



# THE WORD



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

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

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

**ISSUE No. 274**

**OCTOBER 2025**

## **ST. JOHN'S PARISH CHURCH**

**God Centred, Relationship Driven and Life Transforming**



many abused and neglected children for Revive to be able to help them all, but with help from us and from many other churches and charities throughout the world they can do as much as they can to rescue very damaged children and give them the start in life that all children deserve.

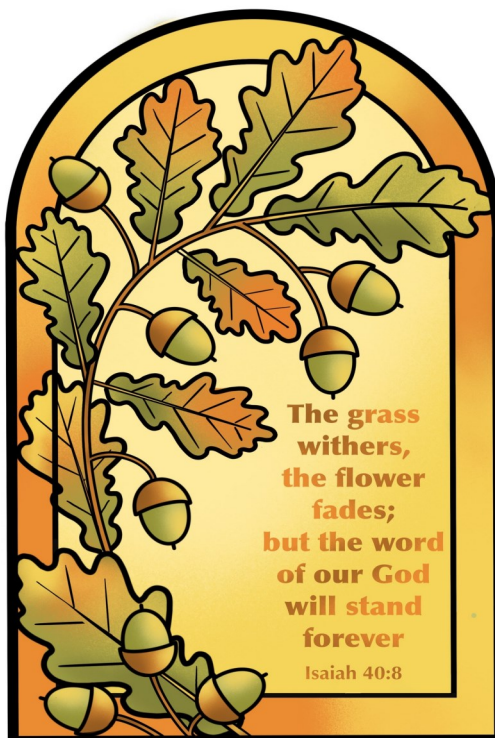
Our voluntary Mission Giving at St John's has diminished in recent years. If everyone in our congregation would commit to giving even as little as 50 pence per week per person we would raise more than £1000 in a year which could help in Revive International's vital work. Can you spare this tiny amount regularly which will help to do so much good?

The season of mists and mellow fruitfulness has arrived and this is proving to be a bumper year for some of our native fruits such as apples and pears. A combination of long hot summer days with long hours of sunshine and some more recent heavy falls of rain have produced abundant quantities of fruit to be harvested.

On 26th October St John's will have a Harvest Celebration: see page 10 for details.

On that Sunday we shall have the pleasure of welcoming again Andy and Rose Roberts who work with Revive International who are our Mission Partners in Olinda, Brazil. Andy will give the talk in our 10.30am service. He is a very engaging speaker and it is to be hoped that St John's will have a sizeable congregation on that day to hear him.

The work of Revive International in Olinda is unremitting. On page 11 of this issue we include some extracts from their recent newsletter in which some details are given of children whom they have received into their care. There are too



**The grass  
witheres,  
the flower  
fades;  
but the word  
of our God  
will stand  
forever**  
Isaiah 40:8

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

Greetings **WORD**  
Readers!

Have you ever seen a leopard without any spots?

I'm not sure they exist in real life, but I recently saw a painting of such a leopard that really spoke to me. I was at a worship event where some of the worship team practice something called, 'prophetic art'. It's where one or more people will paint during an extended worship time and believe that God will speak through the art that is created. It can be quite remarkable. In fact, I have a piece that was gifted to me at one such event after the attack in Southport in 2024. A few hundred people in that event prayed over me and over Southport at that event and I was gifted one of the paintings that was titled, 'Impartation of Restoration' which depicts a person being closely engulfed by a horse which for the artist, is representative of the Holy Spirit, God.

The leopard without its spots was an inference to the saying, 'a leopard doesn't change its spots'. The message was one of sanctification. Ultimately, we, as followers of Christ will not be fully sanctified or made holy until we meet Jesus face to face. Although this is true, we can come against the lie that sometimes we might succumb to, that we cannot change. Paul says in 2 Corinthians 3:18 'And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.'

Jesus is transforming us to more closely resemble Him. Note, this transformation comes from the Lord. So, if there is some issue, some sin that you are struggling with, perhaps a struggle that you have given up trying to change because, 'a leopard doesn't change its spots', maybe this is the encouragement you need to hear today. Change is possible when we keep our eyes fixed on Jesus. 'Remain in me and my words remain in you'...said Jesus in John 15:7 'and you can ask for whatever you wish.'

The best way to keep your eyes fixed on Him, to remain in Him, is to read His Word. Read the Bible, read it every day. Even if it is only one verse each day, read it, meditate on it, pray about it, talk to God about it, ask Him to give you a deeper understanding. The more you remain in His Word, the more you will be transformed and the more you will naturally be empowered to step away from the things you might find yourself doing that you do



not want to do, the things that fall short of God's glory.

We are human, we are fallen which is why Jesus came to take our place, to make a way for us to be with God. We all fall short of His glory, every one of us. God is gracious, forgiving and His mercies are new every morning. When we turn to Him, He will help us. But we first have to take that step, we have to turn. We have to want to make changes that will draw us closer to God. God never called an army of robots, He calls you, His child, and He gives us the opportunity to make positive choices, to follow Him and to change, by doing so we can continually become more and more like His Son.

You could never do anything that would make God stop loving you. He loves you, and He is with you even if there are times when you feel unworthy. The truth is we are unworthy, but He is worthy and thanks to Christ, we are seen through His worthiness. A heart that truly loves the Lord will always turn to Him and strive to do better. Our spots can indeed be changed.

God bless you on your journey.

Love, Jennie xx



*Spot the leopard*

## WHO'S WHAT AT ST. JOHN'S

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

Transport Officer:	Mrs. Jean Morris (564206)
Church of England Children's Society:	Mrs. Sylvia Kent (564071)
Mothers' Union:	Mrs. Linda Caton (564737)
Girl Guides	Mrs. Janette Law (565951)
St. John's Brownies:	Mrs. Helen Jones and
Brownie Guiders:	Mrs. Lesley Scott
St. John's Rainbows:	Mrs. Lesley Scott
Church Flowers:	Mrs. Cath Whiteside (07732 993025)
Magazine Editor:	Stuart Baker (560518)
Magazine Printer:	Mrs. Christine Baker (560518)
Buildings Inspector:	David Halsall (07790 822343)
Eco Champions:	Mrs. Elizabeth Rothwell and Duncan Rothwell (564192)

### Parish Register

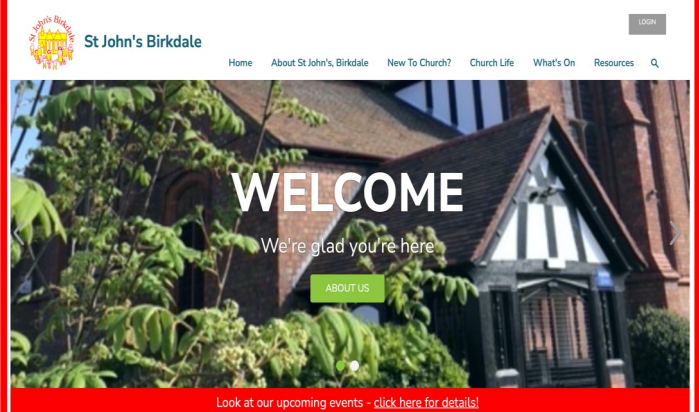
#### Holy Baptism

Sunday 7th September

Tony Humphries



**Tony is welcomed into the family of Christ at St John's**



## Visit our website

[stjohnsbirkdale.co.uk](http://stjohnsbirkdale.co.uk)

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

**God centred, Relationship driven,  
Life transforming**

#### Lost in translation

Sign on a door in Istanbul:

American dentist – 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. Teeth extracted by a new Methodist.

# WHAT'S ON AT ST. JOHN'S



## Pray Together

**Thursday @ 7.30pm  
on Zoom  
Meeting ID: 83550743780  
Passcode:  
7ehHEK**

The prayer meetings are on the **1st and 3rd Thursdays each month** and last half an hour. This month they will be on **2nd & 16th October**. If there is anything which readers would like to be included in the prayers please contact Jennie Hardy, Roy Doran, Christine Baker or Clive Morris. Do join us if you can. See page **28** for details about logging in on zoom by computer or by telephone.

**GODSPEED**  
**INDOOR CYCLING CLASSES**  
TUESDAY 7.30PM  
THURSDAY 6PM  
FRIDAY 9.30AM

Scan to book!

STJOHNSBIRKDALE.CO.UK

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

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

**Jolly Tots**

Every Friday in term time  
1pm - 2.30pm

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

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

CONTACT  
info@stjohnsbirkdale.co.uk  
stjohnsbirkdale.co.uk  
07905875944

# WHAT ELSE IS ON AT ST. JOHN'S



**St John's Birkdale**  
DRIVEN BY SPIRIT

Are you ready to dive into the wonderful world of knitting? Whether you're a complete beginner or looking to refine your skills, our knit & Natter is the perfect opportunity to learn and create in a fun and supportive environment. Learn to knit or crochet if you can't already and make blanket squares to make into rugs for church for extra warmth.

