

The Parish Church of Saint George



PARISH MAGAZINE

An open door in the heart of the City



NOVEMBER 2025



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St George's Parish Magazine is published on the Sunday nearest the first day of the month, except August and January. Please send contributions to the Parish Office at stgeorgesoffice@btconnect.com. Views expressed by contributors do not necessarily represent the views of the parish.

Editorial Team: William Odling-Smee, Selby Nesbitt, Tony Merrick.

From the Rector's Desk



Dear Friends in Christ,

Let me begin by thanking all of those who made such a magnificent job of decorating the church for the Harvest Thanksgiving on Sunday 12th October. It all looked wonderful and entailed a lot of skill and hard work. It may seem incongruous to some that a city centre church observes Harvest Thanksgiving but as St George's was the originator in Ireland of Harvest Festival services, it is important that we maintain the tradition, and it serves to remind us 'townies' of the central importance of agriculture to our lives and to the economy.

I have informed the Select Vestry that my original projected departure from St George's, which was to take place at the end of January. 2026, has now been put back until Easter next year. That's, for various practical reasons which I won't bore you with, but I will be leaving St George's shortly after Easter Day 2026. More details will follow about an exact date in due course.

BBC Radio Ulster have asked us to broadcast a live service of worship on the Second Sunday of Advent, 7th December this year. The broadcast is scheduled to go out live at 9:00 AM and will last around 45 minutes. I will work with Dr Bert Tosh, the producer, and our choir in arranging this service, but it will probably be a short version of the Eucharist (Order 1). I have chosen the old Order 1 format because it is much easier to fit into a 45 minutes slot and because it is so rarely used in broadcasts from the Church of Ireland (or indeed Church of England) parishes nowadays. We would like to have a good attendance on the 7th, so the usual 9:30 AM Eucharist will, of necessity, be cancelled. The 11:00 AM Eucharist will take place at the usual time in a simplified form for those who cannot get to the 9:00 AM service. Please do try to be present at the 9:00 AM broadcast Eucharist if you can.

I am presently doing my Michaelmas round of Home Communion for the housebound and sick. If you know of anyone who cannot get to church and would appreciate Holy Communion at home or a pastoral visit, please contact me on 079 0279 2080.

