



St James
Church
TAUNTON

St James Church Magazine

March - May 2020





Letter from the Vicar

Reverend Fabian Wuyts

Vicar of St James



This lent I am reading a book entitled “Marking Time” by Nick Baines, currently Bishop of Liverpool. I found the book in our St James library

which is situated in the Link corridor. I am grateful to Michael Hayes and Christine Marsh for refreshing it in order to make the library more widely accessible and would encourage everyone in church to pay a visit to it!

In his introduction, Bishop Baines reminds us that Lent is a time for serious reflection on God, our Christian learning and the nature of the good news of Jesus Christ. The book is based on Mark who opens his Gospel with the phrase, “The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.” (Mark 1:1) This beginning is important for two reasons. First, Mark declares that Jesus of Nazareth is very good news and he will spend his Gospel to flesh out why it is so. Second, this Jesus is God’s Son and through him God is acting decisively upon the world and the onus is on the world to respond (that includes you and me). What might the response look like? Repent and believe in the good news.

While repentance is a main theme during Lent, repentance and good news do not seem to work very well together. Repentance does not have good press these days and always seems to be for those who

are not like 'us' and who appear to commit the sins that 'we' do not. Repentance, metanoia in Greek, literally means "change of thinking". It is therefore, first and for all, a change of mind which, in turn, leads to a change of life. The call to repent is about daring to see differently, to look at God, the world and ourselves through a different lens. It implies letting go of one way of seeing and thinking in order to embrace the risk of seeing and thinking differently and, therefore, living differently.

As we seek to make St James accessible for people of all ages and all walks of life, what are the attitudes, fears and inner thoughts that we need to repent of? Repentance, a change of thinking, is what is required of God's people first. When heard and acted upon, we will be surprised how the call to repent, to see differently, will come to us as good news and not bad.



Happy Lent,

Fabian

Fabian Wuyts - Vicar of St James

Contents

Page 2 Letter from the Vicar	Page 21 What is Xplorers?
Page 5 Forgiveness	Page 23 St James Players on tour!
Page 6 A letter from the Bishop of Taunton	Page 24 Crossword
Page 8 EcoChurch - going green	Page 26 Children's Pages
Page 12 Traidcraft News and Fairtrade Fortnight	Page 28 What has the PCC been discussing recently...?
Page 14 Focus on Mission	Page 30 Making the best use of the Organ
Page 16 Easter Services	Page 31 Who's Who - the PCC
Page 18 Helping the Homeless	Page 32 Contacts
Page 20 Interview: Nigel Johnson - Headteacher	

Thank you to all the contributors to this edition of the Magazine. If you have something to share for the next edition, do contact the Editor either directly or through the Church Office - details on page 32.

This edition covers two of the major Church festivals - Lent and Easter.

- Lent, a time of fasting (although hot cross buns have been in the shops since just after Christmas!) and reflection/repentance - see both Fabian's letter (page 2) and also Bridget Hall's poem opposite.
- Easter, a time of feasting (Easter eggs likewise...) and the celebration of Jesus' resurrection allowing us to be raised to new life. See our list of Easter Services on page 16 - maybe you could invite your friends to one of them?

There is a section on things 'Eco' with advice from the EcoChurch group and personal experience from Andrew Wright. This is coupled with news of Fairtrade Fortnight from Freda Davis, our Traidcraft representative.

Our Focus on Mission pages also link with some cautionary yet practical advice on how to help those who are homeless. We have the promised interview with Nigel Johnson the now not-so-new Headteacher of St James Church School.

Do read and then, maybe, pass this magazine on to a neighbour who isn't a member of St James' so they can see what we get up to.

Chris Doyle - St James' Parish Magazine Editor

Deadline for copy for June-August edition is 19th May 2020

The cover picture for this edition of the magazine is by Chris Doyle. It shows part of the sculpture park at Le Calvaire de Pont-Château in the Pays de la Loire. Le Calvaire is a 14 hectare site containing stations of the cross with wonderfully detailed life-size sculptures. (<https://www.lecalvairedepontchateau.com>)

Forgiveness

The broken doll, the grazed knee,
Food withheld, cry to be free,
From home and family within,
Damaged lives our days begin.

From birth to death, our fragile frame,
Hurts to shame, so quick to blame.
With anger fuelled and debts recalled,
The engine churns and hatred burns,
A ravaging beast that gives no rest,
Till Christ comes in.....and then we're blessed.

No sore can match the pain he bore,
For us that day upon the cross.
'Father forgive them for they do not know what they do,'
Releases us from curse and loss.
Creates in us a freedom new,
That lifts and sets our vision true,
From guilt and fear, to walk in grace,
In faith, at last, to seek His face.

Bridget Hall



DIOCESE OF **Bath & Wells**

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Letter from
**the Right Reverend Ruth Worsley,
Bishop of Taunton**

Let's talk

'It's good to talk!' so the old BT advert (other telecommunications firms are available) used to say. I agree. Who doesn't feel better after having a good old chat with a friend, or even after having a quick chat with a stranger when stuck in a tedious queue? It may seem then, that this year's Lent Challenge from Bishop Peter and myself is no great challenge at all as we are simply suggesting that we have conversations with our neighbours, family and friends.

The challenge comes in what we might talk about. We are encouraging all of us, including Bishops, to step outside what may be our normal topics of conversation, and perhaps our comfort zones, and grapple with some simple questions about life, death and everything in between. The challenge is both to listen to someone else's viewpoint and to ask ourselves how our own answers connect to what we believe.

In order to help us have those conversations, the Go Team and discipleship team have produced a handy pack of question cards, and by the time Lent begins, we hope that each church will have received at least one of these packs of 40 Everyday Questions.

The questions are suitable for all ages so can be used in a whole host of ways – with friends, family, colleagues, in school, with a Lent group, at a ‘bring and share’ lunch, even in church on a Sunday.

