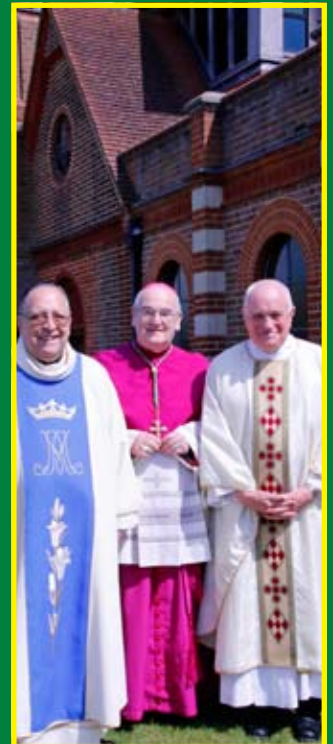


# COMMENT

## THE MAGAZINE OF THE CHURCHES IN TRING



**IN THIS ISSUE:** Waiting • Thy kingdom come • Sunday School reflections

- A good life should include a good death • 100 favourite hymns • Piano and more
- Celebrating 25 years of marriage • Till death do us part • Remembering David
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## Editorial



This is the last edition of Comment before the summer break. I hope you can wait till September for your next copy but in the meantime there is plenty to interest you this time.

It always amazes me the way there is some loose connection between types of article or themes – even when we haven't planned them. If only this was by design.

This month we have contributions on marriage and on death; on having children and on losing them; on belonging to different churches and the importance of being part of a church – whatever its denomination; on Bibles, on prayer, faith and prophecy; a silver wedding anniversary and an emerald ordination anniversary; on Church buildings past and a Church building very much present and renewed for generations to come... and we have the

last of our contributions for favourite hymns, books and places – a big thank you to all who offered their choices.

Please do sign up for a Comment subscription if you haven't already so we can order the right number for everyone (contact Frank Dalton on 01442 822417 or David Whiting on 01442 767403) and do encourage your church members, neighbours, friends and families to read them and pass them on. If you miss an edition and have internet access you can also see back copies on the Tring Team website [www.tringteamparish.org.uk](http://www.tringteamparish.org.uk) under the heading Parish Magazine.

We are looking for people who have lived in Tring or the villages for a long time to contribute their nostalgic accounts of what they remember of churches in the 'old days' and of how things have changed. Please get in touch if you want to tell your story. Thank you again to all those whose stories and accounts of events make Comment interesting reading.

**The Editor**

## Waiting

Waiting for the train or bus or the family; waiting for the plumber or the delivery van. Waiting for that appointment or the next client. We live in a busy so-called 24-hour-society. So much is literally at our fingertips, yet waiting is still so much a part of our world. However our expectations are usually for the instant, the now, the immediate.

At the end of May, we saw a bomb kill twenty-two people and injure many others. Many of the victims were waiting to take others home. British Airways was hit by a worldwide computer system power failure, causing cancellations and delays for thousands of passengers. Many had to wait either within the confines of the airport, in a local hotel, or even at home for news of another flight, the whereabouts of their baggage or compensation. Waiting.

Waiting has long been part of the spiritual life. All of the world's major religions encourage and extol a space for waiting. Some years ago while working in Asia I took a long mini bus trip with colleagues. When we eventually arrived the Europeans in our group exited the bus, stretched and then began to assemble our kit ready for work. Our

Asian colleagues stretched and then sat on the ground. They informed us they were waiting for their souls to catch up with their bodies.

My niece recently gave birth to her first child (I tell my sister that Great Uncle does not sound as old as Grandmother!). Her pregnancy, like all, involved waiting. Now that she has a daughter her life has changed.

Like all mothers, Jesus' mother had to wait for his arrival. Waiting in joyful hope (as well as all the other usual thoughts accompanying pregnancy). Jesus' first message was about change or even more precisely 'Change your mind!' So it is strange that the religion founded in Jesus' name has been resistant to change and has tended to love and protect the past and the status quo much more than the positive and hopeful futures that could be brought about by people open to change. Maybe that is why our earth is so depleted and our politics are so pathetic. We have not taught a spirituality of actual change or growth.

Waiting for change can be a real challenge, as any expectant parent knows only too well. Waiting for change is what Advent is all about. Waiting

for change can be meaningful and, or, frustrating. Yet the waiting space, the waiting time can be important. Jesus often waited, sometimes on his own, sometimes with others. Maybe we all need to take time to wait, wait for the change that we wish to see, cultivate a spirituality of waiting so that when change comes, we are in the right place to act accordingly. With God's help we too can wait with joyful hope.

**Andrew Cowley, High Street Baptist**

*Listen to your life.*

*See it for the fathomless mystery that it is.*

*In the boredom and pain of it no less than in the excitement and gladness:*

*touch, taste, smell your way to the holy and hidden heart of it because in the last analysis all moments are key moments, and life itself is grace.*

*Frederick Buechner*



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# Thy kingdom come



On Saturday 3 June St Peter & St Paul's Church was the setting for a special day of prayer and approaches to prayer from 8.00am to 8.00pm. This was in response to the Archbishop's appeal for there to be a period of prayer for the world between Ascension Day and Pentecost. The Prayer Ministry team worked out a programme that they hoped would offer 'something for everyone' and indeed there were many choices.

The day started with Morning Prayer followed by a Prayer Breakfast which was attended by about twenty people from different churches in the town; a lively and sometimes sober time of prayer followed. This was the best attended Prayer Breakfast for a long time although they happen on the first

Saturday of every month in Churches around the town (the next one is at New Mill Baptist Church on 1 July).

There was music of various styles, including piano music, songs, organ music; times of quiet and times of sharing different approaches to prayer. We heard about meditation, with an invitation to attend a regular group run by Malcolm Nobbs; Liz Wood shared with us how to pray when life is so busy that you can't realistically set aside time to pray, but you can use time in a prayerful way in the midst of a busy day. The Justice and Peace Group encouraged us to pray when we are struck by reports etc. in newspapers that touch us; and we also heard about Prayer Walks which can be done locally.

There were other offerings too and the day was much appreciated by those who came for one or two parts or for more. People commented on the good atmosphere and the willingness of members of churches across the town

to join in. So maybe next year, if we do it again, there will be even greater sharing of our joys and sorrows in a day of prayer – and one thing is sure, there will still be a need for it.

Many thanks to the Prayer Ministry team for their hard work in planning and preparation and their presence on the day, Anne Nobbs, Celestria Bell, Janet Goodyer, Leslie Barker, Mike Watkins and Rosemary Carpenter.

**Margaret Whiting, St Peter & St Paul**



# Sunday School reflections



I had been a Sunday School pianist for seven years when we came to Tring in February 1978, and had decided to take six months break whilst we all settled in.

This was not to be. Five months later I was playing the piano at what was then the Infants Department of the Anglican-Methodist Sunday School for children aged 4-7 years at Bishop Wood School in Frogmore Street.

In the following September I found myself teaching along with Sandra Luddington, Susan Anderson, Felicity Pemberton and the late Mary Heale. Our main problem was space! We were allowed to use two classrooms only, and we had around sixty-six children, which meant that every Sunday our first job was to draw plans on the blackboard of how the classrooms were set out, so that we could put everything back as we found it!

For four years we took with us everything we needed for the morning, but then in 1982 we approached Paul

Van As, the Headmaster at the time, to see if we could keep a box on the premises to store our equipment. (I found the letter recently, which gave us permission, provided we did not leave any money in the large metal box!)

We were then given permission to use the large hall, which meant we could use the classrooms for stories and activities, and the hall for games and meeting all together. Thus we continued, and with the help of the new Rector, John Payne Cook, we held Annual Open Mornings, where parents joined us, along with members of both Anglican and Methodist churches.

Different teachers came and went, and by the end of the 1990s we were using the Dining Hall and Library for our sessions. By 2001 our numbers were down and there were three teachers, Sandra Luddington, Jane Woodham and myself, when Revd Frank Mercurio suggested that we move over to what was then the Anglican-Methodist Hall, and use the upper room, with the Junior Sunday School below. Up until then we had felt a little isolated from the rest of the church so this was a big improvement for us.

This we did and continued to meet until the end of 2016, when our numbers were down to two or three, which made games and other activities difficult.

So ended an era. I doubt if the format we used would work again – but who knows what the future may hold for young children? Whatever happens, we know we did the best for the children at the time.

What funny things do I remember? One child asked why God wasn't on the telephone as it would be nice to talk to him! Another with a strong Scottish accent said he liked the story about the priest who 'burned the bugs'. On further interrogation it seems he was talking about burning incense – he had misheard incense for – you guessed it – insects!

**Mary Haywood  
St Martha's and St Peter & St Paul**



# A good life should include a good death

**Death is a bit of a challenge to love but we all have to embrace her**

So... what can we as a church community do about our biggest dilemma? Do we ignore it? Do we embrace it? We don't have to like it to do something about it so...

**A practical opportunity to put things into perspective**

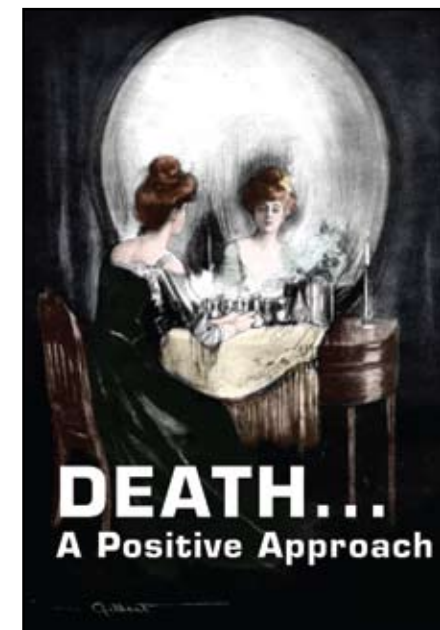
How do we plan for a 'good death'? In the April edition of Comment I wrote that Huw Bellis has asked me to move this initiative forward. Here is an update on how things are looking. On the weekend of 5 November 2017 we are planning an event in St Peter & St Paul's Church which is designed to look at all the services and support we can offer around the subject of death, bereavement, funerals and all that that entails.

It promises to be a challenging time but as some writers have said 'the job of a parish priest is to prepare his flock for death'. Whether you agree with that or not, the whole issue of death and all that surrounds it is certainly a key aspect of our religion and faith. It therefore seems that we should have the confidence to approach this boldly.

Appropriately enough, as we approach All Souls/All Saints Days at the end of October we are allocating this time in our church life to take a positive, practical look at all that death entails. We will explore how a Christian Community of Faith can manage the inevitable watershed between life and death.

We are planning this weekend as a time when we can openly face up to the issues surrounding death from different points of view. As humans we get to play different roles in the whole scenario as life's journey progresses. Different experiences await us; as bereaved, as terminally ill, as deceased, as dependants, as mourners, as life celebrants, as administrators, as executors, as widows/widowers, as children newly alone... All of us get to play some of these parts – some of us play all of them – at some stage in our lives.

And what comes next? Recent debates and discussions have made it plain that the Christian faith – belief in Christ and his redemptive grace – must play a major part in this process.



Otherwise, what's the point? As Paul said in his first letter to the Corinthians: 'If for this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied'.

**An event for all of us....**

Clearly this is neither an easy subject nor an easy thing to plan and organise but that does not mean we should not attempt it. An exploration of all that we do – and all the more that we could do – in planning for a good death means pooling the skills and contributions of many of the members of our community. The plan is to make this an opportunity to cover all aspects of moving from life to death and beyond...

The hope is that we can make this a festival of re-assurance and shared preparation in both practical and spiritual dimensions. It is something we can do together because we all have to go through it. We are not alone.

In the coming weeks we will be refining this plan, which will involve some of our local funeral directors, solicitors and medical experts as well as members of the ministry team.

Hopefully, it will also involve you. Unless this initiative engages members of the whole community it will not be worth putting on, so please do tell us what you think. If you have some thoughts on the subject and would like to contribute, please do contact me.

We are setting up a working party to put together a plan for the day. The more input and ideas we have the better will be the resulting occasion.

An outline plan could look like this: breakfast in the church hall; Morning Services of Communion (8.00am and 10.00am) that focus on the theme of Paul's letter to the Corinthians as above 'If for this life only...'; a simple Parish Lunch that has exhibitions and speakers giving short presentations of some of the practical/administrative matters to do with death, funerals, wills, bereavement, and outlines the support available; an afternoon programme of 'workshop' opportunities to talk to experts on the above subjects in a little more depth; the opportunity to register interest in pursuing deeper discussions via an 'email contact' exchange; a quiet restorative interlude of music and the time for reflection ending with a simple service of Compline/Night Prayer.

No doubt after consultation and discussion it will turn out somewhat differently but the objective is to make it a balanced and effective way of exploring the subject together as a community.

As I write this in early June, I am about to go to a conference in Warwick organised by the Archbishop's office on 'Taking Funerals Seriously – Fresh Perspectives'. Doubtless the discussions there will throw up different opportunities for us all to consider. I will let you know what I learn.

**Watch this Space**

Please give me your feedback and ideas. When I get back I will be discussing the whole process with Huw Bellis and the working party and putting together a more detailed and structured programme for the day for us all to consider.

It is a subject that concerns us all, that affects us all and I suspect worries many of us.

Death is all around us but life is in each one of us. Surely the opportunity to make the best of both life and death is best approached by walking forward in faith together and sharing our experiences, hopes and fears as a community. That is what the event on 5 November will be all about.

**Grahame Senior, St Peter & St Paul**





# 100 favourite hymns

## 'Let all mortal flesh keep silence'

This is a really beautiful hymn, with very moving words. It speaks of our King and God, Jesus Christ, leaving heaven and coming to earth in human form to bring to us his body and blood. And, as the 'light of light descendeth' to drive the powers of hell away. And the beautiful last verse talks about the 'joys and wonders of Heaven'. This hymn dates back to the 3rd or 4th century and is an ancient Syrian Hymn.

**Wendy Hinds, Corpus Christi**

*Cliff Brown also chose this hymn because the tune 'Picardy' is an organist's dream for improvisation – the possibilities are endless.*

*Let all mortal flesh keep silence,  
And with fear and trembling stand;  
Ponder nothing earthly-minded,  
For with blessing in His hand,  
Christ our God to earth  
descendeth,  
Our full homage to demand.  
Liturgy of St James*

**Trans Gerard Moultrie**

## 'Turn your eyes upon Jesus'

From Youth Praise, number 20, which we used to sing as an intro to prayer and one I still often use in my own head when praying.

**Mike Watkin, St Peter & St Paul**

*Turn your eyes upon Jesus,  
Look full in His wonderful face,  
And the things of earth will grow  
strangely dim,  
In the light of His glory and grace.*

**Helen Howarth Lemmel**

## 'Breathe on me, breath of God'

This is a favourite hymn from my teens and holds fond memories of that time.