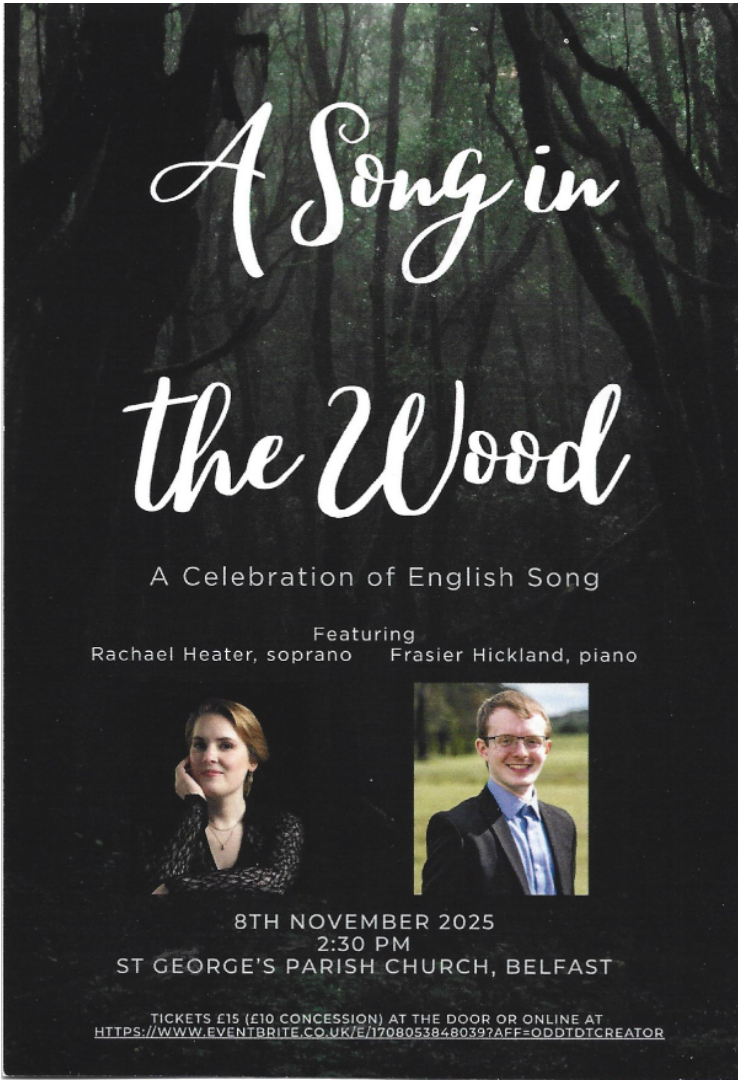
Yours sincerely in Christ

Brian Stewart

PARISH NOTICES

All Souls Day - Requiem Eucharist 6th November at 7:30PM

If you would like to have a loved one remembered during the All Souls Requiem, please add their name to the list in the Narthex. This is a **new list**, which will replace all previous lists.



*A Song in
the Wood*

A Celebration of English Song

Featuring
Rachael Heater, soprano Frasier Hickland, piano



8TH NOVEMBER 2025
2:30 PM
ST GEORGE'S PARISH CHURCH, BELFAST

TICKETS £15 (£10 CONCESSION) AT THE DOOR OR ONLINE AT
[HTTPS://WWW.EVENTBRITE.CO.UK/E/1708053848039?AFF=ODDTDTCREATOR](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/1708053848039?aff=ODDTDTCREATOR)

SAVE THE ENVIRONMENT FROM ELEANOR MAYNARD



If you're an avid gardener or environment enthusiast, you might have heard of peat. But do you know why it's so precious? **Here are five things you need to know.**

1. Peat is often classified as a fossil fuel

Peat is decomposed plant material which accumulates in waterlogged areas like moors and bogs. It's extracted at industrial levels for gardening and horticulture.

Peat bogs accumulate just 0.5mm to 1.0mm of peat each year and many in the UK have been growing for as long as 10,000 years. That's why peat is often called a fossil fuel - because it's ancient and almost impossible to renew.

2. Peat extraction is devastating for our wildlife and climate...

Rare wildlife thrives in peatland. It's home to some of the UK's most distinctive plant communities, like sundews, butterworts, and colourful sphagnum mosses.

Peatlands are also one of our most important carbon sinks. But when peat is exploited, it's exposed to the air and releases carbon dioxide - this turns a wonderful carbon store into a dreadful carbon emitter.

3. ... and peat extraction puts us in danger in other ways, too

Peatlands slow the flow of water, helping to keep us safe from floods and provide resilience to drought. Plus, water filtered through healthy peatland is of a better quality than water from extracted bogs - giving us affordable, safe and clean drinking water.

4. Despite government promises, peat sale is STILL legal

Many people think peat sales are already banned. But nope - despite the wealth of evidence showing the environmental cost and overwhelming public support for a ban, you'll still find it on sale at garden centres across the country.

5. It's up to all of us to protect peat & keep it in the ground

Amateur gardening accounts for 69% of peat used in the UK - we currently use three billion litres of it every year. But if the Royal Horticultural Society has made 97% of their gardens peat-free, so can we!

By buying peat-free soil, encouraging our loved ones to do the same, or by making our own compost at home, we can all play our part in saving the environment.

THE BIG SCHOOL

by Paul McLaughlin



Memories of our summer holidays were fading fast. The salt and sounds of the vast fishing fleet in the busy harbour at Kilkeel in the Kingdom of Mourne now only fleeting odours and whispers.

The page for September on our mother's holy calendar had been turned and now held all the grief and suffering of Our Lady of Sorrows to whom the month is dedicated. It hung in our hallway where it could be seen by those going in and those going out, impossible to miss and even as an eleven-year-old I thought it a fitting sign that school was about to start back. The big school.

The master at our primary had congratulated those of us who had passed the Eleven Plus examination, but his stern words, forgotten for eight weeks of sun and what seemed like timeless fun, returned like the Bells of Hell warning song that the Salvation Army girls had sung outside Belfast's City Hall the Christmas before. "This is where the easy bit stops", he'd said; "You think you've done it all, but you've only just started. There will be work. Lots of hard work from now on".

