



**Dear Friends,**

Although I was not surprised, I was nevertheless deeply shocked by the result of the referendum on Britain's place in the EU, and I know that many people in our community feel fragile and displaced by the events of the last few days.

It has become commonplace to think that religion and politics should not mix, but this is not something I have ever believed.

Here are three pieces of theological and spiritual wisdom which I hope might resource our politics, of whatever party, following the referendum result.

God did not have a vote in this referendum. Thousands of years of sacred and secular history bear witness to the way in which human beings make decisions which bring the world as they know it to an end, sometimes through a process of slow decline, and sometimes through a sudden, apocalyptic, catastrophe. The same histories also record that somehow, as if by a miracle, 'new worlds' keep coming into being. None of this happens without some loss, pain and suffering. But loss, pain and suffering are an integral part of the spiritual teaching of all the major religions, especially Christianity. If we are genuinely seeking a way forward, then we will discover that God's providence always accompanies us in whatever direction we decide to take, and that there are never any short-cuts to whatever we believe to be our promised land.

Jesus was not an idealist, he lived with human reality. At a time when politics and religion were almost identical Jesus confronted simultaneously two different ideological groups: the leaders of the Jerusalem establishment, the Sadducees, and the very active and idealistic Pharisees. He also challenged those village leaders who had no ideas, but who rejoiced in the power of their traditions and local customs.

Throughout the gospels we read about the ways in which Jesus comes alongside ordinary human beings and exposes the ways in which their lives have been trapped or blighted by

the unintended consequences of other people's well-meaning projects. It's clear that, for Jesus, idealism of whatever kind, whether political or religious, futuristic or traditional, is not sufficiently connected with human reality and therefore does not advance the Kingdom of God. In particular, the best word in the Bible is the little word 'with', which characterises the whole of Jesus' life, work, and divine mission.

In our time those politicians who, with grace and humanity, engage in the gritty realities of ordinary life on behalf of all their constituents are both rare and especially valuable, whichever party they belong to. Jo Cox seems to have been just such a person, and so her tragic death should perhaps be thought of as a martyrdom. Whatever her religious beliefs, —if she had any—she was obviously a woman of faith.

The Holy Spirit illuminates hearts and minds and enables each person to articulate their own highest hopes and deepest desires. This is a fundamental conviction which sustains our belief in democracy. The challenge for political as well as religious leaders is to ensure that it is indeed the highest hopes and deepest desires which are articulated. When these hopes and desires are expressed the job of the leaders is far from over. How are these goals to be prioritised, and how are they to be harmonised with the goals of other societies? And then how are they to be realised, by whom, and when?

Even if every person in the world agreed on the same basic list of hopes and desires (for instance peace, justice and the preservation of the environment, to name three), we would still find ourselves engaging in passionate discussion with people whose motives we would respect and honour. Unfortunately, not every political argument is inspired by the Holy Spirit, as has been all too clear in the last few weeks. Nevertheless we should, at the very least, assume that people whose views are different to ours may also desire things which are good in themselves. They should not be disrespected for having different priorities.

Nothing is straightforward in life, least of all the prospect of Brexit. I don't want to deny the outworking of democratic process but, having seen the faces of the Leave leaders when they finally realised the responsibility that they now carry for the Brexit project, and the enormity of the task they have undertaken, perhaps I could be forgiven for feeling that Brexit might not happen in the end.

God bless you as you live in the present moment.

*Chris Lyon.*

## **Announcements**

### **BAPTISMS**

1 May 2016      Erika Maria Julie Grebet Spilman

29 May 2016      Alice Claire Christelle Lapierre  
Christelle Marie-Paule Lapierre

### **All-Age Holy Communion at 11am on the First Sunday of the Month**

Recently our First Sunday Music Group returned, bolstered by new members and more instruments, invigorated by new music, and led and encouraged by our Director of Music, Ovidiu Dragan. Alongside this happy event, the Church has introduced a new liturgy especially for all-age worship, and First Sundays (except in January and August) will be All-Age Holy Communion Services.

The purpose of all-age worship is to allow adults and children to learn, share, and pray together. To that end the language of the liturgy is slightly simplified, and the overall service is somewhat shorter. St Gregory the Great wrote in his commentary on the Book of Job, ‘Scripture is like a river ... broad and deep, shallow enough here for the lamb to go wading, but deep enough there for the elephant to swim’. We hope that this is true of our shared worship in this liturgy, and that families will enjoy worshipping together. Our prayer is that everyone, of any age, will be enabled to glorify God and feel resourced for the week ahead.

The Youth Group will also be revived, meeting on the first Sunday of the month, from the first Sunday in October onwards. We will get together in the bar of the hotel next door from 10.15 to 11am over drinks and pastries. It will be a low-key and relaxed way for 12- to 16-year-olds to join in fellowship and explore their faith. The young people will then be able to enjoy and participate in the All-Age Service. We hope to organise youth socials in due course.

*Evelyn Sweerts & Joanne Smith*

#### **Summer cover photo**

Thanks to Paula Lehtinen for this edition’s picture of the Ascension Day walkers on their way to Neuhausgen in May this year.

## News from the Church Council

At the April meeting the Council adopted an Environmental Stewardship Policy (see website for details) in which it undertook, amongst other things, to consider the environmental implications of its decision-making and to use as little energy as possible in any buildings the Church owned or used. The Chaplain presented a paper entitled 'From raising money for charity to working with others for a fair, sustainable world'. He was keen to move from 'charity' to 'justice' and from doing things 'for' people to doing things 'with' people. He hoped to set up a Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC) working group from within the Church membership and a group dealing with human rights.

In May the Council talked about the arrangements for the congregational meeting planned for 25 May and for the *Te Deum* service to be held on 26 June, further discussed the Chaplain's JPIC ideas, and adopted a negotiating strategy for the meeting with the prospective buyers of the Vicarage to settle the price.

Besides looking at the usual matters involved in running the Church, the June meeting focused on arrangements for services over the summer, the ongoing search for a new Treasurer and how to act upon the ideas (about the crèche, welcoming people, the Church Fair and working together) arising from the congregational meeting on 25 May. It welcomed the news that the sale price agreed with the developers for the sale of the Vicarage was higher than initially expected, as this would give the Church's financial situation a boost.

