



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
Vicar: Rev. Jennie Hardy**

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. 272

AUGUST 2025

ST. JOHN'S PARISH CHURCH

God Centred, Relationship Driven and Life Transforming



Summer Holidays

In August many of us will be having some time away from our usual activities, either going away for a holiday or staying at home and relaxing. At St John's all of our church services will continue as usual but we shall have some time off from some of our other meetings. Jennie's Home Group will meet only, and for the last time, on 6th August. Roy's Bible Study group will not meet in August but will reconvene on 10th September. Godspeed will continue throughout August. And SPACE will continue (see the details on page 5).

What's New? Coming in September

A **new Growth Group** will meet on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month starting on 24th September at Jean and Clive Morris's home.

Starting on **Sunday 14th September** there will be a **weekly traditional Holy Communion service at 8.30am** in addition to our 10.30am services.

And on **Wednesday 24th September** a **new 10 week Alpha course** will commence, running until 26th November.

Coffee, Cake and Chat

For the last few years we have been offering coffee and cake and an opportunity to chat on the second Friday morning of each month. In recent times the number of members of our church and visitors attending on Friday mornings has diminished and it has been decided that after the August break it will not restart. We thank Christine Baker for baking many cakes for this over several years, and to others in our church who occasionally helped in a number of ways.

A Year after the Tragedy

For most of us life moves forward with a seemingly ever increasing pace, and it is hard to think that a whole year has elapsed since the tragic events of 29th July 2024 which will be forever a dark day in the history of Southport.

But for many, especially the families of the three innocent little girls who were killed and the other children and adults (some of whom received serious injuries) and their families who were traumatised by those events, part of their lives stopped on that day and many days will have been spent in anguish with time hanging heavily upon them.

At St John's, on the first anniversary, we kept our doors open all day so that anyone who wished to come in for a period of quiet reflection or private prayer could do so. During the day more than 70 people came through our doors and many lit candles in remembrance of all those affected by that dreadful day. We hope and pray that for those who came they found the time and the stillness and quietness in our church to be of some comfort.

Stuart Baker

**FOR ALL ENQUIRIES TO OR ABOUT ST. JOHN'S CHURCH PLEASE CONTACT US
BY EMAIL info@stjohnsbirkdale.co.uk OR PHONE THE VICAR: 07872 400718**

Hello **THE WORD** readers!

Trust

I'd like to begin this month's article with a question. When you stop for a moment and think of God's Word, the Bible, perhaps as you bring to mind some of



your favourite passages and stories, what image comes to mind? I encourage you to take a moment to do this before you continue reading....

For me the image that immediately came to mind is the story of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego found in Daniel 3, where King Nebuchadnezzar had thrown the three Jewish men into a blazing hot furnace because they refused to worship any other god than the one true God, YHWH. The image is taken from verses 24-25, 'Then King Nebuchadnezzar leaped to his feet in amazement and asked his advisers, "Weren't there three men that we tied up and threw into the fire?" They replied, "Certainly, Your Majesty." He said, "Look! I see four men walking around in the fire, unbound and unharmed, and the fourth looks like a son of the gods."

This story is a profound example of trust in God demonstrated by the three men, even the king reflected in verse 28, "Praise be to the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, who has sent his angel and rescued his servants! They trusted in him and defied the king's command and were willing to give up their lives rather than serve or worship any god except their own God."

The three men's response to the threat of King Nebuchadnezzar was complete trust in God saving them one way or the other, they said in summary, "our God will deliver us from the furnace and even if He does not, we will not worship any of your gods or statues." They had a profound trust in God delivering them in a real and physical way that most people would think impossible but they even demonstrated an overwhelming trust in God's will by standing their ground even if they were not saved, they were willing to trust God in the face of certain death. The soldiers who took them to the furnace were killed by the heat of the furnace but these three faithful men walked around in it, met by and protected by God.

For them to have such faith surely they must have seen Him intervene in such ways before, this was before Daniel was thrown into the Lion's den so we could presume that they inspired Daniel's act of trust that we read later in the book of Daniel. God made a habit of intervening and saving His people when they trusted in Him and the people had real events to remember that instilled in them such unwavering trust.

We are blessed that we have the whole Bible at our fingertips, so we are also enabled to read and be inspired by these amazing encounters, of which this story is just one.

I wonder what image came to your mind? Do you see an act of trust displayed in it or as a result from it?

The most important event we can reflect on which should instil whole trust in us is the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, perhaps it was this image which came to mind for you. God has not stopped intervening to save His people. He did once for all at the cross and subsequently, He walks in the 'fire' of life with all of us through His Spirit. In a sense, we are all examples of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego now, because God is walking with us through the salvation bought at the cross.

There's a song by Hillsong called, Another in the Fire that encourages us all to have this level of trust in our God. The chorus goes:

"There was another in the fire Standing next to me,
There was another in the waters Holding back the seas,
And should I ever need reminding Of how I've been set free
There is a cross that bears the burden Where another died for me."

I heard a story recently about lambs. Occasionally when a ewe gives birth to a lamb, she rejects it and if the shepherd tries to reintroduce them she may even try to kill it. So the shepherd must intervene and look after the lamb or the lamb would die, not from starvation but from a broken spirit. A few times a day the shepherd will pick up the 'bummer' lamb as they are known, hold it close and talk to it. When the lamb is grown enough the shepherd sends it back to the flock.

Then every morning when the shepherd goes to the flocks and calls them it is always the bummer lambs that come running first. Because they know His voice and trust him they are the first to respond to his call. It's not that the shepherd loves them more than the others, but that they know they can trust him and can freely come to him without fear. When we know Jesus, when we know that he has cared for us and held us close and talked to us as our good shepherd we can discern His voice and trust in Him and step into unknown situations knowing that He is with us and whether we face hardship or not we know we can trust the outcome because He has already intervened for us, He has already provided the ultimate protection, He walks with us.

I leave you with this image, of the wee bummer lamb being held and comforted by the good shepherd. That lamb is us.

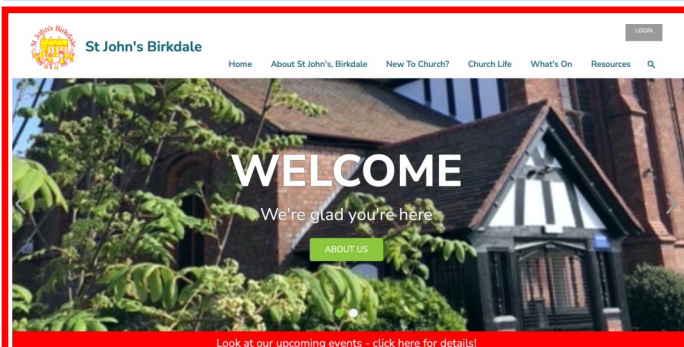
Be blessed this summer.

Love, Jennie xx

WHO'S WHAT AT ST. JOHN'S

Vicar:	Rev. Jennie Hardy (07872 400718)
Priest (retired):	Rev. Roy Doran (572387)
Reader:	Mrs. Christine Baker (560518)
Churchwarden:	Clive Morris (564206)
PCC Treasurer:	Mrs. Amanda Potts (07530 950100)
PCC Secretary:	Mrs. Christine Baker (560518)
Gift Aid Secretary:	Mrs. Sylvia Kent (564071)
Parish Hall Secretary:	Mrs. Jean Morris (564206)
Electoral Roll Officer:	Stuart Harris (563789)
Deanery Synod Reps:	Clive Morris (564206) Stuart Baker (560518)
Lead Safeguarding Officer & Recruiter	Stuart Baker (560518)

Transport Officer:	Mrs. Jean Morris (564206)
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 (07732 993025)
Magazine Editor:	Stuart Baker (560518)
Magazine Printer:	Mrs. Christine Baker (560518)
Buildings Inspector:	David Halsall (07790 822343)
Eco Champions:	Mrs. Elizabeth Rothwell and Duncan Rothwell (564192)



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**



Making Donations to our church through online banking

The church's bank details are:

Account name:

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

Sort Code: 60-20-11

Account Number: 86882120

WHAT'S ON AT ST. JOHN'S



Pray Together

Thursday @ 7.30pm
on Zoom

Meeting ID: 83550743780

Passcode:
7ehHEK

The prayer meetings are on the **1st and 3rd Thursdays** each month and last half an hour. This month they will be on **1st & 15th August**. If there is anything which readers would like to be included in the prayers please contact Jennie Hardy, Roy Doran, Christine Baker or Clive Morris. Do join us if you can. See page 28 for details about logging in on zoom by computer or by telephone.

GODSPEED

INDOOR CYCLING CLASSES

TUESDAY 7.30PM
THURSDAY 6PM
FRIDAY 9.30AM



Scan to book!

STJOHNSBIRKDALE.CO.UK

UPCOMING EVENTS

14 JUNE SUMMER FAIR 10AM - 3PM	12 JULY STRAWBERRY TEA 3PM - 5PM	19 SEPTEMBER COUNTRY & WESTERN NIGHT 7PM	26 OCTOBER HARVEST CELEBRATION 12PM	15 NOVEMBER COLOUR PARTY 7PM
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5 - 6 DECEMBER
CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL & FAIR

Having a break during August. Starts again on 5th September

Jolly Tots

Every Friday from 9th May
1pm - 2.30pm

For tots, babies & bumps
St John's Hall, St John's Road, PR8 4JP

Connect with other parents and bring your little one for nursery rhymes, dancing, play, stories and more.

CONTACT
info@stjohnsbirkdale.co.uk
stjohnsbirkdale.co.uk
07872 400718

WHAT MORE IS ON AT ST. JOHN'S

SUMMER SPACE

open to adults and children
accompanied by an adult

A 'Space'
to be creative & chat in the
community



St John's Church Hall
St John's Road, PR8 4JP

TUESDAY 22ND JULY

POTTERY PAINTING

3PM - 5PM

TUESDAY 29TH JULY - CANCELLED
CHURCH OPEN 8AM - 7PM FOR
PRAYER & REFLECTION

TUESDAY 5TH AUGUST

COME & COOK!

