

June & July 2021



GRIDIRON

The Magazine of the Parish Church of
Saint Laurence Upminster
£1



Photo by Debby Hudsonon, Unsplash

In 2021 Corpus Christi is 3rd June

AT THE TIME OF PRINTING IT IS STILL NECESSARY TO PRE-BOOK ATTENDANCE AT MASS.

Service times

Said Mass	Sunday 09.30	Wednesday 11.00
Said Evensong	Sunday	18.30 via Zoom
Private Prayer	Sunday	15:00 – 16.30
Private Prayer	Thursday	10.00 – 12 noon

IMPORTANT: Please pre-book your attendance at Mass in accordance with the following timings in order to be sure your request is received:

Email Joanne at: parish.office@upminsterparish.co.uk by 11am on Wednesday for the following Sunday, or by 12 noon on Monday for the following Wednesday.

Or if you do not have email, phone Deborah on 01708 609816 by 6pm on Wednesday for the following Sunday, or by 12 noon on Monday for the following Wednesday. Thank you.

Evensong via Zoom contact Revd Susannah for the login details at: susannah.brasier@upminsterparish.co.uk by 10am on Saturday for that Sunday.

There is no need to pre-book for Private Prayer but you may be asked to wait a while before entering at busy times.

NB: Due to the pandemic services and events may change at short notice. Efforts will be made to communicate changes as far in advance as possible.

Baptisms and Wedding Banns	These are administered during public services. Please contact the Parish Office to make arrangements.
Confessions	By appointment with the clergy.

Please inform the Parish Office, Revd Susannah or Fr Roy of anyone who is ill or in need of a pastoral visit. See back pages for useful telephone numbers.

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From Fr Roy



The second Saturday in June will, as usual, be the day for the official celebration of the Queen's birthday. This year, social distancing restrictions will mean that the day cannot be marked with all the normal ceremonies and traditions. The Trooping of the Colour parade and fly-past over Buckingham Palace will be replaced by a simpler ceremony at Windsor Castle.

This year's pageantry would have had a unique significance. Never in the history of the United Kingdom has the sovereign celebrated his or her ninety fifth birthday. The day will no doubt hold a particular poignancy for the Queen, as the day before would have been the one hundredth birthday of the Duke of Edinburgh.

The Queen has been queen since February 1952. This means most of the British people cannot remember there ever being a king. As well as being our Queen, Her Majesty is also Queen and head of state of several other countries and the head of that great family of nations we call The Commonwealth.

There is another title and position in our country which the monarch holds. The Queen is The Supreme Governor of the Church of England. This is a position which she takes seriously. The Queen's personal faith is one of the anchor points of her life and of her approach to her work. A few years ago, a biography of the Queen was published entitled 'The Servant Queen and the King She Serves'. In this book Her Majesty says, 'I have been, and remain, very grateful to you (the people of this country and the Commonwealth) for your prayers and to God for his steadfast love. I have indeed seen his faithfulness.'

It is perhaps the very title of this book which is most revealing - 'The Servant Queen and the King She Serves'. This title tells us that the Queen sees her life as one of service. She is not here to tell us what to do, to reign and rule over us, but to serve the country and its interests at home and in the wider world.

That idea of service comes from a life of faith, a life rooted in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Jesus himself clearly indicated that he had come to serve, not to be served. This idea of service is at the heart of the Christian Gospel. Jesus summarised the Jewish Law into two great commandments. Those are that we

should love the Lord our God with all our heart, and that we should love our neighbour as ourselves.

Jesus' parable of the Good Samaritan speaks of love and service. This Samaritan took care of an injured, vulnerable stranger. He took this man to a place of safety where he could recover from his wounds. At the last supper, one of Jesus' final acts for his apostles was to wash their feet as they gathered together. This act underlined the fact that Jesus was one who came to serve.

In our Christian witness we too are called to serve. We are called to serve Christ and his church in whatever way we can. We are to serve our fellow Christians and the wider society. It is through acts of service that the world might be able to see the love of Christ at work in the world.

