

# RG3 1

St Catherine's Tilehurst  
Parish Magazine  
Autumn 2023



# From the editor



At every church ‘business’ meeting we do ‘dwelling in the word’; reading a Bible passage, seeing where our attention is drawn and then sharing with another person and then with the whole group.

Now that the summer holidays are over I've been reflecting ‘where my attention has been drawn’ and it was on a wet day out in York where we spent two hours in York Minster doing the guided tour.

My attention was drawn to hats. I've been used to the younger generation wearing Baseball caps, sometimes back to front’ for no apparent reason, as a permanent fixture, but was struck by the number of older men doing the same.

It used to be customary for men to remove their headgear when entering a place of worship, and indeed any indoor space where the headgear wasn't needed to keep the head warm and dry. This out of courtesy particularly when entering someone's home.

I suppose that for many, York Minster is seen as a tourist attraction; a museum like space where the admission cost of £16 gives certain rights and not in the same league as an ‘ordinary’ church.

Having said that I've been struck by some men ‘up front’ in church who keep their headgear on, watch a video of Stuart Townend, many of whose songs we sing, for instance. Recently on ‘Sings of Praise’ I noticed that the drummer in a worship band was wearing a cap.

Is it just me? I did some in depth research (OK I Googled) as you do, to see what the views are on male headgear and worship and the jury is out it seems. This is one result of a ‘Google’ search:

*There's a scene in “The Two Popes” where Cardinal Bergoglio tells Pope Benedict a story about two seminarians who like to smoke. The first one went to his spiritual director and asked if it's permitted to smoke while praying. The reply was, “no, of course not.” The second seminarian asked slightly differently. “Is it permitted to pray while smoking?”*

Might the same be applied to the wearing of a hat? The wearing of male headgear may be making a return but not, it seems always for warmth or to cover a bald head, but as a fashion statement.

If you look at any photos from the 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> century of workers, Navvies or football crowds, every man was wearing a hat.

Perhaps the tide is turning and it's time for St Catherine's to commission the design of an in-house baseball cap as worn by Tennis players, Racing Drivers and Footballers to promote their brand?

Only joking?

Tony Bartlett

PS - If you see me wearing a hat (and NOT in church) it's either to keep the sun off, or to keep my head warm and dry.

# Introducing our new vicar

My name is Jackie Fountain and I am excited to be joining you as the vicar of St Catherine's and St Birinus at the end of November.

A little bit about me. I am married to Paul, and we have four grown up children.

I am originally from Lancashire (you will be able to tell from the accent!). Paul and I met at Warwick University and lived in Coventry for a few years. We then moved to the Democratic Republic of Congo (Zaire as it was then) and worked for Tear Fund, partnering with the local church to establish a Village Water Supply Project. Eight years, three children and many adventures later, we returned to the UK and moved to Reading where Paul is working for Thames Water.

In Reading we had our fourth child. I worked as a primary school teacher. I then got a job as a Community Worker at New Hope Community Church (a church outreach, part of Greyfriars church) where I worked for 13 years. I loved working alongside the congregation reaching out to the local community; loving, serving and sharing good news with people in many different ways.

I was doing some preaching and teaching at New Hope and I wanted to study the Bible on a deeper level, so I started studying theology part time at St Mellitus College in London. I really enjoyed the learning and being challenged. I began to feel that God was calling me to ordained ministry. After a process of exploring that call, I was accepted and completed my training at St Mellitus while still working at New Hope.

I have been working in Newbury, at St Nicolas church for the past three years as a Curate. This has been a really positive and helpful time, and it has been encouraging to see God working in people's lives and to see Him using many different kinds of people, each with their gifts and talents seeking to follow Jesus.

I am looking forward to this next step on the journey, returning to Tilehurst (where we used to live), joining you in the kingdom work which is happening there and together seeking to move forward in God's direction. We are encouraged by all we see that God has been doing in you and through you; and we look forward with eagerness and anticipation to all that God is going to continue to be doing.



