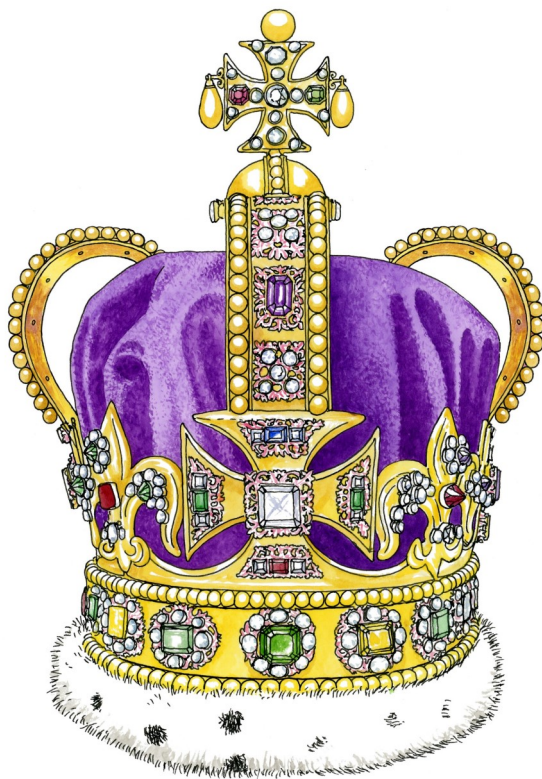


St. George's Montezbury

Magazine 50p



May 2023



The Parish of Pontesbury

Contact details:

Rector

The Revd. Greg Smith
07902 794653

Greg's DAY OFF is FRIDAY

Curate

The Revd. Richard Lonsdale
07922 830488

Richard's DAY OFF is TUESDAY

Churchwardens

Mrs Mary Worrall 791069
Mrs Marianne McCall 07944 333830

Assistant Churchwardens

Mrs Helen McCall 790296
mobile 07985 312192
Mrs Heather Ryder 790359

Treasurer

Mike Bowen
Stgtreasure@btinternet.com

PCC Secretary

Mr Allen Marsden 791822

Organist & Choirmaster

Dr Paul Bracken 07951 674428

Prayer Chain Coordinator

Revd. Shirley Small 791885

Parish Visitors Team

Mrs Marion Elliott 792256

Parish Safeguarding Officer

Mrs June Cribb 07947 482066

Oasis

Mrs Heather Ryder 790359

Little Dragons

Mrs Valerie Butterworth 790587

Bell Tower Officer

Mrs Sheila Bower 790294

West End Room Booking

Contact Mrs Mary Worrall 791069

Website

Mr Richard Elliott 792256
webmaster@st-george.org.uk

Magazine Editor

Mrs Sheila Bower 790294

Advertisements

Mrs Marion Elliott 792256

Printing team

Mrs Carolyn Lewis 860714
stgsprinting@gmail.com

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

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

Alison Bebb - Keepers Cottage, Cruckmeole, Shrewsbury, SY5 8JN
Telephone: 01743 860158 email: alisonbebb5@gmail.com

A digital version of this magazine, with extra articles, can be found on the church website from the beginning of the month.

When you talk, you only repeat what you already know,
but if you listen you may learn something.

- Amish school proverb



LIFTING UP OUR EYES

With Carolyn Chadwick

Musings – on Love

1Corinthians 13: 'Love is patient; love is kind'... What do you think of when you see this?

Weddings? Weddings! St Paul at his most lyrical; a lovely reading for weddings, something to bring tears to the eyes, so that we all reach for our hankies. Sentimental, maybe; idealistic and impossible? Definitely. As the season of weddings approaches, this reading will be heard many times, and rightly so.

The trouble with Bible passages that are so well known is that they lose their potency. I wonder if we ever stop to think about why St. Paul wrote these words. Was he enjoying a nice, rosy moment of sentimentality? Was he speaking to misty-eyed brides and grooms? Well... his words do indeed have something vital to say to young people setting out on the journey of married life, but that is not his main focus.

St. Paul is talking about the Kingdom of God and what it looks like in human life. He wrote this letter to the Corinthian church because it was on the point of falling apart due to internal conflicts, competing factions and generally pretty awful behaviour towards one another. It seems that one of the problems was disagreement about what was 'right' and what was 'not right,' depending on which leader you chose to follow. They were even competing with each other over who had the best spiritual gifts. Paul will have none of it. All God's gifts are good, all are needful and, being gifts, can never be used as a badge of honour. The whole of chapter 12 is spent developing this awareness. Then he says, 'But I will show you a better way'...

The foundation of everything Paul says from here on is that God is Love; that, as his sons and daughters, we are called to reflect that same love in our lives, in our relationships. If I am loved by God unconditionally, forgiven and called to a loving relationship with him, that is good news indeed for me. The difficult bit is that it is also true for everyone else, even if they don't know it yet. How

then can we not want to love one another as God loves us? If God is Love, this hymn of praise to Love is Paul's description of God Himself. There is something far more important than all the gifts of God, says Paul; it is God Himself, our faithful trust in Him, our hope in His future. Greatest of all, it is Love, because that is the very nature of God, and God has called us to live His love in this world.

So, Paul's description of what Love looks like in everyday life is much more than sentiment. It is a template for our own lives and relationships, a litmus test for our impulses to behave in certain ways. It gives us pause for thought: what does Love say to this situation? What is the loving response here? What is the loving way to see this person? And he gives us wonderfully clear guidelines:

There is (he says) something far more important than being impressive, the best, or even right; without love these are all meaningless, worthless. *'Love is patient, love is kind. It does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude; it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when perfection comes, the imperfect disappears.....now we see but a poor reflection in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am known. And now these three (gifts) remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is Love.(1Cor. 13: 4-13)*

I believe that Paul meant us to use this description as a guide, to help us pray with understanding about the way we relate to one another. Just imagine a world where this is the normal way of life! That, my dear brothers and sisters in Christ, is our ultimate goal!

Faith, hope and love be yours, through His grace,
now and always.

Carolyn



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 join a church service this month.

Date	Service	Readings
2 nd May (Tuesday)	Tea Service 2.30pm	
7 th May 5th Sunday of Easter Coronation Service	Holy Communion 10.30am	Isaiah 40: 12-17,25-end Luke 22: 24-30
14 th May 6th Sunday of Easter	Holy Communion 10.30am	(Psalm 66 7-end) 1Peter3 13-end John 14:15-21
18 th May (Thursday) Ascension Day	Holy Communion 7pm	Psalm 93 Luke 24.44-end
21st May 7 th Sunday of Easter	Holy Communion 10.30am	(Psalm 68.1-10) 1Peter 4.12-14;5.6-11 John 17.1-11
28 th May Day of Pentecost (Whit Sunday) Group Service at Minsterley	Holy Communion 10.30am	Numbers.11.24-30 (1 Corinthians 12.3b-13) John 20.19-23



***Pause a moment: Why does our lectern have an eagle? See p10
It is the symbol of John the Baptist ... look it up on google.***

Looking at GOD

By Canon Paul Hardingham:

The Coronation of King Charles III

On 6th May His Majesty King Charles III will be crowned alongside Camilla, The Queen Consort, in Westminster Abbey. How can we pray for him, as he approaches this important event? Paul says: *'I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness.'* (1 Timothy 2:1,2).

For God's presence - to guide every aspect of King Charles' life as he prepares for his Coronation and future roles. At his Accession, he was proclaimed Defender of the Faith, the Supreme Governor of the Church of England. Charles has talked about *'the Sovereign's particular relationship and responsibility towards the Church of England - the Church in which my own faith is so deeply rooted.'*

For God's wisdom - as he provides leadership that will honour God and promote the wellbeing of our society. King Solomon prayed for wisdom for himself: *'So give your servant a discerning heart to govern your people and to distinguish between right and wrong.'* (1Kings 3:9).

