



THE WORD

Editor: Stuart Baker: stjohnbirkdaletheword@gmail.com



THE PARISH MAGAZINE OF
ST. JOHN'S CHURCH
ST. JOHN'S ROAD, BIRKDALE. PR8 4JP
Charity Number 1128171

St. John, Chapter 1, verses 1 and 14:

*"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God...
The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us."*

ISSUE No. 243

MARCH 2023

ST. JOHN'S PARISH CHURCH

God Centred, Relationship Driven and Life Transforming



In striving to be God Centred, Relationship Driven and Life Transforming St. John's is pleased to inform our readers that we have a number of new activities in addition to those which have commenced in recent times and during our Interregnum.

Revd Roy and Sue Doran have very kindly decided to start a **Bible Study** group on two Wednesday afternoons each month. We have not had a Bible Study group since before the coronavirus pandemic, and this will be a very worthwhile addition to our ways of understanding the Bible.

There are many times in our lives when we are lonely and need some friendly company, or when we need to be able to talk to someone who will listen with a sympathetic and understanding ear. And sometimes it's nice just to have a coffee and a chat! In March St John's will start a new monthly activity: **Coffee, Cake and Chat**. **Anyone** (you don't have to be a St John's attender) who would like to come to the church hall for company and a chat will be very welcome to come and enjoy coffee (or tea!) and cake in a relaxed atmosphere. We hope that members of our congregation will support this which will give an opportunity to churchgoers and non-churchgoers to meet together.

In recent years we have held an annual **Memorial Service** at which **anyone** can come to the church for a short period of quiet reflection in memory of a lost loved-one and, if they choose to do so, light a candle of remembrance. This year we shall hold this service on 16th April. It is available for anyone, no matter how long ago they lost a relative or friend.

For details of all these: read on...

FOR ALL ENQUIRIES TO OR ABOUT ST. JOHN'S CHURCH PLEASE CONTACT US
BY EMAIL info@stjohnsbirkdale.co.uk OR PHONE: 07732 691542

WHO'S WHO AT ST. JOHN'S

Priest (retired)	Rev. Roy Doran (572387)	Church of England Children's Society:	Mrs. Sylvia Kent (564071)
Reader:	Mrs. Christine Baker (560518)	Mothers' Union:	Mrs. Linda Caton (564737)
Churchwardens:	Stuart Baker (560518) Clive Morris (564206)	Girl Guides	Mrs. Janette Law (565951)
Deputy Warden:	Tim Wright (553977)	St. John's Brownies:	Mrs. Helen Jones and
Wardens' Assistant::	Miss Lucy Wright (553977)	Brownie Guiders:	Mrs. Lesley Scott
Treasurer:	Mrs. Sylvia Kent (564071)	St. John's Rainbows:	Mrs. Lesley Scott
PCC Secretary:	Alex Vernon	Church Flowers:	Mrs. Cath Whiteside (568874)
Parish Hall Secretary:	Mrs. Jean Morris (564206)	Magazine Editor:	Stuart Baker (560518)
Electoral Roll Officer:	Stuart Harris	Magazine Printer:	Mrs. Christine Baker (560518)
Safeguarding:	Stuart Baker (560518) and Ms. Michelle Baldeh	Notice boards, I.T, Website developer:	Mrs. Sally Wright (553977)
		Buildings Inspector:	David Halsall

Growth Groups

2nd & 4th Wednesdays, 7.30pm
@ 32 Hartley Crescent

*Finding out more
together*



WE'D LOVE YOU TO JOIN US

*We believe in
the power of
prayer*

**PRAYER
TIME @ ST
JOHN'S**

Led by the leadership team

**1st and 3rd Thursdays
7.30pm**

SEE WEBSITE FOR ZOOM DETAILS



Thursday Evening Prayers

The next prayer meetings by **zoom** and telephone will be at 7.30pm on 2nd and 16th March.

If there is anything which you would like to pray about with others contact Sally, Tim or Lucy Wright, or Christine, Clive or Roy.



WHAT'S ON AT ST. JOHN'S



Visit our new website

stjohnsbirkdale.co.uk

- Find out about what's going on at St John's
- Check out the calendar for upcoming events
- Listen to the weekly talks
- Find out about booking the hall
- Free on-line bible
- Show it to your friends and family

God centred, Relationship driven,
Life transforming

St John's Presents **FILM NIGHTS**

Come and join us as we enjoy great films and refreshments @ 6.30pm
film begins at 7pm

For details of our screenings
see our church noticeboards

17 February

17 March

28 April

26 May

23 June

Free entry, refreshments available

ST JOHN'S INVITE YOU
TO JOIN US IN OUR

SOCIAL EVENTS

If you'd like further details or to book a place please contact Christine 07821 982477 or Sally 07800 550097



Friday 13 January @ 7pm

Early, Early Burns Night

Friday 24 February @ 7pm

Late, Late Pancake Party

Saturday 11 March @ 7pm

Andy Dean's Quiz Night

Friday 21 April @ 7pm

Italian Food Night

Friday 5 May @ 7pm

Coronation Bangers & Mash

Date to be confirmed

Summer Fair & Afternoon Tea

Saturday 8 July @ 2pm

Strawberry Tea

Friday 22 September @ 7pm

Harvest Supper

Friday 20 October @ 7pm

Just Desserts

Friday 17 November @ 7pm

Bingo and Beetle Night

Friday 1 December 6-9pm

Christmas Tree Festival and

Saturday 2 December 10-3pm

Christmas Fair

YOUNG ADULT SOCIALS

2022/2023

Sunday October 9th

Pumpkin picking & Sunday Lunch

Saturday November 5th

Bonfire party @ Hurlston Hall

Saturday December 3rd

Christmas fayre & supper @ Lucy's

Friday January 20th

Snow White Panto @ The Atkinson

Friday February 10th

Film and fajita night @ Lucy's

Sunday March 12th

Waffles and Walk in the pinewoods

St John's Church, Birkdale

St John's March Calendar

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
		1	2 Prayer Time @ 7.30pm (on zoom)	3	4	5 10.30am Service followed by Holy Communion
6	7	8 <i>NEW</i> Bible Study 2pm Growth Groups 7.30pm	9	10 <i>NEW</i> Coffee, Cake & Chat 10.30am	11 Quiz night 7.00pm	12 10.30am Service Young Adults (time: ask Lucy)
13	14	15 Midweek BCP Holy Communion 10.30am	16 Prayer Time @ 7.30pm (on zoom)	17 Film Night 6.30pm (film starts at 7.00pm)	18	19 10.30am Service: Mothering Sunday
20	21	22 <i>NEW</i> Bible Study 2pm Growth Groups 7.30pm	23	24	25	26 10.30am Service
27	28	29	30	31		

Holy Week and Easter Services Dates for your Diary

April 2nd: Palm Sunday, 10.30am Service at St John's (talk by Sally) followed by Holy Communion

April 6th: Maundy Thursday, 7.30pm at St John's. An informal occasion, with light refreshments and a talk by Revd Roy Doran

April 7th: Good Friday, 10.45am at Liverpool Road Methodist Church, joint service

April 9th: Easter Day, 10.30am at St John's (talk by Christine) followed by Holy Communion

WHAT'S NEW AND COMING SOON

TOGETHER @ 7 *A time for Worship and Fellowship*

Can we encourage you to come to worship and have fellowship together across the three churches?

Please join us for an informal service with a time for refreshments. This is a fantastic opportunity to meet others from our partner churches and build up our relationships with the other Christians in Birkdale.

As we move towards the goal of appointing new clergy to our parishes it is our responsibility to make sure we are ready. Our new vicars will be working across the three churches and will be encouraged from the start of their ministry to see that we, as three congregations, have prepared the way for that new ministry.

So please make 'Together @7, and other joint services, your priority as we all embark on this journey.

5 March - St John's
2 April - St James'
7 May - St John's
4 June - St Peter's



St John's Church Birkdale

BIBLE STUDY GROUP

2nd & 4th
Wednesdays

2-4pm
St John's small hall

Starting on
8th March



FRIDAY

Coffee, Cake & Chat

ST JOHN'S CHURCH, ST JOHN'S RD, BIRKDALE PR8 4JP

ST JOHN'S CHURCH BIRKDALE
MONTHLY
2ND FRIDAYS
10.30AM

Starting
on 10th
March

St John's Church, Birkdale, PR8 4JP

Quiz Night

SATURDAY
11 MARCH

ST JOHN'S
BIRKDALE

QUIZ STARTING AT : 7PM
TEAMS OF UP TO 4

FOOD AT : 8PM

TICKETS : £10
BRING YOUR OWN DRINKS

www.stjohnsbirkdale.co.uk



Our Series of Sunday Sermons for Lent

On Ash Wednesday our worship leaders started a new series of Sunday Sermons: **"Give It Up For Lent."**

The talks will encourage us:

- to give up looking back but instead to move forward
- to give up doubting the power of Satan
- to give up lacking confidence
- to give up thinking we are being punished
- to give up thinking we are not special enough
- to give up giving God second best

Do join us to hear these talks as we draw closer to Easter.

