



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. 250

OCTOBER 2023

ST. JOHN'S PARISH CHURCH

God Centred, Relationship Driven and Life Transforming



St John's is now advertising the vacancy for a Vicar. Any shortlisted applicants will be interviewed on 31st October. Please pray that at least one suitable person will be inspired to apply and that we may look forward to having a Vicar in the New Year. We have been a long time without a Vicar in active service and we shall look forward to a time when a new incumbent is in post and leads us in our mission to spread the Gospel in Birkdale in conjunction with Rev Sam Johnson at St James' and St Peter's and the Minister of the Methodist Church on Liverpool Road.

THE CHURCH GARDENS

On **Saturday 14th October at 9.00am** there will be a Garden Party in our church grounds. This will **NOT** be an event with tables and chairs and cream tea being served, but will be a **Garden Working Party** when members of our congregation (and any friends, relatives and other volunteers) will tidy the church grounds before the onset of winter.



If you can help, **PLEASE COME ALONG**. Bring your own gardening tools and gloves and, if possible, some sturdy binliners for collection of what will be cut back. The hedges and bushes will need trimming (please bring shears, loppers and secateurs) and the borders will require weeding (bring a hoe, a fork or spade, and a rake).

We are grateful to those kind souls who have spent time and energy keeping the grounds neat and tidy during this year, and we hope that a concerted effort in mid-October will make the grounds very presentable until next Spring.

And please give a little thought to whether you will be able to help when we start again next year.

**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	
Reader:	Mrs. Christine Baker (560518)	Children's Society:	Mrs. Sylvia Kent (564071)
Churchwardens:	Clive Morris (564206) Tim Wright (553977)	Mothers' Union:	Mrs. Linda Caton (564737)
Wardens' Assistant::	Miss Lucy Wright (553977)	Girl Guides	Mrs. Janette Law (565951)
PCC Treasurer:	Mrs. Sylvia Kent (564071)	St. John's Brownies:	Mrs. Helen Jones and
PCC Secretary:	Mrs. Sally Wright (553977)	Brownie Guiders:	Mrs. Lesley Scott
Parish Hall Secretary:	Mrs. Jean Morris (564206)	St. John's Rainbows:	Mrs. Lesley Scott
Electoral Roll Officer:	Stuart Harris (563789)	Church Flowers:	Mrs. Cath Whiteside (568874)
Deanery Synod Reps:	Clive Morris (564206) Tim Wright (553977) Stuart Baker (560518)	Magazine Editor:	Stuart Baker (560518)
Safeguarding & Recruitment:	Mrs. Abbie Holden (07961003359)	Magazine Printer:	Mrs. Christine Baker (560518)
		Notice boards, I.T, Website developer, Publicity designer:	Mrs. Sally Wright (553977)
		Buildings Inspector:	David Halsall

St John's PCC Update

The PCC met on Monday 11 September. Discussions were had over our finances and a group was set up to look at a Stewardship Campaign. The leaking roof is being addressed and the shed in the play area has been moved to allow access for pointing work on the church wall. The Vision Document was reviewed and updated. Our vacancy will be advertised when dates have been agreed with the Diocese.

The next meeting of the PCC will be on Monday 13th November.

Please speak to Sally or Christine if you would like the PCC to consider.

Minutes of PCC meetings are on the noticeboard in the inner church porch.

Interregnum Update

If any of our readers would like to consider the Parish Profile which was prepared by our PCC, and our Vision Statement, they can find them by visiting this website:

<https://pathways.churchofengland.org/job/pathways/4650/vicar-of-birkdale-st-john>

NEW SERIES OF SUNDAY TALKS: KINGS IN THE BIBLE

Starting on 1st October we shall be learning each week about three Kings of the Old Testament, Saul, David and Solomon, their strengths and their weaknesses. The series will culminate with Jesus, the King of Kings.

Thursday Evening Prayers

After the summer break in August we shall resume the prayer sessions on **5th and 19th October on zoom**.

The meeting start at 7.30pm and last half an hour.

If there is anything which readers would like to be included in the prayers please contact Roy Doran, Christine Baker, Clive Morris, or Sally, Tim or Lucy Wright.

The number of those joining these prayer meetings has gradually increased. Do join us if you can. See page 31 for details about logging in on zoom by computer or by telephone.



St John's Church Birkdale

BIBLE STUDY GROUP

2nd & 4th
Wednesdays
2-4pm
St John's small hall

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



FRIDAY

Coffee, Cake & Chat

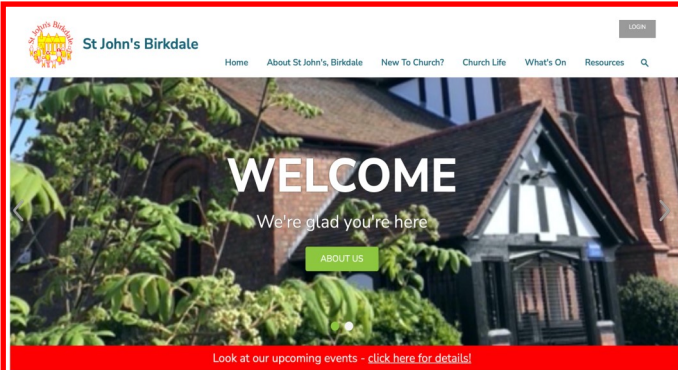
ST JOHN'S CHURCH, ST JOHN'S RD, BIRKDALE PR8 4JP

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

**NEXT MEETING:
13TH OCTOBER**



WHAT'S ON AT ST. JOHN'S



Visit our 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

14 July
29 September
★ 27 October ★
24 November
15 December

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 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 Christmas Fair

Saturday 2 December 10-3pm

YOUNG ADULT SOCIALS

Saturday 11th October

LUNCH & PUMPKIN PICKING

STJOHN'S BIRKDALE

Message Lucy for more details...

Worship on the
Seventeenth
Sunday after
Trinity

**SUNDAY 1st OCTOBER:
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 Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity

Almighty God, you have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless till they find their rest in you: pour your love into our hearts and draw us to yourself, and so bring us at last to your heavenly city where we shall see you face to face; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

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

Saul is Chosen to be King

The Reading: 1 Samuel 9: 1-10

There was a Benjamite, a man of standing, whose name was Kish, son of Abiel, the son of Zeror, the son of Bekorath, the son of Aphiah of Benjamin. Kish had a son named Saul, as handsome a young man as could be found anywhere in Israel, and he was a head taller than anyone else. Now the donkeys belonging to Saul's father Kish were lost, and Kish said to his son Saul, "Take one of the servants with you and go and look for the donkeys." So he passed through the hill country of Ephraim and through the area around Shalisha, but they did not find them. They went on into the district of Shaalim, but the donkeys were not there. Then he passed through the territory of Benjamin, but they did not find them.

When they reached the district of Zuph, Saul said to the servant who was with him, "Come, let's go back, or my father will stop thinking about the donkeys and start worrying about us." But the servant replied, "Look, in this town there is a man of God; he is highly respected, and everything he says comes true. Let's go there now. Perhaps he will tell us what way to take." Saul said to his servant, "If we go, what can we give the man? The food in our sacks is gone. We have no gift to take to the man of God. What do we have?" The servant answered him again. "Look," he said, "I have a quarter of a shekel ^a of silver. I will give it to the man of God so that he will tell us what way to take." (Formerly in Israel, if someone went to inquire of God, they would say, "Come, let us go to the seer," because the prophet of today used to be called a seer.) "Good," Saul said to his servant. "Come, let's go." So they set out for the town where the man of God was.

Worship on the
Eighteenth Sunday
after Trinity

SUNDAY 8th OCTOBER
10.30am service IN CHURCH
and via zoom & phone.

