



THE WORD

Editor: Stuart Baker: stjohnbirkdaletheword@gmail.com



**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. 249

SEPTEMBER 2023

ST. JOHN'S PARISH CHURCH

God Centred, Relationship Driven and Life Transforming



The summer is drawing to its end, the rich aroma of autumn is in the air, children will soon return to school and we shall no doubt be reminded that there are a certain number of days (which really means shopping days) until Christmas.

At St John's we must feel pleased for the parishes of St James' and St Peter's who will welcome their new Vicar, the Rev Sam Johnson, on 10th September. We hope that he and his family settle in to their new home and parishes and are warmly received by their parishioners. We

look forward to our church working with him in spreading the Gospel throughout Birkdale.

Our church's revised Parish Profile has been sent to the Archdeacon and we hope that the vacancy at St John's will be advertised in September. We place our trust in God that at the right time the right person will be inspired to apply to become our Vicar.

During the autumn we shall have our annual Harvest Supper which will be in the church hall on Friday 22nd September. The meal will be a chicken casserole followed by apple pie and custard. Tickets are available from Sally Wright and Christine Baker. This will be an excellent time of fellowship in which we can be thankful for the plentiful gifts which God has provided to us all.

Our regular activities will resume in September: Bible Study, Growth Groups, Prayers on Zoom, and our Film Nights. We shall continue with our increasingly popular Coffee, Cake and Chat, and events for young adults. We hope to see you at worship on Sundays and at some of our social events.

**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) | Church of England | |
| Reader: | Mrs. Christine Baker (560518) | Children's Society: | Mrs. Sylvia Kent (564071) |
| Churchwardens: | Clive Morris (564206) Tim Wright (553977) | Mothers' Union: | Mrs. Linda Caton (564737) |
| Wardens' Assistant:: | Miss Lucy Wright (553977) | Girl Guides | Mrs. Janette Law (565951) |
| PCC Treasurer: | Mrs. Sylvia Kent (564071) | St. John's Brownies: | Mrs. Helen Jones and |
| PCC Secretary: | Mrs. Sally Wright (553977) | Brownie Guiders: | Mrs. Lesley Scott |
| Parish Hall Secretary: | Mrs. Jean Morris (564206) | St. John's Rainbows: | Mrs. Lesley Scott |
| Electoral Roll Officer: | Stuart Harris (563789) | Church Flowers: | Mrs. Cath Whiteside (568874) |
| Deanery Synod Reps: | Clive Morris (564206) Tim Wright (553977) Stuart Baker (560518) | Magazine Editor: | Stuart Baker (560518) |
| Safeguarding & Recruitment: | Mrs. Abbie Holden (07961003359) | Magazine Printer: | Mrs. Christine Baker (560518) |
| | | Notice boards, I.T, Website developer, Publicity designer: | Mrs. Sally Wright (553977) |
| | | Buildings Inspector: | David Halsall |

St John's PCC Update

The PCC has refreshed our Parish Profile and has submitted it to the Diocese so that we can advertise the vacancy of Vicar of the parish of Birkdale St John in September.

The PCC's next meeting will be held on Monday 11th September. The PCC Secretary is Sally Wright. If any members of St John's wish to bring anything to the attention of the PCC at that meeting they should contact Sally by 4th September. See "Any Other Business" on page 26.

A summary of the draft minutes of the meeting will be displayed on the noticeboard in the church porch soon after the meeting.

Together@7: suspended until further notice

In July the congregations of St John's, St James' and St Peter's were invited to take part in a survey in order to find out what our churches think about the Together@7 services. There were many different opinions amongst the responses but the underlying impression was that these services, in their current format, are not meeting the needs or wishes of many amongst our congregations. They have not attracted younger worshippers and most people who have attended have already been to a service at their own church during the morning. A group of leaders from St John's, St James' and St Peter's has decided that these services will be suspended in the near future but will be considered again when Reverend Johnson is installed as the Vicar of St James' and Priest in Charge of St Peter's. As always, you will be able to read further news about this in **THE WORD**.

Thursday Evening Prayers

After the summer break in August we shall resume the prayer sessions on **7th and 21st September on zoom**. The meeting start at 7.30pm and last half an hour. If there is anything which readers would like to be included in the prayers please contact Roy Doran, Christine Baker, Clive Morris, or Sally, Tim or Lucy Wright.

The number of those joining these prayer meetings has gradually increased. Do join us if you can. See page 28 for details about logging in on zoom by computer or by telephone.



St John's Church Birkdale

BIBLE STUDY GROUP

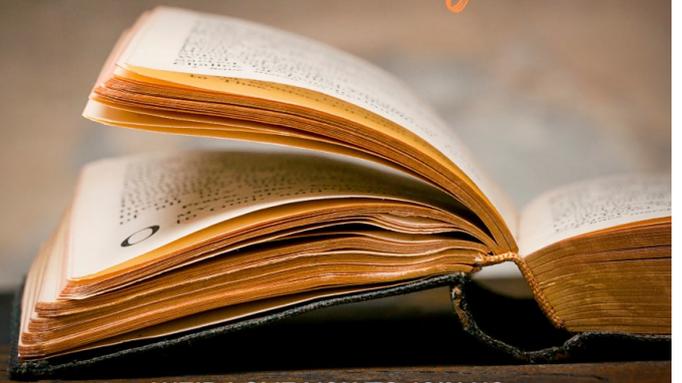
2nd & 4th
Wednesdays
2-4pm

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

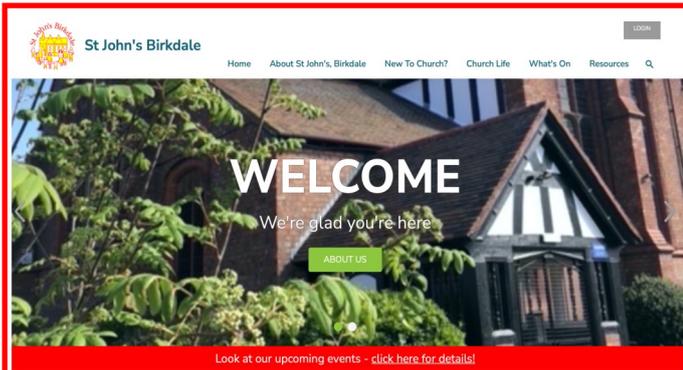
Coffee, Cake & Chat

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 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**

St John's Presents
FILM NIGHTS

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 Christmas Fair

Saturday 2 December 10-3pm

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 23th September
Bowling and Nando's

St John's Church, Birkdale

Worship on the
Thirteenth Sunday
after Trinity

**SUNDAY 3rd SEPTEMBER:
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 Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity

Almighty God, who called your Church to bear witness that you were in Christ reconciling the world to yourself: help us to proclaim the good news of your love, that all who hear it may be drawn to you; through him who was lifted up on the cross, and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

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

Assurance

The Reading: 1 John ch.5, vv.13-15

- 13 The man who was healed had no idea who it was, for Jesus had slipped away into the crowd that was there.
- 14 Later Jesus found him at the temple and said to him, "See, you are well again. Stop sinning or something worse may happen to you."
- 15 The man went away and told the Jewish leaders that it was Jesus who had made him well.