*For more details, please see the minutes of the Church Council's monthly meetings on the Church website: visit [anglican.lu](http://anglican.lu) / Links & Documents / Meeting Minutes & Reports, and scroll down to 'Church Council'.*

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The 2016 Annual General Meeting, attended by 28 Church members, was held on 20 April 2016 at 8 pm in Centre Jean XXIII. The Chaplain reviewed the year, highlighting the Confirmation service, the decision to purchase two properties, the Church Council's overnight meeting, the safeguarding conference, the recruitment of a new Music Director, the Church office's move to Centre Jean XXIII and his own move out of the Vicarage to a new flat. He also focused on aspects of pastoral care, worship and the mission of our Church.

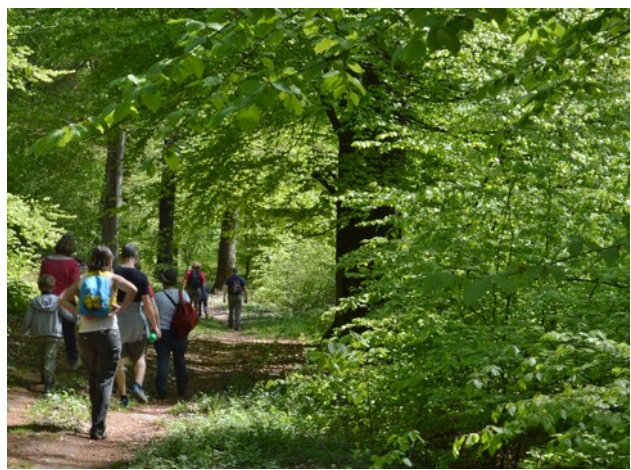
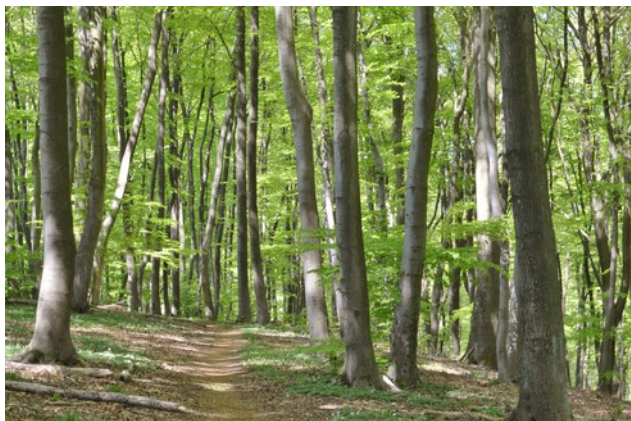
Simon Norcross and Philippa Seymour were re-elected as Churchwardens for a second year, and two new members, Gabriel Chelladurai and Catriona Gillham, were elected to join the Council, both for a three-year term of office. The Chaplain thanked the outgoing Council members, Evelyn Sweerts and Paul Townend, for their work.

The acting Treasurer, Chris Vaudrey, presented his report. However, the items of the agenda concerning his report, the approval of the 2015 accounts and the Auditor's report had to be adjourned to a later date as the accounts had some errors (subsequently found to be due to the effects of rounding) and the Auditor required further documentation about the Church's overall financial situation. The AGM was resumed on 29 May after the 11 am Church service in the Konvikt Chapel, when the Treasurer presented an amended version of the 2015 accounts, duly signed off by the Auditor, Michael Chamier, who also presented his report. The Chaplain thanked the Treasurer and the Auditor for all their work.

*Tania Buhr*



## Ascension Day walkers



## Being a Beast

Charles Foster – vet, barrister, ethicist – wanted to know what it was like to be a non-human animal. So he spent time living as a badger, an otter, a red deer, an urban fox and a swift. Then he wrote about it for those of us who would prefer not to eat Welsh (or other) earthworms for weeks. And yes, it is worth specifying the origin of the worms. Read the book to learn why.

*Being a Beast* by Charles Foster is a stunning piece of writing. The book is worth savouring (perhaps unlike the earthworms). It is well written and well researched, but Foster wears those talents lightly. Spiked with sharp one-liners and observations ('Domestication makes everything shrivel'), it is far more than the sum of its parts – at least until the end, when Foster cannot resist an epilogue explaining everything. I felt this 'the moral of the story is...' section drained the narrative of all its power, so my advice would be: read the book; skip the end.

Rather than evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the writing in depth however (there are plenty of reviews online), I'd like to engage theologically with some of the many questions Foster's project raises. God barely gets a mention in the book, but that doesn't mean he's not present.

### *Being a Victim*

In his section on red deer, Foster makes the illuminating remark that in the end he cannot access the inner lives of deer because he cannot access being a victim. Partly this is the barrier of humanity: we humans are fairly near the top of the food chain, and long ago caused the extinction of most big animals that might have killed us before we had guns. For good evolutionary reasons, it's hard to be frightened of germs in quite the same way as most of us instinctively fear spiders, tigers, and snakes. But I suspect it's also white, straight, male privilege speaking. Most women will admit to feeling at least some anxiety in an unfamiliar, poorly lit car park alone at night; *#blacklivesmatter* matters for good reasons; physical attacks and verbal abuse are horrifyingly more common for LGBT folk than for others. Such is the balance of power in human society. Yet in the gospel accounts we find Jesus constantly disrupting the normal power relationships. Foster's experience is an unintentional reminder that God's kingdom has not yet come, and thus an invitation to recognise and dismantle privilege by extending it to all.

### *Being a Prophet*

Foster is a prophet. Like most prophets, he doesn't set out to be one. Covered in dirt, living on the thin and porous border between civilisation and chaos, he cries out from the wilderness that to save ourselves we need to be willing to save others – including non-human others. He rightly (though mostly implicitly) calls into question how civilised civilisation is, or even how desirable. The interconnectedness of things is laid bare, though never described.

In calling us back to the best versions of ourselves (and thus implicitly to a rightly ordered relationship with God and with the earth), he follows in the footsteps of the biblical prophets. In being a bit ornery and arrogant he does likewise. It's not a call to preserve, but a call to engage respectfully with the planet upon which we depend for life. There are many reminders that it's in the little things: one newly dipped sheep going chest-deep in a river for a drink will kill everything downstream for 50 yards. The patterns and structures are huge: industrial agriculture, urbanisation, population growth, technological advance, economic development – but in the end all their effects are coalesced into one sheep causing 50 yards of river death.

