



After researching different ways to engage online, our youth group Rooted was able to restart meeting, but on Zoom – they are such a blessing to our church. It was so important to keep that connection with young people – to just take some time out of the week to worship together, play games and encourage them to keep going on their journeys with Christ. They particularly liked to laugh at my general knowledge when we challenged each other in a quiz!

Together we chose the name ‘Rooted’, based on the Bible verse from Ephesians 3:17–18: “And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord’s holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ”. This has helped us to remember that through all these unsettling times, our roots and connections are in Christ, and that

we need to show these roots and Christ’s love to the people around us.

We won’t be able to go into schools for some time to deliver collective worship, but we have had great fun thinking of enjoyable ways to record worship for teachers to play in class. Over the last few weeks I’ve recorded the lost sheep from our farm, and I’ve climbed a tree for the story of Zacchaeus! I also had to learn how to edit videos, but this has really strengthened our relationship with the local school, and helped the teachers who are having to cope and adapt in so many new ways.

Going forward, it’s going to be more important than ever to get creative about worship and how we can reach out as a church. I feel really excited to see where God takes me, to keep looking for the light in the darkness and keep pushing on those new doors, making those spaces for God to come in and do his stuff!

A host of useful information and resources to help you during this time can be found via www.peterborough-diocese.org.uk/coronavirus/coronavirus.

Remember, remember...

November – 1st: All Saints, 2nd: All Souls, 5th: Guy Fawkes, 8th: Remembrance, 11th: Armistice... 22nd: Christ the King (and 29th is Advent Sunday this year). Lots of church, community, and civic highlights. This year still very real, and very important – but subdued and maybe overshadowed by the virus.

Remembering still matters though. Not just wars and those lost in them or damaged by them, not just those currently in our armed forces – though we mustn’t minimise that at all. But we need to remember our story, our history (even Guy Fawkes and his co-conspirators). We need to remember our Church story, and who we are as the inheritors of all the saints, named and unnamed. We need to remember those we have lost, those who have gone before us into eternity. And above all, we need to remember that Jesus is still Lord, that Christ is still King, High King, Lord of lords and King of kings.

In these strange days of covid, apparently running through the dark winter ahead, we need hope and light. In a sense, some of that comes through our support for each other, our continued self-discipline for the common good, and the scientific endeavour to find a cure or at least a vaccine. But in the

deepest sense, hope and light come only through Christ – and we are assured of that by remembering the past.

Ultimately we have hope, and light at the end of every tunnel, because God is faithful. Scripture and Church history point so consistently to a merciful, saving, promise-keeping, faithful God. Nothing “in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord”. “God is faithful, and he will not let you be tested beyond your strength.” “Come to me, all you who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.”

Remember, remember, what a faithful God we have. Remember, remember, his faithfulness to the saints of old. Remember, remember, that Jesus is King. Remember, remember, that he promises to put all things right.

With best wishes

+Donald
Bishop of Peterborough



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Peterborough to Land's End? On your bike!

Michael Moore, Vicar of St Mary's Church, Peterborough, got on his exercise bike in August for a fundraising challenge. Here is his story of just how hard it was...

Each year St Mary's Church chooses a specific local charity to support, and this year it chose Peterborough Foodbank. As a result, a fundraising garden party is held at St Mary's Vicarage every summer. However, this year, my wife Sue and I could not, as we usually do, fill people full of cakes and gently (and reverently) extract money from you! So instead, in a heat of madness, I said, "I will cycle to Land's End on my exercise bike".

The distance from Peterborough to Land's End was 374 miles and I divided this into seven days – thus 54 miles per day.

Notionally, I fixed a place in my mind where I would like to aim for each day – the places were Newport Pagnell, Swindon, Bristol, Taunton, Chagford, Bodmin and Land's End.

I knew that it would take about four to five hours a day so I would have to fit my normal work around it all.

The first thing was to split the day into three sessions, and then each session into three-mile stints. I would set off, do the first three miles then stop, walk around the bedroom where the bike is, then walk downstairs and go back up again. I found this would allow the blood to find the numb areas, so as to refresh them before getting straight back on to the bike.



Boredom soon came into play. I kept looking at the speedometer and, as it seemed to slow down, I tried to amuse myself by looking out of the window. This did not work. So I said morning prayer, midday prayer and evening prayer whilst peddling.

As I got more proficient, I started to send emails whilst peddling and making phone calls. Who says men cannot multi-task?!

After day two, soreness started to be a problem. One church member told me to have a bath when I

finished each night. That sounded good advice, but I was so tired after the last session I had a job to get out of the bath! One other member told me to put two banana skins in my shorts so as to ease things along. I did not do this because I didn't want any slip-ups!

So I motored on and prayed as I went along, knowing that God would get me through it because He always has and always will. All I kept thinking of on day four was those people losing their jobs once furlough ends and being short of food. Jesus explicitly tells us to feed the hungry, so I kept on.

When not praying, I listened to two documentaries about the Falklands War – it was really interesting because they had accounts from both sides. I recall

the war very clearly and how I was involved – I was working in a foundry at the time and we worked 18 hours a day for two weeks to make spare parts for the troops' vehicles as they steamed down to the islands. When you hear these real-life stories, you are very grateful for what you have.

After a week of cycling, I finally 'arrived' at Land's End on the Friday night at 7pm and was sorely glad to have done it!

I was glad too that I have not (so far) had to fight in a war.

I was glad that I had raised some money for the Peterborough Foodbank and for the Church.

And I was really glad that I did not have to sit on a bike the following day!

Lockdown log

Nat Stiles is one of two new Mission Enablers (along with Sarah Howes) who joined the Gen2 project in September. She caught up with us to talk about her experiences of the last few months.

I am very lucky to be based in two different churches in our Diocese (St Peter and St Paul, Uppingham and St Andrew, Whissendine) which gives me the opportunity to be involved in different areas of ministry. I am passionate about intergenerational church, where each generation connects together to worship God.

Although the last few months have seen so many restrictions, it has also given us a chance to try new and exciting ways to worship and stay connected.

Lockdown gave me an opportunity to pause, pray and fully think about where God was calling me to be. As a mum, I wanted to support parents/carers, so I turned my energy to a weekly newsletter, which included a short reflection and different links to ideas about online family-friendly worship. I also completed a mental health First Aid course, and I hope to be able to offer support to families and schools.

Story continues on back page