncertain

of what that will mean. Perhaps keep that as the first image in your mental photo album.

The second Mary comes from the village of Bethany. Bishop Emma described this Mary as a 'bit of a show-off', always wanting to be in at the centre of the action wherever Jesus was. She was willing to cause a bit of a stir, doing things that women in her time wouldn't normally do. In this scene she is sitting at the feet of Jesus, talking and listening to him, in the way that was normally expected just of male disciples. Jesus doesn't shoo her away, instead he jokes with her exasperated sister Martha (who's busy making everyone welcome and getting the food ready), that Mary has chosen the best portion. It's a bustling homely scene, with the presence and words of Jesus bringing life and joy.



The third Mary is Mary the Magdalene. She is standing in a garden cemetery with tears of grief and loss streaking her face. An empty rock tomb lies behind her and she is just turning as she hears someone speaking her name. She is in the moment of recognising that it is Jesus, and that he is alive and not dead as she supposed. Bishop Emma suggested that Mary's nickname 'the Magdalene' is probably not a reference to a particular place, but a general reference to 'a tower'. Mary became 'a tower' among the early Christians, witnessing to her community about the living Jesus.

In a wonderful way, each of these Marys are part of our family photo album, when we are adopted into God's family through faith. Just as we look back on photos from this summer with fondness. Just as we share photos on our phones of children and grandchildren, let's keep pondering and enjoying the portraits of God's faithfulness in the Scriptures.

Every blessing in Jesus Christ,

*Lawrence*



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# ANNOUNCEMENT

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**James Grier has been named as the next Anglican Bishop of Plymouth. James grew up in Plymouth, worshipping with his family at Tamerton Foliot, before studying theology at university. After serving as a minister in Oxford and Birmingham, James came to Devon to establish a church for unchurched teenagers in Exeter. Most recently he has served in the Diocese of Exeter as mission enabler. James is married to Liz, who is a musician and an academic, and is also training for ordination in the church. They have two sons, Joshua and Toby.**



Speaking ahead of the announcement James said: "I cannot think of a greater privilege than to become the Bishop of Plymouth.

"For so many Plymothians, Plymouth always holds a very special place in our hearts which you never lose, wherever you live. I can't quite believe that I will be returning home to Plymouth as bishop.

"I look forward to playing my part in expressing the love of Jesus at a time of difficulty and uncertainty for so many.

"The church may face many challenges, but I believe that now is a time for renewed faith, deeper prayer and continued serving. Christ

offers hope, transformation and healing which is good news for us all.

"I look forward to supporting church leaders and members. I commit to love and serve the people of this wonderful part of Devon, both within and outside the church, and to pray for them."

James succeeds Nick McKinnel, who is retiring as Bishop of Plymouth after 42 years of ordained ministry. A farewell service for Bishop Nick will be held at Exeter Cathedral on 24 July at 3pm.

James will be consecrated as a bishop at Southwark Cathedral on 29 September, with an installation service at Exeter Cathedral on 9 October.



**FROM ARCHDEACON NICK:  
SEEKING NEW HOSTS FOR  
UKRAINIAN REFUGEES**

**We are now beginning to run low on hosts in towns and cities and we would be pleased to recruit more hosts from across Devon. We have another issue that we are coming across: large extended families.**

We are now trying to find host families in the same community so we can split these large extended families across 2 or 3 hosts. We are therefore interested in any such local clusters in villages, towns or cities whether or not they are "signed up" to the Diocesan scheme at the moment. We continue to welcome guests to the UK and are very busy online trying to find suitable matches. Thank you for your continued generosity. To contact the team please email [ukraine@exeter.anglican.org](mailto:ukraine@exeter.anglican.org)



## PLATINUM JUBILEE COMMUNITY LUNCH

Here are some pictures from the Sunday lunch to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee of Her Majesty the Queen. Thank you to all those who worked tirelessly to decorate the hall and church (especially Kerrie and Vanessa), thank you to all those who brought so much food, and thank you to those who laboured in the kitchens (especially Kayleigh, Hettie, Stacey, Phil and Kerrie). Thanks to Mariska for helping to organise everyone, and especially a big thank you to you all for coming and making it such a good afternoon. Congratulations to Shirley for winning first prize in the cake decorating contest.





**Congratulations to Capt. Phil Baul and Kerrie Willmott licensed as Church Wardens for St Pancras.**

The licensing took place at St James the Less (Ham Drive) during the Archdeacon's visitation for all those elected as Church Wardens for 2022. For St Pancras we would like to thank Phil and Kerrie and we offer our prayers for them and others across the churches of Plymouth as they take on their responsibilities.



