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Magazine 50p

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May 2026

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Contributions for **St. George's Magazine** should be sent to the Editor 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

Items for inclusion in the **Deanery News** should be sent by the **10th** of the **previous month** to Ann Jones anmorganjones456@gmail.com

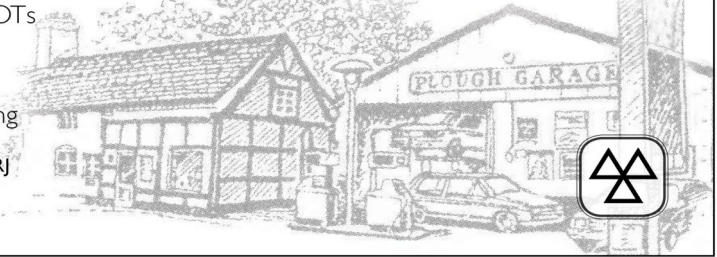
QUOTE: 14th May is Ascension Day...
Astronauts sink into insignificance
beside this ascension! -V Havner

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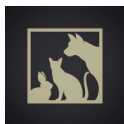
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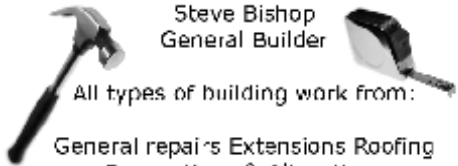
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LIFTING UP OUR EYES

With Rev Greg Smith

When I awoke this morning, I was puzzled by the pain in my thigh muscles. I had done nothing more strenuous the previous day than drive to the Wirral and back to see my week-old granddaughter – and I'm not that heavy on the clutch or the accelerator! However, after a couple of hours of puzzlement, the penny dropped. What I had forgotten was that the previous day, I had initiated a lower back muscle strengthening regime (after two days it's a bit early to calculate its success), a regime that also involved putting those thigh muscles (glutes I think is the technical term) under unaccustomed stress. This is the law of unintended consequences.

This is a little like launching a bombing campaign on a country and only subsequently realizing that the same nation has the ability to disrupt 25% of the world's oil supply. Of course, both the impact on my thigh muscles from a new exercise regime and the threat to the Straits of Hormuz are foreseeable consequences.

We are still in the midst of the Easter season when the world was amazed at the apparent connection between Jesus' death and resurrection.

The connection between these two events is absolutely central to St Paul's writings. 2 Corinthians 5.15 says "Christ died for all that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for Him who died for them and rose again." We might feel that St Paul had an advantage over the other apostles in that he came to the Christian faith a little later, when it was already accepted that the resurrection was a central tenet of the faith. Those other apostles had received countless predictions and prophecies from the lips of Jesus but had failed to understand how His death would lead to His victory over death.

We ought to marvel at how God uses the inability of the Roman authorities and of the Jewish religious leaders to see how the execution of the supposed Messiah would supercharge this new religious movement rather than

quash it. God is always at least three steps ahead of us, working all things together for the good of those who love Him (Romans 8.28). This should give us peace and confidence in the face of our own trials and worries. It should also give us a degree of peace and confidence as we look upon the turmoil of the world, concerned as we are as to how it will all end. He's got it!

There is a lot of talk about 'mindfulness' these days, and how to find calm moments in our daily lives. Both the BBC and Classic FM have radio stations devoted to 'mindful' and 'calm' music.

But as Christians, we have an extra, divine resource to call on ... read on....

Peaceful mind in the month of Pentecost

Luke 11:11-13

Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!

John 14:15-18

If you love me, keep my commands. And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever - the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept Him, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him. But you know Him, for He lives with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.

Titus 3:4-7

But when the kindness and love of God our Saviour appeared, He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of His mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Saviour, so that, having been justified by His grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.

Pentecost



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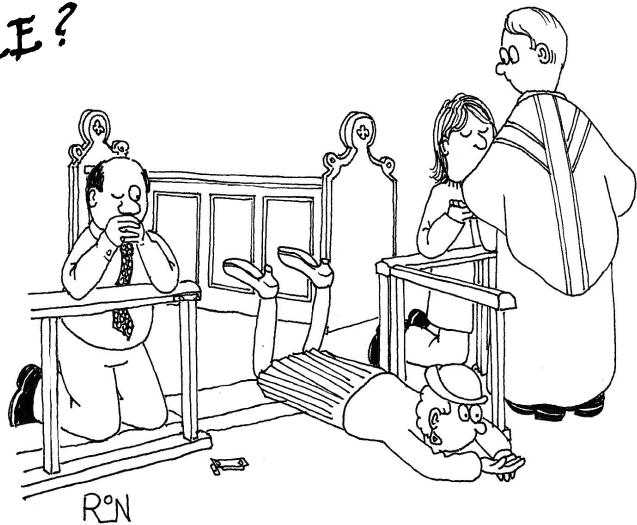
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Down