Easter Lilies 2023

If you would like to commemorate anyone at Easter please contact **Cath Whiteside** who will be organising the arrangement of Easter Lilies.



Donations will be very welcome.



The **Film Nights** will continue during 2023. See page 3 for the dates.

We have a licence from CCLI which permits us to show films distributed by many film production companies but we have been told that we must not publish details of the films either in print or online outside of our church premises.

We have a printed notice on the church noticeboards and each month's film will be announced in the oral notices in church. If our friends at St James' or St Peter's or LRMC or anyone else who does not attend St John's would like to know what film will be shown from month to month please contact Christine Baker on 560518.

Spring forward



Don't forget to set clocks ahead one hour at 2 a.m. Sunday.

British Summertime starts at 2.00am on Sunday 26th March

Worship on the
Second Sunday of
Lent

SUNDAY 5th MARCH: COMMUNION

**10.30am service IN CHURCH and via
zoom & phone**

**Worshippers in church are invited to remain in
church after the first part of the service has
concluded and receive Communion.**

Collect for the Second Sunday of Lent

Almighty God, by the prayer and discipline of Lent may we enter into the mystery of Christ's sufferings, and by following in His way come to share in His glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**The subject of
Roy's talk:**

Give Up Lacking Confidence

The Reading: Psalm 118, verses 1-9, 22-24 (New Living Translation)

- 1 Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good! His faithful love endures forever.
- 2 Let all Israel repeat: "His faithful love endures forever."
- 3 Let Aaron's descendants, the priests, repeat: "His faithful love endures forever."
- 4 Let all who fear the LORD repeat: "His faithful love endures forever."
- 5 In my distress I prayed to the LORD, and the LORD answered me and set me free.
- 6 The LORD is for me, so I will have no fear. What can mere people do to me?
- 7 Yes, the LORD is for me; he will help me. I will look in triumph at those who hate me.
- 8 It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to trust in people.
- 9 It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to trust in princes.
- 22 The stone that the builders rejected has now become the cornerstone.
- 23 This is the LORD's doing, and it is wonderful to see.
- 24 This is the day the LORD has made. We will rejoice and be glad in it.

TOGETHER @ 7

*A time for Worship
and Fellowship*

**Can we encourage you to come to worship and have
fellowship together across the three churches?**

SUNDAY

5TH MARCH

@ 7PM

AT ST JOHN'S

Please join us for an informal service with a time for refreshments. This is a fantastic opportunity to meet others from our partner churches and build up our relationships with the other Christians in Birkdale.

EVERGREEN BLOSSOM ACADEMY



A visit to St John's

On Sunday 12 March we will be joined in St John's by the Headteacher of Evergreen Blossom Academy in Ghana. Some of you will remember the relationship we have had over the years with this school through links via Lucy Wright and Hannah Richie.

The school was founded in September 2011 and opened the following September. Lucy was privileged to meet Francis during her last year at Greenbank and Hannah went to visit the school itself in Ghana. Both have been involved in fund raising for the school over the years as have members of our congregation. As a family we have been involved since the school was set up and it has always been close to our heart so we are particularly honoured to welcome Francis to St John's.

About the school

The school is based in Akropong-Akuapem in the Eastern region of Ghana and aims to deliver quality education to the children in the community as well as supporting the needy to provide equal education. The community in which the school is located has about 8000 people with different economic and social backgrounds.

Evergreen Blossom Academy is a faith based school and believes in the values of Christianity. They believe it is their mission to educate all students to the highest levels of academic achievement, to enable them to reach and expand their potential and to prepare them to become Productive, Responsible, Ethical, Creative and Compassionate members of the society.

Francis has led the school from the beginning and has always been driven by the vision of making the school the best it can be for the children he serves. He has had strong links with Greenbank High School over the years and also with Farnborough Road Junior School. Fundraising in Southport has helped him extend and improve the building and provision over the years – something for which I know he is very grateful. Without people's generosity Evergreen would not be the school it is today.

Supporting the school

Currently, there is a building project on the go which will become a purpose built computer lab, kitchen and canteen. If you would like to give towards this project I am sure Francis would be most grateful. We hope to be able to give him a gift after his visit to St John's. If you would like to make a donation through the bank please use the reference Evergreen.

If you are in the service on Sunday 12 March please take the opportunity to chat to Francis over coffee and welcome him to St John's. I know he is very keen to join us for worship and is excited to meet us all in person. I am sure he can expect a warm St John's welcome!

Sally Wright



Worship on the Third
Sunday of Lent

SUNDAY 12th MARCH

**10.30am service IN CHURCH
and via zoom & phone.**

Collect for the Third Sunday of Lent

Eternal God, give us insight to discern your will for us, to give up what harms us, and to seek the perfection we are promised in Jesus Christ our Lord.

**The subject of
Tim's Talk:**

**Give Up Thinking You Are
Being Punished**

Reading: Luke chapter 13, verses 1-9 (New Living Translation)

- 1 About this time Jesus was informed that Pilate had murdered some people from Galilee as they were offering sacrifices at the Temple.
- 2 "Do you think those Galileans were worse sinners than all the other people from Galilee?" Jesus asked. "Is that why they suffered?"
- 3 Not at all! And you will perish, too, unless you repent of your sins and turn to God.
- 4 And what about the eighteen people who died when the tower in Siloam fell on them? Were they the worst sinners in Jerusalem?
- 5 No, and I tell you again that unless you repent, you will perish, too."
- 6 Then Jesus told this story: "A man planted a fig tree in his garden and came again and again to see if there was any fruit on it, but he was always disappointed.
- 7 Finally, he said to his gardener, 'I've waited three years, and there hasn't been a single fig! Cut it down. It's just taking up space in the garden.'
- 8 "The gardener answered, 'Sir, give it one more chance. Leave it another year, and I'll give it special attention and plenty of fertilizer.
- 9 If we get figs next year, fine. If not, then you can cut it down.'"



St John's Church, St John's Rd, Birkdale



*Mothering
Sunday*
SERVICE

SUNDAY 19 MARCH

10.30 am



A time to say thank you





**Midweek Book of
Common Prayer
Holy Communion**

**WEDNESDAY 15th MARCH
10.30am service IN CHURCH**

**Worship on the Fourth
Sunday of Lent
Mothering Sunday**



**SUNDAY 19th MARCH
10.30am service IN CHURCH
and via zoom & phone**

Collect for the Fourth Sunday of Lent

Merciful Lord, you know our struggle to serve you: when sin spoils our lives and overshadows our hearts, come to our aid and turn us back to you again; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Collect for Mothering Sunday

God of love, passionate and strong, tender and careful: watch over us and hold us all the days of our life; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**The subject of
Lucy's talk:**

**Give Up Thinking You Are Not
Special Enough**

The Reading: Luke chapter 15, verses 4-7 (New Living Translation)

4 "If a man has a hundred sheep and one of them gets lost, what will he do? Won't he leave the ninety-nine others in the wilderness and go to search for the one that is lost until he finds it?
5 And when he has found it, he will joyfully carry it home on his shoulders.
6 When he arrives, he will call together his friends and neighbours, saying, 'Rejoice with me because I have found my lost sheep.'
7 In the same way, there is more joy in heaven over one lost sinner who repents and returns to God than over ninety-nine others who are righteous and haven't strayed away!

World Water Day is 22nd March

We take clean water for granted. After all, when did you last turn on the tap and expect filthy water to come out?

But sadly, bad water is still a daily reality for billions of people. The United Nations wants to help them by ensuring that everyone can access clean water by 2030. It is part of the so-called '2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development', and it is an enormous challenge.

Meanwhile, this year each one of us can do at least something to help on 22nd March. A donation to Water Aid will help provide safe water to marginalised communities worldwide. Simply go to: www.wateraid.org/uk



Worship on the Fifth
Sunday of Lent

SUNDAY 26th MARCH
10.30am service IN CHURCH
and via zoom & phone.

Collect for the Fifth Sunday of Lent

Gracious Father, you gave up your Son out of love for the world: lead us to ponder the mysteries of his passion, that we may know eternal peace through the shedding of our Saviour's blood, Jesus Christ our Lord.