For God's love - to strengthen all relationships within the Royal Family; for reconciliation, understanding, forgiveness and good communication.

For God's purpose - to be fulfilled through the work of the King and Queen and their family in the years to come. He has said: *'and whatever may be your background or beliefs, I shall endeavour to serve you with loyalty, respect and love, as I have throughout my life.'*

A Prayer for the new King:

Everlasting God, we pray for our new King. Bless his reign and the life of our nation. Help us to work together so that truth and justice, harmony and fairness flourish among us; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Canon Paul Hardingham continues a series on the spiritual disciplines that help us to grow and deepen our faith.



Spiritual Practices: PRAYER

An important spiritual discipline is *prayer*, where we can both listen and talk to God. However, it's not always easy, and as Pentecost tells us, we have the Holy Spirit to help us to pray.

'In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God.' (Romans 8: 26,27)

The Spirit helps us in our weakness

We often don't know how to pray for a person or situation. The Holy Spirit is alongside to help: *'He bears the burden with us'*. He enables us to connect with God and assures us that He loves to hear our prayers: *'And by Him we cry, 'Abba, Father.'* (Romans 8:15).

The Spirit helps us in our ignorance

When we don't know what to ask in prayer, the Spirit prays for us with a perfect understanding of God's will. The Spirit pleads on our behalf in *'wordless groans'*, which go beyond mere words. We are never alone when we pray, since the Spirit takes our words and brings them to the Father.

The Spirit helps us in our requests

The Spirit intercedes for us according to the will of God. He translates the prayers we can't articulate or the requests we get wrong, so that they come to God in accordance with His will. In prayer we attune ourselves to the Spirit with our words or groans. Reading the Bible alongside our prayer is helpful, so that we can pray in agreement with God's Word.

When we pray, let's confidently ask: *'Come Holy Spirit.'*



Where did Jesus go?

In Salvador Dali's picture of Jesus' ascension all you can see are His feet!

(have a look at <https://www.dalipaintings.com/the-ascension-of-christ.jsp>)

As we celebrate the event this month, it prompts the question *'where did Jesus go?'* Peter says Jesus *'has gone into heaven and is at God's right hand'* (1 Peter 3:22). However, the New Testament tells us three things about what Jesus is doing at the Father's side.

Sitting: At Pentecost Peter says Jesus is *'exalted to the right hand of God, He has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear...'* *'The Lord said to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand"'* (Acts 2: 33-4). Peter is affirming Jesus' position of authority and power at the heart of the universe. By pouring out the gift of the Holy Spirit upon us, Jesus gives us a foretaste of the life of heaven i.e. eternal life, forgiveness, healing, release and God's provision for our lives.

Standing: When Stephen, the first Christian martyr, was being stoned to death by the Jewish authorities he cried out: *'I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.'* (Acts 7:56). Our experience of heaven is only ever partial, as we live with the reality of suffering and setbacks. However, Jesus is still on the throne! He has a bigger plan and purpose for our lives than we might imagine (including the difficulties), and we are called to trust Him daily.

Praying: *'Christ Jesus who died – more than that, who was raised to life – is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.'* (Romans 8:34, cf Hebrews 7:25). Even when we don't know how to pray, we have the assurance that Jesus is already praying for us! He knows our needs even better than we do ourselves, so when we feel condemned or defeated in our Christian lives, we have somebody on our side!

The Ascension reminds us that the risen Jesus lives in the immediate presence of God and both transcends and embraces our present experience. This truth lies at the heart of the *up* language used to describe the event.

'Heaven relates to earth tangentially so that the one who is in heaven can be present simultaneously anywhere and everywhere on earth: the ascension therefore means that Jesus is available, accessible, without people having to travel to a particular spot on the earth to find Him.' (Tom Wright).

After the Ascension, what?

The New Testament tells us that Jesus ascended into heaven, and now intercedes for us at His Father's right hand. Have you ever wondered what this means?

Some have thought that the Lord is somehow constantly 're-offering' the sacrifice of His death before the Father in heaven, and in so doing is 'pleading' on our behalf. But the New Testament is clear in its insistence that Christ's death was historically once and for all achieved.

Hebrews 7:25,27 tells us "...He is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them....He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily.... Since He did this once for all when He offered up Himself...."

Instead, Jesus is now in heaven to 'represent us before the Father' (1 John 2:1). He is there to escort you into the Father's presence every time you turn to God in prayer. That is why Christian prayer always ends with 'In Jesus Christ's Name'. He is our only way through.

Blessing

It was the five-year-old boy's first trip down to the Communion rail at church. Fascinated, he watched the vicar place a wafer in the palm of each person kneeling before him.

When the vicar reached the little boy, he ignored the child's out-stretched palm, and laid his hand on the child's head in a gentle blessing instead. The boy, utterly bewildered, whispered to his father in a piercing voice; "He's put it on my head!"



Reflecting faith – The Lectern

Written by The Revd Dr Jo White

Have you ever considered the furniture that we have in our churches?

Close your eyes and think what your own sitting room looks like and the furniture you have chosen to go in there. Most of us will have chairs, a sofa, one or more tables of different sizes, a fire-place and a television. Which way are the chairs facing? What's the focal point?

Churches are no different in that they have most fixtures and fittings in common, and in set places.

In an Anglican church the focal item is the altar at the centre, with the lectern – from where the Bible is read out loud during services - on the right side as you look at it, and a pulpit on the left-hand side.

In a Methodist church the pulpit is often behind, but built higher than the altar, and probably with a mobile lectern to be placed as chosen.

This demonstrates a key difference between the two denominations. The former holds the bread and wine in greater importance whilst the latter gives that status to the preaching and the Word of God.

Such variations reveal the way in which we 'reflect our faith' through our buildings.

The word 'lectern' derives from 'to collect, gather', and again, 'to speak', so together it means 'to gather words, to pick out words.'

The words in church which we read from the lectern have been certainly carefully chosen and then written down. There have been centuries, indeed millennia, of time, thought, prayer and energy going into preparing the Bibles that we read today!

It is a privilege to be asked to read from the Bible during a service, as that will form the basis for the sermon, the hymns and indeed the whole theme for that day or even that week.

This month: Have a look at the lectern in your place of worship or the place where the Bible readings are read from.

What material is it made from? What shape is it? Does it have any distinctive features? Then consider how that passage or those passages are continued and expanded through the different elements of the service.

Our Local and Church COMMUNITY



**Caring and sharing
within the community**

If you are currently in a financial crisis then we can bridge the gap until your circumstances improve by providing a weekly parcel of nutritionally balanced food, along with other essential household items.

You do need a referral but just call Reverend Greg Smith 07902 794653
Or Reverend Richard Lonsdale 07922 830488

A referral ensures that your parcel will meet the needs of you and your family and take into account any dietary requirements. You will be warmly welcomed by our team when you come to your collection point.

Holy Trinity Church, Minsterley Tuesdays 10am-12.00
St George's Church, Pontesbury Thursdays 10am-12.00

We are in need of donations of men's toiletries, women's toiletries and carrier bags.

These can be dropped off at Holy Trinity Church, Minsterley
or St George's Church, Pontesbury.

Financial donations are also welcome, enabling us to buy essential items :

Here are the account details:

The Rea Valley Foodbank
51-61-06
76841804

If you would like more information
then please email
support@reavalleyfoodbank.co.uk

The reference is: Donor

Do good, be blessed

When we do good, even when others are doing wrong – God will bless us. That does not mean God will always bless us in material ways, although at times this is the case. But God will always bless you spiritually for your faithfulness.