"St Francis would have preached to it" said Sheila.

**Barking mad... (That's just the dogs!)
Recently seen at Southport Flower Show**



Worship on the
Fourteenth Sunday
after Trinity

SUNDAY 10th SEPTEMBER
10.30am service IN CHURCH
and via zoom & phone.

Collect for the Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity

Almighty God, whose only Son has opened for us a new and living way into your presence: give us pure hearts and steadfast wills to worship you in spirit and in truth; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

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

Worship

The Reading: John ch.4, vv.19-30

¹⁹ "Sir," the woman said, "I can see that you are a prophet.

²⁰ Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem."

²¹ "Woman," Jesus replied, "believe me, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem.

²² You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews.

²³ Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks.

²⁴ God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth."

²⁵ The woman said, "I know that Messiah" (called Christ) "is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us."

²⁶ Then Jesus declared, "I, the one speaking to you - I am he."

²⁷ Just then his disciples returned and were surprised to find him talking with a woman. But no one asked, "What do you want?" or "Why are you talking with her?"

²⁸ Then, leaving her water jar, the woman went back to the town and said to the people,

²⁹ "Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Messiah?"

³⁰ They came out of the town and made their way toward him.

Worship on the Fifteenth
Sunday after Trinity

SUNDAY 17th SEPTEMBER
10.30am service IN CHURCH

Collect for the Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity

God, who in generous mercy sent the Holy Spirit upon your Church in the burning fire of your love: grant that your people may be fervent in the fellowship of the gospel that, always abiding in you, they may be found steadfast in faith and active in service; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

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

Warfare

The Reading: Ephesians ch.6, vv.10-20

10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power.

11 Put on the full armour of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes.

12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

13 Therefore put on the full armour of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.

14 Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place,

15 and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace.

16 In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.

17 Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

18 And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.

19 Pray also for me, that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel,

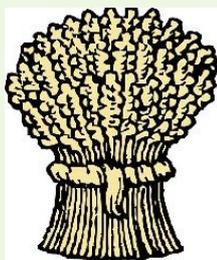
20 for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.



**Midweek Book of Common
Prayer Holy Communion**

WEDNESDAY
20th SEPTEMBER
10.30am service
IN CHURCH

Worship on the
Sixteenth Sunday
after Trinity
Harvest Festival



SUNDAY 24th SEPTEMBER
10.30am service IN CHURCH
and via zoom & phone.

**At this service we shall be joined by the
uniformed organisations**

Collect for the Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity

O Lord, we beseech you mercifully to hear the prayers of your people who call upon you; and grant that they may both perceive and know what things they ought to do, and also may have grace and power faithfully to fulfil them; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

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

Fruit

The Reading: Galatians ch.5 vv.16-26

16 So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.

17 For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want.

18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

19 The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery;

20 idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions

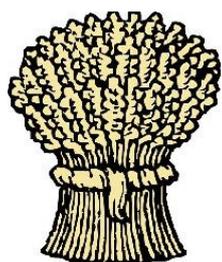
21 and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

24 Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

25 Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.

26 Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.



Harvest Gifts

Our older readers will remember the days when the Harvest Festival service took place in a church which was full of the heady aroma of recently harvested fruit and vegetables which were brought by worshippers and later distributed to needy people in the parish.

In recent years we have moved away from thanksgiving in that way and we now invite parishioners who wish to contribute to the Harvest Festival to provide produce which is either dried (packeted) or tinned food which can be given to the Soup Kitchen, or money donations to the Families Emergency Fund, or items which are on the list on page 12 for the relief of families in Ukraine.

Please: this time, no baskets of fresh fruit and vegetables, however delicious they may smell or how pleasing they are to the eye!

ST JOHN'S CHURCH BIRKDALE

HARVEST SUPPER

*Friday 22 September
@ 7pm in the hall*

**COME AND JOIN US FOR
CHICKEN CASSEROLE
AND APPLE PIE
BRING YOUR OWN DRINKS**

**TICKETS £10
FROM CHRISTINE OR SALLY**

Please let us know of any food allergies when booking

Harvest Thanksgiving *by Stuart Baker*

Where did it start and who started it? The Mermaid of Morwenstow

Avid readers of **THE WORD** will remember (or they can delve into their archived copies!) that in the September 2021 issue we reported that Harvest Thanksgiving services originated as recently as 1843 in a small parish in Cornwall. At the Editor's desk at **THE WORD** we know that this bare fact will not satisfy our inquisitive readers, so we shall now put some more flesh on the bones.

The creator of the service which has become part of the calendar for the last 180 years was **Reverend Robert Stephen Hawker** who was, according to a biography published by Reverend Sabine Baring-Gould in 1876, one of life's eccentrics.

Born in 1803 Hawker married at the young age of 19 (his spouse being 41) when he was an undergraduate. He is said to have been a prankster and one of the hoaxes which is recorded was when he was on vacation in Bude, Cornwall. One moonlit night in July 1825 or 1826 he swam or rowed to a rock a little distance from the shore, plaited seaweed into a long wig which he threw over his head, and enveloped his legs in an oilskin. Otherwise naked he sat on the rock flashing moonbeams from a hand mirror and sang and screamed until people walking on the cliff saw him and ran into Bude exclaiming that a mermaid with a fish's tail was sitting on a rock, combing her hair and singing. A number of people ran to the beach and listened to the singing and disconsolate wailing of the mermaid who dived off the rock and disappeared. This occurred again for several nights. People came from neighbouring villages to witness it. Eventually, Hawker became tired of it, his voice became hoarse with nightly singing, and he wound up his performance with a rendition of "God Save The King". Never again did the mermaid revisit the shores of Bude.



Hawker was ordained in 1831 and became the Vicar in the parish of St Morwenna and St John the Baptist at Morwenstow, Cornwall. There he was to be seen tramping around in a purple coat, bright blue fisherman's jersey, red trousers, huge weatherproof boots, a bright yellow poncho and a pink brimless hat. He described his attire as the habit of an Ancient Cornish saint (St Padran). He kept ten cats who followed him to church and which reportedly made up the majority of his congregation. He publicly excommunicated one of them for catching a mouse on the Sabbath. He also kept a black pig as a pet which he took on pastoral visits to the distress of genteel womenfolk.

