



THE WORD

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**THE PARISH MAGAZINE OF
ST. JOHN'S CHURCH
ST. JOHN'S ROAD, BIRKDALE. PR8 4JP
Charity Number 1128171**

St. John, Chapter 1, verses 1 and 14:

**"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God...
The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us."**

ISSUE No. 247

JULY 2023

ST. JOHN'S PARISH CHURCH

God Centred, Relationship Driven and Life Transforming



Birkdale has been enjoying a very unusual early summer this year. The sun has shone, there has been very little rain, and most of us who have gardens have seen our lawns turn from verdant green to the colour of straw. As this issue of **THE WORD** goes to print we are having a little rain and are thankful for it, but we must hope that we shall have a dry afternoon on **Saturday 8th July** when there will be a Strawberry Cream Tea in the garden at 34 Oxford Road to which all members of our congregation are invited. We need to know how many will come so that we can cater for you, so if

you have not already obtained a ticket and would like to come please contact Christine (560518) or Sally (553977).

Whilst we have been suffering a shortage of rain recently we have been reminded in the news about the damage and the human cost which can result from too much water. The wilful destruction of a major dam in Ukraine led to a vast area in that country being flooded. Lives have been lost. Many thousands of homes have been ruined. There has been devastation on a scale which we in England can hardly imagine. In response to this calamity an appeal is being made by international agencies for help for the many people whose lives are in turmoil.

Please see the article on page 17 of this issue and give prayerful thought as to whether you can help in the relief effort by making donations of food, toiletries, or other items on the list. You do not have to take them anywhere other than to our church from where our volunteers will deliver them to an embarkation point. **PLEASE BE THANKFUL AND HAPPY TO HELP IF YOU CAN.** God loves a cheerful giver!

**FOR ALL ENQUIRIES TO OR ABOUT ST. JOHN'S CHURCH PLEASE CONTACT US
BY EMAIL info@stjohnsbirkdale.co.uk OR PHONE: 07732 691542**

WHO'S WHO AT ST. JOHN'S

Priest (retired): Rev. Roy Doran (572387)
Reader: Mrs. Christine Baker (560518)

Churchwardens: Clive Morris (564206)
Tim Wright (553977)

Wardens' Assistant: Miss Lucy Wright (553977)

Treasurer: Mrs. Sylvia Kent (564071)

PCC Secretary: Vacant

Parish Hall Secretary: Mrs. Jean Morris (564206)

Electoral Roll Officer: Stuart Harris

Safeguarding: Mrs. Abbie Holden
(07961003359)

Church of England
Children's Society: Mrs. Sylvia Kent (564071)

Mothers' Union: Mrs. Linda Caton (564737)

Girl Guides: Mrs. Janette Law (565951)
St. John's Brownies: Mrs. Helen Jones and
Brownie Guiders: Mrs. Lesley Scott
St. John's Rainbows: Mrs. Lesley Scott

Church Flowers: Mrs. Cath Whiteside (568874)

Magazine Editor: Stuart Baker (560518)

Magazine Printer: Mrs. Christine Baker (560518)

Notice boards, I.T,
Website developer,
Publicity designer: Mrs. Sally Wright (553977)

Buildings Inspector: David Halsall

A new series of Sunday sermons starts this month

Our series of sermons based on the Book of Jude will end on 16th July, and on the following Sunday we shall start a new topic, Back To Basics, which we hope will be a help to us all in our Christian pilgrimage and pathway with the Lord Jesus. There is a great need in this modern church age in which we live, an age of modern technology, an age of slick programmes, an age of emphasis on professionalism, to reassess what really matters in the life of the church and in the life of individual believers, Christians.

We need to reassess what really brings blessing to the people of God. If we are ever, as individual Christians, going to succeed for God in a biblical sense, it is essential for us to go back to our roots and examine where we came from, and get back to basics, to examine our roots, to go back to the first principles of Christ - if you like, the ABCs of Christian discipleship - and ask ourselves: are we still practising these things, and is it the absence of these things that are the reasons for the absence of blessing in our lives?

Please join us on **23rd July** when Clive will deliver the first talk in this series, entitled "The Morning Watch" which is based on Psalm 5 verse 3. The entire text of this Psalm is on page 9 of this issue of **THE WORD**.

Thursday Evening Prayers

The next prayer meetings by **zoom** and telephone will be at 7.30pm on 6th July and 20th July.

If there is anything which you would like to pray about with others contact Sally, Tim or Lucy Wright, or Christine, Clive or Roy.



St John's Church Birkdale

BIBLE STUDY GROUP

2nd & 4th
Wednesdays
2-4pm

St John's small hall

Growth Groups

2nd & 4th Wednesdays, 7.30pm
@ 32 Hartley Crescent

*Finding out more
together*



WE'D LOVE YOU TO JOIN US

*We believe in
the power of
prayer*

PRAYER TIME @ ST JOHN'S

Led by the leadership team

**1st and 3rd Thursdays
7.30pm**

SEE WEBSITE FOR ZOOM DETAILS



FRIDAY

Coffee, Cake & Chat

ST JOHN'S CHURCH, ST JOHN'S RD, BIRKDALE PR8 4JP

ST JOHN'S CHURCH BIRKDALE
MONTHLY
2ND FRIDAYS
10.30AM



WHAT'S ON AT ST. JOHN'S



Visit our new website

stjohnsbirkdale.co.uk

- Find out about what's going on at St John's
- Check out the calendar for upcoming events
- Listen to the weekly talks
- Find out about booking the hall
- Free on-line bible
- Show it to your friends and family

God centred, Relationship driven,
Life transforming



Come and join us as we enjoy great films and refreshments @ 6.30pm
film begins at 7pm

For details of our screenings see our church noticeboards

14 July

29 September

27 October

24 November

15 December

Free entry, refreshments available

ST JOHN'S INVITE YOU TO JOIN US IN OUR

SOCIAL EVENTS

If you'd like further details or to book a place please contact Christine 07821 982477 or Sally 07800 550097



Friday 13 January @ 7pm

Early, Early Burns Night

Friday 24 February @ 7pm

Late, Late Pancake Party

Saturday 11 March @ 7pm

Andy Dean's Quiz Night

Friday 21 April @ 7pm

Italian Food Night

Friday 5 May @ 7pm

Coronation Bangers & Mash

Saturday 3 June @ 11.30am

Summer Fair & Afternoon Tea

Saturday 8 July @ 2pm

Strawberry Tea

Friday 22 September @ 7pm

Harvest Supper

Friday 20 October @ 7pm

Just Desserts

Friday 17 November @ 7pm

Bingo and Beetle Night

Friday 1 December 6-9pm

Christmas Tree Festival and

Saturday 2 December 10-3pm

Christmas Fair

YOUNG ADULT SOCIALS

2023

Saturday 15th April
Ghetto Golf & Baltic market

Saturday 13th May
Knowsley Safari park

Saturday 17th June
Pizza and games @ Lucy's

Saturday 15th July
Rivington

Friday 11th August
BBQ @ Lucy's

Saturday 23rd September
Bowling and Nando's

St John's Church, Birkdale

ST JOHN'S BIRKDALE

Strawberry Cream Tea



Saturday 8 July 2 - 4 pm

In the garden @ 34 Oxford Road

Tickets: Adults £5 Under 16s £1

Call 560518 or 07800550097

Let us know of any allergies when booking



What a fabulous summer we are having, and I, for one, am not complaining about the heat! I am aware that it won't be around for long so let's just enjoy it. After all, there will be plenty of cold, wet days and months to follow, so let's be thankful.

