

St Mary's Church, Shalford  
Parish of Shalford and Peasmarsch

# **Edition Two**

# **Parish Prayers etc**



*A compilation of favourites  
from and for the people of  
Shalford & Peasmarsch*

# Welcome ...

to our *second* edition of *Parish Prayers etc*, from and for all in the Parish of Shalford and Peasmarsch. We hope this will prove a valuable companion to you, and also bring some enjoyment and comfort during difficult or confusing times.

This Second Edition to the popular first (both will remain available, even when the third appears!), has come together entirely from contributions from people in our villages. Huge thanks to Ian, Ann, Sue and Val, and especially the overall editor for this volume, Tony, for all their care and generous work as they've lovingly compiled and shaped this wonderful volume, rich in word and image for us all to enjoy.

These prayers and readings are also a great resource to share in a *Care & Prayer Triplet* - there are now many people in Shalford & Peasmarsch who simply phone/email/chat to each other on a regular basis as a 'triplet' of mutual caring for each other, and a way to become connected with others in the village. If you would like to join a new 'triplet', please contact Rev Sarah.

*Parish Prayers etc* is a constantly evolving companion, so please continue to send in your favourite prayers, poetry, scripture passages or other prose, or any you find meaningful, comforting or uplifting which you think others will value or enjoy. We will try to include your suggestions in the Third Edition eventually! Just send to any of your *Parish Prayers etc* team below.

With thanks and prayers from our *Parish Prayers* team:

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## *Nature*

Cleaning boots after the ramble  
Detaching caked Earth from the sole  
Collected in the scramble  
Through banks of Heather  
High above the River Mole,  
There lodged beneath a wedge of clay  
Preserved miraculously whole,  
A life suspended, like Pompeii,  
A butterfly, its colouring intact,  
Deep orange dust on velvet black.  
Too small a thing to merit grieving  
Yet few could add such beauty  
To their leaving.  
*Ron Woodland*



I have seen the sun break through  
to illuminate a small field  
for a while, and gone my way  
and forgotten it. But that was the  
pearl of great price, the one field that had  
treasure in it. I realise now  
that I must give all that I have  
to possess it. Life is not hurrying  
on to a receding future, nor hankering after  
an imagined past. It is the turning  
aside like Moses to the miracle  
of the lit bush, to a brightness  
that seemed as transitory as your youth  
once, but is the eternity that awaits you.  
*R.S. Thomas - The Bright Field*

Of all the walks from Guildford town  
The one I love is Merrow Down  
to Newlands Corner when the birds  
have sweeter messages than words.

Violets and primroses  
look up like the child I was;  
cowslips ring the grass and rare  
butterflies are made of air.

Like a deer that leaps its track  
bearing sunlight on its back,  
from undergrowth the view  
springs free  
southward to the hidden sea.



Through villages that nestle near  
Chilworth, Abinger and Shere  
over patchwork grassy ways  
where cows bow brown their heads to graze,



further still to field and hearth  
whose dreamy distance gives the earth  
a peace, until the South Downs swerve  
into the horizon's curve.

My path goes on but here I stand  
to contemplate this quiet land.  
Field and tree and hill and I  
touch the silence of the sky.

*Susan Skinner*

The earth laughs in flowers.  
*R. W. Emerson*

Adopt the pace of Nature: her secret is patience.  
R. W. Emerson

Fifteenth of May, Cherry blossom.  
The swifts  
Materialise at the tip of a long scream  
of needle. 'Look! They're back! Look!'  
And they're gone  
on a steep  
Controlled scream of skid  
Round the house-end and away under the  
cherries. Gone.  
Suddenly flickering in sky summit,  
three or four together,  
Gnat-whisp frail, and hover-searching,  
and listening  
For air-chills - are they too early?  
with a bowing  
Power-thrust to left, then to right,  
then a flicker they  
Tilt into a slide, a tremble for balance,  
Then a lashing down disappearance  
Behind elms,  
They've made it again,  
Which means the globe's still working,  
the Creation's  
Still waking refreshed,  
our Summer's  
Still all to come ——



*Ted Hughes, extract from "Swifts"*

And people stayed home and  
read books  
and listened and rested and  
exercised and made art and played  
and learned new ways of being  
and stopped and listened deeper  
someone meditated someone  
prayed someone danced someone  
met their shadow and people  
began to think differently  
and people healed and in the absence of people who lived in ignorant  
ways, dangerous,  
meaningless and heartless, even the earth began to heal  
and when the danger ended  
and people found each other,  
grieved for the dead people  
and  
they made new choices and  
dreamed of new visions  
and created new ways of life  
and healed the earth  
completely just as they were  
healed themselves.

