

GRAPEVINE

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The NOW time has come

Matthew 28:19-20 ESV ¹⁹ *Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,* ²⁰ *teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."*

My faith journey and a message for the next steps.

I guess my faith journey began as a young child growing up with parents who had no doubts about God's existence and who brought me up to know He was there. But Dad had a problem with church, so Mum, being loyal, waited until he was ready. So, it was when I was about 9 I guess we started going to 8am Holy communion at St Peter and Paul's Tonbridge (where Wendy Carr is now Associate Vicar!) and then The Family and various other groups followed as I followed my brother Simon from group to group – God remained a head belief rather than a relationship.



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When I was 16, I followed Simon to Hildenborough, where I met a bunch of teenagers at YF (Youth Fellowship). They were so different, and they obviously had a relationship with Jesus that showed in their lives and in their eyes. I went home transformed – Jesus made the journey from Head to Heart - and life has never been the same since.

The Hildenborough YF years were fantastic and so helpful in establishing my faith foundations, eventually becoming a young leader. I owe so much to Gillian and Brian, to John and Heather, to Steve, and to Carl and Simon (Curates) who opened their homes and showed us how to live lives 'all in' for Christ, which is a model Kate and I have *tried* to follow. I remember one woman saying to me that it was all right being passionate about Jesus as a youngster, but I would grow out of it – sorry Barbara – still waiting!

Christian life is the best life. It is the life as God intended. We were so fortunate that Hildenborough was alive to God's Holy Spirit – and The Spirit has been my power for life ever since.

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St John's News

'Until October,.. How can that be! Have a lovely two months I concluded the August news,.. Well, it IS October and for some it has been a lovely two months and for others less so.

As July turned into August so Spark happened in our usual spot in Danson park. We were so Blessed with Beautiful weather; many, many families attending; an amazing team from over twenty churches; a lovely happy atmosphere with no challenging issues; God at work as Christian truth was shared. Christian behaviour was being modelled and Everyone was having just so much free, healthy fun and enjoyment.

On the last day were thanked Adam and Kate for their consistent commitment to Spark since it began and rejoiced with them that Spark leadership is in the safe

hands of Bexley Christian Life Centre and Hope Church,.. (and of course St John's Welling too).

August is always a quieter month with many of us away on holidays. However, there was the small excitement of arriving at Church on Sunday 10th August to discover a large tree had fallen on the hall roof!!!! Fortunately no one was hurt and repairs are underway.

'Unlimited', is a Christian camping holiday which our youngsters had the opportunity to attend along with Dubster members from BCLC. The reports are that it was so VERY good that bookings have already been made for next year!

The news of Sylvia Costi's sudden death came in the middle of Spark week leaving us shocked and sad, and yet knowing beyond all shadow of doubt that, in the words of CS Lewis, Sylvia is now 'beginning Chapter One of the Great Story which no one on earth has read in

which every chapter is better than the one before'. We continue to pray for Harry.

Our lovely new German Koru student Smilla arrived on September 2nd and is already managing; going into schools with CRIBS; getting to know the St John's Welling family; navigating local transport, and the biggest challenge of all, living in Welling Way!

Mushi's major stroke at the beginning of September is resulting in a long time in hospital. As I write, he has just been moved to Lewisham hospital. We pray for steady improvement in every area of his body affected.

Adam and Kate's retirement and good-byes will be upon us as you read this. More next time,.. suffice to say what a privilege and comfort to face the future knowing the daily presence of the Good Shepherd. We need to walk closely with Him. Till December, **Estelle Woodcock**

Christian Mission Society: Peru

Many blessings from Rivadavia Banda Sur, Salta.

Many blessings for the faithful church of St. John-Welling that encourages the congregation to support the work of God in the North of Argentina. Your help is a great blessing, thank you very much for blessing us in this way!

May the Lord greatly bless your family, your children and grandchildren. Without a doubt they are a blessing for your lives. Surely it is not easy to meet because "they flew from their nests and have their own homes", however, at opportune moments they share their time as a family.

I currently live in my aunt's house, she has been retired from teaching for a year now, she is single like me. Well, I've been away from home for about 7 years now, although when I have the opportunity I spend time with my family at my father's house. He is 74 years old and my three brothers, two sisters with their children, Virginia with her three daughters and Joselina with her 5 children, and our brother Alexander also live on the same property. The family has grown so the place is getting too small.

