

St. George's Montezburg

Magazine 50p



October 2021

The Parish of Pontesbury

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QUOTE:

Plan ahead -- It wasn't raining when Noah built the ark. -
Anon

Contributions for St. George's Magazine should be in by the **15th** of the **previous month**. It may not be possible to include contributions received after this date until the following month.

Send e-mail & attachments to stgsmagazine@googlemail.com
Please post handwritten articles to Ford Place, The Bank, Pontesbury Hill, SY5 0XX.

Website: www.st-george.org.uk

Items for inclusion in the Deanery News to be submitted by 10th of previous month to
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LIFTING UP OUR EYES

with Revd. Shirley Small

From Nills Farm House

As I am preparing to write this piece, I'm aware of the tractors busily driving up and down the lane with their loads of fodder and tanks of preparations for the fields. A busy life and, in many ways, a solitary one.

It takes me back to nine years ago, when I was delighted to be asked by the McCall family to provide an informal blessing service for their new milking parlour. As a result, I put together a dedicated prayer and reflection, along with a well-known poem (see below). The short service was duly held in the farm's new milking parlour and attended by family and friends. At the request of the National Rural Officer, it was also subsequently published by the Church of England's National Rural Office at the Arthur Rank Centre.

Ministering to the rural community here in Shropshire has always made me aware of the importance of the land and the people working in it. However, at the present time following Brexit, the farming industry is facing an uncertain future.

In the service, I included special words of thanksgiving which are now as relevant today as they were then. They included thanking God for "the working cows, the dry cows and for the bulls and calves for the machines and the expertise that has gone into providing new equipment and machinery which, perhaps, takes some of the toil out of the labour ??" The prayers also named all those at the farm, both workers and supporters.

Farmers are indeed a very special group of people for whom we should all be thankful.



Poem: A Winter Milking

All is quiet and dark but there is wakefulness:
The farmer pulls on his boots, the cows stir in their shed.
Light comes out of darkness, the machine springs into life,
The cows go swaying o'er the sanded yard,
Breath steaming, udders swinging,
Each in her place and known as she enters the parlour.
A trinity of creator, man and beast
Linked in the giving and receiving,
Held in God's heart but present here on earth.
Hear the gushing of the milk from willing teats,
The rhythmic, almost hypnotic pulsing of the milk
along the line
Until it reaches the dairy and is discharged
Into the gently foaming, slowly chilling tank.
A procession of cows passes through the parlour,
The farmer knows which might have problems,
Might come bulling.
It is a world apart where on a good day
All is harmony and pleasure.
The morning milking is the farmer's dawn prayer.

(Noel Lovatt)

Rev. Shirley Small

Autumn Prayer by Daphne Kitching

Dear Loving, Father God,

As the season changes and we enjoy the beautiful colours of autumn, there are other changes which we don't enjoy. Changes we cannot control; changes and suffering in the world, beyond our comprehension; changes to our work routines, or health, or circumstances; changes which cause us anxiety and uncertainty.

When everything seems to be falling around us like the autumn leaves, help us, Lord, to remember that you stand firm. You are our rock. You never change. You are always faithful, always with us, as we move into each new day and each new season.

Thank you for loving us so much that you gave us Jesus,
so that by putting our trust in Him,
we can know the security of your love, for ever!
In His name, we thank you, Sovereign Lord. Amen.

Readings and Services for this MONTH

Here are the Sunday Service details, and the readings which you may enjoy at home if you are unable to come into church this month.

Date	Service	Readings
3rd October 18 th after Trinity	Harvest 10:30am Holy Communion	Malachi 3: 6 – 12 2 Corinthians 9: 6 – 8 Luke 12: 22 – 31
5th October Tuesday	2:30pm Tea Service	TBA
10th October 19 th after Trinity	10:30am Morning Worship	Amos 5: 6 – 7, 10 – 15 Hebrews 4: 12 – end Mark 10: 17 – 31
17th October 20 th after Trinity	10:30am Holy Communion	Isaiah 53: 4 – end Psalm 91: 9 – end Mark 10: 35 – 45
24th October Last Sunday after Trinity Bible Sunday	10:30am Holy Communion <i>... See page 9</i>	Isaiah 55: 1 - 11 2 Timothy 3: 14 – 4: 5 John 5: 36b - end
31st October 4 th Sunday before Advent Celebrating All Saints	Group Service 10:30 am at St. George's Pontesbury 3:00pm All Souls Service	Psalm 24: 1 – 6 Rev. 21: 1 – 6a John 11: 32 - 44

*A sermon will be recorded live from a Sunday morning service at one of our churches (audio not video) and one day in the following week will be posted on our website.
To access this on our church website look for 'Rector' in the section labelled 'Blogs'.*

Looking at GOD

Canon Paul Hardingham considers the signs of God's kingdom.

St. Luke – the doctor who brought good news

This month we remember St Luke (18th October), the author of the third gospel and the Book of Acts. Throughout his writing Luke makes clear that the good news of salvation is available to all people regardless of their gender, social position, or nationality. It is believed that Luke was a doctor, and he certainly sees the importance of healing in the ministry of Jesus and the Church. The signs of the presence of God's kingdom include the healing of sickness, hurts, as well as unforgiveness.

This is evident when Jesus sends out the 72 disciples recorded in Luke 10, a reading for St Luke's Day:

'The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field... When you enter a town and are welcomed eat what is set before you. Heal the sick who are there and tell them, 'The kingdom of God is near you.' (Luke 10:2,8). What challenges do we find in these verses?

Firstly Luke, as a **Gentile** (a non-Jew) recognises the revolutionary way outsiders are welcomed into the faith community, e.g. Zacchaeus (Luke 19) and Cornelius (Acts 10). How can we engage with those who are outside the community of faith? We have to avoid the tendency to regard ourselves as insiders! As we reach out to those who are ready to welcome the gospel, we have an opportunity to share good news and healing in the name of Jesus.

Secondly, as an **Evangelist**, Luke wants us to share the love of Jesus with all those we encounter. However, as these verses indicate, this has got to be rooted in prayer, if we are going to be led by God in our response to others. *'Mission is seeing what God is doing and joining in'* (Rowan Williams).

QUOTE:

Though the Lord is out of sight, we are not out of His. - M Henry

The Revd Dr Jo White considers the bread left behind.

Reflected Faith Series: Sacred Things

Last month we thought about the bread we share at the Communion table. But what about any bread that is left over – regardless of the type of bread or wafer used?

During the service the bread and the wine are 'consecrated'. That is, they are set aside for a specific purpose, in this case to be the body and blood of Christ. Because to Christians this is so very special, indeed 'sacred', we treat the unused bread and wine with special care.

