

The Feast of Corpus Christi

At the earliest opportunity, in Ordinary Time, following the great season of Easter, the Church celebrates the festival of *Corpus Christi*. Traditionally, it was observed on the Thursday following Trinity Sunday. Thursday, because that is the day of the week when we commemorate the Last Supper, Maudy Thursday. Now the Church usually transfers it to the following Sunday, as we are doing today.

Corpus Christi recognises the centrality of the eucharist in the spiritual life of the Church. In one sense the shared meal, which Jesus is often described in the Gospels as sharing with his disciples and friends, is the basis of the community of the Church. Then, at that final Passover meal, at which he presided on the night he was arrested, Jesus made real what he had been preparing his disciples for in his teaching throughout his ministry: taking the bread, blessing it, breaking it, and sharing it he said, "This is my body." Taking and blessing the cup of wine and sharing it he said: "This is my blood". He concluded by saying to his continuing fellowship, "Do this in remembrance of me."

At the time of the Reformation across Europe, there was great debate about the place of the Eucharist in the Church, and what was actually happening at the altar. 'Was Christ really present in the bread and wine?' Some countered cynically by asserting that doubters believed in the 'real absence' of Christ! Gradually, in the middle of the twentieth century, most Church communities recognised that Christ's command needed to be obeyed if the fellowship of the Church were to be strengthened and renewed. Today, almost every Church has the Mass/Eucharist/Holy Communion at the heart of its worship.

Today we shall obey Christ's command, as we do every day. But at *Corpus Christi*, we give special thanksgiving and reverence for this most holy sacrament. We shall process at the end of the Mass with the host, Christ's real presence in our pilgrimage, and conclude with a special benediction, as the sign of the cross is made over the congregation, as the bread of life is elevated in the monstrance – a sacred vessel which contains the consecrated host.

'Flaming June' – not the late 19th century 'pre-Raphaelite-ish' painting by Sir Frederic Leighton, but merely the weather! In 2019 the meteorological office declared **that** June to be the hottest on record. We can only wait, and hope!

Please take this Pew Leaflet home and keep it for your reference and prayers.

Take a copy to give to a friend and share the good news.

If you have any news or ideas that might be considered for inclusion in future leaflets, please give copy to Robert Middlewick. (robertmiddlewick@gmail.com)

THE PARISH OF S. BARNABAS, TUNBRIDGE WELLS

CORPUS CHRISTI

2nd June, 2024

*WELCOME TO S. BARNABAS' CHURCH,
especially if you are a visitor or a newcomer.
We hope you will be able to stay for refreshments,
which will be served at the rear of the Church immediately following the Mass*

Services This Week

Today	2 nd June	THE FEAST OF CORPUS CHRISTI 11.00 am PARISH MASS with procession of the Blessed Sacrament, Benediction, and Sunday School	
Monday	3 rd June	<i>S Charles Lwanga</i>	11.00 am Low Mass
Tuesday	4 th June	<i>Feria</i>	11.00 am Low Mass
Wednesday	5 th June	<i>St Boniface, Bishop and Martyr</i>	11.00 am Low Mass
Thursday	6 th June	<i>Feria</i>	11.00 am Low Mass
Friday	7 th June	<i>The Sacred Heart of Jesus</i>	11.00 am Low Mass
Saturday	8 th June	<i>The Immaculate Heart of Mary</i>	11.00 am Low Mass
Sunday	9 th June	10th Sunday in Ordinary Time 11.00 am PARISH MASS , with Sunday School	

We wish our newly elected Churchwardens and PCC every blessing for their leadership in the coming year.

Special News Edition

This week, the *centre fold of the Pew Leaflet* is designed as a *Sunday Black and White Supplement* reporting our Parish Meetings and Elections last Sunday.

