



Connecting faith and daily life

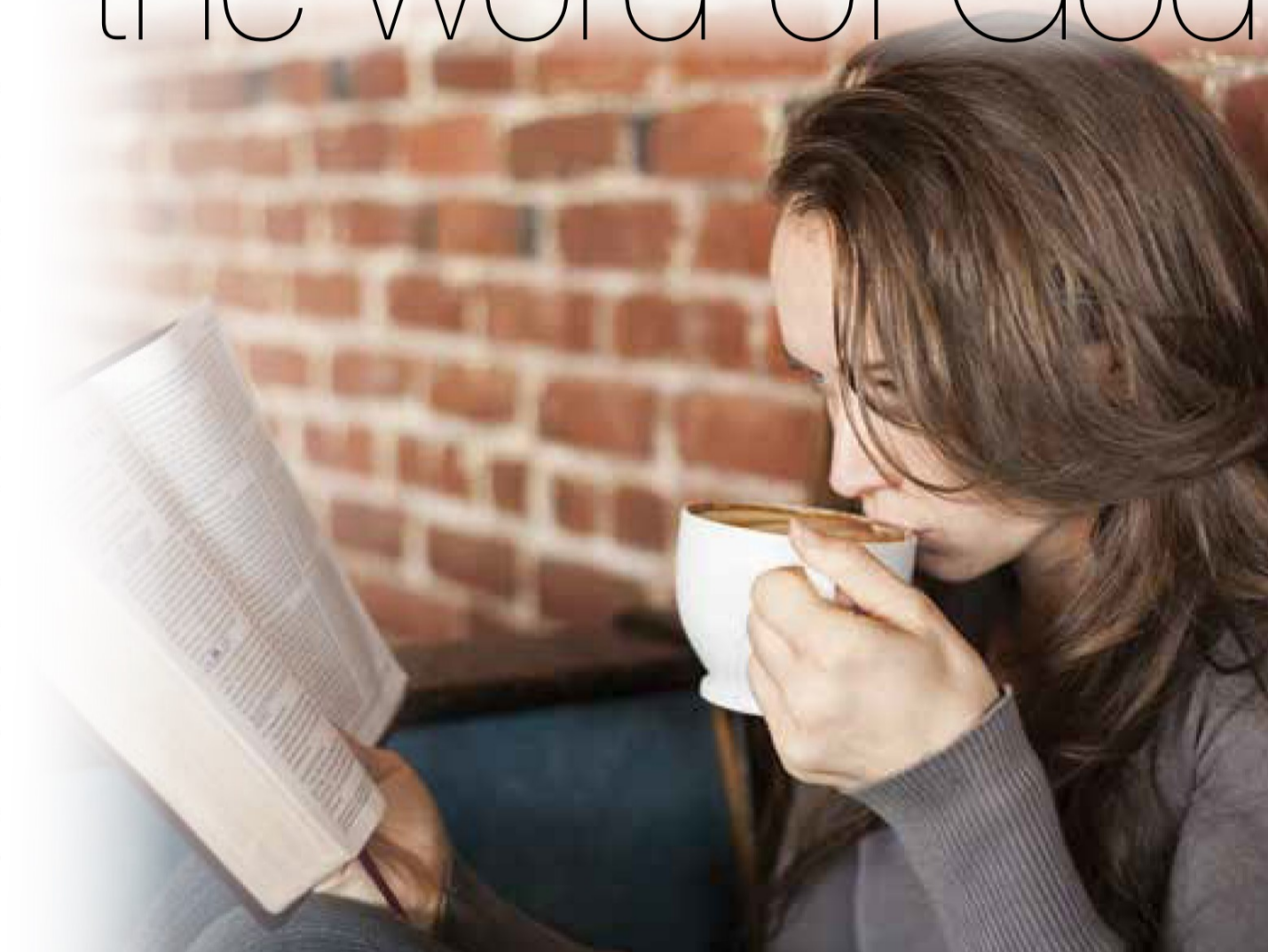
# A deep encounter with the word of God

Georgina Byrne *reflects on*  
Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10 and Luke 4:14-21

The Old Testament reading gives us Nehemiah's account of Ezra, who read aloud from the Law of Moses for several hours. The people listened attentively, engaging with those who interpreted the words, to make sure that they understood. There is a sense that this is thrilling, life-changing. At the end of this day of studying the word of God, Ezra and Nehemiah send the people away and encourage them to celebrate. They are to feast, and to make sure that others, who have nothing prepared, can feast too. In other words, a deep encounter with God in the word leads to joyful action – worship, prayer, celebration, community-mindedness and generosity.

As we continue in Epiphany – the manifestation of Christ to the world – it is important to remember our own role in making Christ known to others. If we have been touched by the presence of God in the words we read, then, rather than sitting still, or simply carrying on as before, we too are moved into joyful action.

