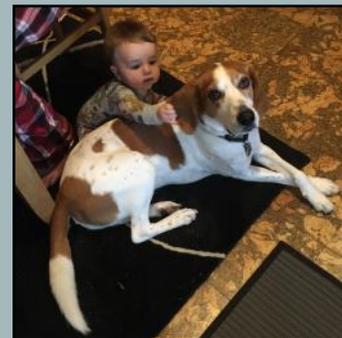


Time Together

While We are Apart

Sunday, May 31, 2020



Good morning, dear church communities,

Our featured animal today is Gable, who is a mixed-hound, and lives with Dave and Susan Whitlow (Trinity). Gable was adopted from a shelter, where he got his name, short for Clark Gable, because he is so handsome! Gable is pictured here with the Whitlow's grandson, Wes, who Gable patiently allows to pull on his ears a bit. Susan wrote that Gable had also inadvertently chewed up a few of Wes's toys, so things are pretty balanced between them. Also, Gable has learned quickly that when Wes visits, sitting under his highchair will yield ample rewards. Check out the second picture below; finding Gable is a little like "Where's Waldo?"! Many thanks to Susan and Dave for sharing patient Gable with us!

Today at 10am we will attempt our first SMWC and Trinity Zoom worship service, a historic day! Things will not go perfectly, or perhaps even well, but hopefully a good number of us will connect, see each other, certainly laugh together, and worship together. I would never choose to be in a pandemic, but since we are here, I find I am learning much, including how to use technology. And as many of our dear folk will not be able to gather in person until a vaccine is in place, because of age or health, today will not be the only time we gather electronically. And with these new methods, though we are apart, we are discovering and learning new ways to be together, some ways that will continue to connect us long after COVID-19 is in the history books. There are so many ways we can find God working within us, within our churches, within our world, in these oh so strange times.

And now onward to a little more "Time Together,"

-Megan



Prayer Notes:

We will include our prayer lists in each Sunday Newsletter. Please continue to let us know of folks you would like to have on our prayer lists.

Notes for this week:

- Chuck McGrath Please continue your prayers for Chuck and his family.
- Our healthcare workers are on all our hearts. Please keep them, and their families, in your prayers.

Prayer Lists:

St. Mary's Whitechapel: Chuck McGrath, Don DeFilippo, George Clowser, Sherry Mann, Susan Goff, Jori Keckman, Nancy Brandon, Ron Okrasinski, Sally Flanigan, Alexa Frisbee, R. W. Courtney, Tammy, Dorsey Ficklin, Glenn Courtney, Terry Thompson, Wendy Burnett, Nora Pennell, Lin Greene, Jake Cobb, Dave Petersen, Dan Ficklin, Marie Beringer, Donna Alexander, Rose, Cecil Courtney, Mimi Chace, Donna Brayton, Hilda Courtney, Robert, Howard Hanchey, Jennifer Cassell Cole, Karen Woodruff, Roger Fortin, Wier Harman, Gina Adams, Brad Quillen, Jessica, Joanne and Michael.

Nursing Home Resident: Lancashire - Mary Sue Courtney

Armed Forces: Joshua Green, Aimee Budzinski, Mark Medina, Kathryn McCormack Akacem, Mehdi Akacem, Anderson Sale, Thomas Mackie, Pia Mackie, Tate Young, Spencer Fortin.

Trinity: Omid, Nancy Clark, Vicki Simmons Watson, Jerry Gregor, Susan Goff, Janice Shanks, Sherri Carter, Terri, Nick Slaughter, Fran and Dick Davis, Sally Flanigan, R. W. Courtney, Frances Bush, Delford Walthall, Glenn Courtney, Barbara Nunnery, Keith Elswick, Steve, Rick Bateman, Jenny Dunaway, Earline Tomlin Kelley, Ed Borer, Dean Haine, Donna Alexander, Mary and Karen Jackson, Cecil Courtney, Berkeley Kellum, Wendy Boswell, Preston Bryant, Michael, Mel and Frances Ercelino, Hilda Courtney, Robert, Karen Woodruff, Joey Coker, Michael Dunaway, J.W. Boone, Brad Quillen, Ian Larmore, Brandon Dunaway.

Armed Forces: Giovanni Elhordoy, Ward Gavin, Paul Price and Michael Stout.

Diocesan Cycle of Prayer: Pray for Grace, Keswick; St. Thomas, Richmond; Church of the Spirit, Kingstowne, Alexandria; St. Anne's, Reston; Holy Comforter, Vienna.

