

COMMENT

The magazine of the churches in Tring and the villages



What's on in September in Tring Church

Services at Tring Church

Sunday 7th September

8am Holy Communion traditional language
10am Holy Communion with craft activity **

Sunday 14th September

8am Holy Communion traditional language**
10am Worship for all

Sunday 21st September

8am Holy Communion traditional language
10am Holy Communion with craft activity **

Sunday 28th September

8am Holy Communion traditional language
10am Holy Communion with craft activity **

** Streamed service on our website and YouTube

Mid-week Services in Tring

9.15am Tuesdays
Holy Communion

10am Thursdays
Holy Communion in traditional language

Lots more going on



Mondays 3.15pm - 4.30pm

Youth Café in term time - toast, chat etc for secondary school kids

Food Bank

Monday to Friday

10am - 12noon.

Drop-off donations and collect food



Tuesdays 2pm - 4pm

Craft and a Cuppa

Drop in for chat, cuppa and bring a craft to do if you would like to

Social Coffee

Fridays, Saturdays

10am - 12 noon,

and after Sunday, Tuesday
& Thursday services



Piano & more series



Sunday September 7th

3pm for an hour's concert
of music followed by
refreshments.

Free but collection for
church and piano expenses

Who are God's heroes?



During my late teens, as I was heading off for interviews, I took a number of longer train rides to reach various bigger cities. The trains at that time had the carriages with a bench seat on either side where three or four people sat opposite each other, doing their best, in my experience, not to talk or look at each other the entire 3-hour journey. Everyone kept to their bit of the seat, doing their best not to touch or look as they entered or exited the carriage. I clearly didn't understand this etiquette and chose to try to encourage some conversation, so as I ate a fruit pastel or other confectionery, I would offer them around. There was a variety of responses as you can imagine, but to my delight, at times it broke the ice and some people started to talk. Those journeys were the best – at least for me!

Many years on, my experience of finding joy in connections with others continues as I perceive that everyone has a unique story and that we learn from each other if only we take the time to observe or listen.

I'm struck that it's often in the planning of a funeral that I hear of the incredible life events of a person who has died and realise I missed out on hearing from them directly all that had gone on to make them who they were. That spurs me on to ask a few questions and listen

more to those whom I get to meet. It's often when sitting with a group of older folk at our regular Community Café that there are 'gems' in the conversation when I hear of what they did when younger, and how decisions they made led to all sorts of different pathways and adventures in life. There are some real hidden heroes in our midst if we listen long enough.

What makes someone a hero for us all, of course, will depend on what we value. You may be aware that in Hebrews chapter 11 in the New Testament there is a list of heroes of faith. Some of them are no surprise as we read of their lives at greater length because they led the people of Israel at various times, were martyred for following God's way or showed incredible trust in God in the face of great adversity. Of the sixteen people mentioned, two are women; one of them, Rahab, had lived her life in what we might consider a disreputable profession, but when God's people were in danger, she was there with her faith in God to help them (and later became one of the ancestors of Jesus). We might question why the author mentioned some of the judges: Gideon and Barak who had reluctant or fearful faith; Samson and Jephthah, who had ignorant or shallow faith. Why not mention some of the 'better' judges of that era? But clearly the author isn't deciding on the heroes with the same criteria we might, or naming the perfect people that we might prefer to emulate. What we should find encouraging is that they had SOME faith,

were able to trust God at some points in their lives and were still seen as heroes.

If you take time to consider who your heroes are, I wonder if they, like mine, are more of the ordinary people who kept enduring or kept giving out even when their own lives were really tough? Whilst I admire many well-known people, like Mother Teresa or Florence Nightingale, those heroes who have impacted my life more personally are those who quietly lived a godly life and showed the impact of God in their day-to-day lives and decisions. They weren't the great speakers from stages, with articulate sermons, but the quiet 'plodders' who connected with God every day and drew their daily strength from him. They were the ones to offer the kind word or action even when struggling physically with ageing pains.

Unlike my fellow train travellers, who had to be encouraged or coerced with sweets to look up and speak to me, my travelling with Jesus in the ordinary of the everyday is done so knowing that he loves to be connected to me and listens to everything I say and wants me to listen to him. We read in 1 John chapter 3 that we are his children: I am his child and he is my heavenly Father. God would have me snuggle up on the couch with him. Such an image fills my heart with joy and peace. I hope it will for you too.

Jackie Buie

New Mill Baptist Church

Come and buy!

St Peter & St Paul's Church is holding a Charity Tabletop Sale on Saturday 13 September, 9.00am – 12 noon in the churchyard to raise funds for the church. We wanted to try something new utilising the churchyard, so please do support Lottie and myself in our fundraising endeavour, whether you're selling or buying.

If you've got anything you'd like to sell, book a table for just £8 (bring your own) and sell your preloved clothes, books, bric-a-brac. If you'd like to sell for yourself, the cost is £8, but if you'd like to fundraise for the church with your items, you're

welcome to without a tabletop fee (but please still bring your own table or blanket to sell on!).

Come along, grab a bargain or sell – we can't wait for you to join us. To book your space, call me on 07765 420700.

Maria Lashley, St Peter & St Paul



Everyone is welcome to join us at any of our church services and activities.

Celebrating in style



There is no doubt that the early church did things together – sharing their gifts, time, money, meals – as well as their worship. They shared with each other and they shared with those in need. Tring's rector, Huw Bellis, has many gifts and one of them is cooking. He loves to

do it! So many of the events in the Tring Team Parish involve food. Along with a team of willing helpers, and with the blessing of sunshine, of which we saw a lot this summer, we celebrated the patronal festival of St Peter and St Paul on 29 June after the church service with a hog roast feast (vegetarian options were available) in the churchyard: a wonderful day.

Annette Reynolds
St Peter & St Paul



Their finest hour



On 30 September 1938, Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain stepped from a plane waving a paper in his hand which he proclaimed had been signed by Chancellor Hitler promising, in return for the Sudetenland, there would be no further expansion of Germany. He had brought 'Peace with honour'. The crowds roared and Chamberlain was hailed as a hero. By September 1939 the hollowness of this promise was dramatically revealed.

Hitler had invaded Denmark, Norway, Belgium, Luxembourg – and France had capitulated and was either occupied or collaborating. Winston Churchill replaced Chamberlain as PM and rallied the country for what was to be six years of austerity and suffering: 'blood, toil, tears and sweat'.

Although the war in Europe ended on 8 May, it continued in other sectors, notably Japan. Only after the devastating results of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima on 6 August and Nagasaki on 8 August 1945, did Japan give up. On 2 September American General Douglas MacArthur accepted Japan's unconditional surrender. The war was now

officially over.

On Sunday 31 August, St John the Baptist's Church in Aldbury celebrated the end of six long years of war with a programme of words and music, focusing on Aldbury, the evacuees that came and went, the men who gave their lives, and the songs we sang to keep our courage up with soloist Sophie Ray. We didn't actually 'Roll out the Barrel' but there were refreshments, laughter and some tears.

Thank you to all who supported the event and raised money for The Royal British Legion.

Caroline Ellwood
St John the Baptist, Aldbury

Biblical connections

Find four groups of four in the grid below that share a connection.
Answers on page 30.

JAIRUS' DAUGHTER	NUN	SETH	JESSE
FROGS	TABITHA	LOCUSTS	ZECHARIAH
AARON	ANDREW	FLIES	LAZARUS
BOILS	BENJAMIN	ZEBEDEE	WIDOW OF NAIN'S SON

The Hangout Hub



Most churches provide activities other than Sunday services during the week and so help to provide for the needs of the community. People are invited to take part in events related to their age or particular interest whether they attend church services or not. Coffee mornings and lunches, Ladies evenings, Men's activities, clubs for young people from 0 (creche) to age 11 and a Youth Club for those who attend senior school are among them. The latter provides a very important opportunity for teenagers who want to meet up with mates in a safe setting with activities provided for their age group – a great asset for any community. At Akeman Street Baptist Church all of these opportunities are provided as well as Bible teaching on Sundays for all ages.

Last summer it was suggested that something could be done for Tring School children to fill the gap between the end of school and going home. An invitation was given for years 7-9 (ages 11-14) to spend that long gap at the 'Hangout Hub', the Hub being the hall at the back of the church with side rooms and an outside area where football could be played.

On average, up to forty children make use of this facility each Thursday from 3.10 to 4.30pm. They come and go as they please and join in with various games as they wish. On arrival, they make for the kitchen serving hatch for a doughnut or small cake and a drink and then drift about in small groups, happy to be free of school before going home. The church has provided the sufficient number of helpers, with one couple organising everything while others are just available. They have all been checked for safeguarding and have had experience in youth work. One young lady is spending a year with us as part of a youth training course.

Those who come are not told what to do, there is no particular programme and the members just wander about enjoying each other's company in a different setting from school. Normally a church youth group would include a time for Bible teaching (that being a priority for any church activity) but it is not included in the short time the members are there. The usual club games are available – table-tennis, snooker etc. and some play for a few minutes then wander off to something else. Some just drift about in small groups doing nothing in particular. When the weather is suitable, most of the boys play football. Sometimes we play chess or board games and puzzles which are available.

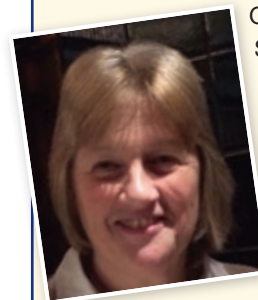
After going for a few weeks, I described it as follows: 'There is a whirl of non-stop action, the energy of "teen life" released and free. They are high-spirited, chirpy, cheerful and seemingly happy. They wander about chattering with friends, quite uninhibited, a lovely bunch of young life yet mostly responsive to expected standards.'

I enjoy the atmosphere this evokes – lots of lovely, harmless noise filling the hall with youthful, irrepressible life! There is something about this hour and a half which seems very worthwhile and not only because they can 'wind down' after grafting all day in school. The helpers wander too – chatting, watching, helping, sometimes joining in. Most of these children may never have attended a church on Sundays but, here they are, mixing with Christian adults. It may be better for them than listening to a long sermon! Whatever happens to them in the days to come, we hope that this may prove a landmark which will lead them to having a true faith which will help them in life.

What are our churches for? Surely to show our love for God in worship and service and to show our love to our neighbours of all ages – and importantly – the next generation.

John Young
Akeman Street Baptist Church

A treat for music lovers!



On Saturday 27 September at 3.00pm, pianist Jill Crossland will be giving a recital in St Martha's Methodist Church Tring. Jill has given recitals in the Wigmore Hall, London's South Bank, Sage Gateshead as well as international concert halls.

Her recital will include Bach's Toccata in D Major BWV912, Schubert Klavierstück D946/2 and Beethoven's Piano Sonata no 30 in E Op 109.

Tickets are £15 each which includes refreshments. Call 01442 822305 or e-mail berdinner@gmail.com.

You can see Jill Crossland online to give a flavour of what's to come as follows:
Concert videos [youtube.com/JillCrosslandPiano](https://www.youtube.com/JillCrosslandPiano) please subscribe!
Website www.jillcrossland.org
Facebook [jillcrosslandpiano](https://www.facebook.com/jillcrosslandpiano)
Instagram: [jill.crossland](https://www.instagram.com/jill.crossland)
X(Twitter): [@jillcrosslandPN](https://twitter.com/jillcrosslandPN)
Bluesky: [@jillcrosslandpiano.bsky.social](https://bsky.app/profile/jillcrosslandpiano.bsky.social)
Rosemary Berdinner
St Martha's Methodist Church



Our Father in heaven

The first four words of the Lord's Prayer help us find our place again each day in the vastness of the universe. We are not here by chance, as random collections of atoms in infinite space. We are people and we are called into a relationship with our creator.

That relationship is defined by love: not our weak love for God but God's strong love for us; the love of a Father for his children. God made you. God loves you powerfully and personally. God calls us by name into a relationship of love and trust, which forms us and recreates us as God's children: 'Our Father in heaven'.

Steven Croft
from '40 Days of Reflections on the Lord's Prayer'
Church House Publishing

A new Welcome Area in St John's, Aldbury



'I was glad when they said to me, let us go into the house of the Lord.' (Psalm 122)

We are delighted in Aldbury that the southwest corner of St John the

Baptist's Church has been transformed into a welcoming and flexible space, including a new sloped entrance allowing easy access for all, a table and chairs, storage cupboards, a warm carpet, moveable hymn book shelves and display boards. The space is now suitable for various uses during Sunday worship and throughout the week.

This new area was dedicated to the glory of God and in memory of Katherine Grace Allsworth during the service on 20 July. The church is grateful to Harry Munn for his gift which enabled the transformation of the area in memory of his granddaughter Katherine, and to Katherine's parents, Ann and Rod



Allsworth, for their patience and support during the planning of this project. In the service we gave thanks for the completion of the space, the beauty of the materials from which it is made, the skill, time and attention to detail offered by those who made it, and the sense of welcome and the ease of access that it has brought.

During the service, the congregation made these hand cut-outs and a welcoming 'wave', with each person

sharing qualities of St John the Baptist's Church that they appreciate.

The church in Aldbury is open every day from 9.30am - 5.00pm. You are always welcome. Pop in and have a look if you haven't already!



Part of our dedication prayer:

*Loving God,
we pray for all who will use this space,
that they may seek and find your
presence with them.
May those who gather here for
conversation, worship and prayer
know that you welcome them with
open arms of love.
Amen*

Michelle Grace
Tring Team

Tevye – my inspiration



The editor suggested that I might like to write about people who have inspired me. I have chosen Tevye, a Jewish milkman living in a Russian village, from the musical

'Fiddler on The Roof'.

I have been on stage in 'Fiddler on the Roof' twice, and it was an inspiring experience both times.

