



THE FRIDAY EMAIL

Friday 5th July 2024



The Friday Thought from our Vicar – Father Simon:

When you woke up this morning, were you amazed at the result of the General Election? As I write this, I don't know the result. However, my instinct is that most of us won't have been amazed. After all, whilst it takes quite a bit for us to be surprised, amazed is a whole other level. Amazed is: "Well, I didn't see that coming!"



That said, perhaps, by the time you read this, I am truly amazed and Rishi is still the resident of 10 Downing Street. I'll be even more amazed if I wake to find Count Binface contacting removal companies for quotations!



Of course, being amazed is a very human response. Whilst animals can be surprised if, for instance, you approach them and they're not expecting it, amazement, it strikes me, is another level of surprise altogether; one which requires the cognitive processing of information which even the brightest pooch isn't able to do, despite the number of dog-owners who think their beloved pet is a sure bet for '*Brain of Britain*'.

But what about Jesus? Many believe that, being God, Jesus possessed all the knowledge, power, and insight of God within him, surely making it impossible for him to be amazed. Yet here we have, in this Sunday's Gospel reading (see below), an example of Jesus being amazed in disappointment.

As the Son of God, how can that be? Yes - we read that Jesus' home town are offended by his teaching and he's unable to do any miracles there, but surely Jesus, as the almighty Son of God, would have seen it coming? (We're starting to head into that region of conversation I had with a couple of people in my barber's the other day: 'Why doesn't the Bible mention dinosaurs?' With Jesus' inability to predict his home town's response to him, what else didn't he know about? Did he know about dinosaurs? And, if he did, why didn't he mention them?!!)

If your perception of Jesus is more like a spiritual 'Superman' rather than Jesus the God-Man, then you might need to rethink your perspective of our Saviour. He wasn't, for example, pretending to experience suffering on the cross in the way humanity suffers because he was immune, through some superhero strength, to the pain. The emotional and physical pain Jesus suffered on the cross was real, and reveals the human vulnerability, despite being the Son of God, that he shares with us.



No! Jesus is fully human and fully divine, now sitting on the throne of heaven, having taken his wounds of suffering - both physical and emotional - with him back to heaven. By fully experiencing what it's like to live as a human, God drew even closer to us, understanding, first hand, our pain and our suffering.

And so, born fully human yet fully divine, Jesus is able to be amazed because, as we know, being amazed is part of our everyday human living.



And there are two moments in the gospel accounts of Jesus' earthly life where we learn of Jesus being amazed. In both Luke chapter 7 and Matthew chapter 8 Jesus hears about the sick condition of a Roman centurion's servant and hears just how much faith the centurion - a gentile - has in Jesus' ability to potentially heal the servant. In both accounts, we're told that Jesus is 'amazed' by the centurion's faith.

And the second moment when Jesus is amazed in the gospels appears, as I say, in this Sunday's gospel passage when Jesus is unable to make an impact in his home town. In contrast to the centurion's belief in him, in Jesus' home town the people say 'No thanks', resulting in Jesus being amazed at their unbelief.



Of course, in a world of advertising hyperbole when even loft insulation can be described as 'amazing', we've become rather immune to true levels of amazement. But on these two occasions, Jesus' amazement forced him to reassess his views - but in different directions.

He was no doubt positively 'blown away' by the faith of the gentile centurion, and no doubt negatively and disappointingly 'taken aback' by the reception of his home town.



I'm sure life for Jesus was far from dull. But we continue to live in a world where, for many, the majority of the week is a mundane experience, with everything routine; a world in which, at the end of the day, the question 'How was your day?' is answered by many with the single word 'Fine'. So a moment of positive, pleasurable, genuine

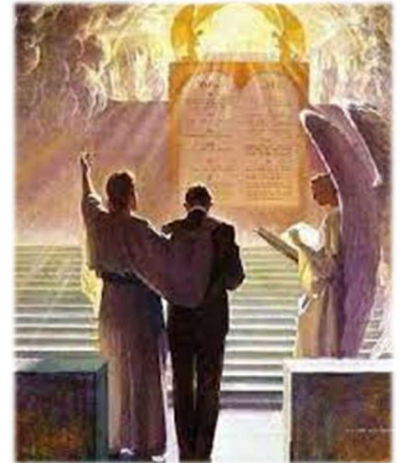
amazement can be such a wonderful experience - like a beautiful shooting star: rare and uplifting. (No wonder the advertisers so frequently use that word 'amazing'!)