Early next year, the Queen will reach another milestone in her life of service as she marks the seventieth anniversary of her accession to the throne. Since she became Queen, she has shown us what it means to live a life of service, putting others before oneself and sometimes doing things which perhaps we would not naturally wish to do. Jesus calls us to do the same. We are his servants. He calls us to serve our community, to serve the people of Upminster. Through our service to them we can show the world that Jesus is the servant king.

Fr Roy

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From the Editors

Dear Readers

It's that time again when the editor of *Gridiron* creates a paragraph or two for inclusion in the magazine and as soon as it's printed it should be re-written!

Hopefully, for this issue, it will be a little different as we start to return to a more normal way of life. The last date of the Government's roadmap out of lockdown should take place on 21st June. Although some things will still be restricted, it will be a time to celebrate all the things we are thankful for and look back in contemplation at the last 15 months.

The thing I am most looking forward to is being able to sing hymns in church. I have missed the choir singing and being able to join in and raise my voice to the Lord's praise.

'I will be glad and rejoice in thee: I will sing praise to thy name, O thou most High.' (Psalms 9:2)

Arlette Wiggins, Editor.

August and September Magazine Deadline

Items for inclusion in the August and September edition of *Gridiron* should reach the editorial team by **Friday 2nd June**. We would prefer to receive items by e-mail at gridiron@upminsterparish.co.uk. Paper copy is acceptable but should be submitted to us as early as possible. The **August and September** Magazine will be on sale from **25th July**.

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St Laurence Church Building Improvement Fund

By this time it was hoped to have various fund-raising events up and running, but sadly it was not to be. This Covid pandemic which has wreaked havoc on all our lives for so long is severely restricting our plans and those of many others. Richard Brasier continues his virtual concerts in aid of the pandemic - these can be found on his YouTube channel (Richard Brasier Organist) and donations can be made on the page below. Carole Billings has also been continuing with her quizzes which have been sent out via post and email. Many thanks must go to them both for their efforts.

Please remember our project in your prayers, and make any donations you can - all are very gratefully received.

If you wish to donate, you may do so online at:

<https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/stlaurencerestorationproject>

Now the church is open, there are envelopes available for donations. Cheques should be made payable to 'St Laurence Church Restoration Appeal'



Ride & Stride 2021 - Saturday 11th September

The Friends of Essex Churches Trust are hoping that Ride & Stride will go ahead this year. St Laurence Church would wish to support this once again.

We are looking for walkers and cyclists to take part in visiting churches and chapels, and for stewards at St Laurence to welcome visitors both for the Ride & Stride but also the Heritage Open Day.

For those who are willing to walk or cycle we are also looking for a suitable route in Essex or East London which a group from the church might like to take, bearing in mind we do need to visit a number of churches/chapels to make it a worthwhile outing. Ideas will be most welcome.

The lockdown and restrictions on worshippers have made it particularly difficult for everyone and church funding has been really hit hard. For the churches facing urgent repairs this has become really challenging. The work of the Friends of Essex Churches, which supports all the mainstream Christian denominations, provides grant aid to churches and chapels in the Eastern Metropolitan Boroughs as well as in Essex.

For further information on any of the above please contact our parish organiser for the Friends of Essex Churches Trust - Rob Brabner - email: robertbrabner@icloud.com or phone 01708 457578. See also the 'Friends' website : FoECT

Open Gardens - Blake Hall,

On Thursday 10th June 2021 the gardens of Blake Hall will be open between 2-5pm in aid of the Friends of Essex Churches Trust. Tickets are £13.50 which includes tea and cake and must be booked in advance.

Blake Hall Gardens are opened with the kind permission of Mr & Mrs Capel Cure.

Blake Hall is set within 25 acres of mature garden with a broad variety of specimen trees. It has a traditional formal rose garden and herbaceous border and sweeping lawns to enjoy.

Blake Hall Gardens, Bobbingworth, Essex, CM5 0DG

For tickets and information please contact Becky Willis email: willisbecky@btinternet.com or telephone 01621 788225.

