

ALL SAINTS' HIGHFIELD PARISHIONERS' NEWSLETTER MARCH/EASTER 2024



*Signs of Spring in the church garden:
Leucojum and Tete-a-Tete Daffodils in All Saints' Road - Brigid*

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A Message from Peter Boulton-Lea

Various saints' days occur in March which are worth noting even though our focus will be on Passiontide and Easter which fall at the end of the month this year – almost the earliest Easter can be. The month begins remembering ST. DAVID patron of Wales on the 1st. He was a monk and later a bishop, associated largely with Pembrokeshire, where St. David's, the smallest city is situated. On the 17th ST. PATRICK is remembered, patron of Ireland (although born in England). On the 19th ST. JOSEPH'S day, the earthly father of Jesus, we give thanks for the love and care he gave his Son, who no doubt learnt much from him as He grew up – patience, courage, strength. On the 20th a lesser well-known saint is remembered: ST. CUTHBERT. He became Bishop of Lindisfarne and is the reason for the building of Durham Cathedral where he is buried. The monks carried his coffin from Lindisfarne to escape the Viking invaders and finally arrived at Durham. The cathedral (below) is reckoned one of the finest, if not the finest, Romanesque building in Europe.



So to the end of the month: PALM SUNDAY, HOLY WEEK, MAUNDY THURSDAY, GOOD FRIDAY and EASTER DAY. We follow our Lord's triumphant entry into Jerusalem, the Last Supper on the Thursday, which is the heart of our Communion to this day. On Friday we stand at the foot of the Cross to witness His sacrifice for us, His agony and death, the apparent end not only of His ministry, but of so many hopes and anticipations on the part of His followers. But on the Sunday the tomb is empty! Christ appears to His disciples huddled in the upper room: "Peace be with you." He is risen! So far from the story ending it's just beginning – and continues to this very day!

So this latter event is THE great festival, the foundation of the Christian faith. We rejoice that:

“Jesus Christ is risen today, alleluia!
Our triumphant holy day, alleluia!”



In this part of the world Easter occurs when spring is breaking out, signalling new life – it seems to be reflecting the Easter message. May our celebrations encourage us to share that message when and where we can. As Jesus commanded His first disciples, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you,” (Matt. 28:19, 20) May we carry the torch today.

Wishing you a joyous Easter,
Warmest good wishes,
Your friend,

Peter

Our Worship in March

With an early Easter, and five Sundays, March this year has a good number of special services, above all those commemorating the major events that underpin our Christian faith, the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The middle of Lent brings us **Mothering Sunday**, and Valerie has written elsewhere about the making of possies of flowers for this special Sunday. The next Sunday is also **St Patrick's Day**, and appropriately we have Cannon McFarland, the vicar of St Andrew's Old Headington, leading our worship that day. He is from Ireland, and trained for the ministry in the Church of Ireland at Trinity College Dublin.

After **Palm Sunday** our friend and associate priest Peter Boulton-Lea will lead us in a service of Holy Communion on **Maundy Thursday**, and on **Good Friday** we will have our normal family session making the Easter Garden, and a service of Bible readings and reflection later in the morning.

On Easter Sunday we welcome the **Archdeacon of Oxford Jonathan Chaffey** to lead our worship and preach. **This is the Sunday that the clocks change**, so it will seem as if you need to get to church especially early. However, as an experiment we are running the service at 10:30 a.m. to slightly ease the disruption to our body clocks.

James

Summary of Services in March

| Time | Date | Occasion | Service |
|------------------|-----------------|--------------------------------|--|
| 10:00 a.m | 3 March | 3 rd Sunday in Lent | Holy Communion – Rev. Ginny Thomas |
| 10:00 a.m | 10 March | Mothering Sunday | Holy Communion – Rev. Esther Lay |
| 10:00 a.m | 17 March | 5 th Sunday in Lent | Holy Communion – Canon Darren McFarland |
| 10:00 a.m | 24 March | Palm Sunday | Holy Communion – Rev. Peter Boulton-Lea and Christine Tucker |
| 7:30 p.m | 28 March | Maundy Thursday | Holy Communion – Peter Boulton-Lea |
| 11:30 a.m | 29 March | Good Friday | Service of readings, prayer and reflection |
| 10:30 a.m | 31 March | Easter Sunday | Holy Communion – Ven. Jonathan Chaffey |
| 6:00 p.m | 31 March | Easter Sunday | Easter Carol Service |

Posies for Mothering Sunday



Are you able to come and help in the making of the Posies for Mothering Sunday?

