

COMMENT

THE MAGAZINE OF THE CHURCHES IN TRING



Welcome
Ласкаво просимо
[laskavo prosymo]
Hello!
Добридень!
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High Street Baptist Church - Tring

Growing in the message and challenge of God



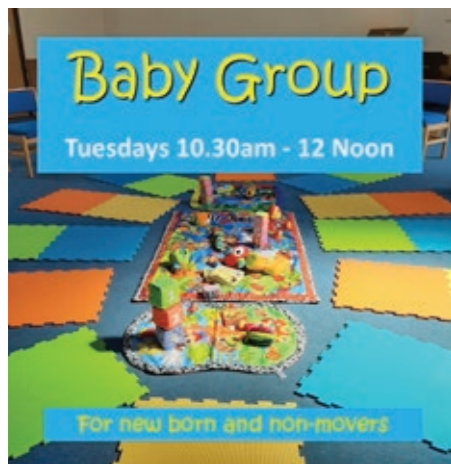
For details about our services,
prayer meetings and special events
visit our website.



Keep updated by following



Activities @High Street Baptist Church



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High Street Baptist Church

The wonders he has shown you



Have you ever witnessed something amazing in nature and just had to tell someone about it? I was once walking along the Wendover arm

of the canal and saw a pair of goldfinches in the hedgerow and with their bright red, white and black heads with flecks of yellow on their wings. They looked so beautiful against the backdrop of a thorny green hedge. And then the other day I took Penny (my dog) for a walk late in the evening and witnessed an amazing cloudy sunset where the sky was alight with colours of pink and orange and red and purple.

For me these are real 'Wow' moments that made me marvel at all that God has created. It's these moments that can lift my spirit out of the worries of life and lead me into thankfulness and praise to our loving creator God.

It's always fascinated me that, given the beauty of God's creation, there are only seven (official) natural wonders of the world (can you name them?). Why aren't there fifty or 100 or 1000? Personally, I haven't been to any of the official natural wonders, but it's said that when you witness such extravagant beauty and grandeur in creation there is absolutely no way you can doubt the existence of God.

While it must be amazing to witness such unique beauty, the truth is we don't have to travel around the world to witness and stand in awe at the work of God's hand. We see his glory in the beauty of the sky, in the light and warmth from the sun, in the rains that fall, and in the moon and stars that shine in the vastness of space. We see his hand in the miracle of a new-born baby, in a child's laughter, in the love of family and friends. Psalm 40:5 declares, 'Many, O Lord, are the wonders you have done. The things you planned for us... they would be too many to declare.' Not only has God given us the wonders of nature, but if we pause and reflect on our lives, we'll find the wonders of God's handiwork in our lives and all around.

At High Street Baptist Church we start the week with prayer every Monday morning and we often use the Northumbria Community Morning Prayer liturgy to guide our time together. We also

use a marvellous Celtic blessing which goes:

*May the peace of the Lord Christ go with you,
wherever he may send you,
may he guide you through the wilderness,
protect you through the storm,
may he bring you home rejoicing,
at the wonders he has shown you,
May he bring you home rejoicing,
once again into our doors.*

This lovely blessing recognises the challenges we may face in life yet encourages us to be attentive to, and find joy in, the wonders God shows us. So, for example, being welcomed home by a beaming smile from a loved one after a busy day (I'm biased but my 1-year-old girl definitely has the power to melt hearts!); seeing the splendour of a vivid and vibrant cloudy sunset; watching the intricate detail and colour of goldfinches playing in a hedgerow;

or marvelling at the grand unique beauty of the Grand Canyon – in these things we witness the wonder of God's handiwork and are drawn into deep joy and praise.

And while September (which is the season of creation) is a time when we specifically celebrate in our churches with harvest services, the wonder

of God's creation and all that he provides for us and through us, the glorious truth is that God shows us the wonder of his handiwork each and every day. So, whatever life's circumstances are for you, you can find faith-filled joy in the wonders of God's creation. And this is my prayer for all who read this, that as you notice God at work in the things around you, you may be filled with a deeper sense of God's presence and love for you and, as you put your trust in him, be filled with the faith, joy, hope and love that his Spirit dwelling in us so graciously brings.

God bless,

Joe Egan

High Street Baptist Church

(The seven wonders are: Mount Everest, Victoria Falls, Northern Lights, the Grand Canyon, Paricutin, Harbour of Rio de Janeiro, and the Great Barrier Reef.)

The Trustees of the Friends Of Tring Church Heritage invite you to the Autumn 2022 half-yearly Lunch

12.30PM 16TH OCTOBER 2022
ST PETER AND ST PAUL CHURCH HALL

All members and friends are invited to join us for a social lunch where the aim is enjoyment and good company.

FOTCH INVITES YOU TO PLAY



OVER LUNCH WITH STEPHEN HEARN

Join us for a jolly lunch for all with the usual excellent spread from Barry and some refreshing and revivifying wines

Bring your best poker face and join our Quiz Master Stephen Hearn, FOTCH Trustee and renowned Auctioneer.

Please do come along and enjoy the occasion. There is no formal charge for lunch but donations to FOTCH are appreciated. You will need to book a place so we can make the catering arrangements work.

Please confirm your attendance by contacting Trish at info@fotch.co.uk, or ringing on 0772 083 6930, or by responding to the notice in the Newsletter.



Wedding congratulations!

Congratulations to Charlotte Mackinder and Matthew Fulford who were married on 4 June this year in St Peter & St Paul's Church!

Charlotte was baptised in St Peter & St Paul's by the then Rector, John Payne-

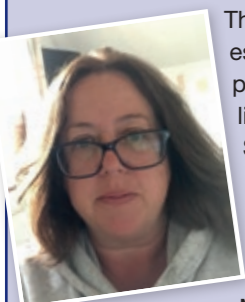


Cook, and sang in the choir from age 14 when Jane Nash was the organist. She attended TAY in her teens and then TAYA, the group for Young Adults, and is a regular worshipper at the Parish Church. Matt went to school at Grove Road and Tring School and now works at The Akeman.

The Editor



Fundraising for The Chiltern MS Centre



There are an estimated 110,000 people in the UK living with Multiple Sclerosis (MS), with another 100 receiving a new diagnosis every week, based on MS Society data

from 2010.

MS is a condition that can affect the brain and spinal cord, causing a wide range of possible symptoms and making it a bit harder to diagnose than some other conditions. People with the condition can experience disability, sometimes temporary, sometimes progressive and it can occasionally be a mild disease. The cause is still unknown but there has been some interesting research making headlines in the last six months. <https://www.mssociety.org.uk/research/latest-research/>

latest-research-news-and-blogs/more-evidence-about-role-ebv-infection-development-ms

The point here is that very few people know, at the start of their MS journey, how it's going to be for them. And this is where facilities such as the Chiltern MS Centre really come in to their own – for many users the biggest benefit is the opportunity to talk to other people having a similar experience. The symptoms may vary but the nervousness, even fear, is consistent.

I asked for quotes from members to help the readers understand exactly what the centre meant to them. This one from Lorraine Brockwell says it all, I think, and reminded me of church. 'The centre is the best safety net ever, whether you are a regular user, a dip in and out member or need advice, a friend or reassurance, there is always someone there. Best medicine ever. Thank you, everyone.'

The centre in Wendover provides valuable treatments: physiotherapy, hydrotherapy, oxygen treatment, exercise classes, Pilates, acupuncture, occupational therapy, nutrition, speech therapy counselling, complementary therapy and yoga, all delivered by a kind and compassionate staff body and an army of volunteers. Before Covid-19, the centre was feeling the pinch financially, and the last two years haven't helped, so whatever you can spare will go to a very good cause – the centre is well run and is starting to offer treatments to others too – those recovering from injury, surgery or an acute event such as a stroke, as well as supporting and learning about other long-term conditions such as Parkinson's Disease, Cerebral Palsy etc.

Liz Ayling
All Saints, Long Marston



The Chiltern MS Centre is a local charity based in Wendover that has been supporting people with multiple sclerosis for more than thirty-six years.

By providing them with treatment, knowledge and a community of health professionals and peers, the Centre empowers people with MS to thrive.

The Centre currently works with 565 members, offering them a chance

to recharge, rehabilitate and reconnect with their lives and the world beyond their condition. The Centre does not just work with those who have MS or Parkinson's (a recent pilot programme opening the service to people with other neurological conditions), but also their carers, offering them their own dedicated range of services so they can feel supported too.

I've been going to the Centre since 2004 and it has been a massive support for me and my family. Initially in little more than a portacabin in the old hospital grounds to the fabulous centre we have now: 1 to 1 physio, class

groups, acupuncture, hydrotherapy, oxygen therapy, social groups, carers groups... I could go on and on! The Centre thrives on helping those of us with MS help ourselves!

Members each pay £25 per year to support the running costs of the Centre and they receive their services for free, but there's still a huge amount to fundraise. The Chiltern MS Centre relies on the generous donations of the local community, to help its members to live life to the full.

Lynne Sherring-Lucas
St Peter & St Paul

25 years – and counting!



On the 29 June 1997, I was ordained a deacon in the Church of England at Southwark Cathedral. There were ten of us being ordained that day – five women and five

men. Women had only been ordained for three years as priests at that point, so my contemporaries and I were the first generation to know when we started training that it would not only be deaconing for us – priesting would follow too. There were, of course, no women bishops at that point; no women archdeacons. In the first two parishes where I worked, I was the first full time stipendiary woman priest.

There was an excitement about it, a sense of being trail blazing. As I was packing my shopping in a supermarket with my collar on, someone I did not know came up to me and said 'I think

it is marvellous!' which sums up the majority of the reactions. There was the other side, of course – those who refused to come to services that I was leading, those who left when they found out it was a woman presiding, and the somewhat ambiguous response of 'I don't approve of women but I suppose you are all right'.

I was also incredibly fortunate in my training parish which comprised an old-style village, and two estates: one comfortable, the other much more deprived; and in my first year I think I baptized at least thirty children (we baptized on two Sundays a month, at one or two services). That is a phenomenal difference from now. I took funerals regularly as clergy were still the preferred option, and that was also the parish where I took the funerals of two babies – one stillborn, and one who was two whom I had baptized. There were three schools, none of them church schools, and we had good relationships with them all.

So what do I think has changed twenty-five years later? To be slightly flippant, clergy clothing for women is much better! The bib in bamboo or cotton that can fit under any top is a vast improvement from the polycotton shirts that were either like the men's, or came in 'interesting' pastel colours with pleats, and there are far more options.

On a more serious level, while within the church community there



is still a minority of those who prefer male ministers, the secular world accepts it all as normal – there is no understanding of why women would ever not have been ordained. I struggle with the fact that the Church of England will still ordain men who do not recognize women as priests – the fight is not yet over.

The Vicar of Dibley jokes died off ten to fifteen years ago which is a great relief – although they were still preferable to Derek Nimmo being the media version of clergy. And I am now one of the older generation of women clergy, who look at the newly ordained and see how different life is for them, just as those who were deaconesses and permanent deacons in the generation before mine must have looked at us.

What has changed most is society and how the church is viewed, but that surely has always been the same. Each generation has had to rethink how to preach and teach the word of God, how to balance what is changeable in the life of the church and what is eternal.

And while I started my ministry as single, and am now married with three almost adult children, I can tell you that what has not changed is how clergy children are viewed – so for all of you who have ever wondered, NO, we do not live in the church!

Jane Banister, Tring Team



Quiet Place

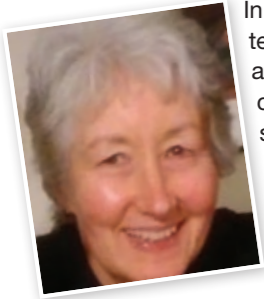
Need space to contemplate?

Pop in to
St Martha's Methodist Church
Chapel Street, Park Road, Tring

Every 3rd Saturday of the month between 10.00am and 3.00pm
(circumstances may cause variations in times)



Like there's no tomorrow



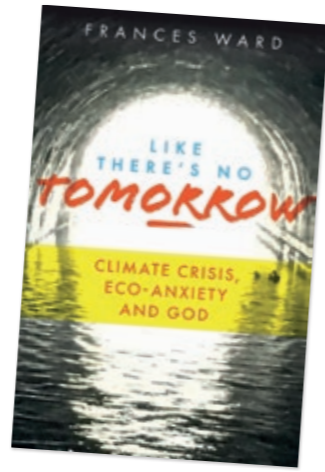
In our country's temperate climate, and in the relative comfort of the southeast, we are sheltered from many of the realities of the climate crisis.