God's kingdom is likewise in the little things, the small moments. These things and moments are not isolated, but similarly connected to bigger patterns. Foster doesn't change the world, nor did he set out so to do. But his voice from the wilderness has the authority of someone who's prepared to swim the river at night, and it calls ears to hear the little things, and opens eyes to notice the small moments. And it rightly pulls us up on our eco-colonialism.

### *Being Human / Being God*

When I was a history teacher, my colleagues and I used to joke about what we called 'Imagine you're a badger' tasks: so-called empathy exercises designed to help 13-year-olds understand what it was like to be in the cargo hold of a slave ship, or dying of dysentery in a concentration camp. We (rightly, I believe) mocked these exercises as firstly impossible (unless one has experienced these horrors, they are impossible to imagine; if one has, one wouldn't want to relive them); secondly, as insulting to those who did (and do) suffer horrifically at the hands of their fellow humans. The intention may have been noble, the method ill-conceived.

Charles Foster goes one further than imagining he's a badger. To the best of his ability, he becomes one. This is incarnation in action. It's imperfect, as he readily acknowledges, but the attempt is not just whole-hearted, but whole-bodied. To explore what it is to be an animal, is even more to ask what it is to be human. As he says in an interview given to the Guardian: '...in living the life we normally live, we are living a life that isn't natural. And in order to be properly human, we've got to be properly animal'.

<http://www.theguardian.com/environment/2016/jan/23/going-underground-meet-man-lived-as-animal-charles-foster>)

Did God need to be human for him to understand from the inside our predicament? The writer of the book of Hebrews seems to suggest this is indeed the case: 'For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathise with our weaknesses, but we have one who in every respect has been tested as we are, yet without sin' (Hebrews 4.15). God already loved the world, but perhaps deep empathy came through God's lived experience of humanity in Jesus. It seems even God cannot come alongside others from a comfortable distance.

For us humans it's difficult because often 'Human interaction is a matter of yelling between mountaintops, through driving rain, in different languages, with socks over our heads' (Oliver Burkeman, *Guardian Weekly*, 1 April 2016). It's not as easy to understand one another, or to feel understood, as we might like to think based on myriad more superficial interactions we have throughout the day. In that interview with the *Guardian* newspaper, Foster says, 'All of us, I guess, wonder how real our relationships are. We wonder whether we are talking at cross-purposes, whether we can know anything about our nearest and dearest – this was just another lens through which to view that question. I thought, if I can have a relationship with something that is as different from me as a fox or a badger, then there's a possibility that I might be able to know my wife or my children or my best friend'.

Incarnation is how we learn, and how we love.

*Evelyn Sweerts*

## On Safeguarding

Are our efforts to protect the young and vulnerable in our community in fact strangling the work we do and destroying trust?

At the age of 21, on graduating from university, I was surprised to discover that Great Britain was not crying out for History graduates and it was consequently quite difficult to find employment. To keep body and soul together, I went to work in a small prep school in Norfolk. Part of this job included sole responsibility for the junior boys' dorms at night. I suppose that I was CRB-checked, but it wasn't discussed in those days. Twenty-five years later, as a Leader at Junior Church, I am advised to call for another adult to 'witness' me helping a three-year-old to go to the toilet, despite having been 'checked' and 'trained' as part of our Church's safeguarding policy. I find this ridiculous and not a little insulting.

As part of our efforts to comply with current requirements, I recently completed the online Diocesan Safeguarding training course and was disappointed to find it rather unhelpful. I am also concerned that it may encourage an atmosphere of suspicion and a culture of accusation in order to protect oneself. No right-thinking person would contest that children (and vulnerable adults) should be protected and that the Church should be a 'safe' environment, but I really think that we, particularly congregations in the Church of England, need to do two things before we start to lose valuable aspects of our communal life to unworkable regulations.

Firstly, we must evaluate risk realistically. Some things are high-risk and others are low-risk, and telling the difference is vital. I read recently that the actor Bill Cosby has been accused of indecent behaviour towards a 15-year-old girl in the Playboy Mansion, many years ago. I am not excusing his alleged actions, but surely going to the Playboy Mansion is high-risk behaviour. Junior Church in Luxembourg seems to me to be low-risk.

Which brings me to my second point: I think we need to be very careful that we don't lose all trust as a body of Christians. Please note, I do not mean blind trust along the lines of 'she's nice, she's safe', but the kind of trust built on the solid foundations of experience, best practice and careful monitoring. If a parent is not happy to leave their child in our care at Junior Church, they are not obliged so to do, but expecting more and more adults to be involved, in order to reduce the risk of incident to zero, simply isn't feasible.

I cannot be sure that nothing irregular went on in my Norfolk prep school 25 years ago, but I don't think it did. I am, on the other hand, confident that Junior Church is run on principles putting the safety of children first and that opportunities for abuse are negligible. Please let us really consider Safeguarding carefully and decide whether it is as positive a force as it claims to be. It would be a great shame if Junior Church could not continue due to a lack of trust. Child abuse remains, thankfully, relatively rare and I worry that by concentrating on highly unlikely scenarios we will forget to be vigilant about the real dangers faced by our Junior Church—the road, the stairs, the hot urn—until a serious accident really makes us think about what is most important.

*Siân Crisp*



## Introducing ... Gabriel Chelladurai & Family



### *Life before Luxembourg*

Destimona and I were born and brought up in South India. We belong to families with the Christian faith and so we have been involved in Church activities from when we were young. After we got married we moved to Luxembourg for my work, and our two children Nathanael and Natasha were born here.

### *Finding this Church*

It was quite easy, because my friend Ambrose moved to Luxembourg a few months before me and he was already a member of our Church.

### *Church activities*

We are both involved in the Junior Church and the Creche. We regularly host Mothers' Prayers meetings in our house. I have recently been elected to the Church Council.

### *Free day?*

If I could have a whole free day, I would spend most of the time with the kids (cycling, swimming etc) and end the day by watching a movie.

### *Favourite hymn*

What a Friend We Have in Jesus: since I studied in a Christian diocese school, I used to sing this hymn during assembly prayer time.

## The Congregational Meeting on Wednesday 25 May

It was a journey where we were led in a way we hadn't thought of, re-routed in a way that seemed unlikely and yet ended up where we always meant to go. But enough of our adventures by SatNav, which, having taken us up a narrow winding road that looked suspiciously like a private driveway, had announced our successful arrival by a closed gate in the middle of a wood.