SWEET TREATS
2PM-4PM

TUESDAY 12TH AUGUST
PAINTING WORKSHOP
GET ARTY!

2PM - 4PM

TUESDAY 19TH AUGUST

WEAVING ACTIVITY - LEARN TO WEAVE

2PM - 4PM

TUESDAY 26TH AUGUST

COME & COOK

SAVOURY SNACKS
2PM - 4PM

TUESDAY 2ND SEPTEMBER

GET CRAFTY

2PM - 4PM

Refreshments, games &
tots play area
provided.

For More Information

stjohnsbirkdale.co.uk

Info@stjohnsbirkdale.co.uk

Suggested Donation £3 per participant

Spaces limited to 30 children please book on our website or in person.

COME AND JOIN US!



WHAT'S ON WEDNESDAYS

AT ST JOHN'S

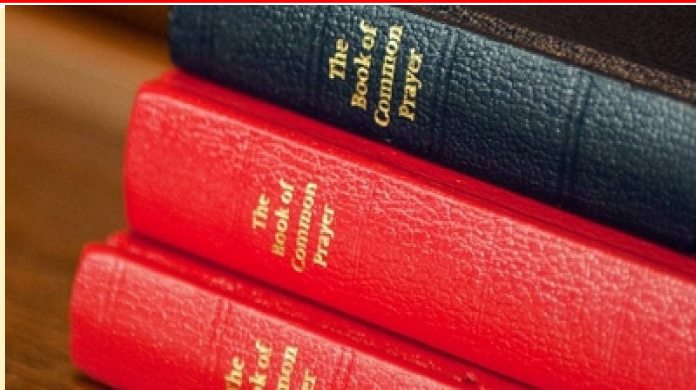
WEDNESDAYS 6th & 20th AUGUST

MIDWEEK COMMUNION SERVICE

There will be a Midweek traditional Communion service at 10.30am in church on **Wednesdays 6th and 20th August**.

On 6th August the service will be followed by Brunch: do stay and enjoy fellowship and a bite to eat.

On 20th August the service will be followed by tea, coffee and biscuits.



Wednesday
6th August



Growth

HOME
GROUP

@ the vicarage - 17 Kirkstall
Road PR8 4RA

food. fellowship. fun.

revjenniferhardy@gmail.com

Please note:

This will be the last Growth Group meeting at The Vicarage.

A new Growth Group will meet at Clive and Jean Morris's home on 2nd and 4th Wednesdays in the evenings commencing on 24th September. Further details will appear in the September issue of **THE WORD**.

Transfiguration, by Canon Paul Hardingham

'There Must Be More to Life Than This'. These words from Freddie Mercury of Queen will resonate with many of us, when we are looking to get more out of life, even as Christians. At a deeper level, we want to see and hear more clearly what God is doing in our circumstances. The Transfiguration of Jesus, which we remember this month, helps us to consider this issue (Luke 9:28-36).

Jesus was transfigured alongside Moses and Elijah, 'As He was praying, the appearance of His face changed, and His clothes became as bright as a flash of lightning.' (29). To understand our circumstances, firstly we need to see Jesus as God wants us to see Him. The disciples' eyes were opened to see Jesus' divinity. The presence of Moses and Elijah confirmed Him as God's promised Messiah. By helping us to grasp who Jesus really is, this event powerfully calls us to entrust our lives into Jesus' hands to experience His presence and power.

Secondly, if we are to make sense of our circumstances, we need to hear what God says about His Son. A cloud covered them and 'a voice came from the cloud, saying, 'This is my Son, whom I have chosen; listen to Him.'" (35). God affirmed His love and call on Jesus as His beloved and chosen Son. Do we hear God speaking these same words to us? When we know that we too are loved and accepted by God, this transforms our understanding of our lives.

Whatever our circumstances, they can be transformed by what we see and hear. Open your eyes to see a transfigured world. Open your ears to hear a transfiguring voice. Open your heart to become a transfigured life.

'No one who meets Jesus ever stays the same' (Philip Yancey)

Worship on the Seventh
Sunday after Trinity & Holy
Baptism

SUNDAY 3rd AUGUST
HOLY COMMUNION
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
Christine's talk:**

**Fruits of the Spirit:
Goodness**

The Text: Galatians 5: 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.

**MIDWEEK TRADITIONAL
COMMUNION SERVICE**

**Brunch will be served
after the service**



**WEDNESDAY
6th AUGUST
10.30am
IN CHURCH**

Worship on the Eighth
Sunday after Trinity

SUNDAY 10th AUGUST
10.30am service **IN CHURCH** and via
zoom & phone

Collect for the Eighth Sunday after Trinity

Lord God, your Son left the riches of heaven and became poor for our sake: when we prosper save us from pride, when we are needy save us from despair, that we may trust in you alone; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The subject of Jennie's talk:

**Fruits of the Spirit:
Faithfulness**

The Text: Genesis 12: 1-4 & 10-13

1 The Lord had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you. **2** "I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. **3** I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you." **4** So Abram went, as the Lord had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he set out from Haran.

10 Now there was a famine in the land, and Abram went down to Egypt to live there for a while because the famine was severe. **11** As he was about to enter Egypt, he said to his wife Sarai, "I know what a beautiful woman you are. **12** When the Egyptians see you, they will say, 'This is his wife.' Then they will kill me but will let you live. **13** Say you are my sister, so that I will be treated well for your sake and my life will be spared because of you."

Worship on the Ninth Sunday
after Trinity

SUNDAY 17th AUGUST
10.30am
IN CHURCH and via zoom & phone

Collect for the Ninth Sunday after Trinity

Lord of heaven and earth, as Jesus taught his disciples to be persistent in prayer, give us patience and courage never to lose hope, but always to bring our prayers before you; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

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

**Fruits of the Spirit:
Self control**

The Text: Matthew 4: 1-11

1 Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. 2 After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. 3 The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread." 4 Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" 5 Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. 6 "If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down. For it is written: " 'He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, 7 Jesus answered him, "It is also written: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'" 8 Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendour. 9 "All this I will give you," he said, "if you will bow down and worship me." 10 Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'" 11 Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.

**MIDWEEK TRADITIONAL
COMMUNION SERVICE**
Tea, coffee and biscuits will
be served after the service



**WEDNESDAY
20th AUGUST**
10.30am
IN CHURCH

Worship on the Tenth Sunday
after Trinity & Holy Baptism

SUNDAY 24th AUGUST
10.30am
IN CHURCH and by zoom and phone

Collect for the Tenth Sunday after Trinity

Gracious Father, revive your Church in our day, and make her holy, strong and faithful, for your glory's sake in Jesus Christ our Lord.

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

**Fruits of the Spirit:
Gentleness**

The Text: Psalm 23: 1-3

1 The LORD is my shepherd, I lack nothing.
2 He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters,
3 he refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for his name's sake.

Miscellaneous observations on life

You know you're a bad driver when Siri says, "In 400 feet, pull over, stop and let me out."
You know you're getting older when you begin to realize that your parents were right, after all.

You can learn many things from children. Like, how much patience you have.
The most fattening thing you can put in an ice cream sundae is a spoon.

And finally....

Be careful to be good, or you'll end up in the minister's sermon.

Worship on the Eleventh Sunday
after Trinity

SUNDAY 31st AUGUST
9.45am
AT ST. JAMES' CHURCH

This is the fifth Sunday of the month and as usual we shall be joining in worship with the congregations of St James', St Peter's and Liverpool Road Methodist Church.

The service will be at St James' Church on Lulworth Road, commencing at 9.45am.

Refreshments will be served after the service.

The Nicene Creed: The Incarnate Jesus

Canon Paul Hardingham considers a bedrock of our Christian belief: that Jesus is the Son of God.

'For us men and for our salvation He came down from heaven; by the power of the Holy Spirit. He became incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake He was crucified under Pontius Pilate; He suffered death and was buried'

In this study we are looking at what the Nicene Creed says about the ministry of Jesus on earth.

'For us men and for our salvation He came down from heaven': Jesus came down to earth to save us all.

Salvation involves healing and rescuing us from the wrong things in our lives, which result in death itself. The Creed demonstrates the importance of having a proper understanding of Christ that safeguards the gospel of salvation. *'For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.'* (Luke 19:10).

'by the power of the Holy Spirit He became incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and was made man':

Although the word *'incarnate'* doesn't appear in the New Testament, it expresses the meaning of Jesus' birth. Heresies of the time included Adoptionism (i.e. Jesus became God's Son only at His baptism) and Docetism (i.e. Jesus appeared to be human, as a fully divine being). The incarnation affirms that the divine son, was conceived in Mary's womb by the power of the Spirit and born in time as a human being: *'The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy One to be born will be called the Son of God.'* (Luke 1:35). If Jesus was not conceived both fully divine and human, the Christian understanding of salvation is lost.

'For our sake He was crucified under Pontius Pilate; He suffered death and was buried':

In the Creed we move straight from Jesus' birth to His death, which is the climax of His ministry. Jesus dying for our sins on the cross lies at the heart of God's plan of salvation. The mention of Pontius Pilate roots our faith in history and reminds us of the important part people played in God's plan. *'He himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by His wounds you have been healed.'* (1 Peter 2:24).

What is the place of the incarnation in your understanding of the Christian Faith?

St John's Prayers for those in need

We believe in the power of prayer and we are eager to include as many people who currently need prayer in our twice monthly prayer meetings and on the screen on a Sunday. We aim to keep the prayer list current and to receive regular



updates on people who need longer term prayer so that we can pray meaningfully at the zoom prayer meeting. Names will be on the list for a month at a time, so the lists will be refreshed at the beginning of each calendar month.

If you would like to be on the list for September **please let Rev. Jennie know** with a current update of why you would like prayer so that we can use that information on a Thursday.

If you would like to add someone else to the list, provided you have asked their permission, then pass their name, and any other information on why they would like prayer, to Jennie.



The hard core fans were at the back, playing air-organ




Give to Church

Give cash, use the card reader
at the back of church or
give regularly and most
efficiently through the
Parish Giving Scheme



Scan to learn more



FILM NIGHTS

12th September
10th October
21st November
12th December

Our copyright licence does not permit us to advertise the titles of the films outside our church or by publications. A list of films will be displayed on the noticeboards in the church, and details can be requested from Christine.

