

# COMMENT

THE MAGAZINE OF THE CHURCHES IN TRING



# High Street Baptist Church - Tring

Growing in the message and challenge of God



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

Visit our website to find out more about creation care.



## Sensational Spring!

High Street Baptist Church is delighted to be part of the Tring Together Spring Fayre. As we emerge from lockdowns (and winter) we are focussing on our senses to promote a sense of wellbeing and connect with God through creation.

Read more about wellbeing on our website  
[www.tringbaptistchurch.co.uk/wellbeing](http://www.tringbaptistchurch.co.uk/wellbeing)

## Morning worship

Sundays 10.30am

zoom

Meeting ID: 978 9592 0392

If you, or someone you know, would like to find out more please call Cliff on 07906 597882 or email [admin@tringbaptistchurch.co.uk](mailto:admin@tringbaptistchurch.co.uk) [www.tringbaptistchurch.co.uk/linkinglives/](http://www.tringbaptistchurch.co.uk/linkinglives/)



Sermons are available

'High Street Baptist Church, Tring, UK'.



Don't hesitate to get in touch if you need pastoral support.

Church office [admin@tringbaptistchurch.co.uk](mailto:admin@tringbaptistchurch.co.uk)  
Revd Joe Egan 07521 513493 or [joe@tringbaptistchurch.co.uk](mailto:joe@tringbaptistchurch.co.uk)  
Revd Ruth Egan 07521 513494 or [ruth@tringbaptistchurch.co.uk](mailto:ruth@tringbaptistchurch.co.uk)

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#tringbaptistchurch High Street Baptist Church

## Editorial



There was a scrap of paper on my kitchen work surface for weeks on which was scribbled 'What a difference a year makes'. It was to remind me to write such an article for *Comment* – but then Janet Goodyer sent in an article for April with that very same title that was so much better than what was in my head that I threw away the scrap of paper!

That year for me was a reflection on those 'lost' in the last year or so to me personally. Without naming everyone, it was because I had returned physically to church when able and was saddened that the people who were part of 'my' normal Sunday were no longer there – nor would they ever be. We used to bring Gwen Hewison and Daphne Nash to St Peter & St Paul's Church almost every week for some years. That routine died with Covid-19 but then they also died at the end of last year. I used to sit next to Leslie Barker but he died at the beginning of last year. Frank Dalton sat in front of me and Jean Wakefield behind. Both died last year. Others have, as we know and have variously recorded, moved away for all sorts of good reasons and some are good enough to write for *Comment* so we do not completely lose touch and they still 'feel' present with us. It doesn't feel as if they are gone for ever. I know that others are planning to move away even

as I write this. St Peter & St Paul's will have lost many 'characters' and those faces who were dependably there from week to week. When we are allowed to sit next to each other again in church – just maybe we will not always be separated by a pew's width and masks that make it hard to see our expressions of concern, sympathy or joy – our church will be a different mix of people in the future who will bring different gifts and personalities to enrich our church life. As I look back on what has been, I look forward with hope to what will be.

Last month I asked people to write in with the hymns they would most like to sing when we are 'allowed' to sing again in church. I was overwhelmed with the response – which means that only two people responded! So here you have my own choices – as soon as I thought of one, I was confounded by many others that crowded in!

The first has to be 'Great is thy faithfulness' which I first sang at All Saints, Laleham in my teens and then became a favourite at St George's URC in Hemel Hempstead. The words reflect how constant God is day to day whatever is happening around us. My favourite hymn, I think, must be next which is 'In Christ alone my hope is found' much newer and probably last sung as part of the Good Friday Walk of Witness service in 2019... but sung often in St Peter & St Paul's. I would also love to sing again 'Who is on the Lord's side?' which I don't think I have sung since a teenager. But then it was as part of a small but packed

church as it always was for Evensong at All Saints, Laleham and everyone knew the 'parts' to the tune Rachie, the men and women singing the chorus in harmony. In truth it was the joy of singing in harmony that made it feel so good to sing. Then it would have to be either 'Shine, Jesus, shine' for the sheer joy of it or '10,000 reasons' which I first heard at the funeral of Victoria Macdonald at St Peter & St Paul some years ago – again, uplifting and joyful.

Well, that was piece of pure self indulgence and I for one will be singing them in my head for the rest of the day!

After I had been to the Maundy Thursday service last month at the parish church I found myself singing in the car on the way home a hymn that again I don't think I have sung since my teens but as soon as I reminded my husband of it, we could both recall most of the words and found it profoundly moving and nostalgic. The hymn is 'O teach me what it meaneth / That cross uplifted high / With one, the man of Sorrows / Condemned to bleed and die. / O teach me what it cost thee / To make a sinner whole / And teach me, Saviour, teach me / The value of a soul.' Do you know it? Maybe we also sang that at St George's? Perhaps Joan and David Eeley can confirm!

So, please do write and tell me your own choice of 'hymns for when we can sing together again' for next time.

**The Editor**

## Being reborn with Christ



Which point of the road map are you looking forward to? Was it 29 March when you could see family again in a garden for the first time? Was it 12 April when shops and some pubs and restaurants were open again? Will it be 17 May when indoor entertainment and attractions open? Or are you waiting for all the restrictions to hopefully be lifted on 21 June? Maybe none of these fill you with excitement and you remain fearful?

There are a lot of 're' words being

bandied about with the re-opening of society. We have to re-build and we hope the economy will re-bounce. All of these 're' words imply going back to how things were before.

In May our churches are still celebrating the Easter season and at the heart of this is the Resurrection. Churches have always been places of hope and looking forward to a better future. However, our 're' word is about dying with Christ so that we can have a new and better future. In the last year maybe we have started to rethink our lives. Do we really want to travel and pollute as much as we used to? Are we comfortable with the fact that even within rich Tring, many are dependent

on the Foodbank? What will we do about the isolated and lonely and elderly?

As society re-opens our churches will once more dedicate themselves to working for a better community with green agendas, with coffee mornings and lunch clubs and charitable fundraising. We never want to go back to how things were before. We always want to be reborn with Christ. Hopefully in this magazine you will see ways that the Churches in Tring are doing their part in this.

**Huw Bellis**  
**Tring Team**

# What a difference a year (or so) makes



Having retired from a Senior Physiotherapist career in the NHS at the end of 2015, my wife Sandra was diagnosed with Early Onset Dementia,

Alzheimer's, in 2017; and seeing such a rapid decline in her ability to function, Sandra went into hospital last October for two weeks to give the Consultant a chance to sort out her medication. She is still in hospital, albeit her third different one, now in Lambourn Grove in St Albans. The disease has got progressively worse and the medication is at best keeping her calm much of the time. The fact that in such a short time she has gone from being a Senior Physiotherapist caring for others to needing 1:1 care in a Dementia Unit is testament to the aggressive nature of the disease and must be very confusing for her.

In December she, along with the rest of the Dementia Unit in Hertford, caught Covid-19 which had a negative impact on her Alzheimer's and, whilst she is now clear of the virus, it has affected her appetite and she is not eating well at present. Sandra is currently in Lambourne Grove, Hixberry Lane, St Albans, Herts AL4 0TZ.

Last year we sold our house to downsize so we had a more manageable garden and was nearer the centre of town. We planned some changes to the new house to ensure I could care for Sandra. The move went through in November, one month after Sandra was admitted to hospital but I continued with the move and improvements, anticipating she would be able to come home; that now seems unlikely. Our new address is: 7 The Hollies, Tring, Herts HP23 5HW.

## Looking forward

We have a roof over our head, money in the bank and food in the larder so we are so much better off than many people in this country and around the world. Sandra is getting the best care available and I hope to be able to visit her soon, Covid-19 permitting.

Work on the house and garden is progressing so I am staying isolated much of the time and keeping out of the way of workmen when they are here. Catching Covid-19 would seriously

scupper my plans to visit Sandra when that becomes possible.

I have stood back from active involvement in ministry in the parish, including the leading of worship, providing support for the Audio and Visual systems in and around the parish and Baptism preparation, with my only practical involvement being trying to ensure we have people reading the lesson and Intercessions at the 10.00am services at St Peter & St Paul's. I am not sure what form my ministry will take going forward, but having been so greatly blessed by people's prayers, I still believe some form of prayer ministry should be part of it.

I have been avoiding attending services in church. It really doesn't seem the same without the people and interaction we have become used to. The online Morning Prayers each weekday morning have been my access to formal worship, complemented by the opportunities I have made to walk around the area and enjoy God's wonderful countryside. Looking forward, I hope, to doing more walking as a form of worship and prayer.

As the sun shines a little more often and the roll out of the vaccines progresses, I look forward to being more engaged in the life of the town and the parish but am bidding my time for the right time and opportunity. Despite everything the virus has thrown at us, life is still good.

Our family are doing well with Debs and her husband Jimmy now living in Penarth, Wales, where he is the vicar. Sarah, Ben and our two grandchildren, Jacob and Harry, are in Ludgershall in Wiltshire. Sarah is doing well as a Learning Support Assistant and Midday Supervisory Assistant at the boys' school, alongside homeschooling them which she has excelled at, so the boys are doing well. James and Lucy have moved to Walmsley, Sutton Coldfield, both working for the Jericho Foundation, although Lucy is due some maternity leave, so exciting news all round. They have continued to support us both in prayer and wherever possible in word and action. I miss them all greatly but am looking forward to getting to hug them all.

## Things I have learnt during Lockdown...

I very quickly learned that I did not have the skills to work the washing basket whatever magic words I used, so I am

having to wash the clothes myself. If anyone knows them, please let me know.... Check the pockets of clothes before putting them in the washing machine: cordless earbuds do not appreciate being washed. Fortunately, I wanted them before they got washed twice, so a close call.

When you have put washing on, you need to take it out when the machine stops. Waiting until you have run out of clothes to go looking for them and find them in a soggy state in the machine can be a problem.

Calls from friends checking I am OK really make a difference, as do their prayers, without which neither Sandra or I would have survived. Thanks...

Making decisions on my own, without being able to share them (and the blame if they do not come out right) is not easy.

It can be challenging switching between video-calling applications: Microsoft Teams, Zoom, FaceTime, WhatsApp etc... remembering which options and shortcuts work on which tool and where they are found.

There are some fantastic walks around Tring, around the town, along the Wendover arm and Wilstone reservoir, around Tring Park and beyond. But avoid the steeper sections when the ground is too sodden and slippery.

Having someone to hug at any time but especially at night is a blessing I greatly miss. I am so looking forward to restrictions easing.

The dust from taking internal structural walls down and the mud from landscaping the garden in the rain gets everywhere, and no amount of cleaning seems to stop it creeping back.

Cooking for one is not easy; portion control is certainly a skill. Often I cook enough for two with the intention of freezing half for another day but somehow it gets eaten day one, which has not been a blessing to my weight.

Once a bottle of wine is opened it is very difficult not to keep topping the glass up. The effect of this is often that I miss great chunks of a programme I have been watching and become aware there is a message on the screen saying the recording has finished.

## And then?

This recording has finished for now but as someone once said... 'I'll be back'. And another said 'Tomorrow will be a good day'.

**Mike Watkin, St Peter & St Paul**

# Looking forwards and back...



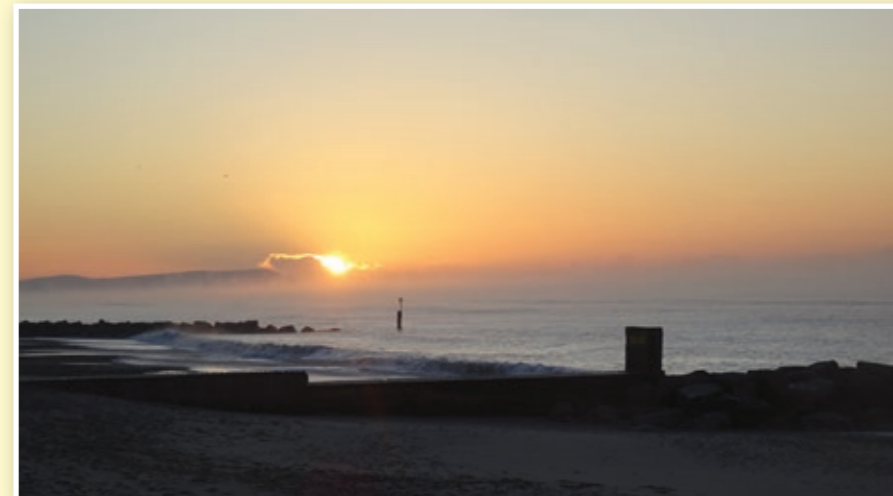
Last time I wrote an article for *Comment* David and I had recently left Tring for pastures new on the south coast, Southbourne, an eastern part of

Bournemouth, and not far from the old town of Christchurch.

We are well settled into our flat, but glad we have a garage where we keep, not our car, but a number of items which have no other home! These include our bikes which we use from time to time; mine is an electric one which I can highly recommend for people who want to get from place to place and are not necessarily clocking up energetic miles for exercise' sake.

There is a pleasant communal garden here and David has joined the small team who mow the 'lawn'. Fortunately a new mower has now arrived making the job easier. We see some neighbours quite often and others hardly at all from among the twelve flats, all 'in passing' as they have not held any of their usual meetings or get-togethers in the last year.

Last summer and early autumn were a relatively good time for exploring the area as we were not under the restrictions that have returned with further lockdowns. On the social side of life, including church and Quaker life, it has been difficult to get to know people for reasons that are familiar to everybody. I join in a Zoom meeting with the Quakers on some Sundays, and on others follow the 10.00am service from St Peter & St Paul's in Tring. We appreciate being able to do this, and



notice from March's *Comment* that we are not alone in joining in from afar!

By this time in normal times we would have expected to be feeling more at home in new church surroundings, but we still have a foot, or at least a toe, in Tring parish. We live next door to the Vicarage of an impressive looking Anglican church just yards away, but we find that it is very high church and they do not have women priests. What they are missing out on! And since Christmas, they are in a vacancy situation as their vicar and his wife are about to leave for Jaffa, under the auspices of CMS, to re-open an Anglican church there which has not been used as a church for about seventy years – a daunting task! (I do not know if their plans have been affected by Covid-19 problems).

We have been to a few services at their other church, a light modern building near Hengistbury Head, where lay people do a lot to keep things going in difficult times; we have been welcomed, as far as possible, behind masks and with a quick exit after the service.



David and I do our own shopping, quite often at a busy local Co-op which is only five minutes' walk from here; likewise in a different direction we can look out to sea from The Needles in the east to a hazy Studland in the west. It certainly lifts the spirits to see such a sweep of the bay and usually, a couple of cruise ships anchored there. I wonder when they will be able to go cruising again?

During lockdown our younger daughter, who lives at Boscombe a short distance away, has been joining us for brief walks once a week, but not socialising more than that at the moment. Our grandsons will have grown somewhat by the time we see them again!

As you can tell, we are fortunate in our lockdown situation in some ways, but life does seem to be 'on hold' for us, although modern ways of keeping in touch are a great boon. Some of us may find it strange when we are allowed to entertain each other with simple cups of tea!

I wonder if we retired people will return to a time table of U3A meetings, singing in choirs and generally occupying ourselves in sociable ways, or maybe we shall hang on to a bit more 'quiet time' for reading or pursuing hobbies that can be done at home. And in some cases, people will be catching up with delayed medical or dental appointments.

Greetings from the south coast, may you enjoy good health and a good summer after the trials and tribulations of the past months.

**Margaret Whiting**  
formerly St Peter & St Paul

# An African summer



The summer of 1975 fell between the third and fourth years of my undergraduate Biochemistry degree. I was beginning to consider what I might do the following year and as my interests were in human metabolism it was suggested that I look at postgraduate courses in Human Nutrition but spend the summer doing something that would be relevant to such further study. My tutor and my College Principal were really helpful, providing names of people to contact for help in finding a project overseas and places to apply for funding. Everything worked out well and in early July I set off for Zambia to work on part of a project looking at whether moulds that grew on the harvested maize and groundnuts kept in humid conditions were linked with higher incidences of cancer of the liver, hepatoma.



The flight from London to Nairobi was my first on a civilian aeroplane. My father was an RAF pilot and we had been on a couple of RAF flights to holidays in Cyprus and Malta thanks to what are known as 'indulgence' flights for service families – I seem to remember that they cost around 10/- per head. However, this was a much longer journey and it wasn't without incident. On the refuelling stop at Khartoum Airport, we were all required to stay on board. Details were scanty but it seemed that something was happening on the ground and the safety of the passengers couldn't be guaranteed. I never did find out what the problem was

and eventually we flew onwards; only when I stood at the top of the steps on the tarmac in Kenya did I first feel the heat of the African sun. After a few days of acclimatising in Nairobi with a university friend and her family, I flew on to Lusaka. There I was met by Dr Anne Bayley, with whom I would stay while I was working in the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry at the University of Zambia in Lusaka. She made me very welcome in her cosy bungalow and for some reason one of the things I remember is that we ate tilapia quite often.