**Lilian Purse, St Peter & St Paul**

*Breathe on me, Breath of God,  
Fill me with life anew,  
That I may love what Thou dost  
love,  
And do what Thou wouldst do.*

**Edwin Hatch**

## 'Before the throne of God above'

I love the tune of this song and every time I hear it the words move me because it really reminds me of how precious we are to God and all the verses reflect this. The verse that moves me the most is where we sing, 'because the sinless saviour died, my sinful soul is counted free, for God the just is satisfied to look on him and pardon me'. I think these words are so amazing because they reflect the wonderful truth that we are so precious to God that he sent Jesus, the only sinless being to have ever existed, to die so that we can be free and experience him, no matter who we are or what we have done.

**Leah Rogers, Tring Community Church**

*Before the throne of God above  
I have a strong, a perfect plea;  
A great High Priest, whose Name  
is Love,  
Who ever lives and pleads for me.*

*My name is graven on His hands,  
My name is written on His heart;  
I know that while with God He  
stands  
No tongue can bid me thence  
depart.*

**G L Bancroft**

## 'O Jesus I Have promised'

This was my 1943 confirmation hymn but I also love the choruses we used to sing at St Mary's (Battersea) Sunday School such as 'Wide, wide as the ocean'. I still sing them once a month at Rosemary Duck's Bright Hour in New Mill Baptist Church. A mixture of lovely memories.

**Beth Scraggs, St Peter & St Paul**

*Oh, let me see Thy footmarks,  
And in them plant mine own;  
My hope to follow duly  
Is in Thy strength alone.  
Oh, guide me, call me, draw me,  
Uphold me to the end;  
And then in heaven receive me,  
My Savior and my Friend.*

**John Ernest Bode**

## 'Dear Lord and Father of Mankind'

Jo Webber's article on my all-time favourite hymn in May's Comment was wonderful and expressed my feelings exactly. Singing this on Lake Galilee in 1987 is still a highlight of my life. In fact that visit to the Holy Land was a healing process for me, as I was restructuring my life after my divorce. Lake Galilee and the Palm Sunday walk down from the Mount of Olives to the Church of All Nations was most moving.

**Barbara Anscombe, St Peter & St Paul**

*In simple trust like theirs who  
heard,  
beside the Syrian sea,  
the gracious calling of the Lord,  
let us, like them, without a word,  
rise up and follow thee.*

**John Greenleaf Whittier**

## 'Lord, for the years'

The first two verses of this prayerful hymn thank God for his guidance as we travel along the Christian path and for the Bible which inspires us on our life's journey as people of God. The next two verses include prayers for our land and the world where there is so much selfishness and suffering. But the last verse sums up the basis of our faith, 'Self on the cross and Christ upon the throne.' The lovely tune builds up to a crescendo in the third line and finishes with our thanks, prayers and praise for all that God has done for us and for all he will do.

**John Young, Akeman Street Baptist**

*Lord for ourselves, in living power  
remake us –  
self on the cross and Christ upon  
the throne,  
past put behind us for the future  
take us:  
Lord of our lives to live for Christ  
alone.*

**Timothy Dudley-Smith**

## 'Jesus Christ is risen today'

When I was a little under three years old, I asked my Granny to sing this hymn to me as a lullaby. Being a traditionalist, she didn't want to because it wasn't Easter! But she did. This has remained one of my favourites through the many Easters I have celebrated.

**Celestria Bell, St Peter & St Paul**

*Hymns of praise then let us sing,  
Alleluia!  
unto Christ, our heavenly King,  
Alleluia!  
who endured the cross and grave,  
Alleluia!  
sinners to redeem and save.  
Alleluia!*

**Unknown**

## 'Father I place into your hands'

Each year, when I was teaching, I glued the words of a hymn into the front of my mark-book. This was one of them, along with 'Be still, for the presence of the Lord', 'Brother, Sister let me serve you', just one hymn each year. There are so many things you just cannot do in the classroom when you are faced with all the hopes, dreams, aspirations and challenges the youngsters bring in with them. There are the times when it is difficult to explain a point to a struggling child, and you keep talking, hoping God will put the right words on your lips or show you how someone else (maybe another pupil) can help. There are times when the pupils come in with 'baggage',

often after lunch break or a difficult weekend at home and you know you will not get any teaching achieved until that is dealt with one way or another. There are times when you need to celebrate and be happy with the class. I always maintain that the world is there before you in a classroom and it is good to place into God's hands the things you find challenging. The last line of the hymn is a reassurance and an act of faith that I, for all my shortcomings, try to commit to.

**Jillian Smith, St Peter & St Paul**

*Father, I want to be with you  
And do the things you do.  
Father, I want to speak the words  
That you are speaking too.  
Father, I want to love the ones  
That you will draw to you,  
For I know that I am one with you.*

**Jenny Hewer**

## Now the green blade riseth

As a schoolboy, I couldn't really see the point of hymns and the only one I enjoyed singing was 'Father, hear the prayer we offer'. It's not my top favourite now, but I have learnt to love the rich and varied canon of English hymns. There's the sublime subtlety of George Herbert, the passionate intensity of Charles Wesley (often almost, but not quite, over the top), the gentle and pure theology of Mrs Alexander (There is a green hill far away), the breezy confidence and optimism of Sydney Carter (Dance, then, wherever you may

be), the grandeur of 'Angel voices ever singing'... and so on.

Of course, the music must work with, and complement, the words; sometimes I think George Herbert's wonderful poems are better left said than sung. The hymn I've chosen – 'Now the green blade riseth' – I find very moving because the music complements the words so beautifully. The writer is telling the Easter message in a very simple way – love has overcome hatred, and new life is springing up again. But there is none of the triumphalism of another marvellous Easter hymn, 'Jesus Christ is risen today'. There seems to me to be a deep sadness in the words; Jesus promised us refreshment and new life, but he made it pretty clear that he wasn't promising to take away pain and struggle, as the disciples quickly found out. Surely this message exists below the surface of the words, and is brought out by the haunting French folk melody, in the key of E minor.

**Edmund Booth, St Peter & St Paul**

*When our hearts are saddened,  
grieving or in pain,  
By Your touch You call us back to  
life again;  
Fields of our hearts that dead and  
bare have been:  
Love is come again, like wheat that  
springs up green.*

**John Macleod Campbell Crum**

## Piano and More concert series

On Sunday 14 May, Becky Whiteman and I gave a cello and piano recital in the Piano and More series at St Peter & St Paul. Our programme included pieces by Beethoven, Bach and Schumann, and an appreciative audience stayed for tea and cake afterwards.

The Piano and More concerts are going from strength to strength. The next ones will be on Sundays 23 July and 17 September, both at 3.00pm. Look out for more details of performers and programmes nearer the time!

**Anna Le Hair, St Peter & St Paul**



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# Celebrating 25 years of marriage

This year is a milestone year for Ray and me. After seven children and several near-death experiences we have just celebrated twenty-five years of marriage. A short while ago I was featured in a Sunday newspaper's magazine wearing my wedding dress and that, combined with our anniversary, has made me think about our marriage which I have to say has so far (touch wood) been largely happy and successful.

I'm not saying we don't have our off moments – I would worry about any relationship, platonic or otherwise, which didn't have those. But mostly I am proud to say my husband is still my best friend and I don't regret saying 'I do' even though some thought we married in haste.

When I was a cub reporter I was sent out to speak to couples celebrating milestone anniversaries to ask them what they believed was the secret to a happy marriage. At the time I could mostly predict what they would say: 'Give and take'. I'd inwardly roll my eyes and dutifully write it in my notebook but now I know what they meant. In my experience, it's not always about winning. Being a good partner is sometimes knowing when to zip it when you KNOW you are right or apologise when you don't really think you've done anything wrong.

It's about trying to avoid going to sleep on an argument. Sometimes it's about doing stuff you don't want to do and tolerating stuff you really want to shout about. And not always saying 'I told you so' when it turns out you were right.

It's about compromise. For example, we soon realised that I'm an early morning person and he's a late night bloke. We accepted that we couldn't always go to bed at the same time so it's not a failure for me to go to bed leaving him downstairs watching the sport. And I will often get up in the morning leaving him in bed. It avoids either one of us lying awake resenting the other one's snoring (mostly!).

I often wonder about dating sites matching people through shared interests and I worry that people put too much store in that. I think we make a good couple because actually we are quite different and when we met had very little in common, but we had the same aims.

We have very different musical tastes, upbringings and there's quite an age difference but we soon realised we both wanted the same outcomes in life. We got engaged after just six weeks.

We like the same things – having babies and eating nice food mostly but that would be awkward if we had disagreed about the number of children we wanted and couldn't agree on what makes a good night out (or in!).

A successful marriage (in my humble opinion) is about not getting caught up in comparing your relationships to other people's or holding onto unrealistic expectations. I have learned you won't vastly change him/her. You might be able to persuade them to ditch the jumbo cords and terrible jumpers or to only play MUSE at full blast in the car when you aren't with them – but major changes to their personalities? Not gonna happen, not with bribery, emotional blackmail or threats. And anyway, why would you want to change the person you fell in love with?

Take romance. Not everyone can have hearts and roses, endless compliments and Valentine's day every day. My husband is NOT romantic. If he buys me flowers I know it's because they were reduced or he's dented my car. However, he will hammer and saw bits of wood to make me vintage-style shelves or doors or flooring after a long day at work. He will also often let me have first pick of the chocolates as he knows I hate nuts.



I have been every size from 8-20 during our marriage and he has never commented negatively when I know I look less than my best. He also supported me when I said I wanted to stay at home to raise our children even though it has meant he has had to work stupidly long hours so we can survive on one income.

When I started the blog, madmumof7.com instead of getting a 'proper' job he was awesome – defending me to friends who thought it was a waste of time. He still believes in me and is adamant that one day my blog will lead to great things for us. We vowed 'in sickness and in health' and it seems we've had more of the former than the latter: diabetes, MRSI, a heart attack, TIA, hole in the heart, Fibromyalgia, major knee injury... we've weathered it all together and I'm sure there will be more to come.

I still look forward to him coming home and when he annoys me – because of course he does sometimes – I recall his good points, of which there are many. I also remind myself of my less-than-lovely characteristics which he largely tolerates.

He's not perfect, but neither am I. Even when I'm annoyed with him I still love him so I think the following would be my top tip for those looking for the secret to a long-lasting relationship.

If things get tough and you are not sure you can go on, try recalling the good times. Remember why you fell in love with them in the first place and if you think that basis is still there, it's worth working at. Marriage/relationships are not easy but there is professional help out there if you can't find your way back to love alone.

We are lucky: mostly I don't feel the need to smother him in his sleep and since I'm still here I presume he feels the same way. Anyway, we've got seven children so he probably couldn't afford the maintenance if he tried to leave me now (see what I did there?). Plus he never learned to cook so he'd probably starve to death without me.

**Afra Wilmore**  
**St John the Baptist, Aldbury**







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17				18	19		
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23					24		

**CLUES ACROSS**

- Glitter (7)
- Serene (4)
- Head of the parish team (6)
- Excursion (6)
- Green vegetable (8)
- e.g. Jerusalem. (4)
- Complicated plot (9)
- Son of Jehoshaphat (4)
- Biblical song writer (8)
- A choice (6)
- Another vegetable (6)
- Bemuse (4)
- Endure (7)

**CLUES DOWN**

- Rhyming words (6)
- Decay (3)
- Slow music passage (5)
- Lessons of belief (9)
- Front to back (6)
- The 2nd is awaited (6)
- Sacrament (9)
- Be sorry (6)
- Tyrant (6)
- Home of St. Francis (6)
- Focus of worship (5)
- Priest's title (3)

Answers on page 38

# Till death do us part

The Worship for All service at St Peter & St Paul on Sunday 14 May was a celebration of Holy Matrimony, especially for those planning their wedding during the year ahead. For me this brought many happy memories of my own wedding in 1960 when my wife, Lettie (Letitia) and I promised our lives to each other in her Roman Catholic Church in Manchester.

Unfortunately as a 'mixed' marriage Lettie was not allowed, at that time, any floral decorations or music during the brief service in the Church. We were not allowed a full nuptial Mass, and my best man, who was C of E, was not allowed to sign the register of our marriage: it had to be one of Lettie's Catholic relatives. Despite this it was a very happy day for us both. We were much in love and looked forward to a happy future together. I am pleased to say that we did have a blessed marriage which lasted for fifty-two years before poor Lettie was suddenly taken ill and died after eight weeks in hospital.

We were in many ways lucky to belong to our generation whose marriages are (mostly) enduring. Both Lettie and I were born, in the same year, just before WWII was declared; as infants we were nurtured by our mothers as single parents, with no support from grandparents, whilst our fathers were away fighting in the war. In both our cases we did not know our fathers until we were almost nine years old.

Growing up during the war there were no luxuries: life was uncertain and very simple. In my case I lived with my mother in a small terraced house with no hot water, no central heating, no bathroom and an outside toilet next to the air raid shelter in our back yard. It was a cold, austere life that so many at that time had to endure.

After the war, life only very slowly improved. We still had no telephone in the house, no family car, but finally, as a result of the Royal Coronation in 1953, a rented black and white TV for



our parents to enjoy. I was fortunate to win a place at a Grammar School for boys, and Lettie a place at the Loreto College for girls. Whilst at the Grammar School I had to earn my own pocket money working for a couple of hours every day after school and all day on Saturday helping in the store room of our local shop, mainly delivering customers' orders by bicycle.

Both Lettie and I continued our schooling up to our 'A' levels, with no distractions from the opposite sex, but our families would not allow us to go to university. Lettie was directed by her father into SRN training which she successfully completed and finally did a Post Grad course in Premature Baby nursing. I was fortunate before I was 18 years old (and straight from school) to be accepted into the Met Office that was then a part of MOD(Air). As a civil servant within the MOD I spent a very happy career lasting forty-three years, posted every four to five years to over a dozen different places of service in both the UK and abroad, undertaking different tasks at either RAF units or civilian units.

Lettie and I met in Manchester on a blind date just before we both celebrated our twentieth birthdays. We courted, destined for each other, for three years – Lettie house-bound in the Nurses Home at MRI, whilst I was posted around different parts of England. We met as often as we could before we were finally married when I was serving a tour of duty on Weather Ships based at Greenock, spending four to five weeks out in the Atlantic before two weeks ashore before the next voyage.

In the years after our marriage Lettie was called upon to faithfully follow with our children to wherever I was sent.

For us both there were good times and sometimes hard times. We were very fortunate that my first overseas posting was to support the RAF at Nairobi. A fantastic, wonderful experience for us both, accompanied then by our three young children. My next overseas posting, some years later, was to RAF Akrotiri in Cyprus where we were accommodated in the RAF Married Quarters on the station. Our teenage children enjoyed the full use of the sporting facilities on the camp. It was a good time for us all.

