



Welcome to our Parish Mass service today - viewable via the Broadcast Page of our church website. [www.stjohnspevenseyroad.org.uk/broadcast](http://www.stjohnspevenseyroad.org.uk/broadcast)

**Unfortunately, due to the current Covid-19 situation, St John's Church is closed for public worship services & private prayer until further notice.**

**Sunday Parish Mass** will be online only - recorded in the closed church and broadcast via our church website at 10:30 a.m.

**Online "Zoom" service:** 10 a.m. on Wednesday. Send Rev Jill or Deacon Michael an email and they will send you the necessary "link".

**People for whom our prayers are asked:**

Jean & Geoff, Geraldine, Ian M, Brenda R, Jane G, Cynthia H, Jo, Amber, Shirley, Andrew N, Libby V, Kath Q, and Linda.

**Please pray also for...**

...the repose of the souls of the departed,

... especially those whose Years Minds fall around this time:

Doris Gordon, Gordon Ross, John Howie, Mary Robson, Helen Farrer, Rosemary Hughes, Doris Jenkins, and Ruby Crighton,

...and all who mourn.

**HYMN OF THE WEEK: Christ whose glory fills the skies...**

Of the many great hymns by **Charles Wesley**, this is considered one of his best. It is a glorious hymn to Christ – the "Dawn from on high" in the words of the Benedictus (Luke 1:68-79).

Originally titled "A Morning Hymn", it begins with the contrast between light and night. In **verse one** the vivid images of "Sun," "Dayspring" and "Daystar" are personified as Christ.

In **verse two**, Wesley uses the first words of each line to tell the story of redemption. Our human plight is described as "Dark," "Unaccompanied," and "Joyless." The next two lines beginning with "till" represent our hope for salvation. Finally, after the hope is given and the work is done, line six describes the cheer which comes from our redemption through Jesus Christ.

In **verse three** we enjoy the uplifting description of the "Radiancy divine", Christ, "scattering our unbelief" - having redeemed us from our sin. Wesley ramps up the excitement with the words "more and more" - we can never see enough of this "Radiancy divine".

**Scripture references** include John 1:9 concerning the "true light" in verse one. "Sun of Righteousness" comes from Malachi 4:2, and "Day-star" from 2 Peter 1:19. By referencing Christ as the "Sun of Righteousness," it has been suggested that this is a way of "Christianising" old sun-worshipping religious instincts, in the same way that old pagan sites were often repurposed as Christian sites. "Christ, whose glory fills the sky" also promotes the idea that the resurrected and ascended Christ is no longer limited to one place or time, but is with us always and everywhere.



*A message from our Archbishops...*

 THE CHURCH  
OF ENGLAND

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*To the nation*

Lambeth Palace, London SE1 7JU

26 January 2021

Dear friends

As we reach the terrible milestone of 100,000 deaths from COVID-19, we invite everyone in our nation to pause as we reflect on the enormity of this pandemic.

100,000 isn't just an abstract figure. Each number is a person: someone we loved and someone who loved us. We also believe that each of these people was known to God and cherished by God.

We write to you then in consolation, but also in encouragement, and ultimately in the hope of Jesus Christ. The God who comes to us in Jesus knew grief and suffering himself. On the cross, Jesus shares the weight of our sadness.

We therefore encourage everyone who is feeling scared, or lost or isolated to cast their fears on God. We also know that poorer communities, minority ethnic communities and those living with disabilities have been afflicted disproportionately and cry out for the healing of these inequalities. During this pandemic, we encourage everyone to do all they can to live within the guidelines and constraints given by government following the advice of the Chief Medical Officer and Chief Scientific Adviser. We show our commitment, care and love for one another by ensuring we do everything we can to stop the virus spreading.