Saints Days in June

source – Parish Pump

1st June Justin Martyr, first ever Christian philosopher

Justin Martyr (c. 100 – 165), is regarded as the first ever Christian philosopher. He was born at Nablus, Samaria, to parents of Greek origin, and was well educated in rhetoric, poetry and history before he turned to philosophy. He studied at Ephesus and Alexandria and tried the schools of the Stoics, the Pythagoreans, and the Platonists. Then in c.130 Justin became a Christian, and never looked back. His long search for truth was satisfied by the Bible, and above all by Christ, the Word of God.

This apologist and martyr is known as the most important early ‘apologist’. He went on to offer a reasoned defence for Christianity, explaining that it was the fulfilment of the Old Testament prophecies. Justin’s aim was evangelism: he thought that pagans would turn to Christianity if they were made aware of Christian doctrine and practice.

Justin’s martyrdom took place in the reign of Marcus Aurelius, along with six other believers. At his trial, of which the authentic record survives, he clearly confessed his Christian beliefs, refused to sacrifice to the gods, and accepted suffering and death. As he had previously said to the emperor: “You can kill us, but not hurt us.”

6th June St Gudwal, the first Christian in Brittany?

If you would love to be in Brittany for your holiday this summer, then spare a thought for Gudwal, because this obscure 6th century Celtic abbot got there before you did. Indeed, Gudwal seems to have liked Brittany so much that he decided to stay on.

When you visit Brittany today, you will find Catholic churches everywhere. Not so in the sixth century, when only the extraordinary range of megalithic monuments dominated the landscape. There were (and still are) passage dolmens, stepped pyramids and stone circles. The best known site is Carnac, where remains of a dozen rows of huge standing stones run for over ten kilometres. Some of the megalithic ruins in the gulf of Morbihan date back to at least 3300 BC – that is 200 years older than Stonehenge.

Religion was certainly plentiful in Brittany, back then. But Gudwal was one of the earliest pioneers of Christianity in the region. He did a bit of 6th century ‘church planting’, too, when he decided to build a hermitage in the middle of

all that paganism, probably at Locoal. In time, 188 monks came to join him, and they built a little monastery, probably at Guer.

But it was the man himself, his holiness and kindness, that drew people's attention more than the buildings. A man of deep spirituality and prayer, Gudwal willingly spent himself on helping the local people. It was said that he healed many by his prayers for them.

8th June William of York, a victim of injustice

Have you ever been the victim of someone else's malice and ambition? Then William of York (d 1154) is the saint for you. William Fitzherbert was born into a noble family, with royal connections. He was also smart: appointed treasurer of York at a young age, and also a chaplain to King Stephen. But none of it went to his head. He was loved for his kind, amiable and easy-going personality.

Then in 1140 Thurston, the Archbishop of York, died. The canons of York knew whom they wanted, and with royal support William was made Thurston's successor. Yet all was not well: a disappointed minority hated him and had the support of powerful men. William was accused of simony, and of being unchaste. The row brought in the Pope and several bishops, and William was cleared. Yet still, all was not well. That Pope died, and the new Pope was a Cistercian, who preferred the enemies of William. And so he was deposed.

Yet William seems to have taken all this malice and power-grabbing in his stride. He simply retired to Winchester to live as a devout monk until 1153. Then that year several of his key enemies died, and he was restored as Archbishop to York. At last all looked good for him, and he made a triumphant return to York in 1154. But then – disaster struck again: a few days later William was dead. Poison was strongly suspected. He was buried in his cathedral and miracles were reported at his tomb. He was regarded as both the victim of grave injustice and as a saint. In 1421 the famous St William window was made, depicting his life and miracles and death in 62 scenes.

9th June Ephrem the Syriac, prolific hymn writer

Here is a saint for you, if you have ever been touched by the words of a song.

Ephrem the Syriac was born 306AD in Nisibis, Turkey. Baptised in 324, he joined the cathedral school in Nisibis, where it was soon obvious that he had an outstanding gift for writing both music and lyrics.

Ephrem would have agreed with St Paul about the value of using music to express our faith in God. In an age of widespread illiteracy, he saw that hymns could be powerful carriers of orthodox Christianity, even when sung by uneducated people.

