Rushall Parish News

June 2026

Free online. 30p print copy

Newsletter for the Churches of
St. Michael the Archangel and Christ the King
Rushall

Some useful numbers

Vicar: Revd Colin Such Tel: 01922 624677
Email colinsuch01@gmail.com

Lay Reader & Dementia Lead
Mrs Carol Beckwith Tel: 01922 648138

Churchwardens:
Mr Bob Barnard
Tel: 01922 624943
Mrs Jan Firth (Lay Reader)
Tel: 01922 449089

Safeguarding Officer:
Mrs Gill Clark
Tel: 01922 624583

To hire the hall:
Mrs Gill Clark
Tel: 01922 624583.
Email clagilli@aol.com

Wedding Enquiries:
Contact the vicar

See our website www.Rushallparish.org or our Facebook page RushallParish for regular updates.

...well you cannot fault the efficacy of the new 'Planned Giving' scheme...

90 years ago, on 14th June 1936 that G K Chesterton died. Novelist, short story writer, journalist, essayist, poet, social/literary critic and theologian, and remembered for his stories about the priest-detective Father Brown.

We expect our young people to lay down their lives for our nation, but most of us are not willing to lay down our bank accounts for God. – *Anon*

Please send any articles for the July magazine to Colin at colinsuch01@gmail.com by Friday 26th June.

This month's Contents:

Colossians	3
Vicar's Letter	4
Justin Martyr	5
M&M	6
Readers' Ministry	7
Gardening Notes	8
Christian Giving	9
Martyrs of Uganda	10
Corpus Christs	11
Our dementia advisor	12
Columba of Iona	13
Out and about	14
Results of elections	15
John Constable	16
Marylin Monroe	17
Recipe	18
G.K. Chesterton	19
British Bumblebees	20
God in the sciences	21
Richard Baxter	22
Richard of Chichester	23
St. James the Least	24
Bible Bites	25
Puzzles	26
Mouse Makes	27
Crossword	28

Canon Paul Hardingham continues his series on the books of the Bible.

What's the Big Idea? - an Introduction to the Books of the Bible: Colossians

This month we return to look at the books of the New Testament. Many today are asking: '*How does Jesus uniquely reveal God to us?* This question lies at the heart of Paul's letter to the Colossians. The church in Colossae was a fruit of his three years ministry in Ephesus (52-55 AD). Paul went on to write this letter while in a Roman prison around 61 AD.

Paul was dealing with gnostic false teachers who denied that Jesus was fully God and man. They taught that enlightenment could be reached through special knowledge and rigorous self-discipline.

Paul attacked this false teaching by focusing on the supremacy of Christ: *'in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, and you have this fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority'* (2:9-10).

He affirms that Jesus is:

Lord of all Creation, who sustains everything. As the exact representation of God, He is first-born over all creation (1:15-17) and there is no place for worshipping angels or any other power (2:18).

Head of the Church (1:18), to whom the Colossians should submit (2:6, 7) and not be seduced by vain speculations (1:16-18).

Supreme Saviour (3:11), who has defeated all spiritual powers on the cross (2:15), allowing them to share in the power of His resurrection (2:20).

All are adopted into His family and so there are no special qualifications needed to experience God's favour (2:8-20).

In chapters 3&4 Paul demonstrates the practical implications for the Christian's daily life. We are challenged to abandon the old life and cultivate our new life in Christ (3:5-4:6). If we maintain Jesus as our Lord, He will prove truly sufficient for all our needs.

Celebrating Eucharist

The first week of June sees the feast of Corpus Christi (the first Thursday after the seasons of Easter and Pentecost) and so is the first Thursday upon which we can celebrate Jesus' institution of the Eucharist (Communion) since Maundy Thursday itself (when we concentrated not so much upon the Sacrament that he inaugurated but upon the events of Holy Week itself).

Daily Prayer (Morning and Evening Prayer) have been described as the lungs of the church, breathing in life, whilst the Eucharist is the heartbeat of the church by which the Body of Christ is kept alive.

We often think of the Sacrament of Communion as the bread and the wine in which and by which the sacrifice of Christ is remembered. I, however, prefer to think of the sacrament as being the family of faith gathered around the table with Christ himself. A group of people who might not otherwise choose to join together are as one at the table, united by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit as they share the bread and the wine of Christ's body and blood. Each one of us invited to the table not out of our own merit but out of God's love for each one of us. It is the Feast of the Lamb to which all are invited. Our gathering together at the table is the sign of God's dwelling within us "By this will all know that you are my disciples if you have love for one another."

We come to the Lord's Table as brothers and sisters of Christ, each one loved by him and it is this love for God and our love for one another that keeps the church alive – and that is worth celebrating.

Colin

1st June Justin Martyr, first ever Christian philosopher

Sometime in the summer of 165AD seven Christian men were put to death in Rome. Accused of belonging to an illicit religion, they refused point blank to offer sacrifices to pagan gods. Threatened with torture and execution they replied that suffering and death gave them confidence to appear at the Great Tribunal 'of our Lord and Saviour.'

The sentence was pronounced and having been scourged, all seven were beheaded. Their leader was named Justin and we know him in Church History as Justin the Martyr. His conversion to Christianity, although a quiet and low key affair, is a story that should be known.

Justin was born in the year 100AD in Samaria, near the modern town of Nablus. His family was Gentile and pagan and as a young man Justin was drawn to the study of philosophy. Soon he was a recognised pagan philosopher, and he began to travel as an itinerant teacher, wearing the distinctive cloak of the philosophers. He tells us that his search for truth led him to study the various schools of Greek philosophy, but in none of them could he find the assurance he was looking for. Then something happened that radically changed his life. Walking one evening by a seashore, he fell into conversation with an old man. Justin listened as the old man told him that the prophecies of the Hebrew Bible had been fulfilled and they could be found in the writings of the Christian Bible. He further told Justin that truth can only be known through the one true God and that His Spirit would enlighten Justin. Justin was deeply moved by the conversation, began to read the New Testament – and was converted to faith in Christ.

Now a Christian believer, Justin continued to travel, still wearing his philosopher's cloak but now preaching and teaching the Christian gospel. He wrote two *Apologies* explaining and defending the Christian faith. He travelled to Asia Minor and finally to Rome where he taught in a Christian school. His strong defence of Christianity came to the notice of the authorities and he was arrested with six of his friends. Refusing to acknowledge pagan gods, they were executed together.