On that note, weren't we blessed to have such a beautiful day for our Summer Social on 3rd June! There was a lovely atmosphere and everyone seemed to enjoy themselves, not forgetting the lovely food which was on offer.

As always, I would like to thank the Team for their hard work and dedication in making these events the success we enjoy, which this year raised £435.00! A fantastic result. Then, of course I would like to thank everyone who helped or contributed towards the raffle, and to those who helped run a stall.

Finally, none of this would have been possible without the support of you all on the day. Many thanks to you all.

Enjoy the rest of the summer ... we'll soon be planning the Christmas Fair!

Sylvia Kent

The story behind "Now Thank We All Our God"

The joy and serenity of this hymn are staggering, when you learn the circumstances in which it was written.

Martin Rinkart was a pastor at Eilenberg, Saxony, during the terrible Thirty Years' War (1618-1648). As a walled city, Eilenberg offered some protection to the inhabitants. No wonder that political and military refugees of all sorts poured into the city, making it dangerously overcrowded. Soon the water supply was fouled, the sanitation overwhelmed, and the food ran out – leaving people famished and diseased.



In 1637 a terrible pestilence swept through the city, killing some 8,000 people, including Rinkart's beloved wife. By that time Rinkart was the only minister left in Eilenberg, because the others had either died or fled for their lives. Rinkart alone conducted the burial services for 4,480 people, sometimes taking as many as 40 to 50 funerals a day!

Eilenberg was besieged and overrun three times – once by the Austrian army and twice by the Swedes. When a Swedish general demanded the town pay him 30,000 thalers, Martin Rinkart pleaded that the impoverished city could never meet such a levy, but the general scorned him. At that, Rinkart turned to his companions and said: 'Come, my children, we can find no mercy with man; let us take refuge with God.' On his knees there and then, Rinkart led his friends in a fervent prayer and in the singing of a hymn. The Swedish commander was so moved that he decided that the levy be not 30,000 thalers, but instead 1,350 thalers.

Somehow, out of the hell of the Thirty Years War, came this lovely hymn of peace and total trust in God. Martin Rinkart had had to dig deep into his faith to survive, and the result was utter, serene dependence on God – despite chaos and destruction all around.

Worship on the
Fourth Sunday
after Trinity

SUNDAY 2nd JULY: HOLY COMMUNION

**10.30am service IN CHURCH and via
zoom & phone**

**Worshippers in church are invited to remain in
church after the first part of the service has
concluded and receive Communion.**

Collect for the Fourth Sunday after Trinity

Gracious Father, by the obedience of Jesus you brought salvation to our wayward world: draw us into harmony with your will, that we may find all things restored in him, our Saviour Jesus Christ.

**The subject of
Roy's talk:**

Remember, Remember

The Reading: Jude verses 5-11

5 Though you already know all this, I want to remind you that the Lord at one time delivered his people out of Egypt, but later destroyed those who did not believe.

6 And the angels who did not keep their positions of authority but abandoned their proper dwelling—these he has kept in darkness, bound with everlasting chains for judgment on the great Day.

7 In a similar way, Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding towns gave themselves up to sexual immorality and perversion. They serve as an example of those who suffer the punishment of eternal fire.

8 In the very same way, on the strength of their dreams these ungodly people pollute their own bodies, reject authority and heap abuse on celestial beings.

9 But even the archangel Michael, when he was disputing with the devil about the body of Moses, did not himself dare to condemn him for slander but said "The Lord rebuke you!"

10 Yet these people slander whatever they do not understand, and the very things they do understand by instinct—as irrational animals do—will destroy them.

11 Woe to them! They have taken the way of Cain; they have rushed for profit into Balaam's error; they have been destroyed in Korah's rebellion.

In the Genesis account of Sodom and Gomorrah, God reveals to Abraham that Sodom and Gomorrah are to be destroyed for their grave sins (18:20). Abraham pleads for the lives of any righteous people living there, especially the lives of his nephew, Lot, and his family. Abraham seems to negotiate with God on behalf of the righteous in the two cities. God first agrees to spare the cities if 50 righteous people can be found and eventually agrees to spare them if 10 righteous people can be found (18:23–32). Two angels, appearing as men, are sent to Lot in Sodom but are met with a wicked mob who ask for the newcomers. Lot offers the mob his daughters instead, but this only further enrages the mob, who are then struck blind by the angelic guests (19:1–11). Finding only Lot and his family as righteous among the inhabitants, the angels warn Lot to quickly evacuate the city and not look back. As they flee the destruction, Lot's wife looks back upon the city and is turned into a pillar of salt (19:12–29).

Worship on the Fifth Sunday after Trinity

SUNDAY 9th JULY
10.30am service IN CHURCH
and via zoom & phone.

Collect for the Fifth Sunday after Trinity

Almighty God, send down upon your Church the riches of your Spirit, and kindle in all who minister the gospel your countless gifts of grace; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**The subject of
Tim's Talk:**

Whose Agenda Is It?

The Reading: Jude verses 12-18

12 These people are blemishes at your love feasts, eating with you without the slightest qualm—shepherds who feed only themselves. They are clouds without rain, blown along by the wind; autumn trees, without fruit and uprooted—twice dead.

13 They are wild waves of the sea, foaming up their shame; wandering stars, for whom blackest darkness has been reserved forever.

14 Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about them: "See, the Lord is coming with thousands upon thousands of his holy ones

15 to judge everyone, and to convict all of them of all the ungodly acts they have committed in their ungodliness, and of all the defiant words ungodly sinners have spoken against him."

16 These people are grumblers and faultfinders; they follow their own evil desires; they boast about themselves and flatter others for their own advantage.

17 But, dear friends, remember what the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ foretold.

18 They said to you, "In the last times there will be scoffers who will follow their own ungodly desires."



Thank you

St John Birkdale

who during 2022-23 donated

£1,500

and helped people at the edges follow Jesus

Discover more at churchmissionsociety.org

With Jesus
With each other
To the edges

A letter of thanks

St John's church has received a letter from Alastair Bateman, Chief Executive Officer of CMS, thanking our congregation for supporting CMS in 2022-2023, a year which presented many challenges. In his letter Mr Bateman said:

"... thanks to your generosity we witnessed bright sparks of hope and renewal as we followed Jesus to the edges. "We are so grateful to churches like yours who helped us see real change in the lives of people like Steve (pictured, left, in the poster).

"Steve, who lives in Rotherham, had come to the end of himself. After years of grappling with homelessness and addiction he was considering suicide. As he sat on a bench he whispered a desperate prayer to God for help. And God listened. Help and hope for Steve came in the form of Ali, a CMS-trained pioneer who serves at Rotherham Minster. She noticed Steve on that bench, invited him for coffee and ... Steve is now off drugs, he has a place to live and he's begun following Jesus and become part of the church community.

"Steve's story shows all of us that no matter what, Jesus never gives up. Neither should we."

Worship on the Sixth
Sunday after Trinity

SUNDAY 16th JULY
10.30am service IN CHURCH

Collect for the Sixth Sunday after Trinity

Creator God, you made us all in your image: may we discern you in all that we see, and serve you in all that we do; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**The subject of
Lucy's talk:**

A Call To Remain Faithful

The Reading: Jude verses 20-25

20 But you, dear friends, by building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit,
21 keep yourselves in God's love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life.
22 Be merciful to those who doubt;
23 save others by snatching them from the fire; to others show mercy, mixed with fear—hating even the clothing stained by corrupted flesh.
24 To him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy—
25 to the only God our Saviour be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen.

What do we really know about Mary Magdalene?

