



June and July Edition of the Beacon is now available for you to collect from our churches.

Synod Elections: Will You Stand To Vote On Important Issues? There are elections this June and July for Exeter Diocesan Synod (governing body) and the Church of England's General Synod (like Parliament). We would really love a diverse mix of people of different ages and backgrounds to stand for election. People are elected to the Diocesan Synod for three years and meet three times a year. You need to be over 16, on the electoral roll of a CofE church and be taking Communion. Nominations close in mid June. <https://exeter.anglican.org/who-we-are/synod/>

Phoebe We are looking forward to our zoom gathering with Paula Gooder on 14th June. Details to follow.

Thank you to everyone who helped clean Holy Trinity, Torbryan, in preparation for our Mission Community Evening Prayer Service this afternoon, where we will be reflecting on Rublev's Icon of The Trinity, pictured below.



Today's Sunday Services

9.30am	Holy Communion	- St Mary the Virgin, Denbury
11.00am	Holy Communion	- St Andrew's, Ipplepen
1.30pm	Wedding of Ashley Harvey and Hannah Mole	- Ss Peter & Paul, Broadhempston
2.00pm	Baptism	- St Andrew's, Ipplepen
4.30pm	Mission Community Evening Prayer	
	For the Feast of Holy Trinity	- Holy Trinity Church, Torbryan

Telephone support/chat following the church services: Sheila Sheldon is available to speak to following our church services. Sheila's phone number is (01803) 814227.

Morning Prayer

9am - 9.30am Wednesday only this week on Zoom
For the Zoom password, email: rachelbelringer@gmail.com

Reflection

Our churches are open for private prayer and reflection throughout the week at the following times:

St Peter & St Paul's, Broadhempston	9am to 5pm	Sundays and Wednesdays
St Andrew's, Ipplepen	9am to 5pm	Daily
St Mary the Virgin, Denbury	10am to 5pm	Daily

Please note, St John the Baptist, Woodland is currently closed for private prayer and reflection.

Mid-Week

Rev'd Andrew Down will be on annual leave on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday

Monday	Church Office closed for bank holiday	
Tuesday	10.15am	Holy Communion - St Andrew's, Ipplepen
Thursday	10.15am	Eucharist for Corpus Christi - St Mary the Virgin, Denbury

Next Sunday – First Sunday after Trinity

9.30am	Holy Communion	- St John the Baptist, Woodland
11.00am	Holy Communion	- St Andrew's, Ipplepen
6.00pm	Zoom Evening Prayer	- Zoom

For the Zoom password, email: rachelbelringer@gmail.com

Readings	This week	Next week
Readings for this Sunday:		
First Reading	Isaiah 6:1-8	Genesis 3:8-15
Psalm	29	130
Second Reading	Romans 8:12-17	2 Corinthians 4:13-5:1
Gospel	John 3:1-17	Mark 3:20-End
Readings for the week ahead:		
Mon	31st Luke 1.39-49	
Tue	1st Mark 12.13-17	
Wed	2nd Mark 12.18-27	
Thurs	3rd John 6:51-58	
Fri	4th Mark 12:35-37	
Sat	5th Mark 12:38-End	

They can also be viewed/downloaded from <https://bible.oremus.org/>

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www.facebook.com/denburyworship www.facebook.com/Broad20/

Trinity Sunday This year we are holding a Mission Community Evening Prayer service at Holy Trinity Torbryan on Sunday 30th May at 4.30pm. This will be a gentle service of music, readings and reflection. Why not include it as a stopping off point on your bank holiday weekend walk.

Points for Prayer. During this time do remember Lauren, Emily, Isabelle, Charlotte, Jo and Freda as they prepare for their confirmation on Saturday 12th June at 4pm in Exeter Cathedral. We pray for Roger and Vikki, married in Woodland on 8th May and also for Ashley and Hannah to be married in Broadhempston on 30th May.

Online Sermon for Trinity Sunday: The Archdeacon of Exeter, the Venerable Andrew Beane, will be preaching on Trinity Sunday in this week's 10 minute online sermon. <https://vimeo.com/cofedevon>
In Memory. Fredric Lang.

Look out for the wonderful cards on sale to raise funds for our churches. Thank you to Robin and Pam Thomas for organising this. Fantastic picture Robin!



Reflection by Steve Sheldon

Trinity Sunday

John 3:1-17

Sunday 30th May 2021

→3:16← Here it is. The one verse from the whole Bible we were made to memorise, that many feel is enough all by itself so that we don't need to bother with anything else in the Bible. This verse has given birth to that inquiry: *Have you been saved?* As in: *I'm a born-again Christian! Have you been saved?* It is hard to approach this verse afresh ignoring a whole generation of evangelical fervour that loads it with so much weight, but I would like to make an effort and try to piece out what John was actually trying to tell us about Jesus.

