



# THE WORD

Editor: Stuart Baker: [stjohnbirkdaletheword@gmail.com](mailto: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."**

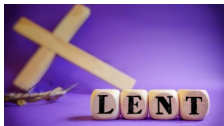
**ISSUE No. 253**

**SILVER ANNIVERSARY EDITION**

**FEBRUARY 2024**

## ST. JOHN'S PARISH CHURCH

**God Centred, Relationship Driven and Life Transforming**



14th February is a date known to most people as St Valentine's Day.

This year, the day also marks the start of Lent, commemorating the 40 days Jesus spent fasting in the desert and enduring temptation by Satan before beginning his public ministry. Our series of Sunday sermons under the heading 'The life of Jesus, from the Cradle to the Cross' continues throughout February and on 25th February we shall hear about how He resisted the temptations and what that means for us in our lives.

See Canon Hardingham's article on page 9 for reflections on the link between Lent and St Valentine's Day.

### REVIVE INTERNATIONAL RESTORING LIVES, RENEWING HOPE

Our Mission Partners in Olinda, Brazil, have told us that in the last three years they have provided a loving environment in their second care home for 24 neglected and abused children aged up to five years. They have recently found two more foster families willing to care for some of these children and in March they will be striving to find more foster parents. They pray that as we bless the work of Revive, we in turn will be blessed knowing that we 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. St John's has been supporting the work of Revive International for several years as part of our overseas mission support. **Our readers can help by putting donations for tea and coffee into the collection box after our Sunday services.**

#### ADVANCE NOTICE WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

The service this year will be on Friday 1st March at 10.00am at St Marie's RC Church, Seabank Road, Southport



**FOR ALL ENQUIRIES TO OR ABOUT ST. JOHN'S CHURCH PLEASE CONTACT US  
BY EMAIL [info@stjohnsbirkdale.co.uk](mailto: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 Officer:	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
		Recruiter:	Stuart Baker (560518)

### THE WORD Silver Anniversary

St John's Parish Magazine has a long history. It was first published in 1890 and it underwent several changes of name and appearance. For several years prior to 1999 the Parish Magazine had been a financial burden. The cost of using commercial printers to assemble and print it exceeded the sales and advertising income.

In the 1990s a Desktop Publishing computer software package became available (Microsoft Publisher) and this inspired us to create the magazine and print it "in house" incurring only the cost of paper and the expense of using a printing machine (now a very sophisticated machine). And so it came to pass that in February 1999 **THE WORD** first appeared.

The title and the quotation at the top of our front page were suggested by the late John Cotterall. The front cover artwork incorporated the church logo, and the contents and layout were a departure from the formal and rather dull material which had been the hallmark of the previous magazine.

**THE WORD** has not stood still. In its 25 years it has become much larger and is now produced in colour. It appears every month instead of ten times each year. During the first covid pandemic lockdown it was published every week as **THE WEEKLY WORD** for six months. It has lots of articles, details of the church services and what's on, and (we hope) something of interest to all our readers. And from the day when the first issue was published it has never lost money.

Stuart and Christine say **THANK YOU** to everyone who has supported **THE WORD** in many ways for a quarter of a century and we hope that you will enjoy reading this Silver Anniversary issue.

### Thursday Evening Prayers on 1st and 15th February on zoom.

The meetings 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 29 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

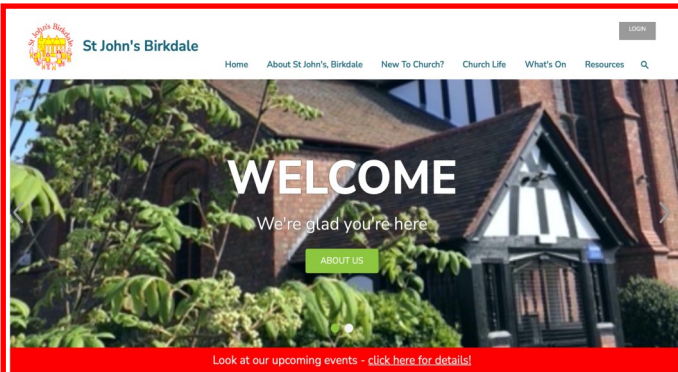
ST JOHN'S CHURCH BIRKDALE  
MONTHLY  
2ND FRIDAYS  
10.30AM

**NEXT MEETING:  
9TH FEBRUARY**





# WHAT'S ON AT ST. JOHN'S



## Visit our website

[stjohnsbirkdale.co.uk](http://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

12 January

9 February

15 March

12 April

10 May

The film titles will be displayed on the church noticeboards.

If you wish to come, please sign the list in church or contact Christine on 01704-560518

£5 to include tea, coffee and homemade cakes

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 26 January @ 7pm

Friday 23 February @ 7pm

Date to be confirmed

Friday 19 April @ 7pm

Friday 17 May @ 6.30pm

Date to be confirmed

Saturday 20 July @ 2pm

Friday 20 September @ 7pm

Friday 18 October @ 7pm

Saturday 16 November @ 7pm

Friday 6 December 6-9pm  
Saturday 7 December 10-3pm

Burns Night Supper

Late, Late Pancake Party

Andy Dean's Quiz Night

Italian Food Night

Car Treasure Hunt

Summer Fair & Afternoon Tea

Strawberry Tea

Harvest Supper

Music 'in the' Hall

Barn Dance and Bangers

Christmas Tree Festival and Christmas Fair

## YOUNG ADULT SOCIALS

2023 - 2024

Sunday 5th November

River of Light @ Albert Dock

Friday 8th December

Christmas Games Night @ Lucy's

Saturday 20th January

Pantomime Rapunzel

February TBC

Pancake Party @ Lucy's

Saturday 23rd March

Pottery Painting and Cafe

Sunday 14th April

Pinewoods Walk and Picnic

St John's Church, Birkdale



Worship on the  
Second Sunday  
before Lent

**SUNDAY 4th FEBRUARY  
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 Second Sunday before Lent**

Almighty God, you have created the heavens and the earth and made us in your own image: teach us to discern your hand in all your works and your likeness in all your children; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who with you and the Holy Spirit reigns supreme over all things, now and for ever.

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

**Jesus -  
The Friend**

## **The Reading: John ch.15, v.15**

I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you.

## **This Sunday is also known as Sexagesima Sunday.**

It is the old name for the second Sunday before Ash Wednesday.

At Sexagesima, individuals are encouraged to evaluate their current spiritual state and prepare themselves to enter the season of Lent. Such preparations can include confession.

The name "Sexagesima" is derived from the Latin *sexagesimus*, meaning "sixtieth", and appears to be a back-formation of *Quinquagesima*, the term formerly used to denote the last Sunday before Lent. The latter name alludes to the fact that there are fifty days between that Sunday and Easter, if one counts both days themselves in the total as was the usual custom of the Roman Empire.

Through the same process, the Sunday before Sexagesima Sunday was formerly known as *Septuagesima Sunday*, and marked the start of the Pre-Lenten Season which eventually became the time for carnival celebrations throughout Europe. This custom was later exported to places settled or colonised by Europeans.

While *Quinquagesima* (50th day) is mathematically correct, allowing for the inclusive counting, *Sexagesima* and *Septuagesima* are only approximations. The exact number of days are 57 and 64 respectively. The earliest *Sexagesima* can occur is January 25 and the latest is February 28, or February 29 in a leap year.