And so Ephrem wrote – and wrote. His poetry was so powerful, and his melodies so evocative, that soon his hymns were spreading far and wide across the Roman Empire. And wherever they went, his hymns took the Christian gospel along with them. Ephrem became the most prolific and gifted hymn writer in all of eastern Christianity. His hundreds of hymns influenced the later development of hymn-writing in both Syriac and Greek Christianity.

After Nisibis fell to the Turks in 363, Ephrem fled to Edessa, where he continued to work. But plague struck the city in 373, and while nursing others with the plague Ephrem finally died of it himself on 9th June. But his music lives on: more than 500 of his hymns still survive today.

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St Laurence over Easter



We would like to take this opportunity of thanking all those who have kept the church decorated, not just for Easter, but all the way through the pandemic. Those of us who have been able to go to church either to Mass or Private Prayer are very grateful for the behind-the-scenes work these people do.



The Easter garden looked absolutely splendid as usual this year.
PS: no prizes for spotting 'Where's Edward?'

Easter Craft photos





News from Chelmsford Diocese

Bishop Peter of Barking Announces his Retirement

“I will officially retire on 4th August, the date my extended licence to serve lapses. I have decided to take some overdue study leave which will start in May and which means my public ministry will end slightly earlier than I’d planned.



I will officiate at the ordination services for new priests in the Barking Episcopal Area at the end of June, which as always will be a real privilege. Ellen and I will move to Newark in Nottinghamshire near our children and grandchildren.

It will be tough to leave an Area, a Diocese and so many people we have grown to love and appreciate, especially at such a demanding and exciting time for the Gospel. After saying our goodbyes we look forward to what the Lord has ahead for us in the East Midlands, as we return to another diocese we love and which formed us in ministry. It was a real Godly surprise and privilege to be called to East London and Essex and it has been a a great discipleship adventure.

The Barking Episcopal Area and Chelmsford Diocese will always be in my heart and prayers.”

Responding to the news, Bishop Guli said: “As you know, Bishop Peter had originally intended to retire last year but agreed to stay in post and become Acting Diocesan Bishop during the vacancy in the See.

I know I speak for all of us in expressing our deep gratitude to Peter for postponing his retirement and for his leadership over the last twelve months. I am also personally grateful for his wise counsel and the warm welcome he has given to me since my appointment was announced in December.”

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from as little as £11.00 per issue.**

Please contact

Maureen Gourley 01708 640747

mlgourley@talktalk.net

New Diocesan Secretary and Chief Executive Officer Appointed

Michaela Southworth has been appointed as the new Diocesan Secretary and Chief Executive Officer.

Michaela brings a wealth of experience and expertise to the role having previously worked in the banking sector before becoming the Director of Finance and Resources for the Anglican Communion. She was recently appointed as

Director of Finance for Chelmsford Diocese. Michaela will start her role as CEO and Diocesan Secretary at the beginning of June. The role became vacant in April 2020.



What do you think will happen after Covid?

You can take your choice: a recent survey has found that a third of us think that society may never go back to the old ways, a third of us think we will go back to exactly as we were before, and a third of us think that we will be keener than ever to stay together.



The Together Coalition, chaired by the Archbishop of Canterbury, has been working for the past year on a piece of research to track just what has happened to communities during lockdown.

The new research has found that “people feel a stronger sense of connection to their neighbours and community. ...We found a clear public appetite for a society in which we are more connected to each other, and the community spirit of 2020 is kept alive.”

It also found that around 12.4 million people have volunteered during the pandemic, 4.6 million of them for the first time. And 75 per cent of those volunteers would be happy to do so again.

The Pelican

by Rob Brabner

There are plenty of symbols of animals, birds and flowers in church and they all have a particular meaning in religious terms. Our own parish has plenty of species to investigate, and I'm not just talking about the congregation!

One of the popular symbols is the pelican. This is on display by the south door exit from the St George's Chapel.



