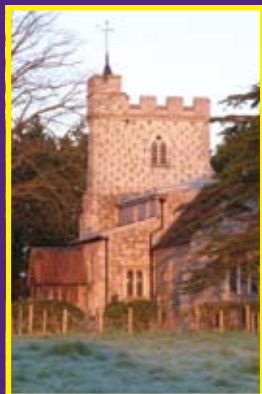
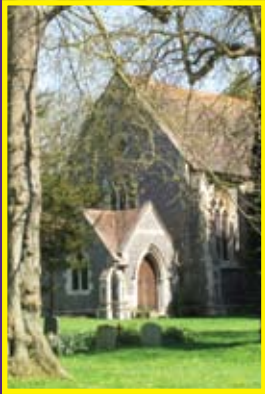


# COMMENT

THE MAGAZINE OF THE CHURCHES IN TRING



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## Editorial

Over the last four years Comment has been reprinting, month by month, extracts from the Parish magazines of 100 years ago. We have read of those who lived in Tring, who sang in the Church choir, belonged to the Church Lads Brigade and were husbands, fathers and sons of the people of Tring and did not return after the First World War. It was a once-in-a-generation event (which all too soon became a twice-in-a-generation event) and was quite rightly recorded in Tring's Parish magazines for posterity.

At 11.00pm on 29 March 2019, the UK is set to leave the European Union. It's another once-in-a-generation event which will affect everyone in Tring and in the UK, their finances and their consumer rights. If you have been reading Comment over the last two and half years, you will have noticed that nothing has been said about Brexit since the initial articles before the Referendum in June 2016. It has been the elephant in the room.

The Comment Editorial Team felt that in years to come it would look strange that we had ignored this subject in our pages so completely – so we have in this issue three articles from brave readers who have committed their own views and opinions to paper. Your own views may align with one or more of those contributors or they may not, but I hope you will agree that we cannot remain silent on the subject which affects us all.

Meanwhile March is the beginning of the season of Lent and our preparation for the Easter season. Information about Lent lunches and Lent films are included here and all are welcome to attend them. We continue to hear about events that go on regularly in Tring and the villages and hear from the Tring Local History Society, from schools, churches and charities. We hear about what interests you and inspires you and about loved ones who have died. Most of our stories start with YOU. So please continue to

respond to what you read by writing your own contribution.

We would love to have a Feedback page where you can continue to debate an issue or respond to the experiences of another reader. Tell us about your inspirational biblical character or about an event you attended that might inspire someone else. If there is a charity you wish to promote or a volunteer vacancy you need to advertise – write about it here.

Finally, if you still haven't subscribed to Comment so you can be sure of your copy delivered to your door or your Church, please let us know. You can contact me or David Whiting, who takes care of distribution (details on page 38).

**The Editor**



## God in the everyday things



March sees the beginning of Lent, those forty days that we mark each year as we remember the time Jesus spent in the wilderness and we prepare ourselves to celebrate Easter.

Lent is often marked by abstinence. Nowadays we abstain from many different things – alcohol, coffee and chocolate are all common things to give up – but in the past it wasn't just the 'treat foods' that were given up: pancakes were made on Shrove Tuesday so that all the milk, butter and eggs were used up and out of the house ready for the fast. Can you imagine nowadays going without some of those foods that we consider to be basic to our diet?

Around the world there are many other traditions. In Iceland it is apparently traditional to eat salted meat and peas on Shrove Tuesday, in Finland they will go downhill sledging, in many countries there will be carnival parades.

I love the way that everyday activities such as sledging and pancakes are used to mark our Christian festivals. They remind me that God is in the everyday,

part of everything we do. Pretzels may not be an everyday food, but did you realise



that they are seen by some as a food to eat at Lent? The origins of pretzels are unclear, but one theory is that they were developed by European monks. Nowadays they are popular across the world and eaten throughout the year, but there are still strong links with Lent in some areas of Europe.

There seem to be three reasons for this. Firstly, the shape of the pretzel is the shape of prayer. Although predominantly we now pray with our hands together, in past times people would pray with their arms crossed across their chests, something that is reflected in the shape of the pretzel.

Alongside that, the shape of the pretzel results in three holes, representing the three persons of the Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. And then thirdly, the basic recipe of the pretzel contains no eggs or dairy products and so was suitable for anyone fasting during Lent.

So if you are looking for a snack to

replace the chocolate you've given up during Lent, then you've got a good excuse to choose pretzels instead and you can always argue that they are helping you to reflect on the importance of prayer and the wonder of our God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

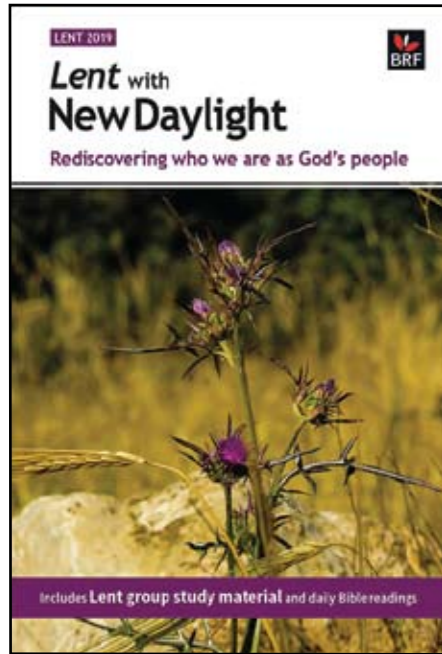
There are many things in the everyday, however, that can remind us of God and his love for us. So often we take what we have for granted, but sometimes we need to remind ourselves to just stop and open our eyes. As the spring flowers begin to bloom and the trees begin to show their leaves once again, for me those are always moments that just make me stop. What would be those moments for you?

God is with us, no matter where we are or what we're doing and he is always loving. Maybe this Lent, instead of abstaining, we just need to stop and use the everyday to remind us of his generosity and give thanks.

I pray that this Lent will be a time when you can gain a greater insight into God's love for you and his presence with you, wherever you are and whatever you do.

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

# Lent with New Daylight



New Daylight is The Bible Reading Fellowship's most popular series of Bible reading notes, with many thousands of devoted subscribers. Now, for the first time, BRF is breaking new ground with a special edition of New Daylight for Lent 2019. As well as daily reflections from some of the series' best-loved writers, Lent with New Daylight offers a range of thought-provoking discussion material for weekly Lent groups.

Helping people engage with the Bible and apply it to their lives has been central to BRF's work from its humble beginnings at St Matthew's Church, Brixton, in the 1920s. This new publication is designed to appeal to regular readers and newcomers alike. For those already committed to daily Bible reading, these writers – Margaret Silf, Liz Hoare, Michael Mitton and Naomi Starkey – are faithful friends; for those new to the practice, the engaging content and convenient format offers an attractive, accessible, competitively priced introduction.

David Winter has been writing for New Daylight for almost 30 years: 'I know how much many Christians value them,' he says, '... but a recent survey showed that most churchgoers only hear the Bible when it's read to them in church, although they admit they would like to know the Bible better. Well, it won't communicate from the bookshelf or a cupboard! Surely, it's worth giving daily Bible reading a try, and with New Daylight I promise you it's not a chore, but a daily delight.'

Readers of Lent with New Daylight will find themselves in good company. Debbie Thrower, team leader of BRF's The Gift of Years programme, has read New Daylight almost without a break since her teens at boarding school: 'I like the fact that you get a sense of who these authors are: they're people who have done their own reading and reflecting and they're giving you the gems that they've culled... Very often I find their words will come back to me during the day and I'm sure this is the work of the Holy Spirit.'

Lucy Moore, founder and team leader of BRF's innovative Messy Church programme, explains why she's another fan: 'It's something to do with refocusing against all the busyness of everyday life; all the practical stuff that everyday life needs, the job needs, the home needs and the family needs.'

To find out more go to [www.brfonline](http://www.brfonline) and search for *Lent with New Daylight* 'It's a way of saying, "There's more to life than this." It resets the mind to be aware that there's an eternal dimension to life and that, while the everyday matters hugely, it matters in the context of the bigger picture.'

The reflections in Lent with New Daylight are drawn from the regular edition of New Daylight for January to April 2019, so they give new readers an accurate sense of what they can expect if they decide to buy an ongoing subscription.

### Here's editor Sally Welch, writing in her introduction:

'This edition of New Daylight invites us to "come and see", but with the eyes of faith rather than a physical encounter. Liz Hoare helps us to explore the importance of place – and Michael Mitton encourages us to consider how it feels to live without place, in exile. Margaret Silf draws us into the experience of contemplative prayer, inviting us to go deeper in our relationship with God, while Naomi Starkey guides us on our journey towards Easter and beyond, through the eyes of those who fail to understand the message of Jesus, as well as those who do.'

**Looking back, Lucy Moore recognises the influence that Bible reading notes have had on her:** 'It's... like having a group of friends you

hang out with, who you chat over things with, and you hear their opinions, and you might not think that they're having any effect on your life, but when you do look back, you realise that hanging out with them for so long has changed your attitudes and a little bit of your character and a little bit of your ambitions. It's like that with Bible reading notes... over time, they've tweaked who I am.'

### And Debbie Thrower also takes the long view:

'I think Bible reading notes are really underrated, at any age – there I was as a teenager getting as much out of them then as I am now. So they're for every age group, not just the very young and the very old. I think to have them as your bedside companion is a really wise idea throughout life.'

## Butterflies at Millhoppers

Herts and Middlesex Branch of Butterfly Conservation bought Millhoppers (which can be found in Astrope Lane, Wilstone, HP23 4PL), with a grant from Dacorum, in 1998. It was the first and only reserve for the Branch, with the aim of conserving the wildlife and particularly butterflies in the area. Since then a monthly recording of Butterflies has been made from April to September every year so we have a twenty-year record of the distribution and the number of butterflies on Millhoppers and other wildlife in addition.

John Noakes was warden on the reserve for the first twelve years and, for a short period, the reserve was managed only minimally until we were able to welcome new wardens. Visitors are always welcome to walk through the reserve and join us in working parties.

### Margaret Noakes



# Bishop Wood School Worship Group

We are a group of children in Y6 at Bishop Wood School. Our job is to help our RE co-ordinator, Mr Hall, and Father Huw with the worship at our school. We thought you would be interested in finding out a bit more about what we do.

One of our jobs is to evaluate the school worship. Each week, one of us is responsible for recording our responses to each assembly. We have a form to fill out that explains what it's about, who's leading it, the prayers and hymns that are used and what we will think about after the worship. From these, we try to suggest improvements that can be made – for example, different hymns, and



making them more fun by including the children.

Father Huw takes our assembly once a week and sometimes we help him. Recently, we had to draw chalk on the doors for Epiphany and we might also light candles at the start.

When there are special services in Church, we help write them and sometimes take part in them too – for example, at Worship for All, Harvest and End of Term.

Last term, we led a class assembly in one of the younger classes! This was about tolerance and included information on Nelson Mandela, Rosa Parkes and Martin Luther King. We also wrote a poem for that.

Some of us even have a Worship group chat on our phones!  
**Raqiyya, Keira, Lily-Mei, Nadia, Riley, Susie and Harvey**  
**Bishop Wood School**

## A locum-ing we will go...



One of the most fascinating locums we did on two occasions was Portugal at a place called Estoril, twelve miles north of Lisbon, where the British Chaplaincy church

was situated. The Embassy church had a small congregation on Sundays but most English speakers lived out of the city in Estoril. Next to the fire station(!) was a very modern Church and it was usually filled on Sundays. Lots of young families attended. It became a real centre of friendship and worship for people often working a long way from home.

One of the churchwardens at the Lisbon Church was a retired American admiral and one evening invited us to dinner. I sat next to another admiral, called Lou Williams. We had a good conversation about religion, politics, families, etc and then he said to me, 'Of course, Ian, I would not be here tonight had it not been for Martin Luther King'.

That was, of course, because he himself was black, from the Deep South. Indeed the idea of a black

Admiral in the US Navy before the Civil Rights Act would have been impossible to imagine. Lou Williams and his wife were the only black people at that otherwise all white dinner table. Those of you who have had to listen to my preaching know that King is one of my great heroes and it was a sobering thought what HIS preaching and teaching had done to change the lives of all the black people of America, especially for Lou Williams. But not even King at his most eloquent could have imagined after his assassination in 1968 that, only sixty years later, there would be a black president. Indeed in his first inaugural Obama spoke of his debt to that young black preacher from Alabama.

Locums do introduce you to a wide variety of people. I thank God for the opportunities we had.

### Ian Ogilvie, Tring Team



## Tring Loneliness Initiative



We are now starting to create a printed Directory and Website listing everything in Tring and around that could help people make contact with others

through taking part in something. This is the first part of the Initiative. The information will be for all age groups from teenagers upwards including 'Young Parents'.

We now need help in contacting organisations to ensure that their details are correct. We will not be able to complete the directory and website without volunteers who can contact organisations and get a details form filled in; and who can enter the details of organisations onto the website using a template. Please help if you can! Send your name to me at [TringLonelinessInitiative@gmail.com](mailto:TringLonelinessInitiative@gmail.com).

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

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# The shepherding year – a wider contemplation



Chris and I have a completed 'a year and a bit' as amateur shepherds, spanning, tugging and lambing; rearing and shearing; worming, foot trimming and vaccinating; not forgetting checking sheep poo for parasites and, of course, sending the biggest lambs to slaughter.

From our bulging freezer have come the ingredients for the Sunday roasts shared with family and friends; home-made burgers and lamb chops for a quick supper; spiced curries and Mediterranean tagines for larger gatherings; and of course, traditional shepherd's pie for two.

**A dilemma**  
From this position of plenty, I have questioned the ethics of meat production and consumption – these are not just questions for Christians.

