

# St Mildred's Church Newsletter



November 2020

## Alpha

How has Alpha blessed all those taking part.

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## Promises of God

Brenda's personal experience of trusting in God makes an encouraging read.

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## Three Cheers

Henry reflects on prayer triplets.

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**@ St. Mildred's Pages 6-7**

**The call of God on our lives at St. Mildred's is to make and equip disciples of Jesus Christ locally and globally in the power of the Holy Spirit.**

[www.stmildreds.org.uk](http://www.stmildreds.org.uk)

# Tom Writes ...

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In October we finished our study in the book of Nehemiah. This tells the great story of the rebuilding of the wall of Jerusalem under Nehemiah's leadership at a time when some of the Israelites had returned to Jerusalem following their exile in Babylon.

The story has so much to teach us.

One of its lessons is that a greater challenge even that a huge project and threats from external enemies can be our own growth in faith.

The book dedicates a lot of space to the building of the wall and the many obstacles Nehemiah had to overcome to achieve this. We are also shown the various ways this great work was celebrated and how God used the project to build people up not just stones.

But one of the things Nehemiah does and then has to return to again and again is the spiritual work of nurturing faith in, and faithfulness to, the Lord.

Over and over again, He is confronted by spiritual problems in the people of Israel themselves. A lack of the right priorities, a willingness to compromise, the desire for wrong things, forgetfulness over the things that matter. Nehemiah has to confront this many times.

### Newsletter Articles

Anyone who regularly attends St Mildred's can contribute articles to the newsletter.

Articles should be sent to the editors no later than Wednesday 25 November for the December 2020 edition, which will be available on Sunday 6 December 2020.

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## Tom Writes ...

And these were God's people who had returned from exile in Babylon. They knew more than most the discipline of the Lord and his rejection of sin in his own people. They'd seen and felt it in their recent history.

*"That men do not learn very much from the lessons of history is the most important of all the lessons history has to teach."* So said the writer and philosopher Aldous Huxley.

Sadly, some of the people of Israel in Nehemiah's day proved this true. They forgot the many lessons of their own history.

During November we have our Remembrance Sunday service. This annual event was organised after the First World War with the often repeated purpose, "lest we forget".

It reminds us how easy it is to forget history and how important it is to find ways of reminding ourselves of those things that matter.

Just as we remember the terrible events of our country and world's recent history on Remembrance Sunday, so may we also find ways to remember the story that God has given us in the Bible. And we do this, not as an academic discipline, but in order to grow in Jesus more and more.

The Coronavirus Pandemic has brought so many dangers of various kinds. One of them is the spiritual danger we always face of forgetfulness.

With us all scattered, with certain acts of service suspended for now, with the difficulty we face of gathering and meeting, it would be so easy to forget all that God has done for us and how we should respond.

So as we remember the horrors of war and the many who have given their lives for peace this November, let us also commit ourselves again to remembering God's story; to our growth together in Christ; to prayer; to the fellowship in whatever way it is possible for us as God gives us opportunity.

Later on in this issue there are some prayers that the diocese have put together for use during this month of remembering. Please do use them in your own prayers.



**Tom Lake - Vicar**

# Remembrance Day

*The diocese have put together some resources for use in the month of November which is a month of remembering.*

*Below is a selection of some of the prayers.*

## **Collect for a COVID-19 World**

**Faithful God, In times of sorrow you are our comfort  
When we find ourselves in need, you provide;  
In this season of separation you have held us together;  
by your Spirit renew our strength  
and give us the words of eternal life  
to offer hope to a suffering world,  
through Christ our lord. Amen.**

## **Collects of Lament**

**Lord God, the maker and redeemer of all,  
as we come before you in grief and praise,  
comfort us with your presence,  
make us attentive to your voice,  
and sustain us with the hope of your kingdom;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

## **The Dean's lockdown prayer**

**Ever-present God, be with us in our isolation,  
be close to us in our distancing,  
be healing in our sickness, be joy in our sadness,  
be light in our darkness, be wisdom in our confusion,  
be all that is familiar when all is unfamiliar,  
that when the doors reopen we may, with the zeal of Pentecost,  
inhabit our communities and speak of your goodness to  
an emerging world. For Jesus' sake. Amen.**