We’ve already been out and about across the diocese asking people some of the questions on the cards. And you can bet that asking school children questions like, ‘Should all bad people be punished?’ or, ‘How would you describe God?’ has yielded some very interesting conversations. We will be sharing some of the conversations we’ve had with a range of people on Facebook and Twitter so if you are on social media then do keep an eye out for them during Lent, and by all means let our communications team know how you are getting on, using the hashtag #40questions.

We really hope the 40 Everyday Questions cards generate some interesting, meaningful and indeed, Godly conversations that will help us hear the point of view of those around us and refresh and deepen our faith in God this Lent.

The Right Revd Ruth Worsley

Bishop of Taunton



*Andy Hall has written a very apt article that chimes well with Bishop Ruth's message for Lent.
You can read it on the next page...*

THE ANSWER'S JESUS

Opposite our holiday accommodation in North East Scotland last year was a chapel with this sign. It set me thinking. To be able to preach is not a gift given to most of us. But did Jesus himself preach? From what I can see from the gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, Jesus didn't preach very much as we understand it. Most of the time he taught and had conversations with people wherever they were, any day of the week, often in the open air. He was frequently moved by compassion to speak with people. Each human being was (and is) precious to Him. Surely a good role model for us all...



About 20 years ago an Australian couple came to our previous church. They felt called to come to Taunton to offer their services in Christian ministry, in music and other ways. Our church became blessed by their presence. One Sunday, Terry, the husband, told me of an encounter he'd had at the launderette in Galmington. There were just two people in there doing their washing, Terry and another man. Their conversation that evening went like this:

Man (talking to himself and giving a deep sigh): "I don't know what the answer is!"

After a few moments of thought Terry replied: "I'll tell you the answer, the answer's Jesus."

I asked Terry whether the conversation had gone any further. He told me, no, those were the only words they exchanged. He felt that he'd said enough, and that what happened to the man thereafter was up to God. To my knowledge the two men's paths never crossed again. Terry and his wife eventually went back to Australia after four years of great work here.

I've never forgotten this story of evangelism in a launderette. It opened my eyes to the opportunities there are all around us to talk about Jesus and our faith. A few things strike me about this conversation:

- When we talk, less can be more. Being brief can have more impact.
- The name of Jesus was mentioned.
- This was a conversation in an ordinary place, not in a church or on a Sunday.

- Terry trusted his faith and seized the moment. A seed may have been planted just by saying, ‘the answer’s Jesus,’ which could have changed that man’s life, and Terry understood that.

In this case, the man did not ask Terry a follow up question when he’d said, “The answer’s Jesus.” But it’s possible to envisage being asked, “All right, then, if Jesus is the answer, what’s the question?” If we have sufficient boldness to talk about our faith, we could be asked to explain it further. In my limited experience, I feel I can only answer deep questions like this and sound authentic if I use my own personal experience. It reminds me about advice I had once about interview technique when going for a job. The advice was, if you can’t think of an answer to a technical question, try to think back to how you dealt with a similar problem in your current job, and tell the interviewer about it. Apart from anything else, it shows you’re human.

If each of us was asked, ‘What’s the question?’ we might come up with some common big issue problems like:

- Do I matter?
- Does God care?
- Why doesn’t God act?
- Is there another way?

...and so on. It’s useful to think about some of the questions which we’ve grappled with ourselves, and why Jesus is the answer. Sometimes, though, we would have to admit that we don’t know the answer to some questions like, ‘Why is there suffering?’ We can only say that Jesus showed that God does care for each one of us and will never forsake us. And we can trust Him for that.

We were recently given a yellowed copy of the St James magazine dated September 3rd 1953. The vicar at the time, Rev. Edwin Hirst, wrote, ‘It is a wonderful thing to be told that God loves the whole world and has redeemed it. That, however, can be scant comfort to the one who longs for the personal assurance of a personal salvation.’

Although 66 years later we live in a very different world, that vicar’s message surely still holds true. Let’s pray that each of us may be given the opportunity to give people around us in everyday situations a glimpse of personal salvation. Like Jesus did.

Andy Hall

In the last magazine, we looked at how our food choices can make a difference to the impact we have on God's creation. In this article we look wider, and members of the 'eco-group' in the church collectively have identified some tips to help us make our overall lifestyle a little greener:

Take your foot off the gas: if your car has an "instantaneous fuel consumption" readout, have it showing all the time. You'll be surprised how often you can go at the same speed for up to twice the m.p.g. Maybe also consider if you could drive a more fuel efficient car.

Walk or cycle: across the whole country, over 50% of car journeys are under two miles. How many of your journeys could you walk or cycle?

Finish it off: did you start on increasing your home insulation but never completed the job? Then finish it this year using 2020 standards.

Do I need to print that? Read documents online when possible and only print when you really need to. Check if your printer can automatically do double-sided output.

Less (fewer) but better: we live in a disposable society, so perhaps think about buying things designed to last. There's also scope for sharing items like power tools which may only see occasional use.

Repair not rubbish: though much modern technology seems designed to be unmendable, many things can be fixed. Repair Café is coming to Taunton in April – see Taunton Transition Town's website or Facebook page for details.

Make it yourself: try to cook as much as possible using basic ingredients. For work or trips, why not take your own sandwiches rather than hitting the nearest chain outlet?

Train not plane: swap flying for trains for shorter trips. Think about the journey as part of the holiday not something nasty to be got over with as quickly as possible (which is how we tend to think of economy class flights).

Ethical banking: does your bank support the fossil fuel industry? Consider swapping to an ethical bank such as Triodos where all investments made by the bank are transparent and ethical. (*Other ethical banks are available - Ed.*)

Buy local or grow your own: local markets or farm shops sell a good range or you could grow veg in your garden or allotment. Doing so can help you both reduce your food/product miles and also keep your cash in the local economy.

Reuse bottles: Several shops around the town now offer the option to refill

bottles for anything from olive oil to washing liquids, nuts and cereals.

