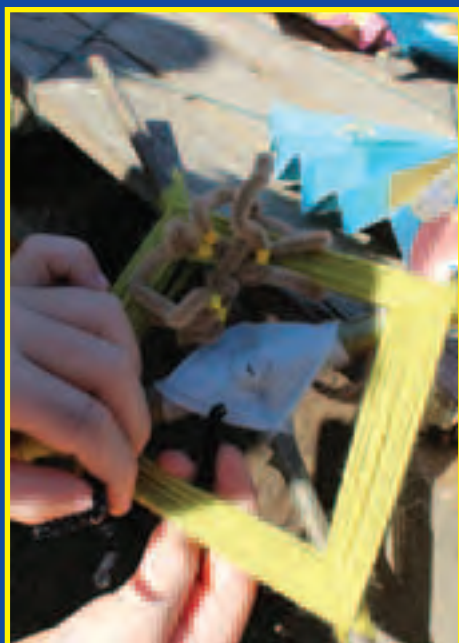


# COMMENT

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## A community of hope



We Anglicans from Tring recently had a Parish Vision Day, thinking and praying about what we need to do to enable our churches to continue to flourish. I imagine all of the churches in the town do this kind of thing, and businesses certainly need to make sure they keep their focus.

We invited along the Very Reverend Jeffrey John, Dean of St Albans, to talk to us. He emphasised the centrality of the parish Eucharist (or Communion) service and how we need to keep the sacraments at the heart of our worship as it is the most important thing that we do. I couldn't agree more, for in celebrating Communion we hear the story of Christ, we are encouraged to do this to remember him, and nervously we are called forwards to receive Communion; unworthy as we are, we offer ourselves, and we welcome God into our messy lives before we go back out into the world.

However, Jeffrey then, in my view,

shot himself in the foot by saying that noisy children shouldn't be there as they get in the way of the holiness of the service and don't really understand what is going on. To be fair to him, he may not have said this in so many words but this is what I, in my anger, heard. He did leave us copies of his little booklet 'Going for Growth', if you would like to read his own words. He certainly got me thinking. Churches are one of the few places where you can have all ages from 0 to 90 (or older). We are proud to say we are an inclusive church: everyone is welcome, irrespective of age, gender, sexuality or race. But it is more important than that. Society is hurting, and many would say broken, and in response there is a genuine yearning for community. As Christians we are formed by sharing in Communion. We hear of the broken bread and the broken body on the cross, and this is reflected in our broken society (if you don't think it is broken, can I just ask you to look at parliament?) and yet as we partake in Communion, the body of Christ is made whole in the church, as we become a community of hope shaped by our worship.

As we enter November, we enter a time of remembering. We remember our loved ones at All Souls, we remember the horrors of war on Remembrance Day. This November we also find out if we will be in, or if we will be out, or is it still all going on? Wherever we are, I doubt there will be unity, which is why more than ever we need to do 'this in remembrance of me', and to worship as a whole but broken community which seeks God's wholeness.

**Huw Bellis, Tring Team**



Please send articles and photos for the December edition of Comment to the Editor by the end of October at [comment.magazine@gmail.com](mailto:comment.magazine@gmail.com)

## Selfless sacrifice



While our news is full of politics at the moment, there is one other issue that is hitting the headlines: the climate emergency. It is becoming more and more urgent that we alter how we are to live if we are to be good stewards of the world. As Christians, and as church members, it is something that we have been aware of for a long time; many have campaigned on this issue as well as trying to live in a way that reflects this.

I read recently that church goers are supposed to be the most successful at making the changes required because the idea of sacrifice is one that we value and see has an importance. We know that to change our lives because it will benefit people we will never meet, or never see, is part of what we should do. We have the role model of Jesus as the ultimate loving sacrifice, so for us to make much smaller changes in our



*'I am here to help raise the alarm, to call for profound ecological conversion. The life of God's creation is under threat, especially the lives of God's poor. I am here to protect our common home.'*

lives is something we accept.

But sacrifice is a difficult concept to sell to others. As Chaplain at Tring School I have been promoting the DENS sleepout, but I have been struggling with the line on the flyer that says 'Wake with a great sense of achievement that you have made a huge difference'. For me, the sleepout and other fundraisers, not to mention green changes such as turning down heating and using the car less, should not be done because it makes us feel better. We do them because they are the right thing to do. It should not always be about us, and that is one message that the privileged world that we live in needs to hear.

Jesus tells a story in Luke's Gospel, chapter 16, about a rich man who does not notice the starving Lazarus at his gate because he has all that he needs and does not think beyond himself. By the time he realizes what he should have done, it is too late. Christians are called not to be like that rich man and to spread that message of selfless sacrifice.

**Jane Banister, Tring Team**

# The season of Creation



The Season of Creation is celebrated annually by tens of thousands of Christians around the world during the month of September. The purpose of the Season

of Creation is to join together in prayer and action to protect God's world. As Christians we are called to be stewards of the planet and this period encourages us to think more deeply about our responsibility. This year the theme was 'The Web of Life: Biodiversity as God's blessing', encouraging us to reflect on two essential features of creation: that it comes from God, and that we have a part to play in it.

Of course, it is not only Christians who are preaching. The message of the climate emergency we are facing is coming from every angle, the demands to think about the role we play in taking care of creation are inescapable. The wise words of 16-year-old Greta Thunberg are on all forms of media and young people are taking to the streets to encourage leaders and big business to think of the future instead of short-term profits.

We are part of a complex, delicate and interdependent web of life which is valuable because it is created, sustained and redeemed by God. Human wellbeing depends on stable and thriving ecosystems and the services they give us, from clean water and food, to oxygen, clothing and climate regulation, and the 'resources' we use from nature. The Bible reminds us that we are not on this earth by accident, but rather by God's design.

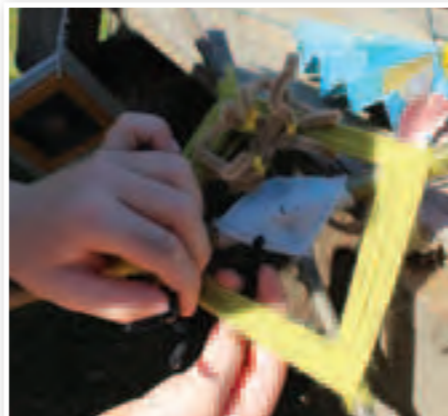
*Isaiah 42:5*  
 Creator of the heavens,  
 who stretches them out,  
 who spreads out the earth  
 with all that springs from it,  
 who gives breath to its people,  
 and life to those who walk on it...

This year High Street Baptist Church participated in the Season of Creation by highlighting small steps we can take toward caring for God's creation. We shared these ideas using social media, leaflets at Church and our notice boards. Our activity culminated with an Eco Sunday service and Green Communion on Sunday 15 September 2019. We are



encouraging our church family to make pledges to respond to the Season of Creation and play their part in protecting the delicate web of life.

You can read more about High Street Baptist Church's green journey on our website, along with links to useful websites and resources [www.tringbaptistchurch.co.uk/eco-church](http://www.tringbaptistchurch.co.uk/eco-church)  
**Polly Eaton, High Street Baptist Church**



## Postcard from Lewes



I left Tring nearly five years ago (it really seems not that long ago) and have happily settled in Lewes in beautiful Sussex.

I have found new friends, a new church and U3A community and most of all enjoy being close to the family. Having had my one and only daughter

at the age of 41, I feel now particularly blessed to have three grandchildren aged 11, 5 and 5 months, although, at the age of 84, we seem to have jumped one generation. Friends of mine are great-grandparents by now.

Comment has developed and grown enormously over the years and it is a joy to see new faces amongst the familiar ones in its pages. This is to send

my love and best wishes to all my old friends from Tring and to tell you to carry on the good works.

A few of my Tring friends come and occasionally visit me for the day. It's a lovely day out.

**Hannelore Kettle**  
 formerly St Peter & St Paul

## God in the everyday things



Many people say they feel close to God when gazing at breathtaking scenery or when out on nature walks; whilst, of course, this can be the

case, these are not the only places we encounter a spiritual presence.

Often we meet God in the most unremarkable of places: it might be while making a cup of tea, or in the 'good morning' glances we share with a stranger; it could be as we put the bins out or during the embrace a loved one. The truth is, God is present in all we do

– there is no moment when God is not around.

The prophet Jeremiah starts with saying exactly this – that God occupies all places, the whole of heaven and earth and every secret place. It may not seem this way given that we cannot see him and we are all guilty at times of thinking God may not be paying attention! But he is.

Consider what God is doing at the most unlikely times in your life. Make an effort to be mindful of where he is in the ordinary. Be open and listen. What you get in return may surprise you...

**Sarah Marshall, Tring Team**

### Season of Creation prayer

*Creator of Life, the Earth is full of Your creatures, and by Your wisdom you made them all. At Your word, the Earth brought forth plants yielding seed of every kind and trees of every kind bearing fruit, the waters teemed with swarms of living creatures of every kind, and the world was filled with every kind of winged bird, walking animal, and creatures that creep upon the ground.*

*Mountains, plains, rocks and rivers shelter diverse communities, and through the changing seasons Your Spirit renews cycles of life.*

*During this Season of Creation, open our eyes to see the precious diversity that is all around us. Enlighten our minds to appreciate the delicate balance maintained by each creature. Inspire us to conserve the precious habitats that nurture this web of life.*

*In the name of the One who came to proclaim good news to all creation, Jesus Christ. Amen*



## Conference End



In view of the huge, worldwide gatherings of young people in support of Extinction Rebellion's

demand for action on climate change, I remembered a poem I wrote following an earlier conference held in Bali in 2007 where these things were starting to be discussed, though little happened as a result. Sadly, what I wrote then seems pretty apt for these days, more than over ten years on.

**Margaret Whiting, St Peter & St Paul**

### Conference End

*We are gathered today to say goodbye to a way of life we can no longer sustain.*

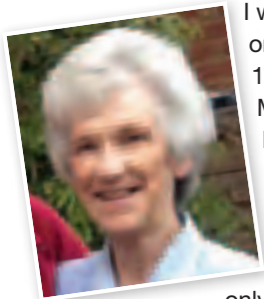
*Man loves to travel, to trample, to change this life-giving earth. Now earth sighs "Enough – let me breathe or I die."*

*So we stand on the brink, we shudder, we fear, reluctant to cede our conquering power.*

*We stare in dismay but still we delay...*

*Change, change is the word that haunts us now, with when? and what? and how? and who will make the first move?*

## Confirmed by Bishop Wood



I was confirmed on 27 March 1955 at St Peter's Mill End (near Rickmansworth) where my father was Vicar (along with two other churches). I was only ten years old

when my father suggested that my older sister and I should start Confirmation classes which, at the time, lasted for many weeks.

He thought it best that we didn't attend the classes that he took at St Peter's so it was arranged for us to go to St Thomas, West Hyde, which was a few miles away. Canon Paul Deussen was Priest in Charge and he lived in Church House almost opposite the tiny village Church.

After our piano lessons on Saturday

mornings, we had to take the bus to Maple Cross and walk about half a mile to his house. He was very elderly (or so we thought) but gentle and welcoming. We were the only candidates. I must confess that I can hardly remember what he actually said to us except for such things as God loves us and is always near us and we should pray night and morning. This was quite what we were used to.

On Confirmation day all the candidates, about thirty in number, assembled in our Vicarage in the evening and the girls/ladies, already in our white dresses, had a veil placed over our heads. The clergy and the Bishop, Claude Wood, were preparing in my father's study.

My godparents arrived, a priest and his wife, whom I had hardly seen in eleven years, and my other godmother, who was a very good family friend and always took me to Church when I went

to stay with her. We, the candidates, processed into Church (beside our Vicarage), my sister ensuring that I stood on the right side of her so that when the Bishop placed his hands on our heads, two of us at a time, she wouldn't be affected by his shaky hand!

I can certainly remember it as being a very special time and I was excited that I was now committing myself to a Christian life which my parents had initiated at my baptism eleven years previously. It was special to think I could receive the sacrament of Holy Communion from my father alongside my mother each Sunday morning.

Claude Wood was Priest at St Peter & St Paul, Tring, from 1930-42. The new Church School was named after him when he was made Bishop of Bedford in the early 1960s and he came to Tring to bless it.  
**Margaret Gittins, St Peter & St Paul**

## Bishop Claude Wood

In 1930 the Reverend Claude Wood came to Tring from a large parish in Croydon and was to be with us for the next twelve years. He was related to the Williams family of Pendley Manor who held the patronage of the living.

His father was for many years the Rector of Aldbury and lived in the beautiful new red brick Rectory at the foot of Toms Hill. Claude Wood was handicapped by a slight physical disability but that was never allowed to interfere with his untiring devotion to duty. He was an outstanding preacher and firmly held the attention of his congregation. Only this week I met an old friend in the town who remarked, 'I shall always remember him for his outstanding sermons'. He was a very earnest, rather sober man who became much loved during his ministry in Tring.