No-one leaves very precious things lying around in case of theft, damage, or misuse. And so it is the same with the consecrated elements of bread and wine. When they have not all been consumed by the congregation, it is important that the surplus is dealt with in ways that honour the meaning that we give and receive from them. In most denominations they are consumed immediately, in others they are returned to the earth or given back to nature.

Sometimes, at the end of a service, you will see that some bread and wine has been deliberately kept aside to take out to those who are sick, or for use at a service where no priest will be present, and this then must be stored. So, the question arises – what vessels will be used?

The 'pyx' – literally a box – is the name for the container for the consecrated bread. Its size depends on the amount that it needs to contain; for taking to individuals in their own homes it is usually small enough to fit in the palm of a hand.

Although these can be especially bought from church suppliers, made in a variety of metals with embellishments, precious stones, enamel work and so on, you can actually use any container that fits the purpose.

This month

Have a look around your house and ask yourself, 'What container would I use for a pyx?' And thinking of containers, how about yourself? Do you and your life need a bit of cleaning and polishing to hold the bread? Are you aware how precious you are in God's eyes as you receive the bread? The Bible says that we are the temple of the Holy Spirit – an awesome, sacred calling.

Canon Paul Hardingham considers Jesus' encouragement to pray.

The Friend at Midnight

This month we are looking at the Parable of the Friend at Midnight (Luke 11:5-8). It is found in a passage where Jesus is teaching His disciples to pray.

Pray Shamelessly:

The parable concerns a man coming to his friend at midnight and asking *'Friend, lend me three loaves, for a friend of mine has arrived on a journey, and I have nothing to set before him'* (5-6). Despite the hour, the rules of hospitality would mean this was not an unreasonable request.

But the friend refuses to help because everyone in his house is asleep. Jesus adds, *'though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet because of the man's boldness he will rise and give him whatever he needs'*. Jesus uses this parable to encourage us to come in *shameless boldness* to our heavenly Father with our needs. In contrast to the parable, God is not slow in responding to us. It's not God who is reluctant to answer, but we to ask. Do we pray with shameless boldness?

Pray Persistently:

Such confidence is the basis for persistent prayer: *'Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.'* All three verbs indicate a continual habit: *'Keep on asking...seeking...knocking'*. We will not be content simply to ask once and then move on. Jesus tells us to bring our prayers to God persistently. Do we give up too easily in prayer?

Pray Expectantly:

'For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened.' Do we pray expectantly, believing that God delights in answering your prayers? Why not begin this adventure of prayer today!

QUOTE:

Courage is fear that has said its prayers. - Anon

Bible Sunday – 24th October

Bible Sunday is 24th October; in this article we are encouraged to read our Bibles in a way that will really help us.

How to read the Bible

Reading the Bible is much easier if you follow some simple steps and get prepared. And, as you delve into it, you might find that you are more familiar with the Bible than you expected: it crops up in everything from Shakespeare to Hollywood movies; it's inspired musicians, historical figures down the centuries, and campaigners.

The Bible is complex. It's not one book but a collection of 66 books, split into two sections: the Old Testament and the New Testament. Each one of these books are divided into chapters and verses. People often find it easier to begin at the opening of the New Testament, which starts about three-quarters of the way through.

The New Testament begins with four accounts of the life of Jesus Christ, the founder of Christianity, known as the Son of God. These accounts are known as the gospels. They include eye-witness reports of what happened. Matthew and John were among Jesus' 12 closest followers. Here you can read about what Jesus did and said – His profound teaching, how He healed people of sickness and how He challenged the authorities. The Gospels also tell us about His death by crucifixion and how He came back to life and then returned to heaven.

The first Gospel, Matthew, opens with the story of Jesus' birth (the event which is celebrated at Christmas) and then jumps forward 30 years to when Jesus began travelling around what is now Israel and the Palestinian territories telling people about God. Starting with a Gospel introduces you to the person of Jesus and the basics of Christian belief.

Early Christian teaching

A good next step is to read some of the teaching given to the early Christian Church. Much of the New Testament is a series of letters written by early Christian leaders such as Paul. He travelled around the lands of the eastern Mediterranean, telling people about Jesus. He then wrote to the various newly-established churches and individuals to encourage them in their beliefs. Letters such as Philippians or Colossians are short, bite-sized letters full of advice about how to live a Christian life.

Getting to grips with the whole Bible takes some time, but it is worth the effort. In his second letter to a young leader called Timothy, Paul says the Bible is "*inspired by God and useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness*".

How reading notes can help

Many people find it helpful to find a quiet and comfortable place to sit and read the Bible and make sure that they read it every day. Take time to digest what it says. You could say a quick prayer – asking God to help you understand what you are reading and its relevance to you.



Nigel Beeton writes: Psalm 119, at 179 verses is not only the longest chapter of any kind in the Bible, and is longer than the books of Ruth, James, and Philippians!

There is a story of a condemned prisoner who exercised his right to have a Psalm recited prior to his execution, chose Psalm 119, and received his pardon before the end of the Psalm! Almost every single verse mentions God's Word, His Law, His Statutes, or His Ordinances. That's how important it is to be familiar with the Word of God. Many of us neglect it at our peril, but many Christians spend longer in a day watching commercials than they do reading God's Word...

This poem is based on only one stanza, Nun, which begins at verse 105, and is one of the most familiar passages:

Thy Word

Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet
And a light unto my way.

Thy Word is right, and I will keep
Thy Law from day to day.

Thy Word will revive my weary soul
Afflicted it was, and astray.

Lift me O Lord, and make me whole
By Thy side, O Lord, I will stay.

Although the wicked lay a snare
Thy ordinance makes me bold;
Within Thy tenderness and care
No devil can get a hold.

Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet
And a light unto my way.

Thy Word is right, and I will keep
Thy Law from day to day.

The gardener and the Vine

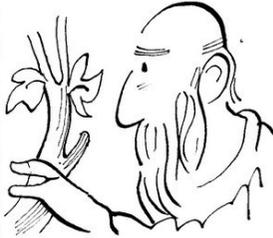


JESUS OFTEN TOLD STORIES WITH HIDDEN MEANINGS



ONCE HE TOLD HIS FRIENDS ALL ABOUT A GARDENER.

THE GARDENER'S JOB WAS TO CARE FOR THE VINES



HE WOULD LOOK AT EACH BRANCH CAREFULLY...

... AND IF IT WAS PRODUCING GOOD FRUIT, HE WOULD CARE FOR IT AND NOURISH IT.



IF IT WAS PRODUCING BAD FRUIT...

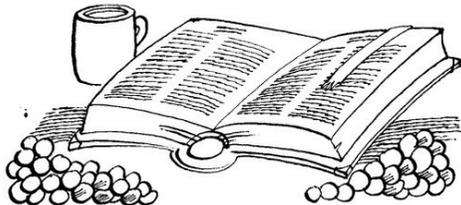


...OR NO FRUIT AT ALL...