For the following three months I lived between Lusaka and Katete, spending most of my time in a remote area in the Eastern Province of Zambia. St Francis Mission Hospital, Katete is located off the Great East Road and while there I lived with Dr James Cairns and his family. I spent my days riding a bicycle out to neighbouring villages to collect samples of the local diet. The staple food was maize, ground into mealie meal – not unlike ground almonds – and then cooked into a thick porridge called nshima, eaten at most meals and supplemented by vegetables and occasional meat. Every other week I transported food samples collected from the villages back to Lusaka, often riding on the back of the supply lorry and baking in the sun. It was an eight-hour journey and then I spent a few days in the university laboratories analysing the samples for the presence of aflatoxins, before returning on the lorry to Katete.

I took very few photographs that summer, relying on a Kodak Instamatic camera and a couple of rolls of slide film. What pictures I did take have since been digitised but they only give hints about my experiences. However, I have a number of very vivid memories of my time in Zambia. There was the full moon as I walked across the Katete compound after sunset, with wooden buildings and statuesque trees casting shadows. Moon-shadow: something I had listened to Cat Stevens sing about in my university room. But this was the real thing. A natural light so bright that



you could almost read a book by it. There were no streetlights. When darkness fell, with a suddenness that took some getting used to, there were no electric lights. Inside, we lit Tilley lamps.

There was the evening when we sat around a campfire within the hospital grounds, a small group of British medical students on their elective trips – and me. As I chatted about the latest letter that had arrived for me from home, I showed my friends a locket, sent by my fiancé. Inside was a tiny black-and-white image. Our May Ball portrait. I mentioned the name of the photographer who had so kindly provided this extra copy of a picture I would not otherwise see until I returned home in early autumn. 'He's my brother!' a voice across the fire exclaimed. What a very small world it was, after all.

And the day I had a bike accident on my way back from one of the villages. I sat, trembling violently, on the wooden veranda outside the TB ward. Blood streamed from my hands, shredded skin hanging in thin red ribbons from their heels. Their impact on the baked



red earth had saved my head. Now my head was swimming and I floated on the edge of fainting. How had I got back to the hospital? I must have walked and somehow pushed the bicycle along the dirt track from the village, but it was all a blur. The pain was intense and all I could think of doing was to say the Lord's Prayer over and over again. After a short wait that felt like an age, some careful cleaning and gently applied dressings soon brought relief and it wasn't long before I was on the mend.

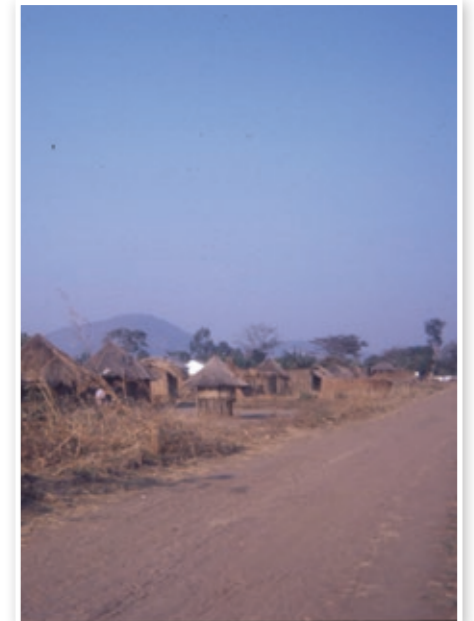


Towards the end of my time in the country, I was invited to join the Cairns family and others on a safari trip to the Luangwa National Park. We reached

the park by crossing on a pontoon, stayed in rondavels very similar to those in the villages I had been visiting, took early morning walks with guides to see elephants, watched hippos, giraffes and other large animals at the river's edge and saw the most incredible birds. It was something I shall never forget.

Equally unforgettable was the night in Katete when one of the medical students came to fetch me. 'You said you'd like to see a birth, didn't you? Well hurry up.' This was about as far as you could get from the scenes on television medical dramas, or even the real-life maternity ward documentaries. In a bare room with painted white walls and a concrete floor, a young Zambian woman lay naked on a narrow bed. She was glistening with perspiration and in great distress. Apparently, she had been in labour for some time and the baby was not coming. I watched from the side of the room – no PPE at all back then – as the medical team used forceps to bring the baby into the world and the mother was given her crying infant to hold. It was truly amazing and, despite having since given birth four times myself, that moment in 1975 was when I fully appreciated the miracle of childbirth.

The months I spent in Africa provided experiences that have stayed with me – and I will forever be grateful for the opportunity I had to live there for a short while all those years ago. I had no idea at the time, and have only learned much more recently, just how privileged I was to get to know two amazing Christian



people who had dedicated their lives to the people of that continent. Dr James Cairns was the Medical Superintendent at Katete for over forty years and is still involved in helping to recruit doctors and medical students from Europe and elsewhere to spend time working at the hospital. Dr Anne Bayley retired to the UK following a very distinguished medical career, having become a global expert on an HIV-related liver disease, and fulfilled a much earlier ambition in being ordained as an Anglican priest in 1994. (See <http://blog.welcomelibrary.org/2014/09/the-discovery-of-aids-in-zambia/> and [http://www.stratshope.org/partners/partners\\_contributors\\_item/rev-dr-anne-bayley](http://www.stratshope.org/partners/partners_contributors_item/rev-dr-anne-bayley)).

**Nicky Bull**  
**High Street Baptist Church**



## Your local

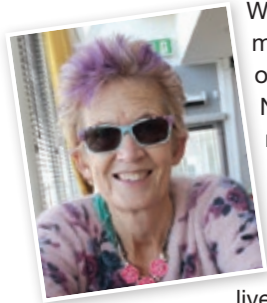
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# Moments in time



When reading the most recent copy of the FOTCH Newsletter, I realised that I have now been away from Tring three times longer than I lived there, which

was a considerable shock. I lived in Tring for almost five years, between 2001 and 2005. I have lived in Bingley, West Yorkshire, ever since.

I landed in Tring by happy chance. We were living in Sheffield and I was working from home for a Chinese company, who acquired a company in Kings Langley and decided without having much idea of geography, that it made more sense for them for me to work from there.

At the same time, my husband Terry's company sent him to work in Northern Ireland on a project, living in company accommodation. Oliver went to university and Kelda moved in with her boyfriend in Wakefield. So we decided to sell up, buy a small place in Hertfordshire to test the water, and decide what to do next when Terry's contract finished. I visited the company in Kings Langley and driving along the A41 saw a sign for Tring. The name sounded joyful. I turned off, loved the High Street, the church and the whole ambience, picked up a pile of estate agent brochures and was sold.

Our house in Morefields was tiny, but worked well on a Musical Chairs basis. Most of the time I was there alone. If Terry and Oliver came home at the same time it was a squeeze. Visitors had to stay at the Rose and Crown or the Crows Nest. But those five years were so special, and seem like yesterday.

The church family at St Peter & St Paul's made me so welcome, and will always have a place in my heart: the love and friendship, the mutual support and



encouragement, the laughter and the fun and the opportunities for spiritual development. I loved working with TAY (Tring Anglican Youth), helping to organise Family

Fun Days, selling raffle tickets, sending numerous teddies on the perilous journey down the tower, even honing my acting skills, and always, the feeling of coming home whenever I returned to Tring from my regular trips to China.

It can't have been, of course, but it always seemed to be warm and sunny, and we seemed to spend most of our time outside, walking along the canal, sitting in pub and café gardens, having barbecues – like the song: we had joy, fun and seasons in the sun, and even though Terry, Oliver and Kelda were only in Tring sporadically, none of us have ever forgotten our time there.

In 2005 my company sold the company in Kings Langley and decided I should work from home again. There was not much room for home-working in Morefields. And as Terry's time in Northern Ireland was coming to an end, we had to make decisions. We decided to move back to Yorkshire to be closer to my mum, who was now on her own, my dad having died the year before, and where we could get a much bigger place which would be more appropriate to our changed circumstances.

I hated leaving Tring. We chose Bingley because it reminded us of Tring – on the canal (the Leeds/Liverpool), a market town with a sloping High Street, an imposing church in the centre of the town, friendly people. We are very happy here. There have been hard times – Oliver had kidney failure in 2007, and has been on dialysis ever since, but he has settled

here well, made many friends and is working and living a full and rewarding life in this vibrant, diverse and beautiful area. The church community, as in Tring, is warm and friendly. We have the same mutual support network, spiritual challenges



and enthusiastic social committee as Tring, and the last difficult year has shown how much we look out for each other. I have not been able to travel, and have been able to be more involved in the church and town community, which I have relished.

Life is punctuated by a series of moments in time, threaded like different coloured and textured stones on a necklace chain, each one connected with those before and ahead. Now that we can see glimpses of light and hope ahead at the end of the pandemic, I think of the stones behind me and those yet to thread on the chain ahead. The Tring stones shine bright and colourful with the memories of love, friendship and joy. Behind and ahead of them are other stones. The bright and shining ones reflect other times and places of friendship, support and community – for example, my years at home in Sunderland, five years in the lovely town of Penistone, near Sheffield, at University in Warwick, a number of years in Germany. There are dark and dull stones, when times were hard and bitter, but the bright stones on either side of them gave strength, comfort and hope. The Bingley stones are comforting and joyful, mirroring those of Tring. I look forward to threading more stones in future, knowing that the chain is strong enough to support the heavy and dark ones, confident that there are good and caring people everywhere and enough mutual love and faith to give strength to carry on in even the darkest times.

I am sorry that the demands of life have meant that I have not kept in touch as much as I wish with all the people I was close to in Tring. Annette has my email address and I would love to hear from anyone who remembers me. The pandemic has brought into sharp focus the importance of keeping in touch with friends and valuing what is special.

**Chris Anderson**  
formerly St Peter & St Paul

# The Big Read



During the autumn a group of us at High Street Baptist Church embarked on reading a book by John Mark Comer called 'The ruthless elimination of

Hurry'. The book was the first of the Big Church Read series where many people read the same book throughout the churches. There was a video each week and then we all read the relevant chapters and, in our case, discussed them via Zoom each Sunday evening.

In some ways it was strange to read this book because for most of us our 'hurry' had been eliminated by the lockdowns but we still managed to get a tremendous amount out of the book. On the cover of the book it states 'How to stay emotionally healthy and spiritually alive in the chaos of the modern world'. Again, very relevant for us going through lockdown.

John Comer lives, writes and works in the core of Portland, Oregon, United

States. He is married with three children and is the pastor for teaching and vision at Bridgetown. At the beginning of the book it is 10.00pm and he has given six talks at churches that day and he is beyond tired – emotionally, mentally and spiritually. He is tired out, on the couch watching a movie and completely spent.

The next day is full of hurry again but the church has grown very fast and there is just so much to do. He got into this way of life so he could teach the way of Jesus but what type of person is he becoming?

Six months later, after talking to many people, he decides to resign from his high-powered job and only to lead one church at a time. He wants to slow down, walk to work and goes into therapy. He doesn't know where his life is going but it has to be better than before and many of those he has spoken to feel that he is taking the right route.

The book then continues with his journey into a more structured life with periods of rest and time to worship God and get his life on a more enjoyable road. He realises that it is possible to

have time for working, resting and playing.

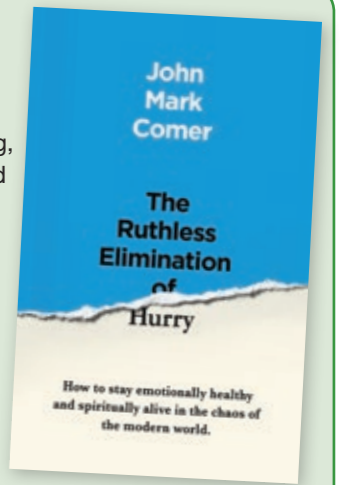
The book then gives practical examples of how to gain more from your life in so many

ways. He talks about doing Sabbath and how he sets aside most of a day each week for this, just praising the Lord and being with his family too. He covers many subjects in a friendly way.

In this time of lockdown it shows us how, although much of the hurry has disappeared from our lives, we can reclaim time that maybe we let ooze away or wasted on things we didn't really enjoy before.

A group of us enjoyed reading this together and maybe you might enjoy it too.

**Thelma Fisher**  
High Street Baptist Church



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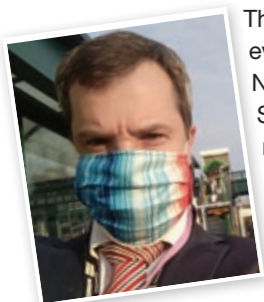
**The Church of England Children's Society is one of the longest established Anglican charities and remains a major force in the protection of our most vulnerable young people.**

**Our current mission focus this May/June is supporting the Society. We will write to all box holders about "Box-Opening" arrangements.**

**For further information on how YOU can support The Children's Society - or make donations please contact Prue and Grahame Senior on 01442 822770 – gsenior@seniorpartners.co.uk**

*or watch this space!*

## Church life



The first church I ever went to was St Nicholas Church in Sutton, Surrey, with my parents. When I was about 7 years old, I joined the choir there. They had a wonderful

group of singers led by David Squibb, who was also the Director of Music at Trinity School in Croydon.

We participated in the Royal School of Church Music (RSCM) training and I won my light and then dark blue ribbon awards.



The services were quite traditional and we would lead the singing at Mattins of the Te Deum and Jubilate to various settings as well as Psalms and traditional hymns from Hymns Ancient & Modern and sometimes from the more recent (but still old) 100 Hymns for Today. We also had fantastic special services, such as the Service of Nine Lessons and Carols at Christmas which were performed to a very high standard, along the lines of the famous service at King's College in Cambridge.

Through choral singing I had also joined the RSCM's Southern Cathedral Singers, who were based at Addington Palace in Croydon under Martin How. This group filled in for regular cathedral choirs across the southern part of the UK, anywhere from Portsmouth to Peterborough on various weekends throughout the year. I visited and sang in many cathedrals with them on various weekends, accompanied by supportive parents and a long-suffering little sister. This also included a memorable residential course in Westminster Abbey, with a service broadcast on BBC radio.

Unfortunately, we had a new vicar in Sutton in the early 1980s who wanted to modernise the services. The choir rapidly disbanded, and the traditional music we had sung was replaced with new very modern hymns from Mission Praise. (I used to enjoy Mission Praise! Ed)

As I was keen to keep singing in the more traditional style, I moved on to join what was Croydon Parish Church. Croydon was a very large church, almost like a mini-cathedral, and indeed it is now called Croydon Minster, which is probably more in keeping with its scale and grandeur.



I joined the boys' choir there, which was run by Carl Jackson, and this was of a similar if not higher standard than the choir at St Nicholas had been. I became Head Chorister and gained my red ribbon award and then the Provost's and Bishop's awards from Southwark Cathedral as well as touring with the choir to the Netherlands and making a record while we were there.

Singing at weddings was a frequent occurrence, especially in the summer. I recall, one Saturday, where there were five in a row, one every hour, and we earned a pound for each one, which was some good pocket money back then.

Music is a small world. Carl Jackson also worked at Whitgift School in Croydon as a music teacher, with Robert Vincent, another organist and head of music, who was a contemporary and friendly rival of David Squibb, but also father to my one of wife's best friends. Also, rather coincidentally, Andrew Cantrill, who is the son of someone my wife used to work with, also became organist at Croydon many years later, and reported that some of the music they sang was still marked up with my name for some of the solo parts I had sung.



After a break from regular church going, I resumed when I met Gill, by attending her local church, another St Peter & St Paul's

in Chaldon, Surrey. It is a very small but friendly church in a lovely rural spot. They had a small choir there which was run by an elderly couple whom I think had a professional music background. Normally there were only about four in the choir, but on special days like Easter and Christmas, the choir would suddenly be augmented, filling half the church with semi-professional singers attempting some fairly ambitious anthems.

One Palm Sunday we arrived earlier than usual and were asked to participate in a dramatization of the Passion. I took the part of Jesus, I think much to the chagrin of regular church-goer Ted, an elderly gentleman who had probably played this many times over the preceding couple of decades, and probably wondered who this interloper was taking his regular part. Anyhow, he had to settle for the part of Caiaphas, and all passed off without further incident. This church was also memorable for a rather hip and trendy young curate who drove a Morris Minor and played acoustic guitar. We nicknamed him Father Earring, because, well, he had an earring and it was before we found his proper name, and it sort of stuck.



Gill's dad was a vicar, or Emeritus Rural Dean, as he is known in some quarters. When I asked if we could get married, in flash he got out his notebook and booked us straight in to St Andrew's in Stratton, near Bude in Cornwall. It's a lovely 13<sup>th</sup> century church with a wonderfully ornate wooden screen. We got married there in 2003 and have attended church there whenever we are visiting my father-in-law.

After getting married, we moved to Tring and to another St Peter & St Paul's, where we were made to feel very welcome on our very first visit by Rosemary Carpenter and Margaret Gittins. We've been going there for seventeen years now, even though we moved to Ivinghoe seven years ago.

**Andrew Kinsey  
St Peter & St Paul**

## More twins...

Imagine how excited we felt on hearing that our first grandchildren were to be twins! Our son Peter and his wife Becky broke the news to us and showed us the scan, with two little dots, to prove it!