Who was the old man who introduced Justin to Christianity? We don't know and Justin doesn't even tell us his name, if he ever knew it. Justin's conversion happened because a Christian witnessed to him. We should use every opportunity we have to pass on the Good News.

M&M:
Monty and Matty

Boy it's been hot! So hot that we've been taking the servant out for his exercise extra early, somewhere around 5am. There's no one else around at that time (nobody's that daft!, he says) but it's a lovely time of day, nice and cool. The birds are busy chirping away; the squirrels are chasing each other (he still won't let us off the lead to join in the chase!) and the horses have moved into the main field to start their day of munching. It's easy to feel that all is well in the world at this time (we bet he won't be ready to walk at this time in the winter though!)

We spend the rest of the day in the house, the back of the house is usually cool so we have a lazy day, mainly because the servant complains it's too hot for him to come and play. We're all ready to play chase the stick but we graciously give in as we don't want to make him overdo it.

We had a thunderstorm the other night. We bark at the thunder not because we're scared but just because we can (we bark in the same way at the church bells.) We were worried the servant might be scared so we barked and barked until he came down and sat with us so we could see he was alright. Strangely he didn't seem to be happy sitting up through the early hours of the day but we did let him go back to bed for an hour or so before taking us out for our walk again!

Lots of woofs,
Monty and Matty

Celebrating 160 years of Reader Ministry

It is 160 years since the Reader Movement began in the Church of England. It was born out of a need to connect the proclamation of the Word with an increasingly secular world, a world in which the Church had lost direct contact with millions.

The founding archbishops and bishops realised that people were becoming biblically illiterate, and that there was a need to bring the Bible back into the home and the workplace. They founded a ministry to bring the voice of God back into the conversation.

What was so important in this episcopal initiative in 1866, as with the founding of the Mothers' Union nine years later and the Church Army 16 years later, is that they were all lay initiatives in mission. All, of course, were encouraged and supported by the ordained, but proud to be overwhelmingly lay.

That emphasis on lay-ness was not a form of anti-clericalism, but was founded on a concept of teamwork in which lay and ordained would work together, to pray for and bring in God's kingdom.

Present leaders of the Reader movement use the example of the past to point to the future. We cannot do anything about the past, but we can help to be 'prophets of a future not our own'. In the words of Archbishop Oscar Romero's famous prayer-poem:

We cannot do everything.
And there is a sense of liberation in realising
that this enables us to do something, and to do it very well.

It may be incomplete but it's a beginning, a step along the way,
an opportunity for the Lord's grace to enter and do the rest.
We may never see the end results, but that is the difference
between the master-builder and worker.

We are workers, not master-builders.
We are ministers, not messiahs.
We are prophets of a future not our own.

To be a Reader is to emphasise the fact that your primary ministry is *not* in holy buildings with coloured-glass windows and pointed arches, but in being a disciple, a member of the dispersed people of God, bringing Him into the conversation.

Gardening Notes for June

Monthly Gardening Notes
Can we really have reached June already, it seems the spring and summer months go by at twice the speed of the time spent waiting for the warmer days .

As the end of May approached we added some summer bedding mostly in baskets and containers, where slug and snail damage seems less than in open soil. Now we have to remember to water them if we have dry periods. Dead heading plants in containers will maintain a succession of flowers, the same applies to herbaceous perennials and of course roses.

Shrubs which have flowered in May and maybe early June such as Deutzia, weigela and Philadelphus will now be fading and will respond to a light trim to allow them to make good growth for next year and look better.
Although the bluebells have now all but gone forget-me-nots have hung on a little longer. Soon both will have to be cleared from the borders usually leaving unattractive spaces of bare soil.

At this time some inexpensive perennials could be added often the small pots will contain plants which have put on some growth at the nursery giving more mature plants at the same cost. The soil can be broken up using a hoe and rake and seeds of hardy perennials could be sown directly whilst there are spaces for them to grow. Even some patchy results will add to plant stock for next year's flowers.

Echinacea is one I will try as previously purchased plants never result in a return plant the following year. For us this also applies to Helenium and rudbeckia which are all lovely for late summer but never become perennial here! Any seedlings will not flower until the following year but it is nice to have some possible surprises.

As always at this time of the year we all need to take time to sit and just enjoy bees, butterflies and flowers, summer is all too fleeting,

Ann

Christian Giving

Stewardship's recent *Generosity Report* explored 'Christian giving in the UK' and is based on 6,000 churchgoers, 1,700 of whom attend church weekly, 1,200 who go monthly and 3,100 who attend less frequently.

On average, these Christians gave £124 a month to different charitable causes, made up of £98 to their church and £26 to other charities.

The more committed Christians, who attend their church and reading the Bible at least weekly, tend to give more than others. They give to Christian charities, then secular charities and finally individual Christian workers.

Why give? "Gratitude for the blessings God has given me (home, finance, family etc.)" is the reason about a third of them give.

This is followed by "gratitude for what Jesus did for me on the Cross" (30%) and being "part of something that can make a difference" (29%).

How do Christians feel about their giving? The answer: "Responsibility and joy," is closely followed by "gratitude" for their church giving. Christians mostly kept quiet about their giving, not even discussing it with friends.

Supporting those in need was a prime reason for giving (say sponsoring running a marathon), whether to family or friends or homeless strangers on the streets. The faith affiliation of charities was less important – it was what they were doing which counted. Committed Christians usually support two charities.

Boasting

Three boys in the schoolyard were bragging about their fathers. The first boy said, "My Dad scribbles a few words on a piece of paper, calls it a poem, they give him £50."

The second boy said, "That's nothing. My Dad scribbles a few words on a piece of paper, calls it a song, they give him £100."

The third boy said, "I got you both beat. My Dad scribbles a few words on a piece of paper, calls it a sermon, and it takes eight people to collect all the money!"

3rd June The Martyrs of Uganda

The Ugandan Church had dozens of martyrs within just ten years of Christianity arriving there. At first, it had gone so well: the first Anglican missionaries arriving in Uganda in 1877 were welcomed by the Kabaka (king) of Buganda, Mutesa. Mutesa also welcomed the Roman Catholics and Muslim Arabs, and, being a natural diplomat, retained his power by cleverly playing off the three groups against each other.

His son, Mwanga ll, who became king about 1883, was very different. Mwanga II wanted to retain absolute power, and deeply resented the missionaries and new converts, whom he felt were giving their allegiance to Christianity, instead.

