

St James Church Magazine



September - November 2015 Edition

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Write down the vision...

The series of services over the Summer holidays this year has been about the Old Testament kings Saul and David, and it has made me think again about vision – God's vision for the church and our lives, and how we listen, hear and act on that vision.

Do you know what God wants you to be doing? That's not a question to get anxious about, or to feel guilty about if you haven't thought about your life in quite that way. But maybe thinking about young David can help...

- ☐ David was not expecting anything more than looking after sheep
- ☐ He had some abilities, but nothing very unusual – self-taught music on some kind of stringed instrument; physical stamina; skill with a catapult (or rather a sling, their equivalent)
- ☐ He was the eighth son so had no expectation of greatness or wealth, and was overlooked when God sent Samuel to his family
- ☐ Even after his anointing by the prophet Samuel, David didn't have a clear picture of what God wanted him to do; but his songs show he was a faithful young man who questioned God and thanked him
- ☐ He was loyal to the king (Saul) to the end, even though Saul's mental traumas made him attack David and caused him to become an outlaw. David spent years being persecuted as part of a 'terrorist' gang (as Saul saw him). Popularity is not a pre-requisite for doing God's work

So whatever *your* past or present, God has a plan for you. Age is no barrier to vision, neither old age (remember Simeon and Anna in the Temple – read Luke 2) nor being young – or young in the faith. That is the first and most important thing to realise and accept.

Once we know that God has a plan for everyone who call him 'Lord', the focus shifts. Now we need to ask 'What, Lord?' 'Where, Lord?' 'When, Lord?' This is as true for our church as for us as individuals within it. Discerning God's vision takes time, prayer, and sharing. The ideas for us often come via friends or during church services or when reading the Bible or in quiet moments. They need to be shared and tested.

This morning my Bible reading was from the little book of Habakkuk, where the prophet complains to God, asking him how it is that there is so much lawlessness, violence and injustice while God seems to be doing nothing about it. God answers, saying (I paraphrase) ‘Write down the vision to make it plain. My vision is waiting for the right time, so you too must wait. It will certainly come, and you will see it if you remain faithful, and it will be just right to enhance your life and my kingdom. The enemy is indeed arrogant, restless, greedy and never satisfied and the people who do not trust me are like that. But my vision will be for you to flourish, be strong and joyful and to bring about my purposes.’

Do you trust God enough in Christ to believe that he has a vision for you and for us (his church here)? Great! Then wait, watch, pray. The enemy, the powers of evil, may do their worst but the promise is the same – flourishing, joyfulness, strengthening and God’s kingdom growing.

Being a people of vision is a very attractive thing. Whatever you think of the policies of Jeremy Corbyn his clear vision excited people during the Labour party leadership campaign. Why? Because for once there was someone with a vision which did not depend just on the fickle nature of ‘what voters want’. A similar excitement arose around the SNP and UKIP in the general election.

The same will be true of the church too. God’s vision will not be discerned by democratic voting of church members (although there is a place for that at times). Nor will it be dependent on what the current trends are in the secular world (although we need to be very aware of them). It may surprise us. It will involve everybody and use people’s gifts and abilities. What does he want St James’ to look like in five years’ time? I don’t quite know yet – so will you be part of the exciting process of discernment? In the process you may also be surprised at what God might want *you* to be doing in five years’ time!

One of our church strap-lines is ‘ready and willing for what God might want to do through us’. How apt.

God bless,
Tim



Taunton Against Poverty (TAP) has been busy since our last update. In April we presented a cheque to the Mothers' Union for £650 to support Away from it All, a scheme which provides much needed holidays to families who would otherwise be unable to afford to take time away. Rod Corke, Vicar of St Mary Magdalene, gave us a real life example of how the scheme had helped a family he knew; it was encouraging to know the money we raised will make a real difference to people in need.

In June, Joyce Lander once again hosted a fundraising event for TAP in her garden; this year a Ploughman's Lunch. About 30-40 people enjoyed delicious meals throughout the afternoon, which stayed mainly dry despite the grey skies. There were many visitors from St James and local neighbours joined us as well, St Michaels in Galmington also sent a donation. In total we raised a huge £428! We are very grateful to Joyce and her team of helpers, several of whom had been up since the early hours preparing the food.

Also in June Mark Johnson took part in the Rotary Club annual 50/50 cycle ride challenge, a sponsored ride through the Somerset countryside. In total Mark raised £210 mainly from members of St James. Half the money raised went to Taunton Against Poverty, with the other half going to the Rotary's chosen charities.

The money raised from our lunch and the bike ride will go to Caring Minds Taunton, a new social enterprise for them to develop a website for children and young people who live with, or care for someone with a mental health issue.

We are very grateful for the support we have received once again for TAP from those at St James and are planning further fundraising events over the next few months. More details soon!



DEVOTED FOLLOWERS

A devoted follower of a not very successful football team once observed that “No matter how many losing seasons you might have had in the past ... the good thing is that all teams get a fresh start once September begins.”

Of course, the football season now seems to begin in the middle of summer, hardly a whistle or a cheer away from the climax and hype of the previous one, but I confess that I’ve always found there to be something of ‘a new start’ once September comes. Yes, we have a new football or rugby season, and this year there’s the World Cup just around the corner too, but there’s also a return to school or university and in many churches a new autumn sermon series, home group study or initiative in the community on which to embark.

For all of us here in the diocese, there will soon be a new ‘episcopal season’ as we welcome Archdeacon Ruth Worsley to be our new Bishop of Taunton. She is sure to bring us new gifts, insights, experiences and encouragement borne of her rich ministry in various places. She will challenge us too and help us to see and experience the things of God in new, fresh ways.