Tevye – the main character in the musical – is a milkman with a horse and cart, living in a Jewish village around 1905 in Russia at a time when the Russian government kept strict and brutal control over Jews. The musical is based on a series of short stories by Sholem Aleichem.

Tevye is a pious Jew and he and his family live by the strict Jewish traditions of the time. His life is full of problems: he is poor, he has several unmarried daughters and his horse has poor health. Despite this he has a strong relationship with God. He speaks to God regularly throughout the day in conversations and in prayers. Talking to God is part of his life. One of his most

emotional conversations in the musical takes place when his horse suddenly goes lame and can't pull the milk cart. Tevye just looks up to heaven in exasperation and says: 'Dear God, Was that necessary? Did you have to make him lame just before the Sabbath? That wasn't nice. It's enough you pick on me. Bless me with five daughters, a life of poverty, that's all right. But what have you got against my horse? Really, sometimes I think, when things are too quiet up there, you say to yourself, "Let's see. What kind of mischief can I play on my friend, Tevye?"'

After his daughter Tzeitel's wedding is broken up by Russian soldiers and the young married couple desperately need a sewing machine, he talks to God again: 'That was quite a dowry you gave my daughter Tzeitel at her wedding. Was that necessary?... Anyway, Tzeitel and Motel have been married almost two months now. They work very hard, they are as poor as synagogue mice... But they are both so happy they don't know how miserable they are. Motel keeps talking about a sewing machine. I know you're very busy God – wars and revolutions, floods, plagues – all those little things that bring people to You –



couldn't You take a second away from your catastrophes and get it for him? How much trouble would it be? ... Oh, and while You're in the neighbourhood, my horse's left leg... Am I bothering You too much? I'm sorry. As the good book says... Why should I tell you what the good book says?'

Of course this is wonderful comedy, but it is much more than that. It is a picture of a man who sees God as a close friend, someone he can talk to at any time about the things that are troubling him. Prayer for Tevye is a conversation, a very honest one, and a very natural one. Prayer is integral to his life and who he is.

Tevye has always been a role model for me in this respect. He has a relationship to God that seems right, and natural. I wish I could be like him.

John Allan
High Street Baptist Church

Nurturing spiritual growth



At Bishop Wood Church of England Junior School, we believe that education is about far more than academic achievement alone. Our vision

is to help every child become the best version of themselves, 'enjoying life in all its fullness'. This vision is grounded in the Christian understanding of human flourishing but offered inclusively to all in our school community, whatever their faith or worldview.

That's why we've recently developed a new approach to spirituality in our school, recognising that spiritual development is vital for the growth of the whole person. Our new policy sets out how we will support children in exploring meaning, purpose, connection and wonder in their lives – all within a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment.

What do we mean by spirituality?

At Bishop Wood, we see spirituality as the search for meaning and purpose, the development of self-awareness, and the cultivation of a deep sense of connection – to other people, to nature, to big questions and, for some, to God. It includes wonder at the world, reflection on our values and respect for different beliefs.

We don't see spirituality as something confined to RE lessons or collective worship. Instead, we believe it should flow through every aspect of school life. It is for every pupil, whatever their faith background, and it is about helping each child think deeply, live meaningfully, and treating others with empathy and respect.

Our key principles

Our approach rests on five key commitments:

- **Respect for all beliefs:** every child should feel safe to ask questions and express their thoughts, knowing their beliefs will be valued.
- **Inclusivity:** we teach about the world's major religions and encourage all pupils to explore their own values and ethical questions.

- **Reflection and mindfulness:** we offer time for quiet, stillness, and personal reflection, supporting emotional resilience and well-being.
- **Personal growth:** we help pupils develop self-awareness, empathy, and a thoughtful approach to life's big questions.
- **Celebration of diversity:** we embrace and learn from the rich tapestry of spiritual and cultural traditions within our school and beyond.

Putting our policy into practice

Spirituality at Bishop Wood is not an add-on or a single subject but is woven throughout our curriculum and daily life. Here are some of the ways we are making this real for our children:

- **Curriculum integration:** spiritual development is encouraged in all subjects. In Reading, pupils encounter diverse, thought-provoking texts that foster empathy. In Writing, they explore different viewpoints and use their imagination to see the world through others' eyes. Even in Maths, collaboration and careful questioning build understanding and respect.
- **Religious Education (RE):** our RE curriculum remains central, encouraging awe and wonder at the world, fostering ultimate questions about meaning, and exploring major world faiths with depth and respect.
- **Science and Outdoor Learning:** these subjects celebrate the wonder of the natural world. Our 'Out to Learn' programme gives children hands-on experiences in nature, prompting questions about beauty, complexity and our responsibility to care for creation.

- **Art, Music, and Design Technology:** creative subjects help pupils reflect on beauty, imagine new possibilities and express themselves. Our music curriculum, for example, includes praise and worship as well as music from many cultures.

- **PE and Well-being:** we see the body-mind connection as deeply spiritual. Mindfulness practices, yoga and dance help pupils develop self-awareness, gratitude and inner peace.
- **Collective Worship:** daily acts of collective worship remain a special space for shared reflection. Rooted in Christian values, these times also embrace the wider spiritual traditions of the world.
- **Celebrating diversity:** we mark festivals from different religions, learn about varied traditions and encourage open dialogue about beliefs and values.

Supporting pupils' spiritual journeys

We also aim to create spaces for personal reflection and conversation. Children who wish to explore questions of faith or personal values further can do so with trusted adults in school, whether teachers, our school chaplaincy or external professionals.

We want every child to feel seen, heard and valued on their journey of discovery.

A vision for flourishing

In all of this, our goal is clear: to develop well-rounded young people who are academically capable, emotionally resilient, morally thoughtful and spiritually aware. We want them to leave Bishop Wood not just with good grades but with a sense of purpose, empathy and the confidence to make a positive difference in the world.

We hope our new approach to spirituality will help us fulfil that vision – so that every child in our care can truly 'enjoy life in all its fullness'.

Gary Stanley
Bishop Wood School



**Tring School
second-hand uniform sale
in the upstairs room of Tring Parish Hall
(behind the parish church)**

**Sunday 3rd August, 1-2pm
Tuesday 19th August, 7-8pm
Sunday 14th September, 1-2pm
Tuesday 30th September, 7-8pm
Sunday 12th October, 1-2pm**

Items are only £2 an item without a school logo, or
£5 with a logo

Contact Revd. Jane for more info
jane@tringteamparish.org.uk
or 01442 822170



THE TYRE CHANGERS

**OUR NEW TYRE CHANGER
BASE IS OPEN**

Unit 5C Airfield Industrial Estate,
Long Marston HP23 4QR

In addition to our popular **mobile service**, that can visit your home or work, we can now also offer a **drive-in facility** by appointment.

We offer a wide range of **Premium, Mid-range and Budget** tyres at competitive prices and can now accommodate the largest of alloy size and low profile run flats.

Do you need new tyres, or have a puncture?
Please let us know and we will be happy to quote and make an appointment.

Not sure of the condition of your tyres?
We can have a look for you, just get in touch.

Wheel swap needed?
Winter and summer wheel swap also available.



Please call or text on **07746 903 095** or email
info@thetyrechangers.co.uk

WILSTONE STICKS
Handcrafted by John Evans



Member of The
BRITISH Stickmakers Guild
www.wilstonesticks.com
Telephone: 01442 822115

Stephen Hearn

**TringMarket
Auctions**

Antique and Fine Art Auctioneers and Valuers. Est. 1982

Our salesrooms continue to attract a wide range of customers from throughout the UK and across the world and we deal with almost everything that comes out of your home whether 17th century or 21st century.

Visit our website and view the sales catalogues with accompanying illustrations, you will find us at www.tringmarketauctions.co.uk

- Valuations for Sale, Probate & Insurance
- Total and Part House Clearance Specialists
- Fine Art and 20th Century Decorative Arts Sales
- Fortnightly Sales of Antique & Modern Furniture and collectables

We provide a full service to meet all your requirements



www.tringmarketauctions.co.uk

The Market Premises, Brook Street, Tring, Hertfordshire HP23 5ED
t: 01442 824446 e: sales@tringmarketauctions.co.uk

Everything in the garden really was lovely...

On 12 July 2025 we held our thirtieth and final 'Greenways Garden Day' in support of the Children's Society. This event has been something of a 'rite of summer' for us. It has developed over the years into a comfortable and relaxed format where friends old and new can gather together, enjoy a simple lunch and some refreshing wines and good company as they support one of the longest-standing Christian charities.

It is a very important cause that the Church of England Children's Society champions as it is there to support our most vulnerable young people at the times when the pressures of modern teenage life are at their most destructive. Having started out dealing with adoptions and running orphanages, the Society has evolved into an agency which joins together the professional support of the official bodies educational, social and medical which now exist. It

creates custom-built support packages for each individual who comes under their care and ensures that everything is organised and monitored from the viewpoint of the troubled (often very vulnerable) young user.

Prue and I have been involved for more than forty years as the local area organisers, having started out handling the house-to-house collections and then co-ordinating the large group of 'box-holders' within Tring's big-hearted community. Both house-to-house collections and cash boxes have now fallen by the wayside in our increasingly cash-less society, but there is still a big appetite among our group of supporters to help raise funds for the cause.

So it proved on 12 July which was a glorious summer's day (fortunately we had plenty of shade) and as you can see from the photographs, a jolly good time was had by all.

The resulting revenue was also pretty glorious as we had a charitable fund promise to match the cash raised on the day and in the end we had a total of £5,015 to send off to the society – our best result ever and we thought a good result for our final day!



Prue and I would like to thank all our wonderful group of supporters and donors who over the years have made this community such a productive resource for the Children's Society. Thank you for all the good times and the great work, and above all, the friendship and goodwill that has made it all such a pleasure – and fun. We know that the Children's Society is very appreciative of what the Tring Community has done.



What comes next?

Hopefully someone reading this will think that they would like to take on being the local area organiser for the society. Could it be you? We have a strong list of enthusiastic donors and there is great depth of goodwill for the Children's Society within the community here in Tring. It would surely be a great shame if all that were to end.

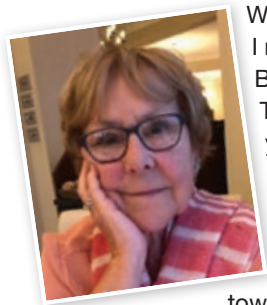
It would be very much more rewarding to see the good work continue. Please give us a ring for an informal chat about how you might get involved. We really, really would love to hear from you...

Prue & Grahame Senior

01442 822770

gsenior@seniorpartners.co.uk

My first commission



When Roy and I moved from Berkhamsted to Tring with our young family, without the church we would not have known a single person in the town. Ralph Seymour was a great home visitor from St Peter & St Paul's and made us welcome, and I had a northern neighbour who came from Manchester, Babs Hawkins, to our right up Cow Lane. Life was so different from the cul-de-sac we lived in in Berkhamsted. I saw no neighbours coming and going, and even the walk to school was different. It takes time to fit in and become part of a town.

In the first few years in Tring, I taught Pathfinders in the Sunday School with Mike and Sandra Watkin, something I had done for the church when we lived in Horwich.

At some stage, when my children were all in school, I decided to take up art seriously and did a part time course in St Albans. In my teens, I had trained as a dress designer at Bradford Art College, but now this was about painting, something I had always wanted to do, but for various reasons never could until then. That was well and good until I had my fourth child. Five years later I applied to Amersham College to do a design and art course (BHDAD) once Simon was at school.

I knew Eric and Janet Bianchi from church and from the Bible study I went to in their home in Grove Park. I was especially friendly with Janet, who was a lovely person, and we got on well. Eric and Janet knew my background, and of my newly trained skill, but when Eric Bianchi knocked on my door one afternoon, I had no idea what he had come to ask me.

Eric told me he didn't know any artists except me, and asked if I could make a piece of art in watercolour of St Peter & St Paul's Church, to celebrate the newly formed group called FOTCH, the Friends Of Tring Church Heritage which was ready to launch.

I was flattered and a little overwhelmed. I had skills. Yes, I could draw and paint, but architecture was a new challenge for me. However, I said yes, and took it on. It was my first commission, albeit free. I decided that I

should take up my sketchbook and look carefully at the details of the church I attended, but one I took for granted and had never studied.

I can't say what month it was – it was thirty years ago. I seem to remember grey skies, and it not being very warm standing in the side road looking at the main doors, with pencil and drawing book. It was then I was struck with a problem.



On Sundays the congregation entered the church through the porch and the side door. Suddenly I had to decide which view was the most important. Which did I represent on paper? In the end I decided I would paint both views and let Eric decide which was used.

It was a huge challenge, and I took photographs to use as reference as well as the sketches. Of course, the camera can't record what the eyes sees, nor feel the subject that an artist would in that second of time when the shot is taken. I saw before me granite and flint hundreds of years old; workmen, architects and sculptors, woodcarvers; men with chisels, simple tools, men with extraordinary skills. How many years, lifetimes, did it take to build such a monument to God?

I did several sketches of the main entrance, the carvings in sandstone, the decorative effect of blocks of stone and flint used together. I wondered if the local quarry nearby going towards Pitstone was a source of the stone, but no. I'm assured it was built in the 15th century in Totternhoe stone and local flint. I'm not sure what sort of makeover it had in 1880, but it had one. Let's put it this way, I couldn't see any joins, nothing apparent

to upset the solid and safe look of it. I still have the sketchbooks with notes beside the pencil drawings. The side view of the church with its many windows and porch made a long landscape painting, but the tower of the front with its heavy wooden doors was my favoured view.

I chose a heavy 300lb watercolour paper, and once I was happy with the planned image, I started. With good sable brushes and artists' watercolours and a deep breath, I outlined the painting in light pencil before making the first marks in paint. It was quite nerve-racking, but once I got started, it felt good.