- 2 Worth (Matthew 13:46) (5)
- 3 'A bruised — He will not break' (Matthew 12:20) (4)
- 4 'Suddenly a great company of the heavenly — appeared with the angel' (Luke 2:13) (4)
- 5 Slip (anag.) (4)
- 6 'Take an awl and push it through his — — into the door, and he will become your servant for life' (Deuteronomy 15:17) (3,4)
- 7 Bountiful (2 Corinthians 8:2) (11)
- 8 'Therefore, as we have —, let us do good to all people' (Galatians 6:10) (11)
- 12 Acquire(2Timothy2:10)(6)
- 14 Container cover(Numbers19:15)(3)
- 15 'He...became obedient to death, even death on——!' (Philippians 2:8) (1,5)
- 19 Refrain(1Peter2:11)(7)
- 20 'She began to—his feet with her tears'(Luke7:38)(3)
- 24 One who worships Brahma, Vishnu or Shiva(5)
- 25 'Give to everyone who—you'(Luke6:30)(4)
- 26 'I lift up my eyes to the hills; where does my—come from?' (Psalm 121:1) (4)
- 27 One of those whom the Lord said would be taken from Jerusalem and Judah as judgment on them (Isaiah 3:2) (4)

SMILE?



Terry made a note to fix the bolt

Readings and Services for this MONTH

Here are the Sunday Service details:

Please note the various times and venues this month.

| Date | Service | Readings |
|---|--|---|
| 3 rd May Fifth Sunday of Easter | Holy Communion 9am (a said service) Eco Service Outdoors at 10.30am | Psalm 24 Matthew 6. 25-34 |
| 5 th May Tuesday | Tea Service 2.30pm | |
| 7 th May Thursday | Messy Church 3.30pm | |
| 10 th May Sixth Sunday of Easter | Morning Worship with Children's Church but with- out Communion. 10.30am | Acts 17.22-31 1 Peter 3.13-end John 14. 15-21 |
| 17 th May Seventh Sunday of Easter (Sunday after Ascension day | Holy Communion 10.30am NOTE: This is a Group Service at HTM | Psalm 68.1-10 Acts 1.6-14 Luke 15. 11-32 |
| 24 th May Day of Pentecost (Whit Sunday). | a Deanery Service for Pentecost at Worthen Village Hall. 3pm | 1 Corinthians 12. 3b-13 Acts 2. 1-21 John 20. 19-23 |
| 31 st May Trinity Sunday | Holy Communion 10.30am Group Service HTM (Bishop Attending) | Psalm 8 2 Corinthians 13. 11-end Matthew 28. 16-end |

Our church COMMUNITY



**St George's Church
Pontesbury**

FREE ORGAN RECITAL
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WITH
RICHARD WALKER
ARCO, FRCO

On
Saturday 23rd May at 11.00am
Coffee and refreshments from 10.15am

Richard Walker – Assistant Director of Music at St Chad's Church, Shrewsbury

Richard studied organ with David Willcocks. His career has been largely in teaching, first at The Edinburgh Academy, and then as Director of Music at Daniel Stewart's and Melville College Edinburgh (1975 – 80), The Leys School Cambridge (1980 – 85), and Harrow School (1985 – 2005).

He was also Assistant Organist at St Mary's Episcopal Cathedral Edinburgh and subsequently Organist at St John's, Princes Street, Edinburgh.

He has given recitals all over the UK, and also in Germany and the USA.

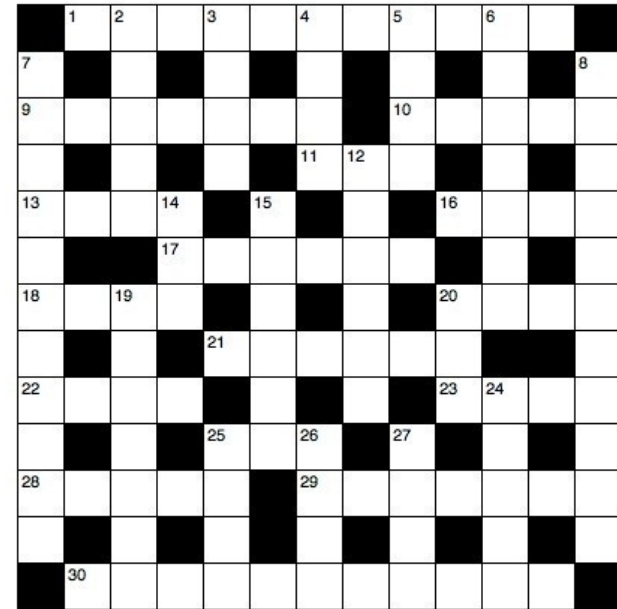
At St. George's Church

Sunday 17th May
Cream Teas

12.30—4.00 pm



Your PUZZLE for this Month ...



Across

- 1 Overpowered (Deuteronomy 11:4) (11)
- 9 'The — are mantled with corn' (Psalm 65:13) (7)
- 10 'Each man—a sword to his side'(Exodus32:27)(5)
- 11 On the death of Jesus the curtain in the temple was torn from— to bot-
tom (Matthew 27:51) (3)
- 13 Stagger(Isaiah 28:7)(4)
- 16 'Anyone,then,who knows the good he ought—and doesn't do it,
sins' (James 4:17) (2,2)
- 17 Stir up or provoke(Acts13:50)(6)
- 18 Burden(Luke11:46)(4)
- 20 'As far as the east is from the—,so far has he removed our transgressions
from us' (Psalm 103:12) (4)
- 21 Sign(Luke23:38)(6)
- 22 'After that,Jesus poured water into a basin and began to—his disciples'
feet' (John 13:5) (4)
- 23 The nature of the seven ears of corn which swallowed up the good ears
in Pharaoh's dream (Genesis 41:23) (4)
- 25 Has(anag.)(3)
- 28 'This is the account of Shem,Ham and Japheth,—sons' (Genesis 10:1) (5)
- 29 'I will...make them drunk,so that they...sleep for—and—
awake' (Jeremiah 51:39) (4,3)
- 30 Paul said of him,'he often refreshes me and is not ashamed of my
chains' (2 Timothy 1:16) (11)

morality and Christian values.”