He was a poet, and an opium smoker (those activities were not infrequently associated with each other in Victorian times, eg Coleridge, Byron, Keats and Shelley) and he paid with his own money for rebuilding works on the dilapidated vicarage.

On 1st October 1843 he held the first Harvest service as a way of getting his parishioners to come to church. Bread from the first cut corn was provided at communion. He wanted his congregation to thank God for providing such plenty. We might think that harvest thanksgiving has a history lost in time, but it is of relatively recent origin. Sadly, when so few people are now employed on the land, it is in danger of becoming a relic of a bygone times.

Source: Rev. Sabine Baring-Gould, "The Vicar of Morwenstow: A Life of Robert Stephen Hawker M.A." Inspiration: Fergus Butler-Gallie, "A Field Guide to the English Clergy."

St Matthew the Tax Collector

This month we remember Matthew's call as one of Jesus' 12 apostles. It consisted of a simple invitation, 'Follow me', and an immediate response. The resulting meal at Matthew's house also helps us to understand the challenge of his call.

Tax Collectors today are not the nation's most popular members of the community. This is unfair because they are only doing their job! But it has probably always been so. Very few of us enjoy seeing the taxman dig his shovel into our sack of hard-earned money.

In the time of Jesus, tax gatherers were the object of widespread dislike. They were bracketed with sinners. The tax collectors were wealthy men who paid for the privilege of collecting taxes in certain localities and they employed local Jews to do the actual collecting. These collectors were hated by their fellow Jews. They represented the foreign domination by Rome. They often overcharged people and pocketed the surplus. In the rabbinical writings they are classified with robbers. They were considered to be renegades, who sold their services to the foreign oppressor to make money at the expense of their own countrymen.

St Matthew was a tax collector, but Jesus did not treat him as an outcast. Jesus saw him sitting at the tax collector's booth. 'Follow me,' He told him, and Matthew got up and followed Him. (Matthew 9:9).

Jesus' welcome:

At the dinner many tax collectors and sinners came and ate with Him and His disciples. (10). Jesus welcomed each person unconditionally, in a way that most Jews would not! In the same way, Jesus welcomes us and shows us how we should welcome others. Our welcome cannot be conditional, expecting people to be like us or to behave as we expect.

Jesus' challenge:

When the Pharisees saw this, they asked His disciples, 'Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?' (11). The Pharisees were upset and avoided sinners, because they believed only the pure and untainted could have access to God. However, Jesus reminded them that they were witnessing God's love in action: 'It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but those who are ill.' (12). When God is at work in the lives of those we don't expect, we need to let Him open our hearts to embrace and encourage what He is doing.

Jesus' compassion:

But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice. For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.' (13). The Pharisees were so committed to keeping the law, that they had forgotten God's heart of compassion. Our religious practice is meaningless without love and mercy towards others.



Christian Aid has been working "around the clock" with its partners in Ukraine to make sure fresh water supplies are reaching survivors, after the Nova Kakhovka dam was recently destroyed. It is also providing humanitarian supplies to people who are displaced across, or who had to leave, the affected areas of southern Ukraine.

In its efforts to respond, Christian Aid has renewed its emergency appeal for Ukraine. Funds will go the charity's partners in Ukraine.

More details at: www.christianaid.org.uk/appeals. **And See page 12 for information.**



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



CHURCHES together in BIRKDALE

PRAAYER TIME

Meeting 1st Monday of the Month @ 10.30am

4 September - St John's Church hall

**2 October - Liverpool Road
Methodist Church**

6 November - 66 Hartley Crescent

4 December - 32 Hartley Crescent

**Please join us to pray for our
churches, community and
our future together**

WORD SEARCH

Solution on page 25

For some reason, the Church gives thanks for angels in September. The 29th is the feast day of Michael and All Angels. Since the days of Genesis, these messengers of God have been sent many times to intervene for the good in human affairs. Angels guarded the Garden of Eden, they led Lot away from Gomorrah, they helped Gideon, they stopped Balaam, they closed the mouths of lions for Daniel, and, most important, the archangel Gabriel was sent to tell Mary that she would mother the Messiah. Angels sat in the empty tomb of Jesus, and told of His Resurrection. Revelation is teeming with angels, sent on all sorts of missions by God in the last times. Today, many Christians in the world's hotspots report having had angels help them when in mortal danger.

| | |
|------------|------------|
| Thanks | Angels |
| Church | Feast |
| Michael | All |
| Genesis | Messengers |
| God | Sent |
| Intervene | Garden |
| Eden | Lot |
| Gideon | Balaam |
| Mouths | Lions |
| Daniel | Archangel |
| Gabriel | Mary |
| Mother | Teaming |
| Revelation | Danger |

A E E A E G N M M E D R D
O L N E D R A G O A D O A
L R F N R G H B A T R O N
S R E E S C H U R C H Y G
H I A V L E A H C I M E E
T D S R E G N E S S E M R
U A T E G L S T A D E L R
O N L T N B A L A A M G A
M I I N A E L T H A N K S
O E O I H A G N I M A E T
L L N V C G I D E O N T K
I O S G R M I C N D N E R
S H T N A R O G H N E I T

Coffee is Good For You

If you like coffee, then this is good news: it seems that coffee is quite good for you. For one thing, coffee contains chemicals called polyphenols, which protect against inflammation in the body and which repair damage to cells.

One study, known as the European Prospective Investigation into Cancer and Nutrition (Epic), found that people who drank more coffee were less vulnerable to a range of chronic illnesses.

Another study, at the University of Verona, found that it can help prevent a toxic protein called tau from clumping together – which might help in fighting Alzheimer's.

Coffee drinkers have also been found to have different species of bacteria in their gut microbiomes, compared with non-coffee drinkers. This is believed to be one of the strongest protective factors against colorectal cancers. Harvard University recommends two to five cups of coffee daily, and the NHS recommends that no more than about two and a half cups of coffee are consumed in one sitting, and no more than five cups per day.



When Doris met The King of Hollywood

From Our Own Correspondent, Doris Brookfield

I've just read **THE WORD** and it's always interesting and full of unusual articles. (Thank you Doris. We are so pleased that you enjoy reading it. Ed.) Reading about The Palace Hotel (July, issue 248) took me back in time.

When the civil service took over the Smedley Hydro my father was the head chef there, and he went then to be the head chef at the Palace Hotel in 1941.

