

PARISH Magazine

Croydon Minster and St George's, Waddon

February/March 2022

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New Beginnings

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- A sermon for the second Sunday after Epiphany *Fr Andrew*

Regular service times

Croydon Minster

Morning Prayer, Monday – Friday 8.30am

Sunday

8.00am Said Eucharist

10.00am Sung Eucharist

6.30pm Choral Evensong

Monday

11.00am Said Eucharist

Tuesday

11.00am Said Eucharist

5.30pm Choral Evensong (Boy Choristers – term time only)

Wednesday

11.00am Said Eucharist

5.30pm Choral Evensong (Girl Choristers – term time only)

Thursday

7.00pm Choral Evensong (Men's voices – term time only)

Friday

11.00am Said Eucharist

St George's

Sunday

10.00am Eucharist

Thursday

10.30am Eucharist

Diary dates

Croydon Minster

February

Fri 4 Lunchtime Recital, 1.10pm

Sun 6 70th Anniversary of the Accession of HM The Queen

Family Service (The Parable of the Sower), 3.30pm

Wed 9 Deanery Synod at Emmanuel, South Croydon, 8.00pm

Fri 11 Lunchtime Recital, 1.10pm

Fri 18 Lunchtime Recital, 1.10pm

Sun 20 Holy Baptism, 11.30am

Thu 24 Farewell Evensong for Bishop Jonathan, 5.30pm

Fri 25 Lunchtime Recital, 1.10pm

Mon 28 Choral Evensong sung by Old Palace School Choir, 5.30pm

March

Wed 2 Eucharist for Ash Wednesday, 7.00pm

Fri 4 Lunchtime Recital, 1.10pm

Sun 6 Holy Baptism, 11.30am

Family Service (The First Sunday of Lent), 3.30pm

Wed 9 Old Palace School Concert, 7.00pm

Fri 11 Lunchtime Recital, 1.10pm

Fri 18 Lunchtime Recital, 1.10pm

Tue 22 John Whitgift Foundation Founder's Day Service, 11.00am

Fri 25 Lunchtime Recital, 1.10pm

Sun 27 Mothering Sunday

New Beginnings

In this edition of the Parish Magazine our theme sees articles reflecting on 'new beginnings'. A year is well under way and, God willing, we are moving into a 'new season' of God's grace as the pandemic becomes endemic and Covid measures are steadily lifted.

The recent celebration of Epiphany embeds the visit of the Magi, the Baptism of the Lord and the Wedding Feast at Cana, which all point, in different ways, to the freshness of the Gospel. The Magi represent the new phenomenon in Christ that all nations now are invited to draw on God's grace, and not solely the people of Israel; the Baptism declares what Jesus always has been – the eternal Son of God – and there begins his public ministry; Cana is set at the beginning of a marriage between a man and a woman, signifying the new marriage of God and the Church, the possibility of union with God and the transformation that brings.

The Church year begins on Advent Sunday, so is well underway. John Langridge's article on the Church year takes us through the rhythm of the seasons of the Church, their features and how we might connect with them. The genius of the Church year is that it reminds us every day in different moods and tones that 'new every morning is God's love': grace is revealed through time.

Jon Blanchard's article 'There you will see him' shows how the Gospel is a series of new beginnings. This derives from the life and newness of Easter which compels us to look back so that we can look forward, the call to move on, yet fed and nourished by God in the sacraments.

David Morgan opens up the theme of new beginnings through poetry, and this speaks for itself opening up intriguing questions for us all to ponder in how we make the move to begin something new.

Elaine Cooper writes about the first Bishop of Croydon. To have a Bishop of Croydon was an innovation in its day. Elaine details that new enterprise and this is timely as we say goodbye to the current Bishop of Croydon. Bishop Jonathan Clark's time here will be marked by a Choral Evensong on Thursday 24th February. That certainly marks a new beginning for Bishop Jonathan and his wife Alison.

Alison Kenney's article is of a very different tone, and is a report of a meeting she attended on Zoom. It opens the pain of domestic violence and violence against women. If it opens up personal issues for you when reading, please don't remain silent. In speaking out there is the possibility of a new beginning.

One of the new beginnings that came out of the pandemic is the new monthly Children's liturgies. This shows that even in the darkness and confusion of the abnormality of something like the pandemic, new fruits can begin to come forth. The trees look pretty dead at this time of the year but in a matter of weeks green life will be sprouting from them.

Finally, my sermon on the wedding feast at Cana is a call for us to be open to the transforming grace of Christ and to begin to grow into the aspiration we set out at our Vision Day in June 2019, that we want to be known as a church that is 'welcoming and open, where people find life and joy and feel they belong'. Not a bad challenge for a 'new season'.

Fr Andrew

‘Arise, shine, for your light has come’

Fr Andrew

When you hear the word ‘epiphany’, I wonder what associations come to mind?

For many people ‘epiphany’ conjures up the image of the Magi arriving to offer their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh to the new-born Jesus Christ. That scene from St Matthew’s Gospel (2.1–11) is what we recall 12 days after Christmas.