**The subject of
Clive's talk:**

**Give Up Giving God Second
Best**

The Reading: John chapter 12, verses 1-8 (New Living Translation)

1 Six days before the Passover celebration began, Jesus arrived in Bethany, the home of Lazarus—the man he had raised from the dead.

2 A dinner was prepared in Jesus' honour. Martha served, and Lazarus was among those who ate with him.

3 Then Mary took a twelve-ounce jar of expensive perfume made from essence of nard, and she anointed Jesus' feet with it, wiping his feet with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance.

4 But Judas Iscariot, the disciple who would soon betray him, said,

5 "That perfume was worth a year's wages. It should have been sold and the money given to the poor."

6 Not that he cared for the poor—he was a thief, and since he was in charge of the disciples' money, he often stole some for himself.

7 Jesus replied, "Leave her alone. She did this in preparation for my burial.

8 You will always have the poor among you, but you will not always have me."

National Day of Reflection & Great Daffodil Appeal 2023

For the third year running, Marie Curie will lead the National Day of Reflection on **Thursday 23rd March**.

It is a day for everyone to remember loved ones who have died, and to support people who are grieving. There will be a minute's silence at noon, a nationwide network of Walls of Reflection, and a series of grief-themed online events.

Taking place on the third anniversary that the UK went into lockdown, the National Day of Reflection raises awareness of the impact of grief on our lives and of the need for better support. Millions of people across the UK – adults as well as children – are grieving now and need support, whether in the workplace, at home, in schools or across communities.

The National Day of Reflection also ties in with the charity's flagship annual fundraising appeal in March – the Great Daffodil Appeal – with people donating and wearing one of their iconic daffodil pin badges. Every year thousands of supporters from across the UK come together to raise money to support the charity's nurses, doctors, and hospice staff so they can continue to provide expert care to people at end of life, and their families.

More details at: www.mariecurie.org.uk/dayofreflection

ST JOHN'S CHURCH BIRKDALE PR8 4JP



Memorial Service



Come and join us to remember and celebrate the life of loved ones - gone but never forgotten

Sunday 16 April @4pm
St John's Church
Birkdale



@stjohnsbirkdale



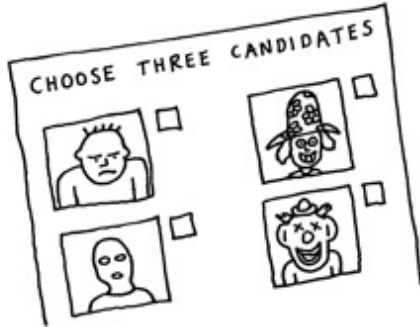
St John's Birkdale

www.stjohnsbirkdale.co.uk

THE ELECTORAL ROLL

REASONS TO JOIN IT

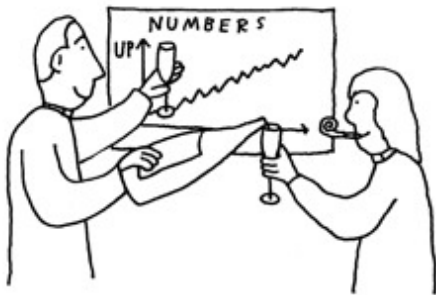
① YOU WILL DECIDE WHO SHOULD BE ON THE P.C.C. AND DEANERY SYNOD



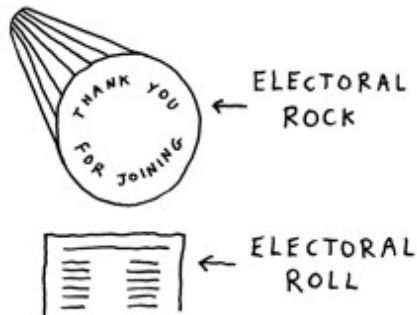
② YOU CAN PLAY A FULL PART IN THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH



③ IT WILL BOOST THE MORALE OF THE CLERGY



④ THERE MAY BE A THANK YOU PRESENT - SEASIDE CONFECTIONARY PERHAPS



⑤ YOUR NAME WILL BE EXHIBITED IN CHURCH FOR 14 DAYS



But seriously.....

Electoral roll revision

The **Electoral Roll** is the basic list in every parish of all those entitled to vote on elections within the Church of England. Those entitled to have their names on this roll have to be 16 years of age or more and they must reside in the relevant parish or be regular worshippers in the church whose roll they wish to join. The roll is completely renewed every six years, at which point all members have to re-apply for membership or else their names will be deleted. By this means, the continuing validity of the roll is maintained. The Roll is then reviewed each year before the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM).

Only those on the Electoral Roll are entitled to vote at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting, which will be held in 2023 on Sunday 23rd April.

The Electoral Roll was last renewed in 2019 and following the latest 2022 revision there are 64 names on the roll for our parish.

If you are not currently on the roll but meet the criteria outlined in the opening paragraph, and would like to apply to be on the electoral roll of the Parish of St John Birkdale, please contact our Electoral Roll Officer Stuart Harris. During March he will revise the Roll by removing from it the names of those who have died or who are no longer eligible to be on it and will add to it anyone who is eligible and who has submitted the necessary application form which can be obtained from him.

If you have changed your address during the last twelve months please ensure that the Electoral Roll Officer is informed of your current address.

If you are currently on the roll but would like your name to be removed, please contact the Electoral Roll Officer.

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING AND ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

Formal Notice will be given soon that the APM and APCM will be held on **Sunday 23rd April immediately after the 10.30am service in church has concluded.**

Everyone living in the parish of St John's is entitled to attend the Annual Church Meeting ("APM") at which churchwardens will be elected. That meeting will be very brief.

The Annual Parochial Church Meeting ("APCM") will follow immediately after the APM and only those who are on the Church's revised Electoral Roll will be entitled to vote on any matters which require a vote.

There are some important matters which have to be addressed at these meetings. The first is the **election of Churchwardens**. Throughout the history of St John's church there have always been two churchwardens in office. The Churchwardens Measure 2001 (the equivalent of an Act of Parliament) provides that a churchwarden shall be disqualified from serving as a churchwarden after serving for six successive terms of office in the same parish. Stuart Baker was elected as a warden in 2017 and will have completed six successive terms of office by the date of the Annual Meeting and he is therefore not eligible for re-election. **This will leave a vacancy and it is important, particularly during the Interregnum when we have no Vicar, that this vacancy is filled. Members of our congregation are all urged to give serious thought to whether they would be willing to become a churchwarden. Stuart Baker and Clive Morris will be very pleased to discuss this with anyone who might be interested and willing to take on this role and to provide advice and guidance as to what is involved.**

Also at the APCM there will be the election of members of the Parochial Church Council (the "PCC"). This is the small group of parishioners who meet several times each year and make the important decisions about how the church is run, how its finances are administered, and how it will conduct the search for a suitable appointee to the post of Vicar of our parish.

In recent years (but perhaps it has always been so) there has been a reluctance amongst members of our congregation to become members of the PCC. Some may see it as too arduous: it is not. Some may not want to take on the responsibility: but the responsibility is shared and decisions are taken after discussion and prayerful thought. And some have decided that they have "done their bit" already: we might all be able to say that, but if everyone adopts that position we would not have a PCC and our church would grind to a halt. ALL members of St John's owe it to our faith, our church and our community to share the burdens and the benefits of being part of this church family. So if you have taken the time and trouble to read this far into this article PLEASE give serious thought to whether you would be willing to serve on the PCC and add to the wealth of experience and good sense which are such valuable commodities.

All of our congregation are urged and cordially invited to attend the APCM at which you will hear about what has been happening at St John's during the last year and what is on the horizon. You will have a chance to ask questions and, importantly, your presence will show that we have an active and interested church family. Please do not leave it to the usual suspects to be the only ones there. **We would love to see YOU at the meeting!**

Stuart Baker

Plan ahead with a Choice Funeral Plan



Choice Funeral Plans could provide peace of mind to you and your family

With our Funeral Plans:

- Fix Funeral Director Services costs which may go up or down in the future
- Record your personal wishes
- Contributions towards Third Party Fees and Additional Products & Services are optional
- Additional payments may need to be made for items not covered by the plan

For a brochure or more information call us or visit one of our branches:

Southport

1-5 Roe Lane, Southport PR9 9DR
01704 500 086

Ainsdale

82 Station Road, Ainsdale PR8 3HW
01704 577 786

howardsfuneraldirectors.co.uk/choice



Howard's Funeral Directors are trading names of Funeral Partners Limited (Funeral Partners) which distributes Choice Funeral Plans, which are provided by Alternative Planning Company Limited (APCL). Funeral Partners is an appointed representative of APCL. APCL is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority with firm reference number 965282.

