



St Hilda's
Ashford

St Hilda's News



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If you would like help or to speak to a member of the ministry team please contact:

- Parish Office Tel 01784 253525
 Email office@sthilda.org
- Father Joseph can be contacted on
 01784 254237
 www.sthilda.org

We are looking for more contributions from the St Hilda's community, if you would like to contribute, please either call, email or send an article to the Parish Office.

New Vision sets out Church of England aims for engagement with Further Education Colleges

The Church of England has launched a new Vision for Further Education, which calls for a major shift in its engagement with the sector.

The report, *Vocation, Transformation & Hope*, highlights three themes, exploring how FE makes a significant difference to people's sense of vocation, their personal transformation, and their hope for society. The high-quality skill-based education of FE is also the basis for the future development of our economy including the new technology sector and emerging services industries.



The Report notes that there are almost 2.2 million students enrolled in 168 FE Colleges, with nearly twice as many 16-18-year-olds as in school sixth-forms. The Church is nonetheless underrepresented in that sector, in contrast to its extensive links with schools and universities.

It recommends that making effective partnerships with colleges should become a core part of the Church's own planning, together with developing support for students, for community links and for chaplaincy. FE Colleges are anchor institutions for the local community, bringing people together and enriching local life.

The vision therefore challenges the Church to reimagine its support for chaplaincy provision, one of the major ways in which it says that churches have reached out to staff and students, offering pastoral care, exploring issues of faith, belief and spirituality. Chaplains play a vital role in supporting student wellbeing and mental health and walking alongside those facing grief and loss.

The report asks each diocese to look at how partnerships with local colleges can become part of its everyday thinking, exploring new collaborations and work together. It recommends that, at a national level, the Church considers the possibilities of forming a group of colleges as part of this wider collaboration.

Launching the new report, **The Bishop of Winchester, Tim Dakin, the Church of England's lead bishop for further and higher education, said:**

“Further education colleges transform the lives of individuals and train many of our nation's essential workers. They are crucial anchor institutions for communities, they cradle innovation and success, and offer new opportunities and second chances.



“We want to offer a positive vision of how the Church of England can contribute to the flourishing of further education and address our lack of systematic engagement in such an important part of our educational and social landscape.

“Our vision for further education invites and challenges church leaders to see the sector in a new light, one in which God is already actively present. It encourages appreciation of the dynamic nature of the sector, its impact upon individual lives and its valuable contributions to society.

“The vision encourages churches to affirm and speak up for those who work and learn within further education. It points to ways in which churches can take practical steps to make these aspirations a reality in a post-Covid world.

“I hope that through local diocesan engagement with FE colleges we can contribute to key issues in the sector such as mental health and wellbeing, develop lasting relationships between churches and colleges, and build a younger and more diverse church.”

The new report sits along alongside the Church of England's visions for schools and higher education, *Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good* (2016) and *Faith in Higher Education* (2020). Together, they represent a restatement of the value the Church places on education at every level, inspired by Christian faith.



“We want to offer a positive vision of how the Church of England can contribute to the flourishing of further education and address our lack of systematic engagement in such an important part of our educational and social landscape. ”

Bishop Tim Dakin

Racial Justice Advocacy Forum recommends establishment of church response teams to deal with racism

The Racial Justice Advocacy Forum (RJAF) has published a number of recommendations for churches to put into practice in response to the government's commissioned race report.

The RJAF's own report questions the conclusion of last month's Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities report that rejected the UK as an institutionally racist country. The report also highlights that the government-commissioned report didn't address reparation and distanced itself from the Windrush scandal.

The RJAF Forum comprises of representatives from various Christian institutions such as the Ascension Trust, the Baptist Union of Great Britain, Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, the Evangelical Alliance, the Methodist Church, the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), the Salvation Army, the Sam Sharpe Project, and the United Reformed Church.



Eleasah Louis, author of the RJAF report spoke to Premier about what was contained in the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities report: "Can we really say that institutional racism is not an underlying issue for many people? Has the report been done in a way that it can definitely say that, or is there more work to be done? And yeah, I just feel that it was, and RJAF feel that it was, very optimistic. It did include a lot of data. But it distanced itself from the Windrush scandal, as well. And that's something quite recent. And so although they're working with data, some of our members thought that it was cherry picked, as other entities said the same thing as well."