In 1942 the American armed services took over the hotel. My father told us about some very famous people who came to help boost the morale of so many men such a long way from home. My mother took me to meet my father after his lunch had been served, and she left me sitting on a wall near the main entrance. A very tall man came out with lots of officers all in lovely uniforms. The tall man came up to me and asked me my name. I told him it was Doris and he said I was a lovely little girl. He then lifted me off the wall just as my mother and father came out, he told my father he had enjoyed his lovely lunch, and that he thought I was a lovely little girl. My mother just stood there in awe. When he got into the jeep waiting for him he waved to me. My other told me it was **Clark Gable**, who I had never heard of at that time.



A year later my father was asked to move with the officers as they were setting up an airbase in Essex and had taken over a Hotel in Braintree. They wanted my father to be the chef, so off we went to live there until the air base at Great Dunmow (which became Stanstead Airport after the war) was completed. It was an exciting time for the three of us. They had plentiful supplies of food, and things we certainly wouldn't have been able to have had because of rationing. My father stayed until the base was completed, then we came back to Southport. He became the chef at Marshall and Snelgroves, until he died in 1947.

My father said the waitresses fought for the stones out of the plums and custard which Clark Gable had eaten at lunch time. It was an exciting period in my life and created such happy memories of a very difficult time during the war. Years later I went to see "Gone with the Wind", and then I realised how famous that tall American dressed in an Officer's uniform was.

Footnote:

Clark Gable appeared in more than 60 motion films, the most famous of which was "Gone With The Wind" (1939). The role of Rhett Butler was declined by Gary Cooper who was convinced that the film would be a flop! Gable's acting career continued after that film but declined following the death of his wife, the screen actress Carol Lombard, in a plane crash in January 1942. Gable's military service commenced when he underwent training and was initially assigned to making motion pictures for the air forces. He saw active service as an aerial gunner in American bombers during 1943, achieved the rank of major and was awarded several military honours. He died of a heart attack in 1960 at the age of 59. In his own words: "We all got to go sometime, reason or no reason. Dying's as natural as living. The man who's too afraid to die is too afraid to live. " Ed.

Plan ahead with a Choice Funeral Plan



Choice Funeral Plans could provide peace of mind to you and your family

With our Funeral Plans:

- Fix Funeral Director Services costs which may go up or down in the future
- Record your personal wishes
- Contributions towards Third Party Fees and Additional Products & Services are optional
- Additional payments may need to be made for items not covered by the plan

For a brochure or more information call us or visit one of our branches:

Southport

1-5 Roe Lane, Southport PR9 9DR
01704 500 086

Ainsdale

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

On the Absurdity of a Vicar Ever Retiring

The Rectory,
St James the Least of All

My dear Nephew Darren,

Beware of being invited by bishops to drop round for a chat. My first mistake was to answer the phone when he rang; what are answerphones for, but to avoid having to talk to anyone – ever. My second mistake was not to be able to think of a meeting I had to attend – preferably on another planet – on the day he suggested.

I therefore found myself in his study this morning, waiting for the point of the meeting while we negotiated the obligatory five minutes discussing the weather and his summer holiday in France. I made it quite clear that I had been far too busy to swan off to foreign parts – although I suspect the implication of what I said passed him by.

We then got to the point. He was toying with the thought of my retirement and linking us with the adjoining parish of St Agatha's. I patiently explained, using simple words and speaking slowly for his benefit, that at 85 and with 40 years at St James the Least of All behind me, I was just getting into my stride and that the vicar of St Agatha's, a stripling at 63, had nowhere near enough experience to organise the hymn list, let alone two parishes. This, too, seemed to drift somewhere above his head.

He had clearly done his homework. There were already plans for my Queen Anne rectory to be sold and my five acres of garden be turned into a housing estate. This news would be received by our parishioners with as much equanimity as if they were told that Buckingham Palace was to be converted into a sports centre.

The matter, I was told, was confidential – which meant that I only relayed the news to one parishioner at a time. By the end of the day everyone in the village knew, and a counter attack was being planned. Inevitably, the most outraged were those who never attend church. People do so love having a church not to go to. Congregations have soared, gardeners are being brought in to tidy the rectory grounds, and the church council is now well attended. The latter is a mixed blessing, as I always think that the time to get worried is when people start to turn up to meetings.

It may surprise our bishop, but the threat of a merger has been the greatest impetus to mission outreach we've had in years. Retirement indeed! I'm sure Zadok was never asked about his pension plans.

Your loving uncle,
Eustace

Two professors were sitting chatting on a veranda overlooking the sea, watching the sun set.

The history professor asked the dermatology professor, "Have you read Marx?" to which the professor of dermatology replied, "Yes, and I think it's these pesky wicker chairs."

GOD in the Arts

The Revd Michael Burgess continues his series on God in the Arts with a look at 'Vase of Flowers' by Jan Davidsz de Heem, reproduced here via Wikimedia Commons,

In this month of September, we give thanks for God's blessings in all that the earth yields us. Those blessings are focused in this wonderful painting of Jan Davidsz de Heem. He was born in Utrecht in Holland in 1606 and studied art under his father's guidance. De Heem then moved to Antwerp, where for the rest of his life he created paintings of such beauty and depth that one of them – a portrait of Prince William III surrounded by blossoms and fruits – received the highest price ever paid for a painting at that time.

In the 'Vase of Flowers' de Heem has gathered together a bouquet of variegated flowers and plants for our delight. Time stands still in his painting in two ways. First, these thirty-one blooms could never have flowered at the same time, but through the magical touch of the artist, they do for us. Caught on canvas, they are as fresh and vibrant as the day they were painted in 1645.

But there are signs that the gifts of nature do wither and die, as we look closely and see on the marble slab a snail. Nearby is a salamander eyeing his next meal as a spider hangs on a thread from one of the flowers. In the centre, another snail looks at his food, the beautiful and rare red and white tulips.

Yet we look again and see also signs of new life: the reeds of wheat are symbols of the Eucharistic bread; the caterpillar and butterfly on the striking white poppy at the top are signs of resurrection; and the peas in their pod and the blackberries mark out the fruitfulness of creation.



The artist shows us a glorious range of flowers – some well-known, others more exotic and brought back to Holland through the colonial expansion of the 16th century. Tulips and poppies dominate, but to the left are some small-scented roses. Each is a testimony to the beauty and goodness of the world we live in.

A 100 years later, Christopher Smart wrote in 'Jubilate Agno': 'For the flowers are great blessings...for the flower glorifies God...for the flowers are peculiarly the poetry of Christ.' And 200 years later Gerard Manley Hopkins wrote: 'I do not think I have ever seen anything more beautiful than the bluebell I have been looking at. I know the beauty of our Lord by it.'