May I suggest we begin this month remembering her and her family in our prayers as they settle in and she begins her new ministry here? Pray too that as we travel together, all our lives, not least hers will be blessed and become a blessing to those we serve in the name of Christ.

I know that the devoted football supporter to whom I referred earlier would begin each season full of optimism for the season that lay ahead ... but hope would soon disappear.

By contrast, devoted followers of Jesus are people whose hope is placed in the one whose love, grace and mercy never fail; they come as gifts for each new day. Jesus will not ultimately disappoint his people.

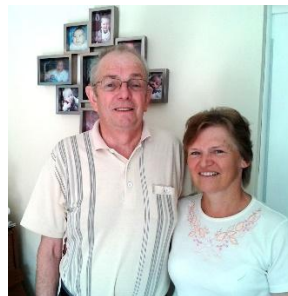
May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope (Romans 15:13)

Archdeacon Andy

The service of welcome to the diocese will take place on Saturday 3rd October at 2.00pm in Wells Cathedral, and will be combined with the Reader Licensing service. Everybody is most welcome!

INTRODUCING

Tony and Eileen Huxtable have been members of St. James for about three years now. Although from Methodist and Baptist backgrounds, their main priority on retiring to Taunton, was to find a lively church within walking distance of their new home. It was Bernice and Brian who invited them to come to St. James, and they felt a buzz on entering the church that attracted them, and it has now become their spiritual home. As a former Methodist minister, Tony still has a preaching ministry (once a month on the Methodist preaching plan) and they also enjoy attending Rowbarton Methodist Church.



Both Eileen and Tony were born into Christian families. Eileen's father was a Baptist Minister; she made a personal commitment at the age of 12, and was baptised soon after, much to her parents delight. Tony was also raised in a believing family with a long term farming background. He recalls always being aware of the rhythm of the seasons and the majesty of God's creation in what was a beautiful but quite isolated area overlooking Exmoor. Although initially working the farm alongside his father from the age of 15 Tony experienced a call to be a minister in 1973 at a Methodist covenant service – (an annual renewal of personal commitment). The Covenant prayer starts with these thought provoking words:

"I am no longer my own but yours. Put me to what you will, rank me with whom you will; put me to doing, put me to suffering; let me be employed for you or laid aside for you, exalted for you or brought low for you. Let me be full, let me be empty let me have all things, let me have nothing. I freely and wholeheartedly yield all things to your pleasure and disposal....."

This led him on a journey of service as a minister. Having left school without formal qualification he had to go back to college to get O levels at Cliff College and A levels while still working on the farm. He then trained initially at St. John's Nottingham, an evangelical and relaxed Anglican college (which has helped prepare them for St. James!). He then concluded his training for Methodist Ministry at Wesley College, Bristol. It was while on placement at a Baptist Church in Grantham that he met, and was immediately smitten by the Minister's daughter, one of those God-instances of time and place. (He and a friend were due to stay with another family which fell through). Eileen at the time had trained as a nurse and was working in Leeds.

They were married while Tony was still in training, a process that took 6 years before he was ordained in 1982, and so began their 30 years of

Ministry. They were sent out to their first circuit (group of Methodist churches) in rural Norfolk, where they started their family, remaining there for 5 years and where Tony was involved in youth ministry as well as church leadership. They were then invited to a mining area in Nottinghamshire. Tony and Eileen reflect that they have served in settings that have been regarded as less than popular but they felt that God has always led them to the right place at the right time. They have three children and they have been conscious of the need to consider this in the timings of their moves. From Nottingham they went to Shropshire and then to Tiverton, where Tony's farming and local background was an asset to his ministry especially as it coincided with the Foot and Mouth epidemic that hit so many farmers. Eileen has been an important part of the ministry, juggling the roles of wife, working mother (she returned to nursing when their youngest was at nursery), unpaid assistant, confidante and member of the church community.

Their last church was in Pontypool where they included a vibrant Tongan rugby-loving community within the church.

On retiring they came back to the South West, where their three daughters had their families and they are much in demand for their 8 grandchildren. It has been since retirement that they have experienced a major challenge when Tony was diagnosed with Lymphoma only 12 months after arriving in a new town, and at a time when they were adjusting to retirement and still establishing new friendships. If anything they feel this experience has deepened their faith, together with a greater awareness of mortality and God's love. Their experience of the Beacon centre and links with people going through similar experiences has been quite profound. They felt upheld by God's love and recall the joy of singing *Thine be the Glory* at Easter, after returning to church having had to stay away due to risk of further infection. Tony's recalls two very special promises given to him during this time:

My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest. Exodus 33:14

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit Romans 15 v 13.

So how does a minister and his wife, used to the responsibilities of multiple churches, pastoral responsibilities, crumbling buildings, church meetings, sermons to prepare, dilemmas to solve – cope with retirement? From talking to Eileen and Tony, I suspect it is with joy as they are able to spend time with their grandchildren, gardening, going walking and cycling together, making new friends and for Tony some occasional preaching and having time to produce more wonderful watercolours.

French Weir Fun Day



It was a kind of Messy Church in the Park on Sunday 16th August when a small group of St. James-ites decamped from Church to pitch our tents literally in French Weir Park to take part in the



annual Fun Day. This is the fourth time we have been invited and it was a really



lovely day. The weather

was ideal, not too hot and with not a drop of rain to be seen. We had a lovely pitch so we could spread ourselves out and make space for the paint

and plasticine, crayons and garden stuff, squash and biscuits, garden chairs and tables we had brought with us. (Thank you Sheila David and Chris for all the picture planning and bran tub wrapping on Saturday and to Martin for the multiple trips and furniture manhandling).