July '22 - Kerrie on her Midnight Walk in aid of St Luke's.

*Congratulations to Sarah Sharland as she starts her new role as priest-in-charge of the Appleshaw Benefice in Hampshire. Her licensing service for this new appointment took place at the Church of St Peter and St Paul, Kimpton, on the 11<sup>th</sup> July with a number of the St Pancras congregation attending this special event.*



Sarah is now the vicar for the churches of Appleshaw, Kimpton, Fyfield, Thruxton and Shipton Bellinger. She was such a blessing to all of us at St Pancras and we send her our heartfelt best wishes in her new role.



# SUMMER OF LOVE FEAST OF FUN

Over the summer we are hosting Feast of Fun events each Wednesday morning from 9.30am-12.30pm (and 9am-1pm on the 31<sup>st</sup> August). There are family games, prayer and craft activities based around the Psalms. The TLC Café and Community Larder remain open, and Plymouth Argyle Community Trust are providing some keep fit training. All are welcome and please contact Lawrence, Mariska or Duncan for more details or if you'd like to be involved.



## St Pancras Sunday Survey

This survey is to help us establish our patterns of Sunday worship after COVID. Please complete it and return it to one of the leadership team or the church office. If you have any questions or concerns please don't hesitate to talk to one of the church council.

**1. What do you enjoy most about Sundays at St Pancras?**

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**2. What would you change so that you felt you could regularly invite family members or friends to Sunday services at St Pancras?**

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**3. As we look to start sharing Holy Communion together again, would you prefer that we use (please circle one)**

(A) one shared communion cup      (B) individual cups      (C) Don't mind

**4. For refreshments after the service, would you prefer that we:**

(A) return to the Church Lounge      (B) remain in the Church Hall      (C) Don't mind

**5. For our All Age Celebrations at the beginning of the month: what do you enjoy? And what would you like to change?**

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**6. To what extent do you agree with the following statements:**

'I can hear clearly what is being said in church'

(A) All the time      (B) Most of the Time      (C) Sometimes      (D) Hardly at all

'I can see clearly what's on the screens'

(A) All the time      (B) Most of the Time      (C) Sometimes      (D) Hardly at all

*Contd...*

**7. What areas of our Sunday life would you most like to see strengthened?**

- A) Prayer Team                      B) Welcome Team                      C) Young People's Team
- D) Music Team                      E) Tea and Coffee Team                      F) Sound/Computer Team
- G) Pastoral Care Team                      H) Leading/Preaching team

**8. Please read this statement: 'I can think of a time in the last month, that God was active in my life on a Sunday morning.' Do you agree or disagree? In the space below, feel free to say more about that or to write about ways in which you would like to see God working at St Pancras.**

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**9. Any other comments about our Sunday Services that you would like to make:**

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Thank you for filling in this survey. It is an anonymous survey, but if you would like more information or have questions, please do speak to one of the leadership team.

Wedding of  
Sue and John Newell  
**Congratulations to Sue and John**  
on their wedding at St Pancras  
on 19 May 2022



## Let's Talk About God: Mystery

Duncan Hollands continues our series asking who God is, in 300 words or less

What is God like? As you imagine him, what sorts of feelings come to the surface? Does he seem cold? Rigid? Stale? Perhaps he is earnest and kind but not particularly interesting, not someone that you feel like there's much more to find out about or that it would be worth getting to know much better?

If so then you, like me, might have a mystery-line problem.

**Deuteronomy 29:29 says, "The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our children for ever, that we may follow all the words of this law".**

So, there are some things that God has revealed, and there are some things that he hasn't. We might call the line that separates his revelation from what is left to mystery the "mystery line."

How soon in questions about God do you have to throw up your hands and say, "It's a mystery! The Lord knows, we just need to have faith". To do that sooner may indicate humility, but it may also indicate a lack of desire to listen to all that God has revealed. The opposite error is to think that we can work out the answers to all of our questions about God and the Universe, and that there is almost nothing that we have to leave to mystery.

The truth is that God has revealed a lot to us (the Bible is a big book), but also that he himself is an unfathomable depth of wonder and beauty. If we have been given a view of God that makes spending time with him boring or uninviting, then that view of God is too small.

I hope, in the rest of this (more occasional than planned) series to restore to us a vision of God that both allows for his infinite mystery and wonder and does so responsibly - within the bounds of the revelation that he has provided.