She added that the RJAF did welcome the report's acknowledgement that the term BAME wasn't helpful: "We welcome walking away from terms like BAME, it does brush, a broad stroke. And it doesn't really talk about the details, the finer details that come along with different ethnic groups in different locations and settings and experiences equally, the term race, and me personally, I'm quite passionate about walking away from that term, because it is the term ultimately that we've been challenging for decades now."

The RJAF's report contains three main recommendations.

Eleasah Louis said it's important churches carry out their own research: "Firstly, the report recommends that churches engage in research themselves. Some churches and church organizations are better at it than others. And also on a local level. Do ministers and pastors and leadership teams know who makes up their congregation, and how that impacts what they believe about God, how they engage with the religion, how they engage with the community and people within their church setting."

"The second main point is that churches should be continuing to engage and get clear biblical cases, for their understanding about ethnic, ethnic difference. multiculturalism, working with one another, loving one another, all those things, how do we as a church feel about racial discrimination in Britain? What is our biblical basis? How do we stand on the word? Where do we stand with it? And how do we feel about what's happening in society today? So not just are we not going to get involved? Or actually, you know, it's not that serious, it's too much of a big deal. What's your biblical case? How does God feel? What does the word say about how we treat others? How we action, justice, and how we theologically approach justice as well," she added.

The RJAF report goes on to highlight the importance of churches challenging ethnic discrimination within their places of worship and building response teams to deal with

racism: "Build response teams, there are people that are really keen to have these conversations with churches, they're good at it, they might need racial justice training, they might need theological training, but there'll be people in the community that will look to the church and say, What do we do? There's protests happening, you know, something happened at work, I'm feeling excluded. I'm feeling maybe guilty of excluding others. What can I do, we need response teams, a few people, a leadership member, a couple of congregational members to say we're here, let's look up a word, let's look at action, and how we as a church can reach out and help with the difficulties in the community."

'End rough sleeping': The Salvation Army urges mayoral candidates to make issue a priority

The Salvation Army is calling on England's mayoral candidates to sign a pledge to end rough sleeping.

The charity has written to candidates who are standing for Labour, Conservatives, Liberal Democrats and Greens in next week's elections, urging them to ensure the government provides enough long-term funding to help prevent homelessness.

Major Ian Harris, of the Severn and Somerset Division, told Premier it's vital the elected mayors make the issue a priority: "The mayoral candidates, the mayor's themselves, have huge responsibilities for their areas, including housing. So we wanted to really encourage them to get involved and understand what the issues are locally, and how they can best work with others like ourselves to support people who are homeless."

Major Harris says that there has been a huge increase in people becoming homeless over the last decade, as a result of various issues, including loss of employment, domestic violence, mental health issues and addictions. But over the last year, the problem has got worse: "We calculate 55 per cent of people are new to the streets. We're finding that people are experiencing homelessness for the first time, and continuing to experience homelessness, because of a lack of affordable housing, and because of a lack of support for those who do achieve housing."

The Salvation Army is one of the largest homelessness charities in the UK, providing more than 3,000 places in supported housing across the UK.

Major Harris says affordable housing and support is vital to eradicating homelessness: "This government has pledged to eradicate homelessness in this parliament, and we applaud that. But now we as charities and churches need to work alongside the government to achieve that. Affordable accommodation is just one part of the whole jigsaw. What we



need is for people to be supported through their very complex needs, and to receive support so they can sustain that accommodation. And that opens up their whole future, that opens up employment, it opens up possibilities for them personally."

Almighty God,
Help us to walk alongside those who are homeless;
We pray that they will find comfort and a place of shelter;
We pray that their difficulties will lessen and they find Hope in a brighter future.
In Jesus' name,
Amen.

Suicidal, hungry and trapped: Christians Against Poverty says pandemic highlights problem debt

Poverty is destroying lives across the UK, according to the charity Christians Against Poverty.

In a new report on the impact of debt during the pandemic, the charity found over half of those asked felt trapped by poverty and that the average household debt was nearly £18,000.



The charity analysed data from more than 1,500 households, together with nearly 900 online surveys.

Gareth McNab, the charity's external affairs director, told Premier that for many people, the pandemic has exacerbated existing financial problems :

"The report summarises the changes we've seen over a five year period ending in 2020. What you see is that when it comes to debt, the nation's been in a pandemic of debt for many years before Covid. And for many, Covid has made visible what was always underlying in our society."

