

The background of the magazine cover is a photograph of a golden wheat field under a bright blue sky with scattered white clouds. A single stalk of wheat with its seed head is prominently featured in the foreground, extending from the bottom left towards the center. In the distance, a line of green trees and some buildings are visible on the horizon.

# St James Church Magazine

*September - November 2023*



## Letter from the Vicar

Rev Fabian Wuyts

Vicar of St James

### Holidays Blues ... Can one find rest throughout the year and not just on days off?

*"Reframing rest as a context for, rather than an absence of, doing makes us realize that our day does not need to be captivated by the allure of speed." Rod Wilson<sup>1</sup>*

For many families and working people, the summer is the ideal time to go on a holiday. For a good number of years, as a family we've spent our summer holidays camping. This year, we have been camping near St David's in Pembrokeshire, South West of Wales.



Holidays give people space and time to discover and have fun. For us there were beach days with body surfing, paddle boarding and surfing (our older son is getting really good at this), excursions to little villages and small sea towns, hikes, a day at the National Botanic Garden of Wales and a few ice cream treats!

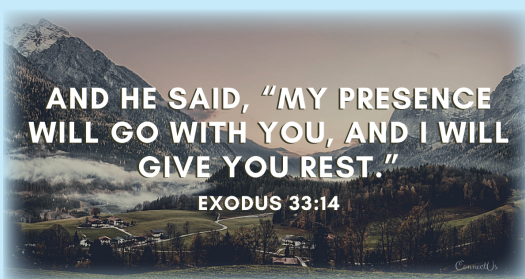
Holidays are also meant to refresh, restore and reconnect us with each other, with ourselves and with God. Despite the gloomy weather and having to weather a storm, our holidays did that in different ways.



Now that I am back home, I wonder whether the experience of rest and of being refreshed and connected are only for holidays and days off. As Christians, we believe that God redeems and restores the whole of life, including work and rest. When God rests from the work of creation in Genesis 2.3, it does not imply that he was no longer active and working. Instead it indicates a posture towards his work.



When Moses challenges God about his call to leadership, God makes a promise, “My presence will go with you and I will give you rest.” (Ex. 33. 14) – an affirmation not that work would stop but that work would be done differently. Similarly,



Jesus, speaking to those who experienced the working of the land as challenging and tiring, said, “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.” (Matthew 11.28)

Biblical rest is not what happens when we take a holiday. It is the way in which we do our work and live our lives. It is our patterns of thoughts and rhythms of life that need to be progressively redeemed and transformed...easier to say that to live it!

Maybe the words of C.S. Lewis in *Mere Christianity* are helpful in this regard:

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*The real problem of the Christian life comes where people do not usually look for it. It comes the very moment you wake up each morning. All your wishes and hopes for the day rush at you like wild animals. And the first job each morning consists simply in shoving them all back; in listening to that other voice, taking that other point of view, letting that other larger, stronger, quieter life come flowing in. And so on, all day. Standing back from all your natural fussings and frettings; coming in out of the wind.*

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When the morning begins with contemplative prayer that listens to that other voice, the day can be more restful quite apart from how busy our schedules may be.

Fabian

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<sup>1</sup> Much of my reflection is taken from a helpful article written by Rod Wilson: <https://world.regent-college.edu/rods-reflections/rest-in-peace> September 19, 2014 / Issue Volume 26, Number 3, Fall 2014 / Rod's Reflections.

## What's in the Magazine...?

Page 2	Vicar's Letter	Page 21	A Mind of Their Own
Page 5	Harvest	Page 22	Hard Words 1
Page 6	Letter from the Bishop	Page 24	Focus on Mission
Page 7	Our amazing world	Page 26	School News
Page 8	Eco Church	Page 27	Time for the next Reformation?
Page 10	The Fisherman's 23rd Psalm	Page 28	Young People's Pages
Page 12	Wilder Churches	Page 30	Crossword
Page 14	Missionary Trip to Uganda	Page 32	PCC News
Page 16	Severe Trauma Recovery	Page 34	Who's Who on the PCC
Page 18	Quiet Day	Page 35	The Chancel
Page 20	Martha - unlikely heroine	Page 36	Contacts

*Many thanks to all the contributors to this edition of the Magazine. If you have something to share for the December '23 - February '24 edition, do contact the Editor either directly or through the Church Office - details on page 36.*

***Deadline for copy is Tuesday 14th November 2023***



This edition of the Magazine is packed with information and also some articles that I think are quite likely to promote discussion...

Holiday season is over but Fabian has some observations on whether we can experience rest and refreshment at other times. Maybe there is opportunity on the St James Quiet Day - see pages 18 for information about that and talk to Lyn or Felicity.

Ruth Preater-Gillard and John Henden tell of their experiences of how prayer and God's help have aided them in different situations, while Jo George reviews a book that might help those trying to cope with children or teenagers. Jenny Wakefield gets us thinking about Martha - was she more than just a biblical catering manager...?

Richard Carpenter challenges us on climate change and also starts a new series seeking to "unpack some of the gnarlier words and phrases that float around in current Christian thinking". And Martin Wakefield's article talks about church-planting and whether it's time for a new Reformation. There are more articles from which to take comfort and inspiration as well as some of our 'regular' updates in various areas. Thank you to all who have contributed.

If you have comments about any of the articles in the Magazine, do email the Editor - [dancingdoyle@sky.com](mailto:dancingdoyle@sky.com) - I'd love to hear your views.

*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.co.uk](http://www.stjamestaunton.co.uk)*

*The views expressed within the magazine may not necessarily represent those of St James Church*



# HARVEST

Our Harvest celebration is on Sunday 15th October this year. We shall be asking you to bring gifts that we can then donate to Open Door (see 'Focus on Mission' on page 24 for details of how this charity works in Taunton). Here is a list of the sort of items Open Door have asked for specifically that will best help them in their work. If you can spare one or more of these gifts that would be really helpful. Either bring them to church on the day or you may deliver them to the Church Office beforehand if you know you won't be in church for the service.

## Non Food Items

*Liquid Hand Soap*  
*Razors*  
*Shaving Foam*  
*Deodorant*  
*Toothpaste*  
*Toothbrushes*  
*Shower Gel*  
*Hairbrushes*  
*Combs*  
*Hair bands/Bobbles*  
*Wet wipes*  
*Washing Powder*  
*Washing up Liquid*  
*Dishcloths*  
*Kitchen Roll*  
*Tin Foil*  
*Toilet rolls*

## Food

*Cereal*  
*Cereal Bars*  
*Biscuits*  
*Sweets*  
*Chocolate*  
*Crisps*  
*Sugar*  
*Hot Chocolate*  
*Coffee*  
*Squash*  
*Ketchup*  
*Brown Sauce*  
*Long Life Juice*  
*Long Life Milk*  
***Tins/jars:***  
*Baked Beans*  
*Ham*  
*Spam*  
*Corned Beef*

## Tuna

*Bolognaise Sauce*  
*Mayonnaise*  
*Garden Peas*  
*Tomatoes*  
*Carrots*  
*Mushrooms*  
*Custard*  
*Curry Sauce*  
*Cooking Oil*  
*Salt, Pepper*

## NOT NEEDED

*(they have sufficient)*  
*Flour*  
*Gravy granules*  
*Pasta*  
*Rice*  
*Tins of soup*  
*Tinned fruit*

## “When is the Harvest Supper?” I hear some of you ask...

This year we've tweaked the idea slightly. Instead of a large Harvest meal on another day, there will be a new event – *Come dine with us...at home!* There are several 'hosts' who will be providing a meal, at lunchtime or dinner time later in the day on Sunday 15th October. All you need to do is sign up on the list to say that you'd like to eat, your preferred time and to indicate if you have any allergies etc., and if you have transport allowing you to travel (we have some hosts who live on the edge of town or just outside). 'Them in charge - our Vicar!' will then match you up with a host. It means you can meet new people from our congregation, enjoy a surprise meal and you won't have to cook or wash up that day!