What we find though is that, traditionally, there is more to The Epiphany of the Lord even than that. The text that captures the richest meaning of Epiphany is a text, that features on that day, from the prophet Isaiah where we read, ‘Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you’ (Isaiah 60.1). Epiphanies are when the light of the Lord shines out and reveals his presence in his people’s midst.

An ‘epiphany’ is, put simply, a ‘showing’. It comes from Greek, joining two words *epi*, meaning ‘on’ or ‘to’, and *phainein*, meaning ‘to show’. When we speak of epiphany, we should not be restricted to 6th January.

Yes, there are the Magi. Their arrival gives us a subtitle for The Epiphany, which is ‘The Manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles’: in other words, the appearance or revelation of Christ to the nations of the world, those who are not part of God’s First Chosen People, the Israelites.

The Magi are representatives of far off pagan lands, who do him homage (after some clever footwork to avoid King Herod’s wrath). This is an epiphany that fulfils the prophecy of Isaiah that kings will come and offer gifts (Isaiah 60.1–6) and



Illustration from the Trivulzio Book of Hours, c.1465, Nicolas Spierinc (Koninklijke Bibliotheek)
Wikimedia Commons / public domain

Psalm 72, 'all kings shall fall down before him; all nations shall do him service' (Psalm 72.11). You may have noted before that the Gospel does not mention kings, but 'O *Magioi*', Magi: there is, contra Herod, only one king present in Bethlehem, and that is Jesus.

The second great theme of Epiphany is the Baptism of the Lord. It too is a 'showing'. At Christ's baptism, at the hands of John the Baptist, the fullness of the Trinity is revealed, shown, as the Holy Spirit descends as a dove upon Jesus who is revealed to be, what he has been from before the foundation of the world, the Beloved Son of the Father (cf Matthew 3.13–17; Mark 1.9–11; Luke 3.15–17).

The third theme is the wedding feast at Cana, when Christ performs 'the first of his signs'. A 'sign' in John's Gospel is typically referred to as a 'miracle' in the synoptic gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke. Cana is unique to John. It is an incredibly rich text, filled to the brim with significant and symbolic meaning. For our purpose it finds its place under the Epiphany heading from the final verse: 'Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, *and revealed his glory*; and his disciples believed in him' (John 2.11).

These three epiphanies make up the fullness of the Epiphany of the Lord at this time of the Church's year. In the gospels they are complemented by the 'theophanies', literally the 'God-showings' such as the Transfiguration of Christ (Matthew 17.1; Mark 9.2; Luke 9.28).

At its heart epiphany is about the glory of the Lord shown forth in the midst of his people. The challenge for us today is to know that reality and to keep our eyes peeled for epiphanies in the everyday, or, to misquote the priest and poet, George Herbert, 'Epiphany in ordinarie', for the Lord's light still shines.

The Christian Calendar and the Faith Within

John S. Langridge

Why is the Christian calendar so important?

Why are the Feast Days and Festivals recognised?

For what reasons are there structures within the church year?

Do we need to be reminded of all these dates constantly – and if so, why?

What does all this mean to our faith?

What an enormous subject this is! It can sound perplexing, but those outside the faith understand the rhythms of the seasons and highpoints in the year. Yet even those within the faith tend to brush aside the Anglo-Catholic / Catholic liturgy. The format of the liturgy, and the recognition of it by upholding its portrayal, form the 'building blocks' of the church year. Why?

Deeply theological? Yes, can be, but for the true purposes of understanding, let us keep this relatively simple and straightforward for the comprehension of this article. So, let us use an analogy of a secular nature (albeit that this of course too was created by God!).

The Seasons of the Year

Spring: New growth, sowing the seeds in the land, trees and plants bursting into new life.

Summer: Long days, full growth, lambs fully grown, an abundance of life.

Autumn: Growth dying down, the harvesting of crops and produce, the preparation for winter.

Winter: The land has settled, the days are shorter, the trees and growth die off as the land lies fallow, ready for the new season next year, when the cycle starts again.

A perfect structure, created by a supreme and loving God, for the benefit of all mankind. And it is a structure that the world could not live without. In fact, to quote the Latin phrase – *sine qua non* – which means ‘indispensable’. And so it is encompassed in the structure of our faith within the Christian church – *sine qua non*!

Sometimes there are those of other Christian denominations who will come back and say, “Ah yes – but this is all man made.” True! – I say, but then man was made by God, and this liturgy was devised by man to worship God. And through recognition of all that happened during Christ’s life through an annual structure to help enable us to follow Him and assist us in our devotions to Him, we follow, serve and remember.

They tend to have a problem arguing with that!

The Structure of the Christian Year, with liturgical colours



1. The Season of Advent (violet or purple)

Starting four Sundays before Christmas. We start to look forward to the coming of Christ as we prepare ourselves for His birth at Christmas and His coming again in glory.

2. Christmas Day (white or gold)

The celebration of the birth of Christ, the Saviour of the world.

