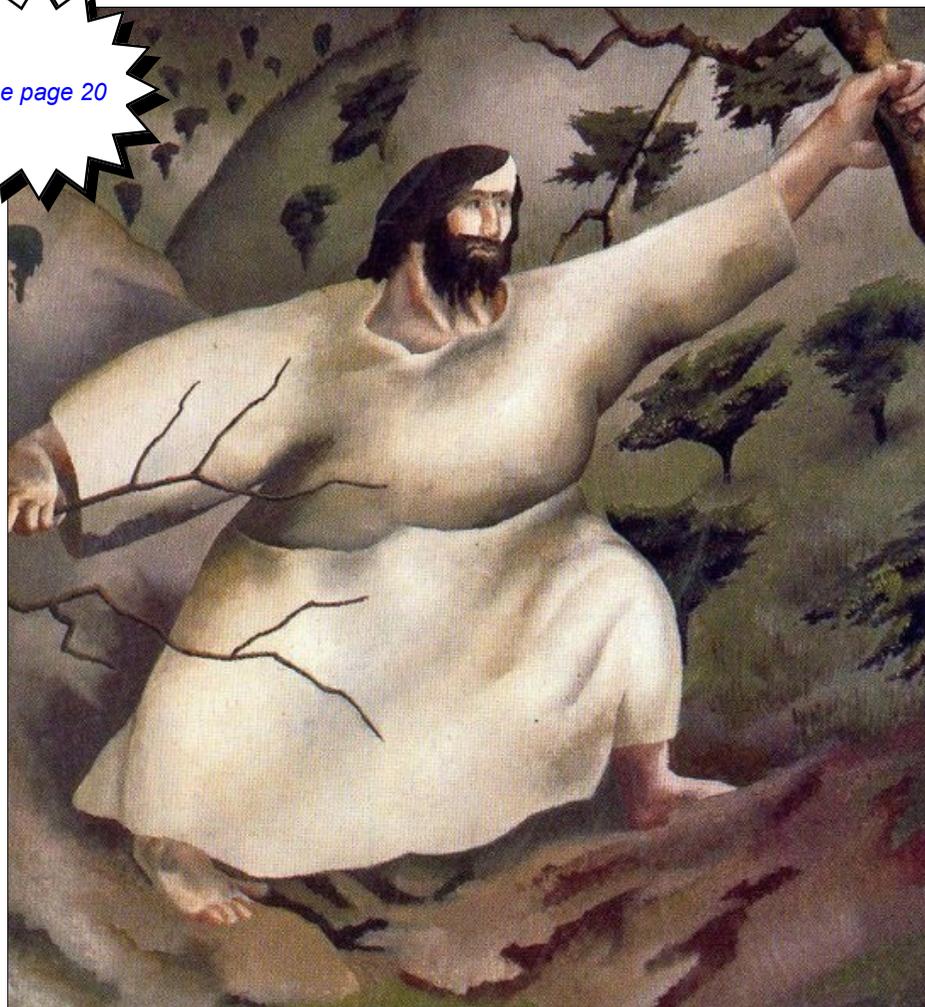


St John's Church

serving Stanborough, Lemsford, Cromer Hyde

See page 20



Parish Magazine

Feb /March 2018

£1



Christmas was a happy time—Christingle above, School Choir below



Homelessness and the church

Homelessness is something that I feel we should all care about, not because we are frightened by those on the street but because we should be frightened for those on the streets. Most homeless people feel, Isolation, fear, shame and worthlessness, often leading them down the road of addiction to survive the pain. Homelessness leads to behaviour patterns that rip people apart in terms of mental and physical health. It reminds me of the lepers at the time of Christ forced to live where no one else would go to live, city dumps and graveyards. No one wanted to touch them yet Christ did, he healed them.