Jackie



# Introducing our new café manager

I am delighted to join the team at Café Siena as the new manager.

Having originally trained in Hospitality management at Cornwall College (many years ago), I have since followed a varied career path in Retail and Property Management.

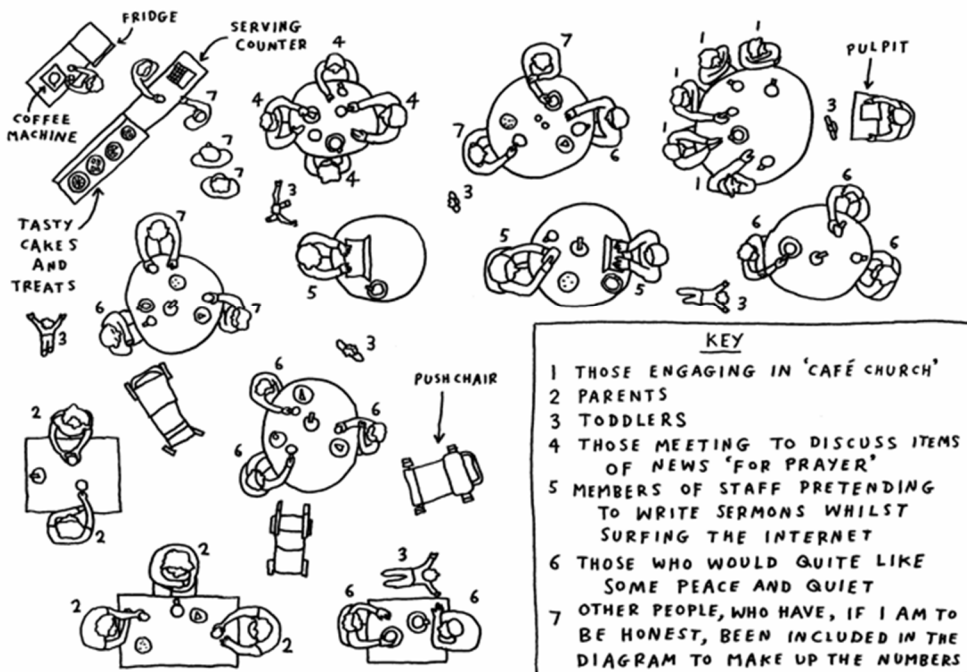
In more recent years, I have organised numerous catering events, primarily to raise funds for the various charities that I support.

I look forward to meeting our loyal customers as well as welcoming our new ones.

Karen Fountaine



## THE CHURCH CAFÉ SEEN FROM ABOVE





# The End of St Catherine's Vacancy in Sight!

## Exciting Times

The thrilling news of Jackie Fountain's appointment as our vicar just missed the publication of the last RG31. We are really excited and looking forward to Jackie and her husband Paul joining us at the end of November. God has been good to us in bringing her to us, and we eagerly await what God has in store.

Do read Jackie's summary of her journey that has brought her to St Catherine's that is available in this edition of RG31. Meanwhile planning for her Institution and Induction service on November 28<sup>th</sup> is in hand, and we very much hope you will be able to come and welcome Jackie and Paul on that occasion.

Jackie is completing her curacy at St Nicolas in Newbury at the end of September, and then having a break and an opportunity to recharge before joining us at the end of November. Do keep Jackie and Paul in your prayers.

If one appointment was not enough, a second one has been made! Karen Fountaine has joined us as Café Siena Manager following Karen Patrick's departure. Just to be clear – Karen Fountaine is no relation to Jackie Fountain, her name is a coincidence, though it does help some of us with lapses of memory that her first name is the same as our previous Café manager!

We welcome Karen, and are looking forward to her steering the Café forward. All the volunteers have done a fantastic job in keeping the Café going without a manager – but the addition of the manager is very welcome!

