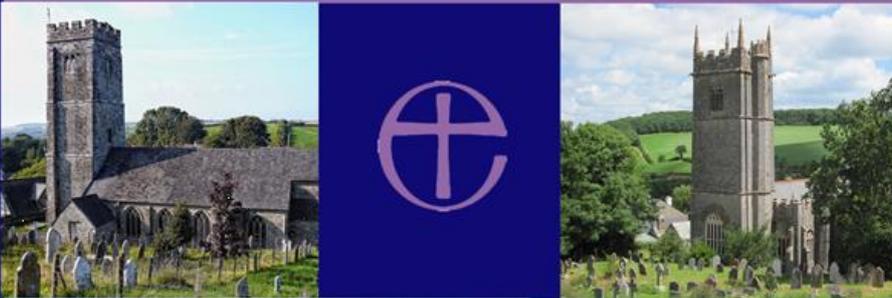




Totnes Ministry Team
Newsletter
August 2021



Monthly Reflection: Considering 'Freedom' – Fr Jim Barlow



Although July 19th was widely dubbed as 'Freedom Day' the only freedom that is worth anything is the freedom to love and care for another. To be mindful of and attentive to the needs of others is not a burden. It is how we create spaces in which all can flourish and feel valued. The Bible teaches us "owe no-one anything except to love one another".

Easy to say. What does it look like in practice, right now? Firstly, to recognise how much people have struggled under the various restrictions the Pandemic made necessary and also how fearful many of us have become. Although I think lifting all restrictions on the 19th July was rash (and an abdication of responsibility) it is also true that at some point we have to begin to live with COVID as a permanent feature of our lives like the flu. We can't spend the rest of our lives wearing masks, not gathering in groups more than six, not singing etc. In short, we have to take the risk to re-engage with one another.

However, it would be folly not to learn from our experience. What has happened has made all of us a lot more aware of how a virus gets transmitted. To continue with hand sanitisation, wearing masks in poorly ventilated or crowded indoor spaces and taking regular lateral flow tests is just plain common sense right now with a highly transmissible and mutable virus on the move. More than that it is about recognising that some people are much more vulnerable or feel much more vulnerable and they need to feel safe to begin re-engaging.

In churches across our team, we will be looking at ways to set up the space so that anyone who wants to participate can, whether that means being able to sing and not wear a mask, or to be in a safer space, not directly exposed to people singing etc. It won't be easy, but we are determined to recognise both sets of needs and find a way forward together.

I return to the key point. The only freedom that matters is to have positive regard for the other person. I have the freedom to make an informed decision about what level of risk I might take. I should not have the freedom to force others to take the same risk without their consent.

Blessings, Fr. Jim

Services in our churches this month

	July 25 <i>Trinity 8</i>	August 1 <i>Trinity 9</i>	August 8 <i>Trinity 10</i>	August 15 <i>Trinity 11</i>	August 22 <i>Trinity 12</i>	August 29 Climate Sunday
St Mary's Totnes	8am HC 11.15 HC 5pm Vespers	11.15 MP 5pm Vespers	11.15 HC 5pm Vespers	11.15 HC 5pm Vespers	11.15 HC 5pm Vespers	Team Service at St John's 10am
St. John's Bridgetown	10am MP	10am MP	10am HC	10am MP	10am HC	Team Service at 10am
Ashprington	9.15 VW Joint at Cornworthy	11.15 HC	11.15 VW	11.15 HC Joint at Ashprington	9.15 VW Joint at Cornworthy	Team Service at St John's 10am
Berry Pomeroy	11.15 HC	11.15 MP	11.15 MP	11.15 MP	11.15 MP	Team Service at St John's 10am
Brooking		9.15 HC		9.15 HC		Team Service at St John's 10am
Cornworthy	9.15 VW Joint at Cornworthy	9.15 HC	9.15 VW	11.15 HC Joint at Ashprington	9.15 VW Joint at Cornworthy	Team Service at St John's 10am
Dartington	10.30 Celtic HC		10.30 MP		10.30 Celtic HC	Team Service at St John's 10am
Marldon	10am VW	10am VW	10am HC	10am VW	10am HC	Team Service at St John's 10am
Stoke Gabriel	8.15 HC 11.15 HC	8.15 HC 11.15 HC	8.15 HC 11.15 HC	8.15 HC 11.15 HC	8.15 HC 11.15 HC	Team Service at St John's 10am
Telephone	12 midday	No service	No service	No service	No service	No service
Home Worship Zoom	10am	No Zoom	10am	No Zoom	No Zoom	10am

