

St James
Church
TAUNTON

St James Church Magazine
September - November 2021

Letter from the Vicar

Reverend Fabian Wuyts

Vicar of St James



The Psalmist proclaims, “The Earth is the Lord’s and all that is in it.”

This statement declares on the one hand that every creature belongs to the earth community and on the other hand that the entire community belongs to the Creator. Each year the church dedicates a time to think about our Creator, his creation and our place in it. This season of Creation is called ‘Creationtide’ and will run throughout the month of September. The theme for the Season of Creation 2021 is: A Home for All, Renewing the *Oikos* of God.



Oikos is a Greek word meaning ‘home’ or ‘family’. In the first chapter of Genesis we read about God setting a dome over the Earth. Today’s words such as ‘domicile’ and ‘domestic’ derive from the word ‘dome.’ Setting a dome over the earth creates a house and a home (*oikos*) for all living creatures.

Rooting the theme of Creationtide in the concept of *oikos* helps to understand the integral web of relationships that sustain the wellbeing of the Earth. A helpful document that can be downloaded from the web (see ‘Suggested Resources’) shows how the words ‘ecology’ and ‘economic’ are both linked to the concept of God’s *oikos*:

1. “The word ecology (*oikologia*) describes the relationships between animals, plants, non-sentient organisms and minerals that each play a vital role in maintaining the balance of this beloved community. Each creature is important and contributes to the health and resilience of the biodiverse ecosystem in which it lives.” (page 7 of the web document)



2. “Economic (*oikonomia*), social and political relationships [also] affect the balance of creation. Everything that we fabricate, use and produce has its origin in the Earth, whether mineral, plant or animal based. Our habits of consuming energy and goods affect the resilience of planetary systems, and the capacity of the Earth to heal itself and sustain life. Economic and political relationships have direct effects on the human family and the more-than human members of God’s *oikos*.” (page 7)

Genesis 2.15 reminds us that among our co-creatures, the Creator has given humans a special vocation to tend and keep the *oikos* of God.



Sadly, God’s *oikos* is suffering like never before because of greed, exploitation, disrespect, disconnection and systematic degradation. This month at St James, we will concentrate our thoughts and prayers on Creation, discover from members of our church what St James does and how we can all participate in the healing and renewal of God’s *oikos*.

You may be interested to explore some of the resources suggested below with your home group, in your family or with friends.

Wishing you all a blessed Season of Creation.

Revd Fabian

Suggested resources:

A series of four webinars during September to help you think about the environment in relation to worship, theology and mission: <https://www.churchofengland.org/about/environment-and-climate-change/season-creation#season-of-creation-webinars>

The document ‘A Home for All: Renewing the Oikos of God’: <https://seasonofcreation.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/2021-SOC-Full-Guide.pdf>

The ecumenical website on this year theme: <https://seasonofcreation.org>

Also take a look at Richard and Sue Carpenter’s articles on pages 8 and 10

True love is multicoloured
Deeper than the sea.
When we look at others
This is what they’ll see.
Love comes from your heart
It’s deeper than the skin.
Just ‘LOVE ONE ANOTHER’
Let it flow from within.

John L Wilson

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*Thank you to all the contributors to this edition of the Magazine. If you have something to share for the December 2021 - February 2022 edition, do contact the Editor either directly or through the Church Office - details on page 32 - **deadline for copy is Tuesday 16th November 2021.***

Several articles in this edition of the Magazine focus on the Church's Creationtide during September. Fabian's letter explains the concept of *oikos* while Richard Carpenter looks at climate change in his EcoChurch article. Sue explains progress on 'the wilding' of the churchyard and Bridget reminds us of the beauty of nature in her poem inspired on the Parish Walk back in May.

The Church of England is developing its vision for this decade. Richard Carpenter explains the concept of 'Simpler, Humbler, Bolder'. Some have found the proposed implementation of this controversial - maybe this article will start discussion and debate within St James...

It's also the season when we think of harvest and Remembrance. We have a couple of articles about the history of these two events and we thank Alan Partridge for the many years of service he has given in the ringing chamber as he retires and hangs up his bell-rope! We also welcome our new Parish Administration Co-Ordinator - see opposite.

Fiona Hope shows how objects of the ordinary and everyday can help with our prayer life while Jenny Wakefield's book review teaches us 'it's OK to be not OK' and how we can rely on God to show us a way forward.

Finally I've launched the challenge I've set myself of compiling a recipe book. I don't know exactly when it will be ready or how successful it will be but I've started the ball rolling and challenge you to help me out. Thank you in advance!

Chris Doyle - St James Parish Magazine Editor

Once you've read the magazine, do feel free to give it to someone who otherwise might not get to see it. The magazine is also published online.

Please let friends and neighbours know how they can access this and previous editions through the St James website: www.stjamestaunton.org

A new face in the Church Office...!

*With many thanks to Beccy Fox for temporarily 'filling in' as Church Administrator, we now welcome **Rachel Knowlman** who has recently taken over that role.*

Rachel is loving the position and has prayed about the church being a beacon of light in Taunton. Her experience was previously in administration for the Army and teaching. During Covid, she lost her job as a violinist around nursing homes. She is teaching music alongside her job at St James' and God has blessed her financially with increasing bookings as well.



Bookings in the church and hall have now exponentially increased, freedom day having been announced. She has been working hard to make our new Covid policies and make sure Sunday Services 'in person' run smoothly. She and her boyfriend currently attend Life Central Church Wellington and Riverside Church Taunton but are looking for a church to attend together if they decide to get together in the future. She will be visiting one of the services at St James' very soon and will make a more formal introduction then.

*If you need to contact Rachel, you can find her in the office during normal opening hours: Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday 10am-12pm
Telephone on 01823 272931 or email info@stjamestaunton.co.uk*



As noted in the Bulletin in August, Rachel also makes classical music Christian videos tailored towards people exploring faith, or to relax with a morning cuppa.

There is a sign post at the bottom of each video to connect with St James' Church. Search 'Rachel Knowlman' on Youtube:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCtesiy70pvgPVC01zwuVeaA>

(I've watched some of Rachel's videos and can thoroughly recommend her beautiful singing voice and accomplished studio production - Ed)



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Living the story. Telling the story.

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

Looking to the next chapter

Back to school! perhaps has never sounded so good. For those of us who found last year disrupted in terms of school, college or University, some of our young people and their parents might be really looking forward to the doors re-opening! And perhaps their teachers too!

