

**Thursday November 14**  
**“A Celtic Advent - 40 days of devotions to Christmas”**  
**(BRF about £8)**

The Celtic tradition might be described as combining a sense of wonder with being very down to earth. Walking through a muddy farmyard in the early morning to milk the cows, and seeing the glory of the Lord. A good way of reading yourself gently and inspiringly into a Christmas in which you can hear the angel voices above the clatter (?) of the cash registers... or its cardless equivalent.



**Thursday December 12**  
**Favourite Christmas Readings**

What the label says: An opportunity to bring and share a reading that, for you, best captures the Real Christmas.

**St George the Martyr  
Shirley**

**BOOK READING GROUP  
2019**



**The Group normally meets on the second Thursday in the month  
at 31 Woodmere Avenue  
7 45 p.m. Refreshments for 8 p.m. - 9 30 p.m.**

**If you want to share a book with us,  
without being physically present,  
You can Email comments to [dunaigh2@btinternet.com](mailto:dunaigh2@btinternet.com)**

**You are welcome to come, or Email, just for one book**



*If you would like a book obtained for you, please ask.  
Extracts or summaries are free.*

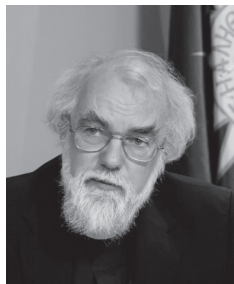


**Thursday January 17**

**“Only dull people are brilliant at breakfast”:**

**Some collected aphorisms from Oscar Wilde (Penguin Classics £1)**

All of Oscar Wilde’s pithy sayings (from his plays and elsewhere) sound clever. On closer inspection, some are wise; some are fairly meaningless; and some are probably misguided. The title quotation maybe falls into the second category. In the first category, how about “A cynic is someone who knows the price of everything and the value of nothing”. In the third category, “Between men and women, there is no friendship possible”? The learning points from this little book are perhaps that (a) You can say a great deal in a few words, (b) You can hurt someone quite badly in a few words.



**Thursday February 14**

**“Christ, The Heart of Creation”:** Rowan Williams

This book by the former Archbishop is big, and not an easy read if you are not used to reading theology. It explores the various ways people have tried to de-

**Thursday October 10**  
**Sharing some of Shakespeare’s Sonnets**

Arguably the greatest poetry ever written, though sadly less familiar to many people than [the titles of] Shakespeare’s plays. Interesting that a jobbing dramatist could write stuff like this. You will get a small selection of sonnets; but if you have your own copy of the sonnets you can choose your own favourites.

*Sonnet V: Time and Love*

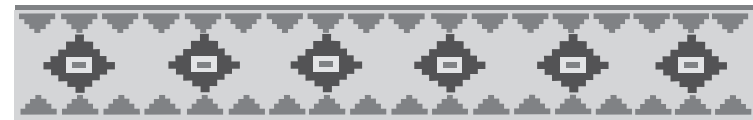
*When I have seen by Time’s fell hand defaced  
The rich proud cost of out-worn buried age;  
When sometime lofty towers I see down-razed,  
And brass eternal slave to mortal rage;*

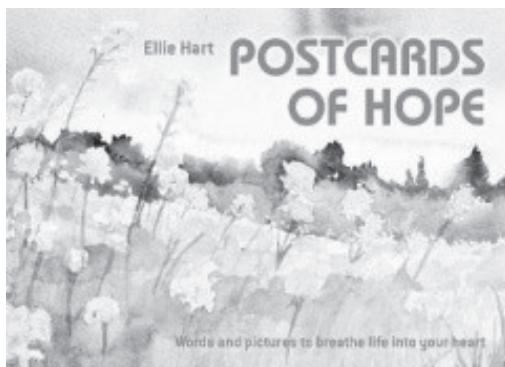
*When I have seen the hungry ocean gain  
Advantage on the kingdom of the shore,  
And the firm soil win of the watery main,  
Increasing store with loss, and loss with store;*

*When I have seen such interchange of state,  
Or state itself confounded to decay,  
Ruin hath taught me thus to ruminare -  
That Time will come and take my Love away:*

*- This thought is as a death, which cannot choose  
But weep to have that which it fears to use.*

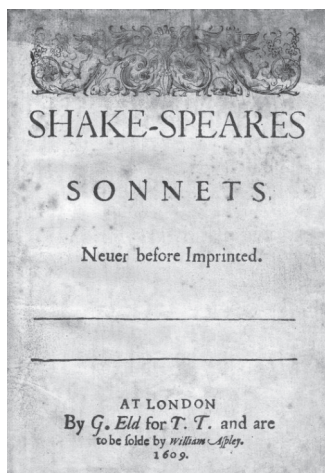
*W. Shakespeare*



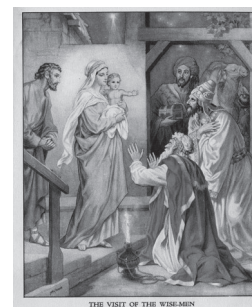


**Thursday September 12**  
**“Postcards of Hope” by Ellie Hart (BRF about £8)**

Writer and artist, Ellie Hart is also theologian, retreat leader, youth worker. The book combines original water colours with reflections. It follows on from her well received “Postcards from Heaven”. Some of us are better than others at spotting God in the world around us. The book provides help in this area, perhaps especially on days or at times when unprompted God thoughts are a bit thin on the ground. The book has been described as “*Words and pictures to breathe life into your heart*”.