## Ongoing Church Activities

Our Sunday service theme of Kings in the Bible during July and August provided a rich source of learning. For some of us these Kings were little known (well let's be honest how many of us were well acquainted with the likes of Ahab, Hezekiah, Josiah or Jehoshaphat!). But what a lot we all learned.

Our windy wet July and August weather this year was disappointing and resulted in only a handful of services taking place outside – and the wind made any communion service outside a particular challenge! Many thanks for everyone's forbearance!

September saw us back in church for our Sunday services, usually following the lectionary. The Leaders and Preachers Action Group have the arrangements in hand for the services through to the end of the year. We will celebrate harvest on September 24<sup>th</sup>, Shoebox Sunday on November 19<sup>th</sup>. The Christmas service schedule is in place, and detailed planning will take place over the coming months.

We continue to be grateful for the amazing support of the visiting clergy. And a special thank you to Ann Cogle who stepped in to preach and lead a service with less than 24 hours' notice when the scheduled leader was unexpectedly unavailable.

Our fund raising events over the next few months include a Quiz night on 30<sup>th</sup> September which has proved very popular – so popular that it is sold out!! On November 18<sup>th</sup> we have our popular Autumn fair.

*(Continued on page 6)*

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Andrea and Matty's wedding is now upon us! Banns have been read (as expected with no objections!!), and the wedding will take place on October 7<sup>th</sup>. We all wish them an enjoyable and memorable day and many happy days of married life.

We look forward in faith to what God has in store for us when Jackie and Paul join us in November. Meanwhile many thanks for all that you do to support our life at St Catherine's.

Lynn Stevens and Caroline Heron  
Churchwardens

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**Memorial service on Sunday, 29<sup>th</sup> October at 3pm followed by tea and cakes.**

Please feel free to invite any who have been recently bereaved  
or you think would benefit from this service

**GOD IS IN CONTROL; TRUST HIM**  
**'My hope is in You.' Psalm 39:7 NKJV**



Life seldom works out exactly the way we hope or think it will.

When Job lost everything, he said, 'I don't have the strength to endure. I have nothing to live for... I am utterly helpless, without any chance of success' (Job 6:11, 13 NLT).

Yet in the end, Job got back twice as much as he had lost. But the experiences and adversities he had gone through changed his attitude towards God profoundly. 'I know that you can do all things; no purpose of yours can be thwarted... My ears have heard of you but now my eyes have seen you' (Job 42:2, 5 NIV).

What had Job discovered? That God is sovereign! He is not our servant, we are His servants. We must obey His Word in order to walk in His blessing - but the final outcome of all things rests in His hands and not ours.

Many of us struggle with control. We want control not only over our circumstances, but our goals, plans, relationships, and all that concerns us. Such fear is often an indication of an unconscious desire to be independent of God; to be the master of our own destiny.

Sometimes it's the result of growing up in a chaotic environment and resolving never to repeat the experiences of your earlier life.

Perhaps you think you're in control of your life due to your educational, financial, or other achievements. It isn't true. God enabled you to do everything that you have done. Paul writes, 'But whatever I am now, it is all because God poured out his special favour on me' (1 Corinthians 15:10 NLT).

Today God is in control — trust Him!

*This thought is taken from 'The Word for Today', Daily Bible reading notes produced quarterly by UCB (United Christian Broadcasters Ltd) PO Box 255, Stoke on Trent, ST4 8YY. If you would like to receive these free (although UCB do welcome donations) notes or those aimed at Secondary School age, call UCB on 01782 911 000*

**St Catherine's  
Tilehurst**

# Autumn Fair

**Sat 18<sup>th</sup> Nov : 2 - 4pm**

A special guest from the North Pole  
will be making an early visit to Tilehurst

**Fun for all the family!**

- |                  |                   |
|------------------|-------------------|
| ● Craft Stalls   | ● Tombola         |
| ● Games          | ● Refreshments    |
| ● Hamper Raffle  | ● Christmas Gifts |
| ● Homemade Cakes |                   |

**Entrance : Donations welcome**

St Catherine's Centre, Wittenham Ave, RG31 5LN  
[www.stcatherines-tilehurst.org.uk](http://www.stcatherines-tilehurst.org.uk)





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# PURLEY PLAYERS

We are your local amateur dramatics group based in Purley on Thames. We produce three types of shows, Pantomimes, Comedy/Farce plays and Murder Mystery Evenings which include a meal.