*Written around 1800 after the  
potato famine*



Christ hath a garden, walled around,  
A Paradise of fruitful ground,  
Chosen by love and fenced by grace  
From out the world's wide wilderness.

Like trees of spice His servants stand,  
There planted by His mighty hand;  
By Eden's gracious streams, that flow  
To feed their beauty where they grow.

Awake, O wind of heaven, and bear  
Their sweetest perfume through the air;  
Stir up O south, the boughs that  
bloom,  
Till the beloved Master come;

That He may come and linger yet  
Among the trees that He hath set;  
That He may evermore be seen  
To walk amid the springing green.

*Isaac Watts*

## *Friendship*

I leave to my children a number of the best and kindest friends, both men and women, that ever man had. Gratefully conscious of all that they have meant to me, I declare friendship to be the most precious thing in life, but it is like a plant that withers if it is not heedfully fostered and tended. It is only by constant thought, by visits, by little services and by abundant sympathy at all times that friends can be kept. I implore my children to remember this, so that the blessings that have been mine may be theirs also.

*Sir Sydney Cockerell*



What a mystery friendship is, and how strangely and delightfully one's friends differ, one from the other. Some we have to carry, others carry us. The perfect friend to my mind, is one who believes in you from the start, never needing explanations and assurances.

True friendship is one of the subtle and beautiful forces that glorify life.

*Dame Laurentia McCloughan*

## *Need, Hope, Doubt*

Why am I here, I used to ask.  
Is all this joy and strife to lead me  
anywhere?  
Is there a purpose to my life?  
Is my existence part of some  
grand plan  
or just an accident?  
Just one more man of little  
individual worth,  
who only came to populate the  
earth  
and leave it just the same.  
But most of all I asked, would these  
feelings last?

But then I saw in others  
communities of care,  
and willingness to share their way of  
life with me.  
And gradually I felt that wondrous  
sense of God,  
within me and out there?  
That's how I now know who I am,  
and why I'm here.  
To help God's plan,  
right now with love and prayer.  
And then when I am gone,  
to join Him in a place so pure.

But oh, I do so long  
to be more sure.  
*Tony Beet*

Doubt isn't the opposite of  
faith, it is an element of faith.  
Sometimes I think my mission  
is to bring faith to the  
faithless, and doubt to the  
faithful.

*Paul Tillich*

I pray that I may so  
know You and love You  
that I may rejoice in You.  
And if I may not do so  
fully in this life,  
let me go steadily on  
to the day when I may  
come to that fullness...  
Let me receive  
that which You promised  
through Your truth,  
that my joy may be full.  
*St Anselm (1033-1109)*

As Daniel Barenboim demonstrated with his East-Western Divan orchestra, when people of differing views are brought together in a collaborative and creative endeavour, differences become subsumed. The give and take of making music for instance, of listening to the articulation of a phrase by one musician so that it can be answered, or echoed, with corresponding inflection by another, is an act of communion which can transcend politics and religion. Indeed it becomes a kind of shared worship at the altar of human imagination and it is surely there that we need to look for real hope.



*For Jan Pereboom who loved music and worked hard to promote understanding between different faiths*

My soul clings to you,  
my right hand upholds  
you.

*Psalms 63, v.8*

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

*Romans 15, v.13*



Who among us has not experienced doubts on this journey of faith?.....We've all experienced this, me too.

*Pope Francis*

We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure.

*Hebrews 6. v.19a*

## *Faith & Worship*

"For by grace you have been saved through faith: and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God "...  
*Ephesians 2, v.8*

Alone with none but thee, my God  
I journey on my way,  
What need I fear, when thou art near.  
The more safe am I within thy hand  
Than if a host did round me stand.  
*Columba (c. 521-97)*

For God so loved the world that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.  
*John 3, v.16*

For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers,  
nor things present, nor things to come,  
nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.  
*Romans 8, v. 38-39*

Lord Jesus, at this evening hour  
We turn with joy to thee  
In devils subject to thy power  
And captive souls set free.