3. The Season of Christmas

Lasts for twelve days between Christmas Day (25th December) and the Feast of the Epiphany (6th January).

4. Holy Innocents (red)

On 28th December, commemorating the massacre of all male children under two

years of age in and around Bethlehem, ordered by King Herod in an attempt to kill the infant Christ.

5. Epiphany (white or gold for 6th January, green for the Season of Epiphany)

From 6th January, running for six weeks and marking the end of the Christmas season. It is the third season of the Christian year after the seasons of Advent and Christmas.

6. Candlemas (white)

Falls on 2nd February and marks the purification of the Virgin Mary and the infant Christ’s presentation at the Temple. Both these ceremonies, purification and presentation, take place 40 days after the birth of a child according to Jewish law.

7. Pre-Lent and Shrovetide (green)

The three Sundays before Lent, Septuagesima, Sexagesima and Quinquagesima, traditionally known as they fall approximately 70, 60 and 50 days before Easter. These three Sundays and the three weeks of pre-Lent are a period of introspection before the rigours of Lent.

8. The Season of Lent (violet or purple)

Lasts for 40 days in memory of the 40 days Christ was tempted in the wilderness and as we prepare for the celebration of Easter.

9. Ash Wednesday (violet or purple)

The first day of Lent, on which the imposition of ashes in the form of a cross are marked on the foreheads of the faithful by their priest. This ritual dates back to the sixth century. It is a symbol of purification and penance and reminds us of the frailty of our life.

10. Mothering Sunday (violet or purple)

The fourth Sunday in Lent, called Mothering Sunday because it is the day when

people were encouraged to return to worship in their 'Mother Church' where they had been baptised.

11. The Annunciation (white)

Falls on 25th March, which is very often during Lent. It celebrates the Angel Gabriel's appearance to the Virgin Mary when he announces to her that she will conceive and bear a son called Jesus.

12. Passiontide (violet or purple)

Starting on the fifth Sunday in Lent, recalling Jesus' final journey to Jerusalem, His suffering and impending death.



13. Holy Week (red)

The most sacred time of the whole Christian year. The week in which we remember the last moments of Christ's earthly life, the mysterious events of which form the very foundation of our faith, running right up to the Crucifixion.

14. Palm Sunday (red)

The beginning of Holy Week. Named after the carpeting of the road by cut branches of the trees of palms spread by the people on the road that Christ rode over on a donkey on His final journey to Jerusalem.

15. Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday of Holy Week (red)

Representing the three days that Jesus and His disciples spent preparing for the Passover Feast in Jerusalem.

16. Maundy Thursday (red, but white at Holy Communion)

Recalls the day of the Last Supper when Christ washed the feet of His disciples and gave them a new commandment to love one another.

17. Good Friday (no liturgical colour, but red for the liturgy)

The day of Christ's Crucifixion.

18. Holy Saturday (no liturgical colour) and The Easter Vigil (white or gold)

With Sunday, the Easter Vigil is the oldest of all Christian celebrations and dates back to the days of the Apostles themselves. The mood changes from sadness to expectation. For centuries Christians have celebrated the impending Resurrection with candles in church on the Saturday night before Easter Day.

19. Easter Day (white or gold)

The most important day of the whole Christian year when we give thanks and celebrate that through Christ, we will have life eternal.

20. Eastertide – the Season of Easter

Runs for 50 days from Easter Day and remembers during these days that the risen Christ was still with His disciples in bodily form and appeared before them regularly. This period runs to Pentecost.

21. Ascension Day (white or gold)

Remembers the risen Christ's Ascension to heaven from the top of a mountain in Galilee. Comes 40 days after Easter Day on the Thursday of the sixth week after Easter.

22. Pentecost or Whitsun (red)

It is the time of the Holy Spirit – the third person of the Trinity. It celebrates the coming of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples ten days after Jesus' Ascension.

23. Trinity Sunday (white or gold)

The first Sunday after Pentecost and the Feast of the Holy Trinity. It is different from all the other Feasts as it does not celebrate a historical event in the life of Christ or the Apostles. Instead it celebrates the religious truth of the Trinity – that the one God is three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

24. Ordinary Time – the Sundays after Trinity Sunday (green)

This Season of Ordinary Time lasts until the Feast of Christ the King near the end of November.

25. Corpus Christi

Takes place on the Thursday after Trinity Sunday and ten days after Pentecost.

It celebrates the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist.

26. Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary (white)

Celebrated on 8th September, remembers the birth of the Virgin Mary, as the Mother of God, the greatest of all the saints. The most outstanding quality of the Virgin Mary is her faith.

27. Harvest Festival and Thanksgiving (green)

Harvest times differ around the world so there is no fixed date for a Harvest Festival in the Christian calendar. A wonderful Festival of Thanksgiving for all that God has provided for mankind as we gather in the food and fruits of the harvest. We also give thanks for those things that grow wild and appear every year of their own accord.