Professor Pillay was responding to a report by a UN-appointed Independent International Commission of Inquiry, which said that Russia had committed crimes against humanity by forcibly deporting Ukrainian children during and after its February 2022 invasion.

Many who love the beauty of North Wales will have visited Betws-y-Coed...

Church bells rang for the first time in Betws-y-Coed

Those of us who enjoy visiting Betws-y-Coed will be glad to know that the bells at St Mary's Church in Betws-y-Coed were rung for the first time at a church service this Easter, following the completion of a major restoration project.

Although the church was built with plans for a full ring of bells, that work was never completed. More than 150 years later, the tower now has a full set of bells in place.

Eight of the bells were brought from St John's Church in Porthmadog, after its closure in 2024. They had been cast by John Warner & Sons, with six dating from 1900 and two added in 1902. The remaining bell, cast in 1873 for Betws-y-Coed by John Warner of London, has been restored and rehung as the clock and chiming bell.

Work on the installation included cleaning and tuning the bells, removing original fittings and installing new headstocks. A new base frame was designed using sections from the Porthmadog installation, supported by the original beams in the tower. The church clock mechanism has also been replaced so it can now chime the hour.



The project has cost around £100,000, funded mainly through grants, including support from the Kelttek Trust, Hobart Trust and Bernard Piggott Trust.

....waiting to be installed.

**Welcome to
The Tea Break**



Cuppa, cake, and a chat

Wednesdays 2pm - 4pm
St George's Church
Pontesbury

OASIS **FREE lunch & companionship** for anyone living in Pontesbury, Minsterley and surrounding villages, who has been recently bereaved ...

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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 Prayer Chain, a small group of people who believe that prayer can make a difference, is being revived under Mary Worrall's leadership. Each person within the group offers daily prayer for anyone who asks for prayer—**would you like to join this group?**

Please contact Mary Worrall
maryew15mp@gmail.com or on 01743 791069
All information given is given in confidence.



Monthly Tea Service

(not August)
1st Tuesday afternoon
2.30pm to 4pm
St George's Church,
Pontesbury.

A moment of prayer,
A short Holy Communion followed by tea and cake

Our local COMMUNITY



Please help by Donating Packaged Food

We are very grateful to everyone who donates what they can, when they can, as it makes a difference to how much we must buy in. You

can drop off in-date, unopened packaged food and toiletries at: Pontesbury Co-op, Longden Village Stores and Worthen Village Hall, 3rd Wednesday of month, 8.30-11am. Foodbank Donation boxes are in many local churches, please see our website for a full list <https://reavalleyfoodbank.co.uk/donating/>. The top five basic items we must regularly buy in are:

Tinned meat, fish, vegetables and fruit, and long-life milk.

The Foodbank does not have refrigerated storage and so we cannot take perishable items. We can take small quantities of fresh fruit and vegetables, but please only drop off when the Foodbank is open and talk to our volunteers or contact us in advance.

To use the Foodbank, get referred: from your local clergy, GP, school, nursery, social/health worker, housing provider or other support agency. Or call for a chat with Rev. Greg Smith 07902 794653 or Rev. Richard Lonsdale 07922 830488.

See our website: <https://reavalleyfoodbank.co.uk/> or Facebook



The Rea Valley Transport Scheme, which is entirely free, is designed to get patients to the doctors, dentists, hospital, opticians and other wellbeing services. To request transport, please contact our scheme administrator, Emma, at reavalleytransportscheme.info@gmail.com or by calling **07468115939**. She works Monday-Friday 10-2.30 and

3.30-5. We do not operate an answering machine service, so please call back if you receive no answer. If possible, please give us a minimum of a week's notice of when and where your appointment is. Whilst we can never guarantee to be able to help, we have so far been able to respond positively to most requests.

In the NEWS

Unfortunately, the Russian Church is backing Putin, not challenging him.

Russian clerics want more Ukrainian land, and praise the Ayatollah

A senior cleric in the Russian Orthodox Church, Metropolitan Kirill (Pokrovsky) of Stavropol, has recently called for Russia to move in and occupy even more Ukrainian territory.

His call came as the war entered its fifth year. Metropolitan Kirill is the Church's director for relations with the armed forces.

He said: "If the Western satanists fail to withdraw, and the current junta still controls territory, the Orthodox Church's persecution will continue, and Russia will need to go further, occupying Odessa and Kiev as well."

He urged Russian forces to continue "giving themselves for the safety and prosperity of the people," and said that President Zelensky could be "eliminated by a missile."