Natural fibres: where possible look out for clothes made from natural fibres such as wool, cotton or linen, which all helps to reduce our output of micro plastics. Buying 'preloved' items is also a great way to do so.

Plan menus: this helps you only buy what's needed, and always ensure you factor in when you could eat up those leftovers – never throw edible food away.

Check labels: it always pays to read labels; some ingredients that are very unfriendly to the planet's well-being, such as much of the palm oil in use, can end up added to all sorts of surprising products.

Wild flowers in your garden: maybe ask for some bee bombs as your next birthday present. The Somerset Wildlife Trust website has some great tips on how to help wildlife at home.

Wet wipes: most contain plastic fibres and, however labelled, are hard to break down. Only use those with a 'fine to flush' symbol as these don't use plastic, or try one of the re-usable alternatives made from natural materials.

Carbon footprint: what's yours? We're all responsible for far more CO₂ than we might think. It's a good idea to check up on your footprint and see what simple actions might reduce it. There's a good calculator available on the Climate Stewards website (<https://www.climatestewards.org/offset/>).

Be informed: understand some of the facts and basic science behind the climate emergency. See, for example, some of the links on the Websites & Books section under the Resources tab on the Climate Stewards website.

Taking it further: There's lots more information available: Countryfile Magazine have a useful Green living guide on their website and the BBC website has an interesting piece on being eco-friendly in everyday life.

Richard Carpenter and members of the eco-group

Andrew Wright, Chairman of the John Ray Initiative (www.jri.org.uk), adds:

"By downsizing and buying a modern, well-insulated home close to town, Cynthia and I have cut our annual mortgage from 17000 to 6000, our energy bills are lower and we can walk to the shops and church. We don't have a garden but I have an allotment. We buy some of our food direct from the producer. In Genesis we are told Adam was asked to curate God's garden. As we are forgiven and our relationship with God has been restored, looking after God's garden becomes part of His plan for us."

Buying Traidcraft for reasons of sustainability and Christian Climate in Action.

Reading the last publication of Manna magazine, (the Bath and Wells diocesan quarterly magazine) I read and found much to be hopeful about. Headings like, 'Saving our planet, one step at a time' and, 'Saying Yes to life' means we have more knowledge about how to formulate our personal plan of action. I intend to do more personal scrutiny during Lent and spend more time deciding about what I want and what I need!

Lent is a great time to focus more on ways to care for creation. So, I thought you would be interested in how buying Traidcraft goods will help.

Tea and coffee are consumed in the UK (and other countries!) on a daily basis. Neither tea nor coffee grow to match the demand in our UK climate so we must rely on those countries with the perfect weather conditions to quench our thirst. This year's Fairtrade Fortnight concentrates on our addiction with tea and coffee. It also highlights how women play a pivotal role in their communities. Traidcraft is committed to **GUARANTEEING** that **EVERY** farmer gets to keep the market price for the tea and coffee that their soil produces. They also guarantee to help and support the farmers by supporting the best ways to keep their soil in a healthy condition. They are making sure that children are not employed to produce these crops and the community has a better standard of living to build more schools and fund teachers.

Traidcraft is also pursuing the invention of plastic-free tea bags, although loose tea has been available for some time. Tea bags contain a small amount of plastic but research and development is nearly there to provide a plant-based bag. Traidcraft now sells 'Transparent Arabic Coffee' which actually has the price on each packet that the farmers are paid, how much goes on shipping, roasting, packing – and the actual profit Traidcraft makes! All other coffee that is sold without the Fairtrade logo means somebody and organisations are living off these poorly paid farmers (and children!).



The latest catalogue from Traidcraft has a huge range of food and drink; gifts, Easter Eggs, cards, fashion, beauty, household items and home wear for us all to buy, ethically and sustainably from now on. This is a practical and important way to care for creation and poorer countries.

Jesus said that “the poor will always be with us”. This doesn’t mean we should turn our back on them! We are ALL equally valued and can share looking after God’s creation on this earth.

The Fairtrade Logo on any products means the guarantee is in place! Unfortunately, Bath and Wells Diocese, as yet, has failed to secure ‘Fairtrade’ status because not enough churches have agreed to use Fairtrade products on a weekly basis.

If you want to find out more by reading other websites, here are a few:

- Fairtrade Foundation - <https://www.fairtrade.org.uk> - for Fairtrade tea, coffee, clothes.
- Traidcraft website - <https://www.traidcraft.co.uk> - will give you more information and news.
- Myakka - <https://myakka.co.uk> - for furniture and furnishings, which is based in Wincanton.
- Many supermarkets supply a selection of goods with the Fairtrade Logo on. Prepare to be surprised!

I’m happy to learn and talk to anyone about any new innovations and the latest discoveries!

Freda Davis.

Freda Davis and Michael Hayes and their helpers run the Traidcraft stall.

They are happy to sell ‘from the cupboard’ or take orders for specialist items from the catalogue. Or you can visit the stall which is open usually on the third Sunday of the month - but...

during Fairtrade Fortnight it will be open in church each Sunday from Sunday 23rd February to Sunday 15th March.





...MISSION

Tearfund



In December we saw the Big Christmas card kindly provide by Sue Doyle, our Tearfund representative. This enabled some extra cash to be sent to Tearfund as well as enabling us to be more eco-friendly and reduce the number of cards sent to local friends.

Tearfund believes that everyone has an amazing God-given potential to create change. As an organisation they show people around the world how to unlock these gifts and put them to use in escaping poverty. Many of their partners in this work are local churches who discover how to offer their communities both material and spiritual hope. Tearfund is one of the major disaster relief organisations, but also works to effect ongoing developmental projects in partnership with churches and project teams in the local areas. Tear Times is a really good way to find out more about their work in over 50 countries, and by subscribing to their email briefings you can focus your prayers on current concerns.

Find out more online at <https://www.tearfund.org> or talk to Sue Doyle.