Contact Christine: 01704 560518
Start: 6.30pm with hot drinks & Cake
For which we charge £5

St John's Hall, PR8 4JP

Why Me?

A poem by Penny Candlin

Because no one else is like you
You are unique
You are special
Why Me ?
No one else has the same skills that you have
You are valued for who you are
You are loved
Why Me?
No one else fits the job like you
You are chosen
You are called
Why Me?
You are precious
You are redeemed
You make all the difference
Why Me?
You are the light to guide others
Why Me?
Because God Loves You.

From the Parish Registers

Holy Baptism:
20th July Dolly Rose Instone

St John's church welcomes Dolly Rose into the family of Christ.

In the event of Medical Emergency at St John's:

We have two trained First Aiders: Rev Jennie, and Janette Law.

If neither of them is available there are two points of contact: Clive Morris and Stuart Baker. They are not trained First Aiders but if they are available they can be contacted and they will contact the emergency services if necessary or give access to the First Aid kit which is kept in the church hall kitchen.

We have a Defibrillator machine. This is in the entrance lobby in the church hall next to the door which opens into the corridor leading to the church.

Instructions for use of the Defibrillator are contained in the machine.

We recommend that worshippers and other visitors to our church should carry a mobile phone with them. We do **not** have a payphone in the church or hall.



A TRULY INSPIRATIONAL VICAR

In recent issues of **THE WORD** we have had some fun looking into the extraordinary lives of some historical clergymen who, we suggest, would probably not enter or last long in holy orders now.

This month we take the opportunity to remember the life and works of a priest who was an inspirational man of our time and who passed away on 29th June after fighting valiantly for several years against a terminal illness.

The Revd Alexander Galbraith was the Vicar of our neighbouring parish of St Francis of Assisi in Kew. We remember him well at St John's because in the period when we were without a vicar in active service from September 2018 until the outbreak of covid in March 2020 he conducted our 9.00am Holy Communion services on many occasions. Alex was blind (since birth) and as if that did not present sufficient difficulties for him he conducted our 9am services and then returned to his own parish to lead worship there. His short sermons at our church were always, and without exception, interesting and stimulating. His opening words would always make me sit up and pay attention. He preached from the heart and his sermons were always appreciated by our congregations. He would speak for five, or at the most ten, minutes and what he said was pertinent and often wryly amusing and quite punchy. He was a pleasure to listen to.

Alex had received an excellent education from five years old at a boarding school for the blind, where the teachers had all the skills and resources to help him. His father died very suddenly two days short of Alex's 17th birthday and his growing Christian faith sustained him in that loss.

He was a graduate of Queen's College Oxford, achieving a MA with Honours in Modern History. His time at Oxford ended with a 900 mile tandem ride from Land's End to John O'Groats to raise money for a children's hospice. After the ride, Alex was recommended by the Church of England to study for Ordination. But, before he did that, in a gap year, he worked as a volunteer in a community for leprosy sufferers and other people with different mental and physical needs. That was a formative experience, testing and strengthening Alex's faith.

Later, after studying at Wycliffe Hall theological college, he came to Southport to a curacy at Emmanuel Church with the area Dean. He met his wife Avon and they were married in August 1992. After another curacy at St Matthew and St James in Mossley Hill in Liverpool he returned to Southport, and to St Francis of Assisi, where Alex was the Incumbent until his death.

Alex was Chaplain to Southport Hospital for 14 years and at Queenscourt Hospice for more than 20



years, always helped by Avon, particularly when called out at night to pray for those who were dying. He served on the Diocesan Synod, the disability awareness group, Sefton area committees and has been the Sefton Mayor's Chaplain twice.

Alex was well known for his fundraising work and did several daredevil stunts to raise money over the years, including white water rafting, abseiling from Liverpool Cathedral Tower, a stunt plane flight over Blackpool, pot holing in Gaping Gill, climbing Mount Snowdon and cycling from his Church in Southport to Liverpool Cathedral and back on a tandem. He also raised money for his church by reading from the Bible, by braille, for many hours.

Alex spent his life focused on helping others and dedicated his time to trying to make things better for his local community. His faith was key to that and it is fair to say that the numerous people who knew him were all left with good memories and a lasting friendship.

Alex was truly inspirational. His parishioners and all who knew him will miss him, and our Deanery will be the poorer for his loss.

Stuart Baker

Source material: Andrew Brown of "Stand up for Southport" whom we thank for giving permission to include some material from his obituary of Alex.



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

On the Annual War of Pumpkin Growing

The Rectory,
St James the Least of All

My dear Nephew Darren,

Anyone who thinks that the English are a peaceful race has obviously never organised the annual pumpkin growing competition. Very regrettably, one of the Pilgrim Fathers sent a handful of pumpkin seeds to a relation in this parish in the 17th century and ever since, the church has been obliged to hold an annual competition to see who can grow the largest. I suspect some of the original recipients of those seeds still compete. There is a certain irony that the church, which is supposed to promote peace and harmony, sponsors the most war-like activity in the annual calendar.

Mobilisation starts at the beginning of the year when seeds are planted. From that moment on, every other potential entrant is regarded as the Enemy. Once seedlings are planted out, then heavy armaments are placed at boundaries to deter possible invasion. By late Spring, paranoia has taken over and rumours begin to circulate of espionage and sinister undetectable herbicides. Anyone in the village with a beard is looked on with deep suspicion.

In the weeks before the competition, homes, partners and children are abandoned, as contestants talk to their pumpkins by day and snuggle up with them at night. Should bad weather arrive at this point, then I am blamed for not having prayed sufficiently fervently for sunshine and light rain. If only I had such influence.

On the day before the show, tables are put out and woe betide anyone who places their cake stand where Mrs Cholmondeley has put her tea urn for the past 25 years; she now believes she has squatters' rights to that place, and any challenge to her claim would probably result in litigation.

I find this competitive spirit a little bemusing, as for the last 25 years, the Earl of Stowe has always won first prize. That his mother, the Dowager Countess, is the judge, is, I am sure, pure coincidence. That she has arrived for the past three years with a white stick and accompanied by a golden Labrador does, however, raise doubts.

To award the Earl any prize at all does seem a little unfair, when the only time he ever gets mud on his boots is when he falls off his horse while hunting. I suspect he would be hard pressed to find where the kitchen garden is on his estate. But to give any credit to his gardening staff would be seen as bad form, so we all keep quiet.

It has been tentatively suggested that another judge should be appointed, but no one has so far had the courage to step forward. They may have the privilege of nominating the winner, but they would also have to face a 12 month period of hatred from all those who were not successful. Christmas card lists will be amended. Families may have sat next to them in church for generations, but would suddenly find it more congenial to worship in another part of the church. Letters would be strangely mis-delivered, and the butcher's boy would suddenly deliver lamb when pork had been ordered. Who could dare to take on such a poisoned chalice?

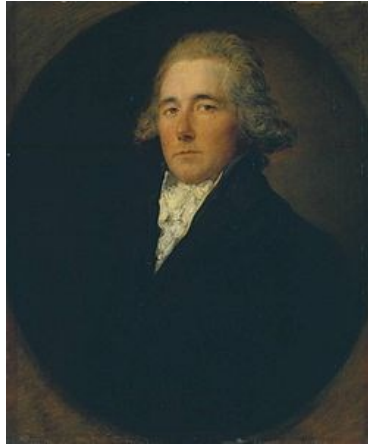
Your loving uncle,

Eustace

COLOURFUL CLERGYMEN

Continuing our excursions into the extraordinary and unexpected lives of some clergymen in the past we look this month at one who became known, with good cause, as “The Fighting Parson.”

Henry Bate (who in later life was made a Baronet and added the name Dudley to his own, thereby becoming Sir Henry Bate-Dudley) was born in 1745, the son of a clergyman. His childhood is not recorded but when he went up to Oxford University it became clear that he was not suited to an academic life. He neglected his studies and failed to graduate. By 1772 he had entered into holy orders and became a curate at Hendon where he became dedicated to getting on in “society.”



Sir Henry Bate-Dudley, painted by his friend Thomas Gainsborough

His willingness to fight came to light when he took offence by the way in which some young foppish men (known at that time as “macaronies”) were looking at his female companion when they were walking in Vauxhall Gardens. Whilst uttering a volley of invectives he called them “impudent puppies” and challenged one of them, Captain Crofts, to a fight. Crofts accepted the challenge, but when he saw Bate limbering up he must have thought that discretion was the better part of valour and he perhaps wisely chose to apologise rather than fight. Meanwhile, another fop named Fitzgerald, claimed to have been offended by Bate and required Bate to fight Fitzgerald’s servant, one “Captain” Miles. A fight took place in a tavern resulting in Miles being badly beaten and Bate acquiring the soubriquet The Fighting Parson. There then followed a protracted exchange of correspondence through the pages of “The Morning Chronicle” in which Bate and Fitzgerald accused each other, in the polite language of 18th Century gentlemen, of lying and ungentlemanly conduct.

Bate became the editor of a gossip sheet “The Morning Post” in which he wrote a very inflammatory article about the Countess of Strathmore which resulted in him being challenged to a duel with pistols. Bate won the duel in which fortunately there were no fatalities. He was later sacked from editing The Morning Post, which resulted in him having another duel, this time with the proprietor of the publication. Later, he created his own, rival, gossip sheet “The Morning Herald” in which he falsely alleged that the government’s Minister for Ordnance, the Duke of Richmond, was opposed to strengthening England’s defences. This scurrilous allegation resulted in Bate being prosecuted for libel and following his conviction he was sentenced to 12 months imprisonment.

Whilst in jail he bought the rights to present a vicar to the parish of Bradwell. When the incumbent died Bate used the purchased right to present himself for appointment as the vicar. This led to further court

proceedings in which the Church accused him of the sin of simony (the buying and selling of spiritual things such as church offices). The case was protracted and in order to finance his case Bate wrote bawdy comic musical material for theatres in the Covent Garden area of London.