If you have committed your life to God, let your life reflect His love for those around you. "Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven." (Matthew 5:16). By your daily actions and your daily words to friends, colleagues and family, you can be a witness to those you meet every day, and God will honour your witness for Him.

Repair Café

The Repair Café continues to open in St. George's on the second Saturday of alternate months. The next is on **Saturday 13th May 10.00- 12.00hrs**, and then there's one at the same time on **Saturday 8th July**.

Come along with your broken things, valuable or just memorable or useful, and see what we can do to help. And if you have a skill to offer, then maybe come along and see if you can repair some treasured items brought in by someone else.



OASIS *FREE lunch & companionship for anyone living in Pontesbury, Minsterley and surrounding villages, who has been recently bereaved...
...on the 2nd & 4th Tuesdays every month, 12pm - 1.30pm
Minsterley Methodist Chapel, Horsebridge Rd, Minsterley.
Transport is Available—Friends & Family are Welcome too.*

Contact Heather Ryder for more information, at
ryder928@btinternet.com or 01743 790359

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?
*St. George's Church has a team of friendly people who would love to **phone** or **visit** 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

Rev. Shirley Small 01743 791885.

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

Looking at the CHURCH Worldwide

By the Revd Peter Crumpler, a Church of England priest in St Albans, Herts, and a former communications director for the C of E...

in praise of passion

Enthusiasm – I love it. Give me passion, excitement, fascination and joy over calm detachment and a cool distance anytime.

I see that passion at football matches when I support my Premier League team, and I see it when I visit a range of grassroots organisations thriving in the city where I live. Hopefully, you see it in your area as well.

Enthusiasm is infectious. But sadly, in our churches, we don't always do enthusiasm well.

Research shows that many Christians fail badly at passing on their beliefs to the next generation. Faith, it seems, is not as infectious as a passion for a football club that can easily be passed down the family line.

Maybe it's part of our character not to talk about religion. It's something some people feel is very personal and might give offence. Other cultures have no such reserve – and I love the impact that Christians from a variety of backgrounds have made on the UK church scene.

Many churches run all kinds of community groups – without articulating the faith that drives them to make a difference in their local area. It's a missed opportunity to explain the reason behind what we do.

I love it when I hear people talking about their faith – a living faith that has made a real difference in their lives. Perhaps prompting them to launch a charity, or a group that helps people with specific needs, or to start a new business.

Or maybe a faith that drives them to leave behind a high-paying City job to work in the health service on lower pay. Or to take their skills abroad to work in a developing country and train local people to replace them.

Our churches have so many stories of transformation to share with their communities.

That's the type of enthusiastic faith that works for me. It's about a passion that makes a difference in people's lives – both themselves and the men and women around them.

Maybe we Christians should be more passionate and open about what we believe - and the impact that faith has had on our lives, as well as the communities around us.

Church of England Cathedrals showed recovery in 2021 amid Covid-19 measures

Latest worshipping and visitor data collected from England's 42 cathedrals and Westminster Abbey during 2021 shows attendance began to recover, despite ongoing Covid-19 measures.

The data showed a weekly total of 15,800 people were reported at cathedral services in 2021. This is 22 per cent more than the equivalent figure from 2020, although still 58 per cent below the 2019 figure.

Meanwhile, the number of cathedrals offering online worship in addition to, or augmenting in-person services remained high, with 94 per cent of cathedrals continuing to offer this.

The Dean of Canterbury, David Monteith, who Chairs the College of Deans, said: "Church of England cathedrals have been an integral part of the country's cultural heritage for over a thousand years. The data from 2021 demonstrates the resilience of the cathedrals and their importance to local communities.

"We have adapted to the changing circumstances throughout the pandemic, and some of what we have learnt is here to stay. This includes the gift of online worship, with many cathedrals reaching new congregations, together with those who would prefer to join services from home.

Worshipping online looks set to carry on

We still enjoy 'going to church' online. In fact, recent viewing figures for the CofE's national online services reveal that they continue to receive about 150,000 views a week. Overall, in 2022, they attracted more than eight million views.

It was in March this year that the CofE marked three years since the start of the online services, which were begun during the Covid lockdown. By the end of that first year, it was found that clips and content from the services across the country had been seen 40 million times on social-media channels.

The current figure of 150,000 a week is thought to be conservative. As a Church House spokesman in London said: "Our analysis in May 2022 showed that 20 per cent of viewers watched with at least one other person, so this would have meant at least another 30,000 views." The C of E online service on New Year's Day gained 800,000 views alone.

And weekly production of services continues. Services are broadcast on social-media channels every Sunday, via YouTube and Instagram. They cover all the CofE traditions, and include estates churches, military chaplaincies, rural parishes, multiple church benefices, big county town churches, and cathedrals.

As one vicar said, "Worship online has made such an enormous difference... now we live-stream absolutely everything, and I'm really passionate about that."

Christians helping to clean up after The earthquake in Turkey

More than 50,000 people were killed, and tens of thousands injured when the massive earthquake in Turkey and Syria struck on 6th February, causing thousands of homes and buildings to collapse across a vast area.

Only a week later, on 13th February, the Christian aid agency, Samaritan's Purse opened an Emergency Field Hospital in Turkey, accepting dozens of patients within hours of opening.

That mobile hospital soon included two emergency operating rooms, four intensive care unit beds, a pharmacy, and 52 beds. It has a staff of about 100, including doctors, nurses, and other medical personnel.

Samaritan's Purse has also distributed thousands of tents, as well as mattresses, food boxes, solar lanterns, and hygiene kits (including soap, shampoo, toothpaste, toilet paper, and more) in partnership with First Hope Association.

Through these local Christian partners, teams are also in the process of installing 120 mobile hygiene containers, each complete with three showers, three toilets, and sinks. Arriving on large trucks and lifted onto level ground by cranes, these facilities will be maintained for up to a year through our partnerships in Turkey.

If you would like to help the on-going relief effort, please go to:

<https://www.samaritans-purse.org.uk>



From the Dragon's Den

It was good to hear that several Little Dragons attended and enjoyed the recent Explorer's occasion when they searched for Easter Eggs, ate Hot Cross Buns and heard some of the Easter Story; this last, helping them to learn the true meaning of Easter.

Now we are into our Summer Term, which, for some of our little people, means they are almost ready for school. During these last few weeks of the Dragon Year, we see that those who have reached the age when they are to venture into the wider world of 'Reception Class', are showing that they are ready as they help to set up for Storytime and help to clear away toys, furniture and materials at the end of the morning.

Some of our first-ever Little Dragons, from our very first sessions in 2006, have now reached the age of 19 and are now studying for a whole range of professions or are already working in their chosen field. It is good to know that we at St. George's have played our part in their lives.

We wish all Little Dragons, past and present, everything that is good in life.

Joy to everyone, from Val and from we three



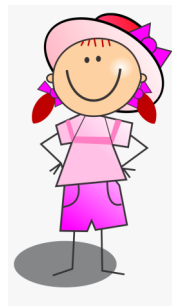
George,



Uncle Sam

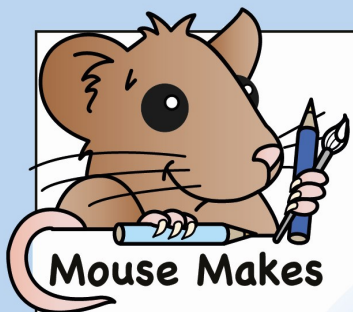


& Idris



An observation:

How come it takes so little time for a child who is afraid of the dark, to become a teenager who wants to stay out all night?