As part of the 'Our Story' report, the charity found that 28 per cent of those surveyed had considered or attempted suicide before seeking debt help and that 37 per cent had sacrificed meals because they couldn't afford to eat:

"Often, that's parents or care-givers going without food so that they can feed their children. And those factors combined to leave the overall feeling of being really trapped in the grip of poverty and problem debt. And that's going to lead to loneliness, isolation, feeling like you are a failure, feeling like you need help but don't know where to turn. It's why the kind of debt help that we give is so critically important."

The report found that young people were the least likely to seek help for debt, despite them being hit hard during the pandemic. Only eight per cent of the charity's clients were

aged between 18 and 25. Gareth McNab says the journey from getting into difficulty and then seeking help is long and complex:

"The average client takes between 18 and 36 months between first experiencing difficulty and getting help from us. I think economically, the impacts of Covid on individuals and households will be felt financially for a long, long time."

Mr McNab is urging anyone worried about debt to contact the charity as soon as possible :

"Please don't wait, please don't delay. There's plenty of room to help you - there are debt advisors ready and waiting and people who really, really care."

Dear Lord,

We pray for those who are struggling with debt,

That they may find comfort in knowing they are not alone and that You are with them.

We pray that they are helped to find a way out of their difficulty

And that they come to see hope and joy in a brighter future.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

Sheep and Lambs Together

Creative and Reflective activities for All Ages

2nd May **5th after Easter**

Read John 15 : 1-8

The true Vine

Draw a large 'V' shape on paper. Take a cork and some paint. – green or purple if you have them, create a bunch of grapes by dipping the cork in the paint and dabbing it onto the paper. Don't want to paint, then draw and colour some circular shapes to make a bunch of grapes. Or you could make grapes from play dough.

When you have finished, talk together/ reflect about what kind of 'fruit' we can grow in our lives by staying close to God, e.g. love, joy, patience. You could write these words around the bunch of grapes.

Or if you have some grapes hold them in your hand and reflect on how you can grow your life by staying close to God: joy, love, patience etc.



Editor's note – please share a picture of your vines, and we will publish in next week's St Hilda's News.

St Hilda's Parish News

If you have any Parish News you would like to share, then please send them into the Parish Office.

Vestry Meeting and APCM

We held the Annual Parochial Church Meeting on Sunday 25th April via zoom. Gordon Clark and Paula Gething were both elected for a period of three years to the PCC. Thank you to them for serving in these important roles.

Children's Society Collecting Boxes

The year 2021 marks the 140th anniversary of the founding of the Children's Society. The Society confirms that, in these difficult times, they need our support more than ever.

Last year we sent to the Society £335 in total, £192 from our collecting boxes and £143 from our Christingle. It would be good if St Hilda's could keep up the momentum.

For those of you who are constantly, or occasionally, topping-up a Children's Society collection box, this is the time of year when I would normally be inviting you to bring your box to Church for its contents to be emptied, counted, banked and sent off to the Society.

In this, very different, year, when many of us are not able to attend Church, alternative arrangements are necessary. I would be very happy to collect your box from you, at a time convenient for both of us, if you phone me on 01784 252170. Please don't hesitate to get in touch.

If you are not currently a box-holder, but would like to have one for the coming year, please let me know on the above phone number.

Many thanks for your support and donations, past, present and future, for a very worthwhile cause.

Chris Davenport,

St Hilda's Box Coordinator



Happy 1st Birthday - St Hilda's News!



We have been publishing the newsletter for 1 year, below is a race through the year.

We received lots of contributions from members of the community, several articles about how people were coping/ surviving during lockdown.

A huge thank you to all those you have contributed – please keep articles coming

A few other memories, apologies if we missed any.....