Why a pelican? In medieval bestiaries the pelican was said to peck at its breast in order to feed its young with its own blood. In a variation of the story, it could revive its young after death by sprinkling them with its blood. In both tales, the pelican gives its blood to feed, nurture, and save its offspring, which was seen as a direct analogy with Jesus' sacrifice. Christian commentators thought that this was confirmed by a prophecy about Jesus in Psalm 102, the King James Version of which reads 'I am like a pelican of the wilderness'. In more modern translations the pelican is an owl. Images of the pelican feeding her young with her blood are known as the 'Pelican in Her Piety'.

Despite the fact that the medieval bestiaries do not meet the strict criteria of the modern zoologist, the pelican has remained as a popular church symbol. There is a very large and fine example not only in the city church of St Michael's, Cornhill, but also in many other historic churches.

I stand to be corrected, but probably the nearest chance we have of seeing a live pelican is in St James's Park, where they were introduced back in 1664 as a gift from the Russian Ambassador. Currently, the Park has six pelicans. They are fed fish once a day on 'Duck Island' between 2.30-3.00pm, but have on occasion upset the tourists when they've swallowed a passing pigeon to supplement their diet.

Reference : How to Read a Church by Richard Taylor, published by Rider, 2003

Parish Registers

by Christine Clifford

For many years I have been trawling the archives in search of my ancestors, who they were, where they lived, what sort of lives they led. It has been fascinating, and I have learnt so much. Having two great-grandparents who came from villages and had uncommon surnames made research a lot easier, and with these families I was soon in the mid-19th century. That was thanks to the Registers of Births, Marriages and Deaths, dating from mid-1837, and censuses from 1841. Then it was time to turn to Parish Registers, recording then as now, the baptisms, marriages and burials taking place in each parish.

In 1538 Henry VIII ordered that each priest should keep a register of these occasions. Sadly, very few survive from this time; they were lost, destroyed or just weren't kept. By 1598, it was clear there was a problem, not least because the paper used was of poor quality and entries were illegible. Elizabeth I ordered that, henceforth, parchment was to be used, and all existing registers were to be copied. Sadly, some chose to start only from Elizabeth's accession in 1558. That, however, was enough to cause me great excitement, as there on the front of the photocopy at the Record Office were the words 'we certify this is a true copy' signed by the vicar and a churchwarden bearing my family name. Inside was one list in Latin and in date order of the baptisms, marriages and burials dating from 1558, including a number of my potential ancestors. Then came the Civil War period (1640 - 60) when entries were not regularly made in this parish or elsewhere, and made worse by some being illegible. So although I can trace my line with confidence to 1700, before that is guesswork, but the family was in the parish from the 1550s.

Subsequently it was ordered that separate registers be kept for baptisms, marriages and burials, and in 1812 incumbents were required by law to use printed registers, similar to those we are familiar with today. The Parish Registers for another village presented a different challenge. My great-grandfather John's father was baptised when a baby in 1820, as was his father, another John. For this adult baptism, the date of birth was given, but why was he not baptised as an infant? It turned out he was born in 1799 in Birmingham, a new industrial town with too few churches to cope with its growing population. Although John's parents' names were given, there were no records of the surname before 1820 in the village's Registers, and I still don't know where the family came from. It really is the luck of the draw with how far back one can go. *(NB: Marriage Registers are now recorded digitally.)*

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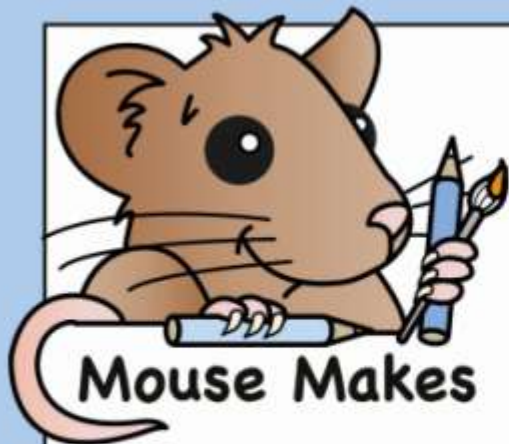