We had a hard time just before my posting to Cyprus. I had been sent

to a unit in Central London where for five years I worked twelve-hour-day duties, and twelve-hour-night duties, a rota of DDNN duties, hopefully with two days off in between. This called on me to commute into and out of London each time, a total of nearly three hours, so that Lettie had the task of me away from home for fifteen hours whilst she bore the brunt of looking after the family. There is no doubt that our upbringing had instilled in us both strong feelings of respect for each other and our seniors, for commitment in everything we did, and with tolerance, grateful for everything we had.

We celebrated our Silver Wedding up in Cheshire, near Manchester, where I had just been posted to. Our children were then pursuing their own lives and Lettie and I gave them support as and when they needed us, but at the same time we found ourselves called upon to care in turn for each of our four ageing parents. Lettie had planned to work in a hospital in Macclesfield but suddenly needed to give her full time care to each of our parents for the next twenty years in their final days.

Lettie and I finally had time for each other when we moved to West Wales where we celebrated our Golden Wedding. Sadly after six years there, Lettie herself died. However we had fully fulfilled our promise to each other made on our wedding day, 2 July 1960.

Both Lettie and I had been overjoyed to see our four children happily married, but saddened when two of them had broken relationships and subsequently remarried; and one of our sons separated from his wife after twenty-seven years of marriage with having three sons. There is no doubt that our children and grandchildren have many more pressures on their lives through media pressures, commercial pressures, social pressures and peer pressures than our generation faced with our austere, simple lives. It is so sad that as a result of modern life's pressures, many marriages will not endure to reach their Golden Wedding nor fulfil promises made on their Wedding Day.

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## Remembering David



### A father's memory

I sometimes feel sad that more people never got to meet our son David. He was a clever lad. At fifteen years old, he was doing well at Tring School. He had lots of friends and many interests, including swimming and football, and was already challenging the way people lived. He often went to Church with his mum and his younger brother Brian. His future seemed all things bright and wonderful.

Eight years later I looked down into his coffin, kissed his cheek, and tearfully said my goodbyes. I could tell by his face that he had found peace. But that was the only comfort that evening.

The following day I went to work, had lunch with a business colleague, and promised myself that mental illness had ruined his life, but would not destroy mine.

A few days later, myself, wife Hazel and some close relatives visited the Coroner's Office. Before going in we decided to have a small cooked breakfast in a local café, and it was there I found my first 'guilt'. I had eaten for the first time since David's death, and even laughed at a joke my brother-in-law told. Surely, it was too early for happiness.

A few months later, we took part in David's inquest. His injuries took a few minutes to be read out. Each one was like a stab in the heart. But we survived the ordeal, and this gave us the strength to start rebuilding our lives.

For the next few months I filled up every minute of the day and much of the night.

During this time, our Baptist Church Minister, Steve, asked me if I would share my pain in front of our congregation. I started with these words.

'What I am about to tell you has been the hardest thing I have ever done. Every time I wrote a few words the tears

washed away the ink so I had to start all over again. So you know what I did. I used a pencil instead.'

Next year will be twenty-five years since David's death, about the same time he had on earth. I still think about him most days. But not once have I ever wished him back. I saw the peace on his face and just knew he was in a better place.

As for me, I used a pencil to write these words today.

**Dick Lovelace**  
**High Street Baptist Church**

### A mother's memory

Mental illness struck our eldest son, David at the age of sixteen. He gradually deteriorated until he was admitted to hospital at the age of twenty-one. There he was diagnosed with schizophrenia. After a further admission to hospital, he fell from an escalator and died.

My chief impression of this time was the anguish of realising how difficult his illness made life for him. It was hard for him to talk to people and he wasn't able to concentrate long enough to do quite simple tasks towards the end. For David it was like facing life with his hands tied behind his back. This was combined with an overwhelming sadness that seemed often to be with him.

I felt angry with him at times; angry with a system that offered him and us very little help over a period of four years; angry with a first admission that seemed like a nightmare with everything out of control; angry with some staff who didn't seem to understand that this was our son David, who did have an illness but was still our 'dear, dear son'.

David had a supportive GP who did his best for him and us: an essential for anyone concerned about their mental health. Dick and I helped to set up a 'Carer's Group' for relatives and friends supporting people with mental health problems. This group is still running today and Dick is joint chairman. Dick tries to facilitate communication between carers and professionals. I found meeting other carers helped to take away that sense of isolation and the fear of the unknown.

Today, you can ask to be registered as a carer at your GP surgery. You will be offered a 'carer's assessment' by the Mental Health service involved. You can become a member of 'Carers in Herts'.



(They have their own Mental Health Support Worker for carers.) Perhaps, come to one of our monthly 'Carer's Group' meetings.

Twenty-four years after David's death, I feel sad that: Mental Health managers face lack of resources and applicants to fill the vacant posts they do have. Mental Health Workers face unmanageable caseloads. Users (patients) and carers can still face situations where the only service available to help in a crisis is the police. And the needs of people with enduring mental health problems are not always met. There is still much to be done to give people with mental health problems the help that they need and deserve.

I found prayer from my housegroup at High Street Baptist Church always made things seem better during David's illness. God seemed far away at times but somehow was always there for me. I clung to a poem by Patience Strong about 'coming through' when things were really bad.

After David died, so many people showed that they cared. It felt like being supported by a 'big cloud' of God's love. Dick was so affected by this he began attending High Street Baptist Services.

David is safe and well now, in God's keeping.

'And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love' (1 Corinthians 13 verse 13).

**Hazel Lovelace**  
**High Street Baptist Church**

### Helpful Contacts

Carers in Herts: [www.carersinherts.org.uk](http://www.carersinherts.org.uk) or 01992 586969

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# A tale of three Baptist Churches



The question is often asked (or at least has been once, by the editor of this edition of Comment) – ‘Why are there so many Baptist churches in Tring?’ I am neither a local historian, nor an expert in Baptist history, but there is perhaps some light that I can shed on an answer to that question.

One place to start would be the number of Baptists and Baptist Churches that are out there across the world today. If all churches and church groups that bear the name ‘Baptist’ are added together, then it can be argued that the ‘Baptist’ denomination numbers some 100 million people worldwide and as such forms the largest historic Protestant denomination globally!

Now clearly there is much variation in theology and practice between say the Southern Baptist Convention (the largest US-based Baptist group), the Nigerian Baptist Convention and the Baptist Union of Great Britain (BUGB) – of which New Mill Baptist Church is a part.

It is perhaps this variation that gives one clue to the reason behind the proliferation of Baptist Churches globally and in Tring in microcosm. Broadly all Baptist Churches follow the practise of baptism by immersion on confession of faith (so by definition, not infant baptism). Hannah Asquith wrote about her own baptism this way in last month’s edition of Comment. But another characteristic is the belief in congregational government: each local gathered church community

is responsible for its own affairs, finance, appointments and theological understandings and interpretations. Baptist Churches are traditionally non-creedal – not that they reject the content of the creeds, but there is usually no set statement of faith; rather, like the BUGB, churches and members agree to follow a Declaration of Principle, where interpretation and implementation of rule and doctrine is done by each church meeting independently.

This can give the advantage of Baptist Churches being lean, nimble and reactive in mission and ministry but it can also lower the barrier to split and schism with groups of members easily able to break away and form their own church.

The origins of the Baptist story are quite complex but it is generally accepted that the first Baptist church in the world was established in London in 1612 by Thomas Helwys. Helwys had been in Amsterdam with John Smyth, an ordained Anglican minister, and a fellow religious refugee, having introduced the baptism of adult believers as the foundation of church membership. Helwys was killed for his faith very quickly having sent to King James, boldly and foolishly in equal measure, a copy of his book in which he denounced the divine right of kings and sought religious liberty for all. The early 17th century saw Baptists across the country persecuted and when in 1655 a group of Baptist believers started to meet in a ‘mud-walled cottage’ in New Mill, they did so knowing their dissenting activities placed them outside the law of the land. Indeed, records show that in Tring in

1662 fifty-two Quakers and Baptists were prosecuted for offences of non-conformity.

The 1689 Act of Toleration granted Baptists and other dissenters certain rights and freedoms and around 1715 a survey records sixty-two Baptist families in Tring. By the 1880s there were five Baptist chapels which accommodated approximately 500 members with 800 children – a significant proportion of the town’s population of about 3,500.

So, Tring, perhaps well positioned as a place of ‘escape’ for London-based dissenters, had become something of a Baptist ‘hot-spot’ – but what were the original theological differences (in addition to the usual problems of personality and power) that had caused the variety of Baptist expression?

Let us pause a moment and consider three basic statements about the nature of God and salvation (soteriology if we choose to be technical!): some people are ‘saved’ and some are not; God is all powerful – the divine will cannot ultimately be thwarted; God wishes all people to know him, to come to faith, and be saved.

Taken individually, there appears nothing controversial here at all, but as a group, there is a logical fallacy, they cannot all be true at the same time. As such, theologians and churches have (knowingly, or unknowingly) chosen to emphasise two of these statements and de-emphasise the third.

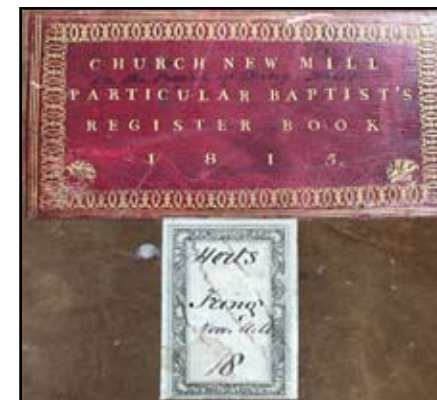
If we take the first and second together, then effectively we say that God has chosen, or pre-ordained or ‘elected’ only certain people to come to faith. This is the basis of Calvinism and

Baptist churches that broadly followed this theological path were known as ‘Particular’ Baptists.

If we take the first and third together then God genuinely wishes all to come to faith, but the divine will (represented by the second statement) is not acted upon as an act of love in granting humanity ‘free will’. This idea, Arminianism, that all could and should come to faith was followed by the ‘General’ Baptists.

The final option of taking the second and third together means that ultimately if there is a finite (even if small) chance of post-death conversion then, given infinite time, all people will come to faith in God. This is universalism – not a traditional Baptist theological viewpoint but one thought possibly to have been held by C S Lewis and championed in the modern era by theologians and writers such as Rob Bell.

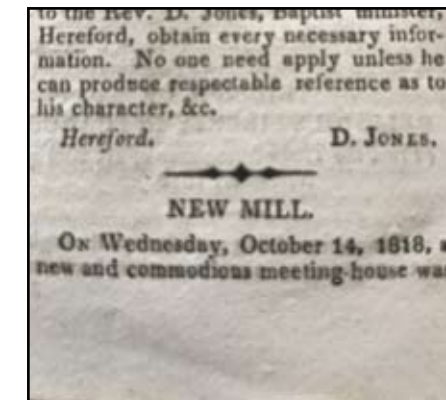
So, returning to Tring and Baptists, New Mill (1655) was a Particular Baptist Church. High Street Baptist Church came into existence as a General Baptist Church around 1750 as a split from the ‘rigid Calvinism of the parent church at New Mill’. Akeman Street Baptist Church was founded as a Particular Baptist Church in 1801 as a split from New Mill



and other local chapels.

Clearly just as the very short and superficial explanation of Calvinism and Arminianism above lacks depth and subtlety, so does the distinction drawn between ‘General’ and ‘Particular’ Baptist Churches. There were always blurred lines and by 1891 the distinctions for many Baptist Churches were so unimportant as to allow the Baptist Union of Great Britain (BUGB) to come into existence, essentially as a merger of ‘Particular’ and ‘General’ Baptists.

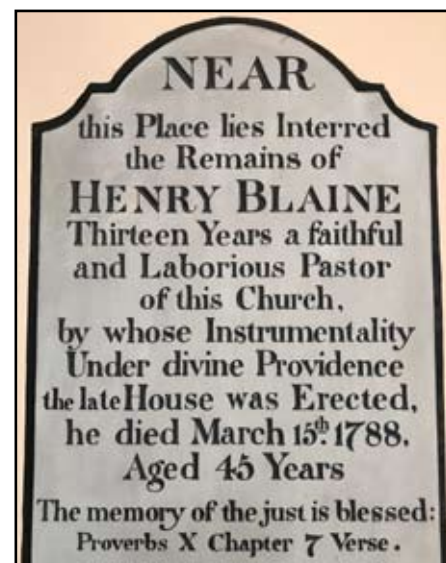
The BUGB is now a broad community of Baptist churches, generally evangelical, varying widely in theology and approach but held together by the Statement of Principle. However,



Baptists being Baptists, when the Union was formed, some churches chose not to join, and Akeman Street is today not in the BUGB but part of a different network of ‘Grace’ Baptist churches in the UK and (at least in its outline of faith on its website) retains Calvinist beliefs in an ‘elect’ and is much more conservative in its theology than New Mill or High Street Baptist Churches.

There is no doubt more that could be said, but hopefully this gives something of a flavour of Baptist history, and all three churches have full histories on their websites, from which some of this article has been drawn, with thanks!

**Andrew Openshaw**  
**New Mill Baptist Church**



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## Why I am a... Methodist

I was born into a Methodist family. My father was a Methodist minister, and from a very young age I was taken to Church. At the age of two I took part in my first Nativity Play. We lived in South Wales at the time and I have very hazy memories of being at Church during that period, up until we moved to Lincolnshire when I was five. I do remember Sunday School there and particularly 'bazaars'.

We moved to Norfolk when I was eight and I have clear memories, some of them good, such as social events, teas and particularly New Year's Eve parties when I was allowed to stay up late! I did find Sunday School rather boring then but I enjoyed singing and taking part in Sunday School Anniversaries, and again, Nativity Plays. As a teenager, by which time we had moved to Cambridgeshire, I was expected to go to Church three times on a Sunday and got fed up, so when I went away to college at the age of 18 I gradually stopped going to Church.

I eventually returned in 1976 in Leicester when my son was four, and he started going to Sunday School. I took him there and began staying in the service. At first I was not very interested, but began to listen, enjoyed the hymns, gradually got to know people, and eventually began to feel that I belonged, so I renewed my membership. I have been a member ever since then, and eventually became a Local Preacher in 1991 after we had moved to Hemel

Hempstead, although I did most of the training in Leicester.

When I think about what has kept me in the Methodist Church, there are many reasons. The main reason, I suppose, is because it is what I am used to, what I am familiar with, but I have sometimes thought about joining another denomination.

I do prefer the Methodist style of worship. The hymns and the way Methodists sing, with enthusiasm and from the heart, helps me to enjoy worship. The words of the hymns, particularly Wesley's hymns, mean a lot to me. Another reason is the kindness of Methodist people, the way they care for each other, their warmth and friendliness. There is an emphasis on meeting together in fellowship groups, Bible study groups and other meetings which help us to grow as Christians, providing support and encouragement.