Worship on the  
Sunday before Lent

**SUNDAY 11th FEBRUARY**  
**10.30am service IN CHURCH**  
**and via zoom & phone.**

## Collect for the Sunday before Lent

Almighty Father, whose Son was revealed in majesty before he suffered death upon the cross: give us grace to perceive his glory, that we may be strengthened to suffer with him and be changed into his likeness, from glory to glory; 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:**

**Jesus—  
The Leader**

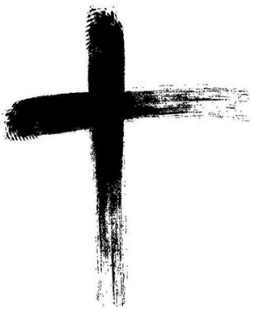
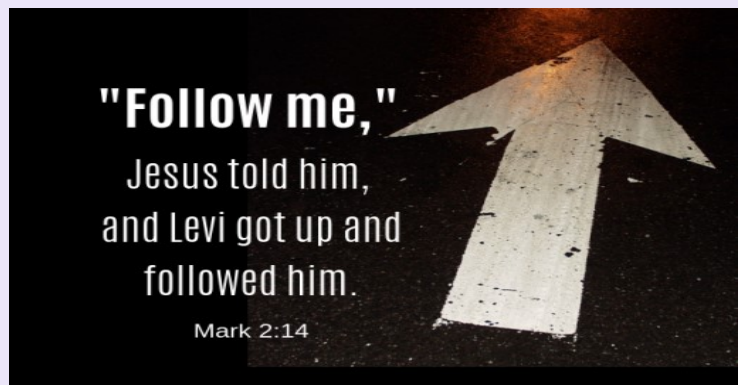
## The Readings:

### Mark ch.1 vv.16-20,

- 16 As Jesus walked beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen.  
17 "Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will send you out to fish for people."  
18 At once they left their nets and followed him.  
19 When he had gone a little further, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John in a boat, preparing their nets.  
20 Without delay he called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men and followed him.

### Mark ch.2 vv13-14

- 13 Once again Jesus went out beside the lake. A large crowd came to him, and he began to teach them.  
14 As he walked along, he saw Levi son of Alphaeus sitting at the tax collector's booth. "Follow me," Jesus told him, and Levi got up and followed him.



## Ash Wednesday

**14th February**

There will not be a service at St John's on Ash Wednesday.

There will be Bible Study (led by Roy) at 2.00pm and Growth Groups (led by the Wrights) at 7.30pm at which the commencement of Lent will be the focus.



No man ever said, at the end of his days, 'I have read my Bible too much, I have thought of God too much, I have prayed too much, I have been too careful with my soul.'

*John Charles Ryle,*  
The first Anglican Bishop of Liverpool



Worship on the First  
Sunday of Lent

**SUNDAY 18th FEBRUARY**  
**10.30am service IN CHURCH**  
**and via zoom & phone**

### Collect for the First Sunday of Lent

Almighty God, whose Son Jesus Christ fasted forty days in the wilderness, and was tempted as we are, yet without sin: give us grace to discipline ourselves in obedience to your Spirit; and, as you know our weakness, so may we know your power to save; 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  
Lucy's talk:**

**Jesus -  
Wants Us To Be  
Generous Givers**

### The Reading: Luke ch.21 vv.1-4

- 1 As Jesus looked up, he saw the rich putting their gifts into the temple treasury.
- 2 He also saw a poor widow put in two very small copper coins.
- 3 "Truly I tell you," he said, "this poor widow has put in more than all the others.
- 4 All these people gave their gifts out of their wealth; but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on."

Midweek Book of  
Common Prayer Holy  
Communion



**WEDNESDAY**  
**21st FEBRUARY**  
**10.30am service**  
**IN CHURCH**

### Ukraine Two Years Later

Although Russian troops were massing near the borders of Ukraine in February 2022, the leaders of western nations naively believed their denial that an attack was imminent.

Since then, an all-out war has resulted in tens of thousands of civilian deaths, and hundreds of thousands of military casualties. A quarter of the Ukrainian population has been displaced. Eight million are now refugees, spread across Europe.

Hostilities between the two countries had begun even earlier. Ukraine had joined the Soviet Union in 1922 and ten years later lost more than a million of its population in the 'Holodomor' famine, now widely regarded as genocide inflicted by Joseph Stalin, the Soviet leader.

Relationships between the two countries have always been turbulent, and Russia's possessive attitude towards its neighbour is deeply resented.

Ukrainians are unceasingly grateful for our hospitality, but they fear our compassion may wear thin, as our attention has been diverted by news of the barbarity between Israelis and Palestinians. That conflict also has a long history of smouldering hatred on both sides. Wars rarely solve disputes. When wearied people recognise their futility, settlements may be negotiated.

Forgiveness takes longer. At St John's we continue to give practical support by providing essentials which are sent to Ukraine: see page 26. There is still a need for the basic necessities for life: dried and tinned food, toiletries, hygiene products and clothing. Please help, if you can.

Worship on the Second  
Sunday of Lent

**SUNDAY 25th FEBRUARY**  
**10.30am service**  
**IN CHURCH**  
and via zoom & phone.

## Collect for the Second Sunday of Lent

Almighty God, you show to those who are in error the light of your truth, that they may return to the way of righteousness: grant to all those who are admitted into the fellowship of Christ's religion, that they may reject those things that are contrary to their profession, and follow all such things as are agreeable to the same; through our Lord Jesus Christ, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

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

**Jesus -  
The Tempted**

## The Reading: Matthew ch.4 vv.1-11

- 1 Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.
- 2 After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry.
- 3 The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread."
- 4 Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.' "
- 5 Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple.
- 6 "If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down. For it is written:  
"He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone."
- 7 Jesus answered him, "It is also written: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.' "
- 8 Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendour.
- 9 "All this I will give you," he said, "if you will bow down and worship me."
- 10 Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.' "
- 11 Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.

### **A short course in human relations:**

The six most important words: I admit that I was wrong

The five most important words: you did a great job

The four most important words: what do you think?

The three most important words: could you please...?

The two most important words: thank you

The most important word: we

The least important word: I

### **A short course in management:**

**A good manager is a person who isn't worried about his own career but rather the careers of those who work for him.**

*(Henry Burns)*



## **Important meeting on Sunday 18th February immediately after the morning service.**

Each week we take the opportunity to thank you and to thank God for the gifts of money that come into the church. It's fair to say that since the pandemic, where so much changed, your generosity has managed to keep the lights on, literally, and we've been able to just about pay our way.

However, we're now in a very different place. Like your own households, church expenses have been increasing and unfortunately the levels of giving have not kept pace. The leadership team believe that we have a responsibility to share the situation with you and also clarify some common misconceptions about church finances and so on the **18<sup>th</sup> February** we will be updating you, members of St John's, on where we are and what collectively we need to do about it. **This is a vitally important meeting.**

The update will immediately follow the service on the 18<sup>th</sup> February in church and on Zoom and we will aim to have finished both the service and the update by 12pm. Please put it in your diaries and make it a priority. We all need to play our part.

## **LENTEN VALENTINES** *by Canon Paul Hardingham*

This month both Ash Wednesday and Valentine's Day fall on the same day! The link between the two can be summed up in terms of the nature of real love! Lent, beginning on Ash Wednesday, focuses on learning to love God more, as we give Him space in our lives.

This is what Jesus found when He was led into the desert by the Spirit to be tempted by Satan. (Luke 4:1-13). Jesus was tempted to turn stones into bread. Yet loving God and His word comes before satisfying physical desires. Satan tempted Jesus to worship him. However, worshipping God is an expression of loving God and serving Him. Finally, He was tempted to put God to the test, by jumping off the Temple. Real love for God does not put Him to the test, but wants to obey Him.

Lent also teaches us how to live out the love of God in practical ways, as we follow Jesus in the way of the Cross. We see this clearly demonstrated in the life and death of Saint Valentine. Valentine was a Christian who demonstrated the importance of sharing God's love with others. We know little about him, except that he was a priest who lived in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Century AD and that he was martyred on 14<sup>th</sup> February. Emperor Claudius felt that soldiers in the Roman Army were distracted from their duty by their wives, and so had attempted to outlaw marriage. It is believed that Valentine married couples in secret, which is why today we celebrate our love for one another on his day.

In trying to understand the meaning of her revelations from God, Julian of Norwich found: 'What, do you wish to know your Lord's meaning in this thing? Know it well, love was His meaning.'

