

COMMENT

THE MAGAZINE OF THE CHURCHES IN TRING



Terry and Stewart
welcome customers old
and new.

Full range of Fuller's
ales including seasonal
offerings and a Guest Beer.



Freshly prepared home-cooked food.

Wide choice weekday menu
and Sunday Roasts.

THE ROBIN HOOD TRING

CAMRA
**Pub of
the year**
Mid-Chilterns
2008



The Robin Hood Inn
1 Brook Street, Tring, Hertfordshire HP23 5ED
t: 01442 824912 e: info@therobinhoodtring.co.uk

www.therobinhoodtring.co.uk

CAREGivers Required

Home Instead
SENIOR CARE
To us, it's personal.

**Do you have a caring
& compassionate nature?
Then you should talk to us.**

We are looking for Caregivers to assist the elderly with non-medical services including companionship, home help and personal care in their own home. No experience is required as we provide full training.



Contact us on **01442 233599**

Home Instead Senior Care

The Lockhouse, Frogmore Road, Hemel Hempstead, HP3 9RJ

www.homeinstead.co.uk/hemel Hempstead

**Are you looking for
flexible and rewarding
part-time work?**

Editorial



understandably everyone had different priorities. And when there was

The February 2020 edition of Comment has not been easy to put together. Contributors needed to write over the Christmas period when

a dearth of material, there wasn't much time to turn things around. As always, people have pulled out the stops to help and I hope you will find there are many articles of interest here in this post-Christmas edition and the first of 2020.

There has also been the sad news of the death of a number of friends including a regular contributor, Leslie Barker; and the news that another two contributors, one of whom also handles

our distribution, is moving away. While this is good news for them, it leaves us all the more in need of support and help from others in the community. I am hoping that others will step into the shoes of David and Margaret Whiting, who will be much missed by many, in due course.

The Editor

Reviewing the past with gratitude



maybe you find it hard to move on, you like knowing what's what. Maybe you're a bit of each?

We've reached February – a month into a new year, a new decade. How's it been for you so far? If you made any new year's resolutions, how are you getting on with them?

I'm not really a fan of new year's resolutions. The middle of winter doesn't really seem to me like a great time for launching into something improving or healthy; it feels like a time when we need comfort – 'hygge' as some of our Scandinavian friends call it. But I am a fan of looking back at what's taken place in the year gone by and taking time to review the past year with gratitude. It's something we can do whatever time of year it is, and whatever may have happened in the previous day, week, or year.

St Paul encourages us to 'give thanks in all circumstances'. It's a tricky thing to do, and we may not thank him for his words. We probably recognize, though, that finding a way to give thanks for all we have learned through challenging times can be a very powerful way of allowing us to move on when we have become stuck. It takes time to get to a place where we can give thanks after challenging circumstances. But being reminded that moving past difficult and negative experiences is possible, and is in fact life-giving, can be a great gift, even if we're not quite ready to unwrap it just

yet. Our pain or hurt or grief can be got through, and we can grow through it.

I share here a way of reviewing the past (maybe a day or a week or more) which can be extremely helpful as we try to 'give thanks in all circumstances'. This prayer might be helpful as you begin:

*God of every matter under heaven,
I offer the events and experiences of the past,
in thankfulness for your presence with me,
through thick and thin.*

*I offer the whole of me, because you love the
whole of me. Give me grace to leave these
memories here, safe in your arms of love.
Amen.*

Sometimes we carry with us a deep underlying sense of anxiety – a bag full of worries. It can be hard to see beyond the worries. One way of going deeper than the stresses and strains of everyday life is to pay attention to our feelings.

Focusing on memories often stirs a number of emotions: deep feelings of joy, excitement and pleasure, or of sadness, anger and fear. It's important for us to pay attention to our feelings, so that we are aware of them, noticing especially when we feel strongly, as this will often point to something that's going on beneath the surface. Our feelings, our hearts, can help us choose what to embrace as life-giving, and what to avoid as life-diminishing. So, we ask these two questions of ourselves, and offer to God all that surfaces for us: Today (or yesterday, or last week), what has given me life? Today (or yesterday, or last week), what has drained me?

As you reflect on these things, offer them with a prayer to God: 'I offer the whole of me, because you love the whole of me.' You might like then to use this prayer:

*I bring to God my anxieties, my worries,
my fears, all that has clouded my heart
and mind, and I let them go.*

*I bring to God all that has drained me,
my anger, resentment and bitterness,
my guilt, shame and regret,
and I let them go.*

*I bring to God all the times I have been hurt,
my wounds, vulnerabilities and loss, my
arguments, disagreements and conflict, and I
let them go.*

*I bring to God all that has opened me to life,
my sense of connectedness, meaning and
purpose, my experience of beauty, wonder and
deep peace, and I offer them.*

*I bring to God all that has opened me to hope,
my imagination, my dreams and my creativity,
the gifts and abilities that have stretched my
horizons, and I offer them.*

*I bring to God all that has opened me to
love, whether from family, friends, home or
community, my sense of belonging, of being
loved, and I offer them.
Amen.*

You may recognize this practice as part of Ignatian Spirituality (if not, then the book Landmarks: An Ignatian Journey by Margaret Silf is just one of the books on this subject which is worth a look). And, if this isn't already part of your routine, you might like to consider trying it during Lent – which begins almost at the end of February this year.

We give thanks for our God who is interested in our past, present and future. And we give thanks for the gift of bringing both our grief and our joy to God in prayer.

Every blessing,
Michelle Grace, Tring Team

My Confirmation

I was at boarding school during preparations for my confirmation, and we used to go to one of the other houses for the classes. I remember our instructor Miss Sadler ('Sadie' to the girls) very clearly, and in fact think of her every week when we recite 'Therefore with Angels and Archangels and all the company of heaven we laud and

magnify Thy glorious name'. She found this phrase very moving, uniting us with all the heavenly host.

However, having attended all the classes, I then went down with mumps and was unable to join the rest of the class at the service. Instead the following term, with a few other latecomers, I was confirmed in the

majestic surroundings of Gloucester Cathedral by the Right Reverend Arthur Headlam CH, Bishop of Gloucester. My mother, father and brother were present, and I received a white leather Prayer Book, which I still use occasionally, and a gold cross and chain, which, sadly, I have lost.

Anthea Fraser, St Peter & St Paul

The Human Stain



In its last outing of 2019, the Parish Church book group met to discuss Philip Roth's *The Human Stain*. The novel, published in 2000 and turned into

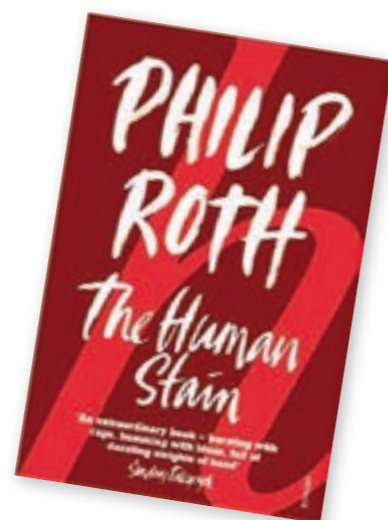
a comparatively disappointing film in 2003, is the third in a (sort of) trilogy, following *American Pastoral* (1997) and the strikingly titled *I Married a Communist* (1998). It is set in 1998, against the background of the impeachment of an American president, but this is not the only reason it feels very contemporary. The plot revolves around Coleman Silk, a professor of Classics and ruthlessly efficient former Dean at a US liberal arts college. Coleman's career is effectively ruined by a single word, offered innocently enough in the context of the continued absence from class of two students. Unbeknown to Coleman, the two no-show students are black, and the phrase he uses – 'Do they exist, or are they spooks?' – is maliciously interpreted as a racist slur. Those with varying motives bring Coleman down, and in embittered forced 'retirement', he persuades Nathan Zuckerman – a writer who appears in several of Roth's novels, and is sometimes taken to be the novelist's alter ego – to tell his story.

Key to the plot are the extraordinary facts of Coleman's backstory, against which background his being labelled a racist has several layers of irony. I won't further spoil the plot for those who may want to read the novel, but Coleman's victimisation by the college authorities brought out echoes of the 'cancelling' of various public figures in our contemporary culture. Such figures are regularly misrepresented by quoting their remarks out of context (such as the New Statesman's hatchet job on the

philosopher Roger Scruton that led to his being fired from an unpaid role on the Building Better Building Beautiful Commission earlier in the year, before being reinstated). Or consider the actions of 'offence archaeologists', who aim to destroy an opponent by unearthing unwise remarks they made on social media more than a decade ago. Worse still, various reputations, careers or lives have been ruined on the basis of allegations that are never proved – and sometimes disproved.

We wondered whether our age of 'trial by Twitter' is guilty of the same self-righteous Puritanism to which Coleman Silk falls victim. A world that is quick to judge – and to reduce people to one thing ('Racist! Sexist!') – but which, when a wrong has been done, finds no room for forgiveness. Early in the novel, reflecting on the Bill Clinton/Monica Lewinsky scandal, the narrator comments on our 'most treacherous and subversive pleasure: the ecstasy of sanctimony', expressing the desire to post the slogan 'A human being lives here' over the White House. Perhaps contemporary American politics has more to worry about now than what seemed so scandalous in 1998. But this is far from the novel's only theme: it takes in aspects of the experience of black and Jewish Americans, and of the survivors of childhood sexual abuse; the role of 'self-identification' in contemporary identity politics; sex in one's seventies (with a lover half one's age); and an especially powerful scene that brings home the after-effects of the psychological trauma of the Vietnam war on its combatants better than anything else I have read.

Some of us loved the book, and most people present seemed to have appreciated it, with even those who didn't like it – or were shocked by some of its elements – acknowledging some wonderful writing. Indeed, one member



commented that it is surprisingly rare for the group to discuss the high quality of the writing of the books we read.

Group members disagreed in their reactions to various characters: one found virtually none of them sympathetic, others empathised with several, while Coleman's complex nature generated quite a bit of discussion, some feeling that their initial sympathy for the character had morphed into something more ambivalent as the plot developed.

In the last decade of his life, Roth (who died in 2018, aged 85), gave an interview in which he expressed the view that within twenty-five years, the reading of novels will be a 'cultic' activity: 'I think always people will be reading them but it will be a small group of people. Maybe more people than now read Latin poetry, but somewhere in that range ... To read a novel requires a certain amount of concentration, focus, devotion to the reading. If you read a novel in more than two weeks you don't read the novel really. So I think that kind of concentration and focus and attentiveness is hard to come by'.

Some of the Tring Church book group's best discussions tend to come from our varying reactions to novels. So perhaps we are doing our bit to keep the flame alive. Why not join in?

John Lippitt, St Peter & St Paul

DENS sleep out

On Friday 15 November we, the Tring Parish Youth Café, took part in another all night 'Sleep Out' to support DENS. Six youth group members and two responsible adults attended from our churches, joining 200 others, all doing their part to help DENS raise a staggering £30,000 for the cause!

Thanks to many generous sponsorship donations from the community, family and friends, we alone raised around £600: however it's not too late if you'd like to contribute – please do give your donations to a member of the clergy team next time you see them. We'd love to get the fund up to £1000!



Here is a selection of comments from our group about the experience:

'It started off really raining, it soon cleared, but then the temperature dropped to 2 degrees!'

'We got to meet some really interesting people: one of the women working for DENS used to be homeless herself.'

'Soup and hot drinks were available all through the night to keep us warm.'

'Some of us slept well, some of us not so much! Huw said it was the best night's sleep he'd had all week!'

'For breakfast there were bacon rolls, along with tea and juice. We also got free hand warmers!'

'We all got given cardboard boxes that we could shape to keep warm. Some fashioned them into coffin shapes to keep the heat in!'



'There was a silent disco (where people are given headphones with different music in each – you can listen and dance along!). The music ranged from reggae, 80s, 60s and all sorts. We did listen but decided not to dance! Some people were dancing so much they fell over!'

'We ate masses of sweets.' (Hope no parents are reading this!)

'It helped you to understand more about those who actually live their lives like this, without the sweets and constant coffee and hot meals.'



'Yes, we would definitely do it again!'

Please do sponsor us, there's still time to reach £1000 – please give donations to Huw Bellis, Sarah Marshall, Michelle Grace or Jane Banister.

The Youth Café, St Peter & St Paul



A wartime Christmas

It was the last Christmas of the war in 1944 and I was 7 years old. All was excitement at our village school as we were to have a Christmas party!

We had been getting ready for weeks, making lanterns from sticky paper (that came unstuck if you licked them too much) and cards for our mothers. It was not easy to draw a robin if you had no red crayons, but they had all worn down to nothing by then.

On the big day, the schoolroom was

all decorated but there was no Christmas tree. Instead we were all to be given an orange and a shilling (5p). We had not seen oranges since last Christmas so you can imagine the excitement! I ran all the way home with mine to share it with my little sister and we sat in front of the fire and ate it with great enjoyment, then threw the peel into the fire. It made a lovely spicy smell.

But then – calamity! Where was the shilling? We looked everywhere. I was

sure I had not dropped it on the way home but it was nowhere to be found.

However, next morning, when Mum cleared the fireplace, ready to cook the porridge, there was the shilling, rather dirty, but none the worse. I must have thrown it into the fire with the orange peel.

Christmas was just as exciting for children then as now, we just didn't have as much. But it was still a lovely time.

Erica Guy, St Peter & St Paul

A Christmas baby



I've been fortunate to have experienced 68 Christmases. Some I have no memory of. One I spent the day by a swimming pool, eating steak club sandwiches and drinking Star

beer in Kaduna, Nigeria;

another I spent with my eight-month-old son at my parent's house in Tring, whilst my husband, Mike was working in Beirut, Lebanon; finally, I have celebrated one Christmas wondering if it would be my last, following an illness. Those aside, I have been fortunate enough to celebrate the other times with family: parents, brother, grandparents and other assorted older relatives, my own children as youngsters and then adults, and lately, our little grandson.

However, Christmas 2019, I knew, was always going to be different. My husband and I had been unable to make any plans, organising nothing. Receiving invitations to family gatherings in Tring, evenings with friends, reading at the

Carol Service at St Cross – all were turned down – or, at least, accepted with the proviso that although we would love to come, we might not turn up!

On Christmas Eve morning, I texted my daughter: 'Any movement, yet?' I enquired. 'Nothing' came the terse reply, followed by: 'The midwife seems to think it won't happen until the end of the week'. So, we settled down, thinking I might make it to the Carol Service after all and contemplated Christmas dinner with my brother and his family.

Six hours later, the phone rang. 'Please can you come and pick up your grandson! It's all action stations here.' Mike drove to the John Radcliffe in Oxford, breaking speed limits along the way. There was grandson waiting with his father who hastily bundled him into our car and was off back to the maternity ward.

Grandson, Axel, was delighted to have Grandma and Datdat look after him for a couple of days in his own home. He's too young to care about festive food, presents and all the trappings of a family Christmas – thank goodness.



At some point in the early hours of Christmas day, a baby was born. We woke at 6.00am to the cries of grandson in the next room and a text from son-in-law. All were well. We had a granddaughter – Freya Belle.

Everything else about Christmas Day was forgotten in that moment. There was just pure joy and relief that the waiting was over and a new life had begun.

We went for a stroll in the village on Christmas Day morning. And the sun shone gloriously.

Vicky Baldock, St Cross, Wilstone

Computer & Printer Repairs & Support

Friendly, patient and expert help with all your computing needs.

barry@childassociates.co.uk



Barry Child
Child Associates
01442 826092
07879 497704
No call out fee in Tring

Jane Ducklin OSTEOPATH

Pain relief from back, neck and joint problems.

18 Christchurch Road, Tring HP23 4EE

Tel: 01442 890073 Mob: 07973 188420

Highly qualified and registered with the General Osteopathic Council

Osteopathic Care for all the Family

Serving Tring since 1995

A Christmas Carol



Did you watch the BBC's latest version of Charles Dickens' 'Christmas Carol over the Christmas period?' It is not to everyone's

taste: there is bad language not found in Dickens and considerable monkeying around with the story line; but still the main thrust comes out.

You know the story – Ebenezer Scrooge, a miserly London-based moneylender (described in the story as 'a squeezing, wrenching, grasping, scraping, clutching, covetous old sinner!') is visited by the ghost of his former business partner Jacob Marley and the spirits of Christmas Past, Present and Yet to Come. After their visits, Scrooge is transformed into a kinder, gentler man who learns to think of others.