Jesus himself makes clear, as he reads from the prophecy of Isaiah in the synagogue, that the good news about God is something lived out. If God's promises are still transformative, then God invites us to make them known by our deeds when the scrolls are rolled up, the Bible is closed, and we are back at home. ☺



**We meet you, transforming God, in word, fellowship and sacrament. Fill us with such joy in the encounter, that our joyfulness spills over into the world you love, that others may come to know you and rejoice with us. Amen.**

## Storytelling Week

26 January to 3 February

by Lisa Tulfer

This week is designated National Storytelling Week, and events all over the country, involving all ages, will see people celebrating and telling stories. Storytelling is the most ancient way of passing on wisdom, history and the knowledge of who we are and where we are from. Fairy tales, myths and

legends are all part of the storyteller's repertoire. Storytelling predates the written word by thousands of years, and much of what is now written in books started as stories on the lips of storytellers. Large parts of what we know as the Bible existed for years, even centuries, as an oral tradition before being committed to writing. On the road to Emmaus, the disciples told the risen but unrecognised Jesus the story of what had happened in Jerusalem over the previous few days.

The Society for Storytelling believes that "everyone has at least one story to tell". What story will you tell?

You can find out more at [www.sfs.org.uk](http://www.sfs.org.uk)

“The only wisdom we can hope to acquire is the wisdom of humility.” T.S. Eliot (1888-1965), poet

## Holocaust Memorial Day

by Christine Clark

As we mark Holocaust Memorial Day today, we bring to mind those murdered by the Nazi regime in World War II – the millions of Jews, homosexuals, Jehovah's Witnesses, black people, gypsies, the "incurably sick", ethnic Poles and other Slavs, Soviet citizens and prisoners of war, and political opponents.

While it is right to remember them, we should also be aware that such genocides continued after the

war, and still do. It is estimated that from 1956 to 2016, a total of forty-three genocides have taken place, causing the deaths of about fifty million people, with an additional fifty million displaced by such conflicts.

It's easy to see only the statistics of these tragedies – people as numbers. But as soon as we see the names or faces of the people, it becomes real and horrifying. I found it unutterably sad to read that some Syrian children caught up in the terror do not understand kindness or gentleness when it is offered, but only recognise brutality and depravity.

There are many ways you can rob people. ☺

## Prayer

### Prayer and Healing Ministry

As a Church Family, God calls us to "pray without ceasing" for one another and for our neighbourhood. With this in mind, a Calendar of Prayer covering the whole of The Parish Of Three Saints has been drawn up. Each Sunday we will be highlighting a particular road or street, plus an organisation or group of people in our Parish or Diocese and encouraging you to pray for them during the week. The Calendar of Prayer will also be available in the prayer corners of each of our church buildings.

This week please pray for....

- Those living in The Boundaries, Lympsham and Old Bristol Road, East Brent.
- Our Churchwardens, our PCC and Carole, our Parish Administrator.
- Local farms and Farmers' markets.

### Don't be afraid to ask for Prayer!

If you or a loved one are going through a difficult time and would like prayer, please contact our Prayer Group Co-ordinator [Gwen Hatton](mailto:Gwen.Hatton@tpots.org) 01934 750416. The Friday Prayer Group will support you in prayer for as long as you need it and everything is absolutely confidential.

Alternatively, if you or a loved one would like to be included in this public prayer list in the Sunday Link and prayed for by the whole Church Family, please contact Carole in the Church Office 01278-769082 or Ginnie Soffe 01278-769117. Please ask for the person's permission beforehand.

Please also contact us if you would like to remain on this list as we are currently looking to update it. Many thanks.

At present please continue to pray for Mervyn, Nathan, Luke, Iona, Ben, David, Carole, Kathryn, Peter, Silla, Carol, Sue, David, Pam, Di, Bob, Richard, Jodie and Marcus.

## Diary

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>27th January</b> 08.00 St Mary's Worship of the Word  10.00 St Christopher's Parish Eucharist  18.30 St Michael's Evening Prayer	<b>28th</b> 09.00-10.30 Emmaus Brentcombe House, East Brent	<b>29th</b> 10.30 Toddlers Brent Knoll Methodist Church	<b>30th</b> 08.45 Coffee Time St Mary's	<b>31st</b>      19.30 All Sorts Choir	<b>1st February</b>	<b>2nd</b>
<b>3rd February</b> 08.00 St Michael's Worship of the Word  10.00 St Michael's Parish Eucharist	<b>4th</b>	<b>5th</b> 10.30 Toddlers Brent Knoll Methodist Church	<b>6th</b> 08.45 Coffee Time St Mary's	<b>7th</b>      19.30 All Sorts Choir	<b>8th</b>	<b>9th</b>
<b>10th February</b> 08.00 St Michael's  10.00 St Mary's <b>SONGS OF PRAISE</b>	<b>11th</b> 09.00-10.30 Emmaus Brentcombe House, East Brent	<b>12th</b> 10.30 Toddlers Brent Knoll Methodist Church	<b>13th</b> 08.45 Coffee Time St Mary's	<b>14th</b>      19.30 All Sorts Choir	<b>15th</b> Prayer Group 2 The Worthings, Lympsham	<b>16th</b>

## Contacts

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Church Administrator	Mrs Carole Carter	<a href="mailto:office.tpots@gmail.com">office.tpots@gmail.com</a>	Church Office, Church Road, East Brent, Somerset. TA9 4HZ Tel: 01278 769082

For further contact information please see our parish website - [www.theparishofthreesaints.org.uk](http://www.theparishofthreesaints.org.uk)

If you would like to submit anything for the Sunday Link please email it to Carole at [office.tpots@gmail.com](mailto:office.tpots@gmail.com) by **Thursday**. Please also send anything for **The Parish of Three Saints** website to the same address.

