

Rushall Parish News

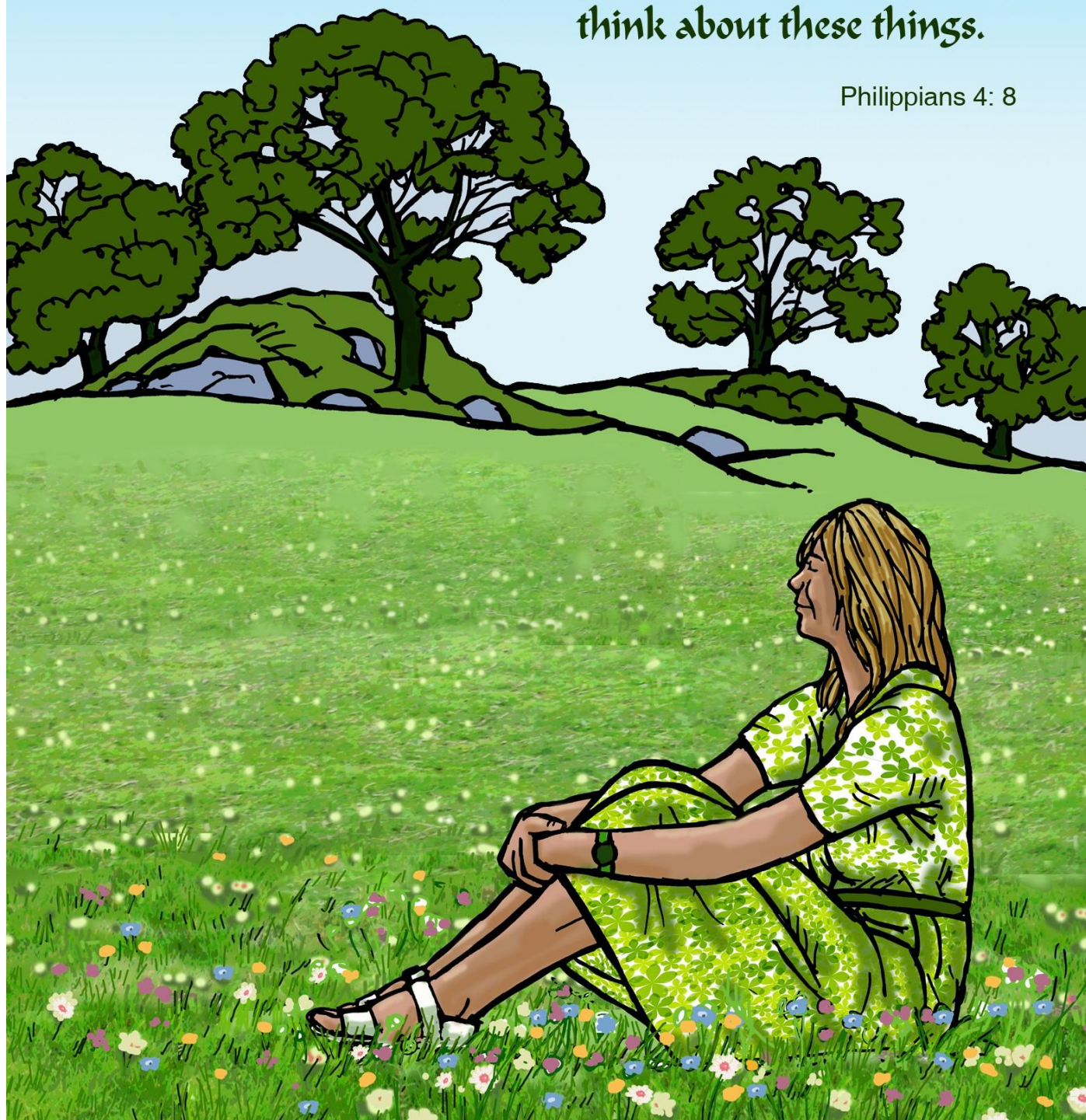
July/August
2026

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

Free online. 30p print copy

whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing,
whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence
and if there is anything worthy of praise,
think about these things.

Philippians 4: 8



Some useful numbers

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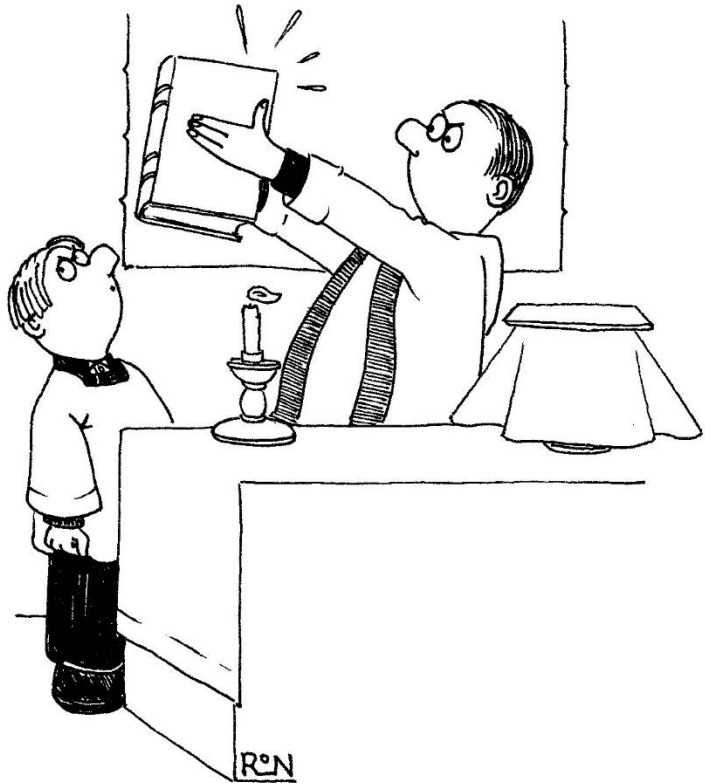
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Wedding Enquiries:
Contact the vicar

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



*Fortunately it was a perfect mosquito,
without spot or blemish*

250 years ago, on 4th July 1776
that the US Declaration of
Independence was adopted by
the Second Continental
Congress.

Plenty of people wish to become
devout, but no one wishes to be
humble. – *Francoise, Duc de la
Rochefoucauld*

Please send any articles for the
September magazine to Colin at
colinsuch01@gmail.com by Friday
21st August.

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: 1 Thessalonians

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1 Thessalonians is the earliest of Paul's letters, written when he was in Corinth during his second missionary journey (Acts 18:1–18) in 49–51 AD. Thessalonica was the capital of the Roman province of Macedonia, as well as being a flourishing centre for trade and philosophy. After founding the church (Acts 17:1–9) Paul was forced to leave, when he was falsely accused of speaking against Caesar. As the new Christians were left with little spiritual support, Paul wrote this letter to encourage them.