...THEN THE GARDENER WOULD CHOP IT OFF, AND BURN IT IN THE FIRE!!

JESUS WANTED HIS FRIENDS TO SHARE THE GOOD NEWS - THAT'S LIKE THE VINE BEARING GOOD FRUIT.



YOU CAN READ THIS SPECIAL PARABLE IN JOHN'S GOSPEL, CHAPTER 15.

Sorry, Lord, I just couldn't make it ... *Author unknown*

The bells ring out on Sunday morn,
O did you hear their call?
They call the faithful ones to prayer
To Church they summon all.



But Lord, I cannot come today,
I live a busy life,
Still, when there's something special on
I'll try and send the wife.

It poured with rain last Sunday
An inch or two, I bet.
You surely can't expect me then –
I'd get my new suit wet.

Today the sky is blue and clear,
but the car's as black as ink.
And if I do not clean it soon,
What will the neighbours think?

You know I do my bit, dear Lord
I have a golden rule,
I sometimes send my kids along
To be at Sunday school.

But I really couldn't come as well,
There's grass to mow, and beds to weed
Shelves to fix, a dog to walk, and
Sunday newspapers to read.

And now this day has ended, Lord
How fast the weekends go!
I ask for faith and strength this week
For I feel (spiritually) quite low.



Inflame, O Lord, my feeble faith
My lamp burns rather dim,
For God depends on me, of course,
And I depend on Him.

Looking at CHURCH

The Revd Peter Crumpler, a Church of England priest in St Albans, Herts, considers an issue facing most of us every day of the week.

Time to reclaim the sabbath, says new report

Home working, zero hours contracts, the switch to home deliveries and online retailing, and an 'always on' culture - the world of work is changing fast and massively, and the Covid pandemic has accelerated the upheaval.

Now faith-based think tank Theos has come up with key proposals aimed at helping modern-day workers survive and thrive despite both the current changes - and the major challenges coming down the track. One proposal suggests 'recovering the sabbath.'

In a new report, 'Just Work: humanising the labour market in a changing world', Theos identifies three 'great disruptions' facing the world of work. They highlight: the technological - Artificial Intelligence, machine learning, and automation; the ecological - climate change and loss of biodiversity; and human vulnerability, as seen through the pandemic, mass migration and declining birth rates.

Paul Bickley, one of the report's authors, explains: "The issue is not work itself, but rather what happens when we make *work*, rather than *the people who do it*, our focus. We are disconnected from a healthy sense of work, and severing the needed boundaries between work and rest has set us adrift. The biblical idea of Sabbath is an ancient answer to modern anxieties. It's time to rediscover it."

During the pandemic, increasing numbers of people have shifted to working from home, from in-person shopping to ordering online, having take-aways delivered, and watching streaming services instead of going to the cinema.

But people working from home or in the 'gig economy' delivering food or online orders, have discovered they are being watched - and watched closely. Software fitted to home computers or installed in vehicles is monitoring when and how people are working.

The move to home working has meant an increased erosion of defined working hours, with 'the boss' able to make demands round-the-clock.

In response, Theos makes three key proposals:

1. First, a focus on a full work, rather than full employment economy.

Paid employment is the main – but not the only – form of work, and unpaid labour, such as caring responsibilities and volunteer work, need greater esteem and focus from a policy perspective.

2. Recognition of the human person as central to any healthy understanding of work.

Investors, and first and foremost church investors, have achieved tangible changes through activism in areas such as climate change and governance. They should add clear requirements on the fair handling of wages, benefits, agency work, outsourcing and employee surveillance to the social criteria they look at within environmental, social and governance investing.

3. Recovery of shared practices of rest to counter our culture of overwork.

Dissolving boundaries between our employment and our leisure – exacerbated during the pandemic – have negatively affected many workers. Overwork is literally killing people. For many, a combination of technology and the pandemic have broken the link between work and particular places and times – leading to an expectation, even if it is only an expectation of ourselves, that we will always be available.



October is the month for pumpkins, so here's a light-hearted reflection...

Like a pumpkin

A lady had recently become a Christian and been baptised. Curious, one of her colleagues at work asked her what it was like to be a Christian.

The lady was caught off guard and didn't know how to answer. Then she saw the office 'jack-o'-lantern' on a nearby desk and blurted: "Well, it's like being a pumpkin."

Her colleague asked her to explain that one. So she said: "Well, God picks you up out of the patch and brings you in and washes off all the dirt on the outside that you got from being around all the other pumpkins.

"Then He cuts off the top and takes all the yucky stuff out from inside you. He removes all those seeds of doubt, hate, greed, etc.

Then He carves you a new smiling face and puts His light inside of you to shine for all to see.

"It is our choice to either stay outside and rot on the vine, or come inside and be something new and bright."

Are you something new and bright? Will you be smiling today, and shining with His light?



It is the season of thanksgiving – and giving.

Harvest time for YOU

Sometimes a law of nature is very similar to a law of the spirit. Take the whole business of harvest, or 'sowing and reaping'. The Bible tells us: "A farmer who plants just a few seeds will get only a small crop, but if he plants much, he will reap much." (2 Cor 9:6)

The most sensitive nerve on our body is the one that runs to our cheque book! Money represents our time, our security, and our hard work. It gives us independence and power. So, when God begins to talk to us about giving more of our money to Him – sowing it in His service – we can feel very alarmed.

The seed a farmer sows in a field may sometimes be lost, but not the seed that we give to God. What we sow with regards to our time, gifts and money in service to others God will make sure we one day reap – in a harvest of spiritual riches that we can never lose.



From Fiona, the Archdeacon of Ludlow.

"God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble."

Last month marked the events of September 11 – it feels unbelievable that 20 years have passed since this major world event happened. For those who lost friends and loved ones, the memory is still raw and our prayers are with all those who grieve.

Most adults over the age of 30 will recount their story of exactly what they were doing and when they heard the news that fateful day. Just as generations before recounted their stories on hearing the news of the assassination of JFK and the death of Princess Diana.

For me, it was an ordinary Tuesday in a primary school I was teaching at in north London. At the end of the school day, as normal, I took the children downstairs to be collected. The usual hubbub was missing. Parents looked grim.

One said, "Isn't it awful, Mrs Gibson?"

I replied: "Isn't what awful? I've been in the classroom all day."

The collective response: "Planes have crashed into the World Trade Center in New York."

We gathered as a staff in the school hall and put on the TV normally used for BBC Schools programmes. We went home, not fully understanding what was happening. I had choir practice that evening and went to the church hall as normal. None of us felt like singing, so we gathered in small groups and prayed. We comforted one another with words from the Bible: God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.

That was 20 years ago, and we all know what followed.

A generation has grown up since then, in a world marked by the events of that day. Other cataclysmic events have occurred too. And those words still hold true, as they always will: **God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.**

Our Church Community

St. George's PARISH VISITORS

Would you, or someone you know, appreciate some help or a phone call? Maybe you're feeling lonely, isolated, in need of support and friendship?