## JOIN OUR NEW KNIT & KNATTER GROUP

**The 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of each month**  
**2:30pm**  
*In the vicar's vestry @ St John's church PR8 4JP*

**STARTS 24<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2025**  
Refreshments provided

Fee: Just £1  
Contact: [info@stjohnsbirkdale.co.uk](mailto:info@stjohnsbirkdale.co.uk)  
Call: Christine on: 01704 560518



**St John's Birkdale**  
DRIVEN BY SPIRIT

3rd Monday of the month  
7.30pm

# Growth

THE BIBLE COURSE  
EXPLORE THE BIG STORY!

@ Stuart & Christines  
**food. fellowship. fun.**

[info@stjohnsbirkdale.co.uk](mailto:info@stjohnsbirkdale.co.uk)



**Got Questions?**

Is there more to life than this?  
Does God exist?  
What happens next?

**Join the  
adventure**

From  
**Wednesday**  
**24th**  
**September**  
**7.30pm**

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

**Alpha.org**  
#TryAlpha

**Alpha**



**St John's Birkdale**  
DRIVEN BY SPIRIT

# FILM NIGHTS

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

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

St John's Hall, PR8 4JP

For details of our films contact Christine

# WHAT'S ON WEDNESDAYS

## AT ST JOHN'S

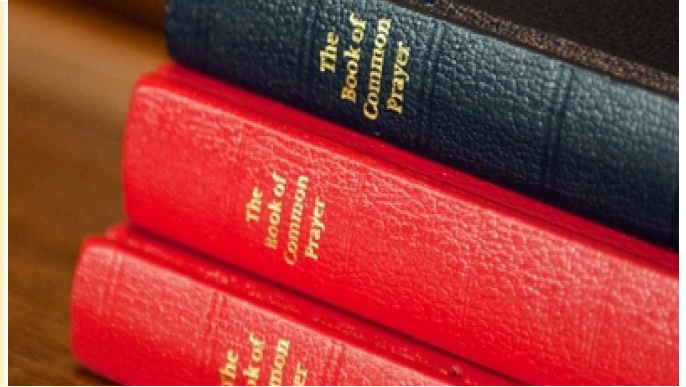
### WEDNESDAYS 1st & 15th OCTOBER

#### MIDWEEK COMMUNION SERVICE

There will be a Midweek traditional Communion service at 10.30am in church on [Wednesdays 1st and 15th October](#).

On 1st October the service will be followed by Brunch: do stay and enjoy fellowship and a bite to eat.

On 15th October the service will be followed by tea, coffee and biscuits.



2nd & 4th Wednesdays  
2pm

God's  
Word

STUDY  
GROUP

@ the small hall, St John's  
Church PR8 4JP

[revroydoran@btinternet.com](mailto:revroydoran@btinternet.com)



2nd & 4th Wednesdays  
7.30pm

Growth

HOME  
GROUP

@ Five & Queen Jeans

**food. fellowship. fun.**

[info@stjohnsbirkdale.co.uk](mailto:info@stjohnsbirkdale.co.uk)

#### Miscellaneous observations on life

People who sing their own praises usually do so without accompaniment. – Anon

Confidence is keeping your chin up; overconfidence is sticking it out. – Anon

A man shows his character by what he laughs at. – Anon

There is no better proof of friendship than to help our friends with their burdens. – Augustine

I not only use all the brains I have, but all I can borrow. – Woodrow Wilson (US President 1913-1921)

# CHURCH SERVICES IN OCTOBER

## MIDWEEK TRADITIONAL COMMUNION SERVICE

Brunch will be served after the service



**WEDNESDAY**  
**1st OCTOBER**  
**10.30am**  
**IN CHURCH**

*Worship on the Sixteenth  
Sunday after Trinity*

**SUNDAY 5th OCTOBER**

**8.30am Holy Communion in church only**

**10.30am Holy Communion  
in church and via zoom and phone**

### **Collect for the Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity**

Lord of creation, whose glory is around and within us: open our eyes to your wonders, that we may serve you with reverence and know your peace at our lives' end, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

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

**Transformed**

### **The Text: 1 Corinthians 3: 16-23 NIV**

16 Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in your midst? 17 If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy that person; for God's temple is sacred, and you together are that temple. 18 Do not deceive yourselves. If any of you think you are wise by the standards of this age, you should become "fools" so that you may become wise. 19 For the wisdom of this world is foolishness in God's sight. As it is written: "He catches the wise in their craftiness"; 20 and again, "The Lord knows that the thoughts of the wise are futile." 21 So then, no more boasting about human leaders! All things are yours, 22 whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future—all are yours, 23 and you are of Christ, and Christ is of God.

*Worship on the Seventeenth  
Sunday after Trinity*

**SUNDAY 12th OCTOBER**

**8.30am Holy Communion in church only**

**10.30am Service of the Word in church  
and via zoom and phone**

### **Collect for the Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity**

Gracious God, you call us to fullness of life: deliver us from unbelief and banish our anxieties with the liberating love of Jesus Christ our Lord.

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

**Moulded by Grace**

### **The Text: 2 Corinthians 4: 7-15 NIV**

7 But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. 8 We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; 9 persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. 10 We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. 11 For we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that his life may also be revealed in our mortal body. 12 So then, death is at work in us, but life is at work in you. 13 It is written: "I believed; therefore I have spoken." Since we have that same spirit of faith, we also believe and therefore speak, 14 because we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead will also raise us with Jesus and present us with you to himself. 15 All this is for your benefit, so that the grace that is reaching more and more people may cause thanksgiving to overflow to the glory of God.

# CHURCH SERVICES IN OCTOBER

## MIDWEEK TRADITIONAL COMMUNION SERVICE

Tea, coffee and biscuits will  
be served after the service



WEDNESDAY  
15th OCTOBER

10.30am  
IN CHURCH

Worship on the Eighteenth  
Sunday after Trinity

SUNDAY 19th OCTOBER  
8.30am Holy Communion in church only  
10.30am Service of the Word in church  
and via zoom and phone

### Collect for the Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity

God, our judge and saviour, teach us to be open to your truth and to trust in your love, that we may live each day with confidence in the salvation which is given through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The subject of Christine's talks:

The Change You Need

### The Text: 2 Corinthians 5: 11-19 NIV

11 Since, then, we know what it is to fear the Lord, we try to persuade others. What we are is plain to God, and I hope it is also plain to your conscience. 12 We are not trying to commend ourselves to you again, but are giving you an opportunity to take pride in us, so that you can answer those who take pride in what is seen rather than in what is in the heart. 13 If we are "out of our mind," as some say, it is for God; if we are in our right mind, it is for you. 14 For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. 15 And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again. 16 So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. 17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! 18 All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: 19 that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.

Therefore, if anyone  
is in Christ, he is a  
new creation;  
old things have  
passed away; behold,  
all things have  
become new.

2 Corinthians 5:17





# CHURCH SERVICES IN OCTOBER

Worship on the Nineteenth  
Sunday after Trinity

**SUNDAY 26th OCTOBER**  
**8.30am Holy Communion in church only**  
**10.30am Service of the Word in church  
and via zoom and phone**

## Collect for the Nineteenth Sunday after Trinity

Faithful Lord, whose steadfast love never ceases and whose mercies never come to an end: grant us the grace to trust you and to receive the gifts of your love, new every morning, in Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Speakers: Jennie at 08.30, and  
Andy Roberts at 10.30**

**Harvest & Our Mission Partner's  
Work In Brazil**

## The Text: Mark 4: 35-41 and 5: 1-20 NIV

### Chapter 4

35 That day when evening came, he said to his disciples, "Let us go over to the other side."  
36 Leaving the crowd behind, they took him along, just as he was, in the boat. There were also other boats with him. 37 A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped. 38 Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion. The disciples woke him and said to him, "Teacher, don't you care if we drown?" 39 He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, "Quiet! Be still!" Then the wind died down and it was completely calm. 40 He said to his disciples, "Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?" 41 They were terrified and asked each other, "Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!"