Collect for the Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity

Almighty and everlasting God, increase in us your gift of faith that, forsaking what lies behind and reaching out to that which is before, we may run the way of your commandments and win the crown of everlasting joy; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

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

The Fall of Saul

The Reading: 1 Samuel 15: 22-26

But Samuel replied: "Does the Lord delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the Lord? To obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed is better than the fat of rams. For rebellion is like the sin of divination, and arrogance like the evil of idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the Lord, he has rejected you as king."

Then Saul said to Samuel, "I have sinned. I violated the Lord's command and your instructions. I was afraid of the men and so I gave in to them. Now I beg you, forgive my sin and come back with me, so that I may worship the Lord." But Samuel said to him, "I will not go back with you. You have rejected the word of the Lord, and the Lord has rejected you as king over Israel!"

Words that are over the top and over used

The Ven John Barton is intrigued by some modern-day usage of our language.

'Incredible'. It's overused and has become almost meaningless. "We are incredibly grateful"; "I had an incredible meal". As the word really means 'beyond belief or understanding', it can't actually apply – in either case.

'Unbelievable' is similarly misused. So is 'fantastic', which is meant to describe something belonging to an imaginary world. So, strictly speaking, a fantastic tennis player can't be a real one.

How about 'amazing'? Count how many times you hear it today. It should be reserved to describe something astonishing, out of this world. If you think about it, if everything is amazing or incredible, then nothing really is. When the exceptional becomes normal or commonplace, nothing is special.

We seem to be struggling to find words to convey something out of the ordinary. Try 'iconic'. Iconic only appeared recently and has been distorted to mean 'historic' or 'traditional' or 'classic'. My dictionary tells me iconic actually means something to do with an icon, which is a depiction of Christ, the Virgin Mary, or a saint.

In fact, most of these over-the-top words, now in everyday use, have a religious association. Originally, they were reserved to communicate otherness, difference, deep respect.

For example, what about 'awesome'? It should mean 'awe' or reverence. It's a take-your-breath-away word. Awe is what Moses felt when he saw a bush on fire, because it didn't actually burn away, and he sensed the presence of God. Awe is something St Peter experienced, when he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, 'Go away from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man!'

If you try to imagine what Moses and Peter actually felt, words like 'unworthiness' and 'fear' might come to mind. They really were experiencing something out of the ordinary, too hot to handle. They were out of their depth. An experience like that stayed with them for life. They had encountered holiness. Now there's a word worth using.

Worship on the Nineteenth
Sunday after Trinity

SUNDAY 15th OCTOBER
10.30am service IN CHURCH

Collect for the Nineteenth Sunday after Trinity

Faithful Lord, whose steadfast love never ceases and whose mercies never come to an end: grant us the grace to trust you and to receive the gifts of your love, new every morning, in Jesus Christ our Lord.

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

**David: A Man after
God's Own Heart**

The Reading: 1 Samuel 17: 8-11, 32-37

Goliath stood and shouted to the ranks of Israel, "Why do you come out and line up for battle? Am I not a Philistine, and are you not the servants of Saul? Choose a man and have him come down to me. If he is able to fight and kill me, we will become your subjects; but if I overcome him and kill him, you will become our subjects and serve us." Then the Philistine said, "This day I defy the armies of Israel! Give me a man and let us fight each other." On hearing the Philistine's words, Saul and all the Israelites were dismayed and terrified.

David said to Saul, "Let no one lose heart on account of this Philistine; your servant will go and fight him."

Saul replied, "You are not able to go out against this Philistine and fight him; you are only a young man, and he has been a warrior from his youth."

But David said to Saul, "Your servant has been keeping his father's sheep. When a lion or a bear came and carried off a sheep from the flock, I went after it, struck it and rescued the sheep from its mouth. When it turned on me, I seized it by its hair, struck it and killed it. Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear; this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, because he has defied the armies of the living God. The LORD who rescued me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will rescue me from the hand of this Philistine."

Saul said to David, "Go, and the Lord be with you."



Midweek Book of Common
Prayer Holy Communion

WEDNESDAY
18th OCTOBER
10.30am service
IN CHURCH

Worship on the Twentieth
Sunday after Trinity

SUNDAY 22nd OCTOBER
10.30am service **IN CHURCH**
and via zoom & phone.

Collect for the Twentieth Sunday after Trinity

God, our light and our salvation: illuminate our lives, that we may see your goodness in the land of the living, and looking on your beauty may be changed into the likeness of Jesus Christ our Lord.

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

David Becomes King

The Reading: 2 Samuel 6: 12-23

Now King David was told, "The Lord has blessed the household of Obed-Edom and everything he has, because of the ark of God." So David went to bring up the ark of God from the house of Obed-Edom to the City of David with rejoicing. When those who were carrying the ark of the Lord had taken six steps, he sacrificed a bull and a fattened calf. Wearing a linen ephod, David was dancing before the Lord with all his might, while he and all Israel were bringing up the ark of the Lord with shouts and the sound of trumpets. As the ark of the Lord was entering the City of David, Michal daughter of Saul watched from a window. And when she saw King David leaping and dancing before the Lord, she despised him in her heart.

They brought the ark of the Lord and set it in its place inside the tent that David had pitched for it, and David sacrificed burnt offerings and fellowship offerings before the Lord. After he had finished sacrificing the burnt offerings and fellowship offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the Lord Almighty. Then he gave a loaf of bread, a cake of dates and a cake of raisins to each person in the whole crowd of Israelites, both men and women. And all the people went to their homes.

When David returned home to bless his household, Michal daughter of Saul came out to meet him and said, "How the king of Israel has distinguished himself today, going around half-naked in full view of the slave girls of his servants as any vulgar fellow would!"

David said to Michal, "It was before the Lord, who chose me rather than your father or anyone from his house when he appointed me ruler over the Lord's people Israel—I will celebrate before the Lord. I will become even more undignified than this, and I will be humiliated in my own eyes. But by these slave girls you spoke of, I will be held in honour."

And Michal daughter of Saul had no children to the day of her death.

Worship on the Twentyfirst Sunday after Trinity

SUNDAY 29th OCTOBER at 10.30am

This is the fifth Sunday of the month and, as usual, we shall hope to be joined by worshippers from St James', St Peter's and Liverpool Road Methodist Church.

The Talk: Tim Wright

The Reading: Psalm 40: 1-3

I waited patiently for the Lord; he turned to me and heard my cry.
He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; he set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand.
He put a new song in my mouth, a hymn of praise to our God.
Many will see and fear the Lord and put their trust in him.

Bible Sunday is 29th October.

Canon Paul Hardingham considers why Christians put such a high value on the Bible.

At the recent Coronation the King was given a Bible with the words 'the most valuable thing that this world affords'. As Bible Sunday is celebrated this month, let's ask why we should read the Bible?

The Bible isn't a single book, but a library of 66 books, composed by some 44 writers over 1500 years in a range of styles including history, poetry, prophecy, letters and apocalyptic (looking at the end times). Despite having a number of different writers, it claims one authority - God Himself! 'All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work' (2 Timothy 3:16). The Bible is inspired ('the word of God in the words of men') and equips us to live for God in every aspect of our lives. We also have the promise of the Holy Spirit to guide us when we read: 'when the Spirit of truth comes, He will guide you into all truth' (John 16:13).