**Only 10 days late... Hold the date**

St John's Late, Late Pancake Party will be on Friday 23rd February.

By all means, give up chocolate and smoking for Lent, but consider making an exception for pancakes. Do come and join us for this very friendly annual event. Tickets are available from Sally Wright.



**FUND RAISING QUIZ NIGHT**

**at LIVERPOOL ROAD METHODIST CHURCH**

Liverpool Road Methodist Church is hosting a Quiz Night on Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> February, 2024 at 7pm in the hall.

You can enter a team of 6 people or come individually and join others to make up a team on the night.

Light refreshments will be served during an interval.

Donations (suggested amount £5 per person) will be welcome on the night for church funds and outreach.

Please submit names to one of the people (below) at Liverpool Road Methodist in person or email [doreen.iddon@btinternet.com](mailto:doreen.iddon@btinternet.com) or [janet.oldham@btopenworld.com](mailto:janet.oldham@btopenworld.com)

Thank you.

Doreen Iddon (Mobile: 07856589593 Landline: 01704 577751)  
Pam Christopher Craig Horan Julie Holland Janet Oldham

**Johann Sebastian Bach's  
St Matthew Passion**

Bach's setting of St Matthew's account of the Passion of Christ will be performed on Saturday 16th March at 7.00pm at Saint Nicholas' (Liverpool Parish) Church, Old Courtyard, Liverpool L2 8TZ. Tickets available from 16th February online at [www.eventbrite.co.uk](http://www.eventbrite.co.uk)

**Southport Orchestra**

The next concert to be performed by Southport Orchestra will be on Saturday **23rd March at 7.30pm at Christ Church** Lord Street, Southport. The programme will be: Mendelssohn's 'Hebrides Overture'. Rachmaninov's 'Rhapsody on a Theme by Paganini'. Dvorak's 5th Symphony.

The soloist performing the Rachmaninov will be the well known local pianist Tom Kimmance. If you have never heard him play you will be in for a treat if you come to this concert.

Tickets £10 for adults, £5 for under 18s, available from Stuart and Christine Baker



**Italian Food Night** at St John's on 19th April at 7pm.

Look for further details in **THE WORD** closer to the date, but put this in your diary now.





St John's Church has received this letter of thanks from **Rev. Bernard Cocker**, CEO and Founder of International Aid Trust

Dear Friends & Supporters,

It's Christmas once again, the time of the year when we remember the birth of Jesus as He left His heavenly throne to bring peace and joy to all mankind. Sadly, as we look around the world, and here in the UK, we see that His message of loving your neighbours has not been received or accepted by so many people and nations. The truth is that the greatest problem in this hurting world is that of unbelief in the teachings and example of Jesus Christ.

Just imagine, if we loved our neighbours and treated everyone the same: no jealousy, greed, or unforgiveness. No looking down on the less fortunate. Jesus only ever looked down on people with compassion. He looked down on Jerusalem and wept, he looked down from the cross and said, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do." He looked down on the woman caught in adultery and said "your sins are forgiven, sin no more." In Matthew 9:36 when he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.

You have helped us with your practical support and prayers, and it is making a huge difference around the world. Let us continue to remember and emulate His compassion this Christmas, and into 2024.

Do not be afraid to share your faith, your compassion, and in doing this you will be planting the seeds of His love. This world needs "Good News" and the best news of all is that He came to save this hurting world.

Thank you for your prayers, your aid, your shoe boxes, your financial support, your encouragement, and your faith in us.

On behalf of the people we serve,  
Happy Christmas and a Peaceful New Year.

Much love and blessings,  
Bernard

*"Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up." Galatians 6:9*

While on a long car journey a couple stopped at a roadside restaurant for lunch. The woman unfortunately left her sunglasses on the table but didn't miss them until they were back on the motorway. By then they had to travel to the next junction before they could turn around. The man fussed and complained all the way back to the restaurant. When they finally arrived, as the woman got out of the car to find her sunglasses the man said "While you're in there you may as well get my hat too."

### **£130 for our church: Home Insurance offer from Ecclesiastical Insurance Company**

Take out a home insurance policy with Ecclesiastical – one of the UK's most trusted home insurance providers and a Which? "Best Buy" – and Ecclesiastical will donate £130 to our church. This offer will expire at the end of 2024.

## Drop A Pebble In The Water



Drop a pebble in the water: just a splash, and it is gone;  
But there's half-a-hundred ripples circling on and on and on,  
Spreading, spreading from the centre, flowing on out to the sea.  
And there is no way of telling where the end is going to be.

Drop a pebble in the water: in a minute you forget,  
But there's little waves a-flowing, and there's ripples circling yet,  
And those little waves a-flowing to a great big wave have grown:  
You've disturbed a mighty river just by dropping in a stone.

Drop an unkind word, or careless: in a minute it is gone:  
But there's half-a-hundred ripples circling on and on and on.  
They keep spreading, spreading, spreading from the centre as they go,  
And there is no way to stop them, once you've started them to flow.

Drop an unkind word, or careless: in a minute you forget;  
But there's little waves a-flowing, and there's ripples circling yet,  
And perhaps in some sad heart a mighty wave of tears you've stirred,  
And disturbed a life was happy ere you dropped that unkind word.

Drop a word of cheer and kindness: just a flash and it is gone;  
But there's half-a-hundred ripples circling on and on and on,  
Bearing hope and joy and comfort on each splashing, dashing wave  
Till you wouldn't believe the volume of the one kind word you gave.

Drop a word of cheer and kindness: in a minute you forget;  
But there's gladness still a-swelling, and there's joy circling yet,  
And you've rolled a wave of comfort whose sweet music can be heard  
Over miles and miles of water just by dropping one kind word.

James W. Foley (1874-1939)

*submitted by Judith Foster*

## From the Archives: Windows in Our Church

This month we conclude our articles about the stained glass windows in our church by looking at the two windows in the north wall (the wall which is furthest from St John's Road) which are furthest away from the pulpit.

These two windows bear an inscription: "Given by the Ladies' Church Workers of St John's in thankfulness for all who have served God in this place."

It is not known what scenes these windows depict. It may be assumed that in the panel on the left are Mary (who is traditionally depicted as wearing blue garments), Jesus as a very young child, and Joseph. It is not known for certain who are the three characters in the panel on the right. If you think that you know, or may know who they are please contact the Editor.



**Who were the Ladies' Church Workers of St John's?** Research into our oldest surviving parish magazines, dating from 1916, has revealed this article:

"It has been decided to form a Ladies' Church Workers' Society, the objectives being to unite as workers for matters connected with the Church and to promote social intercourse. Our first effort will be to raise money towards the building of a Parish Room. The Society will meet weekly according to notice. All ladies are invited to become members at any meeting, Fee 1s. Yearly."

The LCWS decided in May 1961 to raise money to pay for these windows "to commemorate 45 years since the LCWS was formed." (Parish Magazine, May 1961). The members decided to complete the windows on the north side of the church. Two windows had already been provided by them (see [THE WORD](#), January 2024) in memory of all good mothers, and the LCWS decided to dedicate these two additional windows to the memory of the men and women who had devoted their time and money to making the church what it had become. These windows were made by Shrigley & Hunt of Lancaster, who had made the Four Evangelists windows more than 35 years previously, and were installed in 1963. Our readers might look at those windows and these newer ones to compare the different artistic styles.

The LCWS made ceaseless efforts to work for the church and to raise the money which was crucial for early building projects, Their projects included knitting, needlework and baking. When food was rationed during and after World War II members of the LCWS would each donate small quantities of the necessary ingredients to make cakes for special occasions. In this way they made an 80th Birthday cake for a Mrs Gunson. They also knitted for the War Comfort Fund despite the difficulties in obtaining wool.

They continued to meet until 1966 when, having served the Church loyally for fifty years, they decided to disband. If any of our readers can cast any further light on the members or activities of the LCWS please inform the Editor. In their day they seem to have had lots of fun and did much good work. It would be of interest to know more about them for posterity's sake.