PLEASE PRAY THIS WEEK FOR

- our Vicar; our Churchwardens and PCC members: Ben, Adrain, Sarah, Peter, Lorraine, Mel, and Brian, elected last week to lead S. Barnabas' in the coming year.
- all Christian leaders, especially, Justin, our Archbishop; Jonathan, Bishop of Fulham; Jonathan, Bishop of Rochester; Pope Francis; the Orthodox Patriarchs, and the leaders of the Reformed Churches; wisdom in their words, the guidance of the Holy Spirit in their decisions, and commitment to unity in the body of Christ.
- the apparent moves towards war in Europe to be reversed; all who hold weapons and power; those involved in diplomacy.
- those who still carry the scars and consequences of the Second World War; those who serve in our Armed Forces today.
- the healing of the hurts of a broken world; children and families crying in pain for their injury through wars and insurgencies.
- the peoples of Gaza, the West Bank, and Israel; those of Ukraine and Russia; of Iran, Syria and Yemen; of Sudan, South Sudan and Somalia; of Afghanistan and Myanmar.
- those suffering from natural disasters, especially in Papua New Guinea; those experiencing drought and flood.
- ourselves, our families, friends, and all who are in our hearts and minds, especially those for whom we have a special responsibility.
- our politicians, both local and national; those standing for election in this country.
- those who are in hospital, or undergoing treatment; our doctors and nurses.
- Carla, Brian, Johnny, Paul, Ginger, and Nick.
- all who are bereaved.
- the departed, especially those we have loved, and those who have died untouched by human love. We pray especially for the soul of Roy Penny.

6th June, 2024 D-Day 80th Anniversary Commemoration

On Thursday this week Europe and America will be remembering the largest combined military action ever mounted, when a huge flotilla crossed the Channel from Portsmouth to Normandy, marking the beginning of the freeing of Europe from occupation. There will, rightly, be widespread television coverage on 5th and 6th May, including the vigil of light marking every war grave, and the Service of Remembrance. It would be good, especially in these days, to call to our minds the cost paid to re-establish peace. Please watch with reflection.

The Sacred Heart of Jesus

On the third Friday after Pentecost each year, the Church celebrates the Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. The devotion had definitive expression in the visions of the French nun, Margaret Mary Alacoque, in 1673 and 1675. These were reinforced in the nineteenth century by the Portuguese nun, named Mary of the Sacred heart.

The spiritual basis of the mystical adoration comes from earlier medieval stress on 'God's boundless and passionate love for mankind'. Jesus' heart is depicted bearing the wounds inflicted on Christ's body on the cross. His heart is still pained when he observes the lost sheep who still do not hear him call their names, and who stray from the good pasture. His sacred heart is continually bursting with love for all mankind.

A Blasphemous Slur

Those who grew up in the 1950 s and 60s might be familiar with the phrase *hocus pocus*. Today you might be aware of the phrase as the title of an American film made in 1993 concerning a shadowy Hallowe'en night tragi-comedy. In that earlier, more innocent time, it meant trickery, skullduggery, or meaningless talk, or again words used by a magician or conjuror whilst performing tricks.

But the phrase came into common usage in the sixteenth century, especially by Christian Reformers. It was a mockery of the Latin Mass. In the Prayer of Consecration, the priest said the words, 'Hoc est corpus meum'. He still does today, but in English: 'This is my body'. Hence the phrase *hocus pocus* -a slurring of the Latin. Most who use the phrase, fortunately have no knowledge of its origin nor its sad background.

S Boniface, OSB, martyred on 5th June, 754 (aged 79) in Dokkum

A seventh into eighth century English Benedictine monk, born in Devon, with the name Winfrid, was an important figure in the spread of Christianity in Europe. He is called 'the Apostle to Germania and Freshia'. Authorised by the Pope Gregory II to lead three missions to the Frankish tribes of present-day Germany and the Netherlands, where he established many Dioceses. He was a teacher, scholar, writer on various subjects, including riddles, Church organiser, missionary, and, ultimately a martyr. He became Bishop of Mainz, and tried to balance secular and religious authority. His remains are buried in Fulda Cathedral, in Hesse, Germany, where he had founded a monastery.

Pope Gregory re-named Winfrid 'Boniface', after the popular fourth century martyr, Boniface of Tarsus. A beautiful name, but with a premonition?