### Chapter 5

1 They went across the lake to the region of the Gerasenes. 2 When Jesus got out of the boat, a man with an impure spirit came from the tombs to meet him. 3 This man lived in the tombs, and no one could bind him anymore, not even with a chain. 4 For he had often been chained hand and foot, but he tore the chains apart and broke the irons on his feet. No one was strong enough to subdue him. 5 Night and day among the tombs and in the hills he would cry out and cut himself with stones. 6 When he saw Jesus from a distance, he ran and fell on his knees in front of him. 7 He shouted at the top of his voice, "What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? In God's name don't torture me!" 8 For Jesus had said to him, "Come out of this man, you impure spirit!" 9 Then Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" "My name is Legion," he replied, "for we are many." 10 And he begged Jesus again and again not to send them out of the area. 11 A large herd of pigs was feeding on the nearby hillside. 12 The demons begged Jesus, "Send us among the pigs; allow us to go into them." 13 He gave them permission, and the impure spirits came out and went into the pigs. The herd, about two thousand in number, rushed down the steep bank into the lake and were drowned. 14 Those tending the pigs ran off and reported this in the town and countryside, and the people went out to see what had happened. 15 When they came to Jesus, they saw the man who had been possessed by the legion of demons, sitting there, dressed and in his right mind; and they were afraid. 16 Those who had seen it told the people what had happened to the demon-possessed man—and told about the pigs as well. 17 Then the people began to plead with Jesus to leave their region. 18 As Jesus was getting into the boat, the man who had been demon-possessed begged to go with him. 19 Jesus did not let him, but said, "Go home to your own people and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you." 20 So the man went away and began to tell in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him. And all the people were amazed.



CELEBRATE

# HARVEST

We will be joined by Andy & Rose from

**REVIVE**

Come & hear about their work  
supporting children in Brazil

**26 OCTOBER 2025**

**SERVICE 10:30**

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FOLLOWED BY

**BRING & SHARE LUNCH**

ST JOHN'S HALL

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CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES

# REVIVE INTERNATIONAL

## RESTORING LIVES, RENEWING HOPE

### **A recent newsletter from our Mission Partner in Brazil**

#### **Proverbs 4:6–7 (NIV):**

*"Do not forsake wisdom, and she will protect you; love her, and she will watch over you. The beginning of wisdom is this: Get wisdom. Though it cost all you have, get understanding."*

Divine wisdom surpasses all human understanding, giving us the ability to lead and resolve conflicts in an extraordinary way. The wisdom of the Holy Spirit equips us with understanding that comes from God. That is why our daily prayer has been: *Lord, grant us wisdom to have a vision that comes from above.* Every life that arrives at Reaviva is very precious, and we recognise that we are in need of the wisdom that comes from God. It is this wisdom that enables us to carry out our responsibilities and to fulfil God's purposes here on earth.

At the end of July, we welcomed **M.E., aged 10**, who was transferred from a municipal shelter. She was taken in because she frequently ran away from home, and there is a suspicion of sexual abuse — most likely the reason for her repeated escapes from her mother's house. She had also begun associating with drug users.

Also at the end of July, **K.V. returned from her mother's home.** Despite a gradual approach and close support, the adaptation was unsuccessful for both sides, making it necessary for her to return to care. We immediately began a transition plan for K.V., as she is already 17 years old and needs to prepare for her near future, whether that involves returning to her mother or another arrangement. We were able to secure an apprenticeship position for her at ALEPE (Legislative Assembly of Pernambuco), where she is now working. This opportunity will be very valuable for K.V., helping her to gain autonomy and to build her future. In August, we welcomed **P.O., aged 7**, who had already passed through nine different homes without receiving the proper care she needed. She was taken to the Guardianship Council by her brother, who said he could not look after her. Her mother is a drug user and lives on the streets. Please pray that God may grant us wisdom in caring for P.O., as she is very much in need of affection.

We also have news in the adoption cases: **T.V., aged 13**, was registered with CEJA (State Judicial Commission for Adoption of Pernambuco). We have already started the introduction process with a couple, and their first meeting was very positive. Soon, **M.C.** will also begin the process of meeting her new family. Our prayer is that God's will be done and that both may find in their new homes acceptance, love, protection, and care.

We had the joy of sharing a very special time with Andy and his family — Rose, Sofia, and Julia! During the time they were with us, we experienced moments of fellowship and learning that filled our hearts with gratitude. It was wonderful to celebrate together each step forward and every blessing God has granted us, further strengthening our faith and hope.



*Members of the Revive International team in Olinda*

We are living through challenging times, with many children in our city facing neglect and suffering violations of their rights. Last month (August) we reached our maximum capacity of care. At the end of July, we welcomed a newborn baby boy (1 month old), who left the hospital and went directly to the foster family's home, where he is receiving all the care, affection and protection he needs. In August, we also welcomed another child, a 5-year-old girl.

Despite the challenging reality, we remain confident that, step by step, we are strengthening the right to family and community life and transforming lives.

***"Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer."***

**Romans 12:12**

## CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL AND CHRISTMAS FAIR

**5th & 6th DECEMBER**

Having enjoyed a lovely summer this year, it seems to have made a swift exit and autumn has swooped in with a vengeance, reminding us that Christmas will soon be upon us with all our Christmas festivities and our Christmas Tree Festival and Christmas Fair.

As always, the team are busy working hard in preparation to make this event another huge success, but this will not be possible without your help. If you are able to donate any items for the raffle or gifts for any of the stalls it would be much appreciated.

We will have various stalls including home-made cakes, tombola, bottle stall, raffle hamper, good quality book stall, children's crafts, Christmas plant stall, hand crafted wooden items, a selection of fragranced hand-made candles and wax melts, either for your Christmas table or as an ideal gift. As an added bonus we are also pleased to welcome three new stalls, ie, Christmas gifts, assorted hand made gifts and Avon skin care products, so there's plenty to choose from when you are looking for that ideal Christmas present or just the perfect treat for yourself.

Boxes will be available at the back of church from Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> October for your contributions; however, if you join our services via zoom or are unable to come to church for any reason, please telephone me on 564071 and I shall be happy to collect your gifts from you. Similarly, please refer to the hamper lists attached on pages 33-34 of **THE WORD**, and let me know if you would like to contribute anything on the list, which again I shall be happy to collect.

Lastly, don't forget you will also be able to visit our cafe with it's home-made meals, sandwiches and cakes, tea and coffee, or stop for a delicious mince pie with mulled wine or non-alcoholic punch if you prefer! so you won't even have to worry about driving.

Please support our stalls with whatever you are able to provide. Your generosity on these occasions is always much appreciated, especially with the continual calls made on you throughout the year. We are very grateful to you all.

Do remember to put the dates in your diary and come along and support us with as many family, friends and neighbours as possible.

Many thanks, Sylvia Kent



St John's Birkdale  
DRIVEN BY  
SUSPI



# Give to Church

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



**Scan to learn more**

**Making Donations to our church through online banking**

**The church's bank details are:**

**Account name:**

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

**Sort Code: 60-20-11**

**Account Number: 86882120**



# BUN FIGHT AT THE OK CORRAL

On Friday 19<sup>th</sup> September fifty cowboys and cowgirls moseyed along to the old corral (our church hall) for a Country and Western evening. What a selection of costumes, hats and boots were on display. Our host Clive entertained us by asking us to guess what names, places or objects he had in his virtual carpetbag, and this was followed by the arrival of the chow wagon bringing chips to accompany sausage and beans which as we all know are the staple diet of cowpokes.

Then some serious contests broke out. Sharpshooting Tony Humphries won the can-shooting match (with tennis balls), and Stuart Baker narrowly won the lassoing of Clive's hat. This showdown at the hoe-down reflects all the Saturday mornings they spent watching cowboy films at the cinemas. Nobody was injured, not even a flesh wound.

The evening's entertainment was completed by line dancing energetically demonstrated by Kaz Parkinson and practised with greater or lesser competence by many who hitched up their jeans and took to the floor.

It was a great evening of fun and we were delighted to be joined by a party of ladies who were new to St John's and who really enjoyed it. Thanks to Clive for organising the event and to Christine for cooking the chow, and to all who helped in many different ways to make the evening a success.





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

## On What Those Adverts From Parishes Wanting Clergy REALLY Mean...

The Rectory,  
St James the Least of All

My dear Nephew Darren,

So, you are being encouraged to look at adverts for parishes for that happy day when you will have charge of your own church. You wonder if you should look to moving to another part of the country; I suspect it may be better if you look to moving to another planet, as your reputation may not yet have travelled that far.

Reading the specifications that parishes provide, giving a picture of life in their community, need to be read in the same way as estate agents' specifications for houses for sale. Both demonstrate a triumph of optimism over reality. Let me help you decode some of the statements you will find:

"We look to grow our Sunday School" – We do not have a Sunday School.

"We have an enthusiastic choir" – We have a choir totally out of control.