Life was clearly becoming very difficult for Bate and he moved to Ireland for about eight years, returning in 1812 to be the Rector of the parish of Willingham in Cambridgeshire.

His colourful life continued. He was a keen huntsman and on an occasion when a fox clambered up on to the roof of his church he climbed up after it, carrying foxhounds under his arms, and finished the job. He is said to have quipped, later, to friends that “the fox died without the benefit of clergy.”

Notwithstanding his past life he became a Magistrate. Anyone who applies for judicial office now is asked “is there anything in your past which might embarrass the Minister of Justice.” Even past motoring offences can be a bar to judicial appointment. Bate’s history of fighting, duelling, libelling, and imprisonment was not regarded in those days as of sufficient magnitude as to obstruct his elevation to the Bench, and in 1813 he was knighted for his services as a Magistrate.

In 1816, in his role as a Magistrate and as, by then, Canon of the Cathedral of Ely, he organised the local militia who had been attacked by rioters who were protesting about the enclosure of fenlands, low pay, high food prices, and unemployment amongst men who had returned from fighting in the Napoleonic Wars. Bate-Dudley, as he now was, led a charge against the rioters who were quelled. The courts meted out severe sentences, including death and transportation, to those who had been involved in the rioting.

Bate-Dudley moved in celebrity circles. He married the sister of a famous actress and was a friend of the famous actor David Garrick. It has been conjectured that the expression “wonders never cease” was attributed by Garrick to Bate, but this appears to be wrong as the expression had been in circulation from at least a century before. But “wonders never cease” might be a fitting epitaph to Sir Henry Bate-Dudley who died in 1824 at the age of almost 80. Few clergymen have ever been less suited than he was to common perceptions of the meekness of clergy. It is an odd feature of human nature that despite, or perhaps because of, his colourful past his death was quite widely mourned. The great writer Dr Johnson compared him unfavourably to a highway robber and said of him that although he had courage he had no merit whatsoever!

Stuart Baker

Source materials: Essex Family Histories; “A Field Guide to the English Clergy” by Fergus Butler-Gallie; University of Michigan Digital Library Collection; Wikipedia

Let's Do It Ourselves... if we can

In recent weeks some of our congregation have started to do jobs in and around the church which create some *esprit de corps* and which save the church a lot of money.

The church hall boiler house had asbestos panels on the ceiling. These have been removed by a specialist contractor at a not inconsiderable cost, and the panels have been replaced with plasterboard, and a new light has been fitted, by Andy and Will Dean, Stuart Baker and David Halsall. This has saved the church more than £400.

We have reduced our reliance on commercial cleaners who now only clean the church hall. Cleaning the church is done by volunteers: Joe and Genevieve Blackburn, Andy Dean, Colin Jackson, Judith Foster, and Christine and Stuart Baker. This may save the church in the region of £2000 in a year,

There are plenty of jobs which need doing from time to time. Weeding the flowerbeds, the car park and the areas behind the church hall needs to be done from time to time. Trimming the bushes in the church gardens is overdue. Occasional cleaning of the play equipment in the play area between the church and the hall needs to be tackled.

If **you** can help occasionally please do not be too shy to volunteer. Christine will be pleased to include you on the cleaning rota and Stuart will be delighted to have your help when we Do It Ourselves. We are only a phone call away! Contact us on 560518.



The Canterbury Tales

Stuart Baker revisits some of these stories in search of their moral lessons. This month look we at another of Chaucer's stories. And who could be better to tell a tale than

The Man of Law

This is a very long story which, in the interests of brevity, I shall condense. The Sultan of Syria heard about, and was captivated by, descriptions of Lady Constance, the beautiful daughter of the Roman emperor. The Sultan decided to have her for his wife but, being a Muslim knew this would be impossible so he converted to Christianity and required his subjects to do likewise. The marriage was arranged. Constance was close to despair at leaving her family, friends, and Rome, but being a dutiful and faithful daughter, she commended herself to the journey, relying upon "Jesus Christ who died for our salvation". Meanwhile, the Sultan's mother, who would rather die than give up her religion for the sake of a foreign girl, arranged with her councillors to pretend to accept the new religion until the wedding feast, at which time they would attack and slay the Christians. This they did, but Constance escaped on a well-provisioned ship and spent a year roaming the sea until it landed in Northumberland, where a constable and his wife

Hermengild found Constance and took her in.

A young knight saw Constance and was filled with lustful desires. Spurned, and manipulated by Satan, the knight killed Hermengild and left the murder weapon in Constance's bed. The constable took Constance before the king, Alla, who sentenced Constance to death but made the knight swear on holy books that she was guilty. The moment the knight swore to her guilt, he was struck dead, and a voice saying that the king had unjustly judged a disciple of Christ was heard. Awe-stricken, the pagans converted to Christianity. King Alla and Constance fell in love and married. While the king was away at war, Constance gave birth to a beautiful son. But the king's mother, Donegild, an evil and vicious woman, falsely told Constance that the king's will was to have the child destroyed. Horrified, Constance sailed away with her son and steered her vessel to Rome. She had lost her memory and did not recognize her homeland, and she lived in obscurity. The grief-stricken King Alla made a pilgrimage to Rome to seek penance. While in the company of the noble senator, he saw a child who bore a strong resemblance to Constance. He soon after learned of the circumstances of Constance's arrival and, going to her dwelling place, repudiated the false messages and convinced her of his love for both her and their son. After their joyous reunion, Constance, miraculously regained her memory, knelt before the emperor and confessed that she was his daughter. Alla and Constance returned to Northumberland, but within a year, Alla was dead. Constance and her son returned to Rome, where the child, upon the death of his grandfather, became the emperor.

The moral lessons of The Man of Law's Tale:

- An unshakeable Christian faith carries us through suffering.
- Steadfast faith, patience and virtue will ultimately be rewarded.
- God's justice and mercy never fail.
- Evil is ultimately punished.

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Do you want to rent a space?

CHURCH & HALL AVAILABLE TO RENT FOR CONCERTS, PARTIES, MEETINGS...

ST JOHN'S CHURCH BIRKDALE



Large Hall

Are you looking to hire a space for a regular group activity or for a family celebration such as a children's birthday party? Our halls are ideal.

We have both a large hall and a small meeting room available for hire for an hourly charge. A professional standard kitchen is also available.

If you would like to make a booking for any of our rooms in the church hall please contact Jean Morris - phone 01704 564206.

Small Meeting Room

- Dimensions - 30ft x 15ft (9.1m x 4.57m)
- Equipped with chairs and tables
- TV monitor screen

Ideal for meetings and small gatherings

- Dimensions - 55ft x 33ft (16.76m x 10m)
 - Equipped with chairs and tables
 - Theatre style capacity for up to 100
 - Ideal for parties, concerts, clubs, meetings
- Regular or one-off events

Kitchen

- Fully equipped, professional kitchen including cooker, heated cupboard and dishwasher.

Church

The church can accommodate 250 and can be available by arrangement for concerts by musical and choral groups. **If you would like to enquire about using the church please contact Clive Morris - phone 01704 564206.**



Strawberry Tea

On Saturday 12th July the sun shone and it was unusually hot in the afternoon. What could be better to cool down with than a nice cup of tea in the shade of a tree or a parasol? And what could go better with afternoon tea in the middle of summer than cream scones and strawberries? Christine and Stuart were delighted to welcome more than forty parishioners and friends to their back garden for another St John's Strawberry Tea at which we were again entertained by Colin Jackson and his Garage Band of ukulele players who gave us a Strawberry Jam session!





St John's has been providing Mission Support for Revive International for

many years. Those who have come more recently to be part of our church family may not know that we support the work which is done in Olinda, Brazil where the charity provides refuge for children, mainly girls, who have been physically and/or sexually ill-treated, neglected or abandoned, and they try to find new homes for them if that is in the children's best interests. There is an almost limitless number of children in real need there and we pray that our modest contribution to their funds assists them in their mission.

This is an extract from their most recent newsletter:

Testimony of Care and Faith

We joyfully praise God, for even in the face of great challenges—especially concerning the future of the children in our care—we continue to trust in His sovereignty. Despite our human limitations, we find peace in resting in Him. We are constantly reminded that we are called to serve with gratitude and faith, and as we do so, we witness God's hand at work among us and the miracles He performs.

In recent months, we experienced two significant outcomes related to children leaving care. The first involved D.V., an 11-year-old. After all legal avenues for adoption appeared to have been exhausted and the situation seemed to offer no further options, we were surprised

by a providential turn of events. God, in His sovereignty, revealed that He had already prepared the right family for D.V.—exactly the one she needed.

The second case was that of R.K., a 13-year-old who, after a long wait, was able to return to live with her biological mother. The court decision came unexpectedly, and we prepared a surprise to share the news with R.K. The moment was deeply emotional for everyone involved. Seeing a child reunited with their family or welcomed into a new one is always a reason for immense gratitude and a renewed sense of purpose in our mission.

We recently welcomed a teenage girl, V.V., aged 15. **We ask for your prayers** that the time she spends with us will be marked by care, support, and refreshment for her life. After ten years living with her adoptive family, she was returned to the care system. V.V. arrived deeply shaken, visibly bruised and saddened, which highlights even more the importance of providing a safe, loving, and restorative environment in this new chapter of her life.

In July, we welcomed two sisters: R.N., aged 9, and A.C., aged 13. Both arrived in vulnerable circumstances, showing signs of neglect in basic care such as hygiene and nutrition, and frequently lived on the streets without adult supervision. We pray that during their time with us, they may feel the care, dignity, and love of God reflected through our team and the supportive environment.

Please continue to pray for the work which is done by Revive and please continue to give generously to our Mission Funds.

An Introduction to Books in the New Testament: 1 Corinthians

By Canon Paul Hardingham

'When people become Christians, they don't at the same moment become nice. This always comes as something of a surprise' (Eugene Peterson).