However, we have probably all noticed that on occasion our rainfall can be more like a tropical monsoon downpour than an English April shower and that we increasingly seem to have winters with little or no snowfall. Gardeners are also becoming more aware that the pattern of the seasons is less predictable and that some things do not grow as well as they used to do, while semi-tropical plants may flourish in the summer.

The effects of the average increase in global temperatures are already around us all the time and, in our churches, we may be made even more aware of this through our links with mission partners or other contacts in countries far away, where the challenges of extreme droughts or catastrophic flooding may be part and parcel of their new reality.

Frances Ward, a Church of England vicar, like many others up and down the country, has suffered from intermittent climate grief or eco-anxiety for some time. About to move from Cambridgeshire to Cumbria, she and her husband purchased a new canal boat and, aided by a rota of friends, she travelled along the river and canal network to move it to its new home. The resulting book 'Like there's no tomorrow', published by Sacristy Press in 2020, is her story of spending around six weeks in late spring 2018 in a slow-moving 'retreat': she takes us on a multi-layered journey as she spends time reviewing her position as a minister of the church alongside experiencing periods of intense anguish over the damage that humanity is inflicting on the planet.

As she travels, both physically and emotionally, she comes to understand that she needs to accept that lament has its place alongside hope within her life of faith – the despair she sometimes feels will not disappear but must be acknowledged. But in what is more than a record of a chapter in her spiritual journey, this book also charts the history of the English canal system as her



voyage takes her from the south of the country up to the north along the waterways. She describes coping with locks and tunnels, the changing countryside, the flora and fauna and the community of fellow travellers. There are maps, poetry extracts, reflections on passages from the psalms and snippets from favourite writers.

This book really does have something for anyone and everyone who grapples with reconciling the climate crisis and a life lived with hope, who loves nature or who is just interested in a nearby river or canal.

Nicky Bull
High Street Baptist Church

Churches Together at the Summer Carnival



The Tring Summer Carnival, organised by Tring Together, was back in style! There was a parade through the town, vintage cars, gravity-defying acrobats and so much more.

As usual the Churches Together stall aimed to create a relaxed, welcoming space with free activities in the midst of the festivities. High Street Baptist Church took the lead on the Churches Together stall with their 'He's got the whole world in his hands' stall: a timely reminder that despite world and national events, God is wrapping his hands around the globe and can be relied on.

The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it.
Psalm 24:1

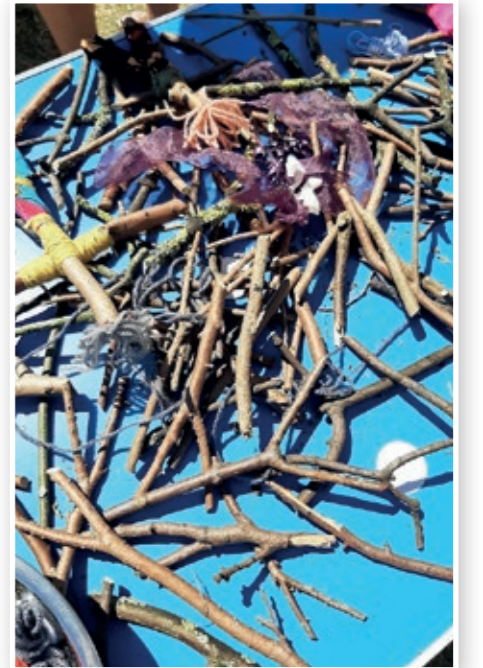
The concept was to create an interactive community sculpture based on a familiar song: people of the world crafted from sticks and fabric scraps; and a representation of the world to carry our prayers written on ribbons. On a hot day the water table play station was an additional attraction. The stall drew many visitors throughout the day, creating plenty of time to chat. Reaching people with the gospel message can be done in many ways: overt evangelistic events, conversations with friends or family, or just those opportune moments when we are able to introduce our faith with strangers. Our presence at the Summer Carnival is a fantastic opportunity to share the gospel message with the people of Tring and surrounding villages. The sculpture will be touring the Tring churches in the coming months with an invitation for people to make additions to the prayers and people. Look out for it around Tring!

The Churches Together movement is the national ecumenical organisation supporting and encouraging churches from a wide range of traditions to work together in unity and one common faith. We are pleased to see this evident locally through our annual events, such as the Walk of Witness on Good Friday and this very magazine. A presence at the Summer Carnival is a great opportunity to bring the message of Jesus Christ to the centre of our town. We were able to offer the recently produced Welcome Packs to those seeking to engage with church to discover what Christianity means today.



As the Churches Together strapline says, 'One in Christ Jesus, engaged in God's mission, empowered by the Spirit.'

Polly Eaton
High Street Baptist Church



Reflecting the light of Christ



Speaking as a priest who's only just started out on this lifelong calling, and as I move from Tring to my first parish, I'm quite in awe of Ian Ogilvie celebrating sixty years of service!

I am in awe of Ian and Jenny, for their faith, their dedication and love to all the communities they have served and supported over the years. To throw yourself wholeheartedly into what you feel God is calling you to do is truly

inspirational.

And 'throwing yourself in' doesn't have to mean grand gestures like eloping to a monastery or even to the priesthood. As Christians, each day we find ourselves doing all sorts of things in the service of God. Our churches are full of such people, offering what they can in some small way.

Inspirational faith radiates in all sorts of ways: it's in the care we show to others, the offered cup of tea or coffee, our welcome to strangers, praying with those in need, replenishing the tea lights, turning the page on the book of remembrance, updating the mission

boards, the music, cleaning the church and adorning it with beautiful flowers, cutting the grass, tidying leaflets, picking up rubbish, washing the altar cloths... none of these things (and more besides!) go unnoticed to God.

Whatever it is that you do to reflect the light of Christ, thank you. Thank you for contributing to our churches and for the witness of faith to those around you. Christianity is a call to service, a call to make disciples of others, a call to love others, just as Jesus loves us.

Sarah Marshall
formerly Tring Team

Bike and Hike

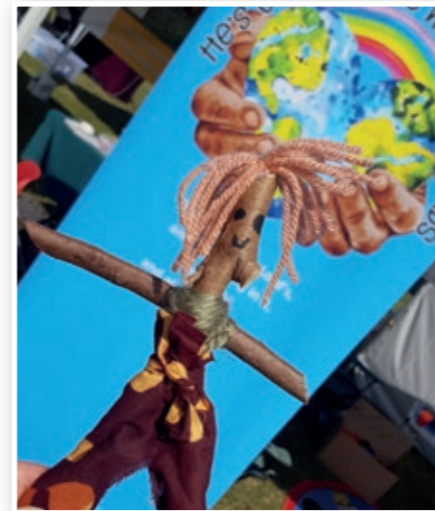
A lot of our church buildings were great constructional feats of their time taking years and decades to build, which need an increasing amount of maintenance. The Historic Churches Trust provides grants for this essential work. Our local churches have benefited from this in the past.

Will you take part in this event, or provide sponsorship, to cycle or walk

around our churches or to sit and welcome people visiting our church and sign their sponsorship forms?

If you can spare an hour of your time on Saturday 10 September between 9.00am and 5.00pm, please contact me on 01442 825956 or e-mail neil@jjanbrown.plus.com.

Neil Brown, St Peter & St Paul



What's in a name?



Do you know why you were given the forename (or names) you have? Some of us still use the term Christian name as we associate naming with Baptism or Christening. Further, the term Christian name is a reminder that for some a name ought to feature in the Bible or the Calendar of Saints. Interestingly, at times biblical place names can be found rather than personal names: Bethany and Jordan, for example. Sometimes, also, the names of virtues are used – Faith, Hope, Charity, Joy and such like. I once saw a church memorial to a daughter called Silence!

This subject of names came to my mind after we had seen the film 'Ravilious', the biopic about the artist and print maker Eric Ravilious. His wife, also an artist, was called Tirzah, although Eric called her 'Tushy'. I had the feeling Tirzah was a biblical name I ought to know, but guessed the wrong book! At first I wondered whether she was a daughter of Job, of whom more later. I discovered Tirzah was the last of five daughters of Zelophedad, who had no sons, and she can be found in Numbers 26 and 27.

The five daughters of Zelophedad were Mahlah, Noah (in Hebrew a totally different name from Noah, the builder of the ark), Hoglah, Milcah and Tirzah. Unfamiliar as their names may be, they are of great importance to those who care about equality of the sexes and are disturbed by the patriarchal nature of much of the Old Testament. Their father had no sons and, so, no heirs, but his daughters pushed to have the same right as sons to inherit. 'Give to us a possession among our father's brothers' they asked Moses. Moses took their case to the Lord, who said 'The daughters of Zelophedad are right' (see Numbers 27). So Mrs Ravilious

had a name to be proud of. However, one 19th century scholar wrote rather patronisingly that the name probably comes from an 18th century German poet, Saloman Gessner. His works included 'The Death of Abel', in which he named Abel's wife as Thirzah. The scholar wrote that it told a story which became 'a favourite among the lower classes in England, whence Thyrsa has become rather a favourite in English cottages!' The name also occurs in Scripture as a place name for a royal city for kings of Israel. The name is derived from the verb 'to be pleased with'. This last sentence is a reminder that in the past, and often still, the meaning of a Hebrew name was of significance. One might say it carried a message.

Indeed, the prophet Isaiah (chapter 8) chose the name Maher-shalal-hash-baz for his son (even before he was conceived). It means 'the spoil speeds, the prey hastens' and the message behind it was that the king of Assyria was going to carry away the wealth of Damascus and the spoil of Samaria. This all referred to the politics of the day but we may hope Isaiah's son had a more manageable name as he grew up. The prophet Hosea (chapter 1) similarly went in for names for his children that were full of meaning, thereby providing scholars with problems. His first son was called after the place Jezreel. It was a place known, among other things, as where King Ahab had Naboth murdered and where Ahab's wife, Jezebel, was thrown to her death out of the window and trampled to death by horses (2 Kings 9). What associations of blood for a child's name! Hosea's next child was a daughter called Lo-ruhammah, which means 'not loved' though in the next chapter the negative is dropped and she becomes 'my loved one' (compare the modern names Aimee and Amanda). Did these children grow up with psychological problems of identity? But then Hosea's marriage was not straightforward as the beginning of the book makes clear!

But what of the other names of significance and meaning from the Bible? I mentioned the daughters of Job: Jemimah, which means turtle-dove; Keziah, which means cassia, an aromatic spice; Keren-happuch which means 'horn of kohl' (antimony) the black cosmetic used on eyes. It has been said that these names refer to three of the senses – Jemimah hearing, Keziah taste or smell, and Keren-happuch sight (mascara), but we don't know why Job chose these names. We are told that no women were more beautiful than they were. Furthermore they had an inheritance from their father as their brothers did. Some other favourite and popular ones include Eve, Sarah, Rachel, Deborah, Ruth, Naomi, Judith and so on, but I am more intrigued by the more obscure and unexpected ones. In my last parish I knew of a Zilpah and a Hephzibah. I also discovered it was a bit of a trick question to ask a curate the name of Moses' mother – a very important woman but rarely named. What about Abraham's marriage? He was married to Sarai, which means 'strife' but her name was changed to Sarah (meaning 'princess'). We know about a relationship with Hagar, a surrogate mother in a sense, whose son Ishmael lost out to Isaac. But are we familiar with Keturah, also later named as Abraham's wife?

The Old Testament tells the story of God's people with emphasis on the males – Abraham, Isaac and Jacob – but it is fascinating to consider the females, some of whom are well known, others less so. And sometimes family history gets a bit complicated.

Has anybody ever thought of using the names Jezebel or Delilah? The use of the name Jael for a girl has been found in Puritan records. But who would call a daughter after a woman capable of hammering a tent peg into the forehead of a sleeping man? What's in a name?

Martin Banister, St Albans Cathedral

Prayer of the month

Lord God, your son left the riches of heaven and became poor for our sake. When we prosper, save us from pride; when we are needy, save us from despair, that we may trust in you alone, through Jesus Christ our Lord.