During the winter months he was sometimes afflicted by a slight hoarseness, but nevertheless it was his regular custom to read the 'Office' for

the day from his desk in the Chancel, and this was not altered. At that time we had a silvery-haired verger who, during the reading of the 'Office', occupied his official seat remotely by the South door. The Vicar thought it foolish of him to strain his throat, so he broke off, 'Smith, would you please come up and sit a little nearer.' The response from Smith was, 'And our mouth shall show forth Thy praise'.

Co-incidentally, the Vicar's chief warden was also called Smith (the chemist). He had to meet the Vicar one evening at the Vicarage and was pleased to be given a glass of sherry before the discussion started. When business was over the Vicar said quite unconsciously, 'Smith, will you have another sherry before you go?' Smith took this as the hint that he was now to depart, and hurried away, making a polite refusal.

Claude Wood had a very charming wife and four children. The ladies of the parish were delighted to welcome

a Vicar with a wife and family after two bachelor priests. The members of the Mothers' Union were particularly thrilled when Mrs Wood became a member and subsequently enrolling President.

After nearly twelve years we were all sorry when Claude Wood moved from Tring to become Suffragan Bishop of Bedford. Shortly after his leaving, and at his instigation, I was approached by the late Canon Wold to seriously consider becoming a Reader, and that is why I became what was then known as a Lay Reader attached to Tring Parish. A year later I was appointed as a Diocesan Reader.

**Ralph Seymour**  
*This article was part of a series of reminiscences contributed by the late Revd Ralph Seymour, who was born in Tring in 1906, a former Choirboy from St Peter & St Paul who later became a Priest. He knew seven different Vicars during his time in Tring.*

## Confirmed in Margaret's Dad's Church

It was a hot Saturday afternoon when we caught the 321 bus from Croxley Green to Mill End, Rickmansworth, for my Confirmation on 14 May 1953. Michael Gresford Jones, Bishop of St Albans,

confirmed me in St Peter's Church.

After the service we had refreshments served in the Church grounds and then caught the bus home. My first Communion was the next morning in

St Oswald's Church, Croxley Green.

**Ian Drakes**  
*formerly St Peter & St Paul*

## Teenagers and technology



I recently heard the parent of a baby commenting on how she thought life would be easier once her baby could sit up. I smiled to myself because I

remember my group of antenatal friends thinking the same. It would be easier once they could sit.

Then maybe when they could crawl or walk or speak.

The thing is, it doesn't get easier just different, as the parenting issues and solutions change.

Take me for instance with children aged from 10 upward into their 20s: a lot less physical parenting but more mind games, amateur psychology and, if I'm honest, a LOT of parenting by text; or What's App or Messenger or Snapchat or whatever your child's communication method of choice might be.

I was glad to learn I was not the only parent who has set up a family group to communicate with older children who might even be in the same house as you. Admittedly my group seems to involve a lot of mickey-taking, changing group message colours and giving

sometimes inappropriate nicknames to group members. Although I secretly quite like my current nickname of 'Mothering Overlord'.

My friend's family group seem to spend a lot of time discussing who is sucking up all the bandwidth, but at

least she avoids the actual eye rolling and door slamming which was more typical when I was a teen. And she can mute them when they are squabbling which is much harder when they are actually using their real life voices.

The main issue I have with using phones and other gadgets as a way of communicating is that although they always seem to have one about their person and leap to answer pinging calls

one was available to answer my call. Except I knew he was.

I sent a message via every messaging service he has. I emailed him in the hope it would pop up on his laptop as it was almost inevitable he would be looking at it with headphones on. Nope. No reply. I actually thought I might rupture something I was so frustrated.

Thinking 'out of the box' I set a reminder for two minutes time on Alexa using the app on my phone to be announced on the gadget we have sitting inches from where he was sitting when we left. I then set it remotely to start playing Queen's Bohemian Rhapsody, then a selection of Muse tracks, switching between them every few seconds in the hope of getting his attention. IT WORKED!

The music baffled him and he finally checked his phone and seeing many, many messages and missed calls, called me back. My pan and the boiling eggs in it were saved.

I have, in the past, messaged my children to come downstairs for tea rather than bellowing up the stairs. I often set an Alexa reminder to tell my teens to go to bed if I want a really early night. No

more telling me they didn't realise what time it was when it's midnight and I've woken to realise I can still hear the TV! I can even turn the TV volume down or even turn it and the lights off, thanks to our smart home gadgets – very useful for sleepover parties. I'm currently working on learning how to broadcast throughout the house via Alexa to tell them to be quiet or to send other messages.

Do you communicate with your teens via technology or are you still parenting the traditional way? Is my way ingenious or lazy? I'm curious to know your thoughts.

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



attention from their peers, whenever I call or message I endure sometimes hours of whistling silence with only the whispering sound of passing tumbleweed to reassure me I am alive.

Could they be ignoring me deliberately? Should I create an alter ego to fool them? I would have to change it regularly of course. Maybe burner phones are the answer?

Today, for example, I went out and worried I might have left a pan on the hob with the gas on. No worries, my 19-year-old son was still at home with another half an hour before he was due to leave for work. I called him on his mobile. The ringing went on until the nice answer machine man told me no

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## My baptism



I had just completed my initial training for National Service when I decided it was time for me to ask to be baptised. I was in the R.A.M.C. as, before enlisting, I had been employed in a North London Hospital. After twelve weeks at Aldershot, I had been transferred to my first unit at Shorncliffe in Kent.

I discussed this with two elders of my church, Cholmeley Hall in Highgate. They questioned me about how I came to faith and agreed that this was the right step to take. The baptism was arranged for me on a weekend when I would be home on leave.

I had been dedicated as a baby in a Baptist Church in Upper Holloway where my parents were members and I had learnt about the basics of the Christian faith at an early age. I made a decision at the tender age of 7 to give my life to Jesus because I believed he had given his life for me when he died on the cross. This was a very simple statement of belief but, as I grew older, I understood more about the fundamentals of our faith and how it should be lived out in everyday life.

From the age of 16 we went to an Open Brethren Church where I was privileged to receive some wonderful Bible teaching and also many opportunities to serve God. I realised the importance of accepting the Bible as the revealed Word of God given as direction on all matters of life and faith. From that I understood that a believer should be baptised as an outward expression of an inward (spiritual) experience of faith in Jesus Christ. Jesus himself taught this and the early church practised it extensively. The Acts of the Apostles has many examples of baptism following conversion.

The meaning behind the practice of baptism by total immersion is that the believer identifies him or herself with Christ in that, just as he died and rose from the dead, so, by going under the water for a second or two, one 'dies' to the old life and 'rises' to a new life in Christ. It is a symbolic act and does not mean that one is saved by baptism but is a public act for all to know that there has been a saving experience of sins forgiven and a life with Christ started. From then on a believer should live in a way to confirm that public statement and to honour God.

It does not mean that in 'rising' to a

new life we are perfect and do not sin. Every believer knows the battle that goes on to please God and the failures that do occur.

So, on the evening of 31 October 1948, at the age of 18, and in front of about 200 people, I and six others were baptised after stating our beliefs and knowing that, as a Christian, it was right to obey the command of Jesus and an entry into the life of the one universal church. (I had to catch a train afterwards and arrived back at Shorncliffe at 12.30am ready to be on parade at 7.00am!)

When God called me to be the Lay Pastor at Wigginton Baptist Church about forty years later, I was privileged to be the baptiser on several occasions – with some difficulty as there was no pool in the Chapel! But there are many places in the world where there are also no facilities for baptising so new converts are baptised in a river or sea. It is good to know that the church is growing everywhere even in the most remote areas.

One of my favourite 'early church' stories is in Acts, chapter 8, verses 26-40. Perhaps, in a future edition of Comment, I may be allowed write about Philip.

**John Young**  
Akeman Street Baptist Church

## Flowers for Jenny's funeral

In early October many Comments readers and others from Jenny Scholes' wide circle of friends and family met in St Peter & St Paul's Church to mourn her death and celebrate her life. Her son commissioned these flowers in shades of yellow and gold to represent each continent.



Asia was Chrysanthemums symbolising fidelity, optimism and joy; Australasia was Kangaroo Paw, symbolising uniqueness and individuality; Europe was Rosemary symbolising remembrance; North America was Sunflowers symbolising adoration, loyalty and longevity; South America was Alstromeria or Peruvian Lily symbolising friendship and devotion; Africa was Gerbera symbolising innocence, purity

and cheerfulness; Great Britain was yellow roses symbolising friendship and caring; The Oceans were Eucalyptus foliage which in the Aboriginal culture represents the division of the underworld, earth and heaven.

The meaning of each of the plants resonated so well with Jenny's many admirable qualities.

**Rosy Edwards**

## Parish registers

### Baptisms

We welcome these children into our church family and pray for their parents and Godparents.

**Savannah Lane**  
**Martina Lane**  
**Sally Jane Lane**  
**Mark William Lane**  
**Shane Lane**  
**James Lane**  
**Isaac Figgy Lane**

### Funerals

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

**Jayne Mary Gibbs 64**  
**Eileen 'Jenny' Scholes 76**

# Wisdom

In Bishop Wood School we have been learning about Wisdom: the quality of having experience, knowledge and good judgement.

## King Solomon

During worship we have been learning about the value of wisdom. Here is one of the stories we were told.

As King Solomon was a good person, he was offered a gift from God. He chose wisdom. One day, there was a big debate over a child with two mothers who claimed the child was theirs. King Solomon had to use his gift of wisdom to solve the issue. He pretended to cut the child in half because he knew that the real mother would not let him.

## Siddattha Gotama

In our RE lessons, we have been taught about the story of Siddattha Gotama. This story is about a prince who knew nothing about the real world and how he learned about pain and death.

Siddattha was an Indian prince and was born in Lumbini (Nepal). When he was born, wise men said he would be

a great king but if he saw anybody who was miserable, he would not be a leader of a country, but of a religion. Siddattha's father ordered that no one who was sick or old was to come anywhere near the palace walls because his father was desperate for him to be a ruler.

One day, at the age of about 29, Siddattha broke his father's rules and left the palace grounds, going into the village. While he was out, he couldn't help but notice an old man with a walking stick. He then saw a man who was obviously ill, and minutes later, he saw a funeral parade with people crying and weeping. He had never seen anything like this before. Then he saw a holy man who was trying to find the answers to the problems of suffering in the world. The man looked happy. Siddattha decided that he must try to find answers to this problem too. So that is what he did.

## Enlightenment

Enlightenment is understanding why the world is how it is and knowing how to stop selfishness and greed. You can be taught what enlightenment means but

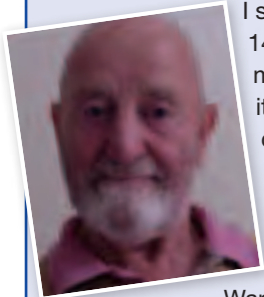
the way Buddha gained enlightenment was to meditate under the Bodhi tree. Yet before the Buddha (Siddattha Gotama) knew this, he had tried all sorts of things to try and answer his questions about the world. He persevered and spent six whole years on his quest for enlightenment.

He started by being taught by two great teachers and although they tried, they couldn't teach him what he needed. Next he tried spending many years with holy men. They ate and drank barely anything. The idea of this method was that if your body was harmed, it wouldn't mean as much. It didn't work for Siddattha and he went back to eating again.

Finally, Siddattha started meditating under the Bodhi tree and after one day and one night, he eventually gained enlightenment. He understood why suffering happens and how it could be stopped. He was now wise and would spend the rest of his life passing on his wisdom to his followers – the people that today we call Buddhists.

**Eleanor Cole & Rosie Hopwood**  
**Bishop Wood School, Year 6**

# JOY at Confirmation



Warrington and there

I suppose I was 14 years old when my parents said it was time to be confirmed. Of the service all that I can remember is that it was by the Bishop of

were around sixty young people being confirmed. The girls wore white with head coverings and us lads white shirts and grey trousers.

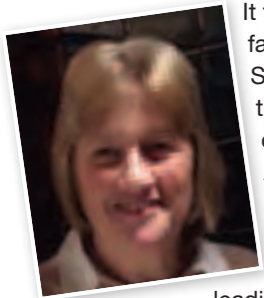
What I do remember, and it has been important to me ever since, was an incident at confirmation class. The Vicar, out of the blue, posed the question: 'How do you spell joy?'. Is this a trick question I asked

myself? Everyone knows how to spell 'joy'. So with some trepidation I responded J-O-Y. 'Correct,' said the Vicar, 'and this is your guide for life: 'J – Jesus first, O – Others second, Y – Yourself last'.

That is the way to have 'joy in your heart'.

