



Sunday 27th June 2021

Worship led by
Mr David Hoar



Minister for Toothill Revd Rachael Wilson Tel: 01793764330

rev.rachael.wilson@gmail.com

To receive the newsletter each Thursday by email contact David at: david11hoar@gmail.com

Toothill Church website: www.toothillchurch.org.uk

For contacting, various groups see the front page of Toothill Church Website.

Welcome to everyone worshipping with us today; for those who have difficulty hearing there is a loop system in operation.

In Partnership (The Partnership Monthly magazine): <http://wswinlyd.org.uk/news>

This Sunday 10.30 Mr David Hoar (Service in church)

With the announced of the extended Covid rules we are still not permitted to sing in the church services for the moment

Next Sunday NO Service

Last Sunday

A small group of us held a prayer walk last Sunday round one part of Toothill stopping at various places and praying for the people who lived in the streets where we stopped including those named on our prayer list and other names of members who have moved away. We used the prayers from our '40 Days of Prayer.' If you would like to pray for the people of Toothill we used the first 12 prayers from our '40 days'. When we do our next walk (Not planned yet) we will continue to use these prayers.

Prayers for today



Do please let us know if there is someone you would like to add to the list for prayer, remembering that we must have the permission of the person for whom we would be praying. Please pray for Bill and Rhoda, Ann Beaumont, Graham's cousin Hayley, Norris and Ruth, Sarah, Hazel, Tina, and all those you know who are in need of God's special love, care and healing.

We pray for our ministers Clive, Rachael, Trevor and Teresa and all our children's and worship leaders and their families across the Partnership.

May God bless us all with wisdom and strength to face each day's challenges.

Please pray for your home congregation that they may be sustained as we meet together again, and for the continuing work with our children, young people and families in West Swindon.

We pray for Grace, Peace and a way forward in your Love in these uncertain times in our lives. May we continually thank God for his great Love and Faithfulness.

Prayer

Lord God

This new day lies before us.

We know some of what it will bring but not everything.

Be with us, we pray, in our planned activities, in the surprises that happen and in the monotony of all that is mundane and ordinary.

May we bring your presence to those whom we meet, in spoken and unspoken conversations; may we see you in the people we encounter along the way.

When this day comes to its conclusion, help us to walk confidently with Jesus into the night, reflecting on things that have gone well, and those needing his forgiveness, that our rest may be free from worry, our sleep untroubled, and filled with your peace. Amen

Sunday Worship in July.

All services will be in the church every two weeks until September when they will be weekly

Sunday 11th Rev Rachael Wilson

Sunday 25th Mr Mark Dowling

Sunday worship in August

Sunday 8th Mrs Rachel Dowling

Sunday 22nd Mr David Hoar

Polish Church

First meeting will be Sunday 4th July then every two weeks until September.

DG for J (Day-group for Jesus) Summer Programme to July 21st

Meeting at – 1:30pm to 3:30pm

Monday, 5th July 21 – Acts & The Church – Leader Angela

Monday, 19th July 21 – Revelation and Review – Leader Edward

For further details contact:

Edward Glennie – edglennie@hotmail.com - 07598482538

Peter Rogers – peter.rogers5599@ntlworld.com – 07500355201

*** We will be continuing with our Zoom calls until further notice. Zoom Meeting details are:

Click on link below to join meeting:

<https://zoom.us/j/92404636497?pwd=bFJLbFM5TFdsalppekdRV2o1QzJEZz09>

Meeting ID: 924 0463 6497

Passcode: 181042

Dial-in Number: 0330 088 5830

Motto:

The Armour of God - Ephesians 6: 10 to 11 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armour of God

Note:

The dates for meetings can also be found on Holy Trinity Shaw's website:

Website: <http://htschurch.org.uk/>

It must be practically impossible not to notice that we're in the middle of a big football tournament at the moment. Love it, hate it, or feel ambivalent towards it, you've probably seen it advertised or noticed that it's been on television quite a lot recently, or perhaps you've seen flags hanging outside people's houses and cars, indicating their support of a particular team. The European Football Championships have been delayed by a year but are finally being held, and perhaps they're generating a bit more joy and excitement than usual, coming as they are at a time when we're hoping that very soon the restrictions Covid 19 has placed upon us will be loosened. The hopefulness we've been feeling as June 21st approached, then the disappointment when the goalposts were moved once again is perhaps reflected by what we see happening on football pitches across Europe at the moment. Bill Shankly famously said, "Some people think football is a matter of life and death. I assure you, it's much more serious than that." And perhaps we do see something of life in general reflected in what happens on the football pitch - the highs, the lows, and the really boring bits in between when nothing much seems to be going on; the fact that sometimes people are looking at you and really wanting you to succeed, but at other times people are watching and hoping for you to fall and fail; the fact that sometimes we try really hard and don't seem to get the result we want or think we deserve, yet at other times things fall into place with very little effort on our part. Sometimes we think we win and sometimes we think we lose, but often our gains and losses are down to factors that are far beyond our own personal control.

