

THE PORCH

APRIL 2021



80p

Camino de Santiago, Spain. Photo by: Damien DUFOUR Photographie

ST EDWARD'S CHURCH DRINGHOUSES, YORK

Who's Who in St. Edward's

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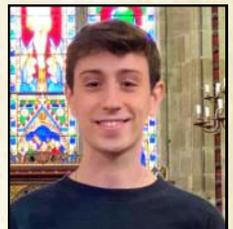
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'Roadmap'

So, we now have a 'Roadmap' as to what a return to some form of normal life might look like after the Lockdown. Whilst I am sure that there will be a few more bumps in the road along the way, it does feel as though there is a way forward and that there is some hope again.



A year ago, I wrote about facing the uncertainty of Lockdown and reflected on the words of Jesus as he spoke to his disciples in a time of fear and anxiety and he said to them 'I am the Way, the Truth and the Life'. In that article, I wrote that "Having recently celebrated Easter, more than one person has pointed out that the uncertainty of what happens next in response to the coronavirus pandemic is akin to living through Lent, but not knowing when resurrection will happen." Whilst it might not yet feel like resurrection, it does at least look like there is the hope of new life. But the question remains as to what will it look like to live well in this new reality?

And so, one year on, I return to that same image of Jesus as The Way.

There are many ways that we can navigate in unfamiliar territory. A couple of years ago we went as a family to America to visit Rachael's sister and my brother who both happen to live in California. For the six-hour drive between them, we didn't have a sat nav and so had to use good old fashioned maps- which is all very well as long as the maps aren't out of date. These days we are more likely to rely on the sat nav, but even then, driving down a 7-lane motorway on the edge of Los Angeles was still a scary experience, when you suddenly hear the voice telling you to cross all 7-lanes to get to the next turn off half a mile ahead.

Far better was to have Rachael's sister or my brother in the car with us. They could then tell us which lane we needed to be in, and would also be an extra pair of eyes looking out for other cars in a world where undertaking is legal - and so are guns! The thought of being involved in a road rage incident here really didn't appeal.

In describing Himself as *The Way*, Jesus is saying that He is so much more than a route map or a sat nav; He is more even than a passenger giving directions. To follow Jesus is a *Way of Life*. So, what might this *Way of Life* look like?

Jesus Himself gives us a glimpse when He is asked what are the most important commandments- i.e., what are the key principles to living life well? His reply is astonishingly simple. "Love God. Love your neighbour". To love God is to recognise that we cannot do life on our own. It is to place our trust in the God who has made us, who knows us, and who loves us more than we can possibly imagine. Out of that place of security of knowing that we are loved and that we are significant, we can then reach out to those around us to affirm that they too are loved and that they too are significant.

As we come out of Lockdown, we will need to relearn what it is to love God and to love our neighbour in what will feel like an unfamiliar land. So many of our familiar signposts have gone, and our usual ways of doing things will need to be reinvented. And yet we will re-emerge into our daily lives looking to Jesus as the one who knows what the *Way ahead* looks like. That *Way* will look different to each of us, but we travel in company with one another knowing that we can all look to Jesus and that, in Him, there is a *Way through*, and it is a *Way* that leads to life.

In this month's magazine, our focus is pilgrimage and journey. We are delighted that the Archbishop of York, Stephen Cottrell, has written an article especially for The Porch about his experience of being a pilgrim.

Striking Out Some reflections on pilgrimage

My little book on pilgrimage, *Striking Out*, begins with the sentence, "We must be the first generation of Christians who think that pilgrimage is about arriving rather than travelling." I wrote the book having returned from walking the *Camino Del Norte*, the less travelled northern route from Irun to Santiago de Compostela.



Every ten years, stipendiary clergy are given the gift of some sabbatical leave. I spent my last one walking. I had always dreamt of walking the Camino, and reckoned that if I didn't do it now, my body may not be up to it in ten years' time.

I set off from my own front door. I walked to the station. Got the train to Plymouth. The ferry to Santander. And walked from there: about 700km. More, with all my wrong turns. I learned many things. But the most important lesson was summed up in the title of the book and its first sentence. When you go on pilgrimage you are making a journey: travelling, not just arriving. You need a destination, but all the important things will be learned on the road: one painful step at a time. Nowadays, many parishes go on pilgrimage, but it is by coach. The journey is a necessary inconvenience. The pilgrimage is what happens at the holy place (and in the gift shop) when you get there, not what happens on the road. Our forebears wouldn't have recognised this as pilgrimage.

I first learned this in parish ministry walking to Walsingham with groups of young people. And then to Canterbury. And then Glastonbury. And then twice to York. Walking and talking my way around England with groups of young people I learned what happens when you strike out. First of all, you have to begin. The



first step - or even the decision to make a first step - is always the hardest. Nothing happens without it. And if you're taking everything you need with you (as I did walking to Santiago) then you really need to think carefully about what you actually need. And what you don't need. This is an education.

