

This Week at St Mary's

19 June 2022

'THE WIND BLOWS WHERE IT WILLS'

This is a metaphor used by Jesus to explain things to Rabbi Nicodemus. 'You hear the sound of it' he goes on, 'but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit'.

Images may well come to mind of waves moving across cornfields or of the tops of trees swaying in the breeze. A welcome cooling breeze on a hot day matches what some may see the Holy Spirit doing - a calm in the stresses of life.

I think it more likely that a violent sandstorm, the 'haboob' as it is called in the Middle East, is what is in Jesus' mind. The noise of the wind on the Day of Pentecost is described as a 'mighty rushing wind'. Moving at 50 mph, the haboob can last many hours and be destructive.

Martyn Harris was a journalist who was diagnosed in 1995 with cancer. He wrote very personally about this - see *Odd Man Out*. His Methodist upbringing had lapsed, but finding himself in an 'haboob' his perspective started to change. C.S. Lewis in *the Problem of Pain* describes times of suffering as God getting out a megaphone.

Harris describes the effect of God's haboob was to uncover the 'feebleness of much of the materialist position assumed to be so impregnable' and to 'surprise him at the intellectual coherence of Christianity'. He saw 'the force and authority of the personality of Jesus', especially in his self giving love. He writes about how the poetry of Herbert, Larkin and Eliot moved his heart and being.

His conclusion is that 'faith' can only become real when the wind of God's Spirit 'blows where it wills'. He urges that the experience is there for everyone, the qualification being 'open enough' or as in his case, 'desperate enough'.

Tom Gillman

SAPPHIE JOHNSON'S WONDERFUL TALENT

At the recent Queen's Platinum Jubilee Service, Sapphie Johnson aged 10 delighted everyone with her violin playing. Her mother here tells her story.

Sapphie started to learn the violin aged 4 with Rob Jourdain, a local teacher in Mansfield. She progressed quickly and did her first exam at 6 years old, grade 3. Her first performance was at the Mansfield Music Festival where she came first in her group and was chosen to do another performance for the winners' concert at Mansfield Civic Theatre.

In 2018, she started new lessons with a more advanced teacher, Laura Gardiner to help improve on her technique. She completed her grade 5 exam with distinction at age 7. She was a member with the Nottingham Youth Orchestra and is still a member of the National Children's Orchestra. She enjoys playing with like-minded young musicians.

In 2020 Sapphie auditioned for Birmingham Royal Junior Conservatoire and the Royal Academy of Music in London. She got offers from both, & we decided to accept the one from the Royal Academy of Music. She is currently going up to London to study under Dr Professor Chika Robertson. As part of the Oasby Group, a string ensemble in Grantham, she has had the wonderful opportunity to work with Nicola Benedetti and Tamsin Little.

In 2021 she won the strings final of the Nottingham Young Musician of the year Competition. Part of her prize is to do a performance with the Orchestra of the Restoration at St Mary's Church later in the year.

Sapphie was delighted to have been asked to perform the 1st Movement of Bach's concerto in A Minor at the Queens Platinum Jubilee Service at St Mary's Church. It was a wonderful experience and she has said she would love to do more (*something we will all say YES to*).

LAST WEEK AT ST MARY'S

Nottingham College students sat exams on Monday & Friday

INSIGHT MEETING Wed 22 June 12-1.30 *What was it like working during the pandemic?* 'Independent since 1844...& still thriving' with Weavers CEO Philip Trease. A stimulating lunchbreak alternative hosted by Workplace Chaplaincy at St Mary's with light lunch. Please email lensimmonds@gmail.com to book a *free* place.

NOTTINGHAM BACH CHOIR Summer Concert St Mary's 3pm Sat 25 June. Composers include Brahms, Holst & Finzi. The programme of songs and choral music will be followed by tea & cake.

NUH SERVICE OF THANKSGIVING & REMEMBRANCE 3 July 1.30pm. A service presided by Hospital Chaplain the Rev'd James Pacey for the work of NUH NHS Trust, & to remember all those in the Trust who suffered and died during the pandemic. All are very welcome to attend.

FRIENDS OF ST MARY'S 46th AGM Sun 3 July 5.15pm (tea from 5pm). Report & accounts will be presented for y/e March 22 to members, with Evensong at 6.30pm. New members welcome, details on the church website - About Us/ Friends of St Mary's.

ST MARY'S BOOK GROUP The next meeting will be Thursday 7 July at 11 am in the church. Everyone is most welcome. The book we'll be discussing is "To Sir, with Love", by E R Braithwaite.

WORKPLACE WEDNESDAY at St Mary's, each week, a third space to work away from home & the office. St Mary's is a unique setting with wi-fi & fresh coffee. 9 to 12pm, no fee or need to book.

GIVING TO ST MARY'S We rely on your financial support. Kindly use online banking (NatWest 56-00-61, St Mary's PCC a/c 00834602); cash or cheque in the donations chest; the card reader; or via the website. Please use Gift Aid if you are a UK tax-payer. Standing order forms are by the south porch.

MEADOWS FOODBANK please support with tinned fruit, meat & tuna; UHT milk; noodles; toilet rolls; shampoo; toiletries; bags for life. Tues 5.30-7.15, Fri 10-12, Sat 11-1pm NG2 2JD

Wherever you are, we extend a very warm greeting to you,
especially if you've recently discovered St Mary's

FORTHCOMING SERVICES

10.45am CHORAL EUCHARIST FOR TRINITY SUNDAY
also Audio Broadcast live via our website
(follow the link, including for Order of Service)

6.30pm EVENSONG Live & Broadcast

6.15pm WEDNESDAY EVENSONG

12.45PM THURSDAY COMMUNION

6pm THURSDAY EVENING PRAYER (skype) Contact Grant
(gwalton@stmarynotts.org)

COLLEGE EXAMS Please note that St Mary's will ONLY be open to
visitors on Wednesday & Thursday this coming week.

ST MARY'S REMAINS COVID SENSITIVE,
especially to the most vulnerable,
in respect of the use of masks, distancing and sanitising.

PLEASE CONTINUE TO PRAY FOR

Estelle Barks Jenny Du May & her husband Peter
Stephen Morris Kirsten Solway

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