

A FREE magazine published by the Langley Churches for the people of Langley

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... Cont'd from p. 3

acknowledge their contribution to the security of our social fabric. ...

Although most of us have enjoyed aspects of 'the break' offered by the lockdown, such as more time with the family, enjoyment of nature and the leisure to catch up on tasks left 'for later', let us continue to remember those who are finding isolation a very lonely experience, those who are locked down with people whom they fear, and young people who are longing for time with their friends and so forth. And let us enjoy the roses and other flowers of early summer!

Anna Thomas-Betts

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Stay at Home?

It would seem that Staying at Home was the easy part! Lifting the restrictions and getting the 'economy moving again' would seem to take the wisdom of Solomon. Of course we are not in it alone, with so many other countries struggling to achieve the same end. Part of the problem is that the government was so successful in its message in the earlier phase that we are all very scared deep down in our hearts of catching the disease.

There clearly are existential questions that spring to mind: 'stay at home or not stay at home' seems to many of us as coming down to the question of 'to be or not to be'. When wrestling with that question myself, two headlines I have seen recently have been helpful to me: 'Lives or livelihoods?' and 'Man does not die by Covid alone'.

I can't but help feeling deep sympathy for government ministers who have to make decisions on our behalf in a totally uncharted territory, with disastrous consequences when a decision goes wrong, or is not taken at the right moment, consequences such as the tragedy that struck care homes and community care.

One thing pretty well everyone agrees on is that the world needs a reliable vaccine to combat Covid19. Testing and tracing is vitally important to get the economy moving again, but without a vaccine that makes us resistant to being infected, those of us who are in the vulnerable group will remain vulnerable.

I once again salute all our key workers, NHS staff and care workers to transport workers, food suppliers and delivery drivers, and our council workers who keep our environment clean. And security staff, who have suffered an enormous death toll. We don't always

News from Around Langley





Unfortunately the AGM planned for June has had to be postponed. As more news becomes available, we shall publish it here and on the LNF website:

www.langleyforum.org/. We were expecting to have a talk about the Urban Forest proposals for Langley at our June meeting. You might be interested to read a progress report on the project below.

Slough Digital Urban Forest

We hope you enjoyed reading about the Urban Forest that is coming to Slough over the next two years in the February issue of Around Langley.

We are now in the process of setting up the Climate Action Group and we are pleased to say we had a lot of interest from people from very different backgrounds. Once set up, this group will help us to create a sense of community where we can bring together people of different ages and interest from across Slough for a worthy cause.

We have also been busy developing the Digital Urban Forest project which will

demonstrate that a forest is much more than just trees.

We are planning to install sensors in the soil and tree canopies that will take regular readings of the environmental conditions and tell us how happy the trees are feeling. All the data will be uploaded to the Central Management System and become a valuable educational resource for local schools and colleges.

The forest will also become an art platform. Two well-known digital artists are already working on artistic representations of the readings taken from the urban forest that will raise awareness of climate change. We are hoping it will inspire local artists to come forward and also take this opportunity to create and exhibit their own interpretation of the Urban Forest.

We spoke to representatives from Langley community forum who came up with an excellent idea of community tree guardians who will monitor the condition of trees and take regular measurements of the environmental data. Please let us know if you would like to take part and we will get in touch when the project starts in your area.

Alisa Cukanova

Project Support Officer Environmental Services, Slough Borough Council Tel 01753 875374

VE Day - Then & Now

Friday 8th May was, most unusually, a Bank Holiday this year, transferred from the first Monday of the month to mark the 75th Anniversary of VE Day in 1945. A great variety of events were planned for the celebration around the country, but few of them could actually take place. My observance of it was limited to watching TV programmes and participating in a socially distanced street party.



Bunting in St Mary's Road

This limited celebration hardly matched the jubilation of VE Day itself, so it seemed a good moment to gather some recollections from those who were actually there:

Renee Higgins recalls being in the crowd outside Buckingham Palace and seeing the Royal Family on the balcony, and people dancing and climbing up lamp posts.

Joan Bastick celebrated by going to the cinema with a young man from work. There was relief of course at the end of hostilities, but also a sense of sadness over those who had been lost.