Fake news is not new. Perhaps one old example is the assertion that Mary Magdalene was a prostitute. Back in the 6th Century, Pope Gregory is said to have confused her with two other women in the Bible. Medieval Bible scholars also attempted to name an unidentified sinful woman who had washed and anointed the feet of Jesus. As Mary Magdalene is mentioned in the next chapter, they regarded her as the same person! After this, many classical artists painted Mary in various states of undress, perpetuating a falsehood.

So what do we really know about Mary? The Gospels tell us that she came from Magdala, a town in Galilee, and Jesus healed her by casting out seven evil spirits. After this she followed Jesus, with other women, on His ministry providing resources. Later, Mary watched Jesus die on the cross, and having cared for His needs while He was alive, wanted to care for Him after His death.

It was when Mary went to anoint the body of Jesus at the tomb that the risen Jesus appeared to her. He told Mary to go to His disciples and tell them about His return to Heaven. She was obedient and became the first emissary of the resurrection. In those days, the witness of a woman was worthless. Despite ridicule, Mary had the courage to speak about Jesus in a place of great disbelief. We have to ask ourselves do we have the same courage as Mary? How prepared are we to stand our ground to share Jesus with others in the face of those who mock and scoff at us?

In this snapshot of Mary's life we know she had experienced great distress and suffering. After Jesus healed her, Mary expressed her gratitude by being utterly committed and devoted to Him.

Jesus can give everyone a new start; a new purpose and direction in life. Like Mary we can thank Him for blessing us, loving us and forgiving us and moving into practical forms of service. Only Jesus can transform our lives so that we can glorify God in all that we do.



Midweek Book of Common
Prayer Holy Communion Service

WEDNESDAY 19th JULY
10.30am service
IN CHURCH

Worship on the Seventh
Sunday after Trinity

SUNDAY 23rd JULY
10.30am service IN CHURCH
and via zoom & phone.

Collect for the Seventh Sunday after Trinity

Generous God, you give us gifts and make them grow: though our faith is small as mustard seed, make it grow to your glory and the flourishing of your kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**The subject of
Clive's talk:**

The Morning Watch

The Reading: Psalm 5

- 1 Give ear to my words, O LORD, consider my meditation.
- 2 Give heed to the voice of my cry, my King and my God, for to you I will pray.
- 3 My voice you shall hear in the morning, O Lord; In the morning I will direct it to you, and I will look up.
- 4 For you are not a God who takes pleasure in wickedness, nor shall evil dwell with you.
- 5 The boastful shall not stand in your sight; you hate all workers of iniquity.
- 6 You shall destroy those who speak falsehood; the Lord abhors the bloodthirsty and deceitful man.
- 7 But as for me, I will come into your house in the multitude of your mercy; In fear of you I will worship toward your holy temple.
- 8 Lead me, O Lord, in Your righteousness because of my enemies; make your way straight before my face.
- 9 For there is no faithfulness in their mouth; their inward part is destruction. Their throat is an open tomb; they flatter with their tongue.
- 10 Pronounce them guilty, O God! Let them fall by their own counsels; cast them out in the multitude of their transgressions, for they have rebelled against You.
- 11 But let all those rejoice who put their trust in you; let them ever shout for joy, because you defend them; let those also who love your name be joyful in You.
- 12 For you, O Lord, will bless the righteous; with favour you will surround him as with a shield.

Worship on the Eighth
Sunday after Trinity

SUNDAY 30th JULY
10.30am service at
ST. PETER'S CHURCH

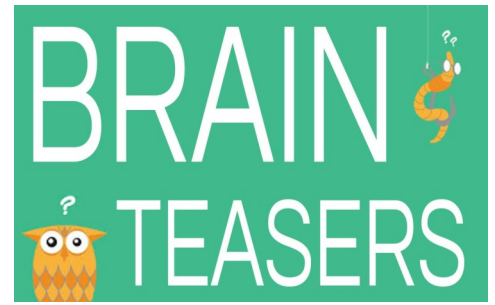
This is the 5th Sunday of the month and as usual we shall worship with our fellow Birkdale Christians in a joint service.

There will not be a separate service at St John's today.

Cryptic Drinks

1. The "Toon Army" sunburnt.
2. He guards the Crown Jewels.
3. Sir Paul's designer daughter.
4. A gem in Mumbai.
5. Sibelius symphony.
6. Marx meets up with ship sinker without ice.
7. The campanologist's drink.
8. It's strange seeing young sheep on a fleet of ships.
9. This slang for a beak can be heard in the forest.
10. A drink from the rice fields.
11. A powerful bend from the waist.

Answers on page 20



Submitted by Judith Foster

WORD SEARCH

Solution on page 21

On 3rd July the Church remembers St Thomas, also called Doubting Thomas, because he would not believe his fellow disciples' news of the Resurrection. But 'doubt' did not mean that Thomas did not love Jesus! Only a few weeks before, Thomas had urged his fellow disciples to follow Jesus to see Lazarus in Bethany, despite danger from the Jews. "Let us also go, that we may die with him." (John 11:16). Instead, Jesus had brought Lazarus back to life. Thomas was sometimes very confused about just where Jesus was headed. But in John 14:5 Jesus untangled his confused commitment: "I am going to my Father", and "No one comes unto the Father but by me." Finally, after the Resurrection, Jesus appeared to Thomas, showing him the wounds of His crucifixion. Thomas was electrified, and his response immediate: "My Lord and my God" (John 20:26ff). Thus Doubting Thomas' honest doubts, turned to honest faith, have become a reassurance for thousands of people down the centuries.

July
Thomas
Resurrection
Doubt
Doubting

Love
Jesus
Follow
Lazarus
Bethany

Danger
Jews
Die
Life
Confused

Going
Father
Wounds
Crucifixion
Response

Immediate
Lord
God
Honest
Faith
reassurance



The Pulpit by Dr Jo White

(At St John's our preaching team have not been using the pulpit for many years. Dr Jo White reflects on the history and usage of pulpits).

The pulpit is one of the four most obvious pieces of 'furniture' in a church; the others being the lectern, altar and the font.

Today, in many churches, the pulpit is where the preacher stands to give the sermon during a service. It is generally raised higher than the chairs or pews, so the preacher can be seen more easily by the congregation. Pulpits often have a 'sounding' board canopy above them, so that the words may 'resound' more audibly.

The pulpit may be simple or heavily ornamented; engraved with pictures and/or words in a creative manner. There are examples of some pulpits which require the preacher to climb up over a dozen steps to reach the preaching platform, while others have only five or six steps.

In Anglican churches the pulpit is likely to be situated between the nave, where the congregation sits, and the chancel, where the choir or church leaders sit. In Methodist chapels, pulpits are normally centrally placed, often above the altar.

In bygone generations, the pulpit was used for all sorts of announcements. Without any microphones, it was better to use a raised area from which to address people.

So the pulpits were used not only by priests for preaching, but also by the churchwardens for notices. The pulpit was also where Marriage Banns were called, excommunications were pronounced, and (in Catholic churches) indulgences were advertised. *[An indulgence is the full or partial remission of temporal punishment for sins after the sinner confesses and receives absolution. Under Catholic teaching, every sin must be purified either here on earth or after death in a state called purgatory].*

In fact, pulpits were not much used for sermons before the Reformation! This is because the clergy in those days were required to preach only four times a year.

Most commonly, the pulpit was used for the bidding prayers. These, partly in English, were said for the leaders of the Church, the King, the governing orders, the people, special needs, and, finally, for those parishioners who had paid to have their names read out.