Dickens was inspired following a visit to the Field Lane Ragged School, one of several establishments for London's street children. The treatment of the poor and the ability of a selfish man to redeem himself by transforming into a more sympathetic character are the key themes of the story (according to

Wikipedia). But that is nonsense if you reread the original story, which I did to refresh my memory – it is only seventy-three pages long in our edition. Scrooge is completely unable to redeem himself. It is the intervention of the Spirits which transformed Scrooge.

The story was first published on 19 December 1843 and the first edition sold out by Christmas Eve; by the end of 1844, thirteen editions had been released. 'A Christmas Carol' has never been out of print and seems to be on the TV every other Christmas.

Dickens wrote 'A Christmas Carol' in response to poverty. The story shows not only Scrooge as selfish and self-interested, but Dickens also warns us about the possible repercussions of ignoring the poor, especially children in poverty. The Spirit of Christmas Present points to two children: 'This boy is Ignorance. The girl is Want. Beware them both, and all of their degree; but most of all beware this boy, for on his brow I see that written which is Doom, unless the writing be erased.'

Humankind, according to the Spirit (and Dickens), must wake up and see what is needed by others and the part each of us can play to ease the pain and suffering of those around us. Dickens' message was of the need for a decent standard of life for the poor of London.

But we don't need that now, do we? The worst child poverty has left this country surely? But still in 2020 there are children who come to school hungry; many are not properly fed at all in school holidays. How can we tolerate that in a country which has the fifth largest Gross Domestic Product?

The first Christmas story was of a child born into poverty, laid in the horse trough, to parents forced to relocate by a foreign power and then forced into refugee status in neighbouring Egypt by a little local despot. We owe it to the Christ Child that no child goes to sleep hungry.

Jon Reynolds, Tring Team



Thank you to a warm & welcoming church



I'm writing this to say 'thank you' for welcoming my family to St Peter & St Paul this Christmas.

I'm sure that all the churches in Tring and the Tring Team are just as friendly, but I wanted to share what we really appreciated.

A warm welcome to children

My nephew Hugo, 10, visiting from France, really likes St Peter & St Paul's Church. He told me proudly on Christmas Day that he had been to Church 'four times in the last three days'. This will be the only time that he goes to Church all year. He was made welcome in so many ways.

At the Carol Service he helped count

the people coming in using the 'click machines' and then he helped count the collection afterwards. Thank you to Roy for being so kind to a small child. Then, at the Crib Service, he was lured into taking part in the nativity scene. Margaret is the best person ever at noticing small people that want to help. Hugo went from 'I'm too old for this' to 'I'd love to be the King' in just a short chat with Margo (as he calls Margaret). Thank you for making Hugo feel part of the church family.

A warm welcome back to older children

My daughter, Zoey, 22, back from Uni, also feels at home in Church. She was greeted by Huw: 'Hello, Zoey (and Eleanor), would you like to do a reading?' 'Err... No, not really...' 'Good, I knew you would.' Thank you for knowing that older children want to be involved too.

Vivianne Child, St Peter & St Paul



TRING CHARITIES
(Registered Charity No 207805)

ALMSHOUSES IN TRING

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

Applicants, one of whom must be aged 55 or over, must not own their own home or have savings in excess of £16,000.

The average weekly maintenance contribution (equivalent to 'rent' for housing benefit purposes) is £96 for a one bedroom property and £115 for a two bedroom property.

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

Graham Blake
soft furnishing

- Loose covers
- Curtains
- Re-Upholstery
- Tracks & Poles

For personal, helpful service,
please call

Tel: 01844 261769

Mob: 07802 213381

grahamblake123@btconnect.com

www.grahamblake.com

TEN YEAR GUARANTEE

MOVE IT
OR LOSE IT!
Your First
Session FREE

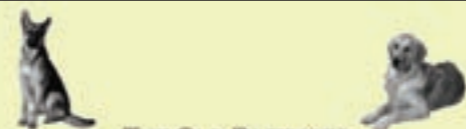


FABS exercise classes
Flexibility, Aerobic, Balance, Strength

Nora Grace Hall, Tring

Mondays 10.00 to 11.00

Enquiries: 07988 649275



THE OLD PASTURES
LUXURY ACCOMMODATION FOR DOGS
Icknield Farm, Icknield Way, Tring, Herts HP23 4JX

Luxury heated accommodation for your dog
Only 8 large kennels giving your dog the extra care and attention they deserve. All dogs are walked twice a day.
Holiday homes for small animals.

DOG GROOMING
BATHING, CLIPPING, TRIMMING, NAILS AND EARS.
WEEKEND APPOINTMENTS AVAILABLE. EASY WALK IN,
NON-SLIP SHOWER IDEAL FOR OLDER AND BIGGER DOGS.
WE CAN CATER FOR ANY SIZE DOG. EASY PARKING.

Mrs. D & M
Hittles

PET SITTERS
WHILST YOU'RE AT WORK, ON HOLIDAY OR DURING
ILLNESS, WE WILL COME & VISIT YOUR PET IN YOUR HOME.
ALL TYPES OF ANIMALS.
MEMBER OF N.A.R.P.
FULLY INSURED.

01442 824856

On being open-hearted...



'How would you feel if our town lost its heart?'

That phrase has been the core proposition for the Friends of Tring Church Heritage for more than thirty years. Along the way it has struck a chord with thousands of members, supporters and visitors who have joined in and got involved.

The 'heart' metaphor is a powerful one and it is much more than just a slogan. For some years now FOTCH has been very active in the 'Open Church' initiative which has seen the building of St Peter & St Paul open and welcoming every day during daylight hours. The very act of being open and welcoming to the whole community sends a powerful message, making it abundantly clear that we are open and open-hearted.

The leaflets, displays and guided tours that FOTCH orchestrates are just one small part of a big shift in the attitude of our church community to the whole community. In the years since Huw Bellis has led our Ministry Team there have been many examples of the church at the heart of the town, beating to a different rhythm. Of course, the prime function of the Church building is to be the centre of worship and outreach for the worshipping community. Arguably also important is our mission as church, the people, to be relevant and engaged for and with the whole community. Everybody in our town should be able to feel that this magnificent resource is the heart of their town – and should value its contribution accordingly.

Over recent years the approach of the Annual Renewal Day on the second Saturday in May has changed. In early years it was an opportunity for FOTCH members and friends to get together and celebrate their progress – a kind of annual birthday party. That has metamorphosed into something much more important which is a Family Fun Day where everybody who cares for our community can come along and be warmly welcomed in the open heart of the town and have FUN!

It's one of our biggest community events but it is just one of many...

Tring's central venue

Tring Parish Church is not just the most central venue in the town, it is also by far the biggest and can seat the greatest number of people. Civic Services, Commemorative Celebrations of Great Anniversaries, School Concerts, Choral Society Concerts, Thanksgiving Services, Exhibitions, Fashion Shows, Pageants and parties all fit happily inside this ancient medieval building.

In recent years we have modernised the facilities out of all recognition with state-of-the-art projection and sound systems and modern high-quality lighting so that we are able to deliver an event that lives up to today's expectations. These improvements make

us more relevant and more valuable to more and more of the town.

On Remembrance Sunday the Church in the morning was full, as usual, with all those wanting to give thanks and pay their respects to those who have sacrificed so much for this country. I called by in the early afternoon en route to a service in Puttenham and the Church was filling up again. Musicians were tuning up, refreshments were being prepared, there was a happy hubbub of anticipation as people took their seats for the latest concert in the 'Piano & More' series. Congratulations to Anna Le Hair and her team are due for this very successful initiative – what a great way to spend Sunday afternoons – in the heart of the community. We have a Church increasingly fully-used and valued and a venue much appreciated and well-attended throughout the seasons – what a wonderful asset for all.

A strategic shift

At our recent annual Strategy Meeting we decided that we needed to 'up our game' a bit and ensure that our 'Open Church' is even more open and welcoming – and becomes the venue of choice for all sectors of the community.

As you may have heard, having restored the Gore Memorial to its original condition and ensured that the lighting shows it off to best effect, we are now working on further displays. It is our intention to display the historic Gore Bequest in an appropriate in the Church. We are also working on developing a display that tells the fascinating history of the celebrated Tring Tiles and includes actual replicas of these marvellous artefacts – here in the Parish Church.

At the FOTCH strategy meeting we upgraded our strategic objective to 'make the building a centre of excellence in which the whole community can take pride and feel ownership and involvement'. We recognise that when everybody in our town feels that it really is *their* heart in *their* town, the long-term future towards which we aim will be secure.

If you want to find out more about FOTCH and how it fits in with the long-term future for our Church in our town, please visit www.fotch.co.uk.

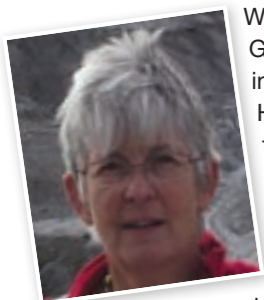
Grahame Senior
Honorary President of FOTCH

HELP KEEP
TRING'S HEART
HEALTHY



The Parish Church of St Peter and St Paul

Reminiscences of an English Emigrant of 1906: Walter F Gower



Walter Frederick Gower was born in 1882 in Tring. He was part of the wider family that still owned several businesses in the town in the twentieth

century. Readers may know of Gowers Removals and the Coal Merchants on Western Road, where Gowers Place now is.

I met him twice, once in 1957, when I was five years old and again when I was fourteen. He married two of my great aunts – first Emily Kent (in 1912) who died of the Spanish flu or something similar in about 1919 and then Elsie Kent (Emily's younger sister) in 1920. He lived most of his life in Canada, although spent six years in America.

So, he emigrated from Britain twice: once to America to work for his uncle for six years and then permanently to Niagara Falls, Canada. There he became an artist, sign writer and printer. Walter died in 1975 in Welland, Ontario.

Fortunately, some of his immediate Canadian family persuaded him at almost the end of his life to write down his memories. Below is an extract detailing his early life in Tring. The words are Walter's own. The original is in a very neat cursive writing.

'My birth and my life up to ten years of age, can only be recorded as a struggle for survival, being very small as a child and subject to bronchial trouble annually. My family life while normally happy together had little of the worldly goods, but was seared in a strictly Christian atmosphere; the church known in the little town of Tring, as Glovers Chapel of Strict Baptist denomination. Incidentally a text that was lettered boldly in a banner, which was strung annually across this large chapel at Whitsuntide, 'Remember Now Thy Creator in the Days of Thy Youth', left a lifelong and respected impression on my young mind.

'My knuckles were often rapped at school because of my habit of making

drawings on my slate rather than attend to lesson and drawing was not part of the school curriculum at any time. Poor hearing has been one of my many weaknesses which was naturally a handicap in my school work and thus I was naturally inclined to pursue my own ways of learning, naturally at variance with the regular school work, and was retarded although keenly observant, which has been characteristic of me down through all the years. So, at ten years of age I developed a deep desire



to draw and make letters. My first efforts expressed my uppermost ambition and was in fact after all, my ultimate career.

'Sorry to relate that generally I was considered more or less a nuisance with all my efforts laying around and my drawing on the walls. Not much can be said for my family encouragement but I was made of stuff that endures. It must be so for many times my will has been almost broken in disgust, because through all those years I have learned at least one thing, that to be an artist, one can expect to be misunderstood. I am sure that whatever difference and there are many among artists, there

is one thing that stands out above all else, artists are the most misunderstood people in the world! Why? Because they are not satisfied with following a beaten path! They want to create a destiny for themselves. Not by copying nature and things. But interpreting them.

'In my thirteenth year, it was found necessary for me to leave school and work! My education ended at sixth grade, then known as standard education in public school. My first introduction to making a living was in an old Weaving shop, where course stiff cotton fabric was woven. It was my job to wind spools onto drying frames. The weaving was done on old wooden looms by hand in those days.

'After working about a year for two shillings a week (about half a dollar) so much for a living(!) my father decided to celebrate something or other by taking the family out on a picnic in a wagonette, through the countryside and woodland to Aldbury Monument. I asked permission of the owner of the factory (known as the master) if I could have time off, which was met with a curt refusal. What shall I do? I resolved to go anyway. We had a very enjoyable trip indeed. It was our first family trip that I remember, but, as should be expected the morning after, I went of course to my job, but first reported to my angry master. It was short and sweet. I spoke first "Well Sir," and with angry murderous scowl I was told "you are no longer needed here anymore!" So that was that, my two-shilling job was done.

'Only a few days elapsed and I noticed a card in a local Bake Shop operated by William Slade which said "SMART BOY WANTED". Was I smart? Well I went in for the job. After a test or two in minor arithmetic, I passed into a job that sealed my fate for eight long toilsome years.

'From there on my day started no later than 5.00am sometimes 4.00am and ended about 10.00pm, six days a week. We made and baked our product "our daily bread" in the morning eating only when convenient at noon. We would then rush home to eat and change into street

clothes and set out to peddle our product on a heavy hand cart. This gross weight was pushed around town to serve about 100 customers pushing and carrying all the way around town and back. This with variations for eight years and the weekly earnings, after eight years of experience was the magnificent sum of eighteen shillings or approx. equivalent of \$4.50 for an average of 15 hours a day or 93 hours a week for little better than 5 cents an hour.

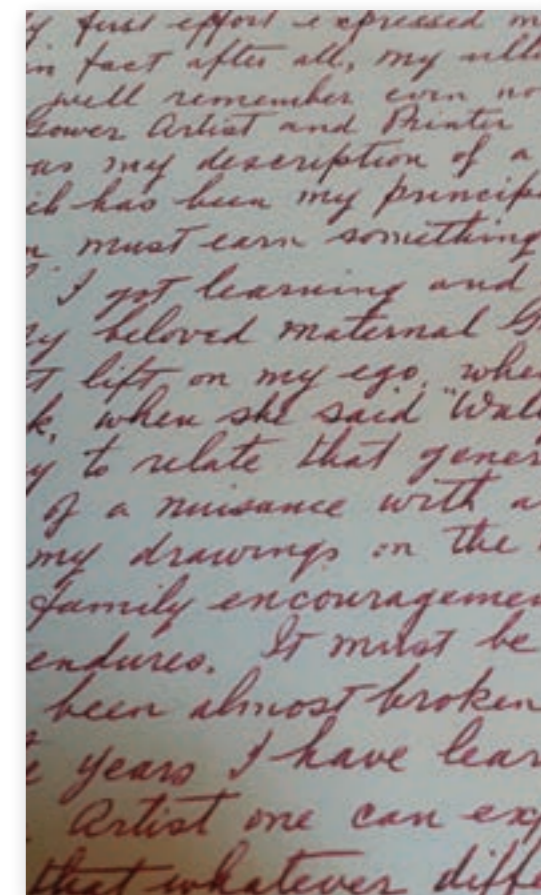
'There was no way out. Once you trained, that is your trade. Start something else and you enter grade one again. A decision had to be made very soon. What must I do? It was very vital to find a solution: this was the crossroads. It was never a trade I could like. I never did like it. I liked to work but it is said too much makes a dull boy and I knew it, everyday was the same back breaking grind! Only to be repeated next day and the next. No holidays paid or otherwise. No time except for work.

'My solution was soon to be found. It had been a matter of urgent prayer and I believe it was the current turn of events

that shaped my destiny and found the answer to my problem. This occurred in 1906. My brother Oliver (Gower) had received a letter from his Uncle in America inviting him to go there and work for him. At that time Oliver was very much in love and could not decide whether to go and risk losing the love of his life, Alice. If he stayed, he would never go and experience the "Wild and Woolly West" that he had dreamed of seeing all his life.

Briefly, Walter, although engaged to Emily Kent, went in his brother's place, on SS Baltic from Liverpool on 22 May 1906, three days before his 24th birthday. He worked with his uncle for six years developing his artistic skills in his spare time. He returned to England after six years and eventually married Emily.

**Vicky Baldock
St Cross, Wiltstone**



More music!



The Piano & More series of concerts in St Peter & St Paul on the second Sunday of each month continues

in 2020, after a successful year in 2019 in which audiences enjoyed an hour of music at 3.00pm followed by tea and cake. The year culminated with our second Advent concert – eighteen local performers of all ages entertaining a large and enthusiastic audience with a variety of seasonal music. The programme for this year – our fourth – is now complete.