"Our youth group is always eager to learn" – Our youth group experiments with some strange substances.

"The new incumbent should be sympathetic to our musical tradition"- The new incumbent must be able to play the organ as well as lead the Services.

"While cherishing our traditions, we see the need for change" – We always see the need for change, but alter anything at your peril.

"Plans for church renovations are in hand" – The building is in imminent danger of collapse.

"We have a large range of church groups" – You will have to run a large range of church groups singlehandedly.

"The vicarage is being refurbished" – The vicarage is a death trap. Its rising damp and dangerous electrics will not be fixed for many months yet.

"There is opportunity for developing ecumenical relations" – No one in living memory has ever spoken to clergy of other denominations in our town.

"The new incumbent should have a sense of humour" – He or she will need it when reading this specification.

My dear nephew, *caveat emptor*. Let the buyer beware!

Your loving uncle,  
Eustace

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

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

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

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

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

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



## The Canterbury Tales

Stuart Baker revisits some of these stories in search of their moral lessons. This month he looks at

### The Canon's Yeoman's Tale

At the completion of the Second Nun's tale of Saint Cecilia, a Canon, riding a dilapidated old hack, and his Yeoman, on an even worse hack, rode up to the pilgrims. The Host welcomed them and asked whether either had a tale to tell. The Yeoman answered immediately that his master knew much about mirth and jollity, and then he began to tell the secrets of their trade and all he knew about alchemy. Seeing that the Yeoman planned to tell everything, the Canon slipped away in shame.

The Yeoman explained that once he had had good clothes and a comfortable living, that he and the Canon were alchemists, and that he was so in debt because their attempts at alchemy always failed. He then tried to explain their occupation, their failed attempts at alchemy, and their elusive search for the Philosopher's Stone. Then he told this tale:

A canon who practised alchemy borrowed a mark (an old coin) from a priest. In three days time, the canon returned the mark and offered to reveal a couple of his discoveries. He sent for some quick silver and, by tricks, made the priest believe that he had turned the quick silver into real silver. Unaware of the trick, the priest was very pleased. Three times the canon tricked the priest, each time "turning" a less valuable object (quick silver, chalk, and then a twig) into silver. The beguiled priest bought the secret from the canon for £40, and the canon promptly disappeared. The Yeoman ended his tale with a broadside attack on the subject of alchemy and a conglomeration of all the ridiculous terms used by alchemists.

*[Alchemy was an ancient tradition which combined elements of chemistry, philosophy, medicine and spirituality. One of its key goals was turning base metals such as lead into gold or silver. This was, of course, impossible but unscrupulous alchemists took advantage of ignorant folk by trickery.]*

### The moral lessons of this tale:

We can think of alchemy as a metaphor for deceit and fraudulence. The tale offered a warning against greed and the desire for quick riches.

The tale does not have a particularly satisfying end because the perpetrator of the fraud got away with £40 of fraudulent gains, and left a gullible victim to suffer the loss.

The lessons which we can all learn and always remind ourselves about are these:

- if something looks too good to be true, it probably is;
- sometimes it is sensible to look a gift horse in the mouth with great care!.

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Do you want to rent a space?

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

ST JOHN'S CHURCH BIRKDALE



## Large Hall

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

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

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

## Small Meeting Room

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

Ideal for meetings and small gatherings

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

## Kitchen

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

## Church

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

## The Nicene Creed:

By Canon Paul Hardingham

*We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son He is worshipped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets.*

This month we are considering what the Nicene Creed says about the Holy Spirit.

*'We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life': The original version of the Nicene Creed ended simply 'We believe in the Holy Spirit.' However, the phrase 'the Lord, the giver of life' was added to counter the teachings of Macedonius (Bishop of Constantinople), who viewed the Holy Spirit as a creation of the Son. The Holy Spirit is part of the Trinity who shapes us, according to Christ's image, through His fruit and gifts: 'the Spirit gives life...we are being transformed into His image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.'* (2 Corinthians 3:6,18).

*'who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son He is worshipped and glorified': In the late 6th century the Latin churches added the phrase 'and the Son' (the Filioque Clause), which was rejected by the Orthodox Churches. Augustine described the Spirit as 'love proceeding' from the Father and the Son, so we can know God: 'When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, He will testify about me.'* (John 15:26).

The Creed is clear that the Holy Spirit is due equal status and worship with the Father and the Son, as a distinct divine person: *'May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.'* (2 Corinthians 13:14).

*'He has spoken through the Prophets':* Why does the Creed include this activity of the Spirit? It is not just referring to the OT prophets, but the whole of Scripture. He has inspired Scripture, so that we have God's word communicated by human writers: *'All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness'* (2 Timothy 3:16). When we read the Bible, the Spirit enables us to hear what God is saying to us.

In what areas of life have you felt the Holy Spirit at work in you?

### Truths about children

A young child is a noise with dirt on it.

An unbreakable toy is useful for breaking other toys.

A child will not spill on a dirty floor.

Having children will turn you into your parents.

If you have trouble getting your children's attention, just sit down and look comfortable.

Avenge yourself; live long enough to be a problem to your children.

## Gather My People Together to Pray

Gather My people together to pray  
And I will sort out the wheat from the chaff  
Gather My people together to pray  
And I will pour out My Holy Spirit on them  
Gather My people together to pray  
And they will prophesy about Me  
Gather My people together to pray  
And I will pour out my everlasting kindness on them  
Gather My people together to pray  
For I have great mercies for them  
Gather My people together to pray  
And I will lead them to true life and peace  
Gather My people together to pray  
And I will equip them to go out and spread My message  
Gather My people together to pray  
And I will give them power from the most high  
Gather My people together to pray  
And I will give them the words to say  
Gather My people together to pray  
And I will fill them with love peace joy  
patience and kindness  
Gather My people together to pray  
And I will gift them with goodness  
faithfulness gentleness and self control  
Gather My people to pray  
And I will lead them.

Poem by **Penny Candlin**

## St John's Prayers for those in need

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

We aim to keep the prayer list current and to receive regular updates on people who need longer term prayer so that we can pray meaningfully at the zoom prayer meeting.

Names will be on the list for a month at a time, so the lists will be refreshed at the beginning of each calendar month.

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

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



## An Introduction to Books in the New Testament: Galatians

Canon Paul Hardingham continues his series exploring books in The Bible.

Paul's letter to the Galatians has been described as the 'Magna Carta of Christian Liberty', because it emphasises the freedom that we have through faith in Jesus Christ. Paul vigorously defends the truth that people are justified ('made right with God') by faith in Jesus Christ alone. Our standing with God is not determined by what we do, but by dependence on what Christ has done.

It is generally believed that Paul wrote this letter in 48/49AD to the churches in the southern area of Galatia (in the central part of modern Turkey), which he planted on his first missionary journey. It was written before the Council of Jerusalem (Acts 15), making it the earliest of Paul's letters.

Paul is dealing with Jewish-Christians (or Judaizers) who were advocating ceremonial practices of the Jewish law, including circumcision, in addition to faith in Christ as the means of salvation. They were undermining Paul's authority as an apostle, by asserting that his gospel didn't agree with the apostles in Jerusalem.

In response, Paul defends his apostolic authority and presents the true gospel, by emphasising the unique importance of Christ and His cross in salvation. He argues that 'a person is justified not by the works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ' (2:16). He appeals especially to the examples of Abraham (3:6-9) and Hagar and Sarah (4:21-31), who stand in contrast as being a 'slave' under the law and 'free' in Christ.

'It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.' (5:1). We are justified through faith alone and it is by faith alone that we live out our new life in the freedom of the Spirit.

# SOUTHPORT ORCHESTRA

St John's will be the venue for the next concert by Southport Orchestra on **Saturday 29th November at 7.30pm.**

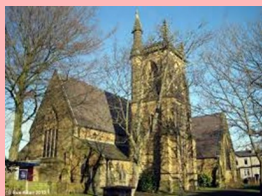
The orchestra will perform **Johannes Brahms' "Academic Overture"**, **Malcom Arnold's Flute Concerto No. 2** and **Cesar Franck's Symphony No. 1**. Tickets will be available from Stuart and Christine Baker.



The flute soloist will be Alexandra Walton, a professional musician who both performs and gives tuition in playing the flute and the saxophone. She says of herself that she is fortunate to have been taught by some of the best musicians in the UK and has always taken inspiration from them.