If you need to know more about how things will work talk to Ruth Crooks on a Sunday or text her on 07472756203. Look out and listen up for notices and announcements in church and on the Bulletin nearer the time.



DIOCESE OF  
**Bath & Wells**

Living the story. Telling the story.

**Letter from Bishop Michael, Bishop of Bath and Wells**

## **Learn from the Master**

When you hear the word 'disciple', what comes into your mind? A learner? A follower? A super Christian? Someone kitted out in Biblical dress complete with robe, sandals, tea towel head covering and beard?

The New Testament's word for disciple doesn't quite match any of these descriptions. It's much closer to the word we'd use in English for 'apprentice'.

Back in history, and still today, to be an apprentice meant spending time in the presence of a master in order to learn a craft – maybe carpentry, or blacksmithing, baking or butchery. You'd start out doing the simple stuff – sweeping floors or sharpening tools. Then gradually you'd acquire more and more skills until you learnt to work confidently with materials producing beautiful things, products of utility and worth. Apprentices often learnt their craft while living alongside their masters, becoming members of their trade through time spent together at work and rest and play.

Jesus was often called 'the carpenter's son' – apprenticed to his worldly father Joseph, growing in skill at the plane and the lathe. He was also the apprentice of his heavenly father. The Gospels speak of Jesus withdrawing to spend time with God in order to know God's mind, hear God's voice, grow in God's ways.

Apprenticeship was and is a story of growth, development, discovery and change. It's the journey that Jesus invites us to take with him too – of baby steps and toddler stumbles, of emerging skill and increasing understanding.

Churches near you are offering opportunities to apprentice yourself to Jesus this autumn - from practical action that gets you involved in Jesus's service to the world, to learning and discussion that comes with courses such as Alpha, Exploring Christianity or Pilgrim.

Why not sign yourself up and learn from the Master?

Every blessing  
Bishop Michael



## Our Amazing World

When I started studying Physics, Chemistry and Biology at secondary

school, the subjects were so much simpler than when I retired over 50 years later. In 1957 the idea that the DNA of the cells carried the genetic information for development was a new thought. The idea of a helical (not a spiral) chain of two single chains joined like a ladder was novel. The molecule was found to bend and flex so that a very long molecule could be packed into a small volume.

But further research showed that there was a system of opening the ladder so that each side could then grow the missing side. So, 1 became 2 then another copying meant there could be 4 copies, and so on. The really important finding was that the ladder could be opened in the middle and just part of the ladder copied. This meant that individual genes could be copied.

The copying of individual genes was done slightly differently as the copy was an RNA molecule which meant it was sorted by the cell and sent to a different system that translated the message into protein. That system is as complicated as the DNA/RNA genetic system.

The whole set up, we now know, is very tightly controlled. There are 'ON' switches, 'OFF' switches, helper molecules, a correcting system that checks the copying is true and corrects errors.

Then, around 35 years ago, workers at Leicester University showed that by using the parts of the system it was possible to analyse the make-up of the DNA of individuals so that each person's DNA 'fingerprint' could be determined. Consequently, in the early 90's a young man was given a life sentence for crimes he had committed because his DNA was at the scenes and the chances of it being another person's DNA were billions to one against that. Genetic fingerprinting is now an established investigative tool.

During the 90's the worldwide analysis of the human genome was undertaken and currently research on the details of many diseases that are genetic in origin is being undertaken using the Human Genome data; and we are gaining the ability to edit safely genetic defects.

That is a brief resumé of only a small portion of the development in modern sciences. Similar accounts of other developments across the sciences could be written. The amount we have learnt in 50 years is staggering.

Albert Einstein is recorded as saying, "The most incomprehensible thing about the universe is that it is comprehensible." That statement is one that comes to mind whenever I reflect on the advances in science in my lifetime.

Why is the universe understandable? Because it reflects the character of God, its creator.

Andrew Wright



# Beyond 1.5°C - we just broke the planet!



As I started drafting this article it had just been announced that June was the hottest month recorded on Earth for some 120,000 years<sup>1</sup>. As I'm editing the final version, it's clear that July will take that mantle (It did! – Ed.). Will it be August's turn by the time you read this?

## Why does 1.5°C matter?

Failure to meet the target to limit average global warming to 1.5°C is primarily a sign of political failure. It's just eight years since almost every country across the planet signed up to a binding treaty commitment. That, intrinsically, is why that number matters.

As it becomes clearer that the 1.5°C commitment will be broken, there is a danger that the nay-sayers will proclaim that it was only ever a line in the sand so going past it really doesn't matter. It does. Each 0.1°C increase leads to greater problems and not caring as we sail past the only major globally agreed limit in the area of climate change will amplify those problems.

## Disruptive change

This really is an area where change now (which may incur cost) will overwhelmingly pay off in the future. Inaction will be much more expensive and will damage environments and people far more than doing the right thing now. The difficulty is that we're looking so far ahead and looking at systems that take so long to change. It's rather like planting trees that will not mature in our, or even our children's, lifetime. It's hard to visualise the future. For the sake of those yet to come, it's imperative that we do so.

Once changes have happened, they will take a very long time to 'unhappen'. One of the most concerning risks is to the circulation pattern across the Atlantic Ocean – the bit we usually think of is the Gulf Stream, but it's far more complicated than that. Melting of the Greenland ice sheet may cause the whole circulation to be sufficiently disrupted so that current climate patterns are significantly affected. Many changes may result from this, one being for Western-European winters to get much colder.

<sup>1</sup> *I realise that there was no one around with a thermometer for almost all of this period but science has enough tools when looking at ice-cores and the archaeological and geological records to determine what the weather has left behind.*

## Pledges and policies

Real-world action has been slow, and the levels of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere are still rising. As a result, UN scientists believe the world is ‘likely’ to warm well beyond 1.5°C based on current government targets.

Such an increase might not sound much. It wouldn’t just be slightly warmer days for us. Increasing the average by that much will lead to many more extreme weather events – heat waves, flash-flooding and the like. And such events are likely to be more extreme than those we experience today.

As we reach hard deadlines for action – with (potentially) real impacts on people’s lifestyle and choices – it’s clear that calls for pushback are getting louder. It’s vital that we continue to listen to the science; delays now will cost more. Climate change is neither proportional nor pragmatic.

That said, we need to be clear as to who should drive the changes needed. It’s not simply OK that electric cars (unaffordable for many) are touted as the only option and the policy for active or public transport is (it sometimes seems) just to ignore the first and let the second wither away.

Perhaps the greatest danger is that governments have lost the will (or perhaps ability) to govern. For instance, moving towards a plant-based diet could halve carbon emissions (much less land would be required and far less water needed) but those who might recommend and promote it think more about voter anger than planetary breakdown. We seem to have entered the ‘bread and circuses’ era as those in charge find yet more ways to divert the attention of us all from the threat we face.

Antonio Guterres, UN Secretary General, recently implored us all to respond to this situation with action, not despondency:

*“The evidence is everywhere: **humanity has unleashed destruction. This must not inspire despair, but action. We can still stop the worst.** But to do so we must turn a year of burning heat into a year of burning ambition. And accelerate climate action – now.”* (27 July 2023)

For Christians, we can have confidence that what is required is action rather than panic; action within the context of our loving creator God. A key message from the church to the rest of the world has to be that the poor must not be left out during any changes to a sustainable way of life.

