

**ALL SAINTS CHURCH BOYNE HILL  
MAIDENHEAD**

**PARISH NEWS**

**[www.allsaintsboynehill.org.uk](http://www.allsaintsboynehill.org.uk)**

**Issue 56 29 April 2021**



**Dear Parishioners and Friends of All Saints, Boyne Hill,**

This Eastertide the clergy of the Oxford Diocese were given thanks for ministry offered during the pandemic.

Inside the card of thanks was printed the wonderful poem of George Herbert –Love

Love bade me welcome : yet my soul drew back, Guilty of dust and sin.

But quick-eyed Love, observing me grow slack From my first entrance in, Drew nearer to me, sweetly questioning If I lacked anything.

‘A guest,’ I answered, ‘worthy to be here’: Love said, ‘You shall be he.’

‘I, the unkind, ungrateful? Ah, my dear, I cannot look on thee.’

Love took my hand, and smiling did reply,

‘Who made the eyes but I?’ ‘Truth, Lord; but I have marred them; let my shame Go where it doth deserve.’  
‘And know you not,’ says Love, ‘Who bore the blame?’

‘My dear then I will serve.’ ‘You must sit down,’ says Love, ‘and taste my meat,’  
So I did sit and eat.

The Bishop of Oxford at the last Diocesan Synod suggested that we should begin to encourage people to come to the Lord’s table to share the Eucharistic Feast. We have over the last year or so been limited in being able to receive the great gift from God, of New Life offered us in the sacrament of broken bread and wine outpoured. As we slowly move out of restrictions, we can start to think about gathering physically again for Eucharistic worship. This Sunday following a long period of sharing morning prayers on Sunday we are moving towards two Eucharistic services at 9.30am and 11am. This offers space for about 60 people to attend at the Parish Centre starting in May. It would be lovely to see you come to share in the gift beautifully described by Herbert. Hopefully moving forward we will be able to share a family service at 4pm once a month as we did on Easter Day.

As a curate in Newport South Wales in 1993-95 we shared a Lent course called 'A Faith that touches the World.' Edited by James Jones the former Bishop of Liverpool. One of the contributors was the Roman Catholic Bishop Vincent Nichols. His subject was based on the understanding of the church. Using the Acts of the Apostles Nichols said that there was a missionary dimension to the church right from the beginning. He said mission is 'the relationship between God and church is almost like breathing in and breathing out. We breathe in, as it were, God's life and we breathe it out. So it is impossible to separate the call to a deep spiritual shared Christian life together as the community, the called body, and the breathing out of those gifts in mission.'

The key to this was described at Vatican II 'We partake of the Body of Christ to become the Body of Christ in the World'' Inspired by the gospel, and the Eucharistic feast as well as each other as the gathered community we put faith into practice at work, over a simple conversation over the phone and in so many other ways.

It seems to me that if you put the invitation of George Herbert to receive the divine gift of love in the Eucharist with the challenge to serve the community you can see our own potential for breathing in and breathing out. As you will see in the sermon that I have preached last weekend and printed in this Parish News there are opportunities for us to be a church of welcome and belonging. It would be great to explore the idea to not only have a beautifully restored floor but take the opportunity to hear the word of God and to receive the gift of God in Eucharistic worship within the building and at the same time attempt to make the building a place of welcome to community groups from outside. The School of All Saints asked would we be putting new chairs within the church to allow for more creative use? This is exciting and having the opportunity to offer the building for community use would be wonderful. Ken Smith and I recently were invited to the borough meeting for people who have actively supported community during the Pandemic. We need to build on the examples set during this time. In the sermon I suggest a few ways we may explore being a welcoming community by sharing the course 'Everybody Welcome'. I will over the next few weeks write about this course and hopefully you may like to join me to discuss via zoom meetings of one hour. The four part course will begin on Wednesday 12 May from 7.30pm to 8.30pm.

Please take time to pray and think how God might be calling you to play your part in the mission of Christ at All Saints.