ALPHA COURSE AT ST. JAMES' CHURCH

St James' church is running an Alpha Course which started on Thursday evening, 26th January. It runs from 7.00pm - 8.15pm each week and lasts for 10 weeks until the end of March.

Alpha is a series of sessions exploring the Christian faith. Each talk looks at a different question around faith and is designed to create conversation in small groups.

For each Alpha session, a video will be shown and the video will ask questions which will be chatted about in a group. Refreshments will be served during the evening in the form of tea, coffee and soft drinks and cakes.

ALL WELCOME

Thank You for a Generous Gift

The PCC and Wardens are very grateful to **Howard's Funeral Directors** for a generous donation of £200 to assist our church with its work. The photograph (right) shows Christine receiving a cheque from Ruth Meadows, the Merseyside Regional Development Manager of Funeral Partners Limited.

This donation will assist our church to commence the new **Coffee, Cake and Chat** meetings which will commence on **10th March**.



Lent At St Peter's Church

Evening Lent Series

with Visiting Speakers: led by Revd Canon Dr Rod Garner and Revd Philip Caton.



Sundays at 4.30pm on March 5th, March 12th and March 26th.

Maundy Thursday, April 6th, at 7pm, Holy Communion and address by Revd Canon Dr Rod Garner.

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

FRIDAY 3RD MARCH at 11.00am

A SERVICE FOR EVERYONE!



I have heard about your faith

At Lord Street West United Reformed Church

INFORMED PRAYER, PRAYERFUL ACTION

**24/7 365 DAYS A YEAR
PRAYER MOVEMENT * ECUMENICAL *
INTERNATIONAL * WOMEN-LED**

**A Coronation Celebration Date
at St John's for your Diary**

BANGERS & MASH

Friday 5 May 7pm

Tickets £10 - Bring your own drinks

www.stjohnsbirkdale.co.uk



The Rev Dr Gary Bowness continues his tongue-in-cheek letters from 'Uncle Eustace'

On the perils of moving from city to country

The Rectory,
St James the Least of All

My dear Nephew Darren,

Those parishioners of yours who won millions on the Lottery and moved into this parish have created quite a stir. It was perhaps a little unwise of them to tell everyone the reason why they had become so wealthy. While most of our parishioners also do the Lottery, few would ever admit it in public. (Since your friends arrived, the entire PCC is buying ever more lottery tickets, but from the shop in the NEXT village, to try and keep it secret.)

However, your family still has much to learn about our country ways. Buying the old Dower House was impressive; and spending a small fortune re-stocking the gardens was certainly commendable. But someone should have told them about installing cattle grids. It must have been quite a shock for them to wake up one morning and find the thirty sheep from the neighbouring field had wandered in for breakfast.

Their brand-new purple Ferrari has certainly brightened up the country lanes around here. The noise it makes as it roars up behind you quite quickens the pulse. Mrs Beamish had been suffering with low blood pressure for months; she says she is quite cured now. The Colonel, who is all for the community supporting the church, then asked if the newcomers would drive the bishop around on the day he came to do his tour of the parish. The Colonel thought that an open-topped purple Ferrari would make a great bishop-mobile; and the newcomers were so kind to agree. What a shame that they decided to accomplish the several miles of parish lanes in record time: the bishop barely even saw the several farmers that they nearly ran down. His new nickname in this parish is: The Purple Peril.

The newcomers have installed security lighting, which is understandable. But now I wonder how much sleep they are getting, as the rabbits, foxes, and badgers who live in their grounds keep it flood-lit for much of the night. Meanwhile, the Colonel is grumbling about the effect of light pollution on his young pheasants in the woods nearby.

But these little inconveniences apart, I am sure they will soon feel at home. I feel confident that by the third generation, they will be properly settled in.

Your loving uncle,
Eustace

Canon Paul Hardingham continues his new series on the spiritual disciplines that help us to grow and deepen our faith. It will run throughout this year.

Spiritual Disciplines – Fasting

Spiritual disciplines are practices designed to help us grow as disciples of Jesus. This month we are looking at the practice of fasting.

Fasting can be a neglected discipline, but plays an important part in the Christian life, especially during Lent. Jesus began His earthly ministry by fasting in the wilderness for 40 days and taught His disciples to fast: *'when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that it will not be obvious to others that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen.'* (Matthew 6:17,18).

Why Fast?

Firstly, giving up something in my life underlines my desire to put God first in my life. Secondly, fasting shows me how much I depend on things other than God in my life, so I can surrender my idols to Him. Thirdly, fasting encourages me to have a deeper hunger and dependency for God in my life. Therefore, fasting gives me space to focus on God for His strength, provision, and wisdom and leads to a more intimate relationship with Christ. It also enables the Holy Spirit to reveal my true spiritual condition, leading to repentance, and a transformed life and a more attentive heart towards God.

How can I fast?

Usually fasting involves missing one or two meals during the day, although some can't abstain for medical reasons. It might also include abstaining or limiting the time I give to television, alcohol or social media. However, Lent can also be a time to embrace new spiritual disciplines e.g. joining a study group, 'random acts of kindness', or giving more time to prayer and Bible Study. Whatever you do, make Lent count this year!

'Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.' (Matthew 5:6).

REVIVE INTERNATIONAL

RESTORING LIVES, RENEWING HOPE

St John's has been supporting Revive International for many years and we have followed their progress in starting a fostering programme. We are pleased to report to our readers that a young boy has become the first child to be fostered through ReVive. He is settling in with a newly trained foster family, giving him a fresh chance at a loving family life.

The charity celebrated this major milestone towards the end of last year as they launched their long-awaited fostering service. ReVive has been engaged in many years' work to get fostering legislation passed, and more recently, to envision and prepare future foster parents.

ReVive provides homes and protection for abused and vulnerable girls in Olinda, a city of around 400,000 people in the north-east of the

country. But the charity's long-term vision is to see vulnerable children cared for within a strong, high-quality fostering service, and to make fostering the primary form of full-time care for vulnerable children in the city by 2030.

Tony Lewry, ReVive's fostering coordinator, said:

"There are so many vulnerable children in our city who desperately need a safe place to live. Our service will not only offer a safe place but a family environment that will create the atmosphere each child needs to overcome the challenges life has thrown at them."

ReVive now runs two homes (one for younger boys and girls) and has supported over 75 girls by providing accommodation, protection and education, taking them out of danger and helping them to rebuild their young lives.

GOD in the Arts

The Revd Michael Burgess continues his series on God in the Arts with a look at **Sandro Botticelli's 'Primavera'**, (Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons)

He Gave Us Eyes To See Them

Each month we are exploring a painting that celebrates the glory and wonder of creation. In this month of March the world around us is moving from the cold and harshness of winter to new birth as the earth comes to life again in the season of spring.

It is the theme of 'Primavera' by the 15th century Florentine artist, Sandro Botticelli. His work in the Sistine Chapel in Rome brought him to the attention of the Medici court, which commissioned this painting in 1482. The Medici dominated the political life of Florence, but Cosimo and his descendants were also great patrons of the arts. Humanism, which debated the place of reason in a world of faith, was the mood of the day in court life, and the work of artists at that time expressed the human form in all its beauty.

Scholars have never agreed on the exact meaning of 'Primavera,' but it is certainly a celebration of beauty and fertility.

We can identify a host of classical figures: Mercury on the left of the canvas separating the clouds so that Spring may come; Zephyr, the west wind, on the right, who is pursuing Chloris; Flora, the goddess of abundance robed in a colourful dress and adorned with flowers. In the centre we see Venus, the goddess of beauty, with a blindfolded Cupid

above, preparing to shoot an arrow at the three Graces, whose arms are joined in a stately dance.

The setting is a wooded garden where the trees are filled with oranges, myrtle surrounds Venus, and wondrous flowers spring up from the earth.

At first glance the sensuousness and fruitfulness seem almost profane. But we look again and think we see not Venus in the centre, but the Blessed Virgin Mary, whose own fruitfulness gave birth to the Saviour.



The three figures by her side could be the Christian virtues of beauty, truth and goodness who dance in her honour, while all around God's creation blossoms forth to bring joy and new life.

It is the world of the Song of Solomon, which the early Fathers could only accept as an allegory of Christian love, where the individual soul seeks the Saviour. But that book of the Old Testament was written in praise of the love that moves human life, as much as it moves the universe. And that can only be good because God the creator is good.