Paul addresses a number of issues throughout this letter. As they weren't expecting persecution, Paul reminds them that this is normal Christian experience (3:3–4). He also challenges those in the church who were living off wealthier Christians rather than earning their own living (4:9–12; 5:14).

However, the most prominent theme in letter is the second coming of Jesus. It is mentioned in every chapter of the book (1:10; 2:19–20; 3:13; 4:13–18; 5:1–11, 23–24). The Thessalonians were unclear about the timing of the day of the Lord (5:1–2). Some church members had died (4:13), and people weren't sure what would happen to them at Christ's return (3:10; 4:13). However, Paul assures them that when Jesus returns, the dead in Christ will rise to meet the Lord with the living (4:15–17). Therefore, believers don't need to fear God's wrath, but rather are assured of inheriting his salvation.

Living in the light of Christ's return calls for holy and blameless lives (3:11–4:8; 5:23). *'May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.'* (5:23).

“O Jesus I have promised”

The end of June and beginning of July saw lots of promises made and/or put into practice. First came the promises of four confirmands from our congregation wanting to make known their promise to follow Christ and to trust in him. Then came the promises of Jan and Bob as they were sworn in as churchwardens, promising to serve the church and the congregations. Next will come the first meeting of the newly elected PCC as members put into practice their promise to help lead our church in both its buildings and all of our congregations.



The end of June was also the anniversary of my making my own ordination promises.

We have all made a promise to follow Jesus, to “take up our cross and follow him” wherever he may lead us. He promises us that he will be with us, not that the way is easy but that he will be there for us.



Although we each make our own individual promises and are called to different types of service, we work and walk together. We work as a team and together we are called as a church to worship together and to reach out into our community and make Christ known to everyone.

Just as Jesus sent out his disciples in pairs to support and encourage each other, so he calls us too to work together, to support and encourage each other in our own individual callings.

Christ calls each one of us by name and we each respond in our own time and our own way. He gives each one of us gifts and talents to serve him and we do so in different ways. However, we each make the same promise, to follow him, to love him and to serve him.

I hop and pray that as we work out the promises we have each made we may hear the word “Well done, good and faithful servant” in our hearts.

Colin

1st July

Henry Venn of the CMS

Most Christians in the UK have heard of the Church Mission Society or CMS. Far fewer have heard of the Revd Henry Venn (1796-1873), whose father, the rector of Clapham, founded CMS in 1799, and who himself became the greatest missionary strategist of the 19th century.

Not that Henry Venn ever became a missionary himself; after Cambridge he served his curacy at St Dunstan's in Fleet Street, and then an incumbency at Drypool in Hull, before becoming vicar of St Johns, Holloway in 1834. But Henry Venn's parish-based ministry did not obscure his passionate interest in overseas evangelism, and in 1841 he accepted an invitation to become the honorary secretary of the Church Mission Society. That decision was to shape the history of overseas missions, and to make CMS into the most effective force in Britain for delivering effective overseas mission.

For Henry was an outstanding administrator, and his wisdom and management of the missionaries enabled CMS to grow and flourish. When Henry first began work on CMS, it employed 107 European clergy and nine local indigenous people. When he died in 1873, there were 230 European clergy and 148 local people in service.

After his resignation from St Johns Holloway in 1846, Henry devoted himself almost exclusively to the work of CMS. He was directly responsible for sending out 498 clergymen, all of them chosen by him, and with most of whom he continued in regular correspondence. He also established eight or nine bishoprics for the supervision of CMS missionary clergy and was usually involved in the appointments made.

Henry and a missions colleague in America were the first to use the term 'indigenous church', and they were way ahead of their time in seeing the necessity for creating churches on the mission fields that in time would become not only self-supporting, but also self-governing and self-propagating. In fact, Venn wrote with enthusiasm on this "euthanasia of missions," meaning that missionaries were only ever meant to be temporary, and not permanent.

All in all, Henry Venn's exposition on the basic principles of indigenous Christian missions was so powerful that much of it was later adopted by the Lausanne Congress of 1974.

But alongside Venn's passion for evangelism was his concern for social justice, and he frequently lobbied the British Parliament, especially the closure of the Atlantic slave trade.

In 1873, when he was 76, Venn died at his home in Mortlake, Surrey. He is buried in the churchyard.

M&M: Monty and Matty

Whew! It's been a scorcher. The servant has been moaning about how hot it is but we have to confess we haven't enjoyed it too much.

Luckily the house is usually quite cool so we found some relative comfortable spots to lie down during the day. We did try to coax the servant



into playing throw the stick but he stubbornly refused saying it was far too hot to play in the garden.

We did manage to drag him out for walks round the Lime Pits at 6.30 in the morning before the sun really got going. We didn't see anybody else ("They've probably got more sense!" muttered the servant) but we did see squirrels begin their day of looking for food and heard the birds in full song mode.

The servant keeps a jug of filtered water in the fridge for us and every now and then tops up our water bowl so we have a nice cold drink to keep us going. He says it's not fair as he has to make do with tap water – but then he does forget his station in the household.

It's a bit cooler now but we still haven't got him to throw the stick – we'll keep trying ...

Lots of woofs,
Monty and Matty

Keep on keeping on

In the church year, we've now come to that long season- it seems to go on forever- variously called 'Trinity' or 'Ordinary time'. Each of those labels tells us something about the approximately six months between Pentecost and Advent Sunday.

'Trinity' reminds us that with Pentecost, God has made himself known to us in all his fullness (or at least as much as we can bear) as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. 'Ordinary time' tells us that this is the season where, now armed with the insights and power of the Holy Spirit, we can revisit the life of Jesus with new eyes, new heart, see new things in the faith, see new opportunities to serve God.

This is the time when those words of Jesus (John 15 v15) 'I have made known to you everything I have learned from the Father' come into play. It may seem a long season, it may feel like the drudgery of 'Keep on keeping on' without the excitement of Christmas, Easter and Pentecost to lift our spirits, but it is ordinary time charged with the knowledge that we have everything we need in the resources of God. The love of the Father, the words and works of the Son, the power of the Spirit will energise us as we 'keep on keeping on' through this long season.

This long season up to the end of November is a reminder that working out our love for God in our community is probably more about perspiration than inspiration. Few are called to be heroes of the faith, but all are called to faithfulness, and somehow or other, with the transforming power of the Spirit, we are all able to keep on keeping on, doing little things with great love.

Here's a lovely prayer I learned from our son's godmother which captures some of the mindset of the Trinity season/Ordinary time; it may help you 'keep on keeping on' through the months ahead;

Let not our soul be busy inns that have not room for thee and thine, but quiet homes of prayer and praise where thou mayest find fit company; where the needful cares of life are wisely ordered and put away, and wide sweet space is kept for thee. Amen to that. Ordinary - but challenging!