Ruby Trotter remembers street parties with long tables, lots of flags, and dancing to the music of accordions and banjos. There was not much food around in those days, but it was amazing how much turned up that day!

Roy Hurst, just short of his seventh birthday at the time, has vivid memories of the day: 'The street party was held in

St Mary's Road did pretty well, thanks to the efforts of one particular family; we had bunting stretched from the Red Lion to the Chestnuts pub, a sound system playing music, and tea, cake and other refreshments served on front lawns and driveways – ending at 9pm with the Queen's speech and a singalong to 'We'll meet again'.



VE Day street party – Roy Hurst is being held, top right

The Crescent, St Mary's Road, Hayes. In the evening, there was a bonfire on Botwell Common, Hayes Town, when Hitler was burned at the stake. My most vivid memory is of walking down Church Road towards Botwell Common with hundreds of people carrying blazing torches, made of a piece of wood with an old tin can on top.'

Back to today: Several people have commented how nice it was to get out of the house, however briefly, to wave and chat to their neighbours, and share a drink with them (at a distance!). It is certainly hard not to be able to get together for important occasions like this (and weddings and funerals have been especially hard hit this year). But we are learning that it is possible to have meaningful engagements in other ways. Let's hope we can keep those channels of communication and sharing open when life returns to 'normal'.

Rev. Robin Grayson

Florence Nightingale

Amidst all the celebrations for the 75th anniversary of VE day going on, it was good that a little space was found to remember Florence Nightingale whose 200th birthday was on 12th May. Quite appropriate for our times, as it was she, when she went to serve in Crimea, who instituted frequent hand-washing among those who were caring for the wounded soldiers and 'social-distancing' between the beds in the ward! It was also a tribute



to her that the emergency Coronavirus hospitals set up around the country were called 'Nightingale Hospitals'.

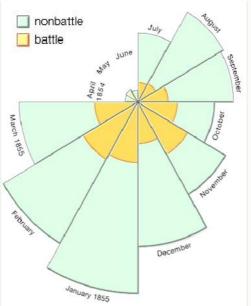
Florence was born to an affluent family and was named after the city of her birth. She was fortunate that her father, unusually for the Victorian era, believed women should be educated and taught her Italian, Latin, Greek, philosophy, history and – most unusual of all for women of the time – writing and mathematics.

Florence Nightingale was much travelled and an accomplished writer, her travel accounts showing a deep understanding of the countries she visited. In fact, it was on a visit to Greece that she felt God calling her 'to do good for him alone, without reputation'. Later she observed and was inspired by Lutheran deaconesses in Germany caring for the sick and the deprived and for several years had medical training at the Kaiserswerth institute for training deaconesses. This proved to be the foundation for her later nursing career.

She resisted offers of marriage in her youth for fear of losing her independence. Her first job was as the superintendent of the Institution for Sick Gentlewomen (governesses) in Distressed Circumstances. where her skills as an efficient administrator who improved the nursing care in the hospital, were evident. These were to become important to her in her pioneering work in the Crimean war as the superintendent of nursing.

In the early 1850s, when the Ottoman Empire and Russia were at war, Britain, fearing the expansion of the Russian Empire, sent troops to support Turkey, Crimea being the battle field at the time. The wounded British soldiers were sent back to the Scutari hospital in Istanbul, where she acquired her reputation as the 'lady with the lamp' for her visits to the hospital wards at night to comfort the sick soldiers.

She soon realised that more patients were dying because of infections acquired due to unhygienic conditions in the hospital, than because of their wounds. In addition to instituting basic hygiene routines for the nurses, she also petitioned various government bodies in London to improve sanitation in the hospital and the death rate came down



"Diagram of the causes of mortality in the army in the East" by Florence Nightingale.

dramatically. Indeed, a new, hygienic, pre-fabricated hospital was built in the Dardanelles, with death rates brought down, it was claimed, from 42% to 2%! It is interesting that Florence herself was not claiming credit for the dramatic decrease in deaths in the field hospitals.