Southport Orchestra will be delighted to perform this concert in our church and will share the proceeds of tickets sales with us. So please put this date in your diary and come and enjoy an evening of wonderful classical music. **Your attendance will support the orchestra AND our church!**

## Social Events Coming Soon at St Peter's Birkdale (St Peter's Road)



**27th September:** Barn Dance with The Wanderers. 7pm til 10pm. Includes light supper. Bring own drinks. £10. Contact 07723527865 or 07746219942

**13th December:** Alistair Lee (professional singer)

For more details about these events please contact [stpetersbirkdale@hotmail.com](mailto:stpetersbirkdale@hotmail.com)

## Social Events Coming Soon at St James' Birkdale (Lulworth Road)



**First Tuesday of each month:**

Games Afternoon in the church hall. 1.00pm for lunch (pre-book at St James' church office 01704 564907 the week before) or 1.30-3.00pm for games.

**Third Sunday of each month:** Afternoon Tea in Welcome Area 2.30-4.00pm. Open to anyone who would like some company along with tea/coffee and homemade cakes.

**Saturday 29th November:** Murder Mystery event (evening). More details to follow.

# W CROSS R D

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

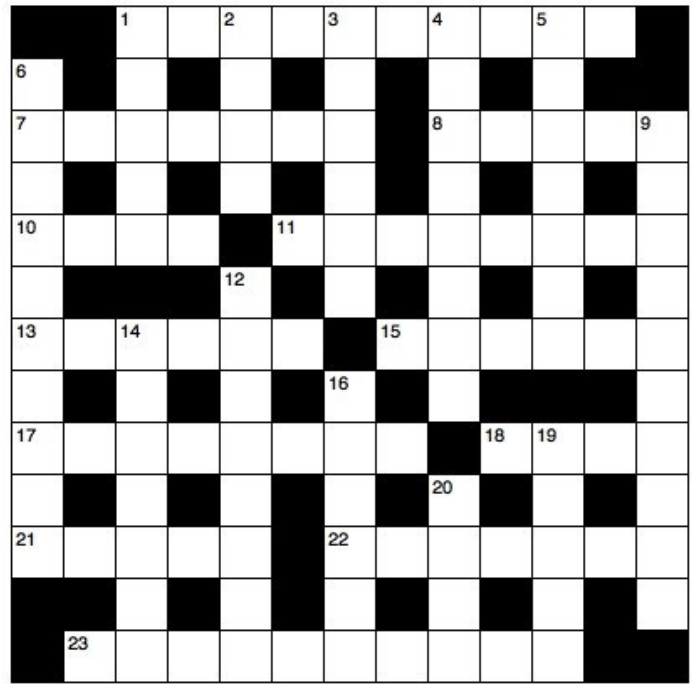
*Solution below*

**Across**

- 1 He was replaced as king of Judah by his uncle Mattaniah (2 Kings 24:17) (10)
- 7 'Let us fix our eyes on Jesus... who for the joy set before him — the cross' (Hebrews 12:2) (7)
- 8 Relieved (5)
- 10 Impetuous (Acts 19:36) (4)
- 11 Surprised and alarmed (Luke 24:37) (8)
- 13 'It is — for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for the rich to enter the kingdom of God' (Mark 10:25) (6)
- 15 Directions for the conduct of a church service (6)
- 17 One of the acts of the sinful nature (Galatians 5:19) (8)
- 18 and 20 Down 'She began to wet his — with her tears. Then she wiped them with her —' (Luke 7:38) (4,4)
- 21 'We will all be changed, in a flash, in the twinkling of an — , — the last trumpet' (1 Corinthians 15:51-52) (3,2)
- 22 'But he replied, "Lord, I am — — go with you to prison and to death"' (Luke 22:33) (5,2)
- 23 Third person of the Trinity (2 Corinthians 13:14) (4,6)

**Down**

- 1 He betrayed Jesus (Matthew 27:3) (5)
- 2 Paul's assurance to the Philippian jailer: 'Don't — yourself! We are all here!' (Acts 16:28) (4)
- 3 'Fear God and keep his commandments, for this — the whole — of man' (Ecclesiastes 12:13) (2,4)



- 4 The sort of giver God loves (2 Corinthians 9:7) (8)
- 5 Sun rail (anag.) (7)
- 6 Naboth, the ill-fated vineyard owner, was one (1 Kings 21:1) (10)
- 9 Paul said of young widows, 'When their sensual desires overcome their — to Christ, they want to marry' (1 Timothy 5:11) (10)
- 12 This was how Joseph of Arimathea practised his discipleship 'because he feared the Jews' (John 19:38) (8)
- 14 Mop ruse (anag.) (7)
- 16 Foment (Philippians 1:17) (4,2)
- 19 Where Joseph and Mary escaped to with the baby Jesus (Matthew 2:14) (5)
- 20 See 18 Across

## In our Book of Remembrance In October

- 1st Norman Edmondson, 1972
- 3rd John Brown, 1973  
Charles Hare, 2011
- 4th Maude Crosby, 1977
- 5th Winifred Webb, 1986
- 8th George Pacey, 1986
- 12th Jane Gorton, 1981
- 13th Albert Beeley, 1981
- 14th Elizabeth Rimmer, 1986
- 16th Robert Burge, 1992
- 19th Doris Shawe, 1980  
Marjorie Tasker, 1989  
Lucy Maguire, 1992

- 20th Margaret Forshaw, 1985  
John Monk, 1985
- 21st Janet Anderton, 1981
- 22nd Sylvia Mather, 2021
- 24th Mary Livesley, 1964  
George Lockie, 1980  
Helen Whitehill, 2017
- 26th Annie Vowles, 1976
- 27th Sarah Whitehead, 1994  
Albert Butterworth, 1989
- 30th Karen Calvert, 2010

*If any of our readers wish to have the name of a deceased relative inscribed in the Book of Remembrance please contact Stuart Baker on 01704 560518*

## CROSSWORD SOLUTION

ACROSS: 1, Jehoiachin. 7, Endured. 8, Eased. 10, Rash. 11, Startled. 13, Easier. 15, Rubric. 17, Impurity. 18, Feet. 21, Eye at. 22, Ready to. 23, Holy Spirit.  
DOWN: 1, Judas. 2, Harm. 3, Is duty. 4, Cheerful. 5, Insular. 6, Jezreelite. 9, Dedication. 12, Secretly. 14, Supremo. 16, Stir up. 19, Egypt. 20, Hair.

## God in the Arts

*The Revd Michael Burgess surveys great works of sacred art.*

### 'He gave us eyes to see them': Lucas Cranach's 'Adam and Eve'

In October we traditionally give thanks for the good gifts of God's creation at harvest time. In the readings for our worship, we often return to that original goodness in the Garden of Eden, described for us in the opening chapters of Genesis. We glimpse that scene of paradisaical harmony in Lucas Cranach's painting 'Adam and Eve.' It shows a wonderful menagerie of birds and animals around the couple, all unaware that the harmony will be shattered as Adam takes the apple from Eve.

One version of this painting is in the Courtauld Gallery of Somerset House in London. It is a large, neoclassical building by the Strand in the centre of the city. In the summer months 55 fountains play in the courtyard outside, while in the winter people skate on the ice rink. Somerset House was built on the site of a Tudor palace and dates from the 18<sup>th</sup> century. It is now a centre for the visual arts with an impressive collection of paintings.

Lucas Cranach, this month's artist, was born in 1472 in what is now Bavaria. He became a court painter to the Electors of Saxony until his death in 1553. Cranach was a close friend of Martin Luther, but also had Catholic patrons. Like the Electors, they marvelled at his mastery of landscape and animals. In this painting we are invited into the garden to look on all the beauty and wonder there. Among the animals we can see a hog, a lion (although Cranach would never have seen a lion in the flesh), a sheep, and a stag, a symbol of Christ. There are birds as well, including a pair of partridges, who traditionally represent the

power of love, but also deceit. The roe deer drinking from the pool in the foreground is a reminder of Psalm 42 and the soul thirsting for God. But dominating the scene is that moment of turning from God: there is a glorious tree, laden with fruit, and in front Adam and Eve, whose hands clutch an apple, while the serpent slithers down the trunk in a moment of triumph.



The painting is reminiscent of medieval tapestries and, like them, has a beguiling quality. All is beautiful and harmonious: it is Isaiah's vision of the lion lying down with the lamb amid the fruitfulness of nature and the oneness of creation. As we look on, we know that the defiance of God and the temptation to eat will lose this paradise. But we also know that creation will be redeemed by another fruit. Around Adam and Eve are the vine and grapes: they represent the Eucharist, the gift of Christ's body and blood.

The fruit of the tree in the painting leads to a fall from grace, but the fruit from that other tree, the vine, will redeem and lift humanity again to share in the bread and wine, the gifts of creation given at harvest and shared at every Holy Communion.