28. Hallowtide

The last day of October marks the start of the three-day period known as



Photo: © Lujans Photography

Hallowtide when Christians remember the dead. This comprises All Hallows' Eve (or Hallowe'en) on 31st October, All Saints' Day on 1st November and All Souls' Day on 2nd November. Actually, the word 'hallow' is an old English word meaning 'to make holy' and All Hallows refers to all the saints – the Holy Ones.

29. All Saints' Day (white or gold)

1st November, when we give thanks for the great exemplars of the Christian faith, who 'shine as lights in the world to the glory of God the Father'.

30. All Souls' Day (violet or black)

2nd November, when we remember and pray for all the dead, especially our loved ones.

The Christian year comes to an end after the feast of Christ the King. In the following week the new sacred year then opens again on Advent Sunday. With this new year, the slow waiting for the light of the world begins again. And so, the wonderful mysteries of Advent, Christmas, Holy Week, Easter and Pentecost begin to unfold once more.

The traditions, Festivals and Feast Days are all there in the Christian calendar to help us in our journey of faith and to assist us in our knowledge and worship of Christ our Lord in our devotions to Him.

All of these dates, seasons and festivals are remembered and celebrated at Croydon Minster. How fortunate we are! Let us therefore fully engage in our Christian fellowship and worship, as we move forward in thanksgiving, worship and anticipation.

Author's note: You may wish to keep these pages or photocopy them for reference as we move through the church year.

‘There you will see him’

Jon Blanchard

When we think of Easter morning we think of joy and relief that suffering and fear of death have been overcome and we are deeply reassured with hope. It is easy to overlook that the first words to the women in Matthew and Mark’s gospel are not reassurance, but first of all to tell them not to fear, which is clearly their first reaction. (Angels usually inspire fear when they appear, as with the shepherds at Christmas, or Mary when Gabriel visits her.)

Instead of saying, “Jesus has come back and everything’s going to be all right,” he says, “He is not here... he is going ahead of you to Galilee, there you will see him”. They are being told Jesus is not here and in Matthew’s gospel Jesus only appears to the disciples when they reach Galilee.

In Mark’s gospel the women are not reassured at all by the message. Instead their reaction is to flee from the tomb because “terror and astonishment had seized them”. The good news is not that the old life has been restored, but a new life has started and new beginnings can be very unsettling.

It is as though to find and live the redeemed life of Easter we have to journey from where we are. Once I noticed this, I remembered how often in the Bible God calls his people to journey forward. In Luke’s gospel the principal resurrection story is of how two disciples meet the risen Lord without recognising him on a journey to Emmaus. He is only made known to them “in the breaking of bread”, a clear indication that Christians are to encounter Christ in the eucharist.

Opposite: The Pitcairn Flight into Egypt, from the Infancy of Christ window of the Abbey Church of Saint-Denis, France, c.1140–1145

(Glencairn Museum, 03.SG.114)

When God begins to call a people to himself, Abraham is the first person called and the first thing God tells him is, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to a land that I will show you”.

It is only when the people of Israel escape from Egypt and spend forty years travelling towards the promised land that they are given the Law and bound together as a people under God.

Matthew and Luke in their accounts of the birth of Christ both include a number of journeys: Mary visits Elizabeth, Mary and Joseph travel to Bethlehem in Luke and in Matthew they travel on to Egypt and then to Nazareth.



The last half of Luke's gospel is structured around Jesus' journey up to Jerusalem.

It is no wonder that the two most famous allegories of the Christian life, Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* and Dante's *Divine Comedy*, are both accounts of a journey. They are very different works indeed and have little else in common apart from both being written when their authors had seen their social and religious ideals overturned. Dante, the sophisticated catholic, was in exile and Bunyan, the barely educated Calvinist, in prison.

The Christian tradition of pilgrimage, travelling to pray somewhere special, is fully in line with this sense that the Christian life is a journey.

Naturally we feel comfort and encouragement when we hear Christ promising in the very last words of Matthew's gospel, "And remember I am with you always, to the end of the age". But those words are only spoken when the disciples have left their safe life behind and followed the risen Christ.

I remember singing a hymn at Sunday School (357 in New English Hymnal) which includes the stanza:

Not for ever by still waters
Would we idly rest and stay,
But would smite the living fountains
From the rocks along our way.

I felt at the time I would far, far rather prefer idly resting beside still waters, but now I am much older I can see that the hymn is right. We need to risk our lives in order to live them. It is right to think of God as our parent, loving and caring for us, but a responsible parent does not want their children to remain as babies,

they want them to grow up, despite the pain that may result in the process. God wants us to grow up which means going forward. As St Augustine says, "Sing alleluia and keep on walking."

Some of my previous articles for the magazine can be found on my blog 'View from the Pew' at <https://anglicanchurchlife.wordpress.com/blog/>

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Please note: The views in the articles of the magazine reflect the opinions of the writers and not necessarily those of the editorial board.

New Beginnings

David Morgan

For a new beginning you must have already started.

So what's making you change?

What's made you plant your footstep in a different direction?

Is it a sideways step?

