

Long-lost monastery unearthed at Church in Berkshire

A lost Anglo-Saxon monastery has been found beneath the grounds of a village church in Berkshire.



A team from the University of Reading unearthed the remains on the site of Holy Trinity Church in Cookham. Archaeologists believe it is the place where Queen Cynethryth ruled a monastic community at Cookham Abbey in the 8th century.

The Queen was the widow of the powerful King Offa of Mercia and it's hoped the discovery will give a unique insight into one of the most prominent women of the early middle ages.

The Telegraph says that while written sources from the Middle Ages reference the abbey, no physical trace had ever been found before the University team struck timber and pottery near Holy Trinity Church earlier in the summer.

Dr Gabor Thomas, leading the team at the site, told the Telegraph :

"We have solved the mystery of the missing abbey. Our excavation is smack bang in the middle of a monastery complex. This is where Cynethryth, queen of the Mercians, retired after her husband King Offa died. She retired here to rule over this institution.

"She would have been buried and her soul would have been cared for by the community she had led, that was the idea. There is, somewhere in the environs, an Anglo-Saxon cemetery, the burial ground of the people who lived their lives here, the burial ground."

Dr Thomas said that the current churchyard may partly rest above the burial site used by Anglo-Saxons.

"We hope this will give us a fine-grained picture of the physical details of this monastery, the different activities that took place within it, and what life was like. This would have been not only a religious centre but also a political one, with plenty of feasting, production and other activities all taking place."

Almighty God,

The discovery at Holy Trinity Church makes us thankful for all those who have followed Your example through the centuries.

Thank You for all those who, through prayer and retreat, have encouraged so many to understand and share the light and power of the Holy Spirit today.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

Methodist minister sings 748 hymns to raise money for Covid relief efforts in India

A Lancashire church minister has sung the entire Methodist hymn book to raise money for an Indian covid relief effort.

Rev Phil Gough, Superintendent Minister of The Chorley and Leyland Methodist Circuit, sung 748 songs in slots of three to four hours a day during a week.

Speaking to Premier, he said the idea came after being made aware of the challenges churches in India are facing to help people suffering with Covid-19.

“We had an event a few weeks ago, looking at our partner churches in the world...we had a new link through a family connected to churches in India. And we were hearing harrowing stories, particularly from northern India, some of the remotest parts on the border with Nepal, where there's very, very little medical assistance for anybody who has covid,” Rev Phil said.

Earlier this year, India suffered a critical shortage of oxygen tanks and ventilators after a huge rise in covid cases. The country currently ranks second in the world in terms of the number of deaths caused by Covid-19.

“Some of the churches there had a vision of having oxygen tanks and ventilation in the church, that people would come to the church to receive medical attention that they couldn't get elsewhere,” Rev Phil continued. “And that just sparked a thought in me that that was something I wanted to contribute towards.”

The 53-year-old minister wanted to “use his breath” to raise money and decided to sing, as many people in the UK have been unable to hold gathered worship over the last months.

“I thought about reading scripture, doing a sponsored reading of the New Testament or something like that. But many of us have really, really missed singing over the last 12 to 18 months,” he said, “especially when we've been unable to do it in our gathered worship. And so, it felt like an opportunity to invite others through social media to join me in singing through the hymn book.”

The Methodist hymn book, *Singing the Faith*, is divided into three topical sections, with hymns from the 20th and 21st centuries. Rev Phil said his favourite one to sing is *Guide Me O Thou Great Jehovah*.

“Being half Welsh and listening, you know, as I'm singing I'm thinking there's a Welsh male voice choir around me singing 'Songs of praises, songs of praises, I will ever give to Thee'; “But the songbook also has a lot of modern songs in so, indescribable was a great one to see. Just glorying in the wonder of God's creation. And songs that spoke about the breath of God. Breathe in the breath of God, those kinds of songs reminded me why I was doing what I was doing that there are churches in India, that are longing to be able to offer literally the breath of life to people in their community,” Rev Phil said.



Rev Phil broadcasted his singing through Facebook Live with the aim of raising £600, but has so far raised £1,500, enough to pay for two ventilators for a church in northern India. He concluded: “When we asked the pastors out there in India, they were asking for prayer for resilience...if you can imagine serving your community with very little medical backup and medical support. We were hearing that 1,000s local church pastors in this area of north of India had died with covid. So, there's a need to support local churches out in India in leadership and in their desire to serve their communities.”

UK churches aid refugees from Kabul

Parishes are offered donations for arrivals from Afghanistan



Afghans depart from an evacuation flight, at RAF Brize Norton, on Thursday morning

As the Home Office expedites flights out of Kabul, Afghan refugees are already being supported by churches, was reported this week.