One of the greatest lessons I learned was what 'enough' looks like. It is so much less than you think. You end up taking a red pen through your possessions. And you wrestle with God. And with yourself: pushing up against physical boundaries; having time to think. Enjoying the encounters of the road. And a lot of other things as well. I learned to receive the hospitality of strangers. I experienced the vulnerabilities of not knowing where I was going to sleep each night. I lived with the uncomfortable, but also liberating, fact that you can't choose your fellow travellers. Perhaps, most wonderful of all, I learned that between A and B there is a vast and beautiful space.

Usually I'm in a hurry. Usually I try to get from A to B in the quickest possible time by the shortest possible route. Now I had to slow down to God's pace. And so I learned to appreciate and delight in the beauty of each moment and each step. And, of course, when you go on pilgrimage you rediscover life as journey. Yes, there is a destination, but you also need to learn how to travel well. In fact, the invitation of the Christian faith is to make the journey of life a pilgrimage home to God.

Wouldn't our whole world be better if we lived as pilgrims? Learning to travel light. Learning what enough looks like. Receiving the hospitality of strangers. Loving and valuing our fellow travellers, whether they were the companions we would choose or not. These make a difference.

Finally, in the long day of walking through the mountains of northern Spain I set myself the happy task of writing a sonnet each day. They were eventually published in the book, *Striking Out*. Here is one with which to finish. It isn't particularly about pilgrimage, but is the fruits of trying to *be* a pilgrim. And about walking with Christ, and what he gives us.

His eye is on the pearl whose price is more
than all the wealth you're storing for tomorrow.
His alchemy brings joy from hurt and sorrow.
He can mend damaged hearts, open locked doors.

His work is restoration and reprieve:
each person valued, every splinter sought.
His aim is beauty. He doesn't squander thought
on cost or blame. He works, and grieves

for the possibilities rejected,
the wonder that was broken and blemished.
He knows his labour cannot be finished
until all the pieces are connected.

His work is revelation and release.
His way is hope and his end is peace.

Stephen Cottrell
Archbishop of York (and pilgrim)



Just A Minute: Report from the PCC Monday 15th March 2021

- ◇ Helen Dobson (Treasurer) said the accounts have been prepared ready to go to the independent examiner. 2021 continues to be challenging, but donations continue to 'hold up'.
- ◇ Worship will stay online until Easter, and in the meantime the Standing Committee will look at a 'road map' for a return to public worship.
- ◇ Peter Burgess gave an update on the ongoing discussions with regard to the roof. He also sought PCC approval for a Faculty to follow up from the Quinquennial Report - namely coping stones repair on the church roof, improved exterior lighting and more robust guttering now required for churches, as storms are becoming more frequent. This was unanimously approved.
- ◇ The rest of the meeting was discussing the new Diocesan vision of 'Sharing Christ's Story' and considering how St Edward's will contribute to the consultation. This will be revisited in the May/June PCC
- ◇ The next APCM is on Thursday 6th May and the PCC Secretary has submitted details for publication in this month's Porch.

Sunday Lunches

Sunday April 4th; Sunday April 25th

After a most delicious and enjoyable Mothering Sunday lunch, prepared by Marion Burgess, I would like to confirm we will be back on EASTER SUNDAY 4th April 2021. We are offering a choice of fresh salmon with lemon and dill or traditional roast turkey.

On the Sunday 25th April, we are offering a roast dinner.

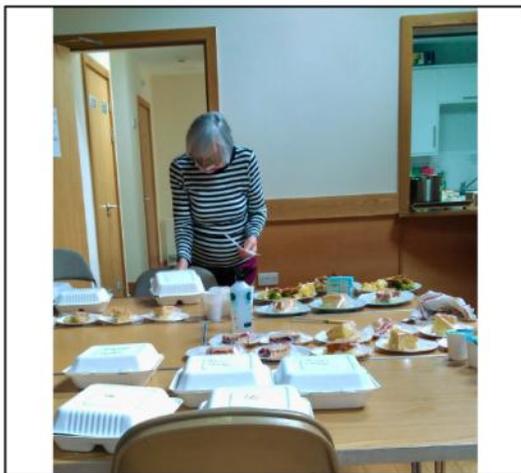
The proceeds will go to St Leonard's Hospice.

Details of how to order lunches are available in the Pew Sheet/Weekly Notices published every Friday at <https://www.stedsdringhouses.org/weekly-notices/>

Please note: lunches are delivered in a Covid-secure manner.



St Edward the
Confessor



Garden Gang Update

"A thing of beauty"

*A thing of beauty is a joy for ever:
Its loveliness increases; it will never
Pass into nothingness; but still will keep
A bower quiet for us, and a sleep
Full of sweet dreams, and health, and quiet breathing."*
John Keats' *Endymion*

There is the proverb, 'Beauty is in the eye of the beholder'; and in the recent BBC 2-part series, *Life in Colour*, there was a lot of amazing eye-catching beauty displayed. David Attenborough, its presenter, commented that whereas humans see colour as beauty, for the animal world colour is essential



for survival. Lately I have also read two articles which touch on this subject of 'beauty' - one was on architecture and what we consider to be beauty in buildings, and the other more philosophical - what is beauty in itself, and why?