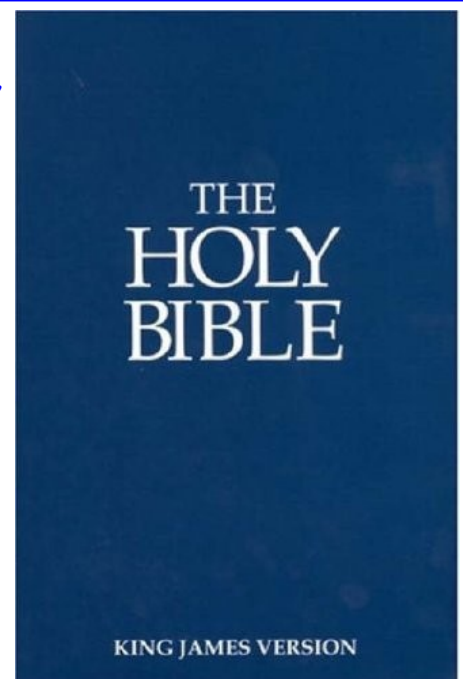
How should we read the Bible? Let's consider the following guidelines:

Right time: We need a regular routine, which will meet our needs. This will vary according to our circumstances: e.g., a mum at home with young children, somebody with a demanding job or a retired person.

Right Place: We need to find a space where we can be undisturbed (e.g. lounge, bedroom, train or kitchen).

Right Version: We need a version of the Bible which we can readily understand and use. A number of versions are available (e.g. NIV, The Message), as well as Bible apps we can access on our phone.

Right Help: Reading notes also help us to understand a passage and apply it to our lives.



**ST JOHN'S CHURCH
BIRKDALE**



JUST **DESSERTS**

FRIDAY 20 OCTOBER

7.30PM

@ ST JOHN'S HALL

**TICKETS £8
FROM CHRISTINE OR SALLY**

Christine: 01704-560518

Sally: 01704-553977

Please let us know of any food allergies when booking



CHURCHES together in BIRKDALE

PRAAYER TIME

Meeting 1st Monday of the Month @ 10.30am

4 September - St John's Church hall

**2 October - Liverpool Road
Methodist Church**



6 November - 66 Hartley Crescent

4 December - 32 Hartley Crescent

**Please join us to pray for our
churches, community and
our future together**



UKRAINE EMERGENCY APPEAL

The destruction of the Nova Kakhovka Dam has displaced thousands of people. We urgently need your prayers, financial donations and donations of aid, so that our teams in Ukraine can help those in need.



Practical Aid Priorities List

Food: Pasta, rice, tinned meat, tinned fish, tinned veg, flour, cooking oil, salt, biscuits (with 1 year's best before date).

Medical: First aid kits, plasters, bandages, dressings, gauze, surgical gloves, antiseptic creams, paracetamol, ibuprofen, Calpol etc.

Toiletries: Soap, toothpaste, toothbrushes, flannels, shampoo, sanitary towels, nappies, incontinence pads.

Clothing and Footwear: for all ages.

Financial donations can be made through the 'Donate' page on our website www.internationalaidtrust.org.uk. For further information please contact the office tel: 01772 611000 Email: office@internationalaidtrust.org.uk

Charity Registration No. 1086597

The need continues ... please help

Leave your donations in the church porch any Sunday between 9.45-11.45am and we will get them to the local drop off point.

Don't take donations directly to the warehouse.

Please note we can only accept the smaller items from the list



Thank You

Local History

We are again indebted to local journalist and historian Henry James who has given us permission to reproduce in **THE WORD** an interesting article which he wrote and which was published in the September issue of Birkdale Buzz. We thank Henry and Birkdale Buzz for their kind permission.

The Smedley Hydro

In the last issue we looked at the history of the Palace Hotel, and in this edition we turn our attention to another Birkdale landmark.

The Smedley Hydro on Trafalgar Road is one of Birkdale's most imposing and important buildings and has had a variety of uses over the years. It was built in 1876 with 47 rooms and started life as Birkdale College for young men. In the same year, however, the building was bought out by John Smedley, who had already established a Hydro in Matlock, Derbyshire. His company paid £7,500 for the building and the five acres of land that surrounded the property. He opened a hydropathic hotel on the site on 1st May 1877 with the capacity to cater for up to 140 visitors.



An advertisement for the hotel in 1885 boasts that the establishment has a new Turkish bath with swimming bath attached, is 'one of the finest in the kingdom' and is free to residents in the establishment. It also offered various fearsome-sounding, hydrotherapy treatments such as galvanic, electro-chemical and Kreuznach baths, all designed to treat illnesses and improve mental health. Hydrotherapy establishments usually had medical staff on hand and the Smedley employed Dr Frederick Barnardo as the resident physician, brother of Dr Thomas Barnardo, who founded homes for poor and deprived children.

There has been little recorded about what happened at the Smedley Hydropathic Establishment in the opening years of the 20th Century. However the business was closed between 1924 to 1928, when alterations could have been made to the building. It is known that in 1932 the premises became the Smedley Hydro Hotel. The advent of the Second World War in 1939 saw a new lease of life for the Smedley Hydro. The North West coast was chosen by government as an area for relocation of civil servants from London. About 2,000 civil servants were moved to Southport and more were sent to Blackpool and Morecambe. Smedley Hydro was requisitioned to use as premises for the creation of the National Register, containing the personal details of every civilian in the UK. This information was then used to issue identity cards and organise rationing etc.

After the war ended the building continued to be used by the British government for the management of official records. The NHS was founded on 5 July 1948 and the staff of Smedley Hydro were asked to administer the identification numbers of the people who used the service (the familiar NHS number). The General Register Office, which is responsible for births, adoptions, marriages, civil partnerships and deaths moved to Smedley Hydro in the 1990s and now also houses employees working for the Passport Office. Today the building is probably the town's largest employer, with a major impact on the Southport economy.

Henry James

St Luke

To St Luke, whose feast-day is 18th October, we owe a beautifully written gospel as well as the Book of Acts. He was a Greek physician and faithful travelling companion to St Paul. Under house arrest near the end of his life, Paul noted 'only Luke is with me'. Luke's gospel focuses on the compassion of Christ, and offers us moving parables, such as the Good Samaritan and Prodigal Son. Women figure more prominently in Luke's gospel than in any other: look out for the extended story of the Virgin Birth, and stories of Mary, Elizabeth, and the woman who was a sinner. His gospel also features more poor people, more lepers, more 'sinners', who are all shown to be 'inside' the love of Christ. In Acts, Luke skilfully links sacred and profane history, as subsequent archaeology has shown. He tells of how the early Christians moved away from Jerusalem into the pagan world, and especially on to Rome.

Luke	women
physician	virgin
companion	Birth
house	
arrest	poor
	lepers
Paul	sacred
compassion	profane
parables	pagan
good	
Samaritan	early
	Christians
prodigal	Jerusalem
son	Rome

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

ST JAMES' CHURCH BARN DANCE

On Saturday 28th October St James' church will hold a Barn Dance in their church hall.
Hours 6.30pm—9.15pm.

Tickets £10 for adults (NO CHARGE FOR CHILDREN) to include a hotpot supper and a pudding (with suitable alternatives for anyone with dietary needs).

If anyone would like to have tickets please contact Stuart Baker (560518) and he will make arrangements for you with St James'. These are great fun occasions. Do sign up for a jolly evening out!

Thoughts on our Christian pilgrimage...

Exercise daily – walk with the Lord. – Anon

We don't change God's message – His message changes us. – Anon

God's biggest problem with labourers in His vineyard is absenteeism. – Anon

God always provides a light through every one of His tunnels. – Anon

We are saved not by our deeds but by Christ's sacrifice for our misdeeds. – Fred Catherwood.

Some people treat God as they do a lawyer; they go to Him only when they are in trouble. – Anon

The wages of sin is death. Repent before payday. – Anon

The Myth of the Rector who originated Rugby Football

For the next few weeks until the end of October one of sport's most keenly fought tournaments will be played in France: the Rugby World Cup which is named in honour of William Webb Ellis (1806-1872).