On Wednesday, the Vicar of St Mary the Great, Ilford, Canon Gareth Jones, who is the diocese of Chelmsford's refugee co-ordinator,

said that within 24 hours of the diocese's issuing a statement pledging to do “all that we can to serve and support refugees in our parishes”, he had received more than 100 offers of help, from financial donations to offers of houses and flats as accommodation.

“People have really stepped up within this diocese already,” he said. “I am hopeful. We are not going to be able to meet every need as it arises, but we can put a big dent in it, and working with our partners in Essex and east London we will be able to make a difference.”

Through its resettlement arm, Essex Integration, a Fresh Expression, the diocese has already resettled 115 Afghans — largely interpreters and their families — in addition to Syrian families. While Syrians had been resettled as part of a long-term programme, the current situation was a “crisis”, he said. “We need to meet that need where it is, without thinking too much about the long term, as we don't know what the long term will be until the Government decides.”

The immediate need was to “put the word out that we are here”, and to resource parishes to help refugees when they arrived, from providing financial support to signposting them to other agencies. “We didn't expect this; we aren't prepared; so we need to come together and meet the need wherever we find it,” he said. What the Government offered was “very basic”.

On Wednesday, the Foreign Secretary, Dominic Raab, said that 9000 British nationals — Afghans who had worked for British forces, and those at risk, including journalists — had been evacuated from Afghanistan since 15 August. Under the Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy programme (ARAP), any current or former locally employed staff who worked in Afghanistan for the UK embassy and are “assessed to be at serious risk of threat to life” are offered priority relocation. More than a quarter of councils are involved in the scheme, and the Government has promised a £5-million fund to help them to provide housing and support.

The Government has also announced a scheme to resettle up to 20,000 vulnerable Afghans, although it has spoken of only 5000 this year. Priority is to be given to “those most in need due to the current crisis — including women and girls, and religious and other minorities, who are most at risk of human rights abuses and dehumanising treatment”.

On Tuesday, Dr Krish Kandiah, whose work includes leading the adoption and fostering charity Home for Good, urged churches to register with Welcome Churches: a charity that seeks “for every refugee in the UK to be welcomed by their local church”.

He continued: “The wonderful thing is that the Church is in every town and city. We have churches full of people with the desire to help, and what we need is to know where those churches are that are keen to help. All they need to do is identify themselves, and it’s free then — they can start accessing training.” This would include advice about culturally appropriate support and safeguarding.

Many of the Afghans arriving in the UK are being housed in hotels. Last week, the five-year-old son of an Afghan embassy worker died after falling from a ninth-floor window at a Sheffield hotel.

“The main challenge is a lack of available social housing to accommodate larger families,” Dr Kandiah said. He is trying to find Christian conference centres willing to help meet the need. “Afghans normally have two adults and six children in one family group.” He expected families to be housed in hotels for months. “What we are trying to do is provide a conduit for churches and other community groups to offer support to those hotels without flooding them with too many strangers.”

While some charities were organising collections of clothes and other donations, Welcome Churches currently favoured money, which was “agile” and could be used to respond to refugees’ specific needs, he said. “We want to treat this group of people with all dignity and respect they deserve.”

Having already met about 100 Afghans, he reported that they were “incredibly happy to be here, and grateful for the reception they are getting — the fact that the Church has stepped up and let them know that they are welcome”. Already, one church leader had organised a cricket match.

Last Friday, the Bishop of Chelmsford, Dr Guli Francis-Dehqani, and Canon Jones issued a joint statement: “As a diocese committed to serving Christ in the downtrodden, persecuted and oppressed, and to witnessing to the transforming presence of Christ in the midst of the

seemingly impossible, we continue to stand ready to do all that we can to serve and support refugees in our parishes across East London and Essex, and those communities seeking to walk alongside displaced people.”

Members of the Jewish community in Watford, Hertfordshire, prepare to deliver donated items to families evacuated from Afghanistan, on Monday

The same day, a spokesperson for the UN refugee agency, Shabia Mantoo, warned that “those who may be in danger have no way out. UNHCR is calling on countries neighbouring Afghanistan to keep their borders open in light of the evolving crisis in Afghanistan.” Individual states have

been organising evacuations, and these were “lifesaving”, she said. “But the main message is that a broader international response is needed.”

The UN estimates that 550,000 people have been displaced inside Afghanistan this year, in addition to 2.9 million already displaced. It has issued an urgent appeal for \$62.8 million. Iran and Pakistan continue to host more than two million registered Afghan refugees.