Of course things will not be the same as they were. A new school year always means change. New classes, new goals, new possibilities. An opportunity to start with a clean sheet, open the next chapter of the book of our lives.

Here in Bath and Wells we are also looking to the next chapter in our story of faith together. This month we will be bringing together all we have learnt from listening to others about where we are as a diocese and what sort of bishop we now need to lead us into the future. If you haven't already done so, please have your say by attending the open consultation Zoom meeting on September 20th. We have already heard the thoughts of almost 1000 of our children across schools in the county, as well as hundreds of adults!

It will be some time before we know who our next Diocesan Bishop will be but now is the time to start praying for him or her so that they might hear from God as we also seek God's wisdom and guidance. And let's pray too for ourselves and all those within our diocese, that each of us will find God's will for the next stage of our journey.

None of us can know what that might hold for certain. The last year or two have shown us how difficult it is to predict anything! Some of us have lost loved ones and livelihoods. It will take time to recover and to renew our hope. There will be challenges along the way and we have much to face together. However, our hope is in the Lord and we hold to the promises of His word...

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

Proverbs 29:11

Every blessing
Bishop Ruth

The search for a new bishop

As you've read in Bishop Ruth's letter, following the retirement of Bishop Peter in May, the diocese is now looking to the future and taking the necessary steps to appoint the next Bishop of Bath and Wells. September's edition of Manna contains a full article about this and about Vacancy in See Committee. This committee aims to consult, discern and prepare a diocesan Statement of Needs and to portray what is distinctive about the Diocese of Bath and Wells.

Youth worker Emily Hatton reflects on her role in the Vacancy in See Committee

What is the Vacancy in See committee for?

It's a group of people who represent the diocese in different ages and stages. Its for finding out what the diocese needs in terms of the next bishop.



Why is it important young people are represented?

I think it's really important that young people are represented because we are an equal part of the church. The church is a family, and in families you have all generations. The committee should ensure that all generations are represented and spoken for and all voices are listened to.

Who is on the committee?

So, we've got Archdeacon Simon, he's the Archdeacon of Taunton, who's been chairing a lot of it, Bishop Ruth is also on the committee. We've got people from the diocese's support services team like Sue Rose, and Matt Orr from Movement, the youth worship team based in Bath. There are also lots of clergy and lay people.

What has your experience of the committee been?

Most of it has been on Zoom, which is interesting when you've got such a big group of people and they've all got things to say. I'm really glad I'm on it, it's quite an honour to be on the committee.

Why does it take so long to get a new bishop?

It's a whole huge process, and the bishop has a lot of responsibility and is an important person in the diocese. You need to make sure you get the right person and that the person who ends up being the bishop is God's best for the diocese.

Just a brief reminder about a couple of things for the autumn; do make sure you read Sue's piece, 'Wilder Churches!' (over the page) about our own churchyard.

Creationtide

Creationtide or the Season of Creation is the period in the annual church calendar, from 1st September to 4th October, dedicated to God as creator and sustainer of all life. With UK hosting COP26, there have been widespread calls for churches across the country to hold a climate-focused service this year.

This last year has been a wakeup call for us to restore our relationships with God, creation and each other. You can find many ideas here - <https://seasonofcreation.org/>

COP is coming

In November, the UK government will host the UN global climate change talks (COP26) – full details can be found at <https://ukcop26.org>

As recent reports make clear, nothing short of transforming society will avert catastrophe.

Our government is on record as saying that the current climate emergency “requires countries to take urgent action at home and abroad to turn the tide on climate change”. However, we do need to continue to pray and lobby to ensure that meaningful actions are agreed and are not simply an exercise in ‘greenwashing’. We do well to keep in mind some recent words of Archbishop Justin Welby:



UN CLIMATE
CHANGE
CONFERENCE
UK 2021

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH ITALY

*“It becomes ever clearer that climate change is the greatest challenge that we and future generations face. **It's our sacred duty to protect the natural world** we've so generously been given, as well as our neighbours around the world who will be first and worst affected. Without swift decisive action the consequences of climate change will be devastating.” (my emphasis)*

Richard Carpenter

Beguiled by Bluebells in Buncombe Woods

Beguiled by bluebells, we enter the woods,
Leaving behind the heady scent of flowers and grass,
Mixed with the smells of mud, wet earth,
Hanging warm in the mid- day air.

The thrum of insects on the wing becomes more distant,
As we delve deeper along the scattered paths, torn long ago.
Bird song grows quieter and everywhere the blanket of blue,
Patched thicker, denser, broken only by the beech trees' sprawl.

Cool shafts of air punch through the warmth,
Where dense leaf cover from above, creates a canopy,
A soft whisper of the palest green.

A gentle time of year when leaf, flower and bird,
Are born in fragile form, new and tender,
Strengthening each day against the sudden ravage of hail, wind and rain.
Here sunlight pools in patches where the tree heads' part,
Making the blue more vivid, their short flowering time assured.

But today we enjoy their true magnificence.

In these woods lie buried secrets from the past.
Hidden deep, the war bunker, brambled and overgrown is in eternal sleep.

The gentle drone of voices, punctuated by rings of laughter,
Winds its way towards the final break-out point.

Our path widens, rises and lifts towards the open hillside,
Coated in warm sunshine, lie golden buttercups and tight furled bracken.

Reluctantly we leave behind our cocoon of blue,
Time-warped in our memories of this special day.

Bridget Hall May 2021



*The group of intrepid walkers on
31 May 2021 - pic: Martin Wakefield*

Wilder Churches!

I wonder if you think church should be wilder?



Our church grounds at St James amazed us by producing a count of 100 species of (mostly) wild plants!! The survey was by Somerset Botany Group in June. We await a final report, but the count thus far is very encouraging.

Simon Leach, who led the survey, says that 130 species will probably emerge over the whole year. We were able to arrange the plant survey in connection with the Wilder Churches project. This is a collaboration between Somerset Wildlife Trust and the Diocese, and on the Somerset Wildlife Trust's website (<https://www.somersetwildlife.org/events/wilder-churches>) we read that the partnership initiative is:

'supporting communities to get to know the wildlife in their local churchyard and work together to find ways to increase the value of these special places for wildlife.'

Churchyards are often the oldest enclosed piece of land in a parish and many still support a rich variety of wildflowers and wildlife, having remained unscathed from the widespread loss of habitats seen in the wider countryside due to changing land management practices.