We may not be able to visit you at this time, but St. George's Church has a team of friendly people who would love to **phone** you -
if we can help, we will !



Call in confidence:

Phone **Marion Elliott 01743 792256**

ST. GEORGE'S PRAYER CHAIN is a small group of people who believe that prayer can make a difference. Each person within the group offers daily prayer for anyone who asks for prayer.

If you yourself or someone you know needs special prayer for any reason, please contact

Revd. Shirley Small 01743 791885.

All information given is given in confidence.
A name is enough if that is all you wish to give.



A reminder: Harvest Celebrations 2021

Saturday 2nd October 10am. Decorated 'brolli' competition

6pm. Harvest Supper in WER. followed by a Promise Auction.

Sunday 3rd October 10.30am Sunday Morning Worship with Holy Communion

Join us to celebrate and give thanks for our blessings.

Tea Services are recommencing!

A service of Holy Communion followed by tea, cakes and a time to catch up and chat on the first Tuesday of each month at **2.30pm** at St George's Church, **starting on October 5th.**

Future dates are November 2nd and December 7th.

Everyone is welcome!

Do you know how to ring church bells?



If you once were a ringer would you consider coming back to help the very small band of ringers at St. George's?

After many months of silence during the pandemic we started ringing the bells again, and have held a few practices at 7.30 on a Thursday evening. We would like to ring for church services on a Sunday morning, but to make this viable we would value the help of some more ringers.

If you're interested please give Sheila Bower a ring on 01743 790294, or come and meet us at 7.30pm on a Thursday.

PCC Report, September 2021

Our PCC Members met recently, and spent much time discussing and agreeing several areas of development for our church. Greg is eager to update our existing church Policies, e.g. Worship; Life events such as weddings, funerals & baptisms; Health & Safety; and to create new ones in areas of need. He also wishes to check on or install 'Job Descriptions' for leaders of various activities, in order that expectations are clearly stated and understood.

In the current climate there is much concern with Safeguarding, at all levels, in order to keep ourselves, and those in our care, safe. Our Safeguarding Officer, June Cribb, was able to update us on how many of our church officers and congregation have taken part in safeguarding training. She also was able to update us on various Risk Assessments produced concerning activities and procedures in church life.

Thus – a very small snapshot of 'Life at the Church Face!'

Val Butterworth
PCC Secretary.

Deanery of Pontesbury

DEANERY NEWS

Rural Dean: **The Revd Bill Rowell**

telephone: 01938 552064 • email: wkrowell@btinternet.com

Thought for the Month from Revd. Christopher Cooke.

IT'S HARVEST TIME OR IS IT?

The Old Testament provided for Harvest Celebrations but the Christian Church does not seem to have celebrated Harvest until fairly recent times. Lammas (loaf mass) was observed in England from Saxon times on August 1st. The harvest home was a secular, weekday, observance. In 1843, the Revd. R.S. Hawker, Vicar of Morwenstow in Cornwall, revived the Lammas custom using the first ripe corn for the bread of the sacrament on October 1st. The 1840s onwards was the period when many of our Harvest hymns were written, and in 1862 the Church of England made provision for the occasion with psalms, lessons and prayers. But when is Harvest to be celebrated?

Farmers harvest crops throughout the year these days and the harvesting of corn is much earlier than in the past. The Church of England has made provision for Harvest Thanksgiving to be held on 31st August this year but has the rubric "Harvest Thanksgiving may be kept on any Sunday provided it does not supersede any Principal Festival or Feast".

On the Llyn Peninsula in Wales, it is the custom for all the chapels and churches to celebrate Harvest on the same Sunday. Anglican churches, particularly in rural areas like our own, seem to spread out their Harvest Thanksgivings through September and early October. People can celebrate Harvest on successive Sundays if they wish to do so by visiting different churches and chapels.

Another factor is what to do when you have Church Schools. It is obviously good to involve our Church Schools at Harvest. Schools often prefer a later Harvest to an earlier one so that they can have some weeks to prepare for it after the resumption of the new school term.

There have been some attempts to provide for Rogation in spring (celebrating the planting) and some churches observe Plough Sunday. One of our most famous Harvest hymns opens:

“We plough the fields, and scatter the good seed on the land,
but it is fed and watered by God’s almighty hand.”

This seems to incorporate all these occasions. It also combines the twin truths that nothing good will happen unless God blesses it but unless the land is prepared and planted, God cannot bless it. This is true of many aspects of our daily lives and our Christian witness.

So the timing of Harvest Thanksgiving is less important than its meaning: we can achieve nothing without God but God is limited in what he will do without us. Jesus says in the Gospels:

“The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few;
therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out
labourers into his harvest”.

Matthew 9:37,38 (Luke 10:2,3).

Christopher Cooke.

Bits and pieces from Revd. Greg Smith:

Alpha

The Alpha course for the Deanery started Tuesday 21st Sept. It’s not too late to join in, please contact Mark Hackney at mark.hackney@hereford.anglican.org The online course runs on Tuesday evenings or you can take part in person at Yockleton on Tuesday lunchtimes.

Harvest Charity

As a family, we will be supporting the charity Water Aid. Each church will take a collection at the harvest service and we will then make a combined donation to this important charity that provides clean water to the developing world.

Habberley celebrated Harvest on Sept 26th, other services are:
Oct 3rd Shelve at 9 am, Pontesbury at 10.30 am.
Oct 17th Hope at 9 a.m, Minsterley at 10.30 am.



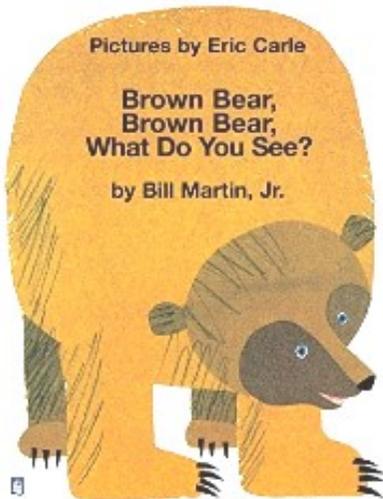
From the Dragon's Den

To quote Dora the Explorer: Yes! We did it!

We did indeed re-start Little Dragons on the 7th of September as we hoped. Eleven Little Dragons and their Carers joined us in the well-ventilated, 'well-anti-bacterialised' church, to enjoy time with us.

All except two were completely new to us, as several of those who would normally have been coming during the past months have now gone to full-time school. The two 'oldies' soon gained possession of the red car, which is always a hot favourite with many of our users. The others soon caught on and were wanting to take their turn up and down the nave aisle.

The dolls were taken for several walks in their pram and the dolls' houses were well used.