Tring Park life



Our KS 2 pupils, that we call 'Preps', have made a start on their vegetable garden. In May, they started growing carrots, lettuce, courgettes and tomatoes.



includes roles as Craig Turner in the original West End cast of Tina and Big Deal/Cover Riff in West Side Story.

We were delighted to welcome back Edward Truelove to take classes with us on his break from Tulsa Ballet Company and do a Q&A with our middle school dancers on his first year in a classical company. It makes all the difference for our pupils to hear directly from those who



CONGRATULATIONS to Kit Esuruoso for winning Best Actor in the Australian Screen Industry and Network Awards. It is the story of a Nigerian boy who becomes displaced by war and is forced to integrate into Australian society. Kit studied on our Musical Theatre course and has since had an impressive career spanning theatre, film and TV which

have come up via our system and gain some invaluable insights.

In July, almost a year after her passing, the school held a Gala in memory of Eve Pettinger MBE to celebrate her life and commitment to both the world of dance as well as Tring Park. It was a most moving occasion, involving the current dance course from young to old, thus showing what a legacy Eve has left us, as several teachers are her former pupils too.

**Sarah Bell
Tring Park**



Farewell Sarah!



In June 2019 a number of us went along to St Alban's Abbey for the diocesan ordinations. Amongst those being ordained deacon was Sarah Marshall, and she was to come to serve in the Tring Team Parish. I suspect little did the parish know that they were to be hit by an explosion of smiley enthusiasm. In many ways the easiest way to describe a curacy is that of an apprenticeship. Sarah had done her theoretical and academic theological training, and now she had to spend three years in a parish learning the ropes before going on to be a vicar.

The first year is spent as a deacon. The Church of England has three

levels of ordained life – deacon, priest and bishop. Deacons still wear dog collars and are called 'Reverend' but they cannot preside at communion. It is a servant role, getting to know the ropes. Sarah quickly settled in, leading morning prayer services in the villages, presiding at funerals and preaching as well as visiting and getting involved at Bishop Wood School. The kids there love her!

Of course, it was quickly going to change into a rather unusual curacy. In February 2020 we held our annual wedding event. Sarah was introduced to Jordan and Michael – they were going to be her first wedding! Sadly, after a couple of delays because of Covid-19, she isn't going to be able to see them married.

Worse was to come in that the Diocese then decided to furlough their curates – something which has never

happened before and I doubt will ever happen again. However, as soon as she was back, we got used to her cheery videos for lockdown worship, with much dressing up going on for the Worship for All Services.

Ordination to the priesthood wasn't quite as had been imagined. There was no grand service in the Abbey. A small gathering at Soul Survivor was live streamed, but now ordained as priest, Sarah has been able to preside at communion services, bringing with her that same infectious enthusiasm.

We hope that the Tring Team has benefited Sarah and that she has learnt much to take to her own parish. We have certainly benefited from an injection of life, energy and inquisitiveness here.

**Huw Bellis
Tring Team**

Happiness



I spent the May half term week in the same beautiful cottage that I stayed in last year, in St Monans in Fife. Looking out of the windows, all one can see

is the wide expanse of the Firth of Forth, with the Bass Rock immediately opposite, and my favourite city in the world, Edinburgh, silhouetted against the bulk of the Pentland Hills. It seems very small, and is often not visible because of the haze, and I find myself musing on all the many people who are there at this very moment, and yet the skyline from here is akin to a miniature version of this great city. Here, on this quiet seafront in St Monans,



one doesn't hear traffic and only the odd aeroplane – it's very quiet. The only sounds are from the oystercatchers and the gulls, and yesterday I communed with a solitary heron on a rock.

I wrote about this place for *Comment* last year, and I mentioned how much one gets attuned to the rising and falling of the tides, but it bears repeating. Not only can one see it, but also hear it. I love to go to sleep with the sound of the incoming tide lulling me to slumber and I don't think it's any coincidence that I have had some of the best nights' sleep for many weeks since I've been here. It's not that there isn't a sense of reality here – there are tourists, especially when the famous Smokehouse is open – and there's one of the fishermen who likes to listen to loud music as he sorts out his catch – but it's a great place to restore equilibrium and charge batteries.

I enjoyed reading Niall Williams' 'This is happiness', the Parish Church Book Group's June read and read the whole book while there. This passage sums up how I feel, being here, away

from the busyness of normal life for a while, living as much as I can in the moment. 'You could stop at not all, but most, of the moments of your life, stop for one heartbeat, and, no matter what the state of your head or heart, say "This is happiness" because of the simple truth that you were alive to see it.'

I know how fortunate I am to be able to be here, to experience this profound sense of stillness, at one with the sea and the ever-changing sky, but I also know that I don't pause nearly enough every day to say "This is happiness".
Anna LeHair, St Peter & St Paul



Tring is named 'Bee Friendly Town'



UK insect populations have suffered badly over the last fifty years or so as a result of changes in land use as a consequence of modern farming methods, urban spread and new transport links. Reductions in pollen and nectar sources have led to a serious decline in the wildlife depending on wildflower-rich habitat. It has been predicted that 40-70% of species could go extinct if action is not taken (www.buglife.org.uk). Efforts to support bees in Tring have led to the town becoming one of the first in the country to be officially named a 'Bee Friendly Town'.

The status has been granted by the Bee Friendly Trust with Tring being one of six towns to receive the accolade nationally. The Bee Friendly Trust launched the scheme – which aims to transform concrete jungles into wildlife havens – in 2021, with the first awards granted on World Bee Day, 20 May 2022. There are criteria that towns have to meet in order to attain 'Bee Friendly' status. Dr Luke Dixon, co-founder of the Bee Friendly Trust, said, 'The Bee Friendly Town Awards celebrate the coming together of communities for the important cause of saving the nation's bees and pollinators. By increasing wildlife habitats in towns, not only are communities providing forage spots and shelters for nature but they are also making their towns greener, friendlier and more uplifting places to live. This year's winners were chosen for their creative and collaborative approaches to making their towns Bee Friendly. We hope they will provide inspiration for other towns to do their bit and to enter the competition next year.'

Since 2020 Tring's Justice & Peace Group have been campaigning to create more and better wildflower areas for bees and pollinators in Tring and the

surrounding area. What started out as a few lone voices has turned into a huge community effort with many different initiatives to make more pollinator friendly spaces in our town and the surrounding villages.



Individuals have taken action within their gardens by taking part in No Mow May, thinking about the types of flowers they plant and creating nesting spaces with leaf piles and bug hotels. In order to promote the campaign, the Justice & Peace Group have held a number of promotional events in the town, both physical and online – perhaps you have met us at the Summer Carnival, Apple Day or Blossom Day? During these events we have given out wildflower seeds, built bug hotels and provided leaflets with planting ideas for the garden.

One of the ways to help pollinators is to create a long season of pollinator-friendly flowers and blossom. Reducing the mowing of roadside verges allows flowers to thrive and provide sources of nectar and pollen. One of the aims of such regimes is to reduce the levels

of grasses and encourage wildflowers. To do this it is important to remove the cuttings to avoid 'feeding' the soil. We have been able to implement this by ensuring spaces are uncut throughout the summer followed by cutting/scything and removal of cuttings, for example at the churchyard behind St Peter & St Paul's Church and the former allotment site at New Mill.

Being awarded Bee Friendly Town status is thanks to the combined effort of individuals, local authorities, schools, churches and businesses. But the work is not done: we need to keep making changes and improvements to our local environment. We are pleased to report that the work continues with an initiative to create pollinator-friendly planting at Tring Station and ongoing collaborations, such as with the Natural History Museum in Tring and local schools. As individuals we have a role to play too. You may well be doing a lot for wildlife already, in which case, great! But if you'd like to do more, here are some ideas:

- Stop using weedkiller and pesticides.
- Leave at least part of the lawn uncut between February and September.
- Grow pollinator-friendly plants, wildflowers and trees.
- Create habitats for pollinators: leaf piles and bug houses.
- Write to the government to stop the use of neonicotinoids.
- Take part in citizen science projects to record data about insects.

To find out more about the Bee Friendly Trust and the Bee Friendly Town Awards, visit <https://beefriendlytrust.org>.

Polly Eaton
High Street Baptist Church

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



How do you view the Bible?



One of the most interesting discussion points in the parish church's Lent course this year was about how we view the authority of the central text of the Christian faith: The Bible.

When we come to decide what we believe about aspects of our faith and how we should live our lives as God wants us to, some of us will see the Bible as the main and perhaps only point of reference, while others will take a different stance. Yet all of us would call ourselves Christians and worship (happily, usually) together.

What follows is taken directly from the book on which the course is based, 'Living in Love and Faith' and imagines convening a panel illustrating the wide spectrum of opinion that you might find in the Church of England. *Comment* reaches much further than this readership so you might find it interesting to see where your own views fit on this scale. How do you listen to God in the Bible? Each voice represents an approach that you might hear from pews and pulpits around the country.

Speaker 1: I believe that God loves us enough to have given us a manual for living. By the grace of God, the Bible is truthful, without error, and clear. Everything we need to know for our salvation, and to live holy lives pleasing to God, is right there on the page. We simply need to read it, and obey it – and that includes all that it says about identity, sexuality, relationships and marriage. Most of what people mean when they talk about 'interpreting' the Bible is one attempt or another to avoid listening to its plain teaching.

Speaker 2: I agree that the Bible tells us what we need to know in order to understand God's loving purposes for us. It is given to us by our Creator, who knows all about what is good for us, and who wants to communicate that to us. We can trust such a God to have spoken to us clearly and coherently – and I think that the answers the Bible provides to our questions, including our questions about identity, sexuality, relationships and marriage, are indeed clear and coherent. I do want to stress, however, that we need

to read everything that the Bible says about marriage and sexual relationships, that we need to pay attention to each text's historical context, and that we need to read them in the context of the Bible's wider message, in order to find a trustworthy framework or blueprint for our thought and practice.

Speaker 3: I broadly agree, but I want to stress the care we need to take in putting the pieces of biblical teaching together – and the danger of taking any part on its own. God has given us the Bible as a whole, expecting us to learn from the interaction of all its parts. Sometimes one text qualifies another, or shows that another was giving guidance only for a specific context, or helps us see that another was revealing only part of the truth. God invites us to the labour of reading all the relevant texts together. It is only when we do so – and especially when we read all of the Bible in the light of Christ's work and teaching – that we will find the answers we are looking for.

Speaker 4: I like your stress on taking care as we put the different parts of the Bible together, but I want to say more about it. I don't see that task as simply one of resolving difficulties, or finding ways to smooth out the Bible's rough edges. I think there are deep and pervasive tensions in the Bible, and that they are there for good reason. It is an inherently complex conversation between multiple voices. I think that we need to acknowledge those tensions, explore them, go on learning from them, and dwell with them, as we think through our questions about identity, sexuality, relationships and marriage. In fact, I think God invites us to this kind of dwelling with the text. I think the Bible is too complex, too mobile, and too lively to be called a blueprint or a framework.

Speaker 5: I agree that God has given us the Bible as a whole, expecting us to learn from and dwell with the interaction of all its parts, but I want to push what you say a bit further. I think that when we read all the relevant biblical texts together, we do discover that some of them, taken by themselves, are misleading. Listening to the Bible as a whole means learning to discern what is more central to it, and what is less central – and I think God expects us to make that discernment. For example, when we do

that, I think we find that some of what we read in the Bible about identity, sexuality, relationships and marriage just doesn't line up with the most central things the Bible says about love. So I think the Bible itself teaches us not to take those passages as instructions for our lives now, and to find some creative new way of reading them.

Speaker 6: I would want to push that even further. I believe the Bible is given to us for the one purpose of teaching us about God's love for the world – especially its fulfilment in Jesus. I want to say that the Bible is a collection of human words brought together by God to witness to that love, and ultimately to Christ. Everything in it is given to us for that one purpose. I do trust that God has provided us with witnesses whose testimony is sufficient to teach us this love. But I also think that the testimony is provided by fallible human voices, all of which need testing against that central message. I believe the Bible calls us to work out our own answers to our questions about identity, sexuality, relationships and marriage, in the light of this central message. And I expect that the answers we give to specific questions will sometimes be quite different from the answers that the biblical authors gave, because we no longer agree with some of the other assumptions they brought to the process – and that we will therefore have to say 'no' to some of their answers.