*Stuart Baker*

**Sources:** 1. *The Parish Magazine*, June 1916 and May 1961. 2. Peter Jones  
3. *The Church on The Common, a History of St John's Church* by the late Rosemary Quinton





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

## **On Why Rural Church-Goers Like To Freeze In Church**

The Rectory,  
St James the Least of All

My dear Nephew Darren,

Winter certainly exposes the difference between those of you who live in cities and us rural folk. While you bask in your centrally heated flat, and complain about the half an inch of slush outside, we country folk wear overcoats in our houses, open all doors and windows to let the heat in and battle through snow drifts, measured in feet, to get the morning paper.

Colonel Wainwright has acquired a new toy: a snow blower, of sufficient power that I believe it could clear the Antarctic. He kindly volunteered to clear the paths around the church. Working outwards from the church door, the path to the church soon became snow-free. Unfortunately, he only realised when his job was complete that the blown snow then formed a ten-foot drift under the lych gate.

Miss Margison, ever helpful in the worst sense of the word, decided to unfreeze the pipes in the church hall. A blow torch was not the ideal solution, although the resulting burst did make some rather attractive ice sculptures round the kitchen equipment. The village badminton team that uses the hall has now temporarily changed sport to ice hockey.

Inevitably, congregations have soared. There is nothing like adversity for making people want to prove they have the moral fibre to overcome it. Much satisfaction seems to be obtained on discovering who has not dared venture out, which is taken as judgement on their strength of character. The Prentices upstaged most people by arriving on a sleigh. Mr Prentice was warmly wrapped in a travelling rug, while his wife pulled it. As they both explained, they couldn't possibly let the pony work in such conditions.

What I momentarily thought was applause during my sermon was merely people keeping their hands warm and the hymns were drowned out by the stamping of feet. Our organist complained that the cold made his fingers so numb that he couldn't play properly – although I didn't notice that things were much different from normal.

No, my dear nephew, a few flakes of wet snow may close your car park for health and safety reasons, but we shall continue to triumph heroically over adversity. We return home after Mattins, knowing we have proved our Christian commitment in being utterly uncomfortable.

Your loving uncle,  
Eustace

# WORD SEARCH

*Solution on page 27*

February is the month of romance. Millions of Valentine cards will be sent in the next week or two, as we celebrate our romantic love for that special person in our lives. But there are other kinds of love to celebrate: and on Candlemas we remember Mary and Joseph taking their baby son to the temple to present Him to God. Jesus' whole life was a loving present to us from God. Through His death for us on the cross, and His resurrection, His love can now transform anyone's life. Romances can die, but God's love for us is always there. But it won't do us much good – unless we accept it!

VALENTINE  
ROSE  
ROMANCE  
LOVE  
PRESENT  
RESTAURANT  
HEARTS  
KISS  
HUG  
GIRLFRIEND  
BOYFRIEND  
FIANCÉ  
WORSHIP  
REPENTANCE  
ANGELS  
BABY  
TEMPLE  
MARY  
CANDLEMAS  
PRESENTATION

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



"Next Sunday I think I'll do a new take on the Parable of the Virgins and the Oil."



Mr Mackenzie kept forgetting his PIN

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## BURNS night supper

The skirl of the pipes announced the arrival of the haggis, that Great Chieftain of the Pudding Race on Friday 26th January when 36 parishioners and friends met in the church hall for a (one day late) Burns Night supper. The haggis received the Address, in English, and was accompanied by the traditional neeps and tatties, and was followed by a delicious Scottish dessert (see the recipe below).

A Scottish themed quiz rolled back the frontiers of our knowledge, and the now traditional (at St John's) games of Toss the Haggis and Bowl the Neep saw some determined competition from our athletes. To those who did not win we wish them better luck next year and recommend that they start on a programme of serious practice.



We record that all who were there expressed their thanks to Christine for preparing the entire feast and to Clive, Jean, Tim and Sally for serving.

*Jean enjoyed her cranachan so much.  
"Please, sir, may I have some more."*

## CRANACHAN: a dangerously easy dessert!

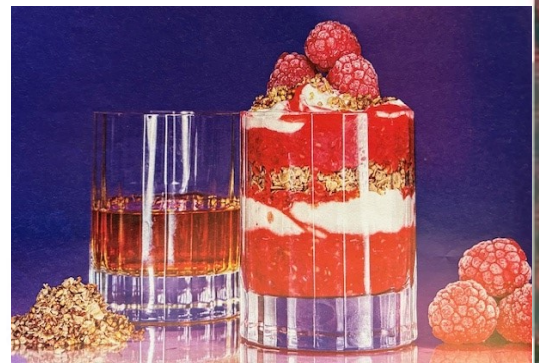
This classic Scottish dessert could quite easily be described as Eton mess with a kilt on. Traditionally made with crowdie—a soft curd cheese—you can swap this for the more accessible and delicious double whipped cream.

**Recipe: SERVES 6**

**45g butter**  
**125g rolled oats**  
**45g demerara sugar**  
**1 pinch salt**  
**300ml double cream**  
**3 tbsp clear honey**  
**4tbsp whisky**  
**300g frozen raspberries (defrosted)**  
**Fresh raspberries (for decoration)**

1. Preheat the oven to 200C/180C fan/Gas 6. Melt the butter. Stir through the oats, sugar and salt. Spread evenly onto a baking tray and toast in the oven for about 15 minutes, stirring halfway through, until deeply golden.
2. Whip the cream with the honey and whisky to soft peaks.
3. Spoon a layer of raspberries with their juice into individual glasses or a large serving dish followed by a layer of the cream, then the toasted oats. Repeat this layering until you have reached the top of the glass or run out of mixture. Top with fresh raspberries for decoration.

*This is the recipe of 'Bake Off' winner Peter Sawkins as contained in 'The Times' newspaper.*



## GOD in the Arts

*The Revd Michael Burgess begins a year-long series looking at great works of Christian music.*

St Luke tells us in his Gospel that the angels sang praises to God at the birth of Jesus, and he has given us three poems that have become part of Christian song: the *Magnificat*, the *Benedictus* and the *Nunc Dimittis*.

The first two are full of praise and rejoicing. The last comes as Mary and Joseph fulfil the Law of Moses and bring the child Jesus to Jerusalem. In the temple they meet Simeon and Anna. Simeon represents each of us who can look back over life with gratitude in the face of death as he says, 'Lord, now lettest Thou thy servant depart in peace.' It is a story that has inspired preachers and artists, and also composers.

In the Christian Church these words of the *Nunc Dimittis* have become part of worship at the end of each day, not just the end of life. Cathedral and parish church choirs have sung settings of these words in that great tradition of Anglican choral music at Evensong – settings that have captured the sense of quiet resignation, but also conveyed the glory of the light that is Jesus shining for all people.

Rachmaninov's setting is part of his Vespers, the night-long vigil sung in the Russian Orthodox Church on the eve of great feasts. Rachmaninov composed the work (and it

comprises 15 pieces) at great speed, but even so, the Vespers are now seen as one of the great masterpieces of religious music. This was no more so than in his beautiful setting of the 5<sup>th</sup> canticle, the *Nunc Dimittis*. Just 36 bars long, it begins with a rocking, undulating figure in the upper voices. A solo tenor enters as the voice of Simeon, and it ends with the basses moving down to a low B flat: 'a sigh of wonder and resignation on the threshold of eternal rest and peace,' one critic has called it.

Rachmaninov later recalled, "After I played the passage at the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> canticle where the basses slowly descend to that low note, the conductor shook his head, saying, 'Now where on earth will we find such basses? They are as rare as asparagus at Christmas!' Nevertheless, he did find them." It was one of the composer's favourite pieces, and he asked for it to be sung at his funeral in the hope that it would send his 'ship of death gently towards the unknown region.'"