The Diocese of Bath and Wells oversees 477 parishes of over 900,000 people in the county and they are working with us to bring communities and church leaders together to learn more about their churchyards and how they can manage them with wildlife in mind.

Key to the initiative is the ongoing support provided to anyone and everyone interested in being involved. Launched on 24 March 2021, regular, free online training sessions are supporting communities to take positive action at a pivotal time for nature.'

You will remember that we have already made some changes in the church grounds as a result of our Eco Church survey: <https://ecochurch.arochoa.org.uk/>, which flagged up some ways in which we could look after our church land in more wildlife friendly ways. We seeded a small area with a meadow mix including yellow rattle seed - this is mown in July...or scythed as it was this year!

You can see the yellow rattle in the survey picture (above) along with Cat's-ear which is plentiful across the site!





Our bug hotel created by Sunday Club in September 2019, and has been doing good buzziness whilst the rest of the world's holiday homes have been vacant!

The bug hotel was praised as 'impressive' by the surveyors. It's an ideal home for invertebrates such as solitary bees. No less than 5 bumble bee species were seen in the meadow area.

We now have a variety of honeysuckles flowering along the wall adjoining the cricket ground, which are feeding the pollinating insects too.

There are a couple of areas which have old tree stumps and decaying plant material. These have been purposefully left to encourage other wildlife. And we have a compost bin, where we will once again be able to recycle coffee grounds/ fruit peel etc as our St James groups begin to serve food and drinks.



The Bug Hotel

The grass has been mowed by the council approximately monthly. We would like to try a different mowing regime for some areas...perhaps enlarging the small meadow area. This would allow for further development of the naturally occurring plants, some of which will have been growing on this little-disturbed plot maybe for hundreds of years.

During the pandemic, many people have become much more aware of the value of being outside in the natural world. God's creation has nurtured us at an anxious and strange time in our lives.

You may have taken the opportunity to visit the church grounds to do the Easter Trail set up by Dave, our Curate? Or perhaps you joined in worship outside in July? If you visited on a Wednesday morning recently, you might have seen the Art Group drawing and painting 'en plein air'! At the end of the summer term the grounds were a great place for St James School's Year 6, who, after their Leavers' service had their lunch under the trees and enjoyed some games in the sun. Amongst the post-lunch activities, we helped them to think about the value of churchyards and discussed some ecological issues.

I wonder how our church grounds might be used for the church family as well as our community in the future, whilst further developing as a special place for wildlife too?

Sue Carpenter

(I'm sure Sue would be happy to discuss any ideas you have about developing the ground - Ed)

Room for another recipe book on your shelf...?

Among the St James' members there are many talented and skillful cooks, chefs and bakers. Whenever the call goes out for cakes we are always inundated and they are always scrummy! (Those of you who were able to come to Johann and Wendy's wedding can attest to that...!) And when the team rally round for events in church (Murder Mystery, Passioneaster, Harvest Supper, etc) we are all impressed at the spread they produce.

So, what if we were able to share some of the recipes so that everyone could enjoy the wonderful dishes that mean something special to us?

I'm proposing to compile a St James' Recipe Book that we can sell in church (or further afield) to raise some cash for church funds. This might be a big task and I'm slightly fearful that there might be so many recipes they won't all fit into one book! But would you be willing to share just one favourite recipe? It could be a dinner dish or a cake or a snack that you rustle up. Or it might be something you always take on a picnic with you or one you love making with your children. Whichever it is, why not send it to me, just one?

But...I would like it to be your favourite recipe that is tried and tested by you - it's got to work! And there must be a good reason you've chosen it. When you send me a recipe I'd also like a few words as to why it's so special. Do you associate it with a person or does it mark a particular event in your life? Does it hold special memories? Has it been passed down to you from generations before? Does it have a link or message from your Christian life? Whatever your reason for choosing this one recipe, a *few* words of explanation would be good and you must be willing to have it attributed to you by name.

I've started the ball rolling opposite. This lentil curry is simple to make but it is a favourite of our daughter, Helen. Whenever she comes to visit, this *has* to be on the menu. It is full of comfort and I am the only one who can make it just the way she likes it (apparently!). As we have not seen Helen for over two years, I'm planning to make it when we go to visit her in Canada, hopefully this year.

Do send me your recipe with full list of ingredients and method. If you have pictures as well that would be good too.

Email a Word document with separate picture files (jpeg/tiff/pdf) to
csdoylebooks@gmail.com

Helen's Favourite Red Lentil Curry serves 4

1 medium onion finely chopped

1 fat clove of garlic finely sliced

180g red lentils

$\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon each of ground:

turmeric, cumin, coriander, garam masala

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon (or to taste) of chilli powder

3 to 4 handfuls of sultanas

1 dessert spoon of tomato paste

tablespoon of olive oil

800ml water

To serve: chopped tomato and banana, mango chutney, poppadums and mini-naans

1. In a large, non-stick pan heat the oil and gently fry the onion for around 10 minutes until soft but not too brown.

2. Add the garlic and cook for a minute or two

3. Lower the heat and add the lentils, stirring until all covered in oil and glistening

4. Stir in all the spices and then add the water

5. Stir in the sultanas and tomato puree

6. Bring back to a simmer stirring to mix

7. Lower the heat and cook on the lowest heat for around 40 minutes stirring occasionally. It should have absorbed all the water but if it gets too dry add a little more water - but don't let it be too 'sloppy'.

Serve on a bed of basmati rice with quartered tomato or sliced banana and mango chutney, poppadums and mini naans. Yum yum!



Harvest

Summer's fading and the 'season of mists and mellow fruitfulness' is upon us when our thoughts turn towards harvest festival.

Before Henry VIII's time, harvest used to be celebrated on 1st August, on Lammas or 'loaf mass'. Farmers baked harvest loaves made from the first crop of wheat and these were used for a special communion service to give thanks to God for the harvest.

After Henry's break with the Catholic Church, harvest festival was moved to the end of the harvest season. It is celebrated on the Sunday closest to the harvest moon, the full moon closest to the autumn equinox. So, it could be the end of September or early October. It would be celebrated with a grand meal or Harvest Supper – see chapter 36 of Thomas Hardy's 'Far From the Madding Crowd'.

Our 'traditional' harvest festival only began in 1843. In Morwenstow, Cornwall, the Rev Robert Hawker celebrated at a special thanksgiving service and the parishioners decorated the church with their home-grown produce and sheaves of wheat. Victorian hymns such as 'We plough the fields and scatter' and 'Come ye thankful people, come' soon became popular at such services.