Please come to the Church on Saturday 9th March, 10.00am Daffodils will be supplied, but small pieces of greenery would be very useful. Please see Valerie, to put your name on the list at the back of the Church.

Thank you

Valerie

A Message from the Social Committee

Don't forget the monthly lunch at the Britannia on **Wednesday 6 March**. Please join us at about 12.15 for a convivial meal and chat with fellow parishioners.

And don't forget the **Food Bank** is in great demand, so all contributions left in the church are much appreciated.

The Saints of March

Saints came in all shapes and sizes in the Middle Ages: those who lived devout and holy lives, martyrs who died for their faith, and those who wrought miracles. March has its fair share of saints who are (or who at one time were) celebrated by the church, and this article introduces you to some of the less-well known. But we start with a brief mention of the more familiar.

The most important festival of the month would have been the feast of St Mary (25 March) that commemorated the Annunciation. Images of the Annunciation were prevalent in all visual media: sculpture and glass, and in medieval manuscripts, such as books of hours, that were used for private devotion. There is a further significance to the date as in many parts of Europe (including England) 25 March was the first day of the New Year. Mary is what we call a ‘universal saint’, that is, she was venerated throughout the Christian world. Another ‘universal’ saint is Benedict of Nursia (21 March), who wrote the monastic rule that came to be the basis of monastic life in the medieval west. He is often called the ‘Father of Western Monasticism’ and his cult was widespread. Unlike Mary and Benedict, the remaining March saints were more local in their popularity.



The Annunciation here depicted in a Netherlandish panel painting

Two – indeed three – British patron saints have their feast day in March: David (Dewi) of Wales on 1 March, and Patrick of Ireland on 17 March. These two need little introduction. Less well known is another claimed as a patron saint: Piran (Pyran), who died around 480 and who is celebrated on 5 March. He was a Cornish abbot, probably of Irish origin. His written life tells that he was expelled from Ireland for preaching the

faith by the rather drastic means of being tied to a millstone and thrown into the sea. (One of the stained-glass windows in All Saints' shows St Clement suffering a similar fate, though he was tied to an anchor – a feature much relished by the Beaver Scouts who visited the church a couple of years ago.) The waves miraculously bore Piran to Cornwall, where he landed safe and sound (though possibly very wet). Piran is often regarded as the patron saint of Cornwall – although he does have some competition from Petroc and Michael. Not surprisingly given his affinity with Cornwall, he is the patron saint of tin-miners.



St Piran's flag, which is the flag of Cornwall

There is a geographical connection between Piran and our next March saint, Wonnow (Winwillow, Winwolacus, Gwenno) who, although he was allegedly of English descent, was born at Plouguin and grew up in Ploufragen in that other Celtic land of Brittany. As a young man he toyed with the idea of visiting St Patrick in Ireland, but a vision of the saint on the very day of his death ordered Wonnow instead to found a monastery, which he did on an inhospitable site at the mouth of the River Faou. Three years later, a passage miraculously opened across the river to allow him and his companions to cross (shades of the Red Sea) to make another foundation, that was to become the renowned monastery at Landévennec.



The ruins of Landévennec Abbey, abandoned in 914 and later rebuilt in stone. It was abandoned again at the time of the French Revolution.

There he died and was buried, and his sanctity rests on the miracles he is said to have performed. Landévennec was destroyed by the Vikings in the year 914 and the monks fled – with Wonnow’s remains. The connection with Cornwall comes with the dedication to him of several medieval churches in that region. Those of you from Wales might be interested to know that the church at Wonastow (‘Wonnow’s place’) in Monmouthshire was dedicated to this saint. Wonnow’s feast day is 3 March, the day of his death.