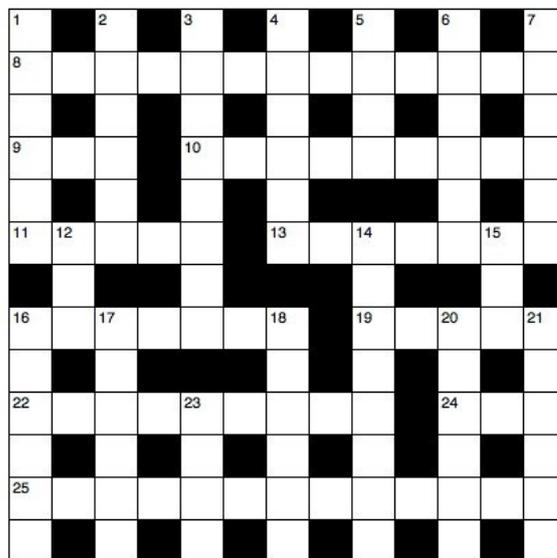
And we, in our own century, can echo poet and painter as we praise God, the author of such flowers and plants that make up a world of 'all things bright and beautiful.'

Parish Register

Baptism 20th August Lexi Rae McKenzie-Taylor

W CROSS R D

Solution on page 23



Across

- 8 Where the Ark of the Covenant was kept for 20 years (1 Samuel 7:1) (7,6)
 9 One of the parts of the body on which blood and oil were put in the ritual cleansing from infectious skin diseases (Leviticus 14:14-17) (3)
 10 Uncomfortable (3,2,4) 11 'Yet I have loved Jacob, but Esau I have — ' (Malachi 1:3) (5)
 13 Where Paul said farewell to the elders of the church in Ephesus (Acts 20:17) (7)
 16 'Jesus bent down and — to write on the ground with his finger' (John 8:6) (7)
 19 Prophet from Moresheth (Jeremiah 26:18) (5)
 22 Comes between Exodus and Numbers (9)
 24 and 2 Down 'Then Elkanah went home to Ramah, but the boy ministered before the Lord under — the — ' (1 Samuel 2:11) (3,6)
 25 There was no room for them in the inn (Luke 2:7) (4,3,6)

Down

- 1 Rough drawing (2 Kings 16:10) (6)
 2 See 24 Across
 3 Underground literature (including Christian books) circulated in the Soviet Union (8)
 4 Lo, mash (anag.) (6)
 5 The Bible's shortest verse: 'Jesus — ' (John 11:35) (4)

- 6 'Can a mother forget the baby at her — and have no compassion on the child she has borne?' (Isaiah 49:15) (6)
 7 Can be seen in a dying fire (Psalm 102:3) (6)
 12 'Send me, therefore, a man... experienced in the — of engraving, to work in Judah and Jerusalem' (2 Chronicles 2:7) (3)
 14 Second city of Cyprus (8)
 15 United Nations Association (1,1,1)
 16 One of the women who first heard that Jesus had risen from the dead (Mark 16:1) (6)
 17 Braved (anag.) (6)
 18 — of Evangelism, outreach initiative in the 1990s (6)
 20 'Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes and — in their own sight' (Isaiah 5:21) (6)
 21 'Neither — nor depth... will be able to separate us from the love of God' (Romans 8:39) (6)
 23 What Jesus shed in 5 Down (4)

In our Book of Remembrance in September

- 3rd William Halsall, 1945
 6th Douglas Whitehill, 2008
 Eileen Jones, 2020
 10th Kathleen Hewetson, 1987
 Alan Burdon, 2004
 14th Alice Lloyd, 2000
 15th Doris Perry, 1992
 17th Annie Stoker, 2001
 18th Harry Jones, 1975
 21st Barbara Carr, 2022
 22nd May Johnson, 1981

- 26th Margaret Ball, 1984
 Arthur Bredow, 1955
 27th Amy Madden, 2020
 28th William Welch, 1984
 29th John Taylor, 1993
 Margery Abbott, 2007
 30th Viola Marriner, 1978
 Norman Isherwood, 2011

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

We are sad to report the recent death of Philip Righton who was a member of our congregation many years ago. We offer our condolences to his family and friends.

Some of our congregation may remember that Philip was one of "two young men" (as the late Rev. Jack Harding described them in the Parish Magazine in July 1983) who were commissioned on Whitsunday 1983 to assist in the administration of Holy Communion at St John's. The other young man, who could no longer be described as such, is the current Editor of **THE WORD**.

From the Archives: Our Church Organ

Forty years ago, in the September issue of St John's Parish Magazine, the late Rev. Jack Harding wrote about the poor condition of our church organ. He said that his information was that the organ was installed in our church in July 1937 having previously been in use at a church in Lillington, Warwickshire. If that was correct, the organ had come from the mediaeval church of St Mary Magdalene. By 1983 the organ was said to have been over a hundred years old. At that venerable age it was suffering from metal fatigue and was in need of extensive repairs.

The Lancashire County Archives at Preston have a disappointingly small number of records relating to our church, but amongst them is a newspaper cutting from the Southport Visiter dated 27th January 1938 which reported that the PCC decided to purchase a reconditioned organ for £760.

In her history of our parish church, "The Church on the Common," the late Rosemary Quinton wrote that the organ had received an electric blower and was dedicated by Archdeacon Twitchett at a Gift Day service on 9th December 1937. At that service the Liverpool Cathedral organist with the delightful name Henry Goss Custard played a recital to demonstrate the efficiency of the embellishment. An inflation calculator suggests that £760 in 1937 might be the equivalent of more than £63,000 today but in case any of our readers think that we have an asset which we could sell for a handsome sum they should understand that there is not a ready market for old church organs now. Sales of old church organs are about as scarce as the organists who play them!

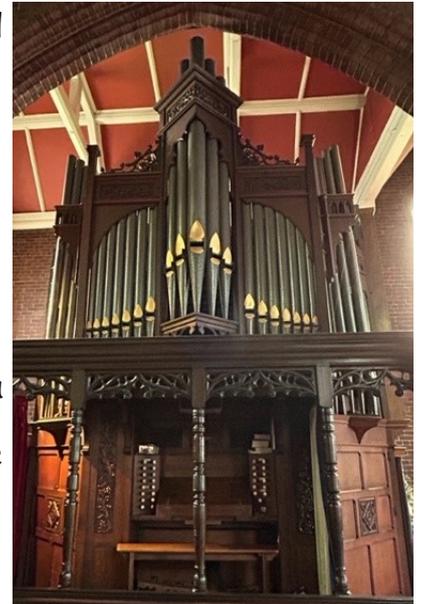
One of the earliest of St John's organists was Peter Jones who for many years was the master in charge of St John's School and also the choirmaster. He was succeeded by Mr Nightingale and later by Dennis Tinsley, Mr. Owen, Mr Upton,

Mr Dootson and (as we reported in the July issue) Frickie Walker and occasionally by Mr Brothwell.