This is a fragile planet and issues around sustainability, biodiversity and the environment are high on anyone's agenda. There are plenty of voices in the media telling us that eating red meat is unhealthy, animals are filling the planet with carbon dioxide, millions of humans will go hungry for want of grain which the wealthy west is pumping into animals. Intensive farming is having a detrimental impact on animal and human health and the health of the land. So, should we stop keeping animals and become vegans?

**'Wilding'**  
Isabella Tree has spent seventeen years 'rewilding' a 3,500 acre estate in the south of England and advocates a balanced approach. She writes: 'rather than being seduced by exhortations to eat more products made from industrially grown soy, maize and grains, we should be encouraging sustainable forms of meat production based on traditional rotational systems, permanent pasture and conservation grazing'. She states that sustainable forms of farming can indeed restore soils and biodiversity and sequester carbon, and change can happen quickly.

**Sheep farming Crooks style**  
Reading Isabella Tree's book 'Wilding'



sheep are brought in to graze the grass swards, their cloven hooves pressing the flower seeds into the ground without unduly compacting the free-draining chalk pastures. They provide a natural fertiliser and reduce competition from the coarser grasses. This is land that is not suitable for arable crops; owners are doing their bit to increase floral biodiversity which has a positive impact on insect life, birds and the wider eco-system. Is this a step in the right direction?

**Keeping fit**  
As a retired vet, my self-appointed role is the welfare of the animals themselves, for the whole of their lives, however long or short. We strive to ensure the animals are well fed, pain free and able to express natural instincts and behaviours. Healthy animals must be providing healthier lambs and healthier meat products and I serve the meat with respect.

I am more careful about how much meat we eat, avoiding waste – this cost the animal its life and is a precious thing. But is it right to kill and eat it? As with so many things in life, there are always more questions.

I close with a quotation from St Paul in Romans 14 verse 2: 'The one who eats is not to regard with contempt the one who does not eat, and the one who does not eat is not to judge the one who eats...'

**Jenny Hoare, St Mary's, Northchurch**

(Picador Press) has given me a new perspective. Perhaps I can eat home-grown meat guilt-free! The sheep spend their days in and around Aldbury as guests of several very generous and helpful landowners. The pastures that the sheep graze include unimproved grassland and conservation land, where wild flowers have been introduced. Once the various plants have set seed, the



## The Children's Society and the Berkhamsted Walk

The Church of England's charity, The Children's Society, started in 1881 running small Children's Homes for the orphans on London's streets, and has evolved to be the national system of help for children suffering in this country today.

It works to reduce the risk of exploitation, neglect and abuse. It builds the resilience of young people who have experienced these evils and strengthens the resources available to meet these young people's needs by supporting children in the care system and those leaving care at eighteen, children who have caring responsibilities in the home, those facing poverty, destitution and crisis in their lives, refugees, migrant families and unaccompanied children arriving in this country.

The Berkhamsted Walk has been supporting this charity since 1968 and the amazing sum of £8,200 was raised from our 50th walk last year!

The Walk this year will take place on Sunday 12 May and we hope to build on last year's brilliant success.

18-mile and 12-mile routes start at the Court House next to St Peter's Church, HP4 2AX in Berkhamsted and



will explore the gorgeous bluebell woods and spring colours of Ashridge and beyond! The 6-mile Fun Walk for all ages starts at Ashridge College, HP4 1NS, between 11.00am and 2.00pm, where free parking is available. A quiz will keep young walkers running ahead!

Please download a sponsor form

from [www.berkhamstedwalk.com](http://www.berkhamstedwalk.com) or pick one up from Church, Berkhamsted Library, Cafe Epicure or at The Complete Outdoors shop, Bourne End. Please phone me for more details on 01442 864968.

**Ann Browning**  
**St Peter's, Berkhamsted**

## St Mary's Church, Puttenham



Thank you... to everyone who has cleaned St Mary's Church and provided flowers throughout the past year. As we now have services each month, this task has been

doubled, and the work of Ernestine and Oliver Matthews, Lis Josling, Margaret Kelland, Ali Driver, Becky Barker and Susan Tondreau has not gone unnoticed. If you would like to join our team, you will be most welcome. Please contact me on 07514 548289.

Thank you again... to our team of 'Gardeners', led by Celestria Bell, who planted new hedging in our newly exposed corner after the removal of thirty-one conifers and in the various gaps around the existing churchyard hedging. We are looking forward to watching them grow.

### Our 2019 social programme

Saturday 6 April	Jumble Sale
Friday 26 April	Cecilia Tea Rooms
Thursday 30 May	Badapple Theatre 'The Frozen Roman'
Friday 28 June	Cecilia Tea Rooms
Friday 9 August	Cecilia Tea Rooms
Saturday 5 October	Jumble Sale
Friday 11 October	Cecilia Tea Rooms
Saturday 26 October	October Supper

Due to their popularity, we have increased from three to four Tea Rooms this year.

### Cecilia Hall

The hall is available for hire: meetings, parties, functions. It is an attractive meeting hall, with a large well-equipped kitchen and dedicated car park. The Hire fee is £16 per hour (no discos). All enquiries to me, the Booking Secretary.

**Christine Rutter, St Mary's Puttenham**



## Where is Wilstone?



Attending a social event at St Peter & St Paul last summer I fell into conversation with a long-standing member of one of the other churches in Tring.

The lady recognised me, said it was nice to see me, and asked if I had recently become a member of St Peter & St Paul's. I said no, I usually worshipped at St Cross in Wilstone. This drew a blank look and a shake of the head - 'Where is Wilstone?' she asked.

Wilstone is often misheard as Willsden so I expanded with 'You know, near Long Marston and Puttenham'. 'No, sorry, where are they?' This lady has been a resident of Tring for over thirty years.

St Cross, All Saints and St Mary's are small villages: indeed, Puttenham is officially a hamlet, not big enough to be classified as a village. They are all within three miles of Tring, thirty miles of the outskirts of London, situated in beautiful rural areas of the diocese. But like most village Churches, each has a set of challenges which they cannot overcome alone.

I have been researching my family history, starting with my Mum's side of the family, focussing on my maternal grandmother's forebears who all came from Gubblecote. (Where is Gubblecote? Between Wilstone and Long Marston!) This research has taken me to All Saints in Long Marston; I knew there were four members of the family buried in the churchyard, but I have since discovered another eight. The Church grounds are lovely, partially smartly mown and partially wild, with lots of snowdrops in the Spring and full of birdsong and butterflies in the summer - really, really peaceful.

The rest of the family are buried in Wilstone cemetery, at least seven, maybe nine relatives, as the families moved to Wilstone upon marriage; however, the earliest marriages and some of the christenings took place in St Peter & St Paul in Tring. My mum was christened, confirmed and married in Tring; my brother and I were also christened in St Peter & St Paul. So I have connections to at least three of the Churches in the Tring Team. (I am still working on Puttenham and Aldbury to complete the set!)

My maternal grandfather's family came from Hastoe and worshipped at Akeman Street Baptist Church but that is another story.

Investigating family history inevitably brings with it a lot of information on the local area, including the changing fortunes of the Churches, and highlights their total dependence on people to take care of them. Today is no different and whilst I would love to be able to enhance my connections to the other Churches I can only focus on one and that is St Cross in Wilstone.

St Cross has a support group, The Friends of St Cross, and a small but determined congregation who recognise that the Church needs to be part of a team to be able to offer weekly worship, engage with wider ministry projects and be open to welcome everyone who wants to use the building. Together



we have pledged to increase our support for the Team and also fundraise for the replacement of the decking approach to the Church. This wooden structure is rapidly approaching the end of its life, but we want the replacement to have a long life and provide much better access for all abilities. We have sought professional advice to help us on this project and now have a plan in place which we believe fulfils these objectives. The project has been named 'Access for All' - A.f.A.

So, St Cross is embarking on a dual fundraising drive, for the Team and for A.f.A. It is a big challenge and will take time and energy but we are going to give it a go and see what happens. The Spring

fundraising is for A.f.A. and the summer fundraising for the Team. The first event is an evening of flower arranging with Neil Gurney, at 7.30pm on Monday 29 April, to be held in St Cross. We look forward to welcoming lots of people to this occasion but please book in advance as space is limited.

I hope my companion from last summer will one day discover Puttenham, Long Marston and Wilstone and enjoy the adjacent countryside as well as all the villages have to offer - I haven't needed to include Aldbury - the lady knew where that was!

**Alison Cockerill, St Cross, Wilstone**



## FLOWER ARRANGING WITH NEIL GURNEY

**Monday 29th April**  
**7.30pm**  
**Wilstone Church**

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## Churches Together in Tring

You are warmly invited to the following Lent Lunches in support of Christian Aid. They are held between 12 noon and 2pm and you can come along at any time that suits you. There is no set charge but hopefully you will donate to Christian Aid. Lunch is a bowl of soup, bread & cheese and a cup of tea or coffee.

Please note they are not always on a Wednesday this year.

Thursday 14th March New Mill Baptist Church

Friday 22nd March High Street Baptist Church

Thursday 28th March Corpus Christi Church

Wednesday 3rd April St Cross, in Wilstone Village Hall

Wednesday 10th April St Martha's Church

Wednesday 17th April St Peter and St Paul Church Hall



## Why are there four Gospel writers?



Why do we have four books called Gospels when there is only one gospel – the good news about Jesus? For the fact is that when we open a New Testament, we find four Gospels under the names of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John but they all tell the same good news about Jesus Christ the Son of God, even if in different ways. (There are other books called Gospels under other names but these have not been accepted by the church.)

We know very little about the four Gospel writers. In fact, it is the case with so many books of the Bible that they are put under famous names such as (The Law of) Moses, David, Isaiah, Solomon and so on. This was regarded as a mark of importance and authority. When it comes to Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, it is rather similar. Of Mark, we know very little; there are a few references to Luke as a companion to Paul; with Matthew and John, the authors are not the Apostles of the same names though for a long time it was believed to be so.

Why four then? We do not know how, why and when they worked, although Luke in his introduction refers to 'many who have undertaken an orderly account' and he declares that to be his purpose. John, near the end of his Gospel says a lot is not included in his book, but enough to convince the readers to believe Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God. And this indeed is the purpose of all four evangelists.

The first Christians gathered for worship which included hearing the Scriptures and sharing the Eucharist. This, as far as we know, went on for several decades. The Scriptures, in this context, were the books of the Old Testament which were interpreted to refer to Jesus. It is possible to provide a good summary of Our Lord's life just using words from Isaiah. In addition, we assume memories were handed on and perhaps a letter from Paul was read.

As far as we know, the first to write was Mark about thirty or more years after the Ascension of Jesus. He came second in order because for centuries he was thought to be an abbreviator of

Matthew. In fact, his book was used as a basis by Matthew and Luke, to which they added their own material. Some is special to each but other material is common to both. This shared material is called 'Q' by scholars, from the German Quelle, meaning source.

It can be useful and interesting to look at a Synopsis, the first three Gospels printed side by side, to compare and contrast what each wrote and added or omitted. John's Gospel is quite different in style and approach and he sometimes reorders events to suit his teaching. It is generally agreed to be the last of the four to have been written.

Probably other people wrote things down about Jesus' teaching and deeds, but only four were accepted and handed on. These books were written over a period of about forty years. We need to remember that Paul was writing his letters before the Gospels were written.

It is clear that the Gospel writers had particular people in mind: Matthew's use of the Old Testament shows he was writing for Jewish Christians – those brought up in the Jewish faith. Luke does not assume such a knowledge of Jewish practices and beliefs and therefore appears to be writing for Gentile Christians. John appears to be writing at a time when there was a separation between Jews and Gentiles. We must remember that all the first Christians were Jews and kept the commandments and worshipped with other Jews as well as having their own meetings. The Epistles and the Acts of the Apostles tell of how this relationship developed and changed.

So we have four witnesses to The Gospel, writing at different times for different congregations in different places, to add to and supplement what they learnt and heard in their meetings for worship. All four Gospel writers assume a knowledge of the faith – that they don't need to explain what it is. Having four versions is helpful but also, at times, a little odd from our point of view. We would never, I imagine, omit the Lord's Prayer in a Gospel, as Mark and John do; nor, as John does, omit the Institution of the Eucharist at the Last Supper.

Somehow these four Gospels were preserved and collected together, usually, though not always, in the order we have them. We think of them

as telling 'one story' but each has a particular point of view and emphasis. About 150AD a combined version was produced called a 'Diatessaron' (literally meaning 'Through Four'). This had a certain success and was used in parts of Eastern Christendom for a couple of centuries, but was later abandoned.

We put the story together but also need to appreciate the particular emphasis and teaching of these four great writers – the evangelists. Their similarities are many but there are significant differences. The classic way of seeing the special concern of each Gospel writer is to look at the start of each Gospel and how and where the author begins his narrative. But that's too big a study for this article.

**Martin Banister, St Albans Abbey**  
Next time: St Paul and his letters

## A regular visitor at Wilstone

Lewis is always up for Tuesday's coffee mornings at St Cross. Nothing deters her. She looks at the weather forecast and immediately informs mum Sue to take the necessary precautions before setting off.

Hence the Pushchair. Our Lewis is an extremely clever girl and begged her owner to provide adequate transport as many coffee morning regulars come by car in inclement weather conditions. The Pushchair has proved excellent and she adores it.

She also loves the treats but sadly is unable to partake of the homemade cakes and biscuits, and especially the Famous Victoria Sandwich cake made by Peter. At the end of the day – Lewis is extremely happy with her low fat treats.

**Ken Lawless, St Cross Wilstone**



## Open Churches, for good or for bad



Our Churches are full of amazing history, artwork and monuments. They are part of the treasure of our nation, and you will find an increasing

number of these treasures are freely available to everyone because the Churches are kept open to anyone who wants to visit. We are supported in this by our insurers, Ecclesiastical, who are very keen that Churches are kept open, and the evidence is that there is less vandalism and fewer break ins when this is the case. It is why we are delighted that we can keep some of our Churches in the parish open every day and it is vitally important for those people who wish to call into Church for a moment of prayer and for those who just want to look around. Very rarely is our goodwill abused.

