



St Peter & St Paul's Church, Cranfield

## NEWS & DIARY

September 2020

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The editors reserve the right to make alterations where necessary.

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**For more information on Cranfield Parish Church look online at:**

[www.cranfieldchurch.org](http://www.cranfieldchurch.org)

### The John Bunyan Trail



As you walk up Court Road, past the church, you are actually following the long distance footpath known as the John Bunyan Trail. It was created to celebrate the Ramblers Association's Diamond Jubilee and follows a circular route

from the Sundon Hills Country Park just north of Luton. From Hulcote it passes through Cranfield, along Court Road, up the High Street, along Bedford Road, crossing the junction with Crane Way and following the bridle path to Partridge Piece. I walk this path every day with my dog, Adam, as we follow the trail across the fields. I have never been beyond the point where it skirts Roxhill Manor Farm. Have any of you followed it further? It is dedicated to the memory of John Bunyan and visits many places associated with him and his major work, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, including Elstow, his birthplace.

It is worth reflecting on the life of John Bunyan, and his own spiritual journey. He was born in 1628 and attended the local school. At the age of 16 he joined the Parliamentary Army during the first stage of the English Civil War, being garrisoned at Newport Pagnell. After three years in the army he returned to Elstow and took up the trade of tinker, after his father, travelling around the local area, mending pots and pans.

After his marriage he became interested in religion. The radical Puritanism which was being preached during the time of the Civil War was based on the Protestant beliefs inspired by John Calvin. The most influential of these was the doctrine of predestination. This purports that we cannot earn our place in heaven but that it is decided by God – if we are not chosen by God than we are, in the words of Fraser in *Dad's Army*, doomed. People, including Bunyan, indulged in agonised introspection over whether they were one of the chosen ones, the elect, or whether they may as well give up. They were constantly looking for signs of God's grace in their lives.



*Continued overleaf*

# The John Bunyan Trail

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At the start of his journey he decided that, as he was such a sinner, there was no hope and he may as well indulge in all the sins going, but he believed that he heard a voice from God reprimanding him for playing 'Cat' on a Sunday and he was influenced by certain people. A lady severely reprimanded him for his swearing (a habit that he had picked up from his father) and he took this to heart. While on his "rounds" in Bedford, he overheard a group of women talking on their doorsteps about discovering Jesus and he envied their obvious joy. He joined the Bedford Free Church, being greatly influenced by its leader John Gifford, and eventually became a fervent preacher. After the restoration of the monarchy (1660), religious teaching had to strictly conform to the Church of England. Preaching to groups was banned and John Bunyan found himself arrested and imprisoned. He spent 12 years in Bedford Jail where he wrote his autobiography, *Grace Abounding*, and started to write *The Pilgrim's Progress*. He died at the age of 59 in August 1688.

What struck me most was Bunyan's "experiential faith": belief from the heart. He knew through coincidences and demonstrations of God's love and grace towards him that, although he was unworthy, he hadn't been abandoned. One such incident was when he was in the army. He was detailed to join a detachment joining a siege, but at the last minute his place was taken by another. This soldier was shot with a musket bullet and died.

This is just a snapshot. Lessons for our own lives may be to think of and be thankful for any who have influenced us on our journey. Also to look back at the "coincidences" which reassure us that we are in God's care. We have no need to worry about whether or not we are "saved" but live on, believing and trusting in Him.

*Dr Marjorie Cotton*

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## Lectionary Reflections

The Old Testament passages tell of the institution of the Passover and then lead us into the high drama captured by Cecil B De Mille. With the Staff of God (*Exodus 4: 1-5 & 17*) Moses parts the Red Sea, allowing the Israelites to pass. Later, when the people complained that they were hungry and thirsty, God supplied Manna from Heaven and water, when Moses struck the rock with his staff.

The New Testament passages take us to the heart of our faith.

The passages from Paul's letters spell out how we should respond to Jesus' call to follow Him, by believing and trusting and living life to the full in Him.

In the first passage from Romans 13 he reminds the Church in Rome and us that the commandments are summed up in "Love your neighbour as yourself". Love does no wrong to a neighbour, therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law." (*vs 9, 10*) For the Jews, obeying the Law was the be all and end all.

He warns us to wake up, laying aside the works of darkness and putting on the armour of light (*v 12*)

There are very real and present dangers and darkness to be overcome. We need His help and He needs us to be a light in the world.

Paul goes on to point out in Romans 14 that, whatever our religious traditions, they should be to honour God and will therefore be acceptable to Him. It is not for us to judge others' practices.