Last week, the European Commissioner for Home Affairs, Ylva Johansson, said: “We should prevent people from heading towards the European Union through unsafe, irregular, and uncontrolled routes run by smugglers. . . At the same time, we cannot abandon people in immediate danger in Afghanistan. Journalists, NGO staff, and human-rights advocates in Afghanistan are amongst those who are most at risk, women in particular.”

The French President, Emmanuel Macron, spoke of the need to “anticipate and protect ourselves against significant waves of irregular immigration”.



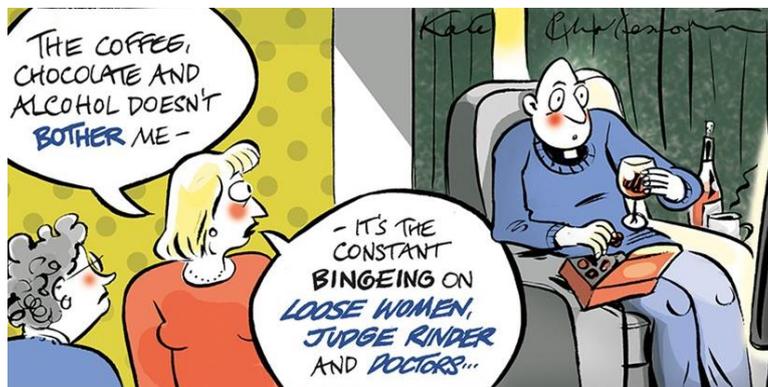
Counting the cost of pandemic ministry

What is the state of clergy morale, one year after the first lockdown, ask *Leslie Francis* and *Andrew Village*

OUR first survey, *Coronavirus, Church and You*, ran between 8 May and late July 2020. We wanted to assess the immediate impact of what was then thought to be a short-term strategy to deal with the pandemic.

Our first survey provided useful data on the emotional toll of Covid-19, the fragility of rural churches, the perspective of retired clergy, the greater dissatisfaction of older churchgoers, the eucharist in time of lockdown, the growing alienation of men from the Church, and the spiritual awakening evoked by the lockdown.

When, responding to the third upturn in infections, the Prime Minister introduced a further lockdown on 4 January 2021, we decided that it was time to take further soundings. The Covid-19 and Church-21 Survey was launched on 22 January to capture an update on how clergy and laity were responding. Among the 6000 participants in the second survey, there were 413 Anglican clergy engaged in full-time parochial ministry in England.



Most of these clergy engaged in full-time parochial ministry had been innovative, creative, and doing a good job to keep their churches engaged. But all this has been at considerable personal cost, and it has taken its toll. The purpose of this, our first report from the Covid-19 and Church-21 Survey, therefore, is to draw attention

to the extent of this personal cost, and to do so through an established model of work-related psychological well-being.

OUR model of work-related psychological well-being employs the theory of balanced affect, which has its roots in the pioneering work of Norman Bradburn in his book *The Structure of Psychological Well-being* (Aldine, 1969). This theory, which distinguishes between positive affect and negative affect, was brought to research into clergy well-being by the Francis Burnout Inventory (FBI; Francis, Laycock, and Brewster, 2017).

We see positive affect (happiness and satisfaction) and negative affect (stress and exhaustion) as separate systems. What keeps clergy going is the way in which positive affect offsets the negative consequences of negative affect. Coping with the pandemic can bring increases in both positive affect and negative affect. What our data tell us is that, among parochial clergy, the increases in negative affect outweighed the increases in positive affect. The following statistics illustrate this point.

In terms of positive affect, 15 per cent of clergy said that their sense of calm had increased during the pandemic, but 40 per cent reported a decrease; 17 per cent said that their enthusiasm had increased, but 43 per cent reported a decrease; nine per cent said that their happiness had increased, but 41 per cent reported a decrease.

On the other hand, 56 per cent of clergy said that their sense of gratitude had increased during the pandemic, compared with eight per cent who reported a decrease; 52 per cent said their sense of thankfulness had increased, compared with eight per cent who reported a decrease. These are positive signs, with increasing feelings of gratitude and thankfulness. Serious erosion in enthusiasm and overall happiness, however, may damage the resilience to bounce back after experiences of negative affect.

In terms of negative affect, 82 per cent of clergy said that their sense of fatigue had increased during the pandemic. For 67 per cent, frustration had increased, and, for 73 per cent, exhaustion had increased. Fifty-seven per cent had become more anxious, 60 per cent had become more stressed, and 51 per cent had become more irritable.

These are not positive signs. These figures are high, and it is here that we can begin to quantify the detrimental effects of living through and dealing with the pandemic on the well-being of parochial clergy.