One recent series of incidents was by someone who seems very unhappy, but created significant damage. In both Tring and Aldbury, they vandalised the altar crosses. These have since been repaired by skilled volunteers.

In Aldbury, however, the damage was more extensive. A painting was damaged. Racist graffiti was carved into the walls, a swastika was carved into the chest of one of the wise men, and the historically significant memorial was badly damaged with more racist graffiti and the hands of Lady Verney were demolished. Fortunately, we have a skilled stone mason who has been helping us to restore the memorial.

As you will see, it is a significant undertaking to repair it BUT there is no way we will ever contemplate locking our churches.

**Huw Bellis, Tring Team**

## Medieval hands

When I was 16, I started work as a stone mason and have been working in this field for over 25 years. I started as an apprentice stonemason with the National Trust in Scotland, predominately working at Culzean Castle which was designed by Robert Adams. I then obtained a fellowship through Historic Scotland and progressed my skills further. I have worked at several different conservation companies throughout my career before coming self-employed.

St John the Baptist, Aldbury, was vandalised last year and, among things, the hands were removed from an ancient stone effigy. The original stonemason would have taken about a week to carve new hands – about the same amount of time it will take me. I have repaired a statue similar to the one in Aldbury at Radcliffe Infirmary. Just a year ago I repaired a statue of William Caxton in Hertford which had been vandalised and I carved a new nose. Throughout my career I have repaired lots of ears, noses, fingers and toes!

### Cleaning

The effigy at Aldbury Church will be gently cleaned by steam and a de-ionised water poultice. The poultice is like a putty which is pressed on and then removed taking any surface dirt and graffiti with it. Surface repairs will be carried out in a colour-matched lime mortar and moulded to the shape of the effigy.

### Repair of hands

The reinstatement of the missing hands is carried out in three stages.



The first stage will be to take a mould of the existing stump of the hands, using a liquid silicone that is poured onto the hands and allowed to set. Once the mould has set, it is carefully removed from the stone and used as the mould from which to create a casting of the base of the hand, in casting plaster.

Once the casting has set in the workshop, the new upper section of the hand will need to be formed. This will first be created as a clay maquette, which will then be temporarily fitted to the statue for approval. Once the clay hand has been approved, this will be replicated and carved in a stone to match the existing stone of the effigy as closely as possible.

Once the new upper section to the hand has been carved, both the remaining lower section of the hand and the base of the new section will be carefully drilled to allow for the insertion of two stainless steel pins. The two parts of the hand will then be resin-fixed with as fine a joint as possible, in order to minimise the aesthetic impact of the repair.

**Lynn Mathias, stonemason**



## The mystery of the Tring tiles



In a special wall cabinet in the Medieval Galleries of the British Museum there is a set of ceramic tiles unique in this country. They were discovered, or so it is believed, during a late Victorian restoration of Tring Parish Church and were immediately spirited away by persons unknown to pass through many hands before achieving their final, and deserved, august home.

The tiles are so important that one was chosen as the cover illustration for a book published by the British Museum – English Medieval Tiles by Elizabeth Eames. They date from the 14th century and were made using a technique known as sgraffito, even at the time an expensive hand-worked process. The brown tile was coated with white slip; the decoration was incised with lines; the slip was removed delicately from the background using a small gouge; and a yellow design remained, separated from the surface colour. Although known in France, no other tiles using this type of decoration have ever been found in Britain, and it is a mystery why they might have been used at Tring. Tiles decorated in a similar, though not identical, technique are to be found in Prior Crauden's Chapel (built between 1321 and 1341) at Ely Cathedral.

Their condition is very good, and it is thought that the tiles were used not on the floor but sited on the walls of the chancel. They were covered perhaps by some drastic alterations in the first quarter of the 18th century when the Church was 'wainscoted and beautified in a most elegant manner' by the then owner of Tring Park estate, William Gore. As in everything, fashions in Church architecture change, and these 18th

century 'improvements' were stripped out in the early 1880s.

The tiles were offered for sale at a curiosity shop in the town. Here they were purchased for a few shillings by a Reverend Owen, rector of a nearby parish. He asked the owner of the shop several times how he acquired the tiles, but the man would never say. Reverend Owen later moved to Essex and when his son died in 1922, the contents of Bramwell Rectory were dispersed in a sale of household effects. An antiques dealer from Chelmsford bought the tiles for £17 and then offered them for auction at Sothebys. They were acquired by the British Museum for £1,420, ensuring a staggering profit for the dealer.

Two more were presented by a former Tring resident, Mrs Foulkes, whose late husband had been a Churchwarden, to the Victoria & Albert Museum in 1927. After the restorations and at intervals over the years, some Tring residents owning large properties reported finding fragments of medieval tiles during the demolition of garden walls and paths. As stated, the tiles appeared unworn, bearing out the theory that they could have been used as a frieze rather than on the floor. A frieze of this type can be seen on a screen in the Malvern Priory Church.

The tiles carry attractive and, to modern eyes, humorous designs of scenes from the childhood of Jesus taken from Apocryphal Gospels [see footnote] popular in the 14th century. The pictures are similar to illustrations in a French manuscript now in the Bodleian Library, but are not direct copies of them. Some depict the young Christ performing miraculous acts, but others are simply bizarre, such as 'Children shut in an oven to stop them playing with Jesus'. One superb double tile depicts him blessing a family feast.



Jesus blesses the company at a family feast and Lion cubs with Jesus. Mary and Joseph stand behind him. Jesus says: "These beasts know me: but men know me not."

Some years ago Tring & District Local History & Museum Society took the decision to commission a specialist potter, Chris Cox of Ironbridge, to copy the design and to make a complete set of the tiles. It was intended these should be displayed for all to see and one set is now on show at Tring Local History Museum in Brook Street.

More research into the origins of the tiles needs to be done, for the mystery is still far from solved. But it is quite possible that we may never know who made the tiles; how they came to England; why they were placed in Tring Parish Church, if indeed they were; and, if so, who actually removed them.

**Wendy Austin  
Tring & District Local History & Museum Society**

### Footnote

In everyday conversation 'apocryphal' refers to a story of doubtful authenticity, but one that is nevertheless told frequently, perhaps even believed widely. The New Testament Apocrypha are books accepted by neither Catholic nor Protestant faiths, although artists and theologians have used them as sources of information and ideas. They include several surviving 'Infancy Gospels', literature created in the early Christian church to satisfy the need for details about the childhood life of Jesus. For example, the Infancy Gospel of Thomas – he of 'Doubting Thomas' fame – describes the doings of Jesus during his boyhood, no record of which exists in the canonical gospels. According to Thomas, Jesus proved to be an infant prodigy at school, instructing his teachers in the unsuspected mysteries of the alphabet and astonishing his family and friends by the miracles that he performed. Scenes such as these are depicted in the Tring Tiles.

Please visit the Tring Local History Museum, The Market Place, Brook Street, Tring, to see many exhibits and displays about the lives of the people of the town and the villages around it. The museum is open from 10.00am to 4.00pm (3.30pm November to February) on Fridays and Saturdays. Admission free. More detailed information can be found on the website [www.tringlocalhistorymuseum.org.uk](http://www.tringlocalhistorymuseum.org.uk)

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## Could you be a School Governor?

At Dundale Primary School, we are currently looking to recruit an additional School Governor from the local Tring community; someone who does not have a direct connection to the school but who is passionate and interested in children's education and willing to give their time, energy and skills to help lead and be involved with Dundale School.

Our vision is to be a school where all our children thrive, love learning and develop resilient foundations for success in life as positive members of society. We are a diverse, inclusive community that values the vast unknowable potential and voice of each person, actively works together for the happiness and well-being of the school community as a whole and aims to have an engaging, irresistible curriculum

that fosters deep learning of values, skills, concepts and knowledge.

As Governors, we are responsible for ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and the strategic direction of the school. If you have a willingness to learn and to challenge with tact, an ability to assimilate information and make judgments that inform decisions, are able to work well as part of a team, respect confidentiality and above all, have an enthusiasm for children's education that gives them the best start in life, we would love to hear from you.

Governors attend a minimum of six



full governing Board meetings and three half day class visits per year, together with a number of school events and training sessions. We are particularly keen to hear from people with an educational, financial, business or leadership background, though welcome applications from all.

If you would like to find out more, please send an expression of interest to our Chair of Governors, Barbara Hamilton at [bhamilton@dundale.sch.herts.uk](mailto:bhamilton@dundale.sch.herts.uk) outlining why you are interested in becoming a School Governor and the contribution that you believe you can make.

We look forward to hearing from you!  
**The Governors**  
**at Dundale Primary School & Nursery**

## Where there is no vision, the people perish...



When she was newly ordained, Jane Banister was invited to preside at her sister's wedding at Southwark Cathedral. The Dean rather pompously gave Jane her instructions and as he was doing so, she noticed the screen saver on his computer, 'It may be God's church, but it is my cathedral'. I am sure it was meant as a joke but it did rather sum up something very wrong.

Church is the home of the people of God and God calls us all to have a vision of what his church should be like. Every five years or so, we have a PCC Vision Day, where we try to listen to what God might be calling us to do in the Tring Team Parish. My predecessor, Frank Mercurio, used to organise them; since then we have had them in 2008 and 2013 (with a couple of interim ones as well looking at specific issues).

You might be thinking, 'Fat lot of good they did then because we haven't done anything as a result', but looking back at the paperwork it is possible to see that in fact these days have really helped to shape our parish life.

In 2008 David Abbott came and

spoke about bridging the gap to those who were 'unchurched'. It was the beginning of our vision to start a chaplaincy at Tring School. At a follow up meeting we also had the idea to start Dads 'n Lads 'n Daughters and Stick Sundays.

In 2013 our major 'output' was to restart house groups in the parish. Whilst this might not be a radical new form of church, it is clear to me that our parish is improved by us having house groups once more. The Vision Day made a difference.

Not everything works. At that session we also talked about trying to cut down the number of administrative meetings we have in the life of the church. I am not at all sure we cracked that. I don't promise that this year we will solve every issue in the church. In fact, I don't even know what issues we will tackle. However, I am very confident that by holding another Vision Day we will make a difference to our parish, we will come up with new priorities for the next five years, and you can have your say in shaping your church.

I know it is a long way off, but please put Saturday 28 September in your diary. It will be from 9.00am – 1.00pm in Cecilia hall, Putterham.

**Huw Bellis, Tring Team**

## Parish registers

### Baptisms

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

**Marla van de Merwe**  
**James Michael Baden Green**

### Weddings

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

**Timothy Godfrey & Rayah Lindley**

### Funerals

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

**Thelma Gower 88**  
**Cynthia Margaret Rose**  
**Midwinter 85**  
**Kevin David Flint 52**  
**Stanley Ernest James Swaby 87**  
**William 'Philip' Jeffery 66**  
**David Thallon 85**  
**Michael Charles Weatherly 75**  
**Stephen Michael Harris 62**  
**Ron Kennett 84**



# Who is your inspiration?



The Bible is read by millions of people all over the world. Many of those people read it every day. It is read in Churches, schools, prisons, hospitals, hotels and homes.

While people use different translations and see different nuances in its pages, one thing we can probably agree about is that the people within its pages are (with one notable exception) fallible. There is fratricide, genocide, murder and mayhem, incest, adultery and rape; there is injustice, betrayal, abuse of power, greed, gluttony, oppression of the poor and destitute. Even the best of them make mistakes or deliberately do the wrong thing to satisfy their own desires. The Bible is no child's playground.

But the Bible also reminds us that we are like those fallible individuals, eager to please God and live his way but often failing to do even what we think is the best thing. Perhaps we can take inspiration from the fact that even when we fail, God loves us and forgives us and never turns us away.

In this and the following editions of Comment, readers are invited to submit their favourite or most inspirational Bible character. What do you like about them? What do you take from their story that inspires you? Write a few sentences and we will print them. I thought I could probably guess which characters would come first but I was wrong! And if the one you would have chosen is printed before you submit yours, send it anyway. Maybe your reasons are quite different.

Here are the first few...

**The Editor**



**Enoch**  
Enoch walked with God and was not for God took him. He passed not through the gates of death Nor did he take a final breath, 'Come,

live with me,' his Maker said, for God loved him.

*We shall never know his secret how he walked thus; But we're sure he loved his Maker, Recognized him as Creator; So he lived thus.*

*Enoch talked with God and, as his friend, he knew him.*

*In obedience to his guiding, Never from his presence hiding, In God, all his soul's needs finding. then God took him.*

Enoch, seven generations from Adam, may not be so well known as others in the Bible, but he has always fascinated me as the only mention of him in the Old Testament is that he 'walked with God' and did not experience physical death 'for God took him' (Genesis 5 verses 22 and 24). He must have been a remarkable character to receive God's special affirmation in that way.

But what an example for all those who have put their trust in God ever since.

We, today, live in similar times as Enoch, for evil and suffering was endemic then and has not changed throughout history. In our times, we are made more aware of it through the media and communication systems. This makes it all the more important for Christians to be 'walking with God', having been brought into a relationship with him through Jesus.

Enoch lived in times so distressing that in the time of his great grandson, Noah, God seemed to regret creating mankind and would destroy every living thing, except for Noah, his family and an ark full of animals, for he, too, 'walked with God' and was spared the total destruction of all living things by flood (Genesis 6 verse 9).

Enoch was mentioned in that wonderful chapter of heroes of faith in Hebrews chapter 11 alongside great men of God of whom we know much more, and also in the little-known letter of Jude, verses 14-16.

