

# CHURCH News

August 2026



Newsletter no: 126

## The Great Story...

We all enjoy a story, whether it's in the pages of a book, the big screen, or told over a pint in the pub. We can't help enjoying stories because we are stories, our lives unfold over time. Unlike a painting, which can be seen all at once, stories must be experienced spread out, and often only gain their full meaning at the end. There are many different kinds of stories: ones that make us laugh, or cry, or think; ones that horrify us, or delight us, or surprise us. There are stories others tell us, stories we tell ourselves, stories we desperately want to be true, and stories we hope are false. All these kinds of story matter, because they help us to reflect on and make sense of our own stories.

One of my favourite stories is the man who inherited his great-grandfather's axe. Over the years the head of the axe had needed replacing a couple of times, and the handle had worn out a couple of times too, but the axe had stayed the same.

The atoms that make up our bodies are changing all the time. Research suggests that 98% of our atoms change each year, and that over 5 years, all of them will be replaced. But, like the axe, we are still the same person.

We are a story, and the storyteller is God. It's no surprise that when God lived on earth as Jesus of Nazareth, he spent a lot of his time telling stories and, even more importantly, living a story; one of birth,

and life, death and resurrection, redemption and forgiveness.

Because of Jesus, our story doesn't end once the atoms are over. It's just the end of 'part one'. Finally, in God's hands, all the threads of all our individual stories—the bright ones and the dark ones, the ones that make us weep, and the ones that make us weep with joy—will at last take their proper place in what C. S. Lewis described as *'the Great Story which no one on earth has read; which goes on forever; in which every chapter is better than the one before'*

Love, Anna

You, yourselves, are our letter of recommendation, written on our hearts, to be known and read by all.

2 Corinthians 3.2

# August church services

*Please note, there are no mid-week Holy Communion services this month*

## Sunday 2nd August

9.00a.m Holy Communion, St. Mary's,  
Lowdham  
11. 00a.m Holy Communion, St. Helen's,  
Burton Joyce

## Sunday, 9th August

9.00a.m. Morning Worship, St. Mary's,  
Lowdham  
11.00 a.m Morning Worship, St. Helen's,  
Burton Joyce.

## Sunday, 16th August

9.00a.m. Holy Communion, St. Mary's,  
Lowdham  
11. 00a.m Holy Communion, St. Helen's,  
Burton Joyce.

## Sunday 23rd August

9.00a.m. Worship for All, St. Mary's,  
Lowdham  
11.00a.m. Worship for All, St. Helen's,  
Burton Joyce

## Sunday 30th August

9.00a.m. Service of the Word, St. Mary's,  
Lowdham  
11.00a.m. Service of the Word, St. Helen's,  
Burton Joyce

Never let loyalty and kindness  
leave you! Tie them around your  
neck as a reminder. Write them  
deep within your heart.

*Proverbs 3. 3*

## What's On...

*Our churches are living communities at the centre of village life, offering help, fellowship and welcome to everyone. Do come and join us. We'd be delighted to see you.*

### Coffee Chit Chat

Mondays 9.15a.m—11.30a.m  
St. Helen's Church Centre, Burton Joyce  
*Come and join us for a cuppa and a natter!*

### Parents & Toddlers

Monday 9.30 –11.00a.m. (term time only).  
St. Helen's Church Centre, Burton Joyce.  
*Everyone is welcome. With refreshments*

### The Tea Shop at St. John's

Tuesdays 9.30a.m. –12 noon at St. John's,  
Gunthorpe. *Join us for coffee, cake and chat.*

### Churches Together' Baby & Toddler Group

Tuesday 9.15 –11.00a.m. (term time only)  
Methodist Chapel, Lowdham. Coffee & snacks,  
crafts & songs.  
*£2.50/ family to cover costs.*

### Home Groups

Come and join us as we share prayers,  
explore the bible and grow together in faith and  
friendship .  
*For more details, please contact Tracey, the  
Vicar's P.A.*



## The Summer Day

Who made the world?  
Who made the swan, and the black bear?  
Who made the grasshopper?  
This grasshopper, I mean -  
the one who has flung herself out of the grass,  
the one who is eating sugar out of my hand,  
who is moving her jaws back and forth instead of up and  
down -  
who is gazing around with her enormous and  
complicated eyes.  
Now she lifts her pale forearms and thoroughly washes  
her face.  
Now she snaps her wings open, and floats away.  
I don't know exactly what a prayer is.  
I do know how to pay attention, how to fall down  
into the grass, how to kneel down in the grass,  
how to be idle and blessed, how to stroll through the  
fields,  
which is what I have been doing all day.  
Tell me, what else should I have done?  
Doesn't everything die at last, and too soon?  
Tell me, what is it you plan to do  
with your one wild and precious life?

Mary Oliver

## Contact us...

**Revd Anna Clarke**

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*For enquiries, including church bookings,  
weddings, baptisms and funerals please contact:*

**Tracey Akehurst**

**Vicar's P.A. & Benefice Administrator:**

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[administrator@stmaryslowdham.org.uk](mailto:administrator@stmaryslowdham.org.uk)

*We take safeguarding very seriously. If you have  
any concerns or questions please contact:*

**Heather Brown**

**BJBSB Parish Safeguarding Officer**

[sgbj@united-benefice.org](mailto:sgbj@united-benefice.org)

**Zena Cameron**

**LCG Parish Safeguarding Officer**

[zenabramall@hotmail.com](mailto:zenabramall@hotmail.com) Mary's Church

## Find us...

**Facebook** at Revd Anna & Friends or the United  
Benefice of Burton Joyce & Lowdham

**A Church Near You:**

**<https://www.achurchnearyou.com>**

Each church has its own individual web pages  
where you can find further information

*God made man because  
he loves stories.*

*Elie Wiesel*