In 1855, the Nightingale Fund was established for the training of nurses in Crimea and after her return home in 1860 she set up at St Thomas' Hospital the Nightingale Training School, now called the Florence Nightingale School of Nursing and Midwifery, part of King's College London.

Florence was very good at mathematics which was greatly beneficial to her in her analysis of the causes of death in the Scutari. We are all used these days to pie and other charts graphical representations, produced at the click of mouse by computer software. а Nightingale is described as "a true pioneer in the graphical representation of statistics", and is credited with developing a form of a circular histogram, which she called a 'coxcomb' to illustrate her findings on patient mortality.

In fact, her instinct for statistics led her to campaign for improved sanitation in very different contexts: for example, her work with the British Army in India led to her concluding that 'the health of the army and the people of India had to go hand in hand'; subsequently, her sanitary reforms were extended to rural areas as well and 10 years on, the mortality rate of the soldiers was reduced from 69 to 18 per 1,000.

It was her work with The Royal Sanitary Commission of 1868–1869 that made it compulsory for private dwellings to be connected to the main drainage system. She was also a believer in devolution! She was convinced that the sanitary reforms would be better enforced by the Local Authority, not by a centralised medical authority. This tactical move is now considered to have improved national life expectancy by 20 years in the 60 years between 1870 and 1930!

As noted earlier, her motivation in life was the call to 'do good' for God. She was a member of the Church of England, although highly critical of its attitude to the poor and what she saw as oppressive practices. In sympathy with Wesleyan tradition, she believed that active care and love of others was the true manifestation of religion.

Although devoted to Christ, she was of the view that other religions also had genuine divine revelations and abhorred any discrimination against other denominations, or religions. In her view, the ideal health professional would be inspired by a religious as well as a professional motive, as she herself was. But to her, personal salvation took second place to the professional desire to deliver the best possible care.

So, the 'lady with the lamp' was much more than a compassionate nurse, and worthy of commemoration for her contributions to many other fields: education and professionalisation of nurses, hospital administration, social reform, sanitation and public health reforms in this country and abroad, an author of around 200 books on a wide variety of subjects, an English feminist, statistician and ... the list goes on.

I wonder how many readers knew that her 'coxscomb' charts were a precursor to statistical analysis of mortality in hospitals!

Anna Thomas-Betts

Community Action – Lessons from Lockdown

I am writing in the week following the Prime Minister's message to the nation about a gradual easing of lockdown restrictions over coming months. There are many uncertainties around this process, but what is clear is that we are still in for a long haul. People have discovered blessings along the way, such as cleaner air, minimal traffic noise, clearer birdsong; the joys of cooking and gardening, the challenges of homeschooling; and a slower pace of life – for some, at least. When this is all over, will we hold on to any of those good things, or will we just go back to the old ways?

One encouraging feature of lockdown is the way people have been ready to help their neighbours. As I ring round my own list of contacts to see how people are getting on, both in the church congregation and beyond it, I often hear



Volunteering at the Slough Food Bank

of new relationships that have grown out of offers to do shopping etc.. People are 'stepping up' for now; but will that lesson of attention to the needs of others be a lasting one? And will those new relationships survive the end of lockdown?

There are many local initiatives under way, to support those in need. One family in St Mary's Road put cards through everyone's door at the start of lockdown, offering help to all their neighbours; I know that offer was especially appreciated by the many elderly residents of our Almshouses. The Langlev Churches are using their networks to identify needs and provide help, as described in the May Around Langley. Schools too are making special efforts to ensure that vulnerable children are properly cared for. What else is being done around Slough? Here are a couple of examples:

In partnership with Slough Borough Council, the **One Slough Community Response Team** is coordinating the response to needs across Slough. During April their call centre supported residents with regular food deliveries, daily welfare checks, a Wellbeing Friend or a prescription drop-off service. They received 1,130 calls: 535 for food, 163 for shopping, 94 for prescriptions, 31 for loneliness and 406 other needs.

Slough Community Transport and Shopmobility (SCTS) has changed its service during the lockdown. Where once they would transport people who couldn't use public transport to medical appointments, schools and day centres, they are now offering a food shopping and medicine collection service for Slough residents. Recent figures show that SCTS had delivered over 720 food shopping requests and 1800 medication supply requests.