Gardening Notes for July

July is a month of marking time, all the summer planting is done and perennials are flourishing.

A correction to something I commented on in the past, I thought the 'Chelsea Chop ' was an instruction to chop perennials down by half after flowering in order to encourage subsequent blooms. It always seemed odd to me as so many plants had not flowered in late May by the time of the Chelsea Flower Show. My tip is useful during the summer to promote more flowers but Monty Don explained the proper meaning of the term is that emerging plants could be cut down by half to make them more bushy.. However when the plants had not even flowered I would find it difficult not to appreciate the first flowers!

Shrubs are now putting on new growth and any spare time could be used to take out any dead wood and to keep them in shape.

If we have any spells of hot weather watering of pots and containers becomes especially important, best done early morning or preferably in the evening when the moisture will not evaporate so quickly. However we are advised not to water lawns even if they are browning. The water encourages the roots to come up towards the surface which will cause die back. Almost always the grass eventually recovers.

As roses we have reached their peak of the initial flowering, a subsequent flush will be prompted if when dead heading the stems are cut down to the next pair of strong leaves.

Dead heading of annuals will also keep them flowering all season.

Our annual Dianthus from last summer remained green all winter so were left in situ and as a bonus are now flowering prolifically. Also the Sweet Williams grown from seed the winter before last and planted out last summer have reappeared so I might sow some more this winter as they are such bright spots of colour in the garden.

With reference to 'Out and About ' my thoughts this month about visiting Open Garden Events some years ago I suggested we did a fun open garden event hosted by a small number of Church members in the local area, planning to see other people's gardens with stops for tea and cake. This was considered and then rejected as those initially willing became nervous of displaying their efforts, pity as it might have been a social event just for fun! As always enjoy the garden, it will be a long winter.

HYMN: The story behind ‘Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken’

*Glorious things of thee are spoken,
Zion, city of our God;
He whose word cannot be broken
Formed thee for his own abode.
On the rock of ages founded,
What can shake thy sure repose?
With salvation's walls surrounded,
Thou may'st smile at all thy foes.*

The year was 1800, and Vienna was under bombardment by Napoleon's troops. The great Austrian composer, Haydn, then old and frail, asked to be carried to his piano. There he made his own defiance of Napoleon, by solemnly play through his composition 'Emperor's Hymn'. Haydn had composed it for the Austrian Emperor, Franz II's birthday on 12 February 1797. Haydn never touched his piano again, and died a few days later, aged 77.

That is where the tune for this well-loved hymn came from. It quickly became the tune of the Austrian national anthem. It was later even adopted by the Germans, as the tune for August Heinrich Hoffman von Fallersleben's (1798 – 1874) anthem Deutschlandslied, which began with the famous words: 'Deutschland uber alles' (Germany before everything). In the ensuing political upheavals, the tune survived in the German national anthem, but was abandoned by the Austrians in 1946.

In the meantime, the tune had also reached England, as early as 1805. It was then that the words of a hymn by John Newton were first paired up with it. This meant that when the Austrian Emperor Franz visited his grandmother Queen Victoria, at Windsor Castle, he most likely would have sung his own national anthem tune to English words written by a converted slave trader turned country vicar!

John Newton's inspiration for this hymn comes from Psalm 87: 'Glorious things are spoken of you, O city of God' (vs3) and also a text from Isaiah 33:20-21: 'Look on Zion... there the Lord in majesty will be for us a place of broad rivers and streams...'

John Newton's hymn celebrates the joy of knowing that the Church is the new Jerusalem (Zion) where God abides. He rejoices that God protects his people and promises to supply their needs. He leads them into the Promised Land, just as long ago he led the Israelites through the wilderness to their Promised Land. Back then, he led them with a fiery and cloudy pillar; now we have his very Spirit within us, to guide us each step of the way home.

6th July Thomas More, Reformation martyr

These days, lawyers and politicians are held in the lowest esteem by the public, along with tabloid journalists and estate agents. St Thomas More was both a lawyer and politician, who is today much admired for holding steadfastly to his faith-based principles.

He lived in dangerous times, when anyone, even queens, who displeased King Henry VIII could find themselves in a condemned cell in The Tower of London.

Sir Thomas More held the office of Lord High Chancellor and at one time was the king's most trusted adviser. But when King Henry took personal control of the Church in England in order to divorce his first wife, More courageously opposed him.

Thomas More was a social philosopher and the author of 'Utopia'. This book described an imaginary republic governed by an educated elite who employed reason rather than self-interest for the general good of everyone. He was himself one of the pre-eminent scholars of his age. As a Christian theologian he supported orthodox doctrine, vigorously opposed heresy and argued strongly against the new Protestant ideas taking hold in Europe. Although holding the highest political and legal office he was far from being a pragmatic politician and opportunist lawyer. In every matter he was a man who held firmly to what he believed was right in God's eyes.

When Thomas More fell from favour with the king, as a result of his unflinching views, he was falsely accused of taking bribes. When this charge failed, his enemies accused him of supporting a celebrated seer of the times who was strongly critical of the king. This too failed. He was then required to swear to the Oath of Supremacy, acknowledging Henry's position as head of the Church of England. This he could not do in conscience. He was put on trial and condemned to be hung, drawn and quartered for his treason, a punishment later changed to beheading. He died in 1535 and on the scaffold his final words were 'I die the King's good servant, but God's first.' He has been officially declared a martyr saint by the Roman Catholic Church.



Lists

I love to make a list. When I get to the shops and find that I have left it behind on the kitchen counter, I like to try and guess what I put onto it.

11th July St Benedict - author of the famous Rule

St Benedict (c.480 – c.550) was an abbot and author of the famous Rule that bears his name. Because of his Rule, Benedict is also the Patriarch of Western Monasticism, and Patron Saint of Europe.

Surprisingly little is known about his life. Born at Nursia, Benedict studied at Rome, which he then left before completing his studies to become a hermit at Subiaco. After a time disciples joined him, whom he organised

into twelve deaneries of ten. After an attempt on his life, Benedict moved on to Monte Cassino, near Naples, where he wrote the final version of his Rule.



At Monte Cassino Abbey on our pilgrimage in 2009

Benedict's Rule is justly famous and respected: not only did it incorporate much traditional monastic teaching from revered monks like Basil, but Benedict went on to modify this in a way characterised by prudence and moderation within a framework of authority, obedience, stability and community life.

Benedict's great achievement was to produce a monastic way of life that was complete, orderly, and *workable*. The monks' primary occupation was liturgical prayer, which was complemented by sacred reading and manual work of various kinds.