The writer invites the beloved to accompany her to the fields and vineyards and find fruits in blossom and plants in bloom: a wilderness transformed by growth and goodness. Just so, we enter the garden of this painting. The characters may be classical, some may be Christian, but as we look we see a creative Love that transforms the winter of death and darkness into light and Spring – the birthday of creation.

W CROSS R D

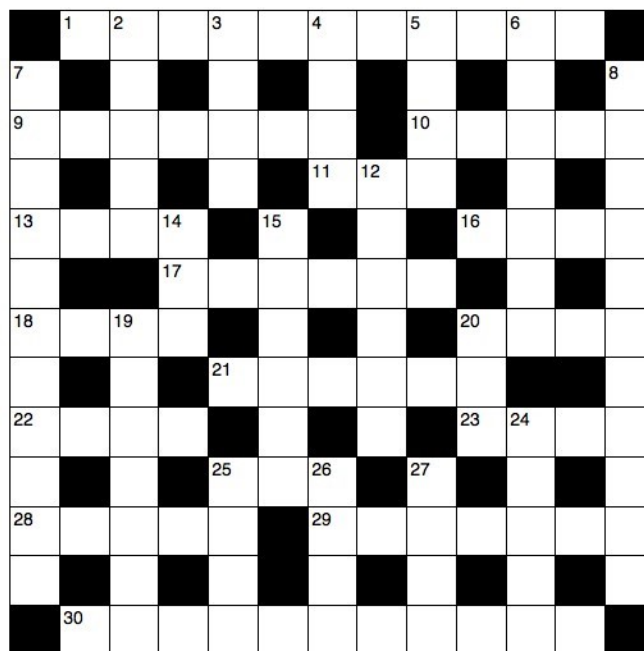
Solution on page 26

Across

- 1 These letters come between Romans and Galatians (11)
 9 'You will not — me to the grave' (Psalm 16:10) (7)
 10 King of Moab to whom the Israelites were subject for 18 years (Judges 3:14) (5)
 11 Town possessing mineral spring (3)
 13 Mede (anag.) (4)
 16 High-fidelity (abbrev.) (4)
 17 He succeeded his father Rehoboam as king of Judah (1 Kings 14:31) (6)
 18 A son of Simeon (Genesis 46:10) (4)
 20 Controversial religious book of the 1970s, The — of God Incarnate (4)
 21 'He has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you — — and hear' (Acts 2:33) (3,3)
 22 'You — me together in my mother's womb' (Psalm 139:13) (4)
 23 Edit (anag.) (4)
 25 'Who has believed our message and to whom has the — of the Lord been revealed?' (Isaiah 53:1) (3)
 28 Abraham's brother (Genesis 22:23) (5)
 29 'When Mordecai learned of — that had been — , he tore his clothes' (Esther 4:1) (3,4)
 30 Sympathetic (Proverbs 11:16) (4-7)

Down

- 2 'That was why his parents said, "He is — —; ask him"' (John 9:23) (2,3)
 3 Integrated Services Digital Network (1,1,1,1) 4
 4 'Saul has slain his thousands, and David his — of thousands' (1 Samuel 18:7) (4)
 5 Concept (John 8:14) (4)
 6 'Do we, then, — the law by this faith? Not at all! Rather, we uphold the law' (Romans 3:31) (7)



- 7 Industrious (2 Timothy 2:6) (11)
 8 'I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be — in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you' (Ephesians 1:18) (11)
 12 'Out of the same mouth come — and cursing' (James 3:10) (6)
 14 This was how many of the Jewish leaders described Jesus (John 10:20) (3)
 15 Vitality (Job 20:11) (6)
 19 He urged David to kill Saul at Hakilah (1 Samuel 26:8) (7)
 20 'So for a whole year Barnabas and Saul — with the church and taught great numbers of people' (Acts 11:26) (3)
 24 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord — —' (Deuteronomy 6:4) (2,3)
 25 Parched (Matthew 12:43) (4)
 26 'In the image of God he created him; — and female he created them' (Genesis 1:27) (4)
 27 Disparagement (Psalm 15:3) (4)

In our Book of Remembrance in March

- 3rd Winifred Hare, 2005
 5th Gladys Whipp, 1994
 7th John Hamer, 1930
 8th Elsie Leather, 2011
 9th Harry Pickering, 1985
 10th Ethel Street, 1994
 13th Doris Ashworth, 1982
 14th Isaac Bell, 1974
 15th John Crosby, 2005

- 18th William Sawyer, 1979
 Arthur Short, 1961
 25th Elizabeth Pacey, 2007
 27th Margaret Fitton, 2010
 Joan Fawbert, 2018
 29th George Hind, 1996
 30th Dorothea Wignall, 2004
 31st Margaret Pierce-Jones, 1984

If any of our readers wish to have the name of a deceased relative inscribed in the Book of Remembrance please contact Stuart Baker.

Book of Remembrance

A request has been received for a name to be inscribed in the Book of Remembrance and the Book will be delivered to a professional calligrapher on 8th March. If anyone would like to have the name of a loved one inscribed in the Book please contact Stuart Baker **before 8th March** so that the additional names can all be inscribed at the same time.

God in the Sciences

Dr Ruth Bancewicz, who is based at The Faraday Institute for Science and Religion in Cambridge, writes on the positive relationship between Science and Christian faith.

A bucket of tadpoles: Springtime, curiosity, and the Theology of Science

When I was nearly three, I knocked a bucket of tadpoles all over the patio. Those unfortunate creatures must have been collected to educate my brother and me on where frogs came from, but a toddler can't just stand by and watch. Can I see up close? Or maybe I was 'helpfully' moving it to another place. I just remember doing something I shouldn't have done, and tadpoles on the ground. I was sad that I wouldn't get to see those creatures grow up.

I might have been great at destroying things when I was a child (my family would probably say I still am), but I absolutely love watching living things up close. The more I learn, the more my sense of wonder grows. For a tadpole to become a frog, large sections of its gut, salivary glands and muscles must die, as well as the gills. The cells in those tissues are programmed to curl up and disintegrate, and are swallowed up by a specialised kind of white blood cell. Legs grow from small sacs of cells on the tadpole's body, and one of my textbooks says that 'The nervous system is also remodelled' - which I suspect is a bit of an understatement.

This knowledge removes a little of the mystery of how a tadpole turns into a frog, but there is plenty more to discover. These few details also reveal the cleverness of the process. Metamorphosis is surprisingly common in the animal kingdom. How is that an efficient way to grow up, or is efficiency not the most important thing for an animal?

Scientists are essentially grown-ups who are still very much in touch with their inner two-year-old self. They refuse to stop asking questions, even when finding an answer becomes decidedly more awkward than opening a textbook.

Many scientists are people of faith, and this also drives their questioning. They believe that God created a world that was very good, that the purpose of all Creation is to praise Him, we are made in God's image, and that we are tasked with looking after Creation. So Christians, of all people, should be enjoying and investigating our surroundings. These are the bones of a Theology of Science which serves some of us very well, and keeps us looking into things like buckets of frogs - that is, until a two-year-old comes and knocks them over.



WORD SEARCH

Solution on page 24

St Patrick's Day Mothering Sunday Annunciation Lent

Leeks for St David's day, daffodils for the rest of the month: March brings us Spring. St Patrick, who brought Christianity to Ireland, is remembered with parades. Mothering Sunday and Mother's Day are celebrated with more daffodils and Sunday lunch 'out'. March brings us the Annunciation, when the angel first appeared to Mary to tell her of her coming pregnancy. March is the month of Lent, of prayer and preparation for Easter.

Leeks
Daffodils
Spring
Patrick
Day
Mum
Mother
Angel
Ireland
Wales
Sunday
Lunch
Pregnancy
preparation
prayer
parades
Mary
Magnificat
Fasting

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

Remembering Sir Christopher Wren

It was 300 years ago, on 8th March 1723, that English architect Sir Christopher Wren died at the age of 90. Best known for designing St Paul's Cathedral, he was also a ground-breaking anatomist, astronomer and physicist.

A founder of the Royal Society, Wren served as its president from 1680 to 1682 and was highly regarded by such eminent scientists as Isaac Newton and Blaise Pascal. But it is as an architect that he is best known: beside St Paul's, regarded as his masterpiece and completed in 1710, he directed the rebuilding of 52 churches after the Great Fire of London in 1666 – though he did not work alone, heading a team of creative minds that included Nicholas Hawksmoor.

Born at East Knoyle in Wiltshire, Wren was the only surviving son of Christopher Wren the Elder, who became Dean of Windsor. He was a sickly child but lived a long life, despite his family being affected by the Civil Wars that broke out in 1642. He married twice, but both his wives died very early – one of smallpox and the other of tuberculosis. Although Wren lived 90 years, he was married for only nine of them, but had four children.