It takes planning and patience when painting in watercolour. Being hasty and not waiting for one layer to dry before going back into the painting can be a disaster. Watercolour will bleed into other paint if it's still damp. I can't tell you how long it took to paint the two paintings – perhaps the answer is years. An artist, like a pianist, has to learn the skills over the years, and confidence comes from experience that takes time to build. I was fairly happy with the outcome of the paintings, though the one of the main doors and tower I thought was best. I presented Eric with both of them and he must have thought my choice was the best too, as when the first print was shown to me, it was of the main doors and the bell tower.

It pleases me to think that my little painting has given pleasure, and raised money for the building of St Peter & St Paul's through selling prints and mugs; and thirty years on, Grahame Senior, who bought the original painting, gave it up to raise more money in a new campaign to save the walls of the church in June at a special event with Stephen Hearn at Tring Auction House.

I hadn't seen the painting mounted or framed and it was a real pleasure to see it beautifully dressed at the auction in June. I hope that Beth and Chris Townsend find the right spot in their home and get pleasure from seeing it every day on their wall. I never did know how many prints were made from it. I'm just happy that one of my talents was useful and helped in raising funds for the church. Thank goodness for the many talented people that were used to promote its success. Thanks to Eric, thanks to Grahame and your many helpers. You made the difference.

Brenda Hurley
St Peter & St Paul

Tring Churchyard Working Party

Tuesday 16th September from 5pm

Please join us if you can to help with a variety of jobs.

This will be followed by a "thank you" BBQ and drinks (including Tring Brewery beer).

We are hoping to work on the following:-

Strim weeds along the hedge - Tidy up hedge height and sides - Reduce hedge height if possible - Trim hedge at top of path near arch - Tidy up around notice board - Remove ivy from trees and from all the walls and graves around the church - Clear all the stinging nettles along the east wall.

Please bring your own tools if you have them (eg. loppers, strimmers, hedge trimmers, etc).



Churchwardens' Quiet Day



Churchwardens are frequently some of the unsung heroes of our church communities. So much is given by them in terms of time, effort and dedication that is often overlooked and undervalued. They are often inundated before and after (and even, sometimes, during) services with 'I know you're busy but...'

With this in mind, Linzi and I discussed with rector Huw Bellis last year the possibility of offering an event for churchwardens which provided something other than the usual warnings about writing in biro in the Service Register, clearing downpipes and gutters and standing with your back to stained glass windows when strimming (important though these are). We wanted an opportunity to value the work which churchwardens do, providing a space for churchwardens

to grumble to God about difficulties, regrets and challenges and to present the chance to thank God for having been chosen for the role, to share with each other the joys which it brings, and to give time to reflect. As a result of this discussion the Tring Team offered this Churchwardens Quiet Day to the Diocesan Year of Spiritual Renewal and Wellbeing which they readily accepted – the first of the Tring Quiet Days that was specifically offered to participants outside of the Tring Team.

The day, on Saturday 12 July, started with Lauds and ended with Vespers, services from our Quiet Day daily office booklet, and Canon Jane Banister presided at the noon Eucharist. There were four reflections with quiet space during the day (there was also less quiet space for lunch and bun breaks!). The morning reflections were from Isaiah 6 (being called by God) and Matthew 20 (the workers in the vineyard – the apparent unfairness but lavishness of God's grace).

After lunch, Linzi shared the

treasures of her button box as we considered the pearl of great price and how special and precious each of us is; she encouraged us to write poetry using the starter 'If I rise on the wings of the morning' (Psalm 139). The responses from all participants were amazing – so much so that I was afraid to share my offering.

Altogether it was a day which met its aims – it's only a shame that there were not more participants who had the opportunity to share in the experience. It was definitely an event to repeat for next year and we are now on the lookout for other groups which might find a Quiet Day helpful – School Governors might be such a group.

Tim James
St Peter & St Paul

Piano & more series

An hour of music on Sunday afternoons

Vivaldi: Concerto Grosso in D minor
Bach: Concerto for oboe & violin

Tony Freer Oboe
Arwen Newband Violin

Elgar: Chanson de Matin
Bridge: Suite for string orchestra

The Icknield Ensemble
Directed by Arwen Newband

Sunday 7th September
at 3pm

followed by tea and refreshments

Tring Parish Church HP23 5AE

Free admission, donations welcome
For further details see:

piano-and-more.org.uk
or Google "Piano and more, Tring"



RUNNING THE MARATHON UPHILL!

We are Up and Running - Thanks to You - Help us finish the race!

IT'S OUR TOWN, IT'S OUR HERITAGE, IT'S OUR CHOICE!



Up and running – thanks to you!

We launched the Save Our Walls appeal back in February aiming for the very distant target of £150,000 over the next

two years. Thanks to our generous Tring Community, we are now moving towards £40,000 and one or two donations are still coming in. We still have a very long way to go and we always knew this would be marathon – not a sprint.

Donation forms are in the dispensers in St Peter & St Paul's Church – please do join us and help us to go the distance. It's our Heritage Heart – now it's our turn to help it stay healthy for all future generations in Tring.

Please help us finish the race!

The trouble with running marathons is that they just go on and on and on and you always feel like you are running uphill. It can seem as if you are never going to get there, but the track record of determined human beings is that, eventually, somehow, we do. Right now we are at a stage in the race where we need to gather our thoughts together, generate some new energy and keep on running! (As Churchill would say when the war years looked gloomy – KBO!)

What comes next?

As we enter the second half of the year, we are working on plans to find new ways of fundraising after the very successful 'Extravagant Evening' and the initial appeal for donations. We also need to ensure that our appeal campaign is more widely known throughout the whole community of Tring. There are many new

residents in Tring and they all moved here because they value the particular character of our town and our community. The medieval masterpiece at Tring's heart is important to them as it always has been for long-term Tring-ers.

The Family Fun Day in early May attracted record numbers of newcomers and young families and also raised a record amount of almost £6,000 – every penny donated to the Fund.

We are looking at ways to increase our profile in the town as well as reaching out to every household and business to pitch and support this initiative to preserve the unique nature of our town centre for the benefit of all.

To do this effectively we need your help, ideas and energy. If you can think of new ways in which we can engage with the whole community, please let us know. From Town Council to every business and every household, we all share a common purpose in maintaining the historic open and welcoming centre of our town as a green space and a welcoming building for all to use and enjoy. It is as important and valuable for everyday relaxation and refreshment as it is for big events and celebratory occasions.

Please do write to us or telephone



us and tell us what you think and how you can help keep us moving the appeal uphill until eventually we reach the target and all the repairs can be commissioned.

All are welcome in this place!

In September we shall be having the AGM of the Friends of Tring Church Heritage and welcoming some new trustees as well as re-electing those who still have the energy to keep on running. This long race is not only a marathon but it has to be a relay. The Friends started out more than thirty-five years ago and our fundamental purpose of preserving the heart of Tring for all future generations to enjoy is going to be relevant long into the future. Everybody is welcome at that meeting and fresh ideas and energy are



vital to keep our initiative vigorous and strong. Do come along and pick up the baton to help us keep on running. Make a date for 27 September and join us as we review how the appeal is doing and how we plan to keep it going all the way to the finish. You will be very welcome. (See Church Notices for details and agenda.)

'It's our town, it's our heritage and it's our choice'

That slogan appears on the new banner which will be going up shortly in front of the parish church and if you live, work or just love it here – those words apply to you. Finally, let me express the profound thanks from the Trustees and the Society for all the generous donations and

encouragement you have given in the race so far to help us keep on running. I should also pay tribute to the Trustees and officers, especially Richard Abel, who will be stepping down as chairman at the AGM after many years of effective leadership with all the passionately committed activists who have created the momentum thus far. Together we are stronger!



RUNNING THE MARATHON UPHILL!

We've started – Please help us finish the race



Preserving the Heart of Tring for Everyone's Future

Please write with your ideas either to me or to the Secretary at: info@fotch.co.uk
Grahame Senior
FOTCH Honorary President
gsenior@seniorpartners.co.uk

Poem of the month



All the previous poems in this series have been written in English. There is, of course, an abundance of wonderful verse written in other languages and here is a medieval Latin poem about the swallow, then, as now, seen as a herald of summer. The translator has changed the metre of the original to a much shorter rhythm, echoing the swift, dipping flight of the bird. The quick changes from place to place, from season to season, from fair weather to foul and the use of the first person seem almost to invite the reader to fly away with the bird.

Radbod, the son of a Frankish noble, was brought up by his uncle, the Archbishop of Cologne. He studied at Tours and in AD900 was consecrated Bishop of Utrecht. He died of a fever 'joyous and innocent' as he had lived.

Helen Waddell, the translator, was

born in Tokyo in 1889, the youngest of ten children. Her father was a Presbyterian missionary in Japan, at a time when that country was on the brink of massive social and political change. Helen's early years in this country left her with a keen interest in natural history and her background helped to give her a profound faith. Aged 11 she returned to Belfast and later studied at Queen's University where she won many literary prizes. She was well-known as a poet, writer, literary editor and translator. Her interest in medieval Latin led to several published books, of which 'Abelard' (a historical novel about Abelard and Eloise) particularly won great acclaim. At the age of 60 she began to develop dementia; she had to stop writing and died in 1965. She is buried in Ireland. Sadly, her work is not much read nowadays – she surely deserves greater attention.

Kate Banister
St Julian's, St Albans

The Swallow

*I take the winds flower-bringing,
I take the time of leaves
And tarry in men's houses
Building beneath the eaves.
My nest where all can see it;
And there I keep my young,
My brood so sweet and little,
Until their time is come.
Out in the empty spaces
They follow me away,
Swift are my wings and tireless
All the long summer day.
But when in the dank marshes
I dip a flying wing,
Then through the fields comes flailing
The east wind harsh with rain.
Colder the sun, and winter,
Bitter with snow at hand.
Out-driven or out-flying,
I leave my fatherland.
Sweet nests and kindly threshold,
Unheeding leave behind,
And my own fate I follow,
Far from the frozen wind.
Beneath strange roofs I shelter.
O man, wilt thou not see?
I follow fate: why wilt thou
Lag after destiny?
Radbod, died AD917
trans. Waddell, 1920s*

Supporting refugees in a crisis



In June, for Refugee Week 2025, the Justice & Peace Group were privileged to host a talk by Tim Whittaker, chair of work of the Watford & Three Rivers Refugee Partnership (WTRRP) and Seema Agnihotri a co-trustee. The venue was the hall of High Street Baptist Church, Tring and we are very grateful to the church for this facility.

As we have read in the press, it is a harrowing experience for many to leave their homes far away and to seek a new life in the UK. Some will be escaping from human traffickers, others from cruel practices such as genital mutilation, others from violence and war. Not many of us would risk our lives and those of our children in a risky boat crossing, I would think, unless we were desperate and could see no alternative. People spend all they have to get to the UK but when they get here, life is far from straightforward; but to put the situation into context, the UK is home to less than 1% of the world's refugees.

Applying for asylum

A person who has left their country of origin, and formally applied for asylum in another country such as the UK, is an asylum seeker. A refugee is someone who has been granted asylum. You register your asylum claim at a 'screening'. This is a meeting with an immigration officer where you can tell them your case. You'll have your screening at the UK border if you claim asylum as soon as you arrive. You can also be screened once you're in the UK if you become eligible for asylum.

To stay in the UK as a refugee you must be unable to live safely in any part of your own country because you fear persecution there. If you're stateless, your own country is the country you usually live in. This persecution must be because of your race, your religion, your nationality, your political opinion or anything else that puts you at risk because of the social, cultural, religious or political situation in your country, for example, your gender, gender identity or sexual orientation. You must have failed to get protection from authorities in your own country.

Asylum seekers are not allowed to work and receive a benefit of £49.18 for each person in their household. Many are living in poverty and experience hunger and poor health. Increasingly they are dependent on food banks. Social Services do, however, have a responsibility to house and financially support families where there are children. The UK is one of the toughest destinations for seeking asylum. As an example, on 27 June the Guardian reported that Ukrainians who fled to the UK after the Russian invasion are being refused asylum by the Home Office on the grounds that it is safe to return to Ukraine. The refusal letters typically state that the conflict-related risks do not meet the threshold for persecution under the refugee convention, as they can relocate to safer parts of Ukraine where there are public services; they can apply for help from the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) and local organisations to avoid destitution.

Seeking leave to remain

To stay in the UK, one has to apply for leave to remain which in the UK context means permission granted to a person who is already in the UK, but not a British citizen, to stay in the country for a specified period or indefinitely. It essentially allows someone to stay beyond their initial visa or entry permission. The application form runs to some considerable length and the fee to pay when lodging it is £1,321. In addition, for healthcare the applicant needs to pay an 'Immigration Health Surcharge' of £2,687. (A lesser-known fact is that £1.7 billion of the NHS budget is in this way funded by the poorest people.) The applicant also needs to pay solicitors' fees, typically £1,500, and also £250 for photo ID and a biometric card. All these costs are per person, so if a family is applying it is much more expensive, though there is some discount allowed for under 18-year-olds.

If leave to remain is granted, it is usually for 2.5 years at a time (often with a 'no recourse to public funds' condition attached) until you reach ten years of continuous lawful residence. So each 2.5 years the process of applying for leave has to be repeated which means the fees already described have to be paid again! If leave to remain is refused, there is an

appeal process, but then there would be further costs!

How WTRRP can help Drop-in Centre and Social Hub

WTRRP is a registered charity and its volunteers and full-time caseworker offer their time and understanding at the Drop-in Centre each Tuesday from 11.30am to 1.30pm at St Mary's Church, Watford. A significant number of WTRRP clients seek assistance with immigration advice, including expert legal guidance. This may involve asylum applications, 'leave to remain' enquiries with the Home Office and more. Once each month a solicitor conducts general advice surgeries focused on immigration matters and the help given has proved invaluable.