Nowadays our donations not only celebrate our bounty but give us a chance to help others through organisations such as Open Door and the Food Bank.
Ed.

As the magazine goes to print, this year's Harvest Festival at St James is still in the planning although the date is likely to be Sunday 3rd October. To be sure and to find out about Harvest and all other services at St James', visit our website – www.stjamestaunton.org

This month's cover picture is a detail from a painting by Isabel Cooper. Isabel lives in Warwick and is Sue Doyle's sister. After a successful career as a maths teacher, Isabel is loving the opportunity to explore her talents as an artist, working in acrylic and oil. She loved the colours and shapes of these squashes and just *had* to paint them!

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A Hundred Year Old Poppy...



This year marks 100 years since the first 'Poppy Day' in 1921.

The first remembrance of the fallen of the First World War (WW1) was at a peace parade in July 1919. It was held at a temporary Cenotaph, made of wood and plaster, designed by the prominent architect Sir Edward Lutyens. During the first week after the parade more than a million people visited the Cenotaph in Whitehall. Within ten days it was decided to make the Cenotaph a permanent memorial and Lutyens redesigned it and built it in Portland stone.

What about the poppy, though?

*In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row...*

In America, Moina Michael was inspired by the first lines of Canadian John McCrae's poem and she made a poppy out of red silk and wore it to remember those who had served in the war. She made many poppies and sold them to raise funds and the symbol was adopted by the American Legion Auxiliary to remember the war veterans.

How came it to Britain?

We can thank a French woman, Anna Guérin, for popularising the poppy as a remembrance symbol in this country. She had travelled to England in 1911 but moved to USA at the outbreak of war. While there, and following Michael's lead, she was instrumental in fundraising for those made destitute by the war. After selling poppies in several US states, she travelled back to Britain and persuaded the fledgling British Legion to accept her idea of using the poppy to fundraise. Earl Haig, Commander-in-Chief of the army during WW1 and founder of the British Legion, wanted 11 November 1921 to be known as Remembrance Day and he called it 'Poppy Day'.

Early protesters...

At that first 'Poppy Day' parade though, some ex-servicemen caused disruption at the service. They were angry at the lack of support and opportunity they had received after the war. Rather than remember the dead they wanted the survivors remembered. But the pattern of remembrance and the two minutes' silence was established at that service in 1921, including the wearing of a poppy. And the rest, as they say, is history.

Ed.

Simpler, Humbler, Bolder

Simpler, Humbler, Bolder - three words which, if you've not heard yet, I'm sure you will come across many times in the next few months and years. They are a key element of the Church of England's vision for this decade.

Vision for the 2020s

The vision is portrayed as four concentric layers:

At the heart of it all...

That we are **Christ-centred** (to be both rooted and radical) and **Jesus-shaped** – particularly through the five marks of mission. Or perhaps, to use a more appropriate description, five marks of discipleship.

Three strategic priorities

In discerning the vision, three strategic priorities for the next few years became clear, that we become:

- A church of **missionary disciples** – we are called in order to be sent and to be changed. We might see these as the actions of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit respectively.
- A church that is **younger and more diverse** – one that encompasses and involves all whatever their age, race or ability, where leadership may be found in all parts of the church. A church that more closely resembles the community it serves.
- A church where **mixed ecology is the norm** – to be effective, we need a greater and more diverse expression of church life.

In the context of...

The presence of the Church of England across the whole country and within every community and working through myriad groups and connections.

Encompassing everything...

Those three words that, as Stephen Cottrell puts it, "*are not strategic aims, they are virtues that we believe God is calling from us at this particular point in our history. They run through our vision and shape all we do and all that we are.*" A church that is **simpler, humbler** and **bolder**...

Simpler

That we do not overcomplicate our faith – be it our theology or our structures and ways as a church. Equally, that both as the church and as individuals, we aim for a simpler life as an expression of our creation care.

Humbler

A key element for the church today must be for us to learn from and admit to the errors of the past. Humility also requires us to learn, better to work with others in our community.

Bolder

Because the love of God compels us: that we proclaim good news to the poor and speak truth to power, be that about poverty, refugees or the climate emergency.

Stephen Croft (Bishop of Oxford) describes the church as a “grace-filled community” and notes that:

“Our call to be a simpler, humbler and bolder church is rooted in the beatitudes. To be simpler means to be pure in heart; to set mercy at the centre and as our highest aim. To be humbler means to be poor in spirit, to be meek, to mourn for the needs of the world. To be bolder means to have the courage to hunger and thirst for justice, to seek peace and reconciliation, to stand our ground when we face opposition.”

Things such as strategies and the like can sometimes be seen as dulling the immediacy of the Holy Spirit – but let’s always remember that God is far more able than we are to plan for the future. The key question driving this is simply, what kind of Church is God calling us to become?

Importantly, this is not just talk. There are other initiatives underway, for example, to ensure that the Church’s resources serve the mission of God more efficiently and that lay ministry can be more effectively developed.

“I want us to be a Christ-centred and Jesus Christ shaped church by the five marks of mission, making a difference in our world and effecting every community that we serve.” (Stephen Cottrell)

Richard Carpenter

To find out more, visit the CofE website (www.churchofengland.org) and search for ‘vision’.



School News



We were delighted that St James' and North Town schools wanted to hold their Year 6 leavers' services at the church – a sign that a little bit of normality was returning. Limited to the top year, the Year 6 parents were able to enjoy the occasion with their children celebrating 7 years at primary school. It's been a tough year for all involved, having to adapt to new timetables, 'bubbles', online lessons, home learning, deep cleaning routines, etc. So, it was a real joy to welcome children and parents back into church and to celebrate with them.

St James' Church School were keen to reinstitute their tower climb and lunch, although this was tinged with disappointment for Yew Class as Covid struck again and the whole class had to self-isolate at the very last moment. But Ms Bowden and Willow class were able to come and enjoy their end of term celebration, spending the whole day at church. There was a flurry of preparation, with the Covid risk assessment; checking sanitiser supplies, clearing the church yard of unwanted hazards (thankyou, Sue and Susie), dusting the church tower and bell chamber of cobwebs (thankyou, Marion and Shona), removing the remains of a peregrine's lunch from the tower (thankyou, Martin) and ordering 'It's Your Move' books for every child to have a copy and talk with Fabian.