Pritt Stick was well in evidence, as those who wished to match animal shapes to create the members of the story – 'Brown Bear, Brown Bear, what do you see?'

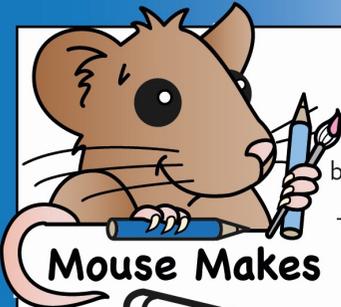
George, Uncle Sam and Idris were delighted to meet their new family, although they were quite cross that they had to sit on the edge of the altar table rather than be passed around from child to child, which is what usually happens.

Our Carers were very sensible in their use of masks if and when it seemed appropriate and we are hoping that the care on the part of everyone will mean that we are able to continue with our weekly meetings. Time will tell!

Please keep everything crossed for a good and safe term.

*From Val and from we three:
George, Uncle Sam & Idris*





Mouse Makes

"Come with me across the lake," Jesus said to his disciples, so they got into a boat and set out. While they were sailing Jesus slept. A big storm *blew* across the lake and the boat began to fill with water. They were in **great** danger. The disciples went to Jesus and woke him. They said, "*Master, mater, we are going to drown!*" Jesus got up and gave a command to the wind and the waves, "*Be still, be calm.*" The wind stopped and the lake became calm.


Read the story
in Mark 4: 35-41



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

EVENING • JESUS • DISCIPLES • CROWD • LEFT • OTHER SIDE • LAKE • BOAT • SAILED
 ASLEEP • WAVES • BROKE • OVER • SWAMPED • DANGER • WOKE • DROWN • QUIET
 STILL • WIND • STORM • WATER • SUBSIDED • CALM • FAITH • FEAR • OBEY • WHO

Looking at CHURCH overseas

Christian Aid's emergency appeal for Haiti

Following the devastating earthquake that hit Haiti in August, Christian Aid has launched an emergency appeal to help people that have been affected.

The nation - which is still recovering from the 2010 earthquake that killed 300,000 people and Hurricane Matthew in 2016, and more recently dealing with Covid and the aftermath of the assassination of its president - has now been struck another blow.



Figures of those killed or impacted are still uncertain. Houses have been destroyed, roads are cut off due to landslides, power lines and communications have been damaged. People have lost their homes, belongings and means to make a living.

People will need emergency shelter, food, drinking water, access to healthcare and protection assistance, but in the long-term they will need housing, livelihood and psychological support.

Marc Pascal Desmornes, Regional Programme Manager for Christian Aid in Haiti said: "We see families moving to wherever they can to stay safe with nothing but the clothes on their backs. Swaths of Haitians are facing growing hunger and healthcare services are already overwhelmed by Covid-19."

There is an easy link for you to make a donation via the Christian Aid website:

<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/appeals/emergencies/haiti-earthquake-appeal>



**Disaster
Appeal**

Persecution of Christians set to rise in Afghanistan

As the Taliban tighten their grip on Afghanistan, Release International has warned that attacks on Christians are likely to rise across the region. One church leader in Afghanistan said Christians were living in great fear. Some who worked for the government now face reprisals, and any identified as Christians could be killed. Christians risk betrayal, even from their own family members.

A Christian contact of one Release International partner describes the situation as 'dire.' Says 'Micah': "Our brothers and sisters in Christ are telling us how afraid they are. In the areas that the Taliban now control girls are not allowed to go to school and women are not allowed to leave their homes without a male companion."

The church in Afghanistan already faced sharp persecution, even before the Taliban advance. That church is invisible and must operate underground in this land where Muslims who change their faith are breaking the law and considered to have betrayed their communities.

To be exposed as a Christian is to risk being charged with apostasy, which is punishable by death or imprisonment. There have also been honour killings of Christians by their families.

One of the communities worst affected by the Taliban is the Shia Hazara minority, which has been especially responsive to the Christian message.

In May 2021, the Taliban bombed the Sayed Ul-Shuhada High School in Kabul, killing at least 85, mainly schoolgirls. The previous year the Taliban staged a shooting at a maternity clinic, killing women, children, and babies.

It was the Pakistan Taliban who shot 15-year-old Malala Yousafzai for going to school and telling the world about it in a blog.

Thousands of Afghans, including Christians, are now seeking refuge in neighbouring Pakistan. But the Taliban are growing in influence there, too. Before the Afghan president fled, he accused Pakistan of permitting thousands of jihadi fighters to cross its border to support the Taliban.

Release International is an inter-denominational Christian ministry working through local church partners in more than 25 countries, helping persecuted Christians prayerfully, pastorally and practically. Our ministry is based on Hebrews 13 v 3: 'Continue to remember those in prison as if you were together with them in prison, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering.'

Looking at the wider COMMUNITY

The UK and US in Afghanistan Tim Lenton looks back on 20 years.

Twenty years ago, on 7th October 2001, the first US and British forces arrived in Afghanistan to launch a massive military offensive following the 9/11 terrorist attack on the United States.

The aim of the offensive was to find and neutralise the al-Qaeda militants under Osama bin Laden who had planned the aerial terror attack with support from the Taliban, killing nearly 3000 people. The Taliban had at that time been in power over most of Afghanistan for five years, tightening the screw with their own strict interpretation of sharia law.

The decision to send forces into Afghanistan – Operation Enduring Freedom – was made by President George W Bush, supported by British Prime Minister Tony Blair, and was initially successful, with support from Northern Afghan forces, taking the final Taliban stronghold of Kandahar in December the same year. But the Taliban never went away, regrouping in the mountains and in neighbouring Pakistan.

Some 456 Britons lost their lives in Afghanistan in the 20-year conflict, and there were many other fatalities, including 2,448 American soldiers, 66,000 Afghan national military and police, 3,846 US contractors, 1,144 NATO allies, 444 aid workers, 72 journalists and 47,245 Afghan civilians.

Zebra crossings – saving lives for 70 years also by Tim Lenton

Seventy years ago, on 31st October 1951, zebra crossings were introduced officially in the UK. The first one was in Slough, Berkshire.

The crossings had been trialled over two years at 1000 experimental sites, but in 1951 the black and white striped pedestrian crossings were approved, with their flashing Belisha beacons, and all drivers were required by law to stop as soon as a pedestrian set foot on them.

The crossings were the brainchild of Yorkshireman and traffic engineer George 'Dr Zebra' Charlesworth, a physicist who had worked on the Barnes Wallis-designed bouncing bomb during the war. His zebra crossings were certainly responsible for saving many lives.

The Belisha beacons, an integral part of the crossing but used since 1934, were introduced by Leslie Hore-Belisha, who served as Minister of Transport at the time.

