

Holy Trinity

(without the walls)

Parish News



Norris Road, Blacon, Chester. CH1

5DZ

July 2021

40p

Welcome back Tina



On 18th July

and Clive!

Registered charity number 1180853

COMING UP ROSES

I am not a gardener. However, I have one particularly pretty rose in my garden. It's a climber, with pretty clusters of white flowers.

It also has whip-thin branches covered in thorns. These smother the nearby plants and yank the guttering off the house. Every couple of years I give it a 'haircut', chopping off around two thirds of the branches.

The poor stubby remainder looks abused. But, that's always the year that it flowers most profusely.

2020 was haircut year. And this year more than ever I am struck by the contrast. The stubby dead-looking branches of winter are now a stunning cascade of flowers.

For me it really brings home the truth of God's promise that he tends his people like a gardener tends a vine. God prunes back

branches that bear fruit. God also prunes those that don't. So that the whole plant can become even more fruitful (John 15).



2020-2021 has been a period of pruning. For the wider church and for Holy Trinity in particular. I hear

churches talk about growth in attendance at online services and zoom alpha courses. I am encouraged by conversations that reveal how deeply God is at work in the lives of our congregation.

But I still grieve for the pruning of the things that were fruitful like the outreach café and playtots. For the chopping off of branches like the 11.30 service that had just begun to grow.

I wonder whether the ways that you relate to God have grown during the pandemic? Or maybe your prayer life and Bible reading feel more like pruned sticks!

Either way it seems that a new season is approaching. I wonder, how does it feel to talk to friends without shouting through a mask from 2m away? Does it feel safe, or too strange for words? Are you looking forward to hugs or have you delighted in social distancing?

Are you longing for the sunlight and warmth of a new season? Or anxious about more changes? Either way, maybe you, like me, will take courage from these words.

“I am the Real Vine and my Father is the Farmer. He cuts off every branch of me that doesn’t bear grapes. And every branch that is

grape-bearing he prunes back so it will bear even more....

Live in me. Make your home in me just as I do in you. In the same way that a branch can’t bear grapes by itself but only by being joined to the vine, you can’t bear fruit unless you are joined with me...

When you’re joined with me and I with you, the relation intimate and organic, the harvest is sure to be abundant.” (John 15:1-5 abridged, The Message)

Our job is simple. Whether fruitful or stinging from the cuts of pruning we are to stay joined to Jesus and make our lives in him.