It is notable that among the saints of March there are a number from early medieval England. There is Felix of Burgundy, also known as Felix of Dunwich (8 March). It is certain that he came from the kingdom of Burgundy and is likely to have been a priest at one of the great monasteries there and possibly bishop of Châlons. His travels brought him to Canterbury and Archbishop Honorius made him first bishop of the East Angles, based at ‘Dommoc’, Dunwich (although some historians identify this as Walton near Felixstowe). He is credited with the conversion of the kingdom of East Anglia to Christianity. The monk-historian Bede wrote that he freed ‘the whole of the kingdom from long-standing evil and unhappiness’. After seventeen years establishing the faith, teaching and preaching, he died and was buried at Dunwich. He soon began to be venerated as a saint. His relics were translated first to Soham Abbey in Cambridgeshire and then to the better-known Ramsey Abbey.

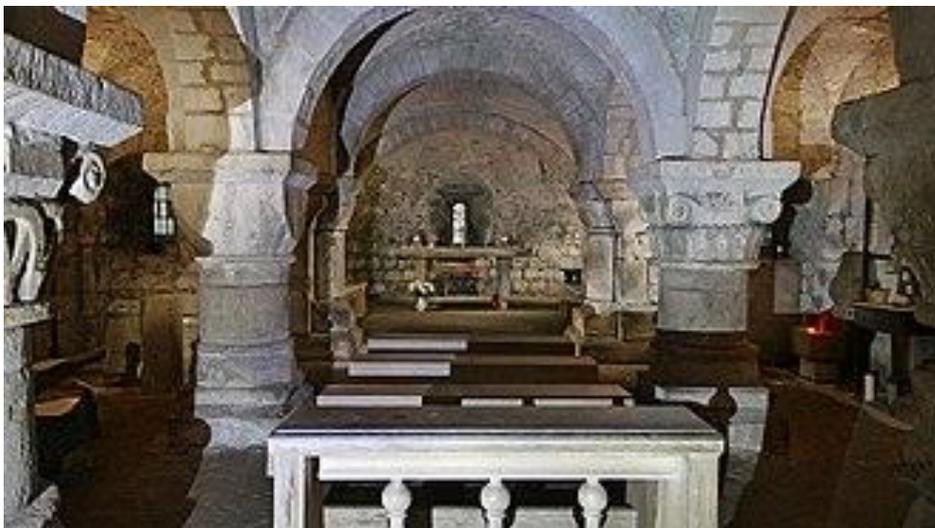
Our next saint, Wihtburh, is also associated with East Anglia. Wihtburh (Withburga, 17 March), was an East Anglian princess, who is said by some to have been a daughter of King Anna of the East Angles. After her father’s death, Wihtburh built a religious community at Dereham in Norfolk, and she lived nearby in solitude, as a hermit or anchorite.



Dereham town sign, showing two deer being hunted

There is a legend that while the convent was being constructed, she had nothing but dry bread to give the workmen, and the Virgin Mary sent a couple of female deer who provided milk. This was interpreted as an endorsement of her religious foundation. A local official who attempted to hunt the deer was struck dead, and the miracle is commemorated in the town sign of Dereham. Half a century after her death her tomb was opened, and her body was found incorrupt – and this was always taken as a sure sign of sanctity – and Dereham became a place of pilgrimage. There followed another phenomenon of the Middle Ages, a *furta sacra* or ‘holy theft’ – Wihtburh’s body was snatched from Dereham on the orders of the abbot of Ely and taken to that monastery and reburied there, where another glimpse of the incorrupt body furnished further evidence of her sanctity. The abbot clearly wanted to profit from the pilgrim trade that could be expected to grow up around a miracle-working saint.

Finally, we have two well-known saints from the north of England. Chad was the brother of Cedd, whom he succeeded as abbot of the monastery at Lastingham in north Yorkshire. A disciple of Bishop Aidan who brought Christianity from Iona to Northumbria, Chad had part of his education in Ireland. He was subsequently made bishop of Northumbria but due to political and ecclesiastical instability and rivalries he was removed from office in 669. Chad moved back to Lindisfarne but soon became bishop of the Mercians (in the Midlands) – doubtless because of his humility, devotion, and zeal. He laid the foundations of the cathedral at Lichfield, and it was to the cathedral church that his relics were translated, claimed (no doubt) because of his immediate veneration as a saint. The wonderful eighth-century illuminated gospel book held in the cathedral library and known as the Chad Gospels was likely associated with the shrine (although it seems to have been in Wales first!)