Is it a leap forward?

Is it a quiet voice that's moved you

Or a great realization?

Is it a surprise that you are changing course

Or is it what others thought might happen all along?

Are you more energised and travelling swifter

Or are you tiring and moving slower?

Were your eyes opened by a piece of art

Or were your ears unmuffled by a piece of music?

Is it a tightrope that you used to walk

Or have you swapped security for the high wire?

Is it that you could always see the next step, but now you're not so sure?

Is God behind you, shoulder to the wheel, pushing you?

Is God ahead of you with a directing light?

Who is it that has to take the next step?

I can show you.

She might guide you.

They could inspire you.

But any new beginning has to start with you.

A historical New Beginning...

Elaine Cooper

It is difficult to remember that it is a relatively modern innovation for there to be a 'Bishop of Croydon' – a post which has only existed since the beginning of the 20th century. So far there have only been ten holders of the position.

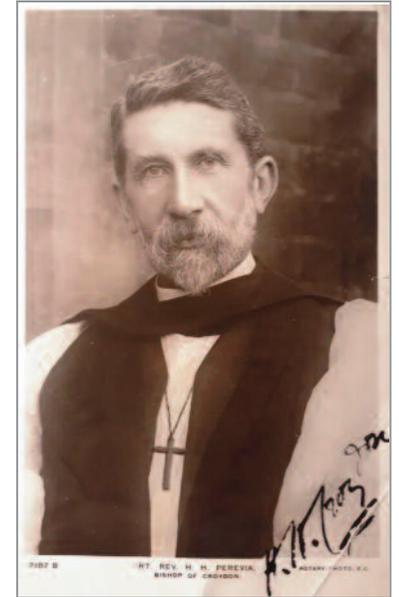
Since Saxon times there has been evidence of estates in the Croydon area owned by the Archbishops of Canterbury. The Domesday Book of 1086 records that the Manor of Croydon belonged to Archbishop Lanfranc. Although Archbishops mostly resided at their Palace in Canterbury, in the 12th century Archbishop Baldwin acquired the Manor of Lambeth as a base nearer the centre of government. In order to facilitate the journey an additional series of Manor houses were bought which provided easy stages of 12–15 miles between Canterbury and London and accommodation for the Archbishop and his large retinue of clergy and servants.

At only 10 miles from London, Croydon was the last stop before Lambeth, and Croydon House, later called Croydon Palace, became a favourite summer retreat, not just a resting place. Today the Old Palace is occupied by the school next door to the Minster. The Palace was eventually sold in 1780, having reached a state of decay. Although Addington Palace was purchased in the early 19th century as the Archbishop's new Croydon residence, this too was sold in 1896 and the last direct link between the Archbishops of Canterbury and Croydon as their place of residence ceased. By now the travel between London and Canterbury was vastly improved and the staging posts no longer seemed necessary.

This close association with the Archbishops explains the fact that for hundreds of years the parish of Croydon was a geographically isolated part of the Diocese of

Canterbury, under the direct Episcopal jurisdiction of the Archbishop. As the Archbishop was no longer to be resident in Croydon, a new area (suffragan) Bishop for Croydon was created within Canterbury Diocese.

So it was that, in 1904, Henry Horace Pereira (*pictured right*) was consecrated the first Bishop of Croydon on the Feast of the Conversion of Saint Paul (25th January), at Westminster Abbey by Randall Davidson, Archbishop of Canterbury. Bishop Pereira was born in 1845, educated at Trinity College, Dublin and ordained in 1869. He served two curacies, at Eston and Southampton, before becoming the first Warden of the Wilberforce Memorial Mission in South London. He later became Rector of Chilbolton and Rural Dean of Stockbridge in Hampshire.



Postcard, 1904

Wikimedia Commons / public domain

When he was appointed as Bishop he was already well known to the people of Croydon for he had been Vicar and Rural Dean of Croydon since 1894.

* * *

Originally begun as an independent movement, the work for temperance had gradually been taken over by religious organisations. Temperance was not specifically a religious cause, yet many clergy viewed drunkenness as a major cause of crime, violence and disorder in society. Although Anglicans had initially held aloof, after the Croydon branch of the Church of England Temperance Society was formed in 1876 with the encouragement of the Archbishop of Canterbury, Pereira became a devoted supporter of the Society. At a meeting of

the Parish Church Branch in 1896, while he was still Vicar, Pereira urged further effort for he considered the situation in Croydon a poor one:

‘If they had full instruction and full enlightenment as to the real state of things in Croydon, they would know that there was need for the work of that great society on behalf of which they were met together that evening... They could never set this matter right by Act of Parliament, it must be done by Christ’s disciples.’

In 1905 Bishop Pereira was the author of ‘Intemperance’ which was issued in ‘Handbooks for the Clergy’. It consisted of over 150 pages outlining the evils of alcoholism and its effect on crime levels – public order, theft, violence, domestic violence. He urged that it was:

‘... the duty of the clergy to speak to people of their temptations and shortcomings – not in the tones of an autocrat but with the frankness and the kindness of a friend – a friend who concerns himself about them because he is not only deeply interested in their welfare, but is prepared to sacrifice himself in the promotion of it... We cannot – dare not – be silent on so urgent a matter, or refrain from uttering our warnings... to educate and teach the truths which will put people on their guard.’

