



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. 245

CORONATION EDITION

MAY 2023

ST. JOHN'S PARISH CHURCH

God Centred, Relationship Driven and Life Transforming



Saturday 6th May will be the day of the coronation of King Charles III.

Some of our readers will remember the day of the coronation of Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, and may have had an opportunity to watch the proceedings by sitting in a neighbour's home, probably with many others from nearby houses, and huddling around a small television set, seeing the grainy black and white images and listening to the commentary by Richard Dimbleby.

At that time there were just over 2 million television licences in the UK but it is estimated that 20 million people watched the live coverage. Many sitting rooms and front parlours must have been bursting at the seams!

The coronation of King Charles III is likely to be somewhat smaller in scale than that of his late mother but it will be watched in full colour by many millions in the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland and throughout the world.

We hope that the reign of the King will be long, happy and peaceful. We

reproduce below an extract from the closing passage of the sermon preached at the Coronation of George I on 20th October 1714. The language of those times may be a little antiquated but the meaning is clear and applies as much today as it did then:

"Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; All blessings from God attend the Person and Reign of him whom his Providence has set over us; May he long continue the Defender of our Faith and Maintainer of our Civil Rights; May he be not only the Joy of his own subjects but the Support of his Allies and the Terror of his Enemies; the Refuge of the oppressed, the Deliverer of the captives, the Restorer of the banished, and a common Blessing to mankind."

Reminder: At St John's we shall have a Coronation social event on 5th May in the evening in the church hall and an afternoon picnic (on the church lawns, we hope!) on 7th May.

If any of our readers can remember the Coronation Day in May 1953 (or the Coronation Day in May 1937 !!) please write or speak to the Editor and share your memories with our parishioners through these pages. It would be interesting to know how you spent those days. Ed.

**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)
 Reader: Mrs. Christine Baker (560518)

Churchwardens: Clive Morris (564206)
 Tim Wright (553977)

Wardens' Assistant:: Miss Lucy Wright (553977)

Treasurer: Mrs. Sylvia Kent (564071)

PCC Secretary: Alex Vernon

Parish Hall Secretary: Mrs. Jean Morris (564206)

Electoral Roll Officer: Stuart Harris

Safeguarding: Mrs. Abbie Holden
 (07961003359)

Church of England
 Children's Society: Mrs. Sylvia Kent (564071)

Mothers' Union: Mrs. Linda Caton (564737)

Girl Guides Mrs. Janette Law (565951)
 St. John's Brownies: Mrs. Helen Jones and
 Brownie Guiders: Mrs. Lesley Scott
 St. John's Rainbows: Mrs. Lesley Scott

Church Flowers: Mrs. Cath Whiteside (568874)

Magazine Editor: Stuart Baker (560518)

Magazine Printer: Mrs. Christine Baker (560518)

Notice boards, I.T,
 Website developer,
 Publicity designer: Mrs. Sally Wright (553977)

Buildings Inspector: David Halsall

Growth Groups

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

*Finding out more
 Together*



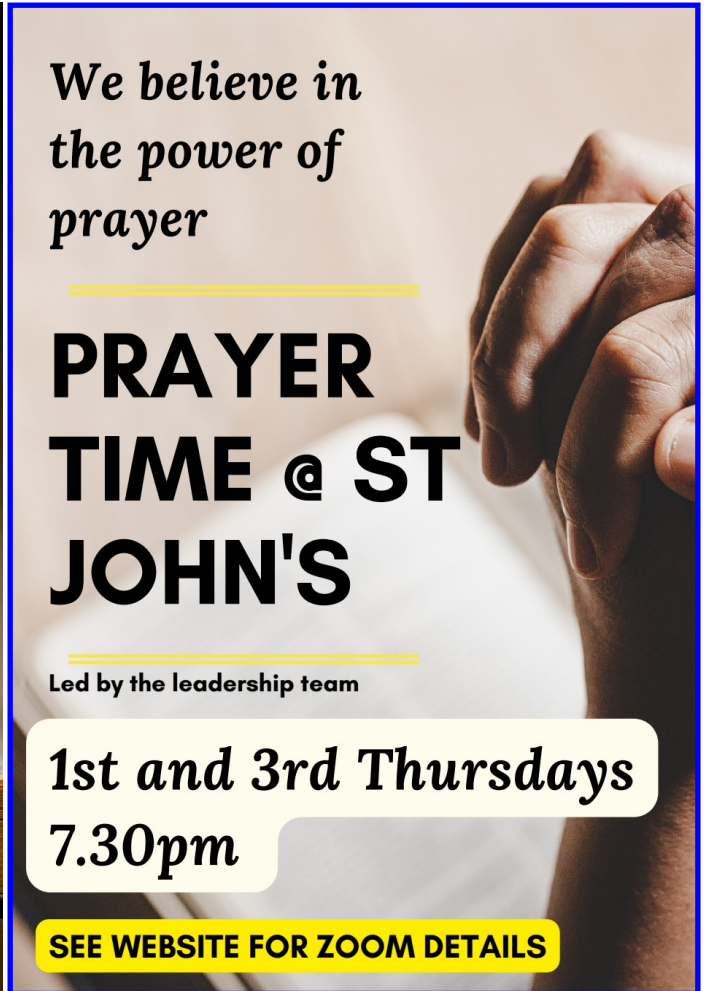
*We believe in
 the power of
 prayer*

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 4th May and 18th May.

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 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

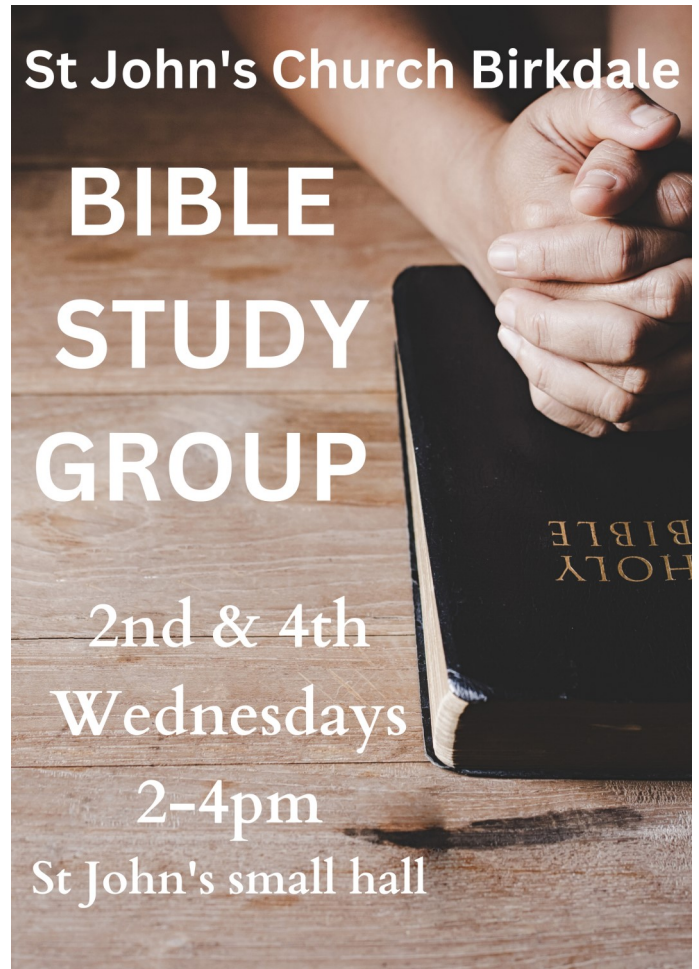


St John's Church Birkdale

BIBLE STUDY GROUP

2nd & 4th
Wednesdays

2-4pm
St John's small hall



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



ST JOHN'S CHURCH, BIRKDALE



SATURDAY 3 JUNE
11.30 AM - 2 PM
ST JOHN'S HALL

FOOD | RAFFLE | PLANTS
CRAFTS | BOOK STALL

FREE ENTRY

ST JOHN'S ROAD, BIRKDALE, PR8 4JP

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



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

Saturday 3 June @ 11.30am

Summer Social

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
Christmas Fair

Saturday 2 December 10-3pm

YOUNG ADULT SOCIALS

2023

Saturday 15th April
Ghetto Golf & Baltic market

Saturday 13th May
Knowsley Safari park

Saturday 17th June
Pizza and games @ Lucy's

Saturday 15th July
Rivington

Friday 11th August
BBQ @ Lucy's

Saturday 23rd September
Bowling and Nando's

St John's Church, Birkdale



As summer is approaching, the team are busy preparing for our fantastic Summer Social event, which is being held in the hall on **Saturday 3rd June from 11.30 am until 2pm** when we will be serving an assortment of delicious sandwiches and cakes with tea or coffee.

