

# See life



Dear God, spread your tent of protection over us, and comfort those who mourn. Help us in all we do to bring life to your world, challenging anything that creates poverty or injustice, so that everyone may be led to the springs of living water. Amen.

## Gregory Dix, priest, monk, scholar, 1952

by Julian Smith

*Gregory Dix is celebrated in the Lectionary on Thursday. Julian Smith considers his legacy.*

Gregory Dix (1901-1952) was a monk and priest of the Anglican Benedictine community at Nashdom Abbey, as well as a scholar and an author. Dix is best known for his book *The Shape of the Liturgy*, which was published in 1945 and ensured his place as one of the most influential figures of twentieth-century Anglicanism. It has been

an inspiration for generations of clergy and laypeople, and has had a profound influence on liturgical revision throughout the Anglican Communion. Although Dix's work has sometimes attracted criticism and his conclusions are at times suspect, the book remains authoritative for the study and practice of worship today.

Our commemoration of Dom Gregory reminds us that we are the priestly people of God and our identity is best expressed when we gather for worship. We are the Body of Christ and, like him, are called to be broken to feed a spiritually hungry and desperate world. 🙏

Jo Jones *reflects on* Acts 9:36-end, Psalm 23, Revelation 7:9-end and John 10:22-30

I find the story of Peter raising Tabitha to life from death hard to believe. I also struggle with its justice. Why raise Tabitha and not others? But I realise I am like those in today's Gospel reading who want to know if Jesus is the Christ, but are too busy asking rational questions to "see".

We all will die. The pain of this can be unbearable. But Jesus offers life where there is death. Through Tabitha's story, Luke demonstrates the gift of life that following Christ brings.

The prophet Isaiah (25:7-8) describes the "shroud" of death that

covers all nations and prophesies that God will "swallow up death for ever". In his vision of heaven (Revelation 7), John sees how the sacrifice of Jesus has fulfilled this prophecy: in place of the shroud of death, God will spread his tent over people of all nations and the Lamb will be their shepherd and "will guide them to springs of the water of life".

"The Lord is my shepherd", today's psalm, is often sung at funerals. I had not realised how strongly this hymn draws together Bible messages about life amidst the suffering of death. No wonder it is such a comfort. 🙏

## Plants of the Bible

### The oak

by Caroline Fletcher

Many species of oak grow in Israel, together with a similar tree, the terebinth, also translated "oak" in Bibles. Reaching impressive ages and sizes, they became landmarks. Hence we are informed that Abram had a divine revelation near the oak at Moreh and Gideon under the oak at Ophrah.

People sat under the oak's spreading branches to shade

from the sun. However, those same broad branches caused the bloody downfall of King David's rebellious son, Absalom, when his flowing locks became caught up in them.

Isaiah 11:1 famously mentions a "shoot... from the stump of Jesse" (King David's father). This image comes from trees such as the oak which, when felled, produce new growth from their stumps.

Isaiah is encouraging Israel that hope remains, despite the ravages of war. As the stump produces new life, so a deliverer will arise from the remnants of David's line. For Christians, this is Christ. 🙏

“Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus.”

Philippians 2:5