



NEWSLETTER ❖ TRINITY SUNDAY

Dear friends

People sometimes kindly give me book-tokens at Christmas giving an alibi for visiting one of my favourite local shops. One resulting purchase is providing reading for me on days off. Neil McLynn's *Ambrose of Milan* seeks to provide an approach of neither hagiography nor denigration in his analysis of Milanese Church and State politics in the late Roman Empire. What could result in a muffled and sterile analysis is neither but shows how St Ambrose was able to deploy his considerable gifts both persistently and deftly at a turning point in the Church's history, sometimes at considerable risk to his life.

Ambrose is famous for inventing antiphonal singing, writing and popularising hymns, the popularisation of religious life for woman, and baptising St Augustine. He also promoted what we understand as orthodox teaching about the Holy Trinity at a time when that stance was a minority position in much of the Latin Church. Successive emperors either avoided clarity on Christian doctrine because it was divisive, or promoted clergy who repudiated the Nicene Creed because they were themselves uncomfortable with assigning full divinity to the Son or the Holy Spirit. Somehow, in this fractious context, Ambrose was elected as Bishop of Milan before he was even baptised, let alone ordained. He then survived everything from threats of decapitation from senior courtiers, embassies deep in enemy territory, to imperial coups on his doorstep. He emerges as a matchless impresario for Christian life and social cohesion during an era marked by a dangerous mixture of political incompetence and proud window-dressing.

While seeking to avoid denigrating what we must hope are the best possible efforts for the common good of those in authority, some might detect here certain similarities with our own context. Reference to principles - religious or political - is frequently presented in our time as the divisive course, or is shunned in order to avoid thinking any deeper than for what is expedient, or again derided as the preserve of boffins. Trinity Sunday is a fitting time to ponder whether the form of Christian teaching we have imbibed and share is of importance great or small. Quirks of history with no bearing on today; the burdensome baggage of the past that hampers our Christian agility? Or - just possibly - could doctrine be the collected witness of Christians who encountered the glory of the living God, and then left signposts to help us share their experience of being mysteriously transformed into the likeness of Christ, so we might share more of his reconciling love in our wounded world?

Fr Alasdair

THE WEEK AHEAD

The Rector will again be on leave on Monday as well as his day off on Tuesday: Morning and Evening Prayer will be placed on the website by kind members of the congregation; Mass will hopefully be celebrated on both Monday and Tuesday but without being webcast on Tuesday.

Another Zoom meeting (bring your own coffee or tea) is scheduled for **1000 on Wednesday**.

To Join Zoom Meeting at 1000 on Wednesday:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82546386442?pwd=Nklvc005SGINVIIdDSIJTZEFHalkUT09>

Meeting ID: 825 4638 6442

Password: 4mkGii

To join Zoom Compline at **2100 on Wednesdays**:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87820265205?pwd=V3dFMFZLRUk0SjBnMEtKRi9KSHdxZz09>

Meeting ID: 878 2026 5205

Password: 2CYC3z

A reminder that, wherever possible, audio recordings of services are being shared on the church website here:

<https://www.allsaints-standrews.org.uk/category/virtualservices/>

Thank you to those providing audio files for various parts of today's Sung Mass and especially to the Revd Anne Haselhurst for providing the Homily, and Andrew Macintosh and members of the Choir for recording and editing William Byrd's Mass for Three Voices.

Please note that the Mass on Thursday this week will be sung for the feast of **Corpus Christi**. The Revd Roxanne Campbell, a deacon in the Diocese of Brechin, had agreed to preach for us and is happily still providing a homily. Sadly there will be no Procession or Benediction this year but the audio file of the Mass should be posted on the church website by early afternoon.