On 2<sup>nd</sup> February the Lectionary includes these words as part of the Gospel on the feast of Candlemas. Simeon prays them because his cup is now overflowing. He has looked on the salvation of God. Music allows us to look on that glory and salvation also, and Rachmaninov, in his moving setting, has captured the calm trust of that moment, which shines out like the brightness of the light of Jesus.

## Why Tea is the Drink of Getting Things Done

The drinking of tea has found an unexpected new champion: James May, the former Top Gear presenter.

Speaking recently on Radio 4, James May said: "I'm just worried that the cult of coffee is going to destroy tea. And I don't like coffee, it is just rubbish. I like tea." He added: "Tea is the drink of getting things done."

How did tea get so embedded in UK culture? Food historian Polly Russell says the answer lies in the Industrial Revolution of the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century. "Tea became less expensive and at the same time you had agricultural wages slumping, and agricultural workers literally not able to buy food, to buy fuel, or to afford a hot meal. So, tea became a way of having something hot and restorative – often with sugar – and that habit then also translated into the urban, as the industrial revolution expanded into our cities."

And so it was that "tea became absolutely central to the diet of the working poor." And this provided the basis for the idea "that tea and sugar were fuelling the industrial nation."

James May argues that tea drinking is still fundamental to "bringing everyone together and ensuring happiness as well as productivity."

He believes: "Tea in the British workplace is more than a drink, it's a social glue. Britain is falling apart because we don't drink enough tea."



# W CROSS R D

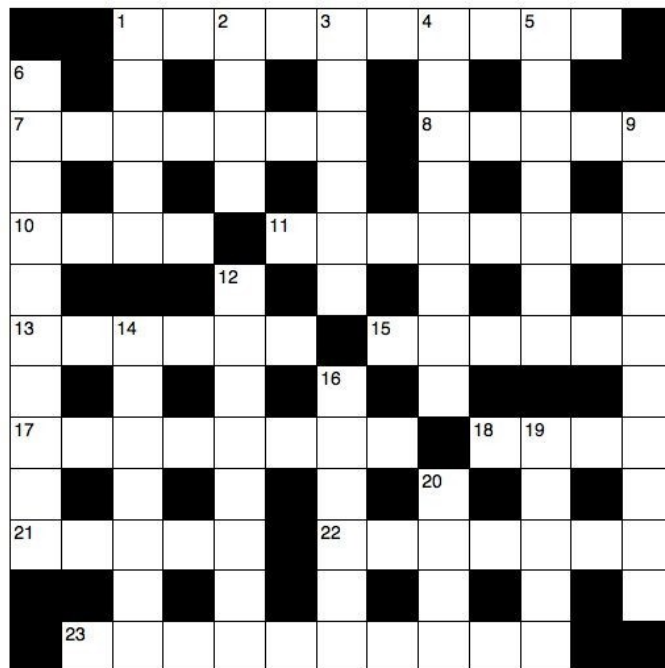
*Solution on page 23*

## Across

- 1 Success or wealth (Deuteronomy 28:11) (10)
- 7 Forbidden fruit for Nazirites (Numbers 6:3) (7)
- 8 Concede (Job 27:5) (5)
- 10 Look at (Psalm 48:13) (4)
- 11 Much in evidence after weddings (8)
- 13 Condense (Job 36:27) (6)
- 15 Breakwater (6)
- 17 Give a tan (anag.) (8)
- 18 More usually now called Pentecost, — Sunday (4)
- 21 After living for 365 years, it was said of him that 'he walked with God' (Genesis 5:23–24) (5)
- 22 Trampled (Judges 9:27) (7)
- 23 For example, Miriam, Deborah (Exodus 15:20; Judges 4:4) (10)

## Down

- 1 Arrogance (Proverbs 8:13) (5)
- 2 Roman poet from first century BC (4)
- 3 So rapt (anag.) (6)
- 4 Declare again (2 Corinthians 2:8) (8)
- 5 Paul's 'fellow worker', to whom he sent two epistles (Romans 16:21) (7)
- 6 God's foreseeing care and protection (Job 10:12) (10)
- 9 Traditional form of Roman Catholic Mass (10)



- 12 'The Lord... has given the — of Israel to David and his descendants for ever' (2 Chronicles 13:5) (8)
- 14 'My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my — ' (Luke 1:46–47) (7)
- 16 The central element in Nebuchadnezzar's dream, identified and interpreted by Daniel (Daniel 2:31) (6)
- 19 'On this rock I will build my church, and the gates of — will not overcome it' (Matthew 16:18) (5)
- 20 City where Paul was under house arrest for two years (Acts 28:16) (4)

## PARISH REGISTERS

### Burials and Cremations

**Jean Burn (age 91) 8th January 2024**  
**John Alfred Hallam, 9th January 2024**  
**Eric John Foxley (age 68) 17th January 2024**

We record, with sadness, the recent deaths of :

1. **Mrs Margery Tasker on 30th December 2023. Margery was one of our congregation for many years and served as a churchwarden at St John's from March 2008 until April 2013.**
2. **Mrs Judith Smith on 15th January 2024. Her funeral will be held on 7th February at St John's Church at 11.00am followed by cremation at Southport Crematorium.**

### In our Book of Remembrance in February

- 2 Howard Stoner, 1986
- 6 Maud Whaite-Chapman, 1944
- 7 Arthur Hignett, 1989
- 9 Ivy Sinnott, 1988
- 11 Simon Owens, 1990  
Ann McCann, 1995
- 12 Jean Arnold, 2021
- 13 William Whaite, 1982
- 14 Susan Halsall, 2019
- 15 Ernest Bennett, 1999
- 17 Joseph Pritchard, 1981

- 19 Stephen Rigby, 1986
- 20 Winifred Beeley, 1951
- 21 Edith Smith, 1966
- 22 Ernest Ball, 1963
- 24 Lucy Leather, 1987
- 25 Elizabeth Clegg, 1978
- 27 Harry Campion, 1984  
Barbara Hughes, 1996
- 28 Harry Beckingham, 2014

***If any of our readers wish to have the name of a deceased relative inscribed in the Book of Remembrance please contact Stuart Baker (01704 560518)***



## From Our Own Correspondent in Ilkley

### New Year 2024

Another year has just begun and expectations are high. Will we have a new government this year? Who knows! But we can guess. Will the weather be really bad like it was in 1947? I hope not.

Will President Putin stop invading Ukraine? We all know the answer to that question. Again we know the answer to the Israel and Gaza conflict, the hatred is too strong between them to forgive. It could carry on, but we all know that. Will it carry over into Lebanon? All these questions can only be answered by one person and we have to wait to find out the outcome. Being a Christian gives us access to God and we can pray that the world could live in peace.

A new year also gives us hope. We celebrate the birth of Jesus just a week before the start of a New Year. His life started on a journey to save us all, and ended on the cross at Easter time. He gave His life to save us from our sins. If only the leaders of every nation would rule by His example.

I have been on a journey to my family down on the south coast and it was great to see everyone again. The journey there was a nightmare as I think everyone decided to travel back into London and beyond on the day after Boxing Day. I was worried about coming back but the traffic and the trains were on time and almost empty. I prayed the night before that it would be ok, and my prayers were answered.

It doesn't matter what you pray for as long as God knows that it's sincere and that you are really worried. He's the only one who can help us. Even something as silly as a train journey on my own.

The birth of Jesus gave us the hope in 2023 let us pray for hope in 2024.

Best wishes to you all, Doris Brookfield

## An Introduction to the Book of The Bible: Exodus

This month we are looking at Exodus, the second book of the Old Testament. Its name means departure, reminding us that Israel's flight out of slavery in Egypt is the major focus of the book.

Exodus is a book of two halves! The first part (chapters 1-19 & 32-34) is the story of an oppressed people who are delivered from slavery into a life of freedom. The second half (chapters 20-31 & 35-40) consists of detailed instructions about the life and worship of God's people. The book introduces us to their salvation or deliverance, as story. God's promises to Abraham are fulfilled as the people journey to the Promised Land. He also renews His covenant with them at Sinai, expressed in the Ten Commandments (20: 1-17).