**David Whiting, St Pater & St Paul**

# On fire for God



leading the evening,

despite losing a night's sleep on her delayed flight back from her holiday. One of our company aptly described her as being 'on fire for God'.

The evening had a poignancy when

Ann gestured to an empty chair in the band and told us that they lost one of their members this year in a tragic accident. Also, although nothing was made of it, Brian Johnson (husband of Pat who was secretary of Bishop Wood School for many years), arrived in a wheelchair this year, looking very frail. Pat said he really wanted to come to play for us (bass/tuba) which was so touching. I was reminded of an Isaac Watts (not Charles Wesley this time!) hymn we used to sing – 'I'll praise my maker while I've breath / and when my soul is lost in death / praise shall my

nobler powers employ...' Salvationists are far from morbid. They live with the blessed assurance that Christians are, in the words of John Wesley, going to Glory. That is their message and it was very powerfully brought to us.

The evening was rounded off with a splendid spread conjured up by our own Jean Genie. I wish I had taken a picture of it – like young people do – but thought only how nice it was to eat and spend time together. Thank you to Ann and Michael for a lovely evening.

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

# A family heirloom



The christening robe and its petticoat were handmade for my mother Kathleen Elizabeth Godsall (nee Kyne) by her maternal aunt in 1913. It was also worn by her brother Henry two

years later.

Subsequently it was worn by Margaret and Edie Kennedy, daughters of Edith, the maker of the robe. In July 1949 it was worn by myself for my baptism at Old St Pancras Church in London, when Margaret was one of my godmothers. It was also the last

occasion when pink ribbons were used!

In the more recent past it was worn by each of our four sons in turn. Richard was baptised at Old St Pancras on 10 July 1976, Paul on 9 December 1978, also at Old St Pancras, Christopher on 18 January 1981 at St John the Baptist, Aldbury, and William on 16 September 1984, also in Aldbury.

Although all eight of our grandchildren have been baptised, it has not been worn again as customs seem to change and all the babies were older and therefore larger by the time of their baptisms.

**Gill Lerigo**  
**St John the Baptist, Aldbury**



Frances Gillian Godsall - 1949



Richard Andrew Lerigo 1976



Paul David Lerigo 1978



Christopher James Lerigo 1981



William Michael Lerigo 1984



Richard, Paul, Christopher & William 1984

  
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## Taking our community into *the* community



### The added value of extended Communion

I have always found that one of the greatest privileges of ministry life is the range and variety of 'home Communion' that we are asked to administer. Some of these, of course, are on a one-to-one basis with people who are ill or perhaps temporarily unable to travel to Church and these can be very fulfilling occasions. The conversations can be very wide-ranging and the chat that takes place outside the service can be just as valuable an aspect of pastoral care as the service itself.

As well as these individual services, there is also a roster of regular Communion occasions which take place with groups either in homes or sheltered communities. For many years I have been administering Communion in the Furlong in King Street. This started when a number of our older congregation members moved there from their original family homes in Tring. Over the years it became a place to which members of our church community would downsize, confident of finding old friends already installed!



Included in this group were my own parents, Raymond and Evelyn, who moved to the Furlong from Yorkshire and were always stalwarts in the regular monthly Communion service. My father had seven happy years there and my mother lived there for eighteen years until her death at 98. To my recollection she didn't miss a single Communion service during all that time and there was always a good group of regular pals who gained a great deal of pleasure from these occasions which, of course, reminded them of their earlier, busier lives within the wider community.

One very satisfying feature of these Furlong services is that they form a continuing link with the Methodist Community at St Martha's and Rachael Hawkins and I alternate the services on a monthly basis.

Given the proximity of St Martha's to the Furlong, it was a very popular retirement choice for that group and thus it became an active meeting point between the Anglican and Methodist communities and kept the link alive long after we swapped our ownership of St Martha's for the Methodist share in the Church Hall in 2005.

Enid Powell, widow of our last St Martha's Anglican minister, David Powell, still lives in St Martha's Lodge and continues to be a regular member of our '8 o'clock-ers' every Sunday and is a very active supporter of FOTCH.

There are many such 'ties that bind' within our wider community and our regular services are an active part of what keeps us close together.

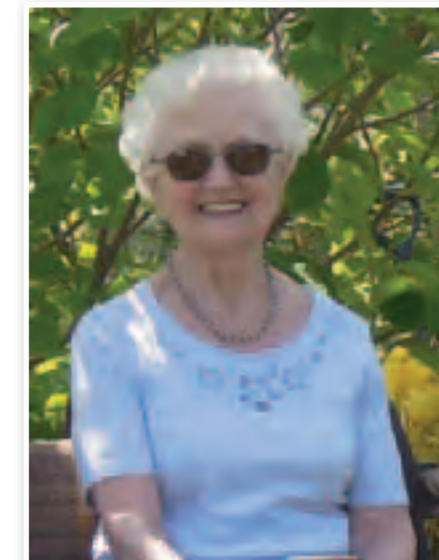
### Further afield, on the road to Wendover

Another community with whom we have a close involvement is the Leonard Pulham home in Halton. This is a small independent care home with a very good reputation for the quality of its personal attention to the needs and wishes of its residents.

A significant proportion of those residents have been ex-church members from St Peter & St Paul's Church. Joan Hollingsworth, Diane Sandy, Brian Royle, Frank Standen, Jean Royle, Evelyn Senior have all been resident members of the Leonard Pulham community. In recent years we have changed our Communion service there from a 'private visit' format into a much more inclusive occasion which welcomes all the members of the home.

Encouragingly we have seen a good growth in the number of attendees, many of whom have had no previous involvement with our church but have now become 'regulars' at these services. These have become very engaged and warm occasions.

A really uplifting aspect of these regular monthly services is that a number of the members of our house groups join me in going along and have formed bonds of friendship with the residents. In a sense this works as a kind of 'outreach' for St Peter & St Paul in a different



location: a travelling church community which has created a satellite community in Halton.

The welcome and friendliness that we encounter there, and the engagement between the individuals who have previously not met each other, is heart-warming and rewarding for all. I know that those who make the journey across the county line get just as much fulfilment as those we visit. It has indeed become a travelling church.

### More opportunities for outreach

Of course, there are other homes and communities to be visited. Val Rockall held regular services at St Joseph's for a number of years and, after her sad death, that was taken over by Huw Bellis and more recently by Sarah Marshall and Mike Watkin.

I am sure that they will have felt the same level of appreciation that I have described for this service of outreach into the community. I am also sure that if any members of our 'in-church' community would like to get involved, they would be very much welcomed.

It seems to me that when we take our church community out into the wider world for any involvement with other groups it is a very rewarding situation for all concerned. Both parties gain from this extension and the closer walk with God.

If you feel that you might like to be involved in any of these occasions and take our community out into the community, you would be very welcome. Please let me or any of the ministers in the Tring Team know and we will make it work.

**Grahame Senior, Tring Team**

# Letter from Orkney



As you probably know, we had a rather disastrous first trip on our boat, with the engine breakdown and all that. Well, you can imagine, I was not my

usual grumpy self, I was Megagrumpy. But my darling wife stroked my brow with the duster and stuck a glass of Whisky in my hand and the world started to look better. I had to be prised loose to come on this trip because I have taken Orkney scenery, people, way of life, and weather on board 100% - I just love it all, and adjusted to everything

On our arrival we went to Waitrose in Berkhamsted. I was so surprised, disappointed and quite frankly appalled, by the arrogance and sheer bad manners of the folk that were my fellow shoppers, from actively barging through without so much as an 'excuse me', to blocking the aisles, looking me in the eye and turning their back, thus leaving me to find another way round. It left a really sad feeling about the people who appeared to be well educated, wealthy individuals who should have known better. Of course, not everyone is like that, but interestingly we never experienced the same thing in Tesco in Tring. Whether I had been accustomed to this when we lived here is hard to say, but the contrast as one travels further north, even as little as Birmingham, is quite marked.

Talking of right things, Janet Goodyer,



the force of nature in St Peter & St Paul's, had agreed to make a wreath for St Mary's Kirk in Stromness from the poppies used last year on the Church. I felt it would be lovely to have something from the Parish Church in my new place of worship and Janet came up trumps in agreeing to make a 3D Wreath for us, and not only that, but have it ready to take back with me as this is an important year in the history of Scapa Flow. It would be fitting to lay it in our Kirk for the remembrance services. Photos will be provided in our next letter from Carrie.

History note: The entire German Fleet was under guard by the Commander in Chief of the British fleet, Admiral Sir David Beatty after their surrender. It was stored in 'The Flo' during 1919 awaiting distribution amongst the arguing allies, when their Commanding Officer Admiral Ludwig Von Reuter gave the order to scuttle the fleet on the 21st June. That action solved any arguments as to who gets what.

At the end of September we were in Lapworth, a place bordering Birmingham. We inflicted ourselves plus dog on brother-in-law Andy. We parked our camper outside his beautiful home and rushed in for showers and a bed we could both get in without hanging on to the edge. Bliss!

We had only a few more days before we were due to head back home after a good visit, meeting up with all the wonderful folk and friends from Church and, of course, our families (who still think we are slightly barmy moving so far

north, especially this year when Orkney has had a rubbish summer and here it has been so glorious) when sadly Alan Reid, one of my two best lifelong friends, died suddenly, ending sixty years of a true non-judgemental friendship. I feel slightly less of the person than I was. I am made of many parts and one of those is my real friends, RIP Alan. So we changed plans, cancelled hotels and ferries and headed for Norfolk and Alan's funeral. My sister Pat had some unscheduled visitors.

We will be coming back to Tring in December so all those who know us: we are giving you fair warning, you have time to hide. That will be after the Australians have left, which should be fun, coming from the Aussie summer in Brisbane at around 35 degrees to the Orkney winter at around 7 degrees. I can see our log reserves will deplete fast. But on the up side, I will get the great delight of a few days cracking a bottle or two with my other oldest and best-loved friend of sixty years.

We will be back home for Christmas, which is always nice, black, black nights, wild whirling winds, a log fire and good Whisky, all reflecting the sparkling lights on our tree. Hopefully we will enjoy some good company to celebrate this special time of year.

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



# A locumming we will go...



California might seem a long way to go for a holiday locum! But the opportunity arose to visit San Diego Cathedral and live in the house of the Dean. My 'rent'

was to preach on two Sundays and live in the Deanery - a single storey hacienda-style building in the city with the benefit of a small swimming pool outside the bedroom window! Not the norm for a deanery in the UK.

The congregation and other clergy were welcoming and friendly and we enjoyed our time immensely. As we were free on the third Sunday, I had always wanted to join the congregation of one of the large charismatic black churches in the city. I was advised about one particular Baptist church and rang the office to find the time of the service. A voice said, '8.30am' and so, as a good Anglican, I said, 'Is that the early service?' 'No', they said 'but, arrive when you want!'

We thought we should go at the beginning and joined the crowds entering this massive white modern building. It seated over 1,000 people and not only was it packed to the doors, but there was an overflow video room where 200 others were gathered. There was a choir of sixty and a church band to lead the music.

One of the welcomers greeted us and said to me, 'The Bishop [I never knew Baptists had bishops!] would like you to sit beside him.' So Jenny was led off elsewhere. We both thought this rather odd and as the Bishop greeted me, he said to my amazement, 'I hope you can give a message to our people from England!' Having prepared nothing as I was expecting to be in the congregation, I was thunderstruck at the thought of addressing this massive Christian gathering.

The Bishop said, 'Don't worry. You have an hour to think of what God wants you to say to us.' I looked at the congregation. Apart from Jenny and me and the drummer in the band we were the only white people present. It made me realise how a coloured visitor to an English church might feel in a sea of white faces.

The Bishop then set off to do a

Baptism in the large glass-sided pool where twenty young people in their teens and twenties were waiting, all wearing long white robes. The choir sang Negro spirituals and the Bishop ducked them completely under the water, baptising them in the name of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit with 1000 'Amens' after each one. It was very moving and very unlike our Anglican baptisms, even of adults!

Meanwhile I had been praying hard as to what I could say to this huge crowd. At the time I was Chaplain to the Bishop of St Albans and had been responsible for helping to organise the first visit of Archbishop Tutu to our diocese in the late 80s and had found him incredibly inspirational. Martin Luther King had been a great hero of mine as a young man. So I began by talking about the role of prophets in the Bible and then illustrated it with stories about these two heroes of mine. My words were often interrupted with people shouting out 'Allelujah, brother', 'Yeah, man, tell it as it is', 'Amen, Amen, Amen,' 'Praise the Lord' - not the way my sermons are usually received in the Tring Team!

But it somehow got the adrenalin flowing and clearly what I was saying struck a chord, because at the end there was enormous applause. It is something I will never forget, along with the warmth and faith of those men and women, many of whom were poor and not part of the so-called American dream success story. But their faith and worship was at the heart of their lives.