There is also concern for those outside the Church, on helping those in need, those who are suffering, praying for them, raising money, sometimes going to help them directly. There is good training in the Methodist Church, for leadership, preaching and many other roles. John Wesley's influence is seen here: he encouraged diligent Bible study, careful preparation and hard work.

I also like the informality, the flexibility in Methodist worship. There is nothing too rigid and yet there is an emphasis on order, both within worship and the

organisation of the church. There are many opportunities in the Methodist church for people to develop their talents, and equal opportunities for women to become leaders, preachers and ministers (John Wesley encouraged women to help him and travel with him, and to become leaders and preachers).

Variety and freedom in worship are helpful too, enriching it and keeping it fresh. Sometimes we use set orders of service and prayers from the Worship Book, sometimes preachers use their own written or extempore prayers. We have different preachers, sometimes a Minister, sometimes local preachers, so we are not listening to the same voice or type of service every Sunday.

For all the above reasons, and probably many more, I am a Methodist. For the past twelve years I have belonged to St Martha's in Tring. The people are kind, loving and caring, the music is outstanding (we have two very talented organists), all typical of a strong Methodist tradition, and there is a warm welcome. I do enjoy attending services at other Churches, but I think I will remain a Methodist!

**Katie Breedyk**  
**St Martha's Methodist Church**



## Charity giving on a budget

We all like to help charities. Here are some ways to donate which only cost postage.

### The Leprosy Mission

Charity No 1050327 can make use of postage stamps, cigarette cards, old match boxes, medals, coins and banknotes. Post them to: The Leprosy Mission, Goldhay Way, Orton Goldhay, Peterborough PE2 5GZ.

### Great Ormond Street Hospital

Contact Margaret Whiting on 01442 767403 who collects plastic milk bottle tops for this charity.

### knit-a-square.com

This charity supports children who are

AIDS orphans or have been abandoned in South Africa. Many live in great poverty in informal settlements and some head up families of their siblings together with other children. Some live alone, without shelter, in hills and dumps around the cities. The charity uses knitted squares to make up blankets to keep them warm in winter and to make hats, hand warmers and cuddly toys for them.

Using double knitting wool: cast on 44/45 stitches on 4mm needles, or 40/42 on 4.5mm, or 35/36 on 5mm. Row 1 knit, Row 2 knit. This is the 'garter stitch' knitting pattern for your square which needs to measure 20cm/8" when completed. Cast off leaving 50cm/20" tail. This is used for sewing them into

blankets. Please do not sew them together yourself, but send them surface mail to: Knit-a-Square, Private Bag x900, Bryanston 2021, South Africa. Don't add value on the customs form, register or insure them as the charity cannot afford to pay the extra duties. If you can view the website, there are more details.

You could even get together with knitting friends to have a sociable afternoon knitting and chatting together. Good luck!

**Pam Russell, St Peter & St Paul**





# Canon Vincent Berry's Emerald Jubilee

On Wednesday 24 May there was a special celebration of Canon Berry celebrating 55 years of ordained priesthood. The weather was fine and many of the parish turned out even though it was a weekday daytime.

Concelebrating this special Mass was Father Brian Reynolds who was ordained with Canon Berry. Also invited was Rev George Stack, Archbishop of Cardiff who gave the homily. Archbishop Stack said he felt connected with the parish when he was Bishop of Hertfordshire and came to Tring for the consecration of the new church on 16 February 2001.

He spoke very movingly about the central part of the Ordination Ceremony



when those about to be ordained as priests lie prostrate in front of the altar. The significance and symbolism of the Prostration is a position of abandonment, dependence, humility and obedience, during which time the Litany of the Saints is chanted. He emphasised the model of faith that Mary, whose feast we were celebrating under the title of Help of Christians, gives us in her great act of faith 'Thy will be done' and the observation that there is a cost to faith. There was for Mary and there is also a cost for us.

He said the Canon's 55 years in the priesthood read like the Underground map – Hounslow, Hendon, Chelsea! 1962-68, a curate in Hounslow; 1968-70, with the Crusade of Rescue (now the Children's Society) where the Sisters of Charity cared for hundreds of children;



1970-72, as a member of the Parish Mission Team involved in outreach and evangelisation in the East End of London for six weeks at a time; 1972-76, a curate at South Harrow; 1976-86, Parish Priest at South Harrow; 1986-90, made Vicar General (a post similar to that of Archdeacon in the Church of England) as assistant to Cardinal Basil Hume; 1990-96, Parish Priest at Hendon; 1996-2006, Parish Priest at Chelsea; 2006-17, Parish Priest here in Tring.

Archbishop Stack said many people had reason to be grateful to the Canon for his gentleness and sense of humour. He went back to Ordination and the promise of Obedience and Respect which means putting trust in the bishops even though the hierarchical nature of the church is counter cultural today. The important word in the promise is 'audire' which means to 'turn to listen', to listen to the inner message, to what is really being said.

The Archbishop spoke about Canon Vincent's family who have supported him for over forty years. The Archbishop himself, when posted to Wood Green,

met Mr and Mrs Berry. He described Dick Berry as a surrogate priest who did what the priest did not do!

Father Reynolds gave us a story of the Ordination Day which was at Westminster Cathedral. The Cardinal had ordered posh limousines to take the ordinands to the cathedral. But the drivers refused to take them as were on strike! The Rector of the Seminary had to pay.

Canon Berry described the many changes in the landscape over his 55 years in the priesthood. When he was ordained the expectation was that he would serve as a curate for 22 years before becoming a parish priest. This gradually dropped to 14 years. Over the years, attitudes changed. One of his former parish priests did not approve of the increasing role given to women in the church. As far as he was concerned women could clean the church and do the flowers but nothing else...

After the Mass we went to the hall for refreshments, cake cutting and much conversation: a very special celebration. **Patricia Apps, Corpus Christi**





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# Being church



I grew up going to the village parish church on a Sunday morning. As a child, I thought all churches were the same. But, gradually, I moved around and I experienced different styles of worship offered by different denominations.

When I moved to West Africa, my experience of church broadened further. Just over seven months ago, I moved to Tring. My husband and I had lived in West Africa for thirteen years, initially as volunteers, then with CBM International – an international Christian disability and development organisation. It was tough saying goodbye to friends, our home and perhaps more significantly the only home our 8- and 10-year-old had really known. One of our priorities, when moving back, was finding a Church where we could worship. Church has taken many forms for us over the years, and we knew it was an important step to feeling settled in our new home.



## Not just Sunday mornings

In 2003, my husband and I moved to a village in south east Nigeria; we lived in a therapeutic community, working with homeless people experiencing mental illness. The circular arrangement of buildings – accommodation rooms, a clinic, an office, dining room and community hall – had a chapel at its centre. Short services marked the start and close of every day. We sang hymns in Igbo (the local language) and listened to a short reading and a brief reflection shared by one of the community. I made a quiet resolution to continue this contemplative pattern when I left.

As with most resolutions, I did not keep it up. After three years in the village, we moved to Abuja, the capital of Nigeria, and I soon found myself running around after a toddler; it was a challenge to brush my teeth twice a day.

Attending lengthy Sunday morning services in the capital was difficult with small children and I usually ended up pacing up and down outside the building, in the sweltering heat, for large sections of the service just to settle my infant. So we gained our weekly spiritual nourishment from the small international house group on a weekday evening.

As the group grew, a few of us felt we would like to meet on a Sunday morning. Having had similar experiences at lengthy services, we chose to worship for about an hour and to take turns running activities for the children. So, Abuja Ark International Church was born. Initially, with only five families, we met in a home. We soon outgrew the front room and found a local school to meet in. The church became established, as did the Sunday School. The membership included many Nigerians, who had lived in the UK or USA, and found our style of worship familiar. The thriving Sunday school was a big draw, and we soon had four classes for different age groups. It was wonderful to be part of the process of establishing a church: working out a mission for the church, establishing a leadership team, and even devising a logo. There was no handbook to guide us, only God, directing our path.

My husband regularly visits Nigeria, and tries to pop in on Abuja Ark if he can. The church continues to thrive, with

a usual congregation of about seventy people. It relies entirely on the goodwill of its community to run, with no paid positions or external financial support. The church manages to be a solid foundation, in what is an often-transient international community.

## United, not divided

In 2011, we moved from Abuja to Lomé, the capital of Togo, a hot, humid city with a thriving port and wonderful beaches. The children went to a large international school, and we lived in a comfortable neighbourhood with good electricity. Togo is a French-speaking country, and with my so-so French we gravitated to an English-speaking international Bible study for our spiritual food. The group met on a Tuesday evening. We shared a 'potluck' meal together, worshipped, then divided into a children's and adult group for Bible study.

Part of the joy of our experiences of international churches in Nigeria and Togo is that, rather than being divided by denomination, we were united by our faith. There were often discussions, and certainly differences, on issues such as baptism, Communion, women preachers or whether to stand for a Gospel reading. But ultimately, these topics never divided us. The churches and groups we were part of remained strong – diverse, but strong.

## An instant family

Most of us would recognise that church is the people not the building. If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole

body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? But as the apostle Paul wrote in his first letter to the church in Corinth (chapter 12:12-14) in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be: 'Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. For we were all baptised by one Spirit so as to form one body – whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free – and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. Even so the body is not made up of one part but of many.'

For those who find themselves moving around the globe for work, relationships or unexpected life events, it can be isolating. We can feel disconnected from the society around

us, at a loss about how we will ever fit in, let alone feel at home. But in many parts of the world, there is in fact a family waiting to invite us in. A church family is not only a 'way in' to a community: it can be a lifeline.

Since our arrival in Tring, we have quickly felt at home at High Street Baptist Church. The welcome we received made us want to worship regularly with our newly-found Christian brothers and sisters. But perhaps even more exciting is that we are part of the wider family in this small town, Churches Together in Tring. We look forward to seeing our family grow spiritually in this place, our new home.

**Polly Eaton**  
**High Street Baptist Church**

Read more about Amaudo and their work in Nigeria at [www.amaudo.org](http://www.amaudo.org)  
Read a little more about Abuja Ark International Church at [www.abuja-ark.com](http://www.abuja-ark.com)  
Read more about CBM at [www.cbm.org](http://www.cbm.org)



# Tweet of the month

The Hoopoe, or more precisely Eurasian Hoopoe, is a species that excites most British birdwatchers. It is a very distinctive and beautiful bird and about one hundred turn up in Britain in a typical year. Despite this number turning up though, it can be difficult to see as most are seen in flight and never seen again. So when I recently heard that one was frequenting an area in Gloucestershire it was too good an opportunity to miss and so I went to see it.

Its lovely-sounding name is possibly onomatopoeic and derived from the male's oop-ooop-ooop song. Its scientific name *Upupa epops* has several possibilities for its origin. *Upupa* could be Latin or onomatopoeic or could refer to its striking crest as the French word *huppe* means both Hoopoe and crest and could indeed be where *Upupa* and/or the English name were originally derived from. *Epops* seems to be the ancient Greek word for a Hoopoe and again may well be onomatopoeic in its origin.

The Hoopoe is mentioned twice in the Bible in Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14 as a detestable and unclean animal that is not to be eaten. It is perhaps surprising then that in



2008 the Hoopoe was named as Israel's national bird given its biblical status. Most birds have a preen gland that secretes an oil that the bird spreads on its feathers to protect them and maintain their insulating and waterproof properties. The Hoopoe's oil is foul-

smelling and smells of rotting meat. This oil puts predators and most parasites off and is one possible explanation why Hoopoes are considered to be unclean. Another possible reason is that they use their long bills to probe dung for insects – lovely! A number of brightly-coloured birds that might seem like an easy meal taste disgusting, otherwise they'd probably be popular with predators. Kingfisher is another bird that looks brilliant but apparently tastes disgusting. So in order to be brightly coloured and survive, the Hoopoe's smelly oil may be deliberate and a clever piece of protection.

So the Hoopoe's only mentions in the Bible are as a detestable and unclean animal not to be eaten so is that 'it' for the Hoopoe? After all, we often sin and so are spiritually 'unclean' and sometimes even detestable. However, the Hoopoe is a beautiful bird and no doubt is loved by God as part of his creation as we are; and seen by God as beautiful, as indeed are we.

**Roy Hargreaves, St Peter & St Paul**



# 100 favourite places

## Graemsay, Orkney



An island of 22 people including children, no pub, no shop, no police, no nothing except the wonderful people and their farms and nature. They seemed to have taken us into their community along with a dear friend who is one of the 22 – so much so that Carrie and I have bought a house on the adjacent island of Mainland Orkney. Even at this late stage of our lives there is an opportunity offered, and we are taking it with both hands. Time is short, and does not come round twice.

**Mac Dodge, St Peter & St Paul**

## Stubbings Wood, Tring



It is such a beautiful place to walk – full of happy memories of childhood walks too. I never forget how lucky we are to live with such beauty on our doorsteps.

**Anna Barrs, New Mill Baptist Church**

## Dunster Castle Deer Park, Somerset



This place is very special to us. Each year we spend a week there, shooting at the local Regional Archery Championships. We meet friends there whom we only see once a year, renew these friendships, enjoy our sport and relish the perfect setting of the field and countryside. Sunday mornings are always interesting as we try to recognise the songs played on the bells of St George's Church.

**Barbara and Barry Anscombe  
St Peter & St Paul**

## Treetops Lodge, Aberdare National Park, Kenya



We were lucky enough to stay with friends in Kenya in the early '80s and spent a night at Treetops. None of our family slept much – there was so much to see and experience! The number of animals coming to the salt-lick was incredible.

**Felicity Pemberton  
St Peter & St Paul**

## Gairloch Beach, Northwest Highlands, Scotland



Better than any tropical beach.

**John Allan, High Street Baptist Church**

## Abelike Bay, Meganisi, Greece



I am lucky to have visited Abelike Bay a couple of times now while sailing with friends. It is an unspoiled remote bay which is a natural harbour and a beautiful location especially as here at sunrise!

**Tony MacKinder, St Peter & St Paul**

## Robin Hood Bay and Yorkshire Moors



This is my favourite place because of the

holiday I had with my lovely husband in this area, the Yorkshire Moors railway trip to Boathland, the Eden prisoners of War Camp at Old Malton (which reminded me of the NAAFI I served in at Merrow POW Camp in 1943) the ships in Whitby Harbour, and who can forget the big helpings of food (you couldn't see the plate) served by friendly people.

**Beth Scraggs, St Peter & St Paul**

## The Great Glen, Scotland



I love mountains. The Great Glen delivers mountains in breathtaking splendour and I am moved by its grandeur.

**Carrie Dodge, St Peter & St Paul**

## Puget Sound, Seattle



Fish and chips on the Pacific waterfront!

**Andrew Openshaw  
New Mill Baptist Church**

## Inchcailloch, Scotland



This tiny island is in the middle of Loch Lomond. There are paths through the woods, past the ancient graveyard of the MacFarlanes, up to the top of the island, where there are fabulous views up the loch to the Highlands and back down again towards Balloch. There is a beach at the far end of the island too. It's a very special place, where you can forget about the cares of everyday life and enjoy the peace and the wonderful freshness of the air.