Lastingham church, the home of St Chad. The crypt dates from the early Norman period when the church was occupied by a group of Benedictine monks from Whitby who went on to found St Mary’s Abbey, York

And so to Cuthbert, one of the best loved of the northern saints. Cuthbert (20 March), like Chad, was born in Northumbria, in the region of the River Tweed. When he was about fifteen he was said to have been looking after a neighbour’s sheep when he saw

a bright light come down from Heaven and return with a human soul – and this was on the night that Bishop Aidan of Lindisfarne died. That confirmed his decision to become a monk and he went to the monastery of Melrose, which had been founded by Aidan, and asked for admission. After being one of a party sent to Ripon to establish a monastery there, he returned to Melrose as prior. At about the age of 30 he moved to Lindisfarne where he played an active role both in running the monastery and providing spiritual guidance. After ten years or so, he felt called to the solitary life, and retreated to the island of Inner Farne. Like many hermits he found it difficult to maintain his solitude and people kept coming to ask for his advice, so he talked to them through a window. That was not the end of his career, as he became bishop of Lindisfarne at what would then have been the advanced age of 50. He travelled extensively, bringing spiritual comfort and healing. Feeling death approach, he returned to his hermitage on Inner Farne, where he died, surrounded by the monks of Lindisfarne, on 20 March 687. Numerous miracles were attributed to him and he became one of England's most popular saints.

Those of you familiar with Durham will know that this is not the end of the story of Cuthbert, just the end of one chapter.



Inner Farne, the retreat of St Cuthbert

Janet

Afternoon Tea with our Friends in the Quarry



On Saturday 17 February members of the All Saints' congregation responded to a kind invitation from our counterparts at Holy Trinity, Headington Quarry, to join them for tea and cakes – and cakes there were in abundance! It was a truly enjoyable experience, giving us chance for a good chat and an exchange of news and views. Light entertainment was provided by our very own Stuart on the piano, and the vicar of Holy Trinity, Rev. Laura Biron-Scott on the clarinet. Thanks to Brigid for the photographs – you can maybe spot one or two people that you know!



Janet

Cities of the Reformation: Geneva

It was only in 1815, after the Napoleonic wars, that Geneva became a canton of the Swiss Confederation. In preceding centuries it had preserved a precarious independence as a city republic, holding out against its avaricious neighbours. It is thus the more remarkable that the branch of Protestantism established there in a context of continuing political turmoil became influential across the world and that the name of its best-known religious leader is still regularly invoked in religious debate into the twenty-first century.

Situated at the south-west end of the Lake of Geneva, the city is almost surrounded by the Alps and the Jura mountains, but these alone could not keep it safe. From the later middle ages into the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, it was vulnerable to pressure from greater powers. The kings of France controlled access to salt and corn, and the strip of land along the lake that cut Geneva off from the Swiss Confederation. The dukes

of Savoy laid claim to the territory itself, periodically invading, most notably in 1602, when an assault on the city walls failed – a seemingly miraculous escape still celebrated annually in the *fête de l'Escalade*. A Grand Council, created in the city in 1457, struggled to



free itself and its citizens from external control, eventually in 1526 achieving a fragile autonomy and signing a treaty of alliance with the Swiss Confederation. By this time, refugees from France and northern Italy had begun to arrive in Geneva, seeing it as a relatively safe haven from persecution of their developing reformed beliefs. Protestant preachers among them spread the new doctrines, encouraged iconoclasm and made common cause with local opponents of the bishop. He was unpopular, not least because he was appointed by Savoy, but although he fled the city in 1528, it was not until 1536 that clashes between religious reformers and conservatives and attacks from Savoy subsided, leaving the way open for residents to take a public oath of allegiance to the Lutheran faith and to declare a republic.



In the same year, French lawyer Jean (John) Calvin (1509-1564) arrived in Geneva from Basel (see December 2023 Newsletter), where he had just published the first edition of his systematic statement of the doctrinal position of the reformers, known in English as *The Institutes of the Christian Religion*. He came at the invitation of another Frenchman, Guillaume Farel (1489-1565), who had been evangelising successfully in Geneva and nearby French-speaking areas of the Swiss Confederation and the principality of Neuchâtel, and who needed assistance. The pair soon produced a Confession of Faith and a set of articles reorganising the church in Geneva, but these were not well-received in the city and fell foul of a

major religious and political row between Geneva and its allies in Protestant Switzerland. Following a riot after the Easter communion service in 1538, Farel and Calvin were ordered to leave.