*Credit: 'Lucas Cranach's 'Adam and Eve, public domain'*

## THE INFLUENCE OF RELIGION ON LAW

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

### “PUNISHMENT FOR CRIME”

Whilst civil wrongs are redressed by compensation, nevertheless there still remain all the criminal wrongs which must be met by punishment. The command that you are to love your neighbour does not mean that those who do wrong should not be punished. In the Epistle of St. Peter it is said that governors are sent by God 'for the punishment of evil-doers.' What then is the right way to punish them? What is to be done with people who are enemies of society, men who prey upon it by theft and fraud, men who assault innocent women and children, men who are murderers? At one time the law held that they should be exterminated.

Nearly all serious offences were punishable by death. But under the influence of a more humane jurisprudence, or rather, I would say of a Christian outlook, capital punishment was abolished in all cases except murder and treason. Now it has for practical purposes been abolished altogether. In any discussion of punishment it is important to recognise, as Christianity does, that society itself is responsible for the conditions which make men criminals.

It is a commonplace that broken homes produce juvenile delinquents. The child, who has lost his sense of security, feels that he must fight for his interests in a hostile world. He becomes anti-social and finally criminal. The broken home from which he comes is only too often a reflection on society itself, a society which has failed to respect the sanctity of marriage, a society which has failed to maintain its standards of morality, a society which has lost its religion. When we try to reform the criminal, we are only treating the symptoms of the disease. We are not tackling the cause of it. The best way to deal with it is to reform society itself: and in this regard, I need hardly say that the leaders of society have an especial responsibility. It is disturbing to find how many broken homes, how many matrimonial offences, exist among those in high positions.



Lord Denning,  
drawn by Sallon

*[Editor's note: Lord Denning's repeated use of masculine nouns and pronouns was in keeping with the way in which these issues were addressed at the time when he wrote. But, of course, his views apply equally both to male and female offenders.]*

*Next month we shall look at what he said about Individual Responsibility and The Guilty Mind]*

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

## Reflecting Faith: Glory to God by Rev. Dr. Jo White

For the last few months we've been looking at the way that church services are put together. Last time we looked at how we begin by recognising how great and amazing God is, and therefore apologise for all the things we've done wrong – or should have done and haven't – in the light of His 'perfection'.

We then receive God's forgiveness. At this point, recognising how gracious and forgiving God is, we are asked to rise from our knees and stand together to give 'Glory to God'.

Known in Latin as '*The Gloria*'. You will recognise those words from those spoken by the angels announcing the birth of Christ to the shepherds on the hills over Bethlehem: "Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth to people of good will" (Luke 2:15)

Traditionally this 'angelic hymn' has been sung and begins with praise to God the Father. It then asks for the mercy from God the Son, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.

The final lines soar into the blinding mystery of the Trinity: 'Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father'. Because it is so full of joy it is not included in worship during Advent and Lent.

This hymn dates back to the third century of the Church. Tradition holds that it was first composed as a prayer in the East, and then translated to Latin by Saint Hilary of Poitiers around the year 360.

Because this hymn is so special over the years there have been limitations on who was allowed to sing or recite it. At first it was only bishops and then in the 11th century priests were allowed to do so. Now we all sing or say it

together. That means we take our place in our Christian heritage alongside those angels singing or saying it each week.

What a privilege!



# WORD SEARCH

Solution on page 26

To St Luke, whose feast-day is 18th October, we owe a beautifully written gospel as well as the Book of Acts. He was a Greek physician and faithful travelling companion to St Paul. Under house arrest near the end of his life Paul noted, 'only Luke is with me'. Luke's gospel focuses on the compassion of Christ, and offers us moving parables, such as the Good Samaritan and Prodigal Son. Women figure more prominently in Luke's gospel than in any other: look out for the extended story of the Virgin Birth, and stories of Mary, Elizabeth, and the woman who was a sinner. His gospel also features more poor people, more lepers, more 'sinners', who are all shown to be 'inside' the love of Christ. In Acts, Luke skilfully links sacred and profane history, as subsequent archaeology has shown. He tells of how the early Christians moved away from Jerusalem into the pagan world, and especially on to Rome.



LUKE  
FEAST  
DAY  
WRITTEN  
GOSPEL  
ACTS

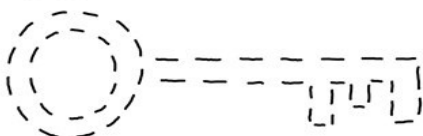
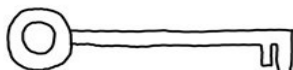
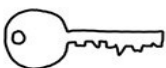
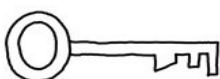
GREEK  
PHYSICIAN  
TRAVELLING  
FAITHFUL  
PAUL  
COMPASSION

PARABLES  
PRODIGAL  
SON  
GOOD  
SAMARITAN  
WOMEN

POOR  
LEPERS  
SINNERS  
JERUSALEM  
PAGAN  
ROME  
EARLY CHRISTIANS

# THE KEYS

WE DO NOT KNOW WHICH IS WHICH



TODDLER GROUP  
SECRET SUPPLIES



THE TEA CUPBOARD



THE KEY CUPBOARD



THE KEY CUPBOARD  
KEY CUPBOARD



LOST KEY TO THE WEST DOOR



THE VICAR'S BICYCLE LOCK



MYSTERY KEY HANGING ON A HOOK  
DIRECTLY OUTSIDE THE VESTRY



SOMETHING TO DO  
WITH BISCUITS



HANG ON, ISN'T THAT NINE  
KEYS ALREADY



THE SEALED CRYPT THAT  
WE DO NOT TALK ABOUT

## God in the Sciences

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

### Continuing the Celebration!

On 6<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> October this year many people around the world will be celebrating the Jewish festival of Tabernacles, or Sukkot. They will celebrate the Harvest, and also remember God bringing the Israelites out of Egypt and through 40 years in the desert.

The biblical book of Deuteronomy contains a description of what Tabernacles should have been like back then. "Celebrate... for seven days. Be joyful... you, your sons and daughters, your male and female servants, and the Levites, the foreigners, the fatherless and the widows who live in your towns."

These festivals were not just a celebration, but also an expression of gratitude to God: "celebrate the festival to the Lord your God... For the Lord your God will bless you in all your harvest and in all the work of your hands, and your joy will be complete." Tabernacles was a proper holiday, with two whole days off normal work and seven days of feasting.

Farming looks very different today. Very few of us have had to sweat long hours over crops, so we're not as ready for (or deserving of) a rest and a party as our ancestors were at this time of year. That might be

even more the case in future, as the agri-tech revolution unfolds. For example, small autonomous tractors are already becoming available that do less damage to the soil and make better use of steep or oddly shaped fields.

Many arable farms already hire contractors to do the routine work with large specialist GPS-equipped machinery. In future years those people might find themselves using very different kinds of high-tech kit, acting more as land-management advisors, helping farmers to gather data and to find ways of improving soil quality, biodiversity and the water cycle.

I'm very grateful for the food that arrives on my shelves. Instead of worrying about whether or not we earned it, our modern-day Tabernacles or Harvest celebration could include ways of encouraging those involved in agriculture and developing new agricultural technologies, as well as enjoying how we can learn about and benefit from God's creation through Science.

So, after you celebrate Harvest at church, why not follow it up with a trip to a local farm this month? Why not learn from the ancient Israelites, and follow it up with a meal together? It stands to reason that those of us who live in countries where food is plentiful and cheap could do with being proportionately more generous in our gratitude and giving. Should we throw better parties? Probably!



*...if you have been affected by any of the issues raised in this sermon...*

### The scary amount of money spent on Halloween

When did you first spot Halloween-themed items in the shops this year? Some were on sale in August. Seriously. August.

But perhaps no wonder – as in the UK Halloween has become the third-largest retail event after Christmas and Easter. In 2019 we spent £474million. By last year it had grown to £776million.

Who spends all this money? Millennialists and young children are driving the sales, with about £40 spent on each costume. The supermarkets are the most popular places to buy the costumes, and then there is all the party stuff and trick & treats to add to the shopping trolley...

Some retail analysts predict that America will spend about \$12 billion dollars (£8.8 billion pounds) on Halloween this year. The UK might spend about £800 million. That may be frightening enough, never mind the costumes.



## THE GOOD KINGS AND BAD KINGS OF ENGLAND

By Dennis Davis

Dennis continues his research into our Kings and this month he looks at

### Edward the Confessor the last Anglo-Saxon King

There is some disagreement about his traditional image of being unworldly and pious and the claim that he was an unsuccessful King who had difficulty in making decisions and who was easily swayed. He had no military capabilities. He spent a quarter of a century in exile. He was described as being the proper figure of a man, tall and distinguished by his snow white beard, pleasant, dignified and graciously affable to all. It was thought that his childlessness was the cause of his devotion to virginity and that a chaste life gave him his nickname.