Two factors may have contributed to Wren's success as an architect: one was basic – his decision to move into that field because of the dearth of architects in the mid-17th century; the other was more dramatic – the Great Fire of London, which necessitated so much rebuilding in the city and gave him the opportunity to shine.

Robert Hooke, the scientist and architect who was a friend of Wren, said: "Since the time of Archimedes there scarce ever met in one man in so great perfection such a mechanical hand and so philosophical a mind."



Making Donations to St John's through online banking

The church's bank details are:

Account name: Parochial Church Council of St John's Parish (Birkdale)

Sort Code: 60-20-11

Account Number: 86882120

the elderberries gardening club

The group meet from 10.30am-noon on the **second Wednesday of every month** at St. John's Church on St. John's Road in Birkdale.



The club offers talks from guest speakers, trips to historical houses and gardens, and

social events.

To find out more, email elderberriesgardening@gmail.com or call Shelley Lewis-Lavender on [01704 560690](tel:01704560690).

www.southportorchestra.co.uk

SOUTHPORT ORCHESTRA
Conductor: Jeff Rimmer

BEETHOVEN
OVERTURE TO 'ESKIMO'

BRAHMS
CONCERTO NO. 1
(Soloist: Tom Kimmance)

SCHUBERT
Symphony No. 3

THE JOYS OF SPRING!

SATURDAY, 1ST APRIL 2023
7-30 pm

CHRIST CHURCH
Lord Street, Southport,
PR8 1AA

SO23

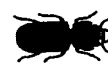
TICKETS: Adults £10. Life's £5 available from Orchestra Members. Via admin@southportorchestra.co.uk Or on the door (payment by cash or card)

WORD SEARCH solution



J. E. ALVEY

VERMIN AND INSECT CONTROL



Domestic and Industrial Contracts

Rats · Mice · Moles · Pigeons · Ants · Fleas · Wasps etc.

13 VICARAGE LANE,
BANKS. PR9 8ES

Tel: 01704 213025

www.jalveypestcontrol.co.uk

WHAT IS ART?

By John M Shakespeare

Preferences that we hold in relation to Art in all its forms, Plato (427-347 BC) believed, give insight to the sort of person we are.

Art can take many forms, it can be painting, carving, dance, theatre or architecture to name but a few. The justification in all artistic works seems to me to be reliant on the sincerity and intentions of its creator. It is almost certain that we will all see art differently, as Plato states, depending on our nurture in life.

For Christians, problems surround the relation between art and truth, and also between art and morality. The Renaissance period of art during the 15th/16th centuries saw many of the iconic Christian churches and Cathedrals become homes to many great works of art. The works of Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo and Raphael were and are memorable tributes to the Christian religion in many European churches.

More people visit the theatre to appreciate and enjoy the art in performance than those who attend art galleries. The dramatic and often pleasurable performers in both ballet and theatre bring art to life. Shakespeare's plays covered every aspect of our human emotions, from the tragic to the lovelorn and the comic sides of life. It can be argued that art in life is also to be seen in the television sagas and soaps of today.

Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900), held the view that art can give meaning to a person's existence. The expressive view of art may relate it either to the emotions and feelings of the artist or to the emotional response it is intended to evoke in the viewer.

There is an eternal argument, over what in fact constitutes beauty in art. Do we believe that beauty is really in the eyes of the beholder or is there a criterion by which beauty can be measured?

Our intuitions strongly support the feeling that there is something more to an object being beautiful than to the fact of our believing it so.

Clive Bell (1881-1964) is linked to the "Significant Form Theory of Art". The assumption is that all genuine works of art produce an aesthetic emotion in the spectator, listener or researcher, which is distinctive and nothing to do with practical concerns. To quote Gustave Flaubert (1821-80) "The artist must be in his work, as God is in creation, invisible and all powerful, and must sense him everywhere but never see Him."

Jewellery as an Art Form is expressed in many ways. Crowns, tiaras, necklaces, bracelets, and rings to name the most popular forms of jewelled treasure are sought after by many. The Bible parable of the hidden treasure and the pearl is a good illustration .

Matthew ch.13 verses 44-45:
"The Kingdom of Heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid, then in his joy goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls, on finding one pearl of great value he went and sold all that he had and bought it."

The Institutional authority on Art gives credence to Tracy Emin's bed, a pile of bricks etc., and by this recognition bestows the title of Art on such artefacts.

In conclusion, how can we judge a work of Art? If we regard it simply as a matter of taste, we risk the accusations of making a merely emotional response, rather than making an objective appraisal. It may be looked at as a response to prevailing cultural norms as seen by the creative artist. A work of art in whatever form it is exhibited, is essentially subject to the eye and senses of the beholder, its worth or value being purely subjective, or so I believe.

From Our Own Correspondent

Doris Brookfield

Here I am sitting having my breakfast looking out on a windy and wet morning. I've been watching a grey squirrel running across the grass searching for food, every so often it stops and sits upright, he holds his paws to his mouth and eats whatever he has found. Then he moves so fast his fluffy tail following him until he finds something else on the ground. The slightest sound sends him scurrying into the bushes.

It is lovely to see these creatures, although he's not a red squirrel like the ones you can see in Formby nature reserve, he is just trying to find food where ever he can.



At the moment how many people are trying to afford food in this country? They have to try and balance what to do with their ever shrinking money, so much for heating, so much for mortgage or rent, just existing is getting to be a nightmare. Food banks are their only access to their daily food. I would never would have believed in my lifetime that this could possibly happen in this country. Just like the squirrel they are trying to stay alive whatever way they can.

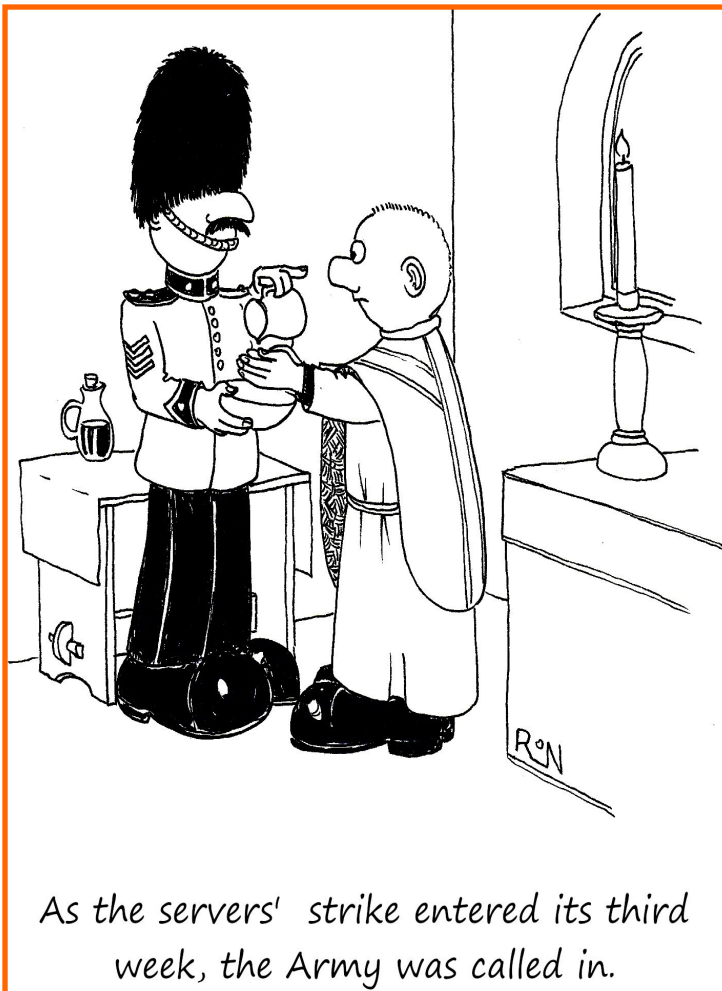
Sorry to be so morbid, perhaps it's the rain and grey skies. A lady here bought me a little plaque at Christmas which says: "When it rains look for rainbows, when it's dark look for stars."

Yesterday Adele came and she looked through my window and was amazed to see daffodils showing in my tubs, so Spring is definitely on the way. Looking out now and it is turning brighter by the minute, but the wind is blowing the trees and they are wafting their branches back and forth. No sign of the squirrel anymore, I think he hides in the bracken with his family. The walkers come up here whatever the weather, I wish I could be brave enough to go out walking in the wind and rain, but not anymore unfortunately.