TYFC



In January we welcomed Bruno Branco in our morning service, together with Kate Solanki and Sam Burton, Trustees of TYFC. Bruno has recently been employed to work alongside Anthony Stevens, the TYFC Project Manager. Bruno spoke passionately about the work that TYFC is doing locally in the secondary schools, where they support Christian Unions at both Castle and Bishop Fox's and provide mentoring and input into RE lessons at Castle School. TYFC also have a youth project in the local area seeking to reach out to young people in marginalised areas. They are also available to support the youth work in local churches, to resource and encourage and to challenge the churches to pray for the younger generation of believers. As a church we support the activities of TYFC. Please pray for their work among young people.

See their website for more details – <https://taunton.yfc.co.uk/>

Taunton Team Chaplaincy

In February Andy Hall shared news about the Taunton Team Chaplaincy. The aim of TTC is to advance the Christian faith in the town by providing care, witness and prayer in a wide



range of community and workplace locations. Chaplains are drawn from local churches and linked with a workplace or area to visit, usually weekly, with the purpose of offering friendly and supportive care to all. A chaplain's main aim is to listen and take an interest in the people they meet and give comfort and compassion where needed. Over a period, the chaplain will get to know and be known and will be accepted as a caring friend.

Two years ago, the Chaplaincy extended its support to the staff and passengers at the railway station, at the request of the Transport Police, with the formation of Rail Responders. Railway stations are often places where people can be anxious and distressed, in some cases to an extreme level. The Rail Responders have quickly found an important role at our local stations.

Several members of our church congregation are involved directly with the Chaplaincy. Please see Andy Hall if you want to find out more, or look on the TTC website: <https://www.tauntontc.co.uk/>

Street Pastors

...will be the focus in one of our services during March.

Street Pastors are part of a national team, pioneered in 2003, that continues to grow throughout the UK and across

the world. Street Pastors are trained volunteers from local churches who care about our community. They usually patrol from 10pm to 4am on a Friday or Saturday night to care for, listen to and help people who are out on the streets.



The Street Pastors are led by a local coordinator and also have support from local churches and community groups in partnership with the Police, local council and other statutory agencies. There are teams of people who are involved in the community during the day time too, working with residents, taking part in local litter picks and generally offering a genuinely caring and listening presence.

Members of our church are, or have been, involved with Street Pastors. If you want to know more talk to Chris Buckman or Vivienne Turner, or visit the website at <https://streetpastors.org/locations/taunton/>



Easter at St James

During Easter our normal pattern of worship will change a little. These are the details of the main Easter Services.

Mothering Sunday

Sunday 22nd March 10:30am

A time to be grateful

Messy Café Church

Palm Sunday 5th April 10:30am

Life in all its fullness

Maundy Thursday

Thursday 9th April 7:00pm

Last Supper meal and short service



Come and Join us this Easter time at St James

Good Friday

Friday 10th April 10:30am

Christians coming together - Hot Cross
Buns and Coffee after the service

The Last Hour

Friday 10th April 2:00pm

A quiet service as we wait with Christ

Easter Sunday

Sunday 12th April 10:30am

All Age Celebration - He's Alive!

Bank Holiday Ramble

Monday 13th April 10:15am

Meet in the Church Car Park

HELPING THE HOMELESS

Some guidance notes from the agencies working with street homeless people in Taunton



It is regrettably an everyday occurrence that we see and walk past people on our streets in Taunton who are without a home or income. “It shouldn’t be happening in this day and age”, you may say. It makes us feel guilty that we will return to a warm house and be able to cook a meal. Is there help available?

A number of agencies work directly with the homeless and roofless. They know the extent of the problems and have developed expertise in being there to help. Their chief hope is to assist people overcome the causes of their homelessness and help them back into normal life.

WEST SOMERSET AND TAUNTON COUNCIL (*Somerset County Council in respect of under 18s*)

The local authorities have a statutory responsibility for assisting people who are homeless, and some priority groups (e.g. children, vulnerable adults, families with children) can be helped with accommodation. SWEP (Severe Weather Emergency Protocol) exists and involves other agencies making help available in severe weather conditions.



ARC (*Formerly Taunton Association for the Homeless*)

Arc is a local homeless charitable organisation supporting over 350 people per year. Their mission is to end rough sleeping in the South West through housing, assisting, supporting and empowering homeless people in Somerset. Their Outreach Team covers Somerset West and Taunton and Sedgemoor Councils. They have a range of accommodation options and support services. If you are concerned about someone, you can contact the **outreach workers at Lindley House: 01823 254557**



OPEN DOOR

Open Door exists to support rough sleepers and those who are in temporary accommodation. It is open from 9.30am to 1pm, providing hot food, showers, washing facilities and a clothing store. It also seeks to provide help in getting people back into housing and work through their ‘Do More’ scheme and works collaboratively with Arc and other services.



THE SALVATION ARMY

...is a Christian Church and Charity serving the local communities in Taunton. The Salvation Army Church in South Street provides significant additional support during the winter months. This includes being open for a meal and a shower on Wednesdays and Saturdays and night shelter provision at weekends until the end of March.

TAUNTON TOWN CHAPLAINCY

Some of the Chaplains work directly with those who are on the streets and are aware of them individually. They, too, work in cooperation with the other agencies.

WHAT CAN WE DO?

If you meet someone on the street who is homeless it is very likely he or she will already be known to the above agencies and their services. If they don't then you will be doing them a favour if you can give them the contact details.

There is a leaflet at the back of church which gives more details of these services mentioned above.

General advice to members of the public from the agencies working with homeless people:

- *Don't give money directly, but...*
- *Offer to buy them food or drink*
- *Be kind and offer a conversation if you feel safe to do so*
- *Point them in the direction of people or organisations that can offer long term help*
- *If you don't feel comfortable approaching, or you are concerned about, a rough sleeper you can contact the **Outreach Team at Lindley House 01823 254557** or **Jason from the Outreach Team on: 07736042918***
- *Consider donating money to a local homeless charity. Find out more about what they are doing - and you might even want to consider what volunteer opportunities exist.*



Now the work of Christmas begins

When the song of the angels is stilled, when the star in the sky is gone,
When the kings and princes are home, when the shepherds are back
with their flocks, the work of Christmas begins:

To find the lost, to heal the broken,

To feed the hungry, to release the prisoner,

To rebuild the nations, to bring peace among the people,

To make music in the heart.