Richard Carpenter

## THE FISHERMAN'S 23rd PSALM

It's said that there are three kinds of people in this world:

- Those who have just been through a storm;
- Those who are in a storm;
- Those who are about to go through a storm.

In Mark Chapter 4, the disciples and Jesus were in a fishing boat in the middle of the sea of Galilee when a violent storm started. The disciples begged Jesus to do something and he rebuked them, "Why are you so afraid? Do you have no faith?" We know that Jesus calmed the storm but what he said seems harsh. I'm pretty sure that if I'd been in that boat I would have been terrified too. The disciples literally had nothing else to cling on to, except Jesus.

This maritime story reminds me of a visit we made to West Bay in Dorset recently. If you visit St John's church near the harbour, you will see models of trawlers and wooden sailing ships decorating the window sills. Over 100 years ago, West Bay (or Bridport Harbour as it was known then) had a thriving fishing and shipbuilding industry before tourism arrived along with the railway. In the church you will find the fisherman's version of the 23rd Psalm:

*'The Lord is my pilot. I shall not drift.  
He lights me across the darkest waters.  
In deepest channels, He steers me.*

*He keeps my log. He guards me by the star of holiness, for His name's sake.  
Though I sail amidst the thunders and tempests of life,  
I will fear no danger for You are with me.  
Your love and your care, they shelter me.  
You provide a harbour ahead, in the haven of Eternity.  
You anoint the waves with oil, My boat rides calmly.  
Surely, sunlight and starlight shall favour me on all the voyages I take,  
and I will rest in the port of God my Father, forever,  
Amen'*

What 'voyage' will you be embarking on this week? It may not be as dangerous as fishing on the open sea, or you may not be making a physical journey at all. But there may be some uncertainty about how things will turn out. As the saying goes, 'Stuff happens, you can never be sure.' The tricky 'waters' you might face could involve something to do with your work, caring responsibilities, exams, medical treatment, a difficult conversation, a diagnosis or numerous other things. The outcome may turn out to be a happy one, or a difficult one.



Psalm 107 also picks up the theme of sailors in a storm...

*"Lord, help!" they cried in trouble, And He saved them from their distress.  
He calmed the storm to a whisper and stilled the waters.  
What a blessing was that stillness, as He brought them safely into harbour.'*

Perhaps when we are in the middle of our own storm, we should copy what these sailors did and pray, in faith, "Lord, help!"

Fundamentally, I believe that God looks after us. St Paul wrote that absolutely nothing can separate us from the love of God. To put this another way, nothing will stop God working for our good. He blesses every living moment. How smoothly or otherwise that our lives are going at any one time provides no indication of how much God loves us.

Why do I think this? Well, firstly, because God's love isn't conditional on us feeling fine or being on our best behaviour. Also, I think that evidence of His love is all around us. God blesses us in ways we often count as unremarkable.

The other day it occurred to me that the most remarkable things in life are often those which we usually consider completely ordinary. For example, the air we breathe, the leaf of a tree doing wonderful things for our environment, bees, the senses that we're born with...and countless other everyday blessings we take for granted. If you think about it, we truly live in a wonderland.

Sometimes, of course, unexpected blessings stand out, such as the God-given kindness of a stranger. Stephen Grellet, an American Quaker, reminded us that we can all be agents of God's blessings when he wrote:

*'I shall pass through this world but once. Any good therefore that I can do or any kindness that I can show to any human being, let me do it now. Let me not defer or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again.'*

Life's blessings, whether remarkable or unremarkable, can all be traced back to God the Father, Jesus the Son and the Holy Spirit who hovered over the waters at the time of creation. And they still do.

Andy Hall



# Wilder Churches

This is the fourth summer of meadow flowering for St James. It was interesting to see how many more species were in evidence this year. We sowed a native meadow mix late in 2019, and this year we have seen cowslips, wild carrot, knapweed, more mallows and Ox-eye daisies for the first time. Apparently, some seed can lie in the ground for decades and when the conditions are right they will grow.

No Bee orchid this year though...  
perhaps a good crop next June?!



I wonder if you took a walk around the meadow on the mown paths during our month of prayer in June and July? A prayer trail gave opportunities to pause, consider and pray.

Thank you to Children's Church who collected the ripe Yellow Rattle seed in July. I will freeze some of it to vernalise it and we'll rake and sow areas of the meadow which are still grassy. That'll be a job for late autumn. There are some spare Yellow Rattle seeds. If you would like

to sow some in a corner of your lawn to make it more insect-friendly, do ask!

Here are our Homegroup members helpfully sorting out the seed from the pods!

We had a visit from 'Britain in Bloom' judges as part of Taunton's bid. Environmental responsibility and community participation are part of their assessments these days. The Parks and Open Spaces team wanted to show how they are managing our mowing and also our eco-friendly changes. We'll have to wait and see how Taunton gets on!



(above) Knapweed and buff-tailed bumble bee  
(below) Ox-eye daisy





More busy times in the church grounds when St James school Year 6 leavers came to celebrate their primary years in July.

During part of their day they helped to build a second bug hotel in the meadow area. Our original one was made in 2019 and has done useful work in encouraging invertebrates. The children searched for dry natural materials to fill pots which they added to each layer of the hotel. Cones filled some gaps!



Susie, Mike and I had fun watching the butterflies and bees whilst we were waiting for our first group of children to arrive.

Scything the meadow area was on one of those fairly dry days in late July. Hester, our local scything hero, came once again. Grateful thanks went to her, and Johnny and Lilian who helped clear up the mowings. Hester's other expertise came in handy when we saw a couple of less common insects: a Longhorn beetle and a parasitoid Javelin wasp!



I was hoping to let you know about a 'Bioblitz' which was planned for September 16th.

However, it is postponed until Spring next year, when we hope various wildlife experts will be available, and we can make a HUGE list of all the wildlife we find! Do come down to Church to support Ruth's Coffee morning and Sale in aid of Acts 2 Alleviate on September 16th anyway!

And see Lyn Jones' article (page 18) about the Quiet day on 23rd September, to include the prayer trail in the meadow again, with some additions!

Sue Carpenter





# Reflections on Missionary Trip to Uganda

I can hardly believe that six weeks have passed since arriving back in UK. I wrote for the last edition of the Magazine about the forthcoming trip; now it is time to write my reflections. Very difficult to condense my rich experiences into a short article for the magazine, those who came to the recent fellowship meeting will know that I easily filled an hour sharing stories! So here I will try and summarise:

ACTS Uganda is a charity that my friend Emmanuel has set up to support deprived families and children with disabilities. St James Players, church members and the PCC have all been incredibly generous supporting financially to enable critical building works, financing freight charges and facilitate the missionary trip to happen.



The team travelling with Emmanuel (second from right), included (left to right) Grace (president of the charity) Margaret (children's physio), Amy (highly specialised neonatal practitioner), myself (occupational therapist) and Viv (midwife).



Whilst we were there we were able to construct and demonstrate the equipment that was donated and sent over, run therapy and health clinics, carry out community visits, provide basic training, and

distribute food and medication parcels. For me one of the best outcomes was to form strong links with the volunteers working for the charity so that we can carry on offering professional support. Also incredibly valuable was to be able to see the centre, locality, families and children first hand as it helps me picture the scenario and focus my prayers and advice.

Leading up to going, I questioned if I had the skills and knowledge to share with families - but I had to trust that God had put us there for a reason. Before I left I felt God saying to me - if you make a difference for just one, that is enough.