## **A Prayer For a Time of Personal Grief**

**Loving God, you travel with us through all of life's landscapes: When the skies are dark with pain and sorrow,**

**When the path ahead seems impossible and we're frightened of the future, When storms of anger rage in us because of life's injustices, And when the sun breaks through with sudden, joyful warmth.**

**As we grieve for those we've lost, help us know your nearness today: Comfort us in our sadness; Reassure us in our uncertainty; Keep us company in our anger; And lead us into healing and hope. Amen.**

**Lord, when we are tempted to trust in our own strength strip us of false security and re-clothe us in your praise, that we may know you as the one who raises us from death, as you raised your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.**

## **A Prayer for Strength in Sorrow**

**God, our friend and companion, we thank you that you travel with us through dark times. We bring you our feelings trusting that you accept us just as we are. We bring you our thoughts and questions, asking you to help us find peace of mind. We bring you our hurts and pains, knowing that you are a God who can heal. Give us the strength to keep travelling forward until we step out into the sunlight again.**



## @ St. Mildred's

Our first online Alpha course came to an end at the beginning of October.

The Alpha course began at Holy Trinity Brompton in the early 1980's and has now spread all over the world and been attended by over 24 million people in over 100 countries and 100 different languages. After our course that number must be at least twenty four million and eight.

The course aims to explore the big questions of life and the basis of our Christian faith. The traditional format is to meet for a meal, watch a half-hour video, and then to discuss the issues raised by the video. Sadly the meal together is not viable in current circumstances, so we were one of the pioneers in running the course online on "Zoom".

While there are many downsides to the online format, and we would have much rather met in person and offered hospitality to those on the course, the cloud does have a silver lining. More than half of those who attended our course had small children, and may not have been able to join us in person if we were running in the normal way.

We met at 8pm every Thursday and finished promptly at 9.30pm. Stella took the lead, while I kept on top of the technology and admin and David and Kay also helped. It was great to be able to pray together with them before the course every week. In an attempt to offer an element of hospitality in the absence of a meal together, Stella (assisted at times by Kay) ran a massive cookie baking exercise. She delivered at least two different types of cookie to the participants every week. I was even allowed one too, occasionally.

The group was made up of a mixture of committed Christians and those with questions. The group gelled well together and I'm sure everyone (including the leaders) learned something from the discussions. Here are a few quotes from the participants:

" I liked hearing about everyone's weeks/ days at the beginning and it added a lovely social element, especially during covid."

"I'm glad that I joined! It's supporting my Christian faith. "

"Your baking and delivery is exemplary and much appreciated and indeed looked forward to!"

"I really enjoyed starting off the evening

with the same questions that are asked in the video as that ties in really nicely to get us thinking about the topic and how it relates to our day-to-day lives. “

“The discussions were really interesting and I enjoyed hearing about other people's thoughts/experiences.”

“Cookies!!! I think we all really appreciated this and always brightened up my week (thank you!!)”

Alpha is the perfect way to introduce friends who may have big questions about life to the Christian faith, but it's also really useful to those of us who are already committed

Christians. It can help us to firm up the basis and how we communicate our faith to others.

We're planning a new course after Christmas. Why not come and bring along (virtually) someone who's not so sure about Jesus? We're planning to pick a time and day of the week to suit those who want to join, so if you're interested, drop is a line on [Alpha@stmildreds.org.uk](mailto:Alpha@stmildreds.org.uk) and let us know what times/days would suit you.

**Trevor and Stella Gill**

# ALPHA

## Online Training

Choose a workshop that works for you

<https://alpha.org.uk/online-training>

### Option 1: **Alpha 101**

Explore the basics of running Alpha online and connect with others in your area.

### Option 2: **Come and See**

A chance to experience Alpha online from a guests perspective. Come and see how it works!