On 9 February, Arwen Newband (violin) and Anna Le Hair (piano) will play sonatas by Mozart, Grieg and Walton, while March combines a singer with two trumpeters: David Borsada (baritone) singing Vaughan Williams' Songs of Travel, plus William Watson and Rob Wallace (trumpets) playing a Vivaldi double concerto.

Other concerts coming up in the next few months include Kathron Sturrock and George Salter completing

their cycle of Beethoven violin and piano sonatas. Please note that this is on 19 April – the third, and not second, Sunday in April – so as not to clash with Easter Day. In May the concert will include Rachmaninov's wonderful cello and piano sonata, played by Mathew Penrose and Anna Le Hair, and there are plenty more musical delights to come throughout the rest of the year too.

The complete programme is on the website – www.piano-and-more.org.uk – where you can sign up for a monthly email reminder of the concerts. Please keep an eye out for posters and flyers around Tring which will have further details. Entry is always free, but there is a retiring collection, split between Church and music series expenses. We look forward to seeing you there!

**Edmund Booth
St Peter & St Paul**

Piano & more series
An hour of music on Sunday afternoons

Arwen Newband *Violin*
Anna Le Hair *Piano*

*Violin and piano sonatas
by Mozart, Grieg and Walton*

Sunday 9th February
at 3pm followed by tea

Tring Parish Church HP23 5AE
Free admission, with retiring collection

For further details, see:
piano-and-more.org.uk
or Google "Piano and more, Tring"

The George Washington connection



Tring has a steady stream of North American visitors with a particular interest in their history and heritage. They are aware of a close connection between Tring and the

family of their (arguably) most famous president.

Whilst there are few artefacts in the Parish Church which bear witness to this, it is indeed the case that George Washington's family came from Tring. Here are the facts:



Between 1630 and 1650 Lawrence Washington, great grandfather of George Washington, lived in Tring.

The births and deaths of some of George Washington's ancestors are recorded in the Church register and George Washington's family tree is in the church records. A replica of this is on the wall of the north aisle close to the Gore Memorial.

George's great-great grandmother, Amphilis Washington (nee Twigden), originated from Tring.

George had two great-great uncles, Lawrence and William, and three great-great aunts, Elizabeth, Margaret and Martha, who were brothers and sisters to John and sons and daughters of Amphilis and the Reverend Lawrence, who was the rector of Tring Church.

Lawrence, William and Elizabeth were baptised in Tring Church in 1635, 1636 and 1641. Lawrence was at one stage tenant holder of the manor of Tring.

These connections are part of the long involvement of our Parish Church and town in the historical fabric of the country and it is interesting to conjecture



that the principles of integrity and social consciousness which informed the Washington family (and subsequently the American nation) were born and bred in Tring.

The Washingtons had moved from Tring by the time the Gore family came to prominence but they both are examples of significant and influential dynasties with deep connections in this corner of the Chilterns.

Grahame Senior, Tring Team

Tring Linking Lives



At Easter this year the High Street Baptist Church in Tring and Linking Lives UK, a national befriending charity, formally began a collaboration to combat loneliness

and social isolation in Tring and the surrounding villages. It is estimated, by the Campaign Against Loneliness, that there are more than one million people in the UK who consider themselves to be lonely most of the time. This seems staggering in a place like Tring, where there always seems to be something going on. But the reality is that people can be lonely and isolated in a crowd, at work, or even with a large family.

It has been estimated that there are likely to be around 900 to a thousand people in our area who would feel lonely or isolated. It's also important to realise that loneliness is not about being elderly or confined to your home because of health or mobility problems. It will definitely make loneliness more difficult, but anyone of any age can experience loneliness.

Many people find themselves alone after their partner passes away or are isolated due to illness or disability. There are, however, many reasons why people may find themselves socially isolated, not getting out or not seeing as many people as they would like. This is where Linking Lives comes in. We find a compatible volunteer, based on interests, geography and personality. Visits are then arranged at times convenient for the volunteer and 'Link Friend'.

The scheme in Tring starts with befriending but it can go much further if it's the wish of the Link Friend. We also provide social events and activities which provide opportunities to get out and mix with others. They include Lunch Clubs, Games Afternoons, Coffee mornings, visits to local beauty spots, Theatre and Art events, linking to clubs and organisations, events for young mothers, Youth Club. At High Street Baptist Church, we have several weekly and annual events that involve over 100 people – everyone is welcome and some, like 'Sausage Sunday' are almost legendary.

Tring Linking Lives is seeking to provide a link between the identified

'Link Friends' and all the wonderful opportunities provided by organisations in and around Tring. We do a great deal in the area but we will be trying to do much more and help people to get involved.

Linking Lives UK is the parent charity, based in Reading since 1998, and operates over thirty-six befriending schemes throughout the country. We are a Christian charity but our services or not dependent on a link friend or volunteer having a particular faith or any faith at all. Each scheme is designed to meet the needs of the area in which it is situated. The Tring scheme is designed to take account of the fact that much of the identified social isolation in Tring occurs in much younger people than many expect. Currently for every older person referred to us we are getting two aged under 50.

We also focus on linking and connecting our Link Friends back into the

community so we really have a 'befriending plus' scheme and move from home-visiting to getting people connected with clubs and activities as quickly as possible.

Tring Linking Lives relies on volunteers to deliver our service. Volunteers do not need any special skills as they receive full training, support and advice for their role. They also provide references and receive the necessary criminal records checks (DBS) prior to beginning visits. If you would like to become a volunteer, if you know of someone who would benefit from having a regular visitor, or if you would like a visitor yourself, please give us a call.

For more information or an application form, please contact Cliff Brown, Tring Linking Lives, 89 High Street, Tring HP23 4AB or telephone 01442 824054 or come via the Tringbaptistchurch.co.uk website.

Cliff Brown
High Street Baptist Church

impact SIGNS
Getting your message across

Plaques for all Occasions
Maintenance Free Stainless Steel
Traditional Brass

Signs and plaques of all sizes available quickly, efficiently and made to your requirements

01296 488902
info@impactsignsolutions.co.uk
www.impactsignsolutions.co.uk

COMMENT
The magazine of the Churches in Tring

Please submit your article to the Editor by the 1st of the month.
Aim for 400 or 800 words and please send a head and shoulders colour photo or jpg and any other photos in high resolution.
Contact comment.magazine@gmail.com

St Kilda's Dental Practice

93 High Street,
Tring, Herts, HP23 4AB
Tel: Tring (01442) 826565

J. P. Norris B.D.S. (Lond)
Miss E. N. Parsons B.D.S. (Lon)
LDS RCS (Eng)

MORRIS EQUIPARTS
JET DISTRIBUTOR

BARTON PETROLEUM
www.bartonpetroleum.co.uk

Your first call for Fuel & Lubricants...

Tring Choral Society and Orchestra
Conductor: Colin Stevens

2020
Spring Concert

J S Bach
St John Passion

Soloists:
Soprano: Alice Gribbin
Contralto: Jessica Gillingwater
Tenor: Rob Johnston
Bass: Tim Dickinson

Saturday 4 April
Church of Saint Peter & Saint Paul,
TRING
Starting at 7.30pm
(doors open 6.45pm)

Tickets: £15, Under 18's free
from Beechwood Fine Foods, Frogmore St
email: tringchoralsociety@gmail.com

Tring Choral Society
Registered Charity Number 276980
www.tringchoral.org.uk

Denominational wandering

I was honoured to receive a 25-year Certificate for service as a recognised and commissioned Preacher in the Methodist Church at a recent Circuit service. At that function I mentioned that I took part in a Youth Service at 16 years old in 1946. Now in my ninetieth year, why a certificate for only 25 years? The answer lies in a life of geographic, denominational and vocational wandering which led to many different ways of preaching the gospel.

I grew up as an Anglican, but joined the Baptist Church after a conversion experience while doing National Service. At University I was very active in the Student Christian Movement, along with Peter Archer (later Attorney General), and Professor Herbert Butterfield.

After Teacher Training and getting married to June, we worked as Associate members of the Methodist Missionary Society, first in Freetown, Sierra Leone (1954-57), and then at Mfantsipim School, Ghana (1957-62). All staff were expected to take services at the school and at Wesley Girls' High School. These services were an inspiration. Imagine 700 boys, all singing Charles Wesley's hymns in full harmony. At Mfantsipim every year a group of 6th

formers did the Local Preacher exams. (I should have joined them!)

When we returned to the UK we settled in Bolton (1962-65), where the church which seemed to answer the spiritual needs of our four children was Congregational (later to become the United Reformed Church). So, I found myself taking services in very lively Congregational / URC churches.

When we moved to Sutton Coldfield (1965-75) the same thing happened. However, by this time I was Deputy Head of a Comprehensive School (1,100 pupils), so found myself taking regular school assemblies.

In 1975 I became head of William Penn School, Rickmansworth (750 pupils), where the same regime of Christian assemblies (including Roman Catholic pupils) took place four times a week. However, June and I rejoined the Methodist Church, and I took the occasional church service.

In 1984 I was appointed Principal of the Cayman Islands High School (1,300 pupils), and I initiated Christian school assemblies (unknown up till then). I also took services in the main church on Grand Cayman (Presbyterian).

We resettled in Rickmansworth in

1988 and I found myself semi-retired. When a problem in filling vacancies on the Plan arose, I offered to take services. It was only after taking about six services, including a service at Wesley's Chapel, that the Local Preachers' Meeting enquired whether I was qualified or not. It had not occurred to me that, after a lifetime of taking services, I needed qualifications. However, I willingly embarked on Faith and Worship in order to conform with Methodist Church rules. I was thankful that I was able to do the course. It systemised the theology and Bible knowledge I had accumulated over many years. Under the diligent guidance of Harold Taylor and Clifford Watkins I passed the exams in 1994.

I am humbly grateful that God has used me to preach the gospel over some seventy years, and in so many circumstances, in West Africa, in secondary schools in the UK and in the West Indies, and to thousands of young people. I hope to continue to do the same, so long as the Lord gives me strength.

David Williamson, St Martha's Methodist & Tring Choral Society

Baptism thanks – and an apology



Some readers may remember that I wanted a traditional baptism robe for display with books for baptism gifts on our exhibition stand at the Frankfurt Bookfair

last year. Proof that someone really does read Comment came about very soon after that edition was available.

I was contacted by Marianne Sands, Dorothy Walsh, Gill Lerigo and Jane Shardlow. Precious, pre-loved, fragile

gowns were lent to me for use at the bookfair and adorned that part of the exhibition. As a Christian book packager, the children's Bibles we have produced with the word Baptism or Christening in the title have been some of our best-selling books – with half a million in print in 27 'languages': Afrikaans, American (Catholic and Protestant editions), Bahasa, Chinese, Croatian, Czech, Dutch, English, English for Australia and South Africa, French Canadian, Finnish, German (where one book has topped Amazon's bestselling Children's Bible list for some time), Hungarian, Italian,

Japanese, Korean, Latvian, Lithuanian, Norwegian, Polish, Portuguese for Brazil and Portugal, Romanian, Slovak, Slovenian and Spanish.

I was also contacted by Jackie Cadge on the day that we were hosting and cooking for an extended family party. I am sorry to say that I wrote down her details on a scrap of paper in my kitchen so I could follow it up later in the week – and subsequently (with a baby in arms and four under-fives tearing around the house and garden) lost it!

So this is a big thank you to Marianne, Dorothy, Gill and Jane but also an apology to Jackie, who no doubt thought I had forgotten her and was very rude not to have contacted her. I found that scrap of paper long after the event but it had no phone number. So, if you are reading this, please know that I am sorry I didn't come to hear your baptism robe story or collect your precious gown. (If you know Jackie, perhaps you could make sure she knows what happened.)

Annette Reynolds, St Peter & St Paul



Standing together...



On 27 January a sombre day of reflection was held, as individuals and groups across the UK commemorated Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD). In 2020, this

annual event has added significance as it is 75 years since the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau and is also 25 years since the genocide of Muslims in Bosnia.

HMD was marked by more than 10,000 local events across the UK. These are co-ordinated and facilitated by the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust (HMDT), a charity established and funded by the UK Government to promote and support Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD) in the UK. The UK played a leading role in establishing HMD as an international day of commemoration in 2000, when 46 governments signed the Stockholm Declaration.

The word 'holocaust' makes us think of the murder of 6 million Jews by the Nazi regime during World War II, but in addition to singling out Jews for complete annihilation, the Nazis also persecuted anyone they believed threatened their ideal of a 'pure Aryan race' – that included Jews, Roma and Sinti people (sometimes referred to as 'Gypsies'), black people and Slavs from Poland and Russia. The Nazis wanted to 'improve' the genetic make-up of the population and so persecuted people they deemed to be disabled, either mentally or physically, as well as gay people. Political opponents, primarily communists, trade unionists and social democrats, as well as those whose religious beliefs conflicted with Nazi

ideology, such as Jehovah's Witnesses, were also targeted for persecution.

We now understand a genocide to be (according to the 9 December 1948 The Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide) 'any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such: killing members of the group; causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.'

After 1945 the world said 'never again', and yet sadly, further genocides have occurred subsequently. HMD also commemorates the genocides that occurred in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur. News bulletins today show that mankind continues to perpetrate similar crimes against vulnerable groups. This highlights the need for our constant vigilance, and that each generation must learn afresh the lessons of the past. We have a great responsibility to honour the victims of these terrible historical crimes, and also to teach our children and grandchildren how to take action before it is too late again.

The theme of HMD in 2020 is to 'Stand Together'. Today there is increasing division in communities across the UK and the world. Now more than ever, we need to stand together with others in our communities in order to stop division and the spread of identity-based hostility in our society. In practical terms, we can 'Stand Together' by: Avoiding 'Us versus Them' approaches to issues;

rejecting propaganda that aims to divide; assisting persecuted people; working together to resist unfair or divisive policies; speaking out against persecution; challenging hostile words; standing together against rising division and hate; honouring the memory of people who were murdered or persecuted; standing together to support those in need.

Locally, the Tring Justice and Peace Group supports HMD and facilitates events locally in Churches and schools. We believe in justice and peace for the world, and for every individual within it. We champion respect for the environment, human rights for the afflicted and assistance for the needy. We meet once a month to plan practical activities, and we welcome new members of all ages and backgrounds. We are inspired by the words of Sir Nicholas Winton (who rescued 669 children from Nazi-occupied Europe) who said: 'Don't be content in your life just to do no wrong, be prepared every day to try and do some good.'

**Peter Dobson
Justice & Peace Group**



An Advent Baptism

On 1 December we celebrated the baptism of Phoebe Elizabeth and Joshua Peter Cowpe, twins born on 7 December 2018 to Charlie and Jo, and a brother and sister to Alice and Nancy.

The congregation of St Peter & St Paul celebrated with cake, which seems to be a growing tradition. Congratulations to them all!

The Editor



On being a hospice volunteer



I'll start off by saying that what I write here is my personal view and does not reflect Hospice policy in any way. So anything you disagree with, or mistakes I have made in facts, are entirely my fault, not the Hospice's!

I am a volunteer in two areas. I volunteer in the In Patient Unit (IPU) kitchen and also volunteer as a member of the Spiritual Team, which is a clinical support role. It is not religious but 'spiritual', and is headed up by Ray Ashley-Brown, a Baptist minister. The team has some members who would not see themselves as Christian and, like the hospice chapel, caters for all religions or none.

The IPU kitchen is very busy. It caters for up to fourteen in-patients and their relatives and some 200 staff who are either based in, or come regularly to, the Hospice. There is a menu for breakfast, lunch and supper, but patients who do not find that the menu appeals can have special food prepared for them to ensure they have exactly what they want.

There are some forty-five volunteers

each week in the IPU kitchen. Some come weekly, some once a month. They are all ages, from 16 to over 80. Shifts are 2-4 hours depending on the time of day, and most volunteers work in pairs. There is a commercial dishwasher that does up to fifty cycles a day. There are usually three cooks on duty under the leadership of Chef Chris Took.

Volunteers go round the patient rooms bringing fresh water, get menu orders for lunch and supper, bring food to the rooms and wash up using the dishwasher. They also chat to patients who want to have a chat, lay out for meals in the dining room for visitors, return cutlery and crockery after washing and generally help out when needed. Sometimes we also chat to visitors or fetch a nurse to deal with a requirement.