Calvin went to Strasbourg, where he continued his ministry of preaching and publishing, participated in conferences of reformers, and learned from the theologian Martin Bucer (1491-1551) a good deal about crafting liturgy and running churches. Recalled to Geneva by its council, he arrived in 1541 better prepared, and he stayed for the remaining two decades of his life. Immediately, he set about restructuring the church there. Distinctively, from 1542 it had a fourfold ministry: pastors (who looked after the flock); doctors (who taught theology); lay elders (who oversaw discipline); and lay deacons (responsible for hospitals and charity). A ‘Company of Pastors’ held together the ordained ministry and provided what we would now call continuing professional development, while a consistory made up of pastors and elders sought to control the beliefs and morals of the population. Unlike in the Swiss Reformed cities, the consistory had the power to excommunicate, that is, to deny people access to the Lord’s Supper.

Calvin’s conscious aim was the building of a New Jerusalem, and many saw the city as a state run by clerics. Reality was more complex, however. Through his regular participation in council meetings as a spokesperson for the Company and his very frequent sermons – some 250 a year – Calvin exercised considerable influence, but not formal political power. That remained in the hands of the Council, and Calvin only joined the *bourgeoisie*, from which the Council was drawn, in 1559; relations were not always harmonious.

On the other hand, Calvin's soft power was extensive: the theology and the institutions he developed had enormous importance. His views on the Eucharist, steering a path between Luther's sacramentalism and Zwingli's austerity and minimalism, gained and have kept wide currency among Protestants. His views on salvation, emphasising predestination, election, and God's judgement (albeit not pursued quite so rigorously as by his disciple, Théodore de Bèze/Beza) were preeminent among Protestants into the seventeenth century until challenged by the teachings emphasising grace associated with Arminianism; they remained central among some groups thereafter, and still have traction today. The 'presbyterian' church structures were replicated from Scotland to Transylvania, and into the Americas. The printing industry which mushroomed in Geneva under his wing had a European-wide reach, while the *Académie* set up in 1559 trained pastors for France and Switzerland and drew visiting students from other Protestant countries. The city increased in population from 10,000 in 1535 to 23,000 in 1562, and the influx of refugees continued into the eighteenth century.



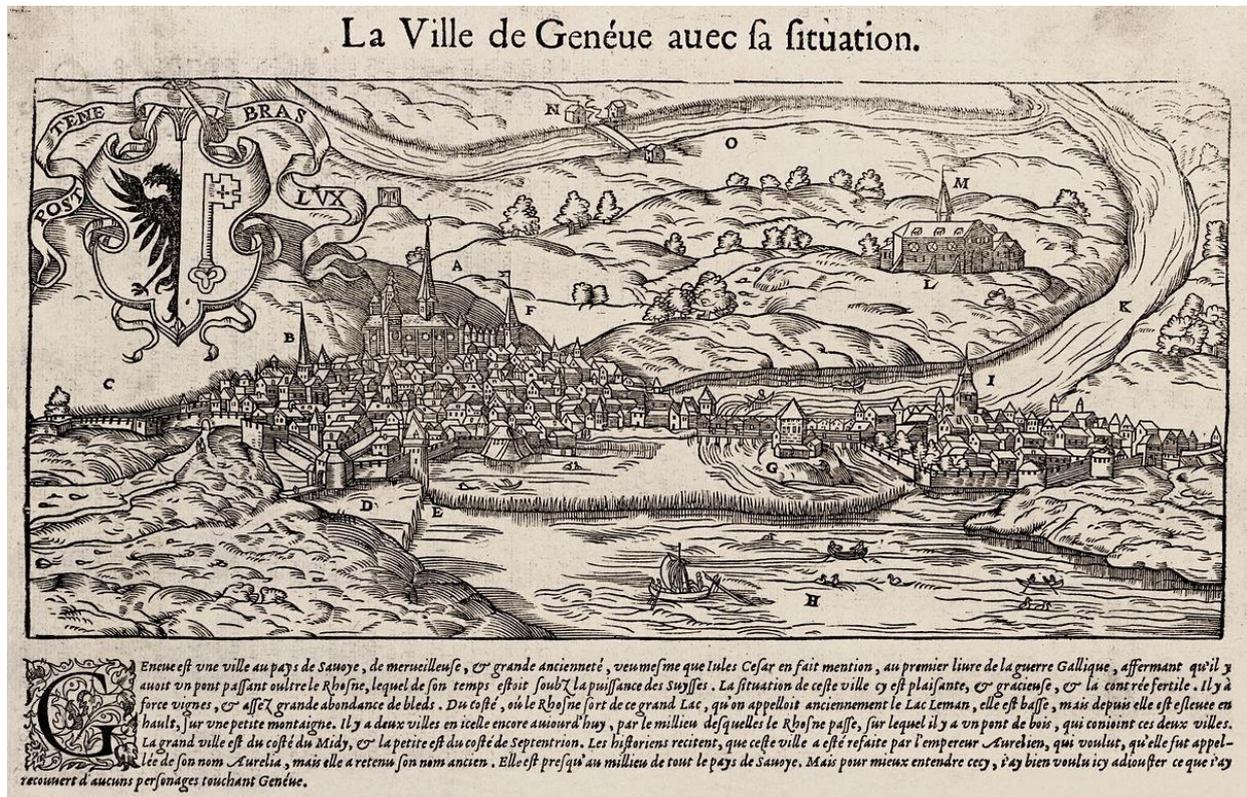
The International Museum of the Reformation was established in Geneva in 2005 and has recently reopened after refurbishment. It occupies a site next to the cathedral of Peter – a very austere building inside, but sporting a rather incongruous classical portico around the west door. In a way this appropriately conveys the unexpected complexity of the Reformation: it is unhelpful to think of people and countries in the past living within rigid, logical and clearly-defined church systems. Near the cathedral in the grounds of the university which superseded Calvin's *Académie* is the International Monument to the Reformation, inaugurated in 1909 and usually known as the Reformation Wall. This features figures, scenes and inscriptions depicting the history of Protestantism in general and Calvinism in particular, including a representation of the passing of bills of toleration and rights in