'Trust you to get two at once,' said my best friend, who had to wait until later in the year to get her first one.

There had never been twins in our families before, so both sets of grandparents were very excited, and I started knitting two of everything.

During her pregnancy, Becky was in the RAF hospital at Halton for most of the time, but they were wonderful there and we could go and visit whenever we liked. One day when we were there Becky was to have a scan and she said 'Come and see'. I had never seen a scan before and was amazed to see these two little babies moving about and they had real Guy legs, long and thin!

By Christmas, the Doctors decided Becky should move to the Special Care Baby unit at John Radcliffe Hospital, Oxford, for their birth. They were due on 23 March but during the night of 23 January, it was decided they needed to be born and they were big enough to survive, so we got a phone call from Peter in the middle of the night telling us that Joseph and Thomas had safely arrived, by Caesarean section, weighing just over 5lb between them – so very tiny.

I was completely overcome by the news and cried, which I seldom do, but have done when all the other grandchildren arrived safely. It is always such a relief! We were absolutely delighted, and Peter said we could

go with the other grandparents (see one below with the twins) that very afternoon to see them. What joy!

It was the first time any of us had been in SCBU and the babies were tiny, but it was reassuring to see photos all over the walls of babies who had been born there and thrived. Joe and Tom were in separate incubators and Tom was on a ventilator, but only for a short time. They looked completely different. Joe had spiky black hair and Tom had fair hair, but they were both a good colour and lively and I had no doubt that they would survive, although they were so small.

They stayed at the hospital for a couple of weeks and were then moved to the SCBU, at the Royal Bucks Hospital. Becky said 'They looked so funny, as they were wrapped in silver foil like two little chickens, in the same incubator' and, of course, she went with them.

We were then able to take my mother to see her first great grandchildren. She was delighted and wanted to take them out for a cuddle, but we couldn't at that stage. They actually came home on their due date 23 March, which happened to be Mother's Day.

It was very hard work for Peter and Becky as they had to be fed every three hours, night and day, to get their weight up to normal, but they managed very well and, of course, we all did what we could to help. Sometimes we would take them out for a walk, to give Becky a break in the day. Grandad loved pushing the pram.

He said it 'took him back', as he always pushed our boys' pram.

Our four boys were all born within six years, which was very busy, but completely different from twins. I think it was much harder for Peter and Becky as it was their first time, with the boys both at the same stage, but they coped well.

We have enjoyed having twin grandsons and used to take them out to all the places we took our boys. Joe and Tom have developed into two completely different personalities. They look more alike now, just like brothers, and have grown into two fine young men. I am very proud of them and they are a great support to me now I am on my own.

Since then we have had five more grandchildren, four more boys as well as a granddaughter and great granddaughter, and I cried every time! Grandchildren are the blessing of our later life. They are a wonderful gift and we love them all.

**Erica Guy, St Peter & St Paul**



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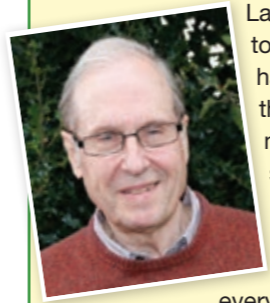
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## The power of prayer



Last November, I am told, I nearly died. It has been suggested that as I survived I might like to write something about my experience. Well, here goes, though almost

everything has been relayed to me. My memory of the three worst days has completely gone.

On the morning of Saturday 21 November 2020, I had a severe heart attack. My heart stopped beating, manual CPR didn't help and I was revived by being shocked from a defibrillator.

What happened, apparently, was that I had telephoned 999 reporting chest pain. My wife was out at the time and I phoned her telling her I had called for an ambulance. She was home when the ambulance crew – two ladies – arrived and I reported to them that I was in severe pain. Then my heart stopped (it was very lucky this happened when the ambulance crew were with me). I was resuscitated as I said by machine and then taken in the ambulance to Harefield Hospital, Uxbridge, a Heart Attack Centre. The ambulance

apparently had become stationary with me inside after it had started off and the local traffic had been blocked. Seemingly I was being resuscitated again!

Anyway, I arrived in ICU at Harefield Hospital and two stents were fitted to open my blocked arteries. I was now in a coma and connected to a ventilator. I woke up three days later and on the fourth day was removed to a normal ward where I stayed for another thirteen days.

I understand there was panic within the family. On the Sunday they had been told they could come to say their goodbyes! My wife, my daughter, my step daughter and my sister and her husband all came to the hospital, all except for my wife having to travel a long way.

Meanwhile a lot of prayers were being said for me. One member of our church told me there had been a huge number of prayers being said for my recovery. At home my wife Jum prayed by candlelight. She prayed hard that I would get better and asked for a sign. Suddenly one of the candles – the one we had bought in the Church of Nativity in Bethlehem – flared brightly before her. She knew at that moment that her

prayer had been answered and she was then able to sleep that night! Our parish priest, Father David Burke, offered prayers for me at Mass and arranged for the local priest, Father Jim, to visit me in Harefield to anoint me. In fact, he came twice.

The hospital doctor warned my family that my heart was severely damaged, that I was not responding, and that there was nothing more they could do. If my heart had stopped again, apparently, they would not have resuscitated me. Anyway, miracles do happen and on the third day I opened my eyes and began to recover.

Naturally my family were anxious to know if I would ever be the same again but the doctors couldn't say. I'm very pleased to report that I'm now pretty much back to normal and I thank God for this every day of my life. I would like to thank, too, everyone who has prayed for my recovery. Without your prayers I would not be here today, I am sure. So miracles do still happen; and whatever the problem anyone faces, it is good to know that prayer is capable of achieving very great things.

**Michael Demidecki**  
**Corpus Christi**

## Speaking your language



Is English your second language? Does a friend or family member, neighbour or someone in your church or school speak Polish or Hungarian, Russian or Spanish, Chinese or Japanese (or any of nearly 60 languages) as their first language? Do they have children?

If this is you, would you like to offer them a gift of a children's Bible or two, a picture story book or activity book in that language?

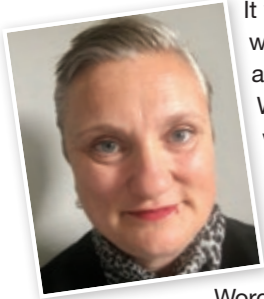
Anno Domini Publishing, which has been based in Tring High Street for thirteen years, has shelves overflowing with such books in a multitude of languages and it's time to release them into the community where they can be useful and appreciated. All are new from the printer and translated from the

English by a professional translator still living in their native country. If you know of anyone who would

benefit from these books, free of charge, please contact me as soon as possible.  
**Annette Reynolds, St Peter & St Paul**



# How I met my husband



It was 1991. I was working as a journalist in Worcester for the world's oldest continuously published newspaper, Berrow's Worcester Journal.

I had an indulgent editor, was keen to make my mark and had been given permission to go ahead with my idea to run a competition for our readers.

Somehow, and in the mists of time I have forgotten how, I had acquired a five-foot tall cuddly penguin. My bright idea was that weekly I would drive said penguin to a different location in our distribution zone and, if readers could identify where it was, there would be a prize.

The attraction of lugging around this penguin in my little Citroen 2CV soon lost its appeal, but I'd committed; so one chilly morning found me at the Three Counties Showground in Malvern waiting for a friendly hot air balloon pilot to fly me and the penguin.

Early indications were that it was not going to be possible to actually fly and my friendly pilot and his crew had apparently decided to indulge in a hangover lie in. Another pilot pal who had not stayed in bed agreed to help me stage a picture and we lugged a basket up onto a mound so my photographer could shoot the penguin in the basket as if it was flying.

Then the shout went out that the weather had changed and flying would be possible. Soon, teams of balloonists started flooding onto the showground, racing to get balloons inflated and into the air.

Now, I had met the love of my life during the previous year at a balloon event I attended. At that point I had a boyfriend he knew about so our interaction was brief. The most memorable thing about our first meeting was that the pilot introduced blonde haired, blue-eyed Ray as 'Manfred' and imparted the information for the article I was writing that 'Manfred's' father was a German U-boat captain. Luckily, as any good journalist should, I checked my facts and discovered I was the victim of a wind-up.

Fast forward to the next year when I was looking for a new romance. He drove

onto the field, spotted me and uttered the unforgettably romantic words: 'She looks better than I remembered.' Luckily, I did not know about this comment until after he had captured my heart.

My pal the balloonist sold crewman Ray to me as great boyfriend material and engineered a date. Knowing how shy Ray was back then he suggested we go off for a bit of trailer-towing practice so I could maybe crew in future. Ray was so keen to teach me, he missed all of my not-very-subtle hints about country pubs, my extreme thirst and how I was keen to stop for a while. Even when they filtered through, we sat in a lovely pub with me jealously eyeing up passing plates while he talked about trailer towing techniques non-stop.

Luckily, those who know me know that I am no shrinking violet; and I so made it clear I was interested in romance, not reversing trailers.

Continuing with my less-than-subtle wooing, I informed him I was looking for someone who wanted marriage and children – and if he wasn't interested in those things, to let me know right away as I didn't want to waste any more time with guys who didn't want one or both of those things.

Amazingly he didn't run for the (Malvern) hills and just six weeks later, after a whirlwind romance, we got engaged. We married eleven months later – the date carefully chosen so everyone would understand this was not a shotgun wedding!

And here we are, almost thirty years later, with seven children, proving that he was in fact interested in getting married and having children. Well, if you don't ask, you don't get.

Some people didn't expect our relationship to last as we got engaged so quickly but I think mainly due to having similar aims and dreams, we have been lucky enough to prove the doubters wrong. We have made so many memories, funny, good and bad.

My brand-new engagement ring had its first outing at the world-famous Bristol Balloon Fiesta where Ray and I were working with different balloons. A film crew streaming live to giant screens across the showground came up to interview me and I said: 'Never mind the balloon, check out my ring!' and Ray was shocked to see a close-up of my hand with ring flashed up onto all the screens, to be viewed by over 100,000 people.



One of our most memorable ballooning adventures was when Ray flew in a hot air balloon across the channel. Wind direction and speed have to be perfect for this challenge and, since I was heavily pregnant, I was obviously not allowed to fly. I went along with a crew member and, for a variety of reasons (none of them my fault) we missed the ferry and spent hours driving between Calais and Boulogne asking: 'As-vous vu un ballon?' Of course, with a sky full of balloons having taken off from Dover, almost everyone had seen at least one balloon and finally, exhausted and hungry, we decided to head to the hotel rendezvous point. There I spotted my husband and his pals, several beers in, telling what is coined 'hero balloon pilot stories'.

Our balloon had landed in what was then the construction zone for the Channel tunnel. Ray's face had missed being shredded by large rocks only by the strength of his muscles and desire not to be badly injured. He was literally saving face.

Our ballooning years were enormous fun but since Ray spent so much time travelling all over Europe (he spent our first wedding anniversary flying balloons at Moscow's first non-military May Day parade), when we decided to start a family, we agreed it was time to keep our flying local.

That decision hasn't stopped our adventures though and we have so many amazing experiences to look back on.

Hopefully we will have some new memories to make going forward. Who knows? There might even be some grandchildren in our future.

**Afra Willmore  
St John the Baptist, Aldbury**

## Our Charity Focus for Lent and Easter 2021



**Working for a World where everyone can lead a life free from Poverty**

**During Lent 2021 we are focusing on Christian Aid, supporting those in need in over 100 countries around the globe. From Syria to Sierra Leone, wherever there is a crisis, Christian Aid will be there.**

- Climate change is happening – we can't ignore the effect any longer
- Coronavirus makes it all much worse
- Christian Aid supports communities in the fight against this dangerous combination
- Join in the Lent Lunches on Zoom at 12 noon every Wednesday throughout Lent
- Support Christian Aid where it matters most; full details and resources from [www.christianaid.org.uk](http://www.christianaid.org.uk)

**Real people. Real change.** **75 years**

For further information on how you can help locally contact Reverend Jane Banister on 01442 822 170

## Looking Glass

*Spiegel im Spiegel  
All life ahead,  
Tic toc,  
Don't watch the clock,  
Carelessly leaping  
Through daisy-decked meadows.  
Everything seeking.  
A wedding, a wife,  
A child one two, three  
Oh what a life.  
On up the ladder,  
What shall I be?*

*Tic toc,  
No stopping the clock.  
Now greying time bites  
Carefully plodding  
Through frost-bitten nights  
Mirror on mirror,  
Who do I see?  
Which endless reflection  
Is actually me?*

**Caroline Ellwood,  
St John the Baptist, Aldbury**

## The twins are rolling!

Christian Aid Week takes place between 10-16 May – that's this month! Look out for the various events to support the campaign and if you cannot join in any other way, do consider whether you can support those who are running or walking (in a Covid-19 compliant manner) for sponsorship.

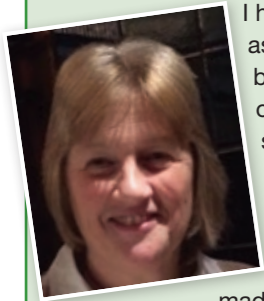
If you would like to support the twins, who are now 6 months old and will be pushed in their buggy for a marathon over a suitable time period (probably 3-4 miles at a time to allow for milk and changing stops) you can contact the Editor at [annetter@ad-publishing.com](mailto:annetter@ad-publishing.com) or via the R pigeon hole in St Peter & St Paul's Church, direct to Chris Hoare who will make sure any money goes to the right place, or via Just Giving using this link <https://www.justgiving.com/>



[fundraising/thetwinsstpeterandstpaul](mailto:annetter@ad-publishing.com). This sponsorship will be matched so anything you are able to give will be doubled. All proceeds, including any Gift Aid, will go to Christian Aid.  
**Annette Reynolds  
St Peter & St Paul**



## Legacy of Prince Philip's visit to Tring



I have always associated the beautiful daffodils on the grass banks surrounding Pound Meadow and from Tesco down to the town, with a visit Prince Philip made to Tring in 1972.

He came to open the new extension which had been added to the Museum.

I seem to recall that the visit had been planned for the Spring and he was to arrive by helicopter which would land

in Pound Meadow. He would then walk (I assume) to the Museum to perform the opening ceremony – hence all the daffodils. However, if I remember correctly, bad weather forced the Spring visit to be cancelled.

The visit actually took place in the July and my French exchange friend was staying with me at the time. Her dad was in love with our Queen! The pavements were thronged with well-wishers and I remember we waited on the corner of Langdon Street and Park Road to wave to the Prince as his car drove slowly past us – no helicopter this time!

The Royal visit created great excitement in the town, but the Prince never saw the beautiful daffodils which had been so carefully planted in his honour! I am wondering, though, is my memory correct? Have I made up the story about the daffodils? Perhaps there is someone out there who can set me straight. Maybe someone remembers attending the opening ceremony at the Museum?

**Rosemary Berdinner**  
**St Martha's Methodist Church**

## Making a joyful noise



Three Anglicans have sent in their hymns - where are yours? Don't you miss singing too? Come on Baptists, Catholics, Methodists and anyone else

reading Comment - what would you choose? Ed.

Last month Annette lamented the restrictions on singing in the past year and posed the question: 'What would you choose to sing in church when singing is allowed?'

My first choice is 'Guide Me O Thy Great Redeemer'. As well as being a cracking good tune, the words sum up to me my faith journey. Pilgrimage has been part of my life, both in making a pilgrimage each year (St Albans on Easter Monday) and our need of God's guidance and strength in all we do in his service. When I was at secondary school, we sang a variety of hymns and usually the music teacher played the piano. But when Mr Adlam the Headmaster took his seat at the piano, we all knew it was going to be this one. He played with such passion and devotion, it brought the words to life and cemented them onto my heart. It is always a favourite of everyone's in the Abbey at the pilgrimage service and a must for me at Beer and Hymns at Tring Brewery led by the male-voice choir of Andrew, Ian, Jon and Brian, among others! Oh, how I miss that!

'Thine Be The Glory' sums up the joy of the resurrection at Easter. The words

are very personal to me and I have lasting memories of singing it with thousands of others at St Albans. It's difficult to pick out a line or two, but 'Lo! Jesus meets us risen from the tomb. / Lovingly, He greets us / scatters fear and gloom' and 'No more we doubt Thee / Glorious Prince of life. / Life is naught without Thee / Aid us in our strife. / Make us more than conquerors / Through Thy deathless love, / Bring us safe through Jordan To Thy home above' – brilliant!

And for something a little quieter and more reflective, 'The Lord's my shepherd I'll not want', but it has to be the Stuart Townend version. He brings a personal dimension to the words of Psalm 23 in the chorus: 'And I will trust in You alone, / And I will trust in You alone, / For Your endless mercy follows me, / Your goodness will lead me home.'



And to finish, this one often comes to mind on all my walks, 'How Great Thou Art'. 'Oh Lord, my God / When I, in awesome



wonder / Consider all the works Thy hands have made' etc. And to finish 'When Christ shall come, / with shout of acclamation / And take me home, / what joy shall fill my heart. / Then I shall bow, in humble adoration / And then proclaim, / my God, how great Thou art!'