A fitting metaphor for the evening spent by some 40 members of the congregation at the Centre Jean XXIII, in which we were invited to consider jointly what it means to 'Be the Church' and to become more conscious of what we are doing in our church life.

Most exciting was the opportunity for Speed Dating. We were each given numbered cards and paired up with another with the matching number. I was partnered with a friend with whom I had spent the morning at a coffee shop, but otherwise it was an effective way to randomise who discussed with whom the questions: 'What was it like for you the first time you came to this Church?' and 'What do you like best about this Church?'. We all had a lot to say, judging by the noise level, and, in contrast to what I've heard about Speed Dating events, there seemed to be no feverish exchange of emails and telephone numbers at the end of the session.

Pausing only to drink wine and tea and to eat sandwiches and cake, the congregation moved on to debate three significant topics:

1. Working together for a fairer, more sustainable world;
2. Summer fun in a good cause; and
3. Welcoming and integrating new members to our Church, especially young families.

Assigning a scribe to each table, who somehow managed to lead the discussion, hear all voices and record the nub of each answer, the congregation moved about to a different group for each discussion. I perceived a different dynamic in the discussions depending on the age, sex and experience in the Church of each member. This was both enlightening and humbling. For my own part, I realised that strong views are emotionally and intelligently held for a number of issues. Most heartening was to see on the charts of responses at the end of the evening that what we like most about our Church life is when we come together as friends and welcome people who are not Church members.

Our journey home was without incident.

*Carol Birch*

## What they said on 25 May

Six groups, whose membership changed for each topic, received the same set of questions to answer. Their findings are given below in raw, unedited form, as typed up by three members of the Communications Committee from the answer sheets compiled by the groups' six scribes.

### ***Topic 1—Working together for a fairer, more sustainable world—five questions on 'charities'***

1. Which are the four most important issues?
2. On every continent, or a narrower focus?
3. Working with the Luxembourg Government, or doing our independent thing?
4. Should the Grants and Donations Committee ask for suggestions from the congregation, or should they find projects which fit the policies which a meeting such as this will contribute to?
5. Do you have some other questions or ideas?

Group	1	2	3	4	5	6
1 Four issues?	Environmental; Education; Governance, justice; Human Rights  (1 = resources, climate change, overpopulation, education, war, poverty, health; 2 = inequality, racism, persecution, civil rights; 3 = political corruption, free elections)	Equity underpinned by faith	Women (education, FGM etc); refugees; climate change; disease treatment & prevention	Civil peace; inequality; education; environment	1 Sustainable economic development; 2 Migration / inclusion; 3 Poverty / marginalisation ; 4 Sustainable natural resource use	Global warming; people trafficking; economic inequality; air/water pollution
2 Focus?	Focus giving on certain places; locally you can see the benefit first hand.	Global	Narrower focus; building relationships; <i>Lumen</i> info to everyone	Narrower, but changing every few years	No excluded continents	Reciprocal partnership with an area long-term project; support one or two nominated charities; + emergency relief
3 With the Lux Govt?	Yes if it amplifies our impact, but not if we lose autonomy.	Liaise with Govt funding? Do own thing.	Both	Support some projects but retain flexibility	Case by case	Yes, if meets our aim
4 Method?	No reason to change the name. Trust the committee to do what they do.	Both	Committee decides in conjunction with ideas from congregation.	More systematic involvement of congregation	Yes, good idea ( <i>sic</i> )	A team should research projects, then propose to congregation.
5 Any ideas?	[Blank]	No	More connection of congregation to giving	No time to have them!	[Blank]	Yes ( <i>sic</i> )

## Topic 2—Summer fun in a good cause (about the Church Fair)

1. What is the most enjoyable aspect of the Church Fair for the individual members of this group? Please indicate whether each person is speaking as a helper, an organiser or someone who has attended the Church Fair.

*Group 1*  
 Organiser/host: Seeing enjoyment of crowd and camaraderie of helpers  
 Helpers: Hard work combined with goodwill  
 Outreach: event that bears fruit, not just financial  
 Puts Church on map  
 Attendees: Joyfulness, sense of family, integration and interaction

*Group 2*  
 Organisers: Meeting new people and welcoming them  
 Contributing to charity in a fun way  
 Helpers: Making ourselves known to folks who don't attend Church  
 Engaging with the wider community  
 Attendees: Fun for everyone  
 Bring friends/family to a relaxed environment  
 'A little bit of Britain'

	<i>Entertainment (dancing, music, dog show etc)</i>
Group 3	<i>Helpers: General feel-good atmosphere</i> <i>Nothing – too much like hard work</i> <i>Meeting people</i> <i>Being outside and meeting people and food</i> <i>Generally great atmosphere – seeing people haven't seen for a long time</i> <i>Attendee: English fête feeling, fun, inclusive; willing involvement of visitors in clearing up</i>
Group 4	<i>Organisers/helpers/attendees: socialising (2 people)</i> <i>Socialising with the wider community</i> <i>Organisers/helpers: Having fun with the family</i> <i>Helpers: meeting new people</i> <i>Meeting old friends and making new ones</i>
Group 5	<i>Helper/organiser: Feeling part of a team</i> <i>Attendees: Great for kids</i> <i>A piece of quirky English culture transported to Luxembourg.</i>
Group 6	<i>Helpers: Meeting people not from Church</i> <i>Atmosphere</i> <i>Attendees: Balance between organised events and free space for children</i> <i>Traditional vibe</i> <i>Organisers/helpers/attenders: Children's faces watching strong man act</i> <i>Watching people having fun</i> <i>Cakes</i>
<p>2. What is the most challenging aspect of the Church Fair for each individual member of your group? Please indicate whether each person is speaking as a helper, an organiser or someone who has attended the Church Fair.</p>	
Group 1	<i>Organiser/host: Rising early for loo delivery!</i> <i>Helpers: Logistics – heavy lifting and carrying</i> <i>Attendee: Transport, access</i>
Group 2	<i>Organisers: A lot of work to organise, do inventory, pricing etc</i> <i>Time-consuming</i> <i>Storage</i> <i>Health &amp; safety</i> <i>Attendee: Parking – but it's worth it! Glad that it's just once a year.</i>
Group 3	<i>Helpers: Safety, Particularly kids on tractor</i> <i>Not enough volunteers</i> <i>Physically demanding (books)</i> <i>More solidarity - more helpers (2 people)</i> <i>Attendee: thankless task, stuck with doing it after you've volunteered once</i>
Group 4	<i>Organisers: Loneliness (isolation)</i> <i>Arriving at yes (getting authorisation)</i> <i>Helpers: Heavy lifting</i> <i>Distance and parking</i>
Group 5	<i>June timing</i> <i>Clash of events</i> <i>Hard physical work for an ageing team</i> <i>Overall coordination</i> <i>Distance</i>
Group 6	<i>Organisers/helpers: Finding parking near enough to carry stuff</i> <i>Carrying tables</i> <i>Heavy lifting at end of day</i> <i>Getting helpers</i> <i>White Elephant stall</i> <i>Attendee: Taking down structures</i>