Howard Thurman

St James Church School

An interview with
Headteacher, Nigel Johnson



BATH & WELLS
Multi Academy Trust

'That they may have life, life in all its fullness' John 10:10



In the previous magazine, Nigel Johnson shared some initial thoughts as the newly-appointed head at St James Church School. His enthusiasm for his new school shines out, as does his admiration for his staff. But paramount is the fact that the most important people in the school are the children. Jenny Wakefield sat down and chatted with Nigel to find out a little more about his background and his move to Taunton.

Nigel made space in his busy day between meetings (and sorting out a defective gate lock!) to share information about how he came to be at St James. Nigel grew up in Stoke on Trent, he is married and has three sons who keep him on his toes at home and are occasional visitors to school if holidays don't quite coincide. Nigel remembers his own school days with enthusiasm and feels that he was very fortunate to have had supportive parents, good friends, and teachers who enabled education to open doors and opportunities. He is only too aware that this is not always the case and the missed opportunities in primary years can have far reaching consequences for adult life. This has served to motivate him to advocate positively for school to be an enriching, enjoyable and safe environment for every child, no matter what their circumstances.

Nigel wasn't always a teacher. He started his working life as a travel agent but was not entirely fulfilled in this role. It was after he met his wife, who was involved in a local school, that he sought to explore teaching as a career. Following a period volunteering in school, he trained as a secondary teacher with geography being his subject. He taught for 5 years in Cheshire before moving to a middle school in Somerset as Deputy Head. This introduced him to a younger range of children, which he found he enjoyed. So much so that when the opportunity came along to take on the headship of St Peter's Church of England First School at Williton, he applied. Nigel faced a number of challenges and developments during those years. However, he enjoyed this period which broadened his teaching experience to encompass children at the early stages of their school career.

So why the move to Taunton? Nigel came to visit the school when it was known there would be a vacancy and was attracted immediately by the atmosphere there. There is a resonance with the area where he had been teaching, with high levels of challenge and economic circumstances - but he felt that this was somewhere he could make a difference. He feels a strong sense of support from the members of staff, who are ready and willing to take on new initiatives and ideas. He has passion to ensure that learning is an enriching and enjoyable experience for all. He is a keen outdoors person and, as well as academic success, he values the importance of a well-rounded curriculum with opportunities for learning in the community. In the past he has been involved in Duke of Edinburgh Award projects and was delighted that St James has both a Forest School area and opportunities for adventures for Year 6's at Kilve, which he experienced in the autumn and wants to foster the extension of such opportunities.

Nigel has had experience in previous church schools and has had a positive working partnership with the local church. He welcomes the already strong links between St James Church and the school, including the new TLG initiatives and Xplore Club (*see below*). He feels that the school motto, 'Loving God, loving others and loving ourselves', is a clear indication of what needs to underpin the school ethos. This goes together with the central core of keeping children at the centre of all the school is and does.

We at St James Church look forward to sharing the continuing adventure with him, his staff and the school.

JW

What is Xplorers...?

Well, you can forget Columbus, Vasco da Gama, John Cabot and other greats from your history lessons. Replace these great names with four people who would not consider themselves 'great' even by the biggest stretch of the imagination. Dreaming of exotic climates in faraway places? These 'explorers' work in an ordinary classroom or school hall with sixteen or so youngsters from St James school. And they have as exciting a time each week as your historical explorers did in a life-time.

Xplore is an oversubscribed club which meets each Wednesday for an hour after school. The youngsters traipse into the room after school is ended for the day to be greeted by their leaders. Names are taken and the fun begins, usually with a games session. The games can range from a sedate human

noughts and crosses to the manic throwing a six on a dice, dressing up in hat, gloves and scarf before attacking a wrapped bar of chocolate with a knife and fork. Another successful throw of the dice means the end of further opportunities of gorging yourself with chocolate.

The atmosphere quickly changes as Storytime begins. Each week we tell the children a different story from the Bible. For many of them it will be a new experience and one which may be rarely repeated outside of Xplore Club. It certainly helps to dispel any feeling that the Bible is dull and totally irrelevant to the lives of youngsters of their age.

Craft time follows. A member of the team (often with the acknowledged help of the internet!) has prepared a simple piece of craft which is related to the story they have just heard. Often there are moving parts so that houses on the sand collapse or Joseph disappears into a pit.

The hour is almost gone but there is enough time for a healthy snack (or what at times seems a meal) before the children don their coats, say their 'goodbyes' and are taken to their parents awaiting them in the playground. Over a term parental faces grow familiar and often conversations are entered into, the first steps of a relationship and communication between St James and parents.

Now wouldn't you like to become part of that experience? No professional qualifications are required. You simply need a heart for children, availability two or three Wednesdays each month, a willingness (with help) to lead any of the sessions which attract you and to which you feel you could contribute, and a God-given desire to help in this area of the outreach of the church.

Wish to know more? Why not have a talk with any of the existing team - Jenny Wakefield, Debbie Rowden, Annie Reid or David Jordan, who leads the team. Conversation does not mean commitment but be warned - it may prove to be contagious! How do you think I became involved?

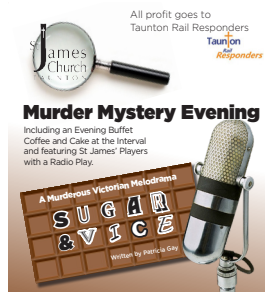
Geoff Treasure



St James Players...

...go on tour!

Yes, St James Players performed not once but twice in February - at St James on Friday 21st and the Saturday night at St George's Wilton - the first time the Players have taken a production 'on the road'.



