

# GRAPEVINE

2024 SUMMER EDITION



St. George's Anglican Episcopal Church  
Núñez de Balboa, 43  
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(Metro VELÁZQUEZ - Line 4)

## A message from our Chaplain, Sal



At the time of writing, towards the end of June, it is clear that change is in the air. School and university terms are coming to an end, and many of us are getting ready to embrace a different pace and place as we prepare to spend time on holiday during July and August.

The modern-day definition of 'holiday' is of a day set aside for a festival or for recreation, but the word dates right back to the Middle Ages and comes from the Old English word *hāligdæg*. *Hāligdæg* is a combination of *hālig* for 'holy' and *dæg* for 'day' and originally referred only to special religious festivals. Our concept of what the word 'holiday' means is much more recent.

While in Spain many of our public holidays still have a clear link to religious festivals, most of us approach the longer holidays we take quite differently. Those tend to be times of rest and relaxation, a chance to recharge our batteries, a welcome change of pace and a break from our normal routine. However, even in the midst of a great holiday, perhaps there is time and opportunity to remember that original meaning of the word.

If you will be on holiday this summer, maybe you can find even a brief moment each day to pause and reflect, to think about the ways in which God has been present in your life, and to be intentionally thankful. Like many things, this sounds easier in practice than it is in reality; but setting aside time each day to focus on something for which you are grateful, however small, really is good for the soul.

Notice a sunrise or sunset; gaze at the beauty of the night sky; marvel at the extraordinary power of the ocean; be grateful for those who care about you; give thanks for the gift of Jesus Christ, who came that we might have life in all its fullness. And, as the psalmist says, '*give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever*'.

### **How Come? by Jenny Effer**

A pastor journeyed to heaven;  
A cab driver followed him through;  
The cab driver got a mansion;  
The pastor got a lean-to.

"How come?" inquired the pastor,  
"This seems like a charade."  
"They slept through your sermons," said Peter;  
"When he drove, his passengers prayed."



## Bigotry and Forgiveness by the Editor

(Inspired by *Prejudice and Forgiveness: Our Daily Bread* Saturday July 17th 2021). & [Acts 10:23–28 & 34](#)

At a time of intense conflicts once again across our world, New Testament scripture shows clearly how God does not show favouritism and demands that his children follow suit. What follows is a short summary of my thoughts on the cited online reading.

After a sermon on the biblical requisite to correct injustice, a weeping member of the congregation approached the pastor and confessed he had not voted for a black minister to be their new church pastor due to his racial prejudice. Begging for forgiveness, he recognised his error in allowing racism to decide his vote and did not want his racism and bigotry to play any role in his own children's lives.

Rather than admonish the man, the pastor met him with tears of his own and forgiveness. He joyfully shared this new testimony of forgiveness with the congregation at their very next service, and the whole congregation responded likewise at God's work in the man's heart.

In the New Testament, St Peter – one of Jesus' twelve disciples and an early church leader – was himself corrected for ill-conceived notions about people who were not fellow Jews.

At that time, Jewish leaders considered it wrong to eat and drink with Gentiles, whom they considered unclean. It was thus a violation of social and religious protocol. As Peter said, “You are well aware that it is against our law for a Jew to associate with or visit a Gentile” (Acts 10:28). Only the supernatural activity of God (vv. 9–23) could convince Peter not to call anyone ‘impure or unclean’ (v. 28).

As Christians today, God still works inside us to change our misguided perceptions of fellow human beings. Working through; (1) His word and the teaching of Scripture; (2) our acceptance of the conviction of the Holy Spirit, and; (3) daily experiences in our own Christian lives, God shows how true it is that (He) does not show favouritism <sup>35</sup>but accepts from every nation the one who fears him and does what is right.



God favours all those who recognise their sin and seek forgiveness, whatever their nation or race, and welcomes them into His eternal kingdom.

Those of us at St George's may have been helped by God to see that no group of people, however special they may feel, has been divinely favoured. All (of us) have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. We may, like St Paul, have been blinded by our own traditions into doing what seems right. There are so many ways that we may be blinded to God's acceptance of us all whatever our colours, creeds and experiences. What He demands is our unity in accepting His work and sacrifice for all of us; that we may see the path to forgiveness He has forged.