Speaker 7: I agree that the Bible is a collection of fallible human voices, but I'm wary of what you say about God bringing these texts together, and giving them to us for some central purpose. I do think that it is a book produced by people who were caught up in movements of God's Spirit in history – but their words only do uneven and partial justice to what they glimpsed. You can certainly find some important truths in Scripture, sometimes powerfully and beautifully expressed, but they are mixed in with all kinds of other material, some of it horrific.

Where do you fit on the scale of 1-7? Your answer will almost certainly shape your thinking on any number of current issues, not least the matter of same-sex marriage in church. Responses, opinions and points of view welcome!

Annette Reynolds
St Peter & St Paul



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The Market Premises, Book Street, Tring, Hertfordshire HP23 5ED
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Harvest Celebrations in Tring Team Parish

St Mary's Puttenham
Sunday 25th September 1.30pm for 1.45pm - Harvest Lunch in Cecilia Hall
Tickets £10 from Christine via 07514 548289 or email christine.rutter2@gmail.com
followed by 3.30pm Harvest Evensong

St John the Baptist Aldbury
Sunday 2nd October, 11am Harvest Festival starting at the Allotments,
followed by a bring & share harvest lunch in the church, everyone welcome.

St Peter and St Paul Tring
Sunday 9th October Harvest Worship for All at 10am, collecting gifts for DENS.
Also Services at Wilstone and Long Marston
dates and times to be arranged soon

See www.tringteamparish.org.uk for more information
nearer the time as plans are being developed

Raising money for
THE BISHOP OF ST ALBANS' HARVEST APPEAL 2022
NOT FORGOTTEN
Supporting the people of Mozambique

"For the needy shall not always be forgotten, and the hope of the poor shall not perish forever."
PSALM 9:18

Why the scaffolding?



You may have noticed that St Peter & St Paul's has had some scaffolding up the side over the last few months. Unfortunately, earlier in the

year, there was some damage caused by vandalism on the roof. A temporary repair was effected to prevent ingress of rainwater, and now quotes have been obtained to repair the damage on a more permanent basis.

More recently there has been some further minor vandalism with graffiti on the west door (see photo), which will need to be carefully cleaned to prevent damage and deter any further occurrences.

On a more positive note, having completed the initial phases of the drainage investigation and soakaway improvement earlier in the year, planned work has now started on repairing the walls.

Scaffolding has been erected to enable inspection of the upper most inner faces of the north buttress.



Scaffolding erected to facilitate inspections and repairs of stonework

The Totternhoe Clunch stonework was found to have been badly eroded and is in poor condition, and needs attention as otherwise water may easily enter the voids and cause more issues when winter arrives.



Totternhoe Clunch stone is friable and in poor condition in several areas inspected

A company called Lost Marble is undertaking this work, which involves conservation of the walls, including lime repointing and two applications of shelter coat to protect the stones.

One of the stones was found to be extremely badly eroded and in need of replacement. Work to renew the hollow and insecure stone section is ongoing.

For improved safety and security, two watchman bollard lights have been installed on the pathway to the east of the church. This provides low level lighting at night helping navigate safely around the church, whilst avoiding disturbance to neighbouring properties.

Inside the church, another quote to repair the organ has been received for comparison with an earlier quotation. Significant costs running into hundreds of thousands of pounds would be

required to repair the current organ. As another option, replacement with an electronic version is under consideration. This would retain the look and feel of the existing organ as the show pipes would be retained, but replace the current analogue instrument with a more modern electronic equivalent.

The replacement or repair of the organ is part of a wider consultation to find out what the people of Tring Team Parish think about proposals for reorganising St Peter & St Paul's Church following discussions at the Tring Annual Church meeting. Please see: <https://forms.office.com/r/zw9CQp3gt5>.

Andrew Kinsey
St Peter & St Paul



Graffiti on west door



Hollow and insecure stones section found during inspection

Computer & Printer Repair & Support

Friendly, patient and expert help

Telephone advice or Covid19-safe collection of your printer, laptop or p.c. available



Barry Child
barry@childassociates.co.uk
01442 826092
07879 497704

Canon Berry's memorial mass

The 10 July was the new date for Canon Berry's Memorial Mass and Parish BBQ as the original date, Sunday 19 June, feast of Corpus Christi, was postponed when Cardinal Vincent came down with Covid-19. It appeared to be the perfect timing. Canon Vincent died on the feast of Corpus Christi, he was the Parish Priest of Corpus Christi, and it was our Patronal feast! And yet it was not to be! God's ways are not our ways!

The new date was, as it happened, an almost perfect day for the Parish BBQ, which was enjoyed by all there, including some of Canon Vincent's family, Cardinal Vincent and Fr Sean. I'm sure Canon Vincent was there in spirit too with his family and friends! Many thanks to Michael Demidecki for the photographs.

Tricia Apps, Corpus Christi

Canon Vincent Berry was ordained in May 1962 at Westminster Cathedral. He served as Priest in the Parishes of Hounslow, South Harrow and Chelsea before moving to the Parish of Corpus Christi in 2006. He also served as Vicar General, worked in the Crusade of Rescue and spent two years on the Diocese Mission Team.

The Parish of Corpus Christi in Tring was to be Canon Vincent's last parish.



The parish had been without a resident priest for several years and the congregation needed a pastor. Their prayers were answered, and the Good Lord sent Canon Vincent. He guided the parish family for over ten years, looking after their spiritual needs in his own gentle and caring way. He was always calm and never raised his voice.

He led the project to build the new office extension, using all his knowledge and experience to ensure the extension was done with great sympathy, such that the extension looks like it has always been part of our beautiful church.

He organised the upgrade of the car park to increase the car parking space, a previously potholed area that was a trip hazard for parishioners.

He gifted the beautiful cross hanging above the altar to his beloved Corpus Christi Church and it continues to add to the beauty of the church today.

His little dog, Petroc, was greatly loved by parishioners, especially the younger children. Canon Vincent would collect Petroc from the vestry after mass so the children could pet and make a fuss of Petroc as they left the church.

Canon Vincent was ably assisted by many parishioners, none more so than Pastoral Assistant, Wendy Hinds, RIP. Wendy was heavily involved with Churches Together in Tring which Canon Vincent strongly supported.

He even brought 'Midsomer Murders' to Corpus Christi to help boost parish finances. And if you haven't seen the programme, the priest gets murdered in Canon Vincent's chair in the front room of the presbytery.

Canon Vincent retired in 2017 to the local village of Weston Turville where he had many plans to enjoy gardening at his lovely bungalow. He was diagnosed with



cancer unfortunately, and within a short time, the disease became terminal. His condition worsened during the Covid-19 lockdown, but he never complained, showing great bravery and stoicism right to the end. Thanks to the help of parishioners and the Rennie Grove nurses, he was able to fulfil his wish of passing away at home rather than in a hospice. He died peacefully on Sunday 14 June 2020, on the feast of Corpus Christi.

Due to the Covid-19 restrictions, the requiem mass could only be attended by a few mourners. A large crowd of parishioners, however, gathered in silence outside Corpus Christi. Showing the utmost respect and the esteem in which Vincent was held, the parishioners from Corpus Christi, as well as members of other churches in the town, walked behind the coffin as it processed through the streets of Tring to the cemetery. He wanted his resting place to be Tring.

Canon Vincent left Corpus Christi in good health as a vibrant and supportive community. He is remembered by his flock in Tring with great love. Rest in Peace, Vincent.

Paul Wright & Margaret Donnelly
Corpus Christi

Welcome: gladly to receive a guest



The Ukraine crisis arrived quickly and dramatically in the headlines earlier this year. It then arrived on our doorstep. Initially, as the story dominated

our screens (and radiowaves) I questioned why the UK had such a palpable response to the situation. I felt there were equally needy humanitarian tragedies in Syria, Yemen, central Africa and elsewhere. Another big difference with this conflict was that our government was asking us to open our homes to people seeking safety (while simultaneously announcing that others would be sent to Rwanda!). With this crisis closer to home, and with faces who looked 'like ours', it became the reality that many of us felt as if we could 'do' something. Some people have literally got in their cars to drive supplies across Europe and others have opened up their homes. But this is the tip of the iceberg; there is an astonishing amount of action which has started as a result.

I have been blown away by the response locally. A group of volunteers

has been morphing into a skilled team sharing out aspects of the work and responding to needs as they arise. Volunteers have found their front rooms full of clothing donations to distribute, others have started to help people fill in forms and connect with schools, dentists and healthcare; others are teaching English.

Over 120 Ukrainians have been given accommodation within Tring and Berkhamsted. A donations shop has been established at Tring Rugby Club, and English lessons are taking place. I've witnessed the value of the weekly 'meet-ups' at High Street Baptist Church. Just a cup of tea and a (strange!) cake or biscuit, as people acclimatise to their surroundings. There is so much more going on behind the scenes too.

'Jesus, knowing their thoughts, took a little child and had him stand beside him. Then he said to them, "Whoever welcomes this little child in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. For it is the one who is least among you all who is the greatest.'" Luke 9:47-48

The need continues and the group is supporting the hosts as well as the Ukrainian guests. Current areas of need



include helping out in the donations shop and finding employment for Ukrainians. If you would like to support locally placed Ukrainian guests, please email batuhostingnetwork@gmail.com or follow the Berko And Tring Ukraine Support Group Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/groups/723596845480763/>.

Polly Eaton
High Street Baptist Church



Parish registers

Baptisms

We welcome into our church family all those below and pray for their parents, godparents and families.

Aaron Williams
Macy Day
Oliver Milenkovic
Chloe Isabelle Robinson
Harrison Read

Weddings

We offer our congratulations and prayers to these couples as they begin their married lives together.

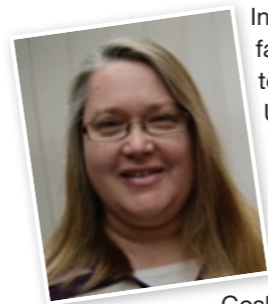
Richard John Frimston & Tiffany Jayne Cornwall
Emanuel (Emi) Baluta & Chloe Sturges (a thanksgiving after their wedding in 2021 during Covid-19 restrictions)

Funerals

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

Russell Williams 56
Alec Butler 95
Mike Stratford 74
Shaw (Skip) Gerald Lindley 58
Susan Lale 77
Lily Robinson 56

An interview with our Ukrainian guests



In March 2022, our family volunteered to be host to a Ukrainian family who were leaving war-torn Kyiv for safer shores. Maryna and her

8-year-old son, Gosha (George) came to live with us in Ivinghoe village, with 12-year-old Liza, who is a ballet dancer, boarding at Tring Park School during the week and joining us at weekends and school holidays. As a family, they seemed to settle into village life smoothly and we were delighted when Maryna's husband, Vova (Vlodomyr), was granted a month's leave from Ukraine and was able to join us all for three weeks in June.

How has life changed for you since moving to the UK?

Maryna: Moving country was always going to be a big change, but we are grateful that our children have the opportunity to study at local schools and are able to continue their studies. All school tuition in Kyiv has been online only since 24 February 2022 [the day the invasion began] so it is nice that the children can meet up with other children. There are almost no children left in Kyiv now. Before the war began, I used to spend a lot of time driving Liza to her dance and ballet lessons at her ballet school in Kyiv, but her academic lessons were not so good – nothing like the great provision she has now at Tring Park. Gosha has started at the local school in Ivinghoe. I think it is easier to make friends here – everybody is very friendly and polite. Possibly this is because I meet people walking to school, but I think in a village people are eager to communicate with each other. I know lots of people – people in the shops know me and everybody seems to be related to each other.

Liza: I love the breakfasts at Tring Park, and I now drink tea with milk. I have not been a boarder before, and I find it very tiring to speak and listen to English all day long, but I am getting better. Ballet instructions are always in French, wherever you are in the world, so I am comfortable in my ballet classes. Gosha and I enjoyed visiting the Model Village in Beaconsfield with our host family. I have not seen such a tiny village before.

Vova: I found it very dark when I arrived [Vova arrived at midnight one evening] and I wonder why there are no streetlights on the country roads? I love all the fresh air and the beautiful countryside, and I have enjoyed tasting different whiskies with Andrew, and sampling beer from Tring Brewery. I have been to an English pub, and I love it that everyone knows everybody else – we are city-dwellers and we do not have this in Kyiv.