He was born in about the year 1003 in Islip, Oxfordshire the only son of King Ethelred the 2nd and Emma the daughter of Richard the 2nd Duke of Normandy. When the Danes invaded England, the family fled to Normandy; a year later, Edward returned to England with the negotiators for the return of Ethelred to England. Ethelred died in 1016.

The Danes again invaded England and Edward went to live in Normandy and did not return until 1041 when he came to London, to the court of his half-brother King Hardecnut. Edward seized his mother's property because she had plotted against his succession to the throne.

He came to the throne in 1042. However for the first 11 years of his reign Godwin, Earl of Wessex, was the real master. Edward married Edith, Godwin's daughter, in 1045 but in 1049 a breach occurred between them and Edward outlawed the Godwins and dismissed Edith, thereby losing his popularity among the people. He brought in foreigners, some of whom were Normans, and gave them high positions. He made a successful policy with both Wales and Scotland. After warring between opposing factions in Scotland, Malcolm Canmore\* (who later became King Malcolm III of Scotland, and who is believed to have slain King Macbeth in 1057) was exiled as a child to Edward's court in England.

Godwin and his sons gathered their forces against the King forcing him to recall his wife



from exile and to exile all the foreigners, some of whom were his favourites.

In 1053 Godwin died and his son Harold Godwinson became the most powerful figure in the Kingdom.

Edward died on 5th January, 1066. There was confusion as to whom he had named as his successor. This was to have a serious consequence for England: William, Duke of Normandy, claimed to be the rightful successor which led to the Battle of Hastings in 1066, and as they say, the rest is history....

Edward the Confessor was Canonised by the Pope in 1161. It had been claimed that a number of miracles had been attributed to him.

- *Translated, means Big Head.*

*[Why "the Confessor"?*

*In early Christian tradition a 'confessor' was someone who publicly 'confessed' (which meant professed) the Christian faith and lived a virtuous life but who was not martyred. In other words, a person whose virtuous life was itself a confession of faith. Edward is reputed to have been generous to the poor, devoted to prayer, and a patron of the church. He commissioned the construction of Westminster Abbey. He was said to have lived a chaste life although this may have been a way of attributing his childlessness to a cause other than his or his wife's infertility. Ed.]*

## the elderberries gardening club

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



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

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

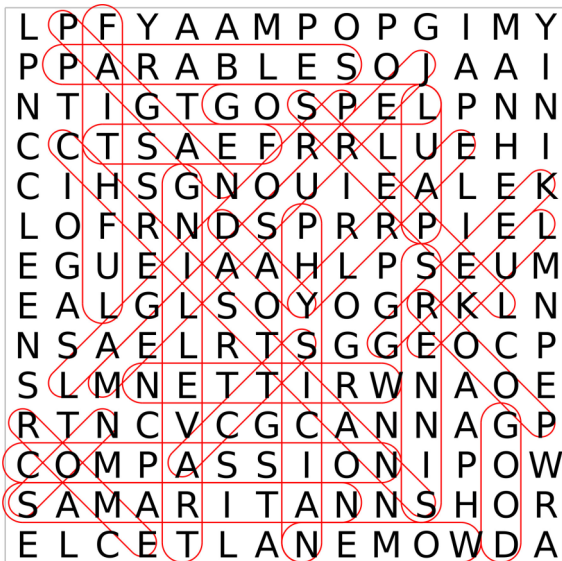


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## WILL YOU SPONSOR A CHRISTMAS TREE?

Our annual Christmas Tree Festival will commence on **5th DECEMBER**.

Every tree is allocated to a charity and is decorated by volunteers from those charities.

The trees cost £40 each. They are all paid for by voluntary donations from our congregation and friends of St John's.

Judith Foster works very hard to find a sufficient number of sponsors to pay for the trees. This year, with just over two months remaining until the Festival opens we are short of at least four sponsors.



The Festival is an excellent opportunity for St John's to open its doors and to welcome visitors who are always impressed by the spectacle, and it enables many charities (some local, some national) to have a timely and visible presence in the community. The Festival will be diminished if we are not able to offer all of our nominated charities a tree for them to decorate.

If our readers have not already offered to sponsor a tree PLEASE consider whether you can do this. If the cost of £40 would be too much at this time perhaps you and someone else could jointly cover the cost a tree.

If you can help, contact Judith on 01704 564990.

## WHERE ARE WE GOING?

by John M. Shakespeare

People have continued to progress in ways of living since time began to the present day. I am interested in what is the driving force that brings these changes.

I feel a personal affinity with the philosopher G.W. Leibniz (1646-1716) who I believe never wrote a substantial treatise but through the works of other philosophers and poets set out philosophical ideas in short articles. Leibniz claimed that God must have had reasons to create our world in the way it is; a theory he developed into the "Principles of Sufficient Reason." He claimed that it would be incompatible with the genius of God not to bring the best possible of all worlds into existence.

How we progress in this world is, of course, mostly down to our styles of behaviour. To this end I would like to quote the final verse of Benjamin Zephaniah's poem, which is in the form of an update along the lines of Rudyard Kipling's famous poem "If".

**If you can speak the truth to common people  
Or walk with Kings and Queens and live no lie.**

**If you can see how power can be evil  
And know that every censor is a spy.  
If you can fill an unforgiving lifetime  
With years of working hard to make ends meet.**

**You may not be wealthy, but I am sure you  
will find**

**That you can hold your head high, as you  
walk the streets.**

To my mind these sentiments express the sort of worthwhile progress we may make in this life. The progressive nature of current scientific enquiry is probably the most impressive example of the way we are making physical progress in today's world. I think that the latest interesting development in helping us progress can be seen in the research behind the production of the Covid vaccine. Following on from the discovery of penicillin we are much better prepared today in progressing with treatments and cures for what historically would have been incurable.

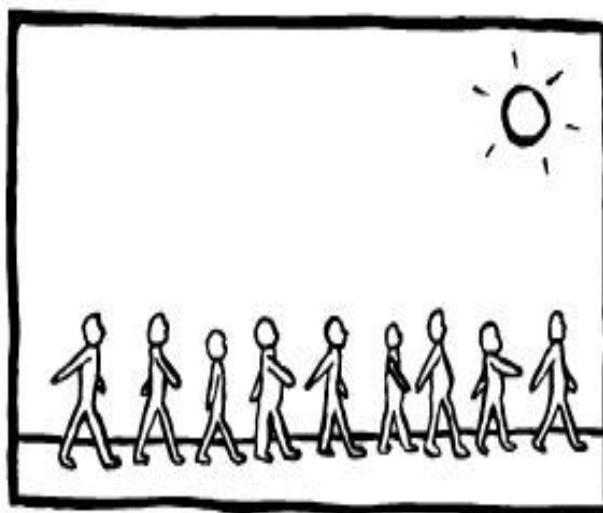
As I said, we have no idea for certain how we will indeed progress in this life. It may then be wise then to follow the words of James (Ch4 verses 14-15), "Yet you do not even know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you are in a mist that appears for a little while then vanishes. Instead you ought to say: if the Lord

wishes we will do this or that".

John Stuart Mill (1806-1873), believed passionately that everyone should have the freedom to both speak and think freely. He argued that without discussion involving progress and changes, we would end up with a life based on prejudicial views. Positive ways of thinking are the basis of an approach called Cognitive Bias Modification (CBM), where we train our brains to seek all the positives in our lives. Mill's message was complimentary to this thinking, known as The Harm Principle. Ideally our thinking and lives should be free to follow our beliefs as long as we harm no one by this process.

None of us can be sure of what is out there, or what is in store for us. I leave you with the following proverb, "Keep a sponge to wipe away the past, a rose to sweeten the present, and a kiss to welcome the future".

## WHERE are we GOING?



'Where are we going?'

'I don't know. I thought you knew.'

'No, I don't know. Maybe he knows.'

'No. He definitely doesn't know.'

PAUSE

'Maybe no-one knows.'

PAUSE

'oh well. I hope it's nice when we get there.'

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

To join the **weekly Sunday morning services at 10.30am** by **ZOOM**:

The Identification Number every Sunday will be: 812 3403 0688

The Password every Sunday will be: 201823

To join the **weekly Sunday morning services at 10.30am** by **TELEPHONE**:

The telephone number you must ring is: 0203 481 5240

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

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

The Password every Sunday will be: 201823.