The Bishop invited us to brunch afterwards in the Church hall and we met a number of the church leaders. The Bishop told me then a story that still resonates in the Trump America of today and reflects a not-so-good side of American life.

He was going with two other lay people to a Baptist Congress in Los Angeles and was driving up the

Interstate highway. He found himself being followed by a large red car which seemed to be trying to push him to the side of the road. He could not understand why till suddenly the car drew alongside his car, the windows went down and three white men with long wooden poles which had steel knives attached to them drove them through the windows of the Bishop's car and tried to kill him and his passengers. Their car veered off the road and turned over on its side, though mercifully none of the men in it were killed. The red car drove off at high speed. The Bishop said, 'But we all survived to live another day, thanks to God's help.'

California is supposed to be the most liberal state in the USA but racism still exists often on a daily basis. Please pray for the Bishop, his staff and that congregation of black Baptists whose faith is an inspiration to all of us, whose lives are so much easier than theirs. Pray for that church, its congregation, its bishop and their wonderful example of faith. I thank God for the privilege of having shared in worship with them and will never forget the experience.

**Ian Ogilvie, Tring Team**

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# Growing in Discipleship: Tring Team Vision Day



The Tring Team is blessed with its own conference centre, in beautiful countryside, and at most a quarter of an hour's journey from the rest of the Parish. Cecilia Hall in Puttenham sits beside St Mary's Church and is a favourite spot for weddings and celebrations.

Fifty Christians from the five churches in the Team Parish gathered in Puttenham for a morning of worship, teaching and discussion at the end of September.

Our starting point was that we have much to celebrate: we are a lively and committed group of Christians. We've achieved key goals we set at the last Vision Day in 2013: the appointment of a chaplain at Tring School and devising a way to fund the post, has been a big success. We have set up a Youth Café and made progress increasing the involvement of young families. We've also improved the way we run meetings, to spend more time on faith and mission

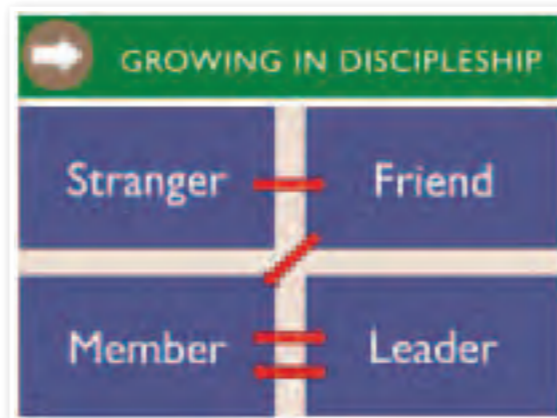


Huw Bellis led the opening worship (with nearly all ages paying attention)

and less on fabric and finance (despite GDPR and a mountain of other important regulation).

The morning was not 'death by PowerPoint', only the hymns and prayers were on slides. There was quite a flurry of brightly-coloured post-its as each person contributed their thoughts and ideas.

The job of the church, i.e. we Christians, is to help each person to make progress along the path, wherever they may be. In different contexts, each of us can be at different stages.



Huw shared a way of looking at Discipleship... as a pathway from stranger to the church, through stages to leader.

As input to that, the participants all posted their thoughts on three questions: (Why do I come to Church? (Answers focused on Fellowship, Worship and Spiritual nourishment); How did I become a member? (I felt at home, I started as a child, I was part of a small group); What makes a good welcome? (Too hard to summarise but together we have a brilliant description of what a good welcome should be).



Coffee time

Sessions of group work looked at areas of strength in the parish and at ideas for improvement, all related to growth in discipleship and progress in that pathway. We've taken away all the suggestions to help the individual churches and the parish work out their priorities for the future.

Michelle Grace shared with us her thoughts on being energised by faith, in particular by finding new ways to engage with the Bible. She also told of her experience of living through the cost of change, telling the stories of the lifecycles of a transplant church and of a house group.

We were privileged to listen to the Very Revd Jeffrey John, Dean of St Albans, talking about his book 'Going for Growth', and emphasising the central role of worship together. He gave us lots of practical suggestions to improve this (and all were stimulating even if we didn't necessarily feel that every idea applied in our context).

Our spiritual refreshment was supported by ample doses of wholesome and tasty food, from breakfast, through coffee time and ending with lunch.

We're drawing up a report of the meeting as Comment goes to press and the next steps will be discussed in each of the churches during October.

Jane Banister provided an uplifting finish to the morning, reminding us to 'Remember the definition of humility; don't think less of yourself, think of yourself less. Remember to be childlike; laugh, tell the truth, be open and friendly'. And we finished by all saying these words together: *Loving God, we come to you in thanksgiving, knowing that all we are and all we have is a gift from you. In faith and love, help us to do your will. We are listening, Lord God. Speak your words into the depths of our souls, that we may hear you clearly. We offer to you this day all the facets of our lives, whether it be at home, at work, or at school - to be patient, to be merciful, to be generous, to*

*be holy. Give us the wisdom and insight to understand your will for us and the fervour to carry out our good intentions. We offer our gifts of time, talent and possessions to you as a true act of faith, to reflect our love for you and our neighbour. Help us to reach out to others as you our God have reached out to us. Amen.*

Our thanks to Huw, Jane and Michelle for leading the teaching and worship, and especially to Jeffrey John for joining us and sharing his insights. Our wonderful team of cooks and bottle-washers was led by Christine Rutter and Jane Shardlow, and included Barry Child, Ian Matthews and Janet Goodyer. Lots of people brought cake too. Thank you to everybody who took part.

**Vivianne Child & John Whiteman**  
**Tring Team**

*Thank you, too, to Vivianne and to John who co-ordinated and orchestrated the whole event to make it enjoyable for all!*  
**The Editor**

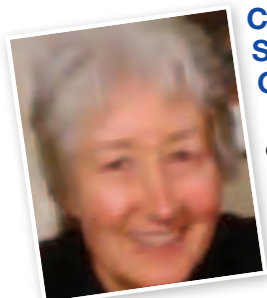


Very Revd Jeffrey Johnm Dean of St Albans



The chief cooks!

# Once in a lifetime



## Climate Justice Summit, Cambridge

I was fortunate enough to be able to attend 'Once in a Lifetime' for two days in September.

Organised jointly by Amos Trust and A Rocha UK, it brought together a wide range of people to explore how churches, Christians and other people of faith can play a greater role in addressing climate change with justice, to accelerate a 'just transition' to a low-carbon world.

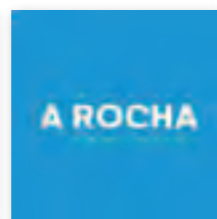
But first, to be clear, that climate change is a reality is no longer in dispute; that is not to say that there won't be a great deal more to find out, or that some of the current conclusions won't be modified – the science is always provisional until there is more information. And suggestions that climate change scientists, campaigners or activists are 'in it for the money' are unfounded. Ask any of them – whether or not they are making their living from working on the subject – if they would be happy if climate change unexpectedly turned out to be an illusion and they would say, 'Yes, of course!' These are people who carry a considerable burden of sadness and grief at what is happening to the climate, to biodiversity and to the ecosystems on which all life depends – and who fear for the future of disadvantaged people in the global south and for future generations all around the world.

Those who now deny the human impact on the climate and that carbon dioxide emissions are causing an unprecedented rate of average global temperature rise are like the lifelong smokers who deny that there is a link between cigarettes and lung cancer – just because they are not currently affected, and perhaps because they fear the truth, they refuse to believe it.

Furthermore, many of those involved with so-called scientific bodies that protest against taking action on anthropogenic (human-induced) climate change have vested interests; in a UK example, the Global Warming Policy Foundation is headed by a peer who has shares in fossil fuel companies. And in America the owners of Koch Industries, a massive conglomerate that has been described as 'one of the

primary sources of carbon pollution in the United States', have devoted a considerable portion of their enormous income to funding a political campaign opposing all sorts of environmental and other regulations that might get in the way of their huge profits. There are also disturbing reports of climate and other environmental campaigners being killed for attempting to defend the land, their homes or the livelihoods of local people against the effects of mining, logging or agribusiness; Time magazine reported in July this year that there had been 201 such deaths in 2017 and a further 164 in 2018. So climate is undeniably a justice issue.

For many of us who are involved with climate change, the sadness associated with what is happening to the climate is accompanied by hope – hope that there may yet be time to turn the tide, reduce emissions, ditch our dependence on fossil fuels and build a better, fairer, more equitable world in which all have the opportunity to thrive. For Christians and many others that hope is sustained by our faith, by the ongoing work of scientists who are seeking to develop new, clean technologies more rapidly than ever before and by the rising tide of public engagement with the issue among young and old alike.



Amos Trust and A Rocha UK convened a summit to look at a whole variety of ways in which individuals and groups are involved in seeking to bring about the necessary just transition that does not prevent development or access to energy where these are needed but that seeks to bring this about without adversely impacting the environment or giving rise to greater levels of emissions of greenhouse gases. In an introductory session we heard via video link from Professor Michael Northcott, who pointed out that despite significant



involvement by the UN the international negotiations taking place around climate change still talk only about curbing emissions and mitigating the effects of rising temperatures but do not address the problem of the extraction and sale of fossil fuels; this limited approach is therefore lacking in climate justice. By far the best strategies involve ending all extraction, replanting trees and restoring soils and oceans – because the most effective carbon sinks are oceans, soils and biomes. Professor Northcott also reminded the audience that the Christian tradition has a long history of giving to those in need, and also of relationship with other creatures. We also heard from Dr Elaine Storkey, who has many years' experience with aid agencies and has frequently been confronted over the last thirty years with the effects of changing climate on the poorest people: seasons becoming less predictable; harvests repeatedly failing; pathogens becoming more virulent – all things that were being predicted back in 1990 by Sir John Houghton, a leading climate scientist. When considering sustainable local responses to climate change we heard from a couple from Nicaragua working with CEPAD, a local church-based development agency: they stressed that love and concern is not enough – really understanding the culture is absolutely vital when working with people from other countries. There was a session on women's leadership in climate justice, with contributions from a Muslim women's community organisation from London who provide access to growing spaces and cookery tuition, helping these women to be able to appreciate creation even in the inner city and at the same time learning from them about the role it plays in their culture and practices. An inspiring session on the Monday afternoon featured young people – ranging in age from school Year 8 to



recent graduates – who have become involved in eco initiatives at school or university and also with the climate strike movement. They stressed that they value opportunities to hear and learn from those who have been engaged in this work for years – and equally it was good to learn from them about their particular concerns and where they see that they can have most impact.

A key session on the second day was around connections between the global north and the global south and various campaigns designed to achieve meaningful change. Among these was the divestment campaign, Bright Now, which is run by Operation Noah and is working for church congregations and denominations to divest from fossil fuel companies and invest in clean alternatives; we also heard from Hope for the Future, which 'supports anyone and everyone who is concerned about climate change to raise their local MP's awareness of the issue'. Breaking into groups there was an opportunity to hear from a range of people about aspects of 'spiritual activism' and while Operation Noah Vice-Chair, Revd Darrell Hannah led a session looking at the book of Revelation, a former Operation Noah colleague, Revd Alex Mabbs, led a session on the spirituality of individual action on climate change. He proposes a dual cycle as a way of walking a path that is a response to a sense of calling to act on climate change. The inner cycle goes from prayer/meditation through a refusal to judge and a commitment to act in love and grace, and then back to prayer/meditation, and so on around. The

idea is that in prayer/meditation you listen to your heart, ie to your feelings and desires. You explore how actions feel, whether they bring you a sense of joy and connectedness, whether they expand your soul and affirm life; or whether they feel overwhelming, close you down and bring a sense of greyness. Refusing to judge means that these discernments are not about whether your actions are good or bad; it's simply about what resonates with your true, inner self and so listening to the call of your heart. Refusing to judge also frees you up from judging others so that you can celebrate actions being taken by others. The outer cycle is like a classic action-reflection cycle, going from doing something, through enjoying it and thinking about it, to doing something else. In this way taking initial steps can



lead to doing more and the enormity of the apparent changes required is lessened. For example, changing your diet from a typical western diet of meat three times daily and lots of processed food to one that's plant-based, organic and locally sourced is a huge leap and attempting it is likely to end in failure – but making incremental changes may actually get you there. Thinking about your chosen actions may include further research into impacts, which in turn sparks off new ideas for enhancing your action or trying something else. Alex has seen how this cycle has released church communities from feeling overwhelmed and fearful of the judgement

of others. People have been set free to try things out and encourage each other to go further, and there has been a mood of celebration. The result has been people coming away feeling excited and motivated rather than guilty, and going on to actually make changes to how they live.

I think that everyone who attended the Cambridge summit will have come away having learned something new and having been encouraged by the stories from near and far, young and old. There are some big changes needed and time is relatively short, but the churches and faith communities around the world are increasingly involved and their voice is very important – and being heard.