None of this is easy. Very many of us are experiencing isolation, loneliness, anxiety and dependency like never before. Many people have lost their livelihoods. Our economy struggles. Also, the necessary restrictions we live with have also prevented us from being alongside loved ones as they died, or even at their graveside. All grief profoundly affects us, but this pandemic grief is so hard.

Therefore, we need to support each other. We do this by following the guidelines. But we also do it by reaching out to each other with care and kindness.

One thing we can all do is pray. We hope it is some consolation to know that the church prays for the life of our nation every day. Whether you're someone of faith, or not, we invite you to call on God in prayer. Starting on 1 February we invite you to set aside time every evening to pray, particularly at 6pm each day. More than ever, this is a time when we need to love each other. Prayer is an expression of love. A number of resources will be made available at [www.ChurchofEngland.org/PrayerForTheNation](http://www.ChurchofEngland.org/PrayerForTheNation).

*PTO...*

Finally, we write of hope. We are grateful for the hope we have because of the service of our NHS and social care staff. What a blessing and lifeline for our nation. We are grateful for the service given in local communities by clergy, other frontline workers and so many good neighbours. We are grateful for the hope of the vaccine. It is a testimony to the God-given wisdom and gifts of scientists and researchers. We urge everyone to take the vaccine as soon as it is offered to you.

Most of all, we have hope because God raised Jesus from the dead. This is the Christian hope that we will be celebrating at Easter. We live in the hope that we will share in his resurrection. Death doesn't have the last word. In God's kingdom every tear will be wiped away.

Please be assured of our prayers. Please join us.



The Most Revd & Rt Hon Justin Welby  
Archbishop of Canterbury



The Most Revd & Rt Hon Stephen Cottrell  
Archbishop of York

### **We invite you to pray for our nation**

In response to reaching the terrible milestone of 100,000 deaths from COVID-19, the Archbishops invite all to call on God in Prayer. Starting on 1st February we invite you to set aside time every evening to pray, particularly at 6 p.m. each day. More than ever, this is a time when we need to love each other. Prayer is an expression of love. We remember before God those who have died and we pray that God's love will surround all who mourn them, now and always.

### **This week's prayer, for 1<sup>st</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> February:**

Gracious God,  
as we remember before you the thousands who have died,  
surround us and all who mourn with your strong compassion.

Be gentle with us in our grief,  
protect us from despair,  
and give us grace to persevere  
and face the future with hope  
in Jesus Christ our risen Lord.

Amen.

# Mass for the Presentation of Christ in the Temple

## Welcome

*Priest* In the name of the Father,  
and of the Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit.

*All* Amen.

*Priest* The Lord be with you  
*All* and also with you.

## Prayer of Confession

Hear the words of our Saviour  
Jesus Christ:  
'I am the light of the world.  
Whoever follows me shall never  
walk in darkness  
but shall have the light of life.'  
Let us therefore bring our sins  
into his light  
and confess them in penitence  
and faith.

*cf John 8.12*

*All* Almighty God,  
our heavenly Father,  
we have sinned against you  
and against our neighbour  
in thought and word and deed,  
through negligence, through  
weakness,  
through our own deliberate fault.  
We are truly sorry  
and repent of all our sins.  
For the sake of your Son Jesus  
Christ,  
who died for us,  
forgive us all that is past  
and grant that we may serve you  
in newness of life  
to the glory of your name.  
Amen.

## The Priest says the Absolution

Almighty God,  
who forgives all who truly repent,  
have mercy upon you,  
pardon and deliver you from all your sins,  
confirm and strengthen you in all goodness,  
and keep you in life eternal;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

*All* Amen.

## The Collect

*Priest* Let us pray

Lord Jesus Christ,  
light of the nations and glory of Israel:  
make your home among us,  
and present us pure and holy  
to your heavenly Father,  
your God, and our God.

*All* Amen.