All this has led me to consider the garden at St Edward's? What is it for? Is it something just useful, i.e. an arm of the mission of the Church to draw people in, or somewhere where people can find a degree of healing? Or can it be, or contain, beauty for its own sake, somewhere beautiful simply to enjoy?

My conclusion and contention is that the beauty of the world, of a flower or created piece of art, be it painting, sculpture, building or flower arrangement - any beauty around us - is something of simple intrinsic value. It doesn't have to have any purpose - or if there is a purpose, it is for enjoyment. Theologically we can say it is an aspect of God's character or personality from everlasting - what might be called '*the beauty of holiness*'. Beauty in the world is a mirror of the eternal beauty of God, and so, as "*Man's (sic) chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever*", what we see in that mirror is there for our enjoyment as well as drawing us to its Creator.

One of the principles that guides me, as a member of **St Ed's Garden Gang**, is that our Church garden should be 'a thing of beauty' to be enjoyed - full-stop!



Therefore, pandemic lockdown rules permitting, it is planned that on **Monday 12th April at 2.00p.m.**, the Garden Gang will restart work on letting beauty be enjoyed. If any are interested in joining the Gang - the only technical skill required being enthusiasm! - please let me know by e-mail mars4654@uwclub.net or on 01904 792154. Let us together make this a place for all simply to enjoy.

Thank you.

Mark Russell-Smith

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Land's End to John o'Groats - Lockdown Style.

I've been asked to write an article about my crazy challenge to walk the equivalent of the distance from Land's End to John o'Groats during 2021. Why crazy? Well, my feet and ankles are not my best features but as long as they keep going, so will I. Starting on New Year's Day seemed like a good idea - until the persistent rain of the wettest January on record and the freezing cold and snow of February came along. Still, so far I have been out every day. At the end of January I reached Tiverton having waved to Helston on Helen Dawe's behalf on the way. By the end of February I was past Bath and enjoying the Cotswold Way, imagining snowdrops and catkins. I hope by the time you read this to have started on the Pennine Way.



Map Man (alias Martin) has been plotting my route and plodding along with me for much of it. He measured it at 874 miles. However, I did not like the idea of walking up the M6!! As well as the Cotswold Way, my route now takes in the whole of the Pennine Way (all 250 miles of it), and parts of the West Highland Way and the Great Glen Way. Doesn't that sound so much nicer?- and longer, so the walk now measures over 1,000 miles.

I hope to finish this challenge before next Christmas. I also hope to raise £1,000 for Accomplish Children's Trust, a charity supported by St Edward's giving scheme. The situation faced by children with disabilities in Africa, whom Accomplish supports, makes our lockdown feel a bit less harsh.

I am for now of course limited to walking around Newark, but when our restrictions are eased, I would like to actually walk some of this route, and with friends. Until then I am enjoying the challenge and learning about places I am passing in my imagination.



Sue Baldock

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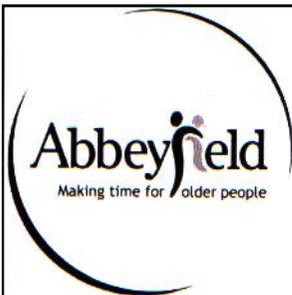
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A Day in the Life of...A Maths Lecturer

According to *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*, the answer to life, the universe, and everything, is 42.

Stephen Hawking would probably have put it at a much bigger number and tried to persuade us that we are the product of chance, our lives determined by a complicated calculation.



On the other hand, God is also quite good at sums and his mathematics impact on us in a much deeper and personal way. He is so intimately involved with his creation that he has counted the very hairs on our head (not so difficult in some cases!) and keeps a ledger where he records the days that are allotted to us on planet earth, and every tear that we have spilled. He can number the cattle on a thousand hills, and all the birds of the air. The Psalmist writes, 'Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom'. (Psalm 90:12)

As numbers are so important, we decided to interview Dr Steve Connor, one of our congregation who is a Maths Lecturer at the University of York.

So, Steve, how did you end up as a maths lecturer?

I was quite good at maths at school, but initially didn't consider it something I would want to pursue as a career. In Year 12, we had a newly qualified teacher who made the subject so much more interesting and exciting, as a result of which, I ended up reading Maths & Statistics at the University of Warwick. There I was fortunate to work with another talented and inspirational mathematician who persuaded me to work with him on my PhD, which then led me to apply for a post in the Maths Department here in York.

What would you say to people who think that maths is not for them?

I think people don't realise how much we use maths in our daily lives, way beyond checking if we have been given the right change or weighing out food for a recipe. Right now, during the current pandemic, there are a lot of numbers and statistics being bandied about and a lot of people really struggle to make proper sense of them.

Yet, we are using these numbers to make very important decisions about whether we have a vaccine, send our children to school, see our friends or families for Christmas etc. A basic understanding of probability and risk would help us spot when the media or the government are trying to pull the wool over our eyes.