Of course, Enoch was not perfect, for Jesus was the only sinless person who ever lived, but in the short account we have of him it would seem he was a holy, God-fearing man, who knew that God was close to him, helping him in daily living, holding him when he fell, so we have an example to give us a guide

to Christian living, as we have Jesus as the one with whom we can walk.

This man, then, has helped me as I have tried to put my faith into practice. The analogy of walking with someone, particularly a close friend, in everyday life, means, literally, going side by side, talking, sharing problems in a very confidential way. So, to experience the presence of Jesus, unseen but very close to us in spirit, and being able to talk with him through silent prayer at any time and about anything or anyone, however insignificant, can be very uplifting and supportive as we travel through life day by day with all its various situations. We can claim the many promises he made that he will be with us. This means that he is not just a historical, religious figure we hear about for a few minutes each Sunday, but he is a personal friend, one who understands, and one who 'sticks closer than a brother'.

So when we fail or grieve him or start to have doubts about our Christian journey, Jesus will hold us up and not let us fall. He talks to us too as we read his words in the Gospels, so prayer and Bible reading are the means by which we know how to walk with him.

God has not promised that we will not experience the process of dying as he did with Enoch, but, when we come to that decisive moment, what joy it is to know that we shall be, not just walking with him, but living with him: for in that heavenly home – our journey is ended.

I finish with the fourth verse of the hymn Audrey and I chose for our wedding, sixty-two years ago: 'Jesus, a great desire have we, / to walk life's troubled path with Thee; / Come to us now, in converse stay; / And O walk with us day by day!'

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



**Noah**  
Working in the construction industry, I can relate to Noah for his impressive skills as an engineer, architect and ship builder. He spent an estimated 55-75 years building a massive ark, the like of which had never been built before.  
*Continued on page 18*

Lent pilgrim

# Lent Films 2019

TRING  
TEAM PARISH  
Living God's Love



Sunday 10th March

## EXODUS - GODS AND KINGS - (2014)



Egyptian Princes Moses (Christian Bale) and Ramses (Joel Edgerton) are raised together as brothers. When Ramses becomes pharaoh, Moses is his most-trusted adviser. However Moses soon discovers his Hebrew parentage, and Ramses banishes him to the desert -- often a death sentence. But God has a mission for Moses: Free the Israelites from slavery. Moses returns from exile and demands that Ramses let his people go, but the arrogant ruler is unmoved, leading to a battle of divine wills.

Sunday 17th March **NOAH (2014)**



When God decides that mankind has become too sinful and must be wiped off the Earth, he chooses Noah (Russell Crowe), a pious man, for a great task. Noah must build an ark large enough to hold his wife (Jennifer Connelly), adopted daughter (Emma Watson), sons (Logan Lerman, Douglas Booth, Leo McHugh Carroll) and their wives -- plus breeding pairs of every animal. When the task is completed, Noah and his family witness God's wrath in the form of an apocalyptic flood.



Sunday 24th March **SAMSON - 2018**



When his youthful ambition leads to a tragic marriage, the all-powerful Samson embarks on a quest for vengeance that brings him into direct conflict with the Philistine army. As his brother mounts a tribal rebellion, Samson's relationship with a Philistine temptress and his final surrender to God will help turn imprisonment into a final victory.

Sunday 31st March **MARY MAGDALENE- 2018**

A young girl from the village of Magdala resists the traditional roles of women in society, and takes the opportunity to rebel by following the newly famous Jesus and his disciples.



Sunday 7th April **RISEN - 2016**



Roman military tribune Clavius (Joseph Fiennes) remains set in his ways after serving 25 years in the army. He arrives at a crossroad when he's tasked to investigate the mystery of what happened to Jesus (Cliff Curtis) following the Crucifixion. Accompanied by trusted aide Lucius (Tom Felton), his quest to disprove rumors of a risen Messiah makes him question his own beliefs and spirituality. As his journey takes him to places never dreamed of, Clavius discovers the truth that he's been seeking.

**All films start at 6.30pm at St. John the Baptist in Aldbury Tea, coffee, wine and popcorn will be available. There will be discussion after each of the films.**

This was an impressive feat of construction in itself, but he must also have developed some fantastic skills as a biologist by gathering not one, but two, of every species of animal to save them from the dangerous flood that was about to occur.

Noah was a godly man, but he wasn't perfect. He had weakness for drinking wine, which was apparently his only recorded sin. The Bible tells us how Noah became drunk and passed out in his tent, making himself an embarrassment to his sons. Whilst I don't know if I've similarly embarrassed my sons, this does have some parallels to our annual dads and lads church camping event!

Noah was the only follower of God left on earth in a world full of evil, violence and corruption. This has a parallel today with fewer and fewer people confessing a living faith in God. Noah's inspiration comes in showing that no matter how bad things seem, there is always a way of helping others to rise above disaster and navigate through life's storms.

**Andrew Kinsey, St Peter & St Paul**

in a short space of time, her husband and two sons had died, and Naomi decided to return to Bethlehem. She was bereft and could have blamed God for her misfortune. But she did not blame God as Ruth's declaration shows.

Initially Ruth and Orpah wanted to go with her but Naomi tried to persuade them both to return to their homes as Naomi felt that she could not provide them with decent lives. Orpah was persuaded but Ruth remained loyal to Naomi. She would remain with Naomi because she could see Naomi's goodness and faith and loved her for it.

On arrival in Bethlehem, following a chance encounter between Ruth and Boaz, a local landowner and kinsman, Naomi facilitated a marriage between them, invoking traditional family law. The outcome of these events meant that Ruth was to become the great grandmother of King David; and Naomi, herself, was to have a fulfilled later life.

Our lives can also be an inspiration to others.

**David Whiting  
St Peter & St Paul**



**Naomi**

Naomi is one of the three central characters in the OT book of Ruth. Ruth herself gets star billing because of her famous declaration to

Naomi. 'Entreat me not to leave you, or to turn back from following after you, for wherever you go, I will go. Wherever you lodge, I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God, my God. Where you die, I will die, and there will I be buried. The Lord do so to me, and more also, if anything but death parts you and me.'

What led to Ruth making this declaration? It was going to be for her a journey into the unknown, just like many of the refugees of today. The character of Naomi, her mother-in-law must have inspired it. Naomi had many reasons to feel hard-done-by. Forced by famine to leave Bethlehem, her home town, with her husband and two sons, she had settled in the land of Moab. Her sons had married Moabite women, Ruth and Orpah, and everything seemed fine. Then,



**Mary, mother of Jesus**

For some reason Protestants don't mention Mary much, except at Christmas. She is, of course, central to Catholics – and to Muslims. The Quran has one

book 'Surat Maryam' named after her, and the Quran refers to Mary more often than in the New Testament – seventy times.

As a Baptist I hear about Mary mainly at Christmas, but as an Oblate of a Catholic Monastery, I hear about her every day I visit – at one liturgy or another. Each day we sing the Cantic of Mary (Magnificat) and end the day with a song in her honour, sung in the chancel before going to bed.

Mary had enormous courage. As a girl, probably fifteen or younger, she is told that she is going to have a child by the Holy Spirit – she is going to become pregnant before marriage, a shameful condition.

She sees her Son, Jesus, crucified in front of her, and watches as he dies. She then becomes a cornerstone of the new young church together with several other of Jesus' female followers, despite persecution from the Synagogue in Jerusalem who had Stephen stoned to death.

Mary brought up Jesus – she was, after all, his mother. She looked after him, taught him and influenced him. Jesus was God and man – and as man he must have been greatly influenced by his mother.

I find Mary inspiring because of her enormous courage, and her steadfast faith despite the tragedy of seeing her son crucified, and her other sons and friends persecuted after his death.

**John Allan  
High Street Baptist Church**

**Saturday 9 March**  
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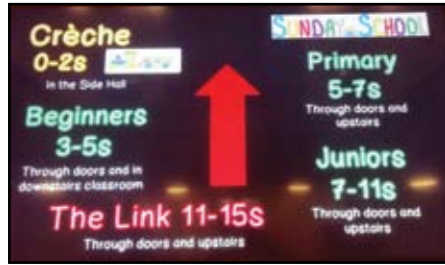
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# From Tots to Teens... and beyond!



There is always plenty going on at Akeman Street Baptist Church! We have a full range of activities for all age groups. As well as our Sunday children's groups, which cater for all, from newborn babies to young adults, we have several regular weekday groups.

Most of the Sunday groups meet



during the morning service; and Impact, the group for 16+, meets during the evening service and is followed by Tea and Toast at various venues.

Every weekday morning, except Thursday, the Pre-school runs: this is popular within the town and is top-rated by Ofsted. On Thursday mornings, the Hall is used by ABC Tots – a popular venue for little ones and their Mums, Grans and carers.

Not to be left out, one Saturday morning a month there is the opportunity for Dads and Tots to come along to enjoy the company and activities, not to mention the bacon rolls!

On Monday afternoons, the Explorers, aged 3 to 6, meet in the Side Hall for fun, crafts, games and a Bible story.

When the children reach the age of six, they can go to Fish Club which meets on Wednesday early evenings. There they can enjoy crafts, games and Bible time. This group has been running for more than forty years – there are



# God's action in the world



In last month's Comment, Leslie Barker mentioned the dispute between John Wesley and George Whitefield on the question of Divine guidance and God's action in the world.

The Editor invited me to expand on this for Comment readers.

### The Holy Club

Wesley and Whitefield met at Oxford University in the 1730s when Whitefield joined John's club for Christian undergraduates known, mockingly at first, as the Holy Club and then as the Methodists, because of their regular,

methodical prayer, Bible study and worship. Charles Wesley was also a member.

All three men were ordained Deacons in the Church of England and went to Georgia in the USA as missionaries. George Whitefield returned to England in 1739 to be ordained Priest. He soon started open air preaching in the UK and was very well received by working people in England, but especially so in South Wales and Scotland. This was a practice which John Wesley later followed, much to the annoyance of the Bishops and some of his fellow clergy.

**George Whitefield, Calvinist**  
George Whitefield was a Calvinist in

that he believed God has predestined some people to eternal life and others to eternal damnation. A story is told of how he was staying at an Inn in a County Town in England and, outside his room, gallows were being constructed. The following day Whitefield saw the condemned man escorted to the gibbet to be hanged. He said, 'There but for the grace of God, go I.'

He did not mean that he was thanking God for his poor but honest parents for bringing him up so well, but that God had literally chosen him, George Whitefield, to be a preacher and literally appointed this man to be a thief and to die on the end of a rope in a painful death; no free will, just the decree of God. Whitefield

many adults in Tring and elsewhere who fondly remember the fun they had here.

On Friday evenings the Wayfinders meet in two groups: Younger Wayfinders for youngsters in years 6-9 and Older Wayfinders for years 10 and above. In these groups there is a wide variety of fun activities, many of which include eating(!), films, sports and games. There is a regular Bible focus and once a month the Wayfinders meet with similar groups from other churches in the area for a Youth Squash.

There are also regular activities for adults held in the Church and elsewhere – Men's meetings, Ladies' groups, mixed activities, House groups, Bible Studies – there is something for everyone. Our



very popular Company Café is providing friendship, companionship and a warm welcome for those who need it – but all of that is another story...

Please see our website for more information and details, times and ages etc: [www.akemanstreet.org](http://www.akemanstreet.org).

**Joan Eeley**  
**Akeman Street Baptist Church**



believed that Jesus died just for the elect, those whom God has picked, not for everyone. Whitefield followed the teaching of John Calvin, the French pastor and theologian of Geneva. His followers are called Calvinists but Calvin himself was more subtle in his writings on God's grace than his followers.

### John Wesley, Arminian

John Wesley rejected this belief. Wesley believed that all people had free will to choose good or evil, to believe in God or to reject God. He did not believe that everything that happened to him was God's will. For example, some Vicars did not like him preaching in their parish and a few of these bought some of the local toughs a pint or three of ale, encouraging them to beat him up.

Wesley saw this not as part of God's plan but of human wickedness which was contrary to God's plan.

Wesley believed that Jesus died for all of humanity. John Wesley's views are close to those of Jacob Arminius, the Dutch Reformed theologian, who taught that while God was King, humans have free will and that Christ died for all. It appears that Wesley and Arminius arrived at this view independently after study of the Bible.

### The Methodist Church

Although Wesley never left the Church of England, the movement he started with his brother and others became what we now know as the Methodist Church.

In South Wales you can still find many Chapels with the name Calvinistic Methodist on the board outside. These latter are the spiritual heirs of George Whitefield, not John Wesley.

Wesley once told Whitefield that his God was worse than Wesley's devil, as in Whitefield's system there was no

chance of heaven if you were not one of the elect.

I am with Wesley in this dispute but a great story is told of one of Whitefield's over-zealous and self-righteous followers who came to George and asked, 'Shall we see Mr Wesley in heaven?' expecting the answer 'No'. Whitefield replied, 'No, he will be too close to the Throne,' that is, the Throne of God. Whitefield disagreed with Wesley passionately but, in humility, acknowledged Wesley's greater holiness.

### Chapel and Tabernacle

Wesley's Chapel (Methodist) can be found in the City Road in London just south of Old Street tube station. Whitefield's Tabernacle (United Reform Church) can be found in Tottenham Court Road in London just north of Goudge Street tube station.

**Jon Reynolds, Tring Team**

# Tweet of the month

The Turtle Dove, or European Turtle Dove as it is often called these days, is a beautiful bird. There are three other closely-related species that have Turtle Dove in their name so European was added to the front of Turtle Dove to avoid confusion.

The European Turtle Dove's scientific name is *Streptopelia turtur*. *Streptopelia* is apparently from Ancient Greek *streptos*, meaning 'collar' and *peleia*, meaning 'dove', which is appropriate given the lines on the side of its neck having a passing resemblance to a collar. *Turtur* is a duplication of its purring call 'turr', which is repeated several times so is realistically onomatopoeic. *Turtur* is also thought to be the origin of its English name as the bird has no link to Turtles either in mythology or appearance.