On the Spiritual Team I run a coffee morning for patients and visitors every Monday. Sometimes no one comes, sometimes several. The purpose is to allow patients and visitors to have an informal chat on non-medical matters. I also visit patients, especially those who want to talk, or some comfort, a prayer or a blessing. Afterwards I put an entry on the patient's notes to record what happened. Obviously, I have to be DBS-checked and trained to do this.

In total the Hospice has over 1,200 volunteers doing many and varied tasks including manning shops, gardening, driving, Ebay-selling and administration. There are many more jobs – so if you are interested, you would easily find something to suit you. Phone: 01442 869550 or go to <https://www.stfrancis.org.uk/support-us/volunteer>. The Hospice hopes to have 2,000 volunteers in the near future – essential for the Hospice to continue to function.

It is worth pointing out that the IPU caters for those who need respite or stabilisation as well as those who are in their last weeks of life. The Spring Centre, which is part of the Hospice, caters for a large number of day patients, and care is also given to home patients. Patients are those who have serious illnesses and need help to recover, or stabilise. The Hospice looks after bereaved relatives and children giving continuing support – and again volunteers are very active in this area.

So the Hospice deals with a wide range of conditions and relies heavily on volunteers. I find my work enjoyable, rewarding and social – maybe you could consider volunteering in some way?
John Allan,
High Street Baptist Church

My Confirmation



My Confirmation took place when I was around 12 or 13 in 1968 (I believe – I have lost my certificate and signed and dated prayer book).

The service was conducted by the Bishop of Tonbridge (a Suffragan Bishop in the Diocese of Rochester) who at that time was the Rt Revd David Halsey.

I grew up in the moderate Protestant Anglican parish of St Mary's, St Mary Cray, Kent. The Vicar and Curate there were very much in favour of the proposed ordination of women to the priesthood. They both left just as I was due to start my confirmation classes and so I was shipped off to the next parish, St Andrew's, which was both posher (my Church was next to a bomb site, a railway viaduct and a scrap metal yard which looked like that owned by Steptoe and Son) and was very immoderate

Anglo-Catholic in theology. The Vicar, Father David, was regularly on television denouncing the very idea of women's ordination.

Fortunately my classes were led by the Curate who was much more balanced and often he would say, 'That's how we see it here at St Andrew's; at St Mary's you probably view it like this...' and then he went on to give a fair summary of how a Protestant Anglican might view Communion, Baptism or whatever. There were about twelve of us in the group and the only name I can remember is that of Carole, as I had a crush on her, as did just about every other boy in the church youth group.

On the day of the Confirmation my parents and I went on the 477 bus which stopped just outside St Andrew's. I was confirmed in my choir robes. I cannot remember much of the service, but I can remember the Bishop telling us off for not responding whole-heartedly enough to the responses. But what most sticks in my mind was the elaborate ceremony

there. It was a full 'smells and bells' Church, with bells at the elevation of the Host and incense at just about every possible point. My mother, a middle-of-the-road Anglican, thought it a bit too high. For my father, a Welsh Methodist, it was all too much.

That afternoon at home I was sitting at the dining room table doing my maths homework, the inevitable low after the spiritual high of the morning, while my father was clearing out the hot ashes from the coke burner in the kitchen. Suddenly there was a tap on the window and there was my dad, swinging the ashes backwards and forwards in the galvanised bucket in imitation of the swing of the thurible in Church that morning.

I looked up the website of St Mary's and found it was now combined with St Andrews, with a female Vicar. Father David would have been very distressed.
Jon Reynolds
Tring Team

Open hearts and open minds



Recently, I was fortunate enough to be at a conference where the first speaker was Roy Blatchford CBE, director of the National Education

Trust, former inspector and headteacher. He asked a simple but deep question: 'If you met a 27-year-old ex-pupil in a bar in Dubai, what would you want them to be like?'

Being a room full of educators, the penny dropped and it dropped quickly. Not one person at the conference stuck up their hand and said they wanted them to have a first-class degree from Oxford or that they were on the board of directors of a FTSE100 company.

Clearly, there is nothing wrong with either of those suggestions but how we want ex-pupils to be aged 27 is no different from how we want them to be at the end of their time at our schools (Bishop Wood in my case).

This is the business of character education. And it has never been more important. It has been widely reported lately that companies recruiting graduates are no longer fixated with grades and results but rather look to the more abstract qualities on offer in an individual.

It is obvious to me and many others that Bishop Wood is a wonderful school. It has a heartwarming community feel and enjoys strong links with the Diocese and the team at St Peter & St Paul. Our vision is built around the four key values of Hope, Dignity, Community and

Wisdom and is central to our work in developing the character of our pupils. Within the vision, there is no mention of SATs, data, progress or Ofsted. As important as they are, they will not define our children or our school.

At Bishop Wood, we strive for more. We strive to send children out from our classrooms with aspiration; children who are world-wise; children who care and show empathy; children who show and use great judgement; children who value and respect the people around them and, perhaps most importantly, children who have choices ahead of them. A-Levels and degrees will open doors for them – but so will open hearts and open minds.

Gary Stanley, Headteacher
Bishop Wood Junior School

Monthly Toddler Worship in Tring



On Tuesday 14 January, a new venture was started in St Peter & St Paul's Church at 11.00am which will continue on the second Tuesday of each month (except August).

Come along and join us for half an hour of songs, stories, activities and prayers suitable for toddlers through to four-year-olds and their carers followed by refreshments. Free but donations welcome.
Pippa Nash, St Peter & St Paul



Please send articles and photos for the March 2020 edition of Comment to the Editor by the end of February at: comment.magazine@gmail.com



Toddler Worship

Every second Tuesday of each month (except August)

11am @ St Peter & St Paul's Church, Tring

Suitable for toddlers to four-year olds and their carers

Songs, stories activities and prayers

For half an hour followed by refreshments

Free, donations welcome

www.tringteamparish.org.uk



Change for control freaks



If a friend comes round for a meal, and then offers to help clear up, does it irritate you if the clean cutlery is put in the wrong place? Would you do that at a friend's home? Is there only one way to stack the dishwasher or fold the laundry in your home?

These might sound like petty issues but I think we all know how much they can wind people up. I am a great fan of offering to help and telling people that they can be honest if they don't want it. I am also not a fan of putting things in the wrong place!

And I think we all know that these situations apply in Church as much as in home – how to do the coffee after the service; where certain pieces of furniture go; how to organise events. If we have done these things many, many times – as most of us have done – then we know the quickest and easiest way to do them.

There are two issues with this: one is that it can make change difficult. We have our routine worked out, so if you alter it, it will take longer or not work as well, or not fit with how we like things to be. But more difficult for whom? So often (and this is something that we churchgoers can be particularly good at) we use the blanket term of 'this is how it is' to cover

up the reality of 'this is how I like it to be'. It can be because we don't like change, or because we are afraid of losing our role and responsibility, or because we have done something for so long, that we cannot believe there is another way of doing things.

Change is like much in life – it is neither good, nor bad, on its own, but it is the results that matter. I refer you back to the new ticket machines in Tring car parks, which caused much upset when first put in, but no one seems to talk about any more! We hated it because we were not told that the new machines were coming, they were a system that required us to have new information and, because we were all taken by surprise, we could be angry together. But in the long run, does it matter? Surely all that happened is that we expended energy on getting cross and frustrated for no reason?

Fearing the loss of being useful, the loss of our role in our community, is a genuine fear, and I think it is something that we do not address in our society. We looked at it briefly when we did our Parish Church Lent course a couple of years ago on getting older, but it was clear then that many of us did not want to face it (understandably). As we go through life, there are things that we cannot do, yet we fear that without those, we are not the same people. We need to feel useful, valued, and altering or lessening what we have always done, can make us feel

insecure, and worried.

The second difficulty, and one that can be very important in church life, is that we if we are too dogmatic about how things should be, we put off other people from helping. It is important if we are a team working together that we find the most effective way of doing something, but equally, there can be a new way of working to which we should be open. 'The only way is my way' is not welcoming or helpful. This feeling too can come from fear, in that we don't want to see our church life reduced as there are fewer people to take on responsibilities.

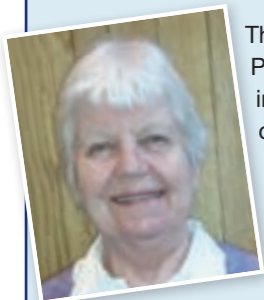
If more of us volunteer, then we all have less work to do. But we also have to accept that we cannot have complete control over it as more people are involved. So what should we do? It is both about the process and the result – creating a church where people want to volunteer, want to help, and acknowledging both what we are able to do, and what we are not.

It requires honesty from us as individuals, and as a church, and some of it might be uncomfortable. But Jesus never said it would not be a burden, only that the burden would not be so heavy. We have to respond to that.

Now I am going to go and check the cutlery drawer!

Jane Banister, Tring Team

World Day of Prayer



The World Day of Prayer is celebrated in over 120 countries. It begins as the sun rises over Samoa and ends some thirty-six hours later back in the Pacific as the sun sets over American Samoa.

Each year the service is written by a different country. This year it has been prepared by the Christian women of Zimbabwe who call us to 'Rise! Take your mat and walk'. We are encouraged to reflect on the difficulties and unrest that have plagued their country over many years. They share the challenges they have met and the hopes they have for the future and invite us to



support them as they continue their often turbulent journey towards full reconciliation.

In Tring we hope to hold services in St Martha's Methodist Church at 2.30pm and 7.30pm on Friday 6 March. The times will be confirmed by posters in Churches during February.

I strongly believe in the work the

Tring churches do together. Learning to work together locally is one step towards working with Christians around the world who have to hold their faith in many challenging situations. I call to mind someone from an African country I worked with many years ago. He told me that his father, who had brought him up in the Christian faith, had said in his last few days, what a difficult legacy he was leaving the family by their faith. It proved so, as he left the country but held on to his faith.

The women of Zimbabwe ask that we constantly seek love, peace and reconciliation. Do come and join in the service, so that we may unite with others around the world in positive prayerful action.

Everyone is most welcome.
Jill Smith, St Peter & St Paul

Chiltern Arts Festival

The Chiltern Arts Festival returns in 2020 featuring Dame Evelyn Glennie, Danny Driver, members of the Piccadilly Dance Orchestra and much more.

As the world celebrates 250 years since Beethoven's birth, Chiltern Arts joins the festivities with a programme celebrating overcoming adversity in the arts, with its usual array of venues across the Chilterns, including Henley-on-Thames, Marlow, Berkhamsted, Tring, Great Missenden, Wallingford and, for the first time, Princes Risborough.

It's a busy year for Chiltern Arts and a really exciting one too! I'm particularly excited to have a theme linking all events for the first time this year – and I hope people will get on board and follow the Festival as a bit of a journey of discovery! There are also lots of opportunities to get involved, as well as simply sitting back and enjoying – there's the Come and Sing day and a poetry competition, and we

Lena Frank and Rodrigo partnering Beethoven's impressive 'Hammerklavier'; and the City of London Sinfonia close the Festival with Beethoven's famous Septet.

One of the highlights of the 2020 programme is undoubtedly a mini-residency from eminent solo percussionist Dame Evelyn Glennie, performing with Trio HLK a piece called 'Extra Sensory Perception'; and we're thrilled to be commissioning a piece from composer Stephen Goss for Dame Evelyn and Matthew Wadsworth. The piece will be premiered at the Candlelit Lute recital in Great Missenden on Thursday 5 March – definitely not one to miss. Dame Evelyn and Matthew both also precede their respective events with pre-concert talks, giving an insight into the challenges of music-making while living with sensory impairments.

Chiltern Arts' popular Concert and Dinner event returns to The Gatsby in

Berkhamsted, this year with music from members of the Piccadilly Dance Orchestra, featuring cabaret and a seven-piece band. Think '20s and '30s High Society entertainment – grab a glass of fizz and enjoy turning back the clock in the perfect setting! Three outstanding young professional ensembles feature at the Festival: the Salomé String Quartet, baroque quartet Ensemble Hesperis and wind group the Magnard Ensemble. The first entirely youth-focused event features music from several

also have a very hands-on Youth Music and Art Day... come and join us for what we think will be a brilliant week!

Chiltern Arts offers an array of concerts for all musical tastes: Septura Brass Septet celebrate the music of female composers; the Come and Sing Company invite you to explore Tippett's *Five Spirituals* alongside Tippett's biographer, Oliver Soden; the Marian Consort uncover the Catholic music kept under wraps in Elizabethan England; the Phoenix Piano Trio present piano trios from Beethoven and Fauré, both of whom suffered hearing loss; pianist Danny Driver presents 'Beethoven and the loss of Vital Senses' with music from Gabriela

local young musicians and performers, including students from the Mary Hare School for the Deaf, Amersham Music Centre, Tring School and Chiltern Music Academy, as well as a massed choir led by the Marian Consort. There are also interactive opportunities for children of all ages to get involved in the day.

The poetry competition also returns in 2020, open to writers of all ages. There's information about all of these events online at chilternarts.com, where you can also request a brochure, purchase tickets and find out how you can get involved with Chiltern Arts.

Naomi Taylor, Chiltern Arts
naomi.taylor@chilternarts.com

Performance Details:

Septura Brass Septet: *One Equal Music*
Friday 28 February, 7.30pm
St Mary's Church, Princes Risborough

Come and Sing Tippett's *Five Spirituals with the Come and Sing Company**
Saturday 29 February, 11.30am–6.00pm
Church of St Mary-le-More, Wallingford

The Marian Consort: *Singing in Secret**
Saturday 29 February, 8.00pm
St Peter's Church, Wallingford

Youth Music and Art Day
Sunday 1 March, 10.00am–5.00pm
Queen's Hall, Royal Grammar School, High Wycombe

The Phoenix Piano Trio: *Into the Silence*
Monday 2 March, 7.30pm
All Saints' Church, Marlow

Ensemble Hesperis: *'The Temple of Apollo'*
Tuesday 3 March, 1.00pm
St Peter & St Paul Church, Tring

The Piccadilly Revellers: *Cabaret, Concert and Dinner*
Tuesday 3 March, 7.00pm
The Gatsby, Berkhamsted

Dame Evelyn Glennie in conversation with Katy Hamilton
Wednesday 4 March, 6.30pm
Chantry House, St Mary's Church, Henley-on-Thames

Dame Evelyn Glennie and Trio HLK: *Extra Sensory Perception*
Wednesday 4 March, 7.30pm
St Mary's Church, Henley-on-Thames

Matthew Wadsworth Pre-Concert Talk
Thursday 5 March, 6.30pm
Church of St Peter & St Paul, Great Missenden

Matthew Wadsworth and Dame Evelyn Glennie: *Candlelit Lute*
Thursday 5 March, 7.30pm
Church of St Peter & St Paul, Great Missenden

Magnard Ensemble: *Passion Prevails*
Friday 6 March, 1.00pm
Church of St Peter & St Paul, Medmenham, Marlow

Danny Driver (pianist): *Beethoven and the Loss of Vital Senses*
Friday 6 March, 7.30pm
St Mary the Virgin Church, Hambleden (nr Henley-on-Thames)

Salomé String Quartet: *Two Sides of the Coin*
Saturday 7 March, 1.00pm
Hughenden Parish Church

City of London Sinfonia: *Beethoven and Mozart*
Saturday 7 March, 7.30pm
St Mary's Church, Old Amersham

Tickets:
Online tickets: www.chilternarts.com/festival
Box office phone: 01442 920303 (Mon–Fri 9.00am–5.00pm; Sat 10.00am–1.00pm)

*Choral Day

Use your LOAF – a just response to climate change



My Christian faith informs many aspects of my daily life. While I certainly don't always manage to live up to my own aspirations, I find my faith

and beliefs affecting many of the decisions I make, and my actions. From why I buy fairly-traded food, to why we installed solar panels on our house – these are decisions influenced by a desire to live in a way that is not only environmentally sustainable but considerate to my neighbour.

The Bible tells us to 'love our neighbour' above all other commandments. My neighbour might be living in my road but is equally the person living halfway around the world, who picked the coffee I drink in the morning, or the cocoa pod which was used to create my evening treat!

But in life today, ethical dilemmas meet us at every turn of the supermarket aisle. For many years I lived in West Africa and had the luxury of no choice. Recently I became aware of 'use your LOAF', as the mantra to inform food purchasing. It neatly encapsulates an ethos for buying food and eating out. The Justice & Peace Group used this as the message for their stand at the recent Tring Climate Event. However, it is not a new idea: Christians have been thinking about these issues long before

the recent XR trend. The LOAF principle was developed by a group of Christian ecologists fifteen years ago. It is easy to remember and has climate responsibility and sustainability running through its core.