What does your average week look like, in “normal times”?

In theory my work is split into about 40% teaching, 40% research and 20% administration. However, for the past 2.5 years I have been Deputy Head of Department in charge of Teaching, which has meant a lot more time dedicated to meetings and admin, even before the pandemic! My main responsibility is to oversee the quality of our teaching; we have about 50 staff and 30 graduate teaching assistants delivering 120 modules to around 800 students each year, so there are a lot of courses and people to look after!

What impact has the pandemic had on your department?

At the moment, all our teaching is online. This has meant that we have had to record all our lectures and make them available, with subtitles, to be viewed by the students in their own homes. Subtitles are automatically created, but need to be proof-read and edited. (Automatic subtitling of mathematical content is particularly prone to errors, some quite amusing!) This has been a huge undertaking.

Because of the uncertainty over the last 12 months, some postgraduate students deferred their start date to January, so we actually now have two cohorts of students doing the same programme but at different times, which has doubled the teaching workload for some colleagues.

The two biggest challenges have probably been exams and student welfare. We use a lot of exams in Maths, and are used to these being sat in examination halls; now that they're taking place online as “open exams” there is unfortunately significant opportunity for cheating. But this has led to a lot of sharing of ideas between maths departments from across the country, as we all have to deal with similar problems. Regarding student welfare, many students have understandably struggled with the current situation, and so we have had to offer extra support for them and to try to find ways for them to continue their education without being disadvantaged.

What do you enjoy most about your job?

I feel incredibly fortunate to do the job that I do.

Firstly, God has given us a brain and it is so satisfying to use it, to see the sheer beauty in numbers and to get the thrill of producing new solutions to mathematical problems, some of which have not previously been considered.

I really value meeting people from different parts of the world, both students and colleagues and, in normal times, travelling to conferences to share ideas and collaborate in exciting projects. It feels such a privilege to be paid for things that I really enjoy!

I've also been involved in outreach programmes in schools to try and encourage students to engage more with maths and see the numerous opportunities it offers.

Finally, how did you arrive at St Edward's?

When we first moved to York, we rented a property in Fulford and attended Heslington Church. After a couple of years, we bought a house and moved to this side of town. We continued to attend Heslington Church as we had become quite involved, but really wanted to be involved in a church that served our local community. Our daughter, Anya, was friends with Beth Hobson through pre-school, so we came along to St Ed's to see what it was like. Initially we had a "foot in both camps" but finally extracted ourselves from Heslington and have made St Ed's our home.

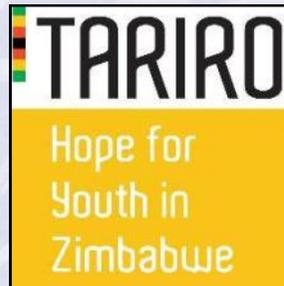
Thank you, Steve. Maybe we can look forward to a future Porch article on "Probability and risk for the uninitiated", or "How not to be bamboozled by numbers".

Steve Connor was interviewed by Linda Sykes

News from Tariro: Hope for Youth in Zimbabwe.

News has just come through of the success of several young people whom the project has supported over the past few years.

Graduation ceremonies were held in December, when there was a lull in their lockdown. The good news is, that as well as Rumbidzai having qualified as an Occupational Therapist, Kundai has gained his B.Sc. in Medicine and a B.Sc. in Surgery from the University of Zimbabwe. Kundai helps as a volunteer at the informal clinic attached to the project, run by Avondale church in Mabvuko each month. This is an area of High Density. The clinic monitors and advises the many elderly grandparents who care for their orphaned grandchildren. He will now be seeking his first post as a junior doctor.



Glenda, whose wedding I attended in 2018, was one of the original TYP young people. After gaining an HND, she was working in the Dept. of Mining and has now achieved her M.Sc. in Analytical Chemistry. She combined studying with being a mum to Marcie, as well as a wife to Shadrack.

Delight, who works in Bulawayo, has also recently married. He works as an accountant, and again is one of the young people that I knew in 2012. He was always so steady and reliable, so I am delighted for him.

As the older ones move on, Tariro has offered a home to two young girls who are just beginning their Secondary education as well as to Farenca, who is starting a Catering and Hotel Management Course in Harare.

Please continue to keep them in your prayers and rejoice with them that so many opportunities have opened up to them through the generosity of the many Tariro supporters.

Helen Dawe

Promise Page: Pilgrimages

When you say 'Pilgrimage' what do you think of? Going to a holy place or a church, possibly to another country? I really believe that we can go on pilgrimage journeys in our local area, using the time that we're journeying to talk to God or about Him and wrestle with the trickier aspects of our faith. That's especially true for children, for example:

We've spent the last year as a family:

tramping/stomping/skipping/running/squelching/slipping/walking on Hob Moor. Taking notice of all the changes the seasons (and cows) made to it. It has been a place that we pilgrimage to. Because of how huge it is and the physical space it has, it also gave us mental space where as a family we had lots of big, honest conversations. Most of them were about Jesus.