We are looking for new members either to be on stage or to work behind the scenes with scenery and costumes.

If you would like to join us please get in touch to have a chat or arrange to meet.

To make contact email us on:  
[mail@purleyplayers.uk](mailto:mail@purleyplayers.uk)

To have a look at the shows we have done in the past visit our website page:  
[www.purleyplayers.uk/show-archive/](http://www.purleyplayers.uk/show-archive/)



# THAMES VALLEY FLOWER CLUB



Come along to our friendly and welcoming flower club.

Make friends and WATCH a professional flower demonstrator make beautiful flower arrangements.

*Membership fees are £42.00 a year (£5.00 for a visitor)*

- Refreshments are available.
- We also hold social events throughout the Year.

We meet at 10.30am on the last Monday  
of each month (excl. Bank Holidays) at

The Calcot Centre, Highview, Calcot, Reading, RG31 4XD.

*For more information please contact Brenda on 0118 943 1079*

# AXA Charity bike ride and Hike

This year in September I completed a 2-day challenge raising money for Readifood.

Back in 2020 my new boss challenged us to raise £20K in 2020....this was before we knew about the impending pandemic and to be honest once this started the impetus to try and support charities was even harder as so many charities relied on sponsored events to boost their donations.

Since 2020 we have continued as a team to raise a lot of money for local charities, we have never been prescriptive about who we fund-raise for – we are a national team so over the years some people have chosen local causes or charities with which they have a close personal connection whilst others have raised money for the more well known ones.

By the end of 2023 we will have passed £100K for a variety of charities, something we are all hugely proud of. AXA is a massive Company, but back in 2020 my department had around 40 staff. It has also inspired other groups within the business to start being active in fundraising as well which is fantastic.

## So to This Year's Adventure!

This year we chose the Shropshire Hills, and the options were to do a bike ride of either 20, 40 or 60 miles and a hike of either 14miles or 26. I chose the short bike ride and the long walk.....

As we approached the walk we did all get increasingly nervous about how many hills there might be in the 'Shropshire Hills' and after 2 of my colleagues went to



Tamsin Harrison and her well-deserved drink after the event

check out the walking route we re-planned it entirely. Unfortunately we were stuck with the cycle route that had been planned....by a very keen and fit cyclist.

It was apparent from the beginning that the bike ride would be really hard, the original plan was that 1 of my colleagues was going to do a lap then another colleague would join him and then the remaining 4 of us would join for the last lap. It should have been obvious before we set off for the 'final lap' that it was going to be tricky.....as they were running about an hour behind the planned schedule.

5km in Gary got a puncture, and we had to call Jane our support person for help! She bought a spare bike from someone else who had finished their lap vowing to never ride a bike again.

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After 8 miles including a lot of pushing my bike up some very big hills we did make it to a well deserved pub break. Some of our non-cycling colleagues met us which was lovely and also tried to persuade us we didn't need to ride back...but knowing full well we were unlikely to take up the offer of a lift.