After setting up we were in business as the first families started to arrive and we were kept pretty busy until it came time to pack up at well after 4 pm, the official finishing time. Fortunately the Wivey scouts were cooking bangers and burgers otherwise we might have starved. We had visits from quite a few members of the church, fresh from Phil and Ella's

baptisms and lots of children and parents wanting to paint, plant, colour and chill out at our stand.



So what was it all about? Simply an opportunity to take the church out into the community and show what “Being Church” at St. James is like.



Our theme was God’s Wonderful World, which we sought to bring into our activities. Sadly not many people went over to look at the wonderful pictures that David and Jenny had sourced (and which are on the boards in church) but we had an amazing time finding them. What an incredible creator God we have.



As you can see from this picture Roger and David enjoyed playing with the Jenga (David won, and then commiserated with Roger over a Mr. Whippy!)



So thank you to the Team (David, Chris, Sheila, Roger, Martin and Jenny) and to all those who lent equipment and to all those who joined us in the afternoon.

(And Sam B won the Sheep, following an independent draw. We were able to send £16 to Open Door with the proceeds of the competition and the Bran Tub)

Behind the Scenes

..... The St. James Magazine

So what lies behind all those crisp new magazines as they mysteriously appear for collection every three months at the back of church?

The mastermind behind it all of course is Andrew Slade, our editor. But there's a lot more to it than that as Andrew also collates and prints the magazine, with help from his friend Ross, who makes it ready for print assuring the high quality of the final production



The weeks coming up to deadline are always a bit fraught. The articles for publication have to be in otherwise it becomes a frantic scramble for Andrew at the end of the month. It can be a real headache as he fits it around his day job, which as many of you know involves juggling working

for Carly Press and his own firm. Somehow, he manages to keep calm and carries on, despite the vagaries of the rest of his team.

The team, which comprises Andrew, Annie and Jenny, meets a couple of times in the months up to publication to discuss whether it is going to be a 32 or a 28 pager and more importantly to talk about content. Annie conjures up the children and puzzle pages and keeps an eye open for interesting verse items. Jenny produces some of the regular features, like *Introducing* and *Behind the Scenes*, and keeps an eye open for any photo opportunities of events that have happened, usually making the deadline with a few minutes to spare. As for the rest that's all down to Andrew, as he chases Tim for his letter and future events, Martin for the PCC run down and anyone else who has promised a contribution.



Talking of which, Andrew is always happy to receive articles, contributions or book reviews from members of the Church. It's a great way of sharing ideas, inspiration, things you have read with others. If you do write something it's best to keep it to a maximum of two A5 pages. (That's about 650 words or 600 if they are long words!!).

Nehemiah-man of vision.

God's work is just that. It is God at work. It is not man striving to achieve his own ends through his own resources. It is not a committee pooling their ideas in the mistaken notion that they have the mind of God. It is not a congregation running with the latest fashion in church growth. It is not one man leading others into paths of his choice through his own charisma and natural gifts. It is God manifesting his will through people of his choice attuned into his mind.

To misquote 1 Corinthians 13:8ff:

'God's work never fails. But where there are personalities pushing their own programmes, they will cease; where there are churches imprisoned in their past with no desire to seek the heart and mind of God, they will fail; where there is venturing without vision, programmes without prayer, action without alignment to the will of God, there will be frustration and failure.'

The task of the church is to discern God's vision. The work of God begins with God sharing his vision, often begins with one man or woman who having caught the vision, envisions others. And that is just what we shall discover that Nehemiah did.

September sees the beginning of a new series of studies based upon the book bearing his name. Nehemiah was a man with God's vision for his people. The result is an amazing story of faith, adventure and ultimate triumph over determined opposition. It is also a story which challenges us to discern God's will for ourselves. The trouble is that to catch God's vision can be costly. It can.

- Take me from my comfort zone and make me aware of my weaknesses.
- Make demands upon my devotion to God, my time and my willingness to go in new paths.
- Create 'unease' with the present and create a desire for more of God and his will
- Force me to listen to others, to acknowledge that God is speaking to the prayerful within the church and demand a spirit of humility and teachability.
- Cause me to marvel at what God is able to do and to provide.
- Disturb my confidence, make me examine my motives and cause bewilderment to some of my closest friends and even opposition.

But the negatives will pale into insignificance in comparison with the excitement and thrill of being part of the vision. So do join in the studies and the activities which will follow in the New Year as together we all seek to discern God's vision for his work here at St James for the coming years.

Geoff Treasure

I've been reading...

... no, not a theologically correct book by an approved Christian author but one by that pin-up boy of modern science, Brian Cox, and his mate, Jeff Forshaw. It aims to show that everyone can understand quantum physics. You might think that's an odd thing to read, but these theories are a big influence on our present world, and I thought it was remiss of me to know so little about them.

There are quite a few noteworthy statements in the book. Did you know, for instance, that we make 10,000,000,000,000,000,000 transistors each year (most of them in computer and other chips), and that's 100 times more than the number of grains of rice that are eaten? Your mobile phone is likely to have a billion of them (transistors that is, not grains of rice).

Quantum physics begins in the late nineteenth century when scientists' ability to make measurements improved to the point where results were appearing which couldn't be explained by the physics established by Isaac Newton. In Russia, Mendeleev noticed behavioural patterns which enabled him to start off the periodic table of the elements – but nobody could explain why this was so.