Here are some suggestions for making your family walk into a pilgrimage:

Take Photos of where you have been and then pray for them when you get back.

Make a journey stick - take some string and scissors out with you, find a great walking stick and wrap the string around it tightly. As you go on your walk and find treasure attach it to the stick and thank God for it.

As you walk around an area and past houses of people you know pray for them, no need to stop or make it a long prayer.

Draw a picture of your own Pilgrimage Journey. This could be published in a future Porch Magazine!

Use the Together@Home website (tath.co.uk) to find the psalm guided walks.

Katie Hobson

Eds Note: If you would like your Pilgrimage Journey to be printed in the Porch, please either hand in to the Parish Office or scan/photograph and send to porch@stedsdringhouses.org

A Journey through Lockdown

I am sitting at my window looking down on pots below
Lots of bulbs are coming up - different shapes begin to show
There's an icy wind that's blowing
and the birds are looking cold
even "Berty" prowling doesn't look so very bold
There's a little pile of feathers in a little corner spot
Where "Berty" jumped and caught and ate (that didn't make the pot)
The lawn is full of moss and ditches here and there
Where our foxes have been digging to find some juicy fare.
And yet despite the icy wind there is merriment all around,
The clouds are racing overhead, colours mixed of white, grey, red
Big fat pigeons plod around eating up what's on the ground
Some so fat take offs in doubt
So "Berty's" lucky if about
Lots of little birds scurry here and there
Hanging off the feeders and swooping thro' the air
Sometimes a lot, then suddenly none
As if an alarm bell suddenly rang
The days are getting lighter of that there is no doubt
Just take each day and what it gives
Stay calm -be pleasant- life is to live
It won't be long there is no doubt
Signs of Spring are all about
And with the signs of Spring around
Let's knock that virus on its head
Stay safe - be smart - hands, mask and face
And send the virus into space

By Liz Coote

P.S. "Berty" is our local cat and prize pigeon catcher!

A Journey through Time

Jim Wilson was inspired by Beryl Bailey's piece in The Porch on her life in Birmingham during the war years, and so here he shares his own memories of life in London.

This was one of the most interesting articles I have read recently, and I thank Beryl for writing in such detail. My thoughts stem from my own memories, starting at 3 September 1939.

During that summer, my brother and I visited some aged aunts who lived in Beverley. During that period, we went to matins at Beverley Minster where another cousin was churchwarden. At aged 12 I was not aware of the detailed political situation, but very rapidly realised that a major problem was developing. The local battalion of the East Yorkshire regiment had been on church parade in the Minster. On the way home we passed a group of ladies who were very tearful because war with Germany had just been declared.

Not knowing what else to do but understanding that we could be bombed at any time, we all sat in the house with gas masks on - but at that time nothing happened.

My brother and I returned to our parents in London, as I was starting at my new Grammar School. It was a brand-new school and because of the shortage of teachers, initially we attended for half-days only. The shortage of teachers persisted throughout the war and even though in the second year we went for full days, we had a shortage of good charismatic teachers. Lacking inspiration, my concentration suffered, which explains partly my poor achievements.

In 1940/41 London suffered from bombing attacks and we all spent a good deal of time going into and out of air raid shelters. I clearly remember one midday period when the ground was so shaken that when we left the shelter it was impossible to grasp the devastation. That was the trigger for the school being partly evacuated to Torquay - but that is another story.



We were away for probably one and a half years and then returned. The incessant bombing had stopped but we still needed to spend our nights in a shelter. In our case it was a Morrison shelter taking up the whole of our dining room, and with space for four people to sleep. The nights were punctuated with explosive and incendiary bombs landing around us.



By this time, I had joined the Scouts and one of our activities was to help installing Morrison shelters in various houses. It was virtually impossible to do any schoolwork in the shelters, but we used our time to become more proficient at playing cards. As time went on there was less enemy activity, but in or about 1943, the Germans started to use V1 rockets which were used indiscriminately - usually called "buzz bombs". They were followed quite quickly by V2 rockets. These were sent in large numbers and mainly deployed into the London area. One incident that I can remember is the total destruction of a large department store in West London with hundreds of people killed or severely injured.

During the war we had many friends and relatives staying or visiting. Most came from Ireland as our family was Irish, and visitors stayed because it was difficult to travel during their time on leave from the forces. They were many and varied from Irish Guards to Indian Army, RAF and ladies from the WRNS. One that I remember was a member of the WRAF with a fiancé who flew members of the Special Operations Executive into France.

At this time, I took my General School Certificate and, as we spent quite a good deal of our time going in and out of shelters, the examiners were good enough to say that they would take account of these disruptions in marking our papers - that was a great help to me!!

At 16, I left school and decided that I would train as a Chartered Surveyor, as at that time very few pupils went into the sixth form and on to university. I worked during the day and studied at night. By the time I was seventeen and a half I joined the Army and spent almost 3 years serving, latterly in Malaya doing work that I very much enjoyed. In early 1948 I left the Army and continued my studies.