**Anna Le Hair, St Peter & St Paul**

# Our new favourite place

Last month's Comment featured an appreciation of Harriet Ridgway, who is leaving Bishop Wood School to become the second family with Tring connections to move to Bahrain. Our daughter and grandchildren moved there in August last year and are just coming to the end of their first academic year. We have been there for two visits and have enjoyed seeing the life in what is the most relaxed of the Islamic countries, albeit with strict customs, which you must respect.

Most people live in a compound, which may be just a few villas or up to fifty. Helen's compound has a green, where the children can play and the residents can hold social gatherings. Other compounds have tennis courts and swimming pools though most of the villas have their own pool.

On our recent visit, end of year school activities were gathering pace as they had to be completed before the beginning of the Holy Month of Ramadan, where no food or drink may be consumed between dawn and dusk. These included swimming galas (Muslim children are not allowed in the pool in case they inadvertently swallow some of the water), drama productions and culturally themed days.

Whilst we were there, the temperatures went from winter to summer and missed out spring – so we

were collecting the grandchildren from school at 2.15pm with temperatures reaching 43 degrees Celsius and you could feel your arms burning just walking into the school grounds. The school is a British International School so as I write this, our granddaughter, Claudia, is experiencing the joys of SATs prior to moving up to the senior school next year. She has received an achievement award, which we are very proud of as this has been a year of settling into a new and strange environment.

So how did we find life in Bahrain? Firstly, the people are very friendly and helpful starting with the immigration officers at the airport. They do have some friction between the different branches of Islam and there were protests during our visits, most of which involved the burning of vehicle tyres on the dual carriageways (though there was a more serious incident, which involved some loss of life). Shops range from the high end of the market in the malls to the local shops in the souk where you are invited to come in and buy their very 'very genuine' fakes (their words, not ours). In the centre of the souk is a mosque with distinctive coloured walls. One of the interesting malls is Dragon City, which comprises a large number of far eastern trading companies, selling a wide range of goods.

The scenery is interesting: they have large amounts of land, even in the middle of town, which is undeveloped and they don't have much greenery apart from palm trees and some bougainvillea growing on the walls of the compounds. Most of the population live in the north of the country; the south is mainly desert. F1 fans among you will have seen the sandy areas around the outside of the circuit, which is roughly half way down the country. One of the places we found really interesting is the Bahrain Fort, one of many on the island. As you will see from the photographs, it is well preserved. During our next visit, we intend to go at sunset, which, we are told, is a spectacle, well worth seeing.

One of the popular customs, on Fridays (which, of course, is their equivalent of Sunday) is to go out for a brunch. The range of food is amazing with items from all around the world including oysters from Cornwall, mussels from France, a wide range of fish and meat, pre-cooked or cooked to order and a huge range of desserts. Alcohol is available (although not during Ramadan and you never see anybody worse for wear).

**Ted & Margaret Oram  
St Peter & St Paul**



# Walking for The Children's Society

The Bluebell Walk last month raised more than £6,500 for The Children's Society – an excellent result! Next year is the 50th anniversary of the walk and in that time we have raised over £280,000 for the Society. Do join us in May 2018 and help us raise even more!

**Jane Hughes  
Berkhamsted Fundraising Committee**





# When childlessness leads to adoption



I was an only child till my sister burst onto the scene when I was six. Before that I was already writing stories where the main plot was having children (usually ten, five boys and five girls) and naming them...

Scroll forward a couple of decades and seven years into marriage and no children had come along as planned. You might read this today and wonder why that could be a problem – many people deliberately put off starting a family till later in life – but it was not our plan and it's hard to convey just how much of a problem this was. We had by this time nieces and nephews – even my much younger sister had two children – all of whom appeared to come along according to 'plan'. My friends had babies, my colleagues had babies – if I had kept pets I have no doubt that they too would have had babies – but no babies came for us. This was an extremely painful time in our lives.

My dear, late mother-in-law said innocently and playfully one day, 'I don't know what's wrong with my son – it's about time he produced me another grandchild...' And as kindly and as gently as I could manage, I explained that we wanted a child desperately – but it simply wasn't happening. She was mortified.

So it was that we began a series of medical investigations, including investigative surgery. Not all of these make good reading for Comment, but suffice it to say that nothing was found wrong with me, nothing was found wrong with Jon and despite the wonder of being able to see Jon's sperm swimming about on a petri dish mingled with my bodily fluids, nothing was apparently wrong with the combination of husband and wife.

This was good news – except that still no babies came. We went away with unprintable advice sheets and suggestions about trying a fertility drug. Having decided that we wanted a baby, not necessarily a baby with our genetic make up, we started to attend a group with people with similar problems with a view to adoption via the National Children's Homes, a Methodist

organisation; but there were so few 'unwanted' babies at this time that they spoke of waiting two years before a baby might be 'available' and time was not on our side – there was an upper age limit for being accepted as adoptive parents. Then we received a letter telling us that the service had been disbanded. Another door closed.

After some soul-searching we decided to try the fertility drug route; three months in, there was still no change. We had moved from Hemel Hempstead to Cheddington around this time and were part of All Saints Church in Long Marston. In a small housegroup, we shared our problems with others and people prayed with us and for us. Then there was a breakthrough. It turned out that by moving we were in another diocese and we could apply to adopt again. But we could only do so if we stopped taking the fertility drug. We had to choose... Our housegroup prayed with us that God would guide us to make the right decision – and I had an overwhelming sense of what we should do, of the kind I have never had before or since. I 'knew' we should try to adopt.

I had complete peace about that decision. What I had not anticipated was the pain that was to come from the adoptive parent classes we had to attend, the process by which others decided whether we would make fit parents. If childlessness was acutely painful, the process of being declared fit or unfit was worse. I remember the sobbing that followed one session where I was convinced that because I couldn't produce the perfect childhood memories that Jon could, I had blighted our chances of ever being parents. Where was that 'peace' now?

The letter that came to tell us that we were in fact 'fit' to be parents arrived on 8 June 1988. We might still have to wait two years for the much longed-for baby. But that very night a baby boy was born to a girl who had gone through her entire pregnancy seemingly not knowing that she was pregnant. Six weeks later we received a phone call and I cannot write this even now without weeping. Our social worker told us about Tom and asked if we would like to meet him and be his parents.

We met Tom with his teenage mother and his grandmother (not much older than me) and talked together. We



were allowed to hold him. We met him again with his foster mother and were told about his routine. One week later, we were allowed to bring home our ready-made seven-week-old baby son. The day before I had handed back my company car and briefed others on my work and left my job. Suddenly we were parents and I was a stay-at-home mum. That blissful August we learned all that parents learn about the way a baby changes your life for ever!

And in September I realised I was pregnant...

The joy that should have been ours – that exciting moment when all your dreams come true – was replaced by fear and confusion. We had been asked to ensure it was not possible for us to conceive (despite our history). Now we had a baby boy entrusted to us but we had to endure nine months before he was legally ours. Would they take Tom away if they knew I were pregnant? The 'bump' I should have been proudly and joyfully showing off was concealed until he could be concealed no longer – and with prayer and some trepidation we threw ourselves on the mercy of the kindly social worker.

All was well. The fears of the powers



that be were that if we were to find ourselves pregnant, we wouldn't want to keep Tom, a thought that had never entered our minds. So Tom was officially adopted four weeks before James was born and we had the fun and the challenge of managing two children under two while Jon was working full time, doing an MA and training to be a Reader in the Church of England; and I was starting a new publishing company working from home – a virtual office before the term was coined. When Jon was licensed as a Reader he turned to face the congregation to hear the wonderful words 'That's my daddy!' coming from Tom.

There are those who would say that God has a sense of humour. Although we had never planned to have more than two children, Jonathan (Jon) came along a little while later so we had three boys under three-and-a-quarter – and Ben arrived five years later just as Jonathan started school (and when I looked old enough for someone to mistake me for his grandmother!). Would any of these precious boys have been ours if we had not adopted Tom?

Tom always knew that he was adopted as advised again by the



powers that be; but as time went on it seemed increasingly irrelevant. There was a period when he was around ten or eleven when I think a disagreement ended with 'You're not my real mother!' But in his teens we found an essay he had written for school which started, 'People are always asking me about what it's like to be adopted and don't I want to know who my real parents are – but my parents are my real parents!' There used to be jokes between the boys about the fact that Tom had an advantage in being adopted because he wouldn't lose his hair in the way his brothers surely would being Jon's biological sons – but even that looks as if it won't be true as Tom and James compare receding hair-lines in their late twenties.

Tom is not like the rest of the family in a much more obvious way – he is a keen adventurer, always looking for the next 'high' and determined to drive me to an early grave through worry. Ben might aspire to this but the rest of us are rather tame in our ambitions. Tom broke the record for cycling between, up and down the Three Peaks in a weekend; cycled solo around Peru, Bolivia, Argentina and Chile; dug a well for an orphanage in Kenya; pot-holed two hundred meters underground in Spain; raised £5000 for charity and became a Guinness World Record Breaker, cycling non-stop through seven countries in twenty-three hours (he will feature in the 2017 edition of the book); and has recently spent a weekend in Morocco climbing Mount Toubkal, the highest peak in the Atlas Mountains, in record time.

When he was working briefly in Tring he gave up his time to drive people to Good Companions; when we had Gwen Hewison for lunch last Christmas Day, he said it was the best Christmas ever; and when she was ill in hospital, he went to visit her and played the guitar for her.

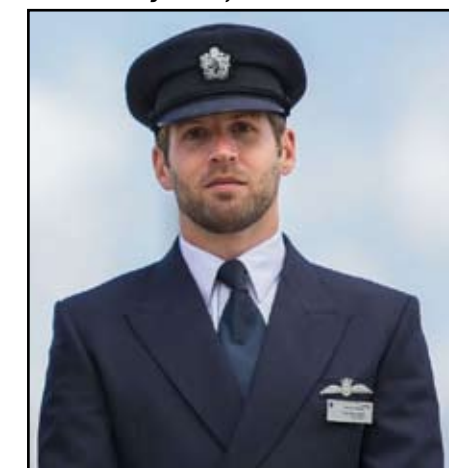


His latest pastime is converting an old post Office van into a recreational vehicle and has just fitted solar panels to the roof... He is also a trained snowboard instructor and a pilot for British Airways (but maybe I should keep that quiet after the fiasco over the last bank holiday weekend).

In January he was flown to South Africa with actor Bill Nighy to meet some of the children being helped by the money he raised as part of the Comic Relief effort. What he told us when he returned brought tears to all our eyes. He met young people in challenging circumstances whose lives had been transformed by the money donated and by the mentors who were there to help them. He was visibly moved. One of the team of reporters asked why. 'I could so easily have been one of these young people,' he said. 'I know that without the right direction I could so easily have gone the wrong way. My story could have been so different. But I was adopted. My family have given me the love and stability to be where I am now.'

Did I ever wonder if we had done the right thing in the days when I had three teenage boys and life was a struggle? Well maybe, sometimes! But the decision we made to adopt was the best thing we have ever done.

**Annette Reynolds, St Peter & St Paul**





# Bibles... for children?



Do you own a Bible? Do you read the Bible? As I write this we are coming to the end of the ten-day period during which Christians have been encouraged by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York to pray for more people to know Jesus Christ.

We celebrated Pentecost in early June, the coming of the Holy Spirit. How can we learn more about Jesus? Where can we discover the exciting events around the coming of the Holy Spirit and what that meant to the early church and what it means to us now? What is our source of information on all the dealings of God with his people throughout the years? The answer is of course in The Bible.

For several years now I have been working with the charity 'Bibles for Children' to provide children in our local primary schools with a Bible of their own, to read, use in school and to take home and keep, we hope, for ever. I am always amazed, when working with children, just how many of them know nothing of God, Jesus or the events and happenings that many of us have known since our early

years in Sunday School, and very few children it seems, own a Bible.

The system operated by 'Bibles for Children' is this: if the Headteacher of a school is in agreement (and they will usually check with parents before the presentation) all the children in years 3 – 6 (7-11-year-olds) are presented with a Bible story book. Then, before the 11-year-olds leave to go to secondary school they are given a Good News Bible free-of-charge. The Bibles are of very good quality and, if they were available in shops, would retail at over £15 each. In subsequent years the charity encourages new intakes of children to receive Bibles which are then funded by local donations from churches and individuals. We are able to buy them for around a third of their retail value. We have been doing this for about six years thanks to occasional donations from a few local churches and regular gifts from some people including some very generous one-off donations. We are very grateful for all of this.

Now, if we are to continue to provide our local children with Bibles in this way, we are looking to raise something like £1800 a year. This is a lot of money, but as we all know, small amounts add up to large sums. Do we care enough about teaching our children about

Jesus? Do we want them to learn about the amazing ways God deals with his people? In our uncertain and often dangerous world – and the third terrorist attack in Britain this year has just occurred as I write this – do we yearn to give our young people a hope which comes from knowing God and trusting him for the future? Do we want them to read the Bible?

I love to read and hear comments from the children about their Bibles: 'My Bible is very important in my life'; 'I think my Bible is a wonderful book to read over and over again'; 'It is exciting and you just cannot wait for the next page'; 'My Bible is a very good way to read stories and learn more about God'; 'It is special to me'; 'It is interesting and exciting'. What a joy and privilege it is to be giving God's Word to the next generation in this way!

If you feel you could help us in our mission to provide Bibles to our local children either by donating yourself, or by persuading your church to contribute, then do please contact me at [davidandjoanealey.co.uk](mailto:davidandjoanealey.co.uk) or 01442 828827. Also please ask if you would like any more details or look at [www.biblesforchildren.org.uk](http://www.biblesforchildren.org.uk).

**Joan Eeley, Akeman Street Baptist Church**

# Benjamin Britten

Reading about Aldeburgh Music in the May issue of Comment reminded me of my own experience of Benjamin Britten's music. He wrote Let's Make an Opera – 'The Little Sweep' – in a month and it was produced in the same year for the second Aldeburgh Festival. There was no Snape Maltings Concert Hall then, and the Festival performances took place in the Jubilee Hall, Aldeburgh or in either Aldeburgh, Orford, Blythburgh and Framlingham Churches.

Children from some of the local schools, including our small school in nearby Leiston where I grew up, were invited to attend the performance of 'The Little Sweep' to join in the audience participation. We were taught our part at school and then there was a rehearsal included in the opening episode of the production, which took place in the Jubilee Hall.

Unfortunately I cannot remember our part, probably because I was only around seven years old at the time. I do remember being absolutely enchanted, watching and listening as the story unfolded on the stage, using the names of local places such as Iken Hall in the narrative.

As a young adult, I heard Britten's War Requiem at St Albans Abbey: quite different!