Anglican Cycle of Prayer: Pray for the Anglican Church of Melanesia.

Announcements:

Our first Zoom worship service will be today at 10am. Today is the Day of Pentecost, and we celebrate the arrival of the Holy Spirit to the disciples. Red is the color of the day for Pentecost, so feel free to wear red, including, if you wake up late, red pajamas! The bulletin for today was sent by email Friday, and can be found at [this link](#).

The Zoom invitation went out yesterday as an email to everyone who receives our Newsletters. The “meeting” will be open at 9:30am for folks to gather and to work out any technological kinks, before worship begins at 10am.

We will still have “Zooming Coffee Hour” today, at 3pm. All are welcome at this comfortable gathering of folks to visit and laugh together and conclude with prayers for the concerns on our hearts. Text, call or email me if you want to join us, and I’ll put you on the list to receive the Zoom invitation each week. Once you sign up you are on the list and can come any Sunday that suits you. (My cell number is 804-477-5515).

Washington National Cathedral continues to offer beautiful and moving worship daily. They can be found at [cathedral.org](#).

Please let me know if you are in need of help with getting groceries or other necessities. Call, text, or email and I’ll connect you with a volunteer.

You can continue to mail pledges and donations to Rector’s Discretionary Fund to each church:

Trinity Church
PO Box 208
Lancaster, VA 22503

SMWC
5940 Whitechapel Rd
Lancaster, VA 22503



Thoughts from the Organ Bench *by Glenn Courtney, Organist* *SMWC and Trinity*

One of my favorite hymns is "**Come down, O Love divine,**" # 516 in the *Hymnal 1982*. This would probably be our opening hymn for Whitsunday, The Day of Pentecost, May 31, if we were in church.

The hymn reflects the deep longing of the human heart for love. The text was written by Bianco da Siena, a 14th-century Italian monk, and draws upon the language of courtly love. This was the era when the feast of Saint Valentine first became associated with romance. Bianco was for a time part of a community known as the Jesuates (not to be confused with the Jesuits), consisting of lay brothers who followed the rule of St. Augustine. He is credited with 92 hymns; however, only a handful have been translated into English and have come into common use. The text was translated into English by the Anglican priest Richard Frederick Littledale, and finally set to music by Ralph Vaughan Williams in 1905. The tune, "Down Ampney" is named for the village where Vaughan Williams was born.

The first verse invites, or even commands, "Love divine," to descend upon the soul. The second verse explores the experience of love, both as it burns, and as it burns out: The third verse explores what divine love looks like when it takes human form: The final verse speaks to the great power of God's constant love.

***Come down, O Love divine, seek thou this soul of mine,
and visit it with thine own ardor glowing;
O Comforter, draw near, within my heart appear,
and kindle it, thy holy flame bestowing.***

***O let it freely burn, till earthly passions turn
to dust and ashes in its heat consuming;
and let thy glorious light, shine ever on my sight,
and clothe me round, the while my path illuming.***

***Let holy charity, mine outward vesture be,
And lowliness become my inner clothing.
True lowliness of heart, which takes the humbler part,
A o'er its own shortcomings weeps with loathing.***

***And so the yearning strong, with which the soul will long,
shall far outpass the power of human telling;
for none can guess its grace, till Love create a place
wherein the Holy Spirit makes a dwelling.***

Some hymnals, including the *Hymnal 1982*, omit the third verse.

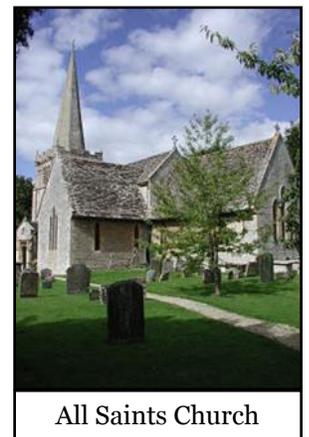
Down Ampney (pronounced *Amney*) is a medium-sized village located in the Cotswold district in Gloucestershire, in England. The population taken at the 2011 census was 644.

Down Ampney was notable in medieval times as one of the principal seats of the powerful Hungerford family (their principal seat was at Farleigh Hungerford, Somerset) and a number of elaborate family monuments survive in the village churchyard.

The Down Ampney estate, comprising almost all of the farm land in the parish, is now owned by the Co-operative Group.