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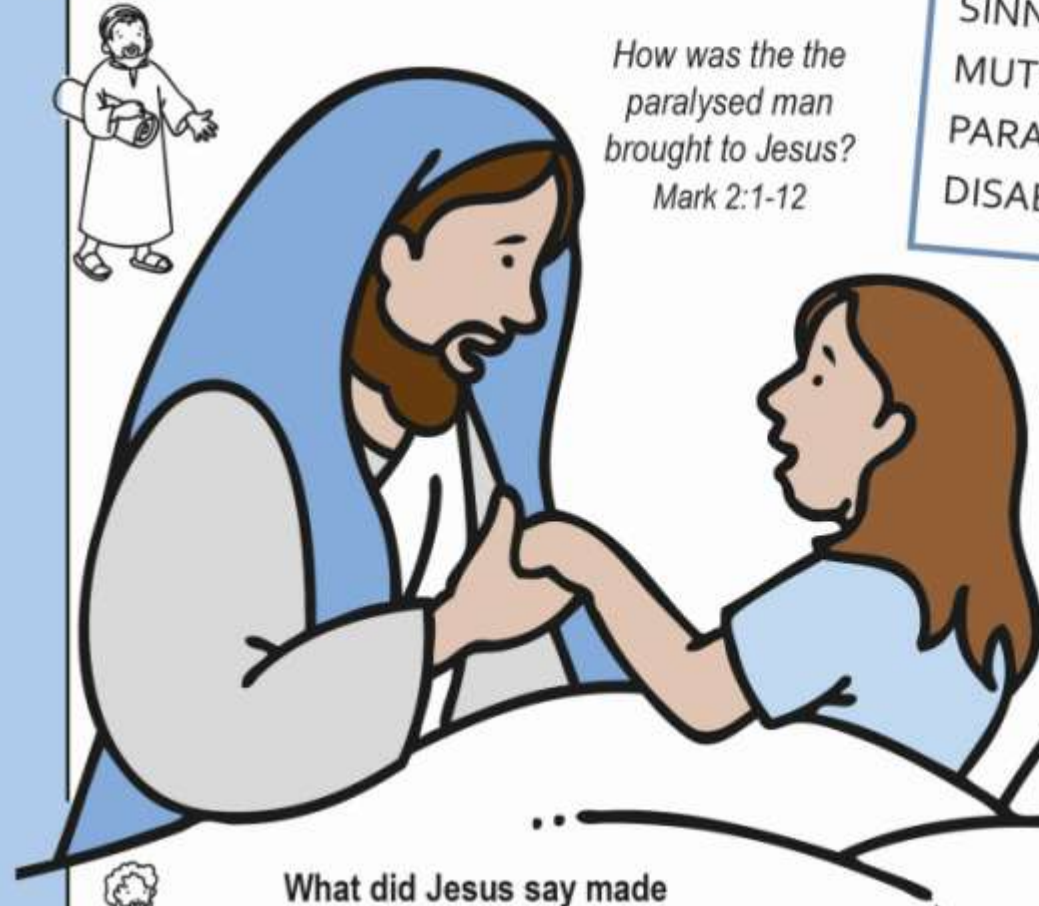
Mouse Makes