Who remembers:

- ❖ The tale of Bobbie and the squirrel?
- ❖ A short story from Carolyn
- ❖ TV lockdown by Steve
- ❖ Gardening tips from Alan
- ❖ Robert and the parakeet
- ❖ 7 generations of the Franklins (Peggy Pinfold)
- ❖ Poppy installation



On 3 occasions, we rang the bells to mark:

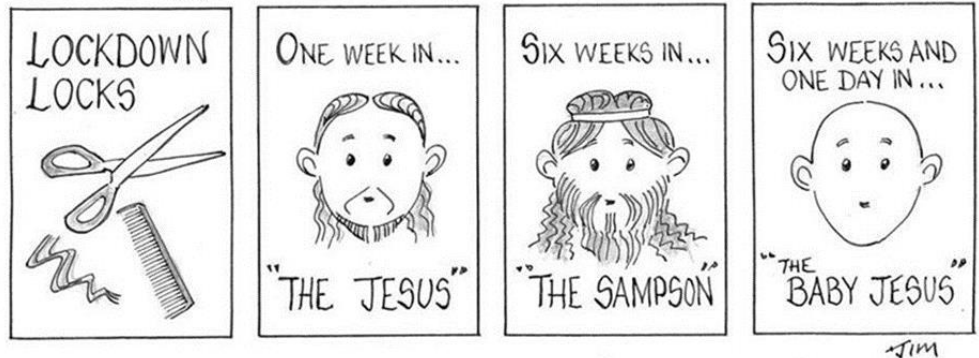
- 76th Anniversary of D-Day
- 3rd Anniversary of Grenfell Tower
- The death of HRH Prince Philip

The Church doors closed on 22nd March 2020, re-opened on 5th July, closed on 2nd November, re-opened on 6th December, closed on 3rd January 2021, and finally re-opened on 14th March.



Cartoon from June 2020, seems to be a recurring theme of the last year!

TRYING TIMES WK 6



During the year, we also had many reasons to celebrate Big Birthdays that a little birdie or 2 let us know (though they weren't celebrated with any parties!)

- 99th - Jenny Grainger
- 90th - Sheila Freeman
- 80th - Robert Dobbie
- 70th - Chris Morris
- 60th - Chris Holliday
- 60th - St Hilda's Entertainers
- 50th - Denise Buttigieg
- 50th - Joseph Fernandes
- 21st - Rebecca Fernandes



We also welcomed a new arrival – xx, Karen Smith's granddaughter

And Gordon and Carolyn celebrated 30 years of marriage

A big thank you to Terry for all his great word searches, and Jo for sending us puzzles to use. NB The puzzle page will make a return soon.



Canaan Ministries are open for any of your needs. Just simply phone or email them and they will look after you. They also offer a delivery service.

Any other information can be found on their website www.canaanchristianministries.co.uk/

Ephesians 5 v 9

for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true.

This weeks services

Sunday Eucharist – 2nd May @ 9.30am

This service can be viewed via our Facebook page, our new YouTube channel (St Hilda's Ashford), and Twitter.

Wednesday Eucharist – 5th May @ 9.45am

Tickets can be booked for this week's services via the links on our website and Facebook page or by contacting the Parish Office.

Please remember a face mask must be worn whilst in the church.

Tea and Chat after Sunday Service

We would like to invite you to join us for a virtual Tea and Chat after the service on **Sunday 2nd May 2021 at 11.15am.** See below on how to join.

The meeting is hosted by Zoom.

- Download the Zoom app – www.zoom.us
- Click – Join a Meeting
- Enter the Meeting id – **956 2029 5386**
- Enter password – **342011**



Please hold in your prayers and thoughts this week those who are affected by the Corona Virus as well as the family and friends of those below.

The Sick

James Bedford	Peter Garner	Raymond Nation	Sandra Swain
Michael Browne	Eileen Gilbert	Pat Parish	Rev. Peter Taylor
Robb Clarke	Alison Griffiths	June Prentice	Sheila West
Daniel Cohen	Jim Hennessey	Elizabeth Savill-Burgess	Chick Wilson
Rebecca Cohen	Jean Iddiols	Delphine Scrivener	Peter Wilson
Ann Considine	Jane Johnson	Riley Shaw	Jo Wood
Michael Dixon	Pat Kyle	Elsie Stone	Erin
Jackie Forsbrey	Libby Mills	Roy Stone	George

The Recently Departed

	HRH Prince Philip, The Duke of Edinburgh		
Gillian Shepherd	Patsy Forsbrey	Joyce Small	Michael Orchard
Daphne Leader			

Prayer

Almighty God,
 whose Son Jesus Christ is the resurrection and the life:
 raise us, who trust in him,
 from the death of sin to the life of righteousness,
 that we may seek those things which are above,
 where he reigns with you
 in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
 one God, now and for ever.

Amen