It is a bird that I first saw in 1975 and while it was never common, if you went to the right habitat you would hear their distinctive purring call and see them without too much trouble. This was the

case through the 80s but in the 90s they became harder to see and since 1994 they have declined by more than 90% in Britain. Nowadays if I want to see a European Turtle Dove, I have to travel, and the only one I saw last year was in east Kent. The closest place to Tring that you might see them is an RSPB



reserve about twenty-five miles away in Oxfordshire. The reasons for their decline are various. They are shot in southern European countries for sport! Also changes in farming practices will

have played their part and crossing the Sahara may also be having an impact in our changing world.

Hopefully it can be saved as a species and won't be lost from this country. It is sobering to think that decades ago you'd be lucky to spot a Collared Dove in a flock of European Turtle Doves, now the reverse is true.

The 'Turtle Dove' is probably the most frequently mentioned bird in the Bible. It is possible that the dove released by Noah was a Turtle Dove. Certainly the Turtle Dove is explicitly named in Leviticus chapter one and it and pigeons are the only birds that can be offered in sacrifice to God. It is known to be a gentle peaceful bird and is used to portray innocence and purity in The Bible and gets a mention at the baptism of Jesus. The dove is used as a symbol of The Holy Spirit and, given the Turtle Dove's beauty and associations with purity and innocence, that seems fitting to me.

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

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8												
9			10						11		12	
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		18							19			
20							21					

### CLUES ACROSS

- Not plentiful. (6)
- A confusing row. (6)
- Book of the O.T. (12)
- Consume (6)
- 'So be it' (4)
- Well-known parable (4) (9)
- Cathedral administrator (4)
- Market stall holder (6)
- A place for baring our sins (12)
- To be sorry (6)
- Tidied up (6).

### CLUES DOWN

- Companion (9)
- Regret (3)
- Outside feature (8)
- Destiny (4)
- Worship (9)
- Donkey (3)
- A law of command from God (9)
- Enter into more detail (9)
- Annual gatherings of crops (8)
- Period before Easter (4)
- A prompt (3)
- Belonging to us (3)

Answers on page 38

# Nye and Alf



Party. They represent to me the two sides of the socialist movement.

Our current national political preoccupation is Brexit and the Conservatives. Labour is however waiting in the wings for its turn at government and after a spell of extremism, is steadily moving to a more central political position.

One of my pair is Aneurin (Nye) Bevan and the other is Alfred (Alf) Robens. These names may bring back mixed emotions in the older generation of readers. I never met them personally, but I do have a common link with them – coal.

### Nye Bevan

My experience with coal mining goes back to the mid-1950s. I was then a student at the Royal School of Mines and part of the course was industrial experience in the college vacations. I spent the summer of 1955 on coal processing operations in and around Barnsley. Barnsley's coal was mined underground and upgraded in surface plants. It was a frustrating experience because for various reasons students were not allowed to do hands-on work. Bizarrely, my fellow student and companion in this experience was Brendan Soane, who later became a priest and rose to high office in the Vatican.

Nye worked in the pits, had a background as a union man in coal mining in Wales and was very briefly Minister of Labour and National Service. He was predecessor in this post to Alf Robens. Nye is best remembered as the Minister of Health when the NHS was set up in the late 1940s.

Nye's parents were non-Conformists.



This is not a story about a TV double-act, although it can be said that they complement each other. Nye and Alf were senior members of the post WW2 Labour Party. They represent to me the two sides of the socialist movement. Our current national political preoccupation is Brexit and the Conservatives. Labour is however waiting in the wings for its turn at government and after a spell of extremism, is steadily moving to a more central political position.

One of my pair is Aneurin (Nye) Bevan and the other is Alfred (Alf) Robens. These names may bring back mixed emotions in the older generation of readers. I never met them personally, but I do have a common link with them – coal.

His book, 'In Place of Fear', is his only significant published work. One of the notes in this book was a complaint about MPs' pay and conditions in the early 1950s. The pay was then £1,000 a year, subject to income tax. Bevan complained that there were no allowances for secretarial support or for accommodation in London for those with remote constituencies. An MP also had to look after his/her own household costs. Surprisingly, and much later, it was Margaret Thatcher who informally eased those financial pressures. Bevan was the political father of the NHS, although the concept had been around for several decades previously. The idea of a national health service was first seriously floated in the 1930s by Lord Beveridge, a Liberal politician, as part of a 'welfare state'. Recruitment for the Armed Forces in WW1 had first revealed just how bad the health of many British young men was. A cynic might argue that the original purpose of the NHS was to improve the quality of our 'cannon-fodder'!

One very significant topic is missing from Nye's book. It is economic growth. I think that the omission of this aspect of political life was his blind spot. His focus was on righting past wrongs for a minority, not on improving life for all. I suggest that this attitude continues and explains some of Jeremy Corbyn's comments ('I have an email here from Jane Smith complaining about...'). Nye and his wife, Lady Jennie Lee, spent their final years at Asheridge Farm in Chesham. She is best remembered for her contribution to the start-up of the Open University.

Nye rapidly, became a local director at age 22, and served on the Manchester City Council from 1941-45, having being declared unfit for military service. He does not appear to be notably religious

### Alf Robens

Alfred (Alf) Robens was born near Manchester into a lower middle-class family and left school at 16 to join Manchester & City Co-op as a clerk. He rose rapidly, became a local director at age 22, and served on the Manchester City Council from 1941-45, having being declared unfit for military service. He does not appear to be notably religious



and I assume he came from a Protestant background.

He became an MP, initially for Wansbeck, an old coal mining constituency in Northumberland and later for Blyth Valley. After a steady rise in the Labour party he became Minister of Labour and National Service under Attlee, but clashed with the later Labour leader, Hugh Gaitskell and was sidelined. Following this frustration, he left active politics and became Chairman of the National Coal Board (NCB). He served from 1961-1971. It was a period when the NCB was in serious decline, and he is, unfortunately, most remembered in connection with his ambivalent handling of the Aberfan disaster in 1966.

The NCB helped to forge his management ideas and Alf spelled them out in a book published in 1970 titled 'Human Engineering'. He laid out a model of an industrial society where communications between management and workforce are the key to personal reward and satisfaction as well as corporate success. The old NCB collieries were saddled with an often brutal private sector history.

Mining is an empirical business, largely dictated by the physical nature of the particular mineral deposit being exploited. Management style and practice, and labour relations are a direct reflection of those local problems. Robens sought to soften this harshness; homogenisation and improvement were his aims. Although UK underground coal mining was by then a dying business, his attitude and successes were acknowledged in his later recognition and appointments.

Alf was made Baron Robens of Woldingham and later became chairman / vice-chairman / director/ board member of several major organisations including the Bank of England, Times Newspapers, Vickers, Johnson Matthey, the LSE and Guys Hospital, as well as other senior public sector appointments. Bearing in mind his humble origins, it is quite a story in itself.

He became a Conservative in 1979 and he lived the final years of his life from 1982 onwards at Laleham Abbey in Surrey, which had been converted into apartments in 1981.

Who was the most successful?  
**Bill Bradford, St Peter & St Paul**

# The four brothers who went to war



It would be interesting to know how many men listed on the War Memorial still have relatives living in Tring. Do we know what happened to those families as they learnt to cope with the immediate aftermath of The Great War and face the future?

My great uncles are on the Tring War Memorial. There are no family photographs of them. None of the family ever talked about them. So, they are rather anonymous figures.

I first 'met' them over the Easter holiday in 1966. My English teacher gave the class homework: Compile a family tree. I was fourteen years old. I duly asked my parents about the family and started constructing a tree. My granddad, Arthur Gates lived in Tring, but had died the previous year. My grandmother, Ethel (born and bred in Tring) was still alive and happily told me as much as she could remember about her siblings – all nine of them. (That is a story in itself.)

When I asked about Granddad's side of the family, she told me that she had had several brothers who were killed in the war. She knew little about them saying, 'Oh, it was such a long time ago'. She was a teenager during the war and didn't really get to know her future husband until after 1918. However, she told me that Granddad (Arthur) had been badly wounded and the German bullets the surgeon removed were kept as souvenirs. He had also been badly gassed and suffered shell shock and significant hearing loss due to the terrible bombardments. He was invalided out of the army at some point. His health was not good throughout his life, much as a result of the injuries he suffered.

My grandmother couldn't remember the names of the brothers who died so suggested I had a look at the war memorial. I duly recorded the three names on my family tree. I handed the homework in, and they were forgotten again.

Move on fifty years... genealogy and family research has become a popular pastime with many people, and I too have been sucked into this very time-consuming activity. Here are the bare bones of the family story.

Emma Casemore married Frederick

Gates in 1880. They had seven children: five sons were alive in 1911; Frederick Ernest; Walter Thomas, Frank John, Arthur and the youngest, Herbert James. The brothers were born in Aston Clinton or Western Turville, but the family were all at 11 Akeman Street, Tring by 1911. All five young men tried to enlist in the early years of the war. Frederick, the oldest, was deemed unfit for duty, but the other four went, at varying times, off to France. All but one, my granddad, Arthur, were killed.

None of them were highly educated. They had ordinary jobs – a grocer's apprentice, trainee hairdresser, journeyman baker, draper's assistant. They probably hoped for a steady life, love, marriage, and their own families had the war not intervened. Many of the young men thought that going to war was an adventure or a chance to get away from their humdrum lives for a while. The population of Tring in 1911 was less than 5000 and the losses would devastate many of the local families.

I can never begin to understand the feelings of my great grandparents as one by one their sons died in France in a 'war to end all wars'. Heart-breaking. Herbert James, the youngest, died on 2 November 1918, probably in the last action of the war. Did Emma and Frederick find out before Armistice Day or after? At the time of the December 1918 Parish magazine, they knew and also their son, Frank was still listed as missing. Did they hold out any hope for him? (He had in fact been killed in the summer of that year.)

Time moved on. Emma and Frederick (snr) had bought a shop at 27 High Street (half of the current motorist's centre). The Spanish flu killed two more of the wider family. Many young ladies in Tring remained spinsters all their lives. One told me that the war took the young men and then Lord Rothschild sent the rest to his new lands in Canada. I do remember that I grew up with lots of 'Aunties', friends of my grandmother and grandfather's age who were treated as family.

Frederick, the oldest son, who was not fit enough to go to war, married Beatrice and lived in Ivinghoe. They ran the Post Office there for many years and had several children. There are still Gates in the area from that branch of the family.



Arthur met and married Ethel Kent in 1922. He inherited the shop and had his own Ladies and Gents' hairdressers at 25 High Street. Two daughters were born, Phyllis in 1924 and Rhoda in 1929. Arthur died in 1965 after a long period of illness and Ethel in 1989, aged 89.

Rhoda is still alive, living in Australia, where her two sons, her grandchildren and now great grandchildren live. She is 90 years old next year.

Phyllis married Harry after World War II and had two children: Stephen and Victoria (me). She died in 2000.

My family has grown too. As we say, life goes on.

There's always a series of questions in my mind. Was it worth it and why were lessons not learnt that Great War? Why did we have to embark on a Second World War only twenty-one years after Armistice Day in 1918? Was it the greed and folly of governments? Were the survivors angry that there was to be another conflict so quickly following that massacre? and one that saw another generation of young men killed? We may not have had a World War since the mid twentieth century, but there has been plenty of war. Did we not learn anything?

It's easy for me to remember those who sacrificed their lives in The Great War. I knew some who survived. But my children don't have the same memories. It's just 'history' and although we have films and photos and interviews – it is so long ago. The 100th anniversary of the Great War was important in that it may have helped the younger generation understand a little better.

Vicky Baldock, St Cross, Wilstone

# Remember your reusables!

Wanting to save the planet? How about ditching single-use plastic and remembering your reusables instead!

The problems of plastic pollution in our environment, from our soils to our seas, has shown us that it is more important than ever to ditch plastic from our daily lives. Whether it's on-the-go or around the house, there are loads of easy ways you can swap single-use plastic for reusable alternatives.

The UK uses over 13 billion plastic bottles every year (including all toiletry, milk and drinks bottles), a staggering 60% of these are just water bottles! Imagine how much waste could be stopped if everyone simply used a reusable water bottle. Tap water is also much cheaper than bottled water, which is between 500-1000 times more expensive, and is often healthier for you too!

Whether you are heading out to work, school, or just to the shops, make sure you remember, reuse and refill your drinks bottle!

Thanks to 'Refill', a fantastic new initiative, topping up your bottle whilst out and about is easier than ever. The scheme encourages public places, such as cafés, pubs, and restaurants, to register as Refill stations that will happily top up your bottle with free tap water. You can find your nearest Refill stations on-the-go by downloading the Refill app or keeping an eye out for Refill window stickers.

Besides water bottles don't forget to 'remember your reusable'...

- Keep cup - for all of your hot drinks; many cafés offer a discount for using these
- Lunchbox - packed lunches reduce waste and are often much cheaper and healthier too
- Shopping bags - store these in your car, handbag or by your door so you always have them ready

Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services, Councillor Janice Marshall, said, 'Recycling is brilliant for the environment, but it is more important to reduce the amount of waste you create by remembering your reusables instead. Grabbing items like water bottles, keep cups and shopping bags as you head out the door should become as important as picking up your wallet, keys or phone.'

There are loads of simple switches you can make around the home too, one of the easiest being to swap soap pumps and shower gel bottles for a bar of soap instead.



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For more information and ideas on how you can find more reusable alternatives and ditch single-use plastic, visit: [www.dacorum.gov.uk/reusables](http://www.dacorum.gov.uk/reusables).