The homeless charity CRISIS has calculated that:

The average age of death of a homeless man is 47, and for homeless women is only 43, compared to 77 for the general population. Drug and alcohol abuse are particularly common causes of death amongst the homeless population, accounting for just over a third of all deaths. Compared to the general population, the homeless are 17 times more likely to have been victims of domestic violence than the general population; over 9 times more likely to commit suicide; 3 times as likely to die in a traffic accident; twice as likely to catch an infection; and 3 times as likely to injure themselves by falling.

Ultimately, homelessness kills.

It is clear that our land is heading into further economic difficulties. This in turn brings greater unemployment and with the increasing pressures on the NHS and welfare systems homelessness is going to keep rising. It's happening to people and families who have till recent times lived quite comfortably and not needed to worry about their security.

Continued overleaf

From the Vicarage *continued*

CRISIS makes the following predictions:

	2016	2021	2026
Rough Sleep	9,100	11,000	16,000
Hostels	37,200	37,200	37,200
Unsuitable Temporary Accommodation	19,300	20,700	37,300
Sofa Surfing	68,300	70,200	75,600
Other	26,000	27,900	36,100
Total	159,900	167,000	202,200

It is a shocking fact that here in leafy Hertfordshire there are people in shelters like Hatfield Homeless Shelter based in St Luke's church, who are actually in work but cannot afford to even rent somewhere to live.

I believe whole heartedly that the answer to homelessness is Jesus Christ working through his church. Praying for their community, as I have said so often in my sermons, God answers prayer. We have seen our prayers answered and working with our Mayor of Hatfield Councillor Lyn Sparkes, the local Fire brigade and by local churches led by Fr. Darren at St Etheldreda's.

I have personally been invigorated and moved by the generosity of so many people. Let us pray that God keeps blessing Hatfield.

Yours, Rev Paul

Lent Groups 'Moral Dilemmas in Challenging Times'

This is a new study guide that encourages groups to delve into divisive issues such as nationalism, populism and extremism from a faith perspective, published by the Council of Christians and Jews (CCJ) and the educational foundation, Cumberland Lodge.

Look out for times and locations in weekly news sheets

Sunday 4th Epiphany 5

8am BCP Holy Communion led by Paul Seymour

11am Family Service Jo Brooks

Sunday 11th Epiphany 6

8am BCP Holy Communion led by Paul Seymour

11 am Holy Communion led by Sue Stilwell

Tuesday 13th 2.30 pm Friendship Tea**Wednesday 14th Ash Wednesday**

10 am Holy Communion with Imposition of Ashes

Sunday 18th Lent 1

8am BCP Holy Communion led by Paul Seymour

11am Morning Prayer led by Paul Seymour

Sunday 25th Lent2

8am BCP Holy Communion led by Paul Seymour

11 am Holy Communion led by Paul Seymour

**** Morning Prayer 10 am every Wednesday, except first of month when shortened Communion Service ******

Readings (preacher reads the gospel at Parish Communion)**4th Colossians 1: 15-20 John 1: 1-14****11th 2 Corinthians 4: 3-6 Mark 9: 2-9****18th 1 Peter 3: 18-22 Mark 1: 9-15 Psalm 25: 1-9****25th Romans 4: 13-25 Mark 8: 31-38**

Sunday 4th Lent 3

8am BCP Holy Communion led by Paul Seymour

11am Children's Service, Jo Brooks

Sunday 11th Lent 4 ** Mothering Sunday**

8am BCP Holy Communion led by Paul Seymour

11am Holy Communion led by Paul Seymour

Tuesday 13th 2.30 pm Friendship Tea**Sunday 18th Lent 5**

8am BCP Holy Communion led by Paul Seymour

11am Morning Prayer led by Paul Seymour

Sunday 25th Palm Sunday

8am BCP Holy Communion led by Paul Seymour

11 am Holy Communion

10.30 pm Midnight Communion *****

Friday 30th GOOD FRIDAY

11 am One hour service of reflection

Sunday 1st April EASTER DAY

8am BCP Holy Communion led by Paul Seymour

11 am Family Service & Holy Communion

*** Morning Prayer 10 am every Wednesday, except first of month when shortened Communion Service ***

Readings (preacher reads the gospel at Parish Communion)

4th 1 Corinthians 1: 18-25 John 2: 13-22

11th 2 Corinthians 1: 3-7 Luke 2: 33-35

18th Hebrews 5: 5-10 John 12: 20-33 Psalm 119: 9-16

25th Philippians 2: 5-11 Mark Chapters 14 - 15

1st April Acts 10: 34-43 John 20: 1-18

Coffee after 11am Services.