Everyone who has ever played or followed the game of Rugby Football, and many others who have not, will be familiar with the legend of William Webb Ellis picking up the ball during a football match at Rugby School in 1823 (or possibly 1824: such is the vagueness of legends) and running with it until he placed it on the ground in the opposing team's goal, thereby originating the game which we now know as Rugby Football.

It is a nice story, but (alas) it is probably only a myth which is unsupported by any reliable evidence.

William Webb Ellis was a pupil at Rugby School in the 1820s and was said to be more passionate about sport than in his academic studies. One of his contemporaries, Thomas Harris, who left the school in 1828 reportedly said that Ellis "had a reputation for taking an unfair advantage at football." The rules of football in 1823, such as they were, permitted a player to catch the ball and then retreat back as far as he pleased, with his opponents being unable to advance, and then play the ball forward. The legend tells us that having caught the ball he ran forward with it which, insofar as there were any rules at that time, was contrary to them.

This legend first came to light in 1876, four years after Ellis died, but doubts about its authenticity emerged when Thomas Hughes, the author of "Tom Brown's Schooldays" who had been a pupil at Rugby School, wrote that "a jury of boys would probably have decided it would be justified homicide if he (Ellis) had been killed running it in."

A committee of Former Pupils was convened in 1895, 23 years after Ellis's death, to decide who was the game's originating genius. They reached no firm conclusion, but the myth was too good a story to dismiss out of hand, and it has persisted to this day, and it really doesn't matter. To make use of Voltaire's conception of God: "if he didn't exist it would be necessary to invent him."

Why is this article in a church magazine, you may be asking? It is only because after leaving school and Oxford University William Webb Ellis entered the Church and became chaplain of St George's Chapel, Albemarle Street, London and then rector of St Clement Danes in the Strand.



He became known as a low church evangelical churchman but he appears not to have come to the attention of the wider public in his lifetime other than in 1854 when he gave a particularly stirring sermon on the subject of the Crimean War which resulted in this image of him being published in the Illustrated London News. But because of the myth of him picking up the ball and creating the great game which is Rugby Football his name shall live for evermore!

Sources: Rev. Fergus Butler-Gallie: "A Field Guide to the English Clergy."
Tony Collins: "The Sunday Times."



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

On the Perils of Harvest

The Rectory,
St James the Least of All

My dear Nephew Darren,

In the unlikely event of ever being put in charge of designing the course for those being trained for ordination, I would make a few significant changes. Modules on doctrine, Church history and Greek would all be dropped as unnecessary. In their place, I would add courses on how to run a tight jumble sale, ways to keep your church council in order – and especially close to my heart at present, how to negotiate Harvest.

The first skirmish starts in early Summer when it becomes clear that the flower arrangers' plans mean that the choir would disappear behind a huge array of chrysanthemums. The choir then retaliate by announcing that their Harvest anthem must take place just when the Sunday School intended to re-enact the parable of the Good Samaritan. They, in turn, raise the stakes by insisting that a stage will be needed for their performance, thus ensuring that I will be separated from the congregation by an impenetrable barricade.

In September, therefore, there is the traditional meeting to iron out all these little difficulties. This inevitably results with the annual act of the vergers handing in his resignation, of the bell ringers threatening a mass walk-out, and those who organise coffee afterwards demanding that my sermon lasts no more than three minutes, so there will be plenty of time for socialising after the Service.

I greet all suggestions with a spontaneous burst of indifference, smile, agree with it all – and do nothing (this, incidentally, is a good policy for all decision-making). Inevitably, everything goes ahead exactly as it has always done for the last century.

Come the day, there will be the usual arrangement of eggs round the font, with the strategically placed card saying 'Given anonymously by Elsie Jones' and the pyramid of apples temptingly near the choirboys, so designed that when someone tries to pinch one during the sermon, the whole pile disintegrates as they roll all over the chancel.

On the following Friday, all will leave after the Harvest Supper saying that the entertainment was worse than the previous year and that the absence of red cabbage had quite ruined the hot pot. Everyone therefore has had an enjoyable evening.

My Harvest training course would be compulsory and a pass mark of 90% would be needed before ordination could be considered.

Your loving uncle,
Eustace

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From Our Own Correspondent

Doris Brookfield

Happy Memories

To think it's exactly two years ago when I said goodbye to you all at St. John's, and started a new life here in Yorkshire! I settled in quite quickly and it was so nice to have Adele and Paul so near to me but when you have lived in a town for 88 years it's hard to come to terms with the move. I like it here and I've made some really nice friends and I can have help whenever I need it, but after my visit to Southport in August it made me realise my heart was still with you all, and although we didn't go to the golf course to be with Bob I felt I was so near to him. He would have never moved from Southport, he loved it, especially his beloved golf course Royal Birkdale where he now lies, and his home in Guildford Road where we brought up our lovely family. I can't say I miss my home, as I left during Covid, and the house and the upkeep was getting too much for me, but memories of all the happy years will live with me forever, most of all I miss my garden and the beautiful view from my house.

I have lovely views here and Yorkshire is a lovely county but I will always remain a Lancashire lass.

I felt very depressed at the state of our lovely town, it was awful to see Lord Street and Chapel Street, it's just cafes and pubs and people covering the pavements on the tables and chairs; you can hardly get past. But what a joy it was to return to Birkdale, it was as lovely as ever. I walked into the butcher's and was greeted with 'Hello we've not seen you for a long time, where have you been?'

They asked if I would like a coffee, but as we were due to meet my niece we had to decline. Then I went to the bakery, and again I was asked where had I been, so I must have left some memories over the years. Then we came to St. John's for the coffee morning, and I knew I was home. There you all were, just as though I had never been away, Clive had spotted me waiting for Adele on Lord Street so he wasn't surprised to see us. It was so lovely to be with some of my old friends from St. Johns. Thank goodness for Zoom!

I've spent a week in Weymouth with one of my friends and had a lovely time, with sunshine every day. What a delightful place Dorset is. So God is good and is looking after me, I have lots of issues with my health, but all due to being 90, but I'm still here. God Bless-you all, may you find your Vicar soon, but you'll be a hard act to follow, you are the life support of the church.

Much love to everyone,
Doris



Chesil Beach, viewed from the Isle of Portland, with Weymouth in the distance to the right of the beach. In the far distance, on the left, is Fleet Lagoon, a narrow strip of water between Chesil Beach and the mainland. The lagoon was one of the locations where the Bouncing Bomb was tested during World War II.

GOD in the Arts

The Revd Michael Burgess continues his series on God in the Arts with a look at 'Still Life with Lemons, Oranges and a Rose' by Francisco Zurbarán. Reproduced by courtesy of The Norton Simon Foundation.

The weekday eucharist in a parish church, with only a handful of worshippers present, can be a great contrast to the bustle and liveliness of Sunday services. It can offer you a quiet time to focus on the gifts of bread and wine offered on the altar. This month's painting of 1633 is an opportunity to focus on the gifts that have been offered at the altar of *this* table, in 'Still Life with Lemons, Oranges and a Rose' by Francisco Zurbarán. He was a contemporary of the more famous Velázquez and worked in Seville until his death in 1664.

There is something quite special and evocative in the arrangement of fruits and flowers – two highly polished plates, one bearing the citrons (not lemons as the title tells us), the other a cup of water and a rose. In the centre there is a basket with oranges and orange blossom. Against the dark background we

sense the cool tones of the plates and cup, and the warmth of fruits and flowers.

There is a curious balance and poise here, and some critics have suggested a Trinitarian allusion in the three groups so deliberately placed on the table. Others have pointed to the rose and water as symbols of our Lady, and the fruit and blossom as signs of the new life of Easter.

A devout Spanish Catholic in the 17th century would have noticed these allusions, but they may be too fanciful, as X-rays have shown that Zurbarán painted out another plate which simply contained sweet, candied potatoes.