Meanwhile, following the assassination of Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei on 28th February, Patriarch Kirill of Moscow, head of the Russian Orthodox Church, sent a message of condolences to the President of Iran, Masoud Pezeshkian. In it, he praised Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, as "a man of deep religious convictions, a spiritual and national leader strong in spirit and character."

As we pray for Ukraine, here is a matter for urgent prayer...

World Council of Churches condemns Russia's mass abduction of Ukrainian children

The World Council of Churches (WCC) has responded with grave concern to a recent United Nations commission that has confirmed Russia's mass abduction of Ukrainian children.

"These actions are a shocking violation of the God-given dignity of every child and the sanctity of family bonds", said the WCC's general secretary, the Revd Professor Jerry Pillay.

"The deliberate removal and relocation of children for political or ideological purposes is fundamentally incompatible with international law,

National Biscuit Day – 29th May

Did you know that Britain is the country with the highest biscuit consumption in the world?

According to industry research, we each eat about 500 biscuits a year. And the great biscuit dunking debate - over which biscuit holds up best when dipped in tea – can spark surprisingly passionate discussion.

Biscuits have been part of our daily lives for centuries. Their dose of sweet, tasty comfort is loved by 2-year-olds and 90-year-olds, and every age in between.

And so National Biscuit Day is held each year to honour this beloved snack. Our national favourite seems to be the chocolate digestive, followed by shortbread and chocolate fingers. But don't underestimate the appeal of custard creams, hobnobs, chocolate chip and oatmeal cookies!

The McVitie's Digestive, first produced in 1892, is one of the most iconic biscuits in British history. Today, it remains a bestseller alongside other classics like the Rich Tea, the Bourbon, and the Jammie Dodger.

The word 'biscuit' comes from the Latin *panisbiscotus*, meaning 'twice-cooked bread'. In Roman times, flour-based provisions were baked twice, to remove moisture, making them durable enough for long journeys. Ancient Egyptian sailors and Roman soldiers relied on these early biscuits as a portable, long-lasting food source.

The transformation from practical sustenance to sweet treat began around the seventh century, when Persian bakers added eggs, butter, cream, and eventually sugar and honey to their recipes, creating some of the earliest cookies in history. By the Middle Ages, biscuits had spread across Europe, with each region developing its own favourite.

The Industrial Revolution brought mass production to the biscuit world. British firms like McVitie's, Huntley and Palmers, and Carr's produced biscuits on an unprecedented scale. In 1831, Huntley and Palmers even invented the decorative biscuit tin, which not only kept biscuits fresh but also made them an attractive gift item.



May is a month of transition. At the beginning, we can feel like we're still in winter, with frosts and rain. By the end, summer feels just around the corner with longer evenings and warmer days. Our lives are still governed by these rhythms even though many of us no longer have the farming connections we once did. Our ancestors were much more bound by the clock and the sea-

sons. The calendar and liturgical years were intertwined; the church was more central to people's lives.

Ecclesiastes contains that well known passage about times and seasons, a time to plant and a time to harvest; a time to mourn and a time to laugh; a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing. This year, our diocesan family is focusing firmly on celebration.

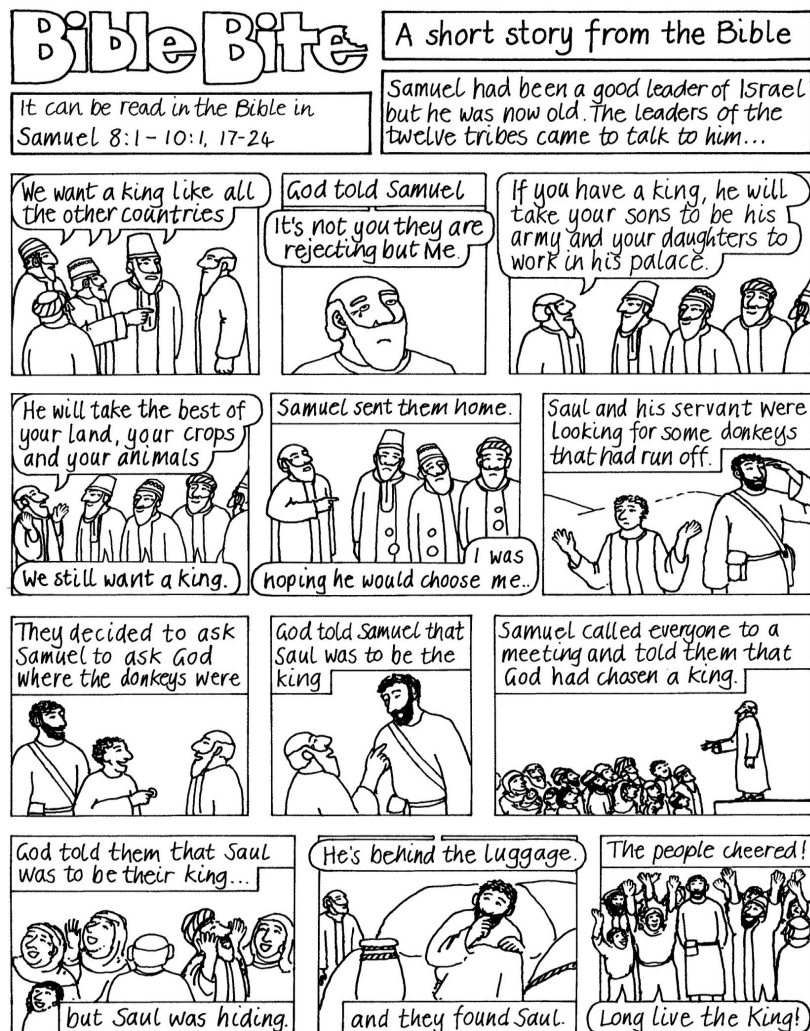
I have always thought that the continued existence of the church is one of the surest proofs of the resurrection. How could an organisation composed of frail, sinful people like you and me still be here but for divine intervention? No other human organisation has continued in this way. The world was vastly different 1350 years ago when Putta made the gruelling journey here from Rochester to become our first Bishop. England didn't exist. Our diocese was carved out of the corner of a Mercian kingdom and part of an old Roman settlement.