There will also be some stalls selling books, plants, jewellery and handmade fragranced candles, and not forgetting our usual raffle with

fabulous prizes including a hamper, so please make a note in your diary and come along with family and friends and support it.

If you would normally donate items for the tombola, perhaps you would be kind enough to donate them towards raffle prizes instead, by putting them in the box at the back of church from Sunday 7th May.

There will also be a list at the back of church for any contributions towards the hamper. Please sign against the item you are providing and bring it to church latest by Sunday 28th May.

If you have any difficulties in taking your items to church, please do not hesitate to either speak to me in church or telephone me on 564071.

So why not come along for a couple of hours and enjoy spending time together, having some lunch and treating yourself (or a friend!) to something from one of the stalls.

Sylvia Kent

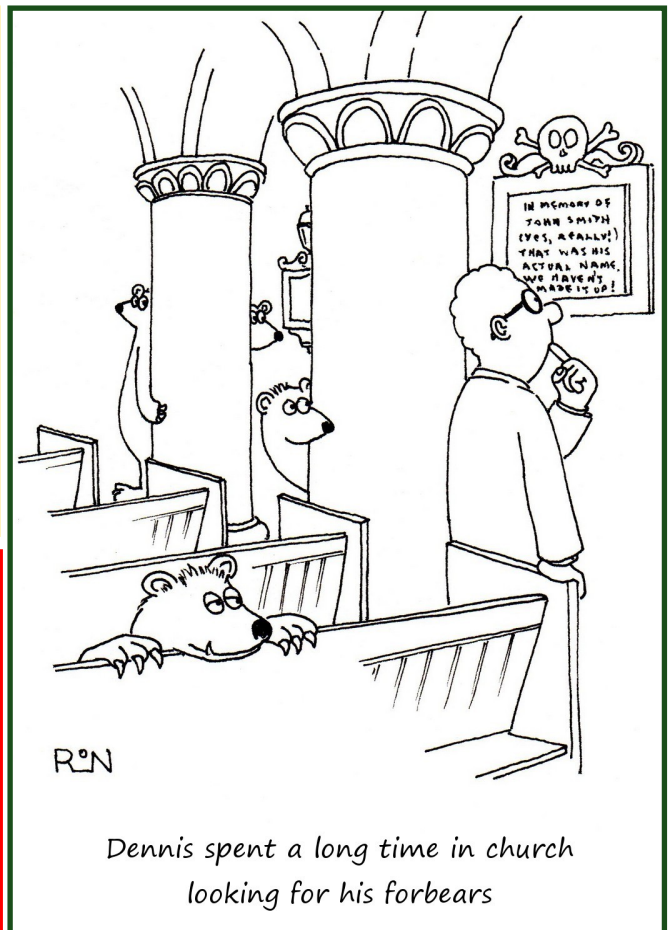
A Coronation Celebration

BANGERS & MASH

Friday 5 May 7pm

Tickets £10 - Bring your own drinks

www.stjohnsbirkdale.co.uk



Italian Night

On 21st April about 40 parishioners and friends joined in an Italian themed evening at Tim and Sally Wright's home and were treated to a wonderful selection of pasta and pizza dishes and Italian desserts. There was a very convivial atmosphere and the evening was thoroughly enjoyed by all who attended.

Thank you Tim and Sally, and also Lucy and Alex for splendidly ensuring that nobody's glass was empty!

Mille grazie!



RAFFLE

Please let Sylvia Kent know if you will donate for the Raffle anything on this list

ITEM

YOUR NAME

PLEASE TICK

Sweet biscuits

Tin ham

Small tin salmon

Savoury biscuits

Small jar pickled onions

Bottle wine

Jelly

Small jar coffee

Small packet tea

Small box chocolates

Tin fruit

Carnation cream

PLEASE ENSURE YOU INDICATE THE ITEMS YOU WISH TO DONATE BY PUTTING YOUR NAME ON THE ABOVE LIST WHERE APPROPRIATE, THEN TICK WHEN PUTTING THEM IN THE BOX AT THE BACK OF CHURCH LATEST BY SUNDAY 28th MAY.

St John's May Calendar

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4 7.30PM Prayer Time on Zoom	5 7.00pm Coronation Bangers and Mash in the Church Hall	6
7 10.30am Morning Service and Holy Communion. 12.00 noon, Picnic on the church lawns. 7.00pm Together@7 at St John's	8	9	10 2.00pm Bible Study in the Church Hall 7.30pm Growth Groups at 32 Hartley Crescent	11	12 10.30am Coffee, Cake and Chat in the church hall	13 Young Adults outing to Knowsley Safari Park (contact Lucy wright for details)
14 10.30am Morning Service	15	16	17 10.30am Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer) Although this is not Ascension Day this service will be a celebration of the Ascension of Christ	18 Ascension Day. 7.30PM Prayer Time on Zoom. Roy's talk will focus on the Ascension of Christ. (No church service at St John's today)	19	20
21 10.30am Morning Service	22	23	24 2.00pm Bible Study in the Church Hall 7.30pm Growth Groups at 32 Hartley Crescent	25	26 6.30pm Film Night with tea, coffee and cakes (contact Christine or Stuart Baker for details)	27
28 10.30am Morning Service	29	30	31	<p>WhatsApp For the last three years St John's has had a WhatsApp messaging group which proved to be a very useful way of keeping in contact during the covid pandemic. Although the lockdowns are now (we hope!) a long way behind us our WhatsApp group continues and is much used. If you have a mobile phone and would like to be part of this group please contact Roy Doran.</p> 		

Worship on the
Fifth Sunday of
Easter

SUNDAY 7th May: HOLY 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 Fifth Sunday of Easter

Risen Christ, your wounds declare your love for the world and the wonder of your risen life: give us compassion and courage to risk ourselves for those we serve, to the glory of God the Father.

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

**Great Works and
Their Beginnings**

The Reading: Nehemiah ch.3 verses 22-27

22 And after him the priests, the men of the plain, made repairs.

23 After him Benjamin and Hasshub made repairs opposite their house. After them Azariah the son of Maaseiah, the son of Ananiah, made repairs by his house.

24 After him Binnui the son of Henadad repaired another section, from the house of Azariah to the buttress, even as far as the corner.

25 Palal the son of Uzai made repairs opposite the buttress, and on the tower which projects from the king's upper house that was by the court of the prison. After him Pedaiah the son of Parosh made repairs.

26 Moreover the Nethinim who dwelt in Ophel made repairs as far as the place in front of the Water Gate toward the east, and on the projecting tower.

27 After them the Tekoites repaired another section, next to the great projecting tower, and as far as the wall of Ophel.

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.

SUNDAY

7th MAY

@ 7PM

AT ST JOHN'S

Worship on the Sixth
Sunday of Easter
(Rogation Sunday)

SUNDAY 14th MAY
10.30am service IN CHURCH
and via zoom & phone.

Collect for the Sixth Sunday of Easter

Risen Christ, by the lakeside you renewed your call to your disciples: help your Church to obey your command and draw the nations to the fire of your love, to the glory of God the Father.

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

**Dealing With Criticism
and Discouragement**

The Reading: Nehemiah ch.4

1 But it so happened, when Sanballat heard that we were rebuilding the wall, that he was furious and very indignant, and mocked the Jews.

2 And he spoke before his brethren and the army of Samaria, and said, "What are these feeble Jews doing? Will they fortify themselves? Will they offer sacrifices? Will they complete it in a day? Will they revive the stones from the heaps of rubbish—stones that are burned?"

3 Now Tobiah the Ammonite was beside him, and he said, "Whatever they build, if even a fox goes up on it, he will break down their stone wall."

4 Hear, O our God, for we are despised; turn their reproach on their own heads, and give them as plunder to a land of captivity!

5 Do not cover their iniquity, and do not let their sin be blotted out from before You; for they have provoked You to anger before the builders.

6 So we built the wall, and the entire wall was joined together up to half its height, for the people had a mind to work.

7 Now it happened, when Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabs, the Ammonites, and the Ashdodites heard that the walls of Jerusalem were being restored and the gaps were beginning to be closed, that they became very angry,

8 and all of them conspired together to come and attack Jerusalem and create confusion.

9 Nevertheless we made our prayer to our God, and because of them we set a watch against them day and night.

10 Then Judah said, "The strength of the laborers is failing, and there is so much rubbish that we are not able to build the wall."