After founding the church in Corinth Paul spent a year and a half with them, showing them how to live out this new life as a community of believers. Corinth was a major commercial centre in Greece and a crossroads for travellers and traders across the Empire. Its people placed a high premium on wisdom, but Corinth was also known for its immorality. Little wonder that the church was plagued with so many problems! However, after Paul left the church factions developed, immorality was rife, and worship had become a selfish grabbing for the supernatural. Paul's letter, written around AD 55 in Ephesus, is a response to these problems.

It is clear that, although the church was gifted (1:4–7), it was immature and unspiritual (3:1–4). Paul's purpose for writing was to:

- instruct and restore the church in its areas of weakness, correcting erroneous practices such as divisions (1:10—4:21), immorality (ch. 5; 6:12–20), litigation in pagan courts (6:1–8) and the abuse of the Lord's Supper (11:17–34).
- correct false teaching concerning the resurrection (ch. 15).

This letter is very relevant for us today, as we are also powerfully influenced by our cultural environment. Many of the questions and problems that confronted the church at Corinth are still with us. Yet despite the problems, Paul's focus remained on knowing Christ in His life and trusting in the power of the cross: *'For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.'* (2:2).

How big was the Flood?

by the Revd Richard Bewes, formerly Rector of All Souls Langham Place, London.

A Mesopotamian disaster, or a world catastrophe? The Flood continues to fuel speculation worldwide.

That is the precise point – we don't even have to explain which flood we're talking about; Noah's Flood is firmly embedded in the human memory on every continent.

There is a Hindu tradition about a great flood, and a ship of safety finally landing on a northern mountain. In China, Fa-he, the reputed founder of Chinese civilisation, is represented as escaping from the waters of a deluge – and reappears as the first man in a new world, accompanied by his wife, three sons and three daughters: eight people in all.

There is the famous Babylonian Epic of Gilgamesh with its detailed myth-legend of a great flood.

The Fiji islanders have accounts of a flood, in which a family of eight was saved. In South America, paintings have been discovered, representing a flood, a man and his wife on a raft, with a mountain featuring in the story, as well as a dove. Even the Cherokee Indians have a similar story. Only Africa seems to be without a traditional flood story.

I believe that the book of Genesis gives us the original, inspired and definitive account of this mega event. It could have been Shem, one of Noah's sons, who later told his children of this great epic of his life, and, as people fanned outwards from Mesopotamia, so the story travelled outwards as well – inevitably becoming garbled in the process, and mixed up with legend and folklore.

How big was the Flood, then? The right answer is that it was of all-time, universal dimension and significance. Certainly we can make out a strong case for a literal worldwide flood – with the release of the great waters both from below



and above (Genesis 7:11,12) But we may also observe that the phrase of Genesis 7:19 – that 'all the high mountains under the entire heavens were covered' can be paralleled by Acts 2:5, where – on the Day of Pentecost – those who were present were 'from every nation under heaven'. Those nations are then listed out in detail, and they are all from the then known world of Luke the writer – around the Mediterranean basin. So, the Flood itself need not have extended across the entire world.

Can we respect the differing views among reverent students of Scripture? If we cannot, we are in deep trouble. Once we get into lengthy and heated debates as to whether the flood covered every dot of land-space on the world, we are in danger of exhausting ourselves and diverting people from hearing the real message of the Flood. And what is that?

First, it widens the problem – from a garden to the whole world. The Flood conveys a universal warning. Second, it produces a model – for our entire understanding of judgment and grace, for ultimately the safety of the ark is found in Christ. Third, it sets the stage – for the drama of salvation that is to be unfolded from Genesis 12 onwards.

Doctor to an overweight patient: "I advise you not to eat anything fatty"

Patient to Doctor: "Do you mean burgers and sausages?"

Doctor to patient: "No, fatty, I advise you not to eat anything!"

(This one must have come from Roy's joke book): Some tourists touring the north of England stopped to visit a Priory. The Prior gave them a tour of the buildings, ending in the kitchen, where one monk was making fish and chips. One tourist said brightly: "You must be the fish friar," to which the monk gravely replied, "No, I am the chip monk."

Social Events

Coming Soon at
St Peter's Birkdale
(St Peter's Road)



31st August: Family Fun Day

27th September: Barn Dance

13th December: Alistair Lee (professional singer)

For more details about these events please contact stpetersbirkdale@hotmail.com

W CROSS R D

The Bible version used in our crosswords is the NIV. Crosswords reproduced by kind permission of BRF and John Capon, originally published in Three Down, Nine Across, by John Capon (£6.99 BRF).

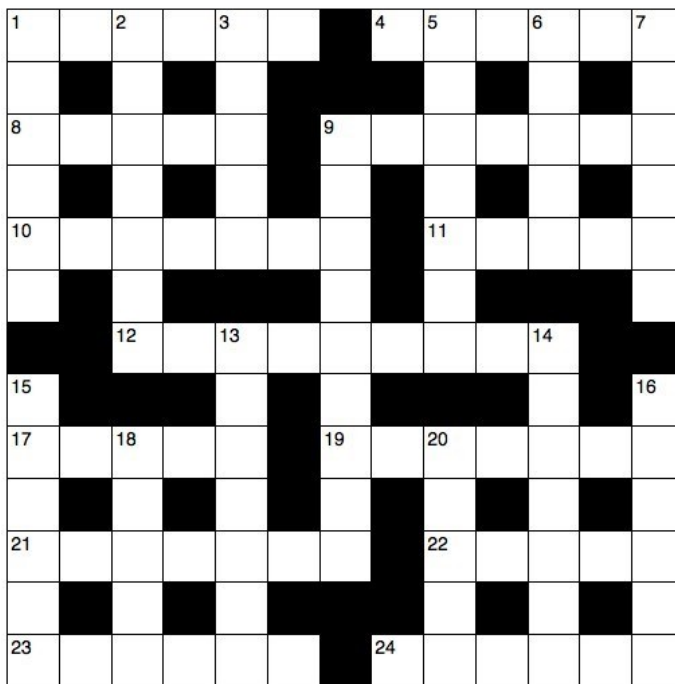
Solution below

Across

- 1 'The people were — at his teaching' (Mark 1:22) (6)
 4 'He saved —; let him save himself' (Luke 23:35) (6)
 8 He addressed the crowd in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:14) (5)
 9 Father of James and John (Matthew 4:21) (7)
 10 One who charges another with an offence (Job 31:35) (7)
 11 '— thy ministers with righteousness' (Book of Common Prayer) (5)
 12 and 15 Down 'All — is God-breathed and is — for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness' (2 Timothy 3:16) (9,6)
 17 'No — of the field had yet appeared on the earth and no plant of the field had yet sprung up' (Genesis 2:5) (5)
 19 Made to feel embarrassed (Isaiah 24:23) (7)
 21 This man built his house on sand (Matthew 7:26) (7)
 22 David's hypocritical message to Joab on the death in battle of Uriah: 'Don't let this — you' (2 Samuel 11:25) (5)
 23 Detest (Job 10:1) (6)
 24 'God made two great lights, the greater light to govern the day and the — light to govern the night' (Genesis 1:16) (6)

Down

- 1 To make a serious request (1 Corinthians 1:10) (6)
 2 Launches an assault against (Genesis 32:8) (7)
 3 'The wicked man — deceptive wages' (Proverbs 11:18) (5)
 5 Tuba ale (anag.) (7)



- 6 'The day thou gavest, Lord, is — ' (5)
 7 Old Testament measure of weight, equivalent to about 12 grammes (Exodus 30:13) (6)
 9 Where Elijah restored life to the son of a widow with whom he lodged (1 Kings 17:10) (9)
 13 Paul said of whatever was to his profit, 'I consider them — , that I may gain Christ and be found in him' (Philippians 3:8) (7)
 14 City visited by Paul, described by the city clerk as 'the guardian of the temple of the great Artemis' (Acts 19:35) (7)
 15 See 12 Across
 16 Rioted (anag.) (6)
 18 She had a surprise when she answered the door and found 8 Across outside (Acts 12:13) (5)
 20 Maltreat (1 Chronicles 10:4) (5)

In our Book of Remembrance In August

- 2nd Elizabeth Jackson, 1960
 3rd Albert Wright, 1972
 4th Ernest Wright, 1966
 Robert Randles, 1999
 6th Betty Hartwell, 2021
 7th Betty Duffield, 2013
 8th Joan Tait, 1993
 9th Louisa Short, 2002
 10th May Evans, 1996
 11th Thomas Macfarlin, 1980
 Anne Hall, 1997

- 13th Cecele Welch, 2010
 15th Elizabeth Livesley, 1979
 Henry Baker, 2007
 17th James Foster, 1985
 19th Joan Horrocks, 1990
 24th Agnes Thomas, 1990
 26th Richard Livesley, 1967
 27th Eunice Wall, 1987
 David Moss, 2017
 30th Phyllis Turner, 2006

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

CROSSWORD SOLUTION

ACROSS: 1, Amazed. 4, Others. 8, Peter. 9, Zebedee. 10, Accuser. 11, Endue. 12, Scripture. 17, Shrub. 19, Abashed. 21, Foolish. 22, Upset. 23, Loathe. 24, Lesser.
 DOWN: 1, Appeal. 2, Attacks. 3, Earns. 5, Tableau. 6, Ended. 7, Shovel. 9, Zarephath. 13, Rubbish. 14, Ephesus. 15, Useful. 16, Editor. 18, Rhoda. 20, Abuse.

God in the Arts

The Revd Michael Burgess surveys great works of art, based on various saints of the church.

'He gave us eyes to see them: John Henry Newman'

In the 1830s a group of academics came together to promote a new identity for the Church of England. To them the church was not just a department of state for the government to control, but part of the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church.

Among that group in what became known as the Oxford Movement was John Henry Newman. In 1816, when he was 15, he had a profound religious conversion. Six years later he was elected a Fellow of Oriel College and after ordination became the Vicar of St Mary's, Oxford. When he was touring Italy and southern Europe in 1833, he wrote a poem, which became a popular hymn, 'Lead, kindly Light.' Newman was anxious to return home to do God's work for his church, and in this poem he prayed that he would be ready to follow that light of God, come what may.