Even after he had retired as Bishop, his commitment to the Temperance Society remained strong.

He was Honorary Canon of Canterbury Cathedral, and an Honorary Chaplain to Queen Victoria from January 1900 until her death the following year.

Bishop Pereira retired in 1924, after 30 years’ association with the Croydon area. He died on 1st January 1926, aged 80.

Interestingly, the post of Bishop then remained vacant until 1930, when Edward Woods, who had been Vicar since 1927, was also appointed as Bishop, serving in both roles until 1937. The two subsequent appointees, William Anderson (1937–1942) and Maurice Harland (1942–1947), each served as both Vicar and Bishop.

* * *

Our current Bishop, Jonathan was consecrated Bishop in March 2012. In September last year he announced his resignation and he will leave us in March 2022, having served Croydon as Bishop for exactly 10 years.

On Thursday 24th February there will be a special service at 5.30pm in the Minster. We will have the chance to say goodbye to Bishop Jonathan and express our thanks for his ministry here in Croydon.

As he and his wife Alison move to Orkney we wish them God’s blessing in their new home – very different from Croydon.

And then we await the new beginning – a new Bishop for Croydon...

Minster Records

Baptism

Clara Kwarteng, Louis Da Silva

R.I.P.

Betty Fry, Stephen Haude, Alix Sullivan, Brian Palmer, Aggie Naicker

Congratulations to Eve Wilkinson
who celebrated her 100th birthday in January.

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Southwark Diocese Mothers' Union Online Seminar: Action on Gender-Based Violence

Alison Kenney

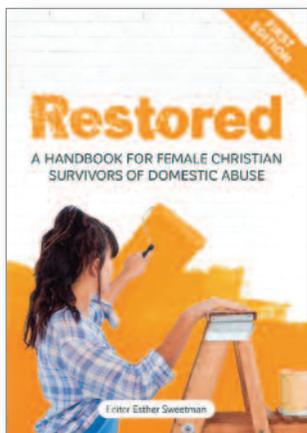
I attended this online seminar on 25th November 2021 as the subject of gender inequality, violence and abuse is a matter of concern to all Christians and indeed all caring people in society. During the ongoing pandemic of the past two years, our own country has seen spiralling levels of domestic violence against women (and a small proportion of men too). The stresses of lockdowns, job losses and housing evictions have placed a huge strain on families as they have struggled to stay afloat financially and emotionally, often separated from their extended families and friends by necessary regulations about Covid transmission. Frightened women have been effectively trapped at home with abusive partners, who have taken out their frustrations on them, often in front of the children. Women throughout the world have suffered additional abuse at this time, but some countries have a bad track record of violence against women anyway, for example in the practice of female genital mutilation.

The seminar consisted of three presentations by (1) the Director of Gender Justice in the Anglican Communion, (2) representatives of the Mothers' Union HQ in Westminster, who lead the worldwide response to violence against women and (3) a director of 'Restored', an organisation which helps women to survive the trauma of abuse and rebuild their lives.

Particularly surprising and shocking to hear was the level of domestic abuse suffered by female churchgoers in the UK, as demonstrated by detailed survey research. Biblical passages about the permanence of marriage and women's role in nurturing children are often quoted to deter women from leaving a violent

or psychologically abusive spouse. The misuse of these texts to keep women effectively imprisoned is examined and debunked by Helen Paynter in her book, *The Bible Doesn't Tell Me So: Why You Don't Have to Submit to Domestic Abuse and Coercive Control*, published by the Bible Reading Fellowship, 2020. In the chat I recommended an older book, which a friend had recommended to me when I was being bullied at work, as most abusive relationships share common characteristics – *Men Who Hate Women, and the Women Who Love Them*, written by two American psychologists, Dr Susan Forward and Joan Torres, published by the Bantam Press, 1986.

It was heartening to hear how the Mothers' Union has been making considerable progress worldwide in promoting women's economic independence and involving men in equality training. Their campaign is called 'No More 1 in 3', based on the fact that 1 in 3 women suffer domestic abuse, a shockingly high figure. They and the Anglican Communion have planned 16 days of action, including a 3 minute silence which took place on Saturday 27th November at 1.03pm for women who are victims of violence. Women are most likely to be killed when they are planning to leave the abuser, hence the need for safe and secret refuges.



Both the MU and 'Restored' have extensive online resources to help women find assistance and move on:

Restored

www.restored-uk.org

Our story | Mothers' Union

www.mothersunion.org/projects/supporting-those-affected-domestic-abuse

They also produce helpful publications, for example leaflets for churches, libraries and other community spaces and also stickers for ladies' toilets, to make sources of help more widely known, especially as women need to access this information in secret away from their abusive partners.