'Remember your reusables' is a campaign put together by WasteAware, the Hertfordshire Waste Partnership. Dacorum is part of this partnership. More information on the campaign is available here: [www.wasteaware.org.uk/reusables](http://www.wasteaware.org.uk/reusables)



Spring Concert



**Tring Choral Society**  
**and Orchestra**  
Conductor: **Colin Stevens**

2019

*Elgar*

**The Dream of Gerontius**

(reduced orchestration by David Meacock)

with The Chamber Choir of  
St Clement Danes School

**Soloists**  
Mezzo Soprano: Gaynor Keeble  
Tenor: Robert Johnston  
Bass: Jimmy Holliday

**Saturday 6 April**  
**Church of Saint Peter & Saint Paul,**  
**TRING**  
**Starting at 7.30pm**  
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Tickets: £15, Under 18's free  
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# 'Banging on about Europe'



One of the reasons that WW1 continued for so long was that the contestants were so equally prepared and armed that entrenched armies faced each other contesting land which neither could retain, creating a deadlock. This is very much the situation with the contest between the remainers and the leavers of the 'Brexit' dilemma which has now embroiled both parliament and people in dispute.

Equally balanced in the referendum, divided across and within party lines in parliament, the British system of government has struggled to function with the anomaly of a direct mandate from the people.

David Cameron's aim in calling the referendum was to stop the Conservative Party once and for all from 'banging on about Europe'. Asked the question 'Should the United Kingdom remain a member of the European Union or leave the European Union', the answer he expected was 'Yes'. The reality was quite different: 48.1 % said yes but 51.9% said no. There was indeed a majority for getting out, but the closeness of the vote revealed that 'banging on about Europe' was far from over in either the country or parliament. Indeed the next two-and-a-half years would reveal a country and its political parties both fractured and fractious. The result has been dissension within parties, an inconclusive election reflecting the split in opinion in the country and resulting in a minority government. It is a situation of such intractable inability to agree on a plan that even the Queen has been moved to suggest the necessity for compromise. As B-Day looms on 29 March, the discussion has become more heated, the situation more fluid and at the time of writing, it is far from clear whether Mrs May's plan, another plan, or no plan will result

This inability to agree on either what the situation is or how we should actually leave is more and more causing disaffection between people: family, friends and neighbours. The media inform us of the situation constantly, experts pontificate but in bewildering terms: 'Article 50', 'the backstop', 'The Malthouse Option' and 'Brexit is

Brexit' – what do they mean? And there is the seductive plea for 'a people's vote', which is another way of saying we should have another referendum because we didn't like the first one. Even writing this article is attempting to hit a moving target as the situation changes every day.

To comprehend the complexity of the network of forty years of legislation and agreements, together with membership of innumerable committees and NGOs, is in itself bewildering. Twenty-eight countries have to agree with the terms of exit and this cannot be done until the UK has actually left, and those who want 'out' cannot agree on how. Unravelling the Gordian Knot would be simpler.

A large part of the inability to agree of both the people and their parliamentary representatives is engrained in our history. The tension between those who want closer ties with the continent of Europe and those who want to maintain a clear national sovereignty goes back to the very foundations of our country and the fact that we are an island nation.

For much of the mediaeval period Britain was tied to France and involved in years of war over who owned and ruled which bits. Henry VIII asserted the supremacy of England through his break with Rome and foundation of the Church of England. Mary Tudor attempted to restore the link by marriage to a Spanish King and restoring Catholicism. However, she lost Calais, our last possession on the continent, and Elizabeth 1 restored Protestantism and ruled an England that stood alone. Crucial changes were made through revolution and regicide and the establishment of rule over Scotland and Ireland, but at no time did Britain consider renewing a direct link with the continent; indeed, France became the traditional enemy. Even though European royal houses supplied us with monarchs in the 18th and 19th centuries, British sovereignty and that of parliament were secured. As the British empire was established in a 'land of hope and glory' nationalism grew and the attitude towards European countries was both competitive and superior. Summed up by the famous newspaper headline, 'Fog in the Channel, continent cut off,' the idea that Europe was a quite separate entity from the UK was reinforced.

It is in the modern age, after two violent and bloody conflicts, that the

idea gained impetus that a Europe united would mean not just 'no more war' but also bring prosperity through trade. Post WW2, with the popularity and success of co-operation in production of coal and steel, the idea developed further through the Treaty of Rome; and The European Economic Community was founded. In both 1963 and 1967, Britain's application to join was vetoed by De Gaulle. In 1969, with de Gaulle no longer President, Britain applied again. Throughout this period the foundations were laid for the 'in' and 'out' arguments and opinions that we have found across the next fifty years. However, what is interesting is that the attitudes of the various political parties both evolve and revolve.

Initially Labour was against. Gaitskill considered that 'to join the six would be the end of 1000 years of history'. Ernest Bevin announced that 'If you open that Pandora's box, you don't know what Trojan horses you will let loose'. Attlee had made his opposition clear (November 1962) in a view that could easily be replicated today. 'The fact is that if the designs behind the Common Market are carried out, we are bound to be affected in every phase of our national life. There would be no national planning, except under the guidance of Continental planning—we shall not be able to deal with our own problems; we shall not be able to build up the country in the way we want to do, so far as I can see. I think we shall be subject to overall control and planning by others. That is my objection.'

Nevertheless activated by economic needs, and a belief that unity would promote future peace, Edward Heath in 1969 led Britain with enthusiasm into what was then the European Economic Community. The slogan 'better lose a bit of national sovereignty than a son or daughter' was meaningful in the growing fears of the Cold War. Heath announced that he had 'changed history'.

However, from the beginning there were efforts to change history back, led by Enoch Powell and his supporters on the right, and by Tony Benn and Barbara Castle and their supporters on the left. Heath lost the election in 1974 to a Labour party with a strong and growing group for 'out' in a period of crises over unemployment, the mines and Ireland.

The new Prime Minister, Harold Wilson, countered this movement by

going to Brussels and renegotiating Britain's terms of membership and then in 1975 put the agreement to the country in a referendum. The campaign could count on both party leaders as Margaret Thatcher went on the campaign trail wearing a jumper composed of all the flags of the EEC proclaiming, 'Yes, Yes and Yes'. 67.2% agreed and voted to stay. Harold Wilson celebrated, asserting that 'Fourteen years of national argument are over'.

In fact, the argument never stopped, and was reinforced in 1983 when the Labour Party campaigned to withdraw. It surfaced with the foundation of the Euro-sceptic Referendum Party in 1994 and the activities of UKIP (1991) and rumbled underground amongst socialist activists and far-right groups like the National Front. Based on ideological differences, this split has affected British politics for the last fifty years. Affecting both the

main parties, it is paralysing parliament today .

So for two-and-a-half years, British political leaders have struggled with 'Brexit', attempting to find a way to please both sides of the argument without a compromise. The attempt to square the circle has produced little but intractable exchanges from entrenched opponents. To the surprise of all sides, Mrs May has, in spite of a small majority, survived would be heirs-apparent snapping at her heels, a vote of no confidence in the government, and the initial rejection of her 'deal'. However, since her deal is the only deal presented at the moment, parliament has some stark choices. Agree on May's deal, leave with no deal, delay or – unlikely, but as some would wish – remain.

As 29 March grows nearer and Brussels shows no signs of any willingness to change what has

already been agreed, minds in both parties are becoming more focussed. Parliamentarians are now meeting together, even across party lines, to discuss not how to stick to their guns but possible compromises. In spite of Brussels' discouraging attitude, Mrs May will continue her attempt to solve the problem of Ireland's border.

Time is short; when Pandora opened the box some very nasty things jumped out, but the last to emerge was 'Hope'. I voted Remain but believe we must honour the result of the referendum. My personal hope is that Mrs May's plan, even at this late hour, is amended and accepted and we start the next long journey: that of clarifying what it means to be 'out'.

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

## The 'B' word



How would I vote in the Brexit debate if I were asked again? The same as two years ago. Leave.

I voted for my children and grandchildren and their future. I am neither ill-informed, selfish nor stupid. I fully understood what I was voting for; after all, the government sent out a detailed booklet of scenarios and warnings. Some Remainers have called people like me 'small-minded little Britons who live in the past'. I would suggest that they should look more closely at the EU and how it works, and what's happening within the EU, then decide if they really want to stay within it.

I do understand that some people believe that staying in the EU gives security to all the twenty-eight member states from wars between themselves. We don't live in the 1940s and we have established a very different relationship with our neighbours over the last seventy years. The craft of war is very different now. Drones and rockets hit faceless targets. IT and electronic links give instant information. We have seen it with the warring that still goes on.

What is the real purpose of the twenty-eight countries joining forces? Trade certainly, and a power base big enough to face up to the big nations:

Russia, China, India and the US. So the aim of the EU is to become a federation with its own army. I understood that the UN was the world's army, men drawn from all around the globe, there to help and intervene in world problems; we also have NATO. How many armies do we need?

And look at some of the terrible waste that goes on, including this piece of lunacy. In 2013 a study was taken. 103 million Euros could have been saved by agreeing to keep the EU parliament in one city, not moving it monthly, lock stock and barrel from Strasburg to Brussels and back again. In the last five years, 515 million euros plus have been spent on that madness! Think how that money could have been spent on poverty in Europe, and helping to stop the mass migrations of young people from the poorer countries, robbing them of their young, the builders of their futures. Fishing... a list of fish that could be landed. Fish not on the list must be thrown back... even if it were dead.

Of course, it's a very complicated issue. How do we unpick forty years of rules? There are some good rules, to make standard sizes, weights and measures, all to help us trade more successfully, as well as health and safety, security and the war against international crime.

However, to make one size fit all... we are not all alike! Different customs, climates, language and traditions have

made it difficult for some nations to adapt, made worst by those in the Euro zone.

The EU is a huge business venture necessitating a large bureaucracy run by a huge number of people who do not seem to be accountable. For example, the EU accounts have been not totally signed off for many years.

Germany has been the greatest winner in this EU club up to now, full employment and financially secure, compared to the other EU countries such as Greece, Italy and Spain and France. These have suffered through being members using the Euro and many of their young people have been struggling to find work in their own country with youth unemployment rates of up to 50% at their worst.

And then we had a vote. What caused it? Why? Mr Blair allowed the flood gates to be opened for migration. Was it to counter the problem of a rapidly ageing population? The people saw unfairness in the country, newcomers were getting housed with benefits and the like. It was, after all, their taxes that were paying for it. Pressures were being felt on the country's infrastructure, housing, hospitals, education; roads and crime had become intolerable.

A change of government sent Mr Cameron to the EU leaders to try to rebalance the situation but he got

*Continued overleaf*

nothing meaningful. He had promised a vote to the people on the agreed new terms, and promised to stay and see things through no matter what... The rest is history.

And where are we at now? It's been like a civil war since the vote. And how sad, because in spite of our differences, the people of this country want the best for the country and our children's futures. Our negotiations have been repeatedly weakened by people 'playing politics', and not looking to secure a future when the UK has left the EU.

The EU put down three red lines before it would speak to us about negotiating a withdrawing agreement. It seemed rather like twenty-seven countries wanted to stop us from leaving at all costs – and they were. They had not expected us to want to leave and realized that our contributions would cease.

As well as dealing with them, we also had Parliament and the House of Lords doing battle to hinder the exit from the great machine, backed up by the Media. The EU was never going to give us a good deal – we know that – but

the bickering and interference by our own MPs who should know better, is appalling. Where is the democracy that we expect?

Mrs May, I believe, has tried to bridge the divide that lies between us, but is weakened by the media and her own party. What a shame, as I believe she is the only person that has the courage to try to heal the rift.

I believe in the people of this country. We will rise to meet any difficulty that we encounter. But I also believe that despite all the scaremongering that is going on, all the Project Fear that has been planted in people's minds, it will not last as long as, or be as bad as, people forecast, even if we go out on a No Deal and trade by World Trade Agreements. Most of the world still use them successfully; why not us?

The document that is before parliament goes some way to satisfy the needs of this country. But we should remember that it is only the structure draft of the negotiations document that still has to be approved by twenty-seven countries. Unfortunately, with the backstop clause in place in its current

form we could never be able to leave the EU. We would be trapped, as I believe we would never get everyone to agree not to veto us for one reason or another. Whether it was Spain wanting Gibraltar or France wanting fishing rights to fish in our waters with the same quotas: we would never be able to leave the EU.

Maybe some would be pleased by that; but remember we would have no say and no vote in any of the future rule making. However, if the EU gives us a legally binding date to leave the backstop, I think we should sign and get on with it. I'm sure the Irish border issue can be solved if all the parties are willing. There is already a border with different currency and VAT rates. Technology is the best answer, just as it is used on the US/Canada border.

Those that have suggested that the troubles may start again if there is a hard border, underestimate the Irish people; they have more intelligence than that. They would never allow that to happen.

**Brenda and Roy Hurley  
St Peter & St Paul**

## Proud Europeans

A couple of weeks ago, we had the pleasure of visiting the Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms exhibition at the British Library. Hailed as a 'once in a generation experience', it also brought home to us just how much the British Isles are intertwined with European culture and heritage. And it reconfirmed to us that there is no contradiction in considering ourselves as British and European at the same time.

It has been a painful couple of years watching the Brexit drama unfold and knowing that by the end of it, we will have lost one of the greatest privileges that EU membership has brought us – freedom of movement. This freedom is not just a one-way street and many in the Leave camp overlook the fact that this also means the rights and privileges of young (and old) Brits to work, live and settle in twenty-eight different nations without any major obstacles or restrictions.