Over the course of our existence, kings have risen and fallen; cathedrals have been burnt down and rebuilt, fallen and been rebuilt again! Previous Bishops, in a variety of acts of architectural vandalism, have used their own (or their wealthy wife's) money to remodel the Palace and even demolish bits of it they didn't like. Meanwhile, in over 400 churches, faithful Christian people have gone about the work of the gospel. Priests have hatched, matched and dispatched, celebrated the sacraments and taught the faith. We have made the transition from Catholic to protestant; from Christendom to being a minority in a largely secular, indifferent and occasionally hostile culture. We have both remained faithful to the tradition and found ways to

proclaim the faith afresh to each generation. There have been times of relative ease and times of real struggle. Churches have fallen down and been rebuilt, and populations have shifted.

All this has happened in the power of the Holy Spirit, whose gift we will celebrate at the end of this month. We have never had to do it on our own, dependent on our own ingenuity. To be a Christian is to be supernaturally empowered by the Holy Spirit. God's faithfulness and that power are definitely worth celebrating.

+Richard



The world-wide COMMUNITY



It's that time of year again – when Christians across the country raise funds for Christian Aid's programmes, which help those suffering poverty and injustice worldwide.

Since 1957, Christian Aid Week has brought faith and action together to help families survive poverty and violence, and communities rebuild after crisis.

It says: "This is all thanks to the amazing support of churches, communities and individuals who choose to walk, run, bake, dance, make, and do whatever it takes to help make lasting change.

"Through our locally led work with partners around the world who are rooted in their communities to lead change, your valuable support will help communities ravaged by poverty and the effects of the climate crisis.

Christian Aid welcomes anyone who would like to be involved this year in raising support. And there are various ways to take part:

- Give online or through collections.
- Fundraise with friends, family, colleagues or your community.
- Take part through your church with worship, prayer and events.
- Volunteer locally to support Christian Aid Week activities.

Long ago ... 300 years ago, on 25th May 1726 the world's first Circulating Library (lending library) was launched by Scottish poet and bookseller Allan Ramsay at his bookshop in Edinburgh.

200 years ago, on 29th May 1826 Ebenezer Butterick, American tailor was born. He and his wife invented tissue paper dress patterns in multiple sizes, and thereby revolutionised home dressmaking.

100 years ago, on 4th to 12th May 1926 the UK's General Strike was held. The Trade Union Congress (TUC) called a General Strike in support of 1.2 million coal miners. The strike lasted nine days, and had little effect.

80 years ago, on 11th May 1946 the first CARE packages for Europe arrived in Le Havre, to help people who were starving after WWII.

60 years ago, on 30th May 1966 British racing driver Graham Hill won the 1966 Indianapolis 500. He was the only driver in history to win the 'triple crown of motor racing': the Formula One World Championship, the 24 Hours of Le Mans, and the Indianapolis 500.

use credit and debit cards so often, even for small payments. Credit cards and bank cards have their advantages. They are simple and easy to use. If you buy something on a credit card that costs more than £100 you get extra legal rights. So, if it does not arrive or does not work you can claim against the credit card company. But don't forget that debit cards are not credit cards and you do not get the same rights.

Up until a few years back we had offers of credit cards, loans, and buy-now-pay-later deals, all the time. Now things are tighter, and debt is a big worry for many. The Bible warns us of the dangers of borrowing but offers us the assurance that God cares for us. No questions asked!

Christ is All-in-All

By Sam Doubtfire

We hold you and your treatment
at the heart of every prayer,
And we ask our God who loves you
Just to hold you in His care.

May He make His presence known
To you in every way He can
While the healing balm of Christ is placed
In the hands of mortal man.

So may the good Lord bless you
As He holds you in His grace;
And may He ever let His peace
Be known in every place

Where your journeying will lead you;
In whatever may befall:
That you will know in everything
How Christ is all-in-all.

*Is someone you
care for facing
medical treatment?
Or in need of
special care?
This poem may be
helpful in your
concern.*



Looking at GOD

Thoughts from the Revd Roy Shaw, a retired but active priest in the diocese of York, where he is a spiritual director.