Slough Council for Voluntary Services (SCVS) organise volunteers to deliver all these services. When I signed up myself as a volunteer with SCVS, I was a little disappointed, but not really surprised, being over 60, that I was not called on to rush around the town with food and medicine for the needy. Instead I am a 'Wellbeing Friend', assigned so far to a couple of older people in isolation, whom I call for a chat once a week or so.

It's not glamorous – I don't need a superhero cape, or a fast car with flashing lights, just the time, the patience, the love to spare, to listen and offer encouragement to those who are feeling low or confused. One interesting feature for me is this: I only give my first name, and don't let on that I am a clergyman. I'm so used to being identified by that role, and its expectations, it is quite liberating to be just 'Robin' on the end of a phone. And that is something anyone can do! Visit <u>sloughcvs.org/covid19/</u> to request help, to offer help, or to donate.

Slough Foodbank has recently released figures for this April: In total 687 people were helped, of whom 417 were adults and 270 were children – 2 to 3 times as many as for the same period last year. Alongside this dramatic increase in demand, many regular volunteers had to

step down as theywere in the vulnerable category. But the Foodbank has been overwhelmed by offers of help from the local community, from new volunteers, to help deliver goods and fundraising. Visit <u>https://slough.foodbank.org.uk/</u> to find out more.

Here is a directory of organisations offering help, which includes a number of faith groups: <u>sloughcvs.org/wp-content/</u> <u>uploads/2020/04/Support-services-for-</u> <u>Slough-residents200420.pdf</u>

There is so much good will around at present, being expressed in so many acts of care and kindness. Let us hope that that generous spirit persists in our community after lockdown ends!

Rev Robin Grayson



Did you Know... Where 'Chaplains' come from?

It all started with St Martin, a very popular saint in the Middle Ages! Martin was born in AD316, in a place now belonging to Hungary, but then part of a Roman Province. Even though he was drawn to Christianity, joining the church and the army was forbidden, so he joined the army in accordance with family expectations. He was posted in Amiens in France. Legend has it that while there, out on a winter's night, he saw a beggar shivering in the cold, whereupon he cut his own cloak in half with his sword and gave one half to the beggar. That night he had a vision of Christ surrounded by angels and wearing half of his cloak, telling him that he, Martin, had 'covered him with his cloak' and enfolding him in it. So he decided to be baptized to become a 'soldier of Christ', and therefore had to leave the Roman army. He spent most of his life in France and is a Patron Saint of France.

The remaining half of Martin's cloak got to be a relic and French Kings were keen that part of the relic should be taken as a banner into battle fields when they were at war. The relic had its home in a small building called 'cappella' (meaning a little cape) – from which our word 'chapel' comes from, originally buildings where relics were housed.



The priest in charge of the relic, who would carry it into the battle field, was called 'capilani'. It was a small step to go from 'capilani' to chaplain'! Now we have Chaplains in so many fields: education, police, NHS and prisons to name but a few, as well as chaplains and padres in the armed services. Most are multifaith chaplaincies these days as well.

Anna Thomas-Betts

Faith Matters

The Most Holy Trinity



The feast of the Most Holy Trinity is the celebrated on Sunday after It is a standard joke among Pentecost. the clergy that on this occasion the bishop sends a pastoral letter to be read out at the Sunday liturgy. This conveniently gives the opportunity to the presiding priest, deacon or vicar to drop the Sunday sermon, letting them off the hook and saving them from getting muddled in sorting out the three in one conundrum of the trinity. I hasten to add that I have never heard of any parishioner objecting to this supposedly convenient ruse. On the face of it, the idea of a triune God can be problematic. Indeed, it took Christianity the best part of three centuries to have it verbally formulated at the Council of Nicaea in 325 AD using the Greek concepts of nature and person to express the self-revelation of God that progressively took place in a Jewish context and tradition. The idea of three persons in one God is abhorrent to Jews and Muslims while faith in the absolute oneness of God is common to the three Abrahamic faiths. For Catholics, Orthodox and mainstream Christians, the

Trinity together with Redemption, is one of the two pillars of the Christian faith expressed every time we make the sign of the cross, in the "Glory be" prayer and at the ending of each psalm. The Catechism of the Catholic Church describes the Trinity as "the central mystery of Christian faith and life." It is baptism in the triune God that makes us Christians.