Strangely, although that didn't sound too threatening back at the tail end of June and was positively forgotten for the duration of the holidays, those words of warning rang loudly in my ears as my father stood behind me to knot my first school tie.

"It's all go this morning", he said jovially as always. "New school, new friends, new uniform, I wish I was going with you".

I wished something similar and attempted a smile that didn't reach eyes that were like windows of worry.

A trolley bus ride later found me staring at a series of red-bricked buildings on the edge of the city centre, stained with years of soot and traffic grime and more like a prison than a place of education.

I clutched the leather brief case that my mother had bought for me. I didn't like it, thought it was too showy, but carried it obediently. My father had written my name and address on the inside of the covering flap in blue, indelible ink, block capitals, so even my chances of losing it were remote. It was to stay with me for the entire first year.

No one in our family had ever gone to grammar school and I had no idea of how grand it would be. Just as well, as disappointment met me at the gates.

The place looked and felt old. The roofless toilet block, the stark cement quadrangle that doubled as an outdoor gymnasium – I was soon to find there was none indoors – and my first classroom in a block built in 1866 whose upper floor was reached by a wrought iron

staircase looked like the kind of horrors that Dickens had described so vividly.

But the sun shone and the hubbub and hollering of forty classmates, brought into line quickly by a sergeant major in a soutane, fell to silence as we trudged up those riveted steps.

The classroom where we would be based for the next nine months held solid oak desks that must have come with the original building. Dark wood, iron-framed with seats attached, they were arranged in three rows facing a blackboard and easel that defied the gravity of time. I was afraid of everything, but comforted slightly by the behaviour of those bigger lads who seemed to take our new surroundings in their stride.

Within hours, friendships had been forged, a pecking order established, teachers introduced and first impressions made that would last my seven years as a pupil at St Mary's CBS.

I think back to the real fears that filled my young heart on that first day. Was I really good enough to be here? Imposter syndrome they call it nowadays. How would I ever navigate such a huge campus? Our primary had been homely, small, but newly-built with Scots pine furniture and huge windows. Would I be able to make friends with so many strangers? And how could I avoid the traditional 'ducking' in a cold-water filled tub handed out to first formers by those who just a year before had suffered the same fate?

I need not have worried. The big school brought together boys from all over city, most as frightened as I was I am sure, into an environment that encouraged comradeship, oozed tradition and fostered a set of values that moulded young minds while encouraging them to flourish in their own ways.

The statue of Our Lady that stood in each classroom of the big school became a poignant reminder that we should be gracious, kind and forgiving as we make those ways, but ready to uphold big school tradition by 'ducking' the next batch of first formers when our time came.

RNID - A MESSAGE FROM LISA STEWART



Royal National Institute for Deaf People (RNID) provides a wide range of services to support people in the UK who are deaf, have hearing loss, or tinnitus, including hearing aid support, information and guidance, community outreach, health advocacy, and employment support.

I hope this message finds you well.

I'm writing to share an exciting opportunity for your members to get involved in meaningful volunteering work with **RNID** – the charity supporting people who are deaf, have hearing loss, or experience tinnitus.

We are currently recruiting volunteers across **Belfast Health and Social Care Trust** locations to help deliver vital services that make a real difference in people's lives. Our volunteers support individuals with hearing aids, provide information about hearing loss and tinnitus, and help run drop-in sessions in hospitals and community settings.

These roles are flexible, fully supported with training, and open to anyone aged 18 and over. No prior experience is necessary – just a willingness to help and a friendly attitude.

We would be incredibly grateful if you could share this opportunity with your network, whether through your newsletter, social media, noticeboards, or upcoming events. By helping us spread the word, you'll be playing a key role in improving access to hearing support across Belfast.

For more information or to express interest, please contact us at:

 volunteering@rnid.org.uk

 www.rnid.org.uk/volunteer

Thank you for your continued support of community wellbeing. If you'd like us to attend one of your meetings or events to speak about volunteering, we'd be delighted to arrange that.