Britten may be less known these days but his work is being kept alive here in Tring. Albert Herring was staged at The Court Theatre, Pendley, not so long ago and last Christmastime, as part of their programme, the Tring Choral Society sang 'A Ceremony of Carols' in St Peter & St Paul's Church.

**Felicity Pemberton  
St Peter & St Paul**



# Summer trips in Luther's footsteps

This year, all of Germany (including the Catholic parts!) and many other countries celebrate 500 years of the Reformation, or more precisely, the beginning of the Reformation, which starts symbolically with Martin Luther nailing his 95 Theses to the Church door in Wittenberg. As I grew up in the part of Germany that might be considered the Lutheran 'heartland', the stories and places linked to Luther have always been a significant part of my background, even growing up in a staunchly secular household in the GDR. For us, the pastor from Wittenberg is as much a local cultural icon as he is a religious leader.

While John Lippitt will say more about Luther's life and theology in the next editions of Comment, in this article I would like to introduce some of the sights that might be interesting for those keen to learn more about the great reformer, but also for those who just fancy a summer trip to 'Middle Germany' with a bit of a difference.

Coming from Tring or the surrounding areas, the easiest way to get to 'Luther Country' is probably flying from Luton to Berlin. In Berlin, you can start by visiting the Exhibition 'The Luther Effect: Protestantism – 500 Years in the World' at the Max Gropius Bau (<https://www.3xhammer.de/en/>). Then, head to Lutherstadt Wittenberg, the centre of the celebrations. Apart from the famous door and the two main Churches, make sure not to miss a stroll through the Luther Garden. This wonderful symbol of the international ecumenical community features 500 trees sponsored by church communities of various denominations from all over the world with a corresponding tree planted in each community. The project was inspired by Luther's hopeful saying that 'even if I knew that tomorrow the world would go to pieces, I would still plant my apple tree'. There is too much to see to list it all here, but for some initial information, have a look at [www.lutherstadt-wittenberg.de/en/](http://www.lutherstadt-wittenberg.de/en/).

Afterwards, I would recommend a trip to Leipzig, although I'm of course biased, this being my home town. The city museum currently shows the exhibition 'Luther Debating', which provides background information on a famous debate between the Catholic theologian Johannes Eck and Martin Luther. If you are fed up with museums

by that point, why not enjoy coffee and cake (we Saxons love our coffee!) in one of the many charming street cafés. In the evening, go to a concert of which there are plenty on offer throughout the summer. Of course, Leipzig is also the city of J.S. Bach, so don't miss a visit to 'Bach's Church' (St Thomas) and if you're lucky you might even catch a free organ concert here or in St Nikolai. The latter is the other significant Church in the town centre with stunning neoclassical architecture. It has a small contemplative service with music every Wednesday at 5.00pm and an Organ concert each Saturday at 5.00pm (entry 2€). Once you've sampled Leipzig's culture, continue to Erfurt, the capital of the state of Thuringia. Erfurt is a lovely city to relax in and explore. From there, a 30-minute train ride brings you to Eisenach, and its famous castle – The Wartburg. It was the first German castle to be designated a UNESCO World Heritage site, was the setting of the fabled Battle of the Bards, a tale immortalised in Richard Wagner's opera Tannhäuser, home of Saint Elisabeth, and of course it provided a refuge for the exiled Martin Luther, who translated the New Testament into German here. Legend has it that one night the devil came to visit and Luther threw an ink pot at him. The – regularly retouched – stain on the wall can still be seen today!

For those more interested in outdoor activities rather than exhibitions, why

not hike one of the Luther Trails, for example, the 90km trail through Saxony-Anhalt from his birthplace in the small town of Eisleben back to Wittenberg.

The route is likely to be busy this year, so make sure you book accommodation in advance. There is too much to see and do this year to feature in this article, so if you want to find out more, check out the central website [www.luther2017.de/en/](http://www.luther2017.de/en/).

**Sylvie Magerstadt, St Peter & St Paul**





# A tale of two prophets?



The Church faces a very big challenge in the twenty-first century. There are new ways to salvation on offer. They are however secular rather than religious.

We are a bit short on prophets these days (a prophet is somebody who claims to interpret or transmit the commands of a deity). However, we are long on pundits (critics or authorities on a subject, especially in the media). Prophets have effectively been replaced.

Some pundits say that the twenty-first century will be dominated by religion, not politics. I suggest however that the main competing ‘religions’ will not be any of the old mainstream ones; they will be the Environment and the Economy. They are claimed to be humanity’s new routes to salvation. Ignore them and conflict threatens. Their leading ‘prophets’ are Lester Brown and Bjorn Lomborg.

Lester Brown is an American, born on 28 March 1934. He is a graduate of Rutgers University and has postgraduate degrees from Harvard and the University of Maryland. He is the founder of



the Worldwatch Institute and the Earth Policy Institute and focuses on water depletion, and food and energy shortages. His main publication is ‘The State of the World’, produced annually. He is an environmentalist.

Bjorn Lomborg is Danish, born on 6 January 1965. He is adjunct professor at the Copenhagen Business School and President of the Copenhagen Consensus Center. His first major publication, the Skeptical Environmentalist (2001), made a big impact. It was subtitled ‘Measuring the Real State of the World’ to make clear his alternative view. It has been followed by a steady stream of monographs on the cost of alternatives for world development. He is a statistician and an economist.

Both offer palliatives to soften the impact of climate change on humanity.

They attempt to quantify the effects of the implementation of their arguments. In a way they are religious, in its broadest sense. People believe what they say and are prepared to act on it.

There is a branch of psychology called transactional analysis. It looks at our position in relationships (transactions?) with others and categorises them as parent, adult or child. Prophets are historically parent figures; their ‘flock’ are their children. Brown fits this description well; parent-child is his mode of operation. Lomborg is harder to define; he is essentially a persuader; he has more of an adult-adult relationship with his followers.

Climate change is a fact of life. It always has been and always will be. I suggest that we flatter ourselves if we think we can control it to a significant degree. We can however adjust to it; the big question is how. I am an engineer/economist by training and experience, which is perhaps why I feel more sympathy with Lomborg than Brown. Like all prophets however they have challenging arguments.

You can take your choice – Father Lester or Brother Bjorn.

**Bill Bradford, St Peter & St Paul**

# Prophets for the 21st century church?

In Bill Bradford’s article, ‘A Tale of Two Prophets?’, he identifies the environment and the economy as the dominating issues of this century and I am sure he is right to do so. However, I am not convinced that they need to be set against each other.

The growing voice of those who argue that we must move away from our consumerist, ‘growth is good’, multinational-dominated lifestyles and appreciate anew the benefits of the ‘local’ and of community-based economic activity, together with the fossil fuel divestment movement, provide evidence that economics and the environment are actually rather closely linked. Furthermore, as we recognise the growing threat of climate change, there are economic opportunities opened up by moving away from our post-Industrial Revolution dependence upon fossil fuels and gearing up instead towards a ‘net zero carbon’ economy, with increasing investment in the expanding renewables sector. The Bank of England has spoken out about this over the last few years, with warnings about ‘stranded assets’ and the ‘carbon bubble’ – so perhaps Mark Carney could be seen as a prophet on both the economy and the environment?

I have not read the works of either Lester Brown or Bjorn Lomborg, so I cannot really say whether either of Bill’s suggested candidates is providing the prophecy that would speak to me about the way God sees the world heading. But I have heard Bill McKibben of 350.org speak, and have read the words of Naomi Klein and Jeremy Leggett and parts of Pope Francis’s ‘Laudato

Si’: On Care for Our Common Home’. I also see the prophetic in the work of campaigners around the globe – people from organisations, both faith-based and secular, such as A Rocha and Greenpeace – seeking to bring humanity back to a recognition that we are both dependent upon and responsible for this planet and its wellbeing. Above all, as a Christian, I see this as being about listening to the voice of prophecy – however and through whomever God may speak – and then testing it against the word of God as we find it in Scripture.

In a small document produced five years ago, the then leaders of Church denominations across the UK, along with Archbishop Desmond Tutu, all supported a call to the church – that is, to all who follow Christ – that we should do a number of things in response to climate change: this was a prophetic call and it is just as relevant and urgent today. Among the actions they called for was that we should ‘listen’.

‘Prophets are those who speak truth,’ they said, ‘usually uncomfortable truth, to their generation. In ancient Israel, prophets were always shadowed by false prophets, representing the ruling powers. We must listen to the scientists warning us of approaching dangers, exercise discernment, and be wary of “false prophets” representing the vested interests of the powerful.’ Wise words indeed. As we respond to the call of God on our lives, to ‘act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly’ (Micah 6:8), as well as to love our neighbours (Mark 12:31), we should nevertheless never lose sight of the promise of God, who

has given us hope in the future in order to motivate us to take action today.

So I believe that there are prophets for the twenty-first century to be found in a variety of places, from the inhabitants of the Marshall Islands facing the loss of everything beneath rising sea levels – and calling out for the world to take notice – to the members of local Transition Town groups up and down this country and farther afield, all working to reinvigorate local communities within their natural environments.

But let’s not forget the prophets who spoke long ago and whose message remains as important as ever: we can hear from them week by week in Church, or day by day as we read the Bible, and if we do so with an ear for what they are saying about the economy and the environment we may be surprised at just how current their words are. Isaiah’s warning of the environmental impacts following on from a breaking of the covenant between humankind and God (Isaiah 24:4-5) is just as relevant today as it was in Old Testament times: ‘The earth turns gaunt and grey, the world silent and sad, sky and land lifeless, colourless. Earth is polluted by its very own people, who have broken its laws, disrupted its order, violated the sacred and eternal covenant’ (Isaiah 24:4-5, based on The Message).

**Nicky Bull, High Street Baptist Church**



# Parish registers

## Baptisms

We welcome these children into our church family and pray for their parents and Godparents.

**Eleanor Grace Parr**

## Weddings

We offer our congratulations and prayers to these couples as they begin their married lives together.

**Alex Mead & Becky Morgan**  
**Geoffrey Maurice Willcox & Alison Clare Willcox**  
**Ben Paterson & Amanda Gara**  
**Nick Rogers & Gill Saunders**  
**Samuel Turnball & Laura Kennedy**  
**Ciaran Patrick Murphy & Gemma Louise Roberts**  
**Nigel Benselin & Caroline Mary Dowse**  
**Robert Hughes & Sarah Louise O’Sullivan**  
**Thomas Charles Mist & Toni Sherrie Kempster**  
**Samuel Phillips & Lisa Tippet**

## Funerals

We thank God for the lives of the departed and pray for comfort for those who mourn.

**Ernest Oliver 6 weeks**  
**Pat Gray**  
**Josie Rance 80**  
**Jacqueline Philomena Bennett 67**  
**Jeanne Eustace 85**  
**Joan Horrell 87**  
**Maureen Parnell 84**

# Tring Parish magazine July 1917

George Crockett who has been missing since the 30 July 1916, is now reported to have been killed on that date somewhere in the Somme ‘push’. He joined the 2nd Beds in April 1915 when he was just 18. May God accept the life he has given.

Stanley Miller was wounded in the leg on 31 May by a piece of bomb dropped from an enemy aeroplane while he was with the Palestine Expeditionary Force. His leg was amputated but he died the following day in the 3rd Australian

Stationary Hospital. He has been buried in the Holy Land, and left behind him a memory of splendid service in his country’s cause. As a boy he sang in our Parish Church and was also confirmed here.

Ernest George Wright was also killed in Palestine on 3 June. He joined the Army in June 1915, and spent eight months with the 4th Essex in France, afterwards proceeding to Egypt. He will be remembered here as one who fought and died bravely. May they rest in peace.





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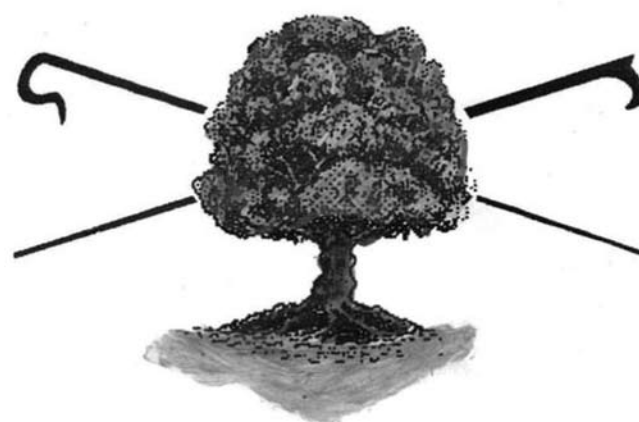
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## St Mary's Puttenham - completion!

As the final stage approached even nearer, it was a touch-and-go thing as to whether we would be completely ready for the Bishop's visit on the 14 May.

The pews were back, but a front pew upstand remained absent. The electrics were in, but there was a final securing of the operational switches still outstanding and the wooden cupboard to enclose it all was still missing, as was the cupboard to enclose the under-floor heating controls. Worse still, the heating could not be switched on because UK Power Networks were being somewhat unresponsive.

In the last week, suddenly workmen appeared and the cupboards were fitted and painted, and the missing pew frontal was fitted. The Wednesday prior was to be the Big Day to clean up the Church from builders' dust, polish the pews and return all the brassware, Bibles, service books etc. As it happened, Wednesday still had workmen in the Church using the porch as a workshop and likewise the tower/vestry – and the nave was covered with assorted tools and wet paint. The only area left available to clean was the chancel.

At last, the builders finished and Thursday and Friday were spent busily returning all our bits and pieces and making a final clean-up. The flowers were put in on Saturday and Cecilia Hall laid up with tables and china – all that remained was the food to prepare for the buffet tea that was to precede the Service on Sunday.

At last the big moment had arrived. Between 5.00pm and 6.00pm most



of those who had donated towards the tiles, the lights and the project in general, gathered in Cecilia Hall, ate, talked and circulated. The Bishop of St Albans, Bishop Alan, arrived in good time and spoke with everyone in the room before going over to the Church.

As 6.30pm approached, everyone found themselves a seat in St Mary's and Bishop Alan was 'wanded in'. The service began with his dedication of the new floor and all the work that had taken place. It was one of the best Evensong services of all time – the atmosphere in the Church (and earlier in the Hall) had been something very special and memorable. After being 'wanded out' at the end of the service, the Bishop was on hand to say goodbye to everyone. No one seemed in a hurry to leave. It was just one of those occasions.

But are we going to sit back and enjoy? It seems there are further plans... But that is another story for another day.

PS: We still await UK Power Networks. It seems the full current due into the Church is still not getting there. Until that happens, we will not be able to switch on the under-floor heating. They have a 6-month commitment to complete work, apparently. That will be nearly Christmas time! We await the moment when we can say 'the heat is on!'