And so it was that on 31st January 1885 he ordered the execution of Yusufu (Joseph) Rugarama, Makko (Mark) Kakumba, and Nuwa (Noah) Serwanga. That October, even the Anglican Bishop, James Hannington, was murdered.

When Joseph Mukasa Balikuddembe, a senior advisor to the king and a Catholic convert, condemned Mwanga for ordering Hannington's death, Mwanga had him arrested. Mukasa became the first Catholic martyr on 15th November 1885, when he was beheaded at Nakivubo.

Between December of 1885 and May of 1886 many more converts were murdered. The crisis came in May, when Mwanga ordered all the converts to choose between Christianity and complete obedience to his orders. (Mwanga had been furious and humiliated when the Christian pages in his own court refused his homosexual advances; it was unheard of to deny the king anything.)

Courageously, the young Christians chose their faith. And so it was that 26 pages were wrapped in straw and burned to death at Namugongo on 3rd June, 1886. In the following months, many other Christians throughout the country died by spear or fire for their faith. They included two Christians who were in the king's court, Joseph Mukasa Balikuddembe and Charles Lwanga. Both had rescued royal pages from Mwanga's sexual advances.

The last Christian to die in this persecution was Jean-Marie Muzeeyi, beheaded at Mengo on 27th January 1887. The final list of 45 known Protestant and Catholic martyrs includes only those who could be formally accounted for.

The end result of the Namugongo martyrdoms was directly opposite to Mwanga's intentions. The sight of these young Ugandan Christians, who could die singing hymns and praying for their enemies, inspired many bystanders. They wanted to know about such a faith as this. Within a few years Christianity had taken firm root in Uganda.

.

4th June - Corpus Christi, thanks for Holy Communion

The feast of Corpus Christi was proposed by Thomas Aquinas, focused on the Eucharist or Holy Communion. It celebrates the joy of sharing the Body and Blood of Christ with His presence in the Eucharist, and is usually celebrated on the Thursday after Trinity Sunday.

Today, most Protestant denominations don't acknowledge the festival, because of its association with the doctrine of the Real Presence. However, some Anglican churches do observe it, as the Thanksgiving for Holy Communion.

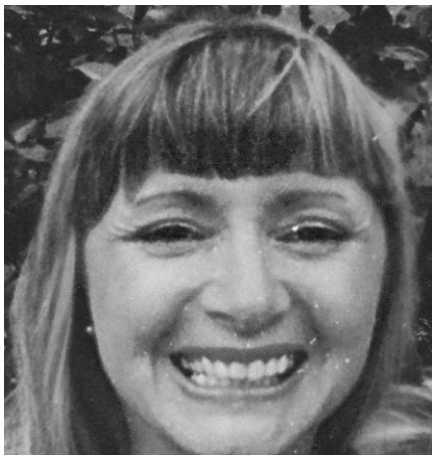
How do we understand the significance of the Eucharist or Holy Communion? Paul in 1 Corinthians 11: 23-32, points us in three directions.

A Past Commemoration:
The Eucharist *looks back* as we remember the Passover meal Jesus shared with His disciples (Luke 22:14–20). Jesus broke the bread and took the cup to signify that His atoning sacrifice on the Cross delivers us from the bondage of sin and death. As we remember His broken body and shed blood, it becomes personal: Christ died for *me*, suffered for *my* sins that *I* might live. It is truly a *eucharist*, a thanksgiving: *'Do this in remembrance of Me'* (1 Corinthians 11: 24,25).

A Present Communion:
The Eucharist speaks of the communion we enjoy with a living Christ, because our sins are forgiven. Paul encourages us to *look in* at the state of our hearts: *'Everyone ought to examine themselves before they eat of the bread and drink from the cup.'* (28). We should also *look around* acknowledging the communion we have with other believers. Holy Communion expresses our unity together: *'Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all share the one loaf.'* (11:17). Paul is expressing his concerns here about the divisions in the Corinthian Church.

A Future Certainty:
The Eucharist is also a place where we *look forward* to Christ's return: *'For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.'* (26). It declares that the reign of Christ has already begun, as we look forward to Jesus' return. He will unite earth and heaven under His rule and sin, death and Satan will finally be defeated.

So, when we next take Holy Communion, let's reflect on the past, present and future implications of what this meal means for us.



DEMENTIA
CO-ORDINATOR
St Michael the Archangel,
Leigh Road, Rushall, WS4 2DS
And
Christ the King, Lichfield Road,
Walsall, WS4 1HB

NAME; Carol Beckwith
PHONE: 07971 977464
EMAIL: carolbeckwith@hotmail.com

Hello, I'm Carol, the Dementia Co-ordinator for our churches.

- SOMEONE TO SPEAK TO: I'm here for a conversation if you have concerns about memory loss or dementia, or if you are living with dementia or caring for someone who has dementia.
- SHARING INFORMATION: I'm happy to share information about local groups and resources available to people living with dementia and their families/carers. Have a word if you'd like to know more: I may be able to signpost you on to something locally that you may find helpful.
- PRAYERS: I will pray for people affected by dementia and will ensure that they are prayed for regularly in our church services.

The Memory Café

Tuesday 30th June 2pm – 4pm in St. Michael's Community Hall

Dementia friendly but open to anyone who'd love to come for a chat and refreshments, Come along and join us

9th June Columba of Iona, missionary to the UK

In 563 AD St Columba sailed from Ireland to Iona – a tiny island off Mull, in the Western Highlands. He brought Christianity with him.

Columba (c. 521 -97) was born in Donegal of the royal Ui Neill clan, and he trained as a monk. He founded the monasteries of Derry (546), Durrow (c.556) and probably Kells. But in 565 Columba left Ireland with twelve companions for Iona, an island off southwest Scotland. Iona had been given to him for a monastery by the ruler of the Irish Dalriada.

Why would a monk in his mid-40s go into such voluntary exile? Various explanations include: voluntary exile for Christ, an attempt to help overseas compatriots in their struggle for survival, or even as some sort of punishment for his part in a row over a psalter in Ireland. Whatever the reason, Columba went to Iona and spent the rest of his life in Scotland, returning to Ireland only for occasional visits.

Columba's biographer, Adomnan, portrays him as a tall, striking figure of powerful build and impressive presence, who combined the skills of scholar, poet and ruler with a fearless commitment to God's cause. Able, ardent, and sometimes harsh, Columba seems to have mellowed with age.