Benedict's own personality shines through this Rule: wise, discreet, flexible, learned in the law of God, but also a spiritual father to his community. Benedict's Rule came to be recognised as the fundamental monastic code of Western Europe in the early Middle Ages. Because of his Rule, monasteries became centres of learning, agriculture, hospitality, and medicine. Thus, Benedict came to influence the lives of millions of people.

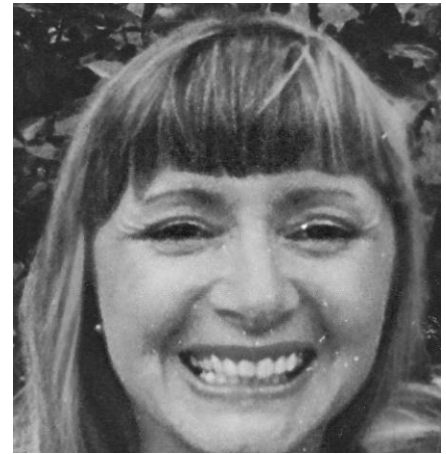
DEMENTIA

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 28th July 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

Does your young teenage son have a girlfriend?

Are you sure you would even know?

There is a growing trend for young teenage boys to set up 'AI girlfriends', realistic-looking artificial intelligence 'bots' which have been created by using 'companion apps'. These services are widely advertised on the online games which many children use, and on the platforms which they watch, such as YouTube.

Now new research has found that a staggering one in five boys aged 12-16 may be either already in a romantic relationship with an AI companion, or know of another boy who is in one.

The research was carried out by the men's organisation Male Allies UK, which found that about eight in 10 boys (85%) have been in conversation with a chatbot. It takes a young boy less than five minutes to create his 'dream girlfriend'. He can choose either a 'ready-made' AI girlfriend, or else customise her looks and personality to his personal preferences.

In return, boys admit to quickly forgetting that their AI girlfriend is not real. Research from Bangor University's AI Lab has found that most teenage boys come to think that their bots can really think and understand them. As one said: "She remembered everything that was important to me and always seemed to know the right thing to say."

So – does this matter? Yes, says psychology experts. They are concerned at this blurring of fantasy and reality.

As one children's psychotherapist points out, a boy's relationship to an AI companion is not a "congruent human relationship." And she warns that to have children "designing" the appearance of their romantic partner could cause them to have "a very warped idea of what a body or sex looks like."

Also, the chatbots' agreeableness – or lack of challenge – is worrying. "Their whole engagement model is telling a user what they want to hear, and that's hugely gratifying for a teen. So why would they spend time enduring the reciprocity or the difficulties of a real relationship? But 'frictionless' relationships aren't what life is about."

Male Allies UK is concerned to where this may lead. "We have heard of situations where, when a boy has tried out his online chat in the real world, he's been rejected. Feeling humiliated, he has lost his temper and lashed out. So, there's a chance we'll see more of that frustration being expressed, when instantly gratifying online behaviours don't translate in real life."

In the meantime, there is currently no UK law setting a minimum age for using an AI companion, including the relationship-style chats.

Out and about walking, driving and visiting:

Gardens

A pleasant occasional day out at the weekend for us is to visit an Open Garden Event. A number of villages in the Lichfield area had already had their weekends in June but a trawl through the internet would surely yield some others fairly local to us in July or August.

A village event is usually at a modest entry fee and often a good number of gardens from the small, but perfectly formed, to the grand are on view. There are always stops for tea and cake and sometimes plant sales. These tours are interesting to see other people's ideas and find things try at home.

There is also the National Garden Scheme usually individual home gardens open for charity.

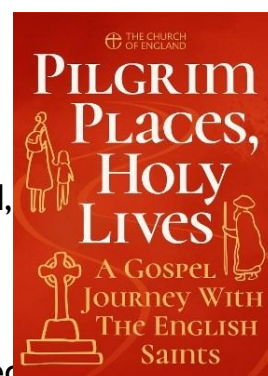
The village events present better value as they can easily occupy a whole afternoon some places having in excess of 20 gardens,

Ann



Pilgrim Places, Holy Lives – a Gospel Journey with the English Saints Church of England, CHP, £3.99

The greatest story ever told is of God becoming human in Jesus Christ to offer us a transforming relationship with Him. This book explores how this amazing story took root in Anglo-Saxon England, and how those who responded to it can still inspire and encourage us today.



Through eight places of spiritual awakening and the saints associated with them, Pilgrim Places offers 24 days of Bible readings, reflections, questions and prayers on the ancient practice of pilgrimage. From Durham to Canterbury, Lindisfarne to Lastingham, it will help you reflect on what it means to live as a pilgrim.

Each week focuses on two saints who dedicated their lives to God and shared the gospel with others: the Venerable Bede of Durham; Bertha of Canterbury; Cuthbert of Lindisfarne; Cedd of Lastingham; Frideswide of Oxford; Etheldreda of Ely; Alcuin of York; and Hilda of Whitby. The saints are not merely remarkable people from the past, but fellow travellers on the pilgrim journey who can shape our identity, our worship, and our witness to the world today.

Contributors include Sarah Mullally, Stephen Cottrell, Dee Dyas, James Shelton, Sammi Tooze, Sally Welch, Jenny Wright and Alexandra Zhirnova.

14th July – John Keble, priest, Tractarian and poet

John Keble is remembered for the spirituality of his hymns, and for being one of the leaders in the conservative Tractarian Movement of the 1830s, which aimed to defend the Church's Catholic heritage from the power of Parliament. Keble College Oxford was dedicated in his memory.

Keble was born into a clergy family in 1792, and his brilliance at Oxford led to him being elected a Fellow of Oriel College when only 19. In 1815, aged 23, he was ordained deacon and worked at Oriel as a tutor. But Keble yearned for parish life and so left Oxford in 1823 to be curate in his father's church in Gloucestershire. His new life gave him time to write hymns, some of which are still known today, such as *New Every Morning* and *Blest are the Pure in Heart*. But then in 1831 his poetry and hymns gained him election as Professor of Poetry back at Oxford.

The 1830s were a troubled time for the Church of England. Many conservative clergy were concerned by the reforms being carried out between Church and State by the Whig government. In 1833 Keble used his Assize Sermon to clearly protest against the Church of England being made subordinate to Parliament, as it was no longer exclusively Anglican. His views were very popular in the clerical circles of deeply conservative Oxford.

But although Keble went on to write nine of the 90 *Tracts for the Times*, and engaged in some debate, he did not enjoy controversy or the limelight. He was at heart a scholarly parish priest, and so in 1836 he left Oxford again, for 30 years of parish life in Hursley, where he sought to revive sacramental confession in the Church.

As in the words of one of his hymns, his prayer was always above all:

*Only, O Lord, in thy dear love, Fit us for perfect rest above;
And help us, this and every day, To live more nearly as we pray.*

Keble died in 1866, and four years later, Keble College was founded at Oxford, in his memory.