Mouse Makes

Find the answers in the word search

What did Jesus say from the Apostles?

a _____
Acts 1:9

Where was Jesus taken up to? _____
Luke 24:51

Where did the Apostles return to? _____

Acts 1:12

Forty days after His resurrection Jesus appeared to the Apostles one last time. He told them that the Holy Spirit would come, then He blessed them and **ascended** into heaven.



READ
Acts 1 4-17

What did Jesus say that the Holy Spirit would give the Apostles?

_____ to be Jesus' witnesses.
Acts 1:8

Who appeared to the Apostles?
Two _____ and what were they dressed in? _____
Acts 1:10

Where is Jesus seated?
At the _____ of God.
Mark 16:19

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

JESUS • CHRIST • FORTY DAYS • APOSTLES • ASCENSION • TAKEN • LOOKING
SKY • RETURN • BLESSED • WORSHIPPED • JOY • PRAYER • GOD • SAT
GATHERED • WITNESSES • HOLY SPIRIT

Looking at the wider COMMUNITY

Speak out By the Ven John Barton

As a little boy growing up during World War II, I spent night after night in a bomb shelter. Why were those wicked Germans strafing us? Why was everything rationed (especially sweets)? After the war I began to understand that many other countries had suffered too, and unspeakable atrocities had been inflicted on Jews and other defenceless minorities. In my own lifetime, history had shown what happens when a failure to recognise the unique worth of all other human beings turns civilised people into monsters.

It was hard to accept that Germans were an enlightened, cultured people whose history, like ours, was steeped in the Christian faith. Yet as I grew older, I came to the conclusion that if they could succumb to an evil ideology, despite the values which must have been instilled in them as children, so could we, and it would be arrogant and blinkered to imagine we were immune from the influence of inhuman propaganda.

We need to highlight disinformation and speak out when other people are demeaned, even if that makes us unpopular. Keeping silent when others are being oppressed is not an option. The German Pastor Martin Niemöller issued this warning:

*First they came for the Communists
And I did not speak out
Because I was not a Communist.*

*Then they came for the Socialists
And I did not speak out
Because I was not a Socialist.*

*Then they came for the trade unionists
And I did not speak out
Because I was not a trade unionist.*

*Then they came for the Jews
And I did not speak out
Because I was not a Jew.*

*Then they came for me
And there was no one left
To speak out for me.*

Niemöller was a one-time supporter of Hitler, but changed when Nazis imposed their racial ideology on churches. He was incarcerated in concentration camps from 1938 to 1945. That's the price he paid for speaking out.

Did you know 10 Facts about King Charles III?

He was born at 9.14pm on 14th November 1948, to Princess Elizabeth and Prince Philip, at Buckingham Palace in London.

He has been heir-apparent to the throne since he was three years old.

He is the first monarch in British history to have earned a university degree. From 1967 to 1970 he studied history at Cambridge University.

He can speak Welsh. He spent two months learning the language in 1969, as he prepared to become the Prince of Wales. He still speaks it today.

He is a qualified pilot and diver. While serving in the military in the 1970s, he trained as a jet and helicopter pilot and became a confident diver.

He is a keen watercolour painter, a published author, and a music lover, who played the cello at Cambridge. He has done some TV: making a guest appearance on Coronation Street, and presenting the BBC weather forecast.

As Prince of Wales, he founded nearly 20 charities. Together, they raise £140million each year for good causes. He is passionate about the environment, speaking out against plastic pollution as early as 1970. He has planted many trees during royal engagements.

Aged 73, King Charles III is the oldest monarch ever to be crowned in British history. He became King on 8th September 2022, after the death of his mother, the Queen, in Balmoral.

As head of the Commonwealth, King Charles III is monarch of each of the 14 Commonwealth realms: Antigua & Barbuda, Australia, Bahamas, Belize, Canada, Grenada, Jamaica, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Saint Kitts & Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent & the Grenadines, the Solomon Islands, and Tuvalu. As King, he's also the only person in the UK who can travel abroad in the Commonwealth without a passport and drive without a licence.

King Charles III has two children, Princes William and Harry, and five grandchildren. Prince William is next in line to become King and was named the Prince of Wales in 2022.

Tim Lenton on the history of a national treasure.

The beloved Stone of Scone

A quarter of a century ago, on 30th November 1996, England officially returned the Stone of Scone to Scotland after 700 years. It was the coronation stone of the Scottish and (later) English and British monarchs. Scotland has agreed to loan the Stone to Westminster Abbey for future coronations.

Ten thousand people lined the Royal Mile in Edinburgh to witness the Stone's return, and at a service in St Giles' Cathedral the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, the Rt Revd John MacIndoe, formally accepted it.

The red sandstone block – sometimes called the Stone of Destiny – has been used in the enthronement of all Scottish kings since Kenneth I united the Scots and Pictish kingdoms and moved his capital to Scone, Perthshire, in about 840AD. It was brought to England by King Edward I in 1296, and taken to Westminster Abbey, where it has been used in the crowning of every subsequent monarch of England.

Scottish Nationalists had taken the Stone from the Abbey on Christmas Day 1950, but it was returned a few months later.

One of several legends suggests that it is the same stone Jacob used as a pillow at Bethel, which later became the pedestal of the Ark in the Temple.



Nigel Beeton writes: 'It often seems to me that the only thing united about the United Kingdom is the name.

We've had Brexit, various independence movements, and I'd be the last person to pour scorn on those who seek independence, nor on those who struggle to accept the validity of Royal accession.

But I was struck by the symbolism of the fact that the Stone of Scone is to come back from Edinburgh to be placed under the Coronation Throne, and by the graffiti on the throne left by people in the 18th and 19th centuries, one of whom, named P. Abbott, claimed to have slept on it on 5/6 July 1800!

So I do hope that, for one day at least, we can rejoice in the shared values of our United Kingdom...'



United



An ancient ornate wooden seat
And an historic stone
Shall once again be joined and meet
To form a royal throne.



Our kings and queens, anointed there
O'er seven hundred years.
Upon this Anglo-Scottish chair
They heard their people's cheers!



The throne was formed of English Oak
And gilded with fine gold
It bears the marks of common folk –
Who slept there, so we're told.

The stone was used by Scottish kings.
Upon the Stone of Scone
Was marked the destiny it brings
In time-eroded rune.



And now, united once again
As royal anthems ring;
We sing, united just like them
Our hymn 'God save the King!'



By Nigel Beeton

How an argument over tea led to the founding of America

by Tim Lenton

Some 250 years ago, on 10th May 1773, Britain passed the Tea Act, which favoured the British East India Company over the American colonies. This led to the Boston Tea Party in December, which escalated into the American Revolution and the establishment of the USA.

The idea of the Tea Act was to help the struggling British East India Company to dispose of its vast holdings of tea profitably in the American colonies, where much of the (inferior) tea came from Dutch sources and was smuggled in. But the colonists reacted strongly against the attempt to manipulate their tea-buying, and against British taxes generally, which they regarded as taxation without representation.

Later the same year this led to what has become known as the Boston Tea Party, where a large group of citizens, calling themselves the Sons of Liberty and dressed as Mohawk Indians, boarded the British tea ships and threw 92,000 pounds of tea into the harbour.

This was not a violent insurrection. No-one was injured, and it was reported that the Sons of Liberty swept the decks of the ships afterwards. But British politicians of all sides were appalled, not least because many of them had substantial holdings in the British East India Company.

Added to the ill-feeling resulting from the Boston Massacre in 1770, in which five people died after British troops had been taunted (the comparison with Ulster is obvious), this led in two short years to the American War of Independence, which changed everything.