**Janet Goodyer**  
**St Peter & St Paul**

**Brenda Hurley and Amanda Curbishley**

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## World Day of Prayer



In contrast to some previous years when we have had to brave inclement weather to foregather for the World Day of Prayer (formerly Women's World Day of Prayer), this

year members of the Tring churches met on Zoom. It lacked some of the warmth and spontaneity of physically meeting but was nevertheless a beautiful service prepared by the Christian women of Vanuatu, on the theme 'Build on a Strong Foundation' – to inspire a fuller understanding of Jesus's ministry and the Kingdom of Heaven.

The service consisted of readings, hymns and prayers including a Prayer of Commitment from Isaiah (66:1): 'God is looking for a home to live in. What is the house that you would build for me?'

Vanuatu, an archipelago of eighty scattered islands in the south-western Pacific Ocean, was the subject of contact by the Portuguese, the French and in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Captain Cook, who named

the island group the New Hebrides.

Jill Smith of St Peter & St Paul very efficiently co-ordinated our efforts and delivered the service booklets and Jane Banister hosted the Zoom session. She had also suggested substituting the hymn: 'Bind us Together' for a lesser-known hymn, an inspired idea as it made up for the fact that we could not be together physically this year to sing it.

Let's hope we can meet together next year when the service will be prepared by representatives from England, Wales and Northern Ireland on the theme 'I know the plans I have for you'.

Donations: This year it is not possible to make cash donations but The National Committee suggests that cheques can be sent directly to the office at Commercial Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN1 2RR. Alternatively, money can be paid by text:

Text 70085 using the phrase 2021WDP and then adding the amount you wish to donate (eg 2021WDP 5). Beneficiaries of donations are Project Grants made to organisations around the world and included, last year, the Fairtrade Exchange and the Royal National Institute for the Blind.

For more information, please go to [www.wwdp.org.uk](http://www.wwdp.org.uk).

**Caroline Burmaster**  
**Corpus Christi**

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## Letter from Orkney



Following on from the last 'Letter from Orkney' when I recounted the story of my husband Mac suffering a stroke, I can now report on the latest instalment of this saga.

He's home! Having been taken off to hospital on Ash Wednesday he made it home on Maundy Thursday. Therefore his plan to give up alcohol for Lent fitted in quite nicely, though it seemed a little drastic to go to such lengths to avoid temptation.

It was nerve-wracking for us both in his first few days back at home. It was, for me, like bringing home a newborn infant except this one weighed 16 stone and answered back! A new routine was required as we adjusted to Mac's lack of mobility and dexterity. However, the support from NHS Orkney was extraordinary, with visits every day from physiotherapists, occupational therapists and rehab workers so his full



potential could be reached.

Mac is very keen on cooking and part of his rehabilitation was learning

how to navigate his way safely around the kitchen. One signature dish of his is roasted mediterranean vegetables, all of which require chopping. The sight of him wielding a very large and very sharp knife with his right hand (he's left handed but unfortunately the stroke affected his left side) while slicing through an aubergine with intense concentration was slightly traumatic, especially when bearing in mind the high dosage of blood thinners he is taking. Happily on this occasion he did not end up in A&E, although I have purchased extra supplies of bandages in case of future mishaps.

We are hopeful Mac will regain most if not all his strength in the months ahead. Everything at the moment is a huge effort and requires extraordinary amounts of concentration but if anyone can get there he certainly will. We would like to thank everyone at St Peter & St Paul's for all their prayers and good wishes – it has made all the difference to us both.

**Carrie Dodge**  
**St Mary's, Stromness**

# The Trees, by Philip Larkin

*The trees are coming into leaf  
Like something almost being said;  
The recent buds relax and spread,  
Their greenness is a kind of grief.*

*Is it that they are born again  
And we grow old? No, they die too.  
Their yearly trick of looking new  
Is written down in rings of grain.*

*Yet still the unresting castles thresh  
In fullgrown thickness every May.  
Last year is dead, they seem to say,  
Begin afresh, afresh, afresh.*

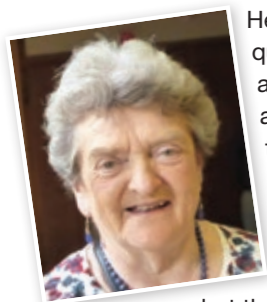
surely be seen for us in the words 'born again' and the reference to rebirth and reawakening in the seasonal cycles of the year. The subtle pattern of the rhyming and the simple metre combine to make this one of Larkin's more optimistic nature poems. Against the background of the greening of the trees which happens as if in answer to a signal, the poet adds the theme of mortality – nature and we die – but the new brightness of the trees encourages us to hope for a fresh beginning. Perhaps after the Covid-19 regulations and privations of the past year, this poem has a particular relevance.

Philip Larkin (1922-1985), sometimes called 'England's miserable genius', is associated with the group of poets writing in the 1950s, including Kingsley Amis, Elizabeth Jennings and Robert Conquest. He is well known for his rather gloomy and colloquial style. Born in Coventry, he suffered from poor eyesight and a stutter, and he seems to have been

almost claustrophobically attached to his mother. He never married but was linked to several women over the course of his life. Larkin's poems were about events of ordinary life and ordinary people. He shunned interviews, being reluctant to talk about his work. He made his living as a university librarian, ending his career at Hull, where he stayed for thirty years. In 1984 he was offered the post of Poet Laureate, in spite of a relatively small output of poems, but he refused saying he had lost his inspiration. He was notoriously grumpy and was sceptical of faith though drawn to churches, which figure in several of his poems. He considered this poem 'very corny ... and awful tripe'.

What do you think? (Larkin can be heard reading this on the poetry archive website.)

**Kate Banister**  
**St Julian's, St Albans**



Here is something quite different, a short poem about Spring, though the word is not explicitly mentioned. Nor is there any mention of faith, but the resonances can

# In memory of Edward Barber VC



If you were a reader of *Comment* early last year, you will have read my article regarding the plans to have three display boards on the south aisle wall of St Peter & St Paul's Church. These are to be paid for by a donation from the Aylesbury Branch of the Grenadier Guards Association in memory of Edward Barber VC. At the end of the article, I stated that an application had been made to the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC) to start the process of obtaining a faculty. We anticipated that we would be able to dedicate these at the commemoration of the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VE day. How wrong could we be?

You may assume that the delay we have incurred was caused by the pandemic. However, this was not the primary cause. The DAC raised a number of issues, one after another, regarding the size of the boards, the design and whether we needed to have three. By the beginning of June last year, we had answered all their questions and still had not received a

positive response, so the DAC secretary agreed to issue the faculty application documents including the statement that they were not happy with our proposals.

After the 28-day public display period, the papers were sent to the Diocesan Registrar and on the 31 July, I received a response indicating that the Chancellor was not happy as we had ignored the recommendations of the DAC when we should have been working with them!

I shared the letter with the Parochial Church Council at the September meeting and they, in the words of Queen Victoria, 'were not amused' and authorised me to continue to press for our proposal to be accepted. The DAC

then suggested that they should send representatives to visit us to discuss the plans and Jane Banister and I met with them the day before the start of the second lockdown. This proved to be beneficial in convincing the representatives that we had a sound proposal, and this was referred back to the DAC and then to the Chancellor.

Finally, on 15 January, I received the faculty forms by email, together with a document detailing the reasons for the Chancellor's change of mind. The order has now been placed with Carlisle Furniture and we hope to be able to dedicate the display boards later this year.

**Ted Oram, St Peter & St Paul**



# Five churches that have mothered me



On Mothering Sunday we were reminded that mothering is not just about what mothers do, although that is vital for our well-being. It also includes the support, encouragement, teaching and love that we receive from fellow Christians. And while the buildings associated with this are not important in themselves, at least for me, they can be the focus and gathering point for that mothering.



My grounding and direction in faith is associated with St John's Church in Rugby, a very modest building in a working class area of the Midlands town. I was baptised in a nearby village that was my family's origin but St John's was at the centre of my life as a child – Sunday school, the choir, altar servers, the youth fellowship, wolf cubs and scouts – and the priest-in charge (Martin Turner) was a teacher and role model for me, especially as a young teenager. During my time with St John's I was imbued with Bible stories, but also

the regular practice of repentance and renewal in faith. Rugby is part of the Coventry Diocese, and the rebuilding of the cathedral in that city – destroyed in bombing in November 1940 – was an important landmark of my childhood. We saved up our 'old' pennies (even sometimes our sixpenny bits) to help fund the re-creation of St Michael's. But it was not just about an inspiring and striking building. Martin taught us about the destruction and suffering in Dresden in 1944, and the development of the Cross-of Nails community with its emphasis on reconciliation. I was pleased to return to Coventry in 2012 to take part in a recording of 'Songs of Praise' to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the consecration of the new cathedral building.

I left home in Rugby to go to university in Exeter. I was privileged to have the opportunity to learn and explore for three years. I fell in with a group of Christians, a number of whom are still my friends. As well as attending the chapel at university I took in the whole range of Protestant worship, from Belmont Brethren Church to the Anglo-Catholic St Michael and all Angels. With my upbringing it is perhaps not surprising that my favourite way to end the weekend was at Evensong in Exeter Cathedral.

I moved on from Exeter and spent two years studying a Master's course in Oxford. Again there was the college chapel, but I often spent most of my Sundays at St Aldate's, one of several non-descript city-centre churches which catered (also literally – Sunday lunch!) for



students. I was lucky to meet my future wife, Pat, while in Oxford, but was also supported following my father's sudden death.

After Oxford I worked and lived in Washington D.C. where I did not get closely involved with any specific Protestant church – I was travelling incessantly – but mostly accompanied Pat to Mass in the Roman Catholic church.

When we came back to England, we happened to rent a house in Tring and I decided that I would join the local Anglican church, St Peter & St Paul. And we're still here, forty years later.

My direct involvement in the Parish has ebbed and flowed over the years, depending on work and family commitments. But I have found in Tring parish church a source of teaching to sustain my Christian faith. I have also been supported in times of difficulty. And I have developed friendships with other Christians, journeying together along the path of discipleship.

I am very thankful for the many people, not least in Tring, who have mothered me during my lifetime. I hope that sometimes I can play a role in mothering others.

**John Whiteman, St Peter & St Paul**



# Sensational Spring



High Street Baptist Church is delighted to be part of the Tring Together Spring Fayre. As we emerge from lockdowns (and winter) we are focusing on our senses to promote a

sense of wellbeing and help us connect with God through creation.

The 5 Ways to Wellbeing – Be active, Connect, Keep learning, Give, Take notice – are small actions proven to make a real difference to our mental health. Reminding yourself to ‘take notice’ can strengthen and broaden awareness.

This means actively bringing your mind’s attention and interest to the world around you. It means being present in the moment: observing what’s beautiful or unusual in the world. It is asking us to be aware of our thoughts and feelings as they arise, without getting lost in them. Taking notice means savouring the moment.

Another way to think about this is to be mindful. You can be mindful in many activities. Eating mindfully means seeing, smelling, tasting the flavour and feeling the texture of food. You might be drinking a cup of tea or coffee: holding the warm cup, sitting, smelling the fragrance as it drifts from the cup, and noticing the sensations of the first sip as it warms your throat and tummy. Mindful eating



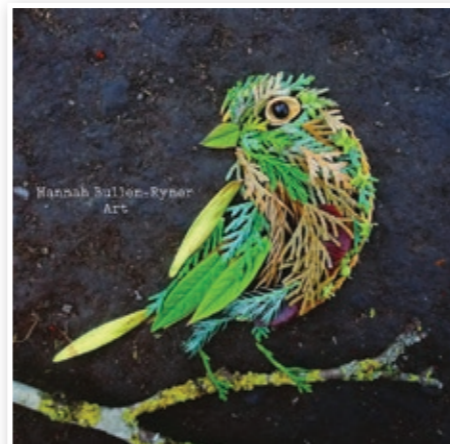
cannot happen while watching television or having a conversation, but it is possible to do without leaving our home.

Taking notice of nature is perhaps the most obvious way of implementing this activity. This could be done by looking at a leaf of a house plant or on a tree outside the window or by being fully immersed in nature by ‘forest bathing’. In our Sensational Spring activity we are encouraging you to take some time to enjoy the moment and the environment around you and be curious about what you see by using your senses. Notice the shapes of leaves, bird song and other sounds, colours, shades and textures, movement of animals and people, the

effect of the wind on leaves or blades of grass, scent and smells.

One of the natural responses to noticing nature is to thank God for his hand in it. Take a moment to pray for what you see, feel, smell, hear. ‘Dear God, thank you for ... Amen.’ This can lead to prayers of adoration and praise for the wonder you notice and the magnitude of his creation.

I have recently come across two phenomenal artists who are not only inspired by nature but use natural objects to create their art. James Brunt ([www.jamesbruntartist.co.uk](http://www.jamesbruntartist.co.uk)) creates soothing and mesmerising repetitive shapes using stones, leaves and branches. He photographs these in situ and then they are left there to be stumbled across by others or to dissolve with the elements over time. Hannah Bullen-Ryner (<https://hannahbullenphotogra.wixsite.com/hannahbullen-ryner-l>) creates intricate illustrations and structures using only natural materials and no permanent fixings. Again, the scenes are created on the ground and are photographed. The



leaves, buds, blossoms are her paint.

Both artists respond to the natural environment and demonstrate a connection to nature and soul. I imagine the mindfulness involved in creating the work. It is hard to imagine a form of art less damaging or more sustainable than the images by these two artists. No brushes, paper, paint or chemicals are used – just nature itself. Bullen-Ryner describes her work as ‘landart’; she says, ‘I flow purely with found materials, creating ephemeral Mandalas or little bird visitors underneath my favourite Oak tree. Within moments sometimes, my offerings fly away on the breeze.’ The



work of Hannah is especially short-lived – a breeze will cause the design to be lost – while the work of Brunt may last a little longer in some instances: a stronger breeze will be needed for stones to tumble.

Bullen-Ryner goes on to say, ‘I create to share my love of nature and to soothe my soul.’ I would say both artists soothe the soul of the observer and are

wonderful images to meditate on, or perhaps be used as inspiration to create your own.

To read more about wellbeing and to download High Street Baptist Church’s Sensational Spring activity ideas visit [www.tringbaptistchurch.co.uk/well-being](http://www.tringbaptistchurch.co.uk/well-being).

**Polly Eaton**  
**High Street Baptist Church**

## Sensational Spring!

High Street Baptist Church is taking part in Tring Together’s virtual Spring Fayre.

To download the brochure visit [www.tringtogether.org.uk](http://www.tringtogether.org.uk)

High Street Baptist Church

[www.tringbaptistchurch.co.uk](http://www.tringbaptistchurch.co.uk)

## The path of discipleship



We are still in the Easter season. We are living in the light of the resurrection. So here is a further reflection on the ending of Mark’s Gospel.

In some ways Mark could have ended his Gospel with the words of the centurion at the foot of the cross: ‘Truly this was the Son of God’. We have seen that in his Gospel he was trying to answer for the early church ‘who was this man who suffered, was crucified, died and rose again?’ This is answered in the centurion’s words of faith. However, if the crucifixion completes the Gospel story, then the resurrection crowns it. Mark’s resurrection is simply an empty tomb; an instruction to go to Galilee to look for Jesus; and fear.

Like the other evangelists, Mark does not describe the moment of Jesus rising from death. No one gives us a description of that moment of ‘resurrection’. Instead, we encounter the scene after the rising up.

Earlier in Mark’s Gospel Jesus has been anointed ahead of his death. Now the women are coming to anoint him, as one would expect, after his death. But they are frustrated. He is not there. The women were expecting difficulty in getting access to the tomb, but had gone anyway, in hope. The stone has been rolled away, the tomb is empty. They do not encounter Jesus, they encounter a young man. To us the description reads that he is just a mysterious young man dressed in white. However, the allusion that he is a heavenly figure is clear. Earlier in Mark’s Gospel, when Jesus is described in heavenly terms, his clothes are dazzling white (Mark 9:3) and there are echoes of the heavenly protectors in the book of Maccabees (2 Macc 3:26). As one would expect when one comes face to face with an angel / heavenly protector, the response is sheer panic and fear. When you read the passage, how did they translate the word? Was it astonished, astounded, affrighted, alarmed or something else?

The angel tells the women ‘Do not be alarmed’. They are told to go ahead

to Galilee and there they will encounter the risen Jesus. It is ambiguous as to how we are meant to read this. Is the message that the disciples should follow Jesus to Galilee? That he will lead them there, like a shepherd walking ahead of the flock? That they must go back to the place where they met him first? That the mission will start again but this time it will never die? Or, is it a message to the (Gentile Christian) reader that the risen Christ is to be found in the Gentile world (in ‘Galilee of the Gentiles’) and that, as we have seen elsewhere, his original Jewish disciples didn’t get the message?

I love the ambiguity of it. I love the invitation to go and start my own path of discipleship without telling me what the path is. I love it that although the women were scared and despite them ‘saying nothing to anyone’ they must have told someone otherwise there would be no story to tell. For Mark (and me) resurrection is both scary and open ended. It fits with my experience of it, not least the vagueness of it!