Warm regards,

Lisa Stewart

Development Manager

RNID Northern Ireland/Shetland

The Rector's Address at the Funeral of Billy McArthur.

As the Rev'd Gerry Lynch, who knew Billy well, has remarked, 'When God made Billy McArthur, he threw away the mould'. I suspect most of you here today who encountered Billy even once, would concur with Fr Gerry. Billy McArthur was an incredibly rich and rare character. He was the very best of this city, a real Belfast man through and through. He also knew the city inside out and its people he knew intimately. If you wanted something done, something fixed, something arranged, in fact, if you needed help or advice with anything, then Billy knew where to go, who to ask, and what to ask. He had incredible contacts and knowledge of such a huge variety of people and places. It was largely because he was very nosey! Not nosey in an interfering way, not nosey in a gossipy or bad way but because he was genuinely interested in people, in places, in history, in music, in art, in culture, in events and in the whole sweep of human activity. He had a huge fund of stories and tales from his long life going right back to his upbringing on the Crumlin Road, his school days, his rugby playing days, his working life, and his involvement in the Religious Drama Society, the Ulster operatic, his many travels in Ireland, Britain and Europe and his lifelong involvement in the Church of Ireland, first in St Mary's Crumlin Road and over the last 25 years here in St George's and in many other churches.

For so many visitors and new members, Billy was the welcoming face of St George's. He knew its history inside out and better than anyone. He immediately made people feel welcome and at ease and was always interested in them and where they came from. So many visitors have written in our visitors book about the welcome they received from Billy and how he would spend time with them and even take them for coffee or lunch. Billy was especially welcoming to those who came to join St George's, particularly recent arrivals from Iran and Nigeria whom he befriended and took a particular interest in. He ended up sponsoring many of them for Baptism and Confirmation and there are now several dozen recent members of our parish who have Billy as their godfather. Wonderful!

In many ways Billy represented all that was best about the Church of Ireland and he epitomised for me the very best of us in the church, - warm, welcoming, informed about his faith, not showy or hectoring, respectful of other traditions, generous to a fault, and full of wisdom and good practical advice, that was always worth listening to.

Billy knew his faith, his church, his tradition, and could hold his own

with anyone - and often did! But he was never disparaging of other views except for out and out bigots who he would firmly put in their place with a few well-chosen words.

Billy taught Sunday School for many years at St Mary's and remained a lifelong friend of many of those he taught, such as the late John Cranston, who also came to worship in St George's. Billy's faith was very deep and I know he was ready to go to God, as he often told me in recent years. I was so glad to see him in the Royal just a few hours before he died when he joined in the prayers fully.

He also was a key figure in our Walsingham Group here in the parish and had been many times on their annual pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham. Not the usual sort of devotion one might expect of a lad from the Crumlin Road, but then his home parish was St Mary's named after the Mother of our Lord. The hymn, 'Shall we not love thee Mother dear', a very Anglican hymn, reflects in many ways Billy's devotion to the Mother of God and her Shrine at Walsingham. Later on, after the Nunc Dimittis, as Billy's body is carried from the church, the organist will play 'Our Lady' the tune of the Walsingham hymn in acknowledgement of Billy's long association with the shrine. He will now be reunited with Geraldine Black who was also a Walsingham Pilgrim. He and Mrs Black will be able to resume their verbal sparring, which could be hot and heavy at times, but always very entertaining and full of a deep affection for each other.

So now, dear friends, we come to say our earthly farewells to Billy and although there is always a sadness at any earthly parting, we can also be very thankful to God for giving us the gift of Billy's friendship and love for nearly 90 years. He was a good Christian man who I and many of you here today loved deeply and who touched so many hearts and lives. We commend Billy's soul to God our Father, full of confidence in Christ's resurrection and in Billy's and in our own, knowing with full assurance that he will hear those words of Jesus 'Well done, thou good and faithful servant'.

May he rest in peace and rise in glory. Amen

POETS CORNER

The Impossible Cost

By Paul McLaughlin

Dig and we did with the order
given
Our gaiters unloosened
And jackets undone
With the smell of the gas
Drifting over the trenches
Away from the East
Whence the Hun would come.