By Tim Lenton Remembering David Livingstone – missionary and explorer

It was 150 years ago, on 1st May 1873, that David Livingstone, the Scottish missionary and explorer, died. He was best known for his search for the sources of the Nile, and for going missing (and being found by the American journalist Henry Morton Stanley) in the wilds of Africa.

Livingstone was born in Blantyre, near Glasgow, and died of malaria and dysentery in what is now Chipundu, Zambia. He was the first European to

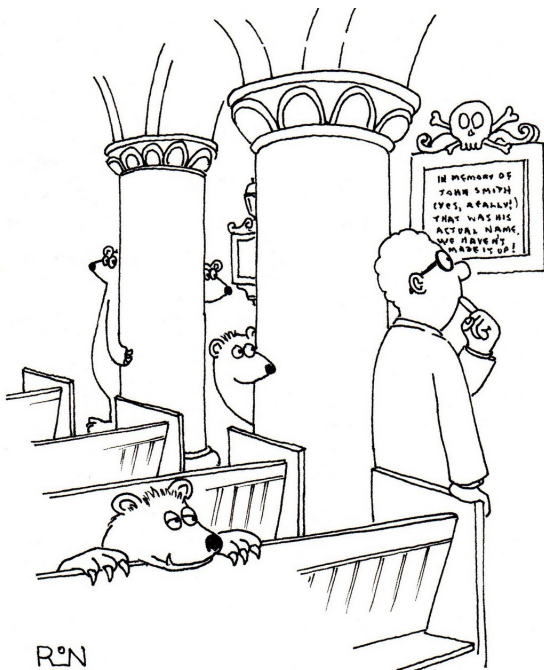
cross the African continent from west to east and to discover the Zambesi River, the Victoria Falls and many major lakes.

His mother and father were both strict Christians, and the family was poor: he was one of seven children brought up on the top floor of a tenement. But he felt called to be a medical missionary in China; so he spent two years studying to become a doctor and was accepted by the London Missionary Society.

But the political situation in China prevented his going there, and a meeting with Robert Moffat, a well-known Scottish missionary in southern Africa, persuaded Livingstone that he should go to Africa instead. He arrived in Cape Town in 1841.

He felt that Christianity, commerce and civilisation were destined to open up Africa, and he was strongly against slavery, often clashing with the Boers and Portuguese because of their treatment of the Africans.

He was awarded a gold medal and money by the British Royal Geographical Society for the first European sighting of Lake Ngami, now a birdlife conservation area in Botswana. He also found fame through the publication in 1857 of his *Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa*, which sold more than 70,000 copies, bringing a vastly improved lifestyle for his wife Mary (Moffat's talented daughter), who had put up with his repeated absences.



Dennis spent a long time in church looking for his forbears.



Looking at you

How your friends may be keeping you alive

Take care of your friendships, and they will take care of you.

A recent study has found that if, in later life, you enjoy your friends on a regular and frequent basis, then the joy that they bring you may even halve your risk of death within five years.

The book of Proverbs (27:9) compares the balm of ointments and perfumes to the soothing effect of a good friend, and an analysis of the research would seem to confirm this. People in their later years who socialised every day were healthier than those who didn't. Even those who saw their friends only once a week were healthier than those who saw no friends on a regular basis.

In fact, the team reported having found a 'dose response', with the greater the frequency of socialising, the greater the likelihood of living longer. As one doctor put it: "The more frequent the social activity, the more prolonged the survival time."

It is thought that having regular contact with friends encourages healthier thinking, better personal habits, increased physical activity, and reduces stress.

Yet according to Age UK, more than two million older people in England live alone, and more than a million older people can go for a month without speaking to anyone.

The study was published in the *Journal of Epidemiology & Community Health*.

Falling among thieves

David Pickup, a solicitor, considers the after-effects of theft

And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves... Luke 10:30

Some of the saddest victims of crime include cases where people have been betrayed or taken advantage of by one of their own family members.

One victim lost thousands of pounds to someone with whom they shared a home. They had given their partner access to their bank and credit cards because they trusted them implicitly. Sadly, that person then accessed their accounts, spent the money, and even ran up thousands of pounds of debt. In the end, the police stepped in, and it became a criminal court case.

Is it worse being robbed by a stranger, or by someone whom you have loved? If robbed by someone you loved and trusted, it would be difficult to trust anyone ever again. And the sad reality is that your former 'friend' will probably have already spent all the money, and so there is little point trying to claim it back through the civil courts.

In cases where such betrayal ends up as a criminal court case, the police can put a victim in touch with victim support services, who will explain the court procedure to them (who is who, where to sit and what to call the judge or magistrate). If you win your case, the court can order a convicted criminal to pay compensation to the victim, and sometimes even make restraining orders.

Who can you trust? Inviting a new partner into your home and life is a big step, especially if you already share your home with others. Proverbs encourages us to take care in our relationships, especially whenever money is involved. If your partner or family member wants access to your finances, perhaps you don't need to agree right away.

Instead, take time to consider: why do they need such access? Money is power, and power is control. Why should they exercise this control over your resources? Why not tell them that you will go into your own account, and share with them any money that you have both already agreed upon?

The 'certain man' Jesus was talking about fell among thieves, but then the Samaritan cared for him. Sometimes we need to be good Samaritans to those in trouble.

A THOUGHT: It is not our responsibility 'to make people Christians' and get them baptised into a particular denomination, but rather to help people decide to follow Jesus and His radical message. Maybe this is why the New Testament writers only use 'Christian' three times, but use 'disciple' on 269 occasions! - *Tom Getman, World Vision International*

If a vicar asks you for money...

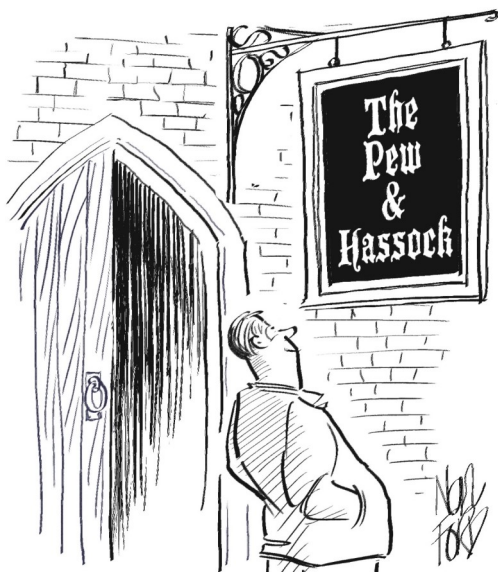
If you are contacted by a clergyman asking you for money, beware! It is a scammer.

Scammers have been impersonating various clergy, including even the Archbishop of York, to ask priests and other church people to buy them Amazon vouchers and online gift cards.

The scammers use either emails or texts, and their message is along the lines: "I have a request I need you to handle discreetly." They then say: "I am currently busy in a prayer meeting, so no calls – just reply to my email." Then the message asks the intended victim to send them financial help, usually in the form of vouchers or gift cards.

The police reckon that the scammers have trawled church websites for the contact details of clergy and parish officials. At least one person is believed to have been fooled – and lost £1000 in a scam.

As diocesan spokesman said: "It seems this is a national trend." The police are looking into it, and meanwhile, advising people that: "Clergy will *never* ask you to give them money, vouchers, or personal banking details directly, even to help someone in need.... it is a scam."



Changing the name from 'St Mark's Parish Church', resulted in a big increase in the number of men attending services.





From the Archdeacon of Hereford, Ven. Derek Chedzey

I remember this time last year we were about to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and the sense of excitement and joy at marking 70 years of her reign.