Zebra crossings were adopted throughout the world, from continental Europe to North America, Singapore and Australia. They have now been superseded to some extent in the UK by pelican crossings, which are controlled by lights. These were introduced in 1969. While zebras were named because of their appearance, a pelican crossing (originally pelicon) is so named as a contraction of the phrase 'pedestrian light controlled'.

Defender of the Faith

It was 500 years ago, on 11th October 1521, that Pope Leo X granted the title 'Defender of the Faith' to King Henry VIII of England and Ireland. It recognised the King's defence of the sacrament of marriage, the supremacy of the Pope, and his opposition to the Protestant Reformation and the ideas of Martin Luther. The title has been inherited by all British monarchs since then.

Ironically, it was only 17 years later that Henry was excommunicated by another Pope, Paul III, because of his divorce from Catherine of Aragon. Even more ironically, this came after Henry had his next queen, Anne Boleyn, executed. His infatuation with Anne had been the reason he decided excommunication was a price worth paying, in the hope that she would provide him with an heir.

Anne was a keen supporter of Martin Luther, and her influence – and the excommunication – led to the independence of Britain from the Roman Catholic Church, and therefore to the Reformation.

Anne was the mother of Queen Elizabeth I, the strongly Protestant and long-lived sovereign who was in fact the successor that Henry VIII had longed for. It just never occurred to him that it could be a woman.

Petition for annual national fundraising day for animals



A ten-year-old girl has launched a national petition asking the Department for Education to introduce an annual fundraising day for animals in schools across the country.

Bailey Woozeer proposes that World Animal Day, held annually on October 4, would be an ideal opportunity for schools to support both British and international animal welfare charities through events such as non-uniform days.

Schools and animal welfare organisations have quickly given the idea a 'phenomenal' response, and her petition has attracted over 27,000 signatures.

Bailey, from Doncaster, said: "Why are the nationwide fundraising days always about helping humans? Animals are desperate and suffering and many species are nearly extinct. They need our help. Please sign and share my petition, because one school fundraising day a year, for the animals around our planet, is something that should already be happening."

Like most charities, animal welfare organisations have faced a financial crisis during the past 15 months. Their income has been hit by a lack of fundraising events due to social distancing guidelines, charity shop closures during lockdown and donors reassessing their priorities.

To sign the petition, go to:
<https://www.change.org/p/departement-for-education-introduce-a-yearly-fundraising-day-for-animals-in-schools>

Find out more about World Animal Day and how to get involved: worldanimalday.org.uk



In the NEWS

NEW CHAIR FOR CHRISTIAN AID

The Rt Revd & Rt Hon Dr John Sentamu, the former Archbishop of York, will be the next Chair of the board of international development agency Christian Aid.

Dr Sentamu – who has been outspoken on issues of poverty and justice in the UK and globally for many years - served as the Archbishop of York from 2005 until 2020. He was created by Her Majesty the Queen, Baron of Lindisfarne in the County of Northumberland and Masooli in the Republic of Uganda. He is a member of the UK Parliament, in the House of Lords.

Born in Kampala, Uganda, Dr Sentamu will be the first person of African descent to take up the position of Chair in Christian Aid's 75-year history.

Dr Rowan Williams, former Archbishop of Canterbury and current Chair, will stand down at Christian Aid's Annual General Meeting (AGM) in November, having served two full terms of office.

Announcing the appointment today, Christian Aid's CEO Amanda Khozi Mukwashi said: "This is wonderful news for Christian Aid. Dr Sentamu brings with him a passion and energy for global justice, a deep love of the Church and a profound theological understanding that will be

able to speak into the crises of climate change, Covid, conflict and debt that are affecting the world's poorest communities. We look forward to welcoming him to the Christian Aid family.

“DRACULA ISN'T HERE!”

A church in North Yorkshire has been trying to convince eager tourists that the vampire's grave is NOT in their churchyard.

Recently the church leaders at the Church of St Mary the Virgin, Whitby, even put up a poster in the entrance door which reads: "Please do not ask staff where Dracula's grave is as there isn't one. Thank you."

Whitby inspired Bram Stoker to write his novel, *Dracula*, in 1897. And it seems that Stoker first came across the name 'Dracula' in Whitby's library. It was another name for the blood-thirsty Romanian ruler, 'Vlad the Impaler'.

St Mary the Virgin stands beside Whitby Abbey, and has a churchyard. This prompts many tourists to ask for the exact location of Dracula's grave, even though of course Dracula never existed.

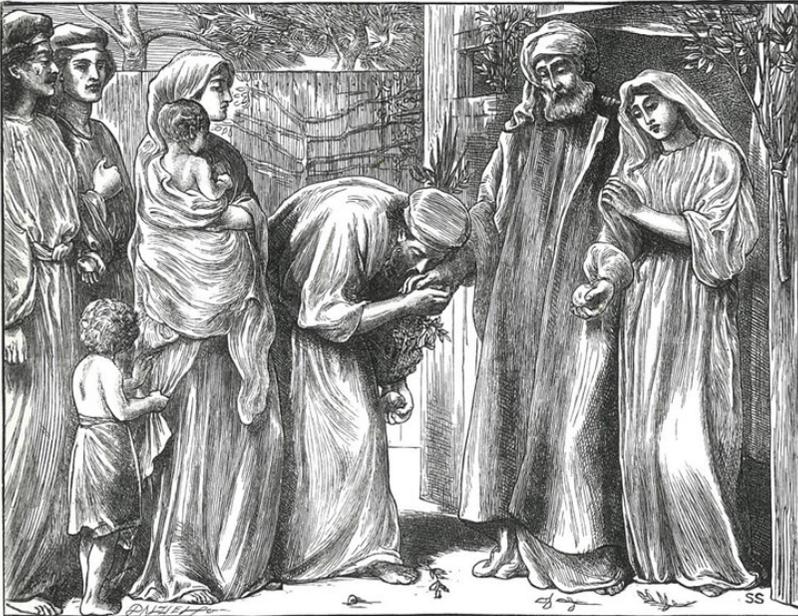
The grave that *can* be found, however, is that of a man named Swales, who is also mentioned in the book.

God in the Arts

This month the Revd Michael Burgess continues his series on God in the Arts with a wood engraving of The Feast of Tabernacles, one of several 'Illustrations of Jewish Customs' by Simeon Solomon.

You can see a copy of the illustration at

<https://victorianweb.org/art/illustration/ssolomon/24.html>



'Spread over us the tabernacle of your peace, O God'

For nine days at the end of September Jewish families will have gathered to celebrate the festival of Tabernacles. It is always a happy season as adults and children alike join for their Harvest feast. Many churches will be having their own Harvest Thanksgivings at the beginning of this month. We know this was a custom revived by Parson Hawker in the Victorian period, but its roots lie in that Jewish feast which Jesus Himself knew and celebrated.