Gosha: I play cricket in the village, and I go to Cubs. I have to wear school uniform – we don't wear uniform in Ukraine, and now I have school uniform, Cub uniform and cricket clothes. I like living so close to the playground as there is a zip wire which I love and lots of good equipment. I am able to play in the playground after school with my new friends. I like the special events my school has arranged, like Sports Day, a street party for the Jubilee celebration, and that parents are able to come in to see things in the classroom. Most schools in Ukraine finish at lunchtime so my school day is longer, but we don't have much homework, just some reading and some spellings. The summer holidays here are much shorter – I have never been to school in July before!

Maryna adds: I have been surprised that the UK and Ukraine are more similar than I would have thought – although there are other countries which are physically closer to Ukraine, like Poland, I think that the people in the UK are similar to Ukrainian people. I feel very comfortable driving here [Vova drove Maryna's left-hand-drive car over here and left it for her] and there have been no tricky incidents. I think the drivers here are very polite and well-behaved. I understand now why the British always talk about the weather – it is so changeable! I was surprised that I could tan here, and even if it does rain, it never rains all



Liza and Gosha

day long. [Watch this space for that view to change!] I have noticed people do not use umbrellas in the village, but instead wear coats with hoods and everybody wears wellies. I have been to two Indian restaurants which was a new experience for me as it is not in our culture. I also like your National Trust houses – I have been to Waddesdon and Hughenden and Gill has shown me the correct way to eat a cream tea. Your church is very different – although the service might be similar, in our country there are no seats in the church and a service lasts two hours. Also, we would not sing Happy Birthday to someone in church, and we have a strict dress code to enter. Your church seems to be much more democratic – we do not have women priests and there are certainly no barbecues, paella, or events with beer, which I have enjoyed in Tring.

Gill Kinsey
St Peter & St Paul



Andrew, Gill, Maryna and Vova

Have you noticed?



In February one of the benches in the Quiet Space by St Peter & St Paul's was totally vandalised. The family who had sponsored the bench visited and removed the remains for safety's sake. Then in April, the lone bench at the front corner of the churchyard, was also vandalised and removed. This time the family concerned definitely wanted to replace it.

On seeing this damage, Helena and Peter Holliday (who look after the flower beds at the front of the churchyard) volunteered to pay for a replacement bench to celebrate their 40th wedding anniversary. They preferred a re-cycled plastic version.

The two benches near the War Memorial showed the beginnings of rot, having been installed around ten years ago. At that time Ben Cartwright informed us that the Tring Lions had hinted that they may pay to replace a bench. On making contact, I found that they would actually be willing to sponsor two new benches at the War Memorial!

A plan was formed... Could we replace all five benches? Would the congregation fund a bench to commemorate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee? The Treasurer team agreed to create a Bench Fund and the request for donations was placed in the weekly notices.

Then Huw Bellis informed me that one had to have permission from the Diocese to install a bench in the churchyard and also to replace a bench! So having chosen a supplier, the approval process started with forms and photos being submitted to the Diocesan Advisory Committee. Luckily another parish had already been given permission to use plastic benches rather than wooden ones, so we received approval in May.

Ten weeks later the benches were ready for delivery. Then my worries started... how large a lorry would arrive? Who would assist moving and installing the benches, which weigh 85kg each? Ben suggested he open the entrance to Zebra Square so the vehicle would be off the main road. I emailed a few strong-looking gentlemen in the congregation and also asked the Lions for some muscle. At 11.00am on the day, a happy

group arrived all very willing to get involved. A last-minute problem occurred that the installation bolts provided were the wrong size for bases in the churchyard, but again Ben solved the problem. So as one bench was being fitted to the ground another was being prepared and others were removing the old wooden benches that remained.

By 3.30pm all five were installed and I couldn't have been more grateful for all who helped. Already many people had spoken with us about their joy that the missing ones were replaced and some



had chosen to eat their lunches and drink their coffees as soon as they were ready.

So had you noticed that all five benches were present again? Have a look and see who has sponsored them.

**Barbara Anscombe
St Peter & St Paul**



Book Group



'This, is happiness' says Christy, one of the principal characters in Niall Williams' poignant, beautifully written and often very funny novel, which is set in a remote rural town called Faha in County Kerry in the 1960s.

Christy has been asked why he's not more downtrodden by his failure to re-establish links and ask forgiveness of the woman – the love of his life – whom he stood up at the altar half a century previously. His interlocutor is Noah, a shy, sensitive 17-year-old who is struggling, often chaotically, with his own issues of love and faith, and for whom Christy is a mentor and the only friend he has apart from his beloved grandparents. Noah, of course, is puzzled by Christy's answer – how can happiness result from failure to obtain forgiveness? – but he comes to realize, many years later, that 'stop for one heartbeat, and, no matter what the state of your head or heart, say This is happiness because of the simple truth that you were alive to say it'.

Stopping for a heartbeat, living

in the experience of the moment and dealing with development through time generally – these form important themes of the book. Faha is on the cusp of transition as crews from the outside world invade the town to connect it to electric power for the first time. Moylan, the salesman selling electric lights, washing machines and cookers, dramatically promises the Fahaans: 'The hardship of your lives is now over'. Noah's grandfather, though, is not duped; he is wise enough to realize that entry into the modern world will bring Faha its own problems. He refuses to be connected to the electricity, not because he rejects 'progress' but because 'aren't we happy as we are?' and he fears that that the happiness will be compromised by the siren calls of modernity and consumerism.

The seven of us (what an ideal number for a discussion group!) discussing the novel at St Peter & St Paul were unusually united in our positive reactions to the novel. We were all struck by the beauty and charm of the writing; some of us took a little while to get used to its slow pace (this is not the novel for you if you require action and fast-moving events in a story), while others were immediately grabbed

by its Irish charm and its emphasis on character, description of place and exploration of the human condition. I loved it and was not alone in finding the many references to music such an appealing feature. Thus, the idea is put forward that an Irish folk melody develops in its own way, independently (it seems) of the player and this is a metaphor for the way lives should be lived. Noah, it turns out, plays the fiddle, and it appears that this will come to dominate his adult life.

There are many deeply moving moments (as well as very funny ones) in the novel and some of us (including me) were moved to tears when reading it. It is full of practical wisdom, too; since the role of community and religious faith in developing the well-lived life is an important theme of the book, here's some 'practical wisdom' for Father Huw to comment on. There are two priests in Faha, the senior Father Tom, and the young and more perceptive Father Coffey. Writing many years after the events of the story, Noah reflects that 'Father Coffey had taken a wisdom that wasn't in too many priests then, which was: leave things be'.

**Edmund Booth
St Peter & St Paul**

Kilimanjaro – the roof of Africa



The tallest mountain on the African continent 19,340ft (5,895m), the highest free-standing mountain in the world and one of the seven summits!

The Knoblauch family are attempting this arduous trek of 97kms along the Northern Circuit Route, over nine days!

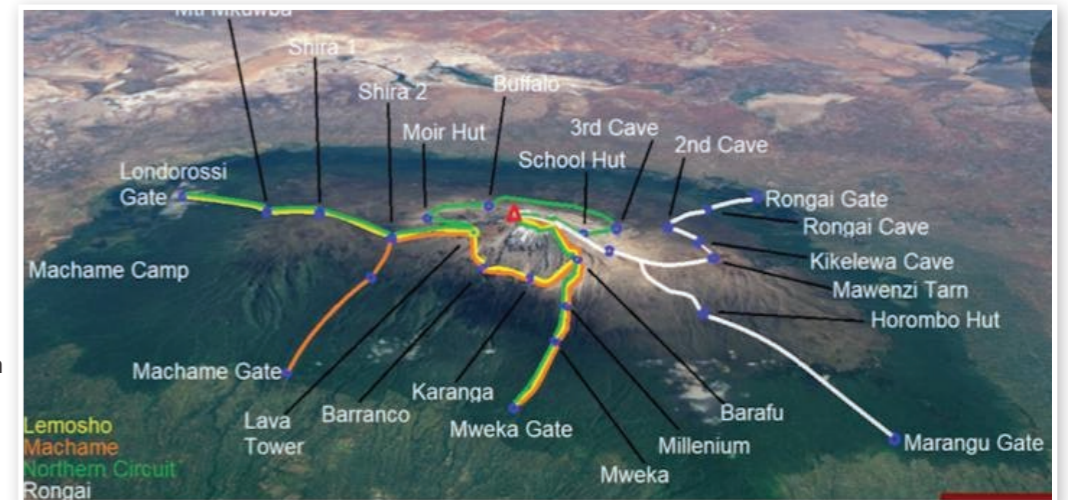
Eleanor's main mission, is not only to summit! But to raise considerable funds to give every young girl the opportunity to be the 'best that she can be' by giving them the education, vision and confidence to breakaway from the relentless cycle of poverty they were born into. Kenya Kesho School for Girls

educates to eradicate poverty. For more information or to donate to the charity visit justgiving.com and search for Kenya Kesho Trust.

**Eleanor Knoblauch,
5th Form, Tring Park School**



**Kenya Kesho
SCHOOL FOR GIRLS
Educate to Eradicate Poverty**



We all share in one bread...



French, Sophia Haenschel-Parton, Teddy Hart, Thomas Sypko, Jessica Sypko and Isabella Sypko.

In the Tring Team Parish we encourage people of all ages to fully participate in the worshipping life of the church, including the invitation to receive communion. For twenty-five years the Church of England has encouraged parishes to welcome children from the age of 7 to receive communion following preparation to do so.

Holy Communion is all about celebrating, remembering and being God's family together. It is God's gift to us, set in the context of a meal eaten together – the Lord's Supper. All the baptised are 'full-blown members' of the church – including children. Children have God-given gifts for the building up of the whole church; they have spiritual insights that we all need. Yes, they have much to learn – but so do all of us! Children may not grasp all that is going on in communion but neither do adults!



We gladly welcome them to share in the meal that Jesus gave us, and receive the mysterious sacrament of God's grace.

**Michelle Grace,
Tring Team**

Tweet of the month

How is a species of bird defined? What makes a group of birds the same or different species? The need to identify and categorise is very much a human thing – an animal's interest in this extends far enough to ensure it mates with the same species and produces young to perpetuate the species. Sometimes animals don't even worry about their mate being the same species and this is how hybrids arise.

In the 18th century a Swedish scientist called Carl Linnaeus developed a hierarchical scheme for classifying and identifying organisms. This allowed us to identify what is a species and which species are closely related to each other. It also gave rise to binomial nomenclature, i.e. scientific names for birds etc. The first name is the name of the family/genus the bird belongs to and the second name is the specific name/species. When this scheme was set up, in many ways science was in its infancy, DNA was not known about, and so morphological traits (appearance and structure) were used to group birds into species (e.g. Chiffchaff or Willow Warbler), or families (e.g. warblers or finches).

In the 18th and 19th century, as people travelled the world, a large number of new species were described to science based on these morphological principles. Initially

species were thought to be fixed so a male and female of a species would produce offspring of the same species and these wouldn't ever change. However, when Charles Darwin came along and explained the concept of evolution, it became clear that species weren't fixed and unchanging. So, a modern biological species concept was proposed that defined species as a population or populations whose members interbreed and produce viable, fertile offspring. Conversely two different species shouldn't be able to breed and produce fertile offspring. While this works in most situations, two clearly different species can produce fertile young so it is not an infallible concept. Other species concepts include the ecological species concept (which separates species based on their habitat) and the phylogenetic species concept (a group sharing a common ancestor that possess similar defining traits). There are over twenty species concepts so saying what a species is can be harder than you'd think!

With scientific advances, the genes of organisms can now be analysed and compared with those of another organism which has changed our understanding of how closely related some species are to each other and also resulted in the realisation that separate species are actually the same;



or that what was thought to be one species is actually more than one now.

Take the striking Arctic Redpoll in this photo – the poll is the forehead so Redpoll means red forehead. When I saw my first in 1982 there were two species: Redpoll and Arctic Redpoll. Currently three species are officially recognised as Redpoll was split into Lesser Redpoll and Common Redpoll. However, recent research has suggested that they are all the same species so Lesser Redpoll and Arctic Redpoll are likely to be merged with Redpoll. They have slight differences but much in common and we treat them as the same. Christians of different denominations can also be seen as the same thing with the same basic defining characteristics – a belief in God and Jesus and love for others which arises from that belief.