Age of those with religion by Dr Peter Brierley

The 2021 Population Census asked people their age as well as whether they had a religion. 94% of the population answered both questions. The average age of the population is 41, and the average age of Christian adherents was 48, the oldest of any religion. The youngest are the Muslims with larger families and therefore more children; their average age is 29. Those with No Religion are the next youngest, with an average age of 34. All the other religions have an average age between 37 and 42.

These figures re-enforce what is already well known: that church congregations are generally lacking in young people, but the higher percentages of younger people in other religions shows that it is not necessarily *religion* as such which is alien to young people, but rather the *Christian* faith.

It has been said that it is not the essence of the Christian faith which deter younger people, but rather the Church itself and the lacklustre lives of those who profess to be Christian. In addition, in Western culture, the tenets of Christian belief have been discarded in a modern, secular environment, the Bible has been largely dismissed and ignorance reigns, particularly among the younger population.



The Rev Dr Gary Bowness continues his tongue-in-cheek letters from 'Uncle Eustace'

On Why We Don't Bother To Lock The Church

The Rectory,
St James the Least of All

My dear Nephew Darren,

Since I happened to be in your area last week, I tried to call in at your church, and was sorry to find it was locked and bolted, with surveillance cameras watching me.

We tend to be a little more relaxed about matters of security. The key to the medieval lock was lost some time during Queen Victoria's reign and never replaced. How someone managed to misplace a foot long piece of cast iron, weighing about 10 pounds is a mystery. If it had fallen out of someone's pocket, it would certainly have broken their foot. Ever since, no one has bothered with locking the door – which makes me wish our burglars last year had thought of trying it, before wasting so much energy smashing a stained-glass window when they visited in the early hours one morning. On the other hand, were the key still in use, I should probably be arrested these days for carrying an offensive weapon.

As with most rural churches, keys which open just about everything in the village are hidden in various parts of the church. The vestry key is under my seat cushion, the organ key under a vase on the altar, the church hall key on top of the hymn book cupboard, and Miss Simpson's spare front door key inside the font. I have never been certain whether the latter is there for safety, or as a general invitation. I am sure someone could usefully produce a book suggesting the many places that keys are likely to be found secreted in churches for the use of vergers, flower arrangers, cleaners – and thieves wanting to save themselves time and effort.

I suspect that the burdened look that many urban clergy wear is not because they are weighed down with parish troubles, but because they are obliged to carry with them a superfluity of keys needed to negotiate every door in church, hall, school, and vicarage. And why is there always one for which no one has any idea what it opens?

The only occasion I have ever thought it would be useful to be able to lock a church is when you have a party of visitors inside. So often, on hearing the words "let us pray" or the start of an appeal for funds, they bolt for the door.

Your loving uncle,
Eustace

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GOD in the Arts

The Revd Michael Burgess continues his series on God in the Arts with a look at 'Herdsman with Cows by a River' by Albert Cuyp

'He Gave Us Eyes To See Them'

'Herdsman with Cows by a River' by Albert Cuyp

'What is this life, if full of care, we have no time to stand and stare?'

Those words of W H Davies provide the theme for this year. The paintings chosen celebrate creation in all its wonder and diversity, and we are encouraged to take time to look anew and so become aware of the author of that creation. But this month it is the other way around as we sense the animals looking at us in 'Herdsman with Cows by a River' painted in 1650 by the Dutch artist, Albert Cuyp.

It is a very ordinary scene of nature. Yet there is a radiance and a tranquillity that strike us as we see the herd of cows standing in the still waters. Around them there is a lot of movement: birds fly in the sky, boats are sailing off into the sunset and two fishermen are busy at their work to the left of the canvas. But the cows and their herdsman are quiet and contented, relishing this moment of the day closing, and contemplating the world going by. And two of those cows seem to be looking out into our own world. In many of Albert Cuyp's paintings the sun bathes each scene in a golden light. Here the clouds are gathering in the sky as the sun sinks down in the west, but there is still a glowing calmness brought by the light of the sky above.

In this month of July we are probably planning holidays. Some holidays can be a frenetic rush, others are those occasions when we simply sit back and relax, letting what we see

around us bring refreshment and renewal. It is the way we are encouraged to savour the joy and delight of Scripture in what is called *lectio divina**. Monastic teachers compared it to cows grazing in the field. They pointed to four stages: *Lectio* – we take a bite of scripture; *Meditatio* – we chew on that word; *Oratio* – we savour its flavour and nourishment; and *Contemplatio* – we digest its goodness to feed body and soul.



The herd of cows in Albert Cuyp's painting have spent the day doing just that – grazing and ruminating in the fields nearby. The herdsman has brought them to the river to relax in the water. Soon they will take the journey home to the farm and the safety of the cowshed. Tomorrow will bring them the opportunity to graze anew in the gift of another day. Walt Whitman wrote in one of his poems, 'I think I could turn and live with animals, they are so placid and self-contain'd, I stand and look at them long and long.' As we stand and look at the cows in this painting, perhaps we may realise that whether at work or on holiday, in Sunday worship or Bible reading at home, God can feed us through His world around and in His word in Scripture. As long as we take the time and the care to savour the delights that He offers us.

**Lectio Divina is an approach to scripture that emphasises reading it prayerfully, slowly and with imagination. Ed.*

W CROSS R D

Solution on page 20

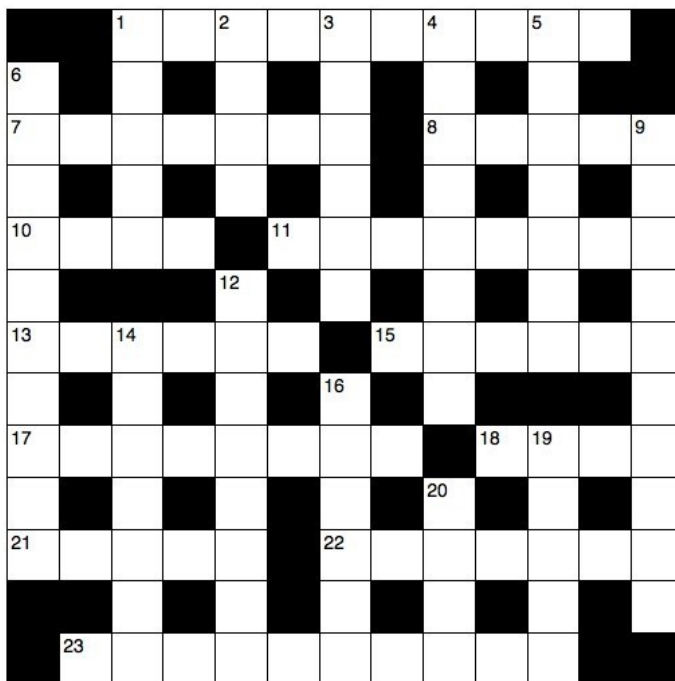
CLUES

Across

- 1 Relating to the Jewish day of rest (10)
 7 Point of view (Matthew 22:17) (7)
 8 20th-century Brethren philanthropist whose construction company became one of the UK's biggest, Sir John — (5)
 10 Girl's name (4)
 11 Peter was accused of being one in the courtyard of the high priest's house (Luke 22:59) (8)
 13 The fifth of the 'seven churches' (Revelation 3:1-6) (6)
 15 'Now the famine was — in Samaria' (1 Kings 18:2) (6)
 17 Banned by the seventh Commandment (Exodus 20:14) (8)
 18 Insect most closely associated with itching (1 Samuel 24:14) (4)
 21 Bantu tribe which gives its name to tiny landlocked country in southern Africa (5)
 22 Familiar material in churches that use an overhead projector (7)
 23 Last book of the Bible (10)