As well as building his monastery on Iona, Columba also converted Brude, king of the Picts. Columba had great skill as a scribe, and an example of this can be seen in the Cathach of Columba, a late 6th century psalter in the Irish Academy, which is the oldest surviving example of Irish majuscule writing. In his later years Columba spent much time transcribing books.

Columba's death was apparently foreseen by his community, and even, it seems, sensed by his favourite horse. He died in the church just before Matins, and it is a tribute to this man that his traditions were upheld by his followers for about a century, not least in the Synod of Whitby and in Irish monasteries on the continent of Europe.

Here is a prayer of St Columba:

Christ With Us
My dearest Lord,
Be Thou a bright flame before me,
Be Thou a guiding star above me,
Be Thou a smooth path beneath me,
Be Thou a kindly shepherd behind me,
Today and evermore.

Out and about walking, driving and visiting:
David Austin Roses

It's that time of year again to visit the growers of these famous plants and see them at their best.

Joining the A5 from Pelsall and continuing on this road through parts of Cannock and eventually beyond Weston Park an island is reached just after entering Shropshire. Turn left here onto the A41. Pass RAF Cosford and, a few miles on, start looking for the brown signs for a right turn to David Austin Roses. The road becomes a fairly narrow lane then look out for a sign for the rose gardens.

The site consists of extensive growing fields, a large retail nursery where it is possible to view hundreds of varieties of roses in flower plus other garden plants.

There is an attractive gift shop, a restaurant and a tearoom and then a show garden with the many varieties of rose bushes which should be at their best in June and July.

On one occasion prior to the quiet wedding of some friends who had taken decades in deciding to tie the knot we were looking for a rose as a priest. Having found Rambling Rectory and Wedding Day we realised that they would both would possibly ramble to a length of 30 ft. So we quickly diverted to a shrub bush rose called Tranquillity which was greeted with a comment of we need that here. Every year we are told how many blooms it has had.

Visiting this centre is free unless you cannot resist purchasing a plant to take home,

Ann

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

RESULTS OF ELECTIONS

Parish of Rushall: St. Michael the Archangel with Christ the King

Deanery of Walsall

At the Annual Meeting of Parishioners and Annual Parochial Church Meeting of the above parish held on Sunday 17th May 2026

The following were elected as **Churchwardens**:

Bob Barnard

Jan Firth

The following were elected as **Lay Members of the Deanery Synod**:

Boris Worral

The following were elected as **Lay Members of the Parochial Church Council**:

Rose Harris

Denise Kemp

Caroline Green

Gill Clark

Andrew Hardisty

Wendy Manton

Rosie Whitehouse

Robert Hubble

At a meeting of the newly elected PCC held immediately after the annual meeting Jade Allport was co-opted as a member of the PCC and Paul Tomlin was elected as a deanery synod representative with effect as from 28th June.

Please remember our churchwardens, deanery synod representatives and parochial church councillors in your prayers.

The swearing in of churchwardens takes place at the Archdeacon's visitation at Lichfield cathedral on Monday 29th June at 7.30pm

Remembering John Constable

It was 250 years ago, on 11th June 1776, that John Constable, British landscape artist, was born.

Widely known as a painter in the Romantic tradition, Constable had a deeply conservative faith centred on the Church of England, which he viewed as an essential stabilising force in society. His painting of Salisbury Cathedral is regarded as a symbol of this.

Born in East Bergholt, Suffolk, to a wealthy corn merchant who owned Flatford Mill, he was expected to take over the business: although he was the second son, the eldest was regarded as incapable. But John Constable was always focused on painting, and the business was eventually taken over by his younger brother.

Constable enjoyed painting the areas he knew well – primarily those on the border of Suffolk and Essex which is now known as Constable Country. “Painting is but another word for feeling,” he wrote to a friend. He regarded nature as a reflection of God’s creation and his own work as spiritual, though a tour of the Lake District in 1806 did not convince him of the attraction of mountains.

He is now highly valued, but he was never successful financially in his own lifetime, though he was elected to the Royal Academy at the age of 52. He was more popular in France than in England, but refused invitations to travel to promote his work, saying he would rather be a poor man in England than a rich man abroad.

After the death through tuberculosis of his wife Maria Bicknell at the age of 41, Constable became depressed: it had been a love match that triumphed over opposition from her wealthy relatives, and he was left a widower with seven young children. He continued to paint, but in a different style, darker and semi-abstract, but still compelling.

‘Our Marilyn Monroe’ – born 100 years ago this month

One hundred years ago, on 1st June 1926, the American film actress, model and sex symbol Marilyn Monroe was born. Remembered for *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*, *The Seven Year Itch* and *Some Like it Hot*, among others, she died in 1962.

Her original name was Norma Jeane Mortenson, and she was born in Los Angeles, spending much of her childhood in foster homes; she lived for a while with evangelical Christians Albert and Ida Bolender, as did her mother, Gladys Monroe. She married James Dougherty at the age of 16, and later Joe DiMaggio, the baseball star.

Marilyn suffered a great deal from endometriosis, and although she became pregnant on three occasions, she had no children. Her character was contradictory: she was probably bipolar, but combined an apparent naivety with an extremely shrewd business intelligence: some estimated her IQ at a very high 165. She certainly had a spiritual side, but this was rarely obvious.

When she married Arthur Miller in 1956, she converted to Judaism because she identified with Jews as an oppressed group, and she retained this spiritual connection after they divorced.

Monroe’s career in films started when she was spotted by a photographer while she was working in an aircraft factory. She was always seen as a pin-up, and it was an image she cultivated. She wore white to draw attention to her blondness (though she was naturally brunette) and wore deliberately revealing clothes.

As far as politics were concerned, Monroe was a democrat, admiring Abraham Lincoln and giving her backing to civil rights. Her closeness to the Kennedy family – she was rumoured to have had brief affairs with both the president, JFK, and his brother Bobby – came at the end of her life. She died of a barbiturate overdose at her Los Angeles home.

Recipe

Chocolate Tiffin variations

After making Simnel Cake at Easter I had part of a block of marzipan left over so I thought to try to use it up before it becomes rock hard!

Ingredients

2 eggs beaten
1oz caster sugar
6oz butter melted
8oz plain chocolate melted
12oz rich tea or digestive biscuits crushed (leaves in some bigger lumps)
A handful of raisins
Small squares of chopped marzipan

Beat eggs with sugar

Stir in melted butter and chocolate
Allow to cool slightly the stir in raisins and marzipan.

Line a tin (approximately 5 by 10 inch) greased and lined with parchment paper then press mixture into tin
Put fridge until set.