However, two years ago my uncle gave me his land, he lent it to a family that has retired, they are from Paraguay. And my uncle moved to another community far

from where we live for work and he is not going to return because he has started a family there. This year I thought about staying longer in my community to dedicate myself to cleaning the place and studying the word of God and supporting more specifically the work of God in El Potrillo, however the situation is different because in the diocese there is much to do to train and educate in responsibilities in order to delegate, "faith without works dies" I think that working together with experienced and trained leaders can encourage each member of the body of Christ to feel useful, we were born to serve in the kingdom of God and to be useful in life. When a person does not feel useful, he becomes depressed and loses hope and even loses the meaning of his life. At least in our context the ideology is like that.

I am encouraging women to feel loved and important before their Creator, and to serve with the love of our Lord from where they have their calling, which may be from where they serve in the community, local Church or ministries in their areas (nuclei), reminding them that they are part of the church of Christ with gifts that come from the Holy Spirit Romans 12:6, and always learning to work based on the love of our Lord Jesus Christ from

where they are "Blossom where you are" Psalm 93:12-13.

Encourage working together supporting our leaders, our pastors, youth and children's teachers in Bible study. Mothers teach their girls to read the word of God in their homes and that is very exciting! We want many children to grow up knowing the word of God to have the opportunity to embrace faith in their lives. I am supporting (in the weeks that I can) the students of the Anglican Training Center in Ingeniero Juárez with practical matters and with pastoral work to encourage them to continue with this task of dedicating time to learn more of the word of God in order to serve in the diocese with more tools.

I am also on the Leadership Training Team that David Stokes and others have dedicated time to for many years to carry out this ministry, "being Capable of Serving" is the motto. This year we began to create a strategic center in an area called Misión Rivadavia Banda Sur de Salta. I ask for prayer so that the work continues in these places because we see that there is a great need for biblical teaching. There is a lot of openness on the part of the leaders of this area and we notice that there are new leaders emerging. Currently, the two strategic centers of meetings are maintained, which are "La Iglesia de Misión la Paz" and "La Iglesia de Barrio Obrero – Ingeniero Juárez." This traveling

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JOBS: Cate Woodcock

When Cate left school, she was initially unsure of what direction to take, but settled on a 3 year general nursing qualification with the aim of becoming a cardiac (heart) nurse. Obstetrics (the care of women before, during and after pregnancy and childbirth) did not appeal, but after her Y2 placement in that area, she was sold on it and changed course. She loved the autonomy it provided. 3 years and she qualified as an SRN, then another 18 months and she was into midwifery. Her first appointment was at Queen Mary's Hospital in Sidcup, from where she also studied for a BSc in Health and Social Care, giving her an interesting breadth of background, in particular in continuity of care.

Cate has relatives in Vancouver, Canada, and after 3 weeks on holiday there, was sold on returning so applied for a role in British Columbia (BC) in a tertiary unit, taking the Canadian health exams to entitle her to work there. BC Women's Hospital wanted to pilot a new scheme Midwifery in the Health Care System (private health care) based on the UK system, following the example of Toronto. A UK midwife had an advantage. Up until then all antenatal care was conducted by the women's Obstetrician (doctor in obstetrics) and post natal care by the Obstetric

Nurses. Doctors were paid per delivery, and there were no midwives. The successful pilot scheme was for midwives to lead and doctors to support, and Cate extended her stay from one to two years.



Whereas in the UK at that time, mothers had choices in their care and delivery, Canada had none, so the scheme was to "empower women to make choices". Returning to the UK and Queen Mary's, Cate continued to innovate over the next 10 years, driving the transfer to a Continuity of Care Programme for midwives to care for women throughout their pregnancy, delivery and the first 6 weeks of life for infants. The team of 6 midwives rotated through the shifts covering both the hospital and community, covering the caseload

between them. It was during this time that she reluctantly attended an Alpha Course at Bishop Ridley with a colleague, and her life changed.

When Queen Mary's closed in 2007, Cate moved to Darent Valley Hospital, Dartford to set up a new innovative midwife led delivery unit in the hospital grounds, an alternative to the medicalised delivery suite in the hospital. This would be all the low risk deliveries, leaving the hospital suite for those with high risk pregnancies or underlying medical conditions. It was not far to go if a straightforward birth suddenly needed intervention. The unit allowed for water births, an aromatherapy service, and freedom of movement with monitoring, and Cate wrote the guidelines for its mode of practice. There is now a midwife led low risk unit on site at all hospitals around the country.

After 10 years, in 2017 Cate fancied a change from low risk midwifery to high risk clinical care, and moved to Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH), Woolwich where for 4 years she was the delivery suite coordinator, a Clinical Lead position, after completing a Masters module in High Risk Obstetrics, and then 2021-22 the Interim Labour Ward Matron. It was an adrenalin inducing unit!