Down

- 1 The young David's favourite weapon (1 Samuel 17:40) (5)
 2 'Your vats will — over with new wine' (Proverbs 3:10) (4)



- 3 Once yearly (Exodus 30:10) (6)
 4 Milled it (anag.) (3-5)
 5 Region north of Damascus of which Lysanias was tetrarch (Luke 3:1) (7)
 6 Comes between Philipians and 1 Thessalonians (10)
 9 Lake where the first disciples were called (Luke 5:1-11) (10)
 12 Abusive outburst (8)
 14 Are loud (anag.) (7)
 16 Printing errors (6)
 19 'Take my yoke upon you and — from me' (Matthew 11:29) (5)
 20 Jacob's third son (Genesis 29:34) (4)

In our Book of Remembrance in July

- | | | | |
|------|------------------------|------|------------------------|
| 1st | David Smith, 2005 | 23rd | Evelyn Moore, 2004 |
| 5th | Selena Clare, 1965 | 27th | Thelma Karran, 2010 |
| 7th | Denis Haslam, 1983 | 28th | John Kent, 1995 |
| 9th | Leslie Holme, 1974 | 30th | Robert Hind, 1960 |
| | Tom Ball, 1994 | | Jimmy Beaumont, 2001 |
| 10th | Sarah Shaw, 1969 | 31st | Rosemary Quinton, 1998 |
| 11th | George Close, 1978 | | |
| 15th | Alan Burton, 1999 | | |
| 16th | Colin Johnson, 1979 | | |
| | James Turner, 1986 | | |
| 19th | Geoffrey Sanders, 1994 | | |
| 20th | Frank Pacey, 1969 | | |

If any of our readers wish to have the name of a deceased relative inscribed in the Book of Remembrance please contact Stuart Baker.

The character which we find in the Beatitudes is, beyond all question, nothing less than our Lord's own character, put into words. It is the description set side by side with an example. — *Billy Graham*

Canon Paul Hardingham continues his new series on the spiritual disciplines that help us to grow and deepen our faith. It will run throughout this year.

Spiritual Disciplines – Solitude

'Solitude is a time when we withdraw from the company of others in order to give God our undivided attention' (John Ortberg).

The spiritual discipline of *solitude* is about spending time alone with God, to grow in relationship with Him and hear Him more clearly. This practice was a priority in Jesus' life and ministry, especially at crucial moments eg *'Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where He prayed'* (Mark 1:35).

Solitude is not so much about what we *do* as what we *don't* do! If we want to hear God, we need to consciously shut out the external noise in our lives and focus on the quiet inside us. If we are honest, this can be a real struggle. We want to do it, but other things can so easily get in the way: distractions, tiredness, jobs that need doing, wandering thoughts etc. Solitude gives us an opportunity to enjoy God's presence, as somebody who we really want to spend time with.

Richard Foster (*'Celebration of Discipline'*) suggests some ways in which we might grow in this discipline:

'Little solitudes': small everyday moments to seek inner silence eg, coffee times, travelling to work and time spent outside.

Quiet place: having specific places where we go to be quiet, eg a room or special chair in our home.

Retreat: organising a retreat where we can have time in silence and solitude.

We need to plan carefully how we use our time with God, including silent listening, meditating on Scripture, prayer, journaling, taking a meditative walk, or listening to a worship CD.

'If we possess inward solitude we do not fear being alone, for we know that we are not alone.' (Richard Foster)



"It's not a new stained-glass window – the Youth Club put its skateboard ramp too close to the church's west wall!"



FRIDAY

Coffee, Cake & Chat

**14th July at 10.30am
in the church hall.**

**The coffee's great, the cakes are delicious, and
the chat ...well, that's down to you.**

And it's free.

Do come and join us.



UKRAINE EMERGENCY APPEAL

The destruction of the Nova Kakhovka Dam has displaced thousands of people. We urgently need your prayers, financial donations and donations of aid, so that our teams in Ukraine can help those in need.



Practical Aid Priorities List

Food: Pasta, rice, tinned meat, tinned fish, tinned veg, flour, cooking oil, salt, biscuits (with 1 year's best before date).

Medical: First aid kits, plasters, bandages, dressings, gauze, surgical gloves, antiseptic creams, paracetamol, ibuprofen, Calpol etc.

Toiletries: Soap, toothpaste, toothbrushes, flannels, shampoo, sanitary towels, nappies, incontinence pads.

Clothing and Footwear: for all ages.

Financial donations can be made through the 'Donate' page on our website www.internationalaidtrust.org.uk. For further information please contact the office tel: 01772 611000 Email: office@internationalaidtrust.org.uk

Charity Registration No. 1086597

The need continues ... please help

Leave your donations in the church porch any Sunday between 9.45-11.45am and we will get them to the local drop off point.

Don't take donations directly to the warehouse.

Please note we can only accept the smaller items from the list



Thank You

Dennis continues his research into the religious wars, terror, persecution, murder, rebellion and turmoil after the Reformation. It is his aim to show what was done in the past for the religious freedom we have today. What if this had never happened? Our world would be a different place today.

The Inquisition

The Inquisition was first used against the Moorish and Jewish inhabitants in the Iberian peninsular to those who refused to turn to Catholicism but was later extended to Pagans and Heretics. The intention was not only to scare the populace from abandoning Catholicism but also to bring new converts to the faith.

When Phillip became King he strengthened the use of the Inquisition in the Netherlands by appointing Spanish Bishops to punish Heretics, but bishops and Archbishops were not exempt from its effects as Phillip had decreed that the high and low were to be tried equally. He appointed an Inquisition. This enraged the Dutch and caused riots. These riots were put down ruthlessly and massacred without mercy by the Spanish soldiers in what became known as "the Spanish Fury."

Victims were tried by a bench of hooded monks, witnesses would be called but the accused was not allowed to respond nor have an advocate. Those who pleaded guilty could still be sentenced to death and their property confiscated to the state. Those who pleaded innocent were tried by torture. They were left in dark cells without food until weakened, then put on the Rack or a range of other instruments of torture. This would continue until they confessed. Torture would begin at midnight by masked torturers. Victims were stripped naked, male or female. There was no appeal against the sentence which was usually Death by burning, the dreaded Auto Da Fé.

Victims were then kept in cells to wait some special occasion. It was seen as a festive occasion. Victims would be fed and dressed in a yellow

gown with a white conical hat on their heads and go in procession led by small children. Victims, magistrates,



nobility, Church dignities and, lastly, the Inquisitors mounted on horses. Phillip is alleged to have remarked, "It was a Heavenly remedy, and doing the work of Christ."

Phillip went on to appoint an Inquisitor General to the Netherlands, the hated infamous Pieter Titelmans, and gave him the power over Bishops, Archbishops, Presidents, Sheriffs and Judges who were exhorted to render to him all assistance. He became known as Saul the Persecutor.

A boy victim on going to the stake prayed, "O God, eternal father, accept the sacrifice of our lives, in the name of thy beloved Son"

A Monk lighting the fire interrupted "Thou liest, scoundrel, ye are the devil's children. The boy continued, "look father, all heaven is opening and I see ten hundred thousand Angels rejoicing over us"; "Thou liest, thou liest" screamed the monk, "all hell is opening and you see ten thousand devils thrusting you into eternal flames".

In an account book the following register of accounts was found. "To Mr Jacques Barra, executioner for having twice tortured Jean de Lannoy, ten sous. To the same, for having executed by fire the said Jean Lannoy. For having thrown his ashes in the river eight sous."

This was the treatment which many thousands of subjects in the Netherlands had to undergo. This only fermented mutiny.