There is a social hub too on Tuesday's at St Mary's Church at the same time as the Drop-in service. Here there is a warm welcome and a relaxing and supportive atmosphere for WTRRP's many clients.

Education

WTRRP offers weekly English lessons (ESOL) throughout the year. Some students need to reach a good standard of English in order to find jobs in specific fields or obtain their British citizenship.

Client cases

Most of the client enquiries are regarding homeless applications and financial support applications. The committee is currently looking at befriending options.

Social programme

Highlights of 2024 included a five-a-side football event in June, a family party at Edge Grove School in Aldenham, and a children's trip to Watford Football Club to support the local team and choose a souvenir to take home!

Volunteers

The total number of volunteers is currently 75. The trustees are working hard to recruit new people to support all the different teams that form WTRRP. So, if you can spend an hour, a day or a week at a time to help, WTRRP would be very pleased to hear from you at volunteers@wtrrp.org.uk.

Michael Demidecki
Justice & Peace Group, Tring

Monastic orders – living under rules



We don't see many monks or nuns in Tring or the surrounding villages but they still exist!

A monk lives apart from society in poverty, under religious vows.

The first monks were groups of hermetic monks living alone in the desert but in a loose organization. Hermits date from around AD250 but in AD285 Paul of Thebes went into the desert and his reputation was such that, by AD305 he organized a monastic life for the hermit monks – or Desert Fathers. Melania organized the Desert Mothers around AD370. In AD346 St Pachomius gathered a group of Desert Fathers together to form the first cenobitic or communal living monastery in Egypt.

Monasteries spread throughout Europe and North Africa but were largely unaffiliated and without formal rules. In AD451 the Council of Chalcedon officially recognized these monasteries and, to bring some order, placed them under the control of their local bishop. In AD529 St Benedict founded his first monastery. He founded twelve near Rome and then moved to Monte Casino where his sister Scholastica founded a convent of nuns. St Benedict wrote a Book of Rules by which monastics were to live. These rules were adopted by most monastic orders as a basic foundation for monastic life.

Ireland soon emerged as the principal centre for monastic life, and the Irish monks travelled to Scotland, Germany and Switzerland, converting people to Christianity. The Benedictine monasteries placed great emphasis on learning and culture and became central to many communities and influential in society. In AD910 Cluny monastery was founded and restored the strict Rule of St Benedict, bringing monasteries back from cultural extravagance.

By the end of the 13th century, over 1000 monasteries were following Cluny in strict adherence to the rule. New stricter orders emerged, principally the Cistercians and Carthusians.

From the mid-15th century, the monasteries started to decline. There were several reasons. The Rule of St Benedict was not being strictly

observed, the mendicant orders were emerging and were preferred by many, the Protestant Reformation led to the destruction of many monasteries and the execution of some monks. Martin Luther (himself an Augustinian monk) wrote strongly against monasteries. The Catholic Church responded with its own Reformation through the Council of Trent in 1545-63 bringing back strict rules and the formation of new orders including the Trappists. This renewal only lasted until the French

Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars led to the mass destruction of monasteries in France, Switzerland and Germany.

Around 1840, Abbot Prosper Louis Pascal Guéranger, the Benedictine Abbot of Solsmes, started a rejuvenation movement for monasteries and founded the French Benedictine Movement and, in conjunction with Mere Cécile Bruyère, founded the Convent Abbey of Solsmes. His writings were very influential and are regarded as the prime reason for the resurgence of monasticism in the 19th and 20th centuries. This renewed movement spread throughout Europe and to the USA and Australia.

Sadly monasteries started to decline again in the late 20th century, principally because few people wanted to become monks or nuns. My own monastery and convent – Turvey Abbey & Monastery of Christ our Saviour, was originally founded in 1980 with a deliberately small number of twelve nuns and six monks but now has seven nuns and one monk with no new novices or oblates for several years. The decline is mainly in the Western World.

Hope may lie in a form of monasticism – 'New Monasticism' which first appeared in Ireland and the USA. It has its roots in a Christian Ashram formed in India by the Benedictine monk Bede Griffiths, the



writings of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Raimon Panikkar's vision of 'The New Monk' and Beverly Lanzetta's Community of the New Monastic Way. This monasticism is individual rather than communal (although some followers live together in small communes). It is not specifically Catholic and is at present evolving. Instead of the Rule of St Benedict, some followers have proposed Nine Vows for the 'new monk' as follows:

I vow to actualize and live according to my full moral and ethical capacity.
I vow to live in solidarity with the cosmos and all living beings.
I vow to live in deep nonviolence.
I vow to live in humility and to remember the many teachers and guides who assisted me on my spiritual path.
I vow to embrace a daily spiritual practice.
I vow to cultivate mature self-knowledge.
I vow to live a life of simplicity.
I vow to live a life of selfless service and compassionate action.
I vow to be a prophetic voice as I work for justice, compassion and world transformation.

So perhaps there is still hope for monasticism!

John Allan
High Street Baptist Church
and Turvey Abbey

A holiday in Devon – but so much more



Having resisted taking holidays without Sandra since she was admitted into hospital with Early Onset Alzheimers five years ago, and not feeling

happy going away without her, I resolved to get over it and booked up five days in Lee Abbey this summer. Lee Abbey is a Christian retreat and holiday centre on the spectacular North Devon coast in Exmoor National Park and home to a Christian community who run the estate and all the activities. I have been a number of times before, although the last was some twenty years ago when the Tring Team went as a parish. You may recognise some of the faces in the group shot of sixty of us who attended on that occasion.

This time, however, I booked up for a stay which included a number of sessions entitled 'Praying your Path' led by Emma Hudson, better known perhaps for her involvement with the 'Pray as you go' application. Perhaps with some trepidation about going alone, not having ever been on holiday on my own that I can ever remember, I let it be known around the parish that I was going and invited others to come as well. To my surprise and relief, four others opted to join me. So Beryl Poll and Janet Goodyer came with me in my car and Sue Yeomans joined Jeremy Buckman in his. Having some passengers on a five-hour drive is always a blessing.



Lee Abbey was much as I remembered it. After a couple of laps of the house, I got my bearings and felt very much at home. It is difficult not to feel that way in such beautiful surroundings and with such a welcoming community. Meeting up with around 100 other guests and some of the community over afternoon refreshments and dinner brought it all back to me, much reinforced by a stroll to the promontory, where the views across the bay and out to Wales were stunning.

The cycle of activities over the next few days, having arrived on Monday and travelling home on Friday, followed a similar pattern:

- 8.00am Morning Prayers with Community
- 8.15 to 9.00am Breakfast
- 10.00am Session 1
- 11.15am Morning Refreshments
- 11.45am Session 2:
- 12.45pm Lunch
- 2.00pm Time to Breathe
- 4.00pm Afternoon Refreshments
- 6.30pm Dinner
- 7.45pm Evening Activity
- 9.00pm Hot Chocolate
- 9.30pm Night Prayer

The sessions were a challenge for me at least, as they set out to reset our prayer lives and offered space to hear from God in new ways. We were encouraged to have a go at different ways of praying, using inspiration from the spirituality of St Ignatius of Loyola. Themes ranged from 'Finding God in all things' through 'Where is God moving' and 'Using our imagination' through to 'How to carry on in prayer'. I am still working through much of what we heard, however, my fears of being told to go and sit in silence somewhere, something those who know me will testify is not something I am normally able to do, were fortunately unfounded. Yes, there were times when we were sent to find somewhere away from others to think and pray, but it was very much guided by what we were learning; and for those, like me, who very quickly forget what I have been told, there were notes to remind us.

It sounds a lot and there was plenty to process, but it was not done in a way that overloaded even my simple brain and certainly helped with my approach to prayer and how it interacts with my life. Emma Hudson leads similar sessions and retreats through the Jesuit Society so we approached her about the possibility of her running a day at the Cecelia Hall in Puttenham – and she was keen! We will stay in touch with her and arrange something in our Quiet Day series. Watch this space.

There is no pressure to attend any of the sessions, worship or even meals and the countryside around the estate and beyond is well worth the walk, even allowing for the hills as the land drops down to the sea. Lee Bay, part of the



estate, is rocky, but well worth a dip if you are up for it. Janet got her toes wet this time but I just watched, contemplating the walk back up to the house, via the Tea Cottage which provided a very satisfying Cream Tea. Further afield we walked to the Valley of the Rocks where we admired the agility of the goats perched up on the cliffs and sweated in the sunshine (well, I did).

The evening activities included a quiz evening which was totally not competitive BUT WE WON! and a talk by David Hopwood, an ex-community member, who gave us some insight into the spiritual aspects of films from 'Coast Path' to 'Mission Impossible' and others in between. This was followed later that evening by the film 'The Most Reluctant Convert: The Untold Story of C.S. Lewis' which is about his life and conversion. Well worth watching if you haven't already.

One of the highlights for me at Lee Abbey was the worship, led by

members of the community, which is normally around seventy people of all ages. Some are parents with children, others are couples or young people from around the world who come for a year or more. Some are associate community members who join the team when needed but are not permanently



based there. The community normally functions in a number of teams, including the Estate Team, looking after the land and the livestock, the Admin Team, the Catering Team, the Housekeeping Team and the Beacon Team who run events in the Beacon Centre which provides holidays for children. The community members who lead each week are drawn from across the teams which ensures we get an insight into the whole life of Lee Abbey.

All in all, I really enjoyed the week, especially with the company from the Tring Parish (two of whom are also in my house group) and have in mind doing it again next year. Perhaps next time we may get a larger group, or others may like to venture themselves? As you have probably already realised, I really missed being there – and a twenty-year gap between visits was far too long.

Take a look at the programme and see if it may work for you: <https://leeabbeydevon.org.uk/> and any of us would be happy to expand on our experiences. Just ask.

Mike Watkin
Tring Team Parish



To drink or not to drink?



During the interval at one of the music recitals* we regularly present at St Martha's Methodist Church, I was chatting to the man in the next seat. Somehow, we got on to the Wine Society, which is based in Hertfordshire. A lady further down the row turned to us, ruefully playful, saying: 'Methodists? Surely not!'

I am sure it is widely assumed that the thing which marks out the Methodist denomination of Christianity is that Methodists don't drink (or gamble for that matter). This is not strictly true in my experience.

When I was a child, my brother had a serious illness. Our Methodist minister came to see him one evening and, when he came downstairs from seeing my brother in our bedroom, my father said to him, 'What would you like to drink?' expecting the reply to involve tea, coffee or water. But no, the reply came, 'I'll have a sherry,' at which point my mother needed smelling salts to revive her and my father made it the hot topic of conversation for the next two days.

It is true that the Methodist Conference continues to forbid alcohol in Methodist churches. So we serve non-alcoholic communion wine. This injunction is occasionally tricky for Methodist buildings. At our Methodist youth club, my friends and I frequently ran the gauntlet of the volunteer youth leaders by trying to smuggle in a rogue bottle of 'Watney's Red Barrel,' without success!

However, John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, himself drank alcohol –

although he warned against the excessive use of it, for good reason. In his lifetime there was an epidemic of 'Mother's Ruin.' The 18th century he lived through had an estimated 7,000 gin shops in London alone, with some 10 million gallons of the spirit distilled each year. It was cheap, it staved off hunger and provided a buzz to counter the grinding drudgery of working conditions for the 18th century poor. William Hogarth's famous print, 'Gin Lane,' is a nightmarish vision of gin addiction showing a drunken mother dropping her baby to take a pinch of snuff, the burial of a naked woman, mass brawling, and a man and dog fighting over a bone. Hogarth's dystopian vision did the trick when the government of the day passed the Gin Act in 1751 to tackle this epidemic which has echoes today in the United States, where, in 2022, there were nearly 74,000 deaths involving the synthetic opioid fentanyl.

Wesley travelled an astonishing total of around 250,000 miles across the country during his preaching life and his constituency was often poor families, who were perhaps the most susceptible group to seek comfort in cheap booze. So, there was a sound reason for his message of moderation. Nineteenth century Methodists, moreover, took an even stricter view of alcohol.

In my 20s, a friend took me to visit her family at their farm, high up in the remote Cumbrian fells, an area which had long been a stronghold of Methodism. The family were devout

Methodists. My friend's brothers took me to a local pub where they had soft drinks and argued persuasively that alcohol, and particularly the misuse of alcohol, had profoundly negative effects: family break up, anger and aggression, motoring accidents and so on. Their total abstinence ensured that they never fell prey to misuse and set an example to others. I could see their rationale and it had a profound effect on me. However, Methodists aren't required to 'take the pledge.' They can choose whether to drink alcohol or not and throughout my life, I've encountered Methodists who have never had a drink and others who do, including ministers, as above!

You may now be interested to know what my own stance is. Did I destroy every wine bottle ever given to me at Christmas? Well, I refer you back to my conversation at the piano recital about the Wine Society and leave you to draw your own conclusions...

David Wood
St Martha's methodist Church
<https://www.saintmarthas.org.uk/whats-on/events>



Anxious, bereaved, not coping?
 Need someone to talk to?

 Qualified & compassionate
 counsellor based in Tring
 can give you the time you need

 Private and confidential service
 BACP registered

 Tel: 07533 169073
 Email: lucyhuttyewcounselling@gmail.com

 For more info
 visit yewcounselling.co.uk

News from the Bell Tower

Here in Tring Bell Tower, we are at that encouraging and gratifying place where hopes and dreams turn into reality as our recruiting efforts have been successful and new ringers are now learning the ropes enjoying their new-found hobby.