### Option 3: **Alpha Youth Training**

Online training specifically for those planning an Alpha Youth online course.

### Option 4: **Grow Alpha Training**

Training for churches already running Alpha online, who would like to see its impact increased.

# Diary ~ November 2020

In these uncertain times, it is hard to plan exactly what our diary will be. We have tried to be as accurate as possible. Changes are likely - both in terms of new events appearing and some listed here being cancelled.

<b>Sunday</b>	<b>1</b>	10am Morning Service 11.30am Prayer Meeting 4pm Virtual Tea
Monday	2	9.30am Prayer meeting
Tuesday	3	8pm Home Group
Wednesday	4	8pm Home Group
Thursday	5	5.30pm Church in use 8pm Home Group
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>8</b>	10am Morning Service 11.30am Prayer Meeting 6pm Grid via Zoom
Monday	9	9.30am Prayer Meeting
Wednesday	11	8pm Prayer Meeting
Thursday	12	5.30pm Church in use
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>15</b>	10am Morning Service 11.15am Grid/Connect in Church 11.30am Prayer Meeting 4pm Virtual Tea
Monday	16	9.30am Prayer Meeting
Tuesday	17	8pm Home Group
Wednesday	18	8pm Home Group
Thursday	19	5.30pm Church in use 8pm Home Group
Saturday	21	Church in use for event
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>22</b>	10am Morning Service 11.15am Grid/Connect in Church 11.30am Prayer Meeting

# Diary ~ November 2020

Monday	23	9.30am Prayer Meeting
Tuesday	24	8pm PCC Meeting
Wednesday	25	8pm Prayer Meeting
Thursday	26	12pm Blood Donors 5.30pm Church in use
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>29</b>	10am Morning worship 11.15am Grid/Connect in Church 11.30am Prayer Meeting 4pm Virtual Tea
Monday	30	9.30am Prayer Meeting



## Businesses to pray for in November

Rose Chinese Takeaway  
Polish Tavern  
Cat & Dog grooming  
ishopsmart  
Classy Design

Kinleigh, Folkard &  
Hayward  
Lee Station  
Travis Perkins  
St Winifred's Nursery  
St Winifred's infant /  
junior school

Week  
Beginning

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

16/11/20

Exodus  
39:8-31

Exodus  
39:32-40:19

Exodus  
40:20-38

1 John  
1:1-10

1 John  
2:1-14

1 John  
2:15-29

23/11/20

1 John  
3:1-24

1 John  
4:1-21

1 John  
5:1-21

2 John  
1:1-13

3 John  
1:1-13

Psalms 7

30/11/20

Psalms 8

Psalms 9

Psalms 10

Psalms 11

Psalms 12

Psalms 13

07/12/20

Psalms 14

Psalms 15

Psalms 16

Psalms 17

Psalms 18

Psalms 19

14/12/20

Psalms 20

Malachi  
1:1-14

Malachi  
2:1-9

Malachi  
2:10-16

Malachi  
2:17-3:12

Malachi  
3:13-4:6

# Prayer Page

**“Truly I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything they ask for, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven.”**

Matthew 18:19

**Please continue to pray for Keiko and her parents and her sister** that as Keiko abides in You The truth of your Word will be made know to them.

## **Building Project**

Please pray that our planning appeal is allocated to a planning inspector who will be sympathetic to our objectives and determine the appeal fairly to all.

**Please Pray** for all those needing to learn new skills

**Pray for strength and encouragement** for Theresa's friend as her family suffer ill health and specialist treatment. May the treatment be successful.

**Pray that our leaders, Churches, communities** might respond promptly, creatively and effectively to food poverty here in the UK and the difficulties of prisoners and their families at this time.

**We also pray for Nigeria** and other countries in turmoil that your Holy Spirit will give wisdom to Church Leaders.

## **Thank you Heavenly Father**

that you bring us encouragement through your Word as Psalm 33 assures us, “the plans of the Lord stand firm forever, the purposes of His heart through all generations We wait in hope for the Lord, He is our help and our shield.