John. The young disciple whom Jesus loved and to whom he entrusted the care of his mother. John, who was a witness to Jesus' ministry, his life, death and resurrection. John, who pondered all of this for 50 years, and only late in life, when he thought he understood it all in a mature distanced sort of way, finally put it down in writing to preserve for us the benefit of his contemplation of his time with Jesus.

John's gospel is not like the other three, hurried out in the relatively early days of the church in youthful exuberance, anxious to get down in writing the amazing story of Jesus. John took his time and thought about it.

This story of Nicodemus is not found elsewhere, and we are greatly enriched by its preservation. Throughout Jesus' ministry he received a lot of flak from the established authority. Rich, powerful and well-connected, well-educated men would come up to Jesus and ask him a question, not with the intention of learning something, but hoping to trap Jesus into saying something dumb, or outrageous or dangerous.

Nicodemus wasn't like that. He didn't shout out a challenging question in public, but came to Jesus at night hoping for a private interview. He was aware of what Jesus had been doing, and that the miracles he was performing were actually works of God performed through Jesus, not by him; he didn't see Jesus as acting in league with the devil like some. And as a leading teacher of all Israel, he knew that these things Jesus did signified the coming of the Kingdom of God, and being at the top of the social ladder, Nicodemus knew he'd be first in line for all the benefits of the Kingdom when it came. Nick & his upper-class pals, sitting around waiting for the Kingdom, would debate who and how and when and where. Jesus took Nicodemus' understanding of things and used them to explain to him what His mission was really about; Jesus used ideas and vocabulary that Nicodemus could understand, because Jesus is taking him seriously, unlike the rude enquirers who got sent off with a verbal clip around the ear.

Jesus tried to explain to Nicodemus that his understanding of the Kingdom was going to have to change, that **he** was going to have to change. Sitting around waiting for the Kingdom to suddenly appear was not good enough. The Kingdom was going to be a *spiritual* reality, not some glorious military empire where Israel gets to lord it over the rest of the world. And here we get the 'born again' thing. Or is it 'born from above'? Actually, it's *both* as the underlying Greek word means both 'again' and 'from above'. To be part of the Kingdom of God we need to be **re-born** spiritually, from above by God.

John had already introduced this idea in Chapter 1: *'To all who received him, to those who believed in him, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but born of God.'*

Born again. Born from above. Not just born through the breaking waters of physical birth, but spiritually reborn in order to become a whole person. Not just a physical person, but a spiritual person as well. To be only a physical being is to be like an animal, living life day by day with no meaning in life. To be a whole human being one must be aware of the spirituality that has been given to us by God.

And poor old Nick just doesn't get it. He should have known better but he was too afraid to let go of his habits and status to understand what was in front of him. He should have been very familiar with the lines from Ezekiel that say, *'I will give you a new heart and a new mind. I will take away your stubborn heart of stone and give you an obedient heart. I will put my spirit in you.'*

It was there staring him in the face. Jesus was there staring him in the face saying, Nick, just trust what you have been seeing, trust me. God is giving you the gift of freedom. God is saving you from yourself. God is giving you a way forward. And all for free. All you have to do is accept it, receive it, put down all the things that are holding you back, let go, and receive God's redemption, his forgiveness, his justification. Nick, they are going to kill me now, but everyone who sees me, everyone who hears me, everyone who believes and trusts me will know God and be blessed forever, and shall not perish but have everlasting life.

And this is so hard for us in our educated Enlightened world. It is so hard for us being the naturally curious and imaginative creatures that we are. We want better explanations of these things. We want it all spelled out for us. Jesus has been sorely abused over the centuries by those who would seek to control their world by attaching conditions and rules and providing explanations and details, which really aren't possible to provide. Our curiosity is exploited and manipulated by the unscrupulous who would seek to profit thereby. Nicodemus wanted answers, but Jesus wasn't going to give him any, because there are some things that are just not knowable.

What happens when we die? That's the big one. What is eternal life all about? What is heaven like? Who gets to go there? Is there hell, and devils and angels? For centuries human imagination has tried to explore those questions and have come up with an amazing array of answers. But the real answer is right here in John's gospel: Jesus says that no one has ever gone to heaven and returned. So, Nick, there is no way you can know these things, and there is no way I could explain them to you so as you could understand. You are just going to have to trust me on this, and trust God.

It is what we mean by a *mystery*.

Jesus is telling us, leave the works of God to God, and don't get bogged down trying to learn the unknowable, don't use learned conundrums as an excuse to avoid getting your hands dirty and dealing with the real world.

You are born again, you are a new creation, you are meant to live the Kingdom in the present, not sit around waiting for it to come to you in the future. You have been set free to do God's will and take the Kingdom with you everywhere you go.

Have you been saved? *You're darn right you've been saved!* Jesus has already done it all and there is nothing more anyone can pretend to do.

Praise the Lord, the Father the Son and the Holy Spirit.