**Acts 20: 35**

*In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: "It is more blessed to give than to receive."*

I recall a special time with a 14 year old boy - afflicted with his erratic movements in arms and legs - hitting himself and injuring his head. We sat together and, just holding him, I felt him relax in my arms. To be honest it was hard, as it was obvious that this lad had been left in his own urine and he did smell. But his need to be embraced was greater than my need to stay clean. By being calm with Rasheed it helped him to relax and accept Margaret doing some exercises with him. I am a doing person - tell me what needs doing and I'll get on with it. In this circumstance God's calling was for me to just be still and the calmness that followed was good for this young lad and for myself.



Coming away we are left with many thoughts and these currently are the priorities for the future:

- Secure regular funding to pay Patience (occupational therapist) for dedicated therapy time
- Ensure the charity has sufficient funding to cover day to day expenses
- Explore ways to enable families to gain access to essential medical advice (cost implications)
- Maintain and develop the fabric of the building
- Consider the focus of future missions
- Innovate ways to create specialised equipment locally and cheaply

For me, I would like to create a monthly prayer meeting to pray for the charity and specific children. I am also exploring ways to create time in my week to dedicate to supporting remote work for the charity. This would mean reducing my hours at work, which needs to be carefully considered.

If you would like to hear more about the charity and the families we supported, we have a coffee morning with table top sale at:

**St James on Saturday 16th September 10am to 12**

I am also willing to do another talk; if that interests people, please let me know.



Ruth Preater-Gillard  
ruthpg75@gmail.com

# SEVERE TRAUMA RECOVERY WORK FOR UKRAINE

This article is about my teaching trip to western Ukraine in February of this year, organised by the Roman Catholic seminary in Lviv-Bryuckhovychi.

On 8th February 2023, I flew into Rzeszow, south eastern Poland, which is a combined civilian and military airport, heavily defended by HIMARS rocket systems. I felt safe in my hotel, which was less than 300 yards from the 'Arrivals' area!

The following day, my Ukrainian hosts (two senior clerics from the seminary) crossed the border into Poland to meet me at the hotel in readiness for the long journey by road through snowy wastes back to Lviv. As we approached the Ukrainian border, passports in hand, I enquired whether I would encounter any difficulty in crossing. I was assured, in common with other Brits who had offered help in recent months, I would be welcomed across with open arms by the border guards.

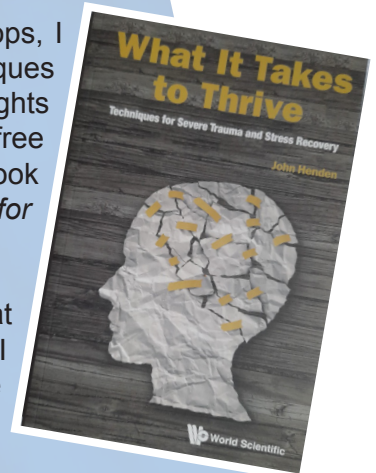


On arrival at the seminary, I was made comfortable in my quarters. The following day, I enjoyed a guided tour of the old town by one of the workshop registrants who assured me that life carried on as normal, despite frequent air raid sirens and all historic church windows, statues and monuments being covered in corrugated iron cladding for protection against explosions from any incoming rockets.

At the 2-day workshop which followed, we had 65 participants, which comprised 40% clergy; military and civilian psychologists, counsellors and a few military welfare workers who were providing help to families who had lost loved ones in the war and to soldiers returning from the front.



Over the two days, as is usual with these workshops, I teach simple and easy-to-pass-on tools and techniques for dealing with triggers, flashbacks, intrusive thoughts and sleep disturbance, which are outlined in jargon-free and psychobabble-free format in my best-selling book on the topic: *What it Takes to Thrive: techniques for severe trauma and stress recovery*.



At the end of the second day, it was suggested that my book be translated into Ukrainian and that I should be invited to return to Ukraine to deliver more training next year. Naturally, I was delighted!

During my time in Ukraine, I was able to witness to various senior clerics and workshop participants how God had put this tour together over many months and that much prayer had gone into both its preparation and the actual trip.

My hosts were more concerned for my safety than I was, sending an urgent text to ask if I was okay following a nearby explosion. Overall, I felt much safer than when visiting Northern Ireland in various capacities, during 'The Troubles' in the 1980s and '90s.

The message of these severe trauma and recovery workshops is always the same: no matter what psychological and physical trauma people suffer, it is possible to survive and thrive.

I am grateful to all the prayer support I had from St James' folk, among others, both before and during my time in Ukraine.

John Henden



**Simply  
Pray  
Simply  
Pray  
Simply  
Pray  
Simply**



**Lectio Divina**

Praying with scripture

**Examen**

Praying your  
experiences

**Centring**

Praying in your  
“inner room”

**Taizé**

Praying with music

**Labyrinth**

Walking prayer

**Saturday 23 September**

2023

anytime between 9.45 – 15.45

**St James Church**

St James Street Taunton TA1 1JS


[www.stjamestaunton.org](http://www.stjamestaunton.org)

mob: 07772 881463



We are looking forward to inviting anyone interested to our next Quiet Day entitled 'Simply Pray.'

## What does a Quiet Day involve?

 We are all glad of a break from routine. A Quiet Day is an opportunity to take time out from the busyness of life and have time in with God. Whether you are in a good place or having a hard time this might be just what you need.

## Is there a structure to the day?

The day is themed (this time on enriching our prayer life) and has a structure - but no one is under any obligation to follow this. We offer a warm welcome and the time and space to meet with God. If that involves quietly doing your own thing that is absolutely fine, or you may wish to follow the day's programme, or to dip into parts of it. Interested? Why not try us out!



## Any questions?

We are happy to answer any queries after the Sunday service  
or call 07772 881463

## Lyn and Felicity

*This poem from Lilian seems to highlight just the sort of thing you might want to bring to the Quiet Day - to cast your worries on God and then enfold yourself in the peace and love He brings... Ed.*

# Worry

As the washing machine turns clothes over and over we can find  
That thoughts and worries go round and round inside our mind  
The most awful that could happen can be the scenario  
We wonder if we do the right thing or know what path to follow  
We cannot control everything about those we love,  
those we do not want to lose  
I forget my God who reigns, who holds all things together until I choose  
I choose to trust, to believe to have even a little faith  
My God loves my loved ones and can keep them safe  
Our God of hope can be trusted although we cannot see  
He gives the joy of being loved and the peace that we need

## Lilian



## Martha - an unlikely heroine of faith?



Over the summer we heard about several unlikely heroes of faith; young, scared, female and questioning. There are many other examples and one in particular I discovered in the Lectio readings in July.

We are all familiar with the story of Martha and Mary. Martha the nagging older sister busy in the kitchen, grumbling about her (younger?) lazy sister who was sitting at Jesus' feet listening to him, and then being rebuked by Jesus for her obsession with the household chores. Martha has therefore become a bit of a byword for people who are busy doing and not realising what's really important. However, what

is perhaps overlooked is the detail of the story told in John chapter 11 where it is Martha whose meeting with Jesus shows an extraordinary element of faith as she grieves for the death of her brother, Lazarus. Straight talking, sharp-tongued, practical Martha is not afraid to enter into a dialogue with Jesus when he comes late for the funeral. But her faith in him is such that she expresses her belief that her brother wouldn't have died if Jesus had been there. What seemed to me to be remarkable is her expression of belief and hope that Jesus' power is not just to heal or prevent death, but he could beat death. Her ultimate statement of belief stands with that of Peter's declaration at Caesarea Phillipi in Mark 8 when he blurts out, "You are God's Messiah." So too in John 11, dear old grief-stricken Martha makes a clear categorical statement that Jesus is The One. "Yes, Lord, I do believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God who has come into the world." (v27) And then she quietly goes to her sobbing sister and sends her to Jesus.