HOMILY FOR TRINITY SUNDAY

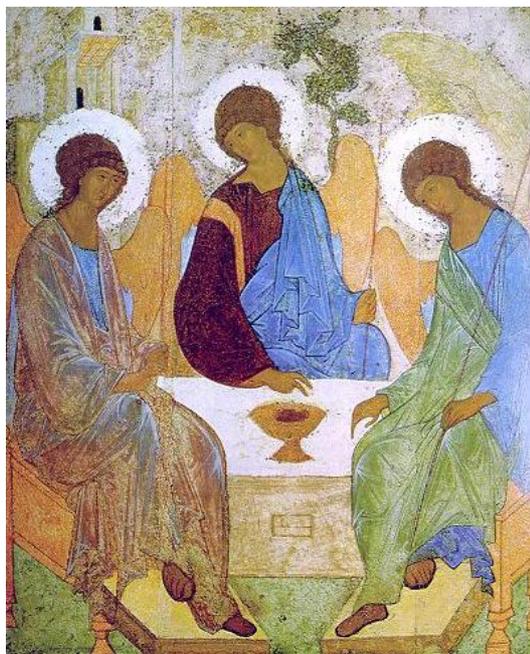
Trinity Sunday isn't the easiest day to preach on, partly because it seems to be limited in its theme to a single knotty problem of Christian Doctrine and partly because that problem is so very knotty that we strain to find a picture to illustrate it satisfactorily.

The doctrine of the Trinity began with experience. The first followers of Jesus were Jews: strict monotheists, who took seriously the first commandment that God is *One* and that they should have no other gods beside him. But after their experience of the Resurrection they found themselves beginning to use language about Jesus that was the same language they used about God. And after the experience of Pentecost they found they needed yet another term to explain their conviction that God lived within them in a way he had not done before.

It took about 400 years before a doctrine to make sense of this was fully formulated, but whether that could improve on the *actual* experience that *each* Christian *must* have is, perhaps, doubtful. Still, it seemed to be necessary to exclude misunderstandings about the Christian faith, as any study of

some of the wilder flights of fancy that some early Christians made will quickly demonstrate (not to mention similar wild flights of fancy still to be found in writers like Dan Brown!). Since then, preachers have tried to use various images to try to explain what we mean when we say that God is Three, but at the same time, One.

St. Patrick famously used a shamrock, with its three leaves joined together on one stem. I have more than once heard water being used as an illustration, in its three forms of ice, liquid water and steam. You will often find, sometimes in stained glass windows, abstract images used to illustrate the Trinity.



My own favourite illustration is the famous icon painted by the Russian icon painter Andrei Rublev. The title of his painting is *The Visitors of Abraham* recalling the three angelic visitors who told Abraham of the forthcoming birth of Isaac, but Abraham doesn't feature in the picture at all as the three visitors have long been interpreted as an early reference to the Trinity. You may well have seen a copy of the icon, for it is very famous, but if you haven't, I have put a copy of it on the copy of my sermon that is on the newsletter.

The picture shows three figures sitting around three sides of a round table. Your first thought might be that the figure in the centre is meant to be God the Father, as the central member of the Holy Trinity (it was certainly mine), but you would be wrong. God the Father is the figure on the left of the picture, dressed in robes so filmy he almost disappears, which is appropriate, as it is unusual for the Father to be depicted in art at all, for traditionally we think of God the Father as the One whom we cannot see. Certainly the Jews believe that God is so awesome and terrifying that one cannot see him and live.

The figure on the right is God the Holy Spirit, dressed in robes the colour of some of the most important parts of God's creation: green as the predominant colour to be found in nature, and the blue of water – the waters over which the Holy Spirit brooded at the beginning of creation, bringing order out of chaos, the waters that still sustain life.

The figure in the centre of the picture, then, is Christ, dressed in the red robes of his sacrifice. His hand is stretched out in blessing and also points to the elements of the Eucharist.

What makes the picture important though, is that there is a fourth place at the front of the table, and that place is empty. That place is for you, the viewer, as you look at the picture, meditate on it and finally find yourself drawn into it.

It's important because belief in God as Trinity is not just about what God *is*, but about what he *does*. And it is less about words that we say than it is about what we do. And that is reflected in the readings that are usually read on Trinity Sunday.

The first reading we had this morning doesn't speak explicitly of God as Trinity, but it does speak of the work God does in creation, for it is the first of the creation stories in Genesis, and sums it all up at the end: "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all their multitude. And on the seventh day God finished the work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all the work that he had done." The second creation story follows on from it, and it is in this story that

God charges humanity to be good stewards of his creation, something we have increasingly failed to do.

Until the covid19 pandemic overtook all the other news, one of the biggest stories in the news was all about creation: about climate change and the urgency to do something about it, and about the catastrophic loss of biodiversity which our thirst for progress over the millennia has caused.