Cate and a colleague constantly noticed there were pinch points in the system, and they wrote a business proposal for suitably qualified and experienced mid-

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seminar lasts 4 years and in each session there are more or less 200 students who come from different Churches or rural communities.

I dedicate myself to studying the word of God a lot in order to share it with others. I study according to the topic that we address in each interest group. I learn a lot from those who have already done pastoral theology and biblical seminars. My dream of many years of doing the biblical seminar is coming true. I am doing it virtually at the Tirano Missionary Seminary in Tartagal, and in fact the financial and prayer contributions help me a lot in this task!

Another of my desires and I am working on it and praying about it is that I want to form a group of biblical study teachers to generate materials in our languages. For the moment at my aunt's house and then "in the meantime" I will do it where I am going to live.

I get a lot out of learning from others in the events in the communities, and I also offer time with the people who approach us to talk about topics from the word of God, their doubts, their concerns. And if possible, be accompanied by another person to learn to listen, share biblical passages and pray for the lives of the Brothers.

But I also need to dedicate time to communicate virtually with teammates. In our context, it is not normal for a person to lock themselves away and sit in front of the computer or do paperwork for a long time at home. But, little by little, they are understanding what life is like in these times. Ha! And they no longer demand physical presence, because they know it is necessary. I think they are patient with me because they have some hope in me for the good of others.

My church, La Santa Trinidad, where my father pastors, is very concerned about generating opportunities to develop talents and gifts for the good of the local church and of others.

Well, I have a lot to share. But I will stop here because we will stay in touch.

With love to the S.J. church.

Mirna

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wives to undertake the mandatory Newborn Infant Physical Examinations necessary prior to discharge from hospital, carried out by Paediatricians (baby doctors) who were often unavailable while seeing to other urgent cases. Discharges were delayed, admissions backed up, deliveries could take place prior to admission and complaints often followed. The proposal was accepted and is now in place, and Cate worked in this way for 2 years prior to her recent retirement. Outcomes: Mums can go home quicker, backing up has gone, and there are less complaints. The one-unit qualification which enabled her to make the proposal is now included in Y2 of midwifery training for all new midwives.

Cate has returned to work post-retirement, initially 3 days a week then 1, with her and 2 others covering this particular role they created. It was warmly welcomed by Obstetricians and has made a real difference to the post-natal system of care. The huge wealth of experience for all 3 staff would otherwise have been lost.

My observation of Cate's employment history is that she has been a real innovator, and has made a significant difference to the world of midwifery.

Kate Foot

My Faith Journey: Adam Foot

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Studying at Thames Poly for my Degree (not always easy), marriage, work as a Civil Engineer, move to St Stephen's Tonbridge, move into teaching engineering, the arrival of Nicola and David, church planting in Tonbridge, and eventual selection for ordained ministry followed, 3 years at Trinity College, Bristol (the best family time EVER!), then my Curacy in Luton, Chatham where I was able to learn so much.

And then St John's Welling – 24 years ago about now we moved into the Vicarage and into your lives. God has been so generous allowing us to be here and serve, and to see Nicola and David flourish because of 3Dub and Dubsters, and grow into 'all in' Christian adults.

So many baptisms (adult immersion outstripping infant I guess by 2 to 1), weddings, funerals (such a precious part of ministry), staying so long has blessed us with so many families where we have become an integral part of their story. And Prayer in the Park, Spark, 24/7 prayer and Soul Survivor (don't throw the baby out with the bath water). Sending so many people off into ministry - lay and ordained, and precious relationships with what has become our second and precious family (that's you!).

SO now – the now time has come (the time to face...). God made it very clear 24 years ago that we should come here, and now He has made it clear it is time for someone else to come and lead St John's in the next part of your journey. So some words of wisdom as I hand over the keys.

1. Remember God is in charge – so don't get in the way!
2. Smile, be nice to people, preach the Gospel and Pray and be filled with the Spirit.

We only have a right to reach people with God's love if we do so in love.

John 3¹⁶ For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷ For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. NIV

As Paul says in 1 Cor 13 – otherwise we are just a clanging gong.

And if we don't preach the FULL Gospel, we are just a nice social club. God's whole truth Old and New Testament MUST remain the bedrock of who we are. A large part of The Church of England is pandering to the world in the mistaken belief that if we become like the world people will flock to us. This is so mistaken.