When we think of Martha and Mary, it is Mary who is seen as the spiritual one. But in this account Mary is so overcome by her grief that she can't face Jesus, until her sister gives her a little gentle push and tells her that he is there. It's Martha, dependable Martha, the one who always comes out with the lunch on time and makes sure the house is clean and tidy, who makes the ultimate statement of faith.

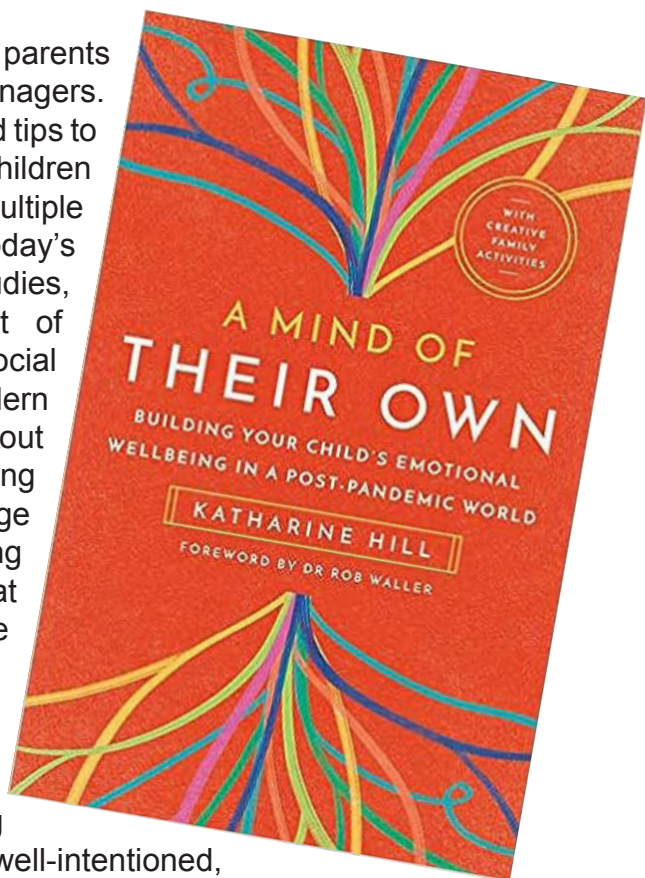
So, to the 'Marthas' of this world; be encouraged you can be practical and have a faith as strong as a rock. And it makes me wonder when Jesus said in Luke 10:41 "Martha, Martha...", whether he had a little smile on his face as he chided the much-loved Martha, who kept the home spick and span and where he came as a house guest more times than any other recorded in the gospels.

Jenny Wakefield

## **A Mind of Their Own: building your child's emotional wellbeing in a post-pandemic world** by Katharine Hill

This is a very useful book for parents of both children and teenagers. Katharine Hill offers hints and tips to help parents support their children as they navigate the multiple pressures of growing up in today's world. Using real life case studies, she discusses the impact of hormones, peer pressure, social media and lockdown on modern teenagers, and also talks about the science of what is going on in the developing teenage brain that makes young people behave in ways that seem so incomprehensible to older generations.

Hill writes in a very non-judgemental way but is not afraid to call out parenting approaches that, however well-intentioned, are misguided and unhelpful. She acknowledges that parenting is a tough gig and that no parents are going to get it right all the time, and gives advice on strategies to try, practical activities that may help, and 'zip it' phrases that parents should avoid at all costs. Although she doesn't hide the fact of her personal faith, this isn't an overtly Christian book, and could be safely lent to anyone without it looking like a covert evangelisation tactic. It's well-written and easy to read, with entertaining illustrations and short chapters that can be polished off in the space of a half-hour lunchbreak (which is exactly when I found the time to get through it!) Altogether, I would thoroughly recommend it to any parents of school-age children.



Jo George



# Hard words #1 – Christendom

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This article marks the start of a new series which will, I hope, help you unpack some of the gnarlier words and phrases that float around in current Christian thinking. We begin with Christendom, looking both at the idea itself but also the impact on the church as we leave that era.

## Just what is it?

In the Christendom era, from roughly the fourth century to near the end of the twentieth, the church had a dominant role in western society and Christian values shaped public life. Today, it seems, we are witnessing a profound shift in world view. Much of Europe is leaving Christendom behind and entering a new period. In this new era, the church is far less influential, and Christianity competes with many other values.

## Where did it come from?

Once upon a time, the church in the west was a subversive organisation, persecuted because of its potential disruptive effect on society around it. Then in a few short years, church leaders moved on from, metaphorically at least, hiding in the catacombs to cosying up to the secular authorities.

With Constantine's declaration in AD313, the church was no longer illegal. By the end of the century, Theodosius had made it the official religion of empire and in 529 Justinian declared that anyone born a Roman citizen was automatically a Christian – only Jews were excepted. Its position as official religion of empire was inherited by many medieval kingdoms.

It has been said (with a little hyperbole) that with the onset of Christendom the church entered an era where Jesus was worshipped but no longer followed, where belief went from being a fundamental change to a coat of sanctifying varnish. A time where the church itself focused more on social order rather than social justice and changed from a rebellious movement to civil society. In short where discipleship metamorphosed into little more than loyal citizenship. Such change in status required changes in thinking, such as:

- Previously the church had banned believers from joining the army, now everyone in the army had to be Christian.
- Reintroducing tithing from its temple-worship context into a wholly different society.
- Infant baptism became the norm – consistent with the thought that being born in the empire means that you're born Christian.



In short, the Church abandoned its prophetic role for one of chaplaincy... Within Christendom, evangelists were redundant; prophets unwelcome, and apostles would threaten the territorial hierarchy. The church simply had to maintain itself while mission was delegated to specialist agencies.

### Christendom effects

The line between the church and world was by and large replaced by the separation of clergy from the laity with all activity focussed on the former and the latter, largely passive. Teaching in the church moved from a balance including much dialogue and discussion to the performative model of the monologue sermon.

Too often the gospels came to be seen as the milk (fit for infants) only required before believers could move on to the solid food of the epistles. Increasingly, writers had to turn to Old Testament models in order to justify practices necessary for a 'Christian country'.

### Why is it an issue now?

Throughout the changes of the recent centuries, there remain lingering memories from Christendom as to what is 'proper' church. The 'maintenance' mindset leads to a church too focussed on its internal life rather than service to those around. Many of the Christendom vestiges in society tend to inoculate rather than assist in evangelising. Our words too often seem to spring from an assumption that Christianity should receive favoured status when compared to other faith groups.

### What can we do (about it)?

The era of Christendom has clearly passed. We need to move on and discover where that should take us. One thing though is certain, we cannot simply return to the church as it was before Constantine. Fundamentally, we have to move on from a position where churchgoing is an essentially passive affair to one where discipleship is a truly 168 hours a week thing and the ministry of the laity is seen as the central work of the church.

As well as moving from maintenance to mission, we need to reimagine ourselves as less an institution, more a movement, from controlling the centre to witnessing from the margins, accepting that we are just one faith movement among many with no privileged call on those we encounter; to embrace a life as pilgrims seeking a kingdom that is not of this world.