So what are the things that have truly amazed you recently? I hope the positive, joyful moments of amazement have outnumbered the negative, sad occasions.

But a further and more important thing for us all to ponder is: What will amaze Jesus when, in due course, he reviews what we've done with our life?

He will no doubt be amazed. But will he be amazed in delight or amazed in disappointment?

Yours in Christ,
Fr Simon



[The collect for the Sixth Sunday after Trinity](#)

Merciful God,
you have prepared for those who love you
such good things as pass our understanding:
pour into our hearts such love toward you
that we, loving you in all things and above all things,
may obtain your promises,
which exceed all that we can desire;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen.



➤ READINGS FOR THIS SUNDAY

The book of the prophet Ezekiel, chapter 2, verses 1-5:

The Lord said to me: O mortal, stand up on your feet, and I will speak with you. And when he spoke to me, a spirit entered into me and set me on my feet; and I heard him speaking to me. He said to me, Mortal, I am sending you to the people of Israel, to a nation of rebels who have rebelled against me; they and their ancestors have transgressed against me to this very day. The descendants are impudent and stubborn. I am sending you to them, and you shall say to them, 'Thus says the Lord God.' Whether they hear or refuse to hear (for they are a rebellious house), they shall know that there has been a prophet among them.

Gradual Psalm 123:

- 1 To you I lift up my eyes,
to you that are enthroned in the heavens.
- 2 As the eyes of servants look to the hand of their master,
or the eyes of a maid to the hand of her mistress,
- 3 So our eyes wait upon the Lord our God,
until he have mercy upon us.

Response: Have mercy upon us, O Lord, have mercy.

- 4 Have mercy upon us, O Lord, have mercy upon us,
for we have had more than enough of contempt.
- 5 Our soul has had more than enough of the scorn of the arrogant,
and of the contempt of the proud.

Response

St Mark's Gospel, chapter 6, verses 1-13:

Jesus came to his home town, and his disciples followed him. On the sabbath he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astounded. They said, 'Where did this man get all this? What is this wisdom that has been given to him? What deeds of power are being done by his hands! Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon, and are not his sisters here with us?' And they took offence at him. Then Jesus said to them, 'Prophets are not without honour, except in their home town, and among their own kin, and in their own house.' And he could do no deed of power there, except that he laid his hands on a few sick people and cured them. And he was amazed at their unbelief.

Then he went about among the villages teaching. He called the twelve and began to send them out two by two, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits. He ordered them to take nothing for their journey except a staff; no bread, no bag, no money in their belts; but to wear sandals and not to put on two tunics. He said to them, 'Wherever you enter a house, stay there until you leave the place. If any place will not welcome you and they refuse to hear you, as you leave, shake off the dust that is on your feet as a testimony against them.' So they went out and proclaimed that all should repent. They cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many who were sick and cured them.

➤ **Details of Sunday 9.30am Parish Eucharist which is also live-streamed**

- ❖ President: Fr Simon (Vicar)
- ❖ Preacher: Fr Simon (Vicar)
- ❖ Sunday Club: Gilly Squire
- ❖ Reader: Jane Johnson
- ❖ Intercessions: Debbie Cubitt
- ❖ Mass setting: Mass of St Thomas (music: David Thorne)
- ❖ Processional: Praise, my soul, the King of heaven (music: John Goss)
- ❖ Gradual: Lord of all hopefulness (tune: Slane)
- ❖ Offertory: Amazing grace (tune: Amazing Grace)
- ❖ Communion: My God, and is thy table spread (tune: Rockingham)
- ❖ Motet: Ave Maria (music: Franz Schubert)
- ❖ Final: Forth in the peace of Christ we go (tune: Duke Street)



INTERCESSIONS FOR THIS WEEK

For the world-wide Church:

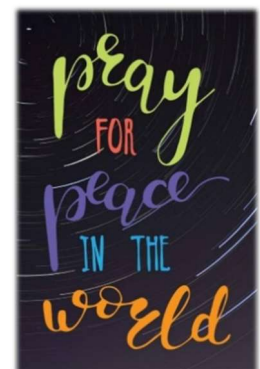
- ❖ Bishop Alan - Bishop of St Albans
- ❖ Bishop Jane - Bishop of Hertford
- ❖ The Venerable Janet Mackenzie - Archdeacon of Hertford
- ❖ The Revd Gaz Tracey - Area Dean - whilst on study leave
- ❖ Archbishop Justin - Archbishop of Canterbury
- ❖ In the Anglican cycle of prayer for the Province of the Indian Ocean
- ❖ In the Diocesan cycle of prayer for the parish and people of Hemel Hempstead, Grovehill and Woodhall Farm in the Hemel Hempstead deanery
- ❖ In our Deanery cycle of prayer for the people of St Michael's, Bishop's Stortford
- ❖ For those being martyred or persecuted for their Christian faith