In 1983 Rev Harding reported that the PCC spent a considerable amount of time thinking about the condition of the organ and decided that the sum of £7,000 (about £24,000 in today's values) was to be spent on a thorough overhaul which took six weeks. The bulk of the cost was provided by the sale of a property in Bedford Road which had been owned by the church.

The organ was made by Rushworths, a long-established Liverpool firm who are no longer in business. They went into liquidation about 20 years ago and, sadly, most of their records were destroyed. After the organ was restored it was played for many years by Julie Ann Carr and Valerie Warren. It is kept in good condition by an organ tuner, Howard Davies, who visits each year. It is now rarely played, except at Christmas and at funerals and weddings, but by arrangement Valerie Warren occasionally visits the church and plays it which helps to keep it in reasonably good working order.

Within the bowels of the organ are some bellow weights which suggest that it might have been made by Robert Hope-Jones, a British inventor, renowned organ maker and "the father of the (Wurlitzer) theatre organ" but as Hope-Jones was born in 1859 and our organ was thought by Rev Harding to have been over 100 years old in 1983 it seems unlikely that Hope-Jones had any part in making this organ. The bellow weights have probably been cannibalised from another instrument.





FRIDAY

Coffee, Cake & Chat

8th September 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.

A friendly chat over a cup of coffee and a homemade cake is becoming a regular occasion for more of us at St John's on **the second Friday of each month at 10.30am.**

In August we were joined by Doris and her daughter Adele who had come from Yorkshire, and Michelle brought two of her Three Musketeers. Children don't do much chatting but Jasmine amused herself with a jigsaw whilst Phoebe was a willing waitress.



It is a very pleasant hour or so, not challenging, not "churchy", but convivial.

If you have not been before why not come and join us?



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.

Rebellion

The Prince of Orange and three other nobles tried to calm the situation caused by some hotheads. Margaret treacherously offered clemency and tried to ease the situation but at the same time was strengthening measures against the rioters and the heretics in general. The city of Tornay (in north eastern France) was subjugated by troops sent to disarm the rioters. Margaret in her reports to Philip painted a darker picture and untruthfully claimed that Orange, Egmont and Horn were the heads of the Confederates and were planning to massacre all Catholics as soon as the King set foot in the Netherlands, and that they planned to carve up the Netherlands into four parts between Orange and two other nobles and give Flanders to the French. There was no truth in this. In fact Orange was still loyal to the King at this stage. However, Orange was beginning to have certain treasonable thoughts about the actions of Margaret and Philip as he recognised their treachery. Philip had informed Margaret that he was bringing foreign mercenaries to crush both Catholics and Protestants. Margaret said it was better to preserve some of the Catholic faith than lose it all.

The rebels, now emboldened, began to build their own Churches and used the debris from the Catholic Churches that they had sacked thereby enraging the Catholics. At one place a band of peasants easily put to flight Rebels armed with pitchforks, pikes, and rusty matchlocks. Remnants sought refuge in a grave yard but were driven into the nearby Church which was set alight. No one escaped.

The Prince of Orange was now rewarded for his efforts for peace; but all his earlier work for peace was

undone when the Regent ordered that all functionaries were to swear a new oath of allegiance. The prince described this as being equal to the Inquisition and refused to sign it and gave up all his offices.

Philip's mercenaries were now placed in all towns and billeted on the residents who had their effects stolen. Families were abused. This led to insurrection. In Antwerp there were three opposing factions, the fiery Calvinists, Lutherans and Catholics. Again the Prince was able to bring about a peaceful settlement between these factions, thus saving the City. Many Calvinists were to lose their heads or were burnt in later years. The Prince having given up all offices now left for his estate in Germany, Philip tried to get him to stay, but the Prince was warned: "Beware of Spanish honey." Philip had ordered his arrest.

With the Prince gone the people felt helpless and fled their homes, the fugitives were hunted down and cut to pieces. An increased number were executed for religious causes. They had called themselves Beggars. They were now really beggars. A new Proclamation was issued which was more rigorous than ever. Singing hymns or psalms and Baptisms outside the Catholic Churches were banned. Vagabonds, fugitives, apostates, runaway monks, and people sneering at priests could all face the death penalty and the confiscation of all their property. Thousands fled. Philip was enraged, not by this but because he saw these measures as clemency and too lenient when they should all have been burnt.

Only man could think of this kind of inhumanity, you may think things could not get any worse, but now worse was to come with a Spanish army being sent to invade the Netherlands under the Duke of Alba, (also known as Alba) who was one of the leading Generals at that time. His mission was to conquer heresy by force of arms; in a way resembling that used to conquer Mexico.

To be continued.

God in the Sciences

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

How Can a Christian be a Scientist?

I used to ask this question as a student. I wondered what it was like to have a career in science, and how being a Christian might make a difference. Eventually I met a good number of successful scientists who were sincere Christians, and I learned that science and faith are a great combination. Dr Francis Collins, former Director of the project to decode the whole of human DNA, wrote that it is “possible for the scientist-believer to be intellectually fulfilled and spiritually alive, both worshipping God and using the tools of science to uncover some of the awesome mysteries of His creation.” So, what do people like this make of the opportunities and challenges of a life in science?

Although our beliefs may affect what we notice about the world and how we interpret our data, they don't affect the outcome of the experiments themselves. If a Muslim and a Christian drop the same ball from the same height under identical conditions, it will fall at the same speed. This means that a scientist can be respected by her colleagues for doing good work, regardless of what she believes and what her colleagues think of her worldview.

Science is an exercise in observing and measuring things, and coming up with general principles about the way things are. The world has been declared by God to be ‘very good’ (see chapter one and two of Genesis), and exploring it is a way to express our gratitude to Him. Scientific discoveries can also bring a sense of awe and wonder that feeds into our worship. Some people don't want to get involved in certain lines of research because of ethical concerns. On the other hand, there are many issues that make Christians want to get stuck into new research that will help care for people and the rest of creation, such as medical research, ecology or developing appropriate technologies.

Organisations such as Christians in Science and the Faraday Institute gather together scientists who are also people of faith, and others who are interested in the subject. They come from a wide range of backgrounds, and express their beliefs in a variety of different ways. What they have in common is the conviction that you don't have to choose between science and God. As the young people in our churches prepare to return to their studies, online if not in person, let's encourage them that science (along with many other fields) is a great way to serve God.