1948 was a good year for me, as not only did I start a new chapter, but I met Joy who was just starting nursing. 3 years later we were married.

Jim Wilson

Competition time

Could you write a 500 word piece for The Porch?

The subject matter is open but some suggestions are:

- ◇ Small acts of kindness
- ◇ Fear and uncertainty
- ◇ Concerns for the environment
- ◇ Technology that has helped us over the past year
- ◇ Fiction or Non fiction

The competition is open to Adults and Children and we will print the winning entries in future Porch Magazines. Under 7's to write 250 words.

Please send entries to porch@stedsdringhouses.org by the 31st May 2021

Prize of book token for the winning entry

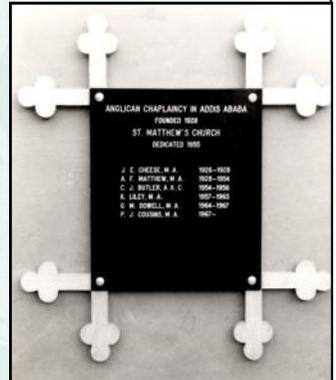
Thanks Helen, Linda and Ian



www. Worldwide Worship: Ethiopia, Egypt and Malta

The editors kindly invited me to contribute to The Porch with regard to my experience of worldwide worship and, on looking back over sixty years of ministry, I realise that I have had the privilege of conducting worship in Africa, the Middle East and Europe and so have a certain slant on the topic. I thought I might try a 'compare and contrast' of how it was for me and Janet in three different foreign capitals - Addis Ababa, Cairo and Valletta. In all three cases, the services I conducted were ostensibly Anglican/C of E but there were remarkable variations of both content and context.

In Addis Ababa, the capital of Ethiopia, the Anglican Church of St. Matthew was the go-to place of worship for anybody wanting English-language, but non-Roman Catholic, services. It was, in the 1960s, very recognisable fare - all in English and all from the Book of Common Prayer (the new modern liturgies had not at that stage penetrated Africa). We had 8.00,10.15 and 6.30 services every Sunday. There was no organ, only a piano and the choir did not wear robes. Since we were not in England, the state prayers had to be modified. For example, instead of "O Lord, save the Queen" one substituted "O Lord, save our rulers" and in the Communion Prayer for the Church Militant, I enjoyed praying for "Haile Selassie, Emperor of this land and Elizabeth, Queen of Great Britain and Northern Ireland"(in that order).



A big feature of the services was their multi-racial character. We had an Electoral Roll of 200, drawn from 22 different countries, mainly African and Asian. 25% of our membership was Indian (because the Emperor had recruited Christian teachers for his new secondary schools after WWII). The African embassies were well represented, and among our worshippers were the Ambassadors of Nigeria, Liberia, Ghana, Malawi and Equatorial Guinea. However, equally welcome were the numerous refugees, mainly from South Sudan, so it was a delightfully mixed congregation. There was one lone Ethiopian gentleman who sat at the back and didn't socialise, and we had to assume he was one of the Emperor's secret police, so we had to be polite - but distant.

The Anglican policy is to respect the local Church - in this case the Ethiopian Orthodox - and not to poach or recruit from them. One final speciality of church life in Addis Ababa was who you might find in the congregation on any given Sunday. One Easter we had Princess Mary, granddaughter-in-law of the Emperor, and at other times were visited by Group Captain Leonard Cheshire and the explorer Wilfred Thesiger.

It was wonderful to be introduced to the Peace during Eucharist, as sharing the Peace had not yet started back home. We introduced the new Liturgy of the Church of South India, of which the Peace is an integral part - but we learned to do it in the lovely Indian manner whereby you interlock your palms vertically and then slowly withdraw them.

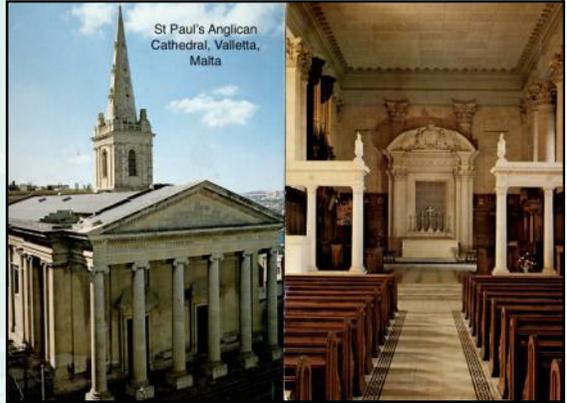
In the mid 1980s, we found ourselves abroad again - this time in the teeming mega-capital of Egypt, where I was appointed to serve in All Saints' Cathedral, Cairo. There was just one snag - there was no Cathedral! A new one was ever so slowly being built, and so for over three years we had to worship in the hall of the British International School. The Alternative Service Book had arrived by then, and so the language was more accessible to the many non-English speakers in the congregation. Cairo hosted twice as many embassies as Addis Ababa and the United States Ambassador, Frank Wisner, memorably crept out of his Residence, eluding his security detail, and walked to church one Easter to join us for our sunrise service, sitting on the floor alongside us all! One less secretive "celeb" was Daniel Arap Moi, the President of Kenya, who one Sunday came to our 8.00 service wearing his trademark white suit.