Amongst our new ringers we have a stonemason and a policy adviser at UNESCO – bell ringing is truly for all. Recruiting is an ongoing activity in order to ensure the continuation of the long line of ringers since bells were first

introduced into monasteries in England in the 6th and 7th centuries.

You will hear the bells being rung after some weddings this summer. The bells make those happy occasions more of a celebration as their joyful sounds make public the spoken promises of the day.

Now, just an interesting historical aside: bell towers have long been used on special occasions such as weddings, funerals, coronations, but also in other ways such as at Magdalen College,

Oxford, where every May Day morning at 5.00am a Latin hymn is sung on the top of the beautiful tower of Magdalen College by the men and boys of the College chapel. After the grace, as the hymn is also called, the bells ring out a merry peal!

Come along at 7.00pm on a Tuesday to watch or try the bells, but please let us know first on tringbells@gmail.com. We are not proposing to ring at 5.00am on any May Day soon!

Johanna Morgan, Tring Bell Tower

Tweet of the month



Six months ago, if you had asked what I was likely to be writing about this month, I would probably have said a Bird-of-paradise. I went to Papua last year, and although Papua New Guinea is part of the same island, the biodiversity of the island, and a trip to the island of New Britain, just off Papua New Guinea, promised plenty of birds I had never seen before. However, when it was time to make the final payment for the holiday, the company said I was the only one booked on the trip, so it wasn't economically viable.

My choice was a different holiday or be refunded my deposit. A quick look at the tours going at the same time revealed a tour to the State of Minas Gerais in Brazil. It was described as a bird and mammal tour with the possibility of seeing Giant Anteater and Maned Wolf as well as a long list of birds that included very rare birds such as Brazilian Merganser, and range-restricted birds such as Hyacinth Visorbearer, which is only found in the Cerrado of Minas Gerais at 3,300 to 6,600 feet above sea level. Naturally, I decided to go to Brazil instead.

I hadn't even heard of Cerrado until I looked at this tour. Cerrado is tropical savannah that covers 21% of Brazil with small parts of it in Paraguay and Bolivia. It is one of the richest habitats in the world and has high levels of endemism – just what a naturalist wants to hear when planning a trip. So, plenty of species that you can't see anywhere else.

Hyacinth Visorbearer gets its English name from the rich, Hyacinth-like, blue underparts and the 'visor' is a small crest on the bird's forehead – more a subtle bump than some outrageous vertical crest. The scientific name for Hyacinth Visorbearer is *Augastes scutatus*. *Augastes* is derived from a Greek word and means 'radiant' or 'light-giver'. *Scutatus* is derived from a Latin word and means 'shielded' or 'equipped with a shield'. So, it could be translated as 'light-giver equipped with a shield': no problem seeing a connection to a biblical character here then! All I knew at the time was it was a beautiful, elusive hummingbird and I was keen to see it.

Early in the holiday the hoped-for Giant Anteater was seen well, and many good birds were seen, including six new species of Hummingbird and five new species of Parrot and a beautiful tanager that will feature next month. The



Hyacinth Visorbearer was seen on the penultimate day and was worth the wait as we were able to watch one perched on a branch for ages at close range. Although it was a little scruffy, it was still a beautiful bird in the right light and a definite highlight of the holiday. The Maned Wolf was even more last-minute and was seen at 4.30am on the morning we journeyed to the airport at Belo Horizonte for our flight to Sao Paulo and from there to London.

When I think of 'light-giver' it can only be Jesus. He is the light of the world whose love and teaching have made the world a better place than it would be otherwise. People in The Bible who carried 'spiritual shields' and were defenders of the faith would make for a lengthy list – please think of your own personal favourite.

Roy Hargreaves
St Peter & St Paul

Holy Cross Day, 14 September



At my favourite aunt's funeral we sang her favourite hymn: 'The old rugged cross', and not for the first time I pondered the peculiarity that the central and enduring symbol of Christianity is the cross. It is, as the second line of the hymn more accurately puts it, 'a symbol of suffering and shame'.

The cross marks the moment in our history when our Messiah was dead; when those closest to him fell apart, denied knowing him or fled; when those who had flocked to hear him bayed 'crucify him'; when our fledgling community disintegrated; when it looked like there was no future. Why choose this as our emblem?

Devotion to the cross of Christ began early in the 4th century when people

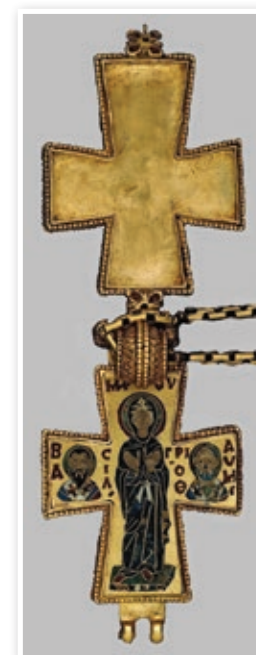
started to make pilgrimages to places associated with Jesus. Many of the exact locations had been destroyed, but Helena, mother of Emperor Constantine, set about excavating them. A cross was uncovered which Helena believed to be the true cross and on that spot she built the Church of the Holy Sepulchre which was consecrated in AD335. There it was possible to venerate not only the true cross, but the crown of thorns, the pillar against which Christ was scourged and the lance that pierced Christ's side.

Between 600 and 1200 the cross became a trophy of war, ransomed, stolen, recaptured, hidden (and those who hid it, tortured) and eventually disappeared from records. It seems that the cross may have been broken up so it could be distributed more widely and fragments appeared all over the world; so many, in fact, that Calvin famously said that if all the pieces were put together there would be enough to build a ship!

Holy Cross Day recognises that the

story of the cross did not end in despair on Good Friday but continues on to the triumph of resurrection. That triumph means that those of us gathered at the funeral could be certain that the transaction mentioned in the refrain had already taken place and my aunt had indeed swapped her cross for a crown.

Linzi James
St Peter & St Paul



Byzantine reliquary of the True Cross
 © Trustees of the British Museum

Why is high school graduation such a big deal?



On a very hot Sunday afternoon in late May, I found myself sitting in the Meyerson Symphony Center in Dallas, Texas, surrounded by proud parents and grandparents

for a high school graduation. With the sound of Pomp & Circumstance played live by the Auditorium's resident organist, the students walked in procession from the back of the large hall towards the stage. As they filed past in their caps and gowns, there were cheers and whoops from their families, while we, the ex-pats, were a bit more restrained and stayed with just applauding.

My nephew, Cormac, was graduating from Booker T. Washington High School for the Performing and Visual Arts, specifically from the Music Conservatory where his instrument was violin. My sister Pauline had invited me to Cormac's graduation months before and I had no idea what to expect. I did not realise what a big event it was and that it would cast our university graduation ceremonies in the shade.

As an Irish auntie who grew up with school leavers' assemblies that rarely extended beyond a few awards and some teary hugs, I was completely taken aback. High school graduation in the USA is not just a school event, it is a cultural phenomenon that involves the whole community.

That day, sitting among hundreds of cheering families, watching students walk onto the stage to receive their diplomas, I kept wondering: why do Americans make such a big deal out of high school graduation?

A rite of passage

Unlike in the UK, where the big ceremonial send-off is typically reserved for university, American high school graduation marks one of life's major transitions. It's a coming-of-age experience. The day when teenagers officially step over the threshold into adulthood. And they celebrate it accordingly.

In the USA, finishing high school means completing thirteen years of formal education, a journey that begins

with infant school and ends at 18. For many families, it is not just the end of school, it is the beginning of everything else: independence, careers, college or service. It is the one academic milestone that unites nearly all Americans, whether they go on to further education or not.

At Cormac's high school graduation event, which as a performing arts school, had a particularly musical flair, the ceremony was amazing and full of energy. Music, dance, acting and art were all performed live or displayed on stage. It was wonderful to see how creative the students were. Each student's name was called as they crossed the stage and each was applauded.



Graduation is for the whole family

Graduation is not just about the student but about the whole family. Many of the parents and grandparents in attendance had made sacrifices to get their child to that stage. For some, especially in communities where higher education is not guaranteed, it is a powerful symbol of progress. The school's Principal spoke equally in English and Spanish, as many of the students' families would be less able to communicate in English. I think this was a particularly inclusive and welcoming gesture. That is what American high school graduation



captures so well: not just what the student has done, but what it means for their future and the people who helped them get there.

In Cormac's case, his musical education at a prestigious arts school was balanced with his drive to pursue science. Playing the violin will become a hobby rather than a career. Cormac is now off to study Biology in the Honours Programme at Texas Tech University, with dreams of developing life-changing medicines to cure people. I am very proud of him.

Parties and proud moments

Of course, no American graduation is complete without the party afterwards. From backyard BBQs to full-blown catered affairs, it's a proper celebration. Families put together boards of baby photos, banners that say 'Class of 2025', and tables stacked with cakes, cards and presents.

Cormac's gathering was a brunch party and all the neighbours who watched him grow up came along with congratulations cards and monetary gifts (which all prospective students need). Miss Jane, his 90-year-old Violin Teacher, attended. It was a proud moment for her, too, as Cormac was her very last student – she is retiring now.

A cultural moment shaped by Hollywood

Part of the reason high school graduation feels so iconic in America is because we have seen it on the film screen many times, from 'Grease' to 'High School Musical' to 'Dead Poets Society'. Those moments of stepping onto a stage, moving the tassel from one side to the other, or tossing the cap into the air have become shorthand for growing up and moving on.

So, when American teens graduate, they are not just experiencing a long-standing school tradition, they are also living out a well-loved cultural script. And when the day arrives, they want that movie moment. After seeing it for myself, I do not blame them.

Community and identity

In the USA, high schools are more than just educational institutions, they are community hubs. They come with mascots, school colours, sports teams, marching bands and the whole town has a strong sense of pride in their high school. Graduation is not just about the students, it is about a tight-knit community of peers, teachers, coaches and mentors.

Cormac's school was a shining example. As a performing arts institution, it was filled with immensely talented students, each pursuing either dance, drama, music or art alongside standard academic subjects and yet the school seemed to have a real sense of unity and mutual respect. It was not just about who got top marks, but about everyone's

growth and academic success. It was celebratory, emotional and entirely sincere. Everyone was cheered when they received their diploma.



Should we celebrate more in the UK?

After attending Cormac's graduation, I could not help but reflect on how we mark similar transitions here. When I left

school at 18 to go to university, we did not have a formal send-off. There were a few laughs at the end-of-term party, and then we just moved on. In fact, we did not know what our results were until August when the dreaded 'Results Envelope' dropped through the letterbox.

There is something wonderfully affirming about giving students their moment in the sun. So perhaps in the UK, we could borrow a little bit of that American flair. A ceremony does not need to be over the top, but a formal celebration of leaving school, with friends and family cheering you on, seems like a positive tradition, especially as not all students go onto further education.

So, while the whole thing might look to us a little over the top with the gowns, the speeches and the grand auditoriums, it is also lovely and heartwarming as a moment that binds students, families and communities together in shared pride and hope.

And really, who wouldn't want to celebrate that?

Margaret Donnelly
Corpus Christi Catholic Church

Parish Church wins award!



What could be more British than newspaper articles about the weather and pictures of campers struggling in torrential rain and strong winds? It is tempting to say it has ever been thus, however, it is abundantly clear that the world creeps closer to a climate crisis. Storm Floris in August was just another example of how our climate is changing and extreme weather events are becoming more normal. We each ask how we can best respond and how can we be better

stewards of the earth? How do we treat it and each other as God's creation?

I am utterly delighted that the hard work put in by a team across the Tring Team Parish has been recognised. We can announce that St Peter & St Paul in Tring has now been given a silver award by the Eco Church team A Rocha and we are currently submitting the work which has been done in the other four churches as well.

In getting the silver award, the Eco Church Survey looked at five key areas of our church life: worship and teaching; buildings and energy; land and nature; community and global engagement; and lifestyle. Across these areas we have identified sensible steps and



changes which we can make. We have demonstrated that by making conscious choices changes can be made.

A huge thanks to everyone on our parish eco team who have driven this. Hopefully they will inspire all of us in our home lives and our wider community to make changes too.

Huw Bellis, Tring Team

TRING CHARITIES

(Registered Charity No 207805)

ALMSHOUSES IN TRING

From time to time, one and two-bedroom bungalows become available to let, for people who currently live in Aldbury, Long Marston, Marsworth, Pitstone, Puttenham, Tring, Wigginton or Wilstone.

Applicants, one of whom must be aged 55 or over, must not own their own home or have significant savings.

Applicants will be asked to supply personal financial information to prove their beneficial status.

The average weekly maintenance contribution (equivalent to "rent" for housing benefit purposes) is £107 for a one bedroom property and £126 for a two bedroom property.

If you would like to be considered for the Waiting List, please telephone Elaine Winter, Secretary to the Trustees, on 01442 827913 (weekday office hours only), for an application form or email info@tringcharities.co.uk

Wartime mothers



On the 80th anniversary of VE Day, my son took me to Quainton, the village where I had been evacuated with my mother at 2 years old and had spent my childhood. My father worked for the BBC and as soon as war broke out, he was sent to Evesham for the duration. We were living in our own new house in NW London but he did not want us to be there on our own. There was no provision for families in Evesham.