the Parliament of William III and Mary II. Centrally-placed are five-metre statues of Farel, Calvin, Beza and Knox; at intervals to either side are six three-metre statues of other notables from Germany, the Netherlands, France, America, Transylvania and England (Cromwell). Immediately surrounding the central group is the motto of both the Reformation and the city of Geneva: *Post tenebris lux* [‘after darkness, light’].



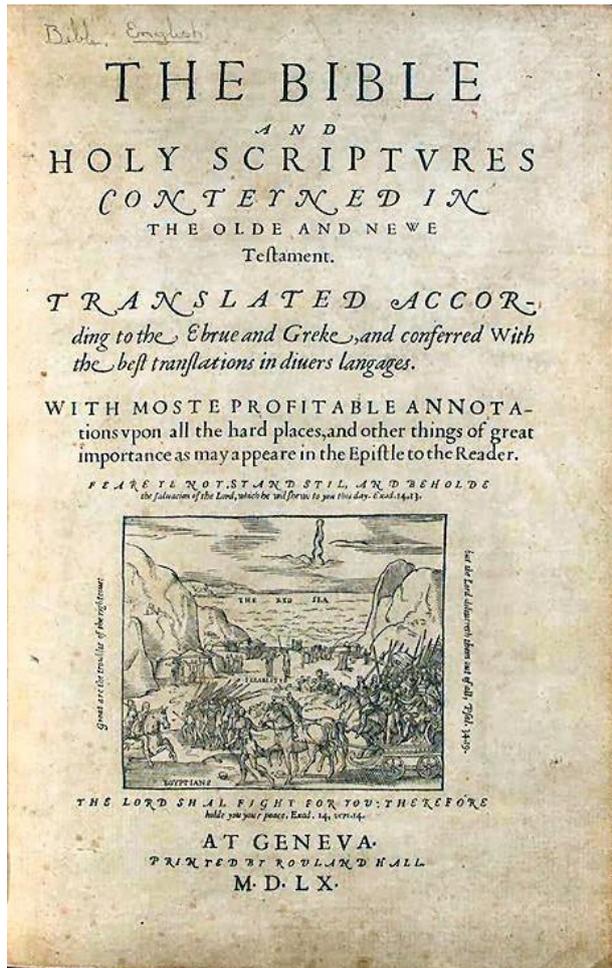
Vivienne



Geneva, English Church Music, and Easter

While Lutherans and Zwinglians helped shape the early Reformation this side of the Channel, Calvinism was a dominant force in the Elizabethan and Jacobean Church of England. The church kept the ‘ancient hierarchy’ of rule by archbishops and bishops, but it also embraced much from Geneva, including theology, as can be seen for instance in publications, university teaching, preaching and wills. Until the 1611 Authorised or King James version of the Bible, and even for some decades afterwards, the main translation used in England was the Geneva Bible (1560). The work of a team of English and Scottish exiles in the city, which included Miles Coverdale and John Knox, it was based on Greek and Hebrew manuscripts, was the first Bible to use chapters and