Baptism

On 10th December, Jessica Britten. Well done to her family.

Easter Services

Ash Wednesday February 14th
Holy Communion with imposition of ashes 10am; Team Service 6pm St Ethelreda's.

Good Friday March 30th Images of Christ: meditations with pictures of Christ from many cultures.

Easter Sunday April 1st at 11am will be a joyful service and very interactive. The service will start with the Easter candle being brought into the church, there will be a family service style sermon and then we will receive Holy Communion.

Snowdrops

Mary Douglas will be reopening her garden for viewing snowdrops in February, as soon as the little beauties burst into view.

Social Committee

Wine and mince pies were served in the school hall after the service of Nine Lessons and Carols. A spur of the moment decision was made to serve them again after the

Carols by Candlelight Service, this time in the annexe. It was lovely to see so many visitors - friends and extended family members, enjoying this social time together.

Thank you to everyone who helped towards this touch of Christmas. The Committee is few in number and we would welcome anyone interested in joining us to plan social activities and events. Come and talk to us - you may have lots of new ideas to offer!!
Jenny Roden

Guys and Dolls

Stanborough School are staging this musical on February 7th, 8th, 9th at 7pm. Several members of our choir have important roles. Tickets £5 (£3 concessions). More from Lorraine Puranik.

Team Outing to Sonning Mill

Saturday **7th July** (Matinee)
Sonning Mill presents 'THE UNEXPECTED GUEST' by Agatha Christie. £62pp which includes: Coach, Two-Course Lunch plus ticket. **Deposit £25 by Feb 3rd** Contact: Jan Palfreman 01707 267039
jan.algy@ntlworld.com

Parish Magazine copy date for the next issue: **18th March**

In our December- January issue you will have read that we will soon start work on drawing up our Mission Action Plan, our 'MAP', for St John's. Mission Action Planning is something every church in our Diocese is involved in and it's not for nothing that it's called the MAP. Just like a road map or your Satnav it shows us where we want to go, the best way to get there, and what we might find on the journey.



But why do we need a MAP in church? The answer can be found in the Bible. Jesus gives us two big mission and ministry commands – firstly to love God and our neighbours as ourselves, and secondly to make disciples, that is to bring people into his family. Our Mission Action Plan is the route map for how we respond and live out those commands of Jesus. Through the process of Mission Action Planning we'll be able to decide as a church how we go deeper into God, how we welcome new people into our church family and how we take action in our community to improve people's lives, especially the lives of people in need. It's a very exciting time for us a church and we're looking forward to getting started in the next few weeks.

And we'd like your help. Please do look out on our church website, noticeboards and social media in the next couple of months for the opportunities you'll have to contribute. You can start now if you'd like to – my email is below - but we'll also be sharing some questionnaires and surveys soon that you can contribute to as well. We want to hear from as many people as possible, whether you regularly attend St John's Church or not – tell us what you like or don't like, tell us what it means for you to have a local church, tell us what our community and parish need - every experience, story and opinion matters. We look forward to hearing from you!

Jo Brooks

Joholifield@gmail.com

In these days of January dark it's good to remind ourselves that there is light and life in abundance when we spend time with our Lord and friend Jesus. John's gospel tells us that Jesus came so that we can have life, and have it *'to the full'* - what a wonderful promise! In Sunday Club this term we have some great Bible stories to share: stories of God's promises to his people and stories of Jesus' love and care. We have family services too, on the first Sunday of each month, and some special events to look forward to. We look forward to seeing you!