## A reading from the Book of the Prophet Malachi

*Malachi 3.1-5*

Thus says the Lord God: See, I am sending  
my messenger to prepare the way before  
me, and the Lord whom you seek will  
suddenly come to his temple.  
The messenger of the covenant in whom  
you delight – indeed, he is coming, says the  
LORD of hosts. But who can endure the day  
of his coming, and who can stand when he  
appears? For he is like a refiner's fire and  
like fullers' soap; he will sit as a refiner and  
purifier of silver, and he will purify the  
descendants of Levi and refine them like  
gold and silver, until they present offerings  
to the LORD in righteousness.

Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old and as in former years.

Then I will draw near to you for judgement; I will be swift to bear witness against the sorcerers, against the adulterers, against those who swear falsely, against those who oppress the hired workers in their wages, the widow, and the orphan, against those who thrust aside the alien, and do not fear me, says the LORD of hosts.

For the Word of the Lord

**All Thanks be to God**

### **A reading from the Letter to the Hebrews**

*Hebrews 2.14-18*

Since the children share flesh and blood, Jesus himself likewise shared the same things, so that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by the fear of death. For it is clear that he did not come to help angels, but the descendants of Abraham. Therefore he had to become like his brothers and sisters in every respect, so that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make a sacrifice of atonement for the sins of the people. Because he himself was tested by what he suffered, he is able to help those who are being tested.

For the Word of the Lord

**All Thanks be to God**

### **Gradual Hymn**

Christ, whose glory fills the skies,  
Christ, the true, the only light,  
Sun of Righteousness, arise,  
Triumph o'er the shades of night;  
Dayspring from on high, be near,  
Daystar, in my heart appear.

Dark and cheerless is the morn  
Unaccompanied by thee;  
Joyless is the day's return,  
Till thy mercy's beams I see;  
Till they inward light impart,  
Glad my eyes, and warm my heart.

Visit then this soul of mine,  
Pierce the gloom of sin and grief;  
Fill me, radiancy divine,  
Scatter all my unbelief;  
More and more thyself display,  
Shining to the perfect day.

*Charles Wesley (1707-88)*

### **Gospel Reading**

Alleluia alleluia.

This child is the light to enlighten the nations,  
and the glory of your people Israel.

**All Alleluia.**

The Lord be with you

**All And also with you.**

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus  
Christ according to Luke

**All Glory to you, O Lord.**

## Luke 2.22-40

When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, Mary and Joseph brought Jesus up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord. (as it is written in the law of the Lord, 'Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord'), and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, 'a pair of turtle-doves or two young pigeons.'

Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

'Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace,  
according to your word;  
for my eyes have seen your salvation,  
which you have prepared in the  
presence of all peoples,  
a light for revelation to the Gentiles  
and for glory to your people Israel.'

And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, 'This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed – and a sword will pierce your own soul too.'

There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of

Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshipped there with fasting and prayer night and day. At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favour of God was upon him.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.  
**All Praise to you, O Christ.**

## Sermon

### Affirmation of Faith

Let us declare our faith in God.

**All We believe in God the Father,  
from whom every family  
in heaven and on earth is named.**

**We believe in God the Son,  
who lives in our hearts through faith,  
and fills us with his love.**

**We believe in God the Holy Spirit,  
who strengthens us  
with power from on high.**

**We believe in one God;  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.  
Amen.**

## Prayers of Intercession

Let us pray to the Father through Christ  
our light and life.

Father,  
your Christ is acclaimed as the glory  
of Israel:  
look in mercy on your Church, sharing  
his light ...

Lord, have mercy.

**All Lord, have mercy.**

[Father,]  
your Christ in the Temple brings  
judgement on the world:  
look in mercy on the nations who long  
for his justice ...

Lord, have mercy.

**All Lord, have mercy.**

[Father,]  
your Christ, who was rich, for our sake  
became poor:  
look in mercy on all who are in need  
and those who suffer with him ...

Lord, have mercy.

**All Lord, have mercy.**

[Father,]  
your Christ is the one in whom faithful  
servants find their peace:  
look in mercy on the whole Church,  
which glories in your salvation ...