The revelation of the mystery of the Trinity is deeply rooted in the Scriptures even if this is not immediately evident. In the Old Testament God is in some sense both singular and plural. The common name of God in Hebrew is *Elohim*, a plural form. So we have God saying: "Let us create man in our image and likeness" (Genesis 1:26). The Fathers of the Church saw in this text as well as in the instance of the visit of the three men to Abraham, immortalised by Andrei "The Rublev's icon, hospitality of Abraham" (see picture overleaf), a hint of the Trinity. In the New Testament, though most vociferously rejected by the Jewish religious establishment, the Trinity emerges as the central theme of Christian revelation, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit expressly identifiable at the Annunciation, at the Baptism of Jesus and in the Paschal event from the last Supper to Pentecost. Many of Paul's letters, written before the gospels show that belief in the trinity was already



Abraham's visitors; after Rublev

present in the early communities. The mission Jesus gives to the apostles to baptise all men in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit spells out the primacy of the Holy Trinity in the Christian message.

So, to whom should we pray, the Father or the Son or the Holy Spirit or to the three together? The prayers in the liturgy are all trinitarian, addressed to the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. But we can address any one of the three persons and we do often do that spontaneously in our private prayers. It makes no difference whom we address. The experience of mystics can help us in this. St Ignatius of Loyola, a 16th century Spanish saint was once pondering on his own practice of praying to the three persons of the Trinity separately and was wondering whether this was proper, until one day he had an awakening of realization that he was seeing the Most Holy Trinity in the form of three musical keys playing in unison. As a practical guide, I would say trust your instinct, follow your heart, go with what comes to you "spontaneously". I say this because it has to be always kept in mind that in any God-creature relationship, God always has the initiative to which we may or may not respond. Another 16th century mystic, also a Spaniard, St John of the Cross, speaks of prayer, indeed of the Christian life itself as, "a call from God to share the happiness of His life: the communion of the Father and the Son in the Spirit of Love."

Alfred Agins

Around Langley

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What was special about being 'adopted' in Paul's Rome?

In his letters Paul talks several times about being adopted by God; e.g.,

The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. (Romans 8: 15; 9:4);

Therefore you are no longer a slave, but a son; and if a son, then an heir through God (Galatians 4:5);

... and In love he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ (Ephesians 1:5).

This emphasis on adoption had intrigued me because Jesus had already taught us

that we were children of God; he even asked us to pray to 'Our Father in Heaven'. So to understand Paul, we need to have some knowledge of his audience in Roman society that he was writing to.

Slavery was common practice then as we know, with around 40% of Italy's population being slaves! In the many battles won by the Roman Empire, it was common practice to take the conquered people, numbering many tens, or even hundreds of thousands, as slaves and taken to Rome to be sold on.

Slaves were the property of their owners, to be treated as they pleased: some very well and some very cruelly. They were entitled to earn and save some money, however, and they could buy their freedom. Also, they could be, and many were, granted freedom by their masters. Indeed, slaves could be freed and made



Come, O Fire and flame of divine love, and burn away all our deadly wounds; may I be cleansed by thee, that I cleanse others;

may I be enlightened by thee that I may enlighten others;

may I be set on fire by thee that I may set others on fire.

For this end thou wert sent from heaven; what else is thy will but to be kindled in us?

(Prayer to the Holy Spirit from the Dies Sacerdotalis)

'heirs' of their masters. Since heirs in those days did not have to wait till the death of their benefactors, adopted slaves would have experienced a dramatic change in status all of a sudden.

Adoption is a concept we are used to in our time, but it needs to be re-thought to understand the Roman context. A very important distinction between now and then is that adoption of adults was commonplace then. There are probably several reasons for this.

We may not be aware that in those days, in Rome, fathers could choose to 'accept' or not, their offspring, at a whim. A newborn baby would be presented to the father in a ceremony and only if the father chose to lift up the baby would the baby be accepted and brought up within the household. Horrifically, the babies who were not accepted by their fathers would be left 'out' to die—some in places where they would be found and rescued by someone, while others left exposed to the elements to die.