numbered verses, and included extensive – and controversial – explanatory marginal notes. It surfaces in the writings of William Shakespeare, John Milton, John Bunyan and Oliver Cromwell.



There are other respects in which Genevan and British strands intertwined, for example in worship. A complicated story relates to the Psalter. In the late 1540s first Thomas Sternhold, a member of the court of the reforming King Edward VI, and then John Hopkins published small collections of metrical psalms in English. Building on these, between 1556 and 1561 English and Scottish exiles in Geneva published three successively expanding editions, which included versifications of their own and which mirrored the succession of local French-language psalters initiated by Calvin. The chief contributor to the 1561 edition, which appeared with

the exiles’ alternative English liturgy, *The Forme of prayers and Ministration of the Sacraments Approved by J Calvyn*, was William Kethe (d. 1596). A Scotsman who was then a member of Knox’s congregation, he was the author of the still-popular setting of Psalm 100 known as *The Old Hundredth*, ‘All people that on earth do dwell’. It is set to a tune by Louis Bourgeois (c.1510-1560), a Frenchman who served briefly as choirmaster and cantor at St Peter’s cathedral, Geneva, and who composed most of the music for the French (Huguenot) Psalter.

Once Protestantism was restored in England under Elizabeth I, many exiles returned there, taking their work with them. Kethe, for example, soon became a rector in Dorset. John Daye published two further editions of the English Psalter. The first followed closely the Geneva version of 1560; the second, *The Whole Book of Psalmes* (1562), dropped some of the Geneva material – while retaining some work by Kethe – and substituted newly-found compositions by Sternhold and Hopkins. As ‘Sternhold and Hopkins’, it became the standard in England, often bound with prayer books and reprinted more than 600 times until 1828; it also had long and widespread use in North America. Meanwhile, the Scottish Psalter, first produced in 1564, stayed closer to the Genevan version and included more of Kethe. It was still very much in use when I was at school in Scotland in the later 1960s.



For a long time, the Psalms dominated worship in all areas where Calvinism was strongest. Eventually, however, hymns such as were popular in Lutheran Europe also appeared. Perhaps the most celebrated to come out of Switzerland’s French-speaking area – the region where missionaries from Geneva like Guillaume Farel had had early success – was the work of Edmond Louis Budry (1854-1932). A native of Vevey in the Pays de Vaud, he studied theology in nearby Lausanne and became a pastor further east along Lake Geneva. Alongside translating German, English and Latin lyrics into French, he wrote original hymns, most notably ‘*A toi la gloire*’, otherwise known as ‘Thine be the glory’. Set to the tune ‘See, the conquering hero comes!’ from Handel’s oratorio about the Jewish military hero Judas Maccabeus, it has become a staple of Easter music in many countries. In many families, including my own, it is a favourite at funerals. Memorably, when a decade or so ago my Swiss uncle by marriage was remembered at a service at Ollon (also in Vaud), we sang alternate verses in French and English, expressing a shared heritage.

Vivienne

An Easter Message from our Director of Music

Editor Catherine has asked me to write about music for the coming Easter. An awkward assignment that, as I don't really know yet what we're going to do! We've just got the latest challenge of choral evensong completed last night [the soup tureens are still in my dishwasher!] so the preparation starts NOW. And it needs to take a whole bunch of issues into consideration. Who is available, on what days of Holy Week? [For of course, the demands stretch far wider than just Easter Sunday itself...]. Until these matters clarify themselves it would be rash of me to promise any particular item that wouldn't subsequently be possible. So, what to do...?

Well, what I'd like to do is point you in the direction of some home listening. The Bournemouth Symphony Chorus has come up with what seems to me a very satisfying Easter concert, which they are giving towards the end of March. Obviously, we can't all head off to Poole for this, enticing prospect though that would be, but it is comparatively easy to construct the concert's contents from CDs or even YouTube.