Probably none of us could have imagined how quickly the national celebration was to be turned to national mourning as we marked her funeral so shortly afterwards. I was struck in the midst of a period of mourning we suddenly had a day of proclamation as King Charles was proclaimed as the new monarch and a new King took the throne. This month we will have the Coronation and very publicly, King Charles III will be crowned in Westminster Abbey with great pomp and ceremony. As a nation we seem to excel at these public state occasions and the Church of England and faith are at the heart of them. They are moments of national pride and celebration and this will be no different as we come together to mark the occasion.

As Christians it is right and proper that we should pay respect to those who rule over us but we should also remember that we belong to another Kingdom and our ultimate allegiance is to another King. In Jesus' trial before Pilate we see this tension between the kingdoms of our world and the Kingdom of God come into stark contrast. Jesus is specifically asked whether he is a King.

"So Pilate entered his headquarters again and called Jesus and said to him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" Jesus answered, "Do you say this of your own accord, or did others say it to you about me?" Pilate answered, "Am I a Jew? Your own nation and the chief priests have delivered you over to me. What have you done?" Je-

Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But my kingdom is not from the world." Then Pilate said to him, "So you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world—to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice." John 18:33-38

Jesus makes the point to Pilate that his is not an earthly political kingdom but instead he is the King over and above all earthly realms and kingdoms. In our modern political world, we do not any longer believe in the divine right of kings to rule over us but as people of faith we recognise that we follow an eternal King who will one day return to rule over our whole world.

The writers of the New Testament recognised this and Paul, in particular in his letters, reminds us that as people of faith we are ambassadors of Jesus' Kingdom. Ambassadors are not citizens of the country they live in but representatives of another Kingdom. Our churches are in that sense embassies of the Kingdom of Heaven and we are its diplomats, pointing others to our kingdom and its values. Peter writing to the early church tells us that we are strangers and foreigners in this world because we have become citizens of another country. I particular like how the Message puts this:

"Friends, this world is not your home, so don't make yourselves at too comfortable in it. Don't indulge yourself at the expense of your soul. Live an exemplary life in your neighbourhood so that your actions will refute their prejudices. Then they will be won over to God's side and be there to join in the celebration when Jesus arrives. "

1 Peter 2:11-12

As Christians we are called to a life of service and this will be mirrored in the Coronation, as the King will not only promise to rule his earthly nation but submit himself to the values of God's Kingdom. We too are called to joyfully serve our communities and one another. My prayer is that through the words of the Coronation service we might all be reminded to commit ourselves in Christian service to Jesus and to each another. We are reminded too that at Jesus name every knee will bow and every tongue will confess Him as lord.

"Therefore, God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

Philippians 2:9-11

As we celebrate the Coronation in our communities we pray. Blessed are you, Lord Jesus, for as you were sent by the Father, so you send us. Equip Charles our King and all your people with the gifts to fulfil our calling, that we may love as you loved, serve as you served, and willingly follow wherever you lead. Blessed be God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Mark

*When the late Dean of York was asked why he called his stumpy-tailed fox terrier 'Mark', he explained:
"The New Testament contains the life-stories of our Lord by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.
Mark's is the shortest tale!"*



Deanery of Pontesbury

DEANERY NEWS

Rural Dean: **The Revd Bill Rowell**

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

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH from Pam Bickley

Way back in the 70's, my mum would work alternate Saturday mornings and in the afternoon, she would rest, I would iron and we would both watch a musical on BBC2. This was in the days of three TV channels, no internet and no videos. Mum had a passion for musicals which I gladly shared.

I loved them all and still do – I spent Easter Sunday afternoon watching Sound of music, singing along with every song. I adore Seven Brides for Seven Brothers; Oklahoma, Showboat, Calamity Jane, High Society and so many more.

I was thinking of a song from a film this week – “Shall we dance” – Can you guess which film it comes from? And it makes me want to dance. There's a wonderful poem attributed to Saint Augustine about dance:-

“I praise the dance, for it frees people from the heaviness of matter and binds the isolated to community.

I praise the dance, which demands everything: health and a clear spirit and a buoyant soul.

Dance is a transformation of space, of time, of people, who are in constant danger of becoming all brain, will, or feeling.

Dancing demands a whole person, one who is firmly anchored in the centre of his life, who is not obsessed by lust for people and things and the demon of isolation in his own ego.

Dancing demands a freed person, one who vibrates with the equipoise of all his powers. I praise the dance.

O man, learn to dance, or else the angels in heaven will not know what to do with you.”

Dancing is joyful and our faith can also be joyful. After the challenges of Lent and the sadness of the crucifixion, we can now share our joy in the risen Christ. And as dancing demands a whole person, so does our faith. Enjoy the dance!

*With blessings
Pam*

PS. The song was from “the King and I”!

Bits and Pieces from Greg

Foodbank AGM

Wednesday May 3rd sees the first AGM of the Rea Valley Foodbank, the organisation responsible for delivering Foodbank out of St George's and Holy Trinity churches. This takes place at 2 p.m. at St George's. Our guest speaker is Karen Williams, manager of the foodbank in Shrewsbury. Anyone who is interested in what we have been doing over the last year is welcome to attend. Please note that giving to foodbanks has remained at the same level compared to last year, but the usage has doubled. We continue to welcome all gifts however small.

Unanswered Prayer

There is a zoom course on Tuesday evenings entitled "unanswered prayer" produced by Pete Greig, who recently addressed 300 people at a Diocesan Study Day. For details of how to join others in the Deanery who will be taking part in this, please contact Mark Hackney at mark.hackney@hereford.anglican.org

Ascension to Pentecost

There period from Ascension (May 18th) to Pentecost (May 28th) is designated by the church as Thy Kingdom Come. This is envisaged as a time of prayer, and more about this will be shared next week. The period will start with a Group Service at St George's on Thurs 18th at 7 p.m. and conclude on Sunday 28th with a Group Service at Minsterley. There will be a special Deanery Service that evening at 6 p.m. at St George's to which everyone is warmly invited.

Pentecost Prayer

How much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him...

(Luke 11:13b)

Heavenly Father,

In these troubled times we need your help, just like those first disciples did when Jesus came back to you after his resurrection. They must have wanted him to stay with them. They must have felt puzzled and bereft – and wondered how to go on.

But you, Lord, knew a better way. You sent them a helper, the Holy Spirit to

Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in
Genesis ch. 25:19-33, 27:1-42

Isaac and Rebekah had twin sons - Esau ('Hairy') and Jacob ('grasper'). When the boys were born, God said...

Esau is older but Jacob will be more important.



The boys grew up...

Esau liked to go out to hunt, but Jacob stayed at home.



When Isaac was old and blind he told Esau



I want to give you my special blessing; first catch me some food.

But Rebekah went to find Jacob



You could have that blessing

But Esau is hairy and I am not.



Use goat skin to cover your arms and wear Esau's clothes



Here is your food, Father



Are you really Esau? Come nearer.

Jacob was tricked by the goat skin and Esau's clothes.



Then Esau returned

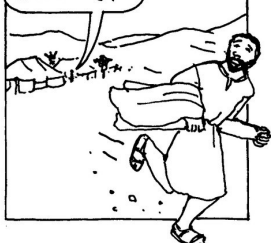


I'm sorry, I already blessed your brother

You must run away or Esau will kill you. Go to my brother Laban's home.



Jacob!



The words listed below are from the Bible Bite story.
Can you find all the words in the grid?