The organ has always been a great draw for the children and Peter Jeanes would have been delighted to know that, despite Covid, the children were awed by the pipes and sounds as Nigel and Dave B put it through its paces.

And, yes, we were able to give them lunch thanks to Ruth organising a wonderful spread in the hall. So very good to see you back St James' after a really tough 18 months.



All the best to all pupils moving on to Senior School and hoping that everyone has enjoyed a really good Summer break.

Jenny Wakefield



Book Review

BOUNCING FORWARDS

By Patrick Regan OBE

When I was a young social worker 40 plus years ago, the stigma of mental ill-health was very real, and people were dealt with in institutions, tucked away in the countryside. Mental illness was something

that happened to 'other people'. The fear and the stigma have not gone away but there is much more recognition that it is universal. 'Mind' reports that in any one week 1 in 4 people will be suffering with some form of mental illness - anxiety, depression or psychosis; there is a vast spectrum and there is plenty of evidence that this has been significantly increased by the Covid pandemic, with its worries about health, death, financial insecurity and more.

Patrick Regan's book, written against the backdrop of 2020, is a helpful, very readable and honest exploration of the power of resilience to enable us not to just bounce back but to bounce forward, learning from the experience we have had to struggle with. Using a mixture of his own personal and frontline experiences, pithy insights that resonate profoundly, real life case examples and established research into the power of resilience, it provides hope. It is underpinned by the deep conviction that it's OK not to be OK and that God can meet us in our vulnerability and pain. He is, after all, a God who understands pain and longs to make the broken whole and more beautiful. What is also clear in the book is the importance of support and walking alongside those who are hurting, traumatised, anxious or depressed. Something that makes sense because, if the statistics are true, most of us are going to need someone walking alongside us at some point as we seek to bounce forward.

Patrick Regan is the founder of Kintsugi Hope.

<https://www.kintsugihope.com/vision>

Kintsugi' is a Japanese technique for repairing pottery with seams of gold, repairing the brokenness in a way that makes the object more beautiful, and even more unique than it was prior to being broken. Kintsugi Hope Groups work in communities through the local church with an attitude of humility – not to judge, fix or rescue, but to come alongside and love one another. We are all broken in some ways and we can all learn from each other.



Jenny Wakefield





When is a Mug not a Mug?

This was the thought I had when emptying the dishwasher one morning. I'm not sure that it is an original thought or even the opening line of a not very funny joke but, if nothing else, it became the title for this piece.

Throughout the year I drink countless mugs of tea - mainly peppermint, coffee - caffeinated and decaffeinated, Americano or cappuccino, occasionally a hot chocolate or just hot water! Each drink requires a vessel and so I turn to my cupboards and the eclectic mix therein. Some might think it is a disordered jumble, Geoff will say he has long since given up trying to work out if there is a system of what goes where when he empties the dishwasher and might opt to leave them 'drying' on the work surface instead. Yes, I have a system but beyond that there is much more.

I confess to being a bit of a creature of habit. My preferred first drink of the day is peppermint tea from one of my Scotland mugs. My first drink of coffee, a little while later, is usually from a mug with a silhouette image of the castle on Lindisfarne. Mid-morning coffee might be from any one of random selection of large cups or mugs, after lunch coffee is often from a small china mug depicting a piece of artwork on one of the walls of Ely Cathedral or one of a set bearing the legend, "I'm in the Garden" on each handle and a different gardening related image around its body. Afternoon tea is often from one of my sheep related mugs or one depicting a group of ladies enjoying life. My final drink of the day - well, that depends on whether it is coffee, hot chocolate or just hot water!

So what is it that is beyond my choice of mug other than the type of drink it is to hold?

The Scotland mugs remind me not only of my family history from and holidays taken North of the Border, but also the friends who currently live there, in particular one from my childhood and another from my college days - I think of them and offer up a prayer for their continued friendship and any particular situations I know currently touch their lives. My prayer day is under way.

The Lindisfarne mug belonged to my late mother and was a gift from our neighbours when we lived in Sunderland. I cherish the memories not only of my mum but also the great friendship shared with and kindnesses shown by these neighbours - during the time it takes to make the coffee there is time to remember and give thanks through prayer. This mug also represents the times I have been both a day visitor to Lindisfarne, or Holy Island as it is also



known, and a temporary resident while on a church retreat there some years ago, cut off from the mainland twice each day as the tide covered the causeway. Many feet have trod the paths of the island, saints and sinners have been drawn there, God has been and continues to be at work there both inside and outside the Abbey – may He continue to be at work in all who make pilgrimage to or live on the island.

And so the day winds on – the random selection of large cups/mugs are mainly gifts from family and friends, the Ely Cathedral mug reminds me of a day out to that city with a friend some years ago, the 'Garden' mugs of the friends we made while Geoff and I were fortunate enough to have a house in France and where we spent many hours cultivating and sitting in the garden there, the sheep and ladies enjoying life mugs of a number of cherished friendships formed over the years. Each drink represents an opportunity to give thanks and pray for these particular, and associated, people and places that form my past, my present and hopefully my future.

Christmas time sees the arrival of additional mugs to the selection, amongst them a small, very old, china one that belonged to Geoff's family, a couple with texts proclaiming the birth of Jesus, another two showing scenes from the Snowman plus a very special hand decorated one given to our younger daughter by one of her pupils when she was in her first year as a primary school teacher – it very clearly bears the handwritten instructions 'no dishwasher, no microwave' on its base along with the name of the giver, Ryan, who will now be in his early 20s. Not only are drinks stirred in these mugs but memories are stirred too – of the first Christmas and our own Christmases – of the family and friends who have shared and still share them with us – of empty spaces at our table – of new faces at our table – and more prayers are offered.

There is another thing that contributes to the making of a drink into a prayer and that is a teaspoon. The shorthand for teaspoon in recipes is 'tsp' but this is also prayer shorthand for 'thanks, sorry, please', or adoration, confession and intercession as we might say in church-speak. So while it may be the selection of mug that prompts who or what is to be my prayer subject, the use of a teaspoon will remind me how to pray.

So as I finish this little piece, while drinking from my Lindisfarne mug, I ask again – When is a Mug not a Mug? Quite simply to me, when it is a Prayer.

Fiona Hope





...MISSION

During the Covid Emergency period we have been able to provide monthly information about the Missions we support, both in the Bulletin and online on the St James' Facebook page. This autumn we focus on the following organisations.

