The Great St Mary's eMag
Issue 12, 5th Sunday of Easter

<&First Name&gt;, it's your weekly eMag(nificat) from Great St Mary's, the University Church.

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From the Vicar

The Strings Are False

'The strings, my Lord, are false'. How's your Shakespeare? Excellent, I am sure. But just in case it's a while since you spent much time with Julius Caesar we are in Act IV, Scene III: a wonderful scene where the ghost of the murdered Caesar comes to give Brutus something of a fright. I love this line, spoken by young Lucius as Brutus wakes him as the ghost leaves. 'The strings, my Lord, are false'. Lucius is half-dreaming of an instrument that is out of tune. But the instrument, of course, is Brutus, whose own out-of-tune-ness is key to the plot. In a few words, the whole story is summed up in a striking analogy.

Nearly a decade ago now, I was ill with a very unusual and rare condition, diagnosed by a Harley Street specialist (I wasn't paying) as binaural diplacusis. The first definition I came to online says that this
refers to a perceptual anomaly, whereby the same tone is perceived as having a different pitch depending on whether it is presented in the left ear or the right ear of the same listener.

In other words, if you played one note on the piano, I heard two notes, not one. And they were clashing. Play a triad (three-note chord) and I heard six notes, all at different pitches. It was excruciating. It lasted for months. I wore a special ear plug in one ear so that we could still have hymns at church when I was taking the service. But perhaps worse of all was the absence of music at home. No recordings, no piano, no radio, no singing. It was awful.

The condition disappeared as quickly as it came, without notice. And back came music. You would have thought, wouldn't you, that it was like Easter morning after a long Good Friday?

Not quite. It was overwhelming. Every piece of music made me cry, sometimes my weeping was uncontrollable. I have found ever since that my emotional response to music can be acute, and I can be quickly taken off guard. If you come to Great St Mary's, you'll probably know that I often weep during music in church. It touches my very soul. It is essential.

Right now I'm having to ration music at home. When the lockdown started, I thought - naively - that I would enjoy the opportunity to spend more time listening and playing. But it's proving to be too much at a time when my heart is raw. It turns out that my strings are false. Perhaps yours are too.

Whatever, wherever, whoever we are, we are likely to be out of tune with our world right now, in small ways or big ways. The trick, I think, is not to be astonished, but accepting. To trust - remembering that our word 'trust' has its roots in the word 'truth'. The Truth will set us free. He himself said so. And not Truth only, but Way, and Life.

Let us listen for His voice, His song - it is the Enduring Melody.

Adrian

Worship

This Sunday, Canon Adrian leads our service of Holy Communion at 9.30am, with a sermon from Revd Helen. Please do us on our Facebook page at facebook.com/greatstmarys/live to take part.

You'll find the service book on our website. Sunday services are posted to our website and YouTube channel later that same day, and we'll be experimenting with streaming to our Twitter feed as well.

After the morning service, do join us for Zoom coffee hour at https://zoom.us/j/91808611088 (Meeting ID: 918 0861 1088). The password is 1205, and this link will now be the same every Sunday for coffee hour.
It’s lovely to all chat together, but please remember to not ask personal or pastoral questions of others when we’re all online together. Of course, you’re always welcome to share your own news!

There will be a service for children and families live-streamed on the Facebook page at 11am each Sunday.

I am the Gate: Rev Devin's sermon for the Fourth Sunday of Easter

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**PCC News**

Canon Adrian wrote recently to the PCC with a number of updates, and we’d like to share a few highlights with everyone via the eMag:

- In the light of this week's revised guidance from the Church of England's [House of Bishops](https://www.churc England.ac.uk/archives/house-of-bishops/) and the [Diocese of Ely](https://www.elydiocese.org.uk/), we hope that the Sunday morning eucharist will be able to be recorded at Great St Mary’s. However, the church building remains closed.
- For Friday’s 75th anniversary of VE Day, the Cambridge Branch of the Royal British Legion have arranged an act of remembrance on Radio Cambridge 105 at 3pm. Our online services will reflect this poignant day of commemoration.
- I am delighted to tell you that our hard-working environmental Committee believe we qualify for Silver EcoChurch status. Thanks to Andrew Dobson and everyone working with him on all of that, not least Clare Redfern, who steered that group so prophetically for many years.
"So let us not grow weary in doing what is right, for we will reap at harvest time, if we do not give up." Galatians 6:9

This verse has been encouraging me lately in so many ways, but I wanted to share it with the parents and caregivers of GSM as we are caring for our children during an exceptionally difficult time. It's easy to become weary (emotionally and spiritually, as well as physically) in the day to day battles with schooling and discipline and everything else that goes into shepherding our kids. But don't give up! Take strength from the Lord and depend on Him to give you what you need to keep going, looking forward to the harvest that we'll reap in due time. Raising your children to love and serve God and others is the highest calling and most valuable thing you can spend your time and energy on, even if it looks like cleaning crumbs, changing diapers, or saying, "Don't hit your sister!" for what seems like the millionth time. God sees you, loves you, and He will sustain you in your weariness!