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

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

The Identification Number every Thursday will be: 835 5074 3780

The Password every Thursday will be: 7ehHEK

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

The telephone number you must ring is: 0203 481 5240

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

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

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

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

**BUT PLEASE CHECK YOUR CALL PACKAGE CHARGES WITH YOUR PROVIDER**

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

## Was it really that long ago?...

65 years ago, on 12<sup>th</sup> October 1960 at a meeting of the UN General Assembly in New York, the Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev is reported to have removed his shoe and pounded his table, in protest at a speech by another delegate.

Also 65 years ago, on 30<sup>th</sup> October 1965 Diego Maradona was born. The Argentine football player, manager and coach is regarded as one of the greatest football players in history. (Died 2020.) Just a pity that he was a cheat: viz. the notorious "hand of God" goal against England in the 1986 World Cup competition.

60 years ago, on 8<sup>th</sup> October 1965 the Post Office Tower (now the BT Tower) in London was officially opened. It was the tallest building in the UK until 1980.

50 years ago, on 9<sup>th</sup> October 1975 the IRA detonated a bomb near the Ritz Hotel in Piccadilly. One person was killed and at least 20 injured.

40 years ago, on 1<sup>st</sup> October 1985 riots broke out in Toxteth in Liverpool and Peckham in London. Five days later (6<sup>th</sup> October) Metropolitan Police Constable Keith Blacklock was murdered in the Broadwater Farm housing estate riot in Tottenham. He was the first British constable to be killed in a riot since 1833.

25 years ago, on 26<sup>th</sup> October 2000 the BSE Inquiry Report was published in the UK. It concluded that the BSE (Mad Cow Disease) epidemic was caused by the use of infected meat and bone meal in cattle feed.

20 years ago, on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2005 Ronnie Barker, TV comedian, actor and writer, died. Known for *The Frost Report*, *The Two Ronnies*, *Porridge*, *Going Straight* and *Open All Hours*.

Also 20 years ago, on 18<sup>th</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> October 2005 Hurricane Wilma, the most intense Atlantic hurricane ever recorded, hit the Caribbean, Central America and the eastern USA. 63 people died. The storm caused £18.1 billion worth of damage.

15 years ago, on 13<sup>th</sup> October 2010 33 Chilean miners who had been trapped underground for 69 days following the collapse of the San Jose copper-gold mine were rescued. Around one billion TV viewers around the world watched them being pulled to the surface one-by-one, in a specially designed capsule.

## Church Hall Users

### Tuesday

3.00pm – 5.30pm **SPACE Pottery Painting**

7.30pm **Godspeed**

### Wednesday

10.30 – 12 noon 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the month only.

### **Elderberries Gardening Club**

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

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

[elderberriesgardening@gmail.com](mailto:elderberriesgardening@gmail.com)

### Thursday

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

Contact: [ageingwellmerseyside@outlook.com](mailto:ageingwellmerseyside@outlook.com).

6.00–9.00pm:

**St John's Rainbows (6.00–7.00pm)**

**St John's Brownies (6.00–7.15pm)**

**and Girl Guides (7.15–9.00pm).**

Contact: Janette Law 01704 565951

6.00pm **Godspeed**

### Friday

9.30am **Godspeed**

1.00pm–2.30pm **Jolly Tots for tots, babies and bumps**

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

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

Contact: Christine Baker 01704 560518.

# Warm Space

Struggling with the cost of living? Feeling lonely?  
Looking for a quiet, safe place to gather your thoughts?  
Or, just need a friendly chat over a hot drink?

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## Agape Love

(God's love for man)

There is a love that no man really knows,  
It's heaven sent and comes down from above,  
To undeserving man it gently flows  
This gift of grace is God's agape love.  
They watch in wonder as the child is born,  
This mystery as God becomes a man  
The angels see Him taking on this form  
As God becomes encompassed in a span.  
For sinners still Christ pays the awful cost,  
At Calvary He bears our sin and dies,  
Forgiveness ours comes flowing from His cross  
And man now free from guilt stands justified.  
Such love as this, such wondrous sacrifice,  
That God Himself descends from heaven above,  
To rescue fallen man He pays the price  
God knows no other way – for 'God is Love'

By Megan Carter

## Prayer for October

Dear Lord,  
In this autumn season, when the harvest is gathered, we thank You for Your provision for us. We have so much, and yet we see terrible images of starving children on our televisions and smartphones and in our newspapers. Lord, prompt us to do what we can to change things, whether that is by writing a letter or email to someone with influence, or by contributing in some way to aid agencies.  
Lord, we ask You to touch the hearts of those leaders of nations whose decisions cause such hunger and suffering. Soften those hard hearts, Lord. Fill them with Your compassion. May there be a new harvest of love – and a kinder world. In Jesus' name, Amen.

By Daphne Kitching

## £130 for our church: Home Insurance offer from Ecclesiastical Insurance Company

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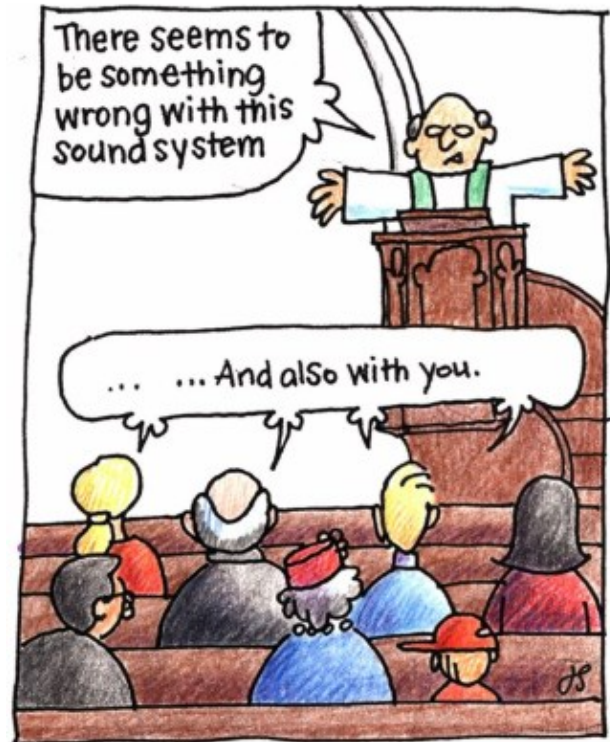
If there are any birthdays, anniversaries or other reasons to celebrate which our readers would like to share with others **DURING NOVEMBER** please let the Editor know by email to [stjohnbirkdaletheword@gmail.com](mailto:stjohnbirkdaletheword@gmail.com)

## The Last Laughs



WHAT THEY SAY

WHAT THEY MEAN



## THE CATHEDRAL



1. COME IN

2. SIT SILENTLY,  
IN AWE

3. NO REQUIREMENT TO  
SIGN UP FOR ANYTHING

4. DEPART

# Keep Moving Club



## Low Impact Exercise Classes

### Liverpool Road Methodist Church Fridays

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

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

Good music and lots of laughs.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Ideal for those who find a standing session uncomfortable

## Beginners Very Welcome

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**CHRISTMAS FAIR RAFFLE**  
**FRIDAY 5TH DECEMBER 2025**

<b>ITEM</b>	<b>NAME</b>	<b>TEL NO</b>	<b>TICK</b>
<u>Christmas cake</u>			
<u>Christmas pudding</u>			
<u>Brandy sauce</u>			
<u>Box mince pies</u>			
<u>Shortbread biscuits</u>			
<u>Tin ham</u>			
<u>Jar Baxters jam</u>			
<u>Jar Baxters marmalade</u>			
<u>Mixed nuts</u>			
<u>Biscuits for cheese</u>			
<u>Chutney</u>			
<u>Bottle wine</u>			
<u>Cranberry sauce</u>			
<u>Small jar Nescafe coffee</u>			
<u>Small packet Yorkshire tea</u>			
<u>After eight dinner mints</u>			
<u>Box chocolates</u>			
<u>Tin John West salmon</u>			

PLEASE SIGN AGAINST THE ITEM YOU WISH TO DONATE AND TICK WHEN YOU HAVE PLACED IT IN THE BOX, AND ENSURE YOUR ITEMS ARE BROUGHT TO CHURCH LATEST BY SUNDAY **30TH NOVEMBER.**

**CHRISTMAS FAIR RAFFLE**  
**SATURDAY 6TH DECEMBER 2025**

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PLEASE SIGN AGAINST THE ITEM YOU WISH TO DONATE AND TICK WHEN YOU HAVE PLACED IT IN THE BOX, AND ENSURE YOUR ITEMS ARE BROUGHT TO CHURCH LATEST BY SUNDAY **30th NOVEMBER**.