What he has portrayed is an allegory of the senses. We can almost smell the fragrance of orange blossom and the tanginess of the fruits. We want to reach out to touch and taste. But no, we must look and ponder the offering of these gifts for our delight, and simply give thanks for the artist who has shown us something of the sacramental beauty of creation in them.



Parish Register

Baptisms

10th September 2023

Jasmine Faith Maiden
Luca Martin Rigby

W CROSS R D

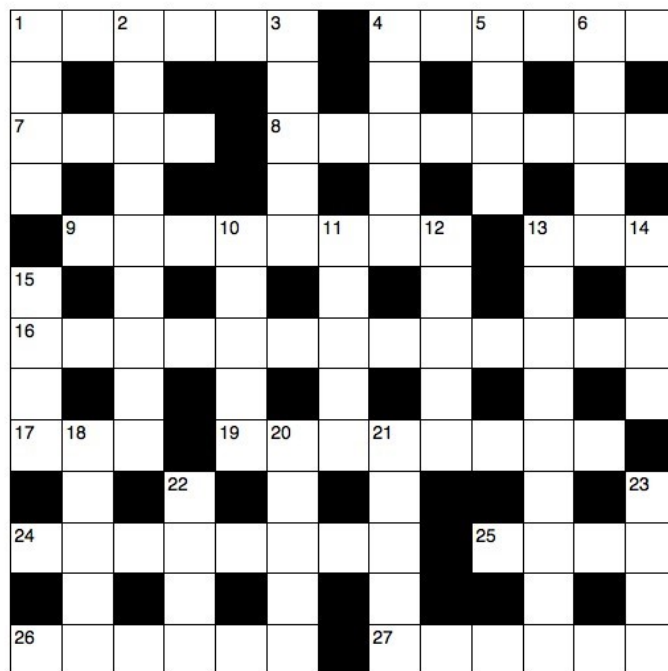
Solution on page 27

Across

- 1 He must be 'the husband of but one wife and must manage his children and his household well' (1 Timothy 3:12) (6)
 4 'For we must all — before the judgement seat of Christ' (2 Corinthians 5:10) (6)
 7 'They reeled and staggered like drunken men; they were at their — end' (Ps 107:27) (4)
 8 See 19 Across
 9 It concerned who among the disciples would be the greatest (Luke 9:46) (8)
 13 Formed by the Jews in Thessalonica to root out Paul and Silas (Acts 17:5) (3)
 16 'He has sent me to bind up the — ' (Isaiah 61:1) (6-7)
 17 Moved rapidly on foot (Matthew 28:8) (3)
 19 and 8 ' — a great company of the — host appeared with the angel' (Luke 2:13) (8,8)
 24 Hindrance (Romans 14:13) (8)
 25 Comes between Luke and Acts (4)
 26 Empower (Acts 4:29) (6)
 27 'Get these out of here! How dare you turn my Father's house into a — !' (John 2:16) (6)

Down

- 1 Sunrise (Psalm 119:147) (4)
 2 The part of the day when Cornelius the Caesarean centurion had a vision of an angel of God (Acts 10:3) (9)
 3 He was one of those who returned with Zerubbabel from exile in Babylon to Jerusalem (Nehemiah 7:7) (5)
 4 'No one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born — ' (John 3:3) (5)
 5 Animal hunted or killed as food (Ezekiel 22:25) (4)



- 6 'He encouraged them — — remain true to the Lord' (Acts 11:23) (3,2)
 10 Ruses (anag.) (5)
 11 Jewish priestly vestment (Exodus 28:6) (5)
 12 Visible sign of what had been there (Daniel 2:35) (5)
 13 This was the trade of Alexander, who did Paul 'a great deal of harm' (2 Timothy 4:14) (9)
 14 'This is my — , which is for you; do this in remembrance of me' (1 Corinthians 11:24) (4)
 15 One of Noah's great-great-grandsons (Genesis 10:24) (4)
 18 Traditionally the first British Christian martyr (5)
 20 Relationship of Ner to Saul (1 Samuel 14:50) (5)
 21 Jacob had one at a place he named Bethel while on his way to Haran, fleeing from Esau (Genesis 28:12) (5)
 22 Bats (anag.) (4)
 23 'You strain out a — but swallow a camel' (Matthew 23:24) (4)

In our Book of Remembrance in October

- 1st Norman Edmondson, 1972
 3rd John Brown, 1973
 Charles Hare, 2011
 4th Maude Crosby, 1977
 5th Winifred Webb, 1986
 8th George Pacey, 1986
 12th Jane Gorton, 1981
 13th Albert Beeley, 1981
 14th Elizabeth Rimmer, 1986
 16th Robert Burge, 1992
 19th Doris Shawe, 1980
 Marjorie Tasker, 1989
 Lucy Maguire, 1992

- 20th Margaret Forshaw, 1985
 John Monk, 1985
 21st Janet Anderton, 1981
 22nd Sylvia Mather, 2021
 24th Mary Livesley, 1964
 George Lockie, 1980
 Helen Whitehill, 2017
 26th Annie Vowles, 1976
 27th Sarah Whitehead, 1994
 Albert Butterworth, 1989
 30th Karen Calvert, 2010

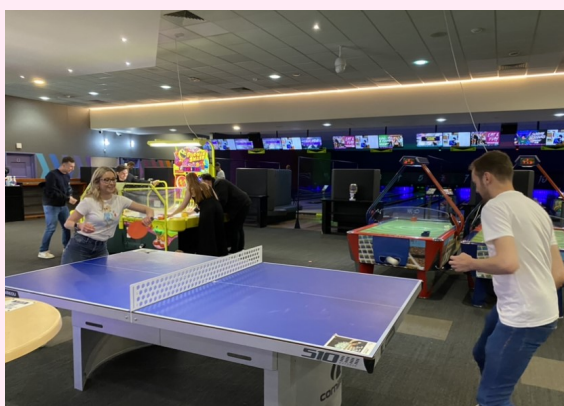
If any of our readers wish to have the name of a deceased relative inscribed in the Book of Remembrance please contact Stuart Baker.

ST JOHN'S YOUNG ADULTS and THE REST

On Friday 23rd September, whilst the grown-ups (!) were enjoying an evening of fellowship in the church hall sharing in a Harvest Supper, the Young Adults went on an outing to Nandos for a meal and then to the Bowling Alley.



Lucy has not told **THE WORD** who won the bowling or the table tennis and other games but it looks from the photographs that they all had an enjoyable time.



Their next outing will be on 7th October, for lunch and pumpkin picking. Any of our readers who feel that they are denying the effect of the passing years and who think they are Young Adults and would like to pick pumpkins should contact Lucy.

Meanwhile, 46 parishioners and friends, and some welcome visitors from St James' and Liverpool Road Methodist Church, enjoyed a meal of chicken casserole followed by apple pie and custard in the church hall. Our games were less energetic than those of the Young Adults. Harvest Bingo and two quizzes were provided and were keenly contested. The logo quiz was particularly difficult but there was an outstanding winning score of 28 out of a maximum 32 points deserving a round of applause and prizes of the winners' choice.



The thanks of all were expressed to all who helped to prepare for the evening and who assisted in many ways to serve the food and to do the clearing away, and especially to Christine and Sally who between them did all the catering. This might not have been the sort of Harvest meal which the Mermaid of Morwenstow (see the September issue of **THE WORD**) might have served to his parishioners but it was very well received.

REVIVE INTERNATIONAL

RESTORING LIVES, RENEWING HOPE

St John's Church is continuing to support the work of Revive International in Olinda, Brazil. This is an extract from their most recent newsletter. Please continue to pray for the work which they are doing to support vulnerable and damaged children, and please continue to support our Mission Fund.