Yet while our eager hearts confide  
The tale of victories won,  
Guard us from joy that turns to pride  
On hearing thy, "Well done."

Lest while rejoicing we should make  
These victories our plea  
Grant us as penitents to take  
Our place at Calvary

There kneeling make our only plea  
Thy cross and hear thy voice:  
"In heaven your names are known to me:  
Only in this rejoice."  
*Stanley Hemming-Clark*

When I finish this earthly life-  
Will then those arms, once stretched out in disgrace  
    Upon the earth, for sinners to atone,  
    Stretch out once more in heaven to embrace  
The one for whom he died, and call me home?  
    And as he showed to Thomas long ago  
    The scars of love on hands once crucified,  
Will those same arms stretched in welcome show  
    Those scars of love now glorified?  
    And will those arms lead me to see again  
Those I have loved with them in heaven's throng  
    As once on earth to sing the great refrain  
    In threefold Sanctus of the angelic song?  
These wondering questions to myself I pose  
But leave the answers to the One who knows.

*Stanley Hemming- Clark*

She was glad to hear of her relations visiting beautiful places. But the horizons of Carmel are more lovely still. They are infinite. In God I can find all the beauty of valleys, lakes and panoramas. Everything in Carmel is wonderful, one finds God in the scullery, just as in prayer. One lives Him, breathes Him. My horizon widens day by day. I do not know how to describe my blessedness. Here there is nothing but Him. He is all we need, and we live by this alone. It is as if the gates of heaven lay open.

*Elizabeth of Dijon, a Camelite (1880-1906)*

He comes to us as One unknown, without a name, as of old, by the lakeside. He came to those men who knew him not. He speaks to us the same word 'follow thou me', and sets us to the tasks which He has to fulfil for our time. He commands, and to those who obey him, whether they be wise or simple, he will reveal Himself in the toils, the conflicts, the sufferings which they shall pass through in His fellowship, and, as an ineffable mystery, they shall learn in their own experience who He is.

*Albert Schweitzer, 1875-1965, The Quest for the historical Jesus'*

O how great thanks am I  
bound to render to you,  
that you have promised to  
show to me and all faithful  
people the good and  
right way to your eternal  
kingdom.

*Thomas a Kempis*

Faith is not knowing  
what the future holds –  
but knowing who  
holds the future.

*Richard Littledale*

I'm so glad to be alive to breathe  
and walk: to laugh and cry: to see  
life's beauty and its grandeur. I  
know too, its beastliness, squalor;  
its poverty, disease, and hate. As I  
give thanks for all my blessings,  
give me Lord, the will to share with  
others what I have so undeservedly  
been given. Make me loving,  
courteous, considerate; give me a  
listening ear, a compassionate  
heart and a generous mind. Let me  
live my life in your sight for others  
so that they, too, may find you and  
give thanks.

*John Charles Vockler*

God of Surprises  
when I think you are not present in my  
life,  
you reveal yourself in the love of friends  
and family  
and nurture me in your never ending  
affection.

God of Surprises  
when we think you are not present in  
our community,  
you labour to make us of one heart  
and cause us to share gladly and  
generously.

God of Surprises,  
when people think you are not present  
in our world,  
you bring hope out of despair  
and create growth out of difficulty.

God of Surprises  
you are ever with us.

When the days go by and our vision  
fades,  
keep surprising us,  
when our hope dims and our patience  
wears thin,  
keep coming to us.  
Teach us to keep our lamps lit  
and to be prepared,  
that we may see your loving presence  
with us.

