

Open Space

SAINT STEPHENS SOUNDWELL

JUNE 2020

GOD PAINTS IN MANY COLOURS!



COLOUR can make you happy, colour can make you sad. A splash of yellow or a splash of red can brighten your day, and the colours we choose and see around us have the power to affect our wellbeing.

AS I WRITE this we are in lockdown, and as yet, no end in sight. A strange time that has filled us all with uncertainty and mixed emotions.

With the restrictions in place we could easily be thinking of our lives as dismal, dull and boring as we are forced apart from families and friends and unable to pursue our normal activities.

The reality is, our world is not black, white and grey. We are surrounded by and bombarded with colour - in the natural world, the clothes we wear, on our TV and technology screens, the foods we eat, skin tones, hair and eye colours and the colour changes within the church calendar.

Colour is familiar and comforting and one of the first things we learn as children.

This time of lockdown has given me time to really take notice of the changes that take place in the spring, and appreciate the glorious colours that our creator God has given us.

One of the highlights over the last few weeks has been the countless number of home-made rainbows that have appeared in windows, in support of the dedicated NHS and care workers.

The word 'RAINBOW' (bow) only appears in the bible a few times. Mostly in the story of the great flood in Genesis.

Genesis 9:13: *'I'm putting my rainbow in the clouds, a sign of the covenant between me and the earth.'*

Ezekiel had a vision of heavenly beings, and in Chapter 1:28 it says – *'Brightness everywhere! The way a rainbow springs out of the sky on a rainy day – that's what it was like. It turned out to be the Glory of God!'*

A door open to heaven in Revelation 4:3 reveals a throne with someone sitting on it who *'looks like jasper and carnelian and around the throne there is a rainbow'*.

Then in Revelation 10:1: a description of a mighty angel *'wrapped in a cloud with a rainbow over his head, his face like the sun'*.

So whenever you see a rainbow stop and think about God's awesomeness.

The rainbow has been used to represent a bridge from earth to a brighter place as in 'Somewhere over the rainbow' from the Wizard of Oz. It is also used as a symbol of love, peace and freedom.

Each colour in a rainbow is vibrant and different from the next. Yet it sends a message of cohesion and inclusiveness and demonstrates how beautiful diversity can be. A six colour rainbow flag has been adopted by, and now reflects the diversity and unity of the LGBT community.

I don't know about you, but I love to see a rainbow arcing across the sky.

There is always something magical about those colours stretched out through the heavens. But have you ever wondered what the seven colours of a rainbow might represent and what relevance these colours have in our worship to God?

In Christianity, colours are used to represent the differing facets of God's character and promises. The colour of the worship flags that Diane and I occasionally use in our services, also have different meanings and symbolism. We choose the appropriate colour flag to fit with the music or words or message we are conveying in our praise to God. *Continued overleaf>*

Open Space
JUNE 2020

Mission Partners
with St Stephens:

Bristol City Centre
Soup Run
Bristol/Uganda Link
Christian Aid
Community of
the Sisters of
the Church
Emmaus
Fair Trade
One25 Project
The Bristol Noise

St Stephens

Church Road
Soundwell
Bristol BS16 4RH
0117 956 6257

visionatststephens@
gmail.com

www.saintstephen
soundwell.org

f saintstephen
soundwell

@SoundwellChurch

CHARITY NUMBER
1131503



St Stephens
SOUNDWELL

So bear that in mind as we find out about the colours of the rainbow.

RED - this is a colour with a lot to say and don't expect it to say anything quietly! It's bold and signifies action, blood, fire and passion. In Christian symbolism it denotes the Holy Spirit and is the colour used at Pentecost.

It is also used for other 'special occasions' - Palm Sunday, Saints (that have been martyred) Days and Christ the King. Think of all the glorious red fruits that nature provides.

ORANGE - an attention seeking colour. It is also the colour of fire and flame, a mix of the red of passion tempered by the yellow of wisdom. It represents the sun. It is not a colour that is used in the liturgical sense but at Christmas it makes an appearance at our Christingle services, as the orange fruit is used to represent the world.

YELLOW/GOLD - few colours are as good at projecting luminosity, sunny warmth. The poet Goethe said '*yellow excites a warm agreeable impression... the eye is gladdened, the heart cheered, a glow seems at once to breathe towards us*'. How we welcome the spring flowers after the dreariness of winter, many of which are shades of yellow.

Yellow represents joy, the presence of God, whereas gold represents God's holiness, divine nature and majesty, which is why it is used (alongside white) for the holiest of celebrations in the church calendar - Easter and Christmas. The wonderful banners hanging in church all have gold material in their design.