HC = Holy Communion, MP = Morning Praise, VW = Village Worship

For Wild Church please contact Sam Wernham on livingspirit3@gmail.com



Climate Sunday

**What is Climate Sunday? Joint Service for
Totnes Ministry Team, Aug 29**

<https://www.climatesunday.org>

The Climate Sunday initiative is calling on all local churches across Great Britain & Ireland to hold a climate-focused service on any Sunday before COP26 (November 2021). Our vision is to leave a lasting legacy of thousands of churches better equipped to address this critical issue as part of their discipleship and mission and to make a significant contribution to civil society efforts to secure adequate national and international action at COP26.

The collective action and commitments from local churches across Great Britain & Ireland will be presented to UK Government at a Nations Climate Sunday Service in Glasgow on Sunday 5th September 2021. Further details about this event will be published shortly.

We are holding a climate-focused service to explore the theological and scientific basis of creation care and action on climate, to pray, and to commit to action. Please join us – there is no Planet B.

The Telephone Service and Zoom

During August many of the Ministry Team are taking well-earned holidays and breaks. This means that with less people available to lead we are taking a break for the phone service and some of the zoom services. We are sorry if this makes it difficult for some people to worship with us, and we are working towards a more sustainable system.

It's wonderful that our 'lay led' services are really becoming established in our churches, and there are still opportunities to expand Lay Ministry further by leading or supporting the weekly telephone service and home worship on zoom in the Autumn and onwards.

Fr Jim would like to hear from anyone who might be interested in occasionally taking these roles as part of their own growth and spiritual journey. Support and guidance will be given. Please talk to him if you are interested on 07775356652 or by email on fr.jim@totnesrectory.co.uk

The Ministry Team

Churchwardens – there’s no stopping them!

Churchwardens are a special breed – none more so than these two who refuse to grow old gracefully!



Congratulations to **John Holl** on his amazing achievement to mark his 80th year. John and friends have climbed 181 Dartmoor Tors in aid of Community Transport ‘Bob the Bus’. John started his on-off walk with friends in August 2020 at Aish Tor and completed the journey at Yes Tor on at the end of June 2021. To donate to John’s appeal and help him reach his target, please go to <https://www.totalgiving.co.uk/mypage/ancient-submariner>

Congratulations to Martin and Maggi!



Wedding photo – outside St Mary’s Totnes on July 14th

Many Congratulations to you both and All Good Wishes

True Footballing Heroes

Much has been said and written about the three young England footballers who were so cruelly targeted with racist abuse after the Euro 2020 finals. What might be less well-known about them is that all three of them are Christians. Here is an extract about Saka’s faith from a recent article in *The Guardian*:

‘Like Marcus Rashford and Raheem Sterling, his England teammates, Saka wears his faith on his sleeve. Until he moved with his family two years ago, to be closer to Arsenal’s training facilities, he attended the Pentecostal Kingsborough Centre in Uxbridge. On winning the young London player of the year award this year, he tweeted “God’s Work”, making clear where he believed the credit for his starring performances truly lay.’

https://www.theguardian.com/football/2021/jul/17/god-given-talent-saka-rashford-and-sterling-blaze-a-trail-for-black-british-christians?CMP=Share_AndroidApp_Other



'Desert Island Discs' – Rev Cliff Berdinner

Rev Cliff has been inspiring us with his reflections for many years. Here is a bit more about him!

1. How do you get your ideas for your 'reflections'?

I usually get my ideas from what is going on in our everyday life; I think that it is only if our religion is relevant to where we are that it can lift us to higher things.