### **Fr Jeremy's Sermon preached at All Saints on 25<sup>th</sup> April Third Sunday of Easter**

**Text: John 10: 11 - 18**

Last Monday following a funeral service at Amersham Crematorium of an elderly lady I spoke to two people who are carers in the Maidenhead area. We spoke about the Care system being measured like many areas of life by output and time. Carers who visit people are allotted a certain amount of time which enables them to cook perhaps a simple meal and then do some basic cleaning but rarely offers the opportunity to spend quality time sharing a conversation with a vulnerable and sometimes isolated person. It seems to be a question of what is expected of them in their professional capacity against what they would like to do to help the vulnerable person.

One of the carers said to me that she did in the care of the person who had died cancel her other appointments so as to make sure that the person in need was not left alone. I did not enquire as to whether this would have caused her problems with her care company. The question is how different would society look if it was based on the quality of relationships rather than achievements? How can we show that we value people?

The story of the Good Shepherd found in John Chapter 10 verses 11-18 offer us some guidance and good examples of what care based on the loving relationship between Jesus and his Father might look like. To begin with Jesus is willing to risk his own life in the way a loving shepherd not a hired hand would live and work. Verse 11 tells us 'I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.' In verse 15 we discover 'just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep.' We continue with verse 17 'For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again.' The good shepherd and pastoral carer will sacrifice all to save the flock.

There is also a relationship of trust that develops between the shepherd and the sheep. The shepherd knows them and they in turn trust the shepherd to guide and protect and nourish them. Verse 14 says 'I am the good shepherd, I know my own and my own know me.'

Finally in this short text we discover that the shepherd's love goes beyond the flock to sheep outside the boundaries. We may recall within John's gospel the story of the Samaritan woman and the woman caught in adultery as well as the disliked poor and the critically ill. Verse 16 tells us 'I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice.'

All Saints church has three main areas of mission within its vision. Worship that can hopefully transform us as people who are inspired to live the Christian faith. Support of our schools as we try to grow the relationships with the young people of our community. This was very much at the heart of mission when Street built All Saints church with a school attached. Through our School governors, assemblies (live and recorded), our wonderful Open the Book Teams we are growing these links. The third of our areas of mission is welcome. To help us explore this area of church life a few of us have studied the 'Everybody Welcome' course. The fourth chapter of this course looks at 'Belonging'. This is the way that relationships can grow within the community as well as seeing good networking with those from the wider community.

I am hoping to use the Parish News moving forward to look at the 'Everybody Welcome' course and I hope that people will join me via zoom to discuss the implications. The five key areas of part four of the course and the desire to find a sense of belonging within community have five areas.

- a. Friendship – An example 'Mrs Smith tried a church for the first time and, over coffee afterwards, a regular said to her, 'It's a very friendly church here.' Mrs Smith retorted: 'I don't want a friendly church. I want a church where I can make friends.'
- b. Community life – Can we develop family afternoon events in the Quadrangle? When we did the 'Branding exercise' we discovered that young families enjoyed 'Tiny Saints', Parish Fete, Salvation Army Christmas Singing. Of course, we could add trips, pilgrimages, film club, parish holidays. The Christmas Market idea might well support the community too.
- c. Christian Nurture – Alpha, Pilgrim and Confirmation courses plus bible studies, courses on specific areas eg; Course looking at sustainability issues in preparation for next years event with schools, the local authority and Bishop. (June/July 2022). We have run a zoom confirmation from Advent to Easter and we are about to begin another one. This will hopefully lead to three adults being confirmed this year.
- d. Pastoral Care – Noticing people. This is one I feel guilty about. How often do we see people in church for two to three weeks then we do not see them again? Do we follow up? Have we made the effort to get to know them? The ministry that went on during the first lockdown was incredible with people taking responsibility to phone people to chat to see that they were ok and to buy food for people.
- e. Christian service. – This is not just encouraging people to support church events but to help enable people reflect upon the Christian values at work.

Following on from this Ken Smith and I were invited by the Borough to join a meeting with other community people. Some examples were the Rotary, The Magpies (Football Club), individuals trying to give a voice to vulnerable elderly people and even health club exercising by helping people with tasks needing doing. The key to this is Jesus going outside his flock to connect with others. How might we meet the needs of this town through networking? Again, one of these groups focusses on the environment.