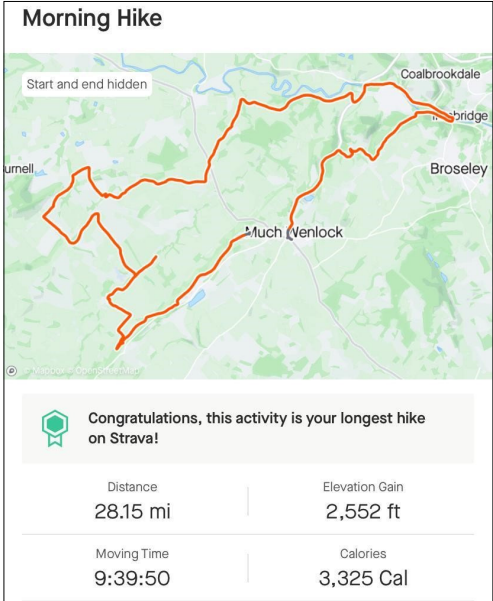
The ride back was 'interesting' we found a cycle route which was lovely to start with, then it got very bumpy then very steep. We did eventually make it back to Much Wenlock, I think I possibly walked as much as I rode but we got there in the end.

this map shows just over 28 miles....someone else's watch said 31 and another friend said 35.

The next picture is the beginning...in the rain!



This is my friend Rob's record of our walk!



The good thing about doing a hike like this is getting to know the people you work with in a very different way. In the corporate insurance world you don't

(Continued on page 11)



The next morning started early, with a 7am departure...in pouring rain. There were 16 of us off on the big hike. When you look at where we went it is pretty apparent there was a fair bit of doubling back and getting lost! And actually I don't know how far I walked in the end,



(Continued from page 10)

really go for a hike, or consume vast quantities of jelly babies, haribo and cake – but there is something bonding about the experience.

A high point for me was when a message appeared on our WhatsApp group suggesting those racing ahead should slow down as the ‘youngsters’ were struggling! I was thrilled to be classed as a youngster, it made my day.

We did have 3 of our group abandon the hike at various points, largely down to inappropriate footwear....but they still achieved 20 miles and 26, so still the furthest any of them had ever walked in their lives. We were really lucky to have 1 of our colleagues driving around Shropshire rescuing people and also providing sweets, water and chocolate at various intervals.

We did eventually make it back to Much Wenlock, via the impressive site of Ironbridge, and a very, very slippery muddy hill and some really vicious brambles. We started in rain and we ended in rain, it was hard going but we did get there and I have made some

lasting memories as well as raising lots of money.



Ironbridge (6 ish miles from the end)

So far I have raised £1,115 including Giftable which is quite incredible, so thank you so much for the support both in prayer and donations.

I don't know quite how much we will have raised for this event this year but I think it is likely to be in the region of £20,000! Gary my boss is also local to Reading and he has raised over £2,000 for Launchpad, another of our local organisations doing fantastic work.

Tamsin Harrison

## Dates for your Diary



Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> October - The clocks go back one hour

Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> November - Autumn Fair, 2.00-4.00pm

Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> November - ‘Shoebox’ service, 10.00am

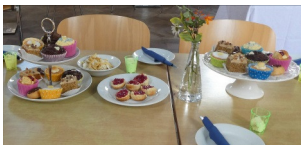
Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> November - Institution and Induction of  
Rev Jackie Fountain as vicar of St Catherine's, 7.00pm

Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> December - Christingle service 4.00pm

## August

The 16<sup>th</sup> August saw us welcome 28 people in St Catherine's church for our annual Afternoon Tea.

Everyone enjoyed an assortment of sandwiches, scones, with jam and cream, and homemade



cakes all washed down with as much tea or coffee as needed.

There were many complimentary comments and a lot of happy chatter.

The proceeds from this event were donated to the MU Summer of Hope Appeal, raising money for life changing work around the world.

## September

The branches' AGM was held on the evening of the 13<sup>th</sup> September preceded by a service of Evening Prayer.

Many thanks to Mike Heather for leading this in the absence of a resident vicar.

After a short interval for refreshments the AGM proceeded.

Minutes of the 2022 AGM were accepted with no matters arising and the Committee, all of whom offered to continue for another year, was approved.

Hilary Smee presented the Branch Accounts which were approved, after a question about a donation to the Big Give was explained satisfactorily by Hilary.

During Any other Business it was noted that the Flower Arranging Demonstration booked for November would not now take place, due to unforeseen circumstances, and that an alternative would be investigated.