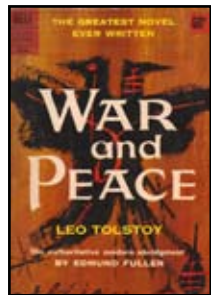
**Christine Rutter, St Mary's Puttenham**





# 100 favourite books

## 'War and Peace' by Leo Tolstoy



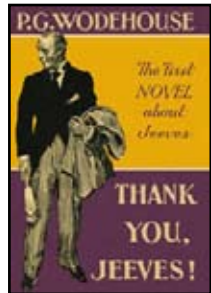
It has such an enormous range of different characters, each drawn with a depth of understanding that I think has never been surpassed by any other novel.

**Edmund Booth**

## St Peter & St Paul

Also a favourite of Anna Le Hair.

## 'Jeeves' et al by P G Wodehouse



I am a great fan of P G Wodehouse and especially the Jeeves books. They have the ability to make me laugh out loud and the stories are so unbelievable but so funny. The exploits of Bertie

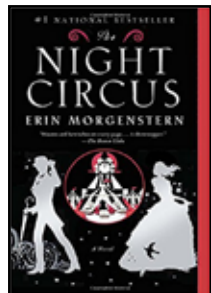
Wooster, Jeeves, Gussie Fink-Nottle etc are completely barmy but brilliant.

**Thelma Fisher**

## High Street Baptist Church

Jon Reynolds is also a big fan but they are banned from bedtime reading as it makes it impossible for me to read alongside the half-stifled guffawing.

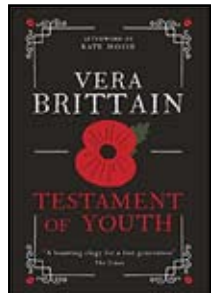
## 'The Night Circus' by Eric Morgenstern



I've just finished reading this strange, magical and curious book. I loved it.

**Anna Barrs**  
**New Mill Baptist Church**

## 'Testament of Youth' by Vera Brittain

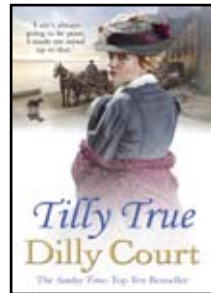


Vera Brittain lost her fiance, brother and two closest male friends in the First World War. She wrote this book as a cry of outrage and agony, so that the futility of their deaths would be

remembered. It is still one of the most powerful and widely read war memoirs of all time.

**Alison Cockerill, St Cross Wiltshire**

## 'Tilly True' by Dilly Court

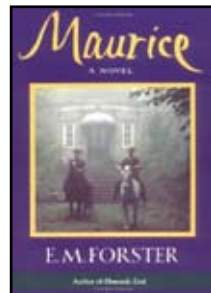


I read this book in hospital and was very touched by it. It was written about the Victorian Era, and shows how very badly women were treated. They had no rights at all and were badly

abused in every way possible – appalling! Children were also very badly abused, often working by the age of five years, badly beaten and had no rights at all.

**Wendy Hinds, Corpus Christi**

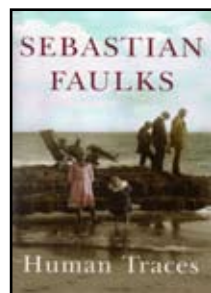
## 'Maurice' by E. M Forster



I found this to be an interesting and totally absorbing book. I loved the film too, but I read the book first.

**Anna Le Hair**  
**St Peter & St Paul**

## 'Human Traces' by Sebastian Faulks

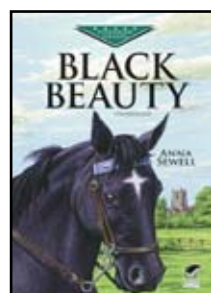


As young boys both Jacques Rebière and Thomas Midwinter become fascinated with trying to understand the human mind. As psychiatrists, their quest takes them

from the Victorian lunatic asylum to the plains of unexplored Africa. The book is moving and challenging as it explores what kind of beings men and women really are – what it is that makes us human.

**Annette Reynolds, St Peter & St Paul**

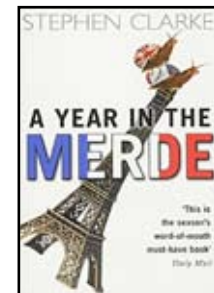
## 'Black Beauty' by Anna Sewell



This takes me back to my childhood and I still have so many mixed feelings – good and bad – when I think about it today.

**Beth Scraggs**  
**St Peter & St Paul**

## 'A Year in the Merde' by Stephen Clarke



A very insightful recounting of a year spent in France by an Englishman.

**Andrew Openshaw**  
**New Mill Baptist Church**

## 'Mort' by Terry Pratchett



Choosing a favourite book is an impossible task. How long have I been reading? How many books have I read? There are loads of favourite books! My genre of choice, the ones

I read for fun and on holiday, is Fantasy and Science Fiction. I don't know why – it just is! So authors like Tolkien, JK Rowling, Steven King, GRR Martin, Raymond Fiest, Robert Jordan and Iain Banks. But it does help if they don't take themselves too seriously, so top of the list would be Terry Pratchett who created his own unique universe of a flat disc being held up by four elephants standing on the back of a giant turtle wandering through space! Yes, very weird; and yet this world is spookily very like our own world. 'Mort' is about a misfit youth who takes up an apprenticeship with Death himself. So the tools of the trade are an old horse and a rather large scythe! You get the picture: very complicated and very funny.

**Chris Hoare, St Peter & St Paul**

# Why forgiveness matters

What does it mean to forgive people, and when should we forgive them? When is it right – if ever – to forgive those who are not sorry or repentant? The long tradition of reflection about forgiveness in world religions has been complemented in recent years by a growing interest in the topic from both philosophers and psychologists.

Counsellors, clergy and interested members of the public met in St Albans on Saturday 13 May to discuss this topic at a day workshop organized by the University of Hertfordshire Philosophy Department in association with St Albans Cathedral Study Centre. The workshop consisted of three presentations – by a philosopher, a theologian and a psychologist – and a general discussion on the topic of forgiveness.

Professor John Lippitt introduced the day and set the scene with a talk entitled 'Philosophical Approaches to Forgiveness; Forgiveness as a "work of love"? The talk introduced some of the key questions raised by philosophers who have written on forgiveness in recent years. After raising the basic question of what forgiveness is (a speech act? a psychological process?), John Lippitt introduced some important conceptual distinctions (for instance, between forgiveness, condonation and excuse); considered the question of whether forgiveness at its best should be conditional or unconditional; and began to explore what difference it might make to think of forgiveness as a 'work of love' (to borrow a phrase from the Danish thinker Søren Kierkegaard). He stressed the importance of the connection between the disposition to forgive and other virtues or qualities of character such as hope, humility and empathetic understanding.

Building upon this, theologian Professor Anthony Bash from Durham explored the biblical perspective in a talk entitled 'Re-Imagining Biblical Forgiveness'. Through a careful look at key passages on forgiveness, particularly from the New Testament, Anthony Bash sought to dispel some common myths (for example regarding Jesus' reported words on the cross) and to separate what those texts say from some of the other ideas that have grown up around them since they were written. He explored the differences between divine forgiveness and interpersonal

forgiveness between fellow humans. Bash stressed that in the biblical context, interpersonal forgiveness is typically about restored relationships, and that it needs to satisfy the demands of justice, as well as of mercy. For this reason, he expressed scepticism about unconditional forgiveness, arguing for the importance of prior repentance.

Psychologist Dr Liz Gulliford from Birmingham explored 'Psychological Approaches to Forgiveness: Practical Means to an Ethical End'. Liz Gulliford focused primarily on psychological processes involved in forgiveness and on therapeutic means of promoting it. After addressing some popular distortions of the meaning of forgiveness that tend to inhibit people's progress in forgiving others, she turned her attention to various psychological interventions that have been developed to facilitate forgiveness, focusing on those involving reframing the offender and on developing a sense of empathy. Some have criticized psychological approaches as focusing in an unhealthy way on the person seeking to forgive, and as construing forgiveness reductively as a means of maintaining mental equilibrium or improving well-being. Against this, Gulliford argued that while forgiveness is important for our mental health it is also central to the health of our relationships, and aimed to show that psychological insights can be fruitfully integrated with both religious and secular worldviews to offer practical insights to help realise forgiveness as an ethical ideal.

In discussion after each session and in the round-table that closed the day, questions

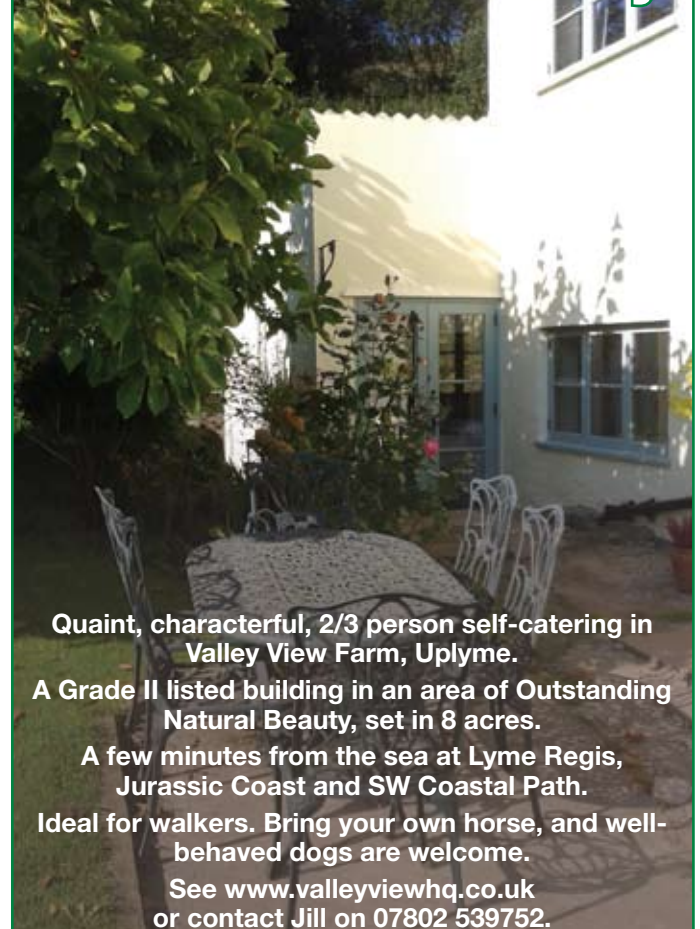
raised included how to judge whether and when to forgive in the context of domestic violence, and the various 'risks' of forgiveness. The unusually

high quality of the questions suggested that the topic was one that spoke to people, one participant later commenting that 'forgiveness is a much more subtle and nuanced area than I'd realized and seems highly relevant to the context of spiritual direction'. As a result of the day, John Lippitt – who is currently working on a book provisionally entitled Love's Forgiveness – has been invited to give a follow-up session on 'Forgiving oneself' as part of the St Albans Cathedral Study Centre's public lecture series next year. Here he plans to explore conceptual and ethical questions arising from the concept of self-forgiveness.

**The University of Hertfordshire Research Blog**



## The Perfect Holiday



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See [www.valleyviewhq.co.uk](http://www.valleyviewhq.co.uk) or contact Jill on 07802 539752.



# In memory of Dennis Aldridge

Dad was born in Gillingham, Kent on 5 February 1930. He was an only child but had five aunts and uncles and assorted cousins.

When he was ten he was evacuated to Pontadawe in Wales. Dad returned home to Gillingham and went to Rochester Grammar School. At the age of 16 he became ill with TB and spent two years in Benenden Sanatorium in Kent. These early experiences made him extremely resilient. It was only years later that we realized part of his treatment for TB had been to collapse one of his lungs. He spent the rest of his life functioning very well on one tank!

Despite the impact on his studies, Dad obtained a place at St Peter's College, Oxford, where he studied history. He then obtained a PGCE. He was the first in his family to go to university. Apparently, Dad wanted to go to Africa to be an educationalist, but his first teaching post, in September 1954, was at Clarendon School in Oxhey, near Watford – not quite the same thing!

Dad taught at Clarendon for a couple of years before he married Jill. They met at Gillingham Parish Church, and were married on 2 April 1956. They then lived in Watford for a short while, then in Andover where Dad taught history at the Grammar School. After three years, they moved to Tring as Dad took up a post as Head of History at Ashlyn's School in Berkhamsted.

Teaching and education were a hugely important part of Dad's life. We have found various papers amongst his files at home, including two references from his early years as a teacher. It is clear that he was thought of very highly, both for his vocation and his practical ability. He was described as bringing a quiet, assured manner to his classes and taking a keen interest in all his pupils.

Dad was appointed Headmaster of Kings Langley School in 1967. One of his key achievements was to set up an outdoor facility in a farmhouse near Brecon. He loved the fact that his pupils had an opportunity to experience nature at first hand.

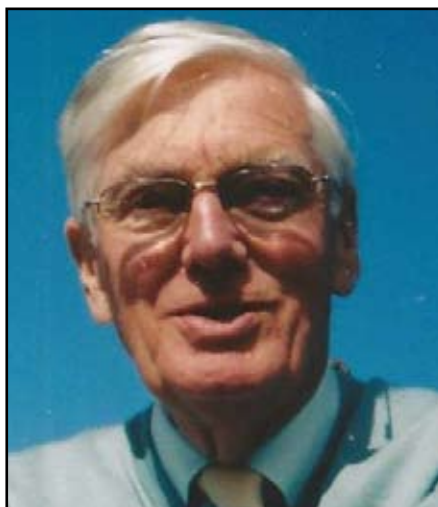
Dad stayed at KLS till he retired in 1992. He was worried that he would have nothing to do after retirement – so he volunteered for Oxfam. He worked for fifteen years in their Oxford office – matching students with work abroad. He really enjoyed the role as it kept him in

touch with young people and his love of education.

During retirement Dad and Mum spent many happy times travelling – often to places he had studied or taught about – Russia, Germany, Prague, Budapest, Latvia and Estonia to name just a few. He tried Spain once but found it far too hot for his liking!

His love of history stayed with him throughout. During his retirement, he spent twelve years as Membership Secretary of Tring Local History Society.

As well as books, Dad loved music and poetry. Ours was a quiet house, except when Dad played Shostakovich records very loudly! He adored classical



music and his love of poetry and nature were reflected in the reading that he asked to be read at his funeral service – extracts from Wordsworth's 'Lines

written above Tintern Abbey'.

Mum and Dad had many happy years in Tring. Their faith and Church life was very important to them both. Dad's contribution to the life of St Peter & St Paul's included being Churchwarden and Secretary of the PCC. He also led the Men's Society for many years. Huw Bellis described him as being quietly confident in his faith – a description that we think fitted perfectly. He and Mum made friends for life through the family of the church in Tring.

It was when Dad reached 80 that we started to see some changes in this active and resilient man. He did well at hiding his failing memory, but he was formally diagnosed with Alzheimer's when he was 82.

Mum and Dad were a close unit and very independent – they loved to visit us and to see our families – but they were of an age and era when you didn't really ask for help and when you asked were always 'fine'. Clearly Mum wasn't and she had a stroke two years ago. Dad struggled to come to terms with her loss and, although resilient as ever, he was not the same man without her.

