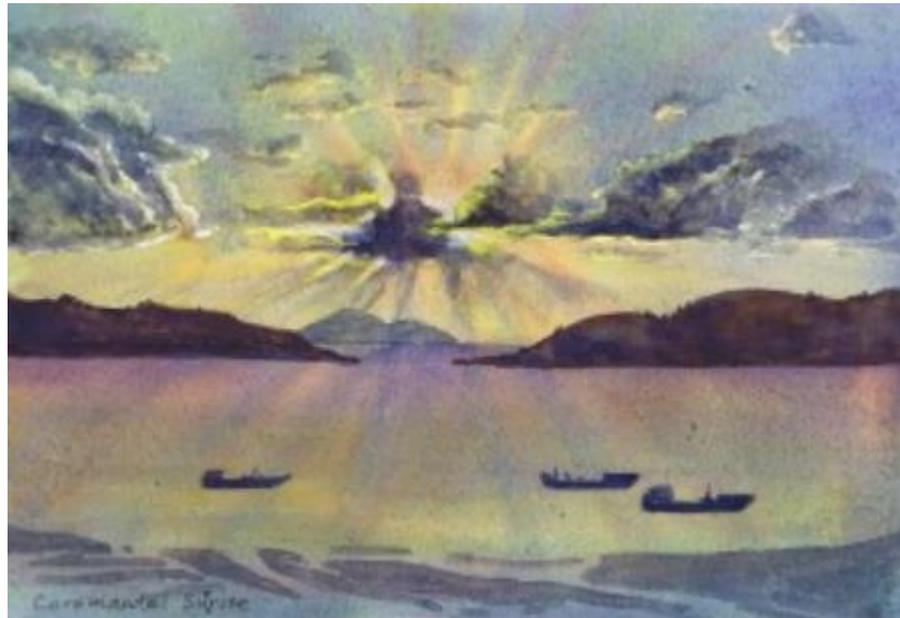


# Christ Church Freemantle

## Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> August – 11<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Trinity

Do you remember Wednesday? I know it is sometimes difficult in these peculiar and disorientating times, but it was the day the heavens opened and we had driving rain for most of the day. Being Wednesday [I had fortunately remembered] I set out to open the church for the weekly morning of quiet prayer expecting no one to be foolish enough to venture out. Imagine my surprise when someone turned up and then another and another. By close of play at 12-30 eleven people had come and all but one had gone.

I feel so proud [I hope not a great sin in the circumstances] that Christ Church has managed to open each Wednesday since the beginning of July and each week seen the faithful and also new folk come through the door. Then we managed to organise a Sunday morning service and have continued week on week in varying styles. Last Sunday



there were 29 there, six of whom we did not know before lock down. I know we should be wary of statistics [they so often are later revised these days] but, hand on heart, mine are entirely accurate and, I think, give us cause to rejoice and give thanks to God. Thanks to God that we have a building that can be adapted for social distancing, thanks that we have a church leadership team that enabled opening the church along with keeping us informed and involved during lock down, especially this weekly thought, thanks for our resident retired clergy and especial thanks to our existing and new congregation. We are also shortly hoping to reopen the Sunday evening service as well! Remember that many of our local churches have yet to reopen and we pray for them

As you probably know we cannot take an offertory in the normal way due to social distancing and I have quietly left the plate at the back of church each Sunday, then put it away in the vestry to be counted under dual control [Yes, we still follow the rules] on Wednesday morning. I have been amazed by people's generosity. £20 notes abound and quite a few substantial cheques. Thank you all, especially as it gives me some exercise walking up to Shirley to pay it in and bolsters our day to day finances. We have been extremely lucky since lock down as so many of you give by standing order each month, but our income, like all churches will be affected this year: no letting income, no fee income, no

fete/fayre and social activity money. That said we are, thank God, in a very fortunate position as the church's financial state has been very heavily strengthened in the last few years through various generous bequests.

These bequests, of course, are the reason we are able to undertake all the restoration work, now in progress under the scaffolding. Wednesday morning not only saw people come in but also the water. There were constant drips and plops throughout the morning from various parts of the church. The driving nature of the rain let in water from all the usual suspects, but upon inspection with the torch I found none that I had not previously seen.

By chance, Michael Weakley, our architect, turned up and was brave enough to go up the scaffolding in the deluge to inspect the flashings at close quarters so that he has a better idea of what work needs doing while the scaffolding is up.

If you look carefully through that scaffolding you will see that some of the new guttering is up and this week much of the south clerestory has been repointed; steady progress, I feel.

So, let us give thanks for all that is positive in our church life, our community spirit, our fortitude in difficult and unsettling times, our faithfulness to God. The neon cross still shines from behind the scaffolding, scaffolding which I hope expresses to the parish and passing travellers that Christ Church is open and confidently looking forward.



Give  
Thanks  
To The  
Lord For  
He Is Good

- 1 CHRONICLES 16:34 -

*William Green*