It is with thankful hearts we should be glad that Elizabeth 1st did not marry Phillip of Spain.

To be continued.

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or Anne 01704 571709

Can it really be that long ago?

75 years ago, on 5th July 1948, the National Health Service (NHS) began operating.
65 years ago, on 26th July 1958, debutantes were presented at the British royal court for the last time.

60 years ago, on 1st July 1963, the British government revealed that intelligence officer Kim Philby was a long-term Soviet spy and that he was the 'third man' in the Cambridge spy ring. On 30th July the Soviet Union announced they had granted him political asylum.

Also 60 years ago, on 12th July 1963, the Moors murderers, Ian Brady and Myra Hindley, killed their first victim, 16-year-old Pauline Reade, on Saddleworth Moor.

50 years ago, on 30th July 1973, pharmaceutical companies in the UK agreed to pay more than £20 million in compensation to about 400 children who were born with birth defects after their mothers took thalidomide during pregnancy.

20 years ago, on 27th July 2003, a team from the BBC reported that the Loch Ness monster did not exist.. They had combed every inch of the loch using 600 sonar beams and found nothing. *[Editor's note: just because they didn't find Nessie doesn't mean she isn't there!]*

15 years ago, on 31st July 2008, NASA reported that its Phoenix Mars Lander

had found frozen water in a soil sample taken from two inches below the surface of Mars.

10 years ago, on 19th July 2013, Mel Smith, British comedian and screenwriter, died. Best known for the TV comedy series *Not the Nine O'Clock News* and *Alas Smith and Jones*.



God in the Sciences

Dr Ruth Bancewicz, who is based at The Faraday Institute for Science and Religion in Cambridge, writes on the positive relationship between Science and Christian faith.

A Scientist Reflects: Suffering and the Image of God

During the cost-of-living crisis, Food Banks have become a necessity for many desperate families. When they are given food people reveal a variety of emotions: from relief, happiness, and hope, to quiet sadness, resignation, and desperation. Most often they display a mixture of several of these feelings at the same time.

I believe that our cries for answers at times like this, and our deep longing for things to be better, kinder, more just, less painful and chaotic, are a sign that we are made in the image of God. The Bible describes God creating men and women, instructing them to rule over the earth, and giving them the freedom to choose what they will do. The world God made was described as “very good”, but human wrongdoing caused a rift between people and God, and also between us and the rest of creation.

From a scientist’s perspective, it seems that the *potential* for accidents, disease and death – for both animals and humans – may have been part of God’s very good creation, and there was a real threat of famine, albeit far rarer than in our current mismanaged version of creation. How would we have managed life in what Genesis describes as an un-subdued world if our relationship with God hadn’t broken down, and evil hadn’t been unleashed? Maybe painful experiences would have been experienced as challenges that brought us closer to each other and to God, rather than bringing us the experience of suffering (which I would define more particularly as involving distress, isolation and fear)? Of course, these are theoretical questions that no one can answer, but perhaps they are worth exploring.

God has already responded to suffering at a root level by taking it on Himself. Through His death and resurrection, Jesus broke the power of sin and death. We do not yet see the final results of those decisive actions – the end of suffering for all those who trust Him – but we can already feel their impact. For example, many people have experienced the wonderful effect, either in their own lives or by receiving kindness from others, which is described by these words: “I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh” (Ezekiel 36:26).

Some of the people who receive food are, in the words of one community leader, “really desperate”, but yet they still trust God to meet their needs. My hope is that the worldwide Church will, with God’s help, be part of the answer to their prayers – demonstrating our true status as people made in the image of God.

CROSSWORD SOLUTION

ACROSS: 1, Sabbatical. 7, Opinion. 8, Laing. 10, Olga. 11, Galilean. 13, Sardis. 15, Severe. 17, Adultery. 18, Flea. 21, Swazi. 22, Acetate. 23, Revelation.

DOWN: 1, Sling. 2, Brim. 3, Annual. 4, Ill-timed. 5, Abilene. 6, Colossians. 9, Gennesaret. 12, Diatribe. 14, Roulade. 16, Errata. 19, Learn. 20, Levi.



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Sort Code: 60-20-11

Account Number: 86882120

the elderberries gardening club

The group meet from 10.30am-noon on **the second Wednesday of every month** at **St. John's Church** on St. John's Road in Birkdale.



social events.

The club offers talks from guest speakers, trips to historical houses and gardens, and

To find out more, email elderberriesgardening@gmail.com or call Shelley Lewis-Lavender on [01704 560690](tel:01704560690).

Welcome Spaces

Following on from Warmer Spaces, the Stationmaster's House will be open as a Welcome Space where people can gather for free in a safe, welcoming place to connect with others and enjoy a hot drink and a warm welcome.



We will be open every Thursday from 10am - 4pm as a Welcome Space.

Birkdale Community Hub & Library, 2 Liverpool Road, Birkdale. PR8 4AR.
01704 566992

Sefton Welcome Spaces

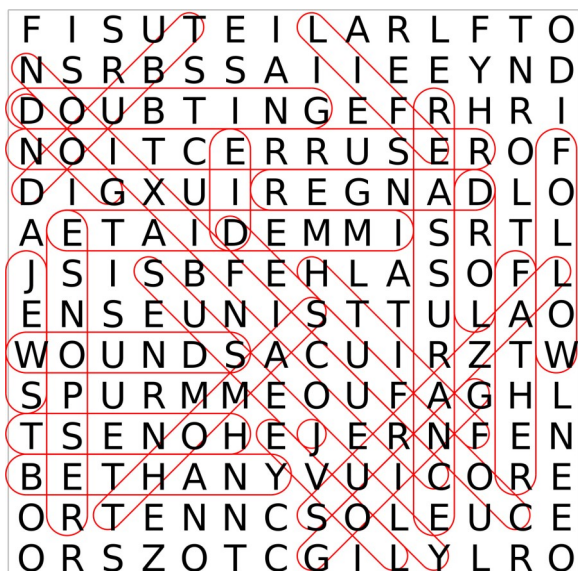
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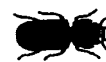
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A Life's Work Remembered

Henry Venn

Most Christians in the UK have heard of the Church Mission Society or CMS. Few have heard of the Revd Henry Venn (1796-1873), whose father, the rector of Clapham, founded CMS in 1799, and who himself became the greatest missionary strategist of the 19th century.

Not that Henry Venn ever became a missionary himself; after Cambridge he served his curacy at St Dunstan's in Fleet Street, and then an incumbency at Drypool in Hull, before becoming vicar of St Johns, Holloway in 1834. But Henry Venn's parish-based ministry did not obscure his passionate interest in overseas evangelism, and in 1841 he accepted an invitation to become the honorary secretary of the Church Mission Society. That decision was to shape the history of overseas missions, and to make CMS into the most effective force in Britain for delivering effective overseas mission.

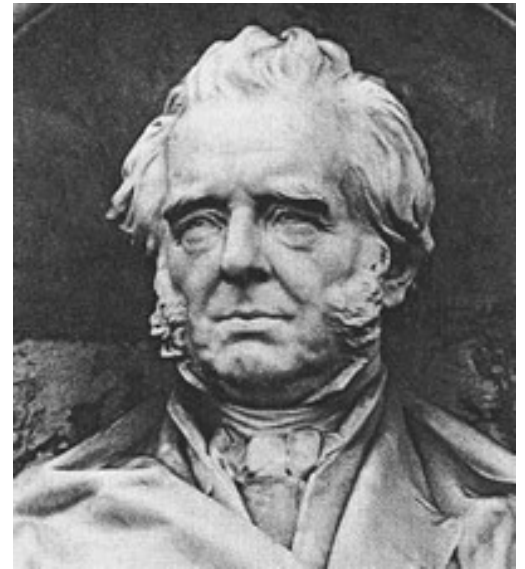
For Henry was an outstanding administrator, and his wisdom and management of the missionaries enabled CMS to grow and flourish. When Henry first began work on CMS, it employed 107 European clergy and nine local indigenous people. When he died in 1873, there were 230 European clergy and 148 local people in service.