GREEN - represents verdancy, growth, renewal. Trees and plants that have lain dormant throughout the winter, burst into life in the spring. God the master painter has blessed us with many variations of this beautiful colour, all blending and merging together in hedgerows, parks & gardens, restoring us back to a sense of well-being. Green symbolizes new life, and as an official colour of the church, it is used during the time between festivals which is known as 'ordinary time'.

There is a short spell of ordinary time between Epiphany and Ash Wednesday and then a much longer long spell that follows on from Pentecost which takes us to Advent. Ordinary seems to me to be a strange word to use for a church season when its meaning is 'not different or unexpected in any way'.

But, it's actually a time to remind us all to celebrate the whole life of Christ



and to discover the meaning of living as his disciples. So, maybe it should be called 'extraordinary time' as we are challenged to follow the teachings of Christ on a daily basis.

This summer, if we still have social distancing, any renewal or restoration to our lives that we might normally expect from holidays/breaks away from home, will most likely be curtailed.

But during our ordinary day to day lives, new life will continue to grow and God will be beside us to make sure that we flourish and feel refreshed. Nature too, will continue its growth patterns so we must rejoice and say thank you to God for his glorious technicolour creativity throughout the summer and into autumn.

BLUE/INDIGO - blue: a colour of many faces that reminds us of seas and summer skies, optimistic, melancholy. Indigo, a dark blue pigment that could be thought of as a dependable colour - a traditional workaday hero used in military uniforms because it was cheap and didn't fade and it's the dye used for jeans.

Blue is my favourite colour, whether its royal blue, sky blue, turquoise, any shade of blue lifts my spirits, despite the common statement 'I feel blue' that's so often used when we are down in the dumps.

The musician Ella Fitzgerald said '*You ain't been blue 'til you've had that indigo mood*'. Blue has a hygienic reputation, it was often used in Victorian kitchens because it was believed to deter flies!

How appealing are delicate blue forget-me-nots and the sentiment they convey and the tall stalks of bluebells.

While blue is often thought of as a masculine colour, in traditional art blue is symbolic of the Virgin Mary.

From around the 12th century she was painted with ultramarine, the most expensive blue pigment available, in tribute to her status in Christian beliefs. Blue indicates heaven, the Holy Spirit and truth.

VIOLET/PURPLE - dark shades evoke royalty and Victorian splendour. Purple is also seen as a symbol of royalty in the bible.

In colour psychology, purple relates to the imagination and spirituality. It's an introspective colour allowing us to get in touch with our deeper thoughts. Of course, this goes hand in hand with the liturgical purple that is used at Advent and Lent.

Church seasons that speak of fasting, faith, penitence and patience.

Periods of inwardly examining ourselves, patiently waiting for the arrival of a very special baby and a time for remembering both the life and death of Jesus Christ.

The pansy/viola flower has many colours including purple. The word pansy come from the French word 'penser' which means to think/ponder over something, much like Christians do during Lent and Advent.

The author Uniek Swain wrote: '*the colour purple seems to have a soul, when you look at it, it's looking back at you*'.

Colours are used throughout the bible to reflect and reveal rich biblical truths about God and mankind.

God weaves colours throughout scripture to paint a bigger picture - amazing! In scripture, the presence of a rainbow was a powerful message from God.

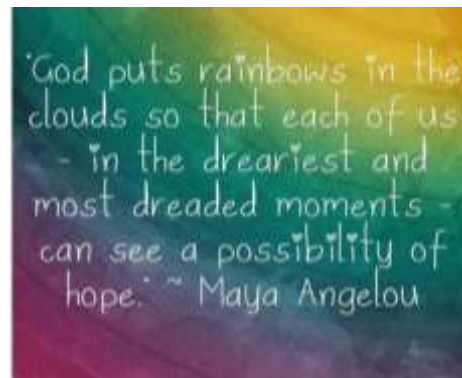
Vincent Van Gogh said: '*colour in a picture is like enthusiasm in life*'. So let's be enthusiastic and appreciative about the colours that God has surrounded us with.

The American poet, singer and activist Maya Angelou urged us to: '*Try and be a rainbow in someone else's cloud*'.

SO - BE UNIQUELY YOU, STAND OUT, SHINE AND BE COLOURFUL. THE WORLD NEEDS YOUR PRISMATIC SOUL!

Let's all appreciate what a wonderful (colourful) world this is - even though, for the time being, we may only be going as far as our own gardens.

Julia Merrifield



A message from St Stephens Youth Church!



THEY love and miss 'us-all-being-together' with all their hearts, but sometimes they're just bashful about showing their faces! I wonder if you can guess who's hiding!!!?