CROSSWORD SOLUTION

ACROSS: 8, Kiriath Jearim. 9, Toe. 10, Ill at ease. 11, Hated. 13, Miletus. 16, Started. 19, Micah. 22, Leviticus. 24, Eli. 25, Mary and Joseph.

DOWN: 1, Sketch. 2, Priest. 3, Samizdat. 4, Shalom. 5, Wept. 6, Breast. 7, Embers. 12, Art. 14, Limassol. 15, UNA. 16, Salome. 17, Adverb. 18, Decade. 20, Clever. 21, Height. 23, Tear.

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 – Service

'Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you.' (John 13: 14-15).

We are all familiar with those requests for more to 'serve on a team' at church, whether the coffee rota or with the children. However, these can hinder our understanding of the spiritual discipline of service.

The discipline of service involves learning from Jesus' example, when He washed the disciples' feet. Like His disciples, we are all called to take the place of a servant and be willing to serve those around us. Richard Foster in *'Celebration of Discipline'* contrasts 'self-righteous service', human effort wanting to impress others and be rewarded, with 'true service', which is rooted in our relationship with Jesus and delights in the service itself.

In his book, Richard Foster highlights the value of small, everyday sacrificial acts of service which flow from the place of being a servant: *'service is not a list of things to do, though in it we discover things to do. It is not a code of ethics, but a way of living.'* He goes on to highlight a number of acts of service, including: hiddenness (working behind the scenes); small acts of service; guarding the reputation of others; being willing to be served ourselves; practising hospitality; listening and bearing the burdens of each other. We need to pray for wisdom and discernment, so that we know when to say 'yes' and 'no' to serving. If we say 'yes' too much we can easily find ourselves becoming bitter or burned out!

Why not make it your prayer each morning: *'Lord Jesus, if it would please You, bring me someone today who I can serve?'*

The Revd Dr Jo White continues her series on finding faith in the fabric of our church buildings.

Reflecting faith – pews and chairs

Many people think of pews as having been installed at the same time the church building was built (*at St John's, ours were. Ed.*), with occasional upgrades over time. But that's not always been the case. Originally church floors consisted of little more than stone flags or beaten earth on which grasses or rushes were laid as a renewable winter covering for cleanliness and insulation. Each year, in late summer, the old and rotten rushes were cleared out and new ones taken to the churches in carts. There are still a number of English towns, in particular in the north of England including Grasmere, Ambleside and Sowerby Bridge, that celebrate 'Rushbearing' each year.

The people stood for all the services. However, it was recognised that the infirm and elderly needed support, and stone benches - often backless – were placed by the walls for them. (*This may have given rise to the expression: "let the weakest go to the wall" but although this is a colourful and convenient explanation it is not supported by historical evidence. Ed.*) It was not until the Protestant Reformation in the 1500s that wooden pews were introduced for everyone to be able to be seated.

Naturally, people being people, there were pews and then there were pews! Society was organised in classes or hierarchies and the richer and more important folk had the best seats near the front so they could hear what the priest was saying and watch the service. One's place to sit was arranged by your place in Society, so the poorer and least important were at the back.

Sermons alone could be lengthy; two hours was not unusual, and if you could pay for privacy to doze off and some form of personal heating for winters, then clearly that made sense.

Making Donations to St John's through online banking

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Account name: Parochial Church Council of St John's Parish (Birkdale)

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.

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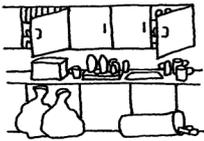
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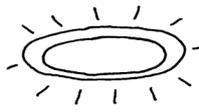
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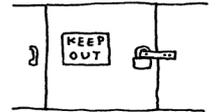
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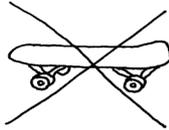
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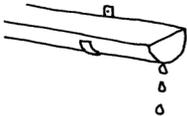
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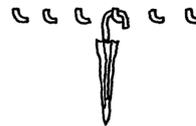
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MANAGING RISK

by John M. Shakespeare

Risk taking means sacrificing the certainty of an outcome for something that is, at best, going to be problematical in its return. Life is a lottery, so we are told, usually by those people who always seem to be the ones with the winning ticket. Generally speaking the bigger Risk will result in the greatest reward if things turn out as hoped for.

Low Risk ventures will bring small improvements but also low level stress. High Risk ventures, taken optimistically or misguidedly, can often bring greater rewards. Such Risks however take positive belief and professional and personal stamina to be seen through to a conclusion.

Technology provides a substantial threat to both our personal and national security, with Risks for us all. Our human liberties are at Risk with CCTV monitoring our every move, and are further breached by the latest NHS virus-tracking methods being tested to fight the corona virus threat. Our privacy is certainly at Risk of being invaded, and our human rights are at Risk of being breached.

Risks to our personal living are also being threatened by hackers, who endanger our financial dealings and also threaten our identity through our own computers, laptops and i-pads. The defence against these Risks is our passwords, which constantly have to be renewed.

May we somehow use what at first seems to be a liability, and turn it into an advantage? This would require discussing with any others involved the possible negatives and positives, and what the effects would be of success or failure. Never taking a Risk can lead to a state of inertia where you refuse to try anything new. Faced with two options people tend naturally to take

the safer option as against the riskier one. What seems to sway the choice of options is how the proposition is put to them, and by whom it is put.



With knowledge comes wisdom, Proverbs (Ch 24-Verses3-5), "By wisdom a house is built, and by understanding it is established, and by knowledge the rooms are filled with all precious and pleasant riches. Wise warriors are mightier than strong ones, and those who have knowledge are mightier, than those who have only strength".

So yes, let our Risks be weighed against what we have learnt, and the extent of the wisdom we have acquired.

We need to identify the source of the Risk we are contemplating and by this assess the nature of it. We can take into account the likelihood of the Risk turning into something less than favourable, and devise contingency plans to deal with the effects presented.

In the taking of Risks we must always keep in mind the possible consequences to others of our actions. We have the responsibility of deciding the level of Risk we are contemplating, and whether this is acceptable. Such considerations may lead our thoughts to consider what may be foolhardy or what may be regarded as sensible.

William Shakespeare (1564-1616): "To be or not to be, that is the question". This quotation from Hamlet's soliloquy epitomises our attitude to Risk. If you believe in yourself, and the feasibility of your ideas, reinforce your positivity by an unshakeable belief in the probability of you winning! Then the chances are, that you will win!

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.