In the modern setting of the 'St James Street Radio Studios', the cast performed the Victorian murder mystery radio play, 'Sugar and Vice'. The sweet manufacturer, Mr Rolo Davenport, and his family suffered the loss of their cook when she was the victim of a dastardly murder. But who was the culprit? Was it Rolo himself (Richard Carpenter), or his daughter, delicate flower Delphinia (Bethan Baigent)? Or was it her beau, Willie Mackintosh (Chris Rickard) or Delphinia's arranged intended, Lord St John Snearing (Andrew Wright)? Maybe it was the crusty old family matriarch, Great Aunt Edna (Jenny Wakefield) or her companion Miss Treadwell (Susie Peeler). Or could it have been Frobisher, the butler (Sam Baigent)...?

Detective Inspector Arthur Pratt (Chris Doyle) and Weekly Whisper reporter, Millie Fry (Alison Buckman) investigated while Ruth Crooks provided entertaining sound effects. All was run to time by Studio Floor Manager, Hannah Buckman, backed up by the superb technical team of Norman Bambridge and Martin Wakefield. Ruth Crooks and Rosa Parsloe and their catering teams, provided lovely refreshments.



The Friday night performance raised around £500 (best figure at time of going to press - Ed.) to donate to Taunton Rail Responders and at St George's the proceeds went to the Church during their time of vacancy.

Next...the 2021 pantomime. Be sure to get your tickets - they'll be on sale in December. And by the way, it wasn't the butler...Great Aunt Edna did it!!!

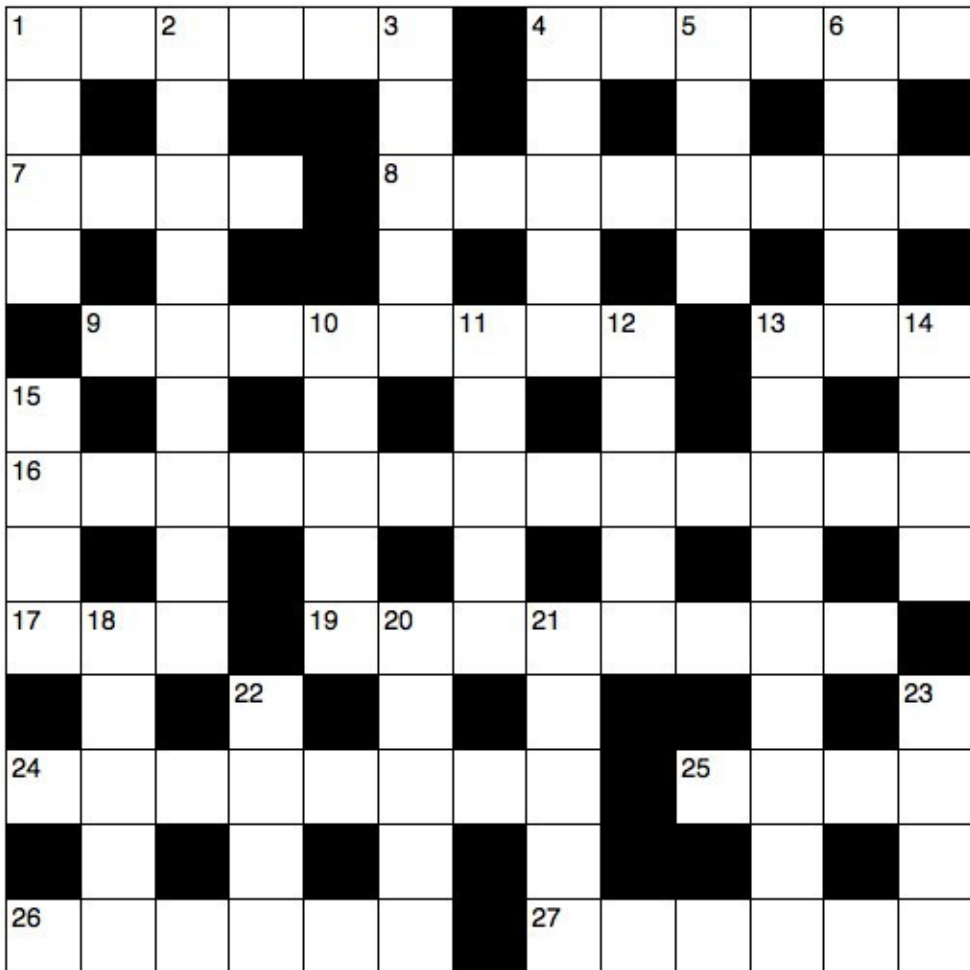
Crossword

Across

- 1 The earth is one (6)
- 4 'On a hill far away stood an old — cross' (6)
- 7 'I am the — vine and my Father is the gardener' (John 15:1) (4)
- 8 The Caesar who was Roman Emperor at the time of Jesus' birth(Luke 2:1) (8)
- 9 'Your — should be the same as that of Christ Jesus'(Philippians 2:5) (8)
- 13 Jesus said that no one would put a lighted lamp under this(Luke 8:16) (3)
- 16 Involvement (1 Corinthians 10:16) (13)
- 17 Armed conflict (2 Chronicles 15:19) (3)
- 19 Where the Gaderene pigs were feeding (Mark 5:11) (8)
- 24 What jeering youths called Elisha on the road to Bethel (2 Kings 2:23) (8)
- 25 The Venerable — , eighth-century Jarrow ecclesiastical scholar (4)
- 26 8 Across issued a decree that this should take place (Luke 2:1) (6)
- 27 Come into prominence (Deuteronomy 13:13) (6)