Cue a lot of people constructing inspired theories, which one by one have been proven through experiment. They in turn showed more anomalies, leading to more inspiration and more experiment until they arrived at the “standard model” of particle physics. Along the way we might mention Bohr, Dirac, Einstein, Feynman, Heisenberg, Pauli, Planck, Rutherford, Schrödinger and many others, including one Peter Higgs who in 1964 predicted the existence of a particle and has had to wait until now for it to be observed. And that was seen by mankind's most complex machine, the Large Hadron Collider, which straddles the French-Swiss border and is funded by 84 countries. So that's quite a story, but what does it all mean?

So back to those transistors: in 1948, quantum physics enabled William Shockley and his team to understand how to manipulate electrons in an atom and build the first transistor. That has been one of the most significant inventions by mankind, probably on a par with the wheel and writing. It has led very quickly to computer chips. Every one of our lives has since been affected by electronics of one kind or another. (And we began producing our own church magazine using a computer less than forty years later.)

Secondly, to me it shows just how wonderful our world is at levels of detail that most of us find incomprehensible. For instance, the book explains how, even though atoms are mostly empty space, “we don’t fall through the floor”, as the authors put it.

But back to those noteworthy statements that I mentioned at the start. Let’s continue with a quotation from Shakespeare, who often seems to have got there before anyone else: Hamlet says “There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy.” (And this in a science book?!) The meaning for us that the world is far more marvellous than any of us know, and we must not limit God to our present understanding.

Then how about “the systematic or axiomatic denial that scientific knowledge can be obtained on the basis of theories that involve, explicitly or not, a teleological principal” (a quote from the biologist Jacques Monod)? Oooh – what does that mean, I hear. Teleological means looking for evidence of deliberate design in the natural or physical world (paraphrasing Wikipedia). Aha – this is an important statement, as it means that scientists can’t invoke “magic” when constructing their models – everything has to be open to being tested. And that in turn means that there is no place for God or intelligent design, or anything like it.

Is that good or not? I think it’s good, because it’s a clear statement about the limits of science, as well as stopping woolly thinking. It also means that nobody can claim that science disproves God: because science operates in a world of measurable evidence, and cannot by definition demonstrate anything outside the limits which it has set itself. So next time you hear Professor Dawkins sound off, just remember what Jacques Monod said, and smile knowledgeably.

So where does God fit it? That’s the big question, and even bigger than the puzzle for scientists over where gravity fits into their standard model – science has made great strides, but there are some big gaps yet to be filled. But it’s not a question that need worry us, because we are looking the other way round: where does science fit in? And the answer is at least partly that it shows the wonder and depth of creation – “so deep can’t get under it”?

I’ve been reading “The Quantum Universe: everything that can happen does happen” by Brian Cox and Jeff Forshaw, published by Allen Lane.

MW

FORTHCOMING EVENTS & SERVICES



**The next Alpha course starts
Tuesday 29th September!
7pm with meal included**

**To find out more please come to
The Alpha Taster Evening on
Tuesday 8th September
in the Church Hall**

**If you know someone who is interested
do bring them along
For more details: Tim Jones [Tel:333194](tel:333194)
or enter your name on
the sheet at the back of church**

Tea and Teaching - Spiritual Surgery

While there were signs of good health amongst the congregation at Corinth, there was also much to concern any spiritual physician like Paul. His first letter reads a little like a doctor's journal, examining the patient, diagnosing the problem and writing the prescription. The surgery waiting room was always quite full. There were patients with fractures, brain disorders, heart problems, neuropathy, sexual disorders, gender issues and speech problems to mention just some.

This year at Tea and Teach In we are going to look into the surgery through a series of studies in 1 Corinthians. I am hoping that this series of studies will be more interactive. They will be practical and, I trust, relevant to our own spiritual health. The surgery will be open from 4.30pm on the fourth Sunday of each month. It would be good to see you there.

PS If you could help occasionally with a cake bought or made- it would help the very small number of 'bakers' upon whom we rely month by month. If you feel this is something you can do, why not give your name to Geoff or to Elaine. Don't worry about your standard of baking. Everything goes!!

Sponsored Bike Ride & Walk

The House of St Martin & St James Church.

Are doing a sponsored bike ride & walk to raise money.

For the Resident's move on scheme and the church donations.

We are going to do a **5 mile** walk or **30 mile** bike ride on **27/09/15**.

LANGLEY
HOUSE TRUST
HELPING PEOPLE TO
LIVE CRIME-FREE LIVES

& St James
Church
TAUNTON

GOOD LUCK TO ALL

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Made by Corbin Nunn (dragon7000@hotmail.co.uk)



**HARVEST SERVICE AND MEAL
ON SUNDAY 4TH OCTOBER
WE WILL BE SUPPORTING OPEN DOOR
SEE BULLETIN FOR FURTHER
ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Archbishop Carey's Hope for the Future

“Hope is listening to the music of the future. Faith is dancing to the tune, today (Bishop Bill Frey)

If you haven't already done so, its well worth a second or even third listen to George Carey's talk about Hope for the Future on the web site as there are many aspects to his talk for us to take to heart.



He talked about the fact that the world is under threat and Christianity is under attack as never before – internationally Christians are facing persecution and expulsion while in West the ogres of indifference and apathy make for a society that has lost its sense of right and wrong, and is in danger of losing its way to despair and futility. He quotes the theologian Jurgen Moltman on

returning to post war Germany, ‘if there is positive hope, we invest in the future. If there is no hope anymore, we incur debts’. (Moltmann had been “found by Christ” during his years as a POW).