September

Tearfund is a Christian charity which partners with churches in more than 50 of the world's poorest countries, seeking to tackle poverty and injustice through sustainable development, by responding to disasters and challenging injustice.



For a glimpse at the extent of their work please look at their website <https://www.tearfund.org/stories/tear-times-magazine>. Subscription to the Tear Fund Magazine and prayer diary is free by post. It's packed with information, challenge and inspiring stories about projects and their impact.

In September, as a church we will be considering the impact of Climate Change on our fragile world and the part that we can all play. Tear Fund and other organisations have prepared a Climate Emergency Toolkit which can be accessed <https://www.climateemergencytoolkit.com/> See also Richard Carpenter's article in this and in past editions of the magazine. The time is now!

October

The local charity **Open Door** serves the homeless and roofless in Taunton, people who for a variety of reasons do not have the security of a home. Like other organisations the pandemic has affected how Open Door operates. During the winter months many of those without accommodation were housed at Canonsgrove under a joint initiative with YMCA, Local Authority, Salvation Army, ARC and Open Door. Since lockdown has eased, Open Door has returned to keeping their door open for rough sleepers and those in temporary accommodation so they can access hot showers, breakfast and have clothes washed and dried. Clients are also able to access the donated clothing store.



In the mornings, the Outreach Team offer practical advice and support about housing, addictions and health.

In the afternoons, the Do More group meets to support people who need help in developing social and practical skills. In addition to this daily support volunteers provide a reading group, a make and mend group and people to read the paper and have a chat. Open Door also acts as a support agency for the local self-employed Big Issue vendors. Support from the Samaritans and various other groups is also available.

For more details about Open Door, do look at their website <https://www.tauntonopendoor.org.uk/> or talk with Jonathan Sladden, their chairperson, or Susie Peeler who has been volunteering there.

November...

...we focus on organisations that we don't support financially but with whom we have links and connections including:



Home for Good was founded by Krish Kandiah, himself a foster carer and adopter, to promote the importance of Fostering and Adoption, inform churches how they can support foster carers and adopters in their congregations and actively encourages Christians to consider if they could provide a permanent home for a child.

For more details have a look at their website or speak to Sheila Marlow, who is a former foster carer and HfG Champion. <https://www.homeforgood.org.uk/>.



WATCH - a local charity based in Chard, but also working in Taunton to provide peer group mentoring and training for people who have experienced difficulties with their mental health. For more information have a chat with Ruth Crooks or

have a look on their website <https://watchproject.org.uk/>.



Operation Christmas Child – watch out for news of the Shoe Box Appeal from Samaritan's Purse this Autumn.

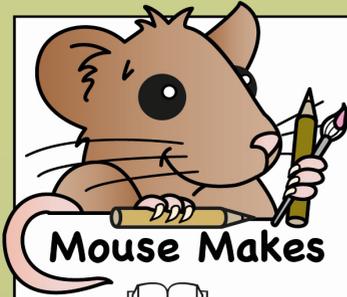
Jenny Wakefield

Praying by Mary Oliver

It doesn't have to be
the blue iris, it could be
weeds in a vacant lot, or a few
small stones; just
pay attention, then patch

a few words together and don't try
to make them elaborate, this isn't
a contest but the doorway

into thanks, and a silence in which
another voice may speak.



Mouse Makes



The bowl of flour and the jar of oil

It had not rained for months and months, there was a drought in the land. God sent His prophet **Elijah** to the town of Zarephath. At the town gate he saw a widow gathering firewood.

"Please bring me a drink of water and some bread." he asked her.



She answered "All I have is a handful of flour and a drop of oil in a jar, it is our last meal."

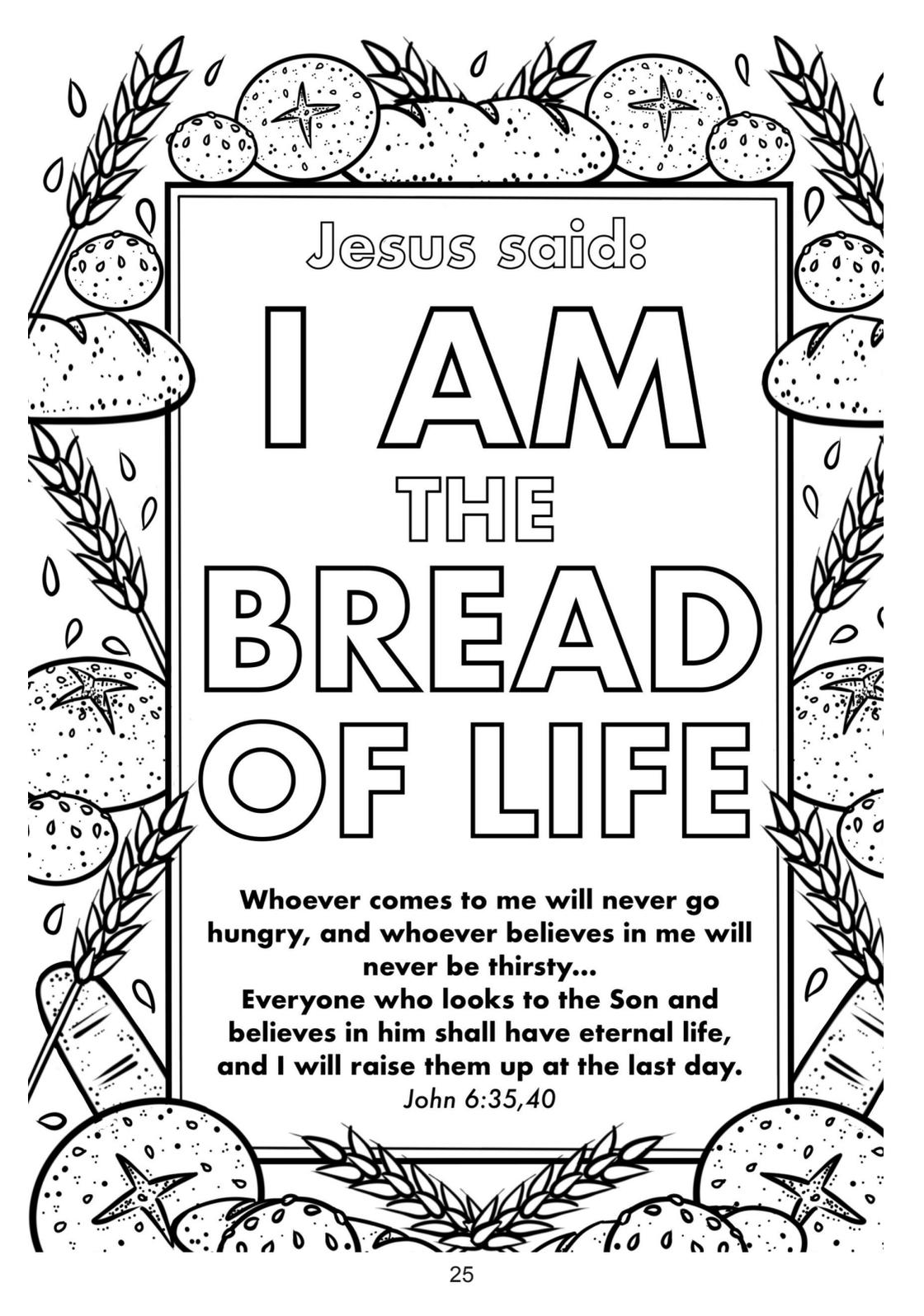
"Do not worry." Elijah said, "Make the meal and make a small loaf for me."