Isaiah 40:6-8 (ESV)

*⁶A voice says, "Cry!" And I said "What shall I cry?" All flesh is grass, and all its beauty is like the flower of the field. ⁷The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the Lord blows on it; surely the people are grass. ⁸The grass withers, the flower fades, **but the word of our God will stand forever.***

And prayer must be central to our daily walk. It is like breathing. We need to do it to survive as Christians. By ourselves and together. Pray. Pray. Pray. And God is faithful and Just!

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 ESV

¹⁶ Rejoice always, ¹⁷ pray without ceasing, ¹⁸ give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

And as we don't neglect prayer, we must NEVER neglect God's Holy Spirit who longs to dwell in us and empower us for ministry: *Ephesians 5⁸ Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit.*



I look forward to watching St John's as it grows into the next chapter.

Please Play nice – the Wardens and lay team will need you to do so!!

Kate and I will be having a rest and then looking to see where God wants us to *Smile, be nice to people, preach the Gospel and Pray and be filled with the Spirit.* God bless you,

Adam

Rev Adam Foot
Vicar St. John's Welling

House Group: Thamesmead

Last year Kate Foot started a new house group in Thamesmead in response to a need in the area where a number of people coming to St Johns live. The group is a great mix

“Exploring together what it means to follow Jesus”. Have you ever felt there’s a big gap between what you know

of around eight ordinary people at different stages in life and from different backgrounds, some from the area, others not. We meet weekly on a Thursday evening during term time at Harry and Abbey’s house who are wonderful hosts and make everyone feel welcome and relaxed so we can be ourselves.

We catch-up with each other over a cuppa before exploring together thoughts, insights and experiences around a theme or passage, which might be linked to the Sunday service. We were particularly challenged by Prayer Course videos by Pete Greig (especially Unanswered Prayer!), after which we drafted a list of family/friends that are on our hearts that we continue to pray for a touch from Jesus. To help to get to know each other better, we had a five minute slot on a different person each week, where they shared and the group stood alongside and supported them in prayer.

Kate handed over to Geoff and Sabine to facilitate the group which they’ve been doing since April. If you’re interested in exploring with us what it means to follow Jesus, and not in a house group already, why not come and pay us a visit – you’d be most welcome. A cuppa is waiting!



about following Jesus, and living it out in your everyday life?

Most of us probably have! It’s helpful to have a place where we feel comfortable and can explore with others what it means to follow Jesus in our home life, work life and social life, and whatever situations we find ourselves in. A house group can be that.

Poem

God meets us in many different ways. I wrote this on the bus going to The Jam @ St John’s, Holy Spirit led...

Stride, stride out for Jesus for he is true. Stride out on His pathway, where the Holy Spirit wind and waters flow.

Be still, still in his presence, soak up his love for His promised peace remains in all you do.

Stand, stand firm. Mustard seeds to be sown. Watch how your faith grows when trusting in Him, He moves with you.

May the fruits you yield, shine amongst all and the light of Jesus blesses too.

Rest, rest with Him, praise and prayer lifted high, listen to His whispering that will guide you along your way.

Receive, receive His word. Announce His truth and bring the missing sheep in, so that the darkness is shattered every day!

Stride, stride out for Jesus make him your way!

Loretta Gill

Finishing Well like Georgia Bell

My current athletic hero is the lovely Georgia Bell, who happens to be talented, intelligent and beautiful’. I don’t know if she is a Christian, but her life story, thus far, can inspire us Christians, even so.

Georgia (now 30 years old) was a very talented 800meter runner as a teenager, and got a place at the University of Southern California at Berkeley, where she was over-trained and ultimately later gave up athletics, because of too many leg injuries.

But, after the Tokyo Olympics, Georgia’s mum cajoled her into taking up running again, and Georgia got off her couch, and began by running in her local park runs. Her improvement was rapid and she found herself enjoying running again. She then reconnected with her former coaches Trevor Painter and Jenny Meadows, and began to train with their group in Manchester, commuting, fortnightly from London, at weekends, to train with a group also containing the very talented Keeley Hodgkinson.



Georgia finished in front of 1500m athlete Laura Muir, at the Olympic trials, which got her a place in the Great Britain athletics team for the Paris Olympic Games.

She got through the 1500 meters heats, into the final, and ran very well in a very fast race. With a hundred meters to run, it looked very likely that Georgia would finish fifth, but she finished well, and against the odds took third place thus winning a bronze medal,

So now, for the rest of her life Georgia can call herself an Olympic medalist.

So what is the Christian point here? The point is to persevere and never give up any talent you may have, even despite the pain, and for us, to persevere at what is our profoundly important Christian faith journey, for the sake of our souls and our promised eternal life.

Aim to persist and finish well, and a much better reward than Georgia’s Olympic bronze awaits each one of us.

Mike Cosser