*Francis Brien*

## Reassurance & Encouragement



Eternal spirit, living God,  
in whom we live and move and have our being,  
all that we are, have been, and shall be is known  
to you,  
to the very secrets of our hearts  
and all that rises to trouble us.  
Living flame, burn into us:  
Cleansing wind, blow through us:  
Fountain of water, well up within us:  
that we may love and praise in deed and truth.  
*Jim Cotter*

We have wounded your love:  
*Oh God heal us.*  
We stumble in the darkness:  
*Light of the world, transfigure us.*  
We forget that we  
are your home:  
*Spirit of God, dwell  
in us.*  
*Jim Cotter*

Oh Lord let your word be a lamp  
for my feet, and a light on my path.  
*Based on Psalm 119, v. 105*

Oh great chief, light a candle in my heart, that I  
may see what is in it, and sweep the rubbish from  
your dwelling place.  
*An African schoolgirl*

God, Let me put right before interest,  
Let me put others before self,  
Let me put the things of the spirit  
before the things of the body,  
Let me put the attainment of noble ends  
above the enjoyment of present pleasures  
Let me put principle above reputation,  
Let me put you before all else.  
*John Baillie 1886-1960*



Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.

Where there is hatred let me sow love;  
where there is injury, pardon;  
where there is discord, union;  
where there is doubt, faith;  
where there is despair, hope;  
where there is darkness, light;  
where there is sadness, joy.

Grant that I may seek not so much to be  
consoled, as to console;  
to be understood, as to understand;  
to be loved, as to love,  
For it is by giving that we receive;  
it is by losing that we find;  
it is by forgiving that we are forgiven;  
and it is by dying that we rise again to  
eternal life.

*Often attributed to St. Francis but not  
thought to be.*

Grant, O God  
that I may speak so boldly  
and so lovingly  
that the greatness of Christ  
may shine out clearly in my person,  
through the indwelling of your Holy Spirit  
*Donald Coggan*



○ Lord help us to be masters of ourselves that we  
may be the servants of others.

*Alexander Henry Paterson 1884-1947*

Oh Lord support us all the day long of this troublous life until the shadows lengthen and the evening comes, the busy world is hushed, the fever of life over and our work is done. Then Lord in thy mercy grant us safe lodging and a holy rest and peace at the last through Jesus Christ our Lord.

*Cardinal J H Newman*



Oh Jesus,  
be the canoe that holds me in the sea of life,  
be the steer that keeps me straight,  
be the outrigger that supports me in time of  
great temptation.  
Let your spirit be my sail that carries me through  
each day,  
as I journey steadfastly on the long voyage of life.  
*Prayer from young person in Vanuatu*

I have a secret that is very simple.  
I'll share it with you if I may.  
When you can't sleep,  
Don't count sheep.  
Pray.

Pray for those you love,  
And those who don't love you.  
Pray for your friends,  
And your enemies too.

Pray for your family-  
All of them, not just one or two.  
Pray for everyone who is sick,  
hurting, or lost.  
And when you feel you are through,  
Pray for you.  
*Betty Harp Butler*

Let nothing disturb you,  
Let nothing frighten you,  
All things pass away;  
God never changes.  
Patience obtains all things.  
Those who have God lack nothing.  
*St. Teresa of Avila*

Be strong and courageous. Do  
not be afraid; do not be  
discouraged, for the Lord your  
God will be with you wherever  
you go.  
*Joshua 1, v.9*

As glowing darkness turns to day  
the blush of dawn spreads light,  
and with it hope in human hearts.  
But with the gentle light of dawn  
the shadows cast so dark and long  
for some can prey on hope.  
Remember then  
the shelter from that shade  
protects you from the midday sun.



And so it is with God,  
who from the dawn of time  
has nurtured us with light and shade.  
And when that hopeful light of life  
seems overcome by darkest night,  
returns the gift again  
in yet another dawn.

*Tony Beet*

Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and  
I will give you rest.

*Matthew 11, v.38*

Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for  
the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.

*Joshua 1. v.9*

I really should be more careful with my blessings, so as not to mix them  
up with my regrets.

*Richard Littledale*

Jesus said, "Do not rejoice in this, that the evil spirits are subject to you,  
but rejoice that your names are written in heaven."

*St Luke 10, v.20*

I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty.

*John 6, v.35*

What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us.

*R. W. Emerson*

Eternal Father, source of light and life, whose love extends to all people, all creatures, all things: grant us that reverence for life which becomes those who believe in you: lest we despise it, degrade it, or come callously to destroy it. Rather let us save it, serve it and sanctify it, after the example of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

*Robert Runcie*

O Holy Spirit, give me faith that will protect me from despair, from passions, and from vice; give me such love for God and men as will blot out all hatred and bitterness; give me hope that will deliver me from fear and faint-heartedness.