50 days after Easter

Pentecost. The word means '50 days after Easter'. It's the celebration of the gift of the Holy Spirit as recorded in Acts chapter 2, and it's the birthday of the Church. So far so good; but beyond this, things get a bit hazy for some of us. We are familiar with the idea of God the good Father, and we've heard and read of all that Jesus- God the Son- said and did. But the Holy Spirit? *Who He?!*

The images used of the Holy Spirit in scripture can be a bit of a barrier to understanding. Words like 'spirit' 'wind' 'flame' 'breath' are all a bit elusive, and they possibly leave us with a feeling that in trying to understand the Holy Spirit we're chasing rainbows. But if we dig a little deeper, we can see that these images speak of an unhindered force which can be powerful and yet gentle, cleansing and free.

The Bible is full of images of the Holy Spirit. There is 'dove', as seen on many Christmas cards and in stained glass windows. It's usually white. A white dove image speaks of gentleness and purity, unfettered as it wings its way across the sky.

Then there's the more difficult word 'advocate'. Someone who speaks up for us, comes alongside us, someone to aid us in times of need. We could go on with different images which tell us more of the character of the Holy Spirit, but there are two key things to remember. Firstly, this is the spirit of Jesus. All that Jesus was in earthly form, the Holy Spirit is to us now. Jesus is no longer among us as He was two thousand years ago, but the Holy Spirit makes Him available to us now.

Which brings us to the second point; the Holy Spirit is given by the good Father to us, His children- giving us, as it were, an injection of Jesus' personality, wisdom and holiness, enabling us to serve as Jesus did, enabling us, as Mother Teresa put it, 'to do little things with great love'.

The first Pentecost set the young Church in Jerusalem off on a great adventure which culminated in today's world where one in three people worldwide say they are Christians. It could be a great adventure for us as we ask God, the good Father, to gift us with the Spirit of Jesus. Let's do it!



Fill me with Your Spirit, Lord

Fill me with Your Spirit, Lord,
Fill me with Your love.
Fill this empty heart of mine,
Come down gentle dove.
You see all my self-concern,
Lovelessness and pride;
Help me open up my heart,
Place Your love inside.

Fill me with Your Spirit, Lord,
Fill me with Your power.
Give to me Your source of strength,
From this very hour.
You have seen me trying hard,
Failing every time,
Show me how to let You now,
Live Your life in mine.

Fill me with Your Spirit, Lord,
Fill me with Your joy.
Give to me that happiness
Nothing can destroy.
Even when my sufferings
Point me to despair,
May I know that joy inside
Just because You're there.

Fill me with Your Spirit, Lord,
Fill me with Your peace,
Quieten all the turbulence,
Bid my struggles cease.
Often my anxieties,
Fill my life with stress,
Show me how to let them go,
Give to Me your rest.

By Howard Webber

Don't drive when sad

You've seen those motorway signs warning you not to drive when you are tired. But now it seems you are far more likely to crash your car if you drive when you are sad, or when you are angry, or when you are agitated.



A study has found that a healthy emotional state is hugely important for your safety at the wheel; being sad, mad or upset can increase your likelihood of a crash by nearly ten-fold. That compares with fatigue making a crash only three times more likely, while talking on a mobile phone doubles the risk.

Having children in your back seat is a very low risk, and chatting to your passenger or moving to music barely raises the risk at all. The study was carried out at Virginia Tech.

David Pickup, a solicitor, considers credit and debit cards...

No quibble guarantee

Not that I speak from want, for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am. I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of ...both of having abundance and suffering need. I can do all things through Him who strengthens me. Philippians 4:11-13

For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs. 1 Timothy 6:10

Recently a man received two letters from his bank. One was telling him his debt was going to be passed to the enforcement department, and the other was offering him a new loan! Sensibly, he got some advice about what to do. If you are thinking of getting a loan or a credit card, do check the small print. Does the offer seem too good to be true? What are the charges if you miss a payment? Make sure you know before you sign!

Many experts wonder if cash will become a thing of the past, because we

Looking at YOU

You and a goldfish's attention span

How long can you concentrate on any one thing? According to the now infamous study by Microsoft (back in 2015), our digital lifestyles have had such a detrimental impact on our concentration levels that our average attention span has fallen to below that of a goldfish.

Humans now stay focused for just eight seconds, before being distracted by news alerts, social media and so on – while even a goldfish can concentrate for nine seconds.

And it is not just the endless stream of information that hits us, but the type of information that is so distracting. Violence and endless conflict can leave you distressed and unsettled. Medical experts recommend regular non-digital breaks such as a walk, a chat, or even just staring out the window.

Meanwhile, try these tips to calm your mind:

- In the evening, reverse the settings on your device, so that you have white writing on a black background. This reduces the blue light that affects your brain's cyclic rhythm, disrupting your sleep/wake cycle.
- Get moving. Exercise takes time, but it also sharpens your mind and increases your concentration. So, in the end you will get more done in less time.
- 3. Eat well. Avoid sugar and too much caffeine which make your mind busier.
- Seek company. Anxiety levels rise after six hours, due to the changes in your brain hormones caused by social isolation. So, if you work from home, take your laptop to a coffee shop for an hour, or see a friend for coffee.
- Fill the final half hour of your day with one simple task, rather than flitting from task to task.

Mouse Makes

WHO IS THE HOLY SPIRIT?