After his resignation from St Johns Holloway in 1846, Henry devoted himself almost exclusively to the work of CMS. He was directly responsible for sending out 498 clergymen, all of them chosen by him, and with most of whom he continued in regular correspondence. He also established eight or nine bishoprics for the supervision of CMS missionary clergy and was usually involved in the appointments made.

Henry and a missions colleague in America were the first to use the term 'indigenous church', and they were way ahead of their time in seeing the necessity for creating churches on the mission fields that in time would become not only self-supporting, but also self-governing and self-propagating. In fact, Venn wrote with enthusiasm on this "euthanasia of missions," meaning that missionaries were only ever meant to be temporary, and not permanent.

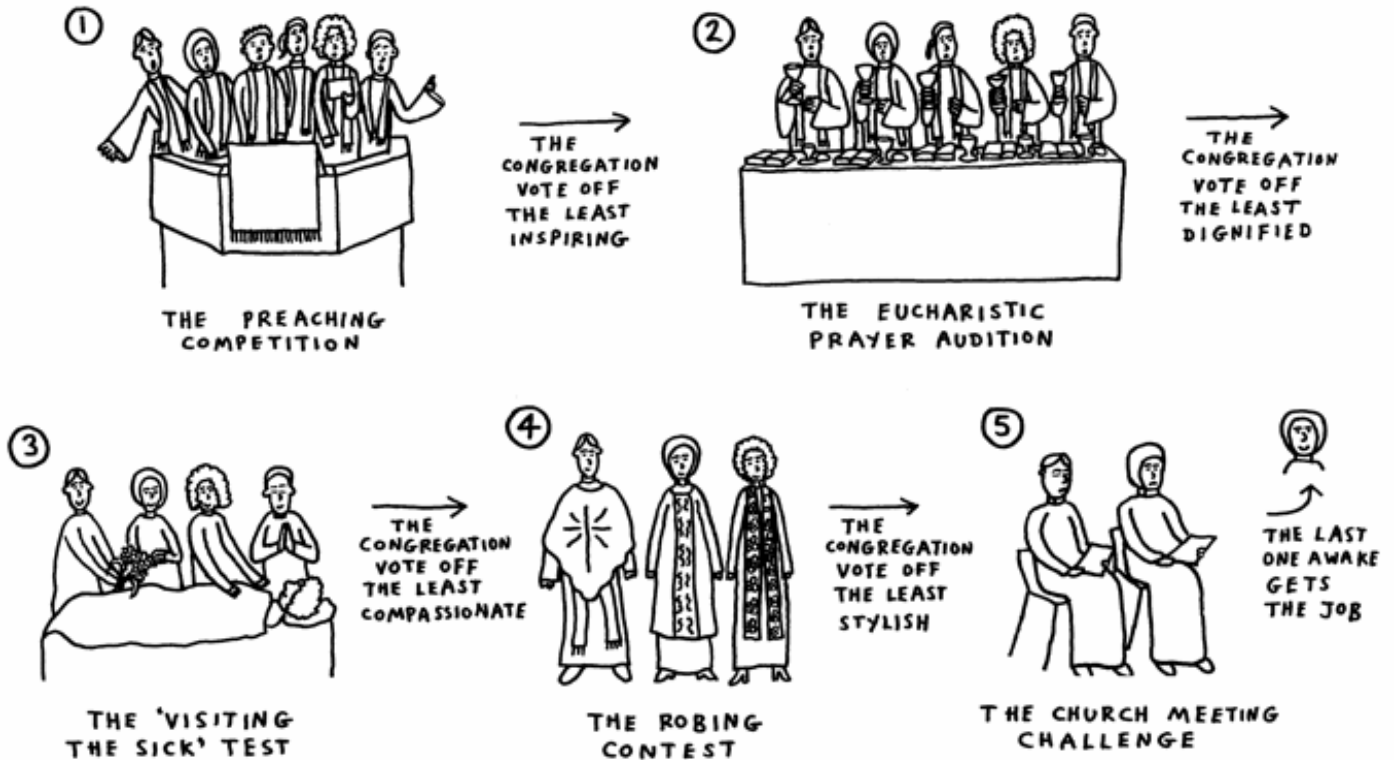
All in all, Henry Venn's exposition on the basic principles of indigenous Christian missions was so powerful that much of it was later adopted by the Lausanne Congress of 1974. But alongside Venn's passion for evangelism was his concern for social justice, and he frequently lobbied the British Parliament, especially about the closure of the Atlantic slave trade.

In 1873, when he was 76, Venn died at his home in Mortlake, Surrey. He is buried in the churchyard.



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THE PARADOX OF EVIL

by John M. Shakespeare

I was asked by a student during a lecture on behaviour how I defined Evil. My response was, I see Evil as the opposite of Good.

Behaviour which is helpful to someone in a verbal or physical way is Good, whilst behaviour which harms is then to be regarded as Evil. St. Augustine of Hippo (354-430), writes that Evil is not a force in itself, but comes from the lack of Goodness.

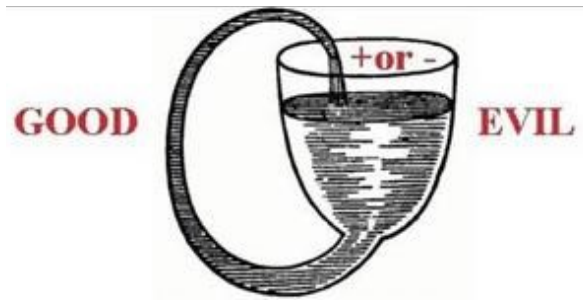
Hannah Arenot (1906-1975), argued that Evil actions did not come from a delight in being Evil but were in fact human failings in our ways of judging the rights and wrongs of any situation.

This thinking, she argued, did not mean no development of monsters, however, in carrying out Evil acts, something we all despise. It does beg the question of given the circumstances in which we find ourselves, are we all of the moral courage to withstand the temptations of satanic Evil actions.

Evil is therefore the price we pay for God allowing us the freedom of our will, but how this applies to the destruction caused by natural forces such as volcanoes, tempests, droughts and floods I am not clear about.

Rene Descartes (1596-1650), believed that Satanic powers were at large, that some malicious demons of utmost power were the sources of many of man's Evil thoughts and practices. An interesting comment on fighting Evil is made by Christopher Dawson (1889-1970): "As soon as men decide that all means are permitted to fight an Evil, then the Good becomes indistinguishable from the Evil they set out to destroy".

The causes and problems of Evil, are the questions we still seek answers to, and to look for possible solutions.



The suffering and hardships that are the unfortunate experience for many in this world, either from human action or natural causes, is a question of debate between philosophers. Pain may seem to be an attack of Evil on our bodies. Descartes argued that the sensory systems of the body through causing pain are nonetheless evidence of God's caring, since they are indispensable to the healthy working of our physical systems.

Manichaeism is a religion that originally came from Persia (nowadays Iran). They believed there was a never ending struggle between the forces of Good and Evil. The dark forces were those of Evil, and the goodness from the forces of light.

Within a person, Manichaeism believed Goodness came from our souls and Evil from the body with all its weaknesses that tempted us to stray.