Now that so many of us are staying home, when fewer vehicles are polluting the air and causing noise, we are much more aware of God's, rather than humankind's creation: the birds are easier to hear and the air is easier to breathe. On our daily walks, perhaps we have been noticing nature more than usual. Sales of bikes have gone up. Many people have discovered they can work at home, and that it's just as easy to do business using video calls as it is to drive, or take the train to meet people in person. But when this is all over, we go back to the 'old normal', or will we make real and important changes to our way of life? I hope so, but it remains to be seen.

Paul is probably quoted in our second lesson because he seems to be the first historically, to speak of God as Trinity: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with all of you." It is a formula we often use in prayer, but again, like the experience of Isaiah, it is not meant to be taken as a doctrinal statement. Instead, Paul seems to suggest that such a statement about God can only come out of our experience of living as God would have us live: "Brothers and sisters, put things in order, listen to my appeal, agree with one another, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you."

As God himself is an example of perfect, harmonious community, Paul seems to be saying, so we can only truly be his children, if our own communities are loving and harmonious. And that brings me, inevitably, I'm afraid, to the story which has now almost overtaken the story of the pandemic: the murder of George Floyd by police in Minneapolis, the violent aftermath that provoked and the response of President trump, which has only served to deepen division. My own feelings have been of both anger and sorrow. The United States likes to think of itself as a diverse, yes, but largely Christian country, and yet more than a century and a half after the end of the Civil War, and the abolition of slavery African-Americans are still all too often regarded as second class citizens and by many as a threat, simply because of who they are. And I pray that there will be an end to this, which will require both a change of heart by ordinary people, but also the commitment of those in leadership, and that seems to be sadly lacking.

And so we come to our Gospel: Jesus giving his disciples a commission: "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, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you." Notice that he doesn't simply say, "Go and baptise them", he says "make disciples of them". For centuries the Church seemed to think that simply encouraging, or even compelling, people to give up one religion, perhaps a pagan one, and take up Christianity was enough. But making disciples is a much harder thing to do. And we can look back to my reflections on the first two readings to begin to discover why that is.

To become a disciple is to become one who is not just willing, but eager to learn: to accept the authority of God and to seek his wisdom as we care for creation. It is to learn how to live in love and peace with one another. The words of Jesus in Matthew's Gospel are often called the Great Commission, but they might just as easily be called the Great Invitation. Jesus invites us to share in the life of God the Trinity and the mission of God in the world. It isn't the easiest invitation in the world to accept. This authority which we are offered is not about laying down the law; it is about laying down our lives.

The Revd Anne Haselhurst

CORONAVIRUS AND HOUSEHOLD DEBT

Member of the All Saints' Diaspora, Economist, Theologian and Church Commissioner for England, Eve Poole examines the potential for recovery from the current situation.

Following the first cases of Covid-19 in the UK in January and February, lockdown was announced on the evening on Monday 23 March. Since then, citizens have been working from home, except for keyworkers, or have been laid off or furloughed under the government's Job Retention Scheme. As at 12 May, [7.5 million jobs](#) have been furloughed, and the British Chamber of Commerce reported that [71% of businesses](#) surveyed by them had furloughed some staff. This means that the UK government are currently paying the wage bill for about [a quarter of all UK employees](#). The scheme will be gradually phased out, with some part-time working and employer contributions, finally ending in October.

The economy has taken a huge hit. The decline in GDP in 2020 is likely to be the largest since WW2. The Office for Budget Responsibility and The Bank of England have published scenarios of a [GDP fall of 14%](#), which compares rather badly to the 4.2% fall during the financial crisis in 2009. As an example, in April and into May, retail footfall was [down by 75-80%](#) compared with a year ago. Claims for the Universal Credit benefit [increased by 2.5 million](#) between 16 March and 5 May, and The Bank of England projects the [unemployment rate rising to 9%](#) in the second quarter of 2020, compared to 4% before the crisis. Many think this is optimistic, given that the [US is already on 15%](#), having not deployed the policy option of a job retention scheme to slow down the rate of layoffs. None of this is good news for the economy, but it is very bad news for household debt. Before the crisis, [government data](#) reported that household debt had peaked in Q2 2008 at 147% of household disposable income. It then declined to 124% by late 2015. But growth in household debt levels accelerated from early 2016, and the debt-to-income ratio had risen to 128% by mid-2017. In Q3 2019 it stood at 126.8%. Already, the [Financial Conduct Authority](#) had established that 12% of UK adults (5.9 million people) have no savings and investments at all and that a further 37% (19.1 million people) have savings or investments of less than £10,000; meaning that almost half of UK adults either have no savings or ones less than £10,000 in value. In particular, of those in the most vulnerable financial category, [3.7 million](#) said that their household could only continue to cover living expenses for under a week if they lost their main source of income, without having to borrow money or to ask for help from friends or family.