Dad died peacefully on 13 April with Martin, Dave and I by his side.

We miss you Dad. You were an inspiration – your tenacity, resilience, love and affection. You touched so many people's lives and cared so much about giving everyone the right opportunity. May you rest in peace.

**Martin and Hilary Aldridge**



# In memory of Frank Clark

Frank was a lifelong member of Tring Methodist Church (at Langdon Street, then St Martha's).

'What a friend we have in Jesus' was one of Frank's favourite hymns. I can well imagine Jesus saying, 'What a friend I had in Frank'.

On 15 May St Martha's (Tring Methodist Church) was filled to capacity for a service of thanksgiving for Frank conducted by our Minister, Revd Rachael Hawkins. In her address, Rachael paid tribute to the immense service Frank had given to the Methodist Church in Tring over a long period of time. Rachael spoke with appreciation of the help which Frank had given her as Senior Steward when she came to Tring.

As well as being involved in the life of St Martha's, Frank gave considerable support to Churches Together in Tring and the Bible Society Action Group. Frank's Christian witness extended to other aspects of life in Tring, such as the Justice and Peace Group. Frank was always ready to give caring and practical help to people in need.

Thanks be to God for Frank Clark.

**John Watkins**

**St Martha's Methodist Church**

Frank has been part of St Martha's and this town of Tring, for many years. He and his wife Barbara were much loved by this town and this church. Frank and Barbara certainly leave a legacy which means that they will not be forgotten.

Rosemary Berdinner, our Senior Steward, commented on how many different bits of Frank's woodworking we have in the Church – the communion chalice, the cross, the stand for the font, the holders for the candles for our communion service. I have a candlestick at home that he made for me when he realized that I didn't have one the right size. Many people I know have small wooden crosses that he made at one point: so many bits and pieces that we look on which remind us of him and his generosity and thoughtfulness.

The Methodist Church here in Tring was an important part of Frank's life for many years, both here at St Martha's and previously in Langdon Street. But although this was his church, Frank was known across the churches because of his involvement with the Bible Society, the Justice and Peace group and the prayer breakfasts. He was also

involved in the wider Methodist circuit, representing St Martha's at circuit meetings.

During my time as Minister here, I have very much valued all that he has done here at St Martha's. If I needed advice I was able to phone him and we would discuss various options. I always found him a wise counsel.

He was also a worship leader at St Martha's. He felt strongly that it was something that God was calling him to do, and those of us who have been present when Frank has led worship have been blessed by his sensitivity and thoughtfulness. That value that he gave to worship was also seen in his and



Barbara's support of the communion service at The Furlong every other month.

Those were just a few of the things that he was involved with. On top of that were the basic practicalities of church life. Frank always liked to be 'doing' and so he took charge of the heating, he moved the chairs and put the tables out for craft club each week, putting the different chairs back into the right places for the people who liked to sit in them. He took his turn greeting people at the door, and filled in as communion steward when needed.

He and Barbara were also Pastoral Visitors, caring for those in their groups and anyone who was in need, sometimes just calling in for a chat, other times giving lifts to hospital appointments or opening their home

for meals. And he was committed to the building of the Church extension, a project that he was enthusiastically behind for many years. It is sad that he won't see it finally finished, but I will never forget the enormous smile on his face when I told him that the work had started.

Underlying all of this is the memory of Frank's faith for all of this was done because of his faith. Frank did not come to Church because it was the right thing to do or because it was a place where he could meet his friends; he came because of his love for God and his knowledge of God's love for him.

Some people struggle to know the purpose of life or to find help during difficult times, but for Frank it was clear. He lived out his love for God in very practical ways and wanted to share it with others. In his eyes, St Martha's was never just about the people who were here each Sunday, but also about reaching out to those who live around us, and the people of this town, this country and the world. He had definite views, and you may not always have agreed with him, but you couldn't argue with where he was coming from and his deep knowledge of God's love for each person.

Frank's faith was an example to each of us and if we remember nothing else of him, he would want us to remember that. But if he were still here, he would be saying to me, don't concentrate on me, concentrate on God because God was always the priority in his life. And I think today he would want everyone to be reminded of God's love for us and all that he did for us on the cross; I think he would want us to be reminded that although he is no longer with us, death is not the end, that Jesus promised everlasting life, and he is now safe in God's care. I think he would want everyone to know that each one of us can have a relationship with God and that he will support us, encourage us and love us through all the ups and downs of life; and I think he would want everyone to know that God can always be trusted and that each one of us can know the forgiveness and hope that he gives.

We thank God for Frank's life and for all that he did for St Martha's.

**Rachael Hawkins**

**St Martha's Methodist Church**



# St Martha's Methodist Church

**REVD GILL HULME'S LEAVING CONCERT ON SATURDAY 22 JULY**

To mark Gill's farewell, Southdown Methodist Church in Harpenden has invited Luton Male Voice Choir to hold a concert at their Church. All circuit members are welcome. Tickets are £8 for adults and £5 for children, obtainable from Jenny Cope on 01582 768087. Proceeds to Methodist Homes.

**BAPTISM AT ST MARTHA'S**

The morning service on 6 August will include a Baptism for Luca, son of Kate and Nick Benson. Revd Rachael Hawkins will be presiding.

**SALVATION ARMY RETURNS TO ST MARTHA'S**

We have a date for a return visit from the Aylesbury Fellowship Band – Saturday 16 September. Please note this in your diaries. We look forward to another Salvation Army style evening which was so popular last time.

**1066 CLUB**

St Martha's would like to put in a plug for the 1066 Club, a club for partially sighted people that meets in Berkhamsted once a month. Transport is provided, including from Tring. If you would like more information, please phone Mary Cutler on 01727 860 695.

2 July 10.00am  
Communion Service  
*Revd Brian Tebbutt*

2 July 6.00pm  
Communion Service  
*Revd Rachael Hawkins*

9 July 10.00am  
Morning Service  
*John Watkins*

16 July 10.00am  
Communion Service  
*Revd Rachael Hawkins*

23 July 10.00am  
Morning Service  
*John Benson*

23 July 6.00pm  
Circuit Farewell Service  
North Watford

30 July 10.00am  
Morning Service  
*Audrey Cox*

6 August 10.00am  
Service with Baptism  
*Revd Rachael Hawkins*

6 August 6.00pm  
Evening Service  
*Ruth Treves Brown*

13 August 10.00am  
Morning Service  
*Katie Breedyk*

20 August 10.00am  
Communion Service  
*Revd Brian Tebbutt*

27 August 10.00am  
Morning Service  
*David Morgan*

# New Mill Baptist Church

**TOT SPOT**  
Tuesdays @ 10.00-11.30am  
4, 11, 18 July

**BRIGHT HOUR**  
Tuesday 4 July @ 2.30pm  
The Speaker is  
*Pastor David Williams*  
from Akeman Street Baptist

Tuesday 1 August Afternoon  
Coach Trip with tea

at Waltham Abbey Salvation Army

**KNIT & NATTER**  
Wednesdays @ 7.30pm  
5, 12, 19, 26 July  
2, 9, 16, 23, 30 August

**THE MILL CAFÉ**  
Thursdays @ 11.00-2.00pm  
6, 13, 29, July

**FRIDAY CLUB**  
Fridays @ 6.00-7.15pm  
7, 14 July

2 July 10.30am  
Morning Service  
*Revd Andrew Openshaw*

9 July 10.30am  
Morning Service  
*Mr Harold Liberty*

16 July 10.30am  
Morning Service  
*Revd Andrew Openshaw*

23 July 10.30am  
Morning Service  
*Revd Andrew Openshaw*

# High Street Baptist Church

**@MYEG**  
Mondays 7.30-8.45pm  
Youth Group for years 7 to 13

**ACTIVITY ROOM**  
Tuesdays 9.30-11.30am  
Craft, stories, songs and more!  
Suitable for 0 to 4yrs

**COFFEE FOR A CAUSE**  
Tuesdays 10.30am – 12noon  
Coffee in the foyer in aid of  
BMS World Mission

**TOTS**  
Wednesdays 9.30-11.30am  
Baby play area, soft play, trikes, scooters!  
Suitable for 0 to 4yrs

**GAMES AFTERNOON**  
Wednesdays 2.00-4.00pm  
Traditional games, puzzles and refreshments

**PLAY CAFÉ**  
Thursdays 9.30-11.30am  
Relax and chat while the little ones play  
Suitable for 0 to 3yrs

**FRIDAY CAFÉ**  
Fridays 12.00-1.30pm  
Freshly cooked lunches

**WHO LET THE DADS OUT**  
First Saturday of the month at 8.30am to 10.00am

**SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP**  
Service at 10.30am with Junior Church and Crèche

**SUNDAYS @ 7**  
First Sunday of the month at 7.00pm



# Tring Team Anglican Churches

The Tring Team consists of five churches: St Peter & St Paul in Tring; All Saints, Long Marston; St Cross, Wilstone; St Mary's, Puttenham; and St John the Baptist, Aldbury.

**Sunday 2 July**  
8.00am Holy Communion BCP Tring  
8.00am Holy Communion BCP Aldbury  
10.00am Holy Communion CW Tring  
10.00am Holy Communion CW Wilstone  
10.00am Sunday Worship CW Long Marston  
10.00am Worship for All Aldbury  
12.00 midday Baptisms Tring

**Sunday 9 July**  
8.00am Holy Communion CW Tring  
8.15am Holy Communion BCP Puttenham  
10.00am Holy Communion BCP Aldbury  
10.00am Holy Communion Long Marston  
10.00am Sunday Worship in Wilstone  
10.00am Worship for All Tring  
11.30am Holy Communion BCP Tring  
6.00pm Evening Prayer Long Marston

**Sunday 16 July**  
8.00am Holy Communion BCP Tring  
10.00am Holy Communion CW Tring  
10.00am Holy Communion CW Wilstone  
10.00am Worship for All Long Marston  
10.00am Holy Communion Aldbury

**Sunday 23 July**  
8.00am Holy Communion BCP Tring  
10.00am Holy Communion CW Tring  
10.00am Worship for All Wilstone  
10.00am Holy Communion Aldbury  
10.00am Holy Communion CW Long Marston  
3.30pm Evensong in Puttenham  
6.00pm Holy Communion CW Tring

**Sunday 30 July**  
8.00am Holy Communion BCP Tring  
10.00am Holy Communion CW Tring  
10.00am Worship for All Wilstone  
10.00am Holy Communion Aldbury  
10.00am Holy Communion Long Marston

**Weekday Services**  
Mondays 8.30am Morning Prayer Tring  
Tuesdays 8.30am Morning Prayer Tring  
Tuesdays 9.15am Holy Communion CW Tring  
Wednesdays 8.30am Morning Prayer Aldbury  
Thursdays 10.00am Holy Communion BCP Tring  
Fridays 8.30am Morning Prayer Tring

Last Tuesday in the month 10.00am Holy Communion Wilstone

**Baptism Preparation**  
Sunday 9 July 11.20am St P&P Emmie Hobbs Room

**Churches Together in Tring**  
Saturday 1 July 8.30-9.30am Prayer Breakfast New Mill

**Dacorum Foodbank**  
Weekdays 10.00am St P&P

**Meditation**  
Thursdays 8.00pm Corpus Christi

**Coffee Mornings**  
Saturdays 10.00am St P&P  
Tuesdays 9.00am Aldbury  
Tuesdays 10.30am Wilstone

**First Saturday Lunch**  
Saturday 1 July  
For those who have been bereaved to meet and eat with others. Contact Margaret Oram for information on 01442 824575.

**Afternoon Tea**  
Tuesday 25 July 2.00-3.30pm All Saints, Long Marston

**Youth Café**  
Mondays in term time 3.30pm St P&P  
Secondary School aged children meet for toast, crisps, coke and chat.

**Young Adults Group TAYA**  
First and third Thursdays 7.30pm St P&P  
A discussion group for young adults

**Mothers' Union**  
Thursday 6 July 1.30pm Tring Parish Hall

**Book Group**  
Last Sunday in the month 6.45pm St P&P

**Piano and More Concert**  
Sunday 23 July 3.00pm St P&P

**FOTCH Safari Garden Day**  
Saturday 1 July 9.30am

**Licensing of Revd Michelle Grace**  
Wednesday 5 July 7.30pm  
St Peter & St Paul

**Dads 'n' Lads 'n' Daughters**  
Saturday 15 - 16 July  
Puttenham Church Yard





# Useful contacts

**TRING TEAM PARISH**

Team Rector  
(Tring & Puttenham)  
Rev Huw Bellis  
2 The Limes, Station Road  
01442 822170 or  
07411 483229  
huw@tringteamparish.org.uk  
(Day off Thursday)

Team Vicar  
(Aldbury)  
Rev Michelle Grace  
Aldbury Vicarage  
01442 851200  
michelle@tringteamparish.org.uk

School Chaplaincy and  
Team Vicar  
(Long Marston, Tring School)  
Rev Jane Banister  
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jane@tringteamparish.org.uk

Associate Priest  
(Wilstone)  
Rev Didier Jaquet  
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(Day off Saturday)

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01442 822915

Ian Matthews (Tring)  
01442 823327

Andy Stephenson (Aldbury)  
07548 696965

Annie Eggar (Aldbury)  
01442 851854

John Barron (Puttenham)  
01296 631351

Christine Rutter (Puttenham)  
01296 668337

Ken Martin (Wilstone)  
01442 822894  
  
Rev Jane Banister (Long  
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Mothers' Union Branch Leader  
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Hall Secretary  
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Bandb33@talktalk.net

Safeguarding  
Jenny Scholes 01442 825276

**ST MARTHA'S  
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01442 866324  
rachel.hawkins@methodist.org.uk

Senior Steward  
Rosemary Berdinner  
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**AKEMAN STREET  
BAPTIST CHURCH**  
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Rev David Williams  
01442 827881

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Emma Nash  
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**HIGH STREET  
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Assistant Minister,  
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tringbaptistchurch.co.uk

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**NEW MILL  
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**JUSTICE & PEACE GROUP**  
affiliated to  
Churches Together in Tring  
Secretary  
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07887 980004  
michaeldemidecki@gmail.com  
www.justiceandpeacetring.org

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Design  
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Articles and photos for the  
next edition should arrive with  
the Editor by the 6th of the  
previous month.

## Crossword puzzle answers

From page 10

**ANSWERS ACROSS**

1. SPARKLE
5. CALM
8. RECTOR
9. OUTING
10. BROCCOLI
12. CITY
13. IMBROGLIO
17. JEHU
18. PSALMIST
20. OPTION
21. TURNIP
23. STUN
24. PREVAIL

**ANSWERS DOWN**

2. POETRY
3. ROT
4. LARGO
5. CATECHISM
6. LENGTH
7. COMING
11. COMMUNION
14. REPENT
15. DESPOT
16. ASSIST
19. ALTAR
22. REV



  
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