11 And our adversaries said, "They will neither know nor see anything, till we come into their midst and kill them and cause the work to cease."

12 So it was, when the Jews who dwelt near them came, that they told us ten times, "From whatever place you turn, they will be upon us."

13 Therefore I positioned men behind the lower parts of the wall, at the openings; and I set the people according to their families, with their swords, their spears, and their bows.

14 And I looked, and arose and said to the nobles, to the leaders, and to the rest of the people, "Do not be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, great and awesome, and fight for your brethren, your sons, your daughters, your wives, and your houses."

15 And it happened, when our enemies heard that it was known to us, and that God had brought their plot to nothing, that all of us returned to the wall, everyone to his work.

16 So it was, from that time on, that half of my servants worked at construction, while the other half held the spears, the shields, the bows, and wore armour; and the leaders were behind all the house of Judah.

17 Those who built on the wall, and those who carried burdens, loaded themselves so that with one hand they worked at construction, and with the other held a weapon.

18 Every one of the builders had his sword girded at his side as he built. And the one who sounded the trumpet was beside me.

19 Then I said to the nobles, the rulers, and the rest of the people, "The work is great and extensive, and we are separated far from one another on the wall.

20 Wherever you hear the sound of the trumpet, rally to us there. Our God will fight for us."

21 So we laboured in the work, and half of the men held the spears from daybreak until the stars appeared.

22 At the same time I also said to the people, "Let each man and his servant stay at night in Jerusalem, that they may be our guard by night and a working party by day."

23 So neither I, my brethren, my servants, nor the men of the guard who followed me took off our clothes, except that everyone took them off for washing.



**Midweek Book of
Common Prayer
Holy Communion Service**

**WEDNESDAY 17th MAY
10.30am service IN CHURCH**

Worship on Ascension Day

**THURSDAY 18th MAY
7.30pm and via zoom & phone
only (NOT IN CHURCH). Roy's
talk will address the Ascension**

**Worship on the Seventh
Sunday of Easter**

**SUNDAY 21st MAY
10.30am service IN CHURCH
and via zoom & phone**

Collect for the Seventh Sunday of Easter

Risen, ascended Lord, as we rejoice at your triumph, fill your Church on earth with power and compassion, that all who are estranged by sin may find forgiveness and know your peace, to the glory of God the Father.

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

Don't Give Up

The Reading: Nehemiah ch.6 verses 1-9

1 Now it happened when Sanballat, Tobiah, Geshem the Arab, and the rest of our enemies heard that I had rebuilt the wall, and that there were no breaks left in it (though at that time I had not hung the doors in the gates),
2 that Sanballat and Geshem sent to me, saying, "Come, let us meet together among the villages in the plain of Ono." But they thought to do me harm.

3 So I sent messengers to them, saying, "I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down. Why should the work cease while I leave it and go down to you?"

4 But they sent me this message four times, and I answered them in the same manner.

5 Then Sanballat sent his servant to me as before, the fifth time, with an open letter in his hand.

6 In it was written:

"It is reported among the nations, and Geshem says, that you and the Jews plan to rebel; therefore, according to these rumours, you are rebuilding the wall, that you may be their king. "

7 And you have also appointed prophets to proclaim concerning you at Jerusalem, saying, "There is a king in Judah!" Now these matters will be reported to the king. So come, therefore, and let us consult together.

8 Then I sent to him, saying, "No such things as you say are being done, but you invent them in your own heart."

9 For they all were trying to make us afraid, saying, "Their hands will be weakened in the work, and it will not be done." Now therefore, O God, strengthen my hands.

Worship on the Day of
Pentecost (Whitsun)

SUNDAY 28th MAY
10.30am service IN CHURCH
and via zoom & phone.

Collect for the Day of Pentecost

Holy Spirit, sent by the Father, ignite in us your holy fire; strengthen your children with the gift of faith, revive your Church with the breath of love, and renew the face of the earth, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

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

**Pentecost:
Filled with New Wine**

The Reading: Acts ch. 2, verses 1-13

1. When the day of Pentecost had come they were all together in one place.
2. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind and it filled the entire house where they were sitting.
3. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them and a tongue rested on each of them.
4. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages as the Spirit gave them ability.
5. Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem.
6. And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each.
7. Amazed and astonished, they asked "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans?"
8. And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own language?
9. Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia,
10. Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes,
11. Cretans and Arabs—in our own languages we hear them speaking about God's deeds of power."
12. All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another "What does this mean?"
13. But others sneered and said "They are filled with new wine."



On that long ago first morning of Pentecost... Jerusalem was crowded with thousands of visitors, for it was one of the most popular feast-days in the Jewish calendar – the Feast of Firstfruits, looking forward to the wheat harvest.

In one small room of that great city, a small group of people who had followed Jesus were praying. There was nothing else for them to do: Jesus had died, He had risen, and He had ascended, promising to send them 'a Comforter'. They were left alone, to wait at Jerusalem. And so they waited – on Him, and for Him. They were not disappointed, for that morning the Holy Spirit fell upon that small room, and transformed those believers into the Church, Christ's body here on earth.

Pentecost was not the first time that the Holy Spirit came to the world – throughout the Old Testament there are stories telling of how God had guided people and given them strength. But now His Spirit would use a new instrument: not just isolated prophets, but the Church, His body on earth.

Acts opens with the preaching of the gospel in Jerusalem, the centre of the Jewish nation. Within 30 years the Gospel had spread throughout the northern Mediterranean: Syria, Turkey, Greece, Malta... to the very heart of the Roman Empire: Rome. The Church was on the move – God was on the move! He was calling people from every nation to repent, turn to Jesus for forgiveness of their sins, and to follow Him.

WORD SEARCH

Solution on page 25

Facts about King Charles

He was born at 9.14pm on 14th November 1948 at Buckingham Palace.
He has been heir-apparent to the throne since he was three years old.
He is the first monarch in British history to have earned a university degree.
He can speak Welsh.

He is a qualified pilot and diver.

He is a keen watercolour painter, a published author and played the cello at Cambridge.

As Prince of Wales, he founded about 20 charities which raise about £140million each year for good causes.

Aged 73, King Charles III is the oldest monarch ever to be crowned in British history.

He became King on 8th September 2022, after the death of his mother, the Queen, in Balmoral. As King, he is also now head of the Commonwealth.

Search for:

Author
Pilot
Cello
Balmoral
Commonwealth
Palace
Welsh
Charles
Watercolour
University
Throne
Buckingham
Cambridge
Oldest
Monarch
Charities
November
Diver
King
Heir

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

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING AND ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

The Annual Parish Meeting and the APCM took place on Sunday 23rd April after the morning service.

After serving for six years in the office of churchwarden Stuart Baker was required by church law to retire. Clive Morris and Tim Wright were elected to serve as churchwardens for the next twelve months.

The APCM received a report from the Electoral Roll Officer, Stuart Harris. There are now 68 people on the Electoral Roll (an increase of 2 over last year's figure). 47 of them live in the parish and 21 live outside the parish.

Reports were also received from the PCC Treasurer Sylvia Kent and the PCC Secretary Alex Vernon, and we also heard from Stuart Baker about the fabric of the church, and from Tim Wright about the work of the Deanery Synod.

Elections were held and the following members were elected to the PCC: Abbie Holden, Lucy Wright, Sylvia Kent, David Halsall, Sally Wright and Alex Vernon. They are all congratulated and we look forward to them contributing to the work of the PCC. Clive Morris, Tim Wright and Stuart Baker were elected as our three Deanery Synod representatives, and Andy Dean (who was thanked for his work in scrutinising our financial statements) was appointed again as our Independent Examiner.

Christine Baker, the Lay Chairman of the PCC reported about the life of the parish and the church during the last twelve months and thanked everyone for the contributions which they have made in maintaining the church and church life in the absence of a Vicar. Churchwarden Clive Morris thanked Christine for her leadership and for her report.

The next Annual Parish Meeting and APCM will be held on 28th April 2024.

The meeting ended with us sharing the Grace.

Although we are now approaching five years of being without a Vicar in active service St John's church is maintaining its church life and continues to be a welcoming church which aims to be **God Centred, Relationship Driven and Life Transforming**. It is encouraging that we have been joined by some new worshippers and that we now have three members of our PCC who are under 30 years of age! We have a good platform on which a new Vicar could build and we must continue to pray that the right person will eventually emerge and join us in sharing the Gospel in our parish and throughout Birkdale.