At the heart of Exodus is the person of God Himself. In chapter 3 God reveals His name as YHWH or 'I am who I am' (3:14) to Moses. This is the name by which God is known throughout the Old Testament, expressed in the title 'the LORD'. To know God's name is to know Him, as well as His character, ie His justice, truthfulness, mercy, faithfulness and holiness. He is the God who controls history, delivering the people out of Egypt, while the death of the Passover lamb points us to Jesus' death on the cross (1 Corinthians 5:7).

God's promises of help remain true for us today: 'Do not be afraid. Stand firm and you will see the deliverance the LORD will bring you today' Exodus 14:13.

'This Exodus story continues to be a major way that God uses to draw men and women in trouble out of the mess of history into the kingdom of salvation.' (Eugene Peterson).

## How well do you know Exodus?

Here are 15 questions to test your knowledge of this second book of the Old Testament. Don't be afraid to sit with an open Bible and find the answers. By reading and searching for the answers (if you don't know them) you will improve your knowledge.

**1. Who rescued Moses from the basket in the bulrushes?**

a. Pharaoh's daughter   b. Pharaoh's maid   c. Pharaoh's wife

**2. How many plagues did God send on Egypt?**

a. 5   b. 10   c. 15

**3. What was the second plague?**

a. frogs   b. water turned to blood   c. locusts

**4. What is the name of the sea the Israelites crossed to escape the Egyptians?**

a. Dead Sea   b. Black Sea   c. Red Sea

**5. At what place did the Israelites arrive to find the water was too bitter to drink and God made it sweet?**

a. Marah   b. Elim   c. Horeb

**6. Which bird did God provide for meat in the wilderness?**

a. pigeon   b. quail   c. turtledove

**7. What guided the Israelites through the wilderness?**

a. a star in the sky   b. Moses had visions telling him where to lead the people  
c. a pillar of cloud and of fire

**8. When there was no water to drink, how did Moses provide it?**

a. from earthen jars   b. from his rod   c. from a rock

**9. On which mountain were the Israelites given the Ten Commandments?**

a. Mt. Sinai   b. Mt. Nebo   c. Mt. of Olives

**10. What is the seventh commandment?**

a. Thou shalt not covet   b. Thou shalt not commit adultery   c. Thou shalt not bear false witness

**11. What was on top of the Ark of the Covenant?**

a. two cherubim   b. candlestick   c. Aaron's rod

**12. What compelled the Israelites to form and worship the golden calf?**

a. they wanted to make a statue to the Lord   b. they made it as a symbol of their freedom from slavery  
c. they didn't know what had happened to Moses

**13. What was the name of a man who was given the Spirit of God, to enable him to become a good craftsman, and assist with the building of the tabernacle?**

a. Caleb   b. Bezaleel   c. Buz

**14. Who was Moses' successor?**

a. Joshua   b. Caleb   c. Aaron

**15. For how many years did the Israelites wander in the wilderness?**

a. 20 years   b. 30 years   c. 40 years

*The answers, in case you need them, are on page 25*

*And here's one just for Roy Doran:*

**16. Where was Moses when the light went out?**

## WHAT IF...?

By Dennis Davis

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 Admiral of the Sea Beggars**

In 1570 a catastrophic northwest gale destroyed the flood gates and flooded much of Flanders killing over 100,000 thousand people, cattle and livestock. The flood was so deep that ships were able to sail over the land and managed to save many people who were clinging to the top of trees and houses.

The Prince of Orange had now become a wanderer. With his two brothers and 1500 horsemen he joined the Huguenots in France. Meanwhile the Duke of Alva received a plan from King Philip to assist the Duke of Norfolk and friends in an attempt to put Mary Queen of Scots on the throne in England. It was planned, with the Pope's approval, that two assassins would be sent to murder Elizabeth, and Mary would marry into Norfolk's family and restore Catholicism in England. An army would be sent to invade England. The Duke of Norfolk was ordered to keep it secret. The Duke of Alva thought the scheme was rash and felt it was impossible for him to comply with Philip's orders.

Once again the Prince of Orange gathered a new army including William de la Marck whose great grandfather had been a pirate known as the Wild Boar of the Ardennes owing to his hairy body and uncut hair and beard. De la Marck was appointed by the Prince as the Admiral of the Sea Beggars (pirates) and was instructed to respect the rights of all regarding their religious practices, whether Catholic or Protestant, and to protect their Churches, but de la Marck had an intense hatred towards the Catholic Church and his sworn task was to wreak vengeance on the Duke of Alva and the Catholic Church from which he had been excommunicated for his cruelty towards Priests and Monks.

His fleet was in Dover when, to appease the Spaniards, Elizabeth ordered him to leave. He captured two Spanish ships then sailed to the city of Brielle (near The Hague) as the winds were contrary. He besieged the city but most of the residents had fled. He attacked the city from two sides. After a short struggle the attackers met in the middle and captured the city in the name of the Prince and founded the Dutch republic. For the first two days they behaved well but the pirates could not be constrained and they ravaged the town in the same manner as the Spaniard fury.

The Duke of Alva quickly organised an attack to recapture the city but a defender took an axe and swam out and smashed the flood gates flooding the land and prevented Alva's troops from approaching the city walls. The Prince was not pleased by this and thought the action premature and that his Admiral was only interested in booty.

At Rotterdam Count Bassu sent a small body of men up to the city walls and asked for permission to pass through. Seeing such a small body of men this was granted, but when the gates were opened they rushed in and held the gate until the main force rushed up and sacked the town with the usual Spanish fury which they inflicted on every city they captured.

Vlissingen (known in English as Flushing) meanwhile resisted and drove the Spanish Garrison out but had to appeal for help. 200 Sea Beggars arrived and the port was later strengthened by a large number of volunteers from England. Alva's chief Engineer stepped ashore unaware that it had fallen and was captured and executed.

The Prince was now reappointed as Stadholder but accepted it reluctantly as this power had been forced on him. He assured Catholics that he would protect them and that he had only come to defeat Alva. Meanwhile Louis had gone to help in the capture of Mons. The Pope and Cardinals offered thanks to God and Philip was overjoyed and praised the king of France as being no one more Catholic.

*To be continued*



## God in the Sciences

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

### **Celebrating the Now and Future Creation**

I find that watching buds swelling on trees and plants during the winter months gives me a tremendous sense of hope. After creation's winter shutdown, the sight of tiny flowers poking out of brown earth may be more important than ever.

Getting outdoors during daylight hours, enjoying green spaces and getting some fresh air and exercise are great ways to keep ourselves healthy at any time of year. A psychologist colleague wrote, "Attending to the details of nature can also inspire awe, which has been linked to positive mood and increased life satisfaction." I expect it is this sense of awe that makes it easier for many of us to connect with God outdoors.

Helping ourselves and others to thrive is a good start to 2024, but it is also vital to have hope for the future. In the face of climate change, we urgently need to care for all of Creation, both human and everything else, with God's help.

Our ultimate hope is in God's promise that He will bring about a new heaven and a new earth. We can look forward to the day when Creation will be fully redeemed and liberated from evil. The Greek word used to describe the new creation is the same as that used to describe someone who becomes a Christian, whose humanity is restored and renewed. There will be continuity between the old and new earth as it is cleansed and purified, surpassing and perfecting what has gone before. There will also be some discontinuity, as there will be no more suffering or death.

So, one source of hope for 2024 is that we can enjoy both caring for and meeting God in Creation. But the parts of Creation that we find most beautiful, giving us a sense of awe and helping us to worship, are also a reminder that there is something much better to come.

### **CROSSWORD SOLUTION**

**ACROSS:** 1, Prosperity. 7, Raisins. 8, Admit. 10, View. 11, Confetti. 13, Distil. 15, Groyne. 17, Navigate. 18, Whit. 21, Enoch. 22, Trodden. 23, Prophetess.