LOAF stands for: locally produced, organically grown, animal friendly, fairly traded (www.christian-ecology.org.uk/loaf-principles.htm).



Locally produced

As we all know, it is possible to eat strawberries in winter and mangos whenever we want. Multinational companies ensure a constant food supply to huge supermarkets. We don't even need to know what season it is when we plan our meals. But the price of this food is air and lorry mileage. 'Transporting one kilo of apples from New Zealand adds one kilo of CO2 emissions to the atmosphere. Fruit from local trees emits none, indeed the leaves absorb some.'

So how, in practice, do we support, purchase and eat local food? As a general rule, follow the 'proximity principle', avoid air freight and buy



seasonal fruit and veg from our own bio-region. Greengrocers, butchers, cheese and fish shops, markets and farm shops are ideal sources of these goods. During the spring 'food gap', when freshness is scarce and expensive, you may have to source from further afield, so Chile or Spain may be the next choice where the proximity principle applies. Then of course, the other way is to grow your own!



Organically grown

'Organic growing works with and not against nature, organic growers resonate with the rest of the soil community, supplying humus, leaf mould, other organic residues, and harvested rain to the soil. Organic growers feed, nourish, cultivate, protect, and encourage the soil' (www.christian-ecology.org.uk/loaf-principles.htm).



Animal friendly

If you have already opted to be a vegetarian or vegan, this one may be a redundant consideration. Indeed, there have been some vehement voices about cutting out meat from diets as being the 'only way to go'. But choosing to be 'animal friendly' means we make choices to buy local, humanely reared and culled meat and fish, eschewing intensification, lorry transport and distant, impersonal abattoirs.



Fairly traded

There will always be food that cannot be produced, in quantity, in north-western Europe, including bananas, citrus fruits, dates, cocoa, olives, pineapples, cranberries, tea and coffee. Here too the LOAF principles apply.

About fifteen years ago I lived in Nigeria, in a tiny village in the south east where cocoa was the only exported product from the region. The villagers where I lived were mainly subsistence farmers, and once a year they would try to get a few extra naira by selling the cocoa that they had grown on their land. Each year the big trucks would trundle down the pothole-riddled, red dirt road, until the road went no further into the bush. Each year the sacks of harvested cocoa would be lined up on the roadside, and the dealer would haggle with each farmer to buy his or her sack. Each year the price was less than last year. The dealer would blame the person he was selling on to. A few extra naira had to stretch further and further as the price of imported goods such as rice would rise and rise.

The people in these villages started to look for new ways to get some extra cash. Trees were the next commodity. If they felled the huge trees in the forest, the loggers would come and give a better price than for the cocoa. Deforestation was happening before our eyes.

These are real people, with families, trying to make a living. I'm telling this story to highlight how trade, justice and the environment are inextricably linked. These people are making choices about their livelihood and income. But our decisions can affect them directly. When you buy Fairtrade chocolate or Fairtrade tea or coffee your purchase has a direct, positive impact on a farmer – on their life, and on the environment.

Fairtrade not only means that a grower will get a decent price for his or her cocoa beans, but that other environmental factors are considered. The Fairtrade mark is only given if certain environmental standards are met, and the standard is high. 'Environmental

protection is ingrained in Fairtrade. To sell Fairtrade products, farmers have to improve soil and water quality, manage pests, avoid using harmful chemicals, manage waste, reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and protect biodiversity (www.fairtrade.org.uk/Media-Centre/Blog/2018/June/8-ways-Fairtrade-protects-the-environment).

Another example of Fairtrade directly tackling climate change is the Oromia Co-operative in Ethiopia. Deforestation for firewood is a big issue in Ethiopia, 46% of tree felling is due to daily energy needs to cook on open fires. This is harmful to both the environment and women's health – smoke kills more people than TB, HIV/AIDS and malaria combined. The Oromia Co-operative has chosen to equip coffee farmers with efficient cookstoves. The new stoves use cow dung as fuel, thus reducing the use of firewood by 50% and carbon emissions by up to 70%.

So when we have a choice of which coffee to buy, and the one with the

Fairtrade mark costs 50p more, now you know the reason why. Hopefully this brief reflection has highlighted that food is not only a justice issue, but food is a climate issue. The issues of justice and environment are inextricably connected, and as Christians both are our responsibility. If we can aim to make our weekly shop local, organic, animal friendly and fairly traded, then we can have a significant impact on the climate as well as on our neighbour.

So why not use your LOAF next time you do your shopping!

You can read more about LOAF at www.christian-ecology.org.uk/loaf-principles.htm. The Justice & Peace Group have compiled a Fairtrade and Local Produce Guide for Tring and District which can be downloaded from their website www.justiceandpeacetring.org. Follow Tring Justice & Peace group on Facebook Tring Justice & Peace Group.

Polly Eaton
High Street Baptist Church

Archangel

My eyes ache from all I see.

The destruction of mother earth is excruciation for me.

Each action inflicts more pain.

I am the guardian of man, of men that no long hear,
no longer see, whose voice is coarse, corrupt, and licentious.

My breath is fire, I could use it to cleanse the earth and rid myself of pain
and yet every now and again I see good.

It heals my wounds and gives me hope.

My hope is, that those who see the sun, smell the flowers,
feel the wind and feed the world will cleanse the earth for me.

Overcome the hate, envy, bullying and division,
will turn a full circle and see how they have damaged their souls.

Driven the light away and welcomed the dark place in.

The dark that grows when fed.

Grows and consumes all the light that lingers,
consumes all kindness and becomes ugly.

Yet a small speck of light turns all eyes towards it
for those that want and need to see it,

those who long to have the darkness taken away.

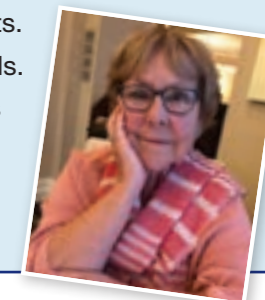
I am the guardian of man. Turn mortals, drink in the light and grow.

Take my fire and fill your hearts.

Take my light and fill your souls.

Take the ache from my eyes
and heal your home.

Brenda Hurley
St Peter & St Paul



What is the message of the Minor Prophets?



In the November and December issues of Comment we looked briefly at the first ten minor prophets: Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah and Haggai. Here we continue with the last two, Zechariah and Malachi.

Zechariah

While Haggai is a prophet as the one who speaks God's message, Zechariah is the one who sees, a seer whose book is a series of visions. His first vision is of a man on a red horse and an angel speaking for the rebuilding of the Temple and City of Jerusalem; then another one of four horns, a man with a measuring line and so on. Chapter 3 concerns the High Priest with Satan accusing him but the Lord rebukes Satan and refers to the high priest, Joshua, as a 'brand plucked from the fire' – words used centuries later of John Wesley! (Satan in this context is an adversary rather than the power of evil.)

A variety of visions follow – a lampstand, a flying scroll, a basket, four chariots and so on. All these visions have their meanings and are combined with a concern for the rebuilding of the Temple. The first part of Zechariah ends with the vision of many peoples coming to seek the Lord in Jerusalem. Ten men from the nations of every language, we are told, will grasp a Jew's clothing, saying 'Let us go with you for we have heard God is with you'.

Zechariah 1 to 8 and 9 to 14 are

usually regarded as separate books in content, style and vocabulary. Further, this second part consists of two sections entitled 'An Oracle', a title recurring in Malachi. A striking feature of Second Zechariah, as it is sometimes called, is the number of quotations which feature in the New Testament, particularly the Passion story. Thus, Zechariah 9, an oracle of judgment on Israel's enemies includes words familiar to Christians from Palm Sunday: 'Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion... Lo, your king comes to you... humble and riding on a donkey', and it continues with 'a colt, the foal of a donkey', which Matthew takes to mean two animals! Chapter 11 has the reference to the thirty pieces of silver and their being thrown into the treasury. There, also (Chapter 12) is the text 'they shall look on the one whom they pierced'. Chapter 13 starts with a fountain for the house of David, suggestive of the Water of Life. Later on there are words about wounds received in the house of my friend. The Mount of Olives in 14 is where 'his feet shall stand'. Part 2 of Zechariah contains references and words which provide the most extensive background, after Psalm 22, to Christ's Passion. In other words, these chapters greatly influenced the Gospel writers. They saw prophetic foreshadowings of Christ's life in these prophecies.

Malachi

Finally, we reach Malachi. The name means My Messenger. His Oracle tells of the Lord's preference for Israel over Eden and of Judah's profanation of the Covenant. But we also find familiar words from the Gospels and Christian interpretations. Thus Malachi 1 – 'in every

place incense is offered to my name and a pure offering' is taken to refer to the Eucharist being offered everywhere as opposed to Temple worship.

Chapter 3 starts 'See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me', words which Mark conflates with words from Isaiah to begin his Gospel when he writes of John the Baptist and of coming judgment. Malachi writes of the reward of the faithful and in Chapter 4 of the Day bringing purification and salvation – a phrase which has become familiar to us as 'risen with healing in his wings'. At the end there is the instruction to keep all that Moses taught with the promise that Elijah will come before the great and terrible Day of the Lord – a promise the Gospels see fulfilled in John the Baptist. The last words contain a warning, a curse for those who do not turn to God!

Conclusion

So, the Twelve Minor Prophets were considered to be one book but are, in fact, a series of distinct books written over several centuries and teaching about the political and religious situation of the day. Here we should remember there was no distinction between politics and religion in biblical times. The prophets spoke to their contemporaries but their words were considered worth preserving. They speak to us because some of their words were taken up and given deeper meaning when applied to Christ's life and ministry.

'May the bones of the Twelve Prophets send forth new life from where they live, for they comforted the people of Jacob and delivered them with confident hope.' Ecclesiasticus 49, verse 10.

Martin Banister, St Albans Cathedral

A loyal group of worshippers

As you might be aware, there is an early (8.00am) Sunday service at St Peter & St Paul's Church here in Tring. We thought it would be interesting to find out what motivates people to come to this service rather than the later (10.00am) service on a Sunday.



Although in essence the service is the same, the experience is a different one. I say this having started my visits to Church by attending the 10.00am Sunday service and then, over time, gravitated to the early service. My own reasons for doing so are that I like the early mornings, no matter what time of year; there is a quietness as the morning breaks or in these winter months, before it breaks! It also allows me to plan the rest of my day, which as a rule, is quite busy, seeing family and friends and doing the odd job around the house.

On the Sunday I took the survey there was a smaller than normal congregation. Had somebody told them what I was about to do?! The week previously we had around twenty parishioners, but of course, on the day I took the survey we had about half that number (very strange). Still, it gives an insight as why we come to the early service and maybe you will give it a try too once you read the results. (And if you missed the survey, please do write your own contribution if your views are not represented here. Ed.)

From those who were there, only one declined to take part and two took the survey away to complete. All the questions were of the multiple-choice type and there was, at the end, an open comment opportunity.

How often do you attend the 8.00 BCP service?

Ten per cent come at least once a month but 90% come every week to this service. One responder chooses not to come when it's a Common Worship service so comes three Sundays out of four.

Why do you come to this earlier service?

Twenty per cent choose the earlier service because it is shorter and 20% prefer it because it is quieter (no one admitted to not liking singing, though there is no music at this service). Sixty per cent like to worship God early giving them a longer Sunday to use afterwards. The additional comments were interesting here. For one responded it was habit, because they came leaving their other half sleeping.

Several comments were about the Book of Common Prayer which they preferred (see above, a common theme) and more specifically not feeling comfortable with the Common Worship Service. Another comment was about exchanging the 'Peace' (*I suspect a whole article could be written about this! Ed*) which some people feel uncomfortable about. Dropping the 'Peace' would make some happier!

Have you ever attended the 10.00am service?

Thirty per cent of responders attend the later service once a year, 10% twice a year, 10% every month and 10% every week (*thus presumably coming to Church services all morning. Ed*). Forty per cent of responders are regular 8.00 o'clockers and never attend the later service. One admitted to coming to a different service a very long time ago and another occasionally; one said they were a regular at a later service in years gone by and another they came for Remembrance Sunday and other special occasions. One is a regular at the Thursday morning service too. The preference for the BCP service came up again here but also enjoying the after-service drink and chat with fellow worshippers, which some might call fellowship.

So, there is a loyal, regular group who worship at the early Sunday service at St Peter & St Paul's Church in Tring. In the main, the congregation love the shorter Book of Common Prayer service without the singing and having the rest of Sunday available to them.

Graeme Berry, St Peter & St Paul

Parish registers

Baptisms

We welcome the children into our church family and pray for their parents and Godparents, and also welcome Peggy who comes as an older candidate for baptism.

Lyra Hodgetts
Rory Benjamin Fossey
Thomas Percy Bayliss
Peggy Bainbridge

Weddings

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

Robert James Allen & Kathryn Laura Butler

Funerals

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

Christine Wakley 63
Rose Lilian Gray 81
Audrey Bennett 89
Roger Bennett 88
David Charles Edwards 79
Lindsay Dingwall
Audrey Clay 86
Jean Royle 94
Peter Wellbourne 71
Adrian Lee 49
Leslie Barker 65

More Bible heroes



Julius the Centurion, Acts 27

St Paul was Julian's prisoner for the journey by ship from Caesarea to Rome. He learned to trust Paul on the journey and, because of this, no one was lost during the shipwreck on the island of Malta. Because he is named it is likely that he was known in the Christian community at that time.

Epaphroditus, Philippians 2:25 & 4:18

Epaphroditus (handsome, charming) was St Paul's 'brother, fellow worker and fellow soldier'. He had been sent by the church in Philippi with money to sustain Paul in Rome prior to his trial. He took back with him St Paul's Epistle to the Philippians.

Rhoda the servant girl, Acts 12:12-15

Rhoda (a Rose) was probably about 12 years old and a member of the household who were praying for St Peter's release from prison. Filled with joy, when she realised Peter was actually knocking to

be let in, she rushed to tell the rest of the household that Peter was outside – their prayers answered – but forgot to open the door! The others were not impressed – but she was right.

The poor widow, Luke 21:1-4

Jesus commends this lady for her two-copper coin gift to the temple treasury, an example of sacrificial giving. Unlike others who gave a large sum but still had much kept for themselves, she had almost nothing but gave it all.

David Whiting, St Peter & St Paul

Renewables revolution



There is a strong emphasis on environmental sustainability in the Tring community including among our church communities. The Tring Town Council sponsored

event in the Victoria Hall last year attracted lots of support. High Street Baptist Church has a rooftop solar installation. St Peter & St Paul – with financial support from Friends of Tring Church Heritage (FOTCH) and Tring Choral Society – recently installed energy efficient LED lighting throughout the building. There are many other great examples, often promoted and facilitated by the excellent work of Tring in Transition.

I'm chair of Trustees of FOTCH and have lived in Tring for seventeen years with my family so could go on a bit more about sustainable energy locally or in the UK... but I am going here to look a bit further afield than Tring – to sub-Saharan Africa and India, where a renewable revolution is taking place.



Solar Farm in India

I know a bit about this because my job for the last two years has been running a renewable energy fund called UK Climate Investments (UKCI) which has a mandate to invest in transformational clean energy projects in Africa and India. UKCI is a £200m pilot investment programme mandated to deploy capital in green projects on commercial terms, mobilising additional private sector investment on a sustainable basis to

help tackle climate change and promote cleaner, greener growth. The UKCI funding comes from the UK Government's official development assistance budget. Profits that come back to the Government from UKCI investments get ploughed back into further assistance.

UKCI is managed by Macquarie's Green Investment Group. I have worked for Macquarie for nine years. Macquarie is the largest infrastructure fund manager globally. Macquarie pioneered Infrastructure as a new asset class for institutional investors (like pension funds) and manages investments in 150+ infrastructure and real assets used by ~100 million people every day all over the world.

The economic development that has occurred across Africa since I made my first visit in 1995 (when at that time I was working for the UK Government) has been incredible, though there is still a long way to go to get many people up to an acceptable standard of living. The pace at which change is occurring shows no sign of slowing, with a growing and increasingly urbanised population to transform the continent's energy landscape – generating new opportunities for renewable energy investors, developers and operators.

By 2050 the number of people living in sub-Saharan Africa is expected to double, accounting for more than half of the world's total population growth over the next three decades according to the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs. The Centre for Strategic and International Studies estimates the population explosion will see the number of people living in the region's urban centres also double. Growing alongside these communities will be their demand for energy.