Each family erects a tabernacle or tent in the garden or back yard. They will have their meals and spend time there, relaxing with one another. The roof of each tabernacle might have branches of trees covering it, hung with fruits and fragrant flowers. The children decorate the tent with drawings and pictures.

Because it is only a temporary building for that time of the year, and because the roof is fragile, it is a reminder of the journeying of the Israelites in the wilderness when their safety rested on the goodness of God. It was God who watched over the people then. It is God who watches over them now and watches over the earth, so that it is fruitful, providing food for their health and happiness.

This feast is the subject of this month's picture by Simeon Solomon. He was a Jewish artist, born in London in 1840 into a family of artists. He made his own reputation through meeting the Pre-Raphaelites and the poet, Swinburne. Solomon was a colourful character of that period, whose life sadly ended in poverty and alcoholism. But this wood engraving was made early on in his life in 1866. It is part of a series illustrating Jewish customs, which Solomon provided for 'Leisure Hour.'

We see an elderly person on the left making his way into the tent, and at the other side a mother leading her children. The walls outside are adorned with palm branches and inside the tent a feast of fruits and food await them. The young boy seems hesitant, wondering what he will find and clinging to the hand of his mother. But all is well, for inside other members of the family are there to welcome them.

Solomon conveys the domesticity of this feast, and the young boy outside reminds us that Jesus Himself would have celebrated this feast with Mary and Joseph. They would also have gone up to Jerusalem to join the thousands of pilgrims there, as Jesus was to do later in His adult ministry. Each pilgrim would carry a branch of myrtle, palm and willow in one hand and a citrus fruit in the other, symbols of the fruits of the promised land. The air would be full of hosannas and praises to God.

Like the Jewish families at the Feast of Tabernacles, we shall gather for our Harvest Thanksgivings. Like them, we shall thank God for His faithful goodness in the past. Like them, we shall look ahead to the coming of God's kingdom, where God who feeds us now in food and drink will nourish us eternally. Like them, we shall proclaim, 'O taste and see how gracious the Lord is: blessed is the one who trusts in Him.'

QUOTE:

History is a story written by the finger of God. - C S Lewis

God in the Sciences

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

Fearfully and Wonderfully Made

Every person was once a sperm and an egg. Those two unique germ cells fused together, and in nine months they turned into a living, breathing, human being. One of the most important stages of this process is when each section of the body, from head to rump, takes on its identity.

In this context, identity means what shape it takes, and which limbs or internal organs grow there: legs or arms, lungs or pancreas, and so on. The source of that physical identity is DNA: the networks of genes that are switched on or off in each segment of the body, making all the proteins that are needed to grow and develop in the right way. The master-genes that control the whole process are called homeobox, or Hox genes for short.

The most beautiful thing about the process of body patterning is the way it brings the dimensions of time and space together in such a tidy way. The Hox genes are organised into several clusters on the chromosomes, in the order in which they are needed during development *and* the order in which they appear on the body.

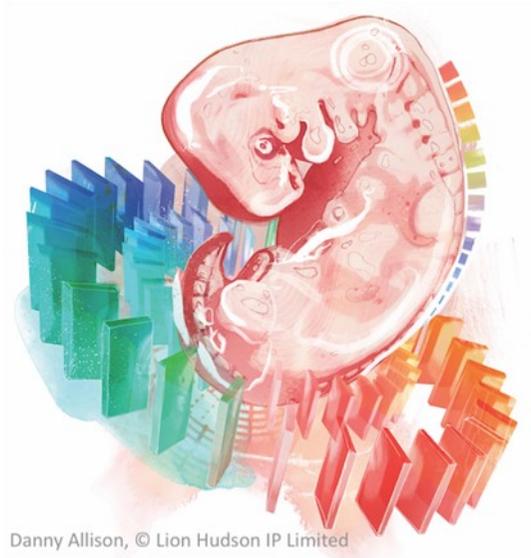
As the embryo develops, the cells near the head end activate the first genes in the Hox clusters. The cells just below the head then switch on the second genes in the cluster, and so on. A wave of gene activation passes down the embryo, specifying each section of the trunk in turn.

Once a Hox gene is switched on it can stay switched on in the next few sections of cells, and it is the overlapping activity of the genes which gives each section of the body its proper identity.

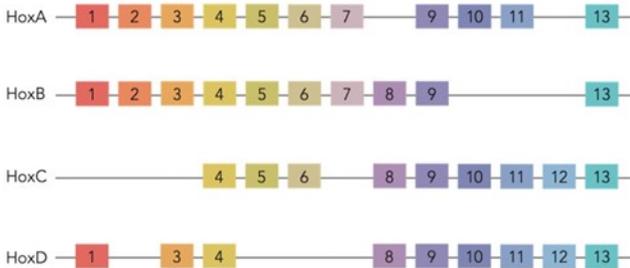
The Wisconsin-based developmental biologist Jeff Hardin often quotes Psalm 139 to express the wonder of embryonic development. *"For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb...your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the*

secret place, when I was woven together in the depths of the earth." The story of the tidy Hox genes is very relevant to these verses, bringing out the hidden beauty in the process.

The more biologists get to find out about how we came to be born, the more we can say, *"I am fearfully and wonderfully made!"*



Danny Allison, © Lion Hudson IP Limited



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Crossword Solution

ACROSS
 1 dare; 3 cherubim; 9 sonTohu; 10 yield; 11 ranch; 12 enlist; 14 Baalah of Judah; 17 Edward; 19 Sheol; 22 media; 23 open air; 24 apostasy; 25 Eton

DOWN

1 describe; 2 run in; 4 household gods; 5 royal; 6 blessed; 7 MIDI; 8 Joshua; 13 children; 15 added to; 16 Jasper; 18 await; 20 exalt; 21 YMCA

Who's Who ... ?

Who is it who writes the articles you read in this magazine each month? **The Parish Pump** is a monthly online collection of articles to help church magazine editors to fill the pages you read. The writers come from a variety of walks of life.

In this magazine, online and print versions, you will have read contributions from:



The Revd Peter Crumpler has worked in and with the media for more than 40 years. He trained as a local newspaper journalist and went on to work in corporate communications for an international energy company in the UK and overseas. Peter was Director of Communications for the Church of England for seven years before leaving to train for ordination. He is currently serving as a self-supporting minister in St Albans, Herts



The Rev Paul Hardingham is vicar of St Peter's Halliwell, Bolton in the diocese of Manchester. Parish ministry has taken him all over the country including Cambridge, Newcastle upon Tyne, Birmingham and Ipswich, during which time he has contributed regularly to the Parish Pump.



Tim Lenton is a former chief sub-editor of the Eastern Daily Press and was a columnist for the same paper. He is now a freelance writer, editor and poet – a winner of the Fish International Poetry Prize – and has been published in several anthologies, collections and on websites. He lives in Norwich with his wife, and has one son and two grandchildren. He takes services, leads worship and preaches (though not simultaneously) at St Augustine's Church in the city.