3. What does your group think are the three most important aspects of this 40-year tradition for our Church?

- Group 1      *Fund-raising and fun-raising*  
*Outreach*  
*Tradition*
- Group 2      *Outreach*  
*Fun*  
*Charity*  
*Visibility within the Luxembourgish community*
- Group 3      *Brings us together - solidarity*  
*Raises a lot of money*  
*Outreach – family-friendly day*
- Group 4      *Connecting with the wider community*  
*Fund-raising for charity*  
*Socialising*
- Group 5      *Outreach and integration of new people*  
*Shared community experience*  
*Impact of funds raised*
- Group 6      *Mixing Church and non-Church folk*  
*Effective fund-raiser*  
*Fun for all the family*  
*Cakes*

4. What does your group think? Should we focus on one big event or should we think in terms of smaller events?

- Group 1      *Consider some smaller events closer to Lux city, e.g. picnic in park, events to attract younger people, plus 1 or 2 bigger events in the year, summer outside the city, winter closer to the city.*
- Group 2      *Would be harder to coordinate several smaller events for all of the helpers – hard enough to get people for Harvest, Mothering Sunday and Christmas lunches.*  
*More small events might accommodate other schedules – could also move date of Fair for that purpose.*  
*Smaller events could be simpler like a picnic with music or similar, possibly even in addition to the Fair.*  
*Overall in favour of one big event*
- Group 3      *Scaled-down Fair*  
*Smaller, diverse events*  
*'Piggy back' on local events – visibility, outreach, local contact*
- Group 4      *One big event – economies of scale!*
- Group 5      *Explore options to contract out part of the process – contact organisations which might help (scouts, schools etc)*  
*Smaller events still take a lot of coordination*  
*Idea for small event: parable of the talents - £10 to multiply by harvest festival?*
- Group 6      *Dilemma! To keep the fun and cut the work!*  
*Different venue*  
*Reduce size, max. 7-10 stands and also have smaller events, e.g. book sale, cake competition, hymn-singing, winter bazaar in New Year.*

5. Does your group want to raise any other questions, issues or ideas?

- Group 1      *Find out what younger segments – with or without children – would like in terms of activities*  
*Cliques and groups in the Church – do people (individuals, couples, families) feel part of a group, or on the edge or the outside?*
- Group 2      *Could use more young people, but hard to get them involved.*

	<i>Can we pay a group of people for heavy lifting? This is controversial. People feel like we need more transparency about the doings of the Council, i.e. service time change, Fair cancellation etc. Folks would have liked to be consulted and had some say.</i>
Group 3	<i>People don't have time to volunteer nowadays.</i>
Group 4	<i>Problems with lack of communication Finding a venue, perhaps Professional event organiser – or a team of volunteers to organise it jointly ? Will the Council initiate a Fair?</i>
Group 5	<i>How to preserve Church identity of event without it being overtly evangelistic? How to guard against same people doing all the work? Has it become over-ambitious? But, how to simplify?</i>
Group 6	<i>2 barriers to large event and current venue: finding an organiser and people to do heavy lifting. Ideas: Link with other organisations/charities Encourage outside people to help Setting up – offer charities cash share!</i>

### **Topic 3—Welcoming people to our Church**

1. What importance does your group give to the role of welcomers on a Sunday morning?

*Very important; sidespersons should be in place until at least 11.15am.*

*Very important to welcome*

*High importance*

*For the 11am we would recommend a separate welcomer or two, not involved with other duties. We consider it important.*

*Doesn't address the issue of people leaving Church – how do we follow up with them?*

*Very important to be welcoming – separate role*

2. What does your group feel would be the advantages of making changes to the way we welcome people?

*Would be good idea to have someone downstairs to welcome people until at least 11.15am.*

*It's a way to get people involved and play to people's strengths.*

*True welcome hard for sidesperson given other responsibilities; good idea, but...*

*Encouraging them to return – happier atmosphere*

*Someone is delegated to notice new people – sidespeople are too busy; gives newcomers a chance to ask questions and feel at ease.*

*People would feel welcomed.*

3. What would be the disadvantages?

*We would need more people as sidespersons as sidespersons have to read too.*

*Yet another rota! Volunteers*

*Difficult to have another committee / list*

*Can be coming on a bit strong for some people*

*Yet another rota*

4. What does your group think are three of the most important issues to bear in mind in welcoming others?

*A friendly smile; information (books; Christian activities); sensitivity*

*Helping through service; sensitivity to needs; knowing people*

*What is 'welcoming'? We need to define it; a simple arrow pointing up the stairs? Are we afraid of confusing new people with people who come regularly?*

*Welcomers should know answers to a lot of question and be prepared to take people for coffee afterwards.*

5. Does the group feel any Church member could be asked to be a welcomer, or that it would be better to choose welcomers with some care, and provide proper training?



*Every Church member has a responsibility to welcome.*

*Yes – with proper training; go with strengths of individuals.*

*No! Perhaps there can be some training re: body language etc; maybe let people be anonymous during service, but note to talk to them at the end.*

*Choose with care and give training.*

6. Other issues / questions on this subject?

*Should have Church sign outside again; lists when mentioned should be visible.*

*Helping people through service: pew sheets vs service booklets*

*Are we making the best use of our 'welcome pack'?*

*Unattractive entrance & approach to Chapel*

*Maybe a greater role for welcomers after the service as well, when people aren't in a rush.*

*Replace stair carpet!*

### **Providing for young families through Crèche and Junior Church**

*How important does your group think that provision for young families is to the life of our Church?*

*Essential*

*Yes! Very...*

*Yes*

*Vital*

*Very!*

*Very! It's essential.*

What priority should this have amongst the other things which we do as a Church, and which we offer on Sunday mornings?