Interregnum News

The closing date for applications to the post of Vicar of our parish was 16th April. Sadly, no applications were received.

Our two parish representatives and two of our patrons met the Archdeacon on 21st April and after a lengthy discussion it was decided that St John's will defer until after the summer holiday period re-advertising the post. There seems little point in re-advertising again very soon after two attempts have not produced any applications. The PCC will keep parishioners informed about how we shall proceed, but meanwhile: **Keep Calm and Carry On!**



Marcio Ciechanovicz and Noemi Celeti

Link Letter no. 2 | April 2023

Contact details:
m.ciechanovicz@gmail.com



Location: Brazil



What we do: Connecting with people beyond the reach of traditional church, sharing the gospel in new ways and ministering to people's physical needs.

Dear friends and supporters,

It has been a whirlwind of new discoveries and change in the past three months. As a family we have lived in seven different places in the last six months. God has provided temporary places for us to stay along the way but we were so happy to find a house and finally move into our home on 18 February!

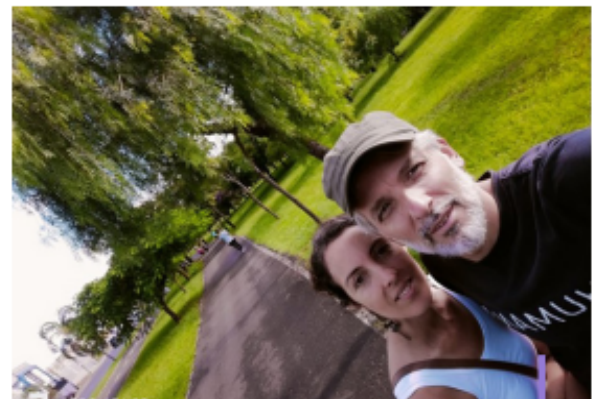
One of our temporary houses was out in the country, a 30-minute drive from the city of Indaiatuba. While we felt like our hands were tied because we were living so far away, Marcio and I decided that whenever we were in Indaiatuba, we would stop at the ecological park. We would do some prayer walking, chat to people and we started asking God for discernment.

An interesting boat-like building caught our attention on one of those walks. It was an orange, boat-shaped structure with round windows and a "prow", built right in the middle of the park. God placed a passage on Marcio's heart: John 21:6, when Jesus meets his disciples after a long night of fishing without results. He then tells his disciples to throw their nets on the other side of the boat. We looked at this structure and began to pray for discernment as to where we should "cast our nets".

As we met local people in various places throughout the city, everyone seemed to know the boat. "Where do you live?" they would ask, north or south of the boat? People began to explain to us that everyone wants to live north of the boat, and that south of the boat is a less privileged area. We began to observe that the park is neater and has a lot of activities and structures to the north, with vast sports areas, a pet playground and is surrounded by posh houses. To the south the opposite is true. There is rubbish on the ground, the playgrounds are not as nice, and the park is more abandoned. Apparently, even last year's Christmas lights were displayed only in the northern part.

We found it so interesting that weeks later God allowed us to find a house to rent just a few blocks from this very boat, just a five-minute walk from the middle of the park! We are in the middle, in the gap between north and south. We have a desire to bless both sides of the park. How can we be God's church in the park that looks at bridging this gap between two different worlds and brings people together?

We are blessed to be part of a wonderful team, and have been investing a lot of time in discerning what God



One of our first trips to the park to do some prayer walking

Support Marcio and Noemi:
churchmissionsociety.org/mnc

**With Jesus
With each other
To the edges**



wants us to do and how to do it. Some of our first activities involved meeting at the park regularly in order to be a presence there every week. We also did some exercises to help us feel more comfortable in approaching people and starting up conversations.

The first activity we did to reach out to people with a particular theme or objective in mind, took place the Sunday before Easter. We invited people to come for a simple game involving water balloon tossing with the title "Easter means...". We labelled different buckets with words like "freedom", "reconciliation", "forgiveness", and people had three tries to hit those targets. As people

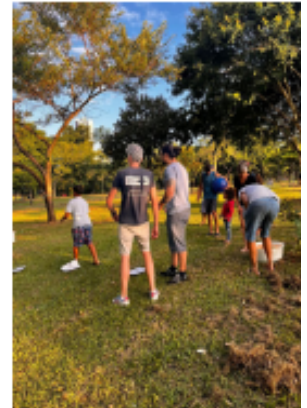
came and played we had individual conversations about what Easter represented for each of them and it was a great way to break the ice and talk about this subject. Each participant then got a chocolate and a card to join us for more activities.

On Easter Sunday we went to the park and set up a table with lots of food elements that the Jewish people used in their Passover meal. We went out inviting people to come hear the story about what Easter is really about. We were amazed that a good group of people came; lots of children, families and even a big group of young adults who were hanging out at the park. The majority had never heard about the connection between Passover and Easter, and they were so interested to taste the different items we had. They tasted the bitter herbs, the salted water, the unleavened bread, the date and almond paste made to look like mud, etc.... Then the pastor of our team, Altamiro, explained that Easter was for all of us, and that we could all participate in this meal together. We all joined together around the table to eat and share the grape juice and bread and fruit. It was an uplifting moment and so encouraging to see people eager to join, willing to hear the story and pleased to eat together.

Our prayer is that each one of you dear friends, along with our team here, can have the discernment of where to "cast our nets"; that in our work and in our times of simply being somewhere, we may carry God's presence with us. Sometimes we will just chat or play a game, but other, special times, we may get the opportunity to share about God's love with those around us.

Please continue to pray for us, we really depend on your spiritual support! We had a few weeks of sickness, so we hope that God will renew our strength and our immune systems. We would appreciate prayer for the children's safety. There has been an increase in violence in schools across Brazil, due to a social media challenge encouraging teenagers to go into schools to kill a certain number of children with various weapons. And of course, please pray for our team, for discernment as we continue our activities in the park, and for the people of the city, that they will be blessed.

Marcio and Noemi



Photos from top to bottom: The boat structure divides the park socially and economically, between north and south; our first balloon toss activity was not only fun, but encouraged people to think of Easter around the themes of reconciliation, freedom, and forgiveness; an eager group listens to Altamiro tell the story of the Jewish people under the yoke of slavery – many were eager to try the Jewish Passover food items; people joining the Easter table to try the Jewish elements and receive the Eucharist.



Going further with Church Mission Society

Jesus never gives up. Neither should we. We live in a fractured, hurting world. It can be tempting to give up: on hope, on people, on the idea that things can ever change. Yet, Jesus invites us to follow him on a journey to the edges. Find out more at churchmissionsociety.org/nevergiveup

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.



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

Beware Those Modern Choruses

The Rectory,
St James the Least of All

My dear Nephew Darren,

I am afraid we shall have to agree to disagree on yet another topic – although I suspect the list of items that we agree to agree on would be considerably shorter. I like to think my appreciation of hymns resembles a connoisseur of fine wines savouring a grand cru claret, yours seems to resemble a Russian female tractor driver who is a Hero of the Nation.

We at St James the Least are more than happy with *Hymns Ancient & Modern* – the original 1861 edition, naturally – the later editions display a dangerous tendency towards modernism. Sadly, St. Paul was not able to sing *Onward, Christian soldiers*, but I am sure he regretted the fact that it had yet to be written. The hymns our grandparents pretended to sing when they were in church are quite good enough for the ones we pretend to sing when we sit in the same pews.

At least when we come to the last verse, we know that we can then sit down, mission accomplished. The last time I attended your church, just as I saw the last words and therefore the finishing line of one of your choruses coming into sight, we were told it would be splendid to sing the thing another three times. At least it gave me another analogy to use when I next preached on eternity in hell.

And your method of singing would plunge our congregation into an existential crisis. What do they do with their hands when they don't have books to hold and are obliged to look at a screen? To be deprived of being able to hold a book in church is like a smoker who is trying to give up being unable to grasp a cigarette when in the pub.

The ladies do not know whether to clasp their handbags, which then makes it look as if they suspect the rest of the congregation of theft, or to hold some flowers, which looks a little too matrimonial. The men experiment with putting hands in pockets, which they then realise looks scruffy, so they try to hold on to the pew in front, which is inevitably too low, so they have to adopt some form of half crouch, which makes them look as if they have recently had hernia operations.

Your choral tradition – if I can flatter it with such a description – also seems to require half an hour before the Service spent singing for our congregation, that time is more usefully spent discussing Government incompetence, livestock prices and why Miss Threlfall always wears a red felt hat with her tangerine coat.