Finally, we are as everyone knows having the floor renewed to enable mission to continue at All Saints. It would be important (at least in my mind) to see how we can make All Saints a building that is flexible for community use. The head of a local church school realising that the floor work is taking place offered us the use of his school. He also asked would we be providing chairs instead of pews to enable a more flexible use of the building. I have no idea whether we would get backing from the DAC or people like the Victorian Society but I would like to put this to the test. We were rejected by many of the funding bodies we sought help from because we were not seen to be connecting enough with the wider community.

In conclusion do we want a church community that values the quality of relationships over achievements? Will we live sacrificially to offer a church that welcomes others, that provides pastoral care, quality relationships and as Jesus did reach out to the wider community?

Coming out of hopefully the pandemic can we take up the challenge to become that 'Welcoming Church' one that cares pastorally?

In the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen

## RESOURCES THIS WEEK

### Thursday 29 April 10.30am Coffee Morning on Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81404382998?pwd=Wkp0SmY3MGxhNFdHSTRJNTRWSDkvdz09>

Meeting ID: 814 0438 2998

Passcode: 466266

All you need is a cup of coffee or tea and perhaps a biscuit or two. Then feel free to share a conversation.

### 8.00pm Night Prayer

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/75976544021?pwd=Q1pJVtIpTytOdHg0VXhSRGxWRzIzZz09>

Meeting ID: 759 7654 4021

Password: 5rHziv

### Sunday 2 May 9.30am Eucharist in the Parish Centre

#### 11.00am Eucharist in the Parish Centre.

It will also be possible to watch on zoom:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85912814977?pwd=VFNmL1hzME1ROVFxcW1oSXNFa1NpUT09>

Meeting ID: 859 1281 4977

Passcode: 702902

## NO Prayer Group on Bank Holiday Monday 3 May

## Wednesday 5 May 10.00am Eucharist in the Parish Centre

### PRAYER INTENTIONS

A prayer of approach from Roots

Eternal God, we come as one and we come together, to draw from the source of your life-giving love,

To reconnect with one another and with you, to listen to your word, to meet you in prayer and praise, and to learn and grow as your faithful disciples,

In Jesus Name Amen.

We pray for All Saints Church community as we try to discern your calling for each one of us Lord. We pray that we may be a church of welcome allowing people to feel a real sense of belonging within the community.

We pray for all those who have lost their lives during the pandemic. We remember too all those who have served on the frontline. We continue to hold in our prayer those living with the impact of the virus physically and mentally. We continue to pray this Eastertide for hope as we move out of Lockdown.

We pray in particular at this time for the country of India whose people are suffering at this time of the pandemic. May the wider community of international support continue to help the people of India at this time of desperate need.

We continue to hold within our prayers George Hutchison, Mandy Rogers, Danielle, Nick, Fr John, Sister Mary Philip and Roger Baldery.

We give thanks for the news that Mike and Jan Moss have a new granddaughter Philippa. Congratulations to Oli and Aimee the proud and joyful parents.

We give thanks to Guillaume and Katie on the birth of their daughter Isabelle. Congratulations to Paul and Laura Lion as they become grandparents for the first time.

Finally, we remember the recently departed Joyce Glover and James Trump and all those whose anniversary of death falls at this time. May they rest in peace and rise in glory.

Charlie Mackesy – Mole to the boy ‘Most of the old moles I know wish they had listened less to their fears and more to their dreams.’

May we all be blessed by God’s love this week.

*Fr Jeremy*

## Worship for SUNDAY 2 MAY THE FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

### Sounds of Worship

Brian Graves

“I am the real Vine and my Father is the gardener” This is the metaphor Jesus uses in today’s gospel reading to signify the relationship between God, himself and his people on earth. It is a relationship in which his followers will be able to grow and be empowered by the holy spirit but those who reject that relationship will have to bear the consequences. The role of God as the gardener is at the heart of the Easter message that through the death and resurrection of Jesus we witness the hope of our own re-growth sustained and nourished by being a living branch of the real vine.

The first of the two hymns I have chosen to illustrate this theme is “Alleluia! Alleluia! Hearts to heaven and voices raise” words by Christopher Wordsworth (1807 – 1885) set to Lux Eoi by Arthur Seymour Sullivan (1842 – 1900).