A Happy Meeting

On Wednesday this past week, a couple entered the Church as the 11.00 am Mass was ending. They said they were just visiting for the first time. The man turned out to be the grandson of *Father Torrance*, who had been the Vicar at S Barnabas' from 1919 until 1938, when he moved to Frome. Fr John and the visitor had much to discuss.

In our Church archives there is a photograph of the west end of the Church, looked at from the chancel. It showed a clutter of bookshelves and the materials for the congregation to use during services. Fr Torrance did not find it an appealing view, so he reflected on a possible solution. He arranged for the font to be moved from just inside the north door of the Church – the traditional positioning – to its present location, in the middle of the east wall. Many felt it made a great improvement.

More substantially, possibly suggested by the original – unadopted - plans for S Barnabas' to have a tower and spire at the north-east corner of the Church, Fr Torrance persuaded the congregation to fund the building of the present entrance porch. The now restored entrance porch is a wonderful addition to the main entrance of our Church.

We have much to give thanks for the ministry of our delighted visitor's grandfather.

They Get Everywhere!

If you were to walk along Camden Road, you will find a shop called 'Stampede'. It is near the pedestrian junction with Monson Road. As the name might suggest, the shop specialises in shoes of all sorts for children.

Part of the window display has been dressed by our own *St Barnabas CofE Primary School*. It is not, however, about shoes. Rather it is a splendid display of real stories and material about the Second World War. Presumably to link in with the eightieth anniversary of the D-Day landings which the whole of Europe will be commemorating on Thursday, 6th June, this week, it is another reminder of the cost of keeping peace and democracy alive.

Congratulations go to our School Staff and pupils for this effort, and for reminding us of those events which cost so many lives, and disruption, which, for some, is just 'history'.

Have You News to Share? *With Summer approaching, if you have interesting, relevant, news to share with the Parish, do email it in for possible inclusion.*

SPECIAL REPORT

This Report forms no part of the official record

In some journals this would be listed as a 'long read'

Report of Last Week's S Barnabas' Annual Meetings

At our Annual Meetings last Sunday, 26th May, 2024, the Vicar presented his *report as the sermon* during our Mass.

The Vicar reported that the new external Church notice boards reflected the engaging vitality of the S. Barnabas. He thanked our *two Churchwardens*, and the small (in number) Parochial Church Council for their engagement in our ongoing mission.

He retrospectively thanked *Jo Bowen*, and the current *Lorraine Greenham* for their administrative work for the parish, as well as much else 'behind the scenes' work. The musical skills and commitment of *Alistair Curtis* and *Martyn Williams* our regular organists, and the former for the maintenance of our splendid instrument. He thanked our cantors *Simon Daniels* and *James Wight*, the latter having recently offered his skill in our worship. In addition, he thanked all who helped sustain the liturgy each Sunday, as servers, readers, sidesmen, and many others. He drew attention to our communications through the weekly pew sheet, the online newsletter, and the Parish's website.

Fr John suggested that those from the congregation who acted as *Governors to our Church School* maintained our close and vital link between our Church and School.

Vicki Mitchell, our Hall Manager, was thanked for her splendid work, as was *Philip Clark*, our Treasurer, and *Nadia Duros* for her weekly delivery of our collections of produce to the Nourish Foodbank.

The post-COVID re-establishment our annual *Parish Pilgrimage to Walsingham* was a sign of the importance of the personal, and institutional, spiritual relationship between S. Barnabas' and the Shrine in Norfolk.

The Vicar expressed our deep thanks to *Bishop Norman Banks*, our now retired Father in God, and looked forward to the appointment of his successor. He expressed thanks for the *anonymous gift* of the payment for new pew hymn books. *The Revised English Hymnal* copies are expected to arrive sometime. Fr John pointed out that a new translation of the Bible used for our daily lectionary readings would require *new books for the lectern and the Gospeller*. This might be an opportunity for a thanks giving donation.