Should we ever have a joint Service, I can't imagine how we'll all get through the first hymn together.

Your loving uncle,

Eustace

GOD in the Arts

The Revd Michael Burgess continues his series on God in the Arts with a look at "The Madonna of the Meadow" which hangs in The National Gallery.

'The Madonna of the Meadow' by Giovanni Bellini

Each year as we look at Creation we see the cycle of the seasons. The earth comes alive in spring, blossoms and bears fruit in summer, gives up its goodness and glory in autumn, and seems to die in the sleep of cold winter. Each of those seasons has its moods and feelings, which we find mirrored in the turn of human life.

The joy of spring and summer go hand in hand with the sadness and resignation of autumn and winter in all that life brings us. When we look at our Lady in the Gospels, and this month of May is Mary's month, we see that mixture of joy and sadness.

In the Annunciation and at Christmas we share in the wonder and happiness of motherhood and new birth. A Son is born, but that birth brings anxiety and strain. Those strange words of Simeon in the Temple, losing the child in Jerusalem, watching her son grow, only to be rejected and crucified – these experiences brought Mary heartache and sorrow. But her maternal love sustains her through it all, and Mary is with the disciples at the glorious moment of Pentecost.

This range of moods in creation and in the life of Mary is caught up in the painting, 'The Madonna of the Meadow' by Giovanni Bellini. He came from a family of Renaissance painters, and this work was created around 1500. It now hangs in the National Gallery in London. The background is full of the details of the world of nature and everyday life. We see some cows grazing and others resting. A farmer tends the livestock on one side of the painting, while a herdsman relaxes on the other. Mary in the centre is part of that creation with the blue of her robe like the sky above, while the russet shades beneath that blue mirror the earth on which she rests.



As we look more closely, we can see some disturbing signs of 'nature red in tooth and claw.' There is a bird to our left – perhaps a crane or egret – that is fighting with a snake. Above, on the top of a tall, thin, leafless tree there is another bird as black as death. We look at the babe sleeping in His mother's arms and sense His vulnerability for all her protective love. Some 30 years later Mary will cradle her Son in that same pose as His body is taken down from the cross: that heart-rending moment we know as the Pietà.

The Venetian landscape is like a peaceful May afternoon where spring is dissolving into high summer amid those contented signs of a clear sky and cows grazing. The serpent and the raven tell us that struggle and death can easily invade that scene. But they somehow pale into insignificance as we ponder that luminous affirmation of new life in the mother and child that dominate the canvas. They proclaim life; they proclaim life after death. The babe sleeping in Mary's arms will wake and grow through the seasons of life. Too soon we know His body will hang on a barren tree like the one where that bird of death perches. But that cycle of birth and spring leading to death and winter will be transformed as His risen body will walk into another landscape – the garden of Easter where the leaves never wither and the sky never darkens, for in that resurrection joy, all is life and light and life eternal.

14th May: Rogation Sunday (Sunday before Ascension)

In the Anglican Church, Rogation is celebrated on the fifth Sunday after Easter. Rogation means an asking of God – for blessing on the seed and land for the year ahead. It is appropriate in any emergency, war, plague, drought or foul weather.

The practice began with the Romans, who invoked the help of the gods Terminus and Ambarvalia. In those days a crowd moved in procession around the cornfields, singing and dancing, sacrificing animals, and driving away Winter with sticks. They wanted to rid the cornfields of evil.

In about 465AD the Western world was suffering from earthquake, storm and epidemic, so Mamertius, Bishop of Vienne, aware of the popular pagan custom, ordered that prayers should be said in the ruined or neglected fields on the days leading up to Ascension. With his decision, 'beating the bounds' became a Christian ceremonial.

Rogation-tide arrived in England early in the eighth century and became a fixed and perennial asking for help of the Christian God. On Rogation-tide, a little party would set out to trace the boundaries of the parish. At the head marched the bishop or the priest, with a minor official bearing a Cross, and after them the people of the parish, with schoolboys and their master trailing along. Most of them held slender wands of willow.

At certain points along the route – at well-known landmarks like a bridge or stile or ancient tree, the Cross halted, the party gathered about the priest, and a litany or rogation is said, imploring God to send seasonable wealth, keep the corn and roots and boughs in good health, and bring them to an ample harvest. At some point beer and cheese would be waiting.

In the days when maps were neither common nor accurate, there was much to be said for 'beating the bounds.' It was still very common as late as the reign of Queen Victoria. Certainly, parish boundaries rarely came into dispute, for everyone knew them.

Where did Jesus go? Canon Paul Hardingham ponders the Ascension

In Salvador Dali's picture of Jesus' ascension all you can see are His feet! As we celebrate the event this month, it prompts the question 'where did Jesus go?' Peter says Jesus 'has gone into heaven and is at God's right hand' (1 Peter 3:22). However, the New Testament tells us three things about what Jesus is doing at the Father's side.

Sitting: At Pentecost Peter says Jesus is 'exalted to the right hand of God, He has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear...' 'The Lord said to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand"' (Acts 2: 33-4). Peter is affirming Jesus' position of authority and power at the heart of the universe. By pouring out the gift of the Holy Spirit upon us, Jesus gives us a foretaste of the life of heaven i.e. eternal life, forgiveness, healing, release and God's provision for our lives.

Standing: When Stephen, the first Christian martyr, was being stoned to death by the Jewish authorities he cried out: 'I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.' (Acts 7:56). Our experience of heaven is only ever partial, as we live with the reality of suffering and setbacks. However, Jesus is still on the throne! He has a bigger plan and purpose for our lives than we might imagine (including the difficulties), and we are called to trust Him daily.

Praying: 'Christ Jesus who died – more than that, who was raised to life – is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.' (Romans 8:34, cf Hebrews 7:25). Even when we don't know how to pray, we have the assurance that Jesus is already praying for us! He knows our needs even better than we do ourselves, so when we feel condemned or defeated in our Christian lives, we have somebody on our side!

The Ascension reminds us that the risen Jesus lives in the immediate presence of God and both transcends and embraces our present experience. This truth lies at the heart of the *up* language used to describe the event.

'Heaven relates to earth tangentially so that the one who is in heaven can be present simultaneously anywhere and everywhere on earth: the ascension therefore means that Jesus is available, accessible, without people having to travel to a particular spot on the earth to find Him.' (Tom Wright).

W CROSS R D

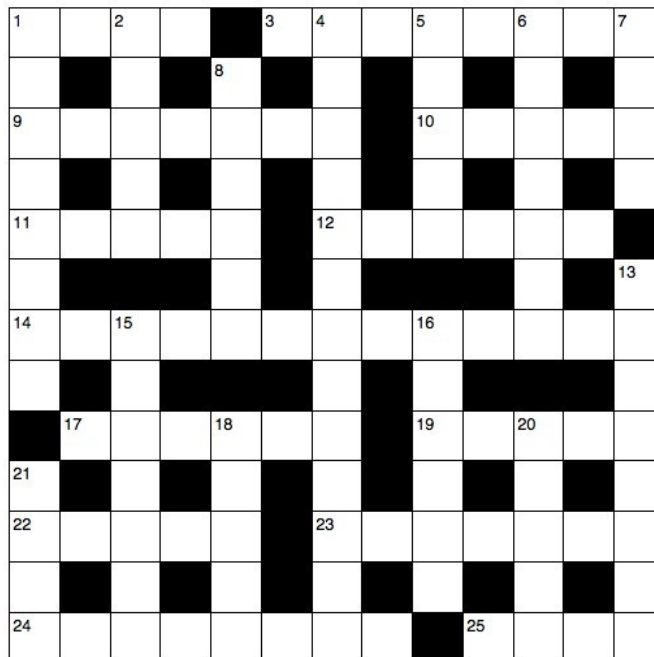
Solution on page 24

Across

- 1 'Therefore let us — passing judgment on one another' (Romans 14:13) (4)
 3 'I — — these persons here present' (Marriage service) (4,4)
 9 According to a prearranged timetable (Numbers 28:3) (7)
 10 Group of eight (5)
 11 The cell into which the Philippian jailer put Paul and Silas (Acts 16:24) (5)
 12 — Taylor, pioneer missionary to China (6)
 14 Otherwise known as the Eucharist, Breaking of Bread, the Lord's Table (4,9)
 17 'So that after I have preached to others, I — will not be disqualified for the prize' (1 Corinthians 9:27) (6)
 19 Attend to (3,2)
 22 Approximately (Acts 4:4) (5)
 23 Tea rite (anag.) (7)
 24 Rule of sovereign (8)
 25 Test (anag.) (4)