Richard Carpenter

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*Care to comment on this or any other article in the magazine?  
Email the Editor - [dancingdoyle@sky.com](mailto:dancingdoyle@sky.com)*

# ...MISSION



## September - Samaritan's Purse

After sharing the story of the Good Samaritan, Jesus said, "Go and do likewise." That is the mission of Samaritan's Purse – to help those in need and proclaim the hope of the Gospel.

Samaritan's Purse is an international relief and development organisation that works through local churches proclaiming and demonstrating the love of God amongst communities in Africa, Eastern Europe and Central Asia. It's part of the global Samaritan's Purse family that has been providing spiritual and physical aid, to people who are hurting, around the world since 1970.

Samaritan's Purse is active all the year round and regular updates are provided on their website (see below) about their different areas of operation. News headlines focus for a short while on different crises, but relief organisations like Samaritan's Purse are still providing emergency response, as in the Syrian/Turkish Earthquake, among Sudanese refugees in Chad or after the dam explosion in Kherson. They also provide ongoing aid through clean water, agricultural, medical and educational projects. Samaritan's Purse has the ability to respond quickly with medical aid, relief supplies and volunteers; but they need the backing of Christians internationally supporting their work.

Members of St James support Operation Christmas Child, a project enabling Christians to provide God's love in a tangible way to children in need around the world, and to share the Good News of Jesus Christ. As autumn approaches, Operation Christmas Child is starting its build up for the collection and delivery of Christmas gifts. If you wish to support this project, either online or through preparing physical boxes for collection, you can find information at:

**<https://www.samaritans-purse.org.uk/what-we-do/operation-christmas-child/ways-to-give/>**

Often our UK boxes go to Eastern Europe, including Ukraine, particularly poignant at this time. Samaritan's Purse has been actively involved there with relief work, some of it seeking to expedite families who have been forced to flee because of the war. Some of the families who have received boxes in the past are among those seeking shelter in countries including the UK.

To find out more, look on the Samaritan's Purse web site:

**<https://www.samaritans-purse.org.uk/>** or talk with Roger Fenton.

## October - Open Door

Open Door is a day centre providing services to Taunton's homeless community. It offers freshly cooked nutritious breakfasts and lunches, five days a week. Clients can access showers, a clothing store and a laundry facility. The organisation relies heavily on core support from churches such as St James for food and clothing throughout the year, but especially at harvest time.

Open Door is not a soup kitchen! It works hard to provide tailored support for individuals aimed at developing life skills and securing accommodation. Working in partnership with a range of agencies, it acts as a hub for access to Somerset Council Housing Department, Somerset Drug and Alcohol Service, the Somerset Homeless and Rough Sleeper Nursing Service, Somerset Rough Sleeper Initiative Team, and MIND.

In November 2022, Open Door lost Mark, their manager of nine years, who now works with the homeless outreach team. Emma has taken over as manager and there is a new support worker, Hayley, who brings with her a wealth of experience working with homeless clients. Open Door also relies on the tireless help of over 40 volunteers, but they are always looking for more.

The service offered is life changing; providing non-judgemental care which is like water in the desert. Those affected by loneliness, boredom, malnutrition, illness and infection find company, community, purpose, nourishment and healing.

The building housing Open Door dates back to the 1880s and unfortunately a recent survey found that repairs to the roof are necessary. Major structural work (structural timbers, chimney repairs and replacement roof membrane) will cost around £50,000. This is a huge amount of money to find. Funding bodies often require matching funding, so Open Door needs to raise as much money as possible themselves. Please have a look at the website for further details about how to donate. <https://www.tauntonopendoor.org.uk/>

If you are interested in supporting Open Door as a trustee or volunteer, please contact Jonathan Sladden or Susie Peeler

Jenny Wakefield

*(Please also see the article on Harvest (page 5) that gives information on specific gifts, apart from money, that you can help with. - Ed.)*



# St James Church School News

## Tower Trips, Cups of Tea and Confetti

As ever it was a joy to welcome the Year 6 pupils and their families for their end of year/end of school services, for both North Town and St James school, celebrating their memories of 7 years at primary school and preparing for the next adventure.



For St James Church school it was a whole day affair, the 4th we have done and the second since Covid hit in 2020. After they had sung, remembered and watched the antics of pupils and staff on the traditional end of term videos, a confetti bomb announced the end of the service and the beginning of the shirt signing and photos with parents before beginning activities.



The logistics of ensuring nearly 60 excited young people get up to the bell chamber, the reopened tower top (single file with only one passing place), have a chance to play on the organ, explore the churchyard, rebuild Hotel Bug, make bespoke badges and have the opportunity to explore what challenges Moving On may bring, is an interesting one. But the youngsters were amazing, the staff really supportive and the day was enjoyed by all. Huge thanks to Marian, Martin, Johnny, Norman, Dave and Fabian on the 'Tower Team', Dave on the Organ with Lil on crowd control, Sue, Mike and Susie in the garden being eco aware, Chris getting to grips with the ancient badge-maker and Fabian and Dave taking turns on the 'Moving On' discussion. Even bigger thanks to Ruth and Maureen for preparing a feast that was devoured in very quick time and Shona for help with coffee and teas. Did I mention tea! Towards the end of the day the entire year developed a taste for a nice cuppa (and biscuits) and politely queued up at the servery – Ruth and I reckoned we must have served 100 cuppas.



Under Mrs Ray's eagle eye the children cleared up most of the confetti before they headed off to school – (Ian might still be find a few little gold discs here and there, sorry Ian!)

**Good Luck to Year 6**

and hoping all the school staff had a good summer break.



## Time for the next Reformation?

I walked into a large church full of young people a couple of months ago...well, folk of my age were in a noticeable minority: very refreshing! And primarily Anglican: even more uplifting! And it was a conference – so let's see what motivated these young Anglicans.

The organisation was CCX, or to give it its full title, the Gregory Centre for Church Multiplication (that's X for multiplication, hence CCX.) The conference was called Multiply, one of several regional gatherings about church planting. And many of the young people were church planters sharing their experience of starting brand new churches.

Before we go any further, don't think that 'church planting' means HTB-style hiving off a group to set up a daughter congregation somewhere else. No. Think closer to home than that, as there are myriad ways to start new churches. In fact, 'Myriad' is a major stream of CCX that "inspires and serves everyday people to form new church communities." Everyday people like you and me, where we are now.

So what's that about Reformation? Haven't we had one of those? One speaker observed that the Church reinvents itself every 500 years. So, we are due the next Reformation around now. There has been a long, gradual decline in church attendance in the West, and we have not been immune to this. Something significant has to happen – and soon.

What to do? We were absorbing 'Life on the Frontline' and 'Talking Jesus' lately, as we look towards reaching out to our friends and neighbours. But we can still feel awkward inviting folk to a 'church service', and for many of our friends, church is a caricature that is not our current experience. We need to shift our focus away from 10:30 on a Sunday morning and towards more accessible groups. Just like Lydia planting the first recorded church in her home in Thyatira (Acts 16).

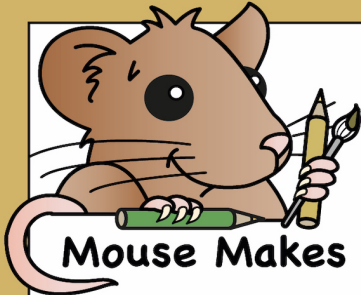
To find out more, look at the CCX website <https://ccx.org.uk/>, and here are two books to get hold of from CCX:

- *The Church of Tomorrow* by John McGinley.
- *Send Me* edited by John McGinley. 16 stories of church planting in action (Dave mentioned this book in one of our August services).

Then pray about where we go from here – there's no prescribed method, just the prompting of the Holy Spirit, one new church at a time!