**Nicky Bull**  
High Street Baptist Church

# Goodbye Didier



As we say goodbye to Didier Jaquet, I have been looking back through our parish photo archives and some of them are included here.

What memories of Didier's ministry with us here do they bring up for you?



## Didier the priest

When Didier and Kathryn first arrived in Tring, Didier was well on the journey towards ordination. We are privileged that he has shared that pilgrimage with us. For those who heard his Holy Week talks on the spirituality of the Desert Fathers and Mothers, we got a real sense of Didier's relationship with God and how he was called to serve God's people, and in leading the Book Group we have been with Didier as we continue to learn, and grow and understand what God is doing in our lives. He was a great Curate and a



great Vicar in Wilstone. He does however HATE all hymns! (*He conceded that if he had to choose, it was 'Brother, Sister, let me serve you...' Ed*)

## Holy Week

Central to Didier's priesthood has been the celebration of the Triduum (that is, the continuous act of worship from Maundy Thursday through Good Friday and Holy Saturday to the celebration of Communion on Easter Day). He has pushed for us to make the Easter Dawn service the most important service of the year, and many will be grateful for the added drama brought to the Team Maundy Thursday. This year he introduced the scattering of the thirty pieces of silver. Our goodbye present to him from the parish was a firebowl so he can have his own for future Easter dawns.



## The Joker

Everyone has experienced Didier's sense of humour. Serious as he was about his worship, and strict as he was about following rules (the lawyer in him went deep), Didier was convinced that we should have fun. He would support many in the congregation(s) with light-hearted banter. He worried that at times he was too flippant. Indeed, not everyone understood our own personal shared sense of humour which could be us being downright rude to each other. Once on the Dads 'n Lads 'n Daughters 'n Dogs camping event, Didier famously tripped up Ray in a game of rounders. Whether Ray's subsequent knee injury was in any way a consequence is a moot point, but ever since, all of the kids are adamant it is Didier's fault and, in fact, if ever are in doubt about anything – blame Didier.



## The extrovert who is comfortable with folk of all ages

Sadly many clergy are introverts and not great at small talk. Didier, thankfully, isn't and many folk will have warm memories of being greeted by Didier, or shared conversations after a service, or at a tea afternoon in Wilstone. Work commitments meant that Didier's youth ministry was

limited but whenever he was able to be with the kids in the parish, he was natural at it. Maybe this is because he is essentially a Big Kid himself, or maybe it is that kids see through pretence. There is no pretence with Didier. What you see is what you get, an honest, open priest, with those of all ages.

## Didier and Kathryn

Although not a regular worshipper with us, Kathryn has been alongside Didier every step of the way. It was a joy to be able to do a double act with Jane and to preside at their wedding. Kathryn was part of the parish trip to Kyrgyzstan, has been a fantastic governor at Long Marston School, and has been remarkably patient in picking Didier up when the post meeting 'meeting' in the pub has gone on a bit too long. However, more than anything she is probably Didier's sanity check and his solid support in his ministry.

**Huw Bellis, Team Rector**



## Spies in the camp!



### The inspiration of Joshua

Spying is often thought of as being an adventurous, dangerous, secretive mission on behalf of a government, yet one of the greatest characters in the Bible was a spy.

Joshua is first mentioned when Moses sent twelve men to spy out the land of Canaan, the country which God had promised Abraham and his descendants – a dangerous mission as they would be easily recognizable. On their return they all reported that the country was highly desirable, being fertile and producing wonderful food crops. They also said that the land was inhabited by giants! Ten of the spies said that there was no point in trying to occupy it as they would stand no chance of victory; but Joshua and Caleb were quite confident that, with God's help, they could win.

What an example for all who believe and trust God that he will be with us in the future even when it seems we have problems impossible to solve. This is especially true for Christians in many countries who face severe persecution for believing that Jesus is the only way to the one God.

So, when Moses died, his leadership was passed on to Joshua who was then faced with the great challenge of succeeding one who had been a great leader for many years and was a 'Bible Giant', enjoying very close communion

with God. This is the challenge which faces anyone who takes over from a well-respected and successful leader. 'How can I live up to such a high standard?' But Joshua did, because he obeyed God.

God encouraged Joshua, as we read in chapter 1 in the book that bears his name (it's worth reading verses 1 to 8 for our own encouragement).

When I lived in London, I was leader of a boys' Covenanters Group in Highgate for twenty-five years. This was part of a national youth movement for teenagers. The Covenanters had a theme song using these very verses. I can well remember it being sung at the Jubilee occasion in the Albert Hall and was often sung in group meetings:

'Be thou strong and very courageous for I have commanded thee, Be not afraid, be not dismayed, thou shalt have victory. God will be with thee, what e'er betide, Captain and Leader, Friend and Guide'.

I always hoped those words would be remembered by the boys in later life, that there is a loving God who would help them through the path of life.

Then Joshua won his first great victory at the well-known battle of Jericho obeying God's instructions – which seemed absurd, marching round the city thirteen times, when a direct assault would seem to be the best way – but complete obedience meant that not a man was lost and in no way could Joshua

or his men boast, 'We did it!' They had to acknowledge that this was God's power. Sometimes we may feel that God is leading us into strange paths, which, humanly speaking, do not seem right; but, later, we can look back and thank God for his guidance.

Things seemed to all go wrong for Joshua, for, at the battle of Ai, through one man's disobedience, the whole army was soundly defeated. This happened because one man was greedy and selfish and ignored God's instructions thus bringing death, defeat and dismay to the nation. Joshua could not understand this; he threw himself prostrate in prayer. Confession and sincere penitence meant that God had mercy on them and, eventually, victory was won.

Joshua overcame these setbacks and went on to great victories. The Land which had been promised was theirs and still is today, the place where Joshua's descendants live in Israel.

**John Young**  
**Akeman Street Baptist Church**

They said on his first day on earth  
Far better if he died at birth  
How could they know  
How could they tell  
The joy he'd bring  
He taught our hearts to sing  
We loved him so

We learned together through the years  
To show the joy, but hide the tears  
They must not see  
They'd never learn the hurt they caused  
Through careless stares that on him paused  
So carelessly

And as he grew we never grieved  
To see how little he achieved  
No praise he'd lose.  
His progress made in life's tough school  
We measured with a shorter rule  
Than scholars use

I can't believe he owed his day  
To some genetic disarray  
Wrongly conceived  
He came into this world – and there he lived  
To teach us how to care.  
This he achieved.

**Submitted by Gwen Hewison**  
**St Peter & St Paul**

## Welcome Sarah Marshall



Tring Park School was delighted to welcome Sarah Marshall for her first visit and tour. We are looking forward to building our links with Sarah.

A few Religious Studies lessons already have her name on them! She was able to meet the year group planning the Harvest service at St Peter & St Paul's Church.  
**Sarah Bell, Tring Park School**



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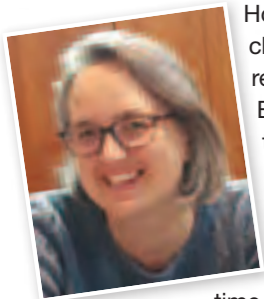


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## 'The Boy at the Back of the Class'



How do you talk to children about the refugee crisis? 'The Boy at the Back of the Class' may be an answer.

Written by a Muslim woman who has spent

time in Calais and Dunkirk, seeing and hearing about the reality of life for many refugees today, this is a book that gives an insight into the many hardships that refugees experience and gives a child's perspective on what that might mean to us today.

Jesus said, 'Unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the Kingdom of Heaven'. For me those words are a reminder that sometimes a child's perspective can cut to the heart of an issue and remind us of the values of the kingdom. That's something that I find in 'The Boy at the

Back of the Class' and why I would recommend it to anyone of any age. It may have been written for children (in fact, it won the Blue Peter book award in 2019) but it gives us all something to think about.

The book is written from the perspective of a 9-year-old girl. One day she is sat in school when a new child comes and sits in the empty chair at the back of the classroom. She is intrigued by this child who sits with his head down saying nothing, and determines to make friends with him. This is not as easy as she had hoped and a gift of lemon sherbets are used to try to break the ice. Soon the boy has an adult sat next to him who talks to him in a different language and he begins to learn some English. Eventually the child, Ahmet, reveals something of his story. He is a Syrian refugee, forced to leave his home because of war. Escape involved a walk over mountains, carrying what they

could, a dangerous boat ride and life in a refugee camp. Now he is on his own in the UK.

The girl and her friends resolve to help Ahmet and reunite him with his father, but soon run into problems. I won't reveal how they get publicity for their cause or what happens as a result, but I love the way the author depicts the children as not allowing practicalities to get in the way of helping someone in need.

Sometimes we can all get downhearted and wonder whether we can really make a difference – this story reminds me of the old saying, 'Where there's a will there's a way'.

'The Boy At The Back Of The Class' is a story of hope, friendship and determination. It brought me to tears, but it also put a big smile on my face!

**Rachael Hawkins**  
**St Martha's Methodist Church**

## The seven remembered



As I reported earlier this year, during the preparations for the commemoration of the end of the First World War, research by Debbie Turnbull, a member of the

team organising the display of poppies around the Church, produced the information that there were nine names that should have been on our memorial.



Doing further research, Debbie found that two of the nine were commemorated on memorials not far away, so they were eliminated.

Of the remaining seven, two were siblings of men already on our memorial. These were Ernest Barber, younger brother of Edward Barber VC, and

Harold Robin Crawley, brother of Charles Jesse Crawley. The others were George Crichton, a native of Dundee, buried in Tring Cemetery, George Henry Brooks, Hugh Connell, William Richard Briant and William Thomas Montague.

As we had received a grant from the War Memorials Trust, it has an interest in the memorial for six years and wanted details of the soldiers, whose names we proposed to add. Debbie then produced several A4 pages of information on each one. Having received approval from the Trust and a faculty, we were ready to start the work.

The first part of the process to add the seven names was to decide where they should be engraved on the memorial. The options were to spread the names over seven of the lower eight faces, the eighth carrying the name of David Barnsdale; or to use fewer faces



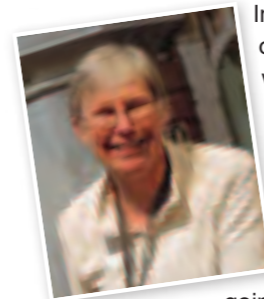
in case names needed to be added after future conflicts. We settled on having three on the block facing the High Street and two on either of the adjacent blocks.

The next step was for Gary, the engraver, to mark out the letters to ensure that they would fit in the desired locations, cut out the shapes and insert the lead letters. Finally, the letters were painted with enamel to match those already present.

As part of the remembrance this month, we plan to have a display of the details of the seven in St Peter & St Paul. I would like to thank Debbie Turnbull for her hard work in researching the information to enable us to ensure that the sacrifice of these men can be recognised for future generations.

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

## Where have all the poppies gone? (Part 2)



In the last edition of Comment there was an article about recycling and re-using some of the poppies from last year's installation. I wrote about some of the poppies

going to the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire. We are delighted to report that more have found their way out of Tring, this time to the Orkney Isles. Around sixty have been attached to a wreath that has been taken to St Mary the Virgin Church in Stromness by Mac and Carrie Dodge. It is lovely that there is a link with the two churches, and that Tring men will be remembered in Orkney.



But we have discovered more to this link than we initially thought. Last year when we were researching the stories of the men from Tring who lost their lives, the story of Able Seaman Stanley Collier was just one of the many sad stories. He was born in Hastoe on 6 May 1888, son of George and Annie Collier (of 68 Brook Street when he died) and signed up on his 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, eight years before the start of WWI. At the time of his death he was serving on HMS Hampshire. The cruiser Hampshire was mined and sunk north of Scapa Flow in the Orkney

Islands on the 5 June 1916. On board was Lord Kitchener (Secretary of State for War and a Cabinet Minister) together with a delegation who were travelling to Murmansk in Northern Russia there to meet the Russian Imperial Command. Kitchener's body was never found, but the body of Able Seaman Stanley Collier, one of the crew, was recovered from the sea and buried in the military cemetery at Lyness, on the Island of Hoy.