A survey in March showed that [49% of those polled](#) expected to have difficulty in paying bills, with 57% of those working saying their earnings were lower than in the previous week. In May, the Citizens Advice Bureau reports that an estimated [6 million people](#) have already fallen behind on a household bill due to Coronavirus. [4 million people](#) have fallen behind on rent, council tax or on utility bills where they will have little protection from debt collection when temporary protections on enforcement expire. It is true that many utility companies, banks and landlords have offered payment holidays for lockdown, which is very welcome. But these arrangements merely defer and delay payments rather than cancel them, [which means they will be mounting up](#), presenting many households with a need either to reschedule their payments to render them affordable, or the prospect of being unable to meet the sudden increase in payments once the holiday ends.

These are not the feckless debts of a bling generation, these are cost-of-living debts. Those in the clutches of the high-interest lenders were already using these clear and simple, readily available and impersonal on-line loans to finance rainy-day purchases. In 2014 research by the Competition and Markets Authority suggested that the [average payday loan](#) is for around £260, lent over 30 days. Reasons for these loans [fell into three categories](#). While some were used to finance living costs, they were most often used for emergency expenses including the repair or replacement of cars, boilers, and white goods. The other major category was seasonal, particularly the need to buy

Christmas presents, or new school uniform and shoes for a new term. Very few were for more frivolous expenditure, for example a last-minute holiday or luxury item. This suggests that a cushion of just £300 savings might enable most households to avoid these kinds of emergency loans.

Looking forward to a post-Covid, post-Brexit Britain, the future looks very bleak, particularly for the financially vulnerable. Even the less vulnerable may now be cautious about post-lockdown spending, just when the economy needs a boost. So my proposal is for the UK government to introduce a year of Universal Basic Income (UBI), which would provide both cushion and spending. Those who do not need it should be invited to donate it to a charity of their choosing, because the UK's charities too are suffering unprecedented falls in income, with many set to close.

First mooted in [Thomas More's Utopia](#) in 1516, UBI is defined by lifelong champion [Guy Standing](#) as 'a modest amount of money paid unconditionally to individuals on a regular basis; intended to be paid to all, regardless of age, gender, marital status, work status and work history'. Many countries around the world are experimenting with it. Since 1982, residents in Alaska are paid an annual [Permanent Fund Dividend](#), funded by a share of the profits from the state's oil industry. Last year, the payment amounted to £1,300 per citizen. This is in comparison to the recent pilot in Finland which awarded 2,000 randomly selected unemployed people with an income of around £500 month; and the 2019 proposal by Guy Standing that the UK rate should be [£48 a week](#). A report by [Reform Scotland](#) suggested giving adults £100 per week and children £50 per week. [Modelling conducted by the RSA](#) for their report on a basic income for Scotland found that in Fife, a basic income of £2,400 a year would reduce relative household poverty by 8.5% and half destitution. A basic income of £4,800 a year would reduce relative household poverty by 33% and end destitution completely. Foodbanks could become a thing of the past.

Malcolm Torry argues that UBI could be funded through a [5% rise in income tax](#), while the [new economics foundation](#) proposes scrapping the tax-free personal allowance to finance it. Others have argued that it could largely be financed by the [reinvention of the current benefits system](#).

My more modest proposal is to introduce this for a year only, as part of the Covid-19 recovery plan, both for its short-term effects and in order to test it properly as an option for the future. It would therefore need to be carefully designed to maximise its potential to generate useful research data. It might also be used to model a separate 'gap year' product in the tradition of National Service, whereby every citizen in the future would have the right to a year off, to use for volunteering and citizenship, or perhaps to re-train or re-skill.