The big difference in Cairo, was that we had separate English speaking and Arabic speaking congregations - the ESC and the ASC. My colleague who ran the ASC was a charming elderly Egyptian canon who had suffered imprisonment under Colonel Nasser. There were also several brave Muslim men who believed in Jesus but could not go openly to the ASC but instead came, Nicodemus-like, to our 8.00. This was because, under Egyptian law, it was impossible to have your ID card changed from Muslim to Christian. Those who attended the Arabic service were Christian Egyptians whose families had converted in the 19th Century.

As in Ethiopia, one had to be careful as a foreign cleric. Whilst I had no personal dealings with Hosni Mubarak's regime, I was always cautious when something critical about "the Egyptians" came up in the Old Testament. I would insert into my text a phrase like "if any of our friends from security are present, I do want to assure them that this is a purely historical reference to the time of the Pharaohs and has nothing to do with this great nation today". Eventually our new Cathedral was finished and consecrated, and the Muslim Governor of Cairo was there in the front row.....

Finally, to Malta and its tiny, but perfectly formed capital city, Valletta. Here it felt more like 'home' because there was a high proportion of British people in the congregation. There were no refugees in the Nineties - and no secret policemen at the back of the church. The Pro-Cathedral of St. Paul, my place of work and also our home, looked truly Anglican albeit overtly 'high church'. There were



six big candles on the altar, Eucharistic vestments, an organ and a robed choir in which Janet of course sang. All this was in an ex-colonial building bedecked with the White Ensign, the flag of St. George and the standard of the Royal Air Force. Often the congregation consisted of tourists and so it happened that I found myself preaching at one time to the novelist Joanna Trollope and at another time to the B.B.C. presenter Richard Baker. For us, it was an ideal halfway stage for our eventual return to the UK.

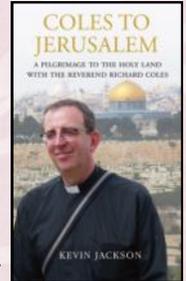
So, there we are - time to go home now, but the memories linger on.

Philip Cousins

Book Review: Coles to Jerusalem

A Pilgrimage to the Holy Land with the Reverend Richard Coles

For two thousand years, pilgrims have journeyed to the place where Jesus lived and taught, in order to walk where he walked. This short book follows Rev. Richard Coles on his journey with parishioners and friends around Israel accompanied by a writer, Kevin Jackson (not himself a Christian), to record each day. Rev. Richard has become known to many of us as an Anglican priest, broadcaster, scholar - and a former band member of the Communiards - but it is not really about him, but rather about the pilgrimage.



We meet this happy band of pilgrims at Heathrow Airport, and the script has echoes of Chaucer's own tale of meeting his fellow pilgrims in the Tabard Inn. Indeed, it is fair to say that many of these modern pilgrims are similarly as colourful as Chaucer's companions and at times as irreverent!

If you are looking for a deeply spiritual and historic guide to the Holy Land, this book will not be for you. However, if you would like to know what the modern-day pilgrim may face in the Holy Land today - then this account will tell you. It doesn't duck the crowds, the noise, the antagonism of some residents, the commercialism and the poor food that many experience on the way. For instance, in Bethlehem Jackson records, 'After such a long wait, anti-climax. Closing time is near, and the Church wardens make us rush down into the Grotto and then out again at such a rapid pace, that the more nimble of us are almost running.' (p68).

However, these disappointments are juxtaposed with moments when the group are surprised by joy and have a profound sense of the presence of God - which even the non-believing Jackson admits to being affecting.

At Emmaus (Abu Ghosh) they visit the Benedictine Monastery that cares for the gardens and the buildings. The pilgrims are invited to attend Solemn Vespers. Jackson writes, 'This was petitioning by notes in prayer...one nun/monk would sing some notes to God and then another would follow with their notes. Each seemed to know when the other had finished. None of them interrupted but just seemed to pick up where the other left off...' (p123). He recalls that the Rev. Richard then read the account of two travellers on the road to Emmaus who encounter the risen Jesus. 'Were not our hearts burning within us?' (Luke 24:32). Rev. Richard concluded, 'It is this passage of scripture that made me a Christian'.

Jackson doesn't just write a daily record; he has done his research and shares nuggets about Church history, Christian belief and modern Israeli politics. However, essentially his story is about friendship, of acceptance, of meeting with God despite the best efforts of the crowds and traffic - and that even in returning home, one remains a pilgrim- as the story isn't finished yet!

Helen Wren

World Day of Prayer: 5th March 2021

Normally in the Dringhouses area, we would share preparations and service with our friends from St James the Deacon and West Thorpe. However, this year things had to be done differently.