**Roy Hargreaves
St Peter & St Paul**

Communion – divisive or uniting?



transubstantiation, lay administration of communion etc.

Quakers do not practise communion because they see the whole Christian life as a sacrament: they don't see any need for rituals to be in touch with God. However, many Quakers have agape suppers, or 'peace meals'.

William Cairns says: 'The Salvation Army regards communion as divisive and not necessary for salvation. Salvationists have proved that the deep experience of communion with Jesus can be understood and practised without the use of the elements familiar to the various symbolic rites used in most churches.'

For other Christians, the practice of communion is represented in two passages with the First Corinthians passage being used in most communion services.

1 Corinthians 11:23-25

For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on



the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, 'This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.' In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.' (NIV)

Matthew 26:26-29

While they were eating, Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, 'Take and eat; this is my body.' Then he took a cup, and when he had given

thanks, he gave it to them, saying, 'Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you, I will not drink from this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.'

Mark 14:22-25 and Luke 22:19-20 are very similar but John's Gospel account of the last supper does not include the bread and wine.

One of the official Methodist communion services has, in a prayer, the words 'Send your Holy Spirit that these gifts of bread and wine may be for us the body and blood of Christ'. One of the official Anglican services has the similar words 'grant that by the power of your Holy Spirit these gifts of bread and wine may be to us his body and his blood'. In Catholic Mass the Priest may say 'Be pleased, O God, we pray, to bless, acknowledge, and approve this offering in every respect; make it spiritual and acceptable, so that it may become for us the Body and Blood of your most beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ' or it may simply say 'The body of Christ', 'The blood of Christ' as he offers the sacraments. There are several formats.

In Baptist churches the bread is usually raised with the words 'Jesus said, "This is my body which is broken for you; do this in memory of me."' And the wine – "This cup is the new covenant sealed by my blood. Whenever you drink it, do this in memory of me."' Very similar words, despite the different denominations, and the difference of the meaning of the words.

Protestants ask that the bread and wine 'may become for us' the body and blood of Christ. The Catholic Catechism states 'By the consecration of the bread and wine there takes

place a change of the whole substance of the bread into the substance of the body of Christ our Lord, and of the whole substance of the wine into the substance of his blood'.

My personal interpretation, probably controversial, is that for an individual Protestant believer the bread and wine become the body and blood of Christ for that person, while for Catholics the bread and wine become the body and blood of Christ in reality for all. Paul makes it clear that it is necessary to believe that bread and wine are the body and blood: 1 Corinthians 11:27, 29 says 'So then, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. For those who eat and drink without discerning the body of Christ, eat and drink judgment on themselves.' (NIV).

How you 'discern' is the critical element. As I am both a Baptist and a Catholic, I see both interpretations. I expect it means something different to you and to me!

**John Allan
High Street Baptist Church**

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Why do bad things happen to good people?



Luke's Gospel records the comments of Jesus on two highly obscure events (Luke 13:1-9) neither of which are historically well attested.

The first is thought to be about some Jews attending Passover who were killed on the orders of Pilate – their blood in consequence being mixed with that of their sacrifice. In the second, a tower collapsed at Siloam, possibly in the course of public works on the aqueduct bringing water into Jerusalem, and eighteen people died. These are first century equivalents of the kind of senseless, tragic stories we read about in the newspapers every day.

All Jesus' listeners wanted to know was whether what happened was these people's fault. Were they especially bad? Did God punish them in this way because of their sins? Jesus answers pretty much in a word: 'No'.

But the real question to which Jesus is responding, 'Why do bad things happen to people?' is a question that just won't go away.

True, most of the time, we've moved on from the presuppositions demonstrated by Jesus' questioners. When folk have caught Covid-19 in the recent pandemic, we haven't, on the whole, started digging for the causes of infection within people's moral conduct (though even then, for the unvaccinated, a tendency to judgement has often not been so very far away).

But, by and large, for our age and culture, the far more potent question is not that which Jesus is asked, 'Did they deserve this?' but rather the question that asks, 'If God is good, how can suffering in any way be part of God's plan? If God exists, how can we live in a world where bad things happen to good people?'

We can, of course, make various observations in response to these questions. Pointing out the irony that assertions of the incompatibility of suffering and the presence of a loving God seem to be largest among those who live in the greatest wealth and comfort, such as those of us who inhabit Western Europe. Contrast our thinking with the response of poor communities in Africa who, when disasters and sufferings happen, are less likely to open up the

pages of Richard Dawkins and more likely to praise God and go to church. And for those for whom natural disasters far away are such a problem, we might ask why so few seem to get similarly worked up about the tens of thousands of completely avoidable deaths that occur each month from diseases such as diarrhoea and malaria, that are needless consequences of very human indifference and inaction.

Ultimately, I suspect that these responses don't get us very far. It would be much better to address this question from a theological perspective – responding that to be alive in this creation is, of course, to be the subject of risk. How could it be anything other, given that taking risk is part of the very nature of the creator? We are made by a God who creates us to be his children, not slaves, and who therefore, in loving risk, gives us the capacity to walk away from God if we choose. The same God saves us by taking the risk of becoming one of us, born in an unhygienic stable in an age of mass infant mortality, and who ends up dying on an instrument of torture, due to the machinations of cruel, contemptuous men.

If the world is made by a God like that, how could it be anything other than risky? And we know that all we value most in this world comes with risk. Who do you value most – the woman who conquers Everest or the person who never leaves their home street? The child who overcomes grave physical limitations to play a full part in the life of the community or the healthy, wealthy person who gives nothing?

This is not to diminish the sorrow we have with those who suffer, but it is to assert that, for the world to be any other way, would be to ask for a reality that would be lesser, constrained; averse to us achieving what it is to be fully human.

For while arguments may have their place, the real question is 'Do we live this?' Do Christians demonstrate in our lives that it is worth living in a world of risk and of putting our faith in a God who both takes risks and who asks to step out in trust in him and to take risks also; risks

that enable us to achieve more for love, beauty, virtue and glory than we could ever achieve by sitting at home, wrapped up in cotton wool? Do we, in Lent, for example, give up instant coffee or seek to blaze with the glory of the gospel? Do we argue about whether churches can welcome same-sex couples or do we find homes for people who've been bombed out of their cities in Ukraine?

How we respond to those questions will be our true answer to those who say that God can't exist if the world God has made is one where bad things happen to good people. And our response matters even more than for that.

In the latter part of that same passage in Luke's Gospel, the owner of the fig tree says this: 'For the last three years I have come looking for fruit on this tree without finding any. Cut it down. Why should it go on taking goodness from the soil?' The gardener who tends the tree replies, 'Leave it, sir, for this one year, while I dig round it and manure it. And if it bears next season, well and good; if not you shall have it down.'

What are we prepared to risk for God? Are we willing to step out, and take the risks God asks of us? Are we worth God's risk on us?

In the lives of the Desert Fathers who lived in Egypt back in the 4th century, it's told how one father came to another and said, 'Father, I keep my little rule to the utmost, my fasts, meditation and contemplative silence; as much as I can, I strive to cleanse my heart. And now what?' And the other Father for answer stood up and stretched his hands to heaven, and his fingers were ten torches of fire. And he said, 'Why not be changed totally into fire?'

**Rt Revd Dr Michael Beasley
Bishop of Hertford**

**Jane Ducklin
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Creating a buzz at the Summer Carnival



Tring's Justice & Peace Group wanted to celebrate the Bee Friendly Town accolade they received in May 2022. What better place to celebrate than Tring's Summer

Carnival on Saturday 9 July? They created a party vibe in their stall with a children's play area, face-painting and a few colourful characters! There were free wildflower seeds, courtesy of Dacorum Borough Council, and plenty of information leaflets. People were keen to find out more and questions included what to plant to attract bees, where to position a bug hotel, and what's the difference between a honey bee and other bees. Many people, however, just enjoyed chatting about pollinators: their delight at seeing a leafcutter bee at work; their amusement at seeing bees nesting in their hedgehog house. Face painting was a huge hit and the Carnival was full of little chubby cheeks painted with bees and butterflies!



Bees are not the only pollinators. On the stall there was also information about moths and nicotiana plants, commonly referred to as tobacco plants, to give away. The tall, swaying, green- and white-flowered types offer a powerful scent during the evening and attract moths. Moths, as with other invertebrates, are in decline so it is helpful to introduce plants that support them. One of the issues



causing this decline is light pollution. Night flying insects are attracted to light, but unfortunately this can have fatal consequences. Exhaustion, increased predation, and a disrupted ability to navigate are just some of the reasons why up to a third of insects attracted to lights die. You can read more about light pollution and what to do to minimise the problems caused by artificial night light at <https://www.buglife.org.uk/campaigns/light-pollution>.

During the afternoon the group presented the Bee Friendly Town award and certificate to Tring's Mayor, Councillor Christopher Townsend, in the main arena. With the presentation broadcast over the loudspeakers, it could be heard by all so even those who couldn't see the beautiful honey bee dance, her bee-keeper and the solitary bee buzzing about, could hear what the campaign was all about.

Tring Justice & Peace Group is a small group of enthusiastic volunteers

working on a number of projects, including Bee Friendly Tring. To find out more, visit www.justiceandpeacecing.org.

**Polly Eaton
Justice and Peace Group**



The difference that DENS makes

Jim never expected to become homeless, but when he was suddenly forced to leave the room he was renting during lockdown, with no notice and for no apparent reason, his life had suddenly turned upside-down.

Filled with the anxiety of having nowhere to turn, a friend encouraged Jim to get in touch with Dacorum Borough Council, who supported him with a personalised housing plan and arranged for him to access our hostel, The Elms. Jim was provided a warm bed for the night in our emergency Crash Pad facility. He then visited our Day Centre, where staff helped him secure short-term accommodation at our 44-bed hostel.

The sudden change into a new setting and routine at the hostel was a shock at first, but Jim was thankful to have a safe haven with a cosy bed and warm shower. 'It was a real cross-section of people in here,' explained Jim. 'I just tried to keep my humour going, which does help. Everyone now says to me, "we miss your wisecracking!"'



" I OWE DENS VIRTUALLY ALL I'VE GOT. IT'S AMAZING WHAT THEY'VE DONE FOR ME. "

Throughout his time at the hostel, Jim received specialist support from his Key Worker – something he's hugely grateful for. 'My Key Worker was wonderful, as are absolutely all of them,' added Jim.

After five months at The Elms, Jim's Key Worker helped him find a new place of his own. This accommodation offers support for his mobility needs, after he sustained a serious leg injury. There, he enjoys growing runner beans in his small garden and chatting with fellow residents over a cup of coffee. 'It's a dream. I'm back in the town that I know and it's a tremendously safe place.'

Jim's access needs were further supported at the Day Centre, where they helped him apply for a Blue Badge disability parking permit.

Delighted with the progress DENS has helped him make, Jim decided he wanted to return the favour by volunteering in his free time. He's now taken on a regular role at the hostel's reception, and loves catching up with residents when checking them in to their rooms. When asked why he volunteers for DENS, Jim simply said, 'I owe DENS virtually all I've got. It's amazing what they've done for me.'

The 'Still Do Do', take 2!



What possesses two people who have been happily married for over thirty years to renew their wedding vows?

A good question that we couldn't answer at the time, but in 2019 we decided to do it all the same. In no time the wheels were put in motion, Reverend Jane had been consulted, the invitations printed and sent out. Then from the East came the bug that stopped the world in its tracks. We were upset that we couldn't get 're-spliced' but even more concerned for all those couples who were planning to do it for the first time, many of whom we met in the Parish Hall just before Covid-19 hit.

Roll on 2022, when it finally felt safe to venture out from virtual church to the real thing and golly, it was good. We felt it was safe enough to try again. This is why our 'Still Do Do' became 'The Still Do Do, Take Two'.



Our faith is very strong, we just don't go to church every weekend, so there was never any doubt that we still wanted a church service and the now Reverend Canon Jane was more than happy to meet with us again to go through the details.

Then we revisited our invitation list and realised that many of our friends were not 'churchy types', which got us thinking that maybe not many would come to the service and would simply meet us at the pub afterwards. How wrong we were! Almost everyone we invited came to the service. Through a great combination of spiritual intervention and Reverend Jane's ability to make the service both formal and fun, we were able to both appreciate being in God's presence and ensure it appealed to all ages and beliefs. Many of our 'non-churchy' friends remarked that St Peter & St Paul's is much friendlier than they thought it would be. Some even found it rather risqué (but no less enjoyable) that they could have a glass of beer or wine around the font at the end of the service with the vicar's blessing!