*High priority*

*Equal – whole family*

*High*

*Equal*

*High priority*

*Top priority*

Should we be asking parents themselves to be running the crèche and staffing the Junior Church, or that long-standing Church members who are not themselves young parents should be asked to commit to this aspect of Church life?

*Crèche – yes; JC needs teachers with some training; no harm asking long-standing members*

*Go with strengths; parents to contribute.*

*Not either / or — possibly both; should we recruit / pay someone to do it?*

*Set up crèche for parents to use; this might free up people for Junior Church; no JC during school holidays (ie core school holidays); long-standing members: no.*

*Can't we do both? Beggars can't be choosers!*

*Both*

Other issues / questions on this subject:

*What about young people?! Vary services – why do young people prefer All Nations? Vary media; more regular all-age services.*

*It takes considerable skill – not everyone is suited; child protection and background checks are quite complex; how does the helper actually participate in the service itself?*

*Lions and Lambs brings people in, but how do we convert them into Church members? How do we make the all-age service more inclusive / involving for the children?*

## **Summary of the transcripts**

### *Welcome*

It is very important to welcome people; there are different ideas about how to do this; although everybody should have a welcoming attitude, most people think it a good idea to have specific welcomers who don't have other duties that Sunday; welcomers should be selected and trained, and should talk to newcomers after the service as well as before.

### *Young families*

It is vital to provide for young families. Creche could be staffed by parents and others. Do we need creche staff at all? It is also important to think about Church services and how children and parents can be involved.

*[continued overleaf]*

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### *Summer fun*

Most people have found the Church Fair mostly enjoyable in the past. Fund-raising is important but so is having fun and socialising – with other Church members and also people from the wider community. Tradition is also mentioned, mainly by attendees rather than helpers. Most people would like the Fair to continue in a way that did not involve so much physical hard work and at a venue which was easily accessible, with plentiful parking. This need not exclude smaller events at other times of the year, such as winter events indoors.

### *Working together*

About 20 issues were mentioned altogether (some groups had more than four). The top four are: global warming/climate change/ the environment; economic inequality/poverty; people trafficking/refugees/migration/social inclusion; war and peace. Other issues mentioned more than once are sustainable use of resources, education, health and disease prevention. Opinions differ as to whether the focus should be global or local, and on the extent to which we should work together with the Luxembourg Government – doing this for some projects would not necessarily exclude doing other projects independently. There are also different views on how and to what extent the congregation should be involved in the work of the Grants and Donations/Charities Committee.

*Philippa Seymour*

## **People trafficking**

a talk by Carrie Pemberton Ford on 20 June in the Centre Jean XXIII

A dozen people came to listen to and discuss this subject, which Dr Pemberton Ford and the UK Cambridge Centre for Applied Research into Human Trafficking are studying. The centre was set up in 2007 and researches into human rights abuses. Such abuses are associated with international criminal gangs working in European and non-European countries (for example Russia, Eastern European states, Nigeria and the Middle East).

Human rights conventions and notably the Palermo Protocol give protection in law but there is a need to ensure justice for those trafficked, who are constrained, denied freedom of movement and sexually exploited.

Some institutions may dehumanize (for example, boarding schools, prisons, families). In some societies drugs and alcohol are plied to young women who may be sold into prostitution for a number of years so that their earnings can be used to care for elderly members of their family.

A number of bodies issue reports, for example UNODC, US TIC, Europol and Eurostat. The speaker urged NGOs, faith communities and others to act together to inform and encourage all to care for their neighbour.

*John Overstall*

## Celebrating Magna Carta in Ghent



On a cold Saturday morning early in June, just over a hundred singers (including five from our Choir) met in St Elisabeth's Church at the Béguinage in Ghent. This grand building is the new home for the local Anglicans, who have been represented in the city for 200 years. We were there for the Archdeaconry's Choir Festival, an annual event in which Anglican singers from Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany and Luxembourg get together to rehearse and then perform a special service of celebration. This year we were using the new festival book from the Royal School of Church Music, entitled *Thy Kingdom Come, Thy Will be Done*. We have been singing anthems from it in the Konvikt Chapel over the past few weeks.

The festival book commemorates the 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Magna Carta, famous as a symbol of justice, fairness and human rights. So the prayers, hymns and anthems collected in the book are centred around those themes. They include a hymn by Albert Bayly (1901-1984), which we sang to the tune *Sharphthorne*, by Erik Routley (1917-1982). The first verse goes like this:

What does the Lord require for praise and offering?  
What sacrifice desire, or tribute bid you bring?  
Do justly, love mercy; walk humbly with your God.

When King John signed Magna Carta at Runnymede, he sought to avoid a murderous civil war. Remarkably, the document bearing his signature continues to flourish 800 years later, encouraging freedom and constitutional government throughout the world.

*Edward Seymour*



## Te Deum



Wall painting at St John's Church, Clayton, Sussex

The *Te Deum* (also known as *Ambrosian Hymn* or *A Song of the Church*) is an early Christian hymn of praise. The title is taken from its opening Latin words, *Te Deum laudamus*, literally 'Thee, God, we praise'. Authorship used to be ascribed to Saints Ambrose and Augustine, on the occasion of the latter's baptism by the former in AD 387. It is now accredited to Saint Nicetas, who was at that time Bishop of Remesiana in the Roman province of Dacia, and whose feast day falls on 22 June.

On Sunday 26 June at 6.30 our Church followed an adapted version of the BCP Accession Service, to join with churches throughout the Grand Duchy which traditionally sing the *Te Deum* for the official birthday of the Grand-Duke on the 23rd, and at the same time celebrate the flourishing of the Anglican Church in Luxembourg. After considering versions of the English words set to music by Orlando Gibbons, Henry Purcell, Charles Stanford and John Ireland, the Director of Music Ovidiu Dragan finally chose a selection from one of George Frideric Handel's three settings, arranged for five-part choir, organ, strings, woodwind, trumpets and drums. This setting was first performed in 1743 to celebrate a British military victory at Dettingen in Germany.