On Friday 5th March, I read through the whole service which had been prepared by the Christian woman of Vanuatu, a country of more than 80 islands in the South Pacific Ocean. The theme was 'Build on a Strong Foundation' where the women of Vanuatu share their stories, their belief in the power of prayer and the love of God.

Thank you to everyone for your donations which totalled £180, which I have forwarded to the York Area to add to their total. The funds will be used for projects run by Christian charities around the world.

The next World Day of Prayer will be Friday 1st March 2022 and will be hosted by St Edward's. More information can be found on <https://www.wwdp.org.uk>

Louise Robinson

Election of Churchwardens and Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM)

This is a preliminary notice to inform that the Election of Churchwardens and the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) will be held via Zoom on **Thursday 6 May 2021 at 7pm.**

I should like to draw your attention to the fact that there are vacancies for PCC members. Please consider being nominated to serve on this Council and be a Trustee of St Edward's Church. Not only will you have a say in the future of St Edward's but also, from a Diocesan point of view, what our priorities are for the church in this area.

More information will follow in the Weekly Notices and in the May edition of The Porch Magazine. Nomination forms will be available immediately after Easter from the Parish Office or by email from: isobelgoforth@tiscali.co.uk.

Isobel Goforth, PCC Secretary

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Journey to St. Edward's

I don't know if you have had a 'Sliding Door moment' in your life? In the 1998 film 'Sliding Doors', Gwyneth Paltrow's character, Helen, dashes to catch a tube train. The sliding doors go across and she misses it - but then the film rewinds to a split second earlier when she catches it. The rest of the film follows two separate scenarios for Helen (conveniently, in one of them she restyles her hair). Of course, unlike the film, we only know the outcome of the paths we actually take, but some decisions we make seem to lead to greater changes than others. This is the decision of mine, that in retrospect has influenced my life the most.

In my last year at university, I applied to do a one-year postgrad teaching course. I was keen to put an Oxford college first, but after prayer, decided to apply to York St John, as my dad wasn't well, and York was only a 45 min train journey from my parents. At the time, St Cuthbert's in York, under its vicar, David Watson, had an outstanding reputation for its worship and ministry. A Christian friend at university, who used to live in York, mentioned the opportunity to volunteer at the Catacombs, a youth project sponsored by St Cuthbert's who were about to move into larger premises at St. Michael-le-Belfry.

I was offered a place on the St John's course, worshipped at St Michael's and started volunteering at the Catacombs. This project was in the annexe of St. Sampson's church. It was spectacularly decorated by art students to look like mosaic-lined Catacombs. Towards the end of the year, two friends and I all got teaching posts in York and decided to share a house. I went out with the letting agent to see a house for rent overlooking the racecourse, on Hunters Way, and was enchanted by the cherry blossoms. Our references accepted, we moved there over the summer. I continued to go to St Michael's - walking past St Edward's to catch the bus.

After a couple of years, I had my arm twisted to attend the Catacombs AGM, where I met the treasurer, Tony Myers. Not only did he also live in Dringhouses, but I discovered he was the organist at St Edward's. After going out with him several times, he invited me to a morning service at St Edward's. I had attended a few different churches at university, but usually with a friend, so as Tony was playing the organ, it felt quite scary going into a new church on my own. Where did I sit? Where in the booklet were parts of the service? How do I go forward for communion? Tony asked to meet me in the hall for coffee, but because he was clearing up, I was once again on my own. I was immediately made very welcome by a lady called Mary Mountain - she was for many years the leader of the Women's Fellowship and was keen to invite me along. School, volunteering and romance meant I had to decline, but it has made me very aware of welcoming newcomers ever since.

Once we were engaged, I worshipped regularly at St Edward's, though until my son was born in 1980, I still volunteered at the Catacombs. Little did I realise that the decision to come to York would lead to involvement with a church for 45 years; a church where I was married twice, where my two children were baptised, confirmed and became choristers, where my daughter was married, three grandchildren baptised, and I was called to become a Reader.



Though it might be interesting to look for a 'Sliding Doors' moment in our lives, ultimately as Christians, we believe our lives are not controlled by random events, but by the guiding hand of our loving God. Now I look back, I can see that the decision to come to York set off God's plan for the rest of my life. Not only did it affect everything else, but that decision actually led Geoff to come to St Edward's. As it turned out, Geoff attended the Catacombs in the 70s and became a Christian. He then became involved at St Michael's as a result.



Years later, he heard that I was single again and called round to see me. A low-key courtship followed. Geoff's first involvement at St Ed's, was assisting me at the Millennium Eve party which I organised in the church hall. It's no surprise that he was in charge of the bar - and the washing up! From our engagement in 2008, he became a faithful worshipper here.

I love our church building; I like the feeling that it's been hallowed by prayer and worship for 170 years. Yet the pandemic has reinforced what I have always believed, the church is the body of Christ, the faithful people - we are the living stones, who can survive without a building.

As 1 Peter 2 states: *'Come to him, a living stone... chosen and precious in God's sight, and ⁵like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house.'* As God's living stones we are called to be Caring, Committed and Courageous.

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