This hymn was first published in *The Holy Year* (1862) as the first of two hymns for Easter Day. The hymn proclaims the Resurrection, looks forward to the harvest of the Second Coming, asks God’s blessing on the worshippers, and concludes with a doxology:

The repetitions of words such ‘Alleluia’, ‘Sing to God’, ‘Christ is risen’ and ‘glory’ give a strong emphasis to the hymn’s message and the images of light in the two harvest verses convey a sense of brightness and joy<sup>1</sup>.

Christopher Wordsworth was brought up at Bocking, Essex, where his father was then rector, and from 1816 at Sundridge, Kent. He was a nephew of the poet William Wordsworth and became one of his literary executors and his first biographer. He was educated at Winchester, where he was outstanding both as a scholar and an athlete, and at Trinity College, Cambridge, where he gained many academic distinctions, becoming Fellow of Trinity College on graduating in 1830. He took Holy Orders (deacon, 1833, priest 1835), and in 1836 was appointed Public Orator of Cambridge University. In the same year he became headmaster of Harrow School, where his efforts to improve the discipline and moral tone, including building a chapel, encountered difficulties, leading to a drop in numbers. In 1844 he was appointed a Canon of Westminster and left Harrow. In 1850 he took the modest living of Stanford-in-the-Vale, Berkshire, where he served as parish priest for 19 years, while continuing his duties at Westminster, where he became archdeacon in 1865. In February 1869 he was consecrated Bishop of Lincoln.

Wordsworth’s achievement as a hymn writer lies in his collection *The Holy Year* (1862). The book was intended to provide a hymn for every occasion of the church’s year. The first edition contained 177 of Wordsworth’s own hymns and a supplement of 82 from other sources.

Wordsworth saw hymns chiefly as a vehicle for doctrinal instruction. He thought that they should be based on scripture, the writings of Christian antiquity, and the poetry of the ancient church, and he attached great importance to simplicity of language. He was strongly of the view that hymns should speak for the church as a whole and preferred to use ‘we’ rather than ‘I’.<sup>2</sup>

Sir Arthur Seymour Sullivan is, of course, best known for his collaboration with W S Gilbert to produce the famous series of Operettas produced by the D’Oyly Carte company. Sullivan was born in Lambeth, the son of an Irish bandmaster. He became a chorister in the Chapel Royal in 1854 and entered the Royal Academy of Music in 1856. Between 1858 and 1861 he was a student at the Leipzig Conservatory. After returning to England, he made his living as an organist in two London churches. His reputation as a composer increased

steadily with his *'Irish' Symphony* (1866), his comic opera *Cox and Box*, his first oratorio *The Prodigal Son* at the Worcester Three Choirs Festival (1869), and the *Overture di ballo* at Birmingham (1870).

During the run of *Cox and Box* he met the librettist W. S. Gilbert. They first collaborated in 1871 on *Thespis* (now missing). In 1875 they enjoyed their first success with the one-act comic operetta *Trial by Jury*, which led to the formation of an opera company by Richard D'Oyly Carte to perform exclusively operettas by Gilbert and Sullivan. Often frustrated by the public perception that he was only a composer of light operetta, Sullivan tried to alter his profile with more 'serious' works such as *The Golden Legend*, written for Leeds in 1886; but with this and the performances of his opera *Ivanhoe* he was only marginally successful.

During the first four years of the 1870s Sullivan was prolific in his hymn production, first for Joseph Barnby's *The Hymnary* (1872) and, two years later, under his own musical editorship, for Church Hymns, published as *Church Hymns with Tunes* in 1874 by the SPCK.<sup>3</sup>

1. Alleluia! Alleluia!  
Hearts to heaven and voices raise;  
sing to God a hymn of gladness,  
sing to God a hymn of praise;  
he, who on the Cross a victim  
for the world's salvation bled,  
Jesus Christ, the King of glory,  
now is risen from the dead.
  
2. Christ is risen, Christ the first-fruits  
of the holy harvest field,  
which will all its full abundance  
at His second coming yield;  
then the golden ears of harvest  
will their heads before Him wave,  
ripened by his glorious sunshine  
from the furrows of the grave.
  