Down

- 1 The name of the street where Judas lived in Damascus and where Saul of Tarsus stayed (Acts 9:11) (8)
 2 'The playing of the merry — , sweet singing in the choir' (5)
 4 'We have been saying that — — was credited to him as righteous' (Romans 4:9) (8,5)
 5 Dr Martyn — Jones, famous for his ministry at Westminster Chapel (5)



- 6 Port at which Paul landed on his way to Rome (Acts 28:13) (7)
 7 Observe (Ruth 3:4) (4)
 8 Minister of religion (6)
 13 'I am — of this man's blood. It is your responsibility' (Matthew 27:24) (8)
 15 'Greater love has no one than this, that he — — his life for his friends' (John 15:13) (3,4)
 16 Archbishop who calculated that the world began in 4004BC (6)
 18 'No one can — the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit' (John 3:5) (5)
 20 Establish by law (5)
 21 Product of Gilead noted for its healing properties (Jeremiah 46:11) (4)

In our Book of Remembrance in May

- 2nd Mary Lockie, 1990
 Leslie Duffield, 2011
 3rd Elizabeth Boon, 1977
 Amy Bell, 1987
 4th Gerald Rimmer, 1977
 7th David Astley, 2001
 Barbara Brown, 2002
 8th Robert Brookfield, 2020
 9th David Jones, 1986
 10th Clarissa Roberts, 1958
 Wilfred Gott, 1968
 12th George Williams, 2011

- 15th Kathleen Hiley, 2021
 16th Dorothy Hall, 2013
 18th Ian Stuart, 2010
 20th Alan Livesley, 1985
 29th William Bullen, 1997
 30th Florence Boswell-Reid, 1993

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

Anonymous Wisdom

What is the difference between Capitalism and Socialism?
 Capitalism is the exploitation of man by man. Socialism is the exact opposite.

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 –

An important spiritual discipline is prayer, where we can both listen and talk to God. However, it's not always easy, and as Pentecost tells us, we have the Holy Spirit to help us to pray.

'In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God.' (Romans 8: 26,27)

The Spirit helps us in our weakness

We often don't know how to pray for a person or situation. The Holy Spirit is alongside to help: *'He bears the burden with us'*. He enables us to connect with God and assures us that He loves to hear our prayers: *'And by Him we cry, 'Abba, Father.'* (Romans 8:15).

The Spirit helps us in our ignorance

When we don't know what to ask in prayer, the Spirit prays for us with a perfect understanding of God's will. The Spirit pleads on our behalf in *'wordless groans'*, which go beyond mere words. We are never alone when we pray, since the Spirit takes our words and brings them to the Father.

The Spirit helps us in our requests

The Spirit intercedes for us according to the will of God. He translates the prayers we can't articulate or the requests we get wrong, so that they come to God in accordance with His will. In prayer we attune ourselves to the Spirit with our words or groans. Reading the Bible alongside our prayer is helpful, so that we can pray in agreement with God's Word.

When we pray, let's confidently ask: *'Come Holy Spirit.'*

From Our Own Correspondent Doris Brookfield

Bob was a carpenter and joiner before becoming Senior Building Surveyor for the Liverpool Corporation.

This was his favourite poem. May 8th, 3 years ago, will be the anniversary of his death.



A bag of tools

by R.L.Sharpe.

Isn't it strange that princes and kings,
And clowns that caper in sawdust rings,
And common people like you and me,
Are builders of eternity?

Each is given a bag of tools,
A shapeless mass;
A book of rules.
And each must make-
Ere life is flown-
A stumbling block,
Or a stepping stone.

Lord, speak to me that I may speak,
in loving accents of thy tone. As
thou hast sought, so let me seek.

Foreword

I have always been interested in history. I remarked lately that I was reading "The Rise of the Dutch Republic" by G M Motely which has three volumes with over a thousand pages. It was suggested that I might write something about it for **THE WORD**. I was always one to accept a challenge, so will try to condense this into smaller bounds.

You may ask what has this to do with **THE WORD**, a church magazine! It is about the Reformation, a time of religious wars, of terror, persecution, murder, rebellion and turmoil. Also, it was a time of heroism and sacrifice in the cause of political and religious freedom. The main protagonists were Spain, France, the Netherlands and England. Catholicism against Lutherans, and Calvinism. It is not my aim to inflame tribal conflict or religious tensions but rather to show what was done in the past for the religious freedom we have today. We remember our war dead, but not those who were martyred for our sake. What if this had never happened? Our world would be a different place today.

For many years there had been objections to certain practices with in the Catholic Church: Huss in Europe and the Lollards in England; Martin Luther in Germany and John Calvin in France. Things came to a head in 1528 when Phillip II became King of Spain. In England Henry the VIII broke away from the Pope's authority and made himself the head of the Church in England which was basically a Roman Catholic Church which over the years has become modified into that Catholic and Apostolic Church we know today.

Philip was a devout Catholic and his fervour amounted to paranoia. He was said to have been of small stature and considered handsome

except for a protruding lower lip, arrogant and of an icy nature. He saw his aim in life to suppress and extirpate the Protestant heretics but it was the more radical Calvinists whom he particularly hated the most. And he had inherited the Netherlands who were part of his Kingdom.

On the death of his first wife he married Mary 1st of England, so becoming King (consort) of England. She was besotted with him but he treated her with disdain and at a distance by spending most of his time away from her. Mary already had a reputation of suppression and was known as "Bloody" Mary. She willingly fell in with all of Phillip's wishes in order to gain his favour when he asked for an English army to go to the Netherlands to fight the French who had invaded the Netherlands.

Phillip was to spend most of his life in conflict or in war. On Mary's death Edward became King of England but died at an early age. Elizabeth the 1st then came to the throne. Phillip made her an offer of marriage, hoping she would accept and let him bring England back to the Catholic Church.

What if she had accepted? Philip was always short of finances to spend on his palaces and other buildings in Spain so he taxed heavily all countries under his control. He kept a standing army of Spanish troops in the Netherlands to keep the populace in subjection. Often they were not paid so they went on the rampage stealing, abusing, raping, running amok and terrorising the inhabitants. In America the conquistadors were using similar tactics in holding Montezuma as a hostage and massacred the Aztecs in the search for gold and forced converts to Catholicism. Their treasure ships attracted the English pirates, but that's another story. In both cases, it would lead to rebellion, uprisings and wars that would last for hundreds of years before the Netherlands would get peace. This is their story.

To be continued

From the Archives: 86 years ago this month.



From the May 1937 Coronation Number
(These are all genuine extracts!)

Monday's Washing

WHITE silk tennis frocks become a nasty yellow shade from constant washing. I find that half a lemon squeezed into the "blue" water is very effective in keeping them white. (E.H.)

Tuesday's Sewing

DARNING BLACK STOCKINGS: Make "light" work of darning black stockings at night by using an electric torch as a mushroom underneath. (Mrs. Dean)

Wednesday's Nursing

INVALID'S CUSTARD: Beat up 1 new-laid egg, add 1 teaspoonful of sugar and 1/4 pint of milk. Pour into slightly buttered cup and steam for 20 minutes. (Miss B. Griffiths)

Thursday's Cooking

NO LUMPS IN SAUCE: When making sweet sauce or gruel, mix a little sugar with the dry powder before adding milk or water. It will then never go lumpy in cooking. (Mrs Coles)

Friday's Household

A CHEAP FIRELIGHTER: Attach some wire to a piece of pumice stone, which stand in a jar with a little paraffin oil. When laying the fire, place pumice stone under then sticks and apply match. Remove when fire gets going. The pumice stone lasts almost indefinitely. (V. Dean)

Saturday's Children

SUN-BATHING: When sending children out to sunbathe, for the first few days rub the whole skin with olive oil. This prevents redness and blistering and promotes a nice golden tan. It is especially necessary in strong sea air. (No name attached)

The Coronation Number of our church magazine in May 1937 is one of a very few old issues which the editor knows to exist. Searches at the Lancashire County Archives and in Liverpool Library have not uncovered any historic copies of the magazine which has changed its name several times.

It appears to have been published in one form or another in an unbroken run since 1890 but, sadly, I have only found, or have been lent, 27 copies covering the entire period from 1890 until February 1999 when **THE WORD** was first published.

If any of our readers have kept any old copies (pre-1999) of the parish magazine, whether for sentimental reasons or otherwise, the editor would be very grateful if he could have sight of them and he will copy them and keep them with those which he already has and return them to you.