Lord, have mercy.

**All Lord, have mercy.**

[Father,]  
your Christ is the one destined for  
rejection:  
look in mercy on us as we turn towards  
his passion.

Lord, have mercy.

**All Lord, have mercy.**

Almighty Father,  
you kept faith with Simeon and Anna,  
and showed them the infant King.  
Give us grace to trust your promises,  
and patience to wait for their fulfilment;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**All Amen.**

## The Peace is introduced

In the tender mercy of our God  
the dayspring from on high has broken  
upon us,  
to give light to those who dwell in darkness  
and in the shadow of death,  
and to guide our feet into the way of  
peace.

*cf Luke 1.78,79*

The peace of the Lord be always with you  
**All and also with you.**

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

## We may exchange a sign of Peace

## Preparation of the Table

Father, in Christ there has sprung up a light  
for the righteous;  
accept the gifts we bring before you  
and grant that Christ may shine in us  
to the praise and glory of your name.

**All Amen.**

*The president takes the bread and wine.*

## **The Eucharistic Prayer**

The Lord is here  
**His Spirit is with us.**

Lift up your hearts.  
**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
**It is right to give thanks and praise.**

It is indeed right and good,  
always and everywhere to give you  
thanks and praise  
through Jesus Christ, who is one with you  
from all eternity.

For on this day he appeared in the temple  
in substance of our flesh  
to come near to us in judgement.

He searches the hearts of all your people  
and brings to light the image of your  
splendour.

Your servant Simeon acclaimed him as  
the light to lighten the nations  
while Anna spoke of him to all who looked  
for your redemption.

Destined for the falling and rising of many,  
he was lifted high upon the cross  
and a sword of sorrow pierced his  
mother's heart

when by his sacrifice he made our peace  
with you.

And now we rejoice and glorify your name  
that we, too, have seen your salvation  
and join with angels and archangels  
in their unending hymn of praise:

**All Holy, holy, holy Lord,  
God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.  
Blessed is he who comes in the name  
of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.**

Lord, you are holy indeed, the source  
of all holiness;  
grant that by the power of your Holy Spirit,  
and according to your holy will,  
these gifts of bread and wine  
may be to us the body and blood of our  
Lord Jesus Christ;

who, in the same night that he was  
betrayed,  
took bread and gave you thanks;  
he broke it and gave it to his disciples,  
saying:  
Take, eat; this is my body which is  
given for you;  
do this in remembrance of me.

In the same way, after supper  
he took the cup and gave you thanks;  
he gave it to them, saying:  
Drink this, all of you;  
this is my blood of the new covenant,  
which is shed for you and for many  
for the forgiveness of sins.  
Do this, as often as you drink it,  
in remembrance of me.

Great is the mystery of faith:

**All Christ has died:  
Christ is risen:  
Christ will come again.**

And so, Father, calling to mind his death  
on the cross,  
his perfect sacrifice made once for the  
sins of the whole world;  
rejoicing in his mighty resurrection and  
glorious ascension,  
and looking for his coming in glory,  
we celebrate this memorial of our  
redemption.

As we offer you this our sacrifice of  
praise and thanksgiving,  
we bring before you this bread and this  
cup  
and we thank you for counting us worthy  
to stand in your presence and serve you.

Send the Holy Spirit on your people  
and gather into one in your kingdom  
all who share this one bread and one  
cup,  
so that we, in the company of Saint John  
the Evangelist, Saint Peter, Mary the  
Mother of God, and all the saints,  
may praise and glorify you for ever,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord;

by whom, and with whom, and in whom,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
all honour and glory be yours,  
almighty Father, for ever and ever.