Early in May an augmented choir of 27 singers began practising the music, which included two hymns, Psalm 121, the national anthem *Ons Heemecht* and a special setting by Alan Carlisle of the Accession Service responses, known as 'The Suffrages'. Twelve players, mostly from the Luxembourg Philharmonic, were invited by their friends in the choir to provide the orchestral accompaniment. In view of the numbers involved, the service was relocated to the capacious and resonant Church of the Holy Spirit in the City suburb of Cents.

*(Ed, with acknowledgements to Wikipedia)*

## The Referendum—a Chaplain's view

About 12 years ago, towards the end of a late-night conversation, one of our organists at the Anglican Church of Luxembourg mentioned that he had played a big role in the development of 'E numbers' – the code of complex substances which are now detailed in a common format throughout the European Union. The common format means that food suppliers can sell their products well beyond their own borders; it also means that concerned consumers can now see just what it is that they are buying wherever they live in Europe. Our congregation is full of people who do this kind of back-room work to make everyday life easier for 500 million people throughout Europe, including people who live in the UK.

Nobody I know wears rose-tinted glasses, even if they arrived here as naïve idealists. Those who work for the EU are often very critical. But my experience is that British workers in Luxembourg have a deep, illusion-free commitment to a Europe of diversity, prosperity and peace, which can only be achieved by dealing with a lot of gritty issues and engaging with the world as it is, and not as we would like it to be.

As well as hosting many of the EU institutions, Luxembourg is one of the world's largest financial centres. Around 6,000 UK citizens live and work here, and most work for the institutions or the banks. The challenge is always to get the details right so that they are accurate across all the legal and linguistic frontiers within the EU, and beyond it. This can be stressful: it's not easy, for instance, to manage the translation process of a document so that it can be published quickly and simultaneously in all the different languages of the 28 countries that make up the Union. But it happens every day, and it almost never makes the headlines.

What British people here find so frustrating is that what does make the headlines is so often half-truth or sometimes plain falsehood, which reflects the permanent anti-EU bias of an important section of the British press. (One parish magazine recently described the EU as 'anti-Christian'.) The problem goes beyond the toxic diet of 'blame and shame' which sells some popular newspapers. At a deeper level British news values seem geared to a nostalgic world-view which continually celebrates yesterday's glory, but which ignores what Britain is developing today with its European partners. I have sometimes found myself talking with 'sheepas' who have done the research and preliminary negotiations for an agreement which got space in the European press, but was not thought worth reporting in Britain.

Most of the British people in my congregation have strong attachments to their home communities in the UK, but very many are not able to vote in the referendum because they have lived outside Britain for more than 15 years. They believe that what they do produces a lot of good developments which people back home just take for granted. Everyone I deal with wants Britain to stay. To them Brexit seems crazy.

*Chris Lyon*

*(This article appeared recently in Church Times)*

## On bees

A bee settling on a flower stings a child. And the child is afraid of bees and declares that bees exist to sting people.

A poet admires the bee sucking from the chalice of a flower and says it exists to suck the fragrance of flowers.

A bee-keeper, seeing the bee collect pollen from flowers and carry it to the hive, says that it exists to gather honey.

Another bee-keeper who has studied the life of the hive more closely says that the bee gathers pollen dust to feed the young bees and rear a queen, and that it exists to perpetuate its race.

A botanist notices that the bee flying with the pollen of a male flower to a pistil fertilises the latter, and sees in this the purpose of the bee's existence.

Another, observing the migration of plants, notices that the bee helps in this work, and may say that in this lies the purpose of the bee.

But the ultimate purpose of the bee is not exhausted by the first, the second, or any of the processes the human mind can discern. The higher the human intellect rises in the discovery of these purposes, the more obvious it becomes that the ultimate purpose is beyond our comprehension.

All that is accessible to humankind is the relation of the life of the bee to other manifestations of life. And so it is with the purpose of historic characters and nations.

*Leo Tolstoy (1828-1910)*  
from the First Epilogue to *War and Peace*

## The meaning of charity

As anyone who has ever tried to learn a language knows, when you look up a foreign word in a dictionary you can be faced with a number of English words as possible equivalents. Context is vital, and even if you know the context, ideally you also need a good knowledge of how and when that word has been used in other contexts, in its literature. In my experience Ancient Greek is one of the worst (or richest, to put it charitably) languages in this respect. If you look up *charis*, from which the word 'charity' is derived, in the Greek Dictionary you find 'joy, pleasure, grace, loveliness; favour, kindness, good will, boon; gratitude, thanks; respect; gratification, delight'.

For those of us of a certain age who were brought up on the Authorised Version of the Bible (AV), the word 'charity' brings to mind the famous passage from 1 Corinthians 13: '... faith, hope, charity, but the greatest of these is charity'. That must be *charis* in the Greek, I thought. But it isn't, it's *agape*. *Agape* is a problem for English translators since it has no exact equivalent, being one of classical Greek's three words for what we call love, and modern Bible translations have 'love' in this passage. The other two words are *eros* and *filia*. *Eros* has sexual connotations and I have not found it in my non-exhaustive researches in the gospels. *Agape* and *filia* and their



verbal forms both occur quite frequently. When Jesus is being quoted directly it's usually *agape*, while other people tend to say *filia*, and in both the AV and modern versions of the gospels, both these words are translated as 'love'. I have no idea why the AV translators chose to translate *agape* as 'charity' in this passage in Corinthians. They must have felt that something special was required.

This passage in Paul's epistle is echoed, even more powerfully, in the Collect for Quinquagesima (Sunday before Lent) in the Book of Common Prayer, first published in 1549:

*O LORD, who hast taught us that all our doings without charity are nothing worth: Send thy Holy Ghost, and pour into our hearts that most excellent gift of charity, the very bond of peace and of all virtues, without which whosoever liveth is counted dead before thee: Grant this for thine only Son Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.*

The Pocket Oxford English Dictionary (1984) defines charity as 'kindness, benevolence, a giving voluntarily to those in need; leniency or tolerance in judging others; institution or organisation for helping those in need, help so given; love of fellow men'. In contemporary English it can have more negative connotations, because of the aggressive fundraising tactics of some charities, and because some acts of charity in the past have made things worse rather than better for the recipients, by perpetuating dependency or distorting local economies. Some people also think it fosters a condescending attitude in the giver. Well-established charities such as ActionAid are well aware of the pitfalls of a top-down approach, and decided decades ago to employ staff from the areas they wanted to help, and to take advice locally on how that help can be most effective. The ethos of effective charities is summed up in an article in *The Observer* of 12 June 2016 by a representative of a very new charity, Help Refugees, started in 2015 to help refugees in Calais: 'always find out from the volunteers on the ground and the refugees themselves. Don't think you know best ... although providing the essentials of humanitarian aid is so important, dignity also really counts'.