2. What has changed most about the church since your early days as an active Christian minister?

The greatest change has been the introduction of the team ministry. This has meant the replacement of the parish priest with a team manager: gone has the shepherd of one flock and with it much pastoral care. I think this has brought some confusion amongst congregations as to who is my priest when I need one.

There have been other changes such as the move away from the 1662 BCP, the introduction of women priests, clergy contracts instead of Livings and new attitudes to marriage and human sexuality. Today the church is faced with finding its place in modern society.

3. Where is your favourite place, and why?

I think that would be sitting somewhere on a beach watching the sea and looking out over the great expanse of water. It would remind me of the time I had a little boat and sailing with my family on the river Dart, or of picnics on the water. I have a love of water and sailed many seas in the Navy during my war service.

4. Can you share with us a humorous memory that still makes you smile?

I remember one day on holiday in Scotland with Paula, we hired a car. On the day before we were coming home, we took the car to fill it up with petrol so as to return it full. The garage was also a large shop so on this occasion we got out, filled the car up, and then went in the shop. We later came out and drove off with a tank full of petrol each of us thinking the other had paid.

We didn't know that neither of us had paid until a police car appeared outside our hotel with two fully geared up police officers looking for two petrol thieves!

Amidst our surprise and embarrassment we apologised profusely and promised to pay on our way home. The police said that they didn't think we looked like robbers on the shops' cameras!

5. On your Desert Island you have the Bible - but what would be the piece of music, the book and the luxury you would take with you?

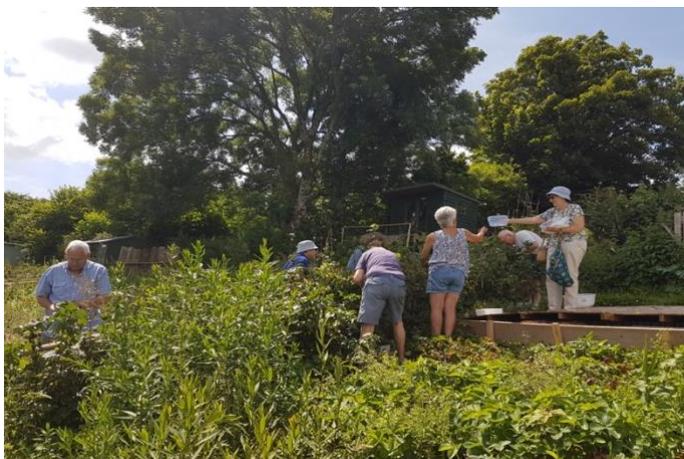
I am very fond of J.S. Bach's, Toccata and Fugue in D minor: but I'd love a bit of Bob Marley's reggae as well please.

As far as a book is concerned I would like to take Lionel Blue's - 'tales of body and soul': he gives it a second title, 'Do it yourself religion'. This is a book about how we privately write our own scripture and parables about ourselves as our life unfolds. It is full of humour and rich thoughts as Lionel talks simply and honestly about the presence of God without the formalities of organised religion.

Lastly my luxury item has to be a teas-maid, please, for my morning cuppa.

On Holy Ground! – Parish Allotment News

Be prepared for a deluge of blackcurrant jam! Our parish allotment has been delivering the goods and to date we've harvested about 40lbs of blackcurrants. A volunteer picking party managed to clear the bushes and enjoy some company and wonderful views at the same time.



Thanks also to Marilyn Burrows who kindly donated some gardening equipment – it will be well used and cared for!

Covid updates (as of July 21 2021) - General Guidance (Totnes Team Ministry)

Continue to provide hand sanitiser at entrances and exits

Continue to encourage people to use track and trace.

Encourage mask wearing wherever possible (but is voluntary)

If feasible, given numbers, maintain social distancing by only using every other row of seats. Congregational and choir singing permitted – with caution.

Establish zones in church for those who do not want to be exposed to aerosols as a result of singing or people not wearing masks. These zones will probably be near back or sides of church and should be close to air ventilation. Keep some sets in these areas set up for social distancing.

Look at how to maximise ventilation.