So, back to why renew marriage vows. Words taken from 'Captain Corelli's Mandolin' by Louis de Bernières sum it up nicely: *Love is a temporary madness; it erupts like a volcano and then subsides And when it subsides you have to make a decision. You have to work out whether your roots have so entwined together that it is inconceivable that you should ever part. Because this is what love is. Love is not breathlessness, it is not excitement, it is not the promulgation of eternal passion That is just "being in love" which any fool can do. Love itself is what is left over when being in love has burned away, and this is both an art and a fortunate accident. Those that truly love, have roots that grow towards each other underground, and when all the pretty blossom has fallen from their branches, they find that they are one tree and not two.*



In short, we simply wanted to say to each other, under the ever-watchful eye of God, 'we are one tree and we still love each other'. Yes, we are well beyond our sell-by dates and certainly many bits don't work too well, but the very core of our love has never ever been in doubt. Our faith has been heavily tested during our marriage: cancer and multiple sclerosis being two nasties where we had to ask, 'Why us, Lord?'. This, however, has been offset many times over by the love of our family, our friends and that of the church. Long may it continue!

**Bruce & Lynne Sherring-Lucas
St Peter & St Paul**



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Sunday 25th September

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BYO drink

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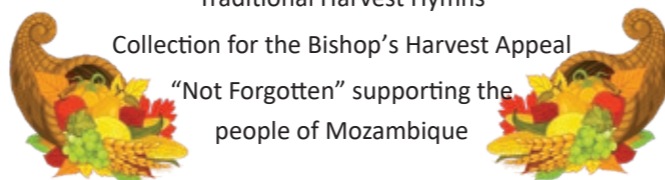
HARVEST EVENSONG

3.30pm in St Mary's Church

Traditional Harvest Hymns

Collection for the Bishop's Harvest Appeal

"Not Forgotten" supporting the
people of Mozambique



Eco Church lifestyle survey



One of the Eco Church assessment areas is 'Lifestyle'. This means that when working toward the Eco Church awards, it is not only the actions of the church, use of building

and garden and what refreshments we serve, but also the lifestyle of church members that counts. At High Street Baptist Church we devised a questionnaire to help us understand the church members' implementation of creation care in their own lives.

This is our third year of conducting the Lifestyle Survey. This year we adapted the survey and moved away from tick boxes to seek out richer data. We wanted to gather broader information about what people were doing to respond to care for the environment, in order to share this and encourage one another. We also wanted to find out what was tough about practising creation care and areas people were questioning or want to know more about. The results of our survey are shared here to offer insight into the Eco Church process and also to encourage and support our fellow Christians in Tring and the surrounding area who are travelling along the Eco Church path – or looking for signposts.

People completed the High Street Lifestyle Survey using an online form

or paper version. Although there was a lower response rate than in previous years (21 questionnaires completed) the information gathered shows a breadth of climate action and insights into how people have adjusted their lifestyle to care for God's earth. Since conducting the Lifestyle Survey, High Street's members have consistently agreed with the statement, 'I consider an ethical lifestyle part of living out my Christian faith.'

When asked about completing a carbon footprint audit, a third of respondents had done this in the last year. As a church we annually complete a carbon audit and recommend households do too. To combat climate change we need to reduce our carbon emissions as much as possible. Becoming aware of your carbon use can help you identify areas for reduction. Usually, we can't completely eliminate our carbon emissions so we can 'offset' by paying an organisation to implement projects that reduce carbon emissions or capture emissions. There are many online resources to enable you to assess your carbon use, such as the BMS Carbon Calculator (www.bmsworldmission.org/other-ways-to-give/bms-carbon-calculator/) or Climate Stewards (<https://www.climatestewards.org/carbon-calculators/>), which then allow you to pay to offset your travel, food and energy use to financially support projects.

These projects will benefit communities and tackle climate change in areas where the ecosystem is fragile and under threat.

Many people are familiar with the 'reduce, re-use, recycle' mantra, but 'refuse' has been added to encourage us to challenge the acquisition of articles in the first place. We asked church members what they have been doing to refuse, reduce, re-use, recycle. The results have been shown as graphics accompanying this article.

'I consider an ethical lifestyle part of living out my Christian faith.' agreed by 95% of respondents.



Lifestyle Survey 2022

There are no simple cure-all solutions. Very often, in our context, it is about making the least-bad choice or about weighing up the good and bad aspects of our options. We cannot get complacent, feeling we are getting it all right – because we won't be!



Lifestyle Survey 2022

Refusing to buy is a great step to not contributing to carbon emissions and not adding to waste: refusing to purchase something is even better than re-using or recycling it. Other options are available if you 'need' something. Consider what the item is and how you long you might need it for. Maybe borrowing it or hiring it will be better value. Maybe you are not sure if the trombone is really for you, perhaps someone can lend you one before you buy! Many people commented that they refuse to buy fruit and vegetables in plastic bags, refuse plastic bags that are offered, and some refuse to buy fruit and vegetables from abroad.

There were lots of great ideas to reduce overconsumption and reduce single-use items and ultimately reduce waste. Some people had made switches from single-use products to longer-lasting washable items, e.g. cloth nappies and wipes, reusable period products and fabric or biodegradable make-up wipes. Efforts to avoid plastic were an ongoing theme in the survey and as well as buying bulk (e.g. 5-litre shampoo or washing-up liquid containers), many people mentioned products which eliminate plastic altogether, e.g. Georganics toothpaste, shampoo bars or solid soap bars from Healthfare, Tring.

Linked to efforts to reduce waste, several people mentioned that 'monitoring' was a good way to avoid

building up excess stock, and buying unnecessarily. For example, checking prescription medicines rather than automatically accepting a regular monthly delivery or checking food stocks rather than doing a 'usual' shop. Another great way to reduce waste is to avoid throwing things away. People in the survey suggested repairing items, boxing up leftovers for lunch next day, and many ways to pass on items they no longer needed, e.g. by passing on items to family, friends or joining social media sites to pass on unwanted items, giving unwanted wood to a 'men in sheds' project in Berkhamsted.

Using charity shops was frequently mentioned as a great way to avoid 'fast fashion' and reduce waste. Re-use (e.g. avoid single-use items, repurpose) encourages you to be more creative and reduces the demand for more resources. It can also save you money, e.g. rinsing out glass jars for storage, upcycling old pallets into tables or garden furniture, washing and reusing food storage plastic bags.

While many people are familiar with the concept of recycling it is really the last resort of what we should do with our waste as it takes energy to process items as well as to transport the waste (sadly, sometimes around the world). However, it is helpful for those items which cannot be re-purposed and it is being made easier to do. One person commented they have set up a mini-recycling centre station in their kitchen to make sure things go to the right places. To read more about this topic visit: www.52climateactions.com/refuse-reduce-reuse-repair-recycle/full

Three quarters of the respondents believed that dietary choices were important for the welfare of the planet. Where our food comes from can impact the planet, from the food miles taken to bring the product to our shelves, the condition of the animals, the effect on the environment from farming methods to the pay and conditions of the people who



farm and produce the food. Some of the suggestions for sustainable food choices are shown in the graphics.

As an Eco Church, we are keen to learn from one another and be inspired to do more; other actions have also been presented in the accompanying graphics. However, it's not all plain sailing. From toilet paper to trainers, sausages to solar panels, making choices of what products are 'best' is tricky. One suggestion is to subscribe to Ethical Consumer to learn how to use your spending power to help change the world for the better: <https://www.ethicalconsumer.org/>. Other resources suggested to check before buying included Friends of the Earth and Which? magazine.

We also asked what makes caring for creation difficult. Cost was cited by several people. This is understandable as often paying for the 'right' item is more expensive because it is better quality, built to last, or has been produced by people being paid a living wage. Time was the other most frequently named difficulty. Time is needed to source items from a variety of locations rather than one supermarket, made increasingly difficult if working full time or shifts. Time was also a factor when researching ethical credentials. Other factors which make ethical living difficult were pressure from supermarkets (e.g. often easily led to non-environmentally friendly options,



poor labelling), the logistics of visiting family living abroad or working overseas, living circumstances (e.g. others in family not wanting change). Very honestly one participant mentioned 'often laziness or lack of attention' is the barrier. Another mentioned that long-entrenched habits can hinder making eco choices.

Despite these challenges people still do make the effort to be conscious about their lifestyle choices – we can see this from the real-life examples mentioned in our survey. Why? Perhaps they feel pressure from climate activists, perhaps they want to be seen to be 'good'. More likely, they see an ethical lifestyle as part of living out their Christian faith. They recognise that God created the earth and we are his stewards charged with caring for it. As I write this, in the middle of July, we are in the midst of the highest temperatures the UK has ever seen. We have a glimpse into what is to come with long-term climate change and extreme weather patterns. The effects are already a reality for many around the world and yet still the global shift away from fossil fuels and a disposable lifestyle is slow. True, we cannot do everything, but we can all do something. To conclude, we remind ourselves of the words of Psalm 24:1: 'The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it.'

Polly Eaton, High Street Baptist Church

Eco Church

A Rocha's Eco Church scheme enables churches to gain awards as they work towards embedding creation care in all aspects of church life. Churches complete the unique online survey about how they are caring for God's earth and collect points towards an Eco Church Award – the more your church does, the more points you get! The survey takes you through five key areas of church life:

- Worship and teaching
- Management of church buildings
- Management of church land
- Community and global engagement
- Lifestyle

You can save your survey responses at any point and return to update them as your church completes additional actions. You can see when you have gained sufficient points in each Eco Survey category by looking at the coloured lines that appear on screen with the Eco Survey questions. The lines will change colour as your points accumulate to reflect the level of Award you have achieved in that category. The website is full of resources to help you progress. www.ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/how-eco-church-works/



I am the song...



While this is not overtly a Christian poem, the writer here invites the reader to see the hand of God in creation and the works of nature.

Each line starts with 'I am...' (an iambic foot), but ends with an initially odd word inversion – 'sings bird', 'strikes stone' etc. This pattern gives a clear rhythm to the poem which is emphasised by the use of the single-syllable nouns and verbs used to describe the breadth and variety of the created world.

The earliest example of this mystical theme is found in an ancient Irish poem ('Amergin' – date and author unknown) which Causley, with his love of all things Celtic, must have known. In fact, he had already written another 'I am' poem in

which the 'I' is God who speaks from the cross, and for which the inspiration was a 17th century Normandy crucifix. Of course, a poet can use this beginning to make an autobiographical point, as John Clare did in his poem of the 1840s about his struggle with depression.