**Almighty God, look into our hearts deeply that we might see where we need to adjust.**

Bible in a year: [Psalms 18–19](#); [Acts 20:17–38](#)

Iain Deuchar



There is no place for bigotry in our church or in our faith

## **School's out for the Summer! by Alison**

As the school year comes to an end, it has made me think about the connection between being a teacher and being a Christian. In many of Jesus' teachings, he is referred to as a teacher.

So other than him actually being a teacher, why is it a good metaphor for our Christian life? I think it's a good metaphor because everyone has experience of being a student, having children in school or being an actual teacher themselves, so the references are easy to understand.

One of the most important characteristics as a teacher is patience. Patience is often tested when dealing with different learning paces and behavioural issues. Yet, these moments are opportunities to practise grace, patience, and forgiveness—key Christian virtues.

Just as God is patient and forgiving with us, teachers learn to extend the same understanding to their students, recognizing that growth is a process, not a destination.

Outside of the classroom, we should strive to be more patient with our children, spouses, and the people we encounter in the shops or in the street. It can be hard after a long day, but everyone deserves patience and kindness.

Next, teaching also reinforces the importance of continuous learning and personal growth. Educators must stay updated with new teaching methods and subject knowledge. Each year I try to incorporate something new into my teaching or look at it from a different perspective.

This is similar to our Christian journey of continuous spiritual learning and growth. We go to church each Sunday to learn more about the Bible, take on a new perspective to a teaching we have heard many times, and pray to learn more about ourselves and God.

Lastly, the impact of a teacher's words and actions on students is a powerful reminder of the influence Christians can have on the world. Just as teachers inspire and shape the future through their interactions, Christians are called to be the "light of the world," influencing others through their faith and actions. Don't forget the major impact our actions have on others and how our lives can help people believe in God and his message of hope, peace and kindness.

So as summer begins and the school year ends, don't forget about all the ways that each and everyone one of us is a teacher. It doesn't have to be your job title, but we all take on the role in some way, so remember to be patient, constantly learning and helping be a positive light in the world.



### Heavenly Humour!

**How do we know God likes coffee?** *Because the Bible says, He brews.*

**Why wasn't Boaz a nice man before he got married?** *He was Ruth-less.*

**Aside from Adam & Eve, who in the Bible had no parents?** *Joshua, son of Nun.*

A man gets on an aeroplane and sees a nun praying fervently beside him.

“Are you afraid of flying?” he asks.

“Flying, no; crashing, yes.”

A priest, a rabbi, and a minister walk into a bar.

The bartender says, “What is this, a joke?”

**What did Moses say when he came down the mountain and saw the Israelites worshipping a golden calf?** *Holy cow!*

**Who was the world's first comedian?** *Samson. He brought the house down.*

**Need a boat?** *I Noah guy.*

**The Pharisees believe in the resurrection of the dead, but the Sadducees don't.** *That's why they're sad, you see.*

## Keep 'em Coming by Thomas Aufdemberge

When I visited my parents last year, my father mentioned to me that he felt his role in keeping his grandchildren in their faith, given his limited opportunities to converse with them and desire not to put pressure on them or push them away, had been reduced to little more than prayer. Prayer is certainly one tool we have in this endeavour, but here we'll take a closer look at what parents and churches can do to help bridge the gap between childhood and adulthood when it comes to church attendance.



### **Parents**

Open communication between parents and children can reveal issues kids have with church and their beliefs in general, if the church is providing them something they need, and what their friends think of their beliefs. Of course, the best approach is based on love where a positive, non-judgmental dialog is created.

Parents should encourage their teenagers to ask tough questions but also be prepared to answer them. Here are just a few they might get:

- Can't I not go to church and still be a Christian?
- Why does God allow a 3-year-old to get brain cancer?
- My friends say religion has started all the wars in history. Is that true?
- Shouldn't I be able to have a relationship with whom I want if we're compatible?

Parents can also try to steer their children toward relationships they feel will better nurture their faith in place of those that may try to tear it down.



When parents pray, they can ask God to present opportunities for them and their children to demonstrate Christlike behaviour. They can ask God to bring good influences into their lives and to “deliver” them from the bad influences. And of course parents should ask for wisdom and understanding when dealing with their children.

If the going gets tough, parents can turn to scripture for inspiration such as Luke 15, which shares the parables of the lost sheep, the lost coin and the prodigal son. Parents also need to realise there’s only so much they can do. They have to trust God’s word in Proverbs 22:6: Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.