**Huw Bellis**  
**Tring Team**

## Living his story – Lent Reflections



Well, Lent was an interesting one this year! I say interesting: it certainly felt like an improvement from last year, when we had no idea how long this pandemic would be going to last. But this year, given that we're all a little more tech savvy, some of us set up small Lent reflection groups to meet on a weekly basis via Zoom.

The group that I was a part of focused on the Archbishop of Canterbury's Lent book, 'Living his story' by Revd Hannah Steele, an evangelical priest in the Anglican church. In her book, Hannah offers the reader a different perspective and practical ways of sharing the gospel story afresh.

For each of the seven weeks there was a chapter of the book to provoke discussion, along with accompanying video conversations with various experts on evangelism. Each video pulling out chapter themes. Essentially the book, videos and supporting resources provided a group with a foundation on which to start our conversations and challenged our thinking on what it is to be an 'evangelist' of Jesus.

I won't take you through our week-to-week discussions. Obviously much of what we shared remains confidential within the group, but it was a wonderful chance to get to know different members of the church community on a much deeper level, much like a house or cell group does, but over a much shorter and

condensed time frame.

Some of the things we discussed were:

- What does it mean to evangelise?
- Do we consider ourselves evangelists?
- How did we come to hear about Jesus?
- Who were those who influenced us in our faith journeys? How would you describe them?
- How do we go about sharing our stories of Jesus and our faith?
- How did Jesus interact with people?
- What can we learn from that?

Possibly the most important question we considered was 'how do we respond when someone asks us why we are a Christian?' Maybe this sounds simple, but we were challenged by Archbishop Justin Welby to avoid talking about the institution of the church, the building or even the community, but to consider our own personal relationship with Jesus. He continued to say that we should be encouraging others to get to know Jesus, not to the joining of an institution. Wise words, we thought.

So: why are you a Christian?

If we are unable confidently to articulate the reason for our faith, then how can we hope to inspire others?

The book helped us to reimagine our views on what it is to evangelise, including busting the myth that it is solely about 'street corner preaching'. Most of the interviewees refer to 'witnessing' as opposed to 'evangelising', encouraging us to be people who share their stories

and experiences of God just as they would testify to a friend about the latest drama on TV.

The book suggests all sorts of useful approaches to evangelism or witnessing, including some specifics on what to say, but overall some of the main areas of advice were: be authentic, let your experiences come through naturally; to listen and respect the place where someone is coming from; do not seek 'the conversion' – we could be a small step on someone's bigger journey; to deliver your message or play your part and know when to leave it in God's hands; to offer all we do to God in prayer; be bold, if we pray for the opportunities to speak to people, God will make it happen.

To quote Archbishop Stephen Cottrell, 'God is the evangelist. Trust God. Trust God's good timing.'

There were all sorts of other subjects, including a great video with Dr Amy Orr Ewing on where God is in times of hardship or disaster. I do not have the word count or space to share them all, therefore I would absolutely encourage you to find a copy of 'Living his story' and explore the subject for yourself.

However, for now, I shall leave you with our group's most favourite quote from the book (and there were many to choose from!): 'For too long we have been preoccupied with trying to convince people that the Christian faith is true, rather than making them wish that it were.'

Amen.

**Sarah Marshall**  
**Tring Team**

## More hymns

Here are the hymns I would like to sing when we are eventually allowed to do so in Church: 'Be Thou my Vision, O Lord of my Heart' or 'All my Hope on God is Founded', both especially poignant in the month of May as this is a month of anniversaries for me. It would also be the 101<sup>st</sup> birthday of Captain Sir Tom Moore, whom I find such an inspiration. Then 'God so loved the World' (anthem) – to tell the Easter story and for climate change 'All things bright and beautiful, All creatures great and small'.

**Barbara Thomas**  
**St Peter & St Paul**

## Around the world...



My late wife Marion and I were qualified photographers and we were fortunate enough to have the opportunity and time to travel to many places taking photographs or visiting our family, scattered as they are around the globe. Here is a snapshot of one of our trips.

On Sunday 9 February 1997 we left a sunny England for far off Hong Kong. The twelve-hour flight was made very much more palatable by the fact that we had the extreme good fortune of being upgraded to Business Class and thus travelling in the lap of British Airways luxury. You might imagine that this was due to the fact that I wore a collar and tie for the trip but in truth we met up with a friend of our daughter, Elizabeth, who works for BA!

After a long night of fitful sleep, we woke to brilliant sunshine way above a cloud formation which was like white sand dunes with the snow-capped mountains of Eastern Asia poking through like distant Arab tents in the desert.

The landing into Hong Kong airport was quite something, the plane banking and sweeping down seemingly into the very heart of the city skyscrapers. From the plane we looked out straight into the windows and rooms of enormous tenement blocks, which towered above us, and the families living there just looked straight back out at us! Within seconds we were thundering down a runway which looked as though we might end in a watery grave but at the last minute we turned and casually taxied back towards the city.

Unfortunately, the weather was not at its best and our first impression of the city, as we drove from the airport to the hotel, was of dilapidated buildings and dirty and unrepaired streets with piles of rubbish lying in every corner. Once through the tunnel under the harbour and onto Hong Kong island, the buildings improved on the main thoroughfares but were just as dilapidated and sordid in the side streets. Since it was Chinese New Year, the year of the Ox, the city was very busy and there were solid masses of people scurrying along pavements like ants under brightly coloured neon signs fixed to the outer shells of the soaring skyscrapers.

We stayed at the Excelsior hotel on the Causeway right on the front of the bay and immediately adjacent to the noon-day gun. The hotel doormen were two gigantic turbaned Indians resplendent in bright red livery who hefted our two large overweight cases as though they were stuffed with feathers rather than our entire belongings for the next five weeks. Later in the day, after some food, we wandered down amongst the streets surrounding the hotel. There were bright red taxis, masses of buses, and good old-fashioned trams running on overhead cables down the centre of the street. Apart from the appalling odour from the drains at every street corner there was a smell of cooking pervading the whole atmosphere. Down the side streets were food vendors working from open barrows akin to hot chestnut stoves, cooking a variety of rather grotesque looking food items on sticks, together with bowls of sauces, all open to the general street dirt and dust, none of which seems to deter their customers in the slightest.

That evening we visited a revolving restaurant high above the harbour. We took a tour around the Temple Road street market where so-called Rolex

watches and any number of branded fashion clothes were on offer at a fraction of the usual price! From the Queens Pier we took a Junk ride for a tour of the harbour which was decked out with huge neon displays of dragons and Chinese characters all in honour of the New Year celebrations. Just below Chater Square, where the old legislative building is situated, more land had been reclaimed from the bay on which was being built a new convention centre. The aim was to finish this huge building by June in order that it could be utilised for the handover ceremony at the end of the month.

The building framework was far from complete and much work was needed if they were to achieve their aim.

The following day we went out of Hong Kong to visit the New Territories and went within a short distance of the border with China. On the way we stopped at a street market in the centre of a village. The centre of the market had been devastated by fire two nights previously and work was still in progress trying to rake out the blackened charred remains and sell anything salvageable whilst business went on as usual all around. The stalls were so tightly packed there was hardly any room between them and the little alley ways running backwards and forwards through the market were blocked with piles of goods or tables at which old men sat drinking and playing cards or a form of checkers. The fire was thought to have been caused by an electrical fault. One look at the wiring arrangements throughout the area and the antiquated and rusting equipment being run from the wiring would have sent any British electrician running away with his head in his hands!

*To be continued...*

**Phillip Lawrence**  
**St Peter & St Paul**



## Organist needed

**St Mary's Church in Northchurch (Berkhamsted) is looking for an Organist and Director of Music.**

This is a permanent position to replace our much-loved Jenny Hoare, who is relocating to Shropshire with husband Chris Hoare.

To find out more, please contact Revd Canon Jonathan Gordon, **07752 261679** or email **revjagordon@gmail.com**

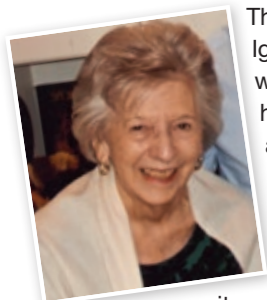


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# Virtual trip to Argentina



The flight from Iguazo to Sao Paulo was just over an hour and we arrived about 5.00am, but unfortunately the onward flight wasn't until 9.00pm. Then

it was delayed so we didn't take off till 10.20pm! We landed at 1.20am, not reaching the Sheraton till after 2.00am, and following delays finding my room and waiting for my case, I crawled into bed at 3.00am.

The next morning, after a brief tour of the main shopping areas, we were left to our own devices. We looked at some jewellery shops as I was interested in rose quartz, known as Rose of the Incas, which is the national stone, but wasn't tempted to buy any. It was considerably cooler than in Brazil, being about 2000 miles farther south, and after sunshine first thing, it was misty and cloudy.

In the afternoon we had an interesting city tour. Our guide assured us that despite the Falklands, Argentina is very pro-British. They had helped far more than the Spanish, built railways and helped run them until Peron took over, when the friendship between the two countries cooled. She admitted that although the claim to the islands had been going on for years, it was the action of a drunken general of theirs that started the war, which no one had wanted.

Buenos Aires was founded in 1536. The Spanish brought horses and cattle with them, and left them behind when



they left. The horses are Arab, so traditionally hold their heads up to avoid the sand and lift their feet high because of soft desert. In Argentina, with firm ground and no sand, they evolved with wide noses and large lung capacity, enabling them to run for days without tiring. Independence from Spain was declared in 1816.

40% of the trees are either English or Australian. There are few native trees as without rocks or stones to anchor the roots and only six feet of top soil, they blew over in the wind. There are, however, silk floss trees, cousins of the capok, which produce cottony buds.

Much of the city land was reclaimed from the River Plate. The name was

translated by the Brits from 'Rio Plato', which really means Silver River, plato being the Spanish for silver. However it's an acceptable translation, since in the Middle Ages silver was known as plate. It's allegedly the widest river in the world and the Spanish thought originally that it was the sea. They believed there were silver deposits in the water, hence the name Rio Plato and, for the country, 'Argentina', from the Latin word argento, silver.

Buenos Aires was built with every block the same size, so it's easy to find your way about. We drove round Plaza de Mayo and Avenida on 9 July, Independence Day, and saw several statues to General Martin, who liberated Peru and Chile as well as Argentina. His remains are in the Cathedral, which was, however, shut! And we dutifully photographed a statue of the original General Belgrano, a national hero, also the Pink House, or Casa Rosada, which is the Presidential Palace, and the balcony on which Eva Peron (and Madonna!) appeared. On Thursdays you could still see the 'Mothers of the Disappeared' parading there. Their relatives disappeared during a clamp-down on suspected terrorists.

We then went to the 'second most important cemetery' which is like a town – street after street of enormous, and, it must be said, tasteless, memorials – huge mausoleums where whole families are buried. Some of them even have lifts in them, to go down three floors! We saw Eva Peron's grave, which has attracted



more attention since 'Evita' than it ever did before. She's buried with her family, but not her husband.

That evening we went to a tango show at the Casa Blanca. It was invented in 1870 by the Gauchos, and originally two men danced it together. Later they brought in prostitutes to partner them. High society never considered dancing the tango until the president and his wife so did in 1912, after which the aristocracy joined in. It was an excellent evening, watching some of the best dancers in the country plus excellent musicians and an Altiplano band. It was over by 10.20pm as there was a second show, and people were queuing outside as we left.

The following day we set off to see the Gauchos, stopping first at San Telmo Flea Market, a smaller version of the Hippy Market in Ipanema. Our guide Hector said a yellow fever epidemic

in the 19<sup>th</sup> century altered the history of BA politically, architecturally and economically, because the rich all moved out to the north of the city. The British created the harbour and railways to encourage commerce.

He showed us Gaucho accoutrements, the silver coin-studded belt, or rastra, the poncho, hat, full trousers and boots. One of their dances is with malaros, silver balls on strings, which were originally stones used to control the animals, though not any more.

Arriving at the farm, Santa Susanna, we were handed warm pies like small pasties and wine or soft drinks before going to see – and ride – the horses. Eventually we went through for lunch at long tables – salad, wine and a variety of meats which were served with a spicy sauce, chimichurri, composed of oil, garlic and herbs. Dessert was pastilino, a very sweet filled pastry.

Finally we went back outside for an exhibition of horsemanship; packs of horses all the same colour – white, black or brown – ran loose, turning at the crack of a whip. Then goal posts were set up with rings dangling from the bar, and two Gauchos at a time galloped up to them and attempted to hook their short lances through the rings and remove them. Those who succeeded presented us with the rings.

The next morning half a dozen of us went on a boat trip to Uruguay, for which we had to go through immigration. We landed at a little town called Colonia, though disappointingly there wasn't much to see and we were ready to catch the boat back. At the hotel we claimed our latest free gift, yet again from H Stern, a Gaucho lasso.

It was the last night of the holiday and we all went to the steak house for a hilarious meal and took lots of photos. We flew home the next day at the end of a wonderful and truly memorable holiday.

**Anthea Fraser**  
**St Peter & St Paul**



## Two truths and a lie

Here are more wonderful facts about people you thought you knew in the Tring community. Has anyone guessed right yet without cheating?! Please send in your own two truths and a lie for the next edition of *Comment*. Answers on p34.

### Mystery person 1

1. I was once interviewed by Melvyn Bragg.
2. I learned to conjugate French verbs in Lord Stanley's ballroom.
3. The family brass foundry made the portholes for the Titanic.

### Mystery person 2

1. I once played lead guitar in a rock band.
2. I wanted to be a social worker but was told I wasn't robust enough.
3. Myxomatosis brought my spouse and me together.

### Mystery person 3

1. I had beef stew for lunch on ten consecutive days.
2. I have been seen on BBC television twice.
3. I led a hiking group through thick fog and arrived at the right place.

### Mystery person 4

1. I started a dress manufacturing business when I was 20 in my mother's front room.
2. My handicap at golf is 12.
3. I went back to college to retrain when I was in my 30s.

### Mystery person 5

1. I opened the batting for the English cricket team under 18s.
2. I was CEO for a large financial company.
3. I once boarded a plane and argued with man in my seat so that a fight almost ensued.

# Postcard from Sydney

We recently renewed the lease on the house we are living in, which brought home to us that it has been well over a year since we moved to Australia. Indeed, we just celebrated our second Easter here: this time, surrounded by the furniture and other belongings we shipped from the UK (which last Easter was still sitting in a storage container somewhere at Sydney Harbour). We were glad to be able to attend church, rather than being in lockdown. It seemed high time to reflect on some things we have come to like, and some things we're not so keen on, about life Down Under.

## Five things we like

- 1. Where we live.** This one is easy: we love the lower Blue Mountains region, where we have settled. Our house is a short drive from the Blue Mountains National Park, affording access to some great bushwalks, and rockpools where one can cool off on a hot day. Mountains in one direction and ocean in the other are a short drive or train ride away. This has influenced our view of where we would like to settle once we return to the UK.
- 2. Australian wildlife.** The unique fauna of Australia was always one of the appeals of moving here. Seeing cockatoos and parrots on a daily basis is still a novelty. On various trips, we've enjoyed encountering koalas, kangaroos, wallabies, wombats and Tasmanian devils, all of which we found to be thin on the



ground during the average walk in the Chilterns. The endangered status of koalas, whose habitat has been devastated by last year's bushfires; and the threat to devils of Facial Tumour disease (see last article on our trip to Tasmania), means that charities like the Port Macquarie Koala Hospital and the Save the Tasmanian Devil Campaign are amongst the new causes we are happy to support.

- 3. The exoticism of local trips.** Australia's relatively low Covid-19 numbers have been achieved in large part by the closure of international borders. Even state borders have

been regularly closed on the strength of miniscule 'outbreaks' that wouldn't warrant a headline back home. Yet the vast size of New South Wales (six times the size of England) means that it is easy for us to forget that since arriving here, we have only left our 'home' state once (that pre-Christmas trip to Tasmania). One can drive for hours without leaving the state, and so trips along the coast – both north and south of Sydney – have taken us to places that, for us, are entirely new. We've taken a particular shine to Kiama, about ninety minutes from home, which has a beautiful coastal walk that reminds us of the Pembrokeshire Coast Path. We completed two sections of this on John's birthday, a sunny day in January. And there is plenty more of the Blue Mountains we are keen to explore.

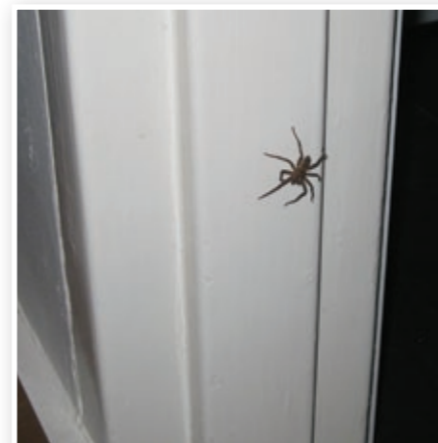
- 4. Cheap public transport.** We live just under an hour by train from Sydney Central Station, which in turn is a ten-minute walk from our university's campus. Yet this commute – roughly the same in distance as Milton Keynes to London – costs us \$6.89 (£3.83) each way in peak hours, \$4.82 (£2.68) off peak. The station car park is free. Other things, too, are notably cheaper than in the UK, such as a tank of petrol and a good bottle of wine from a 'bottle-o'. Yet this is only one side of the coin – as the next list will show.