Ruddy faced farmers
And white-collar heroes
We lived in the mire
With our hopes in vain
Till the shock of the shells
And the crack of the rifles
Followed us over the top once
again.

Then running and falling
And dodging the wire
And watching the dead
Under harvesting fire
As acres of sky
Turned black as the bodies
Like liquorice washing
Hung over the wire

A distant young summer
Is molten and muddled
The stripes on field jackets
Are barbed now and bloodied
The stench is of soldiers
Unknown and unwilling
Whose voices are lost
In the song of the killing

While the wind speaks of
martyrs
And barter for peace
The battle hymns echo
No final release
For the boys are forgotten
Before they are men
As the generals skirmish
On blackboards again

Dear mother I pray
That my fear will be gone
When the order is given
And the trumpet is blown
But the letter's unfinished
And the pages are lost
When the telegram counts
The impossible cost.

In memory of all those who, for our tomorrow, gave their today. And in appreciation of my grandfather Royal Irish Rifleman Paul Collins who served three years and 52 days before being invalided out of the service as a result of gunshot wounds. Paul

MUSIC LIST November 2025

November 2nd

Eucharist

Hymns 338, 341, 374, 484

All Saints Day

Choir Holiday

November 6th

Requiem Eucharist

Setting Duruflé

All Souls Day

Parish Choir

Sunday 9th November

11:00AM Choral Eucharist

Processional Hymn 354
 Psalm 145: 1-5, 18-22
 Setting Sumsion in F
 Gradual Hymn 83
 Offertory Hymn 457
 Anthem And I saw a new Heaven - *Bainton*
 Recessional Hymn 417

3rd Sunday before Advent

Parish Choir

5:00PM Choral Evensong

Hymn 174
 Responses Hunter
 Psalm 40
 Canticles Moore 2nd Service
 Anthem My eyes for beauty pine - *Howells*
 Hymn 391

Choral Scholars

Sunday 16th November

11:00AM Choral Eucharist

Processional hymn 234
 Setting Mass for three voices - *Byrd*
 Psalm 98
 Gradual Hymn 491
 Offertory Hymn 408
 Communion Hymn 308
 Motet Les Saintes Maries de la Mer - *Bingham*
 Recessional Hymn 436

2nd Sunday before Advent

SSA Choir

MUSIC LIST November 2025

Sunday 16th November

5:00PM Choral Evensong

Hymn	263 (Omit *)
Responses	Plainsong
Psalm	97
Canticles	Long in F
Motet	Ave mundo gloria - <i>Langlais</i>
Hymn	146

2nd Sunday before Advent

SSA Choir

Sunday 23rd November

11:00AM Choral Eucharist

Processional Hymn	234
Setting	Ireland in C
Psalm	Benedictus
Gradual Hymn	30
Offertory Hymn	332
Communion Hymn	302
Anthem	Let all the world - <i>RVW</i>
Recessional Hymn	433

Christ the King

Parish Choir

5:00PM Choral Eucharist

Setting	Merbecke
Hymns	338, 272, 439

Sunday 30th November

11:00AM Choral Eucharist

Processional Hymn	11
Psalm	122
Setting	Mass for 5 voices - <i>Byrd</i>
Gradual Hymn	366
Offertory Hymn	492
Communion Hymn	295
Anthem	Drop down ye heavens - <i>Weir</i>
Hymn	9

Advent Sunday

Parish Choir

5:00PM Advent Carol Service.

CALENDAR November 2025

November 2

ALL SAINTS DAY

9:30AM

Eucharist: The Rector

11.00AM

Eucharist: The Rector

Preacher: The Rector

Readings: Daniel 7: 1-3, 15-18; Ephesians 1: 11-23;
Luke 6: 20-31

Reader: *Wardens*

Intercessor: *George Woodman*

Servers: *Tony Merrick, Steven McQuitty, Mark Claney*

Tea and Coffee: *Betty Flynn, Dot Lutton*

5.00PM

Evening Prayer: The Rector

Lessons: Isaiah 40: 27-31; Hebrews 11: 32 – 12: 2
(Janet Sandikli)