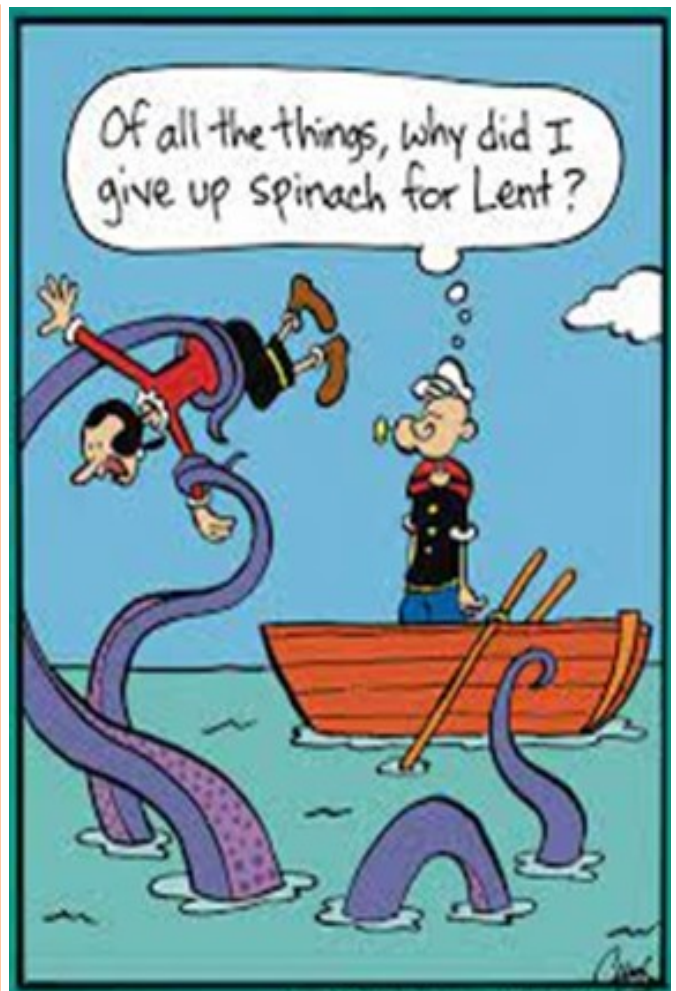
Instead I thought I would write my monthly article for **THE WORD**. Stuart and Christine do a great job preparing it for us each month, so much to read and reflect on. I hope my little article helps to show that wherever you are it's quite easy to stay in touch.

Love to you all. Doris in Ilkley, West Yorkshire.
Wish you could come and visit if ever you are in this area, it's a lovely place.

*(Thank you for your kind words Doris. Delighted to know that you enjoy reading **THE WORD**. Ed.)*



As the servers' strike entered its third week, the Army was called in.





**214, Liverpool Road
Birkdale
Southport
Telephone: 565059**

**HAIRDRESSING
FOR ALL
THE FAMILY**

Tuesdays : O.A.P rates by Diane

Helping Hands
Caring since 1989

Bespoke home care

Supporting people to live **independently**

We provide a range of services from companionship and housework to condition-led care. Whether it's a short daily visit or round-the-clock support, our dedicated care plans are centred around your loved one's individual needs and routines.

 Regular and reliable
Visiting care

 24-hour support
Live-in care

✓ Rated 4.7 on ★ Trustpilot ✓ Regulated by the CQC and CIW

✓ Free care assessments ✓ Providing care for over 30 years

• • • *Because, life is better at home* • • •

**Contact your local
branch today!**

Southport Branch
01704 339073

139 Eastbank Street
Southport
PR8 1DQ

for more details visit
helpinghands.co.uk



Joining the Sunday morning services and Thursday evening prayers by zoom or by telephone

To join the **weekly Sunday morning services** by **ZOOM**:
The Identification Number every Sunday will be: 827 7997 1592
The Password every Sunday will be: 860066

To join the **weekly Sunday morning services** by **TELEPHONE**:
The telephone number you must ring is: 0131 460 1196
The Meeting Identification Number every Sunday will be: 827 7997 1592
When prompted to do so, enter that number and then press HASH (#)
The Password every Sunday will be: 860066.
When prompted to do so, enter that number and then press HASH (#)

To join the **twice-monthly Thursday evening prayers** at 7.30pm by **ZOOM**:
The Identification Number every Thursday will be: 879 8059 1143
The Password every Thursday will be: 966358

To join the **twice-monthly Thursday evening prayers** at 7.30pm by **TELEPHONE**:
The telephone number you must ring is: 0131 460 1196
The Meeting Identification Number every Thursday will be: 879 8059 1143.
When prompted to do so, enter that number and then press HASH (#)
The Password every Thursday will be 966358.
When prompted to do so, enter that number and then press HASH (#)

BUT PLEASE CHECK YOUR CALL PACKAGE CHARGES WITH YOUR PROVIDER
IF YOU NEED ANY HELP: Please contact Clive (564206) or Sally (553977) or Lucy (553977) for any further details you require.

Hearing the Word by telephone

If you would like to hear a recording of the Sunday morning talks telephone 0151-329-2184 at any hour of the day or night.

The calls are **free**. Each talk lasts about 15 minutes and is available for a week.

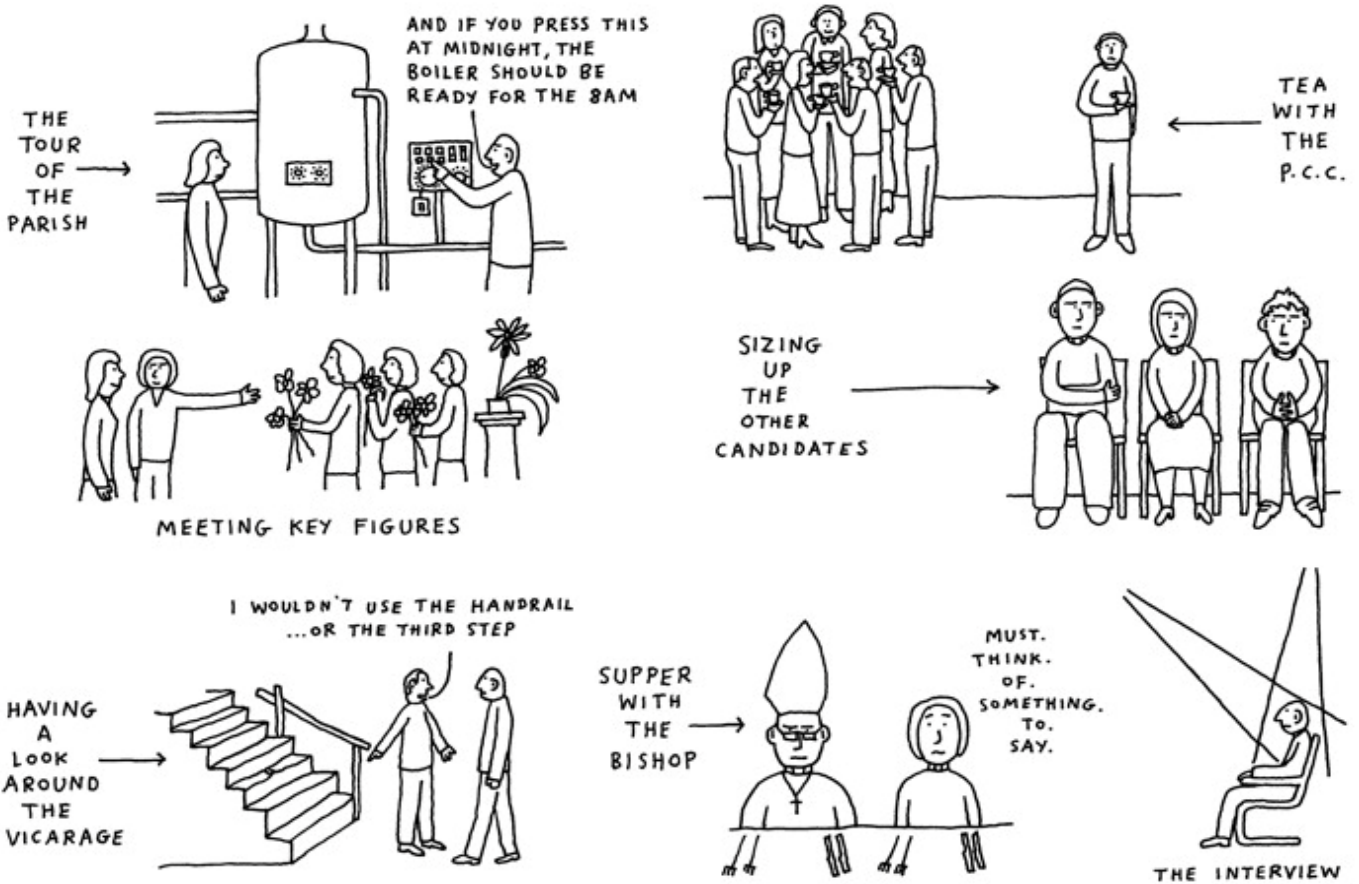
Each recording becomes available during the afternoon of the Sunday on which it is given.