- 5. The weather.** It's Easter Monday at the time of writing, and autumn just started. Yet today is a sunny 26C. Spring and autumn are lovely seasons here, with none of the excesses of summer and the surprising problems of winter – to which we now turn.

## Five things we don't like

- 1. Poor house insulation.** The house we're renting – which overall we really like – is surprisingly cold in winter, largely because of the poor insulation and the absence of central heating. We are very glad we found a place with a log-burner! Yet this is a common problem, about which Aussie friends and colleagues regularly complain. At any given point, the temperature outside is more or less the temperature inside. This also means that in summer, the top floor of the house can feel a good couple of degrees hotter than the floor below; we sometimes need to go downstairs just to cool off!



- 2. Snakes, spiders and other creepy-crawlies.** The obvious downside of Australian fauna, we have thankfully yet to encounter the snakes in the garden that people warned us about, or – thank God – the venomous redback spider, rumoured to hang out, unsportingly, under toilet seats. Counter-intuitively, one of the scariest looking Australian spiders, the Huntsman – a sample of which John found in his office in his very first week – is actually the kind you want around the house, as they are not venomous and yet eat some of the spiders that are. (Our vet advised Sylvie to deal with this psychologically by 'adopting' any Huntsman you find, perhaps calling it George.) A recent new phenomenon, after heavy rains and hot weather, is the infestation of our patio with hundreds of hairy caterpillars.



- 3. Things we miss: historic buildings and country inns.** The real 'history' here is indigenous, and the sorry story of the treatment of Aboriginal peoples by the early settlers is well-known yet still shocking in its details. Some of the features we associate with European history – such as castles and medieval churches – are of course conspicuous by their absence here. While we obviously knew this long before moving, we find that we miss such things more than we anticipated. In the same category are country inns and traditional pubs: we knew it would be a big ask to find a new 'local' to replace the KA, and we certainly haven't succeeded.

- 4. The cost of groceries and hotels.** Though we've enjoyed getting out and about ever since lockdown ended here, the other side of the coin to the cheaper costs listed above is that some things are way more expensive. The weekly grocery shop is a lot pricier than back in the UK, as are the costs of eating out; a drink in a bar; and a room in even a fairly modest hotel. That said, we recently read that the average wage in Australia is between a third and a half higher than in the UK, which roughly accords with our own experience, so overall this is proving to be a good place to save money for early retirement...

- 5. The weather.** It will surprise some to learn that this had to be on both lists! 'Think of the weather', several people said to us enviously when we announced we were moving here. Yet the weather is, very often, the problem with life in Oz. Far from being one long sunny day, Australia does weather by extremes. We moved here shortly after the

dreadful bushfires of late 2019, which devastated over 80% of the Blue Mountains National Park. Thankfully, last summer was comparatively wet, which this 'sunbaked country' urgently needed. Yet this too has its problems: western Sydney recently suffered five consecutive days of nearly non-stop torrential rain, with the Nepean River bursting its banks a mile or so from where we live, and the Warragamba Dam releasing – every day – a volume of water equivalent to that in Sydney Harbour. Our hearts went out to those whose homes were flooded, and we felt very grateful that we live on relatively high ground. As Clive James once put it, when it rains in Sydney, it rains all at once. We found ourselves mildly nostalgic for UK drizzle. And summer days are, for us, often unbearably hot. We didn't have a repeat this year of January 2020, when Penrith – a couple of miles from us – recorded a temperature of 48.9C, making it the hottest place on Earth that day. But several consecutive days of temperatures in the high thirties are more than enough for us. The Australian media recently reported that parts of Sydney are predicted to record regular summer temperatures of over 50C within a few decades, rendering highly urbanised parts of Australia unliveable unless radical changes are undertaken in the design of cities (such as building homes, supermarkets and even entire suburbs underground, as in such outback towns as Coober Pedy). Long before then, we plan to be back in the UK, whose relatively mild climate we shall appreciate afresh!

*John Lippitt and Sylvie Magerstädt  
Currently St David's Anglican Church,  
Blaxland NSW  
formerly St Peter & St Paul, Tring*



# The cross or the manger?



Christmas Day, Good Friday, Easter Day? Which do you think is the most important of these? In one sense a silly question in that they belong

together, but in another sense it is a deep, theological question. Is what matters most the fact that Jesus was the Son of God, born of Mary, or that he died on the Cross, or that he was raised on the third day?

I once heard a sermon in which the preacher said that of all God's actions the two peaks were the creation of the world and the Incarnation, that is, the Word made flesh at the Annunciation. All the rest follows in that God created the world and all that is in it and that he sent his son to be part of that creation which had gone wrong and to put it right. Interestingly, in spite of that preacher's idea, the Gospel writers thought otherwise. Look at the proportion of each Gospel devoted to the Passion and the Death in the Cross. Perhaps also muse on the amount of different information they provide about the Easter events. Then again, look at how much the death of Christ features in the rest of the New Testament compared with the birth.

Further, one may point out that no human death has so influenced human history.

Why, then, this emphasis on the death of Jesus? One could argue that his ministry, his words, and works are what matter, summed up as bringing salvation, health of body, mind and soul. Surely teaching us to love God and our neighbour is what matters? What is it about Jesus' death that makes all the difference? Why does the cross matter more than the manger?

The one-word answer is Atonement: the reconciliation of humanity and God, the At-one-ment, bringing together, the uniting of God and humanity in spite of human sin, rebellion, wickedness, the inclination to sin – it can be described in various way to express the idea that we are not 'at one' with God.

The death of Jesus on the cross is more than a cruel death. Millions have died a cruel death and, sadly, still do; thousands have died on crosses. Yet Christians believe Christ's death is a unique once and for all death which

broke down the barriers erected by sin and enables us to be united to God. Why, then, did Jesus die and how did/does his death bring about Atonement? One familiar answer, from words originally written for children, is presented to us in Mrs C.F. Alexander's famous hymn 'There is a green hill far away': He died that we might be forgiven, / He died to make us good, / That we might go at last to heaven / Saved by his precious blood.'

We then are forgivable and forgiven, and our human nature is treated as being good, although, by ourselves we have no claim to be so treated. Hence, 'he died to make us good' and this means 'we might go to heaven', that is, to be saved, rescued, brought back from exile. All this is through 'his precious Blood'.

The hymn then refers to 'paying the price of sin'. The shedding of his blood, his death is 'the price' but this suggests a commercial transaction as if there was a huge fine to pay. Some explanations of the Atonement in these terms can lead to difficulties; yet we do read in Mark's Gospel that Jesus said he came to give his life as a ransom for many. This image of self-giving for others as a ransom, a price to be paid, raises the question as to whom the price is paid.

There is another image in 1 John 4:10 – 'a propitiation for our sins', although the NRSV translates this word as 'atoning sacrifice'. This, of course, points us back to the Old Testament understanding of sacrifice – what is sacrificed is the price paid – the animal sacrifice put things right with God, though more for particular cases than sin in general. Here we may think of the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16) although the sacrificial system is much more complicated. On this day only there is the annual ritual when the High Priest enters the Holy of Holies and, after atoning rituals (scattering of blood) the sins of Israel are confessed over a goat which is then driven away into the wilderness – the scapegoat.

The first Christians, being Jews, must have thought of Christ's death in terms of the Old Testament sacrificial system and later the Gentiles, similarly, in terms of their offerings of sacrifice in worship as well as in terms of those who sacrificed themselves for others in warfare or other circumstances. We do not know what the first Christians did or thought about the Day of Atonement in the forty years between Christ's death on the cross and the destruction of the Temple and the

cessation of the sacrificial system (for all time). For this system informed much of the thinking about Christ's death and its meaning. The rending of the Temple veil on that first Good Friday (Matthew 27, 51) in retrospect can be seen as the transition moment in that it happened at the time of the crucifixion.

There has never been a formal Church declaration about the doctrine of the Atonement in the way that there has been about the Incarnation as in the Creed. Yet it is quite clear from the Scriptures and the worship of the church that Christ's death means the shedding of blood for us and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Jesus is the Lamb of God, sacrificed when the Paschal Lamb was being sacrificed. But, of course, people have tried in different ways to explain the meaning of Christ's sacrifice, the meaning of the doctrine of the Atonement.

St Paul may be described as the prime mover in teaching this doctrine and, after him, developments followed. For example, explaining to whom the ransom was paid. One idea was that it was paid to Satan who had rights over man as a result of the Fall. Others rejected this. It was also proposed that taking our nature upon him, Christ effected a change in human nature as such. Hence St Athanasius could say 'He became man that we might become divine'. Later, St Anselm developed the idea of satisfaction. Sin is an infinite offence against God and needs infinite satisfaction and this is why God became man. Against this Abelard said Christ's death was effective through its exemplary value. And so the discussions have continued through the Reformation and beyond. Here the name of Luther and Calvin are highly significant with their emphasis on the necessity of a price being paid. As has been well said 'there is every likelihood that a variety of emphases and interpretations will continue'.

So, to cut a long story short, we can assert from the Creed – 'For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate' or from the Eucharist – 'Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, grant us peace' or from where we began – 'There was no other good enough, to pay the price of sin'.

**Martin Banister**  
**St Albans Cathedral**

# Sheep may safely graze



'Sheep may safely graze' is a beautiful soprano aria by Johann Sebastian Bach written in 1713. I find it very relevant as I look after sheep, cattle and sometimes ponies, at College Lake.

Sheep are mentioned in the Bible around 200 times and are first mentioned in Genesis Chapter 12:16 where 'Abram acquired sheep'. He also acquired cattle and donkeys – so with sheep, cattle and ponies to look after I am carrying out a job at least 4,000 years old. I don't look after goats – which are the next most mentioned animal in the Bible. Thank goodness! Goats are escapologists.

All domestic animals and birds have to be checked every day. At College Lake this is performed by a small team of four volunteers (we are trained for this), and I check twice a week. During strict lockdown when volunteers were not allowed, the permanent staff had to do it. The animals can be anywhere on College Lake – or Pitstone Fen. Pitstone Fen is run by College Lake and is the other side of the railway line. It is almost the size of College Lake and consists of fields, woodland, a stream, bogs and a large area of 'pond' filled with bullrushes. It is shut off from the public but you can obtain a key on request from the College Lake visitor centre reception. Note that the entrance gate is very heavy with a very stiff bolt, so you have to be strong to gain entry!

The animals are at College Lake to work – not to be a visitor attraction. There can be up to five flocks of sheep, plus Dexter cattle and sometimes New Forest and Exmoor ponies. The ponies are always on Pitstone Fen, the cattle and sheep can be on both or either one.

The cattle normally only go to Pitstone Fen in the summer if it is very hot, as they can wallow in among the bullrushes to keep cool. Sometimes only their heads show, so they are very difficult to find! Checking the sheep and cattle can take between forty minutes and three hours depending on how many there are and how difficult they are to find.

Cattle and sheep graze differently to keep different areas of the Wildlife Reserve under control and suitable for the orchids and flowers that support butterflies and moths. Sheep graze with their front teeth, nipping off grass and other plants and keeping the level low. Rabbits also graze some areas at College Lake. Cattle wrap their tongues round long grass and pull it up, leaving tufts that can be used for nesting by larks (rare now) and shelter other species of insects and small mammals. The hooves of both cattle, ponies and sheep dig up the surface and allow seeds to germinate and take root.



Each variety of sheep grazes selectively. Hebridean sheep were evolved by iron age farmers to be very hardy. They are sometimes called St Kilda sheep. They are the main sheep used on College Lake and Pitstone Fen to graze on rough coarse grasses and small shrubs. They can survive on very low growing sparse plants. They'll also happily eat docks, thistle flowers and nettles whilst leaving orchids and primroses untouched.



Some sheep have been bred to be very selective in their feeding. Perhaps the most extreme are Ronaldsay sheep. Ronaldsay is the northernmost island of Orkney and the sheep there graze only on seaweed on the beach. The sheep are kept on the beach by a thirteen mile long, six feet high, stone wall! They are only allowed off the beach to lamb. They produce less methane than grass-fed sheep, so maybe the eco-future of sheep lies in a diet of seaweed. Experiments are being carried out on incorporating seaweed into normal sheep feeds. The only other animal known to exist solely on seaweed is a variety of Galapagos lizard.



So next time you walk round College Lake and see the black Hebridean sheep you are watching essential workers – without them the orchids and rare butterflies would not survive easily.

**John Allan**  
**High Street Baptist Church**

# Parish registers

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

**Lawrence Eaton & Emily Tyre**  
**Steve Cumley & Alison McDermott**

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

**Keith Shaw 73**  
**Stephen Patrick Dunham 91**  
**Dermot Ramond Ernold Knowles 73**

# Tweet of the month

The Cirl Bunting is an attractive bird that is currently confined to Devon and Cornwall in Britain. It is predominantly a southern European species but is found in Morocco and along the North African coastal strip as far east as Tunisia and is also found in Turkey. Cirl Bunting is a close relative of Yellowhammer and they look similar and the females of both species are very similar. Its scientific name is *Emberiza cirius*. *Emberiza* is derived from *embritz*, an old German word meaning bunting. *Cirius* is probably a local Italian (Bolognese) name for another species of bunting – either Yellowhammer or Rock Bunting.

Britain is very much the northern limit of the species' range and Cirl Bunting is a relatively recent colonist here. It's thought to have colonised south Devon in the late 18<sup>th</sup> or early 19<sup>th</sup> century. By the 1930s Cirl Buntings had spread as far as North Wales and Yorkshire and did breed around the Tring area but were never common. In the 1930s the number began to decline, presumably due to changes in agricultural practices, and Cirl Bunting was last seen in Hertfordshire in 1981. By 1989 fewer

than 120 pairs were breeding in Britain and most of these were in Devon.

I grew up in north-east Hampshire and by the 1970s a formerly thriving population had disappeared locally. In 1980 when I heard of a male Cirl Bunting at Pewley Down, on the outskirts of Guildford, I got the train to Guildford and walked to Pewley Down to see this mythical bird and it did not disappoint. It was as beautiful as I thought it would be. However, this was the last year this particular individual was seen and subsequently all of my British sightings have been down in Devon.

In 1991 the Cirl Bunting Recovery Project was started and with help from the Countryside Stewardship Scheme, farmers were able to make favourable changes to their practices that benefited the Cirl Bunting. This project was so successful that in 2016 more than 1,000 pairs bred in Britain and numbers are still on the increase with birds seeking out new breeding areas of their own volition.

In Genesis 1:28 it says 'God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and

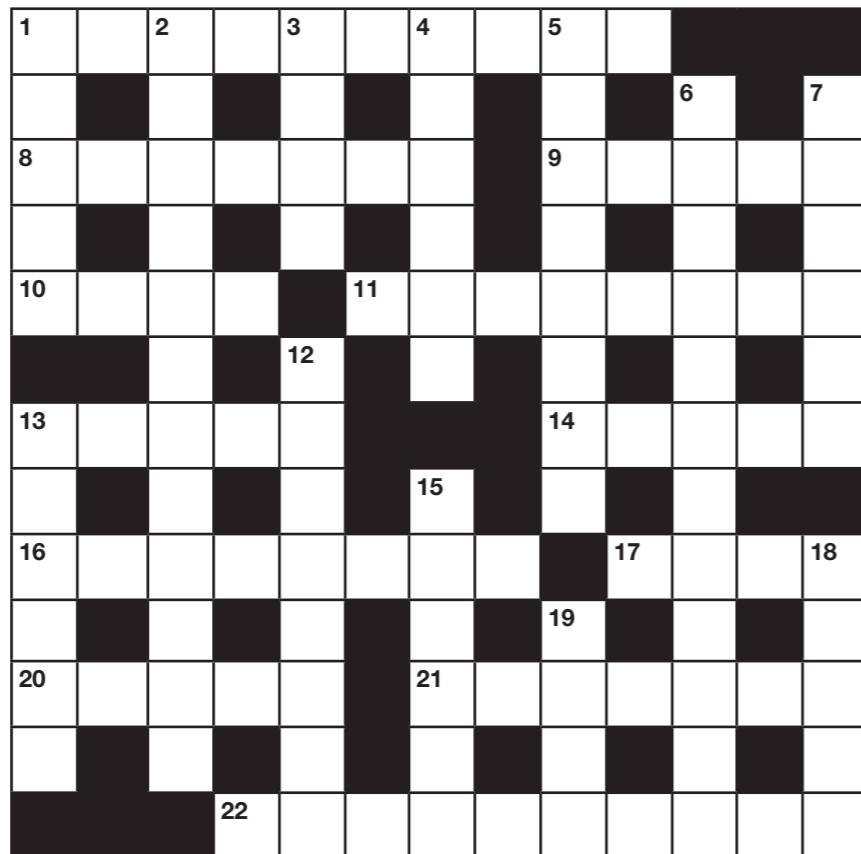


subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth." I know that dominion means take charge of something or rule over it. However, a good ruler should also take responsibility and care for those things they have dominion over. The Cirl Bunting is a great example of recognising something we had adversely affected and us changing things to reverse that. We should all be looking out for things where we could improve, be it for our planet, wildlife or other people both near and far. I am sure this is one of the things God wants us to do.