The Old Vicarage in Down Ampney was the birthplace of Ralph Vaughan Williams in 1872. His father was Vicar of All Saints Church. A tune he composed, used for the hymn "Come Down, O Love Divine", is titled "Down Ampney" in its honour.

Vaughan Williams was active as a composer through both World Wars and his symphonies are still held in high regard in the UK. He has also made many additions to the great American songbook with his series of works titled *Songs of Travel*.



All Saints Church

During the Second World War, the RAF Down Ampney airfield was a base for planes seeing active service in the war. The church has a stained glass window in commemoration of the planes that flew from the airfield for the Battle of Arnhem, 1944.

Aside from the airfield, a school older than 150 years, a multi-use games area for younger residents, a tennis club, a village hall, a small village shop, and the church mentioned above, which evidently dates back to before the bubonic plague, are also present in the current arrangement of the village.

Please enjoy these two performances:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qgUFay0th9A>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fIvKDgktutI>

Sources: <http://trinitylafayette.com/blog/2020/2/14/behind-the-hymn-come-down-o-love-divine>

Wikipedia.com

<https://aleteia.org/2018/07/15/hymn-of-the-week-come-down-o-love-divine/>

Reflection

Today we celebrate the Day of Pentecost, which occurs fifty days after Easter Sunday. On this day we remember the arrival of the Holy Spirit to the disciples, as the Book of Acts describes it: "...a sound like the rush of a violent wind.....(and) divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them." (Acts 2: 1-4) And as that fire alighted on each of Jesus's exhausted bewildered, frightened friends.....suddenly they could do more and do better than they could imagine....Peter and the others leaped up and ran out into the streets of Jerusalem. The streets were full of folks from all over, as the Jewish feast of Pentecost was underway.

Peter and the others entered that babble of different languages and found, astoundingly, that they could speak different languages..."...as the Spirit gave them ability." From exhausted and hiding, the friends of Jesus could now communicate, they could offer the story, the joy, the sorrow the hope of Jesus Christ, our Savior. Interesting too, that the first ability, the first gift of the Spirit was communication. Children, and many adults, love to ponder, what would my super power be, if I was given the choice...if I was a super hero....what could I do? X-ray vision? Invisibility? Super speed? Shape-shifting? Flight? I doubt anyone would begin with communication! Being able to speak languages, or simply to be understood in your own language, a way undervalued superpower! And yet, that is the first gift of the Holy Spirit, and that ability to speak languages and tell the story, launched the disciples into their ministry and out into the world.

Our modern, blockbuster movie mentality about superpowers also might lead us to assume that in the end, everything will work out for the one with a superpower. But Peter and his friends, as we know, go out into the world and all face doubt, derision, and attack for their communication, and all but one died early and painful deaths.

That Holy Spirit, that was given to the disciples on Pentecost and onward through the ages to us too, and is still present with us, each of us on this Day of Pentecost

2020....as the Spirit is so beautifully described in our opening collect today, that we will “...rejoice in his holy comfort”.....Along with fire and a powerful wind the Spirit is also our “holy comforter,” constant, nudging, challenging, empowering, leading us.....

But we must remember that that holy comfort does not bring a promise of easy days, no happy endings are assured.....only “take up your cross and follow me” and “I will be with you to the end of the ages”....

Ministry is not a call to an easy life, but it is a call.....scary, beyond our ability alone, but a call, even a fierce one, to hear the Spirit and follow.

Tim and I experienced a fragment of what the disciples went through, when we received the call to leave Richmond and begin anew in the Northern Neck. I received the phone call confirming my position as associate rector at Grace Church on a Friday afternoon in January of 2014. Tim and I always had Friday evening dinner with a couple from our gym, so we went to dinner, with our big news. The friends had followed our months of discussions of possibilities and whether we would stay in Richmond, our home of over 20 years, or move. As we sat down to dinner, I told the news of the call, and began to cry. And proceeded to cry through most of dinner. I felt called, we felt called, nudged....lead....But I did not want to go, I did not want to leave these dear friends in front of us at the table, I did not want to leave our home, our neighbors, our life in Richmond. And, I was scared.....

The following months were terribly busy, often overwhelming, and full of emotion, but we went forward....comforted beyond our understanding that though we struggled, we were clear about one steady thing...that we were called to go. The comfort of the Holy Spirit is not an assurance that all be great, it is not an assurance that we will be free from fear or pain or sadness.....only the comfort that we are nudged, called, lead....and that we are never, ever alone. Come Holy Spirit, come.

Amen.