As Remainers, we are often told to simply stop moaning and accept the inevitable, but since when is it part of the democratic process to silence all opposition? To allow valuable privileges to be taken away without so much as a protest? After all, this is not simply

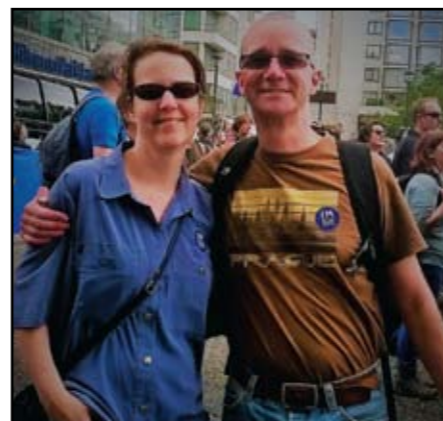
a matter of politics to us, it is a deeply personal matter. Without freedom of movement, we would never have met, as Sylvie would not have been able to move to this country from Germany. Now we feel both at home and settled here and it is a troubling thought that some people may not consider her welcome. It is worrying and disappointing for us that so much of the debate evolves around the alleged threats of immigration rather than the many positive benefits, such as staff for our health and hospitality services. And, as a recent article in The Independent showed, 'over their lifetimes' EU citizens 'pay £78,000 more into the UK economy than they take out in public services and benefits – while the average UK citizen's net lifetime contribution is zero. Why lose such a valuable asset?

Some people argue that a second referendum will be divisive, but it's hard to imagine that this would be worse than things are now. The country is already divided. Young people who were not eligible to vote two years ago are confronted with a future that the vast majority of them did not want. It will affect their future most of all, so now that we know a bit more about what's

in front of us, why not give them the chance to have their say? This is not to mention that EU citizens, many of whom have lived, worked, paid taxes and raised families in this country for decades, were also disenfranchised from a decision that will have a significant impact on their lives.

Whatever happens on the 29 March, we won't stop feeling European and hope that over time, people will realise that whatever issues and frustrations this may sometimes bring, being part of a strong community of neighbours is ultimately better than being on your own.

**Sylvie Magerstaedt & John Lippitt  
St Peter & St Paul**



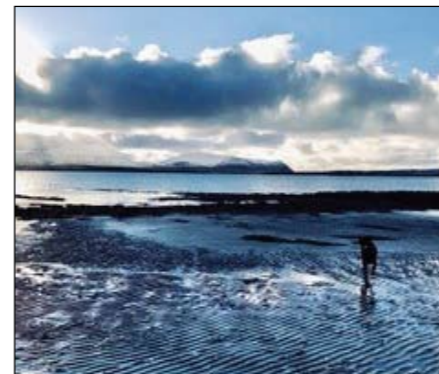
## Letter from Orkney

'What on earth is there to do up there?' was one of the most frequent questions asked of Mac and me when we announced we were going to move to Orkney, which is now nearly eighteen months ago.

There can be a perception, quite understandably, that a remote island situated off the north coast of Scotland may be lacking in 'Things To Do'. In fact, there is as much to do here as there is in Tring, depending, of course, on what one likes to do. While there is not exactly an abundance of night clubs here, to a couple of crumbles like Mac and me that is fortunately not a major issue. There is a good cinema, and a theatre, and an abundance of smaller events, talks, classes and ceilidhs (wow, are there a lot of ceilidhs!).

Most events we have attended include people dancing the Gay Gordons, Dashing White Sergeant, Westray One Step and many others with names I just can't remember. It seems that Scottish country dancing is in the DNA here, and everyone does it. Except me. And Mac. Mac is currently out of action – something about his war wound playing up.

However, I have found a class where



adult beginners are welcomed/tolerated and I am in the process of catching up. I have even managed to join in, in a very limited capacity, at an actual event! These occasions highlight the community spirit here, and even though we still know relatively few people at the moment, we usually come across someone we know whenever we're 'oot and about', as we say here, and everyone is always up for a 'blether', or a good chat.



As people who seriously enjoy good food, we are very fortunate there is an abundance of excellent local food and drink here. We have Orkney cheese, seafood such as hand-dived scallops, crabs and local fish, as well as the local lamb and beef. In addition, there is a supply of mussels available to be foraged from the beach in front of our house – not something that was available to us in Tring, sadly. Then, of course, there are the three gin producers and two whisky distillers, not to mention the wine company! All this may go some way to explain why Orkney recently came top in a survey of 'The Best Place to Live in the UK in terms of Quality of Life'.

We would certainly go along with that, although in winter everyone

goes round huddled up in thick coats and woolly hats – usually against the wind, the force of which we may have mentioned in previous columns! In general, it is warmer here in the winter than in the south: the average temperature over a year varies between 5 and 15 degrees, so it's warmer in winter and cooler in summer. However, we were caught out recently. We left the far east side of the island in sunshine, driving through green fields but in the space of about ten minutes we were in a white-out, on an ungritted road and sliding around alarmingly when going around corners. Thanks to the expert and quick reactions of the driver (I am informed) we arrived home safely, once again reminded how quickly conditions can change.

As Spring is approaching we are enjoying the lengthening days, the aurora borealis season has been in full swing, and the daffodils are tentatively coming through. Life is indeed good here.

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



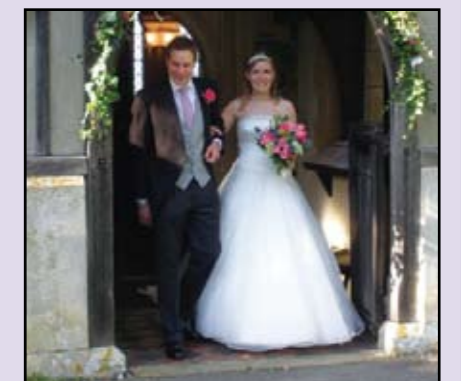
## Getting married?

On Sunday 24 March at our 10.00am service we are inviting all the wedding couples booked in for this year and next to come and join us. This will be an opportunity for us to pray with all the wedding couples from across our five churches and to give thanks for God's gift of love.

After the service they are invited to the Parish Hall so they can share their experiences of planning their wedding with others. We will share some

resources, and comments from those who have been married in our Churches recently, and we will talk about bells, music, photos and the like. We will provide a light lunch where it will be a great opportunity for wedding couples to come with all their questions, and if we as a 'church' can't answer them, then maybe other wedding couples will have some answers.

**Huw Bellis, Tring Team**



## The place of music



My attention was drawn to an article in a recent online edition of the Daily Mail which featured the magnificent Church of St Andrew, Kingsbury, London NW9. It is not clear what prompted the article but it was of special interest to me as it was the Church of which I was a member for about thirty-eight years.

In 1946 at the age of eight, I joined the choir which at that time was managed by the Curate, Revd Knowlton. For services the fine 'Willis' organ was played by volunteers.

After about two years, Rev Knowlton was moved on and an Organist and Choirmaster was appointed. As a consequence of this, the choir improved significantly and before long I was asked to stay behind after a morning service to be told by the Choirmaster that he wished me to become head chorister. I was naturally thrilled to accept but, for a while, things were a little difficult for me as I had been promoted ahead of older



boys more experienced than myself.

Various other Organists and Choirmasters came and went over the years but I remained head chorister until my voice began to change at the age of fourteen, when I joined my father in the back row to sing tenor. We both continued to sing in the choir until about 1961 when the then vicar, Revd Frank Springford (whose nephew David lives in Long Marston) appointed a young very talented Organist and Choirmaster, Barry Rose.

Barry was a genius at training boys to sing but was not prepared to spend time working with men of limited ability, which by his standards, we were at the time. Because of his status in the world of Church music, Barry had a great following of young adult male singers whom he could call on at any time. The Men's section of the choir was as a consequence disbanded and so began for me a period of relative isolation from the Church.

There was, however, a silver lining to this break as it was during this period that I met Olga Rutter who was destined to become my wife. In September 1963 we were married at the Church. Two priests officiated, the vicar Frank Springford and Revd Meredith Davies, vicar of St Laurence, Shoreditch (location for the TV series 'Rev') and also a Chaplain at Wormwood Scrubs prison. Meredith was a long-standing friend of the Rutter family.

During the months prior to our marriage, we had purchased and refurbished a house which was located within easy walking distance of the Church, and when our daughter, Julia, was about five years old, I began to take her to morning service. I was obviously well known to most of the congregation but by this time a new vicar was in place, Rev Walter Bunyan.

My re-emergence as a member of the congregation was obviously being noted and it was not long before I was approached by the vicar and asked to rejoin the choir. By this time Barry Rose had moved on to Guildford Cathedral and his replacement appointed. Initially I did not respond but when approached personally by the new choirmaster, I agreed to give it a go. Once back in the fold I was soon fully committed and it was not long before we were singing to a very good standard. Our son Simon



joined the choir during this period and, like myself, progressed to become head chorister.

The next big development for me came in 1975 when another new vicar arrived, Revd David Mann, a single man and very dedicated to his work. He came with instructions from the Bishop of Willesden to appoint a younger team to support him. Both wardens in post at the time were in their eighties, one of whom had held the position for all the time I had been involved with the Church. The vicar used to visit us as a family on a regular basis and it was not long before he was inviting me to stand for appointment as one of the wardens at the next Vestry meeting. I was only thirty-five at the time and had not previously thought about becoming a warden but after talking it over with Olga, agreed to put my name forward. Needless to say, I was elected and held the position for nine years until moving to Wilstone.

The other vacant position was initially filled by a retired Mounted Police Officer and Dog Handler but during my nine years the person appointed changed three times. With the vicar's approval, I continued singing in the Choir but when there was another change of organist and choirmaster I decided to stand down. In the meantime, Olga was licenced by the Bishop to administer the Chalice and our two children either sang in the choir or helped the servers.

When we moved to Wilstone in November 1984 I continued as Warden until the next vestry meeting.

After that came another period of isolation from Church life but that is a story for another time.

**Ken Martin, St Cross, Wilstone**

## Piano and More in 2019

A hundred people from the church, the town, and beyond were engaged and entertained by the first 'Piano and More' concert in January. It featured two talented young musicians – Rebecca Whiteman on cello, and Jonathan Rawlinson on piano – in a mix of music from Beethoven, Brahms and Saint-Saëns. Rebecca is a native of Tring, now studying in Cambridge, and Jonathan is a fellow PhD student. The best-known piece was probably 'The Swan' from 'Carnival of the Animals' but the audience were intrigued to hear other short pieces ('Romances') by Saint-Saëns, as well as one ('Prière') for cello with organ. Cliff Brown played



the organ part as well as another Prière from Böllmann. And Anna Le Hair, whose energy and vision have been the source of this successful 'Piano and More' series of afternoon concerts,



joined Rebecca for one of the thrilling Beethoven sonatas.

You can see the artistes taking a bow after the concert, but also see and remember how long and hard they worked to prepare for it.

The next 'Piano and More' concert is on Sunday 10 March 2019 at 3.00pm when Alan Dorn will play piano music on the theme of Night, including Beethoven's enchanting 'Moonlight' sonata. The concerts (usually on the second Sunday of the month) are free with a retiring collection towards church and concert expenses; they last about an hour, and are followed by refreshments. If you've not been yet, give it a try. You can find out more at the 'Piano and More' website ([piano-and-more.org.uk](http://piano-and-more.org.uk)), or just talk to us!

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



## A warm-hearted community

When Martin and I came to Tring in the late 1960s, the Friday market was on both sides of the High Street, the Library was in the Victoria Hall and the Silk Mill estate was meadowland and allotments. Heavy traffic rumbled through the town, sometimes mounting the narrow pavement, and the Tring and District News carried frequent items discussing the route of a proposed by-pass. It seemed to me more likely that the northern option would be preferred, going along Icknield Way. Wrong, as usual.

Beside the Parish Church, Stratton Place and Church Lane led up from Frogmore Street to the West Door. One Sunday morning in the early 70s, as we came down for the service at 10.00am, a tractor was reversing, pulling on a thick rope which encircled a pair of the cottages. It was very tempting to stay

and watch the speedy demolition of all these insubstantial homes, but the bells were pealing insistently...

If the Tardis took us back forty plus years, we would notice some significant differences to the layout of St Peter & St Paul's: font at the back, under the tower, screen at the front, dividing the choir from the congregation. At a regular service I think we could not fail to notice the low profile of women. No female clergy, sidesmen or servers, no female Churchwardens, very few adult women in the choir. This did not at all demonstrate a particular misogyny in Tring – it was the norm in the Anglican Church at that time. As I recall, Hilary Aldridge (daughter of Dennis and Jill) and Tanya Emery (daughter of Vanda) were the first girls eventually to become servers and Jenny Thallon was appointed Deputy Churchwarden, to

serve as assistant to Brian Royle.

Grace Hodge recalls a host of extra-liturgical activities and organisations in which women and girls participated enthusiastically: Sunday School, King's Messengers, Guides and Brownies, Girls' Friendly Society. A branch of Mothers' Union was founded in 1943 and Young Wives was also a vigorous and successful group, offering support and companionship to young mothers – apart from anything else its baby-sitting circle and playgroup provided an invaluable service and opportunity to get to know your neighbours.

Many of these initiatives continue to this day, albeit in a form more suited to a 21st century lifestyle, and are an expression of a warm-hearted community.

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



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## In memory of Joan May Stedman

On Sunday evening, 30 December 2018, Joan Stedman died, leaving behind her husband, children, friends and many other members of her family. But what a life! A magnificent ninety-three years of it.

Joan May Goods was born in August 1925 in Barking. In between the two wars, the world was a difficult place but Joan had wonderful, loving parents and an extended family of aunts, uncles and cousins around Ilford, Walthamstow and Barking. A great family bond existed, common in those times, presided over by the rather terrifying Nanny Baker.

Joan was bright and passed her entry exams into Barking Abbey School. But her destiny was changed, like so many others, with the beginning of World War II. Due to the heavy bombing in London, she was evacuated to the safer location of Minehead but it appears that her mum was more worried about the cleanliness of her accommodation and the risk of her catching lice than the enemy bombers targeting the capital! She soon returned to the relative safety of war-torn London.