What's on?

Family services are on **February 4th** and **March 4th** this year, and as usual the whole church family meets together at 11.00 for a service of songs, Bible readings, activities and prayers. All welcome!

In March we also celebrate **Mothering Sunday on 11th March**. This is a wonderful service to celebrate the love of God and his goodness. It's not just for mothers, but for every child in God's family, old or young, parent, uncle, grandparent, aunt, friend or carer. Come and be part of this special celebration – God says 'As a mother comforts her child, so I will comfort you'. Isaiah 66.13

.. and the rest of the year?

Sunday Club meets each Sunday in term time during the morning service for Bible stories, games, crafts, music and prayer. Everyone welcome to join us and share in God's love, from toddlers to Year 6.

Family services are always on the first Sunday of the month, term time and holidays alike.

And don't forget **Friendship Teas**, in the annexe on the second Tuesday of the month (**6th February** and **6th March**) from **2.30**. All ages welcome – why not drop in on your way to pick up the kids from school?

Thanks to everyone who came along to our special Christmas services and particularly our rescheduled **Christingle** (*see inside front cover*) on Epiphany Sunday. It was wonderful to have a packed church to celebrate all that God has given to us and to raise money for the Children's Society, and Save The Children. In total we raised **£350** for them this year.

After an unexpectedly snowy and frosty week (not good for flowers or collecting foliage) the indomitable Lemsford Flower Ladies gathered on Saturday, 16th December to decorate the church for Christmas.

Thank you to Jenny Roden, Margaret Dowdy, Kirsty Humphries, Helen McLean, Lizzie Hurt, and Ann Hollis (pictured below, l to r); and to Jean Mitchinson who spent a major part of the week helping with the preparations and also for her wonderful font display which she did on the Friday.

Sara Poole and Mary-Ann Beech were unable to join us this year but brought us a huge amount of much needed foliage. Thank you both.



The final thanks must go to Kevin Earl, who after walking to church on the snowy Sunday morning, filled endless buckets of water, so that we could make a timely start to our preparations.

We are always looking for people to join us – it is a very satisfying activity and great fun. Do think about it and contact Jean Mitchinson, Janet English or Jenny Roden.

JANET ENGLISH

With this issue you will find an **envelope and letter** encouraging you to make a one-off donation towards the work of St John's. If you value our work and would like to support it then a gift would be really appreciated. We are currently running at a substantial deficit and every bit will help.

There are other ways to help which will **cost you nothing**. You may recall that to celebrate their 130th anniversary of insuring Anglican churches, our insurers, Ecclesiastical, are offering to donate £130 to our church each time a members of our congregation take out a new **home insurance policy** with them during the course of 2018. All you have to do is quote TRUST130 and nominate our church, and Ecclesiastical will then make the donation. To take advantage of the offer simply visit www.ecclesiastical.com/Trust130 or call 0800 783 0130 and quote TRUST130.

Nigel Johnson reports that one person has already used this route and we have a donation of £130 on its way from Ecclesiastical.

Another possibility to give without pain is to register with **Easyfundraising** and nominate St Johns as your designated Charity. Their website is www.easyfundraising.org.uk. There's nothing to pay and no bank account details to put in! Next you choose "St Johns Church Lemsford" as the destination for donations. Then, when you shop online with people like Amazon or John Lewis, go to their online stores via the Easy Fundraising site before you check out your shopping basket. It's that easy. The important thing to remember is to go via Easyfundraising.

When you buy goods from retailers who support this scheme they make donations based on a percentage of the cost price. Examples are: John Lewis (online) 1% of purchase price; Amazon 1.5% Gearformusic 2% to 3%; Waitrose & Ebay (2.5%). House of Fraser, M&S, and lots of travel sites give too. The full list is on the Easyfundrasing website. **PLEASE SIGN UP AND USE IT.**

Thank you for your support.