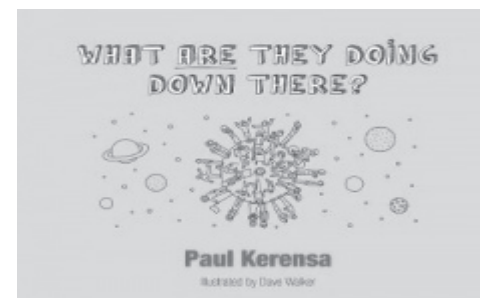
scribe the Jesus we speak of as both fully God and fully human. It talks about His relationship with God the Father and with us, and our relationship with each other. The Jesus descriptions in the Bible, in the Creeds, and in our prayers, trip off the tongue more easily than the unfamiliar theological descriptions in this book. However, even if at the end of the day we can't find the right words to describe the indescribable, it is all important enough for us to have a go. What is on offer to the Group is a few pages of thoughts from those who have read the book, accompanied by quotations from the book. (For example, quoting Bonhoeffer, “*Only a suffering God can help*”.)



**Thursday March 14**

**“The Story of the Other Wise Man” by Henry Van Dyke**

If you want to join us, in one way or another, you can have a free copy. The text most readily available is, unfortunately (and for no obvious reason) printed in Olde English script, and requires a certain amount of perseverance. However, given that this is the story of one of the Magi who took over 30 years to track down Jesus, perseverance is no bad thing. This is, many of us think, one of the best short stories of all time. It is a book about values: about what really matters.



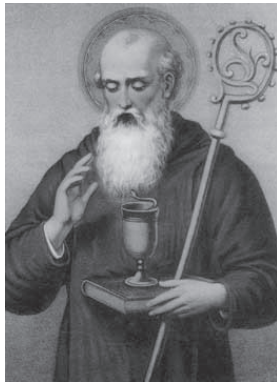
**Thursday April 11**  
**“What are they doing down there?”: Paul Kerensa**

An out of the ordinary Bible Reading Fellowship book, written by comedy award winning writer Paul Kerensa, with cartoon illustrations by Dave Walker. With jokes, quips, observations and punch thoughts, the book explores the bits of everyday life that we perhaps hope take place while God has got his back turned. The sort of casual but significant realities that probably don't get tweeted or posted on whatever you use instead of Facebook. (About £7 if you are investing; though this is a book it would be easy to pass around.)



**Thursday June 13**  
**Favourite Nature Poems and Prose**

This is an own-choice evening. One or two of the Psalms are world-class nature poems - praising the Creator God for the glories of His Creation. At the other end of the time spectrum, there are some excellent 21st Century pieces in the Spring, Summer, Autumn, Winter series produced by the Wildlife Trusts, edited by Melissa Harrison. Not least with nature literature, there is no very clear dividing line between poetry and prose. Just choose your own favourite piece, bring it along, and read it in whole or part, with your own reflections. It is common experience that these exchanges result in you confirming your own choice, but taking away someone else's favourite as a treasured new discovery.



**Thursday May 9**  
**“The Rule of Benedict” (Penguin Classics £2)**

Benedict of Nursia is perhaps the best-known figure of monastic history. Certainly it is hard to imagine the monastic life without the pattern that he, more than anyone, established. Today's Christians (and indeed today's everyone) tend to fight shy of rules—instead, emphasising choice and spontaneity. Even if you are a “Nobody tells me what to do!” person, it is a healthy exercise to dip into the most prominent rule book to which people in a monastery chose to commit themselves. Monks and nuns are not the only full-time disciples of Christ. Really, we all commit ourselves to full-time service, though our marching order are less visible and less structured. Even if the reading of the rules confirms your dislike of external discipline, remember that for “religious” this was the framework for self-discipline. You are promised some surprises!



**Thursday July 11**  
**“Phoebe” by Paula Gooder (£14)**

A first novel by an outstanding Bible scholar, imagining the story of a real Biblical star from the Pauline part of the New Testament. Some of Paul's writing has given him an undeserved “anti-woman” reputation. But we know, from his letters and from the Book of Acts, that a number of Paul's key allies were women. The early Church would have been greatly diminished without the women - even if it wasn't Priscilla who wrote the Letter to the Hebrews.