Africa has the richest solar resources on the planet, however, only 5GW of solar capacity is installed on the continent today according to the International Energy Alliance. As technology costs continue to come down and an increasingly supportive policy environment emerges across the region, we see a significant opportunity for renewables investors to help bridge the



Indian solar farm – they are big!

funding the gap – deploying new green generation and storage capacity that will underpin more sustainable growth in Africa.



Rainwater harvesting storage at a green social housing development in South Africa

India is also in the midst of a renewable energy revolution, with a huge target of deploying 500GW of renewable energy by 2030 to help meet growing energy demand with reduced greenhouse gas emissions.

As other articles in Comment regularly highlight, the basic economic and social needs in emerging markets are vast, and pressing. Every year in Christian Aid week – where, incidentally, my employer Macquarie doubles the value of the sponsorship I raise for Christian Aid doing our fourteen-mile sponsored run around Tring and the villages – that need is highlighted again and many of us try to do our bit. Lots more needs to be done to alleviate poverty, promote sustainable economic growth, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. There remain significant challenges to investing in many of these markets. But



Wind turbine construction in South Africa



Solar panels at a shallower angle than you would see in the UK because these are closer to the equator than here

I am cautiously optimistic that hugely increased green energy in India, Africa and other emerging markets is an attainable goal. My grounds for optimism follow here.



Solar power at a vehicle depot in India, making good use of the car port roofspace

Solar and wind energy production

First, the costs of solar and wind energy production have plummeted in recent years – significantly faster than most forecasters predicted – and are still falling. Battery storage (which can save renewable energy to be used later when the sun isn't shining or the wind isn't blowing) is also rapidly decreasing in

price. This is due to massive scaling-up globally of production of solar panels, wind turbines and batteries, and corresponding technical advances in materials and manufacturing processes. Emerging market countries have limited financial resources. And they desperately need more electricity. So if renewables were too expensive compared to the fossil fuel alternatives, that would be a big problem. But it's a problem that is being solved right now.

Clean energy

Second, there is a big shift taking place globally towards investing individual and Government savings – which are mostly tied up in pension funds, insurance companies and sovereign wealth funds – into clean, not polluting energy. The amount of capital currently managed under sustainability strategies stands at over \$US30 trillion (that's a lot!) – accounting for around one third of all managed capital globally. This figure is only set to grow as investors like pension funds and sovereign funds seek to align their capital allocation with their values and policy objectives. This growth trajectory was underlined by a recent report by Macquarie which found 91 per cent of investors expect to increase

their focus on Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) considerations over the next five years. Renewable energy projects in Africa and India should be front of mind as institutional investors aim to make a more positive impact on society and the environment.

Accessible, reliable, affordable, and sustainable electricity will underpin more inclusive economic and social development – meeting the currently



Spreading the word on renewables in Delhi at an Indian Government conference

underserved electricity needs of households, industry, and essential community services like hospitals and schools. Investors in the sector will also be attracted to the prospect of equipping economies most vulnerable to the effects of climate change with the infrastructure they need to reduce carbon emissions and pursue clean growth. These important social and environmental benefits can also be realised whilst supporting the development of local supply chains and high-quality jobs in the region.

If you want to find out more about UKCI and how we are promoting cleaner growth in Africa and India, you can visit our website or get in touch with me at richard.abel@greeninvestmentgroup.com

Richard Abel, St Peter & St Paul



Planting trees at the inauguration of one of UKCI's solar investments in India

Letter from Orkney



We are always delighted to welcome visitors to come and stay with us, but one problem can be the food left over when they leave – some of which we wouldn't usually eat.

One example was when some very dear friends brought 'Everyday Value Wheat Biscuits', the Tesco version of Weetabix. They were very partial to these, but unfortunately we were not so keen and there were a fair few left over when our friends departed. Abhorring the waste of food, I Googled how to use up Weetabix, and stumbled across 'Weetabix Loaf' on the Netmums' website (a very useful source of information, as all mums are).

This coincided with the need to provide a homebake after the Sunday Service at St Mary's. Volunteers are sought to provide hospitality each week, and although we have one congregation member in particular who provides cakes good enough for 'Bake Off', I feel I ought to show willing once in a while. Therefore,

my Weetabix loaf was transported carefully to the kirk one Sunday morning, and the response was positive – although the congregation there are very kind. It is the easiest cake in the world to make, and very quick, both attributes suited to my style of baking.

This is very good on its own; however, if you wish, it can be served with butter and jam along with a nice cup of tea and a chat, especially after the Sunday Service when one can consider the merits of the sermon just delivered!

Carrie Dodge
St Mary's, Stromness



Weetabix Loaf

Ingredients

300gm self raising flour
225gm caster sugar
200gm dried fruit
2 crushed Weetabix (or 'Wheat biscuits')
1 teaspoon mixed spice
275ml semi skimmed milk
1 beaten egg

Method

1. Measure all the dried ingredients into a large bowl
2. Pour in milk and egg and mix well to a lumpy batter
3. Pour into a greased/lined loaf tin
4. Top with demerara sugar for added crunch
5. Bake at 130°6/gas mark 3 for 1 hour 15 mins to 1 hour 30 mins, until firm, golden brown and a skewer comes out clean.
6. Once cooked, turn it out onto a wire rack and, once slightly cooled, remove the greaseproof paper.

The Hidden God



2020 Parish Church Lent Film series

The subject of God has often been touched on in the movies. European directors like Ingmar Bergman,

Robert Bresson, Luis

Bunuel, Carl Theodor Dreyer, Krzysztof Kieslowski, Pier Paolo Pasolini, Roberto Rossellini, and many others, have dealt directly with the theme throughout their careers, and Hollywood too has told stories based on the Bible, the lives of the saints and the martyrdoms of ordinary people.

The Hidden God was a film series organized by The Museum of Modern Art in New York in 2003, and an accompanying book. It explores the ways in which a sense of God may appear in films, whether or not it is understood as such or is visible to the eye. We have chosen five films from over fifty essays in the book for our 2020 Lent Film series. They come from a wide range of writers who find God encoded not only in explicitly religious subjects but in westerns, horror movies, comedies and many other genres, and in films from all over the world.

In the times, places and societies these filmmakers explore, God may be lost, found, absent entirely or seen by only a few, whether saint or sinner.

1 March Breaking the Waves, 1996, Lars von Trier (18)

Drama set in a repressed, deeply religious community in the north of Scotland, where a naive young woman named Bess McNeil meets and falls in love with Danish oil-rig worker Jan. Bess and Jan are deeply in love but, when Jan returns to his rig, Bess prays to God that he returns for good. Jan does return, his neck broken in an accident aboard the rig. Because of his condition, Jan and Bess are now unable to enjoy a sexual relationship and Jan urges Bess to take another lover and tell him the details. As Bess becomes more and more deviant in her sexual behaviour, the more she comes to believe that her actions are guided by God and are helping Jan recover.

8 March Groundhog Day, 1993, Harold Ramis (PG)

A weather man is reluctantly sent to cover a story about a weather forecasting 'rat' (as he calls it). This is his fourth year on the story, and he makes no effort to hide his frustration. On awaking the 'following' day he discovers that it's Groundhog Day again, and again, and again. First he uses this to his advantage, then comes the realisation that he is doomed to spend the rest of eternity in the same place, seeing the same people do the same thing EVERY day.

15 March Day of Wrath, 1943, Carl Theodor Dreyer (PG)

In a 17th-century Danish village, an old woman is accused of witchcraft. In the shadow of her flight, capture, confession, and burning at the stake, the young wife of the town's ageing pastor falls in love with the pastor's son. Her confession of this illicit affair to her husband brings on her husband's death. At the funeral the pastor's mother denounces the young widow as a witch. Will the widow's lover come to her defence, or has the day of wrath returned?

22 March Vertigo, 1958, Alfred Hitchcock (PG)

John 'Scottie' Ferguson is a retired San Francisco police detective who suffers from acrophobia, and Madeleine is the lady who leads him to high places. A wealthy shipbuilder who is an acquaintance from college days approaches Scottie and asks him to follow his beautiful wife, Madeleine. He fears she is going insane, maybe even contemplating suicide, as he believes she has been possessed by a dead ancestor who committed suicide. Scottie is sceptical, but agrees to the assignment after he sees the beautiful Madeleine.

29 March Crimes & Misdemeanours, 1989, Woody Allen (15)

Judah Rosenthal is an ophthalmologist and a pillar of the community who has a big problem: his mistress Dolores Paley has told him that he is to leave his wife and marry her – as he had promised to do - or she will tell everyone of their affair. When he intercepts a letter Dolores

has written to his wife Miriam, he is frantic. He confesses all to his shady brother Jack who assures him that he has friends who can take care of her. Meanwhile, filmmaker Cliff Stern is having his own problems. He's been working on a documentary film for some time but has yet to complete it. He and his wife Wendy have long ago stopped loving one another and are clearly on their way to divorce. He falls in love with Halley Reed who works with a producer, Lester. Cliff soon finds himself making a documentary about Lester and hates every minute of it.

Come and join us in the Aldbury Chapter House on any of these dates to watch together and for a brief time of discussion afterwards. All are welcome and refreshments are provided.

Jane Banister, Tring Team

Tring Team Book Group



The Lenten Classic is
'The Bell'
by Iris Murdoch

Come along to the Parish
Church in Tring
on 19 April at 6.45pm
for a discussion of the book
led by Edmund Booth

You can read about Iris Murdoch
and her books here:
[www.theguardian.com/books/2019/
jul/13/iris-murdoch-100-books-full-
passion-disaster](http://www.theguardian.com/books/2019/jul/13/iris-murdoch-100-books-full-passion-disaster)

Vanity Fayre
Hairdressers
For Ladies, Gents
and Children
Established for over 30 years

Come and try our professional, friendly,
great value-for-money salon
where your wish is our command!

Tel: 01442 822275
74 Western Road, Tring

Opening Hours
Tuesday-Thursday 9am-5pm
Friday 9am-7pm
Saturday 8:30am-1pm
Appointments not always necessary



All new customers: bring this ad for a
10% discount

WILSTONE STICKS
Handcrafted by John Evans



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

After the event...



asked where 'our' baby is and how we feel now he is gone.

This is likely to be a self-indulgent but also cathartic article, so feel free to skip it! I am encouraged to write it because so many kind people have

New readers start here

In 2018 my husband Jon and I trained to be Foster Carers (note the terminology: not Foster Parents). We attended courses on attachment, safeguarding and diversity, schooling and how to 'ease the move', the family courts and paediatric first aid. We learned about 'early permanence' where prospective adoptive parents can now 'foster' their new child from birth before they adopt.

In March 2019 we were approved and told we would receive the first call after a ten-day period while paperwork went through. As older carers with a grown-up family (our four sons are 23, 28, 30 and 31), this was a big step, but one we (and our immediate family) felt completely committed to. Jon was retired already while I work outside the house four days a week.

The way it used to be

A hundred years ago, my widowed great grandmother became a carer by default. Her eldest daughter died in childbirth and she became the full-time carer for her baby grandson, as in those days it was extremely unusual for a working man to be a single parent: the family stepped in. There was no financial aid, no social worker or court involved (as far as I have been able to discover), she just did it.

Sixty years ago, my aunt adopted her aunt's 'relinquished' baby son. My aunt had just one son and wanted a larger family. She was happy to look after her much younger cousin from birth. This was a formal adoption (and she went on to have two daughters by natural means).

Thirty-one years ago, Jon and I adopted our first son, Tom, a 'relinquished' baby born to a complete stranger via a Christian Adoption Agency, because, after a long wait, fertility tests and fertility drugs, conception did not seem likely and we were not getting any younger. Babies (especially 'perfect' babies) were like gold dust,

and six weeks after our acceptance as prospective adopters, we were asked if we would like to be Tom's parents. In one week, we met first Tom, then his birth mother and grandmother, then his foster mother, to learn how to feed and change him. I left work on a Thursday and the following day was a full-time mum to a seven-week old baby. We brought him home on 29 July; by the middle of September I had a sneaky feeling I might be pregnant and went on to have another son, James, (and thus two babies eleven months apart) and later, when Jon was born, three babies under three and quarter. Ben completed the set five years after that.

How things have changed

Back to 2018 and the approval Panel in March: we didn't have to wait ten days to have our first phone call from Bucks Social Services. The two calls came three and five days after the Panel, offering us two children both times – even though we had been approved for only one! There followed a regular stream of phone calls, usually between 4.00pm and 6.00pm in the evening and we got very excited, rearranged the room and the clothes in the drawers and made sure we had nappies of the right size available.

We learned our first important lesson

the hard way: nothing is certain in fostering. What social workers want and what the courts decide may be very different. 'Baby' 13 turned out to be 10-day respite care for a five-year-old girl who was a total delight and a lovely start to the process apart from a serious sleep problem (she didn't!). Visits to the Zoological Museum and Whipsnade Zoo, and feeding Chris and Jenny Hoare's lambs took place; as well as a crash course in little girl hair grooming, Disney films and princesses!

Baby 14 followed soon after in June when we were asked if we were serious about taking a relinquished baby straight from the hospital – and to prepare for that baby to be born. Those of you

who saw that beautiful baby boy in the Parish Church over the subsequent six months know how we answered.

Fostering today

There are many babies in the care system today, very different from thirty-one years ago. Very few are relinquished now and the sad reality is that they are taken away if social workers (or midwives, health visitors, etc) see that their birth mother cannot keep them safe – from alcohol or drug misuse or domestic violence or a whole host of other factors.

Foster carers will be asked to take care of them at short notice for a period of time that is elastic: there is always a 'plan' but the plan changes weekly with changing circumstances. There may be regular contact time with birth parents and other family members, sometimes making it hard to establish a routine for a newborn baby. Social workers may believe it is in the child's best interests to be adopted but the courts may decide other family members should be assessed first to see if that would be a better option; initial plans are constantly changed. In our case, 'a three to ten-week plan' before he was adopted was extended to a week less than six months. We saw his first smiles and huge weight gain and when he left us, he was just



sitting for a few moments unaided and was ready for weaning. He 'knew' us.

The one-week whirlwind of knowing about Tom to having him in our home forever is a thing of the past. 'Our' baby's adoptive parents met him over a period of two weeks, slowly, carefully, but gradually for lengthening hours at a time; then daily, allowing him to get to know them and so they saw him at different times of the day and night and learned his routines and moods and the cues for when he needed to be fed or changed or cuddled or played with. This transition period was a challenging one as two 'strangers' became regular members of our household at 7.00am and at bedtime as well as the times in between; and we

were a little sceptical about the value of having photos of them in our house and transitional toys that smelled of them and their home and dogs for our baby to play with – but it worked! As we moved the time with them in *our* home, to time with them in *their* home, and our photos and toys adorned *their* house; and as we shared the care of our baby with them so that, by the end, they were feeding and changing him and then putting him to bed, it was not just that they felt comfortable with him and he with them, but we were also gradually letting go...

On the day he left our home for the last time, it was for a 'sleep over' and there were four scheduled visits to follow so that we saw him settling into his new

environment and saw that he was happy and content; and so that he knew he had not been 'abandoned' by us (my greatest fear). And although we didn't have him with us on Christmas morning, we were sent photos of what he was doing and were told that he smiled at my voice on the Christmas message I sent via WhatsApp.

I can't say that tears were not shed after those visits when we left him behind, but we left in the knowledge that he was, and would be, loved and cared for by two people who wanted him in the same way, and just as much, as we had wanted Tom all those years ago.

Annette Reynolds
St Peter & St Paul

VE Day – 75 years on



Friday 8 May and Saturday 9 May 2020

Have you noticed that the early Bank Holiday in May has moved to a Friday in 2020: Friday 8 May? The reason

that the Government has moved the holiday is to allow us to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of Victory in Europe Day on the exact day. There is a website dedicated to the National plans that you may like to peruse: www.veday75.org

'When VE Day dawns on 8 May 2020 it will be 75 years since the guns fell silent at the end of the war in Europe. Years of carnage and destruction had come to an end and millions of people took to the streets



to celebrate peace, mourn their loved-ones and to hope for the future, but not forgetting those still in conflict.'

Tring is swinging into action with some plans that you may like to put in your diaries. On Friday 8 May the Memorial Garden is hosting a late morning / lunchtime Open Day including



boats on the pond, the Halton RAF Voluntary Band and other entertainment. It sounds like an ideal opportunity to bring a picnic and stay-a-while.