How we have changed:

In August 1929 the parish magazine comprised 12 black and white pages of which six and a half were adverts, one was the front cover, and one was a list of clergy and officials in the church. One page was a letter from the Vicar and the remaining two and a half pages were brief parish notes including a list of offertory gifts and rotas.

It recorded that 10 baptisms, two weddings and 7 funerals had taken place in the previous 10 weeks. The Vicar, Rev. Nicholas Earle, lamented that the congregation's giving was not enough to make ends meet and that the hassocks and other needful things were crying out for replacement all at once. It is a testament to our congregations now that although we have fewer numbers we are at least able to keep our heads above water financially.

THE GOLDEN HOUR.

NOW in the shining of the Spring,
The golden hour of May,
Our gracious sovereign lord, the King,
Comes to his crowning-day.

Down roadways of the loving heart
The splendid heralds ride,
Where loyalties proclaim their part
In such a happy tide.

Draw near, O Father, now to bless
This day Thy son who comes,
Else were our trumpets boastfulness,
Our pride but beat of drums.

Inspirer of each noble deed
And every high desire,
Befriend Thy servant in his need,
O Holy One, inspire.

When in Thy sacred place he stands
In silent company,
Deliver Thou into his hands
The seals of majesty.

The orb, the sceptre, and the crown,
The consecrated ring
Lord, from Thy dwelling-place look down....
God save our gracious King !

A. Newberry Choyce.

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.

Can Science Prove God Exists?

To risk sounding like a smart-alec seven-year-old, technically speaking you can only prove things mathematically. If you need to know that one plus one equals two, don't go to a chemistry lab. The natural sciences only deal with things that can be observed and measured. Science has been so successful that it's tempting to get carried away, valuing science above any other kind of knowledge, but there are other ways of knowing that are equally important. For example, art conveys ideas, experiences or emotions that provoke us to think or do something in response.

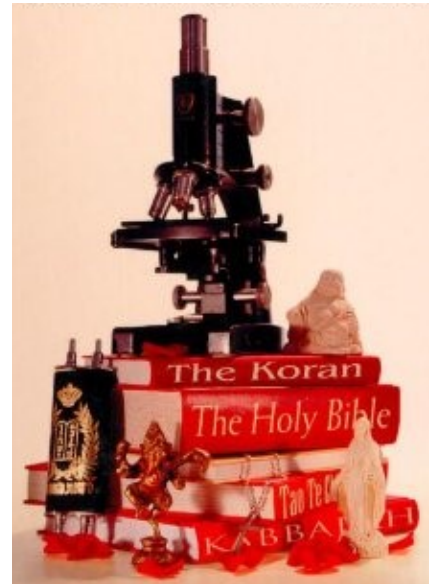
In fact, to find answers to any of the really important questions about meaning and purpose that affect us throughout our lives, we always have to go beyond science. Some scientific data might help define the question, for example a farmer facing a drought would probably like to know some details about the current weather patterns and the availability of seeds for more hardy crops before she can start asking "What is the point of trying to grow anything at all?" But in the end, she is asking a deeper question – and so are the rest of us when we go through any significant experience in life.

So rather than asking "Can science prove God exists?", what about: "Are the findings of science compatible with the existence of a purposeful Creator?" For many scientists today, the answer to the second question is yes. They have investigated the Bible's descriptions of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and found that they make sense. They have discovered that they can interact with God – especially in prayer – and that this faith has changed their lives.

Professor Christine Done, an Astrophysicist at Durham University, writes, "for me the more we know about the vast, yet intricate and beautiful Universe we live in, the bigger and more awe-inspiring is the God who made it all." (*Thinking About: The Big Bang*, <https://www.cis.org.uk/resources/thinking/>)

Some go even further, making statements like this: "the way the universe exhibits an ordered structure, which is open to science to investigate, points to a mind behind it." (Revd Dr Rodney Holder, Astrophysicist, in *Longing, Waiting, Believing* (BRF, 2014))

The question "Can Science Prove God Exists?" turns out to be a category error – trying to use science to answer a non-scientific question. On the other hand, many scientists think there is enough evidence from a wide range of sources to warrant belief in God.



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

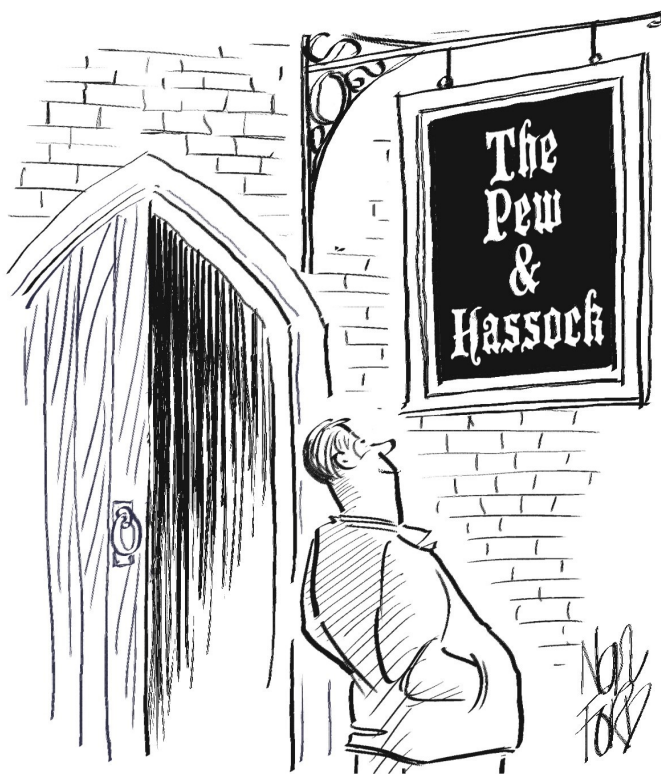
The group meet from 10.30am-noon on the **second Wednesday of every month** at St. John's Church on St. John's Road in Birkdale.



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

social events.

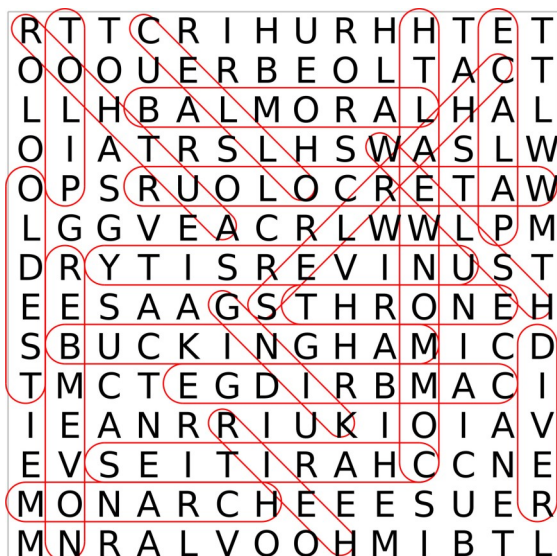
To find out more, email elderberriesgardening@gmail.com or call Shelley Lewis-Lavender on [01704 560690](tel:01704560690).



Changing the name from 'St Mark's Parish Church', resulted in a big increase in the number of men attending services

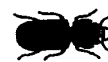
WORD SEARCH

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

ONLINE SERVICES

THINGS THAT CAN GO TERRIBLY WRONG



PROBLEMS WITH THE SOUND



ACCIDENTAL SCREEN-SHARING OF PASTORALLY-SENSITIVE INFORMATION



INTERNET BREAKS AT CRUCIAL MOMENT

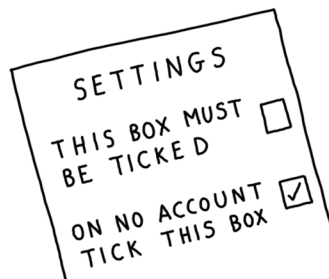


LINDA! HAVE YOU SEEN MY SPECTACLES?

FAILING TO MUTE THE CONGREGATION



ANIMALS RUNNING AMOK



THE APP HASN'T BEEN CONFIGURED

THAT'S ONE WORSHIP VIDEO TOO MANY, SON



LIVE ARREST OWING TO IGNORING COPYRIGHT



INVASION BY ROWDY GROUP OF METHODISTS



**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





**Rev. Patrick Evans fundraiser for
The Southport and Area Schools Worker Trust (SASWT)**

**D-Day to VE Day HOPE Bike Ride
871 miles from Sword Beach in Normandy to Kolding in Denmark
21st April - 4th May 2023**

I'm supporting SASWT as they bring HOPE to young people in Southport, Formby and the surrounding areas. Today young people face many challenges; schools do a fantastic job of support, although they are overstretched.