But Newman realised that the more he defended the Church of England, the more he found himself drawn to become a Roman Catholic. He wrote about that struggle of conscience and mind in his 'Apologia.' In 1845 he was received into the Roman Catholic Church, and in 1879 was honoured as a cardinal. He died on the 11th day of this month in 1890.

In 1875 a visitor meeting Newman described him as 'very kindly, with a sort of grave simplicity which coming from so old a man, has in it something inexpressibly touching...He looks very aged, with an air of melancholy, as of one who has passed through terrible struggles, yet of serenity, as of one who has found peace.' There is a portrait of Newman in Manchester Art Gallery by W T Roden which captures something of the sadness and resignation that struggle had caused him, forcing him to leave friends and colleagues in the Church of England.

In the National Portrait Gallery in London there is a wonderful collection of paintings and photographs of Newman. The portraits of Newman range throughout his life culminating in a painting by his cousin, Emmeline



'John Henry Newman, by **John Everett Millais**, Public Domain, Wikimedia commons'

Deane, of March 1889. It is a sensitive portrayal that invites the viewer to look beyond the scarlet robes and ring of the cardinal to the face of a pilgrim whose search for the light to guide and illuminate had taken him on what was a long and difficult path. There is a dignity and a gentleness there, but also strength and resolution.

When Newman died in the following year, his pall was embroidered with his motto, 'Cor ad cor loquitur': 'Heart speaks to heart'. The heart of God speaking to the human heart to bring guidance and light. Newman followed that voice and light throughout his life. It was a journey that led him from the shadows and images of this world into the radiance of God's eternal light. That thought was inscribed on his memorial tablet – a reminder that we are all called to journey like John Henry Newman, seeking the light to guide and following that light in faith and perseverance.

Cardinal Newman was canonised as a Catholic saint by Pope Francis on 13th October 2019 at the Vatican.

THE INFLUENCE OF RELIGION ON LAW

Reflections of Lord Denning, one of the foremost English Judges of the twentieth century.

“LOVE THY NEIGHBOUR: THE JUDGE’S ANSWER”

How is a judge to know what is justice? Let me tell you how one great Judge answered it. It arose in a case where a manufacturer of ginger beer had made it so carelessly that he (allegedly, Ed.) left a snail in one of the bottles. He sold it as part of a consignment to a shopkeeper, who in turn sold a bottle to a woman whose friend drank it and was (allegedly, Ed.) injured. At one time the law held that the manufacturer was not liable to pay any compensation because he had made no contract with the ultimate purchaser or her friend. But in 1932 the House of Lords held that the manufacturer could be liable. In a judgment of great importance in the law Lord Atkin took the Christian precept as the underlying basis of the decision in these words: "The rule that you are to love your neighbour becomes in law you must not injure your neighbour: and the lawyer's question 'Who is my neighbour?' receives a restricted reply. You must take reasonable care to avoid acts or omissions which

you can reasonably foresee would be likely to injure your neighbour. Who then in law is my neighbour? The answer seems to be—persons who are so closely and directly affected by any act that I ought reasonably to have them in contemplation as being so affected when I am directing my mind to the acts or omissions which are called in question.

It is, I suggest to you, a most significant thing that a great Judge should draw his principles of law, or rather his Principles of justice, from the Christian commandment of love. I do not know where else he is to find them. Some people speak of natural justice as though it was a thing well recognisable by anyone, whatever his training and upbringing. But I am quite sure that our conception of it is due entirely to our habits of thought through many generations. The common law of England has been moulded for centuries by Judges who have been brought up in the Christian faith. The precepts of religion, consciously or unconsciously, have been their guide in the administration of justice.

Copyright in Lord Denning's book is owned by the Lawyers' Christian Fellowship whom we thank for their kind permission in allowing us to publish extracts from it.



Lord Denning,
drawn by Sallon

AROUND ENGLAND QUIZ

- Which is the only English county to border only one other?
- Which Derbyshire town is famous for its Church with the twisted spire?
- How many counties share a border with Bedfordshire?
- Which is the largest island in the Bristol Channel?
- Which is the oldest of the Cambridge University colleges that is still in existence?
- Which city is the administrative centre for Cumbria?
- Auckland Castle in County Durham is whose official residence?
- In which English county is the public school of Eton College?
- In which Greater Manchester town was the Cooperative Movement founded in 1844?
- Which is the most visited zoo in the UK?
- Which part of Britain was known by the Romans as Vectis?
- Which Herefordshire town is often referred to as "The Birthplace of Tourism"?



- Which motorway crosses Berkshire East to West?
- What is the only city in Buckinghamshire?
- Which town in Gloucestershire is home to the Royal Agricultural University?
- Which Cambridgeshire town houses a branch of the Imperial War Museum?
- Where in the UK is the longest pleasure pier in the World?
- The Roman road known as the Fosse Way starts and ends in which two English counties?
- From which King did the Dorset town of Lyme Regis receive its Royal charter?
- In which Cumbrian town was the UK's first nuclear-powered submarine built?



Many thanks to Judith Foster for supplying this difficult quiz which appeared in the magazine of Southport u3a whose editor (Ian Homewood) has generously allowed us to reproduce it in **THE WORD**. Answers below.

And in the same magazine congratulations were given to our own Cath Whiteside for her work with the u3a Floral Art Group over many years.



Cath, left, with two other u3a flower arrangers

Cath has been one of St John's flower arrangers for a long time, with Judith and with Shirley Wall, and we thank her and them for all that they do to make our church look so

beautiful week by week.

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 Cornwall. | 11 The Isle of Wight. |
| 2 Chesterfield. | 12 Ross-on-Wye. |
| 3 Four. | 13 M4. |
| 4 Lundy. | 14 Milton Keynes. |
| 5 Peterhouse. | 15 Cirencester. |
| 6 Carlisle. | 16 Duxford. |
| 7 Bishop of Durham. | 17 Southend-on-Sea. |
| 8 Berkshire. | 18 Devon & Lincolnshire. |
| 9 Rochdale. | 19 Edward I. |
| 10 Chester Zoo. | 20 Barrow-in-Furness. |

THE GOOD KINGS AND BAD KINGS OF ENGLAND

By Dennis Davis

Dennis continues his research into the history of our Kings. This month he will tell us about the time of King William 3rd and the consequences of the Glorious Revolution.

"WE ARE, WE ARE, WE ARE THE BILLY BOYS"

Foreword: there are many misconceptions regarding The Orange Order and the Orangemen which is mainly due to the fact that on many occasions there has been disorder and drunkenness in which the Orangemen come under a lot of criticism and are blamed mainly by opponents. I will attempt to put the story straight.

Since ancient times Ireland has always been in conflict one way or another. The Fir Bolg against the Fair Haired Strangers (Celts); Connauaght against Down; the defeat of the Norsemen at Clontarf, then with the Norman invaders who settled in the main towns, eventually to be absorbed with the Irish. The Scottish army under the brother of Robert the Bruce brought settlers. Some Irish families had hired mercenaries called Galloglasses to defend their properties, and then came the English although it was the men of Pembroke who allegedly subdued the Irish for the Tudor throne.

The Irish rose up in 1641 and massacred Protestants in Portadown, and in other places. This resulted in Cromwell's army and the Irish being offered the choice of going to Hell or Connaght; (death or move to the poorest province). Things only got worse when the plantation of British Protestant settlers arrived, and took the best land for themselves with the native Irish and their Catholic faith being suppressed. Mass was forbidden with the Established Church (Anglican) having ascendancy, being the only faith allowed. This caused much friction from the native Irish who were Roman Catholic and who held their Mass in fields or hillsides with a rock or stone called a Mass rock.

In 1789 a major uprising was planned by the United Irishmen, Catholics in the south and Presbyterians in the north. The Southern Catholics jumped the gun and rose 2 days early and were put down mercilessly. In Antrim and County Down both were defeated; at Ballynahinch, the rebels were pursued and

hounded by the local Yeomanry who showed no mercy to their Presbyterian neighbours who had taken part. In the 1960s it was said families in that area still did not speak to one another, but no longer knew why. Then, the Glorious Revolution and William's Victories at Inniskillen, Derry, AUCRIM and the Boyne, This did not stop Catholics from attacking protestants.

In 1795 the Orange Order was founded by David Winter, James Sloane and James Wilson after a stand off between Protestants, (Peep O'Day Boys) and Catholic Defenders, which ended with the Battle of the Diamond in which 30 Catholics were killed. In 1849 Catholics ambushed Orangemen at a place called "Dollies Brae" near Castletwellen.

The Orange Order now has a membership of over 1100 Lodges (My Lodge was LOL1340), which are spread over much of the English speaking world but the majority are in Northern Ireland. In the 1960s there were over 90,000 Orangemen, but with the decline of Unionism this has fallen to about 34,000. In the First World War thousands of Orangemen joined the 36th Ulster Division; the only division to gain all its objectives, but they suffered so many casualties that they were unable to hold the line against a German counter attack as there were no reserves. It took about 6 months and thousands of casualties before it was finally captured.

So what is the Orange Order?

It is a fraternal secret organisation based on freemasonry but not part of that organisation. Its aim is to safeguard Protestantism and the right of all for freedom to worship as declared by King William 3rd, but the Catholics see it as an anti-Catholic society and have their own Societies such as the Hibernians and Foresters to counter the Orangemen. The Orange Order is based on "An Open Bible" which appears on some of the banners or worn on collarets. William Chillingworth wrote in 1637, "The Bible, the Bible only" is the religion of Protestants" and this introduces them to what is called the inspiration of Holy Scripture. A portion of scripture is read at every Orange meeting with each Lodge having its own Chaplain. Most Lodges have a band but bandsmen do not have to be members of the Orange Order. The major event is a Parade on the 12th of July to celebrate William's victory at the Boyne, although this did not finish the war which lasted for another year.

Continued on the next page

Each Lodge also has an annual Church parade and some Lodges march on the 1st of July in honour of the dead of the Ulster Division in World War 1.