At 3.00pm (or 2.55pm to be precise) there will be a formal commemoration at the War Memorial before a service in St Peter & St Paul's Church. The National plans include buglers, bagpipes and wreath-laying and Tring will be following suit. After the service there will be beer, BBQ and music in the churchyard.

Finally, as it gets dark, there will be a candlelit vigil back in the Parish Church.

Moving on to Saturday 9 May, FOTCH are holding their annual Family Fun Day from 11.00am to 3.00pm in and around the Church. There will be lots of free family entertainment, including a special VE Teddy Flight attraction, organised by RAF Halton especially for FOTCH.

I hope you are able to join in with some of the activities planned over the weekend. The aim is to provide 'something for everyone' and so please watch out in next month's Comment for the full programme. If you would like to help or get involved in any way, please contact me for Friday 8 May (vivianne@tringtogether.org.uk) or Grahame Senior for Saturday 9 May (gseior@seniorpartners.co.uk).

Vivianne Child,
St Peter & St Paul



Tweet of the month

As I write this article there is a rare bird at Whipsnade Zoo called the

Black-throated

Thrush and it will be about the 87th British record of this species. So far I have been to the zoo four times and, after missing it the first time, I managed to see it and get very poor photos on my second attempt. My third and fourth attempts were more successful and I saw it very well and managed to get decent photos of it too.

It is fair to say that my track record with this species has been chequered in the past so it was good to have this bird so close to home and be able to see it so well. It all started back in 1987 when I missed the 16th British record of Dark-throated Thrush on the Isles of Scilly as I voluntarily left the islands early. In 1994 I went to Walton-on-the-Naze in Essex to see a Dark-throated Thrush and this was

the red-throated subspecies of Dark-throated Thrush. So far this is the only time this stunning bird has turned up in Britain. In 1996 I saw the 38th record of Dark-throated Thrush in Britain in a suburb of Peterborough and this was the black-throated subspecies.

In 2008 it was decided that the two subspecies of Dark-throated Thrush should be treated as two separate species – Black-throated Thrush and Red-throated Thrush. So at this point missing the bird in 1987 changed from being a bad thing to being a very good thing as I am sure that missing it ensured that I went for the Red-throated Thrush in Essex, which is currently the only British record of Red-throated Thrush. Also I only went to Peterborough to see the black-throated subspecies as it was on the way home from seeing a Cedar Waxwing in Nottingham! But now because of missing one in 1987 I had seen both of new species.

Black-throated Thrush breeds in the Siberian Taiga in open forests and winters in southern Asia from

Iran eastwards as far as Myanmar. Its breeding range overlaps extensively with that of Redwing – a common winter visitor to this country. It is likely that most Black-throated Thrushes occurring in Britain have joined a Redwing flock and migrated west instead of south. It also has a similar diet to Redwing as it eats berries and insects and so often stays with Redwing flocks in this country. Indeed the bird at Whipsnade Zoo spends most of its time feeding on Cotoneaster berries and Redwing are also very partial to these and are also seen in the same tree.

I am writing this on the Feast of Epiphany, when we are told about the Magi and how they came from the east to witness the miracle of God incarnate on Earth. Obviously this was the greatest miracle ever; but for me the Black-throated Thrush turning up here is one of God's minor miracles and proof that good can come out of something that seems to be bad at first.

Roy Hargreaves, St Peter & St Paul

Cathedrals, Chapels, Churches and me



My personal acquaintance with Cathedrals, Chapels and Churches have mainly been accidental, not purposeful.

My very first was as a WWII evacuee to a family farm in central Devon. Hele Lane Methodist Chapel was almost literally on my doorstep. It seemed small even then. I remember it for the volume of the singing. Sadly, the building has collapsed and all that is left is a small churchyard. Its name and function have been transferred to what was the local primary school, in the nearby village of Black Dog; both are about twenty miles north of Exeter. It is now combined with a social centre. I have visited it several times in recent years and it still looks (and feels) like the school I attended as an evacuee.

About a mile or so away is the Anglican Church of St Peter at Washford Pyne where my father was christened and many of my family are buried. It is architecturally undistinguished and now sadly without a vicar. One of my cousins helps to look after the churchyard and a family friend looks after the old Church records. There are occasional formal services.



I remember the Churches where I was a very young chorister; in Exeter (St Sidwell's) and Highgate, North London (St Michael's). A chorister's life is very different from that of a parishioner. You become part of the furniture! St Sidwell's was badly damaged in the WWII Blitz and has largely been rebuilt. I have not yet revisited it.

My later affiliation, for almost six years, was as a chorister in my school Chapel, at Highgate, where I became choir prefect in my final year. In term time it was a seven-day-a-week commitment.



Strangely, when this happens, you stop looking at the building as a Church (or Chapel) – in a sense it becomes a workplace. I sometimes wonder how the choristers in our Choir Schools see themselves.

Our three favourite Cathedrals are Exeter, Gloucester and York: Exeter because of old wartime evacuee and blitz connections; Gloucester because one of my sons lived fairly close by for a decade or so in the early years of this century; and York because Jenny and I spent a busy and happy Christmas holiday near to it. All three are memorable for different reasons. They were built to impress and they do! We have been lucky to be present at the first two when the organists were 'exercising' their instruments. You literally vibrate when all the stops are out! Apart from that, I remember them for quite trivial things – Exeter and Gloucester because of their excellent on-site cafes; York because we attended its Christmas festival of lessons and carols.

More locally I remember St George's Church at RAF Halton and St Mary's Church in Aylesbury. St Mary's has maintained its external character and surroundings in spite of almost unbelievable changes in the town.

Jenny's family has a very long association with it; her maternal grandfather was the chief bell ringer and a churchwarden. Many of her family were christened, confirmed, married or buried there. We were married in it sixty years ago and two of our children were baptised there.

St George's has the most amazing stained-glass window, commemorating the tens of thousands of apprentices who have passed through. I was stationed there as a National Serviceman in the 1950s.

Abroad we remember the little Greek Orthodox Tempelaukion Church in Helsinki, carved into rock; the Alexander Nevsky Cathedral on Toompea hill in Tallinn, the enormously tall Cathedral of St John the Divine in New York and the decoration of the Sagrada Familia Cathedral in Barcelona.

I have never been in a Church, Chapel or Cathedral I disliked. I value them all for their ambient – a feeling of going back to less worrisome days – a time-warp?

Bill Bradford, St Peter & St Paul

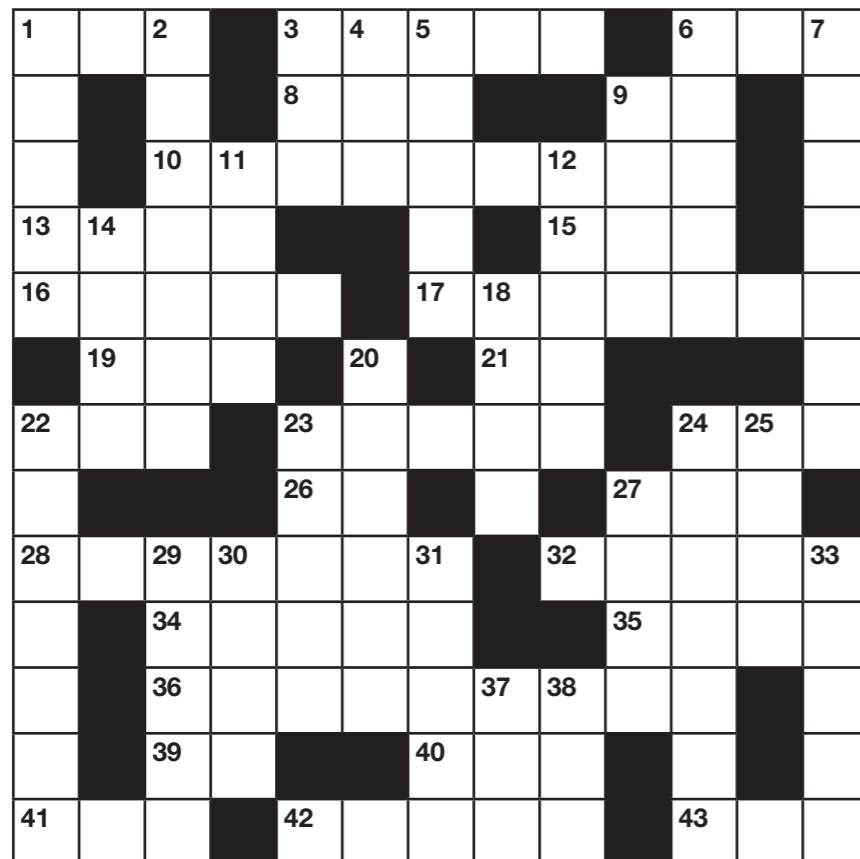
What are the Churches that mark your spiritual life? Like 'Desert Island Discs', could you tell your story through the Churches you attended for Comment?

The Editor

Crossword

ACROSS

1. Deus (3)
3. Chooses (5)
6. Married (3)
8. Listening device (3)
9. Maths term: overzealous (2)
10. Polished (9)
13. Needy (4)
15. Before (3)
16. Smooth cloth (5)
17. Close friend (7)
19. Colour (3)
21. End of the boxing (2)
22. Choose to achieve a requirement (3)
23. Very firm (5)
24. Attach to (3)
26. Behold (2)
27. Domestic animal (3)
28. Fishermen (7)
32. Place by the sea (5)
34. Tear (3)
35. Pain (4)
36. Event's consequence (9)
39. That is (2)
40. Joke (3)
41. A very long time (3)
42. View (5)
43. Decay (3)



DOWN

1. Clasps (5)
2. Ardent religious person (7)
3. Measure of each (3)
4. Scottish man's name (3)
5. Savoury biscuit (5)
6. Make more room (5)
7. Many kinds of (7)
9. Saucy (4)
11. Very dry (4)
12. King of Israel (5)
14. Used to row the boat (4)
18. Related (4)
20. Entrance (4)
22. No sense of e.g. the danger (7)
23. Was not awake (5)
24. Instructor (7)
25. Skin irritation (5)
27. Wet, compressed growth (4)
29. E.g. wheat (5)
30. Existence (4)
31. Sudden unexpected movement (5)
33. Vital body organ (5)
37. Male (3)
38. How long you've lived (3)

Answers on page 38

A new life Down Under?

Many of our friends in St Peter & St Paul's are already aware that we have a new adventure ahead of us and some asked for more details on how it all came about and what our plans are. So we thought this piece for *Comment* would provide some of these details as well as allowing us to reflect on the many happy years we spent as part of Tring Parish.

It was back in early May 2019 that the e-mail arrived. An international search agency based in Sydney, hired by the University of Notre Dame Australia to find a new Director of their Institute for Ethics and Society, wondered if John would be 'open to a confidential chat'. He was away, and so forwarded the email to Sylvie. 'What do you think?', he asked. Somewhat to his surprise, she replied 'Why not?'

To cut a long story short, we are heading to Sydney in February to take up new jobs. To make that story slightly longer: the process has involved screening interviews with the agency; a formal application; an early morning UK, late afternoon Sydney interview with the university's selection panel via video link; and the news, a little later, that they wanted to offer John the job. We then raised the issue that we were an academic couple, and threw Sylvie's CV into the mix. Solving the 'two-body problem' is notoriously difficult for academic couples, since the job market is so competitive, but our question led to a further interview for Sylvie in which she wowed the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, and a second job offer emerged from the discussions.

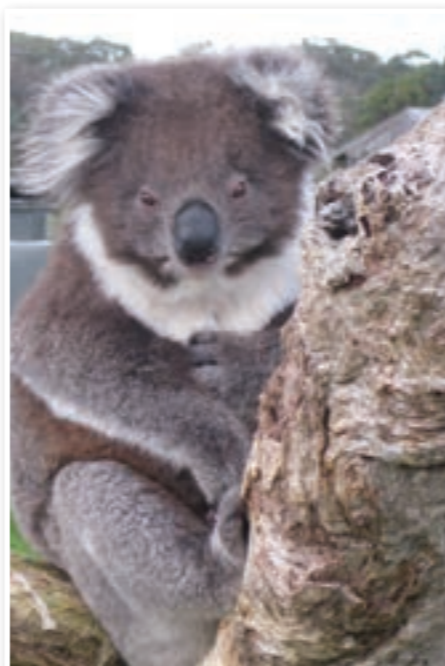


The university then flew us out for a campus visit at the end of September, where we met some of the key people and spent the weekend auditioning various areas of the city for the role of Possible Future Home. By then we were in visa application territory. For reasons too complex to go into here, the process was non-standard, so the wait for a decision was rather nerve-wracking. Outside Australia's points-based immigration system is an alternative track allowing for 'an internationally recognised record of exceptional and outstanding achievement' in one of the following fields: academia/research, sport or a top-talent chef. This sounded to John like an intimidatingly high bar (did he need to have won a Nobel Prize, or something?), but early in November, we were delighted to get the news that the application had been approved. (And a good job too: since John's schooldays had established him as the West Midlands' worst ever goalkeeper, Plan B would have required him having to offer to cook the immigration official his pea and mint risotto and hoping for the best.)

As well as his own research and writing in ethics, John's job will include mentoring early career researchers in one of the university's three research institutes; organising conferences and events (such as 'Scholarship at the Cathedral'); writing bids for research grants; and teaching into some of the units offered by the university's School of Philosophy and Theology. Sylvie will be Senior Lecturer in Media and Film, including developing new Masters

programmes in these disciplines.

At the time of writing, we are tackling a seemingly endless 'to do' list ready to depart in early February. But so many things seem to have fallen into place that we feel very blessed, and still can't quite believe this is going to happen. We are looking forward to our new adventures – which we hope won't be too dominated by bushfires – though we shall miss Tring. John has lived here since 1996 and Sylvie joined him in 2011. One of the first things



in Tring Parish that Sylvie was introduced to was the newly established book group and we have both been keen members ever since. We've read such a variety of weird and wonderful books, many of which we would never have encountered

if it wasn't for the group. It has been a real inspiration. We have been trying our best to write the occasional article for *Comment* (although not as often as Annette would have liked) on topics of personal and professional concern to us, ranging from the Reformation to Brexit and from Forgiveness to Lenten Films. As a film scholar, Sylvie has been working closely with Jane Banister over the years to put together our annual film series and she has left Jane with a couple of suggestions for the coming years, which we hope you will enjoy.

One of the highlights of our life in Tring was, of course, our wedding at St Peter & St Paul in July 2015, followed by



a reception at Pendley Manor. We were very touched and humbled by the many friends in the community who wanted to support us and share the day with us.

We hope that in the future we will be able to stay in touch through the occasional 'Postcard from Sydney' in *Comment* and various personal friendships we have formed over the years. Tring has been a wonderful place to live and we take many happy memories with us on our future travels.

Thank you all!
John Lippitt & Sylvie Magerstaedt
St Peter & St Paul

Introduction to a Skaldic poem written in the 'Kenning' style



I recently had a poem published in a collection of Skaldic 'Kenning' poetry, a type of verse written in metaphors and used in the Orkneyinga Sagas penned by the Vikings.

A skald is Norse for poet. I had a crack at it after attending a seminar by Hannah Burrows, from the University at Aberdeen, never thinking it would be published, so here it is. A rough translation from the metaphorical to plain prose follows. You can find it in 'Kenning the Land' compiled by Hannah Burrows for 'The Centre for Scandinavian Studies' Aberdeen.

Mac Dodge, St Mary's, Stromness

Sky-Cruiser of the Boat-Fields

*White-tipped Birdsticks, awaiting blood.
Harsh, on the high, fast, cloud-scud*

*For Seasnake, his blades unpacked
Riding steady, atop granite-stacked*

*O'er crashing, heaving, liquid-soil.
He reaps the flashing silver spoil.*

*Spring-leaves, quivered, ever-watching
In Sky-Brough, for his sacrificial offering.
(pronounced Sky-Brock)*

*Birdskins, two, young frenetic growing
Seafox snatches, shrieks and crowing.*

*Sky-Queen dives to seething lobster-nest
More Silversnake, on the blades to rest.*

White-tailed Eagle of the Sea

*White-tipped Wings, awaiting blood.
Harsh, on the high, fast cloud-scud*

*For Herring, his tallons unpacked
Riding steady, atop granite-stacked*

*O'er crashing, heaving, tidal-sea
He reaps the flashing silver spoil.*

*Fledglings, quivered, ever-watching
In High-Nest, for his sacrificial offering.*

*Birds, two, young frenetic, growing
Male young, snatches, shrieks and crowing.*

*Female Eagle dives to the seething-sea
More Herring, on the tallons to rest.*

Lent – what are you doing this year?