We had some neighbours with a cousin in Quainton, whose husband had already been called up. She was living in an old house and she had been directed by the billeting officer to have two mothers and their babies to live with her and her baby. The three little ones squabbled all the time and it was not easy. People all over the village had to take in evacuees. The Rectory had several; anyone with a spare bedroom was called on to help out. Older children came with their teachers and had to



be accommodated in the school which practically doubled overnight. It must have been difficult to cope with it all. By Christmas, Mum was offered a very small cottage on the Green and they let the house out in London. We were to stay as nowhere could be found in Evesham. The cottage was basic, one room up and one room down, with water to be fetched from the pump on the Green. The kitchen was under the stairs with fire for cooking and heating; electricity was downstairs only and an earth closet round the back. Poor Mum! She was used to a modern home with all 'mod cons'. However, she was not daunted. We were safe and Dad was able to come sometimes when he didn't have his Home Guard duties. At first Dad still had his car, but soon petrol became short so he came on his motor bike – until that stopped and he would come to us any way he could – train, bus, even hitching lifts. We were always so glad to see him. There were very few men in the village: the doctor and headmaster had both come out of retirement, the rector, baker and farmers, with other elderly workers or land girls to help. My cousin was one.



We were the lucky ones. My cousin's father was in the desert and they did not see him for four years. When he did come home, his little boy did not recognise him. My aunt and her family, including a new baby, were bombed out and arrived in distress at our house one day. We had no room to sleep them so the billeting officer managed to find for them an Alms House. Their father could not leave London as he worked for the railway. There were so many families with no man. I am very struck by how those mothers had the strength and courage to ensure that we children were fed and clothed as well as possible. I have spoken to many friends and not one of us remembers feeling hungry. There were no overweight children though. It was difficult for the older folk too. My granny used to 'run out of tea' before the end of the week – and she didn't like weak tea! My widowed mother-in-law, who was living on her own in London, her only son away, said, 'If I must die, it will be in my own bed – I am not going in that dark, cold shelter!'. She went on to live till 1984! Clothes were a great problem. 'Make do and mend' was the plan. Clothes



could be let out or lengthened with strips of material; woollen jumpers could be unravelled and reknitted – there was no end to what could be done to make something last longer. Shoes were the worst problem. They were often passed down or sandals could have the toes cut out, but I never remember anyone without shoes.

Many families took children in and brought them up, which can't have been easy, but some children actually stayed after the war, which says much for the kind people who took them in.

I have very fond memories of my adopted village and have taken all my family back there. When VE Day came, Dad came home for a week and we went to London on the train, with the pram in the guards van, to see our grandparents. Our big cousins went to Buckingham Palace to join the crowds there and saw the king.

On VJ Day, we had a huge bonfire on the Green – people brought furniture to put on it. We children had never seen anything like it! Somebody found some fireworks in their cellar which we thought was wonderful... some of us had only known the blackout. There was a Fancy Dress Parade for the children and our



Photo by [Eugene West] Tring's "Peace Queen" and her retinue.

TRING'S VICTORY JUBILATIONS VJ Not So Gay as VE RESTRAINT THE KEYNOTE

It is general opinion in the town that the VJ celebrations were not marked by anything like the high spirits and hilarious revelries that so typified the VE jublations. Although thankful that war in the world had ceased the people of Tring, as a whole, did not make an ostentatious show of their undoubted joyful feelings. Restraint was the keynote of the festive holiday. What with the VE street parties having only just ended and the excitement of the Election perhaps the townsfolk have had a surfeit of high times.

PREPARATIONS The historic announcement, although eagerly awaited, came at such an unexpected hour that most people heard it at breakfast time. Consequently, during the morning of VJ-one—during which the heavens truly wept for Japan — there was much hustle and bustle to get the flags out, to say nothing of a housewives' swoop on the shops for two days' provisions. Proudly Little Church Alley claimed the distinction of showing the best display of bunting in the town.

FIRE BRIGADE OUT Apart from small boys letting off fireworks, the morning passed off quietly until lunch-time, when the local firemen were hurriedly called out to deal with a chimney fire in Albert Street. Their efforts, which entailed raising ladders and clambering up a house-top, attracted quite a crowd of onlookers who had nothing to do except kill time.

THE REJOICINGS The organisers of the day's rejoicings must have been relieved when the sullen downpour gave way to white-bellied clouds and a warm sun that beamed, if only fleetingly, in a sky of vivid blue. Just when the day was at its sunniest the Peace Queen (Miss Roma Webb), and the carnival parade, started off the celebration in most effective style. It was undoubtedly the high-light of the day's programme. The crowd that thronged the Church Square until well past midnight was never so large as it was at the picturesque opening stages.

NIGHT REVELRIES Early during the evening nearly all the inn-keepers had to close their doors because their barrels were dry. In Frogmore Street an open-air film show was given, and in other parts of the town more impromptu entertainments were organised. The flood-lighting of the town's principal buildings and the colorful illuminations contrived by enterprising tradesmen were much admired. From ten o'clock onwards there appeared to be only one main pastime for the merry-makers—dancing. They spun gaily on the Church Square till midnight and many more kept up the rhythmic whirl still later at the Victoria Hall.

THE ORGANISERS The day's programme was organised by the Chairman (Miss M. Vaisey) and members of the Town Council, who had the invaluable assistance of Mr. F. Welch and Mr. J. C. L. Phillips and other public-spirited townsfolk. The work of installing the flood-lighting was done by Mr. A. Halvey and members of the Rescue Party, and Mr. P. Fells and Mr. Pretty were responsible for the preparation of the bonfire.

VJ-TWO DAY This was observed quietly in Tring. The Regal Cinema, which drew full houses, was probably the biggest attraction of the day. Arrangements were made for an open-air dance on the Church Square during the evening, but with the onset of steady and dismal rain the dance had to be abandoned. However, at odd-times at the Church House, with Mr. F. Welch as M.C. and Mr. R. Rance at the piano, went off very well. A dance at the Victoria Hall also attracted a good crowd of revellers. The town was "dry" that night. Hardly a licensed house was open. Delinquency over the jubilation period was reported as nil.

COMBINED THANKSGIVING SERVICE A Full Church

THE VICAR AND THE ATOMIC BOMB

A combined service of thanksgiving was held at the Parish Church on Sunday afternoon. It was well attended by a congregation of all denominations. The Rev. S. E. Garrard represented Alcan Street Baptist Church, Capt. Munn represented the Salvation Army and Mr. A. Ree the Longdon Street Methodist Church. Miss M. Vaisey (chairman of the U.D.C.), wearing her chain of office, and members and officers of the Council were in attendance. Members of the Home Guard, Civil Defence, and Youth organisations were also present in uniform.

The Vicar, the Rev. W. T. Boes, conducted the service, which started with the National Anthem. The bidding, from the Rev. J. A. Davies, followed, and the Vicar and the Rev. R. W. J. Webb (High Street) led the prayers. The lesson was those well-known words of St. Paul, "Although I have the gift of tongues." Psalm 46, "God is our hope and strength" was chanted and the Te Deum and the hymns "Praise, my soul, the King of Heaven," "Now thank we all our God" and "Oswald, Christian soldiers" were sung.

In the course of his address the Vicar said: "What a glorious and magnificent thing peace is. With this victory I hope we shall pass from blood and tears to a hopeful and lasting peace, but for many years to come our responsibilities as individuals and as a nation are going to be tremendous. Our thoughts—right and honest thinking—must be towards making a new world order in which all mankind will live in happiness and safety."

Of the atomic bomb the Vicar expressed a view-point at variance with that of the Bishop and Dean of St. Albans. He declared: "We have heard a great deal lately about the atomic bomb. With its arrival we have entered another stage of the conquest of the hidden powers. The bomb has such terrifying and terrible powers that it could end civilisation. We have heard many who have deplored its use against Japan. But I think it has been a tremendous blessing for the whole world. It has hastened the end of the war and saved millions of lives. Would those who object to its use rather the war go on and on, taking its victims all the time? Also, if this energy can be harnessed for good, and not for destruction, it might increase our welfare and happiness."

Raynet – what is it?



Prior to 1953, the attempts by licensed radio amateurs to be allowed to provide a backup communications network to be used in the event of a failure of existing systems was blocked by the Post office: it was thought unnecessary. The use of amateur radio to talk to or about non-amateurs was illegal.

On the 31 January 1953, the East Coast of England experienced a major storm and a high Spring tide, which among other damage, took out the Humber radio station. This provided ship-to-shore communications for shipping on the North Sea. A few radio amateurs, who had been monitoring the marine radio channels, heard many ships calling for help and, despite the regulation, provided vital assistance by passing messages between the ships and the coastguard. During investigation into the disaster, their contribution was acknowledged, and it was agreed that backup communications systems provided by amateurs under strict procedures should be allowed. This led to the formation of the Radio Amateurs Emergency Network, known as Raynet. The aim of the organization

is to provide communications when the normal services such as mobile phones are inoperable. All communications are logged and are available for further analysis in the event of an incident – such as the fairground accident at last year’s Christmas festival. Another tragic event, where Raynet was involved, was the search for human remains and other items following the downing of Pan Am over Lockerbie in 1988. This required special dispensation to allow amateur radio to be operated in an aircraft.



As part of the training required to be able to operate alongside the Blue Light Services (Police, Fire and Ambulance) safely and effectively, the licensing authority, currently OFCOM, allows operators to provide communications for community events such as half and full marathons, funruns and local events (such as the Tring Christmas Festival and



been involved since 1991, took place over the hills in different parts of the country. Repeater stations were used to allow communication down the various hills, valleys and blind spots on the course. The photos show me operating control at a location in South Wales and a typical repeater setup. It is currently based around Phasels Wood Scout Camp to keep the costs down and make it more accessible.



My involvement with the South West Hertfordshire Group started in 1995, with encouragement from Martin Green, who also communicated via bell ringing. Since then, I have enjoyed participating in a range of activities both in this part of the world and at the various Peak Assault locations. I am currently the group treasurer and registrations officer. Most recently I was checking my equipment ready for manning a checkpoint on the Endurance 25 orienteering event around the Chilterns, organized by Buckinghamshire scouts. **Ted Oram**
St Peter & St Paul

Jane Ducklin
OSTEOPATH

Professional and effective relief of back pain, postural problems
and muscle and joint pain

18 Christchurch Road, Tring HP23 4EE

Tel: 01442 890073 Mob: 07973 188420

Highly qualified and registered with the General Osteopathic Council

Osteopathic Care for all the Family

Serving Tring since 1995

the Tring Carnival Procession), horse riding and other events which take place over a large area. The photo shows a marshal’s point on the Watford Half Marathon with a St John’s ambulance awaiting a possible casualty. Peak Assault, where the local Raynet groups have

A recital for summertime



Our church buildings can be rather cold for much of the year, but after a warm spell and on a sunny Sunday afternoon, St Peter & St Paul’s is the ideal temperature for a recital

of summer music (pity about the uncomfortable pews, but we hope that will change soon). For the July concert we were entertained, indeed entranced, by the selection of summertime music curated and performed by our talented pianist, Anna Le Hair. It was a beautiful cocktail of wistful and gentle music, with the occasional dose of a more rousing tune. Chatting afterwards over

a cup of (Fairtrade!) tea complemented the enjoyment of the music. The next Piano and More concert will be on 7th September at 3.00pm, with the Icknield Ensemble playing Bach, Vivaldi, and Elgar. No charge, retiring collection for expenses. **John Whiteman**
St Peter & St Paul

Finding faith in a flower

This is one of many prayers written by Helen Steiner Rice.

*‘Sometimes when faith is running low
And I cannot fathom why things are so...
I walk along among the flowers I grow
And learn the “answers” to all I would know!
For among my flowers I have come to see
Life’s miracle and its mystery...
And standing in silence and reverie
My faith comes flooding back to me!’*

Flowers, particularly roses, are often used as a symbol of beauty and faith, representing the divine. Rosa Mystica (or mystical rose) is a poetic title of Mary. The title ‘Mystical Rose’ is found in the Litany of Loreto (a series of invocations which contains many of the titles for Our Lady). The recitation of the 150 Hail Marys in honour of the mysteries of Mary’s life and that of Jesus was traditionally called a rosarium, which is Latin for a rose garden. From this we get the name of the Rosary.

The recent summer concert by the Tring Choral Society included – embedded within John Rutter’s Magnificat – a recital of ‘Of a Rose, a lovely Rose’. It is an English poem of the 15th century in praise of Mary.

The mathematics underlying nature’s artistry

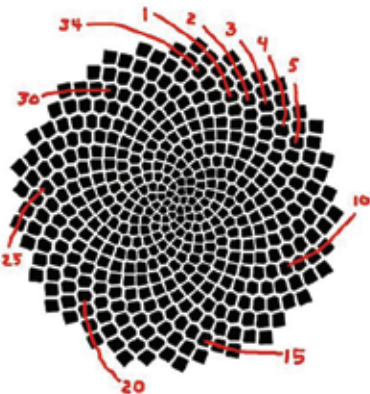
There are many examples of beauty in flowers that can be explained mathematically. The Fibonacci sequence is a pattern that occurs frequently in nature. Each number of this sequence, after the first two, is the sum of the preceding two numbers (1, 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, 21, 34, 55, 89, 144 and so on). Many flowers have a characteristic number of petals, and this number is often found to be one from the Fibonacci sequence, as in the case of the lilac (3 petals), the buttercup and violet (5 petals), the lesser celandine and larkspur (8 petals), calendula (13 petals), or the aster (21 petals). Different types of daisy have differing numbers of petals but they always match the terms in the Fibonacci sequence (21, 34, 55, 89).

Phyllotaxis

Phyllotaxis is a word of Greek origin composed of phyllo (meaning leaf) and taxis (meaning order). The word refers to an area of botany that studies the

arrangement of leaves on a plant stem. The study of phyllotaxis has led to the discovery of some fascinating natural growth systems, which appear to follow geometric principles and conform to precise mathematical terms.

Leonardo Da Vinci noticed that leaves were arranged as spirals along the length of the stem in groups of five. In the 19th century, phyllotaxis and mathematics came together thanks to a German naturalist, Karl Schimper, and a French crystallographer, Auguste Bravais. Both noted the appearance, in pine cones, of consecutive numbers within the Fibonacci sequence. Their studies revealed that the factors governing patterns of phyllotaxis could be expressed as the quotients of Fibonacci’s numbers.