**DOWN:** 1, Pride. 2, Ovid. 3, Pastor. 4, Reaffirm. 5, Timothy. 6, Providence. 9, Tridentine. 12, Kingship. 14, Saviour. 16, Statue. 19, Hades. 20, Rome.

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## LIFE'S CHALLENGES

by J.M.Shakespeare

Tolerance can sometimes seem to be a strain on our own understanding. John Stuart Mill (1806-1873), wrote "Mankind are greater gainers by sufferance of different lifestyles, than by compelling each to live in the same universal way".

Fear of differences brings an intolerance of others. Being tolerant means we can recognise, but not of necessity adopt, an alien lifestyle.

Epicurus (341-270 BC), commented, "Indulgence was not the panacea of life that drove out fears of death, but instead often led to just the opposite feelings". Overindulgence may lead to a temporary euphoria, but is often followed by a period of regret.

The account of Sodom and Gomorrah is told in the Old Testament of the Bible, where sinful overindulgence resulted in these cities being destroyed. Looking at both Tolerance and Intemperance we may see that the ability to compromise, is no challenge to our lifestyles, as long as our personal values remain intact in its practices.

Aristotle's (364-322 BC) conception of a virtuous life was the adoption of the Golden Mean. This does not mean sticking only to moderation, but is more related to reason. Tolerance depends on how we govern our reactions and allow our levels of indulgence by using practical wisdom to react to circumstances!

Arguably, two of the greatest challenges to the way we live our lives, can be seen in the opposites of loyalty and betrayal. Consider the Gospel narrative of Jesus Christ being betrayed by two of his disciples, namely Judas and later Peter. (John ch21 vv23-27 and c18 vv25-27).

These betrayals were, and have later been exceeded by, loyalty from Christian missionaries who have, and still do, spread Jesus Christ's message throughout the world. The human failing of betrayal is usually



revealed in acts of disloyalty and double dealing, and can put a heavy weight on acts of forgiveness.

Loyalty can be seen as an ethical virtue applicable to family, friends or country, but by its very nature it can lead to conflict over disputes of impartiality such as Fascism. People who kill themselves and often others, by bomb explosion in what they see as a religious loyalty are a hazard today.

Jesus called for absolute loyalty of the disciples. Luke's Gospel (c14 vv25 -26) records: "Large crowds were travelling with Jesus Christ and turning to them he said 'If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple'."

Courage in the face of life's challenges to achieve a worthwhile end, was summed up by Aristotle in saying "Courage is seen as dependent on sound judgement, it needs to take into account the end to be reached, it is not about the absence of fear, it is about achieving a mean between timidity and over-confidence."

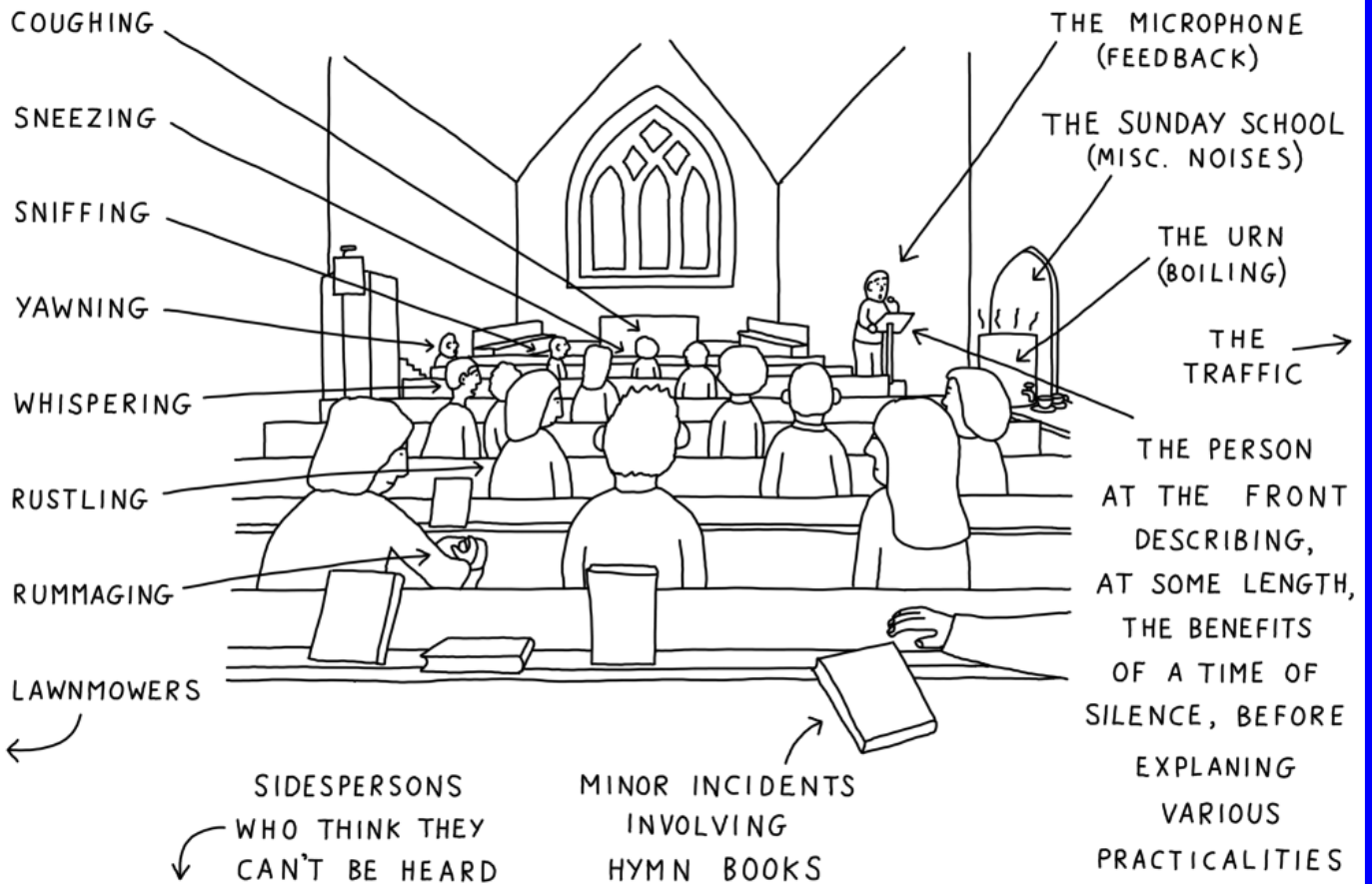
*More and more people seem to forget Henry Ford's sage advice when on his 50th wedding anniversary he was asked for his rule for marital bliss.*

*He replied "Just the same as in the automobile business, stick to one model."*



# A TIME OF SILENCE

PLEASE IGNORE ALL DISTRACTIONS



## How well do you know Exodus?

Answers:

Question 1: a (Pharaoh's daughter)

Question 2: b (10)

Question 3: b (Water turned to blood)

Question 4: c (Red Sea)

Question 5: a (Marah)

Question 6: b (Quail)

Question 7: c (A pillar of cloud and of fire)

Question 8: c (From a rock)

Question 9: a (Mt. Sinai)

Question 10: b (Thou shalt not commit adultery)

Question 11: a (Two cherubim)

Question 12: c (They didn't know what had happened to Moses)

Question 13: b (Bezaleel)

Question 14: a (Joshua)

Question 15: c (40)

Question 16: In the dark. (We told you this one was for Roy!)

## Warm Space


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## Responding to the Israel – Gaza War

**THE WORD** is not a political magazine and the editor does not enter into potentially controversial territory by supporting or condemning any of the participants in this dreadful conflict. But we recognise that there has been and continues to be an immense and tragic human cost resulting from the armed hostilities.

While the warfare continues there are millions of people in Gaza who are without shelter, clean water, adequate food, and the comfort of their homes and families. And there are many thousands of Israeli people who grieve the loss of their relatives and friends who were slaughtered on 7th October.