Down

- 1 Where some of the seed scattered by the sower fell (Matthew 13:4) (4)
- 2 Sexually immoral person whom God will judge (Hebrews 13:4) (9)
- 3 Gospel leaflet (5)
- 4 Physical state of the boy brought to Jesus for healing (Mark 9:18)
- 5 Tugs (anag.) (4)
- 6 To put forth (5)
- 10 Nationality associated with St Patrick (5)
- 11 Leader of the descendants of Kohath (1 Chronicles 15:5) (5)
- 12 'After this, his brother came out, with his hand grasping — heel' (Genesis 25:26) (5)
- 13 At Dothan the Lord struck the Arameans with — at Elisha'srequest (2 Kings 6:18) (9)
- 14 'Peter, before the cock crows today, you will — three times that you know me' (Luke22:34) (4)
- 15 Spit out (Psalm 59:7) (4)
- 18 'When I — , I am still with you' (Psalm 139:18) (5)
- 20 Concepts (Acts 17:20) (5)
- 21 Thyatira's dealer in purple cloth (Acts 16:14) (5)
- 22 Does (anag.) (4)
- 23 The second set of seven cows in Pharaoh's dream were this (Genesis 41:19) (4)



ACROSS: 1, Planet. 4, Rugged. 7, True. 8, Augustus. 9, Attitude. 13, Bed. 16, Participation. 17, War. 19, Hillside. 24, Baldhead. 25, Bede. 26, Census. 27, Arisen.

DOWN: 1, Path. 2, Adulterer. 3, Tract. 4, Rigid. 5, Gust. 6, Exude. 10, Irish. 11, Uriel. 12, Esau's. 13, Blindness. 14, Deny. 15, Spew. 18, Awake. 20, Ideas. 21, Lydia. 22, Odes. 23, Lean.

Children's Page

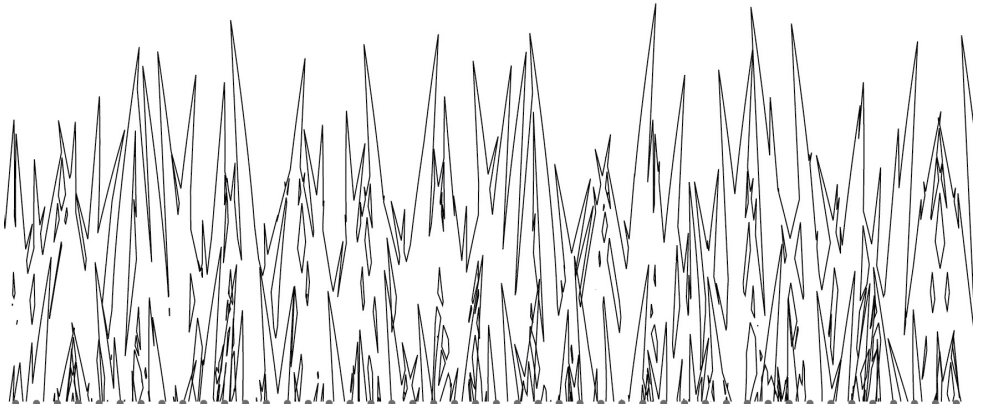
Colour in this verse from 2 Corinthians 12:9 - it tells us that God provides all the help we need if we let him, however weak we feel.

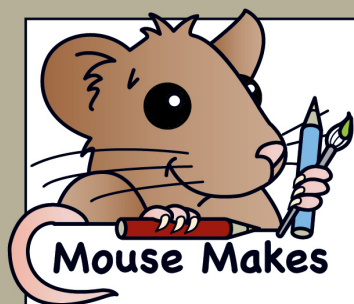
GOD SAYS

MY

GRACE

IS SUFFICIENT





Mouse Makes

Jesus, his disciples and his mother Mary had been invited to a wedding. The wedding was to last a week, but too soon the wine had all been drunk.

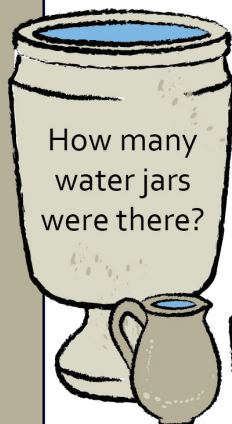
READ John 2:1-11 to find out what happened.



Where was the wedding?



What were the water jars for?

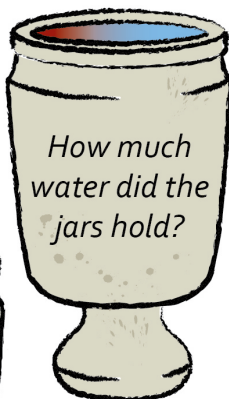


How many water jars were there?

What did the steward tell the bridegroom?

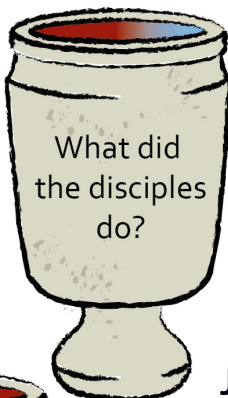


What were the water jars made of?

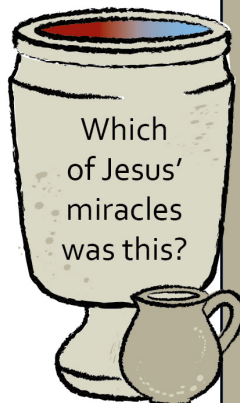


How much water did the jars hold?

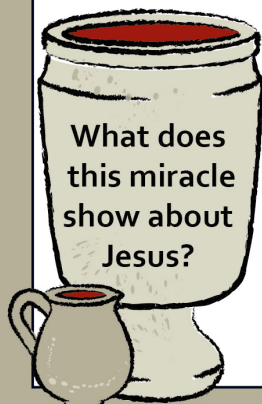
What had happened to the water when it was taken out?



What did the disciples do?



Which of Jesus' miracles was this?



What does this miracle show about Jesus?

J G A L I L E E W A W
J A D I S C I P L E S A
W S E R V A N T S O O D T T
I T S S C A N A X U M D O E
M O U I F I R S T T A I N R
E P S X I T A T T U R N E D
F I L L W I N E X T Y G E T

WEDDING • CANA • GALILEE • JESUS • MARY • DISCIPLES
SERVANTS • RAN • OUT • SIX • STONE • WATER • JARS
FILL • TOP • TASTE • TURNED • WINE • FIRST

What has the PCC been discussing recently...?