## Bible Readings

### Hebrew Scripture

**Nehemiah 8. 1-3, 5-6, 8-10**

All the people gathered together into the square before the Water Gate. They told the scribe Ezra to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the Lord had given to Israel. Accordingly, the priest Ezra brought the law before the assembly, both men and women and all who could hear with understanding. This was on the first day of the seventh month. He read from it facing the square before the Water Gate from early morning until midday, in the presence of the men and the women and those who could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive to the book of the law. And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, for he was standing above all the people; and when he opened it, all the people stood up. Then Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God, and all the people answered, 'Amen, Amen', lifting up their hands. Then they bowed their heads and worshipped the Lord with their faces to the ground. So they read from the book, from the law of God, with interpretation. They gave the sense, so that the people understood the reading.

And Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all the people, 'This day is holy to the Lord your God; do not mourn or weep.' For all the people wept when they heard the words of the law. Then he said to them, 'Go your way, eat the fat and drink sweet wine and send portions of them to those for whom nothing is prepared, for this day is holy to our Lord; and do not be grieved, for the joy of the Lord is your strength.'

### Gospel Reading

**Luke 4. 14-21**

The Beginning of the Galilean Ministry

Then Jesus, filled with the power of the Spirit, returned to Galilee, and a report about him spread through all the surrounding country. He began to teach in their synagogues and was praised by everyone.

The Rejection of Jesus at Nazareth

When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written:

'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,  
because he has anointed me  
to bring good news to the poor.  
He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives  
and recovery of sight to the blind,  
to let the oppressed go free,  
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour.'

And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. Then he began to say to them, 'Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.'

### Christian Scripture

**1 Corinthians 12. 12-31a**

One Body with Many Members

For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many. If the foot were to say, 'Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body', that would not make it any less a part of the body. And if the ear were to say, 'Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body', that would not make it any less a part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. If all were a single member, where would the body be?

As it is, there are many members, yet one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I have no need of you', nor again the head to the feet, 'I have no need of you.' On the contrary, the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and those members of the body that we think less honourable we clothe with greater honour, and our less respectable members are treated with greater respect; whereas our more respectable members do not need this. But God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honour to the inferior member, that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honoured, all rejoice together with it.

Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers; then deeds of power, then gifts of healing, forms of assistance, forms of leadership, various kinds of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? But strive for the greater gifts. And I will show you a still more excellent way.

### Psalm

**Psalm 19. 1-6**

God's Glory in Creation and the Law  
To the leader. A Psalm of David.

The heavens are telling the glory of God;  
and the firmament proclaims his handiwork.  
Day to day pours forth speech,  
and night to night declares knowledge.

There is no speech, nor are there words;  
their voice is not heard;  
yet their voice goes out through all the earth,  
and their words to the end of the world.

In the heavens he has set a tent for the sun,  
which comes out like a bridegroom from his wedding canopy,

and like a strong man runs its course with joy.  
Its rising is from the end of the heavens,  
and its circuit to the end of them;  
and nothing is hidden from its heat.

## What's On



www.theparishofthreesaints.org.uk

office.tpots@gmail.com



The Parish of Three Saints welcomes you to a

# Songs of Praise

Service

at 10am

**Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> February**  
**St Mary's Church,**  
**East Brent**

Everyone is very welcome.  
Come along and sing some of your  
favourite hymns.

Please note: there will be no communion  
at this service.



### WANTED - FOR A COVER UP JOB

We have started redecorating the Rectory, in preparation for Revd Kevin Wright's arrival in March, but still need more volunteers, please.

If you could help with preparatory work, wallpaper stripping or painting, please give your name to Mike Smith (01278 760691)

We hope to have teams working on weekdays and weekends, as and when people are free.

Many thanks.

**Blessed are you, Lord God of all Creation; through your goodness we have this money to offer.....  
to do your work in the world.**

During our worship an offering will be collected. If you wish to join with our offering there is a yellow envelope nearby for your contribution or you can, of course, simply add your donation to the bag that will be passed along the pew during our first hymn. Many of our Church Family make a regular contribution to the running and work of the Parish by Standing Order. If this is something you would like to find out more about, please see one of the Stewards or a Churchwarden.

### Interregnum Update

A Welcome and Licensing service will be held for our new priest,

Rev Kevin Wright,  
at 7pm

on Thursday 21st March  
at St Christopher's,  
Lympsham.

It would be lovely if we could have a full church to make it a special occasion for Kevin and his wife, Chris, as we welcome them into our church family.

Refreshments will be served in the Manor Hall afterwards.

Kevin's first service will be on Palm Sunday, 14th April, at 10.00 at St Mary's, East Brent.

### Blessed Thought

Jesus said, "Because I live, you also will live"

(John 14;19)