Paul writes to the Church in Philippi to "live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ." (*1: 27*)





However, it is in Chapter 2 that we have the wonderful words known as the Hymn of Christ (2:1-13). Here we have the core message: “let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death – even death on a cross.” (vs 5-8)

*At the name of Jesus every knee should bend. In heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (vs 10, 11)*

### **Sunday 6th September – The 13th Sunday after Trinity**

**Exodus 12: 1-14** The institution of the Passover.

**Romans 13: 8-14** The marks of the true Christian. Stick to the rules – to authority. Do what is good. Love your neighbour as yourself. *Put on the armour of light (v12)*

**Matthew 18: 15-20** How to approach someone in church who sins against you (vs 15-12) *“Where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.” (v20)*

### **Sunday 13th September – The 14th Sunday after Trinity**

**Exodus 14:19-31** Crossing the Red Sea

**Romans 14: 1-12** Different opinions over food and the observance of particular days. It doesn't matter as long as it is done for the Lord.

**Matthew 18: 21-35** The importance of forgiving from the heart. *“Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.” (v22)*



### **Sunday 19th September – The 15th Sunday after Trinity**

**Exodus 16: 2-15** Manna from heaven

**Philippians 1: 21-30** Paul's choice to stay and serve on earth or to be with Christ. *“Live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ.” (v28)*

**Matthew 20: 1-16** The parable of the owner of the vineyard who paid the same wage to those who worked all day and those who started later. *“So the last will be first, and the first will be last.” (v16)*

### **Sunday 26th September – The 16th Sunday after Trinity**

**Exodus 17: 1-17** Water from the rock. Moses holds up the “staff of God” with support from others and Joshua defeated the Amalekites.

**Philippians 2: 1-13** *Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus. (v5)* The Hymn of Christ.

**Matthew 21: 23-32** After His triumphant ride into Jerusalem, Jesus is teaching in the temple. He answers the chief priests and elders who question his authority by challenging them to say whether or not the baptism of John came from heaven. When they could not tell him, he said “Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.” (v27) He then told them a parable directed at themselves, as they had not believed in Him.



In the wonderful words from John's Gospel: “He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God.” (John 1: 11, 12); “The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. It is God, the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.” (vs 17, 18)

# DIARY FOR SEPTEMBER 2020

Day	Time	Service/Event	Venue
<b>Sunday 6th</b>	10.30am	Morning Prayer (Lead: Trevor Dimmock)	Cranfield Church
Friday 11th	7.30pm	Home Group via Zoom – Contact Linda Pearson ( <i>l.d.pearson@btinternet.com</i> – Tel. 751358)	
<b>Sunday 13th</b>	9.00am 10.30am	Holy Communion (Lead: Rev Ray Porter) Holy Communion (Lead: Rev Ray Porter)	Hulcote Church Cranfield Church
<b>Sunday 20th</b>	9.00am 10.30am	Morning Prayer (Lead: Maurice Rust) All Age Worship (Lead: Jo Stannage)	Salford Church Cranfield Church
Friday 25th	7.30pm	Home Group via Zoom – see above	
<b>Sunday 27th</b>	10.30am 6.00pm	Holy Communion (Lead: Rev Shaun Atkins) Harvest Thanksgiving (Lead: Canon Richard Hibbert)	Cranfield Church Hulcote Church
<b>OCTOBER</b>			
<b>Saturday 3rd</b>	10am-Noon	Pew Top Sale	The Rectory

Please check with the church website: [cranfieldchurch.org.uk](http://cranfieldchurch.org.uk) for updates on church opening times, material for personal worship and links to other services. Thank you to Revd Caroline Weaver for sending through a weekly reflection.

We have successfully opened for public worship during August. Thank you for complying with the Covid safety guidelines. Unless the rules change, the following will apply:

- ◆ Contact details will need to be taken on arrival to enable future tracing if required. Please come in good time and follow the sidesperson's guidance.
- ◆ Social distancing of two metres needs to be observed but household members will be able to sit together.
- ◆ Hand sanitiser is available and should be used on entering and leaving the building and after touching any surfaces.
- ◆ Hugs and even handshakes need to be put on hold.
- ◆ There will be no hymn singing. There will be no chalice, only bread for Holy Communion.
- ◆ Please wear a face covering.

Sadly there will be no refreshments afterwards. All are welcome to attend but please don't put yourself under any pressure to do so.

**Cranfield Church is open to visitors and for private prayer daily from 10.00am - 4.00pm**

Please use the hand sanitiser provided on entering and leaving the building and do not enter any area that is clearly forbidden.

We hope you will be blessed by your time spent in church.

## Pew Top Sale

Following the success of a Covid-secure, socially distanced Pew Top Sale at the Rectory on 15th August, another is planned for 3rd October. This is again to be held in the garage and garden. Refreshments will be available including, we hope, hot drinks. If you have been having a clear out and have anything to donate please contact Haydn - Tel: 751451. All proceeds will go to church funds.