The Peace – continue to share in a socially distanced fashion.

Communion – current practice to continue of keeping wafers in covered vessel, celebrant to sanitise hands, wear mask (use tweezers) when giving communion. Consider taking communion to people in pews, especially if they are sitting in a ‘safer zone’.

Drinks can be served, however people serving should wear masks and wash their hands / wear gloves both when serving and clearing up. Please avoid serving biscuits or food. We don’t need to and it is just an additional risk.

Encourage people to go outside in good weather for conversation and coffee after the service.

Hymn books and service sheets – if they are handed out at door, person doing so to wear mask and sanitise hands. Try and get people to put back in a box then leave for 48 hours or, if someone collects them in, again advise that you wear a mask and sanitise your hands.

Cleaning – maintain current patterns as far as is practical. If church can be left close for 48 hours after service or event good. If not put up a sign detailing how often church is cleaned, i.e. this church is cleaned once a week only – that enable people to make their own decision about risk.



Wild Church News

Following our launch event at Dartington Church in mid April, Wild Church is on its way with our monthly contemplative pilgrimage along the River Dart on the first Sunday of each month. Fr Jim guided us from Dartington to Totnes in May and nature connection guide, Emma Capper, led us from Totnes to Ashprington in June. On August 1st we are canoeing from Tuckenhay to Stoke Gabriel and on September 5th we will be back on our feet and walking from St David's Ashprington to St Peter's at Cornworthy - more details below or contact Sam (07979 057169 livingspirit3@gmail.com)

We are carrying the [Dartington River Dart Charter](#) with us, a community document created on behalf of the river, expressing what we care about and what we want to protect. Each pilgrimage so far has ended with a special Vespers service, in which the church wardens of each church visited have kindly received a copy of the Charter and a document on how to create a charter, which we hope may be a first step in inspiring their communities to create their own charters for their stretch of the Dart.

Our pilgrimage on the afternoon of Sunday September 5th will be guided by local poet and author, Roselle Angwin, who will encourage us to try creating our own creative writing in response to the land and river along the way. All are welcome but places are limited to please contact Sam if you would like to book. After the pilgrimage, St Peter's Cornworthy are kindly welcoming us to offer Vespers, which is open to all, from 5.30pm.

To find out more about River Dart Wild Church and our Sacred Waters Way pilgrimage, please visit our [website](https://www.riverdartwildchurch.com/)

and Facebook [community page](https://www.facebook.com/groups/791580240900640)

We are working in partnership with the new [Devon Pilgrim](#) <https://www.devonpilgrim.org.uk/> initiative, curated by the Exeter Diocese [Growing the Rural Church project](https://www.growingtheruralchurch.org/devon-pilgrim/).

Sam Wernham

‘This job is unworkable’ – Restricted Giving Campaign to support our clergy

Many of us will recognise these words – spoken by Rev. Preb. Julian Ould and echoed by Bishop Robert at the arrival of Fr. Jim Barlow last July. Sadly, the situation has not changed. The small amount of admin support for the Rector has gone. Many of us know the ridiculous hours they are working in the service of God and of His people. Those of you who have worked in business, or any profession, imagine what it would have been like trying to do your job without any PA, secretarial or even receptionist support?

To say that the situation is unsustainable would be an understatement. Our incredibly busy and loyal clergy simply cannot continue to work safely or effectively. There is a real risk of damage to their own wellbeing and also to the spiritual life of the parishes and people they serve. A long-term solution needs to be found, and there are investigations and avenues being explored. However, if we want to have any clergy at all then immediate actions need to be taken. That means **NOW**.

If 150 individuals across our parishes would pledge **£100** we could provide admin support for the clergy for four mornings a week for around 12 months.