The woman did what Elijah had asked and God blessed her ...
... The bowl never ran out of flour and the jar never ran out of oil until it rained again!



Find these words from the story in the word search:

- WORD • LORD • GOD • ELIJAH • SENT • ZAREPHATH • GATE • CITY • WIDOW
STICKS • WATER • DRINK • BREAD • FEED • HANDFUL • FLOUR • LITTLE
OIL • SON • EAT • DIE • FULL • WENT • MAKE • BAKED • ATE • JAR • JUG • MANY
DAYS • LIVE • NEVER • EMPTY



Jesus said:

**I AM
THE
BREAD
OF LIFE**

Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty...

Everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day.

John 6:35,40

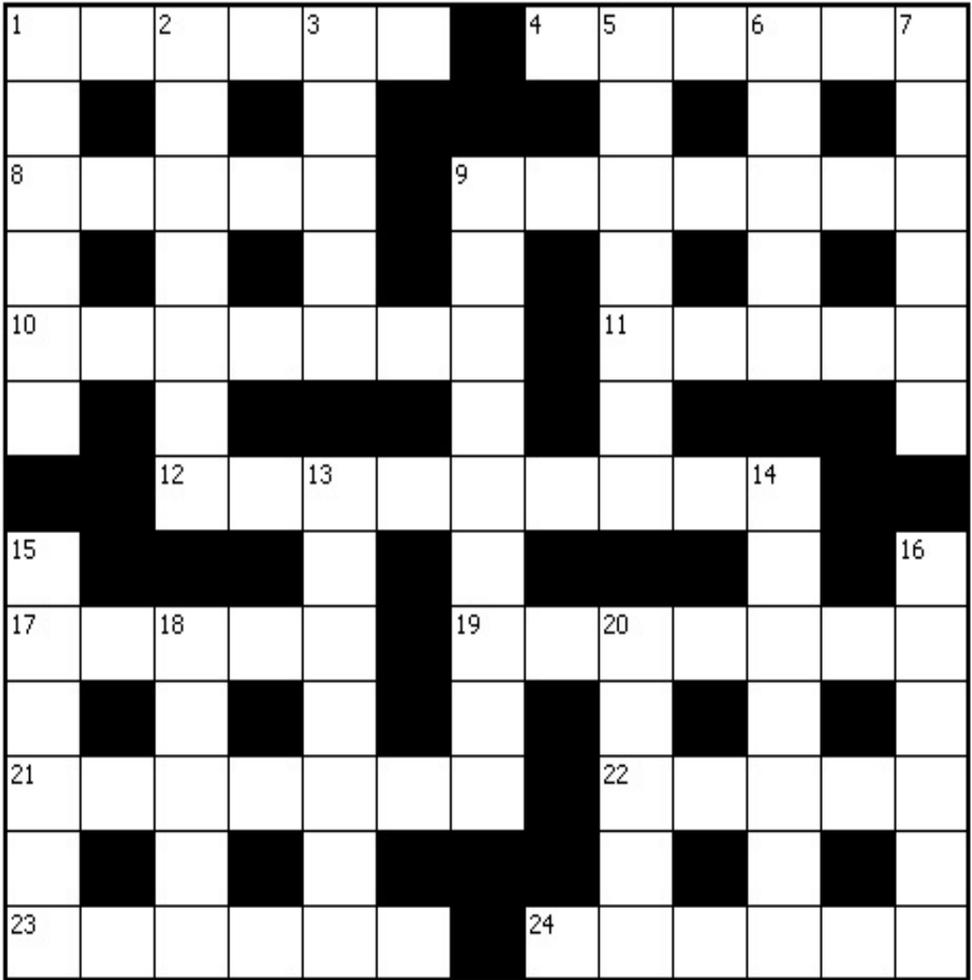
CROSSWORD

Across

- 1 'Through [Christ] we have gained by faith into this grace' (Romans 5:2) (6)
- 4 Deprives of sight (Deuteronomy 16:19) (6)
- 8 The words of a hymn do this (mostly) (5)
- 9 Faithful allegiance (1 Chronicles 12:33) (7)
- 10 Belgium's chief port (7)
- 11 Where John was baptizing 'because there was plenty of water' (John 3:23) (5)
- 12 Imposing height (Psalm 48:2) (9)
- 17 Jesus' tempter in the wilderness (Mark 1:13) (5)
- 19 Comes between Amos and Jonah (7)
- 21 'Your will be done' ... as it is in heaven' (Matthew 6:10) (2,5)
- 22 Gale (Matthew 8:24) (5)
- 23 Axle, eh? (anag.) (6)
- 24 'Out of the... I cry to you, O Lord' (Psalm 130:1) (6)

Down

- 1 Popular Christian author and humorist, Plass (6)
- 2 Transparent ice-like mineral (Revelation 4:6) (7)
- 3 Method of compelling surrender by surrounding target of attack (2 Chronicles 32:1) (5)
- 5 Expose (Isaiah 52:10) (3,4)
- 6 Lonny (anag.) (5)
- 7 Utterance (1 Timothy 1:15) (6)
- 9 Husband of Deborah, the prophetess (Judges 4:4) (9)
- 13 Burial service (Jeremiah 34:5) (7)
- 14 What Christ threatened to do to the lukewarm church in Laodicea (Revelation 3:16) (4,3)
- 15 Simon Peter climbed aboard and dragged the net (John 21:11) (6)
- 16 His response to Jesus' decision to return to Judea was 'Let us also go, that we may die with him' (John 11:16) (6)
- 18 There will be weeping and gnashing of ... (Matthew 8:12) (5)
- 20 Walkway between rows of pews in a church (5)



ACROSS: 1 access; 4 blinds; 8 rhyme; 9 loyalty; 10 Antwerp; 11 Aenon; 12 loftness; 17 Satan; 19 Obadiah; 21 on earth; 22 storm; 23 exhale; 24 depths
 DOWN: 1 Adrian; 2 crystal; 3 siege; 5 lay bare; 6 nylon; 7 saying; 9 Lappi-
 doth; 13 funeral; 14 spit out; 15 ashore; 16 Thomas; 18 teeth; 20 aisle

The PCC has been discussing...