We are offering a list of some Christian UK agencies who are working in either Israel or Gaza, and who have launched Appeals for help if our readers wish to respond with compassion to the many people in need.

Each 'Appeal' below has been adapted from the website of the agency concerned, and so it will reflect their particular concern and emphasis at this time. **We have listed the agencies in strict alphabetical order.**

### Bible Society

#### **Urgent appeal for the Bible Lands**

**Our Bible Society teams are serving in both the Israeli and Palestinian communities.** They are distributing everything from Bibles to food to blankets to hygiene items, but they need your support. If you would like to help, please go to [biblesociety.org.uk](http://biblesociety.org.uk)

### Christian Aid

#### **Urgent appeal for the people of Gaza**

In Gaza, our medical partner is providing mobile medical and psychological care. In southern Gaza, our partner is responding to the recently displaced, providing them with mattresses, medicines, and emergency food items. Your donations can make a huge difference. Please go to: <https://give.christianaid.org.uk>

### Embrace the Middle East

#### **Help the people of Gaza**

If you can help support Embrace's Christian partners as they work to help people caught up in this crisis, please go to: <https://embraceme.org/gazacrisis> .

### World Vision

#### **Middle East Emergency Appeal**

We're already working in the West Bank, supporting the thousands of vulnerable children, families and communities impacted by this crisis. Your donation will be channelled into the areas of greatest need that World Vision and its partners can access.

Please go to: <https://www.worldvision.org.uk/emergencies/middle-east-appeal/#donate>

## And in Ukraine

### **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*

### **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.

## 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](mailto:elderberriesgardening@gmail.com) or call Shelley Lewis-Lavender on [01704 560690](tel:01704560690).

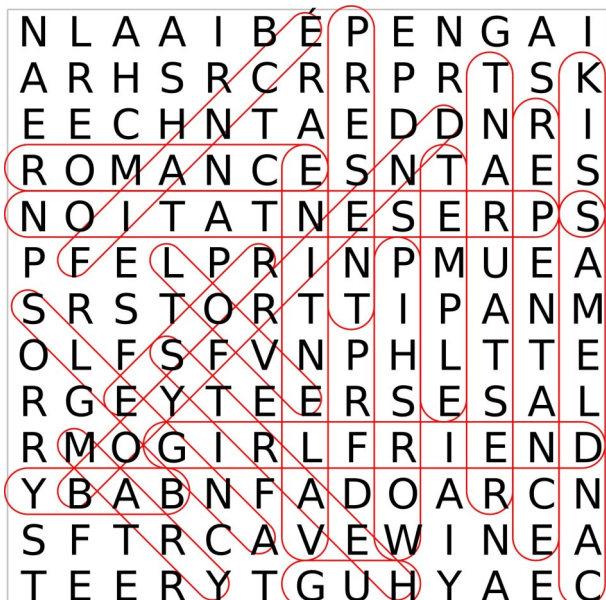


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## Joining the Sunday morning services and Thursday evening prayers by zoom or by telephone

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?...

65 years ago, 3<sup>rd</sup> February 1959, became 'the day the music died', when American rock-and-roll performers Buddy Holly, Ritchie Valens and The Big Bopper were killed in a plane crash in Iowa. 60 years ago, on 7<sup>th</sup> February 1964 the Beatles arrived in New York for their first US tour. They were met by thousands of screaming fans.

50 years ago, on 7<sup>th</sup> February 1974 the Conservative Prime Minister Edward Heath called a snap general election following the miners' strike and three-day week. It resulted in a hung parliament, and the Labour leader, Harold Wilson, became Prime Minister.

40 years ago, on 14<sup>th</sup> February 1984 figure skaters Jayne Torvill and Christopher Dean won the gold medal in ice-skating at the Winter Olympics in Sarajevo. They scored the first perfect 6.0 in Olympic history.

30 years ago, on 25<sup>th</sup> February 1994 serial killer Fred West was arrested in connection with the disappearance of his daughter. Police then discovered human bones buried in his garden. He was eventually charged with 11 murders, and his wife Rosemary with ten murders.

20 years ago, on 4<sup>th</sup> February 2004 Facebook, the social media networking platform, was launched.

**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**

**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](mailto: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](mailto:info@connectedvoices.co.uk) or for more information visit the website

[www.connectedvoices.co.uk](http://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**

2<sup>nd</sup> 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](mailto: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](mailto: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

### **When you stare at a word for too long**

Have you ever stared at a single word for so long that, suddenly, it looks very odd, and loses its meaning?

It is a phenomenon known as 'Jamais Vu', and you can experience it if you try scribbling a single word around 30 times, or for about a minute. Suddenly, it will look very peculiar.

Researchers at the University of St Andrews asked people to write out words, over and over again. About two thirds of them reported 'Jamais Vu', meaning 'never seen'.

One psychologist explained: "There is something about repeatedly encountering the same word that causes your awareness of that word being a proper word to remain unchanged, whilst your subjective experience of encountering that word starts to go a little 'off'."

'Jamais Vu' is often called a 'dissociative experience' – where aspects of conscience experience, that normally work seamlessly together, break down.

*Ed. Looking at a word for too long might have this effect. But reading **THE WORD** from cover to cover more than once will definitely not!*

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

## The Last Laughs

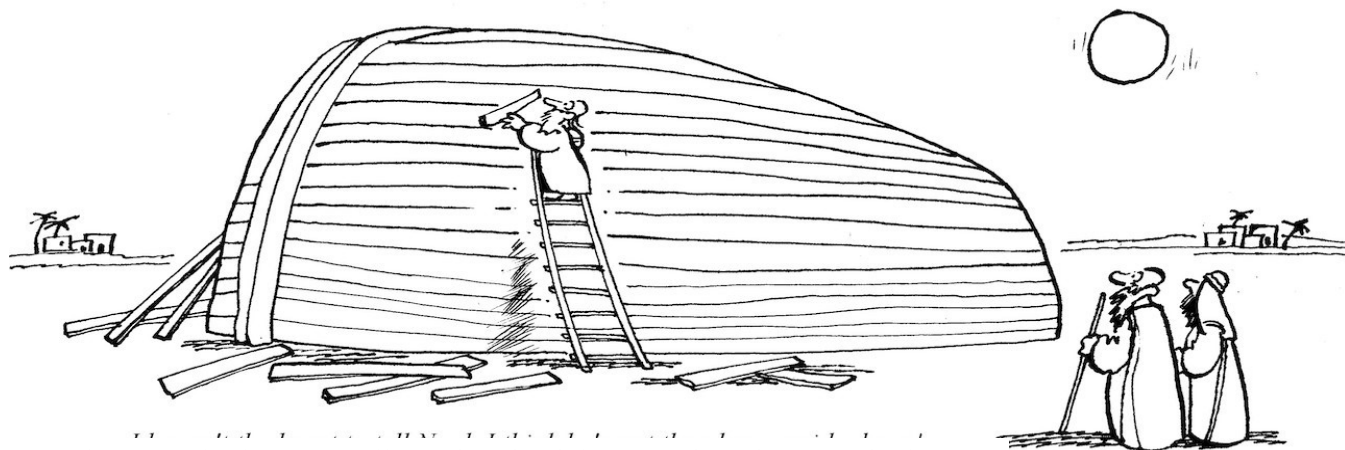


A couple drove several miles down a country road not saying a word to each other. An earlier discussion had led to an argument and neither wanted to concede their position. As they passed a farm where there were donkeys in a field the husband sarcastically asked "Relatives of yours?" to which the wife replied "Yes, in -laws."



George's New Year Resolution lasted just a week.

Several women in the church prayer group were visiting an elderly friend who was ill. After a while, they rose to leave and told her: "We'll do what we can to help. We promise to keep you in our prayers." "Thank you," she said. "But really, I can do my own praying. The thing I can't do is the dishes in the sink in the kitchen...."



...I haven't the heart to tell Noah I think he's got his plan upside down..





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