An excerpt from the Tring Parish Magazine at the time reads: 'One of our Tring lads, Stanley Collier, was on HMS Hampshire when she was mined off the Orkney's and sank with Lord Kitchener aboard, on 5 June 1916. Collier joined the Navy in June 1905 and before the war had sailed to the farthest parts of the Empire. He was on the ship which

rescued the Duke and Duchess of Fife, when they were nearly drowned off the North Coast of Africa. Earlier in the war, he was for some time on a minesweeper which was sunk off Lowestoft. He was picked up after spending some

time in the water. He was in the recent Battle of Jutland. Two days after his parents heard the news of his death, they received the following letter dated 4 June. "Just a few lines to let you know that I am quite well, I hope you are all well at home and that you have not been worrying about me at all. Our ship took part in the naval battle the other day, we sank one cruiser, but our ship did not receive any damage at all, and no casualties. Do not worry about things you read in the papers, a great deal of which is not true." His parents have since

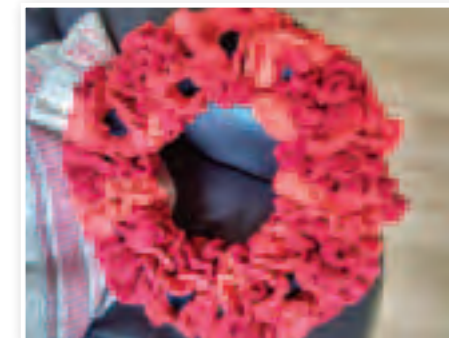


received information that his body has been recovered and buried on the Island of Hoy, Orkney Islands, on 8 June 1916.

'He was a sailor of the best type, keen on his work, anxious to be in the thick of the fight and yet, deeply attached to his home. When in Port, on one of his voyages, he was confirmed by Bishop Collins, of Gibraltar. He died, we believe, a loyal servant of Jesus Christ. R.I.P.'

Our poppies were made in memory of all the men from Tring who didn't come back. Some of those very poppies will end up in a Church about ten miles from where Stanley Collier is buried. Thank you, Stanley, we will remember you both in Tring and on Orkney. May you rest in peace.

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



## Tring's most recent fallen...

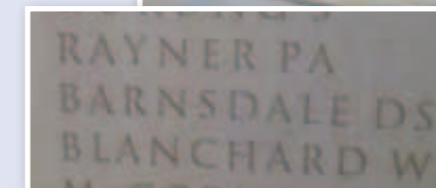


The National Arboretum is situated in Staffordshire and is the UK's year-round centre of remembrance. There are over 300 of them spectacular sculptures

and works of art in their own right. All of them are poignant reminders of the sacrifices made by so many.

In the centre is a circular wall on which the names to be remembered are inscribed, including Tring's most recent fallen, David Barnsdale.

**Jane Shardlow,**  
**St Peter & St Paul**



# What is the message of the Minor Prophets?



What indeed? one is tempted to answer! The Twelve Minor Prophets count as one book in the Hebrew Bible and, indeed, seem to have been treated as such from very

early on. Usually, but not always, they were listed in the same order, though their message, style and date vary. Some scholars have tried to find links in message or language. But, apart from very general themes such as sin, punishment, restoration, it is better to regard each prophet as distinct.

Of course, we can say that as with the 'Big Three', Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel, they teach that the God of Israel is God of all, that Israel and Judah are accountable to God, who rewards those who keep the Covenant expressed in the Law with its ethical and ritual obligations. They teach the DAY of the Lord – a day of judgment that will arrive in the future. It will involve punishment and rewards. But when Israel is punished it will not be destroyed: there will be a remnant.

Such is a summary of prophetic teaching in general. It is very much set in the events of the day and this applies to the Twelve Minor Prophets whether regarded as one book or twelve. So there was a message for the people to whom each prophet was speaking and which, at some time, was written down and preserved. But we are concerned with the fact that New Testament writers found a message or meaning for their own readers. The prophets' words were found to have a significance which differed from their original intentions and purposes. So, unknowingly or by divine providence, they came to have a meaning in the New Testament.

Each prophet deserves an article to himself, but here we can only point out some important points, especially where a deeper meaning was found in Christ.

## Hosea

Hosea prophesied before 722BC in the Northern Kingdom and, through his own tragic home life, he learnt to see and preach that Israel was like an unfaithful wife to her husband, God. He was the first to see family life as an example of God's relationship to his people. His words in Chapter 6 start with a call to

return to the Lord and they talk of God reviving his people after two days and raising them up on the third day.

For the Church this became a prophecy of the Resurrection. Hence this chapter has become a canticle in Common Worship. For one important point in understanding the Prophet is to remember whatever the words meant in their original context, some have or have been given, a deeper meaning for the Christian. The Canticle in Hosea 6 ends with the teaching to be found in various prophets that God wants loyalty rather than sacrifice.

## Joel

When we pass on to Joel we find again examples of Christian interpretation drawn out of the text. Joel writes about the plague of locusts afflicting the people for their sins. He calls on the nation to respond to the blowing of the trumpet in Zion and to sanctify a fast. This passage will be familiar to some for its use on Ash Wednesday.

Joel's words feature as a major part of the Pentecost story in Acts 2, when in response to the outpouring of the Spirit on the many people gathered in Jerusalem, Peter quotes Joel's words at length – 'In the last days... God will pour out his Spirit on all flesh' – and he goes on to quote words about the Coming of the Day of the Lord. This last point about the Day of the Lord occurs often in other prophets – for them the Day of the Lord will not be when everything will be put right, but when people will pay for their sins.

## Amos

The next of the Twelve is Amos, although in time he was the first (mid-8th century BC). He makes the point that he is not a professional prophet. In our terms he is not a minister of religion and was told off for preaching in the Chapel Royal, as we might put it. But although he was a herdsman he felt himself called by God to warn people. He begins with a lot of warnings to local nations before homing in on Judah and Israel with terrible threats of punishment.

His message is also about the Day of the Lord being a dark day. He teaches that God wants not sacrifices but justice and righteousness. Those who think the Church should only be concerned with religious matters should read Amos and others with their concern for social justice.

## Obadiah

Obadiah comes next, the shortest of the Twelve. His work dates from after the destruction of Jerusalem in 586BC. He, too, talks of punishment and the Day of the Lord.

## Jonah

Jonah follows Obadiah. It is interesting that there is a fragment of the Greek Bible from the Dead Sea scrolls which puts him last of all. He is the odd one out, with the story of Jonah and the whale (or 'great fish') and the repentance of Nineveh. This story teaches that we cannot escape from God, and also that God cares equally for Jews and Gentiles.

The Sign of Jonah (Matthew 12, 38-41) occurs in the Gospels as a pointer to the Resurrection. Jonah was in the whale's belly and Jesus was in the underworld until Easter morning. Incidentally, Jonah's prayer from the depths is one of the canticles for worship in Daily Worship in Common Worship.

*This article will continue in the next edition of Comment.*

**Martin Banister, St Albans Cathedral**

## A lovely surprise

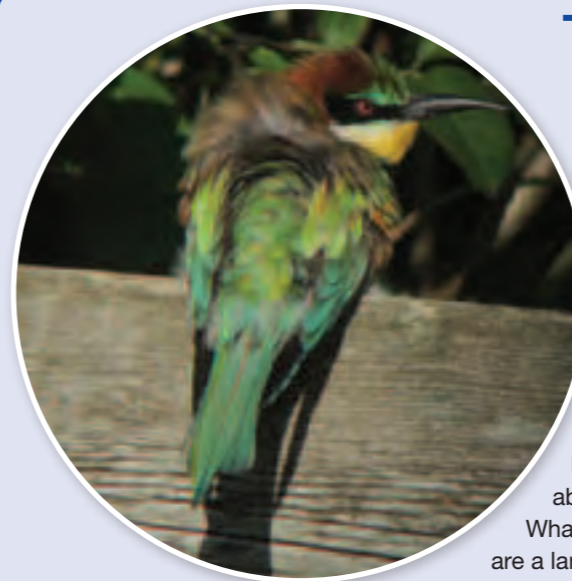
I was nicely surprised to receive a copy of the October edition of Comment. Although I am known as Jeff Renals, now at Hillside Nursing Home, Ardenham Lane, Aylesbury, HP19 8AB, I realised it was for me, though addressed to Geoff Reynolds. It brought back many happy memories.

Going back many years when Comment magazine was a Parish and Methodist Church publication, I was Treasurer of the magazine. So, whenever I see a copy of Comment, I also have many memories.

I would like to thank the person who arranged for me to receive a copy (the late Mary King passed previous copies to me).

**Jeff Renals**  
*formerly St Peter & St Paul*

# Tweet of the month



My friends and I decided to go to Shetland a week later this year to see if this would result in slightly different birds being seen. This year strong easterly winds the week before we arrived on Shetland had resulted in very little being seen and one of the locals said it was so bad people hadn't been able to go out looking for birds.

We also decided to travel up and spend a night on mainland Scotland before catching the ferry from Aberdeen across to Shetland. We stayed in Dunkeld with the hope of seeing Eurasian Beaver nearby. This species was native to Britain and became extinct here in the 16th century but has now been re-introduced both via official programmes and unofficially. This was not universally popular but they do have environmental benefits. We were very fortunate and one Eurasian Beaver swam round and sat beneath the hide we were in. Being mainly nocturnal the photos I got weren't very good, but I was pleased to get any and at such close range. We also saw Black Grouse and Red Grouse in the area, species we wouldn't normally see on this trip.

Despite the weather of the previous week, several good birds were present so we headed south to look at a Semipalmated Sandpiper, a small wading bird, from North America and a Daurian Shrike from Central Asia. Semipalmated Sandpiper is so-named because it has small webs between its toes. We then heard about a pod of Long-finned Pilot Whales, which, despite their name, are a large species of dolphin, near Ollaberry. When a Bee-eater was also reported from Ollaberry, that clinched it and off we went. We arrived to find a group of people looking at the Pilot Whales so we enjoyed watching them and then went on to see the Bee-eater, which is a beautiful, brightly-coloured bird.

Three days later we were out and about and got word of a pod of Killer Whales nearby and eventually got our best views ever of Killer Whales. The following day we saw the same pod of Killer Whales about thirty miles further north and the views were even better than our first views. We know they were the same pod because one of the large males had a distinctive scar on the tip of its dorsal fin. Killer Whales or Orcas (Orca is derived

from a Latin word meaning a type of whale), are again not actually a whale but are the world's largest species of Dolphin, up to nine metres or thirty feet long. Personally I prefer the name Orca as all dolphins and whales are actually predators and so singling out one species as a killer seems unfair to me.

Orca is a species that polarises people with some thinking it is a beautiful, iconic mammal and others thinking it is a vicious killer of whales, dolphins and seals. Jesus also polarises people with some believing he is the son of God and others believing he is a charlatan or deluded. Personally I believe that Orca is a beautiful, iconic species and that Jesus is the son of God.

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



# Why babies in Church are good

Babies are loved around the congregation by most. Recently you may have noticed Jon and Annette Reynolds have a small addition to their pew in St Peter & St Paul's Church. This is a baby that they are fostering for about six months until his new family is ready to adopt him.

So why are babies good in Church? First of all, babies lift community spirits and receive lots of attention from people of all ages. The elderly seem

to love them especially as it may have been many years since they held a baby. Babies are good in Church as it is also a great way to begin a conversation as many people love babies and want to ask about them.

I don't think people mind too much when they make a little noise in the service, as after all, it's what they do, but also as they have the 'cute' factor.

People also like to see babies

going up to receive a blessing during Communion as they like to see that they are fully participating in the service.

The ethos at the Parish Church in Tring is that children are welcome at all the services, however young they may be, and it is nice to see people as young as this little baby being involved instead of being in a creche.

**Nicholas Kinsey, Year 10**  
*St Peter & St Paul*

# Community Fridge for Tring



10.2 million tons of food and drink are thrown away annually. One of the ways of tackling this appalling figure is the Community Fridge Network. High Street Baptist Church is

going to host a Community Fridge. This will be done through Hubbub, a specialist charity dealing with Community Fridges. There are already Community Fridges in Churches in Aylesbury (Vineyard Church) and Chesham (Kings Church).

There are more than seventy Community Fridges across the UK. Every month, each Community Fridge attracts up to 200 visitors and redistributes up to a ton of surplus food which would otherwise go to waste.

Retailers redistributing their surplus food across the network include Spar, Sainsbury's, Morrison's, Waitrose, The Co-op, Nandos, Costa, Marks & Spencer,

Riverford Organic and further local businesses.

A Community Fridge consists of a glass-fronted display refrigerator, shelving for ambient temperature items, and a small deep freeze where items at the end of their life can be frozen. Most are open for a couple of hours two or three times a week. One of the original ones in Frome is open 8.00am to 8.00pm every day, but is unmanned and simply locked up at 8.00pm and unlocked at 8.00am.

The purpose of a Community Fridge is to stop food waste. It is not an initiative aimed at those who normally have food parcels. Anyone is welcome to take items to reduce food waste. The food comes from shops and supermarkets who have food items that would otherwise be thrown away. If items at the end of their chilled life are donated, and the Community Fridge does not open for a few days, they can be frozen and offered as frozen food. So if a supermarket has some meat that is at the end of its life, it can be frozen until the next time the

Community Fridge is open.

Allotment holders with a surplus can donate this to the Community Fridge, a baker with bread left at the end of the day can donate this. All chilled / frozen food has to be sealed in a retail pack (you can't donate your left over shepherds pie!).