Here's a summary of the main things the Parochial Church Council looked at during June and July.

Vision

Fabian led an exploration of what “model” might be a useful framework for our vision discussions. The need to embrace diversity was mentioned most, which seemed to fit with a model of groups of different sizes and compositions. Another common theme was being a pioneering church, “exploring new ways of showing love and being church”. This fitted with a “Spirit-led” model, “spilling out from church and at work in the community”.

These thoughts also resonated with the CoE national vision (simpler, humbler, bolder), with its strands of mixed ecology; a church of missionary disciples; and younger and more diverse. The CofE's vision webinars are well worth exploring: <https://www.churchofengland.org/about/leadership-and-governance/emerging-church-england/vision-church-england-2020s>.

Restarting post-pandemic

The service pattern changed on 25 July to a single 1030 livestreamed service in the church with refreshments afterwards. The guidance continues to evolve, and we will gradually reintroduce other elements of services after the school holidays. Consideration will need to be given to our online congregation.

Living in Love and Faith

Living in Love and Faith (LLF) is a recent Church of England report on “Christian teaching and learning about identity, sexuality, relationships and marriage”. It includes a book and many powerful videos of personal testimony. All the material can be accessed at <https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/living-love-and-faith>.

This important and sensitive subject will be discussed by the CofE bishops later this year, including reflecting on feedback from parishes.

David Wilkie and Chris Rickard reported on what they had learned at a Diocesan introductory day. While there had been mixed responses from those attending, the questions covered in the report do need to be asked. Too many people in society are implicitly excluded from church membership by our attitudes to these matters, or by our silence which makes them unable to talk about the issues. The challenge is in talking with people who are different from ourselves. We are all on a learning journey and never have everything sorted.

This affects how we treat other people, especially those whose journey is outside our experience.

Dave observed that the Church of England's Six Pastoral Principles are worth bearing in mind as an approach to difficult situations like this: acknowledge prejudice, speak into silence, address ignorance, cast out fear, admit hypocrisy and pay attention to power.

The PCC is discussing how best to open this subject to the wider church.

Children and Young People's work

Online C&YP activities are now stopping, with various picnics and other events being planned over the summer. Youth Zoom is now meeting in person as a bubble. Thought is being given to resuming other formerly online groups as in-person activities.

The TLG Make Lunch project (coordinated By Vashti Wuyts) has been delivering food parcels to families from six schools during the holidays. About a third of the families visited the Easter Trail in the churchyard.

The TLG Early Intervention mentor program (coordinated By David Jordan) continues with four coaches resuming face-to-face mentoring.

Interviews were held for the recruitment of a Children & Families Worker, but unfortunately we were not able to make an appointment.

Miscellaneous Matters

Welcoming: The Welcoming Strategy Group continues with practical arrangements. The welcoming course is for everyone, and it is planned to run it from September, with the new welcoming team starting in January.

Monthly Prayer Meeting: Fabian is overseeing this pending the establishment of a rota. It continues on the 4th Tuesday of each month.

Taunton Area Parenting Support: Sara Bright reported to the PCC on the work of TAPS. They are now finishing their third "Parenting Puzzle" course. Another course will start in September.

Routine PCC business continues as usual. In this period, the PCC received the annual reviews of Safeguarding, the Supporting Volunteers Policy and the Data Protection Policy.

Martin Wakefield

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
Vicar*



*Nigel Bright and Joyce Kirk
Church Wardens*



*Rev David Wilkie
Curate*



Martin Bluemel



Richard Carpenter



Roger Fenton



Marilyn Gibson



*Lizzie Haddell
Associate Warden*



Lyn Jones



David Jordan



Julie Kimber



Sue Lucas



Sheila Marlow



Chris Rickard



Richard Sainsbury



Vashti Smit



Nic Tall



Jenny Wakefield



Martin Wakefield

Alan Partridge – our longest serving bellringer

Alan learnt to ring during the Second World War. He first rang the bells at St James 70 years ago. One of the ringers he met at St James was Betty, who was later to become his wife.

There have been many happy years of ringing, but Alan has now decided that the time has come for him to hang up his bell rope and retire.

To mark his retirement, on 7th August the St James Ringers gathered together at my home for a cream tea. Many happy memories were shared over tea and a pair of commemorative mugs was given to Alan and Betty.



Thank you Alan for your huge contribution to ringing over the years: your enthusiasm, reliability, teaching, bell maintenance and your vast knowledge on all things ringing.

If anyone would like to find out more about learning bellringing, do contact me. New ringers always welcome!

Marian Gentile: Tower Captain
01823 275278



Dance as if no-one is watching...!

You will probably have seen Sue Doyle dancing in worship, often with a flag, either in church or on screen.

She is a member of the Christian Dance Fellowship of Britain and they are holding their National Conference on Saturday September 25th.

'Discipleship and Fellowship' (from Acts 2:42) is the title of the CDFB Conference, and includes 4 workshops between 10am and 5pm, with practical ideas to use in your own dance, and opportunities to worship together. It costs £15 for the day, will be using Zoom (which works well for dance – you are in your own space and no-one can see you!) and anyone will be welcome.

Please see the CDFB website for details of the programme and booking information: www.cdfb.org.uk/conference/index.html

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Joyce Kirk 01823 971431

Associate Warden: Lizzie Haddell 07443 873747

Children & Young People's Co-ordinator:

currently vacant

Discipleship & Home Groups Co-ordinator:

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Fabric (buildings & technical) Co-ordinator: Martin Wakefield

01823 277318 email: martin@scoopscoop.co.uk

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