Having set the scene he directed us to really listen to what God says about the future, making a distinction between hype rooted in nothing and hope that was rooted in faith. In an age when it has become fashionable to undermine the idea of a God who is at the beginning of creation and decry the idea of a purpose behind the Universe, he challenged this Big Lie. He argued that the church should cease to be apologetic and lacking in confidence. God, like many things, cannot be conclusively proven, but the working of universe, the creation of life, the astonishing regularity of nature and the sheer wonder and beauty of creation great and small are compelling reasons and even scientists such as Stephen Hawking, are prepared to acknowledge there are religious implications. For George Carey the “password” that serves to unlock the mystery of God is Jesus, who shows us the mind and nature of God. hope has to be grounded on something solid and rock

solid and Jesus has given us that solid foundation and key to living in a hopeful future.

George Carey then went on to present a clear challenge for the future.

1. The church has one purpose – to be witness to Jesus and that it was time concentrate on the transformational purpose of the church to change lives. He quoted Roy Hatterley who said in the Guardian “we atheists have to accept that most believers are better human beings”.
2. The church needs to concentrate on Mission and of serving the world – God is less interested in the church than we are, he is more interested, as was Jesus, in increasing the Kingdom of God.
3. More priority needs to be given to ministry to young people and he reminded us that if we do not take this seriously the church is but one generation from extinction.
4. He commended St. James for the use we have made of our buildings and encouraged us to keep on using our buildings creatively for the community.
5. Last but not least he said that we should seek to ensure that worship is an inspiring and exciting experience emphasising the beauty, dignity and joy that is attractive and avoiding the banal and cringe worthy.



And a final thought – Relax – we do not have to do God's job or be “successful” but we must be faithful And enjoy the dance.



St GILES

St Giles was a hermit, someone who lived a quiet life of prayer away from other people. His special day is 1st September and he lived in a forest near Arles in France, sometime in the 9th century.



The story goes that he had a pet deer. One day the King was hunting in the forest and shot an arrow at this deer.

When the huntsmen found the deer it was in a woodland clearing with St Giles. The saint himself was wounded by the arrow and held the deer in his arms - and all around them were the hunting dogs, silent and still as if held by an invisible power.

St Giles is the patron saint of cripples and beggars. His emblem is an arrow and in the United Kingdom there are over 150 churches dedicated to him.



WOODLAND WORDS

Can you find all these words from the forest? The words go up, down, backwards, forwards and diagonally and some letters are used more than once.

M U S H R O O M S S
B H M O S D I A S L
U A O W T V K A K O
T F D L Y S S O M O
T N O G L F S R E T
E I A K E Y A D G S
R V Y C G R R E E D
F S N A K E G W O A
L M M R O W F O X O
Y E R O M A C Y S T

* ant * badger * butterfly * deer *
fox * grass * holly * ivy * moss *
mushrooms * oak * snake *
sycamore * toadstools * worm *

⌘⌘⌘⌘⌘⌘⌘⌘⌘⌘⌘⌘⌘⌘⌘⌘⌘⌘

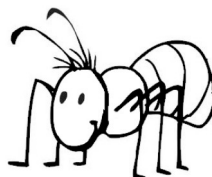
**Did you hear about the car
with the wooden wheels and
wooden engine?**

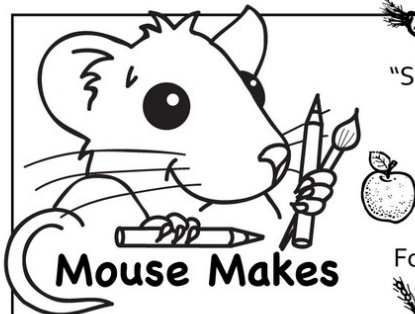
It wooden go.

**What is the smallest ant in the
world?**

An infant.

**What do
ants take
when
they're ill?**
Antibiotics.





HARVEST PRAISE

"Shout out praises to the **Lord** all the **earth**!

Worship the Lord with joy! ...

Acknowledge that the Lord is **God** ...

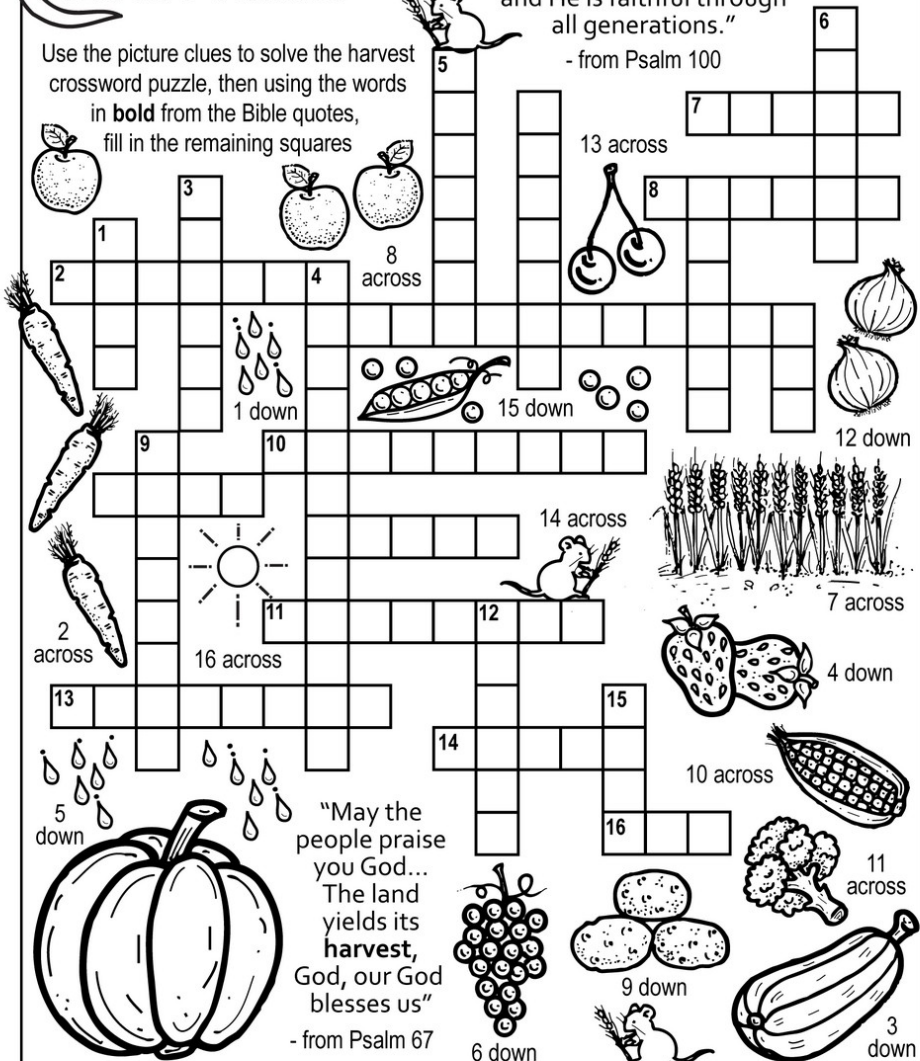
... Enter His gates with **thanksgiving**
and His courts with praise!