THE second lens through which we viewed the way in which clergy perceived the effect of the pandemic on their well-being was through asking direct questions about how well they had coped, and how they saw the effect on their health.

A year on, 42 per cent said that they had not found it easy to cope: 46 per cent were experiencing deterioration in mental health, 36 per cent in physical health, and 26 per cent in spiritual health. These figures help to illustrate the consequences of changes in negative affect outweighing changes in positive affect.

There are strategies that clergy can employ to compensate for increases in negative affect. Nearly half (48 per cent) said that they were eating more: 37 per cent were eating more chocolate, 34 per cent were drinking more alcohol, and 28 per cent were drinking more coffee. More than one in three (37 per cent) said that they were taking less exercise. The problem, of course, is that neither eating more, nor drinking more alcohol, provide long-term solutions.

Here are issues that we consider are worth researching in greater depth, in light of the best available knowledge concerning the science of clergy well-being.

The Revd Andrew Village is Professor of Practical and Empirical Theology, and Canon Leslie J. Francis is Visiting Professor of Theology and Religious Studies, both at York St John University.

Sheep and Lambs Together

Creative and Reflective activities for All Ages

29th August 13th Sunday after Trinity

Read Mark 7.1-8,14-15,21-23

Be as messy as you like - - mud, sand, baking, and at the end wash your hands.

Talk about how you can easily wash away the outside dirt – But talk about the things that make us dirty from within: the things we think and say. We can't wash those away so how can we deal with this type of "dirtyness".



Welcome to St Hilda's - Helen Calner

So, this is a bit of me:



I am born and grew up in Swedish, coming from a small town in the southern parts of Sweden.

Little did I know then that my passion for exploring life and faith would take me around the globe via the route from being a drama teacher, to becoming a deacon and now on my way to priesthood. Especially when I always thought I would become a musician. God and life have a certain way of surprising you.

Naturally you would think that Sweden is home and where I always go back to. But I find myself going elsewhere most of the times. Through my different work overseas, I am blessed with an extended family and friends, taking me to other places too.

My second home though, is Jerusalem, where you accidentally can fall in love with a street cat who you just happen to adopt and is now a Londoner as me.

I came here 7 years ago, with 2 suitcases, appointed to ministry in the Swedish Church and community. And I am still here, with slightly more stuff than what a couple of bags can take. I had no idea that collecting glass baubles could be so addictive that you suddenly find yourself with boxes of them. How did that happen?

And if you by any chance would put me on a deserted island, there are 3 things I can't be without. That is coffee, the Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy and, of course, my 2 cats (they go in the same carrier, so that definitely count as one)



*Welcome Helen to St Hilda's as
our new Ordinand*

Sponsor a church chair

We have selected some fresh, new replacement chairs.

During the last few years, as well as worship, the church has been used for concerts, educational activities, conferences and even a curry and carols evening. We need the building and its furnishings to support the developing uses of the church space and replacing the chairs is a big initiative.

The sale of the old chairs covered approximately half of the cost of the new ones. You can help us with the cost of the new chairs:

- ❖ £90 covers the cost of a chair
- ❖ £225 covers the cost of a stacking dolly or trolley

Features of the new chairs:

- They stack (up to 10 in a stack or 25 on a special dolly)
- They link together at floor level, making them safe and compliant with current regulations
- They are lightweight
- They are upholstered – for comfort and looking good
- The upholstery is wipe-clean
- They come with and without arms, so all the chairs will match
- The chrome finish is an upgrade and will not scratch (like the chairs in the hall)



We will recognise the sponsors of the new chairs in a memorial book / list which will be displayed in church – you can donate either in memory of someone or as an individual donation.

Thank you

If you are interested in sponsoring a chair, please complete a form that can be found:

- At the back of the Church
- On the Website
- Or Contact the Parish Office

Cheques are payable to St Hilda's PCC or you can transfer monies direct;
St Hilda's PCC

Sort Code: 60-01-22

Account Number: 36290696

St Hilda's Parish News

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

Hatton Musical Theatre Society

Hatton Musical Theatre Society will be performing Songs from Movies, Musicals and More at St Hilda's Church on Saturday 11 September at 7pm. This is a great chance to see and hear your favourite songs, live and local.

Tickets are £7.50 and must be booked in advance either through Paula Gething (07788258871) or Mike Davenport.

Spelthorne Deanery Confirmations – Sunday 19th September

Spelthorne deanery confirmation service is taking place at St Hilda's at 3pm.