There is growing opposition to these marches by militant Catholics and riots have occurred. This has got worse in recent years as the Catholic population in Northern Ireland has increased and has taken over areas that the Orangemen have marched on for years but now cause flashpoints as Orangemen see it as a right to march on the Kings highway. Some bands respond by playing provocative tunes. Most Lodges are disciplined and if they infringe the rules with drunkenness they are removed from the ranks and their collarets taken off them. However, there is little they can do to bystanders who are only there to cause trouble with local Catholics. On the other hand many Catholics will also watch the parade with its pageant of bright banners bands and uniforms, especially the main parade in Belfast.

It has to be said that while there is condemnation of these Orange parades and hotheads will respond, there is provocation

from some Catholics which in recent years has been instigated by a militant opposition and glorification of the IRA with the burning of the Union Jack and arson by burning down Orange halls. Republicans also have their marches where they also react in the same way as those they complain about and also play provocative rebel songs which glorify the IRA? On the other hand there are plenty of cases of cooperation where Orangemen and Hibernians have helped one another by the loan of Drums.

Thus said the Lord "Stand ye in the way, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good, and walk there in, and ye shall find rest for your souls." (Jeremiah. 6:16)

(This article is included as an interesting insight into an aspect of the history of these islands which may be little known to our readers. Insofar as Dennis has expressed any views about any of the participants in the conflicts in Ireland, historic or more modern, those views are Dennis's and should not be regarded as any political or religious statement representing the views of this church of the editor of this publication. Ed)

WORD SEARCH

Solution on page 26

The Transfiguration

The story of the Transfiguration is told in Matthew (17:1-9), Mark (9:1-9) and Luke (9:28-36). On that day, high up on a mountain, Peter, James and John were given a glimpse of Jesus' true glory. For Jesus' face began to shine as the sun, and his garments became white and dazzling. Then Elijah and Moses, suddenly appeared, talking with him. Overwhelmed, Peter offered to build three tabernacles on that holy place, one for each. But God's 'tabernacling', or God's *dwelling* with mankind, does not any longer depend upon building a shrine. It depends on being in the presence of Jesus, instead. And so a bright cloud covered them, and a voice spoke, saying that Jesus was his beloved son, whom the disciples should 'hear'. God's dwelling with mankind depends upon our *listening* to Jesus.

Why did Moses and Elijah appear? They represent the Law and the Prophets of the Old Covenant, or Old Testament. But now they were handing on the baton, if you like: for both the Law and the Prophets found their final fulfilment in Jesus, the Messiah.

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TRANSFIGURATION
HIGH
MOUNTAIN
GLIMPSE
GLORY

SHINE
SUN
GARMENTS
DAZZLING
APPEARED

MOSES
TABERNACLES
HOLY
DWELLING
SHRINE

PRESENCE
JESUS
BRIGHT
CLOUD
MANKIND,

LISTEN
LAW
PROPHETS
HANDING
FULFILMENT

God in the Sciences

This series is written by Dr Ruth M Bancewicz, who is Church Engagement Director at The Faraday Institute for Science and Religion in Cambridge. Ruth writes on the positive relationship between Science and Christian faith.

Keeping Calm in the Storm

One of the most famous stories about Jesus is the calming of the storm (Luke 8:22-25). Of course, anyone could say that the wind stopped suddenly of its own accord, but the disciples were not fooled. They had seen a number of these ‘coincidences’ in Jesus’ ministry, and they weren’t about to ignore this one. Jesus had calmed the waves with only His words. Wasn’t this an act of God? Who else could be in complete control of creation?

Jesus dealt graciously with the very pressing and practical issue of the raging storm before He did a bit of teaching, asking His followers “Where is your faith?” It’s not surprising that they were scared, given the circumstances, but clearly Jesus expected better of them. He had already been teaching them for some time, and clearly knew they were ready to trust Him.

In similar circumstances, Christians often do several things in quick succession. We start by panicking and being afraid. After a while we might remember what we know about God’s character and pray for help, trusting that whatever happens He will help us to handle it. Most often, we don’t get the storm-calming effect when we ask for it, but battling on with faith and God’s help is much easier than trying to keep going in a panic.

‘Peace’ in this kind of situation is a very active holding on to what we know about God. The difference between trusting and not trusting can be like night and day in terms of stress levels. I have

found that it can make the difference between unmanageable stress and something that stretches me and teaches me something new.

Knowing some science can help us to trust God. A Being who created the whole universe, sustaining the wonderfully creative processes that produced diverse life on earth, must be both extremely powerful and extremely wise. The God who can both calm the waves and walk on them must be in complete control of the things He made. When this knowledge goes hand in hand with experience of God’s intimate love for us and care for us in every situation that we find ourselves in, I am reassured that He’s got things in hand.

I will always need help from others to pray faithfully in stormy situations, but hopefully I’ve seen enough now not to panic for too long.

Time (and my closest friends) will tell!



Rembrandt's "Calming the Storm"

The Revd Dr Jo White considers **Reflecting Faith: Saying 'farewell'**

Last month we considered how we are welcomed at the beginning of a church service, as we come together to enter into the real presence of God.

This month let's consider how we say 'goodbye' at the end of the service.

For the leader of the service doesn't just say something like, "Thanks for coming, lovely to see you - have a great week." Rather, there's a promise and a blessing for each of us as we take what we have 'received' from the service into the world.

So the crunch question is: what do you get out of coming to a church service?

The ideal is: You have been met with a friendly welcome followed by music you love, played at the perfect speed with no squeaky singers in the congregation. Then, an inspiring sermon which

gives you something to think about for the coming week. After that, prayers that speak of what is on your heart and what you have heard on the news that week. Finally, good fellowship and a cuppa after the service, where you can feel part of 'them', rather than ignored because you are only visiting.

Following all that good stuff, you go out of the church with a spring in your step!

Of course, in the real world not all those boxes get ticked.

But still we can go to church with hope, and ideally, we leave it in peace. The time that we spend together is the 'easy' bit. The real challenge begins when we go out the door and back into the daily round of home life and work. But we can be sure that we do not leave God at the church door. He always comes home with us, and He is there to help us throughout the coming week. That is why we can indeed 'go in peace'.

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.



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

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



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Organ Failures & Bad Behaviours

Historic records at Lincoln Cathedral reveal that Heavenly music does not always mean heavenly behaviour. Some rogues had held the post of Cathedral organist:

In 1599 Thomas Kingston was brought before Chapter for beating the choristers and calling the Choir Master an ass. It was also said that he very often drank and thereby played the organ in a disorderly manner and put the choir out of time.

In 1746 Lloyd Raynor was arraigned and reprovved for playing one anthem whilst Mr Binns was singing another But it was not only the organist misbehaving: the choristers, Vicar and poor clerks were also in on the act!

It wasn't just the organists who were scoundrels. In 1437 the poor clerks were accused of slipping out of the choir to frequent taverns and to gossip in the Nave. (*Our former choristers at St John's would definitely never have done this. Our local tavern did not open until 12.00. Ed.*)

In 1508 the poor clerks accused of frequenting ale houses and houses of ill-repute, and of being too inebriated to attend choir.

And in 1516 they tried to catch pigeons who plagued the Cathedral by climbing up the tower with torches (*that's the clerks, not the pigeons, Ed.*) causing a fire in the central tower. What larks (or pigeons) they had!

Stuart Baker

KNOW YOUR TIME

by John M. Shakespeare

Robert Herrick (1591-1674), in just a few lines, summed up for me, a feeling that I can connect with, "Gather ye roses whilst ye may, Old time is still a flying, and this same flower that smiles today, tomorrow will be dying". In other words we should, I believe enjoy today, whilst by all means looking forward to tomorrow.

William Shakespeare (1564-1616), in his play "Troilus and Cressida", expresses a cautionary warning in an enigmatic fashion:

"Time hath, my Lord, a wallet at his back, wherein he puts alms for oblivion". Time, it would seem, has many facets, but one thing we can be sure of, once it has passed, it has gone forever and we will never be able to recapture time spent.

Arthur Schopenhauer (1788-1860), in his book, "On The Vanities of Existence", explains that the whole form of existence relates in the infiniteness of Time and space, to the finiteness of the individual in both. Personally I find the contrast of value between Time and the more basic values, of, for instance, wealth, plays to our vanities of what we see as valuable. The beauty of a fleeting moment of Time can I feel be expressed in one's own achievement! Our view of Time I believe, often depends on the reasons for measuring it. When we wait, it may be for an appointment, or it may be for some result that we want. If lengthy, the Time spent in waiting may seem to be very taxing, but also a swift result, if unfavourable, may be wanting. To look on the bright side, a Time of rejoicing may be worthwhile, however a Time for loving should be enjoyable to us all. In respect of Time, I feel that Ecclesiastes (Ch3 verses 1-8), gives us a pretty comprehensive guide as to how we should indeed spend Time. "For everything there is a season, and a Time for every matter under heaven, a time to be born and a Time to die. A time to plant and a Time to pluck up what is planted. A Time to kill and a Time to heal, a Time to

break down and a time to build up. A Time to weep and a Time to laugh, a Time to mourn and a Time to dance. A Time to throw away stones and a Time to gather them together. A Time to embrace, and a Time to refrain from embracing. A Time to seek and a Time to lose. A Time to keep and a Time to throw away. A Time to tear and a Time to sew. A Time to keep silent, and a Time to speak. A Time to love and a Time to hate, a Time for war and a Time for peace".

The English poet Andrew Marvell (1621-1678), talks of his view of Time in his poem "To His Coy mistress", relating to his loved one. The most often quoted part of his poem are a few lines from the central part of this poem:

"But at my back I always hear
Times winged chariot hurrying near
And yonder all before us lie
Deserts of vast eternity."

To me the poem epitomises the belief that Time does not stand still, so we must take Time, use it and enjoy its pleasure while we may! I leave you with these thoughts. No matter how hard the past, you can always begin again, and when you do, watch out as history often repeats itself. Which is why so often it seems that things present, are often judged by those things past, hence the saying. Today is the scholar of yesterday! The birth of hindsight?

Life is short, time is fast, no
replay, no rewind, so enjoy
every moment as it comes.

Quotes & Thoughts

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: 812 3403 0688

The Password every Sunday will be: 201823

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

The telephone number you must ring is: 0203 481 5240

The Meeting Identification Number every Sunday will be: 812 3403 0688

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

The Password every Sunday will be: 201823.