07 Bristol Brunel Academy	Gill Ogborne, David Packe Jan and Dave Parker Tim, Olivia & Sophie Parker	Pound Road Prospect Crescent Randall Close
14 SGS College Filton	Wayne, Rosie, Annie-Mae & Joseph Pearce Trish Phipps, Ollie, Jaime & Rupert Phipps Shirley Potts, Malcolm & Pat Pullin	Riviera Crescent Rodway View Rose Oak Gardens
21 Local industry	Claire & Oscar Randall, Dot Randall Nicola, Andy, Amelia & Erin Read Ruth Redler	Rudge Close Seymour Road Sherbourne Close
28 People who work in the parish	Colin and Tessa Rice, Peter Robbins Monica Robinson, Carole Rockliffe Sandra Rosser	Soundwell Road Spring Hill St Clements Court

JUNE 2020 DIARY

REGULAR WEEKLY GROUPS:

TUESDAYS	01.30pm	} <i>suspended for the time being</i> See & Know: } (For toddlers & carers (Term time)
WEDNESDAYS	01.00pm	
THURSDAYS	09.00am	
	01.00pm	

SERVICES AND OTHER GROUPS/MEETINGS/EVENTS:

Cancelled until further notice!
See our website for adult & family activity and support materials:
www.saintstephensoundwell.org

Emmaus Road

SUZY shared this wonderful poem she has written inspired by the Road to Emmaus Gospel reading on Sunday 26th April:

“DID our hearts not burn within us on the road”

This is a time of uncertainty, unsettling.

A time of loss and insecurity. The future unpredictable.

Many had plans and expectations dashed.

Temples crumbled, magnates rendered helpless

Value systems turned on their heads. Predictions and warnings had been ignored, priorities had been questionable for years

The gaps were yawning, inequalities unjust.

But now in this time of grief and bewilderment,

Disappointment and betrayal – Lies our road to Emmaus.

IT is witnessed in the coming alongside, The proof of resurrection. We may not see the eyes behind the visor–

The presence of love and compassion in heart, hands and feet.

They are there in the shared sacrifice of comparatively few for so many of us.

THEY are there in the volunteers for the drug trials and vaccines.

They are there at the checkout, On the road delivering post, food and clearing rubbish

They are there, innumerable, seen and unseen

He is risen in us. May we rise to embrace the chaos and the rainbow–

Ensuring no sacrifice was made in vain.

For all creation’s sake in thankfulness.

Suzy Harvey (a friend of Peter’s)

ROGER continues to fill his giving envelopes each week, and will bring them to Church on our return together, but he wanted to make an additional ‘gift’ for his gratitude for the ‘packs’ of goodies he enjoys receiving and using. This poem came with, and is his gift of, thanks and praise to share with us all:

HERE’s a little something to help our Church survive. I know the bills keep coming in... my postman’s brought me five! ‘God will provide’, goes up the cry but just for once I thought that I would help the Boss-man in the sky.

‘We will never surrender’
Winston Churchill 1943
‘I ain’t giving up yet’
Roger Hurkett 2020

God bless you *and* KEEP SMILING!

SINCE APRIL

Funerals

● MAY 15: **Eileen Millin.**
Please hold Eileen’s son, Lindsay and his partner Janice in your prayers, as they have lost both their Mums within days of one another.

● MAY 21: **Doreen Marsh (97).**
The celebration of Doreen’s life was held at Westerleigh Crematorium. Please hold her daughter, Janice with Lindsay and both their families, as well their many friends and neighbours in your prayers.

● MAY 21: **Grace Jones (94).**
The celebration of Grace’s life was held at South Bristol Crematorium. Please hold her 17 nieces and nephews (particularly Suzanne and Carolyn), her neighbours and good friends in your prayers.

ORDINARY TIME

- O** – open your heart to Jesus
- R** – read your bible
- D** – delight in his teachings
- I** – interact with God
- N** – nourish your soul
- A** – act with Godly love
- R** – rest in the presence of our Lord
- Y** – yearn to follow in his footsteps



SAINT STEPHENS SOUNDWELL



● **Revd Lisa Wigmore**
Priest in Charge, 52 Gladstone Street
Soundwell, Bristol BS16 4RF
Telephone 0117 957 4297



● **Revd Sandy Cooper**
Associate Minister, 1 Deerhurst
Soundwell, Bristol BS15 1XH
Telephone 0117 967 2621



● **Peter Robbins**
Lay Minister, 13 Wood Road
Kingswood, Bristol BS15 8DT
Telephone 0117 967 9576



● **Gill Mayo**
Church Warden
Telephone 0117 956 9796