The classic experiment in this field was performed by a German mathematician, Gerrit van Iterson, in 1907. He accumulated successive points separated by 137.5° in spirals and demonstrated that the human eye observes a clockwise and anticlockwise family of spiral patterns. The number of spirals in the two families tends to be consecutive Fibonacci numbers.

The sunflower is the most spectacular and best-known example of this phenomenon. After flowering, the yellow petals drop off, leaving a mass of sunflower seeds, which are set in a mathematical pattern. When we look at a sunflower, we see the seeds are in a spiral formation, radiating from the centre to the outside of the sunflower head, both clockwise and anti-clockwise. The numbers of each of these spirals are also consecutive numbers of the Fibonacci sequence. The most frequently occurring pairs are 21 and 34, 34 and 55, and 89 and 144. Mathematicians have also worked out that the total number of seeds happens to be a number from the Fibonacci Sequence!



Hidden geometry of a rose

Scientists have recently published a paper describing how rose petals grow. The curled edges and pointed corners of rose petals form due to a geometric trick never before observed in nature.

For decades, a geometrical theory known as ‘Gauss’s Theorema Egregium’ – which links curvature of a surface to measurements of its distance and angle – has served as the basis for understanding how leaves and petals take shape as they grow. However, it has been found that this theory doesn’t apply for roses.

Using a combination of theoretical analysis, computer simulations and experiments with plastic sheets, physicists found that a type of mechanical feedback regulates petals’ growth as they curl outwards. The petals’ edge can’t form a single curl, so it forms multiple ones with cusps in between. As the petal continues to grow outwards, mechanical stresses at each cusp begin to turn what was a round edge into an angle.

The full research article can be found at: Zhang et. al., Geometrically frustrated rose petals. Science, Vol 388, Issue 6746, pp 520-524 (2025). The commentary on this research notes that ‘... this discovery reframes understanding of how geometrical constraints sculpt biological forms.’

As Helen Steiner Rice puts it;
*‘So little do we realize
That the glory and the power
Of he who made the Universe
Lies hidden in a flower.’*

Ide Cremin
Corpus Christi Catholic Church
With thanks to ‘The Golden Ratio – The mathematical language of beauty’, National Geographic (2016).

A song of Francis of Assisi



It is probably true to say that of all the saints who feature in the calendars of Western Christendom (apart from the Saints in the New Testament) the name of Francis is one of the most, if not THE most, familiar. So it seemed obvious to write about this canticle. It is to be found as Canticle 84 (page 641 in Common Worship Daily Prayer). It is also known as The Canticle of Brother Sun. But on researching this canticle I found a reference in an edition of the writings of Francis to the effect that in the 20th century 500 articles had been written about it and, in twenty years, ten books were published!

So here are a few more words! One problem is that there is uncertainty about some writings attributed to Francis. The Prayer for Peace ('Make me an instrument of your peace...') as famously quoted by a former Prime Minister, is apparently not authentic. It has been attributed to William, the Norman, whoever he might be, certainly not William the Conqueror.

The series 'The Classics of Western Spirituality' contains the complete works of Francis. This book comments that relatively few of his writings have survived and suggests that the small number reflects the Franciscan attitude that there is nothing in this world to which a person should cling and be distracted by other than the love which is God. Few writings there may be, but it cannot be denied that the influence of Francis and his followers has been great. His writings have been described as 'deceptively simple, yet marvellously profound'. He was not a man of letters and he dictated his words to his followers; his Latin was poor. It was a time when Latin was changing to Italian. What we have are twenty-eight works including canticles, letters to individuals and to groups, prayers and rules for his followers but many writings have been lost. Francis was not a scholar or theologian, so instead of a great collection of teachings or sermons his legacy is his example of the Christian life lived by him and his followers.

The outlines of his life are familiar, a profligate lifestyle changed by a period in prison and long weeks of illness; but his conversion to an ardent follower of Christ

resulted in his desire to devote himself to prayer and to the poor. He took Christ's words to leave all as a personal call. He wanted to carry Christ 'to the Saracens and other unbelievers'. He wanted to go to Syria but was shipwrecked, so travelled to Morocco and a little later to Egypt to convert the sultan. These missions failed, but success came later in Italy where he founded a brotherhood. Much more could be said about how he started the idea of the crib at Christmas, how he received Christ's wounds, the Stigmata, in 1224, thus enhancing his preaching on the cross and so on.

But the Song or Canticle is our particular concern. It is called 'A Song of Francis of Assisi' but it is also called 'The Canticle of Brother Sun'. The opening words are addressed to 'God most high, all powerful: only to God belong all praise and glory. No one is worthy to call on his name'. Then parts of creation are addressed in family terms – the Sun, his brother, the Moon and Stars (together) are sisters. Next we have Sister Water and Brother Fire. Water is described as useful, humble, precious and chaste while Fire is seen in terms of the light it gives because it 'lights the night and is beautiful and playful, robust and strong'.

This section ends with our sister, Mother Earth – an interesting combination, sister and mother – 'who sustains and governs us and produces diverse fruits and coloured flowers and grass'. So far then, aspects of the created order are to praise God.

Line 10 marks a change from nature as the Lord is to be praised by all who forgive for love of the Lord, and who bear weakness and tribulation, and bear them in peace. Those who live in this way will be crowned. This is followed by the strongest and most difficult line when

the Lord is to be praised for our sister, the death of the body, from which no one living is able to flee. Then we have a warning to those who live in mortal sin. Then blessed are those who do God's will: they will not be harmed by the second death. Finally, there is a blessing for those who serve God most humbly. The phrase 'second death' occurs in the Book of Revelation and well deserves further study.

It is the idea of the death of the body being our sister that we might find difficult. (Why is it not called 'our brother'?) In one sense death is, indeed, part of the natural order, part of creation and so is part of the 'family' along with sun, moon, fire and water. In the time of St Francis, and up until relatively recently, death from disease, accidents, war and crime was never far away. So maybe we need a reminder from him that it is not a subject to be avoided. Rather it leads on to the nearer presence of God.

Martin Banister,
St Albans Cathedral

Community Café

OPEN ON THURSDAYS

11.30-1.15

New Mill Baptist Church

**Cafe Serving:
Coffee, tea
soup, lunch options,
dessert and cakes**



No set prices, just donations

Shopping and eating out in Tring and District – the rise of Fairtrade

The latest edition of the 'Shopping and Eating Out' guide for Tring and surrounding district has just been published (on the day of the Tring Carnival on 12 July) by the Justice & Peace Group. It's a guide to local, Fairtrade and plastic-free shopping and dining. There are fifty-three entries this time and the guide includes sections listing twenty-two catering outlets serving Fairtrade products (cafés, restaurants, pubs, churches and suppliers) and twelve shops selling Fairtrade products.

As this is just the latest updated version of the guide, I wondered if the number of catering outlets and shops offering Fairtrade products had increased or decreased. So I started looking at earlier versions of the guide.

The Justice & Peace Group applied for Fairtrade Town status for Tring in July 2007 and this status (now known as Fairtrade Community status) has been renewed at intervals ever since. We campaigned for three years before being able to make the application. One of the five goals then that we had to reach was to establish that a range of at least two Fairtrade products was readily available in shops and local cafés / catering establishments. With a population then of 13,500, Tring was required to have three retail outlets and two catering outlets serving two or more products with the FAIRTRADE Mark. We met this goal with five retail and four catering outlets. The retail outlets were Tesco Supermarket, London Road; Co-op Supermarket, Silk Mill Way; Harmony Health Food Shop (Now Healthfare), 3 High Street; Threshers Off Licence (no longer here) 90 High Street; and Benellie (also no longer here), 29 High Street. The catering outlets were Kings Arms pub, King Street; The Robin Hood pub, 1 Brook Street; High

Street Baptist Church café, High Street; and Zebra Café (now renamed), Tring Museum, Akeman Street.

We advised the Fairtrade Foundation, the awarding body, that a Directory of Where to Buy Fairtrade goods (both Retail and Wholesale outlets) in Tring had already been produced for Tring Businesses. We told them too that a Directory of Where to Buy Fairtrade Goods for the public had been designed and would be circulated to celebrate when the town achieved Fairtrade status. The result of this part of our application was 'Goal achieved' and the Fairtrade Foundation went on to comment that 'The directory is an excellent and really useful tool to inform residents and visitors to Tring where they can buy Fairtrade products. It's wonderful that you have a good mixture of large outlets and smaller independent ones...'. We were delighted to have been the first town in Dacorum to have been awarded Fairtrade Town status. It was a close race with Berkhamsted in the end as our town mayor was presented with Tring's Fairtrade Town certificate in the morning while Berkhamsted received theirs in the afternoon!

Well, we continued to promote Fairtrade both in our town and nationally (we organised a national competition for school children for a few years in co-operation with the Fairtrade Foundation). The late Moira Hargreaves also helped with her Tridcraft stall in St Peter & St Paul's Church and at Farmers' Markets too. So I return to the question raised at the beginning of this article, namely, whether there are now more outlets selling and serving Fairtrade products in our town and around. Here is what I found by looking through past versions of our guide.

- 2011: 17 Fairtrade outlets (12 catering outlets and 5 shops)
- 2012: 17 Fairtrade outlets (11 catering outlets and 6 shops)
- 2019: 23 fairtrade outlets (14 catering outlets and 9 shops)
- 2021: 21 fairtrade outlets (13 catering outlets and 8 shops)
- 2023: 28 Fairtrade outlets (19 catering outlets and 9 shops)
- 2025: 34 Fairtrade outlets (22 catering outlets and 12 shops)

A number of schools and businesses, and indeed our own Town Council, serve



Fairtrade refreshments too.

The guide will be further promoted at the Apple Day event on Sunday 5 October at Dunsley Bungalow, Cow Lane (opposite the entrance to Pendley Manor) at the Justice & Peace Group's stall. Please come along and support us if you're free. Fairtrade Fortnight will still be on then so this will be just one of many Fairtrade events going on throughout the country.

Copies of the guide are available now in the Tring Information Centre, at Tring Farmers' Market, and in several shops and churches. It can be downloaded from the Justice & Peace Group website www.justiceandpeacetring.org. The guide features for the first time a QR code which can be scanned to open up the guide to one's phone or tablet and so provide a ready reference when out shopping or visiting a café etc.

A special thanks is due to Churches Together in Tring who have sponsored several editions of our guide, including the current one.

Michael Demidecki, Justice & Peace Group, Tring affiliated to Churches Together in Tring



What is church?



Some years ago, I asked members of different churches to write for *Comment* to say why they attended the church they did. I was surprised that the articles really explained that the people who volunteered to do this had been ‘born’ into that church tradition – Anglicans, Baptists, Catholics, Methodists – and saw no reason to move. I think I expected to hear that people believed something only catered for by that denomination or that they preferred a particular practice of worship. I was wrong!

As someone who was not a ‘cradle’ anything, not attending any church until I was 16, I was intrigued. Yes, my parents had me baptised in the local Anglican church (‘high’ in its traditions) because my grandparents – also, like my parents, non-church attenders – had brought their wishes to bear on my young mother. When my sister was born more than six years later, she was not baptised. The church I attended from age 16-19 when I came to faith was an Anglican church but located five miles from my home and ‘low’ in its traditions. These distinctions were lost on me at the time and (don’t shoot me) are not really important to me now.

When away at college I gravitated to the Anglican church recommended to me and attended for a while. Although the worship pattern was more familiar to me than a non-conformist church would have been, it was still not the same as ‘my’ church. After a while I was dissatisfied and attended the local United Reformed Church which many other students made their home. I finally found the small Free Independent Evangelical Church my spiritual home.

After graduation Jon and I became members of the United Reformed Church in Hemel Hempstead and I was happy to worship there and be involved for some years until a new minister was appointed. Despite my home amongst the faithful congregation there, the change drove us away to the Anglican church in Bovingdon which we attended until we moved to Cheddington. We were advised by the vicar at our local Anglican church to travel to All Saints Long Marston

(different county and diocese!) where he thought we would be more at home... and we were, until twelve years later we moved to St Peter & St Paul’s in Tring, part of the same team. We are still there (though, for a specific reason, I also sampled a Vineyard church, which had much to commend it, along the way).

Why did I move churches? What made me dissatisfied and seek another church at those various stages which were not necessary because of a changing location? Am I just awkward, difficult, fussy, a troublemaker...? Don’t answer that – even I know I am!

I do know that I look for a place where I feel ‘comfortable’ and welcome, accepted. Don’t we all want that? But assuming that we feel that, what then makes us stay and want to be an active part of that church? The people? Church is not the walls and roof and windows even though a place ‘to be’ is important – the sense of belonging, the community, people who notice if we are there or not, who support us and care... make a huge difference. But even if that is what we find, what if what we believe is very different from the message being preached there; or if there seems to be no integrity? What if the priorities of the church seem wrong to us? I left two of those churches because of this.

I used to wonder why there were three Baptist churches in Tring until I found that there used to be five in the 1880s! Now I realise that which church we belong to is probably a matter of preference. If you have a relationship with God enriched and enhanced by whichever church you attend, you are probably in the right place. Different denominations do have theological differences that are important to many – otherwise why wouldn’t we all be in the same place? – but there are also, obviously, far more things that unite Christians than divide us.

Take the Justice and Peace Group. Members come from the Anglican, Catholic and Baptist churches as well as some who belong to no church at all. Perhaps historically other churches were represented. The values on the various issues raised and pursued are shared by and important to all those who attend. I suspect most of us would share those values – and could also belong.

Those who march through Tring on Good Friday come from all the churches

because we all believe in the historical truth of the death of Jesus and its central place in the Christian faith.

