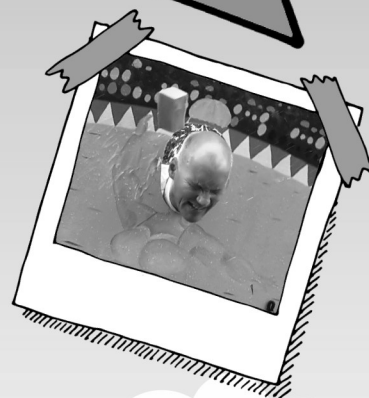
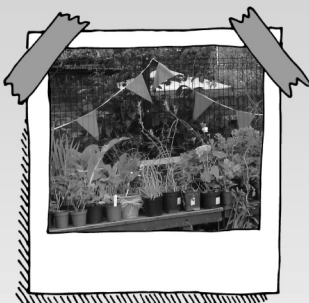
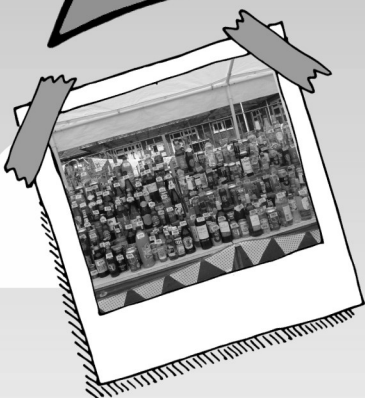


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This Month in 1863 ...

The local press reported an inquest held at *The George* in Northchurch (now *The George and Dragon*) held on a man found dead there a few weeks earlier. The deceased, whose name was not known at the time, but was later identified as a Henry Pattison, had arrived at *The George* a few days before his death looking for temporary lodgings. He said that he had been in the United States until recently where he owned a plantation, but had returned to England following the outbreak of the American Civil War. Given a room and a meal of a pork chop and ale by the landlady of *The George*, 74-year-old Mrs Martha Manton, the deceased spent the next three days walking around the area which he said he knew as he used to live in Berkhamsted.

After supper on his third evening at *The George*, Pattison went to his room as usual, but did not come down for breakfast the following morning. Going to his room, Mrs Manton found him lying on his back and not moving. The local surgeon was called and pronounced the man dead.

Together with a police constable, he found a half-empty phial of a mysterious liquid in the room, which on opening smelt like almonds. A subsequent post mortem revealed that the man had swallowed the liquid, known as *oil of bitter almonds*, which when digested, had released enough cyanide, to kill him.

It later transpired that Pattison had once lived in Tring and worked as a printer. He had in recent years fallen on hard times and was suffering from depression. A friend giving evidence at the inquest stated that he had returned to Berkhamsted to seek parish relief and that the story about owning a plantation in the United States was probably false. The inquest jury was advised that the poison had not been purchased locally and duly passed a verdict of suicide. Henry Pattison's body was later interred in St Mary's churchyard without a formal burial service.

Richard North

We are not alone

The gospel of John tells how, while Jesus had withdrawn into the hills over Galilee, the disciples set off in a boat to cross the lake. Darkness fell, a strong wind came up and the sea became rough. They laboured to make progress. Then Jesus came to them. He spoke to them and calmed their fear. When they took him into the boat, they immediately reached their destination.

This is generally regarded as a miracle story and plenty of us find that such stories raise difficult questions.

Maybe we are looking at the wrong miracle.

In the darkness, the disciples struggled on the water, feeling alone. Yet Jesus saw their need from on high and came to them. His words that identify him to the disciples also identify him as God. God is with the disciples. That is why they need not be afraid.

That something extraordinary happened and that the experience marked the disciples seems clear. Of the history, we cannot say much more. But John's gospel does more than tell us what happened. It also explains what the evangelist believes still happens in the experience of disciples of Jesus.

Many Christians down the centuries have found that, when they have been really up against it, feeling very alone, Jesus has come to them, telling them not to be afraid.

Then, like the disciples, they have found that they have reached their destination, because the true destination of our lives is to be with God.

So I am less interested in the puzzling aspects of what happened 2000 years ago than I am in the testimony of the gospel writer, confirmed in the experience of generations of Christians, that in times of trouble, Jesus comes to us and calms our fears. Yes, that is a miracle and one that seems relevant today.

The gospel story is in John 6:15-21.

David White



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St Mary's Church Fete: Saturday 6th July 2019

We are looking forward to seeing you at our annual church fete!

To open the fete pupils from St. Mary's School will perform country dancing. For children there is a host of activities in the rectory garden, including a princess lucky dip, face painting, a children's craft tent, a toy tombola, a bouncy castle and ice creams. On the school field you will find the ever popular coconut shy, have a go at "Soak the Rector", try your skill at putting a golf ball, or see how far you can throw a welly. Back by popular demand will be the tug of war game. Make sure to register your team well in advance for a chance to win the second St. Mary's Summer Fete Tug of War Cup.

Try our burgers fresh from the BBQ and enjoy them with a glass of beer or Pimms and we will be serving tea and a tasty selection of cakes in the Parish Rooms.

Listen to the Hemel Brass Band whilst you browse through the stalls on the playground: books, gifts & toiletries, plants and flower arrangements, cakes, "nearly new items", beautifully handcrafted and creative stationery, or win a bottle, or one of our great prizes on the tombola or raffle.