Charles Causley (1917–2003), described as a 'Christian poet in an agnostic age' was born in Launceston, Cornwall, where he lived for most of his life. An only child, his father died when Charles was 7, as a result of wounds sustained in World War I. He was described as 'a bright and bookish child' but left school at 16 and for some years worked in an office. At the beginning of World War II he joined the Navy as a coder. After the war he took a Teacher's Training qualification and returned to the school where he had been a pupil and stayed there until his retirement. He was a prolific writer of poetry, essays, plays and ballads,

*I am the song that sings the bird.
I am the leaf that grows the land.
I am the tide that moves the moon
I am the stream that halts the sand.
I am the cloud that drives the storm.
I am the earth that lights the sun.
I am the fire that strikes the stone.
I am the clay that shapes the hand.
I am the word that shapes the man.*

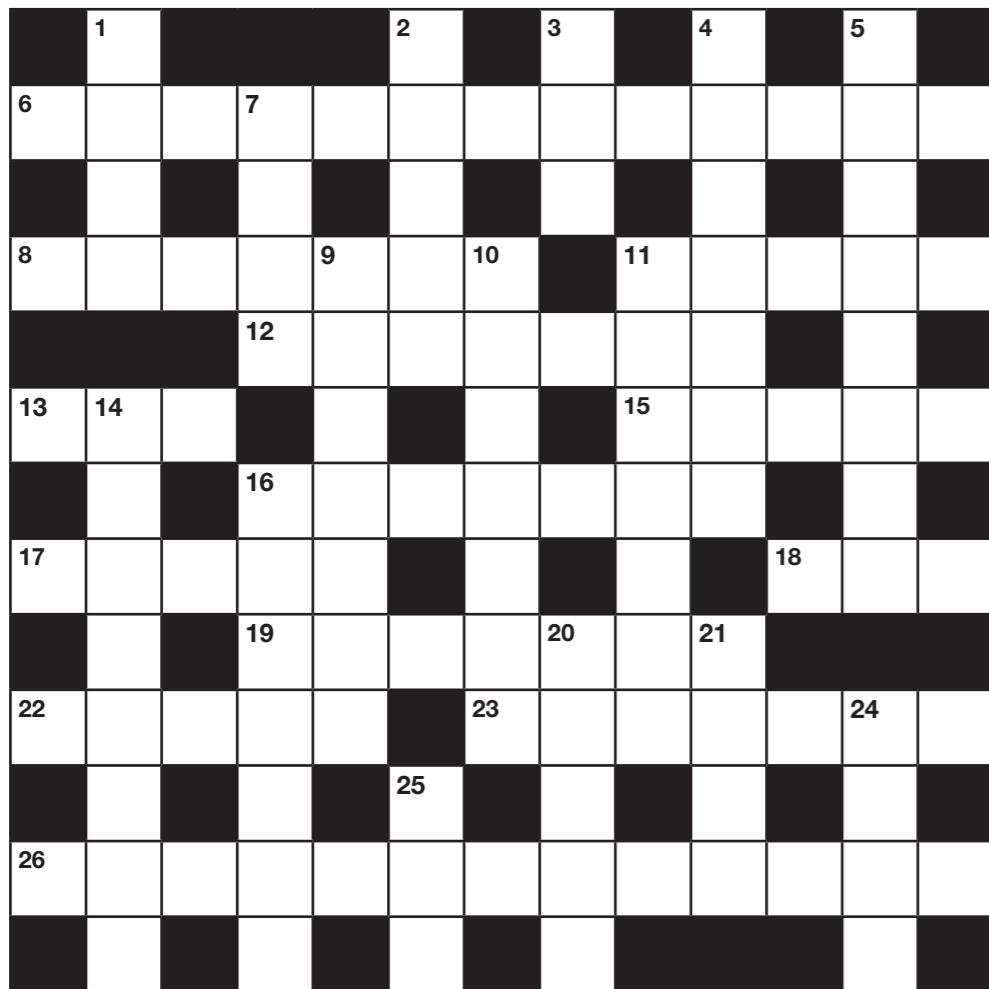
Charles Causley 1986
Short and Sweet: 101 Very Short Poems; edited by Simon Armitage, pub. faber and faber 1999

much of it for children. In 1967 he was awarded the Queen's Gold Medal for Poetry and the CBE in 1986 and served on the Poetry Panel of the Arts Council for some years. He was highly regarded by other contemporary poets for his direct, clear and original style. A Trust now exists to preserve his legacy and encourage poetry writing.

'Do you know, if I didn't write poetry, I think I'd explode?'

Kate Banister, St Julian's, St Albans

Crossword



ACROSS

- 6. Parable (4) (9)
- 8. Praise (7)
- 11. Place to stay (5)
- 12. Puts out of danger (7)
- 13. '...' of the Apostle (3)
- 15. Helpers (5)
- 16. Hindu gods – incarnations (7)
- 17. Group of natives (5)
- 18. Home of the pig (3)
- 19. Angry growl (7)
- 22. Firm ties (5)
- 23. Move – left or right (7)
- 26. '(5) (3) (4)' 'O my soul'

DOWN

- 1. Performance of one person (4)
- 2. Ghastly fright (5)
- 3. Father (3)
- 4. Cell disease (7)
- 5. Walkway (8)
- 7. Bed (4)
- 9. Paradise in the sky (7)
- 10. Those rowing a boat (7)
- 11. Scared – 'Faint' (7)
- 14. Investigators (8)
- 16. Refuse to vote (7)
- 20. Pliant (5)
- 21. Trade agreement (4)
- 24. Songs (4)
- 25. '...' Commandments (3)

Answers on page 30

An appreciation of Michael George Stratford

Mike was a man of many interests, a complex man, he was a son, a brother, a husband and a friend.

He was an engineer. Engineering was in the blood. Grandfather Stratford worked at Bulbourne making lock gates for the canals. Mike's father, George, was a blacksmith at East & Sons in Berkhamsted. Grandfather Delderfield worked for the railway for forty years and naturally Mike was introduced to the wonders of a steam locomotive at a very early age.

In the school holidays Mike and his sister would cycle from Aldbury to the bridge on Newground Road. They perched together on the railway embankment to watch and log the locomotives arriving and departing Tring station. Sisters can disappoint and sadly Elizabeth's interest in steam evaporated, but Mike's enthusiasm remained constant.

Mike had strong family links to Aldbury and St John the Baptist Church. Mike was christened there, sang in the choir, played Telstar on the church organ when unsupervised and married there to his first wife, Christine Chalk.

Mike and Christine's love of dogs and horses is well documented in their photograph collection. Mike was on horseback practising dressage moves when in 1978 a berry aneurysm in his brain burst. Fortunately he was in an indoor riding school and horses are trained to stop when you relax your body. By rights Mike should not have survived; as it was, he was in a coma in the Royal Free Hospital for some time.

Mike went to work for Cooper McDougall & Robertson in Berkhamsted by the canal. Initially in the aerosol section, his sense of mischief was revealed when rubber gloves were filled with compressed gas and dropped into the canal. Gradually the gas would warm and expand and slowly, slowly a 'hand' would rise from the water creaking and groaning as the rubber stretched until it would fail with a bang to the consternation of the ducks!

When growing up in Aldbury Mike helped with the lambing; he found the experience amazing. At Cooper's he developed an effective method to dilute sheep dip for the then compulsory dipping. Based on Christopher Wren's

tipping bucket rain gauge, the device required only mains water (no electricity) to dispense a measured dose of concentrate into the water. Setting the water flow rate to match the entry of the sheep into the bath, a constant concentration was maintained to ensure the sheep were neither over- nor under-dosed. The device won a Silver Medal at the Royal Agricultural Show and Cooper's made a promotional film.

In 1987 Kate Emery joined Cooper's Animal Health as a Formulation Pharmacist. Working in the same department, they got to know one another and Mike eventually asked Kate out. Characteristic for him, Mike's chat-up line was 'Would Kate like to watch a sheep dipping video?' and because Mike was a gentleman, Kate watched the promotional film for his silver-medal-winning device. Their next date was a visit to Tring Museum to see the dressed fleas.



Mike started working for T R W United Carr in Aylesbury in August 1990. Kate and Mike married in September 1990 and had 31 years together.

Mike had used a drawing board at Cooper's, going on to use 3D CAD at TRW. Mike designed clips and fastenings for the automotive industry. He very much enjoyed the challenge of designing the right component in the right material to meet the customers brief and to a tight deadline. Mike was made redundant again but could not find another Engineering Design job so he retired to pursue his hobbies and interests and to volunteer using his skills and experience.

For some time Mike and Kate had volunteered at the Bucks Railway Centre (Quinton Road) working on the modified hall locomotive No 6989 Wightwick Hall. However, once Mike retired, he also volunteered for the Wednesday

Engineering Gang. Ironically it was when his left hand 'forgot' it was holding a painting can and dropped it, the first signs of his Parkinson's disease was noticed.

Mike also used his design engineering skills volunteering with REMAP. This charity allows engineers to use their skills to modify equipment for the disabled.

Mike was interested in the world around him and enjoyed meeting people and travelling. Objects with an engine were of particular interest: airplanes and air shows, cars and bikes and Formula One and steam engines – stationary, traction and rail. Visits to see these formed the backdrop to thirty-plus years of married life.

Mike and Kate were long-time members of the 8.00am congregation at St Peter & St Paul's Church and were sidesmen. Mike was a member of the Church Fabric Committee working on various projects. He took pride in the specification and ordering of the main church notice-board in the correct Church of England shade of blue.

Other church notice-boards were scrutinised ever afterwards.

The Friends of Tring Church Heritage (FOTCH) came into being in the year Kate and Mike were married and both were activists and organisers of events. Mike's support and encouragement (and the checking of spelling!) allowed Kate to volunteer as both a Trustee and as Secretary to the Trustees.

Mike was a member of Tring Men's Society and organised for the church community a guided trip to Quinton to the Bucks Railway Centre where Mike was able to share his knowledge of all things steam locomotive.

Although Mike was forced by ill-health to be an armchair member of Quinton and the church, he enjoyed going to events when he could and this last spring was able to attend the AGM at Quinton and the Jubilee Big Lunch in the Parish Hall. He was so pleased to see his many friends – it was well worth the struggle to get there.

We will miss his thoughtful kindness, practical guidance, quiet words of encouragement and warm smile. God bless.

Kate Stratford & Elizabeth McMillan

Useful contacts

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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



Services in September in Tring Team Parish

Sunday 4th September

8am Holy Communion traditional language **Tring**
8am Holy Communion traditional language **Aldbury**
10am Holy Communion with Sunday Club **Tring**
10am Worship for All **Aldbury**
10am Holy Communion **Long Marston**

Sunday 18th September

8am Holy Communion traditional language **Tring**
10am Holy Communion and Sunday Club **Tring**
10am Holy Communion **Aldbury**
10am Sunday Worship **Long Marston**

Lots more going on in the parish

Mondays 3.30pm - 5pm Youth Café in term time **Tring**
Tuesdays 2pm - 4pm Craft and a Cuppa **Tring**
Wednesdays 10am - 12noon Baby/toddler/carer drop-in **Tring**
Social Coffee Fridays, Saturdays 10am - 12 noon, after Sunday, Tuesday & Thursday services **Tring**,
Tuesdays 10.30 - 12noon **Wilstone**
Tuesdays 10.30 - 12noon **Aldbury**
Thursdays 10.30 - 12noon **Puttenham**

Worship for All and Communion Together

At these services we all worship together but there is more provision for children, quite often a craft activity, however they are for everyone.

Worship for All doesn't have Holy Communion, Communion Together does.

They are a more relaxed style of worship and are a bit shorter.

Holy Communion with Sunday Club in Tring

There are also times when it is important to have age related worship. We all worship in different ways so we have a Sunday Club in Tring. The children (0 - 11 years old) go upstairs during the first hymn to have activities then re-join the wider congregation to take communion.

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

Sunday 11th September

8am Holy Communion traditional language **Tring**
10am Worship for all **Tring**
10am Holy Communion **Aldbury**
3pm Piano and More Concert **Tring**
6pm Celtic Evening Prayer **Long Marston**

Sunday 25th September

8am Holy Communion traditional language **Tring**
10am Communion Together **Tring**
10am Holy Communion **Aldbury**
1.30pm Harvest Lunch at Puttenham, tickets £10 from Christine 07514 548289 followed by
3.30pm Harvest Evensong **Puttenham**
6pm Holy Communion **Long Marston**

Mid-week Services in the Parish

9.15am Tuesdays Holy Communion **Tring**
10am Tuesdays Alternates weekly either Holy Communion or Morning Worship **Wilstone**
10am Thursdays Holy Communion in traditional language **Tring**

Crossword puzzle answers From page 28

ACROSS	DOWN
6. GOOD SAMARITAN	1. SOLO
8. WORSHIP	2. PANIC
11. HOTEL	3. DAD
12. SECURES	4. MITOSIS
13. ACT	5. PAVEMENT
15. AIDES	7. DOSS
16. AVATARS	9. HEAVENS
17. TRIBE	10. PUNTERS
18. STY	11. HEARTED
19. SNARLED	14. CORONERS
22. KNOTS	16. ABSTAIN
23. SIDEWAY	20. LITHE
26. PRAISE THE LORD	21. DEAL
	24. AIRS
	25. TEN



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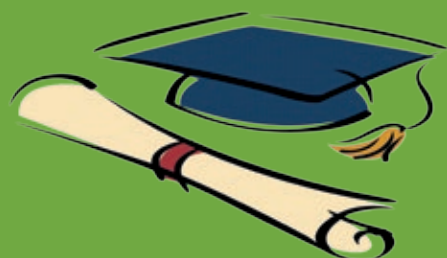
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Website details: www.tringcharities.co.uk/education

Telephone: Elaine Winter, Secretary to the Trustees
01442 827913 Email: info@tringcharities.co.uk



Please note that the closing date is 15 November 2022 to lodge a completed application for grants payable from Autumn 2023.