The details and funding have to be worked out, but we expect to open in the New Year.

If you have a shop or food unit with surplus food at times, please let us know. If you could spare one or two hours once a month to help staff the Community Fridge, we would also love to hear from you.

The initiative will only work if we have donated food and a team of volunteers – there will be no shortage of people to take away free food!

You can find out more about the Community Fridge Network at [www.hubbub.org.uk/the-community-fridge](http://www.hubbub.org.uk/the-community-fridge).

If you can help, please contact me at [johnsteeleallan@gmail.com](mailto:johnsteeleallan@gmail.com).

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

# Bingo at Corpus Christi



On 28 September Tring's Justice & Peace Group put on a new fundraising event, not tried before – a bingo evening. Around forty-six people packed into

Corpus Christi Church Hall and soon it was 'eyes down'.

After an uncertain start, when many were getting used to the rules, the evening settled down and 'line' was called which brought a prize of £5 and then later it was 'bingo' when a card was filled. This time the prize was £10. At half time there were refreshments and a short talk about the charity being supported, the International Justice Mission. Esther Swaffield-Bray, the Director of England IJM, had impressed us with the good work this charity is doing when she gave her talk in High Street Baptist Church hall last year (reported in the February edition of Comment).

The International Justice Mission is the world's largest anti-slavery organisation and they have a plan to



eliminate slavery everywhere. Their plan, to quote from their website (<https://www.ijmuk.org/our-work>) is this: 'First, we find the children and adults who are victims of violence, forced labour, or sex trafficking. Then, we support local police to rescue them. Once they're free, we make sure survivors' everyday needs are met. We partner with organisations to give every survivor a safe home, food, medical care, counselling, education, and a tailored

plan to thrive. Second, we make sure criminals cannot continue to harm their victims... Once survivors of slavery are rescued and their abusers are in prison, we go after the root that caused slavery in the first place...'

IJM say they have worked with police to rescue more than 49,000 people from slavery and other forms of oppression. And they've helped local authorities arrest more than 3,500 suspected slave owners and other criminals!

Those attending the bingo evening were exceedingly generous in their support for this very worthwhile charity and a count the next day revealed that £505 had been raised! So: a big thank you to all who made this evening possible – to members of the Justice & Peace Group and, of course, to all those whose arms we twisted to come along!

**Michael Demidecki**  
**Secretary, Justice & Peace Group**  
**affiliated to Churches Together in Tring**  
[www.justiceandpeacetring.org](http://www.justiceandpeacetring.org)



# Crossword

## CLUES ACROSS

1. Prophet (4)
4. Relating to a religious order (8)
8. Book of the O.T. (8)
9. Personal aptitude (4)
10. Fire! (5)
11. Best place for a holiday (7)
13. Look for (6)
15. Soft (6)
18. Message of fond remembrance (7)
20. Change (5)
23. Poverty (4)
24. Amusing tale (8)
25. Way in (8)
26. Give way (4)

## CLUES DOWN

2. Comical amusement (5)
3. Title of Christ (7)
4. Mother of Jesus (4)
5. Personal treasures (4) (4)
6. Wise men (5)
7. Unbeliever (7)
10. Cry for help (3)
12. Specialist clergyman (8)
14. Make things clearer (7)
16. Relating to desert travellers (7)
17. Finish (3)
19. Teacher (5)
21. Makes a good impression (5)
22. Famous theologian (4)

1	2		3		4		5		6		7		
8									9				
10							11						
					12								
13	14								15		16		17
18				19					20			21	
									22				
23													
25													
									26				

Answers on page 38

# SPONSORED SLEEPOUT

**THE HEMEL HEMPSTEAD SCHOOL  
FRIDAY 15TH NOVEMBER – 9PM - 7AM**



**REGISTER NOW: [DENS.ORG.UK/SLEEPOUT](http://DENS.ORG.UK/SLEEPOUT)**

## The magic of Christingle



There is something wonderful about the Children's Society Christingle service at St Peter & St Paul. Maybe it's the time that the service begins (3.00pm), the way the candlelight fills the

Church for a brief moment, or simply the fact that everyone stands together to sing the Christingle song.

For me personally, it symbolises the moment that Advent really begins; the nights seem to rush in faster as we approach the shortest day and the wind seems just that little bit colder; but inside St Peter & St Paul, for that one hour, there is peace, tranquillity and joy from the first hymn to the last candle being lit. Nothing going on outside the building seems to matter. Everyone comes together to share the light.

The service is the culmination of months of planning, ordering, discussing and deciding, which begins as the previous Christingle service ends. 'Do it again next year?' 'I will if you will!' are the



phrases heard more than once – and not just for Christingle events!

The Children's Society send out their information pack, advising that resources are available and the planning begins in earnest. E-mails circulate, phone calls are made and meetings held; tasks are allocated and orders placed; schools and local associations are contacted and gradually momentum builds until the weekend of the service itself.

At 3.00pm on Saturday 30 November, St Peter & St Paul briefly becomes a melee of oranges, sweets, candles, red tape, marshmallows and raisins, as a veritable production line of volunteers take their seats and set about making approximately 350 Christingles for use at the service. Last year it only took an hour and those who arrived half way through found a happy band singing and laughing together as they worked together to accomplish their task.

On the day itself, Sunday 1 December, more volunteers will help those who come to the service. If you haven't attended a Christingle service before, imagine the Church full of children, parents, grandparents and youth associations, all eagerly joining in the singing and waiting to exchange their Children's Society donation for a Christingle. The lighting of the Christingles runs like a military operation and then, for a brief moment in time, the Church is lit solely by candlelight as it would have been in years gone by.

This year the Christingle service is on Sunday 1 December, starting at 3.00pm at St Peter & St Paul, and Christingle making will take place on Saturday 30 November from 3.00pm-4.00pm, also in the Church. If you are able to help in any way, either on Saturday or Sunday, or simply want to know more about what is involved, please get in touch via the Parish Administrator.

We'd love to see you, and we know you'll enjoy it.

**Sally Smith, St Peter & St Paul**

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

*All Welcome to our  
Christingle Services  
for all ages*

**Sunday 1st December  
Aldbury Church at 10.00am  
Tring Church at 3.00pm**





## So light up the fire and let the flames burn...



I was a mature Confirmation Candidate. I had taken a long time to make this decision for several reasons. Then we had a Vicar come to our Parish

in East Sussex who had also left being confirmed until he was in his 40s. I liked his approach, so I attended classes, to find out if this was what I wanted. His relaxed attitude just got me, so that was it.

There were three 'senior' candidates from our church. The other two had been friends for years and years so I was happy to find a partner, which we needed to do, when I reached the rehearsal evening.

Standing on her own was a young woman in her 20s. Her face and arms were badly burned. She appeared to be on her own and I asked if I could be her partner. She waved to two senior citizens whom I then realised had come with her. We sat together. Mary (not her real name) and I chatted about being nervous, about making the decision to be confirmed. The Deacon of the church came to her, and said as she was being baptised first she needed to walk from one end of the Church to the other. Mary could manage that but the idea was for her to carry the water to the font. He added the Bishop of Lewes 'knew about her' and had said he,

the Deacon, would carry it on her behalf.

It was then, when we were still waiting for instructions, she volunteered what had happened to her. She had gone to a farm with her boyfriend at night. They had a disagreement and he threw petrol over her and set it alight. I can't remember what I said, it was so horrific! I then remembered the court case and knew he was in prison. Mary had had many operations and there would be more.

Mary did not have a family, but a 'family' appeared from a small church in the area where the incident had happened. She was visited every time she was in hospital, and taken under the wing of this small congregation. Mary said they saved her life as she had felt she had nothing to live for.

Confirmation Sunday arrived and I was feeling a little nervous but very excited: this was it. Mary was there with her supporters, and it was obvious they were very happy. Wow, that skirt! Mary's skirt was the shortest in the Church. There were 'some looks'. Mary proudly said, 'There is nothing wrong with my legs'. I am sure everyone understood, and most smiled,

agreeing with her.

So Mary steadily, bravely and with boldness, walked the length of the Church and was baptised, and then joined me in being confirmed. I was so pleased to have been her partner, and admired how she was determined to live a happy life. 'He won't beat me,' she said.

I did feel uncomfortable that three of the hymns chosen for the Service included lines about lighting the fire or bringing on the flames! Every time I sing them now, I am taken back to that day. I pray Mary is well.

So my Confirmation day not only gave me happiness and excitement, but a young woman who had shown huge courage, supported by a small congregation who had shown her much love and care.

**Pam Russell, St Peter & St Paul**

<h1>Town Farm</h1> <h1>ART SHOW</h1>	<p>Perfectly timed for that special Christmas gift!</p> <p>Paintings, Illustration, Printmaking Ceramics, Sculpture, Woodturning Willow weaving, Embroidery, Jewellery</p> <p><a href="http://www.townfarmartshow.blogspot.com">www.townfarmartshow.blogspot.com</a></p> <p>Mixed wine &amp; homebaked festive treats in aid of Remex Grove Hospice Care</p> <p><b>ONE WEEKEND ONLY</b> Friday 22 - Sunday 24 November 10am - 4pm</p> <p>At Town Farm, Cheddington, Nr Tring, LU7 0TT PLEASE PARK ON HIGH STREET NOT AT TOWN FARM</p> <p>Free entry</p>
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## Choir rules in the good old days



An extract from The Australian Musical News, 1 March 1915

The Practice shall commence at 8:30 or such time as a sufficient number shall have gathered together.

Members are thought more of if they arrive late.

The choir meets one evening a week for the following purposes: to discuss politics, tennis, scandal or church affairs, to arrange socials, excursions etc, to flirt. NB If there is any time not occupied in the foregoing manner and if members feel inclined, it might be desirable to have a little singing.

The choir shall consist of sopranos, altos, tenors and basses. All those

ladies who cannot read music shall sing alto. Should any lady with a high voice object to singing alto, she is recommended to consult a voice specialist, who will be almost certain to pronounce her a deep contralto, with a faulty method of production.

The tenors shall consist of many fair gentlemen, who do not mind straining their voices. All the gentlemen left over are required to sing bass.

Basses are at liberty to sing tenor, if they feel that their extensive compass is not duly recognised. He must be a poor worm of a bass who cannot sing tenor if he likes.

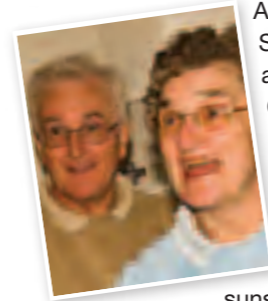
No notice shall be taken of the conductor. Do not trouble to look at his beat. He should tap. What your next door neighbour is saying is sure to be of greater interest to you.

The conductor is always pleased to receive advice from individual members. He likes to receive hints as to choir management, suggestions as to 'tempo' and expression and is delighted to be instructed in the elements of musical grammar. If you think he has made a mistake, tell him so!

Members of the choir are recommended to take home copies of music to look over at their leisure. It really doesn't matter if they don't bring them back, because choir funds are usually in a flourishing condition and more copies can always be bought.

**Barbara Ancombe  
St Peter & St Paul  
Seen in St Mary the Virgin Church,  
Fairford**

## Medieval stained glass in the Cotswolds



At the beginning of September Barry and I went to the Cotswolds for a weekend away. We stayed in a pub in Fairford, enjoying the local area in wonderful sunshine.

We were attracted to the Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin, where we heard that they had some wonderful medieval stained glass windows. They were excellent and whilst Barry took



lots of photos, I was reading the noticeboard. The fact that the windows are still there is amazing, as they haven't been removed or damaged much with wars and religious changes, though apparently they were stored in a cellar during WWII. Currently there is a window guide which you can borrow to walk round in sequence and assist in understanding the figures shown.

On our first visit the sun was shining through the great west window of the Last Judgement: quite stunning. The new central altar is one piece of wood with superb inlays. The clerestory windows made us smile. On the south the windows depicted figures in acts of cruelty and there were ghouls above the windows. On the north side were the 'good men': kings, leaders of note, with angels carved above them.

If you are ever nearby, do visit - you will be pleased you did.

**Barbara and Barry Ancombe  
St Peter & St Paul**





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www.thechallisschoolofdance.co.uk

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2 Christchurch Road, Tring, Hertfordshire, HP23 4EE



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## Memories of Christian education



Our school motto was taken from Psalm 127: 'Except the Lord build the house, the labour is in vain of them that build it' or more briefly, Nisi Dominus Frustra.

The psalms were a major feature of our early Scripture lessons. The Headmistress taught the 1st years (aged 11+) 'to get to know the new arrivals'. Every lesson had

the same format: first off, ten minutes to write out from memory last time's psalm; then, read through today's psalm, grappling with unfamiliar vocabulary and sentence structure; homework: learn by heart. There were two lessons a week, as required by law: we got through quite a few psalms!