Confirmation is a special church service in which a person confirms the promises that were made when they were baptized. If you were baptized at a christening when you were a child, your parents and godparents made these promises on your behalf. As a young person or adult, you may be ready to affirm these promises for yourself and commit your life to following Jesus Christ. At the confirmation service, you make these promises for yourself. Friends and family as well as the local Christian community will be here to promise to support and pray for you.

Bishop Graham will lay his hands on your head and ask God's Holy Spirit to give you the strength and commitment to live God's way for the rest of your life. If you would like to find out more, please do get in touch with Fr Joseph.

Confirmation preparation for adults will run on Thursday the 2nd, 9th and 16th September.

Women's and Men's Breakfast



We are planning to hold individual breakfast get togethers for Women and Men separately. The aim of these is to create a new time for fellowship, followed by a full English breakfast, and a talk by a guest speaker.

The first get togethers are:

Men's Breakfast – 11th September

Women's Breakfast – 16th October

Soup and roll

Starting on **Wednesday 29th September**, after the 11am service and continuing on the last service of each month.

There's something spiritual about breaking bread together. After the Eucharist, we will gather for soup and roll. It will be an excellent way to get to know each other better, to share in fellowship, meet some new faces and enjoy a delicious home cooked soup with a bread roll.

Hope Into Action

Thank you, to everyone who has used the blue bins to donate clothing. Our first collection will be week commencing 23/8. The bins will remain in place, please feel free to continue to leave clothing and shoes. The money raised will be put towards the work of Hope into Action locally.

Homelessness has been a key element of St Hilda's missional engagement and St Hilda has started to support Hope Into Action:

"We provide not just shelter and housing know-how but also friendship. Together with over 70 churches, we provide direct support to people whom others have often given up on. Our vision is for every church to lovingly provide the homeless with a home. The tragedy of homelessness is in every community"

There are two blue wheelie bins, one in church and one in the church hall to take donations of clothes, belts and shoe. It will all be sold, and the proceeds donated towards the partnership with Hope Into Action. Please – clean clothes, paired shoes, and belts only. We cannot do anything with bedding, towels, curtains, and other soft furnishings.

Mothers' Union Election for London Diocesan President:

Voting is by post this year. The deadline for forms to be received at the office has been extended to 31 August.

If you need a voting form, contact Sally Goulden 07970 824367.

Every vote counts! I encourage you to vote.

Canaan Christian Ministries

We are pleased to announce that from the **1st September** Canaan will be able to return back to our normal opening hours of **10am – 5pm Monday to Saturday**.

We are also aware that they are some people who do not want to venture back out to shops yet, so we will continue to offer our **FREE** local delivery service.

We are also pleased to announce that we plan to once again have a stand at the National **Christian Resources Exhibition** which returns to Sandown Park, Esher from the **12th to the 14th October** this year – if anyone is planning to attend please ask them to book via the link on our website.

Finally, we continue to try and offer you and your congregations the **best prices**, and can often match or even beat online prices. Our latest **special offer** catalogues can be found on our website, or hard copies can be provided **FREE** of charge.

As always, we would like to thank you for your much needed support.

Barry Mockford

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/

Matthew 12:35

The good person brings good things out of a good treasure, and the evil person brings evil things out of an evil treasure.

This weeks services

Sunday Eucharist – 29th August @ 9.30am

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

Junior Church will be returning this Sunday (29th) with the Book Bag Blessing service so please remember to book your youngsters.

Wednesday Eucharist – 1st September @ 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 by 5pm Friday for Sunday's service and 12pm Tuesday for Wednesday's service.

Please note we asking for the safety of yourselves and others that you continue to wear a mask whilst in the church.

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	Jane Johnson	Elsie Stone	Izzy
Darren Burkin	Pat Kyle	Roy Stone	Nic
Robb Clarke	Mrs McCammon	Rev. Peter Taylor	Baby Reuben
Ann Considine	Libby Mills	Carla Wells	Bob
Julia Cowley	Raymond Nation	Sheila West	Margaret
Michael Dixon	Pat Parish	Philip Willerton	
Peter Garner	Peggy Pinfold	Chick Wilson	
Juliet Griffith	Elizabeth Savill-Burgess	Peter Wilson	
Alison Griffiths	Delphine Scrivener	Jo Wood	
Jean Iddiols	Riley Shaw		

The Recently Departed

Sandra Swain	Marion Otieno	Joan Andrews	(Auntie) Kath Brown
Clifford McCammon			

Prayer

Almighty God,
 who called your Church to bear witness
 that you were in Christ reconciling the world to yourself:
 help us to proclaim the good news of your love,
 that all who hear it may be drawn to you;
 through him who was lifted up on the cross,
 and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
 one God, now and for ever.

Amen