November 5

10:30AM

Eucharist: The Rector

November 6

ALL SOULS DAY

7:30PM

Requiem Eucharist: The Rector

November 8

2:30PM

A CELEBRATION OF ENGLISH SONG

Featuring Rachel Heater, soprano and Frasier Hickland,
piano

November 9

**THE THIRD SUNDAY BEFORE ADVENT
REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY**

9:30AM

Eucharist: The Rector

10:50AM

Choral Eucharist: The Rector

Preacher: The Rector

Readings: Haggai 1: 15b – 2: 9; 2 Thess. 2: 1-5, 13-17;
Luke 20: 27-38

Reader: *Janet Sandikli*

Intercessor: *Pam Tilson*

Servers: *Omolewa Akinyele, Agape Laoye, Jonny Calder*

Tea and Coffee: *Keith Suckling, Steven McQuitty*

5.00PM

Choral Evensong: The Rector

Lessons: 1 Kings 3: 1-15; Romans 8: 31-39
(Geoffrey May)

CALENDAR November 2025

November 12

10:30AM

Eucharist: The Rector

November 15

2:00PM

Service of Blessing of Marriage

November 16

THE SECOND SUNDAY BEFORE ADVENT

9:30AM

Eucharist: Fr Terence Dunlop

11.00AM

Choral Eucharist: The Rector

Preacher: The Rector

Readings: Isaiah 65: 17-25; 2 Thessalonians 3: 6-13;
Luke 21: 5-19

Reader: *Fr Tom Layden*

Intercessor: *Fr Tom Layden*

Servers: *Banji Akinyele, Janet Sandikli, Mark Claney*

Tea and Coffee: *Mina Kelly, Richard Oldfield*

5.00PM

Choral Evensong: The Rector

Lessons: Daniel 6; Matthew 13: 1-9, 18-23 (*Paddy Sloan*)

November 19

HILDA, ABBESS OF WHITBY

10:30AM

Eucharist: The Rector

November 23

THE SUNDAY BEFORE ADVENT

9:30AM

Eucharist: The Rector

11.00AM

Choral Eucharist: The Rector

Preacher: The Rector

Readings: Jeremiah 23: 1-6; Colossians 1: 11-20;
Luke 23: 33-43

Reader: *Pam Tilson*

Intercessor: *Janet Sandikli*

Servers: *Jonny Calder, Mark Claney, Tony Merrick*

Tea and Coffee: *Catherine Hunter, Rosejane Peck*

5.00PM

Choral Eucharist: The Rector

Epistle & Gospel: Jeremiah 23: 5-8; John 6: 5-14
(*Fr Graeme Pollock*)

CALENDAR November 2025

November 26

10:30AM

Eucharist: The Rector

November 27

1:00PM

Eucharist: The Rector & Fr Graeme Pollock
The Walsingham Group meets at this Eucharist
– all welcome

November 30

ADVENT SUNDAY

9:30AM

Eucharist: The Rector

11.00AM

Choral Eucharist: The Rector

Preacher: The Rector

Readings: Isaiah 2: 1-5; Romans 13: 11-14;
Matthew 24: 36-44

Reader: *James Beattie*

Intercessor: *Archdeacon Harte*

Servers: *Mark Claney, Tony Merrick, Steven McQuitty*

Tea and Coffee: *Brenda Claney, Judith Fawcett*

5.00PM

ADVENT CAROL SERVICE: The Rector

"Abide with me" - Life's little day

By the late Billy Adair

Does the name Henry Francis Lyte mean anything to you? If not, it will if you read on.

Lyte was born in Scotland in 1793, of English parents, spent his early life in Ireland, graduated at Trinity College, Dublin, where for three successive years won the prize for an English poem. He was ordained and moved to England. When attending the deathbed of a clerical friend, he had a deep evangelical conversion which changed his ministry and preaching. In 1823, he was appointed to the parish of Lower Brixham in Devon, where he remained for the rest of his life.

His health was never robust, and he was obliged to take long periods of rest abroad to recuperate his strength. It was from one of these he returned to Brixham in the spring of 1847, a dying man, and he knew it.