The Spirit of _____
Genesis 1:2

The _____
The Spirit of _____ of the Father.
Acts 1:4

A _____
Romans 8:15

H _____
John 14:26

The Spirit of _____
John 16:13

The Spirit of _____
Acts 16:7

The Fruit of the Spirit
Galatians 5:22-23

___ O ___
___ Y ___
___ C ___
___ T ___
___ I ___
___ N ___
S ___
___ N ___

What happened when the Holy Spirit came at Pentecost?
read Acts 2:1-41
How many believers were baptised that day?

Word Search:

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

Look up the Bible verses and fill in the missing words. Look for them in the word search then look for these words below.

HOLY • SPIRIT • COUNSELLOR • COMFORTER
ADVOCATE • TEACHER • LORD • PROMISE
GLORY • GRACE • FAITH • DOVE • FIRE • WIND

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Ever thought about wearing a cross as a necklace?

“Good morning, sir, madam. You’re interested in a cross and chain I believe? Very wise, sir, if I might say so. So modern, so chic. Never out of fashion. Will you be interested in one with the little man on it, or without?”

“May we see both, please.”



“Very wise sir. Now here we have the traditional model, but with a small diamond in the centre. Let’s people know you’re not without means, just a gentle hint there. Discreet size too, sir, not too pushy if you see what I mean. No?... Okay, what about this one... you look like a sporty-type sir, this one is lightweight, comes in various colours, to blend with your track suit or gym wear....or this one sir..... the ‘Weekend’ model- slightly larger so you can project well, particularly on Sundays, sir..... Or we have this one sir, imported from Jerusalem, so it’s very authentic, made of olive wood, I think there’s a special something about that don’t you sir?...Or here’s our very latest model, just come in, it’s recyclable, so when you get tired of it you can happily recycle it and know it’s not going to landfill. Very ethical sir.

“Now madam, here’s one of our high-end models, which I think madam will like; encrusted with small rubies, very appropriate I’m sure you’ll agree. Again, it gives just that little hint you’re a discerning person, yes? Or this one, it’s in plain gold, but rather larger because it plays ‘There is a green hill far away’ if you touch it, which is very sweet, don’t you think? “



‘We were looking for something more traditional, plainer.’

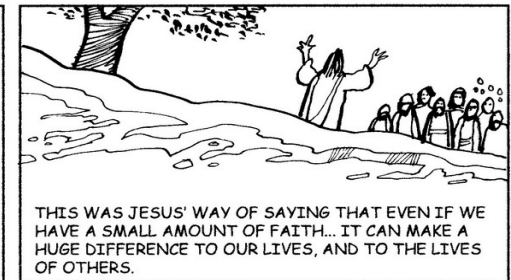
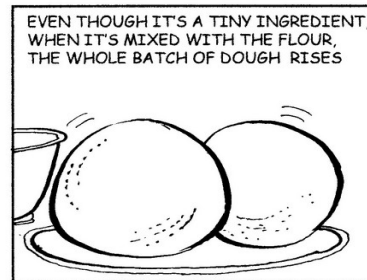
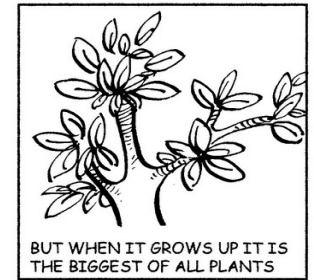
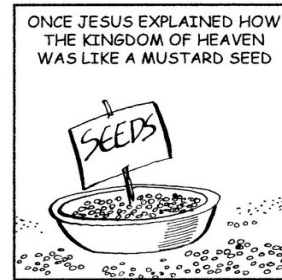
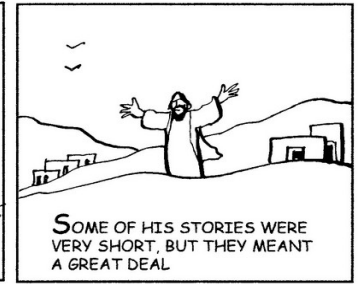
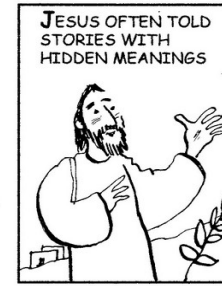
“Well, we can do that sir, if you wish. I just thought that madam might like something more in keeping with the times, if you see what I mean. Right, so two plain cross and chains. I’ll wrap them up right away...”

If you wear a cross and chain, or have a cross as a tattoo, what do you want it to say about you?

What does the cross of Jesus mean to you?

If you were asked *why* you wear a cross, how would you respond? And would it be an easy, or embarrassed response? Talk to God about this.

The tale of the Mustard Seed & the tale of the Yeast



Quote: A family is a mobile strung together with invisible threats – delicate, easily broken at first, growing stronger through the years, in danger of being worn thin at times, but strengthened again with special care... continuity! – Edith Schaeffer

Looking at CHURCH, at home and worldwide

Helping people caught in crisis in the Middle East

At Pentecost, we think back to that morning in Jerusalem when the Church was born. So this month, as we celebrate Pentecost, it is good to know that many Christian agencies are working hard out there in the Middle East now, to help the suffering people of Gaza, Lebanon, Israel, the West Bank.... Not to mention all the other countries where bombs are falling and people are running for their lives.