Hello from us all at Revive!

The month of July began with school holidays during which the girls had the opportunity to go on various outings and do activities at home, including games and scavenger hunts, beach trips, and a special afternoon out at a local Arts and Crafts Festival - Fenearte!

In the same month, we welcomed a 10-year-old girl, G.M. It means we are now at our maximum capacity for girls in the house. We also celebrated several birthdays: A.S turned 4 years old, M.T turned 14, and A.N turned 3. We celebrated these occasions with lots of fun and, of course, cake.

August saw the adoption of one of our babies, an 8-month-old girl, H.M, and the provisional custody of a 1-year-old boy, L.A.

This term, we began the transition from caring for children aged 0 to 6 to a Foster Care model. This means that by December, we will conclude the activities at the second house and prioritise this age group in families. This stage has always been in our plans since the beginning of the second house opening, but due to our limited donations we needed to accelerate this transition.

We would appreciate prayers for this moment as it is a delicate time when we will have to say goodbye to several educators who have helped us care for our children for 3 years.

Our Stories

In April, we received H.M when she was just 4 days old. She arrived at the house unexpectedly and from the beginning it was a challenge to care for her as she began to experience respiratory problems. One morning, while she was feeding, she became very ill and she was brought to us by an educator almost lifeless, with lips turning purple and no signs of life. She was immediately taken to the nearest A and E, and on the way there she briefly revived but then had another respiratory arrest.

At the hospital, she was quickly attended to and needed intensive care. The doctors said she came very close to death. She had to stay in hospital and there were several subsequent hospitalisations, with the last one being critical. The medical team handling her case were deeply concerned about her health condition. Throughout this process, we prayed and interceded for her life. The reasons for hospitalisation were always respiratory issues which were worsening, but she kept fighting for her life. Throughout this, a family had already become attached to her. She gradually improved, and after spending nearly a month in the hospital, she returned to Reaviva and began the process of reconnecting with her new parents. Today she is with a family that provides all the attention she needs.

I would like to encourage you, if you have opened and read our newsletter and have been touched by everything God has done in the lives of these children, to share about Reaviva Brasil with someone who does not yet know us. Help us spread the value of our work and the transformation it brings to the lives of the most vulnerable and their families.

Thank you as ever for all your support.

We pray that as you bless the work of Revive, you in turn will be blessed knowing that you are playing a part in the big picture of **bringing God's love in action to children, women and families here in the city of Olinda.**

WHAT IS SOCIETY?

by John M. Shakespeare

Society is indeed a contract, so says Edmund Burke (1729-1797), an Irish politician. He suggested that it was a partnership between those who are living, those who are dead and those about to be born.

For any sort of society to function, I would suggest that there must be some sort of authority. How this authority is appointed will, I believe, be the crucial indicator as to how that society operates. Dictatorships can and have flourished, commonly called benevolent dictatorships they, to me, reflect the fact of general acceptance of the authority exercised.

President Tito of Yugoslavia was an example of an authoritarian rule which worked. However, on his death its dissolution was beset with civil strife.

The words of John Donne's (1572-1631) poem, "No man is an Island", are iconic words that have echoed through the years. His picture of Society, and what it means, is encompassed in the first and last two lines of the poem:-

"No man is an island entire of itself, every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main....

And therefore never send for whom the bell tolls it tolls for thee."

Margaret Thatcher (1925-2013), the former British Prime Minister will be remembered for this remark: "There is no such a thing as Society, there are individuals, men and women and there are families". I believe that what she meant was that people should take responsibility for their lives and families, and not always expect the state to bail them out.

John Devey (1859-1952), an American philosopher, psychologist and educational reformer, was a systematic pragmatist who believed in taking a scientific approach to the problems of Society. One methodology, was by the use of practical statistics that were



available and trustworthy, for example national censuses.

In order to survive he believed that the knowledge that came from our participation, rather than just observation, was a crucial factor in order to improve the everyday lives of us all in Society.

At this point I believe that a quote from the Bible makes the point of united support.

Genesis (Ch 2 verse 18):

"Then the Lord God said. It is not good that man should be alone. I will make him a helper as his partner. (Verses 21/22), So the Lord caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept, then he took one of his ribs and closed up the place with flesh. And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man, he turned into a woman and brought her to the man".

So then, what is Society? I believe that it can be classified as a grouping of people, unified by norms of acceptable behaviours. Actions of individuals, I think, can still be seen as relevant if they, rather than contradict norms, add to the strengths of communal society. I believe that the diversity of religion and politics if evenly treated can only add to Society's strengths.

To be part of the same Society, is to accept willingly the norms subjected to, and displayed by, the interactions of its members.

To quote Ivan Illich (1926-2000), an Austrian born Roman Catholic priest, theologian, philosopher and social critic, he said that in a consumer Society, there are inevitably two kinds of slaves, the prisoners of addictions and the prisoners of envy.



Marcio Ciechanovicz and Noemi Celeti

**St JOHN'S CMS MISSION
PARTNERS IN BRAZIL**

Link Letter no. 3 | September 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,

We hope that you are all well. We are now properly back to our normal routine after a month of school holidays. We feel that our lives are still a continuous process of learning, re-learning, discerning and adaptation.

Looking back over the past three months, we see how much we are on a journey of discernment. While we had some encouraging events, others seemed to be complete flops. Most of our first activities as a team were held in the northern part of the park in the first few months, but we kept feeling a pull towards the southern side and had several walks and bike rides to "scout out the area."

Everything changed one day when one of the team members, pastor Fernanda, took our son Giovanni out for a chat. They decided to play basketball, but all the nice courts in the northern part of the park were full, so they drove towards the south and noticed a neglected court and decided to shoot some hoops there.

As they began to play, a group of children asked to join them. They all played on although the actual basketball hoops were missing. The boys were overjoyed that pastor Fernanda challenged them to a basketball tournament the following weekend. The next Saturday, a teenage youth group came from the neighbouring city of Itupeva to help us out with the picnic, various group games and our hoopless basketball tournament! This event marked the beginning of our first activities in this part of the park.

We have learned three things from this period. The first is the importance of keeping things simple. Planning activities and events is great, but sometimes we can get ahead of ourselves and make things so complicated.

The second lesson is something we all know but often need to be reminded of: that God is working even during times of seeming failure. On one occasion, although we had organised an amazing obstacle course with much effort from all the team, only three people joined in and all the others declined. But that afternoon as we waited for people to join our activity, Marcio met and chatted with a Christian man nicknamed Cobra. This man is responsible for all the radical sports events of the city and he showed interest in the project



Giovanni and Nathanael training basketball with some kids on the south side of the park

Support Marcio and Noemi:
churchmissionsociety.org/mnc

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



and became a great ally and potential partner. He provided free basketballs for us donated by the city council, and basketball hoops for the court.

Recently, Cobra arranged a meeting with the secretary of sports of Indaiatuba and they offered to help us write a project for "the boat", the structure right in the middle of the park that we were immediately drawn to from the start. There is huge potential, because the boat has a large room underneath which could be turned into so many things, like a cafe or a community space or a hangout for teens, etc.... This space has become a bit neglected and has become notorious for teenagers who try to climb the boat or

just hang out on the steps smoking weed. So we really want to ask what God would have us do and how we might involve the community and listen to them.

The third thing we've learned is the importance of accepting help from other "boats" around us. In the passage of Luke 5:1-7 we are told the story of the disciples trying to catch fish all night. Then Jesus tells them to cast their nets on the other side. As a miracle happens and their nets are filled with fish, they struggle to bring the nets in. We read in verse 7: "they signalled their partners in the other boat to come and help them, and they came." We have welcomed groups of volunteers from different churches who have come to spend time, pray and participate with us in our events. It has been an encouragement for us, since our team is small.