A pithy saying by W. H. Auden (1907-1973), goes, "I and the public know what all schoolchildren learn. Those to whom Evil is done, do Evil in return". It is argued by some, that the existence and practices of Evil serve to bring about the best in us, as a response to that Evil. The idea is that true moral character and virtue are forged in the anvil of human suffering. It is only by overcoming adversity, helping the oppressed, and opposing the bullies and tyrants, that the real virtue and worth of the saint or hero is able to shine forth.

I end with the words of Alexander Solzhenitsyn (1928-2008), "The line dividing Good and Evil cuts through the heart of every human being. And who is willing to destroy a piece of his own heart".

Joining the Sunday morning services and Thursday evening prayers by zoom or by telephone

To join the **weekly Sunday morning services** by **ZOOM**:

The Identification Number every Sunday will be: 827 7997 1592

The Password every Sunday will be: 860066

To join the **weekly Sunday morning services** by **TELEPHONE**:

The telephone number you must ring is: 0131 460 1196

The Meeting Identification Number every Sunday will be: 827 7997 1592

When prompted to do so, enter that number and then press HASH (#)

The Password every Sunday will be: 860066.

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To join the **twice-monthly Thursday evening prayers** at 7.30pm by **ZOOM**:

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The Password every Thursday will be: 966358

To join the **twice-monthly Thursday evening prayers** at 7.30pm by **TELEPHONE**:

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BUT PLEASE CHECK YOUR CALL PACKAGE CHARGES WITH YOUR PROVIDER

IF YOU NEED ANY HELP: Please contact Clive (564206) or Sally (553977) or

Hearing the Word by telephone

If you would like to hear a recording of the Sunday morning talks telephone 0151-329-2184 at any hour of the day or night.

The calls are **free**. Each talk lasts about 15 minutes and is available for a week.

Each recording becomes available during the afternoon of the Sunday on which it is given.

General Synod dates and update on 'Living in Love and Faith' groups

The next meeting of General Synod will take place in York from Friday 7th to Tuesday 11th July. The July meeting will include a substantial item on the proposals, which emerged from the Living in Love and Faith process, to enable same-sex couples who have marked a significant stage of their relationship such as a civil marriage or civil partnership to come to church to give thanks, offer prayers of dedication to God and to receive God's blessing.

Following a landmark debate at Synod in February, a series of implementation groups have been set up to take the proposals forward including refining a set of draft texts known as Prayers of Love and Faith; working on new pastoral guidance for the Church of England and examining what pastoral reassurance will be required to ensure freedom of conscience for clergy and laity.

The Bishop of London, Sarah Mullally, and the Bishop of Truro, Philip Mounstephen, the co-chairs of the steering group overseeing the implementation groups, said: "We will be bringing a report to Synod updating in more detail on the progress that has been made.

"Recognising the complexity of the matters being considered, we anticipate that time could be made available at the November meeting of Synod for any further work required." The next group of sessions will be held in London from Monday 13th to Wednesday 15th November.

Church Hall Users (Note: with the exception of the Friday Film Nights the activities listed below are NOT run by St John's Church. They are run by independent groups who use our hall). Contact details are provided in case readers wish to enquire about or join these groups.

Monday

9:45am-10:30am (6weeks- pre-walking) and 11:00am-11:45am (6months - pre-school).

Moo Music Southport and Preston

Fun, interactive music classes for babies, toddlers and preschool age children.

Contact: <https://moo-music.co.uk/areas/sp/>

1.30pm to 3.30pm **Ainsdale Bridge Club**

Ideal for keen players of the game and those who want to improve their play within a friendly setting of duplicate bridge.

Contact: Dave Pountney 01704 577843 or via email:

jandavepountney@gmail.com

7.00pm to 8.00pm **Zumba@Fitness**

A fun and friendly class and a great workout.

No dance experience needed. All ages and all fitness levels welcome

Contact: Kay Bennett on 07716312909

Tuesday

4.30pm – 5.30pm **Kiwi Sports Coaching**

Tag Rugby class for boys and girls aged 5-7

School holiday classes sometimes available

Contact: shanehuttonnz@gmail.com

7.30pm – 9.00pm **Connected Voices Choir**

We are a non-audition choir for adults, singing a range of uplifting music – from pop and rock to soul and funk. We are open to anyone who loves singing, whether they think they can sing or not!

Contact: info@connectedvoices.co.uk or for more information visit the website

www.connectedvoices.co.uk

Wednesday

Morning, monthly class. **All Aglow Weaning Workshop**

Start your baby on solid food with confidence with an interactive, relaxed and informal class. Suitable for babies 4-10 months.

Contact: Jennifer@allaglow.co.uk

10.30 – 12 noon

2nd Wednesday of the month only. **Elderberries Gardening Club**

A social gardening club, where speakers are invited to talk on various topics, and visits and social events throughout the year.

Contact: Shelley Lewis Lavender on 01704 560690 or via email:

elderberriesgardening@gmail.com

7pm – 8pm **Functional Yoga**

Exploring joint mobilisation, functional movement and relaxation - suitable for beginners.

Contact Lindsay: 07747038613 or email lindsay@wobblytreeyoga.com

Thursday

11am - 12noon **Daisy Baby Tinies & Wrigglers**

A weekly baby class to help you learn tools such as baby massage, yoga, rhythm, rhyme, story and sensory experiences to help aid your baby's development with ease.

For all babies from 6 weeks old.

Contact: Emma Lowe – 07866926223

6.00-9.00pm: **St John's Rainbows (6.00-7.00pm) St John's Brownies (6.00-7.15pm) and Girl Guides (7.15-9.00pm).**

Contact: Janette Law 01704 565951

Friday

6.30-9.30pm Once per month **St John's Film Nights**

A chance to see some great modern films. Tea, coffee and homemade cake available.

Contact: Christine Baker 01704 560518

Saturday

7.30 – 9.00pm **Sequence Dancing**

Traditional & Modern Sequence & Ballroom Dancing. Beginners and experienced dancers welcome.

Contact: Phone or text: John Gaffney 07786 640683. Email: johngaffney3@icloud.com

★HAPPY★ BIRTHDAY!

To Stuart Harris on 2nd July
Sylvia Musgrove on 29th July

If there are any birthdays, anniversaries or other reasons to celebrate which our readers would like to share with others **DURING AUGUST** please let the Editor know by email to stjohnbirkdaletheword@gmail.com

The Last Laughs



The Computer Swallowed Grandma By Valerie Waite

The computer swallowed grandma.
Yes, honestly its true!
She pressed 'control' and 'enter'
And disappeared from view.

It devoured her completely,
The thought just makes me squirm.
She must have caught a virus
Or been eaten by a worm.

I've searched through the recycle bin
And files of every kind;
I've even used the Internet,
But nothing did I find.

In desperation, I asked Jeeves
My searches to refine.
The reply from him was negative,
Not a thing was found 'online.'

So, if inside your 'Inbox,'
My Grandma you should see,
Please 'Copy,' 'Scan' and 'Paste' her
In an email back to me.

Submitted by Shirley Wall

A farmer went to a county show and bought a talking parrot. He just had time to drop it off at his house before going out to milk his cows. On his return he went into the kitchen and smelt a delicious smell of cooking. On enquiry, his wife told him that she was cooking the chicken he had brought. "Chicken?" he shouted. "That was no chicken. It was a highly trained talking parrot." "Well" she replied, "if it was so clever why didn't it say summat?"



*Though the video clearly shows bread, wine, and balloons, it was definitely a service and not a lockdown party (Philip Lickley)
[From The Church Times]*



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