Cut into squares and keep in fridge or freezer.

If marzipan is not available the cooked mixture could have maltesers added or the standard dried fruit /nuts /cherries as desired.
Ann

Parents blamed for children's bad behaviour in class

A government schools tsar has said that weak-willed parents are to blame for the increasingly bad behaviour of many children in the classroom.
In the autumn term of 2024-25 alone, 16,000 pupils were suspended for violence against an adult. Some teachers are now forced to wear bite sleeves, to protect themselves from their pupils' teeth. Other teachers keep an emergency radio on hand, so they can call for back-up in the event of their pupils mounting a physical attack on them in the classroom.
Tom Bennett, the Department of Education's ambassador for attendance and behaviour, says there is a growing dispute between parents and teachers as to who is responsible for such disruptive pupils. Bennett claims that unruly children think "they can do what they want and that they're the most important person in the room and that their feelings are the only feelings that matter". The schools think otherwise.

Country roads can be beautiful – but deadly. Beware.

Be careful on rural roads. In the ten years to the end of 2024, nearly 10,000 people died on Britain's rural roads. And so NFU Mutual launched an on-going campaign in 2020, to warn people of the dangers. The website offers some excellent, practical tips to staying safe. Visit: Ruralroadsafety@nfumuutal.co.uk
Above, don't speed, because anything might be waiting for you in the road just around the next bend: bales of hay, cows, sheep or even a tractor!

Remembering G K Chesterton

Ninety years ago, on 14th June 1936, G K Chesterton died at his home in Beaconsfield, Buckinghamshire. Novelist, short story writer, journalist, essayist, poet, social/literary critic and theologian, he is remembered for his stories about the priest-detective Father Brown.

Gilbert Keith Chesterton was born in Kensington, London, to an estate agent father and a Swiss-French mother. He was educated at St Paul's School before studying art at the Slade School and literature at University College, London. He did not get a degree, and his earliest ambition was to be an artist.

A conspicuous figure in both height and girth, he eventually took to writing, producing in all about 80 books, several hundred poems, 200 short stories, 4000 essays (mostly newspaper columns), and several plays. His literary preoccupations were initially journalism and social commentary, then literary criticism and lastly religion.

He was an apologist who spoke out for orthodox Christianity, initially from an Anglican standpoint, but after 1922 as a Roman Catholic. Using paradox, a sense of wonder and imaginative wit, he described the Christian faith as the one logical answer to life's mysteries. His seminal book, *Orthodoxy*, written when he was an Anglican, was a key factor in the conversion of C S Lewis.

Chesterton married Frances Blogg in 1901, but the couple were unable to have children. A writer herself, Frances encouraged her husband and acted as his personal assistant. He survived a life-threatening illness in 1914 affecting his heart and kidneys and was unconscious for a long period before recovering, though he never regained full vitality.

His most widely known invented character was Father Brown, kindly protagonist of a series of detective novels later televised and recently rerun. Father Brown is an unprepossessing figure with a sharp mind who understands the intricacies of evil through hearing many confessions.

Need total darkness to sleep?

According to followers of 'The Dutch Method', it is good to sleep with your curtains open.

That way, in the morning your bedroom slowly floods with natural light, which coincides with your circadian rhythm, the internal body clock that regulates your sleep cycle. Natural light also stops the production of melatonin (your sleep hormone) and triggers a natural rise in cortisol. That lets you know that the new day has begun. It is considered a gentle way to wake up.

Nevertheless, others of us prefer the curtains to be shut, and need pitch black to sleep.

Whichever you prefer, here are some tips on sleep and waking up.

~ Natural light in the morning is good for you. It is better to go for a walk at the start of each day, rather than to head straight for your phone and computer.

~ Melatonin levels decline as we get older, which makes it harder to fall and stay asleep.

~ Our body clock can shift to earlier, leaving us sleepier at night, but more awake earlier in the morning.

~ As we age, we become more sensitive to disruption during the night, and things like stress, life changes, noise or light can have a bigger impact.

~ A good routine before sleep is essential. Aim for bed at the same time, empty your head with a to-do list for tomorrow, clear your thoughts, and relax.

Our British bumblebees

Did you know we have about 270 kinds of bee in the UK, including 24 types of bumblebees? Here are just six of them:

Early Bumblebee: - Found throughout the UK. Rather small, with distinctive lemon-yellow bands on thorax and abdomen, and an orange tail. An important pollinator of our soft fruit.

Common Carder Bee: - One of our most common bees, and often still feeding in November. Fluffy, brown and orange, with sometimes darker bands on the abdomen.

Tree Bumblebee: - Found in England and Wales, and recently Southern Scotland. A fuzzy bee, with brown-orange hairs on its thorax, a black abdomen, and a white tail.

Red-tailed Bumblebee: - The female is very large, with a big red 'tail', while males are smaller.

Garden Bumblebee: - A scruffy-looking large bee, with a long tongue and face. It has yellow bands at the collar, rear of the thorax and at the first segment of the abdomen, and the tip of the tail is white.

Buff-tailed bumblebee: - The biggest of our bumblebees, with a yellow collar near the head and another on the abdomen. The queen has a buff-coloured 'tail', while the workers have white 'tails' and black hair on their faces.

Be kind to our bees. They are in steady decline across the UK.

God in the Sciences - Re-joining the Choir: Why people are the helpers, not priests, of Creation

Urbanisation has taken us away from the rest of Creation, often reducing it in our eyes to a resource that we draw on when we feel like it, or need it. But Jesus said the stones would start praising Him if people didn't (Luke 19:40), and in the Psalms and Job, all of Creation is praising God. There is no hint here that people are needed to enable Creation's praise to happen. The singing is metaphorical, but it draws attention to fact that all creatures praise God by being themselves. They don't only praise with their 'voices', but with everything else they do as well: eating, running, hopping, grooming, reproducing, and so on (which is a reminder to us that our whole lives can be an act of praise to God).

Our isolation from Creation's praise can add to our sense that the whole world revolves around us and our needs. In reality, Creation is God-centred and 'His name alone is exalted' (Psalm 148:13). The value of Creation for God is not necessarily linked to its value for us – it is of value to God because He made it, He cares for it, and it praises Him.

Genesis 1:28 says that we must "rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground". To rule wisely we need to get hold of the fact that, although we have a special responsibility, we are creatures alongside all the other creatures. One way to ground ourselves in this idea is to re-join the choir and worship God together with every other living and non-living thing on earth.