Happy New Year to all our friends at St John's church, we wish you all a healthy and happy 2018 and hope you had a very blessed time over Christmas.

Since my last report we have truly experienced the vagaries of the British winter weather which caused us to close the school for a day and to miss out on our choir singing to the elderly residents of Stanborough Lodge. The choir were really disappointed to have missed this annual event but were fortunately able to travel to Knebworth House to sing to the Quantum Care Christmas party for their elderly residents – an audience of about 250! *(Photo inside front cover).*



Our lovely children sang beautifully and were a real delight in their enthusiastic and sensitive conversations afterwards as they helped award the raffle prizes. Many thanks go to Joanna Nolan our music teacher who trains the choir and facilitates this event.

Our Nativity was able to take place as planned the day after our ‘Snow Day’ and was a beautiful celebration of the Christmas story. Our youngest children in Reception and KS1 delighted us with their performance skills and comic timing in their performance of ‘Angel Express’. Well done to all involved – a wonderful start our Christmas celebrations.

A huge thank you must go, as always, to St John’s LSA who together do so much to ensure our children have a magical end to the Christmas term.

The willing army of parents who help on the children’s Christmas Shopping Day deserve our special thanks for helping children choose and wrap presents for their families. How important it is for our children to give a special gift to their loved ones as well as receive gifts at this time. Many thanks too to all parents for their generous donations for this special event.

Our final event of the term was our Carol Service, held as always at St John’s Church and introduced with a candlelit procession with our choir singing the Candle Carol. This very special service was led by Reverend Paul and we would like to thank him for this.

Thanks too to both Reverend Paul and John Barnard for leading our Wednesday Worship throughout the year. Both staff and children value this time in our beautiful church each week and the good relationship we have with St John’s church community. This year we followed the service with carols around our Christmas tree in the school hall – a fun end to a very busy term!

Best wishes to all for 2018!
Mandy Evans Head Teacher



St John's has had four Vicarages. The first, situated directly behind the church and built at the same time is now the impressive Lemsford House. In the late 19th Century it was enlarged by a Vicar who apparently had a wealthy wife and employed several servants. His successors could not afford its upkeep and a new and smaller Vicarage was acquired in Brocket Road, Barfrey House, the first house past the Village Hall going south. This was still relatively large and in the 1970s a third Vicarage was bought at 7 High Oaks Road. Most recently a house in Great Braitch Lane has been found, roughly equidistant between St John's and St Michaels, which now share a Vicar.

There have been many incumbents of St John's over the years and in the Vestry is a photographic record of them all—save two for whom it has proved impossible to find a suitable picture. For one of these gaps we do actually have a rather rough one but it is so informal and indistinct that we have left it out hoping for a better one to emerge. This is the Reverend Arthur Evelyn Ward, Vicar from 1909 to 1920.



He came from a clerical background: although his father was a soldier his maternal grandfather was a Clergyman who ended his career as a Canon of Wells Cathedral. Born in 1877 in Woolwich he is listed in the 1901 Census as a Private Tutor living in Endymion Villas, Hatfield. From 1903 – 05 he was a Curate to the Vicar of Hatfield, Lord William Cecil.

Cecil, after Eton and Oxford and a brief Curacy in Norfolk, was Rector of Hatfield for 28 years before being appointed reluctantly Bishop of Exeter in 1916. Married in 1887, he had three daughters and four sons, three of whom were killed in the First World War. As Bishop he was generally liked, but had a reputation for eccentricity. Once, goes a story, while robing in the vestry before a service, he held a handkerchief between his teeth, but forgot to return it to his pocket and proceeded to the altar with it still hanging from his mouth. While travelling around his diocese he would often ring up his wife to ask where he was. (*Editor—usually it is the other way round*).

Arthur Ward married in 1909 to Eileen Vigors, who came from a prominent family in the North of Ireland. They probably met because her mother was living at Roe Green House in what is now College Lane Hatfield. The house was demolished to make way for houses but there are still traces of garden walls to be seen.