[\(https://releaseinternational.org/\)](https://releaseinternational.org/)

For our world:

- ❖ For our nation as it reflects upon the result of the General Election.
- ❖ For the victims of Israel and Gaza during the current Israel-Palestinian conflict.
- ❖ For the people of Ukraine, be they in their homeland or refugees in Europe.
- ❖ For just and peaceful governance throughout the world, not least in Russia, Ukraine, Israel, Palestine, Sudan, Somalia, China, Haiti, Lebanon, Afghanistan, Nigeria, Yemen, Iran, Pakistan, Myanmar, North Korea, and the DRC.
- ❖ For the victims of conflict, terrorism, violence, or tragedy.
- ❖ For those suffering from the effects of climate change or natural disaster.
- ❖ For those working to reduce the effects of climate change.



- ❖ For those working to relieve suffering throughout the world.
- ❖ For emergency and keyworkers, scientists and leaders, medical and care workers, and, in this country, particularly for the NHS and social services.
- ❖ For those being unjustly held captive or being persecuted
- ❖ For those who have been abused in body, mind, or spirit.
- ❖ For those who are victims of modern-day slavery and human trafficking.
- ❖ For those who are victims of famine or poverty, praying for the work of the *Shiksha Rath* educational project in New Delhi which we support.
- ❖ For those struggling with addiction.
- ❖ For those who are homeless, and for the work of the *Holy Trinity Night Shelter* in Bishop's Stortford which we support.
- ❖ For those involved in the migrant and refugee situation.
- ❖ For the work of organisations which are working to bring an end to poverty.

For our town:

- ❖ For the staff and patients of our Central Surgery, the Princess Alexandra, Rivers, and Herts & Essex hospitals, for our care homes, social services, voluntary care sector.
- ❖ For Sawbridgeworth Town Council, including our Mayor, Cllr Reese Smith.
- ❖ For East Herts District Council and our councillors.
- ❖ For local businesses in these uncertain times.
- ❖ For our emergency services.
- ❖ For groups and organisations, including The Hailey Centre and library.
- ❖ For our youth organisations and uniformed brigades.
- ❖ For the pupils, teachers, staff, governors, and parents associated with our local schools, including our church school in Spellbrook.
- ❖ For those feeling isolated and lonely; particularly those living alone.
- ❖ For those who are concerned about making ends meet, and for organisations such as Harlow Foodbank and the evangelical church's pop-up store seeking to bring aid.



For the people of:

Sunday:	Bullfields, Walnut Tree Crescent & The Mews
Monday:	Harlow Road, Beech Drive & Oak Drive
Tuesday:	Rushfield & Beechfield
Wednesday:	Bell Street, Foreland Place, Granary Court, The Gables & The Old Stables
Thursday:	Bell Mead & Copper Court
Friday:	Ladywell Prospect
Saturday:	Brook End & Burnside

For the sick, tired, and bereaved, including:

Sue Adams, Angela Alder, June Allen, Linda Bowler, Pam Brown, John Butler, Barbara Carter, Robert Davis, Rachael Dineen, Elsa Duce, Katrina Evangeli, Kathy Hanratty, John Ireland, Steven, Wendy, Julie Patterson, Jackie White, Mark White.