The Musalaha event last year was attended by more than just the Baptists who attend High Street Baptist Church because we all care about peace and reconciliation.

Members of different churches attend or support or help at events or groups at other churches: St Peter & St Paul’s members in Akeman Street Baptist Church, for example.

In 2004, the Salvation Army set up a craft group for those who were alone or recently bereaved and Anglican Beth Scraggs not only helped by serving refreshments, she started to cook a meal regularly for those who attended. It moved over time to the Parish Hall behind St Peter & St Paul’s and now around forty people each month are catered for and benefit not just from home-cooked food but company, friendship, an opportunity to be with others in a warm, accepting community.

I am sure there are more examples – I would love to know about them!

Wouldn’t it be great if we had more events that would bring us together with a united purpose, to welcome everyone in and to support and help one another to achieve more?

What is church? Catholic composer Bernadette Farrell seemed to have the right idea in this hymn:

*Longing for light, we wait in darkness
Longing for truth, we turn to You
Make us Your own, Your holy people
Light for the world to see*

*Longing for shelter, many are homeless
Longing for warmth, many are cold
Make us Your building, sheltering others
Walls made of living stone*

*Many the gifts, many the people
Many the hearts that yearn to belong
Let us be servants to one another
Making Your kingdom come*

*Christ, be our light
Shine in our hearts
Shine through the darkness
Christ, be our light
Shine in Your church gathered today*

Annette Reynolds, St Peter & St Paul

In memory of Ken Stacey

My dad, Ken Stacey, was born in Ley Hill on 21 May 1931 and attended Ley Hill Elementary School. He left school at 14 in 1945. Growing up, he attended the Sunday School at St George’s Tyler’s Hill which was led by Miss Bangay – a lady ahead of her time. During the war, the Anglican church did not have enough ordained men to run the churches, so appointed some women as ‘Bishop’s Messengers’. Dad greatly admired her and all the work she did for the Ley Hill church and community; she was a vicar in all but name. Even after moving to Tring, he would occasionally return to attend one of her Evening Services.

Dad always had a spirit of adventure and, soon after his older sister Muriel married and moved to Taunton, he and his cousin Peter decided to cycle to Taunton to visit her. They set off early one morning, meaning to break their journey at some point, but they both kept going and did the whole journey of 150 miles in one day. We were told that Dad arrived with the seat of his trousers worn out!

At the age of 18, Dad was called up for National Service. He was posted to the Ruhr in Northern Germany and thought he was very fortunate. His cousin Peter was posted up north and,



according to our aunt, spent his time painting coal white! (Was that really true, or just a myth?) Dad admired how hard the German people worked to rebuild their country. There was even a German girlfriend for a while. It could be from this time that Dad developed a passion for the UK to develop closer ties with Europe.

After his National Service, Dad started a job in the office of a new company in Chesham called SPD (‘Speedy, Prompt Delivery’). It was a central warehouse where companies such as Birds Eye and Persil delivered their goods for distribution to various shops and supermarkets. It became quite a big employer in the town. He had a good career there, running the data office with Alan Branigan who became a good friend. They both did shift work as the office was open from early in the morning until late at night.

At the age of 24, Dad married Gladys, and they lived in a remote farmworker’s cottage between Bovingdon and Chesham. It was one of four cottages, the other three being occupied by elderly couples. It was here that I was born and then Rob and Kas. The cottage had no inside toilet or bathroom, and no mains drains, but Dad loved being in the countryside. He was always good at observing wildlife and identifying birds. There was a cottage garden where Dad grew vegetables.

We were very happy in that little cottage and not at all thrilled to hear the news that we were to move to a shiny new house in Drummond Ride, Tring. Dad’s mother was very unhappy that we were moving so far away. ‘What do you want to go to Tring for? It’s such a poor place!’ Dad obviously thought we would fit in very well!

Gardening was one of Dad’s passions and in Drummond Ride we were each



given a piece of garden. In Spring, we were taken to Woolworths in Chesham to choose our seeds. Sadly, we think Dave and Lise – the two youngest – lost out there!

When Dad retired, he decided he wanted a bigger garden than the garden in Drummond Ride, so he, Mum and Lise (the last of us left by then) moved to Beaconsfield Road where he had a lovely garden with lots of birds visiting all the feeders he supplied. He also loved feeding the kites – who used to call him for food! In addition to the bigger garden, he had an allotment where he spent many happy hours and was really proud of his allotment prizes. He was still digging in that allotment well after his 92nd birthday!

Dad was a member of High Street Baptist Church and one-time Treasurer there. For many years, he and Mum hosted Bible study groups.

Finally, Dad was a big supporter of the Lib Dems and was thrilled when Victoria Collins got elected as his Constituency MP in 2024. He said it was the first time in his life that he was represented by an MP he voted for! Dad died of ‘old age’ on 25 February this year. He was 93.

Rosemary Berrinner, daughter

Parish registers

Baptism

We welcome these children into our church community and pray for their families.

**Isacc Lloyd
Theodore Spargo-Perceval**

Weddings

We offer our congratulations and prayers to this couple as they begin their married life together.

**Jonathan Harding
& Laura Jane Gammel**

Funerals

We thank God for the lives of the departed and pray for comfort for those who mourn.

**David Banyard 91
Godfrey William Orrell 88
Jolyon Charles Hearn 47
Eleanor (Ellie) Jane Terrett 23
Judith (Judi) Moore 87**

Useful contacts

TRING TEAM PARISH

Team Rector
(Tring & Puttenham)
Rev Huw Bellis
2 The Limes, Station Road
01442 822170 or
07411 483229
huw@tringteamparish.org.uk
(Day off Thursday)

School Chaplaincy
and Team Vicar
(Aldbury, Tring School)
Rev Michelle Grace
Aldbury Vicarage
01442 851200
michelle@tringteamparish.org.uk
mgrace@tringschool.org
(Day off Friday)

School Chaplaincy
and Team Vicar
(Tring School, Long Marston,
Wilstone)
Canon Jane Banister
01442 822170
jane@tringteamparish.org.uk
jbanister@tringschool.org

Diocesan Lay Ministers
Jon Reynolds
01296 662326
jonreynolds1386@gmail.com

Grahame Senior
01442 822770
gsenior@seniorpartners.co.uk

Mike Watkin
07715 553556
mike.watkin@btinternet.com

Parish Co-ordinators
Vivianne Child
01442 826092
vchild@childassociates.co.uk

Annette Reynolds
01296 662326
annette@tringteamparish.org.uk

Church Wardens
Gill Kinsey (Tring)
gillhkinsey@gmail.com

Maria Lashley (Tring)
07765 420700

Jane Brown (Aldbury)
01442 851396

Christine Rutter (Puttenham)
01296 668337

Canon Jane Banister
(Wilstone)
01442 822170
(Day off Thursday)

Tring Team Administration
Administrator
Trish Dowden
admin@tringteamparish.org.uk

Janet Goodyer
pewsheets@tringteamparish.org.uk

Hall Bookings
Janet Goodyer 01442 824929
jjgoody@ntlworld.com
tringparishhall@hotmail.com

Hall Secretary
Barbara Anscombe
01442 828325
Bandb33@talktalk.net

Safeguarding
Jon Reynolds
07712 134370
safeguarding@tringteamparish.org.uk

ST MARTHA'S
METHODIST CHURCH
Minister
Rev Rachael Hawkins
01442 866324
rachael.hawkins@methodist.org.uk

Senior Steward
Rosemary Berdinner
01442 822305

AKEMAN STREET
BAPTIST CHURCH
Minister
Rev Tom Copperwheat
01442 827881

Administrator
Emma Nash
01442 827881

CORPUS CHRISTI ROMAN
CATHOLIC CHURCH
Parish Priest
Father John Byrne
0787 905 8732

Parish Administrator
Annabelle Halliday
01442 823161
tring@rcdow.org.uk

HIGH STREET
BAPTIST CHURCH
Ministers
Joe Egan 07521 513493
joe@tringbaptistchurch.co.uk

Ruth Egan 07521 513494
ruth@tringbaptistchurch.co.uk

Assistant Minister
Kevin Rogers
km_rogers@outlook.com

Administration/facilities hire
admin@tringbaptistchurch.co.uk
01442 824054

NEW MILL BAPTIST CHURCH
Minister
Rev Jackie Buie
07549 432582
minister@newmillbaptist.org.uk

Church Secretary
Valerie Carr
07831 709793
secretary@newmillbaptist.org.uk

Hall Hire
Andrew Webber
07773 148706
treasurer@newmillbaptist.org.uk

JUSTICE & PEACE GROUP
affiliated to
Churches Together in Tring

Secretary
Michael Demidecki
07887 980004
michaeldemidecki@gmail.com
www.justiceandpeacetring.org

OUR CHURCHES ONLINE
www.tringteamparish.org.uk
www.tringchurchmusic.org.uk
www.stmarthas-tring.org.uk
www.tringbaptistchurch.co.uk
www.newmillbaptist.org.uk
www.akemanstreet.org
parish.rcdow.org.uk/tring

SOCIAL NETWORKING

 Tring Parish

 @revhuw

COMMENT
Editor
Annette Reynolds
07968 312161
comment.magazine@gmail.com

Advertising, Distribution and
Treasurer
Barbara Anscombe
01442 828325
bandb33@talktalk.net

Design
Kev Holt, Ginger Promo

Please contact Barbara
Anscombe if you would
like to take a subscription
to *Comment*: £20.00 for
10 issues each year. The
magazine can be posted to
you with an additional cost for
postage at current rates.

Articles, photos and publicity
adverts for the next edition
should arrive with the Editor
no later than the 1st of the
previous month.

COMMENT DEADLINES

1 January
1 February
1 March
1 April
1 May
1 June
1 August
1 September
1 October
1 November

NB There is no magazine for
January or August

Biblical connections

Answers from page 4

Four of the 10 Plagues in Egypt
FROGS, LOCUSTS, FLIES, BOILS

The dead raised to life in the New Testament
JAIRUS' DAUGHTER, WIDOW OF NAIN'S SON, LAZARUS, TABITHA
The first three were brought back from death by Jesus; Peter raised
Tabitha in Joppa after the coming of the Holy Spirit.

Less famous brothers

SETH, AARON, BENJAMIN, ANDREW

Seth was Adam and Eve's third son after Cain and Abel; Aaron was the
brother of Moses; Benjamin was Joseph's younger brother; Andrew was
Simon Peter's brother.

Fathers of more famous sons

NUN, JESSE, ZECHARIAH, ZEBEDEE

Nun was Joshua's father; Jesse was David's father; Zechariah was father
to John the Baptist; Zebedee was father to two of Jesus' disciples, James
and John.

High Street Baptist Church - Tring

Growing in the message and challenge of God



For details of our
services, junior church,
prayer meetings, and
special events visit our
website.



Sunday
MORNING WORSHIP
EVERY SUNDAY
10.30AM

IN PERSON AND
ON ZOOM

Meeting ID:
978 9592 0392
Passcode:
highstreet



Church office

Revd Joe Egan

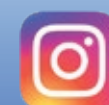
Revd Ruth Egan

admin@tringbaptistchurch.co.uk

07521 513493 or joe@tringbaptistchurch.co.uk

07521 513494 or ruth@tringbaptistchurch.co.uk

www.tringbaptistchurch.co.uk



tringbaptistchurch



High Street Baptist Church

AYLESBURY COMMUNITY ORCHESTRA

Did you used
to learn an
instrument as a
child?

Would you like to
make music with
like minded
people?

Are you looking to
develop your
playing as an
adult?

Come and join
Aylesbury
Community
Orchestra

Thursdays

7:30-9:30

Aylesbury Music Centre

www.bucksmusic.org

aylmusic@bucksmusic.org

TRING CHARITIES

(Registered Charity No 1077157)

MILLENIUM EDUCATION FOUNDATION

Are you hoping to go to University or College in 2026, but are concerned that financial resources might not match up to the requirements?

Are you under the age of 22? Have you lived in Aldbury, Long Marston, Marsworth, Pitstone, Puttenham, Tring, Wigginton or Wilstone for at least three years?

To see if you would be eligible for a grant, apply to Tring Charities' Millennium Education Foundation for information and an application form.

Website details: www.tringcharities.co.uk/education

Telephone: Elaine Winter, Secretary to the Trustees

01442 827913 Email: info@tringcharities.co.uk



Please note that the closing date is 15 November 2025 to lodge a completed application for grants payable from Autumn 2026.



Sponsored Bike 'n Hike
BEDS AND HERTS HISTORIC CHURCHES TRUST

Bike 'n Hike

Saturday 13 September 2025

9am to 5pm



For more information please make contact:

Janet
Godyer



01442
824929



- ▶ Have fun visiting over 600 churches and chapels
- ▶ Raise funds for your local church or chapel
- ▶ Help save other churches in Beds and Herts



BEDS & HERTS
Historic Churches Trust

Bike 'n Hike in association with the national *Ride + Stride*
and with acknowledgements to **THE WIXAMTREE TRUST**
www.beds-herts-ht.org.uk BHCT Registered Charity No. 1197228

"Both children have had a fantastic time at Heirs & Graces Nursery and I have gone to work each day knowing they were safe in your hands."

Heirs & Graces
Day Nursery

A place where
CHILDREN SHINE...



Open
from 7.30am
until 6pm



Childcare vouchers accepted Free hours scheme accepted
Situating in a beautifully converted Victorian home conveniently
located on Tring High Street.

High quality food prepared by our fabulous chef.

Find us on - www.heirsandgracestring.co.uk

Telephone: - 01442 891818

Heirs & Graces Day Nursery, Florence House,
2 Christchurch Road, Tring, Hertfordshire, HP23 4EE