For a one-off donation to the Administration Support appeal please: transfer funds marked **‘AdminSupport’** to the following bank account:

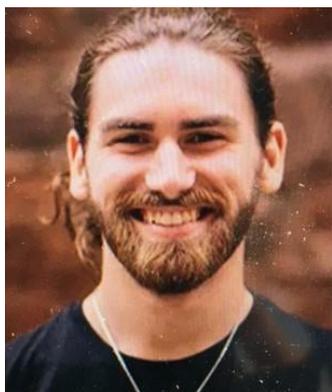
Bank: Barclays
Account Name: Totnes with Bridgetown PCC Building Fund
Account Number: 10028304
Sort Code: 20-60-88

Pay by cheque made out to ‘Totnes with Bridgetown PCC Building Fund’ and mark the back of the cheque ‘AdminSupport’. Cheques to be sent to: Sue Stabler, Totnes Team Treasurer, 5 Follaton Rise, Totnes, TQ9 5FX

If you wish to **boost your donation by 25p of Gift Aid** for every £1 please contact Sue for the appropriate form email: suestabler@sky.com, phone: 01803 849425, 07803 894542

Please note that the Totnes with Bridgetown PCC bank account is being used purely for the purposes of being able to reclaim Gift Aid. Donations made to this account will be held in a restricted fund and will be used solely to provide Administration Support to the Totnes Team.

Team Welcome Service for Christian Harris – September 12th



Our new curate is settling into life in Totnes, and we are delighted that he and Hannah are getting round many of our churches. Chris will be ordained by the Bishop on Saturday September 11th, and the following day it will be our pleasure to welcome him to our Team Ministry at a special **Joint Service**. This will be held at St John's, Bridgetown at 10am and will also be available on zoom.

Please make a note of the date – more details to follow soon.



Church Suite Training Day

As previously announced we are migrating over to Church Suite in the coming weeks.

Church Suite is a well-known administration system designed especially to support churches with email lists, rotas, calendars and sharing information safely and centrally. The basic system is very easy to use – with help!

Therefore, we are organising a training day on Tuesday September 7th, 9.30am to 4pm at St John's, Bridgetown. Our professional trainer will guide us through the basic Church Suite system. You will need to bring a lap-top.

More details to follow soon, and places will be limited. We'd like two people to come from each parish *if possible* and for them to be willing to *show others the system*.

People who should attend are those involved in regular communication, rotas and websites / events. If you'd like to register an interest, please do so by contact ttmcomms@gmail.com

Other options include a generic training day in Bristol on September 22nd at a cost of £65 – see <https://office.churchsuite.com/events/8bia61ku>

Church Suite also do videos of their training here

<https://churchsuite.com/support/free-training-videos/#viewer>

It's just another thought – from Rev'd Cliff Berdinner

Do we all have a little bit of God inside us? Well, I think so, and here's a lovely old Hindu legend I found so interesting.

There was a time when all men were gods but they abused their divinity so much that the chief god, Brahma, decided to take it away from them and hide it where they would never again find it. But the big question was where to hide it? So, a council meeting of the lesser gods was called to consider the question. They said, "We will bury man's divinity deep in the earth". But Brahma said, "No they will learn to dig and find it." "Well, we will sink his divinity into the deepest ocean". But Brahma said, "No they will learn to dive and search the ocean bed and find it." Then they said, "We will take it to the top of the highest mountain and hide it". But once again Brahma said, "No they will learn to climb and they will be sure to find it".

Then the lesser gods gave up and said, "We do not know where to hide it, for it seems there is no place on the earth or in the sea that man will eventually reach." Then Brahma said, "This is what we will do with man's divinity. We will hide it deep down in man himself for he will never think to look there."

Over the ages men and women have sought satisfaction and fulfilment of life in a never-ending search, digging, climbing, diving and exploring the earth and the heavens.

But there was a man whose name was Jesus who did discover deep within his own consciousness the wonder of God's presence; and it seems to me that his mission was to share this secret with those around him whose hearts were ready to receive.

Although for generations we have been led to think of God as a being outside of ourselves – up there and separated from us; I am wondering if the time has not come for us to let go of that traditional view and allow a new spiritual awakening within our own deep consciousness.

Perhaps that is the task of the church today, to help us awaken to our own inner life; and experience the reality of God's ever-loving presence and transforming power within.

Next Deadline: August 20th – ttmcomms@gmail.com or Diana on 07773551030