In the church enjoy a rendition of Handel's songs and arias by professional soprano Madalina Tudorian accompanied on the piano by Roger Bowley.

Aside from being a great day out for all ages, a key aim of the day is to raise money for the church as well as local and international charities. Proceeds will be split between the following deserving charities:

St. Mary's Church Roof Fund

We are continuing to raise money to pay for the new roof on the main and north transept which has recently been installed.

People NOT Borders

A local charity that runs appeals for second-hand and new items needed by refugees.

GO MAD (GO Make A Difference)

A Christian charity working with local community leaders on the north coast of the Dominican Republic providing healthcare and education.



The Canal Dwellers

With sharp wings and forked tails,
Small, speedy Swallows gulp down all
our country has to offer.
Until, in a swirling, whirling, whirlpool,
Flecks against the sky,
They migrate to a distant horizon
Free...

On the canal path herons pose
Like plastic models from the garden centre.
Then with an unexplained movement
Proving they are real,
They glide serenely to the opposite embankment.

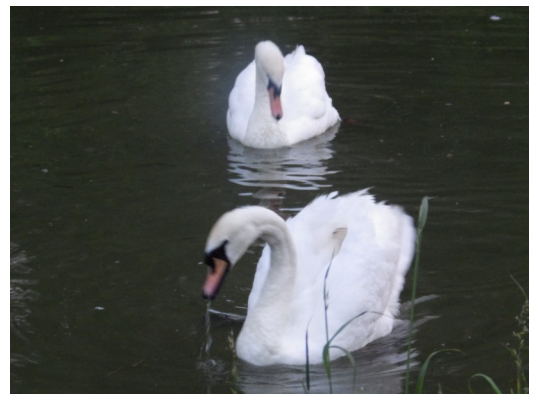
Fish are dawdling in their watery element
While daydreaming anglers make feathery floats.
Really just letting go of work,
Then letting go of their catch.

"Get rid of scabby boats, weekenders
and the rest
A cull is what's required its only for the best".
Dwellers hear advice from the waterway's
engineer,
Then navigate to see old friends
And enjoy an evening beer.

They fire up their barbecues no miasma in the air
And please no uninvited guests.
Apart from gatecrashing midges
Who hold their own soiree.

As sunset draws near
Folk will decree their private curfews.
And wandering down their boats to bed,
Leave other nocturnal creatures to dine out alone.

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A Rap
Got no money, things just ain't so funny.
Gonna get a gun an go shoot a bunny.

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Easter Pilgrimage to St Albans Abbey

On Easter Monday this year my family joined members of St Mary's congregation for the annual Easter Pilgrimage to St Albans Abbey. Although various members of my family have done the walk in previous years, this was the first time for myself, my youngest Son George and Marley the family dog.

We met at St Mary's at 7.30am. Although pretty cold at that stage, spirits were high! About 14 of us started off along the canal and we were joined by others at various stages in Berkhamsted. After a glorious walk along the canal to Hemel Hempstead, a welcome breakfast was enjoyed at Sainsburys and we were joined by more of the congregation.

Fed and watered we set off again, the weather was glorious and we walked across some beautiful open fields and meadows until we reached the "Tin" church in Bedmond. Welcomed with tea and biscuits we ate our lunch in the sun before embarking on the last stage of journey. The temperature had certainly soared by this stage and the sight of the Abbey as we entered St Albans let us know that we were nearly there! Many enjoyed an ice cream (including Marley!) before we joined the procession into the Abbey.

The service was an uplifting experience, the abbey was absolutely crammed full of pilgrims (and dogs!) celebrating

Lorna Foster

the risen Christ. Even after 16 miles there was still enough energy for a sing song in the minibus on the way back!

Should you attend next year? Absolutely! It was a real family occasion and a lovely opportunity to meet other members of the congregation. It was great to hear all the different conversations taking place throughout the walk.

In the dictionary a Pilgrimage is described as a special journey made by a pilgrim. This was definitely a special journey and one that I felt privileged to have been part of. Come and join us next year – I will certainly be doing it again.



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Sunday Services at St Mary's



2nd June

Easter 7

8.00am Holy Communion (BCP)
10.00am Parish Eucharist
6.00pm Evening Prayer

9th June

Pentecost Sunday

8.00am Holy Communion
10.00am All-Age Worship

16th June

Trinity Sunday

8.00am Holy Communion (BCP)
10.00am Parish Eucharist
6.00pm Evening Prayer

23rd June

Trinity 1

8.00am Holy Communion
10.00am Parish Eucharist

30th June

Trinity 2

NB: No 8am service

10.00am Parish Eucharist
6.00pm Evening Prayer

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PLUS: Henna hearts on hands by professional face painter and body artist
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Wednesday 19th June Berkhamsted Arts and
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Hands and Hearts Craft Workshop

All ages 5+ (no unaccompanied children under 16)
Make/Zentagle a Holding Hand, or a Heart—FREE, donations invited
PLUS: 11.00-3.00 Henna hearts on hands by Zoe Thornbury-Phillips: £5 /
£10/£15 each. 4.00-5.30 Insha Khan: Henna hands £5.00

Friday 21st June Open Door
3.00—5.00pm 360-364 High Street
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Hands and Hearts Craft Workshop

All ages 5+ (no unaccompanied children under 16)
Make a Holding Hand, or a Heart—FREE, donations invited

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