Martin Wakefield

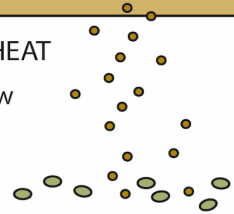
# Young People's Pages



## THE WEEDS AND THE WHEAT

What did the enemy sow amongst the wheat?

Matthew 13:25



### READ

the parable in

Matthew 13 v24-30,  
and v36-43

At harvest time the weeds are gathered, bundled then

but the wheat is stored

in the Matthew 13:30

Who sows the good seed?

Matthew 13:37

What does the field represent?

the

and who is the good seed?

The people of the

Matthew 13:38

Who sows the weeds?

The

Who are the harvesters?

The

Matthew 13:39

"He who has ears, let him

Matthew 13:43

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

PARABLE • HEAVEN • SOWED • GOOD • SEED • FIELD • ENEMY • WHEAT • GRAIN

GROW • TOGETHER • TIME • HARVEST • GATHER • BUNDLE • TIE

PEOPLE • DISCIPLES • JESUS • EXPLAIN • EVIL • FIRE • END • AGE • EARS

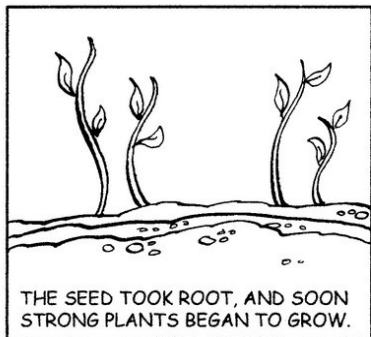
Find the words from the questions too!

The tale of  
the  
Wheat  
and the  
Weeds

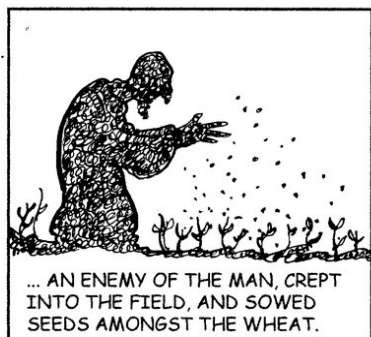
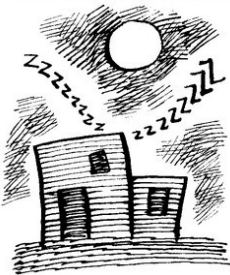
**JESUS OFTEN TOLD  
STORIES WITH  
HIDDEN MEANINGS**



ONE WAS ABOUT A MAN WHO  
SOWED SEED IN HIS FIELD.

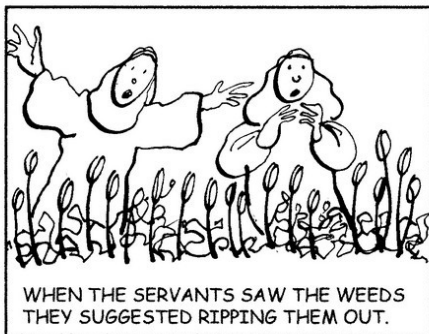
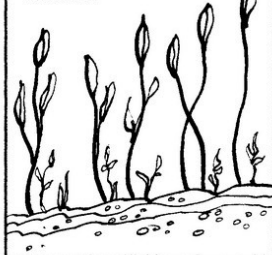


BUT ONE NIGHT, WHEN  
EVERYONE WAS ASLEEP...



... AN ENEMY OF THE MAN, CREPT  
INTO THE FIELD, AND SOWED  
SEEDS AMONGST THE WHEAT.

AS THE WHEAT BEGAN  
TO GROW, SO DID THE  
WEEDS.



WHEN THE SERVANTS SAW THE WEEDS  
THEY SUGGESTED RIPPING THEM OUT.

NO, LET'S LEAVE THEM  
UNTIL HARVEST TIME!



IF YOU PULL THEM UP NOW,  
YOU MIGHT KILL THE WHEAT  
TOO. WE'LL SORT THEM OUT AT  
HARVEST.



WHEN THE WHEAT WAS  
READY, IT WAS HARVESTED  
INTO HUGE BUNDLES.

BUT THE WEEDS WERE  
BURNED IN A LARGE FIRE.



THE PARABLE TELLS US THAT  
ALTHOUGH WE LIVE  
ALONGSIDE BADNESS, WE  
CAN KEEP SEPARATE FROM IT.



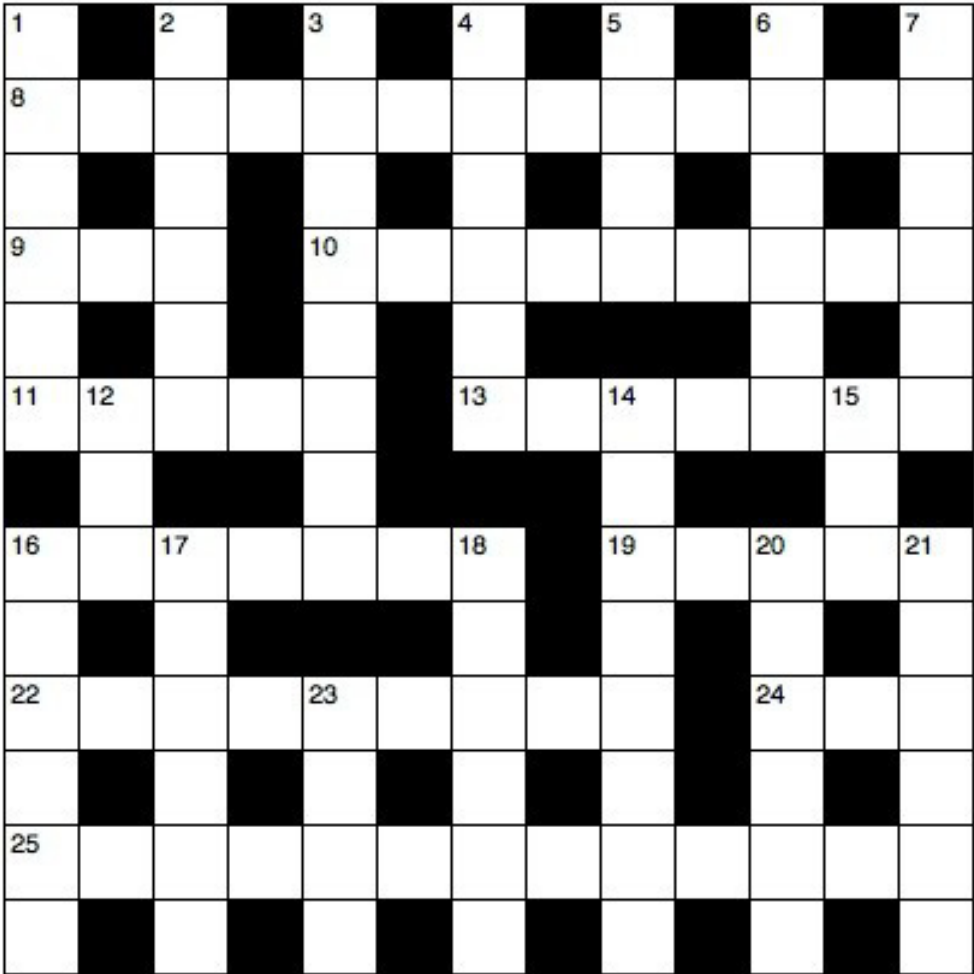
# Crossword

## Across

- 8 Where the Ark of the Covenant was kept for 20 years (1 Samuel 7:1) (7,6)  
 9 One of the parts of the body on which blood and oil were put in the ritual cleansing from infectious skin diseases (Leviticus 14:14–17) (3)  
 10 Uncomfortable (3,2,4) 11 'Yet I have loved Jacob, but Esau I have — ' (Malachi 1:3) (5)  
 13 Where Paul said farewell to the elders of the church in Ephesus (Acts 20:17) (7)  
 16 'Jesus bent down and — to write on the ground with his finger' (John 8:6) (7)  
 19 Prophet from Moresheth (Jeremiah 26:18) (5)  
 22 Comes between Exodus and Numbers (9)  
 24 and 2 Down  
 'Then Elkanah went home to Ramah, but the boy ministered before the Lord under — the — ' (1 Samuel 2:11) (3,6)  
 25 There was no room for them in the inn (Luke 2:7) (4,3,6)