3. Christ is risen, we are risen;  
shed upon us heavenly grace,  
rain, and dew, and gleams of glory  
from the brightness of thy face;  
that we, with our hearts in heaven,  
here on earth may fruitful be,  
and by angel-bands be gathered,  
and be ever, Lord, with Thee.
  
4. Alleluia! Alleluia!  
Glory be to God on high;  
Alleluia to the Saviour,  
Who has gained the victory;  
Alleluia to the Spirit,  
Fount of love and sanctity;

Alleluia! Alleluia!  
To the Triune Majesty.

Alleluia! Alleluia! Hearts to heaven AM 194 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Af5LYjsou8Q>

The second hymn is “Love is his word, love is his way” AM 454 words by Luke Connaughton (1917 – 1979) set to Creswell by Anthony Milner (1925 – 2002)

This hymn expresses the essence of real vine message, we are nourished through Jesus by the agapeic love between God and humans. The opening phrase of each verse is linked to the preceding one. For example, verse 1 is *Love is his word, love is his way*. Verse 2 starts with *Love is his way, love is his mark* and verse three repeats the word *mark*, and so on. This linkage shows the progression from the promise of resurrection in verse 1, recalling the last supper in verses 2, 3 and 4. Then verses 5 to 7 describe how this love is what calls and binds the community of Christ and enables the relationship between God, Christ and ourselves.

Luke Connaughton was born into a Roman Catholic family and was destined for the priesthood. However, he abandoned his vocation and became a journalist. He was closely associated with the firm of McCrimmon, for whom he edited *Sing a New Song to the Lord* (Great Wakering, Essex, 1970). This book included 33 texts by him. After his death many of his hymns were printed in the McCrimmon *Complete Celebration Hymnal* (Southend, 1991).

‘Love is his word, love is his way’ is one of Connaughton’s best known hymns which has found its way into several hymn books

Anthony Milner was also born into a Roman Catholic family. He was educated at Douai School, Berkshire, after which, he was awarded a bursary to attend the Royal College of Music. Milner's own teaching career began at Morley College, London, where he taught music theory and history from 1948 to 1964. He was lecturer in music at King's College London, from 1965 to 1971, when he moved to Goldsmiths' College as senior lecturer, becoming principal lecturer in 1974. In 1980 he was appointed full-time principal lecturer at the Royal College, where he had taught part-time since 1961. He remained in this post until his retirement in 1989.

In 1985 Pope John Paul II appointed Anthony Milner a Knight of St. Gregory, in recognition of his work for Catholic liturgical music.<sup>4</sup>

1. Love is his word, love is his way,  
Feasting with all, fasting alone  
living and dying, rising again,  
Love, only love, is his way.

*Richer than gold is the love of my Lord:  
better than splendour and wealth.*

2. Love is his way, love is his mark,  
sharing his last Passover feast,  
Christ at his table, host to the twelve.  
Love, only love, is his mark.



3. Love is his mark, love is his sign,  
bread for our strength, wine for our joy,  
"This is my body, this is my blood",  
Love, only love, is his sign.
4. Love is his sign, love is his news,  
"Do this," he said, "lest you forget  
all my deep sorrow, all my dear blood."  
Love, only love, is his news.
5. Love is his news, love is his name,  
we are his own, chosen and called,  
family, brethren, cousins and kin.  
Love, only love, is his name.
6. Love is his name, love is his law.  
Hear his command, all who are his:  
"Love one another, I have loved you."  
Love, only love, is his law.
7. Love is his law, love is his word:  
love of the Lord, Father and Word,  
love of the Spirit, God ever one.  
Love, only love, is his word

Love is his word, love is his way AM 454 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C-BtAdRqoGs>

"Love is his word, love is his way" Words Luke Connaught and Music Antony Milner  
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1. Sheila Doyle. "Alleluia! Alleluia! Hearts to heaven and voices raise." *The Canterbury Dictionary of Hymnology*. Canterbury Press. Web. 27 Mar. 2021.<<http://www.hymnology.co.uk/a/alleluia-alleluia-hearts-to-heaven-and-voices-raise>>.
2. Sheila Doyle. "Christopher Wordsworth." *The Canterbury Dictionary of Hymnology*. Canterbury Press. Web. 27 Mar. 2021.<<http://www.hymnology.co.uk/c/christopher-wordsworth>>.
3. Jeremy Dibble. "Arthur Seymour Sullivan." *The Canterbury Dictionary of Hymnology*. Canterbury Press. Web. 27 Mar. 2021.<<http://www.hymnology.co.uk/a/arthur-seymour-sullivan>>.
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## COLLECT