Gifts of flowers were given to Joanne Freeman for manning the sound desk at our monthly meetings, and to Sheila Bryant for writing up details of our meetings for the quarterly magazine. Mike Heather was given some biscuits for taking the service. The meeting ended with the MU Prayer

Steph Walklate

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## Operation Christmas Child



Now is a good time to collect the items to fill a Shoebox for 'Operations Christmas Child' ready for our 'Shoebox' service, at 10.00am on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> November.

At the service we'll find out more about the charity and collect the filled boxes, they'll then go a local distribution depot.

There are leaflets explaining all about the scheme. If you don't have a suitable shoebox to gift wrap (or even if you do) we have a supply of ready-decorated 'flat pack' Shoeboxes for which we ask a donation of 50p, you will just need to buy/find suitable gifts to fill them.

For more information please speak to Tony Bartlett or Joanne Freeman.

# Pause to reflect

## Plenty for all if we share

I have just put out some bread crumbs on to the patio.

A few moments later , down they come, first 1 then 2, 3, 4 and more follow until there is around 15 or more. There is plenty of crumbs for them all to share if only they would, but no, they squabble and fight in an attempt to have it all just for themselves.

They are a family, all related, male, female, mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters and their young.

They are all living in the hotel bird boxes, I made for them, high up on the wall under the eaves for safety. We also have hanging seed feeders and the most important of them all, water in the garden, but even with all of this you would have thought they wouldn't need to fight and squabble as there is plenty for all, if only they would share.

In the apple tree near by, sitting absolutely still and hidden is a predator, just waiting for the moment, to swoop down, then unfortunately there will be one less to this family. Perhaps, they should have been more aware of their surroundings and be content with what they have instead of fighting and squabbling.

In my mind I am thinking, should I stop putting out the bread crumbs or do I swoosh away the imposter, even if I know he is sure to return again in the future.

Maybe we can see a likeness here between the one who gives, the ones



that receive and the one, who given an opportunity, will take away.

If you haven't already guessed The family are our resident house Sparrows and the

intruder is the Sparrowhawk who occasionally visits our garden.

I have concluded that they like us, are all God's creation, therefore it is only God who has the final decision and I'll leave it to Him.

My eye is also drawn to the rear patio fencing panel. On it I have fixed a white dove that I made out of some plastic

*(Continued on page 14)*





(Continued from page 13)

material I had in my shed, planted underneath is a morning glory plant that has just produced the most beautiful sky blue flowers, the two compliment each other and give me a feeling of hope, beauty and peace.

## Choices

Shut your eyes, use your finger to move along life's journey to the destination of your choice. With your finger start life at the beginning at the small dot.

As we progress through life the road is often up and down with no clear direction.

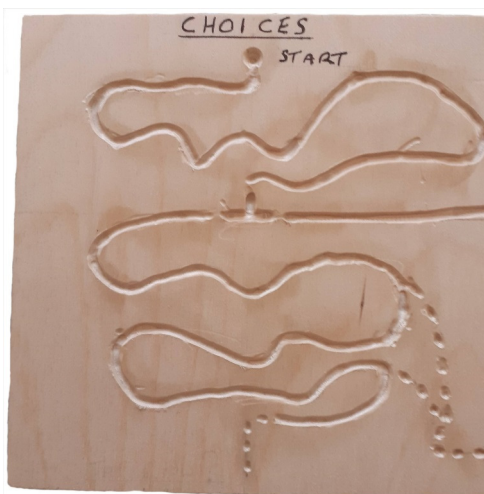
Then we will come to a cross road and we have to make a decision on the path we will take and make.

We can take the way that turns the corner to a new and exciting direction, or we can take the other path and continue as before on the route that will offer a life that may not be completely fulfilled, with it's same old offerings and conclusions, till the end of the road.