**Roy Hargreaves**  
**St Peter & St Paul**

# Crossword

- |   |                                      |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| <b>ACROSS</b>                           | <b>DOWN</b>                          |
| 1. Prime city of the C of E (10)        | 1. Expenses (5)                      |
| 8. A sacred place (7)                   | 2. Sect outside the usual rules (12) |
| 9. Lead (5)                             | 3. Consumes (4)                      |
| 10. Site of the temple of Jerusalem (4) | 4. Over the top (6)                  |
| 11. Healers of teeth (8)                | 5. The days before Ascension (8)     |
| 13. Writing but not in verse (5)        | 6. Those who spread the Gospels (12) |
| 14. Smell (5)                           | 7. Vessel for producing incense      |
| 16. Copies of this magazine (8)         | 12. Christ '.....' of the world (8)  |
| 17. Smear (4)                           | 13. Garment storage place (6)        |
| 20. Site of horse racing (6)            | 15. Emphasise (6)                    |
| 21. Producing excitement (7)            | 18. '.....' this house (5)           |
| 22. 'Forgive us our (10)'               | 19. Garment of ancient Rome (4)      |



Answers on page 38

# High Street Prayers

During a recent walk down Western Road and our High Street, I noted with sadness the closed or empty shop fronts that I passed. While some were undergoing refurbishment, most were closed temporarily or permanently due to Covid-19, relocation, or having gone out of business.

Prior to Covid-19, many towns across the UK had experienced the death of their High Streets, local independent stores and small businesses. Tring has previously been blessed with its range of local businesses and promises of new enterprises but that now looks set to change.

I used to be part of an inter-church group many years ago which met monthly for breakfast (initially at the Rose & Crown and then at The Crow's Nest) to pray for the businesses and working people of Tring. The group has folded but the need to support those in business in our town has never been greater.

Given the current reality of furlough, potential redundancy or insolvency for so many across the world, you may

be wondering why I am talking about prayer?

Scripture tells us that God is interested in all we do (Matthew 10:29-31) and that includes our work. Many of the characters we read about in the Bible were in business as they had to support their families, friends and less fortunate neighbours. Peter was a fisherman, Paul was a tent-maker, Jesus was a carpenter and Lydia a merchant. One of Jesus' earlier miracles was to send Peter out again with his nets after a failed night of fishing. The result was miraculous – the nets almost broke.

I know several self-employed people, including those who run their businesses from home, who are struggling with a huge weight of concern. As well as worrying about their business's viability they are concerned about the people they employ, continuity of supply, the risk of bringing Covid-19 into their homes, and the guilt of prioritising keeping a business afloat over home-schooling or caring for elderly relatives.

Within our churches, we often pray for

individuals we know in these situations. I would like to build on that and put time aside to expand and combine our prayers for all those in business in Tring as they are such an important and necessary part of our community.

If you share my concern for our local businesses and self-employed people and would like to join me once a month for a cup of tea or coffee and 'High Street Prayers' (covering all businesses and self-employed people in and around Tring) please contact me at [highstreetprayers@tringbaptistchurch.co.uk](mailto:highstreetprayers@tringbaptistchurch.co.uk). Our first online meeting will be on Friday 26 March and then on the last Friday of each month.

If you own a business in Tring and would like us to pray for you and your current concerns, please drop me a line at the same email address.

I look forward to hearing from you and 'seeing you' online in the next few weeks.

God bless you.  
**Ali Layne-Smith**  
**High Street Baptist Church**

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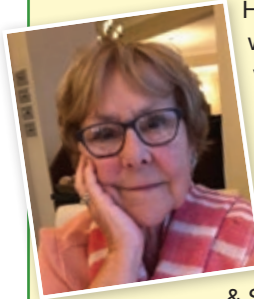
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## The place of the cross



Has the cross we wear as an outward visible sign of faith, become too comfortable, too decorative?

I pose the question, because sitting in St Peter & St Paul's church one Sunday at the start of Holy Week, I was reminded of just what a dreadful tool of torture it was. My thoughts raced, muddled, went up alleys and yet truths seemed to emerge from them; at least a truth for me.

Around my neck I wear a Celtic cross. My husband Roy bought it for me when I got confirmed in my 30s. I love it, it's part of me; but I wonder if it should be so decorative and pretty? I have another cross, a crucifix from Fatima, which a friend brought back as a gift from Portugal. The image of Christ is nailed to it. The cross is made of wood and Christ is cast in silver. It's not pretty, and I couldn't wear it as I wear the Celtic one.

That gives me another dilemma. My gold cross without the image of Christ tells me Jesus has risen, resurrected. Which is so much more

acceptable than leaving Jesus nailed there. And there's the conflict, the wooden one with Christ on it gives a very direct message of pain of Good Friday and it makes me uncomfortable at the thought of the agony of the death.

The more I think, the more questions roll into my mind. All those churches worldwide filled with treasures, ornate crosses, real gems, collected by the faithful for the church. Were they for God or man?



The server was carrying a cross of gold on that Sunday in church, embedded with glittering stones among the engraving, shaped in a tasteful design up and down the nave. OK, I know it doesn't have real diamonds or rubies,

but that's not really the point. It is a symbol of our faith, rich and glorious. No pain there! It is even nice to look at. Does it give me a sense of the awfulness of Good Friday when Jesus was crucified? His great sacrifice for his world? No.

Here's my point: while we have not softened the message from the Bible, have we dulled the image of the cross to fit snugly into our modern lives?

When we choose a cross to wear, do we think about Jerusalem over 2,000 years ago? When I do, I see a hot dusty city. You can almost smell the marketplace and the throngs of people milling about. The people that become mobs, the same sort of people that enjoyed going to a hanging or a burning at the stake of condemned villains or victims. We know how dreadful crucifixion was – how can we decorate and fashion such beauty on the memory of such agony?

Answers on a postcard please... (or as a response to the Editor). I will carry on wearing my cross. It's still my outward visible sign of my faith but I think I will see it differently when I look at it now.

**Brenda Hurley**  
**St Peter & St Paul**

## Have hymnbook – will travel



We have been following Ian Ogilvie's accounts of his spells as a locum priest with interest and have been reminded of meeting just such a priest on a holiday some years ago.

Ahead of our visit to Sicily we had acquired a beautifully illustrated 1911 guidebook, which held out the promise of a wonderful experience: 'The English-speaking community of Taormina are singularly fortunate in having for the Anglican service the chapel of the dissolved monastery of Santa Maria e Gesu, now the property and residence of Lady Hill. It is a most pleasing

example of Renaissance, so excellent in its proportions, so restful in its sweet serenity, that it almost attains to the beauty of holiness.'

We were seventy-five years too late for this, however, for in 1922 a church was built by the Anglo-American congregation, dedicated this time to St George! One of Lady Hill's stained-glass windows was incorporated into the new building.

A not-very-impressed visitor commented that it showed 'a buxom, well-millinered St Catherine, and a St George in full coat of mail, standing at the foot of the Cross, apparently too much taken up with one another to give any regard to the tragic form that hangs above. The substitution of this irrelevant couple for the traditional two, who thenceforth were to be as mother and son, is to be regretted'.

The church has no resident incumbent but depends on a well-organised series of locums who come out for four or five weeks at a stretch. We were lucky

enough to be warmly welcomed by Rev Peter Searle, late of Christ Church, Woking, now retired to Cullompton.

The service was straightforward and intimate, with a sermon about Barnabas, 'a good man and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith'. Screwtape and Wormwood also got in on the act, fearing above all the qualities of enthusiasm and encouragement which Barnabas displayed.

Hymns were accompanied by a single flute, which played a descant obligato for every final verse. The organ (contributions to the Organ Fund were solicited in the notices) managed a simple accompaniment to a post-communion Taizé chant.

After-service care consisted of iced tea and nibbles in the garden at the back of the church, with a glorious view of the sea below and Mount Etna smoking away above.

**Carole & Martin Wells**  
**St Peter & St Paul**

## We all want a 'better' world

This book is not really about climate: it is about energy. We need to remember that: energy changes things and energy makes things happen.

But the production of energy is currently very closely associated with the production of carbon dioxide.

The author claims that around 50 billion tons of carbon dioxide a year is how much CO2 we need to stop producing a year, mainly in energy generation, if we are to stabilise our global climate.

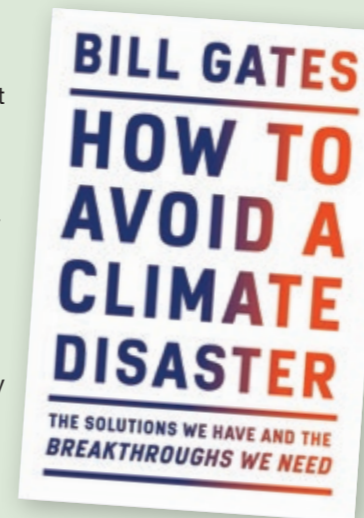
So, why should we listen to Bill Gates?

He is possibly the world's best-known philanthropist. He has been and is spending a lot of his own money on what he and his wife Melinda see as the most important challenges facing humanity.

He came to focus on climate change in an indirect way – through studying the problem of energy poverty in poorly developed countries. He became convinced of three things: to avoid a climate disaster, we have to get new carbon dioxide emissions to zero; we need to deploy the tools we already have, like solar and wind, faster and smarter; we need to create and roll out breakthrough technologies that can take us the rest of the way.

Bill Gates has a target date in his mind for a climate change solution – 2050. He dismisses 2030 as being unrealistic. His principle interest is in a technological breakthrough, the environmental equivalent of the Manhattan atom bomb project or the moon landing. These put the USA in the world's political driving seat. He would like to keep it there. So then, who is Bill Gates and what gives him the right to pontificate?

William Henry Gates was born on 28 October 1955, and raised in Seattle, Washington. He is an American business man, software developer, investor, author, and philanthropist. He is a co-founder of Microsoft Corporation. During



his career at Microsoft, Gates held the positions of chairman, chief executive officer (CEO), president and chief software architect, while also being the largest individual shareholder. He served as one of the pioneers of the microcomputer revolution of the 1970s and 1980s.

In March 2020, Gates left his positions at Microsoft and other companies to focus on his philanthropic endeavours including climate change, global health and development and education.

He has given sizable amounts of money to various charitable organizations and scientific research programmes through his and Melinda's Foundation, which is reported to be the world's largest private charity. He has fundamentally changed our lives through his Microsoft software and has also improved many lives through his work to eliminate polio, TB and malaria.

He suggests that we need to use more renewables and fewer fossil fuels which would account for roughly 27% of the reduction needed in emissions, and change how we manufacture our goods (31%), grow our food (18%), travel (16%), and keep our buildings warm or cool (6%).

Gates is right about the scale and urgency of the problem. Global carbon emissions are 65% higher than they were in 1990. Recognising that we cannot continue to deny electricity to 800 million of the world's poorest people, his starting point is a plan to develop clean energy production and cut its costs. Already, scientific advance has brought astonishing reductions in the



prices of solar, wind and wave energy, battery storage and electric vehicles.

Gates demands an immediate quintupling of climate-related research and development. This would include investing in nuclear fusion as well as nuclear fission; thermal energy (extracting energy from hot rocks underground); capturing carbon dioxide by mineralisation; sea-based carbon removal to de-acidify the oceans; and direct air carbon capture using scrubbing machines.

So, we have to ask why, when what needs to be done seems so obvious, the world community has been so slow to act.

Gates says he doesn't have a solution to the politics of climate change, but knows that the solution he seeks is tied up in political decisions. Seemingly unanswerable scientific evidence can be torpedoed by powerful vested interests, or side-lined by bureaucratic indifference, or undermined by weak and incompetent political leaderships that make commitments they do not honour.

Agreement has been reached on a global target: to prevent temperatures rising to 2 degrees above pre-industrial levels – preferably 1.5 degrees. New obligations have been created on each country to report, monitor and continuously review their emissions. While the major economies could not be bound to precise commitments on carbon reductions, they agreed to a ratcheting up of their ambitions every five years.

As mentioned already there are two numbers you need to know about climate change: the first is 51 billion; the other is zero. Roughly 50 billion is how many tons of greenhouse gases the world typically adds to the atmosphere every year. Although the figure may go up or down a bit from year to year, it is generally increasing. Bill Gates asserts that zero should be our target!

Yet if nothing changes, the world will keep producing greenhouse gases, climate change will keep getting worse, and the impact on humans could be catastrophic. But 'if nothing changes' is a big 'If. Gates believes that things can change.

**William Henry Bradford**  
**St Peter & St Paul**

# Have God Faith



In 2007, I began to challenge my own faith. I knew that faith is important of course, but what is it? We talk about it as if it is related to what we do, the church we go to, the denomination

or religion we belong to. But all these decisions in life may be considered as the outworking of faith rather than an explanation of what faith actually is.

My personal problems were twofold; I was too poor to retire and secondly, my family has to deal with drug addiction. I asked myself the question, 'Why isn't my faith enabling me to resolve these issues, so that I could "live happily ever after"'. Why are my prayers not being answered?'

I justified myself to God by suggesting that to be a Gideon for forty years, being a lay preacher for most of those years, holding office in a church, and being careful about my personal devotions, should entitle me to a big bank balance and a resolution to the drug problem in the family. Please don't laugh at me. You know that none of those things will count with God. But somehow, to me I thought they should.

I was encouraged by two contributions in last month's *Comment*. They reminded me of the journey I have been on, and I commend them.

John Allan of High Street Baptist Church wrote 'Why is Easter not a fixed date.'

Here we have a very clear and detailed analysis of the Christian calendar relating to the birth and death of Jesus. We might argue that this is at the heart of all we call spiritual truth, and our own salvation and redemption. And yet, we find that both of these events predated Christianity by perhaps many hundreds of years. They were originally pagan astrological discoveries and teachings.

Martin Banister of St Albans Cathedral wrote 'No Sacred Language...' in which he drew attention to the complexity of the history of the Bible, particularly of

the changes in translation, which could have altered the meaning. He comments a lot about the old versus new use of words. Some might consider that is not really an issue because that is unlikely to undermine the integrity of the text. But I wonder.

So what we have here is the suggestion in both of these articles that the Bible cannot be relied upon literally or historically. How do we feel about that?'

In my studies and research into how I could be a man of faith in relation to my personal issues, I discovered an example of what Martin was referring to, and it helped me greatly. I have not been the same since. Let me explain.

Frequently in our Bibles we find the odd word printed in italics, which it explains in the margin is a word inserted by the translators, compilers and the like, in order to make the English sound right and to help understand the truth. Of course the truth would be as interpreted by the editor. One such verse appears in Mark 11:22. In all Bibles (except one) I find that there is a word inserted which is not in the original. Where we are used to reading the words 'Have faith in God', we should actually read 'Have God faith' or 'Have the faith which God has'. There is an inserted 'in' which fundamentally alters what the statement of Jesus was meaning. It is not difficult to see that when we say 'Have faith in God' it means that we should believe that God will do something for us, whereas when we say 'Have God faith' this is Jesus' instruction that you and I should ourselves operate in the same faith which God has. This showed me the power available, which Jesus was hinting at, and validates what he promised '...and you will do greater miracles than these.'

**High Street Baptist Church**  
www.tringbaptistchurch.co.uk

**Bake With P**  
Sunday 2 May at 3pm

Our in-house baker P will walk you through a savoury picnic treat as we bake together and meet back online for a tasting! Have ingredients weighed out beforehand and join the fun!  
Email admin@tringbaptistchurch.co.uk for the Zoom code and ingredient list

This transformed my own line of exploration. I began to believe that my prayers were not being answered because I expected God to do something which I had been given to do myself; I needed to take control by a method he had established. Hebrews 11:1 states 'Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen'. I came to experience that underlying 'substance' when I took control of my thinking, meditation and expectations.

I now realise that this understanding is not Christian nor religious in any way. It is the way the universe works – the same for absolutely everyone. What the universe says is the Word of God. That is what Jesus was explaining to his disciples in Mark 11:22. Martin Banister ends his helpful article 'The Word of God cannot be confined to human words'. Perhaps some would say, 'The laws of the Universe are the Word of God and can never change. The Bible is the words of inspired people'. But it is appropriate for us all to recognise the signs of the times we live in. If we limit the Bible to the historic and literal, we may be trapped into the past and irrelevant for today. If we recognise the metaphor and analogy of the Bible we will then explore the rich spiritual teaching which is vital for our victorious lives today.

**Malcolm Baxter**  
formerly High Street Baptist Church

# The garden



Ο κήπος.  
Градината.  
Le jardin.  
Il giardino.  
The garden!  
Home of bees, butterflies, birds and badgers (and that's just the ones that start with b!)