16th July St Helier – losing a loved one to violence

Take the book of Samuel in the Bible, add a bit of Luke Skywalker father/son conflict from Star Wars, stir in a dash of Pirates of the Caribbean, and you sort of have the story of St Helier – the first saint and martyr of Jersey.

According to the legend, it all began in 6th century Tongeren (now in Belgium). A pagan couple badly wanted a child, but the wife was barren. In desperation they sought the help of a local Christian, Cunibert. He advised them to pray to the Christian God, and to promise that any child born would be 'given back' to God. So they did, and then the wife fell pregnant and gave birth to a son, Helier.

The parents were delighted – at first. But as the baby grew into a boy, it became clear that Helier was different from other children – he was precociously intelligent and could perform miracles. Helier's father found this unsettling and grew jealous of Cunibert's influence over his son. Finally he plotted to have Cunibert murdered.

In horror at such treachery, Helier fled. He wandered far, eventually reaching a monastic community in Normandy, run by Saint Marculf. Here he settled, seeking a life of contemplation, but it was not to be. Marculf had received pleas for help from the very few residents of an island called Gersut, or Agna (now called Jersey). They, too, had had bitter experience of violent men who killed their loved ones without warning: the Vikings and Saxons and Vandals had each visited the island in turn. Now they sought some comfort from the Christians: would someone bring them the Gospel? They had no one to shepherd them.

Marculf could not ignore such a plea, and so he sent Helier and a companion, Romard, to Jersey. The two monks found a small community of fishermen on the sand dunes where the modern town of St Helier would later grow. Helier chose to settle on a tidal islet, nowadays known as the Hermitage Rock. Romard, it was agreed, would act as the 'go between' between Helier in his hermitage and the fishing village.

Cont'd

St. Helier cont'd

Helier had chosen a remote spot for the peace and quiet it would give him as he approached God. But one day he discovered that his tidal islet had another great advantage as well. While looking out to sea and praying, he suddenly saw the sails of attacking pirates, stealthily approaching the island in boats.

Frantically, Helier signalled the shore of danger coming, and the fishermen and their families scattered into the surrounding marshes, beyond the reach of the bloodthirsty, lustful pirates. This happened time and again, and became so well known in island history that even today, small dark clouds on the horizon are still known as *les vailes dé St. Hélyi* (the sails of St Helier). As if that were not enough, Helier's prayers and the sign of the cross on another occasion stirred up such a storm that a raiding party was driven clear off the island.

One day the pirates finally caught up with Helier on his tidal islet. They beheaded him. Helier was deeply mourned, and has always been revered in Jersey for having brought Christianity to the island.

When his head and body were sent back to France, a healing spring is reputed to have sprung up on the place where the boat came ashore, and so Helier is better known there as a healing saint. The traditional year of his martyrdom is 555AD. His feast day is still marked in Jersey by an annual municipal and ecumenical pilgrimage to the Hermitage, on 16th July.



The tyrant dies and his rule is over, the martyr dies and his rule begins. – *Soren Kierkegaard*

Recipe

Watercress Soup

Watercress is known as a nutritious and tasty salad leaf but unfortunately does not keep long in the fridge. If it does not get used up before it yellows it makes a delicious soup.

Ingredients

One onion

25g butter

250g diced potatoes

600ml chicken stock

2 packs watercress

50ml cream

A little milk if soup is too thick

In large pan sweat the sliced onion in the melted butter until soft but not brown.

Add potatoes and stock and cook until potatoes are soft.

When potatoes are almost cooked add the watercress and cook for no more than 5 minutes.

Liquidise, add cream and milk if required.

Season with salt and black pepper.

Serve hot, enjoy,
Ann

Is danger lurking in your fridge?

When you look in your fridge, what do you see? Milk, butter, vegetables and last night's leftovers?

So far, so good. But what about the things that you don't see? A recent survey of people's fridges found that more than half of them were harbouring dangerous bacteria such as E. coli, salmonella and listeria. So, it seems that unless we take care of our fridges, they can become playgrounds for germs.

Veggie drawers with bits of slimy carrots or liquefying greens have been found to harbour more bacteria per square centimetre than a toilet seat. Plates of raw meat can be a bacterial timebomb. Even door seals and fridge handles can be a germ hotspot.

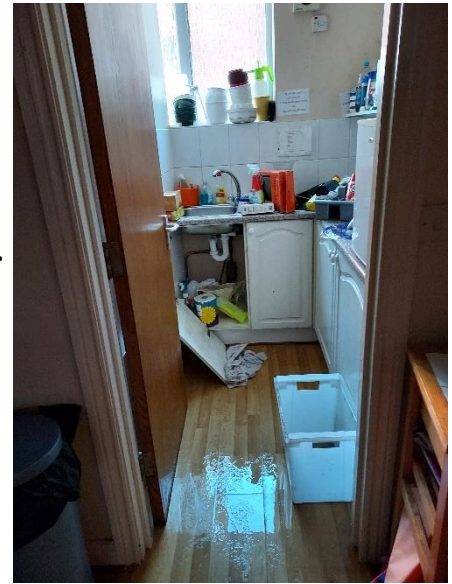
The key thing is to regularly wipe shelves and drawer down with a mild disinfectant, remove stale food, and to keep the temperature of the fridge at five degrees. Don't overcrowd your fridge (which can block air circulation) and don't engage in the classic 'fridge food linger,' staring into the fridge while deciding what you want to eat. The longer that door is open, the more the warm air rushes in.

Christ the King

Back at the beginning of January a burst pipe flooded the back of our mission church of Christ the King. The meeting room, kitchen and toilet were under a couple of inches of water and the back part of the church was also slightly flooded.

Water was pouring through the meeting room ceiling until the stop cock was turned off.

Then followed the mopping up and then the long process of drying out.



Over the following months a great deal of tidying up was done and the opportunity taken to paint the porch (with many thanks to Tony and Roger Wiseman), clutter has been removed and taken to the tip and the vestry was reorganised into a more useable space.

Although there is still a little work still to be done (laminated flooring in the meeting room) we are now able to begin services once again and our first service takes place on July 5th.

Now that we are able to use the building again we have to find ways to use it better.

With only 5 regular worshippers we must grow the congregation to make the church viable for the future. We still have much to do and a mission to fulfil.



Why our ‘crumbling infrastructure’ is hurting older people

Poorly paved roads, unsafe crossings and poor public toilets are slowing people down. Especially older people. Rather than getting out and about in their communities, they tend to feel safer staying inside.

But the lack of regular, positive exercise is a danger for them. Such is the verdict of a recent report from MPs serving on the Health and Social Care Select Committee.