There will be an online Bible study for mums starting on Wed., May 20th. It will be every Wed. from 7:45-9:20pm, and we will be going through the book "A Gospel-centered Life." Any questions or interest in joining, please contact rebekahperez21@gmail.com

Rebekah

For those without internet: Daily HOPE

A free national phoneline, produced by the Church of England and called Daily HOPE was launched on Sunday, aimed particularly at those who don't have access to the internet. Available 24 hours a day, the number is 0800 804 8044

Callers will hear a special greeting from the Archbishop of Canterbury before being able to choose from a range of audio worship services. A section called Hymn Line will also offer callers a small selection of hymns, updated daily.

Can you share this with those who might not have internet access?

Christian Aid Week

Christian Aid week begins on Sunday, and Great St Mary's is joining with churches around the world in supporting Christian Aid. We're passing the virtual collection plate; can you make a gift of any size? Click here to make a donation: https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/gsm4christianaid2020

Christian Aid writes: Love never fails. Coronavirus impacts all of us. But love...
unites us all. As this virus spreads across the world, love rises up in response. You've already shown incredible kindness to your neighbours. Now is the time to reach out to your neighbours both near and far. Your love protects. From storms, from drought, and now from coronavirus. Your love protects our global neighbours battling the spread of this illness. Your love protects. With soap, clean water and medical supplies. By supporting us this Christian Aid Week you can reach out and protect more of your neighbours today. For over 70 years, we've been standing with the poorest of our neighbours, with people of all faiths and none, to stand up for dignity, equality and justice. Let's stand together with our neighbours near and far.

Our next Wider Concerns collection isn't summertime; thank you for your generosity.

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**Pastoral Care**

In case of a pastoral emergency when you need to reach a clergyperson right away, the pastoral emergency phone number is 01223 747277

*Revd Shirley is taking a couple of weeks to complete some academic work as part of her training. The emergency telephone is operational as always 24 hours a day; and any pastoral enquiries this week and next should come to Adrian or Andrew.*

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**Eco Tip: No Mow May**

While we’re in lockdown, it might be very tempting to get the mower out and give your lawn a trim. But please don’t! Plantlife has launched ‘No Mow May’, encouraging everyone to leave their grass unmown for the month and letting the flowers bloom in the run up to *Every Flower Counts* from 23rd to 31st May. By taking part, you’ll learn how much nectar your lawn is producing and how many bees it can support.
O Almighty God, who alone canst order the unruly wills and affections of sinful men; Grant unto thy people, that they may love the thing which thou commandest, and desire that which thou dost promise; that so, among the sundry and manifold changes of the world, our hearts may surely there be fixed, where true joys are to be found; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Collect for the Fourth Sunday after Easter*

Collects from the Book of Common Prayer

This collect came originally from the eighth century Gelasian sacramentary, with the invocation originally reading ‘Almighty God, which dost make the minds of all faithful men to be of one will’. This was modified in 1662 following the turbulence of the civil war, restoration of the monarchy, and, with the latter, the restoration of the Book of Common Prayer itself.

To reach the place ‘where true joys are to be found’ it is necessary not just to align our wills with those of God but our very desires. What we love and desire should be what God loves and commands and promises. As the other collects we have looked at in recent weeks teach us, again we need God’s grace for this. If someone has hurt me, what is my desire? Is it to hurt that person back, or is to forgive, and seek to restore a broken relationship? Do I desire to do what Jesus teaches in the sermon on the mount – turn the other cheek, go the extra mile – or, if I do these things at all, do I do them grudgingly? The question becomes more sharply focussed the greater the hurt that has been caused me, and I can think of heroic examples of forgiveness which I hope I would never be called upon to emulate. Our model is of course Jesus himself, who on the cross cried, ‘Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.’ Relying on God’s grace, our following Jesus now assures us of eternal joy in his presence in the resurrection life to come.

The Revd Dr Rodney Holder
A Prayer

In you, Father all-mighty, we have our preservation and our bliss.
In you, Christ, we have our restoring and our saving.
You are our mother, brother, and Saviour.
In you, our Lord the Holy Spirit, is marvellous and plenteous grace.
You are our clothing; for love you wrap us and embrace us.
You are our maker, our lover, our keeper.
Teach us to believe that by your grace
all shall be well, and all shall be well,
and all manner of things shall be well.

Amen.

Julian of Norwich (1343-1417)

*Dame Julian’s feast day is this Friday, 8 May*