Almighty God, who through your only-begotten Son Jesus Christ have overcome death and opened to us the gate of everlasting life: grant that, as by your grace going before us you put into our minds good desires, so by your continual help we may bring them to good effect; through Jesus Christ our risen Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit one God, now and for ever.

## FIRST READING

### Acts 8: 26 – 40

An angel of the Lord said to Philip, 'Get up and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.' (This is a wilderness road.) So he got up and went. Now there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of the Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, in charge of her entire treasury. He had come to Jerusalem to worship and was returning home; seated in his chariot, he was reading the prophet Isaiah. Then the Spirit said to Philip, 'Go over to this chariot and join it.' So Philip ran up to it and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah. He asked, 'Do you understand what you are reading?' He replied, 'How can I, unless someone guides me?' And he invited Philip to get in and sit beside him. Now the passage of the scripture that he was reading was this: 'Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter, and like a lamb silent before its shearer, so he does not open his mouth. In his humiliation justice was denied him. Who can describe his generation? For his life is taken away from the earth.' The eunuch asked Philip, 'About whom, may I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?' Then Philip began to speak, and starting with this scripture, he proclaimed to him the good news about Jesus. As they were going along the road, they came to some water; and the eunuch said, 'Look, here is water! What is to prevent me from being baptized?' 38 He commanded the chariot to stop, and both of them, Philip and the eunuch, went down into the water, and Philip baptized him. When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing. But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he was passing through the region, he proclaimed the good news to all the towns until he came to Caesarea.

## GOSPEL

### John 15: 1 - 18

Jesus said to his disciples: 'I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine-grower. He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.'

## ALL SAINTS CHURCH ELECTORAL ROLL 2021

The Church Electoral Roll is being revised in preparation for the APCM on 24 May 2021. If you are not on the electoral roll and would like to be or you have moved house, then please contact me by email on [sastannett@gmail.com](mailto:sastannett@gmail.com)

*Sue Stannett*

## QUENCH CHRISTIAN BOOKSHOP HAS REOPENED: Monday to Saturday 11.00am – 4.00pm

Please support them if you can; they have an excellent selection of cards and gifts for all occasions as well as the books.

## Don't forget Christian Aid Week: 10<sup>th</sup> - 16<sup>th</sup> May

**FOODSHARE NEEDS are in the Maidenhead Advertiser each week.**

### **REFLECTION by Greg Hurst**

As a child in primary school we would sing lustily the hymn *All Things Bright and Beautiful*. How clearly I remember the chorus:

*All things bright and beautiful, All creatures great and small,*

*All things wise and wonderful, The Lord God made them all.*

It is a simple and lovely message. But then life's experiences intrude. I love almost all creatures, great or small. But since I have been lucky enough to have a garden, I have found it increasingly hard to extend this munificence to squirrels.

Squirrels destroyed my experiment with a vegetable patch, eating all my runner beans. Squirrels wrecked my attempt at hedge laying, cutting my beech saplings to build nests. Squirrels strip my pear tree of fruit.

At Christmas we put up a bird feeder. We delighted in watching the garden birds that came.

Then came the squirrels. They ate the nuts. They scared the birds. They gnawed at the feeder's wire mesh. I put up strips of 'squirrel deterrent' bumps on the wall behind. Squirrels darted straight across them.

So this week we bought a bird 'dining station', a long thin pole and hangers for bird feeders.

Lots of birds came. And then came the squirrels. They shimmied up the pole. They sat, feasting, on the treats bowl for suet pieces. They lunged at the suspended bird feeders, knocking them to the ground and spilling the nuts. Sometimes the squirrels fell. But always they created chaos.

Wise and wonderful? I'm not convinced with squirrels. But perhaps I must learn to love them, too.