The Rev Daphne Kitching is a poet whose work is published in over sixty anthologies and in two collections of her own poems.

A former primary school teacher, she now teaches pupils with Specific Learning Difficulties (Dyslexia). Based in the East Riding of Yorkshire, Daphne was ordained in July 2009 in York Minster.

She is Associate Minister at St Barnabas' Parish Church, Swanland.



Nigel Beeton was until his recent retirement an NHS radiographer working at the West Suffolk Hospital in Bury St Edmunds. He is also editor of 'The View', the parish magazine of St Mary with St Peter, Bury St Edmunds. To relax from these duties, he enjoys "messing around with words", writing poetry ranging from the comic to the more reflective.

More next month ...

Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in
Mark 6:17-28, Matthew 14:1-11

After Herod Antipator died, the Romans allowed his son Herod Antipas to rule Galilee and Peraea. He was hated by the Jews

Herod Antipas divorced his wife and married his brother Herod-Philip's wife, Herodias.



John the Baptist told him he had broken Jewish law by marrying his brother's wife*



*Lev 18:19, 20-21. She was also his niece.

Herodias hated John and wanted him dead. Herod was afraid of John and wouldn't kill him but put him in prison.

Herod liked to listen to John.



Finally, Herodias got her chance.

Herod had a big party for his birthday.



(Birthday parties were a new trend from Greece.)

He invited everyone important in Galilee.



Herodias sent her daughter to dance for Herod and his guests.



(No decent girl would do this.)

They were very entertained.

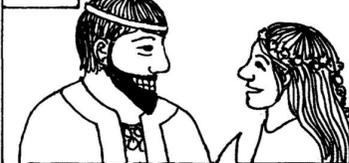


I will give you anything, even half my kingdom



(Which wasn't really his to give.)

Salome asked Herodias, then said



I want John's head on a plate.

Oh, no! But I made a promise in front of everyone!



So John was killed* and Salome was given his head. She gave it to her mother.



*illegal without a trial

Here's a word search grid based on the Bible Bite story on the previous page. Can you find, in the grid, all the words listed below?

j	a	d	x	y	s	a	x	c	o	a	q	t
e	o	e	e	g	p	r	o	m	i	s	e	y
k	l	h	e	a	d	f	i	n	a	l	l	y
u	i	k	n	l	d	b	l	i	h	l	n	n
k	s	l	t	i	o	r	d	m	p	p	s	q
i	t	p	l	l	r	o	a	p	t	r	a	h
n	e	l	k	e	r	t	u	o	v	i	l	e
g	n	a	h	e	d	h	g	r	m	s	o	r
d	f	t	h	q	o	e	h	t	f	o	m	o
o	o	e	n	t	e	r	t	a	i	n	e	d
m	q	c	h	a	n	c	e	n	i	f	n	l
p	a	r	t	y	b	i	r	t	h	d	a	y
g	u	e	s	t	s	d	a	n	c	e	t	p

prison

killed

finally

Salome

birthday

plate

head

chance

daughter

listen

party

mother

John

important

entertained

dead

guests

Herod

Galilee

brother

dance

promise

Herodias

kingdom

Your Puzzle for this month

Crossword Clues

Across

1 'Those who were standing near Paul said, "You — to insult God's high priest?"' (Acts 23:4) (4)

3 They were assigned to guard the tree of life (Genesis 3:24) (8)

9 'Elkanah son of Jeroham, the son of Elihu, the — of —, the son of Zuph, an Ephraimite' (1 Samuel 1:1) (3,4)

10 Surrender (Joshua 24:23)(5)

11 Where American livestock can be reared (5)

12 Listen (anag.) (6)

14 Alternative name for Kiriath Jearim (2 Samuel 6:2) (6,2,5)

17 He founded Westminster Abbey, — the Confessor (6)

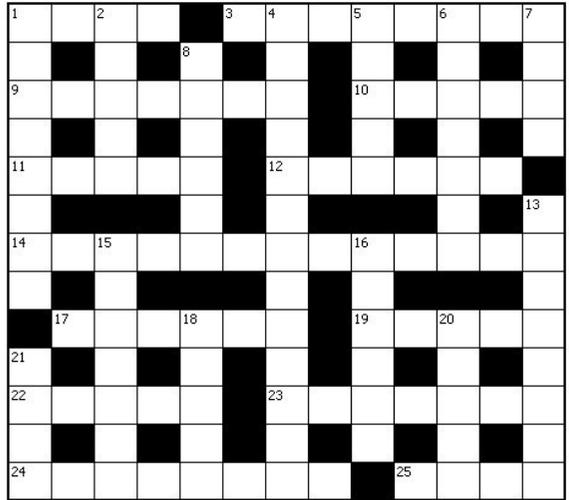
19 Hebrew word for the place of the dead (5)

22 Allies of Persia in the fifth century BC (Esther 1:3) (5)

23 Where John Wesley was forced to preach a lot (4,3)

24 Rebellion against God; abandonment of religious belief (8)

25 Note (anag.) (4)



Down

1 Give an account of (Mark 4:30) (8)

2 'I — — the path of your commands, for you have set my heartfree' (Psalm 119:32) (3,2)

4 'He took the ephod, the other — — and the carved image'(Judges 18:20) (9,4)

5 'You are a chosen people, a — priesthood' (1 Peter 2:9) (5)

6 The meek, the merciful and the mourners are all this(Matthew 5:4–5, 7) (7)

7 Musical Instrument Digital Interface (1,1,1,1)

8 He was the son of Nun (Deuteronomy 34:9) (6)

13 'Let the little — come to me' (Matthew 19:14) (8)

15 'About three thousand were — — their number that day'(Acts 2:41) (5,2)

16 In John's vision, the wall of the new Jerusalem was made of this (Revelation 21:18) (6)

18 'Our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly — a Saviour from there, the Lord Jesus Christ' (Philippians 3:20) (5)

20 'Glorify the Lord with me: let us — his name together' (Psalm 34:3) (5)

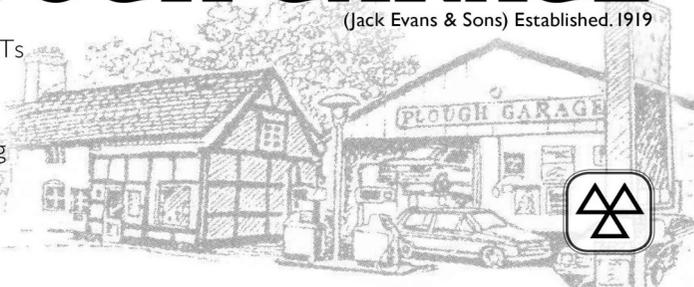
21 Young Men's Christian Association (1,1,1,1)

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