## **The Church**

One of the companies I worked for when I was younger had the teamwork-encouraging motto regarding tasks that needed to be done, “Never say it’s not your job.” Similarly, *the job of keeping young ones attending church falls on the entire congregation, not just the pastors or youth ministers.*

Congregants can take an active role by being examples for the young folks, being happy and hearty worshipers, exhibiting true Christlike behaviour, regularly attending church themselves, demonstrating and sharing the power God has in their lives, and accepting the young ones as they are.

Of course, a great way to keep kids coming to church is to get them involved. Here are some possibilities: cross bearer, acolyte, offering collector, usher, reader, greeter.



Other ministries in the church can also partner with the youth group:

- Sunday School - as a teacher or helper
- Music - singing in the choir or playing an instrument
- Fundraising - working as a group on the setup and teardown of church events
- Administration - helping with the church's website and weekly newsletter
- Maintenance - helping with the cleaning and care of the church and its grounds
- Altar Guild - care and management of vestry and vestments

Finally, the ministry team should foster a formal partnership with the parents of teens to help answer difficult questions, to let parents know what is being taught in Sunday School, and to be sure parents are setting a good example with their attendance and service to the congregation.

Some of these suggestions may require that folks step out of their comfort zone, but it is for this very reason we meet on Sundays, that together we can do things we can't do on our own. Hebrews 10:24-25 reminds us: And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, *not neglecting to meet together*, as is the habit of some, but *encouraging one another*, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

*Thomas Aufdemberge is one of our Sunday School leaders*

**Pevsner's Staffordshire by Charles Penty**

A bespoke-made Gladstone bag still holds  
items stowed for two decades or more:

Linen jacket, lido ticket,  
an annotated edition

of Boswell's *Life of Johnson*,  
armbands to shore up your shirt sleeves.

*Guide to the Buildings of Staffordshire*  
collects fines at the closed library

as Karajan conducts again  
the Berlin Philharmonic  
on your tape of Mozart's *Requiem*.  
Seed packets spill chrysanthemums

into my hand - flowers for her  
whom you survived to your surprise,  
she who peers from the photographs  
you had deftly sectioned in half.

Yorkshire Times *Poem of the Week*, 18th May 2024:

<https://yorkshiretimes.co.uk/article/Poem-Of-The-Week-Pevsners-Staffordshire-By-Charles-Penty>

(First published in the summer 2021 issue of Poetry News.)



## **SUMMER SERVICES AT ST. GEORGE'S**

<b>Sundays</b>	08.30 hrs	Holy Communion (said)
	10.30 hrs	Combined Service
<b>Wednesdays</b>	19.30 hrs	Evening Prayer - online

## **SERVICES FROM 8TH SEPTEMBER**

<b>Sundays</b>	08.30 hrs	Holy Communion (said)
	10.00 hrs	Family Worship - incl. Children's Ministry
	11.30 hrs	Sung Eucharist
<b>Wednesdays</b>	19.30 hrs	Evening Prayer

## **GET IN TOUCH**

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## **THE CHURCH COUNCIL**

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Assistant Curate	Fr. Solomon Ike
Church Wardens	Adam Hill, Charles Penty
Diocesan Synod Representatives	Anne Cole, Adam Hill
Honorary Treasurer	Gerald Richli
Church Council Secretary	Charles Penty
Members	Christian Bolz, Annie Hawkins, Katherine Horton, Riley Kaminer, Carol Skinner

## **PARISH TEAM**

Director of Music & Organist	Stephen Knight
Deputy Organist	Diana Davies Burr
Electoral Roll Officer	Melissa Pearce
Data Protection Officer	Anne Cole
Environmental Officer	Carol Skinner
Website	Riley Kaminer

## **COMMITTEES**

Standing Committee:	Chaplain, Wardens, Secretary and Treasurer
Fundraising Committee:	Angela Irwin, Carol Skinner, Diana Grayland, Jessica Rico, Liz Mason, Melanie Stickland, Melissa Pearce, Helen Munford
Fabric Committee:	Chaplain, Wardens, Carol Skinner

## **THE GRAPEVINE**

Our church magazine is entirely made up of stories, messages and thoughts from our ministry team, congregation, friends and helpers at St. George's. A big thank you to all of those who have contributed in any way!

If you have a written article you would like published in our magazine or if you would like to contribute to future editions of Grapevine, please get in touch with our Editor.

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