I'm not a massive fan of football, and I don't have a particular team to support, but I do like to watch some of the big tournaments, and so over the last 10 days I've watched a number of the matches that have been played as part of the Euros. There's a lot that I could say about football and life, and football and faith, and I've recently discovered a number of other quotes about football (aside from the Shankly one) that have a wider resonance than the game itself that I could draw on. For example, Pep Guardiola once said, "In football, the worst things are excuses. Excuses mean you cannot grow or move forward" and I think, yes, that's true! If we're making excuses about anything then we're not taking responsibility, and if we're not taking responsibility for mistakes we may have made then we can't learn from them, and if we're not learning then we're not changing and if we're not changing we're not growing. So yes, excuses are a massive hindrance! But today I'm not going to go down that rabbit-hole of sharing inspirational football quotes with you or allegorising the game of football as a story about life. You can find your own quotes if you want to - Google is really helpful in this regard! - and it doesn't take a massive stretch of the imagination to see the parallels between life and any sporting enterprise. Even St Paul wasn't averse to drawing on a sporting metaphor from time to time!

There is one thing in particular that I've been thinking about this week while I've been watching the football. And actually it's less about the specific teams, or the supporters, or even what the football players are up to. I've found myself drawn to be watching the referee recently, and I've even missed seeing goals being scored because I've been focusing on that figure in light blue who is always there on the edge of the action! Thank goodness for the replays so I can see what I've missed! The referee is really important, for reasons I'm sure you can all work out for yourselves. There have been a couple of incidents I've seen when it's looked as though a proper brawl would break out if the referee wasn't there to separate people and make a judgement about who is in the wrong. The referee is the authority figure who knows the rules and makes sure that things are done properly. But even that isn't the thing that has taken my attention.

The referee has to be almost as fit as the players on the pitch as they too have to spend the ninety minutes running around. And they have to be completely attentive to everything that is going on. They have to have their eye on the ball, but also on where all the players are at any time. They can't let their attention slip even for a split second. But it seems to me that one of the most important things that they have to do is not get in the way. They've got to be right in there where the action is happening, but they have to make sure that they don't distract from it and that they don't disrupt. They have to notice what is happening, they have to know what their role is, and they have to stay out of the way.

It occurs to me that when it comes to the work of God my job is to take on some of the traits of the referee. But I have to be really careful about which traits I choose. My job as a Christian is most definitely *not* to see myself as arbiter of what is going on, making judgements on what everyone else is doing, although I do know too many Christians who seem to take that approach. I don't have a red and yellow card in my pocket! That's not my job. I'm not there to tell everyone that I know the rules and to point out where I think they're going wrong. I'm definitely not the "thought police" - I'm not the theology police, I'm not the interpretation police, I'm not the Holy Spirit police and I don't have all the answers. Being a Christian is not about knowing a load of rules and trying to enforce them. It's not about making other people feel inferior or clamping down when I think they're making a mistake. It's not about pretending that I know everything or giving the impression that I'm right and that I can decree who is "in" or "out" (or "on" or "off" the pitch). As Christians I don't think we should seek to be seen as authority figures by the rest of society. All that does is alienate people and set us up for a fall. And it means that our focus is always on other people and what they're doing rather than on God and what God is doing - and if we lose our focus on God then we start to take ourselves too seriously, thinking we're the most important ones, and quickly everything depends on us and starts to be more about us than about God. So referee as whistle-blowing authority figure or stern-faced judge and pronouncer of punishments - that's not the model for the Christian life that I want anyone to think is appropriate, and I certainly don't want to encourage anyone in that way of thinking.

I think most of all the job of a Christian is to be attentive to what God is doing and to try not to get in the way. As Christians we need to be people who notice where the Spirit is moving, and who realise that it's not all about us. This means looking all around us, and not being so stuck in the church or the Bible that we fail to see where God is really doing something somewhere else. We are not the centre of attention, the heart of the action, but we know who is; and we're always looking, always seeking to discover where the Spirit is at work and to make sure that we're not an obstruction, hindering and constraining the life of the Spirit or tripping up anyone else as they seek to follow Jesus. We have to know and notice where the action is happening, we have to do our best to allow it to flow, and most definitely we have to not get in the way! I believe that the Spirit gives us signs and enables us to see her direction of travel, so that we can give her free passage to move and flow freely. We can choose to ignore these signs if we wish and try and carry on in our old familiar ways, but doing this means that sometimes we *are* then in the way. Then the Spirit will have no hesitation in bypassing us and moving around us in order to enact the plans and purposes of God. And we'll soon be left behind.

I believe that the Spirit is always on the move, seeking to do a new thing, and bringing about change and transformation in the lives of individuals and in the institutions of church and society. And our job is to pay attention and notice what is happening, to keep up with the action but to realise that it's not all about us - to not get in the way! So I'm praying that God will help me to not get in the way more and more, so that I might be a person through whom and with whom God can work. After all, God is the star player, and I want everyone to be looking at God and not at me.

Jess says- Peace begins with smile - with some summer groans



What do bees say in summer? It's swarm, isn't it?!

What do you do if you get rejected from a job at a sun cream factory? Re-apply!

Why don't oysters share their pearls? Because they're shellfish!

How do you make an octopus laugh? With ten-tickles!

[Toothill Church website](#)