We are planning on receiving a team with a professional photographer to take pictures by the boat. We will be offering families and groups of people the opportunity to have their pictures taken, have picnic refreshments with us and receive a gift. Another event we have planned is for Children's Day on 7 October. Please pray that we will be able to gladden the hearts of many families and children that day.

We appreciate your support from afar as well, as you donate, pray for us and cheer us on. We would like to share a thanks for a huge answer to prayer. We have found an amazing Portuguese teacher for our children. Her name is Rejane, she is a Christian also and has not only helped them improve their grades in school but has also been faithfully praying for them. We feel truly blessed.

We ask that you continue to pray for our children, who are still adapting to the culture and still really miss the UK. The boys have made some friends, but the girls still haven't made any good friends, so we would appreciate prayer for that.

Marcio and Noemi



Photos from top to bottom: Teens from Itupeva church helping us play balloon games with the kids at the park; a recent afternoon at the park parents now stay to chat, kids and teens play and engage in different activities, all making the most of the picnic table; Rejane, the Portuguese teacher, took the kids out for ice-cream; Paul Tester and Andy Roberts, with some members of Du Park Team, praying together on the boat in the ecological park of Indaiatuba



Going further with Church Mission Society

Adelante: Saturday 23 September 2023. A hybrid event – in-person and online – to celebrate, learn about and pray for mission in and from Latin America. Book at churchmissionsociety.org/Adelante

Please note that opinions expressed in link letters are those of mission partners, not necessarily of Church Mission Society.

If you would like to discuss your mailings with us or to receive this link letter on a regular basis, please email supporter.care@churchmissionsociety.org or call 01865 787400. Church Mission Society is a mission community acknowledged by the Church of England. Registered Company No. 6985330 and Registered Charity No. 1131655 (England and Wales) and SC047163 (Scotland).

Dennis continues his research into the religious wars, terror, persecution, murder, rebellion and turmoil after the Reformation. It is his aim to show what was done in the past for the religious freedom we have today. What if this had never happened? Our world would be a different place today.

The Duke of Alva (sometimes called Alba)

The Duke of Alva was said to be a tall thin man, arrogant like most of the Spanish nobility of the time, ruthless and unmerciful, his name alone spread terror, and he eagerly accepted King Philip's appointment as Captain General of all forces in the Netherlands and was given freedom to take what ever measures he needed. Margaret (the Regent) was very angered by this appointment that put her under the Duke's authority and once again asked Philip to let her return to Spain, but he refused. The Spanish troops were billeted on families and abused them in every way. The Regent complained to the Duke who told her to mind her own business as army matters were his concern not hers.

A Council was set up to try Heretics, this became known as the Blood Council. The Prince of Orange, his brother Louis, and other nobles were ordered to appear before it to answer charges of being leaders of the rebellion, encouraging heresy and freedom of religion and other minor accusations. The Prince who had fled to his estate in Germany was to reply rejecting this order, stating that as a Knight of the Golden Fleece, a Prince of France and a citizen of the Netherlands he could only be tried by his peers.

When the Prince fled to Germany his 15 years old son was at university. The Duke thought that his son would be safe, but this was an error of judgement, because the Duke had him kidnapped and held hostage.

The Prince was proscribed and outlawed; all his property was confiscated. He thought with justification that this was now the time for him to become the Champion of the nation. The Prince and other Nobles now started to raise finances to fund troops to take back the Netherlands. The Prince sold all his effects, jewels, plate silver, tapestry, and furniture, this formed a pattern for other nobles who followed the Duke's actions. They did this because they believed that if their efforts failed, all these things would be confiscated any way.

On 16th February, 1568 The Holy Office declared that all inhabitants in the Netherlands some 3 million souls were sentenced to death and declared heretics. Alva was now able to loose his terror to the full. The populace knew this was not an empty threat and fled in their thousands. Victims, when being sent for execution, were prevented from speaking by means of a cruel device which caused the victim's tongue to swell which meant that no one could declare if they had been innocent or guilty. An attempt was made to capture the Duke but it failed.

Plans were now made for war. Louis of Nassau was declared leader of the army, the Prince no longer giving fictitious words of loyalty to the King. The Prince said to let it be known that he would drive out and expel all the King's forces from the Netherlands.

Gangs of marauders calling themselves the Wild Beggars began to rob, plunder and murder Monks and other Catholics. The Duke of Alva ordered that they be killed on sight without trial.

One wonders, how could people declaring to be Christians treat other Christians like this in the name of religion?

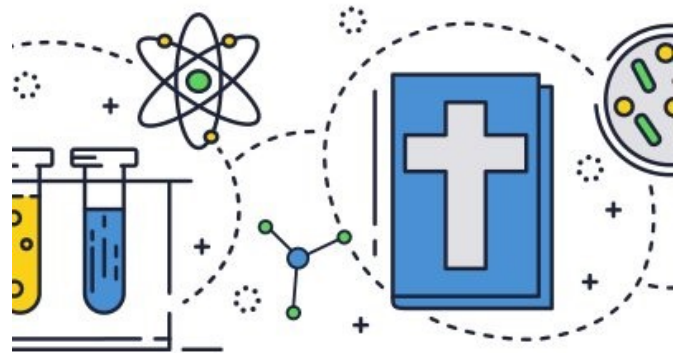
To be continued.

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.

Do the Bible and Science contradict each other?

For the Christian, the Bible is God's Word to us; it tells us about His character and creative purposes, how He has related to people in the past, and His promises for the future. Science is a specific way of studying the world, exploring the physical properties of things – a wonderful way to explore God's creation. So, the question to ask if the Bible and Science seem to be contradicting each other is, have we made a mistake in interpreting one or the other?



Science is very good at answering certain types of questions: 'What size is it?', 'How fast does it travel?', 'What is it made of?', and so on. Questions like 'What's it for?', 'What should I do with it?', and 'What's it worth?' can't be answered using scientific methods. Some of the misunderstanding in discussions of Science and Religion come from not recognising the limits of science.

It's also important to recognise what the Bible is, and what sorts of questions it can answer. The Bible was written well before people began to investigate the world in ways we would recognise as scientific. Of course, people in the Ancient Near East were studying the world around them, observing the movements of the stars, the processes of life and death that happened all around them, the seasons, the behaviour of physical objects, and so on. But they did not study the mechanisms underlying these things systematically using the tools of science, and they did not see or describe the world in scientific terms – not because they weren't intelligent, but because Science, as we know it, wasn't happening at that time.

Instead, the biblical writers used words that were commonly used in their own cultures to record events, share truth and wisdom, and tell stories that convey deep truth about God's character. If we want to understand God's intention in inspiring these words, we need to do some careful work to connect with those ancient writers and find out what they meant, before we can discover what those words mean to us today.

These principles can help us have far more fruitful conversations about Science and Christian faith. If we allow any apparent conflict between Science and the Bible to fuel our search for understanding, not only will we learn as individuals, but we will be able to draw others into a conversation that is relevant to wider society today.

CROSSWORD SOLUTION

ACROSS: 1, Deacon. 4, Appear. 7, Wits. 8, Heavenly. 9, Argument. 13, Mob. 16, Broken-hearted. 17, Ran. 19, Suddenly. 24, Obstacle. 25, John. 26, Enable. 27, Market.

DOWN: 1, Dawn. 2, Afternoon. 3, Nehum. 4, Again. 5, Prey. 6, All to. 10, Users. 11, Ephod. 12, Trace. 13, Metalwork. 14, Body. 15, Eber. 18, Alban. 20, Uncle. 21, Dream. 22, Stab. 23, Gnat.

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 – Worship

'Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshippers will worship the Father in Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshippers the Father seeks.' (John 4: 23).