Here's a summary of the main things the Parochial Church Council looked at in December, January and February

Vision

The vision group is identifying priorities (but refraining from coming up with a series of activities), in preparation for the PCC Away Day in April.

Personnel

Beccy Fox has taken up the role of IT Administrator. She will concentrate initially on moving our databases to the fully supported ChurchSuite package, and then move on to completing the transfer of the church website to a modern platform.

Planning for the recruitment of a Children and Families Worker is well advanced, with a salary agreed, and a job description drawn up, looking towards interviewing applicants at the end of May. We will need around £74,000 over three years, and an appeal will be launched in due course. The Children and Families Worker will take over the coordination role currently undertaken by Hilary and Vashti, and is seen as a first step into a mixed leadership team of both paid staff and volunteer coordinators. The main role will, however, be the church's "friend to families", with contacts made through both church events and school-based activities.

The PCC approved the new Supporting Volunteers Policy, which covers the responsibility of team leaders, recruiting and safeguarding, job descriptions, ongoing reviews with each volunteer, training, etc. Recruitment packs have now been provided to all team leaders.

Team leaders are also working through safeguarding "loose ends" and would appreciate everyone's cooperation.

Transforming Lives for Good (TLG)

Geoff Treasure updated the PCC on the TLG mentoring scheme for disruptive pupils at St James Church School. The service was launched in November last year with four church members acting as mentors – for one hour per week, for one pupil each, for one year. Results were noticed by the school even after just one month, and the staff give unqualified thanks to the team. More mentors are being trained.

We are now planning to run a TLG Make Lunch scheme for one day a week in the school holidays – watch this space!

Finances

Richard Sainsbury presented interim end of year accounts. The figures are very similar to last year, and there is likely to be a £3000-£4000 deficit.

While we are in a reasonably good position overall, the increase in parish share for 2020 and stagnant stewardship giving could make for more challenging times ahead. The provisional figure for income from regular planned giving was £89,531.50 (£88,868.00 in 2018).

The first pass through the October Count figures indicates that membership has stayed around the same, possibly with a small decrease.

During the year 152 people contributed to the Planned Giving Scheme, 12 people stopped giving, and 5 new contributors joined.

Miscellaneous Matters

The PCC conducted an in-depth review of how we might make best use of the organ; this is reported on in a separate article (see over the page).

A Mission Review Group is now keeping an eye on how we focus support for our numerous mission partners. It will meet three times a year and report to the PCC each December with proposals for support and funding in the following year.

Quotations are being received for the repair of the two windows in the North Aisle, which were broken just before Christmas.

Our bells have had a set of new clappers fitted. If you'd like to try your hand at ringing, please ask Marian Gentile.

Various matters are being discussed at Deanery Synod, including the Deanery Mission Action Plan and encouraging parishes to have their own Mission Action Plans (ours will follow on from the vision work). The diocese is reviewing how clergy and lay posts should be deployed across the diocese. The initial response of Taunton Deanery is that it is time for a radical approach, and to stop 'moving the deckchairs'.

The PCC has an annual programme for reviewing governance matters. In this period we have looked at: opening times and security arrangements, the Safe Working Reminders (if you haven't seen a copy please ask!), the annual Facilities report, and First Aid training.

The latest full PCC minutes are displayed near the coffee area.

Making the best use of the organ

Those who came to the recitals last year will know that our organ now sounds better than it has ever done when played by experienced organists and organ scholars. It has also been appreciated when some of our own members have played it on various occasions.



There is also an important heritage side to the organ, as it contains a virtually intact William Hill & Son swell organ, from the original build in 1861. However, much of the instrument, being old, has a mechanical action which makes it difficult to play with much modern music; and the console is poorly sited for use in a band, having been designed originally to accompany a choir. Attempts were made last year to integrate the organ into the mix of instruments, but they did not work easily.

For these and other technical reasons, we have not had an organ-led musical tradition for some 30 years, with the organ gradually being used less and less. For many years the main accompaniment at morning services was actually an upright piano, until this was replaced by the purchase of the Clavinova in 2007. The Clavinova has a wide range of sounds, and there are no songs or hymns that we cannot use with the present arrangement of singers and instruments.

We thus have an historic organ which sounds great but doesn't fit in with our present arrangements. The PCC discussed the matter at length at its meeting in February and concluded that we should now look at ways we can creatively use the organ to reach out to different sectors of the community. Among the ideas that were floated were:

- Recitals, such as those we trialled last year.
- Occasional Sunday afternoon services with a more traditional feel. These may also appeal to those who don't want to be out after dark.
- Weekday services and events could be considered for groups that might appreciate it. The Alzheimer's' services are an example.
- The availability of the organ to local organ scholars should also be advertised.

Do you have any other ideas? Could you take the lead or help in making some of these ideas come to fruition? If we do arrange events or services using the organ, would you feel able to invite your friends? Let the PCC have your ideas for making the best use of this wonderful item of musical heritage!

MW

Current PCC Members

A reminder of the current members of the Parochial Church Council
If you'd like to raise any issues with the PCC or find out more about what
the Council does, do talk to any of these people



Rev Fabian Wuyts



*Church Wardens
Steve Bradford and Ruth Stevens*



*Associate Warden
Joyce Kirk*



Richard Carpenter



Ruth Dunn



Roger Fenton



Jamie Fox



Jamie Haddell



Lizzie Haddell



Sue Lucas



Sheila Marlow



Ruth Praeter-Gillard



Richard Sainsbury



Liz Sykes



Nic Tall



Jenny Wakefield



Martin Wakefield

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Ruth Stevens 01823 972838

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Hilary Hayes 01823 444766 e-mail: mhhayes@outlook.com

Discipleship & Home Groups Co-ordinator:

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