Rather than being needed to help Creation praise God, we can actually rely on it to help *us* in our worship. Sharing God's delight in Creation, we can learn to delight in God. In return, the best thing we can do is to let living things recover their full fruitfulness as much as possible so they can praise God fully. We are called to a life of humble service, taking care of each other and everything else on this planet. In this way, we can choose to see other creatures as they are, pointing our attention away from themselves towards God – until we are caught up in their praise of Him.

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

14th June Richard Baxter, English Puritan church leader

If Richard Baxter were alive today, he would probably be contributing to the Thought for the Day on Radio 4, because he had a gift for the sound-bite. Try these memorable quotes:

Preaching a man a sermon with a broken head, and telling him to be right with God is equal to telling a man with a broken leg to get up and run a race.

If God be not enough for you, you will never have enough. Turn to Him more, and know Him better, if you would have a satisfied mind.

When I compare my slow and unprofitable life with the frequent and wonderful mercies received, it shames me, it silences me, and leaves me inexcusable.

I preached as never sure to preach again, and as a dying man to dying men.

As it was, Richard Baxter lived from 1615 to 1691, and so instead of broadcasting, became a well-known English Puritan church leader, poet, hymnodist, theologian and controversialist.

His 19-year ministry at St Mary and All Saints Kidderminster was very influential – he was an impossible preacher to ignore!

As a matter of fact, the BBC would have loved him because he was so outspoken that after the Restoration, his non-separatist Presbyterian approach made him one of the most influential leaders of the Nonconformists, and he spent some time in prison for various religious 'offences'. He irritated both the Catholics and the Calvinists over various theological views and practices. Yet he was well respected - Dean Stanley called him 'the chief of English Protestant Schoolmen.'

After the Restoration in 1660, Baxter, who had helped to bring it about, settled in London, and the power of his preaching and his skill as leader was well respected. He had been made a king's chaplain, and was offered the bishopric of Hereford, but as a moderate dissenter to the C of E, he refused. He was then barred from preaching, but turned to writing, and in all produced some 168 works. He died peacefully in London in 1691.

16th June Richard of Chichester, wanting God more clearly, dearly and nearly

Ever wonder where the prayer … '*May I know thee more clearly, love thee more dearly, and follow thee more nearly, day by day'* comes from? Richard of Chichester, a bishop in the 13th century, wrote it.

He began life as Richard de Wych of Droitwich, the son of a yeoman farmer. But Richard was a studious boy, and after helping his father on the farm for several years, refused an advantageous offer of marriage, and instead made his way to Oxford, and later to Paris and Bologna to study canon law.

In 1235 he returned to Oxford, and was soon appointed Chancellor, where he supported Edmund, Archbishop of Canterbury, in his struggles against King Henry III's misuse of Church funds. After further study to become a priest, Richard was in due course made a bishop himself. He was greatly loved. He was charitable and accessible, both stern and merciful to sinners, extraordinarily generous to those stricken by famine, and a brilliant legislator of his diocese. He decreed that the sacraments were to be administered without payment, Mass celebrated in dignified conditions, the clergy to be chaste, to practise residence, and to wear clerical dress. The laity was obliged to attend Mass on Sundays and holy days, and to know by heart the Hail Mary as well as the Lord's Prayer and the Creed.

Richard was also prominent in preaching the Crusade, which he saw as a call to reopen the Holy Land to pilgrims, not as a political expedition. He died at Dover on 3rd April 1253. In art, Richard of Chichester is represented with a chalice at his feet, in memory of his having once dropped the chalice at Mass! One ancient English church is dedicated to him.

And, of course, he is author of that famous prayer, now set to popular music, which runs in full: "Thanks be to thee, my Lord Jesus Christ for all the benefits thou hast given me, for all the pains and insults which thou hast borne for me. O most merciful redeemer, friend and brother, may I know thee more clearly, love thee more dearly and follow thee more nearly, day by day."

On the struggle for life in a rectory

The Rectory
St James the Least

My dear Nephew Darren

Ah, the joys of June! At last, I can return to the Rectory without putting on my overcoat before going inside. For the next four months, all windows and doors are left open, in order to let the heat *in*. If anyone else tells me how lucky I am to live in an 10-bedroom Queen Anne house, I shall have them excommunicated.

You will soon stop complaining about your one-bedroom flat should you ever have to live in a rural rectory; the days of wandering about your home in shirtsleeves will become a distant memory. In my first winter here, I had the central heating on full blast 24 hours a day. The house was almost warm, even if the boilers sounded like the Queen Mary coming into port. But that quarter's gas bill needed a substantial grant from the International Monetary Fund to cover it, so ever since, for six months of the year, I live in the kitchen. Parishioners find it either touching or sad that I sleep with my Labrador. It never occurs to them that I need her for extra heat.

It does mean that evening meetings at the rectory on winter evenings can be un-Christianly satisfying. Watching committee members fighting – with infinite politeness - to get nearest to the one-bar electric fire is highly entertaining. They hold on to their coffee cups less for refreshment, more for a little extra warmth. At least it means that meetings are short.

My predecessor was a model railway enthusiast and so several bedrooms were taken up with a system of such complexity that it made Crewe Junction seem trivial. He also found it helpful to put his teenage son in the turret bedroom, where he could play his drums without anyone else in the house being able to hear a thing.

Nowadays, all these extra rooms are filled with cribs and nativity play costumes, Easter gardens and spare choir cassocks. It is remarkable how all these things used to be stored quite satisfactorily in the church vestry until the parish acquired a single priest; now the empty rooms in the rectory have become vital storage space. I so hope my successor has a plethora of children, so that the parishioners have to find alternative accommodation for all the detritus vital to church life.

No, dear boy, cherish your centrally heated, dry, draft proof, mice-free, bat-less, modern-plumbed accommodation. It will not be ever thus.

Your loving uncle,
Eustace

Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in 1 Samuel 17:1-50

The Philistine and Israelite armies faced each other. For 40 days, the gigantic Philistine champion, Goliath, taunted them..