The spiritual discipline of worship has both a personal and corporate dimension. It includes worship services as well as day-to-day activities. God is actively seeking worshippers (John 4:23) and worship is a response to our experience of God's love. The main words used of worship in the Bible have the sense of *submission* and *service*. They remind us that our lives need to be shaped by worship on a daily basis.

There are different ways into worship: practising stillness, offering praise (cf Psalm 95) and offering the whole of our lives as a living sacrifice (cf Romans 12:1). Worship is an act of the will; we choose to honour and please God. Depending on our circumstances, worshipping God requires effort on our part. However, entering into worship is to be transformed by His presence into the likeness of Jesus (cf 2 Corinthians 3:18).

Richard Foster in *Celebration of Discipline* offers some helpful ways in which to engage with worship on a daily basis:

Learn to practise the presence of God daily by punctuating every moment with praise and adoration.

Have different experiences of worship, both in large and small gatherings (i.e., small group)

Be prepared for gathered worship in heart and mind.

Be willing to let our worship transform our thinking and practice as God meets us.

Cultivate holy dependence on God for everything in our lives, looking forward to all God wants to do.

Learn to offer a sacrifice of worship, however we are feeling!

'Now the worship is over, let the service begin' (Bishop Michael Marshall, closing a service)

The Rich Colours of Autumn

Although we no longer fill the church with the heady smell of fruit and vegetables at Harvest time our three flower arrangers always create magnificent displays of vibrant autumnal colours.

These pictures show the displays which were in our church on Harvest Sunday. Our thanks go to Judith Foster, Shirley Wall and Cath Whiteside.



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.



social events.

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

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

Welcome Spaces

Following on from Warmer Spaces, the Stationmaster's House will be open as a Welcome Space where people can gather for free in a safe, welcoming place to connect with others and enjoy a hot drink and a warm welcome.



We will be open every Thursday from 10am - 4pm as a Welcome Space.

Birkdale Community Hub & Library,
2 Liverpool Road, Birkdale. PR8 4AR.
01704 566992

Sefton Welcome Spaces

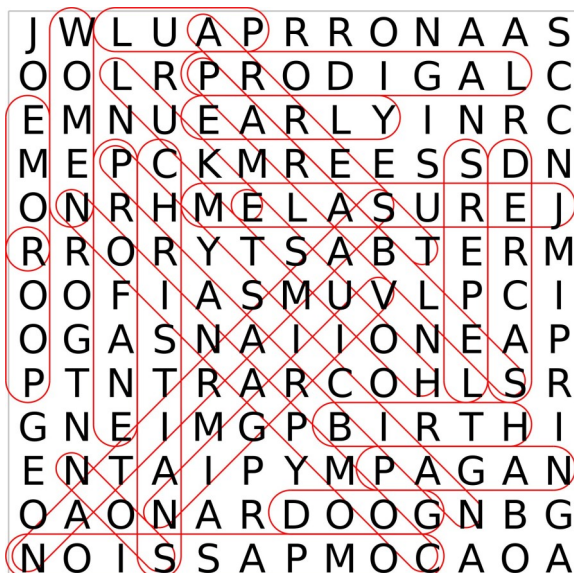
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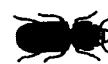
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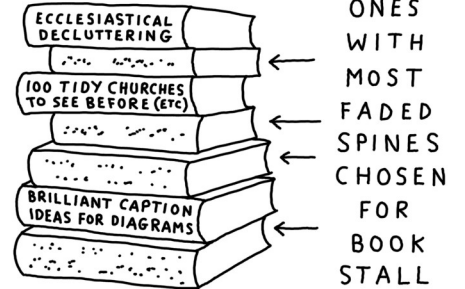
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Joining the Sunday morning services and Thursday evening prayers by zoom or by telephone

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.

Was it really that long ago?...

75 years ago, on 27th Oct 1948 the Morris Minor car was launched at the British Motor Show at Earl's Court in London. It cost £358.

65 years ago, on 1st Oct 1958 Michael Bond's children's book *A Bear Called Paddington* was published. It marked the debut appearance of Paddington Bear.

60 years ago, on 15th Oct 1963 the term 'Beatlemania' first appeared in the Daily Mirror newspaper in the UK. It described the intense, frenzied reaction of fans of the Beatles.

50 years ago, from 19th Oct 1973 to 17th Mar 1974 the 1973 Oil Crisis took place. OPEC suspended oil exports to nations supporting Israel in the Yom Kippur War. It led to major shortages and rationing in the UK, USA, Canada, Japan, the Netherlands, Portugal, Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) and South Africa.

40 years ago, on 25th Oct 1983 Microsoft Word 1.0 was released. It was the first version of the popular word processor, and Microsoft's first full-featured application.

30 years ago, on 15th Oct 1993 South African leaders Nelson Mandela and F.W. de Klerk, won the 1993 Nobel Peace Prize for their efforts to end apartheid.

20 years ago, on 19th Oct 2003, Mother Teresa was beatified by Pope John Paul II and given the title Blessed Teresa of Calcutta. (She was canonised as Saint Teresa of Calcutta in 2016.)

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

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

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

Anonymous Observations on Everyday Life

One thing all nations have in common is the ability to see each other's faults.

Over the centuries, people seem to have improved everything – except people.

In giving until it hurts, some people are extremely sensitive to pain.

Don't let the littleness in others bring out the littleness in you.

Some people are born great, some achieve greatness, and some just grate.

★HAPPY★ To
BIRTHDAY!

Wendy Wright on 12th October
Colin Paterson on 29th October

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

The Last Laughs

Tickled by Doddy

Many of our readers will remember that on 18th November last year St. John's hosted an excellent evening when we were addressed by Anne, Lady Dodd, widow of the late comedian Sir Ken Dodd.

Many will also remember that Sir Ken was tried, and acquitted of tax evasion offences. The venue of the trial had been a difficult problem for the Prosecution because whilst it was felt in some circles that Sir Ken was not overly popular in Liverpool it was also recognised that the taxman had a lower popularity rating amongst some Liverpudlians.

The trial, and its outcome, are history, but a few quips by the Master of Mirth have survived the test of time:

One of his best lines after his protracted court case with the Inland Revenue was:

"I didn't think it applied to me – I live by the seaside."

Another was:

"Self-assessment? I invented that."

Sir Ken thought it hilarious and fitting that the Revenue Office seeking to retrieve vast arrears of tax from him was based in Andover.

And there was this moment during the trial when Doddy explained that he had had some trouble with his tax because his accountant had died.

Asked by the prosecutor, "Did that really matter?" he replied: "Well it mattered to him." Cue jury laughter. Cue acquittal.



'The Times' newspaper reported recently that lots of fake blue plaques have been attached to buildings. Apparently there is one in the town of Riverside, Iowa, USA that notes that Captain James T Kirk, commander of the Starship Enterprise, will be born there in 2228.

Another contributor to the paper said that a pub in Chalton, Hampshire, put up a plaque saying "Jane Austen never lived here" after having so many visitors looking for the author's house in nearby Chawton.



[That reminds me of this sign which I saw on a gate on a property in Montreux in 2019. Ed.]

After a few judicial putdowns were recounted in last month's magazine we are indebted to Walter Tait for another:

the Scottish Judge, Sheriff J Irvine Smith, was once begged by the accused "As God is my judge, your honour, I am innocent" to which Irvine Smith replied "He isn't, I am and you're not."

And finally, this month, a witticism from George Melly, the jazz trumpeter and raconteur who once rather impolitely asked Sir Mick Jagger (right) why his face had so many wrinkles. The singer, whose most famous lyrics included that he "can't get no satisfaction" replied "They are laughter lines" to which Melly acidly replied "Nothing is that funny." Ouch!





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