Give Him thanks! **Praise** His name.

For the Lord is good, His loyal love endures
and He is faithful through
all generations."

- from Psalm 100

Use the picture clues to solve the harvest
crossword puzzle, then using the words
in **bold** from the Bible quotes,
fill in the remaining squares



"May the
people praise
you God...
The land
yields its
harvest,
God, our God
blesses us"

- from Psalm 67



St James Church School and me...

It has been my pleasure to serve as a Local Governing Board Governor at St James Church School for the past 2 years. I followed in the footsteps of several church members who over the years have faithfully served in this capacity when the school was known as Archbishop Cranmer C of E VC Primary School.

Two years ago the church was asked if it could provide someone to fill the role of a Governor on the Local Governing Body of the renamed and re constituted, St James Church School following its conversion to an academy. This was a new role and when the queue was not shall we say long I believed that I should investigate what it actually involved. It seemed to me that a school with the name St James, located half a mile from our place of worship and being the successor to Archbishop Cranmer School needed at least a representative, even if I was just keeping a seat warm!

I went to a series of meetings with others from our church and believed strongly that this was an opportunity that needed to be taken, it was an open door for local organizations and people and one that as the local church whatever the history we should take.

For those who are not fully aware of the, background. ABC, as was, had one of those OFSTEDS and was placed in Special Measures just before the government announced that any school with an inadequate OFSTED would be forced to become an academy. The result of this was it became one of Mr Gove's first forced church school academies so the Diocese of Bath and Wells established its Multi Academy Trust to enable the school and other church schools in similar situations to remain in the church school family. Academy schools are run outside of the Local Education Authority. It was a time of great turmoil, uncertainty and a fair degree of pain. However through all of this God has been at work and the transformation

miraculous. The school changed its name, an outstanding new head arrived, Heather Cunningham (although this was in place prior to academy conversion) along with many new members of staff, a new local governing board supporting the school in learning assessment and achievement chaired by Derek Smart -it was all systems go. OFSTED has now judged the school good taken it and out of special measures and the nursery to be Outstanding. It has involved a tremendous effort from all the staff who have developed into an amazingly united and supportive team. The school is now growing with a waiting list of pupils and is a vibrant and diverse multi cultural environment.

What has my role been in this? To attend meetings, understand data, talk to the odd inspector and support Heather and the staff in their drive to make a difference in young people's lives in and around our parish.

What about moving forward and the church's involvement? The school welcomes the support of the church and a number of people are already going into school and are involved in a variety of ways including leading collective worship, supporting with music, after school Explore Club, listening to children read and in the nursery. The church has been the venue for a number of services and celebrations as well as the Advent, Easter and Pentecost Experiences. A church school prayer meeting takes place the second Thursday of every half term at 8.00am in the nursery and anyone is welcome to join in and support the school with prayer. Three members of the church also work in the school nursery.

The school very much appreciates the link with the church and is very keen for this connection to be strong and to develop further. If this is something that interests you please talk to Tim, Jenny Wakefield or Richard and Sue Lucas.

I am now moving on from this role as I have a new job, but have valued and enjoyed my time at the school.

Richard Lucas

Supporting Mission

During June and July speakers from organisations that we support as a church have visited St. James to tell us about the work that they are doing. This will continue in September with speakers from **Besom** and **TYFC**

The aim is to keep everyone informed about the positive work and the challenges that are happening both internationally and locally.

Why do we support the organisations we do? Support for local organisations is fairly obvious, as they are a means of showing God's love in action to our local community wherever there is need. **Besom, Open Door, the Town Chaplaincy, Street Pastors, Taunton Youth for Christ, and St. James Debt Advice** (soon to be Taunton Area Debt Advice) have all been started by the local Church community in response to different needs in our town. Many people in the church will be aware at first hand through practical involvement with these organisations about their work, but it's always good to keep updated as situations and needs change.

But we are also part of the Worldwide Christian Community and as such we need to engage with what is happening on the international scene. There are many Christian Ministries doing important work across the Globe, and realistically we cannot support all of them, so as a church we support four. (Individual members of the congregation will undoubtedly support a lot more through personal links or concerns.)