*Dietrich Bonhoeffer*

The Lord is near to the broken-hearted and saves the crushed in spirit.

*Psalms 34, v.18*

I prayed to the Lord, and he answered me from all my fears.

*Psalms 34. v.4*

Every day is a messenger of God.

*Russian proverb*

....Fear not, for I have redeemed you;

I have summoned you by name; you are mine.

When you pass through the waters, I will be with you;

and when you pass through rivers, they will not sweep over you.

And when you walk through the fire, you will not be burned;

the flames will not set you ablaze.

For I am the Lord your God.....

*Isaiah 43, v.1-3*

Risen Christ, you came to your disciples in the evening of the first day of the week. Forgive us when, like Thomas, we hug our doubts and worries to ourselves. Grant us such a hunger for the fellowship of those who believe in you, that no excuses may pervert us from meeting together in the evening stillness. Then may we find you standing among us, to strengthen us and send us out in your service; for you are alive and reign, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God now and for ever. Amen.

*Michael Counsell*

For I, the Lord your God,  
Hold your right hand:  
It is I who say to you, "Do not fear  
I will help you."  
*Isaiah 41, v.18*

He who binds to himself a joy  
Does the winged life destroy  
But he who kisses the joy as it flies  
Lives in eternity's sunrise.  
*William Blake*

"My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." *Isaiah 55, v. 8-9*

Sometimes, when the sun goes down, it seems it will never rise again...  
but it will.

Sometimes, when you feel alone, it seems your heart will break in two...  
but it won't.

And sometimes it seems it's hardly worthwhile carrying on.  
But it is.

For sometimes, when the sun goes down,  
It seems it will never rise again.  
But it does.

When the storm clouds boil around me,  
And the lightening splits the sky--  
When the howling wind assails me.  
And life's sea is rolling high--  
And when my heart is filled with terror,  
And my fears, I can't  
allay--  
Then I find sweet peace  
and comfort,  
When I simply stop and  
pray.



When the things of life  
confound me,  
And my faith is ebbing  
low--  
When my trusted friends  
betray me,  
And my heart is aching so--  
When the night seems black  
and endless,  
And I long for light of day--  
Then I find a silver dawning,  
When I simply stop and pray.

There are things beyond the  
heavens  
I can't begin to understand,  
But I know that God is living,  
And I know he holds my hand.  
Yes, I know he watches o'er me  
All the night and all the day--  
And He's always there to hear me  
When I simply stop and pray.  
*William Robinson*

Grant calmness and control of thought  
in those who are facing uncertainty  
and anxiety: let their hearts stand fast,  
believing in the Lord. Be all things to  
all men, knowing each one and their  
petition, each house and it's need, for  
the sake of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Russian Orthodox

## Love



Love is the strongest force the world possesses. And yet it is the humblest imaginable. The more efficient a force is, the more silent and subtle it is. Love is the subtlest force in the world. When I read the Sermon on the Mount, especially such passages as, 'resist not evil' I was simply

overjoyed and found my own opinion confirmed where I least expected it. The message of Jesus Christ, as I understand it, is contained in the Sermon on the Mount... which competes almost on almost equal terms with the Bhagavad Gita, for the domination of my heart. It is that sermon which had endeared Jesus to me. The gentle figure of Christ, so patient, so kind, so loving, so full of forgiveness that he taught his followers not to retaliate when abused or struck, but to turn the other cheek. It was a beautiful example, or so I thought, of the perfect man.

*Mahatma Gandhi*

Look around you, at your family, your workmates, your neighbours.

Loneliness is the disease of mankind. To be unloved and uncared for is poverty of the soul, and we must each try to ease that loneliness wherever we live.

It is not how much we do, but how much love we put in the doing. It is not how much we give, but how much love we put in the giving.

*Mother Teresa 1910-97*



Such love, I cannot analyse;  
It does not rest in lips or eyes,  
Neither in kisses or caress,  
Partly, I know, it's gentleness

And understanding in one word  
Or in brief letters. It's preserved  
By trust and by respect and awe.  
These are the words I'm feeling for.

Two people, yes, two lasting friends.  
The giving comes, the taking ends.  
There is no measure for such things.  
For this all Nature slows and sings.  
*Elizabeth Jennings*



By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we  
ought to lay down our lives for others.