On Sunday 4th September, although far from well and despite the protests of his family, he celebrated Holy Communion and preached at the morning service in his church. He rested much of the rest of the day and in the evening re-joined the family and handed his sister-in-law a manuscript headed 'Abide with me' together with a tune he had composed for it. One of the finest hymns ever written, and one of the worst tunes I have ever heard! If Dr WH Monk hadn't written the tune 'Eventide', it is possible the hymn would never be sung. Lyte's original hymn had eight verses, but the three omitted do not in any sense impoverish what we sing now.

The eight-verse hymn produced on that evening was not instantaneous; it had been drafted a few weeks earlier and this was the revised and final form. Within a few days he left home again to return to the South of France, where he died on 20th November and was buried at the English Church of Nice, aged only 54.

Lyte got his inspiration from St Luke, who in Chapter 24; 28-31, of his Gospel tells the lovely Easter story of the two disciples walking to Emmaus, accompanied by the Risen Lord whom they hadn't recognised, because some say the sun was shining in their eyes. But they wanted this 'stranger' to stay on, "Abide with us" they said, "for it is toward evening and the day is far spent". He did just that, and in the breaking of the bread their eyes were opened, and they recognised their Risen Lord.

As I already said, on 4th September 1847, Lyte knew only too well he was a dying man; for him the fading light, the gathering darkness symbolised the eventide of life – it was his own life he was thinking of when he wrote the hymn. Death would not be long, but how was he to meet it? In pointing to the living, risen, victorious Christ, he had the answer, and in altering "Abide with us" to "Abide with me", he created a personal, deep and meaningful prayer, reminding us of the brevity of life and the certainty of death. When you think of this hymn in this way and not as an evening hymn, doesn't it put an entirely different interpretation on it?

Now a few points worth noticing –

Verse 1 When we reach the eventide in life and the darkness deepens, the one prayer the Christian can offer is "Lord with me abide". The third line,

“when other helpers fail, and comforts flee” refers to an incident when some of his choir and Sunday School teachers left the parish and joined the Plymouth Brethren. His friends had let him down, but he turned to the “Help of the helpless” the Friend who never changed and would abide with him to the end.

Verse 2 As “life’s little day ebbs to its close”, we have to admit that old age can be inconvenient and “earth’s joys grow dim”. In the present world situation the next line, “change and decay in all around I see”, is surely prophetic: but the last word lies with Christ, “the same yesterday and today and forever” – “O thou who changest not, abide with me”.

Verse 3 What a verse this is – what a prayer every Christian needs to pray – “I need thy presence every passing hour”. Life is seldom a smooth journey, but is full of problems, trials and temptations (*the devil sees to that!*), so we need the grace, the guidance, the support of the abiding Christ whatever the circumstances – “cloud or sunshine”.

Verse 4 We are now reaching the climax – each verse ends with “abide with me” and that is key thought throughout the hymn. As Christians, we are not exempt from trouble or adversity; we will meet opposition, tears will be shed, and death and the grave are before us. St Paul in 1 Corinthians 15: 55-57 asks, “O death where is thy sting, O grave where is thy victory?” and finds the answer in “God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ”, Lyte echoes those words when he affirms, “I triumph still, if thou abide with me”.

Verse 5 In the triumphant hope of that last verse Lyte prays, “Hold thou thy cross before my closing eyes”, - a vision of the crucified Saviour whose blood had atoned for his sins. As Isaac Watts wrote in a verse omitted from most hymnals –

His dying, crimson as a robe
Spreads o’er his body on the tree
Then am I dead to all the globe
And all the globe is dead to me

But he was asking for even more. Most hymnals begin this verse “Shine through the gloom”, whereas Lyte wrote “Speak through the gloom”. He prayed that not only might he see his loving Lord, but actually hear His voice whispering words of comfort “welcome home” – “heaven’s morning breaks” and Henry Francis Lyte is with the abiding Christ for all eternity.

In “Abide with me” surely Henry Francis Lyte has left a legacy which has enriched the Church of God for well over a century and will continue to do so for generations to come.

P.S. A chapter from ‘Hymns that talk’ by Frank Colquhoun has helped me to write this article in the lockdown. William Adair