**All Amen.**

### **The Lord's Prayer**

Let us pray with confidence as our  
Saviour has taught us:

**All Our Father,  
who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name;  
thy kingdom come;  
thy will be done;  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass  
against us.  
And lead us not into temptation;  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom,  
the power and the glory,  
for ever and ever.  
Amen.**

### **Breaking of the Bread**

*The priest breaks the consecrated bread.*

We break this bread  
to share in the body of Christ.

**All Though we are many,  
we are one body,  
because we all share in one bread.**

**Agnus Dei is said:**

**All Jesus, Lamb of God,  
Have mercy on us**

**Jesus, bearer of our sins,  
Have mercy on us**

**Jesus, redeemer of the world,  
Grant us peace**

### **Giving of Communion**

*The priest says the invitation to  
communion.*

Jesus is the Lamb of God  
who takes away the sin of the world.  
Blessed are those who are called to his  
supper.

**All Lord, I am not worthy to receive you,  
but only say the word,  
and I shall be healed.**

*Communion is received*

## Prayer after Communion

*The priest prays the Post Communion:*

Lord, you fulfilled the hope of Simeon and Anna, who lived to welcome the Messiah: may we, who have received these gifts beyond words, prepare to meet Christ Jesus when he comes to bring us to eternal life; for he is alive and reigns, now and for ever.

*All Amen.*

*All* Father of all,  
we give you thanks and praise,  
that when we were still far off  
you met us in your Son  
and brought us home.  
Dying and living,  
he declared your love,  
gave us grace,  
and opened the gate of glory.  
May we who share Christ's body  
live his risen life;  
we who drink his cup  
bring life to others;  
we whom the Spirit lights  
give light to the world.  
Keep us firm in the hope you have  
set before us,  
so we and all your children shall  
be free,  
and the whole earth live to praise  
your name;  
through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

## Notices

## The Blessing and Dismissal

*Priest* The Lord be with you  
*All* **And also with you**

Christ the Son of God, born of Mary,  
fill you with his grace  
to trust his promises  
and obey his will;  
and the blessing of God almighty,  
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,  
be among you  
and remain with you always.

*All Amen.*

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.  
*All* **In the name of Christ. Amen.**

**Concluding voluntary:** *Grand choeur in B flat - Dubois*



*The Presentation of Christ in the Temple, by Fra Angelico (c.1395 – 1455)*

## Tomorrow, 1<sup>st</sup> February, Brigid of Ireland is commemorated

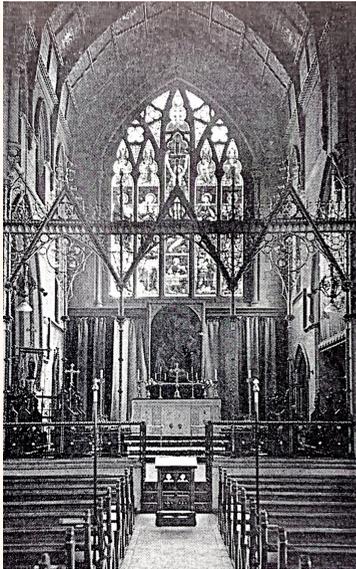
Historical facts about this first abbess of Kildare (died c. 525) may be scarce, but her 'Lives', written from the 7th century, tell many anecdotes and miracles which over the centuries have become deeply rooted in Irish folklore. Brigid came from a village near Kildare, of parents of humble origin, and is said to have been baptised by Patrick, becoming a nun at an early age. She is credited with founding the monastery of Kildare, a powerful influence for Christianity in Ireland.

The miracles attributed to Brigid show her to have been a woman of great compassion and generosity. There are stories of how she could multiply food, especially butter, for the poor. Other stories tell of her changing water to beer, in order to satisfy the thirst of unexpected visitors. Even her cows gave milk three times the same day, enabling some visiting bishops to have enough to drink.