JESUS HEALS

Who was the first person Jesus healed?
John 4:46-54

Who did Jesus heal from fever?
Mark 1:29-31

How was the the paralysed man brought to Jesus?
Mark 2:1-12



What did Jesus say made the woman well?
Matthew 9: 20-22

Where did the demons ask Jesus to send them when he drove them out?
Mark 5:1-20

How long had the man by the pool been disabled?
John 5:1-15

How many men were healed from leprosy?
Luke 17:11-19

What did Jesus heal Bartemaus from?
Mark 10:46-52

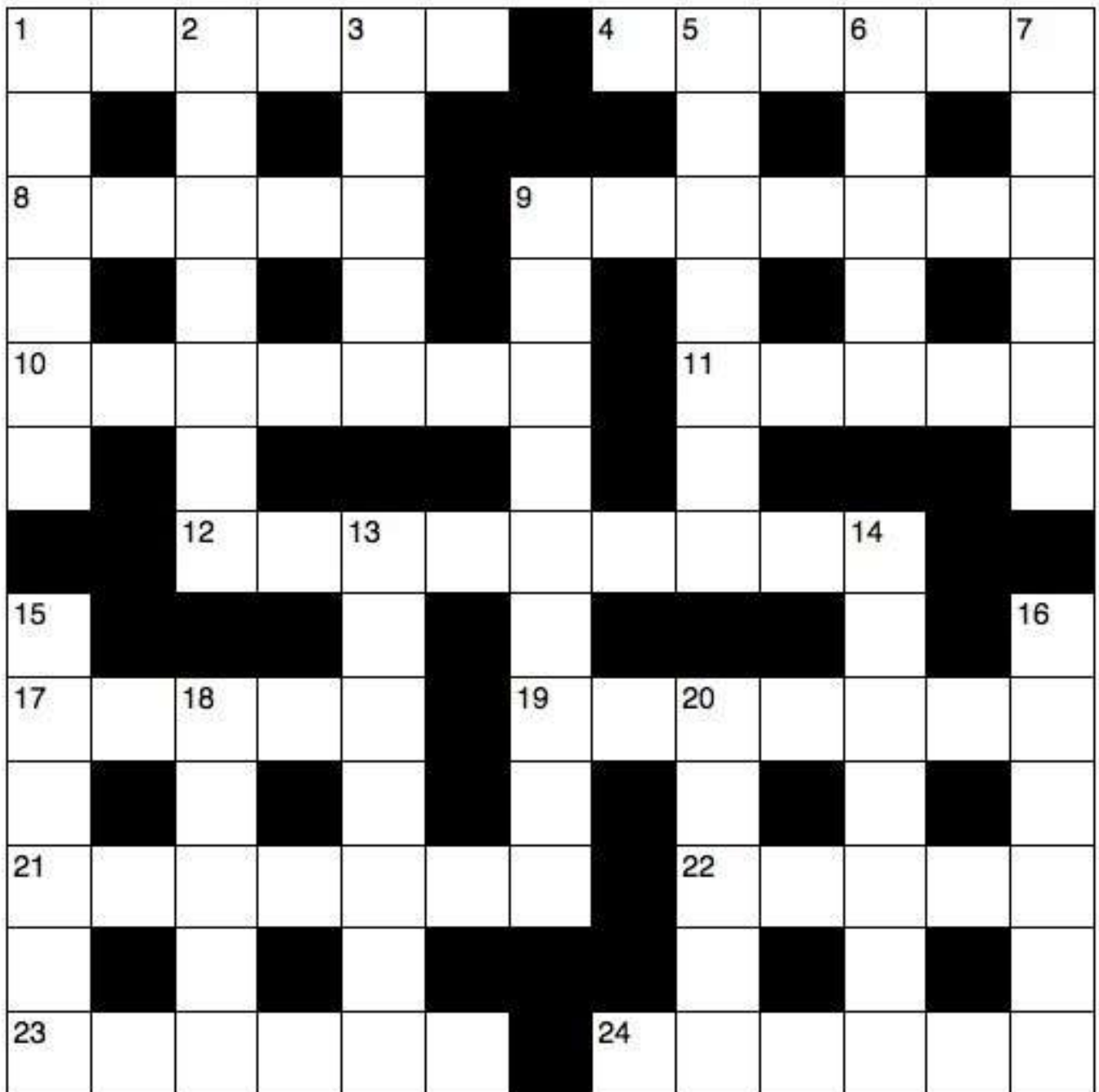


Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, how many days had he been buried?
John 11:1-45

- Jesus healed and made the...
- SICK
 - DEAD
 - BLIND
 - DEAF
 - CRIPPLED
 - SINNER
 - MUTE
 - PARALYSED
 - DISABLED
 - ABLE
 - WALK
 - FORGIVEN
 - ALIVE
 - SPEAK
 - MOVE
 - SEE
 - WELL
 - HEAR