**Pray for Guidance** as we plan during the pandemic.

**Bless all those who work in educational establishments.**

That they remain safe, supportive, positive and even fun places in which to learn.

## **Please continue to pray:**

- for the homeless, especially those in hotels and hostels.
- for those suffering from addictions of all sorts in our community: alcohol, drugs, gambling and other addictions.
- for those involved in crime and those who are the victims of crime.
- **Give thanks** for the many organisations available for support of all the above.

## **Pray for plans and outreach over Christmas.**

**Pray for Sue Harriman** that an injection in her back is effective.

**Pray for Sue's Aunt Eileen's** recovery following heart surgery, particularly for her memory.

**And pray for** the right medical care for her dog Scarlet.

**Pray for wisdom** for the new PCC that started in October.

**Lord Jesus the Good Shepherd,** we lift before you those we are unable to bring together to enjoy the fellowship of Horizon. May you comfort and sustain them. Surround them with your unfailing love, we ask in your Holy name. Amen.

**Lord Jesus Christ,** When fear and anxiety besiege us and hope is veiled in grief, hold us in your wounded hands and make your face shine on us again, for you are our Lord and Saviour. Amen

**Pray for all those who are ill** and for those who cannot be with them during the pandemic. Healing, grace and peace. Amen.

**Send Prayers to** [lisharris68@yahoo.com](mailto:lisharris68@yahoo.com)

# The Promises of God



Over the past year four of the Promises of God which are found in the bible have had a very special place in my life. Instead of just reading them I have believed them and trusted that what God has said is true and He wants me to take Him at His word.

The promises are not there to fill up the pages of the Bible but God says to us this is my word to you. We do need these promises to sustain us at this very difficult time of Coronavirus which is affecting all our lives.

## **The first promise:**

*"I will never leave you or forsake you."*  
Hebrews 13:5

Many people at this time have been forced to self isolate, because of underlying health issues some from St. Mildred's, but if we know Jesus as our Lord and Saviour this is His word to us. We are never alone.

## **The Second Promise:**

*"My Grace is sufficient for you for my grace is made known in weakness."*  
2 Corinthians 12:9

Sometimes I find myself praying for grace about something and then remember that God has already promised it. All I need to do is to receive it. God's Riches At Christ's Expense.

## **The Third Promise:**

*"The Eternal God is your refuge and underneath are the Everlasting arms."*  
Deuteronomy 33:24

Recently I was taken to meet my new great granddaughter. When I held her I wrapped my arms securely around her so she would

not fall. Do you think that God doesn't hold us just as securely? For we are each very precious to Him. His love for us is so great He SENT Jesus to demonstrate the depth of that love.

## **The Fourth Promise:**

*"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."*  
Philippians 4:3

There are times in our lives when we think it is all too much and we can't cope but when we trust Jesus, He enables us to persevere.

A few weeks ago Tom spoke about the promises of God and to trust what God has promised, but we also should thank Him for His enabling, for it is always good to Praise the Lord for His help.

When the Psalmist asked, "Where does my help come from?" He answers, "My help comes from the Lord." and this can be our response as well.

**Brenda Eves**

# Three Cheers

Lots of good things come in threes: faith, hope and love; Patty, Laverne and Maxene (Google them); bacon, lettuce and tomato; Three Billy Goats Gruff; The Three Musketeers; Snap, Crackle and Pop; red, white and blue, not to mention The Three Tenors and three piece suits. (Or indeed three piece suites.) Then there is of course the greatest three ever ever, the Holy Trinity. So why am I giving you the third degree?

Well, one of the things that has truly blessed me this year is being part of a prayer triplet. You may remember prayer triplets were organised just for Lent (you know, the weeks before Easter) this year but because my triplet was having a helpful time praying together and because the coronavirus lockdown was emerging we decided to keep on with it and have kept it up since then, come rain, sleet or shine. If other prayer triplets have also continued that is wonderful to hear. Let me know, it will be a heartwarming inspiration.