Brigid's following grew rapidly in Ireland, where it became second only to that of Patrick. In England, there were at least 19 ancient church dedications in her honour (the most famous is St Bride's Fleet Street). There is also St Bride's Bay, Dyfed, which underlines the strong connection between Irish and Welsh Christianity. St Brigid is patron of poets, blacksmiths, and healers. She is usually depicted with a cow lying at her feet, which recalls her phase as a nun/cow-herd.



## History Corner... the third St John's Church



By the time a third church building was required, the St John's congregation had become more independent, and in 1879 Rev'd Vaughan set the wheels in motion for the creation of the separate parish of Upper St Leonards. The burnt "little brick church" was repaired for use *pro tem* whilst a new and larger church was literally built around it. Mr (later Sir) Arthur Blomfield was the architect. The chancel of the new church was consecrated on 25<sup>th</sup> July 1881 by the Bishop, allowing the new parish of Upper St Leonards to officially come into being, with the Rev'd H.D. Jones as its first Rector. Fundraising continued, to enable the rest of the large structure to be completed, including a tower and spire. Generous gifts funded the baptistery, pulpit and chancel screen. In 1883, the little brick "church within a church" was finally dismantled,

much of it being repurposed as flooring for the new church, and on 29<sup>th</sup> September of that year the new church was first used in its own right.



Everyone at St Johns has helped us to receive the **Bronze Eco Church Award**. This is great considering there is only one other church with this achievement in Hastings. A Rocha, the international Christian environmental charity behind the scheme, recently announced the 1,000<sup>th</sup> award which was for Hereford Cathedral, so we are in good company. You may be wondering what this award means and some may be thinking perhaps we could do even better and go for Silver or Gold.

To achieve our Bronze Award we completed an online Eco Survey about how well we at St Johns are doing at caring for God's earth. The survey asked about five key areas: worship and teaching; management of church buildings; management of church land; community and global engagement; lifestyle. Our answers to the questions earned us points. Questions included: How often does the church pray for environmental issues? Does the church electricity supply come from renewable resources? Are our toilets twinned? Do we maintain an area of land for native wild flowers?

Some issues are quite difficult to change, however we can all do simple things like turning off lights when they are not needed, offering lifts to church and walking when we can. The idea is to challenge ourselves to improve, and repeat the survey in a year or so.

A Rocha was started in 1983 and has lots of other initiatives and resources besides Eco Church. To find out more visit <https://arocha.org.uk/>

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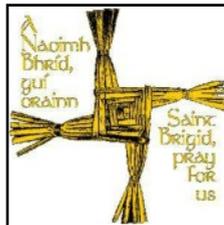
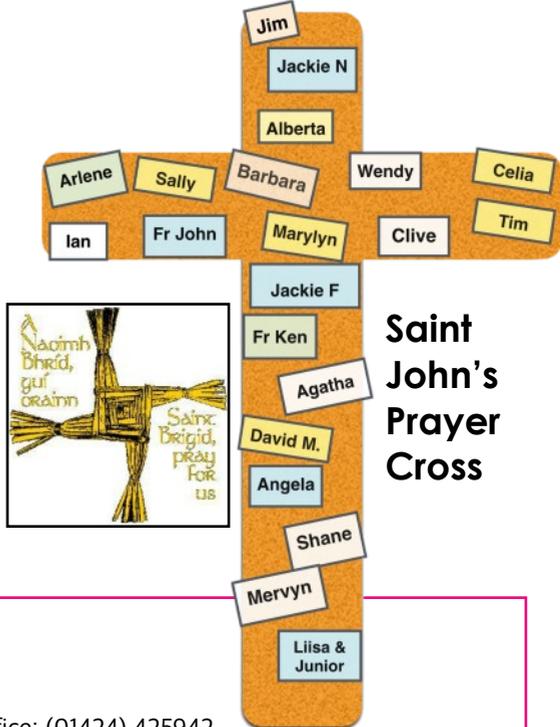
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History Corner information taken from "St John the Evangelist: The First Hundred Years" by W.H. Dyer, 1965



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