*"There are **many** things that Jesus did. If every one of them were written down, I suppose the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written."*
John 21:25



Crossword

Across

- 1 Military tactic used by Joshua to attack and destroy the city of Ai (Joshua 8:2) (6)
- 4 Place of learning (6)
- 8 'When Moses' hands grew — , they took a stone and put it under him and he sat on it' (Exodus 17:12) (5)
- 9 Unpleasant auguries of the end of the age, as forecast by Jesus (Matthew 24:7) (7)

- 10 Stronghold to which girls in King Xerxes' harem (including Esther) were taken (Esther 2:8) (7)
- 11 Where Saul went to consult a medium before fighting the Philistines (1 Samuel 28:7) (5)
- 12 Propitiation (Hebrews 2:17) (9)
- 17 Turn away (Jeremiah 11:15) (5)
- 19 So clear (anag.) (7)
- 21 'I have just got — , so I can't come': one excuse to be absent from the great banquet (Luke 14:20) (7)
- 22 Long weapon with a pointed head used by horsemen (Job 39:23) (5)
- 23 Musical beat (6)
- 24 What the Israelites were told to use to daub blood on their door-frames at the first Passover (Exodus 12:22) (6)

Down

- 1 Fasten (Exodus 28:37) (6)
- 2 Art bite (anag.) (7)
- 3 'The people of the city were divided; some — with the Jews, others with the apostles' (Acts 14:4) (5)
- 5 Contend (Jeremiah 12:5) (7)
- 6 Possessed (Job 1:3) (5)
- 7 Sheen (Lamentations 4:1) (6)
- 9 'You love evil rather than good, — rather than speaking the truth' (Psalm 52:3) (9)
- 13 Large flightless bird (Job 39:13) (7)
- 14 They were worth several hundred pounds each (Matthew 25:15) (7)
- 15 'A — went out to sow his seed' (Matthew 13:3) (6)
- 16 How Jesus described Jairus's daughter when he went into the room where she lay (Mark 5:39) (6)
- 18 The part of the day when the women went to the tomb on the first Easter morning (John 20:1) (5)
- 20 Narrow passageway between buildings (Luke 14:21) (5)

Answers to the April and May crossword: ACROSS: 1, Cosmic. 4, Thomas. 8, In his. 9, Delilah. 10, Falwell. 11, Water. 12, Recovered. 17, Sidon. 19, Radiant. 21, Centaur. 22, Broil. 23, Eleven. 24, Prison. **DOWN:** 1, Cliffs. 2, Scholar. 3, Issue. 5, Holy war. 6, Moist. 7, Sphere. 9, Deliverer. 13, Candace. 14, Deacons. 15, Psyche. 16, Stolen. 18, Dance. 20, Debar.

Time to be Still

a prayer by Nick Fawcett

Lord Jesus Christ,
time and again throughout your ministry you made time to be still.
to draw away from the crowds
so that in the quietness you could reflect on your calling,
You needed those moments,
just as we need them in our turn.
So now we have made a space in our lives,
away from the daily demands,
away from the usual routine.
We are here, Lord, with time for you,
in stillness and in quietness to seek your will.
Use these moments
to refresh us,
to feed us,
to challenge and inspire us.
Fill them with your love
and so we may be filled to overflowing,
by your grace.

From the collection 'Prayers for Reflection' first published in Great Britain in 2013 by KM Publishing

And Finally....

As I left a meeting at our church, I could not find my car keys. They were not in my pockets. They were not in the church. Then I thought – I've left them in the car! As I burst through the doors of the church, my heart sank: the church car park was empty.

With a heavy heart I called the police, confessed that I had left my keys in the car, and that it had been stolen. Then I made the really difficult call, and told my wife that the car had been stolen. There was a little gasp. "You did not have the car. I dropped you off. Remember?"

My heart sang as relief flooded through me. "Of course! Thank God! Well, come get me quick – I am already running late... what is keeping you?"

My wife replied with ominous calm: "What's keeping me? I'll tell you what's keeping me. The police are here. They think I've stolen the car..."



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