SASWT go into schools and bring HOPE to children through presenting assemblies covering various topics such as Bullying, Getting On and Falling Out, and Achieving Goals. They offer three yearly presentations to the primary schools about Christmas and Easter and one for Year 6 children moving into high school.

The SASWT create a safe time and place in local secondary schools to explore the significant issues of life and faith. This is weekly through being a presence at lunchtimes, through the 'Safe Space' lunchtime drop-ins, with games, discussion, a 'Three Minute Thought' and online engagement.

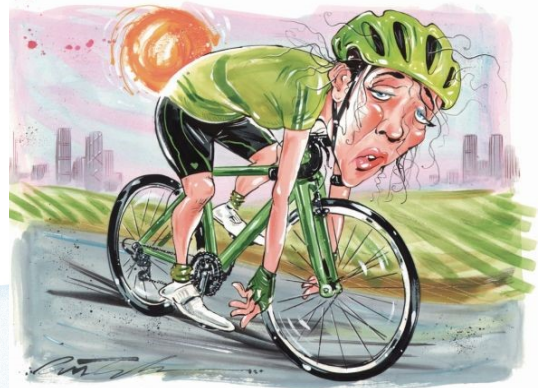
Bringing HOPE to future generations is so important. I'm grateful that my Dad's generation did just this. On D-Day in 1944, he landed with the 5th Battalion Kings (Liverpool Regiment) on Sword Beach in Normandy; during 1945, he became part of T-Force, and in May 1945, he celebrated VE Day in Denmark. Even today, the Danes mark the end of WW2 by placing candles in their windows, symbolising the light returning to their nation after years of darkness. So on the 21st of April, I'll set out to cycle his journey from D-Day to VE Day, covering 871 miles from Sword Beach to Kolding in Denmark, 78 years after he did. In my small way of supporting SASWT, I'm seeking to bring HOPE to the next generation. In anticipation, thank you for your support as we bring HOPE to future generations.

Follow my daily blog at:

<https://southportmethodist.org.uk/patrick>

By the time that you are reading this, Rev Patrick Evans (Liverpool Road Methodist Church) will –we hope– have cycled more than 700 miles on his epic ride to raise funds to support the Southport and Area Schools Worker Trust which desperately needs more money.

He is hoping to arrive at his destination in Denmark on 4th May after completing 871 miles (that's almost as far as from Land's End to John o'Groats) so it's not too late to sponsor him.



If you wish to have a flyer there are copies available in St John's.

Charity Bike Ride for the Southport & Area Schools Worker Trust (SASWT)

Rev Patrick Evans Fundraiser for the Southport and Area Schools Worker Trust - 21st April - 4th May.

The SASWT is facing a £20k deficit in its funding for the next academic year, 2023/4.

Patrick, a local Methodist Minister is undertaking a sponsored bike ride of 871 miles across Europe. You can find more details on the flyers/sponsorship forms in churches or by following this link <https://ainsdalemethodistchurch.org.uk/d-day-to-ve-day-charity-bike-ride/> there is also a Just Giving page at –

<https://www.justgiving.com/page/patrick-evans-1680245274175>

and you can access the flyer/sponsorship form at

<https://ainsdalemethodistchurch.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Patrick's-Sponsorship-Form-2023.pdf>. You can find out more about the work of the Southport and Area Schools Worker Trust at

<https://saswtrust.com/>

Fire

There was a fire at the main Inland Revenue office in London, but it was put out before any serious good was done. – *Ronnie Corbett*

Mark

When the late Dean of York was asked why he called his stumpy-tailed fox terrier 'Mark', he explained: "The New Testament contains the life-stories of our Lord by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Mark's is the shortest tale!"

DID YOU KNOW

by John M. Shakespeare

To quote Nelson Mandela (1918-2013) "Education is the most powerful weapon you can use, to change the world". The philosophy of education takes in the purpose of teaching, and also what are the needs of learning. The very basics of what are our learning needs, must be the three R's i.e. reading, writing and arithmetic. These are the areas of study covered, from the earliest methods of schooling.

Ethical and moral lessons in our modes of behaviour developed from Plato and the Greeks, through to our Monastic and Religious teachers. Heraclitus a Greek philosopher, who lived circa 480/500BC, maintained that everything in the world is subject to change, in that all things evolve as time passes. The comment that, "You can never step into the same river twice", was attributed to him.

Knowledge, that is knowing what something is, comes from the function of the mind translating what it is we are seeing, using the powers of our senses.

It can be argued that our nature and our innocence may be corrupted by education and a curiosity to know. However as in the Law we say, that ignorance is no defence, it therefore follows that Knowledge is a necessity of living.

Regrets over times missed in learning is summed up in this quote from William Shakespeare (1564-1616): "I would I had bestowed that time in the tongues, that I have in fencing, dancing and bear baiting".

How many of us like Shakespeare regret those times when we failed to take in lessons offered. It is not just formal teaching, which has its place, but learning from our experiences of life, that make us the person we are today.

The imparting of Knowledge to people was a puzzle to the disciples. When they asked Jesus why he spoke to the people in parables he replied:



"To you it has been given to know the secrets of the Kingdom of Heaven, but to them it has not been given. For those who have, more will be given, and they will have in abundance, but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. The reason I speak to them in parables, is that seeing they do not perceive, and hearing they do not listen, nor do they understand". (Matthew Ch13 verses 11-13).

Knowledge, its possession or lack of it, is often attributable to social circumstances. The Coronavirus pandemic, with its effects on schools, has brought out in many the fears about breaks in their children's learning.

In some philosophical arguments there can be seen an almost nonsensical aim, to confuse the boundaries between sense and nonsense. When we look to Knowledge for explanations, we are often seeking some clues, to the circumstances we find ourselves in at that moment.

I found students with a regard to the academic work they did sometimes had problems with understanding some of the lower the marks I gave for work submitted. My usual explanation pointed out, that the explanations they had provided to reach their conclusions, were often lacking in contextual Knowledge.

I leave with a quote from St. Edmund of Abingdon, "Study as if you were to live forever, live as if you were to die tomorrow."

Perhaps this can be seen as a reflection on the value of hindsight?

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

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....?

80 years ago, on 16th-17th May 1943 the RAF launched Operation Chastise, which became famous as the 'Dambusters' Raid'. Bouncing bombs were used to bypass anti-torpedo nets and breach dams, which caused catastrophic flooding in Germany's Ruhr Valley.

70 years ago, on 29th May 1953 New Zealand mountaineer Edmund Hillary and Sherpa Tenzing Norgay became the first people to reach the summit of Mount Everest.

60 years ago, on 27th May 1963 the folk/blues album 'The Freewheelin' Bob Dylan' was released. It included the hit song 'Blowin' in the Wind'.

50 years ago, on 17th May 1973 the Watergate hearings began in the US Senate and were televised nationally.

40 years ago, on 20th May 1983 the journal Science reported the discovery of the HIV virus that causes AIDS.

25 years ago, on 23rd May 1998 in a referendum, the people of Northern Ireland voted to accept the Good Friday Agreement. 75% were in favour of a Northern Ireland Assembly.

10 years ago, on 27th May 2013 Bill Pertwee, British comedy actor best known for his role as the Chief ARP air raid warden William Hodges in Dad's Army, died.

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 560690 or via email:

elderberriesgardening@gmail.com

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 Ann Shakespeare on 9th May
Clive Morris (70!) on 13th May
David Halsall on 21st May
Mandy Potts on 26th May
Beverley Cummings on 29th May
Sue Paterson on 31st May

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

The Last Laughs

The wise old Mother Superior was dying. The nuns gathered around her bed, trying to make her comfortable. They gave her some warm milk to drink but she refused it.

Then one nun took the glass back to the kitchen. Remembering a bottle of whisky received as a gift the previous Christmas she opened it and poured a generous amount into the warm milk.

Back at Mother Superior's bed she held the glass to her lips. Mother drank a little, then a little more and then before they knew it she had drunk the whole glass down to the last drop.

"Mother, Mother" the nuns cried, "give us some wisdom before you die!"

She raised herself up in bed with a pious look on her face and pointing out of the window she said "Don't sell that cow!"



A resident of a "cat hotel" in Jakarta tolerates a shower. Owners going on holiday can leave their pets at the venue and the animals are monitored on 24-hour surveillance cameras



THE ASTERISK IS CODE FOR "WE DO NOT TELL THE WHOLE TRUTH IN OUR ADVERTISEMENTS."



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