He became Vicar of Lemsford in August 1905, when it had a population of 444. From January 1917 to February 1918 he was drafted by Lord William to be his Domestic Chaplain in Exeter, because he needed someone to help in a new and daunting post. Ward's Curate, Rev HK Moore, filled in. On Ward's return the Parish News remarked "*Everybody will be pleased to hear that Mr & Mrs Ward will shortly be returning to Lemsford but it will be with unfeigned regret that we shall part with Mr & Mrs Moore, who since they have been among us, have entered into all the interests, the joys and the sorrows of the village with so much sympathy and kindness. Mrs Moore especially, has never spared herself, and has been indefatigable in visiting, and in doing her utmost to promote any scheme that might be on hand for the good of the village.*" Read into this what you will but in 1922 Ward left the Diocese to move back to the Diocese of Exeter as Vicar of St Matthias Torquay. He stayed until 1940 when he was appointed resident Canon of Rochester Cathedral. He died in 1944.

The Wards had five children: John (1911) Stephen (1912) and Raymond (1916) all born at Lemsford; and twin girls Bridget and Eileen (1925) born in Newton Abbott. Stephen is very well known as the man who introduced John Profumo to Christine Keeler in 1961, a meeting which ultimately caused the Macmillan Government to fall in 1964. He had a sad end, committing suicide in prison on the day before he was due to be sentenced for living off immoral earnings. His trial is now widely regarded as an injustice. Human rights lawyers have criticised the verdict on several grounds, such as a lack of evidence to support the main charges, and the failure by the judge to disclose Keeler's perjury at an earlier trial, which made her a tainted witness.



If anyone has a good picture of Reverend Ward do get in touch!

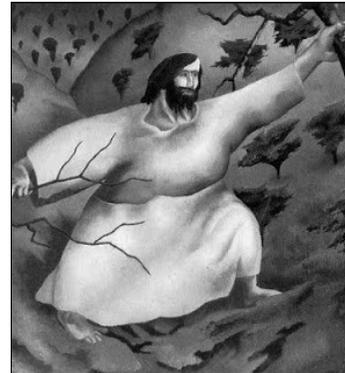
The front cover shows one of a series of paintings planned by Stanley Spencer for the season of Lent.

Stanley Spencer was born in Cookham, England, in 1892, one of 11 children. His grandfather was the village builder. His father William was a professional musician & organist at a nearby church, with a passion for reading & discussing the Bible out loud with his family each evening.

This series, *Christ in the wilderness*, was painted after 1939 during a difficult time of personal conflict in his life. In great penury, after the breakdown of his marriage, he sealed himself in a bare room in London to create his proposed forty square panels depicting each day that Christ spent in the wilderness. The original idea was that each work would be displayed in turn during Lent. Spencer completed just eighteen sketches, and only eight paintings.

Driven by the spirit into the wilderness was painted in 1942, based on the text: 'And immediately the Spirit driveth him into the wilderness.' Mark 1:12.

In 1916, Spencer had served with the Field Ambulances in Macedonia. This experience had a profound effect on him, the memories of war infiltrated his spirit. The massive figure strides through a bleak and desolate land with the promise of resurrection in the figure of Christ.