We were asked in the discussion groups to consider what each of us could do in our own church to publicise this important subject and the resources which are available to help women in need. I decided to write this piece for the parish magazine as my starting point, but I expect the clergy, PCC and church officials are already considering the topic. We were exhorted to promote the 4 R's – Recognise, Respond, Refer and Record.

SAFEGUARDING

Croydon Minster's Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) is

Denise Mead

She can be contacted on:

020 8688 8104 (work) or 020 8688 5971 (home)

07957 149005 (mobile) in emergencies

office@croydonminster.org mad_mead@tiscali.co.uk

St George's Safeguarding Officers are

Anne Tanner

020 8686 3760 / 07715 581046

Christine Crawley

020 8688 0609 / 07770 613948



Croydon
Minster

Services for
CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND YOUNG PEOPLE
Spring 2022

Sunday 9 January, 3.30pm **The Baptism of Christ**

Sunday 6 February, 3.30pm **Ordinary Time:
the Parable of the Sower**

Sunday 6 March, 3.30pm **Lent**

Sunday 10 April, 3.30pm **Palm Sunday**

Friday 15 April, 10am **Good Friday**

We welcome children in church
so that **children** and their parents and carers can be with us
to see, hear, sense, smell and touch
the presence of God here.

www.croydonminster.org

Lift Up Your Hearts: Sunday Afternoon Services for Children

Fr Andrew

As we come out of Covid there is a new venture that we hope and pray will yield fruit at the Minster enriching our whole church life. This is the recently established monthly service for children and their families, which has been taking place on Sunday afternoons at 3.30pm.

Like many churches up and down the country, the pandemic hit our church's work with children hard. The early lockdowns saw schools close and subsequently face coverings, distancing and well-ventilated classrooms were the order of the day.

Those restrictions meant that children's and young people's groups were not able to continue. We had also been aware before the pandemic that we needed to review our children and young people's work because, like many churches, numbers have declined which is both hard work and demoralising for children's and young people's group leaders and helpers. Preparing sessions is hard work and when only a couple of children or none at all appear, spirits drop.

Research also shows that the really effective ways in which children and young people grow in their Christian faith, as in so many things that shape and influence us, is first through their home, especially parents, who are sometimes termed 'primary catechists'. The role of the parish church is to support, encourage and inform parents in how they can best do that.

This has led us to establish the role of Families' Catechist, which Alice Bishop is leading. Alice is not a 'Children's Worker' or taking over Sunday Schools, but is working with our regular church families, those perceived to be 'on the fringe'

and new families to undertake the support, encouragement and information parents need to bring up their children as Christians.

All too often in churches children and young people become detached from the principal task of the Church which is to offer our sacrifice of praise, the Eucharist, to God. It is important for children and young people to be part of the liturgy of the Church, but being realistic, a Choral Eucharist is a bit full on for many. That said, our choir and young servers are soaked in the liturgy, and we should not disregard that they are children and young people who are present.

To meet the need to worship, and be accessible to children in particular, the Sunday afternoon services are providing a way that children together with their parents, guardians or carers can come to do just that. We've explored the church and celebrated St Nicholas and St Francis. This 'term' we will focus on the Parable of the Sower and mark Lent, Holy Week and Easter. At the beginning of January the service was a real live baptism – there's a new beginning if ever there was one!

The other great benefit of this is that we can specifically invite children from the Minster Infant and Junior Schools: when we invite and open our doors and our hearts, people come! These services help us in new ways to be a church that is 'welcoming and open, bringing life and joy and helping people feel they belong'. Please pray that they continue to be fruitful and that we can continue to discern the best way to serve the young people of our church.

Opposite, some photos taken after the Confirmation service which took place at Croydon Minster in November 2021, shared by kind permission of the families of the young people





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FRIDAY 4 MARCH

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1.30pm

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www.wwdp.org.uk Registered Charity Number 233242

A sermon for the Second Sunday after Epiphany: John 2.1-11

Fr Andrew

+

What would the life of the Church look like if we were hosting the wedding feast at Cana of Galilee?

It may sound like an odd question, but I think it is one that holds a huge amount of potential when we consider our life and mission at this moment in time.

The pandemic has really shaken things down. We have to be honest. For many the pandemic made them reassess what was important.

I rejoice, and I hope you do too, that we are here today because we have found that our faith, and sense of belonging to Christ in this place, has sustained us and brought us through.

I rejoice, and I hope that you do too, that this morning, as has been the case through the pandemic, people have been drawn to Christ for the first time through what this church offers in worship, prayer and pastoral care. There is new growth in this church!

I lament, as I imagine you do too, that some people have fallen away. Perhaps they are out of the habit of coming to church or sadly, perhaps, they didn't find that the nourishment, hope and life of the Gospel sustained them. It is also true that some have found new places where they connect with God, and we wish them well and bless them in that.

After that shaking down, the *krisis* time, what does today's gospel give us?