For those who have died, including:

- ❖ Geoff Pavely RIP
- ❖ Victor Baltrop RIP
- ❖ Heather Riches RIP
- ❖ Jennifer Snowden RIP

For our dearly departed ones, remembered at their year's mind:

- ❖ Joan Burrell RIP (9th July)

*God of mission,
who alone brings growth to your Church,
send your Holy Spirit
to give vision to our planning, wisdom to our actions,
joy to our worship, and power to our witness.
Help our church to grow in numbers,
in spiritual commitment to you,
and in service to our local community,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.*

NOTICES

➤ Services and events in church this week:

(CW = Common Worship

BCP = Book of Common Prayer)

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|---|----------------------|--|
| ❖ Sun 7th July
<i>Sixth after Trinity</i> | 8am
9.30am | Holy Communion (BCP)
Parish Eucharist (CW) with Sunday Club
<i>Followed by refreshments in Church House</i> |
| ❖ Mon, Tues, Thurs & Fri | 9am | Said Morning Prayer (CW) |
| ❖ Wed 10 th July | 9.30am
10am | Said Morning Prayer (CW)
Said Eucharist (CW) |
| ❖ Sat 13 th July | 3pm | Wedding of
Mr Richard Mason & Miss Daisy Sinfield |
| ❖ Sun 14th July
<i>Seventh after Trinity</i> | 8am
9.30am | Said Eucharist (CW)
Parish Eucharist (CW) with Sunday Club
<i>Followed by refreshments in Church House</i> |

➤ No Choral Evensong this Sunday

Being the first Sunday of the month, some may be expecting choral evensong this Sunday afternoon. However, as it's the holiday season for several of our choir members, we've taken the decision to cancel it. The next choral evensong will be at 5pm on the afternoon of Sunday 28th July at the close of our flower festival.



News from our associated CofE school in Spellbrook

Mr Fisher - our Headteacher - writes:

At the end of last week, Emerald Class (Yrs 3&4) enjoyed a lovely day out at Rye Meads Nature Reserve. The weather was slightly overcast but perfect for spending the day outside exploring the natural habitat and finding out about minibeasts and their habitats. They went bug hunting with large nets, then had assistance from the experts at the centre to identify what they'd caught. It was mainly beetles, spiders,



and one group were delighted with the grasshopper they'd netted. They were very careful as they used a brush to gently move the creatures so they could examine them closely. They also got involved in pond dipping and used magnifying glasses and identification charts to name what they'd caught. Newts, pond skaters and water snails were the most prevalent catch of the day. They learned more about the climate by using devices to test air and soil temperature as well as to measure the brightness of the daylight. They then focused more on plants and, with a number of clues, they set out to identify a number of trees. When they'd found the correct leaf, they were then able to find out what tree it had come from. The parents who went along were a great help and the children had a really enriching and enjoyable day.

And then last Saturday was the PTA Summer Fair, which was a great success. The volunteers - alongside school staff - worked very hard to provide a great day on the school field. The weather played its part, with it being sunny but not too hot; the perfect temperature to enjoy a burger or hot dog with a chilled drink at lunchtime, followed by an ice lolly later on during the afternoon. There were also plenty of cakes and tasty, sweet crêpes.



But it wasn't just about food and sitting in the sunshine. The children enjoyed having glitter tattoos and hair braids, racing plastic ducks, building a Lego model in record time, making bracelets, and whizzing down the giant slide or helter skelter. The majority of the adults were more content to browse the stalls and see what they could win from the tombolas



and raffle. The bottle tombola was very popular! It was lovely to see so many of the school community enjoying the day, and we even welcomed some of the new families who are going to be joining us in September. Thank you to everyone involved for their hard work.

Have a lovely weekend,

Mr Fisher

➤ **Content for the Newsletter**

If you have a notice for the Friday Email, please let us know by lunchtime on Thursday.

Website: www.sawbridgeworthchurch.org.uk

Facebook: www.facebook.com and search for 'Great St Mary's, Sawbridgeworth'

YouTube: www.youtube.com and search for 'Great St Mary's, Sawbridgeworth'

➤ **Contact us**

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Thank you for your ongoing support of Great St Mary's



Derek always liked to have a bit of a break during his longer sermons!



Great St Mary's, Sawbridgeworth

Flower Festival 2024

Saturday 27th July - 10am to 5pm
Sunday 28th July - 12noon to 3pm

Theme 'Children's books'

Children's activities in the church yard

Treasure Hunt

*Refreshments and
grand raffle at
Church House*

FREE ENTRY



Sponsored Bike 'n Hike
BEDS AND HERTS HISTORIC CHURCHES TRUST

Bike 'n Hike

Saturday 14 September 2024
9am to 5pm



For more information please make contact:



- ▶ Have fun visiting over 600 churches and chapels
- ▶ Raise funds for your local church or chapel
- ▶ Help save other churches in Beds and Herts



BEDS & HERTS
Historic Churches Trust

Bike 'n Hike in association with the national *Ride + Stride*
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