

There are seasons in one's life and for many of us this last month or so has been a season of loss. Our thoughts and prayers are with those in our villages who have lost someone dear to them, but our sorrow is lifted by the sure knowledge that through the death and resurrection of Jesus death is not the end, simply a different way of living. For a time we no longer see loved ones, but their presence is with us, with memories of time together triggered by sights, sounds and experiences as we continue to live on.

Our Parish Church family has lost a significant member from each village recently. From Clapham, Pat Fowler who was a regular helper with the mowing at Clapham Church, helping to keep the churchyard looking cared for; from Patching, Mary, Lady Best, who for so many years sang with the church choir at Clapham and at Patching, as well as arranging beautiful flower displays at Patching Church; from Findon, our Tower Captain and bellringer Barbara Harbut, who also rang at weddings held in Clapham Church. All three leave a gap among our congregations and villages, along with so many happy memories of conversations and time spent together. Also from Findon, our prayers are with Evelyn our Sacristan and Verger and her family at the loss of her husband Denis, and with Irene and Richard Adams at the tragic death of their son-in-law, Mark Long.

On a happier note, Jill Schiller is thankfully now home from hospital and doing well. It is a testament to our village how neighbours and friends have supported and cared for her since her discharge as she gradually regains her strength. John Croft has had successful surgery to remove his appendix and our prayers are with him as he continues to heal.

Staying with the positive, we had the most incredible evening of music in Findon Church on 15<sup>th</sup> June when Graham Kendrick treated us to a selection of his compositions over many years, mostly familiar but with a couple of new ones too. He was supported by Jason Carter, who played a really interesting and versatile instrument called a harp-guitar (look it up online to find out more about this instrument) and everyone there (between 130 and 140 of us) really enjoyed singing along. Graham also introduced some of his songs with heartwarming stories of how he was inspired to write them by his own experiences. We ended with 'Shine Jesus, shine' (of course!) with the recommendation to turn towards the door and reach out in the repeat of the last chorus, as a symbol of our taking out the message of Jesus' love into our community; very powerful! Thunderous applause resulted in one last song as an encore, taking the end of his performance to almost 10pm, with a long drive back to Kent for him and his team. Thank you to all the men who helped set up and dismantle the stage, to Wendy for typing up words for the screens and printing copies 'just in case' and thanks to the school for lending it to us and a very big thank you to Graham Langford for all the time he put into organising this wonderful evening.

So, our lives have their ups and downs, their joys and sorrows, but through it all, we can be confident that our God is always with us to support and strengthen us when we need it.

Every blessing,

*Helena*