One explanation for this terrible practice would have been the expense of bringing up children. So adoption of those who were already adults, and therefore not having to be nurtured to adulthood expensively, would have been an attractive option in those days!

However, once adopted, that person became a permanent member of the family and could not be disowned by them. And if the adoption also involved being made an heir, he would immediately be in a position of power and wealth, because inheritance was not linked to, and delayed until, death. But with power came also responsibilities, also shared by the father and the adopted heir.

Indeed there are many examples of adoptions in the highest places, even several Roman Emperors, Hadrian, Tiberius, Caligula and Nero being among them.

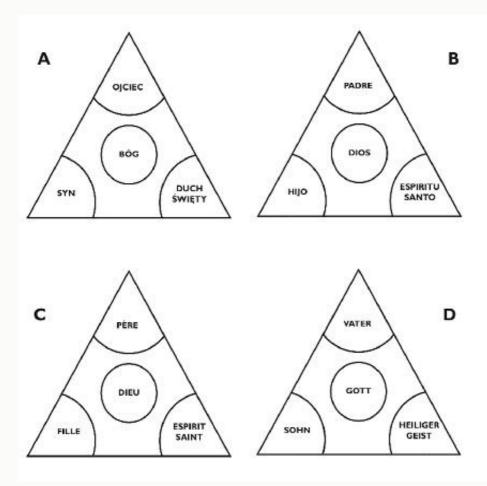
Anna Thomas-Betts

GOD has adopted us!

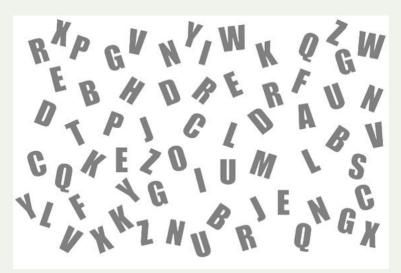
So, what is the big deal about being adopted by God? The most important element is that God has *chosen* to adopt us. He wants us to be his heirs. Through creation, we are already the children of God, but When Paul says 'you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, also an heir', by adoption he is emphasising the Fatherhood of God as someone who has desired us and chosen us to be his children. For us in the present time, there is a need to change our mindset about adoption: it is not because we were orphans, or abandoned, that we have been adopted by God, but because he wants to appoint us as his heirs.

He has, then, endowed us with the riches of his Kingdom, but as heirs and "co-heirs with Christ" (Rom 8:17) we also share the responsibility for his Kingdom. A helpful thought as we join in the global prayer initiative, 'Thy Kingdom Come'. All group activities in our churches are suspended until further notice, But here are some puzzles for Lockdown, thanks to Angus MacKenzie. (Answers on page 18)

The Holy Trinity is represented below in different languages: God, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Can you identify the languages? And can you spot a mistake?



Remove all duplicated letters from the grid below to reveal a familiar name!



Biblical Numbers: can you make sense of these?

(E.g., 39BITOT means 39 Books In The Old Testament)

- a. 10PIE
- b. PDJ3T
- c. 12 DOJ
- d. T4HOTA
- e. 9BIM5
- f. 7LTT7C

- g. 40YITW
- h. 66BITB
- i. POT10V
- j. 6DOC
- k. 70YEIB
- I. PR39L5T

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The Answers to the puzzles on pp 16 & 17

Trinity Puzzle



A-Polish B-Spanish C-French D– German

C has *fille* (daughter) instead of *fils* (son)

Hidden Name: THOMAS

Biblical Numbers

a) 10 Plagues In Egypt b) Peter Denied Jesus 3 Times c) 12 Disciples Of Jesus d) 4 Horses Of The Apocalypse e) 9 Beatitudes In Matthew 5 f) 7 Letters To The 7 Churches g) 40 Years In The Wilderness h) 66 Books In The Bible i) Parable Of The 10 Virgins j) 6 Days Of Creation k) 70 Years Exile In Babylon I) Paul Received 39 Lashes 5 Times

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