Opposition to UBI tends to centre around two key issues. One is moral hazard, and the other its political irreversibility. The latter argues for a very clear Covid-related one-year programme to permit a political u-turn should the experiment not work. The former argument is less easily dismissed. Would citizens abuse the system and would it drive dependency and idleness? Is there any evidence that these schemes in fact work? As a Christian, I hear [these concerns](#), but I hear the moral arguments more loudly. While the economic results of the recent [UBI pilot in Finland](#) were unremarkable, [one finding stood out](#) for me: 'the basic income recipients were more satisfied with their lives and experienced less mental strain than the control group. They also had a more positive perception of their economic welfare.' Given the mental ill-health effects of Covid-19 and lockdown, a year's UBI would be a gracious way to honour the dignity of the citizen and say thank you for their efforts to protect each other during the pandemic.

*Dr Eve Poole, 25 May 2020
with thanks to Andrew Phillips for help with research*

Links

7.5 million jobs: <https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statement/Commons/2020-05-12/HCVS229/>

71% of businesses: <https://www.britishchambers.org.uk/news/2020/04/bcc-coronavirus-business-impact-tracker-more-than-70-per-cent-of-firms-surveyed-have-furloughed-staff-as-scheme-goes-live>

a quarter of all UK employees: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-52539203>

GDP fall of 14%: <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-8866/>

down by 75-80%, increased by 2.5 million, and unemployment rate rising to 9%:
<https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-8878/>

US is already on 15%: <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2020/may/21/us-unemployment-figures-jobs-lost-coronavirus>

government data: <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/sn02885/>

Financial Conduct Authority and 3.7 million:

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5a744d498a02c74f9f04c01f/t/5b61f40e0e2e72c270886d37/1533146216464/financial-lives-consumers-across-uk.pdf>

49% of those polled: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1tVABL3YJHE5I9kzAvjdmRfKjVrzy3D0-/view>

6 million people and 4 million people: <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/about-us/policy/policy-research-topics/debt-and-money-policy-research/near-the-cliff-edge-how-to-protect-households-facing-debt-during-covid-19/>

which means they will be mounting up: <https://www.ippr.org/research/publications/who-wins-and-who-pays>

average payday loan: <https://www.fca.org.uk/publication/consultation/cpl4-10.pdf>

fell into three categories:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/246031/bis-13-1228-payday-lending-advertising-ipsos-mori-social-research.pdf

Thomas More's Utopia: <https://basicincome.org/basic-income/history/>

Guy Standing and Permanent Fund Dividend: <https://www.nationalgeographic.co.uk/history-and-civilisation/2020/05/universal-basic-income-is-gathering-support-has-it-ever-worked-and>

£48 a week: https://www.progressiveeconomyforum.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/PEF_Piloting_Basic_Income_Guy_Standing.pdf

Reform Scotland: <https://reformscotland.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/The-Basic-Income-Guarantee-1.pdf>

Modelling conducted by the RSA: <https://www.thersa.org/discover/publications-and-articles/reports/basic-income-scotland>

5% rise in income tax: <https://www.euromod.ac.uk/publications/evaluation-recovery-basic-income-and-sustainable-revenue-neutral-citizen%E2%80%99s-basic-income>

new economics foundation: <https://neweconomics.org/2019/03/scrap-personal-allowance-and-replace-with-a-new-weekly-cash-payment>

reinvention of the current benefits system:

<https://www.compassonline.org.uk/publications/universal-basic-income-an-idea-whose-time-has-come/>

these concerns: <https://www.wired.co.uk/article/universal-basic-income-explained>

UBI pilot in Finland: <https://basicincometoday.com/the-final-results-of-finlands-basic-income-experiment/>

one finding stood out: <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2020/may/07/finnish-basic-income-pilot-improved-wellbeing-study-finds-coronavirus>