The MPs stress that what they call Britain’s ‘crumbling infrastructure’ is leading to many preventable health conditions, ranging from obesity, type 2 diabetes, heart disease, cancer, the onset of frailty, dementia and disability.

Figures suggest that 44 per cent of people aged 75 or older are doing less than 30 minutes of moderate physical activity per week. In the UK, lack of activity is associated with a staggering one in six deaths and is estimated to cost £7.4bn a year.

So, the MPs are calling for local action to fix streets and crossings, and to put in more toilets and public seating, as well as better national transport.

Layla Moran, the chairman of the health select committee, said: “Staying physically active can help older people to live not just longer, but healthier, happier, more sociable lives.”

Here are some tips for a cooler house

If the summer heat is getting to you, you might consider the following:

Close your curtains and blinds during the day.

Block out the sunlight. That may be hard to do in a country where we don’t see the sun as often as we’d like, but sadly that sunlight pouring through your windows will not only brighten but also heat up your house.

At night, aim to create a breeze that flows through your house.

This is easy to do - simply open windows on opposite walls or at opposite sides of your home. Let the air circulate as much as possible.

Try to reduce heat from your appliances.

Your stove, television, dishwasher, hairdryer, fridge and freezer all generate some heat. Can you do without any of these during the daytime?

Aim for cool flooring.

Try and use wood flooring and ceramic or porcelain tiles in that is why we like them in the winter.

Consider using breathable fabrics over your sofa and chairs. Sitting on natural fabrics such as cotton or linen throws is cooler than sitting on man-made fabrics.

If all else fails, ***try an electric fan***, placed on the floor in front of a bowl of ice water, and aimed at the opposite wall of your room. But they are expensive to run, and do not cool the air. They merely increase the velocity of it, so that it feels cooler.

God in the Sciences - A Scientist Reflects: Suffering and the Image of God

Since the cost-of-living crisis in 2021/22, Food Banks have become a necessity for many desperate families. When they are given food, people reveal a variety of emotions: from relief, happiness and hope, through to quiet sadness, resignation, and desperation. Most often they display a mixture of several of these feelings at the same time.

I believe that our cries for answers at times like this, and our deep longing for things to be better, kinder, more just, less painful and chaotic, are a sign that we are made in the image of God. The Bible describes God creating men and women, instructing them to rule over the earth, and giving them the freedom to choose what they will do. The world God made was described as “very good”, but human wrongdoing caused a rift between people and God, and also between us and the rest of Creation.

From a scientist’s perspective, it seems that the *potential* for accidents, disease and death – for both animals and humans – may have been part of God’s very good creation, and there was a real threat of famine, albeit far rarer than in our current mismanaged version of creation? How would we have managed life in what Genesis describes as an un-subdued world if our relationship with God hadn’t broken down, and evil hadn’t been unleashed? Maybe painful experiences would have been experienced as challenges that brought us closer to each other and to God, rather than bringing us the experience of suffering (which I would define more particularly as involving distress, isolation and fear)? Of course, these are theoretical questions that no one can answer, but perhaps they are worth exploring.

God has already responded to suffering at a root level by taking it on Himself. Through His death and resurrection, Jesus broke the power of sin and death. We do not yet see the final results of those decisive actions – the end of suffering for all those who trust Him – but we can already feel their impact. For example, many people have experienced the wonderful effect, either in their own lives or by receiving kindness from others, which is described by these words: “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” (Ezekiel 36:26).

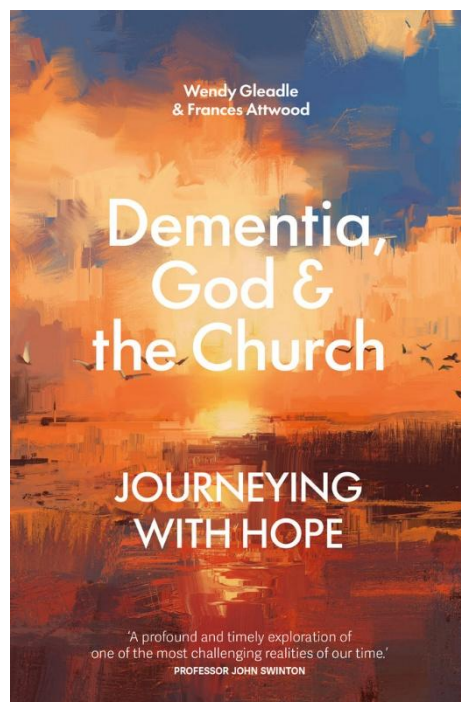
Some of the people who receive food are, in the words of one community leader, “really desperate”, but yet they still trust God to meet their needs. My hope is that the worldwide Church will, with God’s help, be part of the answer to their prayers – demonstrating our true status as people made in the image of God.

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.

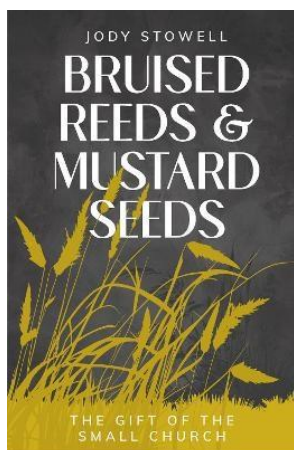
Dementia, God and the Church: Journeying with hope
By Wendy Gleadle and Frances Attwood, BRF, £12.99

Dementia is one of today's most feared health conditions, and Christians with the condition may also worry about losing their faith and their connection to God. However, there is still hope: those living with dementia can still find meaning in their life and their faith.

Written by two practitioners in this field, *Dementia, God and the Church* aims to show how person-centred approaches to dementia can provide hope. Wendy Gleadle first examines the difficulties of maintaining religious beliefs as cognition declines, and the implications of this if faith is equally emotional as cognitive. She explores other forms of spiritual awareness, such as relationships, the arts and creativity.



Frances Attwood asks how churches can better support those living with dementia, through examining what they and their families and carers find helpful and want most. Throughout, space is given to first-hand stories of those with dementia, those working with them and those caring for them.



Bruised Reeds and Mustard Seeds - The Gift of the Small Church
By Jody Stowell, Canterbury Press, £12.99

At a time when churches across denominations face a steady decline in attendance, smaller congregations often find themselves overshadowed by the push for growth and numbers. While larger 'Resource Churches' are praised for their expansion, the true value of the smaller church is frequently overlooked. But what if there's a unique gift in these smaller communities?

Jody Stowell invites you to explore how, in the race for growth, we may be missing the deep significance and essential role of smaller congregations. As anxiety about survival and financial security spreads throughout the church, local churches and their leaders bear the burden. Yet within these smaller churches lies a richness, resilience and spiritual depth that is often lost in the noise. This is a call to rediscover the profound worth of smaller congregations and recognise their vital place in the future of faith communities.