The four we support cover (1) the areas of disaster relief operations and specific projects aimed at campaigning for greater awareness of international issues (e.g. Water projects, anti-Trafficking Campaigns, Aids etc.) – **TEAR Fund** and **Samaritans Purse**; (2) support for the persecuted church – **Barnabas**; and (3) church planting and support – **WEC**. While the latter might seem less dramatic than the others, we need to remember it is often through the local churches that compassion, aid and support is distributed and provided. Moreover in many parts of the world the growth and vibrancy of churches is an encouragement to us in the West where we struggle against a tide of indifference and apathy.

Over on the north side of the Church we have the blue boards with information about the organisations we support. They are about to be revamped a little so that there will be information about all nine of the organisations and we will be asking the

designated reps to keep the information updated. The other way to keep in touch is to visit the websites of the different organisations and to receive email alerts about what is happening. As a church (and individuals) we give financially but they also need our support in prayer, and to effectively pray we need to know what is happening.

Bringing Good News to Cambodian Villages

Savon Ning, 28, used to be shy. "I always used to stay at home," she says. "Now, I like to learn how to love others and take care of them, to be friendly. I have many friends now."

What changed?

When she was 18, staff from *Hope for Cambodia's Children* and other World Relief programmes came to her Buddhist village of Andong in Kandal Province. They brought food and held meetings to teach the villagers about Jesus. One of Savon's brothers attended the meetings. "My brother was a bad man, but when he became a Christian, he changed his ways," Savon remembers. Soon the whole family (Savon has six sisters and two brothers) became followers of Jesus!

But the information they provide also brings many blessings, because our God is a great God there are many answers to prayer. Here is just two example from the Tear Fund and Samaritans Purse websites:



Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene

Samaritan's Purse is providing safe water for children, families and communities in the world's poorest nations through projects that provide wells, rainwater tanks, BioSand water filters and training in health and hygiene practices.

REFLECTIONS OF DIVINE LOVE

It is May 1373. A 30 year old woman in Norwich is gravely ill. The local priest has been asked to give her the Last Rites. As she holds a crucifix in front of her eyes she sees blood trickling down from the crown of thorns. She thinks about the Passion and over a period of two days experiences 15 revelations from God and Jesus. She later recovers from the illness, and lived into her 70s. She wrote about these revelations, the first recorded writing by a woman in English. Although her real name is not known, she was later to be known as Julian of Norwich, from St Julian's church where she lived.

Below are some extracts, translated into modern English on the themes of suffering, the soul, sin, prayer, peace and hope. 640 years later, the truth in this writing still rings loud and clear.

With reference to her illness, she writes 'He [Jesus] did not say "You will not be perturbed, you will not be troubled, you shall not be distressed," but he said "You shall not be overcome."

'Made in God's image, there is nothing more like God than the human soul.' She writes that the soul has two parts: The higher part is God's substance: 'In our substance, God made us so noble and so rich that we always work to his will and glory.' The other part of the soul is what Julian calls our sensory being: 'In our sensory being we are lacking- and God will remedy this and make good this lack through mercy and grace...through Christ Jesus.'

'We ought to rejoice greatly that God dwells in our soul and we ought to rejoice more greatly that our soul dwells in God.'

She asks why God had not prevented the beginning of sin: 'Jesus said to me "Sin is befitting, but all shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of things shall be well"

Julian understands how she can never see in God any blame or anger for human sin. This was at odds with the church's teaching at the time. She believed sin was its own punishment and its pain was separation from God.

'I wondered about the revelation 'all manner of things shall be well'...for those who live without faith, live an unchristian life will be condemned to hell. It seemed impossible that all manner of things could be well. To this I received no

revelation from our Lord God except this: what is impossible for you is possible for me. I shall keep my word in all things and I shall make all things well.'

'By nature we are to long, and by grace we are to trust. If we do what we can, and truly ask for mercy and grace, we shall find him in all we lack. And this is what he means when he says "I am the foundation of all your prayers."'

Jesus revealed this: "Pray with all your heart, even though you may feel nothing... for in dryness and in barrenness, in sickness and in weakness, then your prayers are most pleasing to me even though it seems to you that they give you almost no pleasure."

'No kind of prayer makes God compliant to the soul because God's love is always the same.'

'And so I saw that God is our true peace¹ and our sure protector when we are not at peace with ourselves. When we, through the working of mercy and grace, are made humble and gentle, we are completely safe.'

'I saw truly that nothing is done by chance or accident but everything by God's prescient wisdom. If it seems to be a chance or accident in our eyes, those things are in the foreseeing wisdom of God...which he guides to the best conclusion.'

'I saw most certainly there, that before God made us, he loved us. And this love has never abated nor ever shall. And in this love he had done all his works; and in his love he has made everything for our benefit; and in this love our life is everything.'

1. John 14 v27: 'I am leaving you with a gift- peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give you is the peace the world gives.'

From 'Revelations of Divine Love', a translation by Barry Windeatt

Andy Hall

The PCC has been discussing...

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

St James Debt Advice

Graham Reid and his team continue to work through the mound of paperwork involved in expanding SJDA into Taunton Area Debt Advice. TADA is now a registered charity (No 1162324) in its own right. The service is continuing to operate as SJDA until TADA is approved by the Financial Conduct Authority (probably by the end of October 2015).

Volunteers are now coming forward from other churches in the town, and it is hoped that the new independent charity will be supported financially by other churches.