Can it really be that long ago.....?

50 years ago, on 8th March 1973 the citizens of Northern Ireland voted in a referendum to remain within the United Kingdom. That same day the IRA carried out its first bombing in Britain since WWII, planting car bombs in London. One person died, 200 were injured.
40 years ago, on 6th March 1983 Donald Maclean, British-born Soviet spy died. He was a member of the Cambridge Spy Ring. Also 40 years ago, on 26th March 1983, Anthony Blunt, British art historian and Soviet spy, died.
20 years ago, on 12th March 2003 the World Health Organisation issued a global alert about a severe form of pneumonia (now known as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome – SARS) that was affecting people in China, Hong Kong and Vietnam.

INTERVIEWING

FOR A NEW VICAR



From the Archives

There Is Nothing New Under The Sun

(Ecclesiastes ch.1 v.9)

I recently spent an afternoon at Lancashire Archives in Bow Lane, Preston, looking at the documents which were deposited there by the late Revd Jack Harding many years ago. The parish had been in existence by then for about 80 years but it is disappointing how few documents, other than the formal registers of services, marriages, burials and baptisms, have been kept.

Amongst those which exist I found a Minute Book containing the Minutes of PCC Meetings going back many years. It was of interest to read that at the PCC Meeting on 30th September 1974 (the same year that Revd Harding became the Vicar of St John's) the Vicar said that it was obvious from the way things were going in all branches of the church that every parish would have to 'chip in' to the Diocese more than they had done in the past and that there would eventually have to be some merging of parishes. I never thought of Jack as an Old Testament prophet, but how right he was. He must have had a vision of Fit For Mission 2.

At the same Meeting Revd Harding reported that arrangements were made for a projector to be borrowed and for a Rank Film to be shown on the second Sunday evening each month. And I thought that our monthly Friday evening St John's Film Nights were something new! How wrong I was.

I also came across a short report about Church attendance at St John's on Christmas Day 1927. There was a 7.00am Holy Communion at which there were 37 communicants. Another 96 at the 8.00am service, a further 60 at 10.30am, and 26 at 6.30pm: a total of 219 for the day. This is something that has changed! But there was no Sunday School or Bible Class on that day. So it was a leisurely day for the Vicar!

Stuart Baker

Church Hall Users (Note: with the exception of the Friday Film Nights the activities listed below are NOT run by St John's Church. They are run by independent groups who use our hall). Contact details are provided in case readers wish to enquire about or join these groups.

Monday

9:45am-10:30am (6weeks- pre-walking) and 11:00am-11:45am (6months - pre-school).

Moo Music Southport and Preston

Fun, interactive music classes for babies, toddlers and preschool age children.

Contact: <https://moo-music.co.uk/areas/sp/>

1.30pm to 3.30pm **Ainsdale Bridge Club**

Ideal for keen players of the game and those who want to improve their play within a friendly setting of duplicate bridge.

Contact: Dave Pountney 01704 577843 or via email:

jandavepountney@gmail.com

7.00pm to 8.00pm **Zumba@Fitness**

A fun and friendly class and a great workout.

No dance experience needed. All ages and all fitness levels welcome

Contact: Kay Bennett on 07716312909

Tuesday

4.30pm – 5.30pm **Kiwi Sports Coaching**

Tag Rugby class for boys and girls aged 5-7

School holiday classes sometimes available

Contact: shanehuttonnz@gmail.com

7.30pm – 9.00pm **Connected Voices Choir**

We are a non-audition choir for adults, singing a range of uplifting music – from pop and rock to soul and funk. We are open to anyone who loves singing, whether they think they can sing or not!

Contact: info@connectedvoices.co.uk or for more information visit the website

www.connectedvoices.co.uk

Wednesday

Morning, monthly class. **All Aglow Weaning Workshop**

Start your baby on solid food with confidence with an interactive, relaxed and informal class. Suitable for babies 4-10 months.

Contact: Jennifer@allaglow.co.uk

10.30 – 12 noon

2nd Wednesday of the month only. **Elderberries Gardening Club**

A social gardening club, where speakers are invited to talk on various topics, and visits and social events throughout the year.

Contact: Shelley Lewis Lavender on 01704 560590 or via email:

shelleylewislavender@yahoo.co

7pm – 8pm **Functional Yoga**

Exploring joint mobilisation, functional movement and relaxation - suitable for beginners.

Contact Lindsay: 07747038613 or email lindsay@wobblytreeyoga.com

Thursday

11am - 12noon **Daisy Baby Tinies & Wrigglers**

A weekly baby class to help you learn tools such as baby massage, yoga, rhythm, rhyme, story and sensory experiences to help aid your baby's development with ease.

For all babies from 6 weeks old.

Contact: Emma Lowe – 07866926223

6.00-9.00pm: **St John's Rainbows (6.00-7.00pm) St John's Brownies (6.00-7.15pm) and Girl Guides (7.15-9.00pm).**

Contact: Janette Law 01704 565951

Friday

6.30-9.30pm Once per month **St John's Film Nights**

A chance to see some great modern films. Tea, coffee and homemade cake available.

Contact: Christine Baker 01704 560518

Saturday

7.30 – 9.00pm **Sequence Dancing**

Traditional & Modern Sequence & Ballroom Dancing. Beginners and experienced dancers welcome.

Contact: Phone or text: John Gaffney 07786 640683. Email: johngaffney3@icloud.com

★HAPPY★
BIRTHDAY!

To Emily Potts on 4th March
Doreen Morris on 13th March
Alex Galbraith on 15th March
Mary Ball on 18th March
Irene Wray on 22nd March
Richard Rothwell on 26th March

If there are any birthdays, anniversaries or other reasons to celebrate which our readers would like to share with others **DURING APRIL** please let the Editor know by email to stjohnbirkdaletheword@gmail.com

The Last Laughs

The Vicar's lost his iPad! By Nigel Beeton

The Vicar's lost his iPad –
Disaster's come to church!
His sermon's on that iPad
It's left him in the lurch!

He's been looking for that iPad
For most of half an hour,
He's searched the chancel and the nave
So now he's up the tower!

Oh! Where's he put that iPad?
He had it when he came!
He's searching high and searching low
It's driving him insane!

The angels in the hammer beams
For several hundred years
Have witnessed proper order
But now they're all in tears.

For chaos reigns below them
Upon this modern day
For everyone is searching now –
Both clergyman and lay!

The Vicar found his iPad
Tonight, we'll all be sleeping!
He sent a message from his phone
And set his iPad beeping!

And as he holds his iPad
We feel his happy glow;
But could he not have done that trick
That half-an-hour ago?

The answer comes upon us
That trick he could not do!
For, in the caverns of our church
He'd lost his smartphone, too!

Musings on daily life

'Ecclesiastic' is material used to fasten a clergyman's robes.

A day without sunshine is like, well, night.

I am in shape. Round is a shape.

I plan on living forever. So far, so good.

I am having an out of money experience.

What's a perfect gift for a person who has everything?
Storage space.

***I am ready to meet my Maker.
Whether he is ready for the great
ordeal of meeting me is another
matter.***

Winston Churchill

If it weren't for the fact that the TV set and the refrigerator are so far apart some of us wouldn't get any exercise at all.

Joey Adams

Hymn for Golfers:
There is a green hill far away



MASSAM & MARSHALL

INDEPENDENT
FAMILY FUNERAL
DIRECTORS



We are pleased to announce our new
funeral home - **NOW OPEN** in Birkdale

24 HOUR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES
PRIVATE CHAPEL OF REST • FUNERAL PLANS
MEMORIAL CONSULTANTS
BEREAVEMENT SERVICES

Covering **Southport, Scarlsbrick,**
Churchtown, Birkdale, Hillside, Ainsdale, Formby,
Crossens, Banks and all surrounding areas.



Golden Charter
Funeral Plans 

BIRKDALE
2 Crown Buildings
Liverpool Road
Birkdale
PR8 3BY
**01704
321234**

SOUTHPORT
137-139 Manchester Road
Southport
PR9 9BD
**01704
549222**

PARBOLD
5 The Common
Parbold
WN8 7HA
**01257
462222**

www.massamandmarshall.co.uk
funerals@massamandmarshall.co.uk