31st July St Ignatius Loyola – founder of the Society of Jesus

Ignatius came from a noble Basque family in north-east Spain. Born in 1491 in his family's castle near Loyala, he was sent to serve as a page at the court of King Ferdinand V of Castile. Ignatius entered military service, but was wounded in 1521, at the French siege of Pamplona. While convalescing, he read the life of Christ, as well as the biographies of various saints.

Like those saints, Ignatius felt the call of Christ on his life, and responded. He made a pilgrimage to Montserrat (near Barcelona) where he firmly hung up his sword over the altar. He exchanged his clothes with a beggar, and settled in nearby Manresa, where he helped care for the sick in the hospital there. Then he spent some time as a hermit in a local cave, praying and studying Thomas a Kempis's book '*The Imitation of Christ*'. It was probably during this time that Ignatius wrote his famous '*Spiritual Exercises*' on Christian prayer and meditation. It has been valued by Christians of many traditions for centuries.

Ignatius then went on pilgrimage to Rome and Jerusalem, studied at the universities of Barcelona, Alcala and Salamanca, and ended up in Paris to continue studies. It was there, in 1534 that Ignatius and a group of six student (including Francis Xavier) vowed to go as missionaries to Islamic Palestine.

They were prevented from travel by a war in Europe, and so, in 1537, the group, now ten in number, offered their services to the Pope. By 1540 they had been ordained, and with papal approval, formed the Society of Jesus, with a vow of personal obedience to the Pope, in addition to the traditional three monastic vows.

Ignatius became the first general of the order, and in the following 15 years the order grew hundred-fold, to become the vanguard of both the Counter Reformation and the missionary work of the Roman Catholic Church.

Ignatius died on 31st July 1556, but even today his famous prayer is treasured by Christians of all traditions:

Teach us, good Lord, to serve You as You deserve.

To give and not to count the cost.

To fight and not to heed the wounds;

To toil and not to seek for rest;

To labour and not to ask for any reward;

Save that of knowing that we do Your will;

Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

On war between parishes

The Rectory
St James the Least

My dear Nephew Darren



So, now you have enjoyed your first Summer Fete. Don't say I didn't warn you. It may be small consolation but remember that they only happen once a year - although in your case, you still have another 30 to endure before retirement.

I negotiated our own last week. As usual, the band from our neighbouring parish of St Eusebius played. There has been much bad blood in the past between our two villages. The trouble started on the day that St James the Least of All never told St Eusebius that the Vikings were coming up the river. We may have long since buried the hatchet, but both sides remember where they put it.

Tension between the two communities down the centuries has moved on from occasional slaughter to something a little more refined. Just as I began my opening speech to crown the Rose Queen, the band struck up with the National Anthem. When the hog roast started, they played "smoke gets in your eyes" and when it came to the necessary music for the maypole dancing, they all disappeared into the beer tent.

With great Christian charity, we shall bide our time. In September we have the annual football match between the two churches' Servers. Last year, in addition to winning the match, the St James' boys sent three of their side off with concussion. Naturally, I visited them in hospital.

Miss Prendergast, as always, played Gypsy Rose Lee. If the tall, dark, dear lady tells me one more time that I am about to find romance with a tall dark lady, while she flutters her eyelashes at me, I swear I shall throttle her with a bell rope. Besides, I already have a beautiful dark lady in my life - and my Labrador is devoted to me.

The only real hiccough came when I bought 12 packets of fudge from Mrs Masheder to present to our choirboys. Yet again, she had misread salt for sugar in the recipe. After I presented the packets at Mattins the following day, a formal complaint was rapidly made by a parent to the police that the Rector was attempting to poison their son. But as I explained to the officer, if I had intended to poison anyone, I would have done it far more discreetly - and infinitely more efficiently.

Your loving uncle,
Eustace

Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in
1 Samuel 24

God chose Saul to be the King of Israel, but Saul chose to disobey Him. God said that the next king would not be Saul's son.

Saul didn't know that God had chosen David to be the next king.



David was very successful as a fighter and very popular.



David had to go on the run and hide.



One day, Saul and his army were in En-Gedi. Saul needed to pee, so he went into a sheep fold built next to a cave...

David and his men were hiding at the back of the cave!



David crept over and cut a piece off Saul's robe.



Then David felt bad.



David waited until Saul was far enough away then he shouted to him.



Your majesty, I could have killed you today, but I knew it was wrong. I want to prove to you I'm not trying to harm you.



David, you are better than me. I would have killed you but you were kind.



Now I know you will be the next king, but please look after my family.

David promised, and Saul and his army went home.