+++++

The *Annual Church Meeting* followed the Mass at 12.53pm, and began with prayers. *Ben Johnson* and *Adrian Machiraju* were the two people nominated for the important office of *Churchwarden*, and were appointed by acclamation, having been thanked for their work in the past year. The meeting was closed by the Vicar.

+++++

The *Annual Parish Church Meeting* convened with prayer. The Minutes of the previous APCM, having been circulated, were approved as a correct record. It was reported that one name had been added to the *Electoral Roll*, making the total 54. It was suggested that next year, being the sixth year since the last complete revision of the *Electoral Roll*, every person would need to submit a new application form to be re-enrolled as a member of S. Barnabas'.

There were no questions to the Vicar about his report.

The *Churchwardens* tabled a *comprehensive Report*. They pointed out the work that had been carried out to the roof. They also noted, with regret, that Osbourne, the locksmith, who undertook work during the past year for the Church, would be closing shorting after 60 years' service in the local community. Electrical work had been undertaken and a safety certificate issued. Likewise, both the boiler in the Church, and the boiler in the Hall had been inspected and certificated as safe. Minor repairs had been carried out on the audio-visual system, and an annual maintenance contract entered into for the future.

The *Treasurer* had not been able to prepare accounts for the meeting, but supplied an outline of our income and expenditure. He promised that the printed accounts would be available in approximately two weeks. The *Treasurer* said that our *income* for the year ending December, 2023 was £57,646, about the same as in the previous year. Approximately £20,000 of this total came from the *hall income* and *car parking charges*.

The largest increase in expenditure was expected to be in our insurance (up 15%) and energy costs. Having settled all existing and invoices from previous years we had a £3,273 *deficit for the year*. We still had approximately £10,500 in our reserves.

Thanking the *Treasurer*, the Vicar pointed out that it had been eleven years since we had last held a *Stewardship Campaign* in the Parish and invited anyone to offer help with the implementation of a new campaign.

Following a question about the *electronic payment machine* in the Church, the *Treasurer* promised to look into why it did not provide nor require details of the payee, nor the payment.

The *Treasurer* asked the meeting to authorise him to *seek a new Independent Financial Examiner* for the accounts, preferably io Tunbridge Wells. The meeting accepted this proposal with the assurance that the Vicar would ensure the legal endorsement of any appointment.

The meeting then heard, via Sarah Barter, one of our representatives, of the convening of the *Deanery Synod* on 6th March at S. Barnabas. It was suggested that *the closer ties with other local Anglican Churches were beneficial*.

The Vicar referred to the *OFSTED Report* and *SIAMS Report*, both of which were very positive, on our Church Primary School.

We were awaiting a *report from the Diocesan Organ Advisor* on the state of our organ, by which he had been impressed at his recent visit.

+++++

At the *Election for membership of the Parochial Church Council* for the coming year, *five nominations were received*, appropriately nominated and seconded, for the nine vacancies. The following were all duly elected by acclamation: *Sarah Barter, Peter Bickle, Lorraine Greenham, Mel Johnson and Brian Kempster*. With the Vicar and two *Churchwardens*, this would mean that the total membership of the Council would be eight, with four vacancies.

The Vicar proposed, and the meeting accepted, *the date for next year's Annual Meetings be Sunday, 18th May, 2025*.

The meeting closed with prayers.

The Overflowing Love of God

One of the things that the last few weeks of our Church calendar has illustrated for us has been the enfolding love of God. It is best summed up in the words of St John: 'God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son ...'

A simple way for us to fulfil God's command to love one another as he loved us is to demonstrate that in a practical way. Giving to those who lack the physical requirements to be able to live in dignity is to contribute to our local Food Bank. We should never tire of reading this notice, nor of responding to it. This is a simple and practical display of human love. At the altar at the back of the Church is a hungry basket which we have been filling regularly with tins and dried foods, cleaning products and the occasional 'luxury' item.

Each week our offerings are taken to *Nourish Food Bank* in Tunbridge Wells to be distributed to those who really depend on what we, and the generous people of the town, give. If we give our gifts with a heart full of the love of God, maybe the hope they provide will be received more richly by the recipients.