It seems to me that some words from our Church Vision Day in June 2019 are

powerful today as they were then, before the pandemic, when we said together that we wanted this church to be known as a church that is ‘welcoming and open, where people find life and joy and feel they belong’.

That sounds a little like the answer to my opening question, ‘what would the life of the Church look like if we were hosting the wedding feast at Cana of Galilee?’ If we were a ‘wedding feast church’ we would be a church that is ‘welcoming and open, where people find life and joy and feel they belong’.

Let’s explore that thought through the lens of today’s gospel.

*

Weddings in the days of Jesus were whole community affairs. They were not just for select friends or close family like now; the whole locality would turn out and be welcomed and feel they belonged at the feast.

Modern churches have become a bit like modern weddings: the select few are expected; the select few are welcomed. Being a wedding feast church means that we throw open our doors, not just physically but in *who we are and how we are*, in our DNA, in our bones, in our culture.

A wedding feast church says that what happens here is for everyone and it’s about finding life and joy. It’s where you belong. ‘Fling wide the gates’ as a psalm puts it, to let in Christ, the King of Glory, and those who come seeking him (Psalm 24). We invite, expect and welcome the unexpected guest!

*

At the wedding feast in Cana they famously ran out of wine and it was the Mother of the Lord, Mary, who noticed this.

To be a wedding feast church means that we have to acknowledge when the wine of our own effort and imagination has run out. That’s when we learn to be

the church properly. It’s when we recall that our sure foundation is Christ.

At Cana the servants panicked when they realised the wine had run out. We are the servants on whose watch this pandemic has happened, but it is no time to panic or beat ourselves up about it. After all, the wine in Cana ran out because people were drinking it; and that’s good!

This church has served good wine, to be sure, for more than a thousand years, wine that is replenished in each new season.

A wedding feast church knows that new wine needs serving. A wedding feast church asks Blessed Mary to help us notice the texture and detail of the life of our church. Is the wine flowing? Is the wine souring? Is the wine running out?

Mary is the Mother of the Church, and through her prayers, she longs that her children are renewed, encouraged and drink deeply of the wells of salvation.

So she surely says to us today – as she said to the servants in Cana – *present all this to Jesus and do whatever he tells you.*

*

Now is the time to turn for us to Christ and to be renewed in the life and mission of the church. The good wine is to be served as Christ’s hour comes. A wedding feast church is ready to drink of that wine, for it brings life; it brings joy.

The *life* is the depth of living that the Gospel brings. ‘I came that you may have life and have it abundantly’ says Jesus (John 10.10). St Paul echoes this, ‘take hold of the life that really is life’ (1 Timothy 6.19).

The *joy* is the experience of taking hold of life and finding it in every day of our lives. Many things weigh us down in life, but joy awakens us to the fullness of

life through our daily existence and the challenges and threats to happiness.

*

This coming week the priests and licensed lay workers of this church are going to reflect on the aspiration to be a church that is 'welcoming and open, where people find life and joy and feel they belong'.

What will that look like for me and for my colleagues? What will that look like for the members of the church council, the PCC? What will that look like for you?

A wedding feast church is a church that is welcoming and open, where people find life and joy and feel they belong.

*

A wedding feast church has a banquet at its heart: what the Book of Revelation calls the 'marriage feast of the Lamb'. The marriage feast of the Lamb of God is the fulfilment of all things in heaven, of which we have a foretaste in the Eucharist.

In marriage bride and groom meet to become one flesh; in Christ divinity and humanity meet and become one in his flesh.

As wine is prepared at the Eucharist water is added and a prayer spoken by the priest which says, 'by the mystery of this water and this wine may we share in the divinity of Christ who humbled himself to share in our humanity'. That is an intimate union.

At the wedding feast of the Lamb we become one with Christ, in our bodies, minds and spirits. In this mystical way we are welcomed into his open love and we find life and joy and the deepest place of belonging we can find, because we are at home with the Lover of our Souls.

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Assistant Priest	Revd Alan Bayes	07792 846452
Priest, St George's	Revd David Adamson-Hill	020 8688 7006
Hon Curate, St George's	Revd Peter Smith	07856 365561
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St George's	Marcia Grant-Che	07969 653110
Southwark Pastoral Auxiliary	Diana Hemmings	020 8667 0575
Churchwardens		
Croydon Minster	Arlene Esdaile	020 8657 5187
	Pamela Hall	07966 521761
St George's	Christine Crawley	07770 613948
	Carol Milgate	07984 112804
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Director of Music (from 21 February)	Justin Miller	020 8688 8104
Verger and Parish Administrator	Denise Mead	020 8688 5971 (home)
Vicar's PA	Angela Bond	020 8688 8104
Master of the Ringers	Shirley McGill	020 8406 3083
PCC Secretaries		
Croydon Minster	Sue Kibler	07941 744101
St George's	Lynne Kerwood	020 8688 1666
Treasurers		
Croydon Minster	Deborah Miller	020 8688 8104
St George's	Carol Milgate, Treasurer	07984 112804
	Ethel Dixon, Assistant	