#

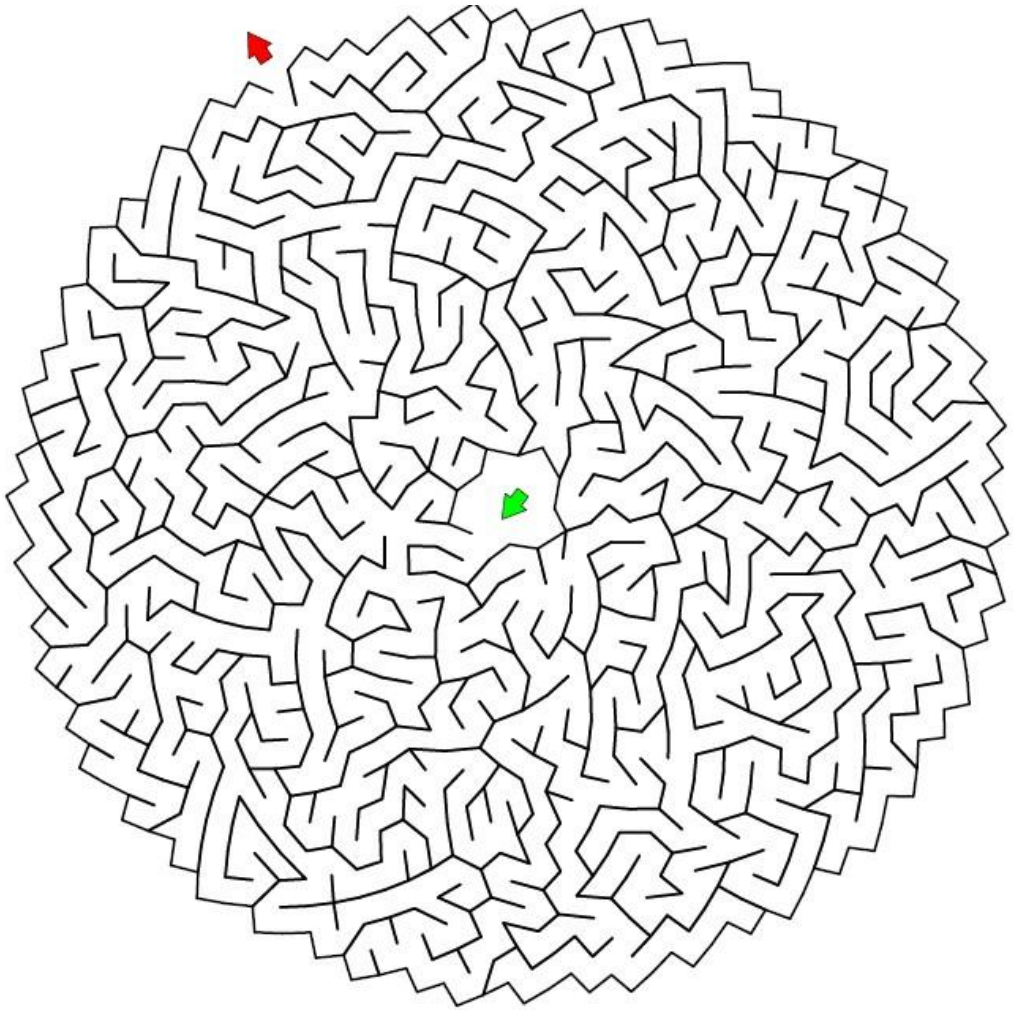
1	5							
					6	4		
	3	6		2	9	1		
	7			1	2			
8	9						4	1
			3	9			2	
		7	9	4		2	3	
		5	7					
							8	6