Ash Wednesday, the beginning of Lent, is on 26 February this year, so the vagaries of the calendar and deadlines mean that this article is being written in

December when, I have to confess, we have not totally finalised plans! So keep your eyes open for more information.

Ash Wednesday

There will be a daytime and an evening service in the Tring Team Parish, both communion services with imposition of ashes, and all are welcome to either (or both!).

Lent films

These will be on Sunday evenings in Aldbury at 6.30pm, preceded by a short service of evening prayer. You don't

have to attend all of them and there will be light refreshments – self-service. If you are thinking of coming and are able to give a lift to others, then do please let us know.

Lent Lunches

These will be weekly during Lent, and as always will be to raise money for Christian Aid. Keep your eyes open for the dates as they may not all be on the same day of the week. Even if you can only make one, then please come along – the food is not penitential at all (glorious home-made soups and a choice of breads).

Schools

As always, we will be encouraging the students and staff in our Church schools to do something different for Lent, whether following the 40 Days of Lent schedule (to which anyone can sign up, and there are specific ideas for adults, students and families). There are

several sign up schemes around for Lent which work well for those who like a daily idea that comes via email or text.

Books

Book Club in St Peter & St Paul is held once a month, and welcomes new people. Lent is also a good time to focus on a particular book. The Archbishop of Canterbury recommends a Lent book each year, and for 2020 it is 'Say Yes to Life' by Ruth Valerio. It lifts our focus from natural, everyday concerns to issues that are having an impact on millions of lives around the world. As people made in the image of God, we are entrusted to look after what he has created: to share in God's joy and ingenuity in making a difference for good. Ruth Valerio imaginatively draws on the Days of Creation (Genesis 1) as she relates themes of light, water, land, the seasons, other creatures, humankind, Sabbath rest and resurrection hope to matters of environmental, ethical and social concern.

Foundational to saying Yes to Life is what it means to be human and, in particular, to be a follower of Jesus. Voices from around the world are heard throughout, and each chapter ends with discussion questions and a prayer to aid action and contemplation.

Pray, fast, give

These three are central to much of our thinking about Lent, although they are also the basis of what it means to be a Christian. It is a time when we can consider our prayer life: what works and what does not; what bad habits we have fallen into; where we can challenge ourselves; and are we listening to God as well as talking to him? Fasting can be the traditional giving up some food or drink, or you can interpret it as something broader. Is there a habit you want to break? Is it time to recognise a reliance on technology, or fast from that? Or maybe, given the focus of the Archbishop's book, organising more car shares, or walking more? The giving can be time and/or money. Do you want to commit to a particular charity, do you want to raise awareness for it, or give them the money saved from your fasting?

There is plenty of time to choose – to think, to pray and to decide. What is it you are going to do this Lent?

Jane Banister, Tring Team

Tributes to Leslie Barker



Readers of *Comment* and members of the 10.00am Sunday service at St Peter & St Paul may be aware of the recent death of Leslie on 27 December. He had been ill for some time, from mid-September when he was admitted to Stoke Mandeville Hospital, then

transferred to the Neurological Unit at the John Radcliffe Hospital in Oxford.

After many investigations and tests he was found to have an unusual form of dementia, which unfortunately caused him to have an aversion to eating and drinking.

Leslie will be missed for his quiet and thoughtful presence as part of the Prayer Group and the Book Group, his knowledge of and great interest in architecture. He was a key member of the

Men's Society and regularly wrote reports for *Comment* about their discussions as well as articles on topical matters. He had been looking forward to retiring in March 2020, but sadly that was not to be.

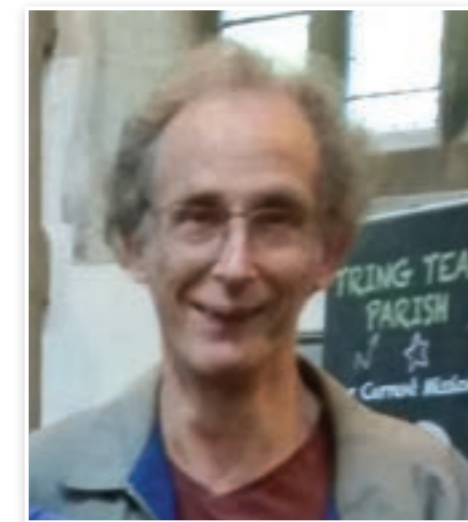
We extend our condolences to his brothers, sister and their mother, who have expressed their gratitude to members of the church who have visited Leslie and helped in other ways at a sad time.

Margaret Whiting, St Peter & St Paul



Leslie Barker was a good friend at St Peter & St Paul's Church. I have known Leslie from when he first came to Tring. As a qualified architect, he moved out here from North London when he changed his job and has been a loyal member of Tring Parish Church, generally in the background as he was quite a shy man, but always ready to support mission, talks and services across the parish. Prompted by his career in architecture, his interest in buildings of various ages and design took him out and about to places of interest both on his own and with members of his family, sometimes enjoying holidays away with them. He loved the Heritage Open Days where he could explore different places armed with his camera, although in latter years, lack of energy curtailed some of his excursions. He was close to his family, his mother in particular, and once a month would spend the weekend with her in Bedford where she lives.

As a committed Christian, and member of the prayer ministry at his



church in North London, he became involved in the prayer ministry in St Peter & St Paul of which I am also a member. It became very clear from the start that Leslie felt he was called by God to pray for others, particularly for those in need. This was not only for people who came to the Church for prayer, but for those in the wider community both in this country and internationally, especially in disaster situations. He felt deep pain and compassion for those caught up in the Cocker mouth flooding and more recently, of the Grenfell fire. He felt a sense of connection as someone working

in the building trade and became very upset that materials so unsafe had been allowed on that building. He was a principled man and campaigned when there were proposed changes in the law involving marriage and education in schools among other topics. He wrote articles for the Big Issue and was pleased when they were published, and was a regular contributor to *Comment*. He was a loyal member of the Men's Society and usually tried to get to monthly Stick Sunday walks in the parish.

Before he died, he was approaching retirement age with part of him looking forward to having more time for his interests, but also aware of his vulnerability of declining health and managing day-to-day stuff on his own. Sadly he died before he reached that milestone, but I like to think he is now enjoying that retirement with the One who created him, who loved him and cared so much for him. Leslie, a servant of God, is at peace now. Thank you, Leslie, for all you have given of yourself, to God and to others in the church, thank you for your deep care and concern and your prayerful faith. May you rest in peace, and rise in glory.

Janet Goodyer, St Peter & St Paul



Leslie Barker was an avid *Comment* reader and contributor. During the time I have been Editor, Leslie has written some forty-four articles ranging from accounts of Men's Society meetings to articles on architecture, faith and social issues. He wrote six articles about the Grenfell disaster about which he felt passionately; he wrote three on refugees. The only person who has

written more is Huw Bellis...

Leslie's final articles were written last summer and published in the month he became ill and was taken into hospital. I am particularly grateful for his commitment and diligence. Who will replace his contribution?

The Editor

Notices from the Tring Churches

ST MARTHA'S METHODIST CHURCH



FRIENDSHIP CLUB

The Friendship Club will meet again at St Martha's on Tuesday afternoon 4 February, when Freya Hollingsworth will talk about the latest developments at Action for Children.

JEAN'S CAFÉ

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

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

This year's event will take place on Friday 6 March at St Martha's. The theme will be 'Rise! Take your mat and walk' and the service has been prepared by the women of Zimbabwe.

DAFFODIL DAY

This year's Daffodil Day event will be held on Monday afternoon 2 March at Westminster Methodist Hall in London. Those with an interest to attend should enquire about their church's travel arrangements.

2 February 10.00am
David Williamson

9 February 10.00am
Communion
Revd Rachael Hawkins

16 February 10.00am
David Morgan

23 February 10.00am
John Benson

NEW MILL BAPTIST CHURCH



BRIGHT HOUR

First Tuesday of every month
2.30pm

MILL CAFÉ

Thursdays 11.30am-1.30pm

2 February 10.30am
Aubrey Dunford

9 February 10.30am
TBC

16 February 10.30am
Harold Liberty

23 February 10.30am
David Nash

TRING COMMUNITY CHURCH



SERVICES

Every Sunday 10.30am
Nora Grace Hall

CORPUS CHRISTI CATHOLIC CHURCH

SUNDAY MASS

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

WEEKDAY MASS

Mondays 10.00am
Thursdays 10.00am
Rosary Prayer group after
Mass

THURSDAYS

Christian Meditation Group
8.00pm in Sacristy

FRIDAYS

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

SATURDAYS

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

SUNDAYS

2.00-3.00pm Power Hour
Group Years 7 - 9

JUSTICE AND PEACE GROUP

Michael Demidecki
michaeldemidecki@gmail.com

ROSARY PRAYER GROUP

Thursdays, after 10.00am
Mass

LADIES GROUP

Annabelle Halliday

CHILDREN'S LITURGY

Viv Bryan, Helen Bojarski

SAFEGUARDING

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

MEDITATION

Thursdays 8.00pm

HIGH STREET BAPTIST CHURCH



SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP

Service at 10.30am with
Junior Church and Crèche

SUNDAYS @ 7

First Sunday of the month at
7.00pm

ACTIVITY ROOM

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

COFFEE FOR A CAUSE

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

TOTS

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

GAMES AFTERNOON

Wednesdays 2.00-4.00pm
Traditional games, puzzles
and refreshments

PLAY CAFÉ

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

FRIDAY CAFÉ

Fridays 12.00-1.30pm
Freshly cooked lunches

WHO LET THE DADS OUT

First Saturday of the month at
8.30am to 10.00am

Tring Team Anglican Churches

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

1ST SUNDAY OF THE MONTH

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

2ND SUNDAY OF THE MONTH

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

3RD SUNDAY OF THE MONTH

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

4TH SUNDAY OF THE MONTH

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

5TH SUNDAY OF THE MONTH

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

DACORUM FOODBANK

Weekdays 10.00am St P&P

BABY SONG TIME

Mondays in term time 11.00am St P&P

TODDLER WORSHIP

Second Tuesday of each month 11.00am
St P&P

WEEKDAY SERVICES

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

YOUTH CAFÉ

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

MEDITATION

Thursdays 8.00pm Corpus Christi

COFFEE MORNINGS

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

YOUNG ADULTS GROUP TAYA

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

FIRST SATURDAY LUNCH

Saturday 1 February
From 1.00pm for those who have been
bereaved to meet and eat with others.
Contact Huw Bellis for information on
01442 822170.

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

Sunday 23 February from 6.30pm St P&P

CRAFT AND A CUPPA

Tuesdays 2.00pm, St P&P

MEN'S SOCIETY

Wednesday 5 February 12.30pm
Half Moon, Wilstone

PIANO & MORE

Sunday 9 February 3.00pm St P&P



Useful contacts

TRING TEAM PARISH

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

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

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

Curate
Rev Sarah Marshall
St George's House
3 New Mill Place
Tringford Road
07538 888502
sarah@tringteamparish.org.uk

Diocesan Lay Minister
Mike Watkin
01442 890407

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

John Whiteman
01442 826314
john@tringteamparish.org.uk

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
Jon Reynolds
07712 134370
safeguarding@tringteamparish.org.uk

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

Senior Steward
Rosemary Berdinner
01442 822305

AKEMAN STREET BAPTIST CHURCH
Minister
Rev 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
Ministers
Joe Egan 07521 513493
joe@tringbaptistchurch.co.uk
Ruth Egan 07521 513494
ruth@tringbaptistchurch.co.uk

Assistant Minister
Kevin Rogers
km_rogers@outlook.com

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

NEW MILL BAPTIST CHURCH
Minister
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

SOCIAL NETWORKING

 Tring Parish

 @revhuw

COMMENT
Editor
Annette Reynolds
0845 8681333
07968 312161
comment.magazine@gmail.com

Distribution
David Whiting
01442 767403
davidswhiting@aol.com

Treasurer
Chris Hoare
01442 822915

Advertising
Sue Mayhew
0845 8681333

Design
Kev Holt
Ginger Promo

Please contact the Treasurer if you would like to take a subscription to Comment: £10.00 for 10 issues each year. Contact David Whiting if you would like it posted.

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

COMMENT DEADLINES

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

Crossword puzzle answers From page 30

ACROSS		DOWN	
1. GOD	24. TIE	1. GRIPS	23. SLEPT
3. PICKS	26. LO	2. DEVOTEE	24. TEACHER
6. WED	27. PET	3. PER	25. ITCH
8. EAR	28. ANGLERS	4. IAN	27. PEAT
9. PI	32. BEACH	5. CRISP	29. GRAIN
10. VARNISHED	34. RIP	6. WIDEN	30. LIFE
13. POOR	35. ACHE	7. DIVERSE	31. SURGE
15. ERE	36. AFTERMATH	9. PERT	33. HEART
16. SATIN	39. IE	11. ARID	37. MAN
17. PARTNER	40. GAG	12. HEROD	38. AGE
19. RED	41. EON	14. OARS	
21. KO	42. SCENE	18. AKIN	
22. USE	43. ROT	20. DOOR	
23. SOLID		22. UNAWARE	



Old Church House,
Tring

Mummy and me Ballet
Thursday 9.30-10.00am

Preschool Ballet
Friday 2.15-2.45pm
Saturday 9.00-9.30am

Contact us for a free trial —
Email: admin@thechallisschoolofdance.co.uk
Facebook: [facebook.com/challisdance](https://www.facebook.com/challisdance)
www.thechallisschoolofdance.co.uk

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

Heirs & Graces Day Nursery

A place where CHILDREN SHINE...

Open from 7.30am until 6pm

Childcare vouchers accepted Free hours scheme accepted
Sited in a beautifully converted Victorian home conveniently located on Tring High Street.
High quality food prepared by our fabulous chef.

Find us on - www.heirsandgracetring.co.uk
Telephone: - 01442 891818
Heirs & Graces Day Nursery, Florence House,
2 Christchurch Road, Tring, Hertfordshire, HP23 4EE



Stephen Hearn
TringMarket Auctions
Antique and Fine Art Auctioneers and Valuers. Est. 1982

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

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

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

We provide a full service to meet all your requirements



www.tringmarketauctions.co.uk
The Market Place, Church Street, Tring, Hertfordshire HP23 4EE
© 2014-2016 www.tringmarketauctions.co.uk

DETAIL GARDENING & MAINTENANCE
Maintaining Your Properties Potential

01582 529429 | 07984 244494
✉: info@detailgardening.co.uk

A local family business offering regular, occasional and one off gardening and maintenance services.

We can help with:
Lawn Mowing • Hedge cutting • Weeding
• Garden Clearance • Fencing • Power Washing/
Sealing • Turfing • General Maintenance
+ and much more...

Contact us now for a free quote!

For more information visit us at www.detailgardening.co.uk

 DGMaintenance
 DetailGardening





brown & merry

Brown & Merry estate agents in Tring would be **delighted to SELL or LET your home.**

Open since 1832, Brown & Merry are one of Tring's longest established estate agents. We strive to deliver a service that is bespoke and personal to you and your property. Therefore, you may find our processes a little different from any other estate agency you have previously dealt with. This is what makes Brown & Merry so successful in the local property sales market.

Thinking of selling or letting, **book a free valuation**

Call: **01442 824133** email: **tring@brownandmerry.co.uk**



'Trusted Customer' 'Professional Service'

"Brown & Merry were not the only agents that came to value the property but right from the start I was impressed by Alan Dempsey's knowledge, experience and professionalism; I therefore chose to market the property with him and his team. It was a good choice. The level of contact whilst seeking a buyer has been excellent; regular updates from Alan and the team on interest in the house, plus constructive feedback after each viewing and after each offer made on it. I can recommend Brown & Merry to anyone seeking a professional, effective team."

Joe Smith, a review

"Brown and Merry lettings in Tring, were great to deal with. Both Emily Walker and Jo always helped to make things work with ease. Their can do attitude and always approachable has made my move such a pleasant experience, even from staff fielding calls. Highly professional yet extremely friendly. Top Marks!"