When she was 20, Joan fell for a Canadian soldier stationed in England, and then for a local lad. The detail of these dalliances only came to light when Joan was cajoled into telling something of her life story to a few friends, much to her children's delight and to her husband's horror.

The Ilford boy became a fiancée but then a short holiday break in Hastings changed her life for ever. Strolling along the promenade, approaching her from the opposite direction was this handsome, young, fair-haired soldier with an odd accent. They were smitten – it was love at first sight. Holiday romances are said not to last but this one lasted for seventy-two years. There followed a romantic marriage proposal in Lincoln Cathedral, a whirlwind courtship and a wedding at St Margaret's Church in Barking in August 1946.

Initially, Joan and Maurice Stedman lodged with her in-laws in Lincoln and she was lonely in a strange town, living above the family newsagent shop. In March 1948, her first son, Michael, was born. Soon they moved south, as Maurice had finished his apprenticeship and took a job at a printing firm in St

Park Estate, where they were again very happy for thirty years, and blessed with some lovely neighbours. Joan carried on working after Maurice's retirement in 1981 but when they were both retired, they travelled extensively to (amongst other places) Canada, the Amalfi coast, Lake Garda, and Belgium and France to recall Maurice's wartime skirmishes.

They made the brave move to Wilstone around five years ago. Joan was very happy in Wilstone, enjoying the feel of the village, the love of St Cross Church and her lovely neighbours.

Joan was a special lady, generous of spirit and warm by nature. One of her most endearing features was her genuine interest in others – she wanted to hear about your day, your life, your world – she was a 'people person' and came to life in company, especially that of younger people.

We laughed at her lack of practical skills.

She spent hours trying to position her hearing aids; she couldn't understand the rules of a board game. It's just as well she never passed her driving test as she couldn't understand why the inside lane of the motorway was the slow lane...

For Joan, the pillars of her life were her family, music and faith. She was delighted with her grandchildren and great grandchildren and the annual Baker Garden Party. She was a hugely competent pianist and loved classical music and Gilbert and Sullivan. She loved the Churches she attended during her life, St Peter's in North Watford, St Luke's on the Cassiobury Estate, and St Cross in Wilstone where her funeral was held on 17 January 2019. She is now with God.

Jose Mourinho once said that 'A person only dies when the last person that loves her dies'. On that basis Joan will continue to live for many, many years to come.

**Tony Stedman, son**



Albans, living at 33 Hillrise Avenue, Watford, their home for the next thirty years. Almost immediately, they had to cope with a life-threatening illness for Michael which involved them in numerous daily trips to Great Ormond Street Hospital. Then I was born in 1950 and the Watford branch of the Stedman family was complete.

We were a happy family and Joan was a wonderful mum except on Mondays which was washing day. Joan was tired and tetchy, we had Sunday left-overs for dinner and Maurice was asleep upstairs after his night shift ('Make a sound and you're in trouble!'). I still hate Mondays.

In the modern era I suspect Joan might have pursued a substantial career: she was clever, hard-working and efficient. As it was, her time as secretary to the dental consultants at Watford Hospital and the friendships she made there were especially cherished memories for her.

When her children moved out, Joan and Maurice moved to the Cassiobury

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## In memory of Dennis Howard Guy

Dennis Guy, my dad, was an only child, born on 7 July 1929, in Dollis Hill, North London. His father died while Dad was very young from injuries received during his service in the First World War so our Grandma raised Dad as a single mum. To do this she returned to her trade as a high-quality seamstress, sewing dresses by hand for wealthy customers.

Aged 6, Dad attended a private Haberdasher's school in Kent. Highlights included learning to be a strong swimmer in an unheated outdoor pool and proving to be an expert marksman, for which he received an award. Being too young to be called up during the war, he spent those years either at school directly under 'bomb alley', dodging the Luftwaffe and doodlebugs, or in North London where he slept in a bed under the stairs in case the house was hit. This would have been much more likely if Hitler had known about the early computers being built up the road at the Dollis Hill Post Office Research Station.

Dad's mum arranged for him to be an apprentice electrician which led to him working on all sorts of building sites across London, including the Festival of Britain site in 1951 (where the London Eye is now).

Dad also took up cycling seriously at this time. He once cycled non-stop up 'the struggle', a ferocious climb out of Ambleside in the Lake District up to Kirkstone Pass, 400 metres of climbing with a maximum gradient of 1 in 4. His favourite achievement was a trip to Bath and back, however, over 200 miles on a bike in one day. During his holidays he cycled extensively across England, Wales and Scotland and more locally at weekends which included passing through a little market town on the edge of the Chiltern Hills called Tring.

Dad attended a dance at Hendon Tech where Erica Mathew invited him to be her partner. The attraction was instant and mutual and he escorted her back home that night. Mum still has the Christmas card he sent her that year in which he is already calling her darling: this card caused some consternation in the Mathew household that Christmas!

Dad and Mum married on 30 August 1958 and honeymooned in Devon. They set up home in the upstairs rooms of elderly relatives but soon discovered that they were unable to afford a house

in London. In 1961 they bought a house within commuting distance of London. Their house in Drummond Ride in Tring cost less than £3000 and they remained in the same house all their lives.

Sons, Ian and I, had been born by now and Robert and Malcolm followed soon after. Dad began working for the BBC at Television Centre in Shepherd's Bush in 1960 and took the train or travelled with a colleague until he learned to drive.

Dad's career at the BBC lasted thirty-one years. He was very casual about his brushes with the world of celebrity. He worked on Top of the Pops which was recorded on a Wednesday and broadcast on a Thursday. While other fathers were expressing outrage at the haircuts of David Bowie or the costumes of Slade, Dad would be expressing



outrage at the lights that were supposed to be flashing but weren't or pointing out all the bulbs that had 'popped'. On another occasion the then Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, asked him if a photograph was a good likeness of her (he mumbled that he was sure it was fine and got on with his job).

Dad was a very 'involved' father, pushing the pram at a time when this was frowned on for men to do and tucking us up in bed at night. He also did a lot of taxi driving, ferrying us to and from all sorts of activities, including rock concerts in Aylesbury when there were no late buses. He also volunteered for behind-the-scenes jobs in the community such as helping to build the scout hut in New Mill, which of course included putting in the electrical wiring.

In due course daughters-in-law

came along and then grandchildren. Dad enjoyed being a grandfather, both the visits and the visiting, for many years going annually with Erica to Ireland and Scotland to see the families there.

After he retired from the BBC in 1991, Dad and Mum were able to travel and visited mostly mountainous countries in Europe. His last trip abroad was for my marriage to Edith in Barcelona five years ago.

In 89 years Dad experienced a number of losses. For a single child of a single parent, the passing of our Grandma in the early 1980s was a severe blow and even more so the tragic loss of our brother Robert in a mountaineering accident in 1993. Dad and Mum were able to find a way to pull together and carry on after this but it was not easy. In 2018 Mum and Dad celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary with a family party and a card from the Queen. Whatever else happened, their love and total commitment for each other over the years was never in doubt.

Dad bravely fought the cancer for eight years, occasionally having stints in hospital which he hated. With his life slowly ebbing away, it became less about 'doing' and more about 'being'. Dad became more able to express verbally his love and gratitude to his family that we never doubted existed. In his simple faith he welcomed prayer, words from the Bible and visits from the Parish clergy to deliver communion. These gave him peace as he anticipated the future.

Often his words were filled with humour: Dad knew that life was best seen on its brightest side. We are enormously grateful for all the medical support given to Dad in his final years, from the GPs and practice nurses, The Iain Rennie Hospice at Home and the daily carers. We are also grateful to the wide circle of neighbours and friends that have supported both Dad and Mum in many ways and continue to do so.

In later life Dad would often have a jigsaw on the go. It was Dad's tradition to always allow Mum to put in the last couple of pieces. In the jigsaw picture of Dad's life, Mum has placed the final few pieces as she gently and lovingly cared for Dad, allowing him to stay at home where he longed to be until the end.

**Peter Guy, son**

# Notices from the Tring Churches

## ST MARTHA'S METHODIST CHURCH



### FRIENDSHIP CLUB

The Ladies Friendship Club will meet again at St Martha's on Tuesday afternoon 5 March, when Christine Hopkins will visit to talk about Tring in Transition.

### JEAN'S CAFÉ

Making use of our new kitchen facilities, Jean will continue to provide lunches at the Church every Tuesday from (12.00 midday to 1.30pm). Everyone is welcome to drop in for soup, lunch, tea or coffee, etc. Saturday afternoon teas will start later in the spring.

### HOUSE GROUPS

John and Jennifer's House Group meets again on Wednesday afternoons, 13 and 27 March at 20 Verney Close. They will be continuing to follow the Methodist booklet 'Talking of God Together'.

### WOMEN'S WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

This year's event will take place on Friday 1 March at New Mill Baptist Church. The theme will be 'Come – Everything is Ready' and the service has been prepared by the women of Slovenia.

### DAFFODIL DAY

This year's Daffodil Day event will be held on Monday afternoon 4 March at Westminster Methodist Hall. Those planning to go

should make their interest known and check for travel arrangements (lifts to Hemel and onward coach to London).

Sunday 3 March 10.00am  
**David Williamson**

Sunday 10 March 10.00am Communion  
**Revd Rachael Hawkins**

Sunday 17 March 10.00am  
**David Morgan**

Sunday 24 March 10.00am  
**Revd Rachael Hawkins**

Sunday 31 March 10.00am  
**Audrey Cox**

## NEW MILL BAPTIST CHURCH



### MILL CAFÉ

Thursdays 12.00 midday

3 March 10.30am  
**Peter Wortley**

10 March 10.30am  
**Aubrey Dunford**

17 March 10.30am  
**David Norkett**

24 March 10.30am  
**Steve Brehm**

31 March 10.30am  
**TBC**

## 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 All Age 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 Evening Prayer 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  
6.00pm Alternative Communion CW Tring

### 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 Sunday Worship Puttenham

### 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

### DACORUM FOODBANK

Weekdays 10.00am St P&P

### BABY SONG TIME

Mondays in term time 11.00am St P&P

### 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

### FIRST SATURDAY LUNCH

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

### CTT PRAYER BREAKFAST

Saturday 2 March at 8.30am St Peter & St Paul's

### 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 March 7.30pm  
Half Moon, Wilstone

### PIANO & MORE

Sunday 10 March 3.00pm St P&P

### STICK SUNDAY WALK

Sunday 17 March 3.00pm  
One-hour gentle stroll followed by informal service and tea

### WEDDING EVENT

Sunday 24 March 12.00-3.00pm St P&P

### MOTHERS' UNION LADY DAY SERVICE AND TEA

Monday 25 March 2.00pm St P&P

### CTT LENT CHRISTIAN AID LUNCHES

Thursday 14 March New Mill Baptist  
Friday 22 March High Street Baptist  
Thursday 28 March Corpus Christi  
Wednesday 3 April Wilstone Village Hall  
Wednesday 10 April St Martha's Methodist  
Wednesday 17 April St Peter & St Paul

### LENT FILMS 6.30PM

**ALDBURY CHAPTER HOUSE**  
Sunday 10 March 'Exodus – Gods and Kings'  
Sunday 17 March 'Noah'  
Sunday 24 March 'Samson'  
Sunday 31 March 'Mary Magdalene'  
Sunday 7 April 'Risen'

# 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  
didier@tringteamparish.org.uk  
(Day off Saturday)

**Diocesan Lay Minister**  
Mike Watkin  
01442 890407

**Parish Co-ordinators**  
Roy Hargreaves  
01442 823624  
roy.hargreaves@btinternet.com

Ted Oram  
01442 824575  
ted@oram-home.net

**Church Wardens**  
Chris Hoare (Tring)  
01442 822915

Ian Matthews (Tring)  
01442 823327

Jane Brown (Aldbury)  
01442 851396

Ray Willmore (Aldbury)  
01442 825723

Christine Rutter (Puttenham)  
01296 668337

Ken Martin (Wilstone)  
01442 822894

Rev Jane Banister (Long  
Marston)  
01442 822170

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

Janet Goodyer  
pewsheets@tringteamparish.org.uk

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

**Hall Secretary**  
Barbara Anscombe  
01442 828325  
Bandb33@talktalk.net

**Safeguarding**  
Jenny Scholes 01442 825276

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

**Senior Steward**  
Rosemary Berdinner  
01442 822305

**AKEMAN STREET  
BAPTIST CHURCH**  
**Minister**  
Rev David Williams  
01442 827881

**Administrator**  
Emma Nash  
01442 827881

**CORPUS CHRISTI  
ROMAN CATHOLIC  
CHURCH**  
**Parish Priest**  
Father David Burke  
01442 863845  
davidburke@rcdow.org.uk  
www.rcdow.org.uk/tring

**HIGH STREET  
BAPTIST CHURCH**  
**Minister**  
Vacancy

**Assistant Minister**  
Kevin Rogers  
km\_rogers@outlook.com

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

**NEW MILL  
BAPTIST CHURCH**  
**Minister**  
Vacancy

**JUSTICE & PEACE GROUP**  
affiliated to  
Churches Together in Tring  
**Secretary**  
Michael Demidecki  
07887 980004  
michaeldemidecki@gmail.com  
www.justiceandpeacetring.org

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

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 @revhuw

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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 22

### ANSWERS ACROSS

1. SCARCE  
5. FRACAS  
8. LAMENTATIONS  
9. DEVOUR  
11. AMEN  
14. GOOD SAMARITAN  
15. DEAN  
16. VENDOR  
18. CONFESSIONAL  
20. REPENT  
21. SORTED

### ANSWERS DOWN

2. CHAPERONE  
3. RUE  
4. EXTERNAL  
5. FATE  
6. ADORATION  
7. ASS  
10. ORDINANCE  
12. ELABORATE  
13. HARVESTS  
17. LENT  
18. CUE  
19. OUR

  
the  
Akeman

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