Our Church (in the Council and at the congregational meeting in May) has been talking about extending its charity activities beyond simply giving money to good causes, to showing solidarity in action to promote justice, peace and human dignity and preserve the environment. This means active participation, and cooperation with organisations like Amnesty International or Greenpeace – or locally, ACAT, Stëmm vun der Strooss, Caritas, the Red Cross or the CELL. People can use their muscles and intelligence as well as their money to support good causes, as many members of our congregation already do.

I very much welcome the idea that money by itself is not enough, and that there are many different ways to use our energy and talents to combat inequality and make the world a better place. But I would not want to ditch the word 'charity' with its rich and complex back story. The idea of charity as 'the bond of peace' chimes very neatly with the idea that the root cause of many conflicts is inequality, and that climate change will also bring conflicts as water and food become scarce and inhabited areas disappear under the sea. I would like to see the word rehabilitated by ensuring that our charitable giving avoids the possible pitfalls, so that 'charity' can once more carry the meanings of kindness, tolerance, love, or even joy, pleasure, and delight.

*Philippa Seymour*

# Trinity Sunday

But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. John 16:13 (NIV)

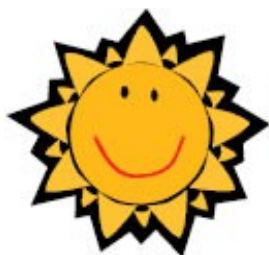


The puzzle is based on John 16:12-15

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P O T F N Z D D O G W F Y K Y
V Q R W M E O X B E A R N Q S
J I O H H C U I R Z T J J V J
S N M E Y Q J K P H R N X O J
K K L A B E L O N G U T N L P
B C X R A W E Q V A T T Y E F
P B C S M M Y G E O H N F N Y
J E L U O Y S U J P S P E A K
D O T C I T L I R Q T H V I Q
Q C I I N H Y D M I O Z Y J N
D N V F A T H E R K W X I K J
B R V S I A R I G L O R Y G O
H S X W H O P H W C H R T W A
E P J U M S Q Y W F L Y Z F H
A Q N U Y Y F A S G M Q W F Y
    
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COME	TRUTH	MORE	HEARS
BELONG	GUIDE	SPIRIT	GLORY
SPEAK	FATHER	BEAR	KNOWN



# WELCOME SUMMER

C X A G N B H R C I Y J D L M K R A P E M E H T  
 A A T E P A R T I E S V F R U G A D H B T I J N  
 M L R H J W K K E Y S E I L F E R I F B L E U K  
 P B M N T K E O Y F P O U Q I W X R I H F S M O  
 I L D V I C E C R E A M R X S D W Y R G L Y P Z  
 N A P B O V C G P D S H E R H F S S E G I V R H  
 G R P H U L A H O O P S I J I J J A W K P H O L  
 M O D N A O F L O P G Q J R N S K N O T F U P V  
 W L F X P Y J Z L A A W E S G B L D R C L P E D  
 E L H F J G O H X I Q J W E K R L A K G O M H N  
 O E B S P C A U G U S T Q I C R X L S U P Z T M  
 V R G U H T D E R T H J K V L O H S B T S D R G  
 D C H N R V J T N C H A R O M H R L E E D E A F  
 P O P S I C L E S T T Y U M O Y L K K C I N H G  
 E A X C C W E T Y K C S G N A E M I E F A H A Q  
 S S T R N O N N E G H W O E V X B P A R A D E S  
 H T U E A D J U L Y R I B J R K E Y M M G H E V  
 A E S E T D F F Q W T M E R E T A Y U I H S O P  
 A R S N A D F G H A J M K L L Z C X C V S B N S  
 M Q W E L R T U C T I I O P K A H S D A A F G C  
 H J K L I Z X A C V B N N M N Q R W L E L N U I  
 R T Y E E U V I O P A G S D I F G G H J P A J N  
 Z X N C V B N F D H J T R H R J N K L E S G W C  
 I U E R K S E N O C W O N S P U P C I H G E W I  
 J W H C O O K O U T S W E E S D L K I J F M D P

AUGUST  
 BEACH  
 BIKES  
 CAMPING  
 CARNIVAL  
 COOKOUTS  
 FIREFLIES  
 FIREWORKS  
 FISHING  
 FLIPFLOPS

FUN  
 HULA HOOPS  
 ICE CREAM  
 JULY  
 JUMPROPE  
 JUNE  
 MOVIES  
 PARADES  
 PARTIES  
 PICNICS  
 POOL

POPSICLES  
 ROLLERCOASTER  
 SANDALS  
 SPLASH  
 SPRINKLER  
 SNOWCONES  
 SUNGLASSES  
 SUNSCREEN  
 SWIMMING  
 THEME PARK  
 VACATION

With acknowledgements.

## Natural things

Truth, so far, in my book;—the truth which draws  
Through all things upwards,—that a twofold world  
Must go to a perfect cosmos. Natural things  
And spiritual,—who separates those two  
In art, in morals, or the social drift  
Tears up the bond of nature and brings death,  
Paints futile pictures, writes unreal verse,  
Leads vulgar days, deals ignorantly with men,  
Is wrong, in short, at all points ...  
... And truly, I reiterate, nothing's small!  
No lily-muffled hum of a summer-bee,  
But finds some coupling with the spinning stars;  
No pebble at your foot, but proves a sphere;  
No chaffinch, but implies the cherubim;  
And (glancing on my own thin, veined wrist),  
In such a little tremor of the blood  
The whole strong clamour of a vehement soul  
Doth utter itself distinct. Earth's crammed with heaven,  
And every common bush afire with God;  
But only he who sees, takes off his shoes,  
The rest sit round it and pluck blackberries,  
And daub their natural faces unaware  
More and more from the first similitude.

*Elizabeth Barrett Browning (1806-1861)*

*from 'Aurora Leigh'*