Many of the Christian agencies work through local partners to provide essential supplies like food, water, and hygiene kits, alongside psychosocial support. If you would like to help to support this work, you could send funds through various key organisations:

Caritas Jerusalem; Christian Aid; Embrace the Middle East; Friends of the Holy Land; Help the Persecuted; Medair; Mosaic Middle East; Samaritan's Purse; and Tearfund.

Not forgetting Ukraine...

The crisis in the Middle East has distracted world attention from Ukraine. But the country is still at war, and its people are still needing help.

Numerous Christian relief agencies are active now in Ukraine and its neighbouring countries, providing emergency aid to those affected by the ongoing conflict.

If you would like to send some support, you might choose to send it through key organisations who mostly work through partners on the ground, channelling humanitarian assistance and long-term care to displaced families, the elderly, and children. These are:

Blythwood Care; CAFOD; Christian Aid; Mission Without Borders; Operation Mobilisation; Salvation Army; and Ukraine Christian Ministries.

These organizations work directly with local churches to ensure aid reaches those in the most need, often providing both physical relief and spiritual support.

The Revd Dr Jo White considers various aspects of Christianity.

Reflecting Faith: The Creed (Part 1)

There are various sections that make up a Communion service. While different denominations, and different styles of churches even within the same denomination, may do things differently, generally speaking they all include the same foundational elements.

So, after the Bible readings, and then sermon, what follows next? In Common Worship (CW) we 'immediately' jump to our feet and proclaim our faith!

If you follow the Book of Common Prayer (BCP), the Creed comes between the Gospel reading and the sermon – which is my excuse for forgetting to say it more than once when I've conducted the latter service first (if you get what I mean) on a Sunday morning.

The question is, 'Why is it placed here? 'Wouldn't it make more sense to have it at or close to the beginning of a service; so that we can be sure everyone in the congregation is on the same page, so to speak.

Or why not at the end, just before we go out into the world taking our faith with us?

... .. Why here?

When (BCP) it follows directly after the Gospel reading, it's as though having heard the words of Jesus we rush to say 'I believe that. I believe in who said it. And I believe in ... etc etc.' Rather like after your favourite team has scored a goal!

Where we've had the sermon first (CW), it's as though the 'explanation and contextualisation' by the preacher makes it so plain that we can do nothing less than join together and reaffirm our baptismal faith.

This month

Pause for a moment before you say the Creed next time and consider where in your service it is placed. What has encouraged you to be able to say it from your heart? Was there a word, phrase or sentence that particularly gripped you and prompted you to your feet? Or was it just words written on the service sheet with a direction to stand?



Canon Paul Hardingham continues looking at the books of the Bible:

What's the Big Idea? - An Introduction to the Books of the Old Testament: Ezekiel

Ezekiel was a prophet who proclaimed judgment to God's people in the 6th century BC. He was among the group of Jews exiled in Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar. Ezekiel received his call when he was 30 years old through a vision of the glory of God. His ministry finished 22 years later with a vision of the restored Temple in Jerusalem.

Ezekiel spoke to a community forced from its home, who had broken faith with God. He presents a God who rules over all people and history. He is a God who desires to be known and acknowledged (*'then they will know that I am the Lord'*). As a priest, Ezekiel was deeply concerned with the holiness of God. This call to holy living includes an emphasis on individual responsibility (chapter 18), which is a significant milestone in biblical thought.



Ezekiel offers a vision of true hope for those who have undergone judgment. He promises a restored Temple as a sign of God's presence among his people. He also promises a future *'prince'* who will rule with justice and restore God's relationship with his people (34:23-4).

In restoring them morally and spiritually, God promises to use them to bring light to the Gentiles. They will demonstrate the holiness of God's name, because they will know him from the heart. This is the promise that is fulfilled in Jesus and made possible for us:

'I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws.' (36: 26-27).

Breakable



A lady was posting an old family Bible to her brother in another part of the country. "Is there anything breakable in here?" asked the postal clerk. "Only the Ten Commandments," answered the lady.



The Seven Deadly Sins: Lust

'Lust is the craving for salt by a man who is dying of thirst'
(Frederick Beucher).

This month's Deadly Sin is *lust*. It is usually understood as an intense desire for sexual pleasure, but can include other things eg food, success or fame. Objectifying a person for our own selfish pleasure can leave us feeling guilty, ashamed or disappointed. Our relationship with God is spoilt, as we create an area of life which is not under God's authority. As Jesus says: *'You have heard that it was said, "You shall not commit adultery." But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.'* (Matthew 5:27,28).

How can we deal with lust in our lives?

Confess it to God: 'If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.' (1 John 1:9). Lust feeds on secrecy, yet God already knows our thoughts and desires. Focus on Jesus, who loves and accepts us for who we are. Confess our desires to Him, knowing that He wants to cleanse us of our sin.

Renew your Mind: 'Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is- His good, pleasing and perfect will.' (Romans 12:2). Overcoming lust requires an understanding of our thinking. We need to acknowledge when lust affects us, understand the triggers for our thoughts (circumstances, time) and address them by asking for God's strength to overcome them.

'Lust is a poor, weak, whispering thing compared with that richness and energy of desire which will arise when lust has been killed.' (CS Lewis).

Seize the day:

Today is the oldest you've ever been, yet the youngest you'll ever be, so enjoy this day while it lasts.