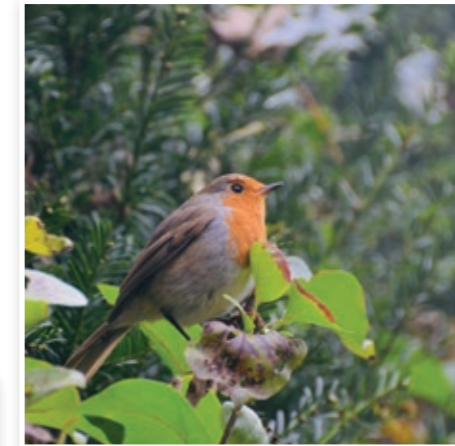
There is a universal love of a private space where you can relax in nature, plant flowers, grow vegetables and spoil the birds.

Our new garden is the joy of all birds who visit – the noise never ends! This last week there's been this crazily loud song thrush who delights in waking us all up in the early hours of the morning and keeping us awake as we try to fall asleep.



As the weather gradually warms, more and more time is being spent in the garden, trying to clear paths and rescue dying trees swamped in ivy while still preserving the wonderful wildness of it all! In the past couple of weeks there's been a delightful selection of finches – goldfinches, greenfinches, chaffinches and even some bullfinches! I'll fill up one of our feeders in the morning and it'll be half empty by the end of the day!

Since we've arrived there's been one species that really caught my attention – the robin! There's a total of three robins in our garden, and though we can't tell them apart yet, we've seen two of them build a nest in the ivy on the front of our house – it feels very special that they have chosen to build their nest so close to us!



The European robin is our national bird and it's not hard to see why – you can be out of the house for five minutes and immediately spot a robin, singing its heart out in a nearby tree. I think a lot of the popularity comes from their willingness to approach humans. Apparently, robins see

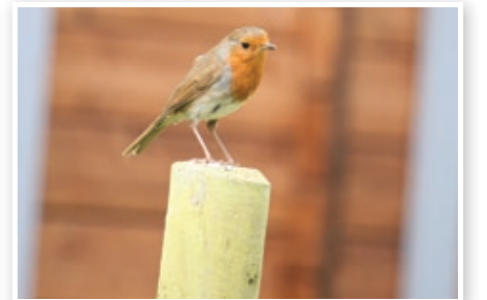


humans as just another big mammal such as a deer, and they may follow us when we are gardening as we usually dig up lots of worms and insects for them to eat!

We hear a lot about all the terrible effects humans have had on nature, and



while it's good to support the causes protecting nature, it's also good to remember the nature we are supporting – and I think robins are a good example of this. If you have a robin in the garden, why not try taming it, and see whether you can get it to feed from your hand? I haven't managed it with our robins yet – I haven't really been in the garden much through the winter – but now it's spring I'm going to try again! I think the best I've managed so far is the robin eating seed off the floor while I'm sitting about a metre away. Caution! If attempting this task, be prepared to have your limbs go completely numb as you sit there, or stand for ages with your arm outstretched!



So have fun! Get out there and find a robin! I've attached some photos I've taken of robins over the last year – they are so photogenic.

**Fern Asquith**  
High Street Baptist Church

## Answers – Two truths and a lie

1. Anthea Fraser (3 is false: though they did make the fittings for the Ark Royal, Queen Mary, Queen Elizabeths 1 and 2 and the Mauretania)
2. Annette Reynolds (1 is false: it was my eldest son who did!)
3. Ted Oram (2 is false: it was once on BBC and once on ITV)
4. Brenda Hurley (2 is false: I stopped playing golf when I became pregnant with son Simon and never picked it up again)
5. Roy Hurley (1 is false though I played for the Bingley team; on 3, it turned out I was on the wrong plane!)

## Alice's pandemic

'It's alright.' Alice says this many times out loud each day and then, 'It won't be long now.'

Alice is well and well equipped to survive the pandemic. She has stayed at home, able to do so because people less at risk have been kindly and helped her.

It's been fairly simple for Alice during the day but evenings have been hard and then she hasn't slept well. But it's

been doable – and there hasn't been much choice.

It's time for Alice to take stock and give thanks. Spring is coming and then summer and then harvest will follow. It was wonderful to see the full moon early in March.

Alice tells me she sang a hymn at Sunday School many years ago, the last line of which is 'Thank you God for everything.'

Thank you must be ongoing. There is something to be learned always and being able to understand as much as she can while still wondering why she is here, she gets on with being Alice and wonders why she wonders.

I'm aware and thankful that 'God works in mysterious ways his wonders to perform'.

**Peggy Bainbridge, St Peter & St Paul and St John the Baptist, Aldbury**

# Attempts at arriving at the truth



The death has been announced of Professor John Polkinghorne who started his career as a mathematical physicist and ended it as a priest in the Church of England. He was the leading British writer on the science and religion debate and so clear a speaker on the topic (the two don't always go together) that I made a real effort to get to every open conference at which he spoke.

Polkinghorne was born in 1930 in Weston-Super-Mare. Following National Service in the Army he entered Trinity College Cambridge where he read Mathematics, graduating at the top of the list of those studying the subject in 1952; and then did a Physics PhD supervised by Abdus Salam, the great Muslim Nobel Laureate in a group led by Paul Dirac, another Nobel Laureate and theoretical physicist. (It was around this time that Trinity College had more Noble Prize winners than in the whole of France.)

While at university he joined the Christian Union and there he met his wife, Ruth Martin, another mathematician. He was a post-doctoral student at the California Institute of Technology and then accepted a job as a lecturer at the University of Edinburgh from 1956 to 1958. At this point he returned to Cambridge, rising to the prestigious role of Professor of Mathematical Physics in 1969.



His contributions to theoretical physics are amongst the first rank, including a role in the work that led to the formation of the idea of the quark, the minute elementary particle. For his outstanding contributions to science he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society, the premier body for British and Commonwealth science in 1974. His most famous student was Martin Rees, now Lord Rees of Ludlow, the Astronomer Royal and a frequent broadcaster.

Christianity was always an essential part of Polkinghorne's life and during this time as a lecturer time he trained as a Reader in the Church of England.

Many mathematicians and theoretical physicists do their best work before they are 50. Bernard Lovell, the founder of the Jodrell Bank Observatory of radio telescopes considered around that age that he might train as a priest but decided against it. Polkinghorne actually concluded that that was the right thing for him and in 1979 he went to Westcott House, Cambridge, to train for the Anglican priesthood. He was ordained in 1982 and served as a curate in a working-class part of Bristol and then as Vicar of Blean, a village near Canterbury. In 1986 he returned to Cambridge first as Dean of Chapel at Trinity Hall and then as President of Queens' College.

Polkinghorne believed that to be a physicist and a priest was not a contradiction in terms – like being a vegetarian butcher. Both physics and theology were attempts to arrive at the truth. He believed that belief in God was the best answer to the question of the German natural philosopher Leibniz: 'Why is there something instead of nothing?' He thought that belief in God makes better sense of the physical world and of human experience than atheism. He mentions three reasons in particular:

## The Intelligibility of the Universe

The fact that we can understand sub-atomic particles (his particular field) and general relativity goes well beyond anything required by mere survival of the fittest. The fact that some of us can

understand the mathematics of sub-atomic particles cannot easily be explained by evolution alone without a creator.



## The fine-tuning of the universe

He often quoted with approval the words of Freeman Dyson, the Anglo-American mathematician, 'the more I examine the universe and the details of its architecture, the more evidence I find that the universe in some sense knew we were coming'. Polkinghorne himself said that either there are a very large number of universes in the Multiverse or that 'there is just one universe which is the way it is because of its anthropic fruitfulness because it is the expression of the purposive design of a Creator, who has endowed it with the finely tuned potentiality for life'.



## A wider humane reality

Polkinghorne believed that we can have real moral knowledge with belief in God, but wondered how an atheist can believe the phrase, for example, 'torturing children is wrong', is anything more than a social construct. On the other hand, a theist, a believer in God, believes this to be an absolute moral truth.

In 1997 Polkinghorne was knighted by the Queen. In 2002 he was awarded the prestigious (and very ruminative) Templeton Prize. His book 'The Way the World Is' (SPCK) is an accessible introduction to his thought. His autobiography 'From Physicist to Priest' (SPCK) is very readable.

**Jon Reynolds  
Tring Team**

# Denny the Bear

There is no denying how challenging the pandemic has been for us all. But through all the hardships faced during this unprecedented time, it's important to appreciate some of the positives that have emerged – particularly the opportunity to engage with new hobbies or rediscover the joy of old past times. Whether it's getting active, relishing the great outdoors or learning a nifty new skill, getting stuck in with hobbies has been great way of banishing lockdown boredom and staying on top of our mental health. Yet, it was one creative endeavour in particular that not only achieved this, but also led to the birth of our first ever mascot: DENNY The Bear!

Hazel, aged 80, from Leverstock Green, was struggling during the first lockdown. Unable to have face-to-face contact with her family or social clubs, she was suffering from a real lack of motivation. 'Franky, my granddaughter, started to become concerned that I was getting bored and suggested I took up knitting again. I used to knit bears about 18 years ago for "Teddies for Tragedy" and they were sent all over the world, but then I stopped knitting for some reason. At first I didn't think I wanted to do this as I hadn't knitted for such a long time, however Franky kept encouraging me then provided me with the wool, so I thought I'd better give it a go.'

It wasn't long before Hazel had finished crafting her first teddy, a sweet gift for a family friend's new-born baby, and she was extremely proud of her creation. Hazel's family then set her the task of making a special version of the teddy for DENS – complete with

a dashing yellow jumper. As soon as our Fundraising team saw her handiwork, they knew something special was afoot. DENNY The Bear was born!

Buoyed by this positive response, Hazel has now well and truly caught the knitting bug. Since the first lockdown, she has knitted a total of twenty-seven teddies for DENS.

Hazel adds, 'I'm glad my granddaughter persisted with me dusting off my knitting needles as I'd forgotten how much I enjoy it. It's nice to knit away whilst also being able to watch TV or listen to the radio. I feel a good sense of achievement when I've finished each bear and I like the thought that what I'm doing might make a difference to DENS'.

Soon, word began to spread about DENNY The Bear. When Julie, a sister of a DENS volunteer, found out about the adorable knitted mascots, she was keen to get involved.

'I have been knitting for charity for about four years now. My friend first introduced me to her "Knit and Natter" group who were knitting bears to be given to children in Eastern Europe. Then my sister told me about her fundraising efforts for DENS, so we got our knitting needles out to make DENNY!' Julie said.



Julie has knitted almost 100 bears with her group, which have been shared out among various charities. She added, 'The bears are fairly quick to knit up, and when the facial features are added, they are just so friendly'.

Thanks to the fantastic support from knitters within the local community and beyond, a total of fifty DENNY The Bears have been made so

far. There are now big plans ahead for all of our DENNYs to go on their very own adventures throughout Dacorum. Expect to see the teddy as mascots in local schools, making appearances across the borough during our Go Yellow week in June and going out as thank you gifts to fundraisers young and old.

The very first recipient of the mascot was Chris. This inspiring man from Hemel Hempstead was the top fundraiser in our STEPtember campaign. After completing 10,000 or more steps each day throughout the month of September, he more than doubled his fundraising target to reach £526. Chris, who has a learning disability and autism, was delighted to receive a congratulatory hamper including his very own DENNY The Bear.

Nicky Maxwell-Braithwaite, Community & Events Fundraising Manager at DENS, said, 'We are so excited to finally reveal our new mascot to the world! The creation of DENNY and the reaction that has followed is a perfect example of how our supporters have been able to come together and stay connected with the charity throughout the pandemic.'

Anyone can get involved with making a DENNY for us. It doesn't matter if you're new to the needles or a master knitter, we want you to help us build our growing family of mascots. DENNY can be any colour or size; the most important thing is that they're wearing the eye-catching yellow jumper! If you'd like to start knitting for DENS, please contact fundraising@dens.org.uk to get your DENNY The Bear pattern.

# Useful contacts

## TRING TEAM PARISH

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

## School Chaplaincy and Team Vicar

(Aldbury, Tring School)  
Rev Michelle Grace  
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## School Chaplaincy and Team Vicar

(Tring School, Long Marston, Wilstone)  
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## Curate

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## Diocesan Lay Minister

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## Church Wardens

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Jane Brown (Aldbury)  
01442 851396

Christine Rutter (Puttenham)  
01296 668337

Ken Martin (Wilstone)  
01442 822894

Rev Jane Banister  
(Long Marston)  
01442 822170

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**Hall Secretary**  
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Bandb33@talktalk.net

**Safeguarding**  
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safeguarding@tringteamparish.org.uk

## ST MARTHA'S METHODIST CHURCH

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**Senior Steward**  
Rosemary Berdinner  
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## AKEMAN STREET BAPTIST CHURCH

**Minister**  
Rev David Williams  
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**Administrator**  
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01442 827881

## CORPUS CHRISTI ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

**Parish Priest**  
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## HIGH STREET BAPTIST CHURCH

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Ruth Egan 07521 513494  
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**Assistant Minister**  
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**Administration/facilities hire**  
admin@tringbaptistchurch.co.uk  
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## NEW MILL BAPTIST CHURCH


**Minister**  
Vacancy

**JUSTICE & PEACE GROUP**  
affiliated to  
Churches Together in Tring

**Secretary**  
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michaeldemidecki@gmail.com  
www.justiceandpeacetring.org

**OUR CHURCHES ONLINE**  
www.tringteamparish.org.uk  
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www.tringbaptistchurch.co.uk  
www.newmillbaptist.org.uk  
www.akemanstreet.org  
www.berkotring.org.uk

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 Tring Parish

 @revhuw

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Please contact Barbara Anscombe if you would like to take a subscription to *Comment*: £10.00 for 10 issues each year. The magazine can be posted to you with an additional cost for postage at current rates.

Articles, photos and publicity adverts for the next edition should arrive with the Editor no later than the 1<sup>st</sup> 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

## Crossword puzzle answers From page 30

ACROSS	DOWN
1. CANTERBURY	1. COSTS
8. SANCTUM	2. NONCONFORMIST
9. GUIDE	3. EATS
10. SION	4. BUMPER
11. DENTISTS	5. ROGATION
13. PROSE	6. MISSIONARIES
14. ODOUR	7. CENSER
16. COMMENTS	12. REDEEMER
17. DAUB	13. POCKET
20. EPSOM	15. STRESS
21. EMOTIVE	18. BLESS
22. TRESPASSES	19. TOGA

 THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

**TRING**  
TEAM PARISH  
*Living God's Love*

## Tring Team Parish

[www.tringteamparish.org.uk](http://www.tringteamparish.org.uk)

Aldbury, Long Marston, Puttenham, Tring and Wilstone Churches.

Please visit our website for everything.

Services - Resources - Pastoral Care  
Support - And Much More!

## It's ok to contact any of the clergy

**Team Rector** Revd Huw Bellis 01442 822170 or 07411483229 huw@tringteamparish.org.uk  
**Team Vicar** Revd Jane Banister 01442 822170 Long Marston and Wilstone: jane@tringteamparish.org.uk  
**Team Vicar** Revd Michelle Grace 01442 851200 Aldbury: michelle@tringteamparish.org.uk  
**Curate** Revd Sarah Marshall 07538 888502 sarah@tringteamparish.org.uk

## Open Churches for Services

We have services in our five churches throughout the month, **subject to current government restrictions**. You need to book through our website, to allow space and for NHS Test and Trace.

[www.tringteamparish.org.uk/news-events](http://www.tringteamparish.org.uk/news-events).

Aldbury, Sundays at 10am, and 1st Sunday at 8am  
Tring Sundays 8am\* & 10am\*, once a month zoom Worship for All 3pm,  
Tuesdays 9.15am, Thursdays 10am  
Long Marston Sundays at 10am or 6pm.  
Wilstone Tuesday at 10am,  
Puttenham 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month 3.30pm.  
\* denotes live-stream service on our website or YouTube

## Open Churches for individual Prayer

Tring Church open daily, 10am - 12noon  
Wilstone daily 9am - 4pm  
Long Marston Church open Sundays (daylight hours).  
Aldbury Church open daily, 11am - 3pm



## Join in with our worship on the web. Some streamed, some recorded.

Services featuring our clergy and others coming into your home! Different styles, something for all ages and activities for families. Access to daily prayer and services from the Church of England.

## Pastoral Care and Support

We are here for you, please contact any of our clergy. - Keep in contact with church friends - Prayer support and resources - Protecting your mental health, lots of ideas about staying focussed and in balance.



The Foodbank in Tring Church is open on weekdays, 10am - 12noon, to collect food and to drop-off food donations.  
[www.dens.org.uk](http://www.dens.org.uk)





# Mega Stick Sunday

## 16th May 2021

Walk, run, cycle, amble or scoot round Tring and/or the villages to raise money for Christian Aid.

*You can choose what route you take - visit all the churches in Tring, go round all the villages or walk a bit each day during the week.*



Small groups of six or two households can walk together

The easiest way to collect money is to set up a JustGiving account to go directly to Christian Aid

To find out more or to join a small group contact Rev Jane Banister

*jane@tringteamparish.org.uk or 01442 822170*