For it's the *ingredients* of the concert that are the especial attraction. All Bach, an excellent start! Rather than giving us one of the Bach passions, it includes the Easter Oratorio followed by selections from the Mass in B minor, specifically the Gloria, Sanctus, Benedictus, Agnus Dei and Dona nobis pacem. Now the Easter Oratorio is not all that often performed, which is a great pity. This is possibly due to the relative brevity of the piece: at around forty minutes it is only one half of a concert. But the listener misses out on some splendid music otherwise. No one does jubilant in quite the same way as Bach, all oboes, trumpets and timpani proclaiming the resurrection miracle.

So why not pre-prepare an Easter treat for yourself [sugar-free, too!]? Go on YouTube, find a performance of the two pieces and conflate them into a special playlist for the big day. I can't guarantee sunshine on Easter Day, alas, but with this selection ready to go I can promise you audible radiant beams!

There are various performances available on YouTube, this is just one set of options.

First the [Easter Oratorio](#) itself. Now, the selected movements from the B minor mass:

[Gloria](#)

[Sanctus](#)

[Benedictus](#)

[Agnus Dei](#)

[Dona nobis pacem](#)

By the way, there's quite a lot of this to take in at one go. Feel free to chop it into more manageable portions. The B minor mass movements might make a useful set of reflections for the five weekdays following Easter.

With every blessing, *Stuart*

Evensong on 25th February

Stuart and the All Saints' Choir made Evensong a truly uplifting experience with moving renditions of Stanford's 'Magnificat' and 'Nunc Dimittis', which Stuart told us were written specially to celebrate the establishment of the Music Department at the Oxford University Press. This month also sees the centenary of Charles Villiers Stanford; he died on 29th March 1924.



Having refreshed our spirits, after the service Stuart provided some physical nourishment with some excellent soup and some rather exotic breads, the latter produced by Stuart's daughter, Elinor.



Many thanks to Brigid for providing the photos.

Catherine

World Poetry Day: 21st March

Barbara Silcock came across this poem and wanted to share it with us. I have subsequently realised that 21st March is also World Poetry Day, which seemed an additional reason to include it. It is also, of course, the first day of Spring in the Northern Hemisphere and of Autumn in the Southern. Sadly, I have not been able to find any information about the poet.

Catherine

Sonnet on March 21st

Today, tonight are equal - of one length;
The year hangs balanced on the equinox.
At dusk the belligerent blackbird mocks
His rivals, shouting in a show of strength
Mistaken by romantics for fervent prayer,
Glamorous gold narcissi pierce the lawn;
A green ghost touches willows that were bare
Last week. The pond is jellified with spawn,
Suspended here, the garden waits and prays
As winter dies, what damage did it do?
Spring yawns and stretches, but which plants came through?
Shoots should awaken with the lengthening days,
Come love, reach out your arms to strengthening sun,
Let's grasp each Spring, before our day is done.

Mary Lewis

From the Editors

We hope our readers will agree that we have got a bumper edition for Easter with lots of interesting articles and a good selection of photographs illustrating the breadth of activities at All Saints', As ever we send our warmest thanks to all our contributors.

This month we send Birthday greetings to Veronica John on 8th March, to Peter Boulton-Lea on the 20th and Valerie Boulter on the 24th; we hope you have a very happy day.

Prayers are asked for those members of All Saints' who are unable to attend church for health reasons; please remember Marian Loudon, Audrey and Derek Woodcock, Sheila Fitzgerald, Joan Turner and Margaret Gunstone.

Wishing you all a peaceful and blessed Easter,

Catherine & Catherine

Deadline for April issue: Tuesday 26th March

Headington Singers – Gloria!

Headington Singers

Conductor Sally Mears

Vivaldi : Gloria

Michael Haydn : Requiem

GLORIA!

Helen Atkinson : Soprano

Serenna Wagner: Mezzo Soprano

Peter Willis : Tenor

David Biccaregui : Bass

Julian Littlewood : Organ

Friday, 15 March 2024 at 7.30pm

All Saints Church, Lime Walk, OX3 7AL

Tickets on the door £12 / £10 / children free

www.headingtonsingers.org.uk

Advertisements

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