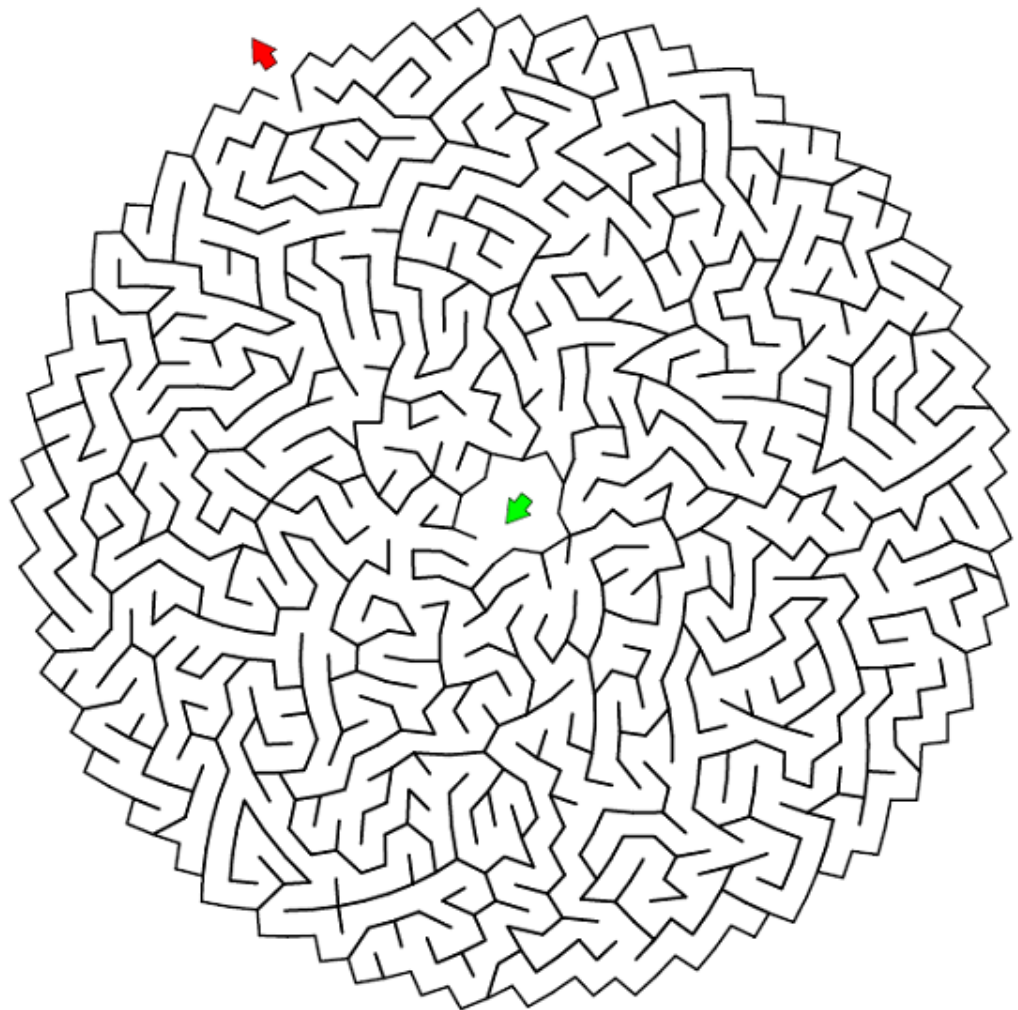


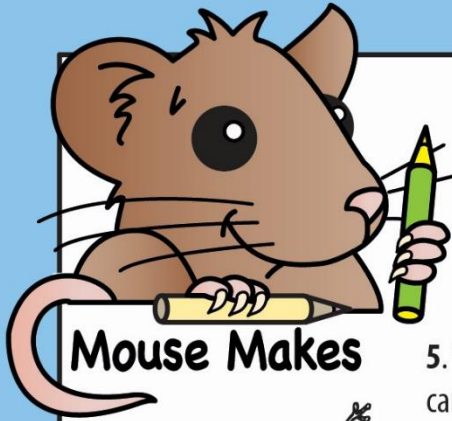
June's Solution

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

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

Can you solve
the maze?





Mouse Makes

1. What bird makes its nest on high?
Job 39:27



2. What ate the seeds along the path?
Matthew 13:4



3. The hair of which animal was used to make curtains?
Exodus 36:14

4. What insect can we learn from?
Proverbs 6:6

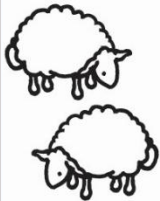
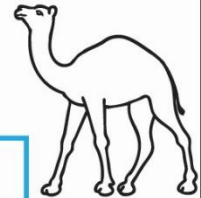
7. Which animal was Jesus compared to?
John 1:29



5. What plague came out of the River Nile?
Exodus 8:6



6. What animal would go through the eye of a needle easier than a rich person?
Luke 18:25



8. What bird did Noah release from the ark first?
Genesis 8:7



9 across.
In what creature's mouth was a coin found?
Matthew 17:27

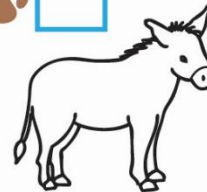


9 down.
What lives in holes?
Matthew 8:20



12. Which bird did the Holy Spirit appear as?
Luke 3:22

13. Which animal did Jesus ride on?
Matthew 21:7



14. What bird did God provide for food in the wilderness?
Exodus 16:13



15. What insects did John eat in the wilderness?
Matthew 3:4



16. Which animal is the "mightiest among beasts"?
Proverbs 30:30



B I B L E

C R E A T U R E S

Across

1 Proverbs describes her as being 'of noble character' (Proverbs 31:10) (4)

3 'Shall we go up again — against the Benjamites, our brothers?' (Judges 20:23) (2,6)

8 A descendant of Shem (Genesis 10:28) (4)

9 'Anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my — ' (Luke 14:27) (8)

11 Resentment(Ephesians 4:31)(10)

14 In Cain(anag.)(6)

15 'Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to—' (Psalm 139:6) (6)

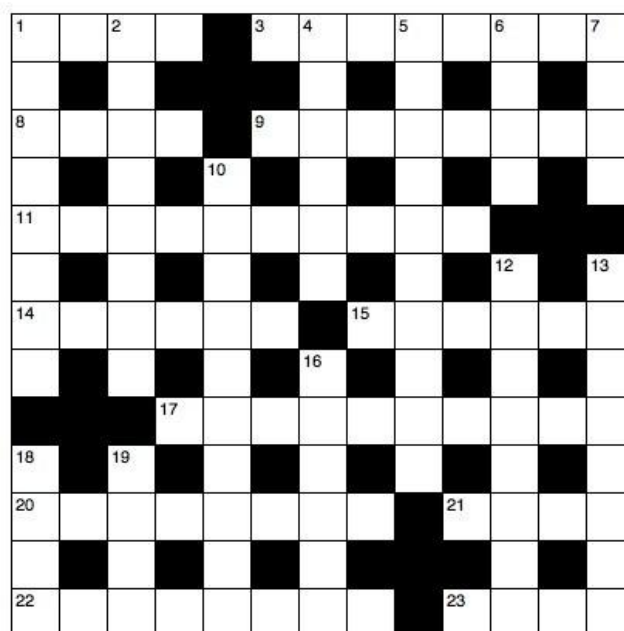
17 Intense (1 Thessalonians 4:5)(10)

20 Third Order of the Roman Catholic Church(8)

21 'At midnight the cry rang out, "Here's the bridegroom! Come out to — him"' (Matthew 25:6) (4)

22 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in — ' (2 Corinthians 12:9) (8)

23 'As the — pants for streams of water,so my soul pants for you, O God' (Psalm 42:1) (4)



Down

1 Nickname of popular First World War chaplain, the Revd G.A. Studdert Kennedy, — Willie (8)

2 Occasion of religious joy (Lamentations 2:22) (5,3)

4 'We three kings of — are' (6)

5 Allegation or charge (Jude 9) (10)

6 Kind (1 Chronicles 12:33) (4)

7 'Open your — and look at the fields!' (John 4:35) (4)

10 Also known as the Feast of Lights (John10:22)(10)

12 Area that saw the healing of two demon - possessed men and a herd of pigs stampeding to their deaths (Matthew 8:28) (8)

13 Forebear(James2:21)(8)

16 Name given to the first two books of the Apocrypha(6)

18 Esau sold his birthright for this (Genesis25:34)(4)

19 Rear(anag.)(4)

June's answers:

ACROSS 1, Wickedness. 7, Harpist. 8, Teach. 10, Side. 11, Impostor. 13, Encamp. 15, Saddle. 17, Ignorant. 18, Tent. 21, Grass. 22, Olivier. 23, Wrongdoers..

DOWN1, World. 2, Crib. 3, Entomb. 4, National. 5, Started. 6, Whispering. 9, Harvesters. 12, Imprison. 14, Centaur. 16, Unload. 19, Evils, 20, Give.