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

clothes

Laban

hunt

Esau

twins

away

Grasper

skin

boys

run

home

Rebekah

important

Hairy

arms

old

tricked

Jacob

food

blind

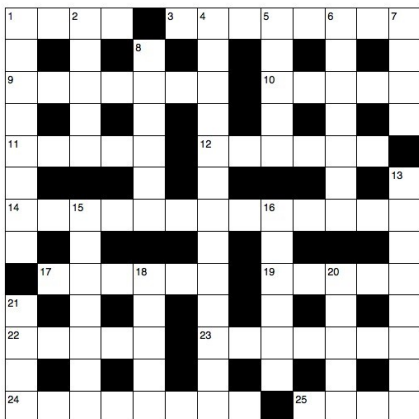
son

Isaac

blessing

goat

Your PUZZLES for May



Crossword Clues

Across

- 1 'Therefore let us — passing judgment on one another' (Romans 14:13) (4)
- 3 'I — — these persons here present' (Marriage service) (4,4)
- 9 According to a prearranged timetable (Numbers 28:3) (7)
- 10 Group of eight (5)
- 11 The cell into which the Philippian jailer put Paul and Silas (Acts 16:24) (5)
- 12 — Taylor, pioneer missionary to China (6)
- 14 Otherwise known as the Eucharist, Breaking of Bread, the Lord's Table (4,9)

- 17 'So that after I have preached to others, I — will not be disqualified for the prize' (1 Corinthians 9:27) (6)
- 19 Attend to (3,2)
- 23 Tea rite (anag.) (7)
- 25 Test (anag.) (4)
- 22 Approximately (Acts 4:4) (5)
- 24 Rule of sovereign (8)

Down

- 1 The name of the street where Judas lived in Damascus and where Saul of Tarsus stayed (Acts 9:11) (8)
- 2 'The playing of the merry — , sweet singing in the choir' (5)
- 4 'We have been saying that — — was credited to him as righteous' (Romans 4:9) (8,5)
- 5 Dr Martyn — Jones, famous for his ministry at Westminster Chapel (5)
- 6 Port at which Paul landed on his way to Rome (Acts 28:13) (7)
- 7 Observe (Ruth 3:4) (4)
- 8 Minister of religion (6)
- 13 'I am — of this man's blood. It is your responsibility' (Matthew 27:24) (8)
- 15 'Greater love has no one than this, that he — — his life for his friends' (John 15:13) (3,4)
- 16 Archbishop who calculated that the world began in 4004BC (6)
- 18 'No one can — the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit' (John 3:5) (5)
- 20 Establish by law (5)
- 21 Product of Gilead noted for its healing properties (Jeremiah 46:11) (4)

Answers
ACROSS: 1. Stop, 3. Call upon, 9. Regular, 10. Octet, 11. Inner, 12. Hudson, 14. Holy Communion, 17. Myself, 19. See to, 22. About, 23. Iterate, 24. Monarchy, 25. Stet.
DOWN: 1. Straight, 2. Organ, 4. Abraham's faith, 5. Lloyd, 6. Puteoli, 7. Note, 8. Cleric, 13. Innocent, 15. Lay down, 16. Ussher, 18. Enter, 20. Enact, 21. Balm.

God in the SCIENCES

Written by Dr Ruth M. Bancewicz, Church Engagement
Director at The Faraday Institute
for Science and Religion in Cambridge.

Can Science Prove God Exists?

To risk sounding like a smart aleck seven-year-old, technically speaking you can only prove things mathematically. If you need to know that one plus one equals two, don't go to a chemistry lab. The natural sciences only deal with things that can be observed and measured. Science has been so successful that it's tempting to get carried away, valuing science above any other kind of knowledge, but there are other ways of knowing that are equally important. For example, art conveys ideas, experiences or emotions that provoke us to think or do something in response.

In fact, to find answers to any of the really important questions about meaning and purpose that affect us throughout our lives, we always have to go beyond science. Some scientific data might help define the question, for example a farmer facing a drought would probably like to know some details about the current weather patterns and the availability of seeds for more hardy crops before she can start asking "What is the point of trying to grow anything at all?" But in the end, she is asking a deeper question – and so are the rest of us when we go through any significant experience in life.

So rather than asking "Can science prove God exists?", what about: "Are the findings of science compatible with the existence of a purposeful Creator?" For many scientists today, the answer to the second question is yes. They have investigated the Bible's descriptions of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and found that they make sense. They have discovered that they can interact with God – especially in prayer – and that this faith has changed their lives.

Professor Christine Done, an Astrophysicist at Durham University, writes, "for me the more we know about the vast, yet intricate and beautiful Universe we live in, the bigger and more awe-inspiring is the God who made it all."
(Thinking About: The Big Bang, <https://www.cis.org.uk/resources/thinking/>)

Some go even further, making statements like this: "the way the universe exhibits an ordered structure, which is open to science to investigate, points to a mind behind it." (Revd Dr Rodney Holder, Astrophysicist, in *Longing, Waiting, Believing* (BRF, 2014))

The question "Can Science Prove God Exists?" turns out to be a category error – trying to use science to answer a non-scientific question. On the other hand, many scientists think there is enough evidence from a wide range of sources to warrant belief in God.

God in the ARTS

Michael Burgess continues his look at great works of Christian art. This painting hangs in the National Gallery in London.

‘The Madonna of the Meadow’ by Giovanni Bellini

Each year as we look at Creation we see the cycle of the seasons. The earth comes alive in spring, blossoms and bears fruit in summer, gives up its goodness and glory in autumn, and seems to die in the sleep of cold winter. Each of those seasons has its moods and feelings, which we find mirrored in the turn of human life.

The joy of spring and summer go hand in hand with the sadness and resignation of autumn and winter in all that life brings us. When we look at our Lady in the Gospels, and this month of May is Mary’s month, we see that mixture of joy and sadness.

In the Annunciation and at Christmas we share in the wonder and happiness of motherhood and new birth. A Son is born, but that birth brings anxiety and strain. Those strange words of Simeon in the Temple, losing the child in Jerusalem, watching her son grow, only to be rejected and crucified – these experiences brought Mary heartache and sorrow. But her maternal love sustains her through it all, and Mary is with the disciples at the glorious moment of Pentecost.

This range of moods in creation and in the life of Mary is caught up in the painting, ‘The Madonna of the Meadow’ by Giovanni Bellini. He came from a family of Renaissance painters, and this work was created around 1500. It now hangs in the National Gallery in London. The background is full of the details of the world of nature and everyday life. We see some cows grazing and others resting. A farmer tends the livestock on one side of the painting, while a herdsman relaxes on the other. Mary in the centre is part of that creation with the blue of her robe like the sky above, while the russet shades beneath that blue mirror the earth on which she rests.

As we look more closely, we can see some disturbing signs of ‘nature red in tooth and claw.’ There is a bird to our left – perhaps a crane or egret – that is fighting with a snake. Above, on the top of a tall, thin, leafless tree there is another bird as black as death.

We look at the babe sleeping in His mother's arms and sense His vulnerability for all her protective love. Some 30 years later Mary will cradle her Son in that same pose as His body is taken down from the cross: that heart-rending moment we know as the Pietà.

The Venetian landscape is like a peaceful May afternoon where spring is dissolving into high summer amid those contented signs of a clear sky and cows grazing. The serpent and the raven tell us that struggle and death can easily invade that scene. But they somehow pale into insignificance as we ponder that luminous affirmation of new life in the mother and child that dominate the canvas. They proclaim life; they proclaim life after death. The babe sleeping in Mary's arms will wake and grow through the seasons of life. Too soon we know His body will hang on a barren tree like the one where that bird of death perches. But that cycle of birth and spring leading to death and winter will be transformed as His risen body will walk into another landscape – the garden of Easter where the leaves never wither and the sky never darkens, for in that resurrection joy, all is life and light and life eternal.