I sometimes wonder whether Diane Abbott and (Baroness) Shami Chakrabarti (both after my time) experienced the same regime.

My most vivid memory of assemblies at Primary School is of the day when the

local Vicar (who took assembly every Thursday) told us children that today was a very special day – did we know what day it was? He was taken aback when a couple of hundred children roared back, 'Sports Day!' (I don't remember what July festival he must have had in mind).

Rather later in life I sometimes found a moment to reflect that to begin one's working day with an act of worship was an enormous privilege, especially in the Chapel at Ashlyns School in Berkhamsted, on a sunny summer morning.

**Carole Wells, St Peter & St Paul**

## A teacher's prayer



This is my 25th year in education and it has been quite a journey, having started my training in the UK's biggest comprehensive in Birmingham which had ten-form entry and served an estate of some reputation.

I have seen the power of education and the difference it can make in the lives of young people both at Tring Park, of course, as well as my previous schools. I wanted to capture in a

short prayer the inevitable highs and lows, especially in those early years of teaching when young teachers have so much to learn themselves.

**Sarah Bell, Tring Park School**

*Dear Lord of coffee and calm before the school bell  
Of those moments in the classroom that are unforgettable for good and bad reasons  
Of those mistakes and magic when a learning experience just blossoms  
Of those moments of hope, blessing and unexpectedness  
Be alongside us all in education  
Amen*

## Letting go



It's 3.30am and on my shoulder is a sleeping child, his breathing irregular against my neck, my hand cradling his tiny head. Only occasionally do I think of the huge responsibility; most

often I think only of the immense privilege of being allowed to take care of a baby born to another woman, to love and cherish him, to give him the best possible start in life. The response most often received to the fact that we are caring for 'looked after' children, is 'but I couldn't do that! I couldn't cope with letting go'. This has come from family and friends, two of our very supportive referees and a number of people in Church on hearing for the first time that we are fostering. We were asked the same question by the assessing social worker before we were approved as foster carers and again at Panel, where a team of professionals decided whether or not we were fit to do this job.

How DO you let go? 'Oh, it won't be a problem!' you might say. Well, in that case you probably shouldn't be doing it! Anyone who has parented knows that the whole process is one of letting go. In my own case it was a long series of (often painful) occasions of letting go: to the childminder when I returned to full time work; at the nursery or school gates, especially with the reluctant child; when they were staying away from home or at school camp; to World Challenge on the other side of the world in the care of teachers barely out of their teens; going off to university when you know (and they probably don't) that when they return (if they return) they will be different people, with an altered view of the world, and will no longer need you quite as much; that over a period of time they will feel separate and apart and you will indeed be left behind...

I have been very lucky. I wasted a lot of time worrying about the empty nest syndrome and I pray daily for my four children as they find their way in the world. But though different, they each keep in touch regularly, one almost daily,

others once or twice a week. It may not be a long heart-to-heart (they are boys after all!) but it's a checking in, a reminder that they know we are here and they know we worry about their well-being; being independent doesn't mean cutting themselves off completely. The virtual umbilical cord is severed but a shadow of it remains and I am so grateful for that. They know they are loved and still matter to us whatever else happens in their lives.

It doesn't answer the question of how we will feel when our tiny infant is found a permanent home. I can guess. I will have to go through it when it happens. I don't expect it to be easy. We have already seen his first smiles and heard his little cooing noises. He 'knows' us. But we won't be there when he sits unaided or spits out pureed vegetables or waves goodbye or speaks his first words. We probably won't even share his first Christmas...

No, it won't be easy. But would that expectation stop me doing this with all the joy it is bringing? Not a chance.

**Annette Reynolds, St Peter & St Paul**

# Notices from the Tring Churches

## ST MARTHA'S METHODIST CHURCH



### FRIENDSHIP CLUB

The season's meetings will resume on Tuesday 5 November with Revd Rachael visiting.

### JEAN'S CAFÉ

Jean continues to provide lunches at the Church every Tuesday from 12.00noon to 1.30pm. Everyone is welcome to drop in for soup, lunch, tea or coffee, etc.

3 November 10.00am  
**John Benson**

10 November 10.00am  
Communion  
**Revd Rachael Hawkins**

17 November 10.00am  
**Katie Breedyk**

24 November 10.00am  
**John Benson**

## NEW MILL BAPTIST CHURCH



### BRIGHT HOUR

First Tuesday of every month 2.30pm

### MILL CAFÉ

Thursdays 11.30am-1.30pm

3 November 10.30am  
**Les Elbon**

10 November 10.30am  
**Colin Briant**

17 November 10.30am  
**Colin Briant**

24 November 10.30am  
**Colin Briant**

## TRING COMMUNITY CHURCH



### SERVICES

Every Sunday 10.30am  
Nora Grace Hall

## CORPUS CHRISTI CATHOLIC CHURCH

### SUNDAY MASS

Confession 5.15pm & by appointment  
Saturdays 6.00pm (Vigil)  
Sundays 12.15pm with Children's Liturgy  
Coffee afterwards

### WEEKDAY MASS

Mondays 10.00am  
Thursdays 10.00am  
Rosary Prayer group after Mass

### THURSDAYS

Christian Meditation Group 8.00pm in Sacristy

### FRIDAYS

5.00-6.00pm Church Hall  
SPOG (Small People of God)  
Age 7 + onwards:  
**Tricia Apps**

### SATURDAYS

9.00-10.00am **Tricia Apps**  
Sacramental Preparation  
First Reconciliation and Communion

### SUNDAYS

2.00-3.00pm Power Hour  
Group Years 7 – 9

### JUSTICE AND PEACE GROUP

**Michael Demidecki**  
michaeldemidecki@gmail.com

### ROSARY PRAYER GROUP

Thursdays, after 10.00am  
Mass

### LADIES GROUP

**Annabelle Halliday**

### CHILDREN'S LITURGY

**Viv Bryan, Helen Bojarski**

### SAFEGUARDING

**Caroline Burmaster**  
tringsg1@rcdow.org.uk  
**Mary Miles**  
tringsg2@rcdow.org.uk

### MEDITATION

Thursdays 8.00pm

## HIGH STREET BAPTIST CHURCH



### SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP

Service at 10.30am with Junior Church and Crèche

### SUNDAYS @ 7

First Sunday of the month at 7.00pm

### ACTIVITY ROOM

Tuesdays 9.30-11.30am  
Craft, stories, songs and more! Suitable for 0 to 4yrs

### COFFEE FOR A CAUSE

Tuesdays 10.30am – 12noon  
Coffee in the foyer in aid of BMS World Mission

### TOTS

Wednesdays 9.30-11.30am  
Baby play area, soft play, trikes, scooters!  
Suitable for 0 to 4yrs

### GAMES AFTERNOON

Wednesdays 2.00-4.00pm  
Traditional games, puzzles and refreshments

### PLAY CAFÉ

Thursdays 9.30-11.30am  
Relax while the little ones play  
Suitable for 0 to 3yrs

### FRIDAY CAFÉ

Fridays 12.00-1.30pm  
Freshly cooked lunches

### WHO LET THE DADS OUT

First Saturday of the month at 8.30am to 10.00am

# Tring Team Anglican Churches

The Tring Team consists of five churches: St Peter & St Paul in Tring; All Saints, Long Marston; St Cross, Wilstone; St Mary's, Puttenham; and St John the Baptist, Aldbury.

### 1ST SUNDAY OF THE MONTH

8.00am Holy Communion BCP Tring  
8.00am Holy Communion BCP Aldbury  
10.00am Worship for All Communion Tring  
10.00am Sunday Worship CW Long Marston  
10.00am Worship for All Aldbury  
10.00am Holy Communion CW Wilstone  
12.00 midday Baptisms Tring  
12.00 midday Baptisms Aldbury  
3.30pm Holy Communion Puttenham

### 2ND SUNDAY OF THE MONTH

8.00am Holy Communion CW Tring  
10.00am Holy Communion BCP Aldbury  
10.00am Holy Communion Long Marston  
10.00am Sunday Worship Wilstone  
10.00am Worship for All Tring  
11.30am Holy Communion BCP Tring  
3.30pm Service of Light Puttenham  
6.00pm Evening Prayer Long Marston

### 3RD SUNDAY OF THE MONTH

8.00am Holy Communion BCP Tring  
10.00am Holy Communion CW Tring  
10.00am Holy Communion CW Wilstone  
10.00am Worship for All Long Marston  
10.00am Holy Communion Aldbury  
12.00 midday Baptisms Aldbury  
3.00pm Stick Sunday Service with tea  
3.30pm Taizé Puttenham

### 4TH SUNDAY OF THE MONTH

8.00am Holy Communion BCP Tring  
10.00am Holy Communion CW Tring  
10.00am Worship for All Wilstone  
10.00am Holy Communion Aldbury  
10.00am Holy Communion Long Marston  
3.30pm Evensong Puttenham

### 5TH SUNDAY OF THE MONTH

8.00am Holy Communion BCP Tring  
10.00am Holy Communion CW Tring  
10.00am Holy Communion Long Marston  
10.00am Holy Communion CW Wilstone  
3.30pm Service of Light Puttenham

### DACORUM FOODBANK

Weekdays 10.00am St P&P

### BABY SONG TIME

Mondays in term time 11.00am St P&P

### WEEKDAY SERVICES

Mondays 9.00am Morning Prayer Tring  
Tuesdays 8.30am Morning Prayer Tring  
Tuesdays 9.15am Holy Communion CW Tring  
Wednesdays 8.30am Morning Prayer Aldbury  
Thursdays 10.00am Holy Communion BCP Tring  
Fridays 8.30am Morning Prayer Tring  
Fourth Tuesday in the month 10.00am Holy Communion Wilstone

### YOUTH CAFÉ

Mondays in term time 3.30pm St P&P  
Secondary School aged children meet for toast, crisps, coke and chat.

### MEDITATION

Thursdays 8.00pm Corpus Christi

### COFFEE MORNINGS

Tuesdays 10.30am Aldbury  
Tuesdays 10.30am Wilstone  
Fridays 10.00am St P&P  
Saturdays 10.00am St P&P

### YOUNG ADULTS GROUP TAYA

First and third Thursdays 7.30pm St P&P  
A discussion group for young adults

### CTT PRAYER BREAKFAST

Saturday 2 November at 8.30am

### FIRST SATURDAY LUNCH

Saturday 2 November  
From 1.00pm for those who have been bereaved to meet and eat with others.  
Contact Margaret Oram for information on 01442 824575.

### BAPTISM PREPARATION

Second Sunday in the month 11.20am  
St P&P Emmie Hobbs Room

### AFTERNOON TEA

Fourth Tuesday in the month  
2.00-3.30pm All Saints, Long Marston

### BOOK GROUP

Fourth Sunday in the month 6.45pm  
St P&P

### CRAFT AND A CUPPA

Tuesdays 2.00pm, St P&P

### MEN'S SOCIETY

Wednesday 6 November 7.30pm  
Half Moon, Wilstone

### PIANO & MORE

Sunday 10 November 3.00pm St P&P



# Useful contacts

## TRING TEAM PARISH

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

## School Chaplaincy and Team Vicar

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

## School Chaplaincy and Team Vicar

(Long Marston, Tring School)  
Rev Jane Banister  
01442 822170  
jane@tringteamparish.org.uk  
jbanister@tringschool.org

## Associate Priest

(Wilstone)  
Rev Didier Jaquet  
on sabbatical  
contact Rev Jane Banister

## Curate

Rev Sarah Marshall  
St George's House  
3 New Mill Place  
Tringford Road  
sarah@tringteamparish.org.uk

## Diocesan Lay Minister

Mike Watkin  
01442 890407

## Parish Co-ordinators

Roy Hargreaves  
01442 823624  
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affiliated to  
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## OUR CHURCHES ONLINE

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www.tringchurchmusic.org.uk  
www.stmarthas-tring.org.uk  
www.tringbaptistchurch.co.uk  
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Articles, photos and publicity adverts for the next edition should arrive with the Editor no later than the 1st of the previous month.

## COMMENT DEADLINES

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

## Crossword puzzle answers From page 26

### ACROSS

1. AMOS  
4. MONASTIC  
8. PROVERBS  
9. GIFT  
10. SHOOT  
11. SEASIDE  
13. SEARCH  
15. GENTLE  
18. EPITAPH  
20. AMEND  
23. WANT  
24. ANECDOTE  
25. ENTRANCE  
26. CEDE

### DOWN

2. MIRTH  
3. SAVIOUR  
4. MARY  
5. NEST EGGS  
6. SAGES  
7. INFIDEL  
10. SOS  
12. CHAPLAIN  
14. EXPLAIN  
16. NOMADIC  
17. END  
19. TUTOR  
21. NOTED  
22. BEDE

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