*1 John 3, v.16*

Before God made us, He loved us;  
His love never did grow slack, nor ever will.  
And in this love He has done all his works;  
and in this love He has made all things profitable to us;  
and in this love our life is everlasting.  
*Julian of Norwich*

Whatever we do or suffer for a friend is pleasant, because love is  
the principal cause of pleasure.  
*Thomas Aquinas*

## KINDNESS

Kindness oils our interactions,  
It is the Holy Spirit's gift.

Nourishing those in desolation,

Diffusing warmth, healing the rift.

Nurture a smile's ripple effect,

Engraving God's love in our hearts.

Shadows shroud, our lives disconnect,

Still kindness its healing imparts.

*Ann Hyde*



God be in my head, and in  
my understanding;

God be in my eyes, and in my looking;

God be in my mouth, and in my speaking;

God be in my heart, and in  
my thinking;

God be at my end, and  
my departing.

*Pynson's Horae*

Accept one another then, just as Christ  
accepted you, in order to bring praise to  
God.

*Romans 15, v.7*

Everyone should be quick to listen and  
slow to speak....

*James 1, v.15*

Do to others as you would have them do  
to you.

*Luke 6, v.31*

I sought the Lord, and he answered me,  
he delivered me from all my fears....

*Psalms 34, v.4*

Clothe yourselves with  
compassion, kindness,  
humility, gentleness and  
patience.

*Colossians 3, v.12*

I read of a man who stood to speak  
At the funeral of a friend.  
He referred to the dates on her tombstone  
From the beginning to the end.  
He noted that first came the date of her  
birth  
And spoke the following date with tears.  
But he said what mattered most of all  
Was the dash between those years,  
For that dash represents all the time  
That she spent alive on earth.  
And now only those who loved her  
Know what that little line is worth.  
For it matters not how much we own;  
The cars, the house, the cash.  
What matters is how we live and love  
And how we spend our dash.  
So think about this long and hard.  
Are there things you'd like to change?  
For you never know how much time is left  
That can still be rearranged.  
If we could just slow down enough  
To consider what's true and real  
And always try to understand  
The way other people feel.  
And be less quick to anger,  
And show appreciation more  
And love the people in our lives  
Like we've never loved before.  
If we treat each other with respect  
And more often wear a smile,  
Remembering that this special dash  
Might only last a little while.  
So, when your eulogy is being read  
With your life's actions to rehash  
Would you be proud of the things they say  
About how you spent your dash?

*Linda Ellis*

When you are gone you may  
live on  
And thrive in other's lives.  
But if so how?  
What ought to be in other's  
thoughts  
Depends on you  
Right now.  
*Tony Beet*

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Question not, but live and  
labour  
Till the task be done  
Helping every needy  
neighbour,  
Seeking help from none.  
Life is mostly froth and bubble,  
Two things stand like stone  
Kindness in another's trouble  
Courage in your own.  
*Adam Lindsay Gordon*

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May the blessed sunlight  
shine upon you and warm  
your heart till it glows like a  
great peat fire, so that the  
stranger may come and  
warm himself at it, as well as  
the friend.

*Traditional Irish blessing*

## *Something lighter*

Behold the hippopotamus!  
We laugh at how he looks to us,  
And yet in moments dank and grim  
I wonder how we look to him.  
Peace, peace thou hippopotamus!  
We really look all right to us,  
As you no doubt delight the eye  
Of other hippopotami.  
*Ogden Nash*



I am what folks call a Self-Employed lad,  
For I am a burglar; Burglar Bill is my name.  
The tricks of my trade I learnt from my dad.  
My well-paid career would cause him no shame.  
When couples leave houses empty all day,  
I force open windows, doors I can smash,  
Safes I can crack in my own skilful way.  
My wages were silver, jewels or cash.  
No wages come now! Folk all stay inside.  
Through Covid 19 my life's not the same.  
No house can I rob, they're all occupied.  
Self-Employed but compensation daren't claim.  
With the lonely, unemployed, old and ill,  
Oh! Please spare a thought for  
poor Burglar Bill.  
*Stanley Hemming-Clark*



**In need of a haircut in lockdown!**

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