At the start of Lent we met of course inside a house but with unsocial distancing upon us at present we are meeting trilaterally over the telephone and once you get used to it the praying is like any other praying and the lovely thing is that although the three of us are geographically apart (Sidcup, Lee and Catford) we are still in the presence of the Lord. He is the divine glue that binds us together. So, we get down to it, praying for the good, the bad and the ugly.

If you were in a prayer triplet that has ceased (or never began) I would urge you to start again. In these viral times they are vital for two reasons. One, that it keeps people in touch with each other on a regular



basis. Two, prayer is so, so, so important, not just in difficult times but at all times. Anyone can pray; woman, man or child. Our supreme example is Jesus Himself, a man of constant prayer. You can pray on your own, but scripture also firmly recommends us to prayer together, in twos, in threes or as a church.

I've found that being in a prayer triplet has been such an encouragement to focus on our Heavenly Father, especially in these diverting times. And you can pray as often or as long as your want. Simplicity itself. So, three cheers for prayer triplets! Let us pray that more start up again. Anyone like to coordinate?

(With grateful thanks to the two other people in my prayer triplet, Jean and Paul, without whom I would be a singlet.)

**Henry Girling**

# “Being a witness”: how sharing the good news is not just about what we do, but who we are

As Christians we are called to not just share the good news but to be the good news to those around us



Photo by Melissa Askew on Unsplash

**“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth”.**

I’ve been reflecting recently about this verse from Acts 1:8 and how for many years I concentrated on why I was supposed to witness or share the message of salvation with others. Reasons that come to mind might be because of all that Jesus has done for me or because it was command language in the Greek and I have no choice. I also reasoned that I might be the only Christian they knew and if I cared for them I should share the gospel with them.

In addition to these reasons and many others, when I saw the word ‘witness’ in this verse I immediately saw it as a verb, something that I did that was separate from me. It was an action that I undertook: I witnessed. While this is partially true, I’ve realised that I’m much more than that. In the Bible the word ‘witness’ is also used as a noun. I am a witness; it’s something that describes the new me.

When God the Holy Spirit came to live in us, we became a witness. We were transformed into the euangelion, the Greek word for the good news itself. Whether we’re sleeping or

awake, talking or listening, for 24 hours of every day we are a carrier of the greatest news, the answer to the greatest need, and the truth that sets us free, simply by our identity as a witness. Incredible isn’t it?

I need to remember though that my freewill combines with my new identity. As a witness of the good news I can choose to be mean or kind, wise or foolish, honest or dishonest. Whoever I choose to be, I’m still a witness, whether that be a good or bad one.

The end of Acts 1:8 tells us that we start our lives as witnesses at home and then extend it wherever we go. It’s a little reminder of how important it is to be the good news in our families and with our close friends first. Oswald J Smith shared a thought provoking truth when he said: “The light that shines the farthest, will shine brightest at home.”

**Rob Burns** Rob holds a master's degree in theology and two other post graduate degrees in missional leadership and coaching. He has worked for many years in the academic and training arenas.

This article is used with the permission of Evangelical Alliance... article available at: <https://www.eauk.org/news-and-views/being-a-witness-how-sharing-the-good-news-is-not-just-about-what-we-do-but-who-we-are>

# The Artist's Heart



Denise's art reflecting a recent sermon

# The Back Page



**Sunday November 15 at 7.30pm**  
*Unite in prayer for our persecuted family.*

We are very excited to invite you to a unique online prayer event to mark this year's International Day of Prayer for the persecuted church.

In place of our monthly Prayer Without Borders webinar, we will be joining together with our friends at [CSW](#), [Release International](#) and [Evangelical Alliance](#) for an evening of prayer and worship. This jointly hosted webinar will feature the latest news, testimonies and prayer requests from China, India and Nigeria.

We believe that when God's people unite together in prayer, God's kingdom breaks through in new and powerful ways. So please join us on this special day of unity with the global church, as we stand together with the most persecuted and cry out to God.

“Truly I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything they ask for, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven.” Matthew 18:19

To be part of this event please register your place on [Eventbrite](#).