Experience is something you don't get until just after you need it.



GROUNDWORKS | BUILDING | LANDSCAPING

With over 25 years' experience, we specialise in
all aspects of Groundworks, Building and Landscaping.

FOR ALL YOUR CONSTRUCTION NEEDS THINK HOMDEN EXCAVATIONS!

Tel: **01743 719092**

Mob: **07812 5656584**

Email: **info@homdenexcavations.co.uk**

Visit: **www.homdenexcavations.co.uk**

<https://www.facebook.com/homdenexcavations/>

The Cottage, Lower Common, Longden, Shrewsbury, SY5 8HB



Open 5.30pm to 10.30pm

Special 4 course Banquet Night
Every Sunday £15.95 per person

Buffet Night Tuesdays £15.95 per person
We are closed Mondays except Bank Holidays

Private parties can be catered for,
please ring 07763839775

Lea Cross Tandoori,
Lea Cross, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY5 8HR
Tel: 01743 860229
Mobile: 07763839775

Website: **www.leacrosstandoori.co.uk**



The Silver Line
helpline for older people
0800 4 70 80 90



HIGNETTS OF PONTESBURY LTD.

Established 1919

Butchers * Bakers
Greengrocers * Flowers * Fish
tel: 01743 790228

SUZANNE CLASSIC HAIR

Main Road, Pontesbury

Tel: 01743 791186

The Complete Building Service

Steve Bishop
General Builder



All types of building work from:

General repairs Extensions Roofing
Renovations & Alterations
Patios Fencing & Decking
Garden Maintenance and more

Fully insured, no job too small, call for a free
estimate & no obligation:

01743 792028 / 07773 868040

Clean, tidy, reliable
& professional.

PONTESBURY PHARMACY

Dispensing Chemist

Your
Local Community Chemist
"ASK YOUR PHARMACIST"

Your health is our concern
Our aim is your satisfaction

01734 790273

Connections

(Williams & Picken Ltd.)

Your Local Department Store

DIY, Gifts, Gardening, Pet supplies, Jewellery, Greeting
Cards, Toys and Gladrags Clothing Agency



Come and see our new
haberdashery area with a
great range of wool, patterns,
needles and accessories.
For all your creative knitting
and sewing ideas.



Come and
Join Us!



Shrewsbury Road, Pontesbury. Tel. 01743 790600

PHIL GRIFFITHS

Local Plumber

Tap Replacement
and Plumbing Repairs Undertaken.
New Taps Supplied and Fitted
Full Range available
Established 35 years

Tel: 01743 790046
Mobile: 07970 010148



MALTHOUSE

VETERINARY GROUP

A dedicated and independent veterinary practice that
has been established in Shropshire for over 50 years,
specialising in companion animal care

Website: www.malthouseveterinarygroup.co.uk

Email: reception@malthouseveterinarygroup.co.uk

Telephone: 01743 791246

FUNERAL



DIRECTORS

W·R·R Pugh & Son

— established 1890 —

133 Longden Coleham Shrewsbury SY3 7DN | 87 Whitchurch Road Shrewsbury SY1 4EE

01743 344646

info@pughsfuneraldirectors.com

Dedicated professional service throughout Shropshire offering help and guidance in every aspect of arranging a funeral service.

- No obligation written estimates available upon request
- Private service chapel
- Personalised funeral stationery and orders of service
- Forget Me Not Florist
- Private parking & disabled access
- Environmentally friendly options
- We can recommend professional stone masons for all your memorial needs.



NAFD
Resolve

FUNERAL PLANS FROM
Golden Charter
Smart Planning for Later Life



copywrite



Commercial & Residential Arborcare

Specialising in Sustainable Solutions
for Trees, Hedges and Woodlands
throughout Shropshire.

- ✓ Tree Surgery Services
- ✓ Tree & Hedge Planting
- ✓ Hedge-Laying
- ✓ Orchard Management
- ✓ Woodland Creation
- ✓ Site Clearance
- ✓ Tree Preservation Orders
& Conservation Area Applications



Call: 01743 891 231
07974 300 328

Email: info@woodmattersltd.co.uk

[treecareshropshire](#) [wood_matters_tree_care](#)

www.woodmattersltd.co.uk



G E WILLIAMS

Quality Painting and Decorating



Interior and
Exterior
also
Carpet and
Upholstery
Cleaning
Estimates Free

25 Ashford Way,
Pontesbury

Tel: 01743 790539

Mob: 07813 242145

Window Cleaning:

Rates from:

Small House/Bungalow £10.00

Medium House/Bungalow £15.00

Large House/Bungalow £17.50

For a free quote please call or email:

07800 537789 andybithell@yahoo.co.uk

Day Care £35

Residential or
Respite
Package from
£550 per week



Cliffdale
CARE HOME

Shrewsbury Road, Pontesbury, SY5 0QD

☎ 01743 790 261

Email: info@cliffdalecarehome.co.uk

Weekly
Wednesday
Lunch Club
@12.30pm.
Two course
meal £3.99

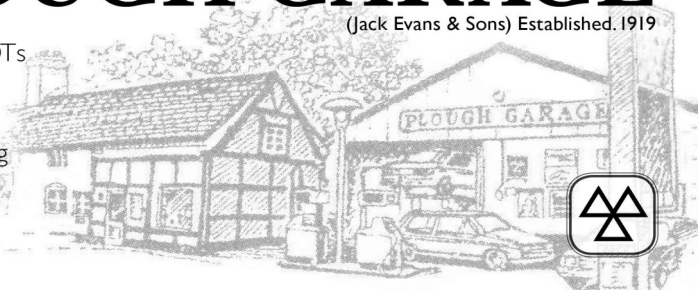
We offer full time supported residency, respite and day care for older people
who require assistance from dedicated care staff.

PLOUGH GARAGE

(Jack Evans & Sons) Established. 1919

Servicing & MOTs
Diagnostics
Repairs - Tyres
Air Conditioning

Pontesbury, SY5 0RJ
01743 790270
ploughgarage.co.uk



**Collingwood
Richardson & Co. Ltd**

CHARTERED INSURANCE BROKERS

We specialise in: • Liability Insurance
• Motor Fleet • Property Owners
• Commercial Combined

T: 01743 790 790
www.collrich.co.uk



Collingwood House, Pontesbury, SY5 0RF
Authorised & Regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority

PC & LAPTOP REPAIRS COMPUTER PROBLEMS SOLVED

- ✓ Internet, email, web browser, WiFi repairs
- ✓ Virus & problem software removal
- ✓ Slow computers made faster
- ✓ New computers set-up
- ✓ Training & tuition
- ✓ Local Friendly Technician



Free collection & return for devices not reparable on site.
Free no obligation quotations provided. You only pay when we repair!

for a local, reliable & friendly service - direct to your door

Call local - 01743 294555

Computer Repair Man. Local Technicians You Can Trust!

theWI
INSPIRING WOMEN

1915 FOR 100 YEARS 2015

**Pontesbury
Women's
Institute**

meets on the
second Monday

of each month (except August)
at 2.00pm
in Pontesbury Public Hall.

*Friendly group, interesting talks,
numerous visits.*

Why not join us?

New members always welcome.
Phone Irene Windows
on 01743 791903

**Or just come along
to a meeting.**

To **place an advertisement** in this
magazine, please email:

stgsmagazine @googlemail.com

or phone: Marion Elliott 01743 792256

*Disclaimer: each advert in this magazine
has been devised by the advertiser in
question. St. George's church accepts no
responsibility for the standard or quality
of goods and services provided.*

*St. George's church accepts no liability
for any loss or damage arising from
acceptance of any advertised trading.*