LECTIONS FOR SERVICES THIS WEEK

<i>Trinity</i> 7 June	Mass Genesis 1.1-2.4 Psalm 8 2 Corinthians 13.11-13 Matthew 28.16-20	MP Psalms 96, 97 Exodus 3.1-6, 13-15 John 17.1-11	EP Psalms 148-150 Isaiah 6.1-8 John 16.5-15
<i>Mon 8</i>	<i>St Ephrem the Syrian</i> 1 Kings 17.1-6 Psalm 121 Matthew 5.1-12	Psalms 38-40 Joshua 7.1-15 Luke 10.25-37	Psalms 41-43 Job 7 Romans 4.1-12
<i>Tues 9</i>	St Columba Isaiah 61.1-3 Psalm 34.1-8 1 Thessalonians 2.2-12 Matthew 5.13-16	Psalms 44-46 Genesis 12.1-9 Hebrews 11.8-16	Psalms 47-49 Isaiah 52.7-12 Acts 20.25-35
<i>Weds 10</i>	1 Kings 18.20-39 Psalm 116.1,6-end Matthew 5.17-19	Psalms 50-52 Joshua 8.1-29 Luke 11.1-13	Psalms 110, 111 Exodus 16.2-15 John 6.22-35
<i>Thurs 11</i>	CORPUS CHRISTI Exodus 16.9-35 Psalm 116.12-19 1 Corinthians 11.23-26 John 6.53-58	Psalms 147 Deuteronomy 8.2-16 1 Corinthians 10.1-17	Psalms 23, 42, 43 Proverbs 9.1-5 Luke 9.11-17
<i>Fri 12</i>	St Barnabas Acts 11.21-26, 13.1-3 Psalm 98.1-6 Matthew 10.7-13	Psalms 62-64 Jeremiah 9.23-24 Acts 4.32-end	Psalms 65-67 Tobit 4.5-11 Acts 9.26-31
<i>Sat 13</i>	1 Kings 19.19-end Psalm 16.1-7 Matthew 5.33-37	Psalms 68 Joshua 10.1-15 Luke 10.11.37-end	Psalms 69-70 Job 12 Romans 6.15-end

If you don't have your own Prayer Book, the Offices of Morning & Evening Prayer are in the same section as recorded services on the church website. If you'd like to borrow a Prayer Book or any other resources from church, let the Rector know.

GIVING TO ALL SAINTS'

A reminder for any who would like to support All Saints' financially our bank details are:

Bank:	Royal Bank of Scotland
Branch:	113 – 115 South Street, St Andrews, Fife, KY16 9QB
Sort Code:	83-26-28
Account name:	All Saints Episcopal Church – St Andrews
Account number:	00104363

Treasurer's contact details: Mr Ian Palfrey, 8a Howard Place, St Andrews, Fife, KY16 9HL
01334 472358 treasurer@allsaints-standrews.org.uk

INTERCESSIONS

Trinity Sunday

Judy Cummins and Robin White are both making steady progress recovering from surgery. Please remember them in your prayers. The Schepps family returned to the USA at the start of lockdown, please pray for Megan who is in hospital suffering complications during pregnancy.

IN PARTICULAR NEED

Debbie & Priscilla White, Eleanor Ross, David McLean, Anne Zweers, *Priest*, Amy Cox, Robyn Seenan, Bill Scott, *Priest*, Samantha, Averil Taylor, *Priest*, Anne Clayton, Judy Cummins, Ian Sadler, Andrew Mate, Graham Kennedy, Robin White, Megan Schepps

CONTINUING NEED

Lenora Mahoney, Effie Keracher, Jonah & Chris Andrews, Gareth, Jenni & Rosalie Saunders, Ashley & Kathleen Cummins, Charles & Thomas Ware, Ann Noltie, Lawrence Reynolds, Sally-Marie Gardner, Edie, Amber & Morya Blyth, Alice Bullough, Joan Day, Janet Reid, Catherine Rowe, Bill Hyland, Samantha, Steve Scott, Angela Allaway, Cherry Jackson, Lori-Mark Quate

RESIDENTIAL CARE

Catriona, Fiona Ingham, John Shillaker, *Priest*, Marie-Louise Moffatt, *Priest*, Charlie Mather

RECENTLY DEPARTED

Simon Barrington-Ward, *Bishop*

YEAR'S MIND

9/6 John Hunter, 2014
11 Alexander MacDonald, (*Priest*), 1980
12 Thomas Harry Hope Lloyd-Evans, 2014
13 Eliza Harriot Rose, 1939

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