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

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

The Identification Number every Thursday will be: 879 8059 1143

The Password every Thursday will be: 966358

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

The telephone number you must ring is: 0131 460 1196

The Meeting Identification Number every Thursday will be: 879 8059 1143.

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

The Password every Thursday will be 966358.

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

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.

How Sardines may help you Hear

Bertram Wooster often told his manservant Jeeves that fish is good for the brain. Jeeves was doubtful of the efficacy of fish as nutrition for his grey cells. But now it seems that seafood, and oily fish in particular, may be able to help you hear better. A new study has found evidence that consuming oily fish such as sardines, salmon and mackerel may help slow down the onset of deafness.



Scientists at the University of Guelph, in Canada, found that people with particularly high blood levels of DHA (Docosahexaenoic Acid), found in seafood which is rich in omega-3 fatty acids, were 16 per cent less likely to have difficulty hearing, compared with those who had low levels.

Scientists believe that the DHA may play an important role in signal transmissions between nerve cells, including the auditory nerves of the ear.

Some scientists suggest that we consider eating fatty fish at least three times a week, in order to increase our blood levels of DHA. This need not be expensive: according to the Cleveland Clinic, in the US, sardines – a tin of which cost just 47p at Tesco – contain some of the highest levels of omega-3 of any fish.

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

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

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.

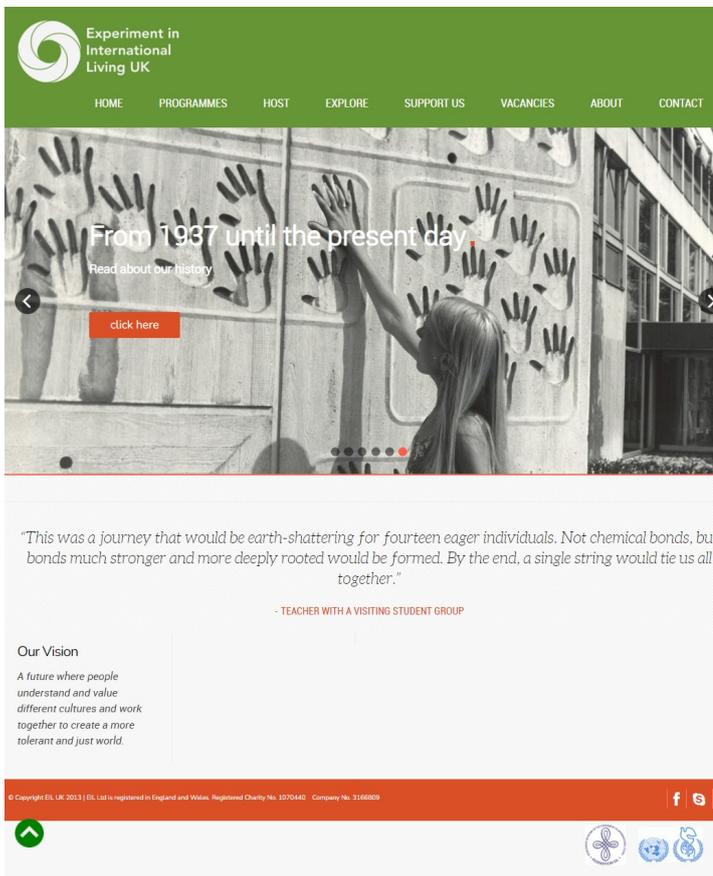
Contact: Phone or text: John Gaffney 07786 640683. Email: johngaffney3@icloud.com

Observations on everyday life

To me, old age is always 15 years older than whatever I am. - Anon

We have relatively few illiterates in the country, but millions of people who can't read the road signs. - Anon

It is surprising how many people unselfishly will neglect their own work, in order to tell you how to run your affairs. - Anon



Hosts Needed For International Students.

EIL is an educational charity and are looking for a number of host families for a group of German high school students studying in Southport from October 1st to 28th 2023.

This is a great opportunity to welcome a young person into your family to share British culture, your experiences and interests.

EIL UK offer a financial contribution towards expenses.

For more information about our charity please see our website at www.eiluk.org or mail Calvin at volunteer@eiluk.org

COMPASSION ACTS

Dear friends,

10 Years of Southport Foodbank

We celebrated this milestone recently. One of our trustees Rev Patrick Evans has written a blog post on our website based around his talk at the celebration service. "May we continue to offer outrageous grace as long as its needed"

Uniform Hub

A reminder that our Uniform Hub is open Tues-Friday 10am to 12noon at 17A Cambridge Walks for all your pre-loved school uniform needs. No appointment or referral is needed and you can bring an item with you to swap, make a small donation or take free items. It is for the whole community as so many of us hate to see waste and find ourselves being stretched to afford the very costly uniforms and sports kits. Donations of blazers from Y11 school leavers (good condition only) are welcome at this time of the year.

Sincerely in Christ,

Richard

"And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh" Ezekiel 36:26

Richard Owens, Chief Executive

01704 264505

Compassion Acts, Victoria Centre, 197A Sussex Road, Southport. PR8 6DG

www.compassionacts.uk

Registered Charity Number: 1172948

also a Limited Company registered in England & Wales: 10457781

★HAPPY★
BIRTHDAY!

To

Diane Rothwell on 2nd September
Phyllis Stuart on 12th September
Alf Quinton on 18th September

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

The Last Laughs



"Er... vicar – does the church have a position on the donation of GM vegetables for the Harvest Festival?"

Judicial putdowns:

At the end of a criminal trial in Ireland when the defendant was found Not Guilty the Judge discharged him with the words "You have been acquitted by a Limerick jury and leave with no other stain on your character."

Meanwhile, in England, a judge tried a case in which the evidence was considered damning by everyone except the jury. After the not guilty verdict the defendant's counsel rose to ask for his client's discharge. The judge replied: "Perhaps it would be kind to give him a moment or two to overcome his astonishment." Or, as a judge at Preston Crown Court once observed, the acquitted accused had received "a deliverance beyond his expectation."

Mr Justice Melford Stevenson (a hardline judge who named his house "Truncheons") appears to have had a dislike of the Midlands. He commenced one of his judgments: "The Plaintiff in this case lives in Birmingham, an incomprehensible choice for any man of free will, full age and sound mind to make." It must have gone down well!

Nelson Mandela: a Politician's Answer!
The late Michael Parkinson regarded his interview of Nelson Mandela as a career highlight. "Where is the famous BBC interviewer?" Mandela demanded. On being introduced he warned Parkinson that he was slightly deaf. "I hope, sir, you will hear my questions" said Parkinson, to which Mandela replied, with a benign smile, "I'll hear the ones I want to answer."



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