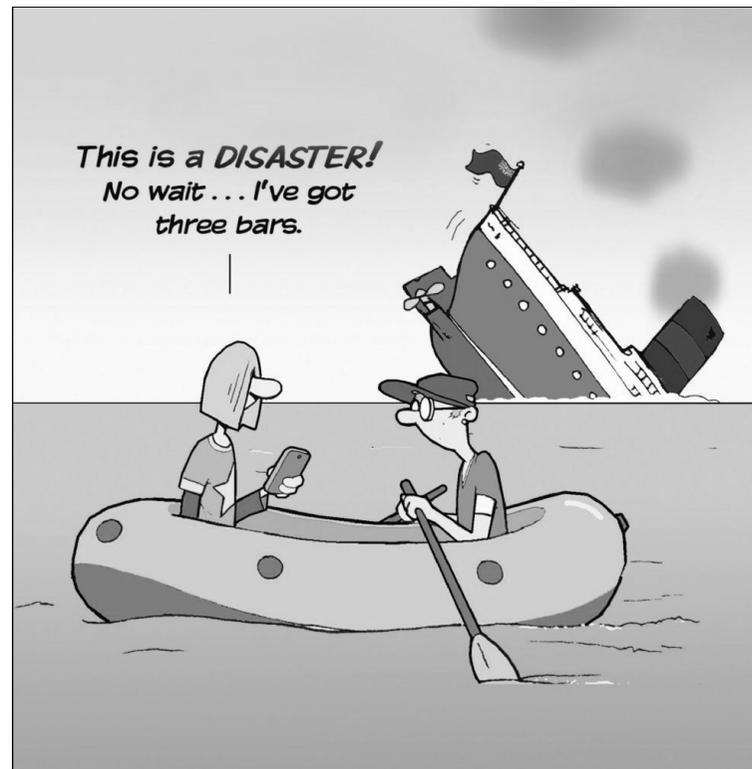
These works may appear deceptively simple but on closer observation they reveal a classical order where shapes and colours achieve a harmony. Spencer's communication of his religious beliefs often overrode the accuracy of his highly personal depiction of Christ.

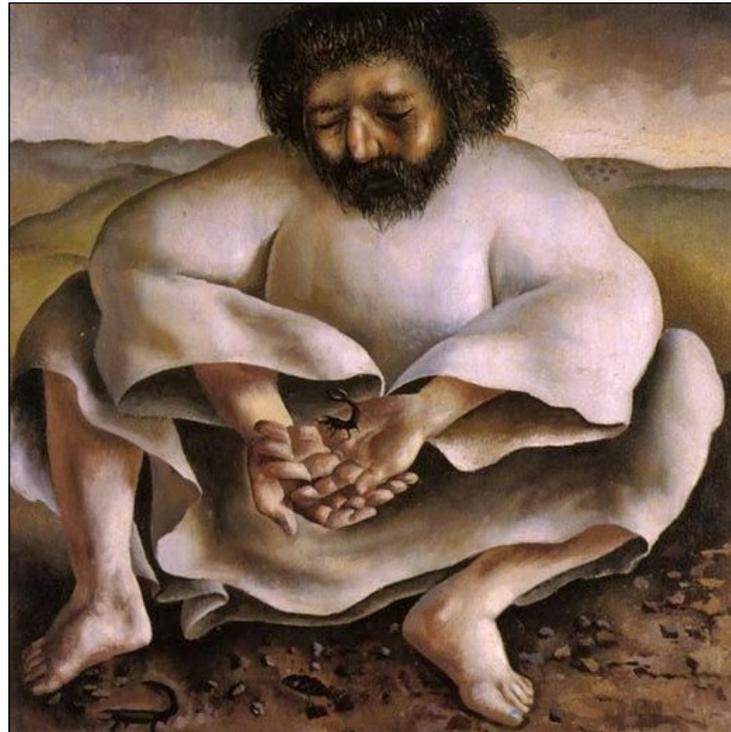
In 1983 the Art Gallery of Western Australia acquired most of the sketches and all of the paintings so to see them in the flesh it is now necessary to travel to Perth. *Other examples from the series are pictured inside the back cover.*

As Jesus resisted temptation in the wilderness,
help us reflect on his faithfulness to God,
his rejection of worldly values
and hold these thoughts in our hearts
throughout Lent and beyond.

Amen *Methodist Church*

And finally





Christ in the wilderness
see page 20

The Scorpion

"Behold, I give unto you the power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you." Luke 10:19



The Eagles

"For wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together." Matthew 24:28