## Down

- 1 Rough drawing (2 Kings 16:10) (6)  
 2 See 24 Across  
 3 Underground literature (including Christian books) circulated in the Soviet Union (8)  
 4 Lo, mash (anag.) (6)  
 5 The Bible's shortest verse: 'Jesus — ' (John 11:35) (4)  
 6 'Can a mother forget the baby at her — and have no compassion on the child she has borne?' (Isaiah 49:15) (6)  
 7 Can be seen in a dying fire (Psalm 102:3) (6)  
 12 'Send me, therefore, a man... experienced in the — of engraving, to work in Judah and Jerusalem' (2 Chronicles 2:7) (3)  
 14 Second city of Cyprus (8)  
 15 United Nations Association (1,1,1)  
 16 One of the women who first heard that Jesus had risen from the dead (Mark 16:1) (6)  
 17 Braved (anag.) (6)  
 18 — of Evangelism, outreach initiative in the 1990s (6)  
 20 'Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes and — in their own sight' (Isaiah 5:21) (6)  
 21 'Neither — nor depth... will be able to separate us from the love of God' (Romans 8:39) (6)  
 23 What Jesus shed in 5 Down (4)



**Down**

1, Sketch. 2, Priest. 3, Samizdat. 4, Shalom. 5, Wept. 6, Breast. 7, Embers. 12, Art. 14, Limassol. 15, UNA. 16, Salome. 17, Adverb. 18, Decade. 20, Clever. 21, Height. 23, Tear.

**Across**

8, Kirith Jearim. 9, Toe. 10, Ill at ease. 11, Hated. 13, Milletus. 16, Started. 19, Micah. 22, Leviticus. 24, Eli. 25, Mary and Joseph.



## ***The PCC has been discussing...***

*Here's a summary of the main things the Parochial Church Council looked at in June and July (no meeting in August).*

### **Finances**

Richard Sainsbury reported that, following the steps taken by the PCC to reduce costs, it looks possible that we may have a slight surplus over our running costs at the end of the year.

The PCC noted that while stewardship giving has increased by about 5% since the start of the year, inflation is running at around 10%.

The diocese is aware that there are many churches like us which are having to reduce their Parish Share contributions as they cannot continue to draw on reserves.

### **Children and Families Worker**

The PCC continued its consideration of employing a Children and Families Worker. The review group had held one 'pooling thoughts' meeting, and the PCC undertook a similar exercise to feed ideas back to the group. Among the points discerned were:

- We need to consider the whole of the week, not just Sundays.
- If we have the vision, the resource will come.
- We must talk to families both inside and outside the church.
- We have to recognise and address insecurities about change.

Everyone is involved and we are all responsible for our church's mission.

### **Premises**

- The replacement of the main church lights is complete, and we are now learning how to adjust the lighting levels using the new dimmers.
- The stonework at the top of the tower has been inspected and there were no signs of anything structurally amiss. The detailed report has listed the usual crop of minor repairs.
- Planning for the replacement of the electrical distribution boards in the church is under way.

### **Children's Church**

Dave Wilkie presented an end of academic year report on Children's Church. The main message is that there is a desperate need to pray for people to lead a group for older children. There are only just enough leaders for Children's

Church itself, so there will be problems if one leader needs to stop. Church members are encouraged to find ways to engage with Children's Church: the eco church team and the worship dancers using flags have already done so.

The numbers of children are at capacity some weeks, so the South Aisle chair layout is being adjusted to make more space for them and also to allow room for new families to join in before going down to the hall.

### **Using our Facilities better**

Regarding the churchyard, the PCC thanked Sue Carpenter and her team for developing the conservation area. Looking back, we made frequent use of the churchyard for children's activities, holiday clubs, all-church barbeques and picnics, so we have experience to draw on. We will look at temporary trails and other simple events initially, and obtain sturdy picnic tables. More permanent installations could include a prayer trail, a sensory garden or a labyrinth.

In the Side Chapel, there was general agreement that this area should be permanently set aside for people to pray, but with changing content. The south-east door should be kept open to give easy access from the street.

The discussion widened to think about visitors generally. Better provision is needed for those interested in the history of the church, and space also needs to be made for faith literature.

### **Miscellaneous Matters**

- Jacquie Sainsbury is our new Assistant Parish Safeguarding Officer.
- Richard Carpenter has been elected as Lay Dean. This role plays a major part in many deanery matters, and will see a focus on the development of lay ministries.
- If you are interested in doing Fire Awareness training, a course is scheduled for 16 September. Speak to Nigel or Joycey.
- Keep an eye out for an announcement about First Aid training. Also, if you would be interested in doing Food Hygiene training in connection with any future event, please speak to Ruth Crooks.
- The PCC continues to keep its policies under review. In this period, we looked at the PCC Standing Orders and the Data Protection Policy, and approved a new Risk Assessment Policy and Guidance. The latter two are on the website under Information/Guidance and reports.

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*



*Fiona Hope*



*Lyn Jones*



*David Jordan*



*Sue Lucas*



*Chris Rickard*



*Richard Sainsbury*



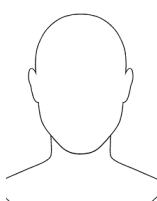
*Johan Smit*



*Vashti Smit*



*Nic Tall*



*Vacancy*



*Jenny Wakefield*



*Martin Wakefield*

## The Chancel!

A number of people have asked about the screens across the chancel. Well, it's a long story...

Pre-Covid there was nothing in the chancel behind the drums other than the projector staring back at everyone with a bright light. When we restarted services after lockdown, the chancel filled up with stacks of non-socially distanced chairs, and the livestream background was a forest of upturned chair legs! So, we moved the burgundy screens from the crèche area to hide the chairs and improve the livestream picture, and it also blocked the stray light from the projector. As the number of chairs reduced and the band gradually reappeared, the screens moved back to where they are now. Coincidentally, this is roughly where the pre-1884 chancel ended.

Thanks to Fabian, the large wooden cross now makes an excellent centrepiece, and the flower team has been creating wonderful displays around it. In so doing, the visual focus for the congregation has shifted forwards.

And now the screens have come to rest because, while the forest of chairs has gone, they have been replaced by little-used furniture evicted from the Side Chapel. If we took the screens away you would see some of it, even though most is crammed up in the east end behind the second set of screens, and the projector would be visible again. We intend to dispose of some of these redundant items, which will ease the situation, but please bear with us because we need faculty permission to do this...and that will take time.

Meanwhile, do have a chat with me if the screens bother you, or please also say if you like the arrangement. Or is it a matter of the colour?

Martin Wakefield

*This is a quote from a sermon, given by Nic Tall on 13 August 2023:*

**'You will never look into the eyes of a person who is unloved by God'**

*Just think what that means for you and for me...*

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