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: 835 5074 3780

The Password every Thursday will be: 7ehHEK

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

The telephone number you must ring is: 0203 481 5240

The Meeting Identification Number every Thursday will be: 835 5074 3780.

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

The Password every Thursday will be 7ehHEK. **SUBJECT TO BEING CHANGED.**

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

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IF YOU NEED ANY HELP: Please contact Clive (564206) or Rev. Jennie for any further details you require.

Was it really that long ago?...

65 years ago, on 6th August 1960 the Twist became a national sensation in the US, and triggered one of the biggest dance crazes, when singer Chubby Checker performed the song on the show American Bandstand.

60 years ago, on 6th August 1965 the Beatles' Album *HELP!* was released.

50 years ago, on 1st August 1975, the Helsinki Accords were signed by 35 nations in an attempt to improve relations between the Communist Bloc and the West.

50 years ago, on 20th August 1975 NASA launched its Viking 1 space probe on a mission to Mars. It became the first spacecraft to land successfully on Mars, and to complete its mission.

40 years ago, on 22nd August 1985 the Manchester Air Disaster took place when a British Airtours Boeing 737 burst into flames after an engine caught fire and a fuel tank ruptured. 55 people were killed.

30 years ago, on 24th August 1995 Microsoft released both Windows 95 operating systems and also Microsoft Office 95.

25 years ago, on 4th August 2000 Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother celebrated her 100th birthday. (She died in March 2002, aged 101).

20 years ago, on 22nd August 2005 the last Israeli settlers left the Gaza strip, ending 38 years of occupation.

Also 20 years ago, from 23rd to 30th August 2005 Hurricane Katrina hit the Bahamas, Cuba and several southern US states. The city of New Orleans was flooded by 80 per cent when the levee system was overwhelmed. More than 1,800 people died. It was the costliest natural disaster in US history.

15 years ago, on 5th August 2010 the Copiapo Mining Accident in Chile took place. A cave-in at the San Jose copper and gold mine trapped 33 workers 700 metres underground, and an international rescue operation was launched. The workers were brought to the surface on 13th October, 69 days later. Around one billion people watched their rescue on TV.

10 years ago, on 1st August 2015 Cilla Black, pop singer and TV presenter died. Known for her hit song *Anyone who had a heart* and for presenting *Blind Date* and *Surprise Surprise*.

Church Hall Users

Tuesday

3.00pm – 5.30pm *SPACE Pottery Painting (for details see page 7)*

7.30pm *Godspeed*

Wednesday

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

Thursday

1.00pm to 2.00pm: *Balance Classes for the Elderly.*

Contact: ageingwellmerseyside@outlook.com.

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

6.00pm *Godspeed*

Friday

9.30am *Godspeed*

1.00pm–2.30pm *Jolly Tots for tots, babies and bumps (see page 7 for details)*

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.

For those travelling in August

The Pilgrim's Aiding

God be with thee in every pass,
Jesus be with thee on every hill,
Spirit be with thee on every stream,
Headland and ridge and lawn;

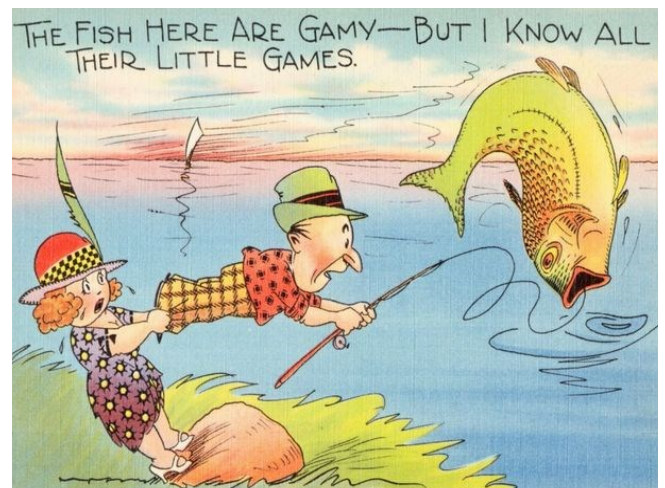
Each sea and land, each moor and meadow,
Each lying down, each rising up,
In the trough of the waves, on the crest of the billows,
Each step of the journey thou goest.

A Celtic prayer collected by Alexander Carmichael

To a Fish of the Brook

Enjoy thy stream, O harmless fish;
And when an angler for his dish,
Through gluttony's vile sin,
Attempts, the wretch, to pull thee OUT
God give thee strength, O gentle trout,
To pull the rascal IN!

By John Wolcot (Peter Pindar) 1738 – 1839



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To:

Linda Caton on 3rd August
David Jones on 5th August
Diane Barrington Moss on 9th August
Grace Wilkinson on 13th August
Abbie Holden on 14th August
Sylvia Kent on 14th August
Christine Baker on 17th August
Anita Hinds on 27th August
Andy & Cheryl Dean on 8th August
John and Ann Shakespeare on 10th August



To:

Andy & Cheryl Dean on 8th August
John and Ann Shakespeare on 10th August

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

The Last Laughs

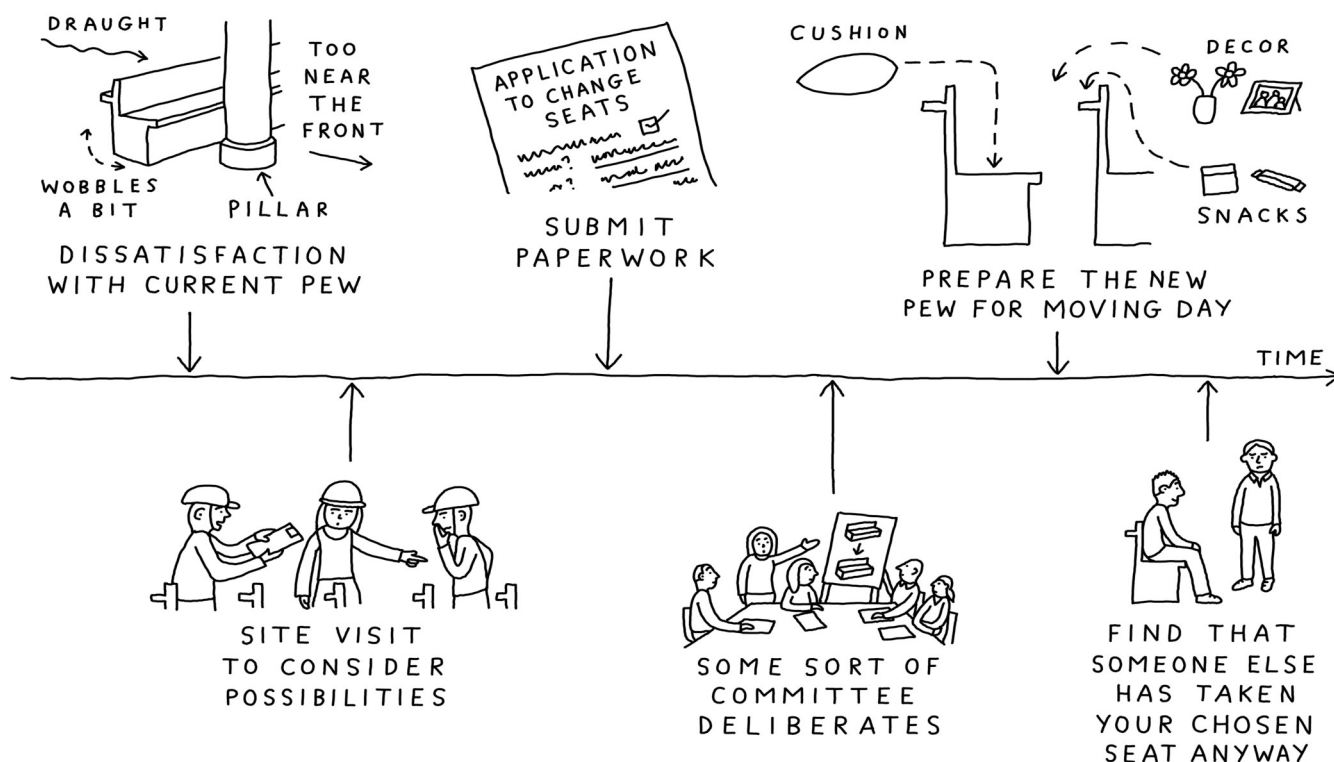
The economist Duncan Weldon learnt some lessons about the free market the hard way. On "War Movie Theatre" he recalled trying to sneak into cinemas to see films while under age. He attempted to see the 15-rated Judge Dredd while still only 14 and successfully persuaded cinema staff he was old enough, only to blow it at the last minute. "I asked for a half-price concession ticket," he said.

TESTING TIMES

It's exam season, so spare a thought for both examinees and examiners. Political scientist Philip Cowley tells "Politics Home" that marking is harder now papers are digitised as you can no longer "work your way through a stack of essays sat in the sun, with a long cold drink in one hand". Still, howlers by students make the job easier. He has seen references to the "minor's strike" (note the singular), Labour's problems at the "ballet" box, and how the 2001 election was delayed by "foot and mouse". This tendency for errors makes AI cheating easy to spot: a computer's essay is properly punctuated.

CHANGING SEATS

HOW TO MOVE TO A DIFFERENT PEW





Low Impact Exercise Classes

Liverpool Road Methodist Church Fridays

10:15am – 11am Low Impact Dance Fitness – £4.00

A mixture of aerobics and dance to help you have fun and lose your tum!

Good music and lots of laughs.

Ideal if you are first on the dance floor or have two left feet – if you're having fun you're doing it right!!

11:05am – 11:35am Balance Improver – £3.00

Using a variety of proven balance techniques to help improve your balance, confidence and coordination.

These can be done seated, standing whilst holding on or unsupported if you're feeling like showing off!

11:45am – 12:15pm Seated Dance Exercise – £3.00

Using a mixture of exercise and dance moves – to a background of sing along tracks to help you have fun and keep moving.

Ideal for those who find a standing session uncomfortable

Beginners Very Welcome

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