The PCC voted to continue funding SJDA/TADA at the current level for two years (up to £2,000 per annum). A TADA-PCC liaison group is to be established to report on progress.

Safeguarding

Jenny Wakefield presented the Annual Safeguarding Report. The church continues to follow the Diocesan Policy and guidance with regard to recruitment of people involved with children and young people and vulnerable adults. There are 63 people who are actively approved or going through the recruitment process who are required to have DBS recruitment procedures or updates. New applicants cannot take up their posts until the process is completed and the PCC have been informed and agree to the appointment.

Progress reports

Video Screens: the technical problem referred to in the last report has been diagnosed. Work will continue on this project once the people involved have cleared loose ends elsewhere.

Organ: a report has been commissioned into the work that should be undertaken on the organ. It is likely to be extensive and costly.

Church heating: the PCC was informed that it is essential to replace the boilers this year. A contract has duly been placed for £22,000. This will mean that our financial reserves will be less than

they should be. A reduction on gas bills is expected, which will help replace the shortfall. Grants will be sought.

Quinquennial inspection: the five-yearly inspection of the church has shown that more work is needed to deal with loose stonework on the tower; an initial one-day will deal with the immediate items, with the rest of the tower work needing up to 5 days in due course.

Five Year Plan

The PCC reviewed the actions arising from their November Away Day, which began the process of discerning a fresh five-year plan.

The possibility of establishing another main service is still in the background, but we need members to feel called to lead on this.

For some time we have been refurbishing our existing premises. It is now time to assess how well they meet our mission needs.

Our response to “peace and justice issues” has been raised as a topic for review. A start will be made on reviving church members’ interest in our existing mission partners.

The possibility of running another *Growing Leaders* course is being considered. It was noted that in five years’ time we will not have the same co-ordinators or structure, and we need to plan for growth and succession. Also, younger people’s talents need to be developed.

Following the previous course, a strategy group had looked at church growth, which led to the present structure of coordinators. There may be a need to convene another strategy group to review our situation and recommend the next steps.

PCC members agreed to pray about this over the summer.

Hall Chairs

The new hall chairs have arrived. The colour has met with universal approval - many thanks to Suzie Peeler for her expert advice! After assessing storage options, the PCC decided to buy three more trolleys. The green chairs are now all in the church.

The total cost was £9172, of which £6643 is covered by donations, Gift Aid, fund-raising activities and the sale of the old chairs. We have drawn £2529 from the Projects Fund to cover this ... but any further donations won’t be refused!

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

NEWSLETTER CONTACTS LIST

Contacts for Pastoral Matters

Vicar: Rev. Tim Jones 01823 333194 e-mail: timjones@tesco.net

Pastoral Care Coordinator - Annie Reid 07812 130619

Church office: 01823 272931 e-mail: info@stjamestaunton.co.uk

Children and young People's Coordinator - Kate Taylor 01823 619739
e-mail: rhtaylor14@tiscali.co.uk

Magazine Editor - Andrew Slade 01823 259440 e-mail: 3waypersonalprint@gmail.com

Churchwardens - Stan Wojcik 01823 443287 / Ruth Stevens 01823 972838

HOME GROUPS

Tuesday

10:30 am 34 Dunkleys Way (Contact Jean Jarrett 288144)

7:30 pm 25 Whitmore Road (Contact Kathryn Clarke 283691)

Wednesday

2:30 pm 15 Barrington Close Fortnightly (Contact Ken Jamieson 289367)

7:30 pm 13 Gyffarde Street

(Contact Mark Stevens 972838; hosts Bethan and Tim Baigent 271655)

7:30 pm 28 Comeytrowe Lane

(Contact Steve Bradford 337690; hosts Wakefields 277318)

7:30 pm Killams Group (Contact Les Andrews 254344)

7:45 pm 42 Ashley Road (Contact Richard Sainsbury 284688)

8:00 pm Hesperia The Avenue (Contact Richard Carpenter 277916)

8:00 pm North Taunton (Contact Mark Johnson 07796525094)

Thursday

2:30 pm 27 Priorswood Road (Contact Kay Seed 251077; host Sue Collard 271858)

7:30 pm 69 Richmond Road Womens' Group (Contact Margaret Jones 333194)

7:30 pm Gable Cottage, West Lyng (Contact Geoff Treasure 490458)

8:00 pm 12 The Avenue (Contact Sue Doyle 271223; host Annie Reid 07812 130619)

OTHER GROUPS

- Mondays Parent and Toddlers Group 10am-11.30am in the Church Hall
Contact Kate Taylor (619739)
- Tuesdays Bell ringing (alternate weeks) Contact Marian Gentile (275278)
- Wednesdays Art Group in the Church Hall Contact Church Office (272931)
- Praise and Play in the Church 10am - 11am - for pre-school children
 and their parents/ carers every Wednesday.
 Contact Kate Taylor (619739)
- Thursdays Thursday Fellowship (first Thursday of the month)
 in the Church Hall Contact Vicky Dykes (282507)

BELL RINGING OUTING

Bell ringers from St James and Thurloxtton joined together for their Annual Bell ringing outing on Saturday June 13th



Church towers visited were Culmstock, Hemyock, Clayhidon Pitminster and West Buckland. Food too was high on the agenda and well catered for with Lunch at The Half Moon, Clayhidon and a Cream Tea at West Buckland.

Thanks to Marian Gentile for arranging the day and for everyone who made it possible in visiting each tower.



DECEMBER NEWSLETTER DEADLINES

The Next Newsletter is due out on 1st December. All entries for this Newsletter must be submitted by 31st October. All entries are at the discretion of the Editorial team and the space available.