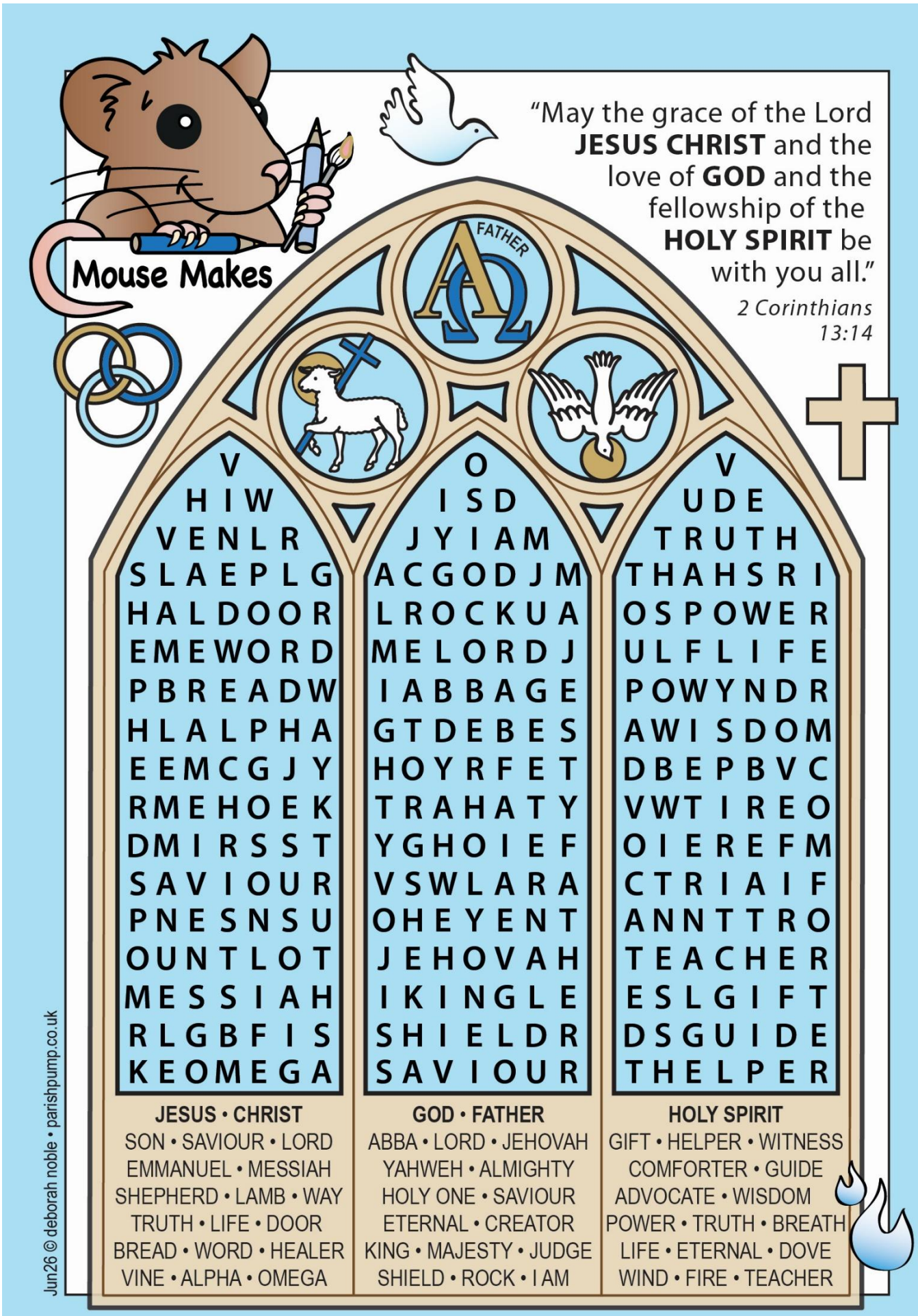
© 2013 KrazyDad.com

May's Solution

8	9	2	1	4	6	7	3	5
5	1	7	3	2	8	9	6	4
6	4	3	9	5	7	8	2	1
7	5	8	4	6	9	3	1	2
9	3	6	8	1	2	4	5	7
4	2	1	7	3	5	6	9	8
2	8	5	6	9	4	1	7	3
3	7	9	2	8	1	5	4	6
1	6	4	5	7	3	2	8	9

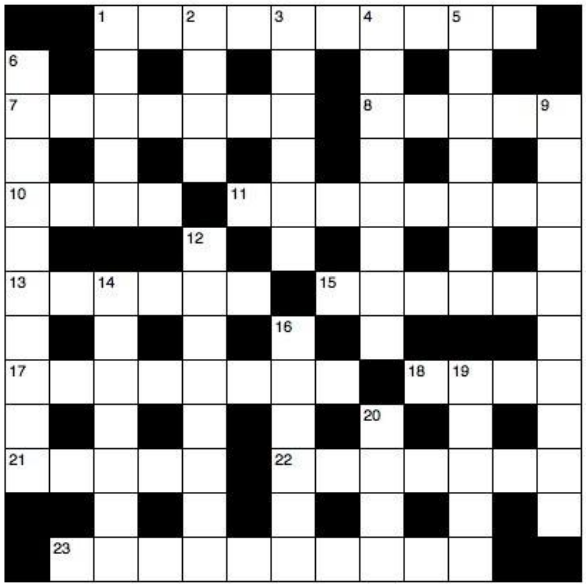
Can you solve the maze?




Mouse Makes
"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
FATHER
V
H I W
V E N L R
S L A E P L G
H A L D O O R
E M E W O R D
P B R E A D W
H L A L P H A
E E M C G J Y
R M E H O E K
D M I R S S T
S A V I O U R
P N E S N S U
O U N T L O T
M E S S I A H
R L G B F I S
K E O M E G A
O
I S D
J Y I A M
A C G O D J M
L R O C K U A
M E L O R D J
I A B B A G E
G T D E B E S
H O Y R F E T
T R A H A T Y
Y G H O I E F
V S W L A R A
O H E Y E N T
J E H O V A H
I K I N G L E
S H I E L D R
S A V I O U R
V
U D E
T R U T H
T H A H S R I
O S P O W E R
U L F L I F E
P O W Y N D R
A W I S D O M
D B E P B V C
V W T I R E O
O I E R E F M
C T R I A I F
A N N T T R O
T E A C H E R
E S L G I F T
D S G U I D E
T H E L P E R
JESUS • CHRIST
SON • SAVIOUR • LORD
EMMANUEL • MESSIAH
SHEPHERD • LAMB • WAY
TRUTH • LIFE • DOOR
BREAD • WORD • HEALER
VINE • ALPHA • OMEGA
GOD • FATHER
ABBA • LORD • JEHOVAH
YAHWEH • ALMIGHTY
HOLY ONE • SAVIOUR
ETERNAL • CREATOR
KING • MAJESTY • JUDGE
SHIELD • ROCK • I AM
HOLY SPIRIT
GIFT • HELPER • WITNESS
COMFORTER • GUIDE
ADVOCATE • WISDOM
POWER • TRUTH • BREATH
LIFE • ETERNAL • DOVE
WIND • FIRE • TEACHER
Jun26 © deborah noble • parishpump.co.uk

Across

1 Evil (Genesis 6:5) (10)
7 Musician called for by Elisha when he met the kings of Israel, Judah and Edom (2 Kings 3:15) (7)
8 The request that led to the institution of the Lord's Prayer: 'Lord, — us to pray' (Luke 11:1) (5)
10 'We are hard pressed on every— '(2Corinthians4:8)(4)
11 Fraud (2Corinthians6:8)(8)
13 'His troops advance in force;they build a siege ramp against me and — around my tent' (Job 19:12) (6)
15 Where Rachel hid Laban's household gods when he searched his daughter's tent (Genesis 31:34) (6)
17 'Now about spiritual gifts,brothers,I do not want you to be—' (1 Corinthians 12:1) (8)
18 Nomadic dwelling(Genesis26:25)(4)
21 'As for man,his days are like—,he flourishes like a flower of the field' (Psalm 103:15) (5)
22 Or I live (anag.)(7)
23 Those guilty of 1 Across(Romans13:4)(10)



Down

1 'God so loved the — that he gave his one and only Son' (John 3:16) (5)
2 'Away in a manger, no — for a bed' (4)
3 Mob ten (anag.) (6)
4 'Each — group made its own gods in several towns where they settled' (2 Kings 17:29) (8)
5 Began (Luke 9:46) (7)
6 Speaking very softly (John 7:32) (10)
9 Workers Ruth joined when she arrived in Bethlehem with her mother-in-law Naomi (Ruth 2:3) (10) 12 Put in jail(Acts22:19)(8)
14 Aceturn(anag.)(7)
16 Discharge(Acts21:3)(6)
19 'All these—come from inside and make a man "unclean"' (Mark 7:23) (5)
20 'Let us rejoice and be glad and — him glory!'(Revelation19:7)(4)

May's answers:

ACROSS 1, Overwhelmed. 9, Valleys. 10, Strap. 11, Top. 13, Reel. 16, To do. 17, Incite. 18, Load. 20, West. 21, Notice. 22, Wash. 23, Thin. 25, Ash. 28, Noah's. 29, Ever not. 30, Onesiphorus.
DOWN: 2, Value. 3, Reed. 4, Host. 5, Lisp. 6, Ear lobe. 7, Overflowing. 8, Opportunity. 12, Obtain. 14, Lid. 15, A cross. 19, Abstain. 20, Wet. 24, Hindu. 25, Asks. 26, Help. 27, Hero.