If we chose the road to Damascus and the right that turns the corner we would then be on a path that will have no end only a new beginning with the cross and Jesus at the centre.

if you chose the way that maybe you now wish you should and would have taken, do not despair, we are given another chance and an opportunity in life to change, so have another go and choose the other way.

Peter



Two sides of a board of wood carved by Peter representing the two routes

John 14:6

Jesus said 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life.  
No one comes to the Father except through me.



**Looking for friendship  
or company?**

**Why not come along to**



## **Tuesday get Together**

**Serving the community**

**Drop in and meet old friends and make new ones**

**A warm welcome awaits. Tea & Coffee provided**

**Tuesdays 10 am – 12 noon  
in Café Siena**

**St Catherine's Church Centre,  
Wittenham Avenue, Tilehurst, RG31 5LN**

For more information email  
[info@stcatherines-tilehurst.org.uk](mailto:info@stcatherines-tilehurst.org.uk)

## **TgT**

We have been Getting Together on Tuesday mornings for almost four years now and are delighted to welcome newcomers. So if you know of anyone that would benefit from joining us then please do point them in our direction!

Lorraine Roberts





# The Song of the Lilies

In this noisy  
and  
fractious  
world I really

appreciate the quiet subtle ways in which  
God speaks to us. Not this time from a  
glorious cathedral or church but from a  
deserted little place of worship that time  
has forgotten.

For me this has been a summer of seeking  
lilies! I love them and their scents and so  
have been to garden centres, bought two  
and only last week another one from an  
economy supermarket, which had by far,  
the most lovely flowers. All this lily  
attention came to a climax last week.

My friends and I have been exploring  
local churches that appear rather  
desolate. We struggled with the door,  
which did give way and were met by  
darkness and a damp odour. Cautiously  
we moved to the front and I asked my  
friend to read out the bible verse open on  
the pulpit as I felt that within the  
bleakness, a message was brewing. She  
stood there and read out the beginning  
of psalm 45. Message received and  
understood.

Psalms 45 is a special love song that the  
sons of Korah wrote for the music leader.  
It is sung to the music that they call  
'Lilies.'

## Psalm 45

This beautiful song makes my heart very happy.  
I will sing this special poem to the king.  
My voice is ready to sing it very well,  
as well as a clever writer can write with a pen.  
You are the most handsome man that there is.  
You speak kind words in a beautiful way.  
And so God will continue to bless you forever.  
Brave soldier, wear your sword at your side!  
Show what a great king you are!  
Wear your royal clothes  
and ride out to win against your enemies!  
Win the war on behalf of truth and justice!  
Then your strong right hand will do powerful things!  
Your sharp arrows will cut into the heart of your enemies.  
Nations will fall down under your feet.  
God, you will continue to rule as king  
always and forever.  
Your authority as king will bring justice to your people.  
You love people to do what is right,  
and you hate anything that is evil.  
So God, your God, has chosen you  
to be greater than all your people.  
He has put special olive oil on you,  
to make you happy.

*Continued overleaf*



Continued

All your clothes have the beautiful smell  
of myrrh, aloes and cassia.  
You hear the music of stringed instruments  
that comes from beautiful palaces.  
That makes you happy.

The daughters of kings are among your visitors.  
Your royal bride stands at your right hand.  
She is wearing gold from Ophir.  
Royal daughter, listen to me.  
Listen carefully to what I am saying.  
Forget your people and your family.  
You are very beautiful  
and the king will want to be with you.  
He is your master, so respect him.  
Rich people will come from Tyre to give gifts to you.  
They will want you to help them.  
The king's bride is in the palace,  
and she looks beautiful!  
Her dress has gold threads in it.  
Now they lead her to the king in her beautiful clothes.  
Her young friends follow after her  
to bring her to the king.  
They are very happy as they walk together  
and they go into the king's palace.  
You will have sons to become kings,  
as your ancestors were kings before you.  
You will make them princes  
to rule over all the land.  
In future years I will cause people to remember  
that you are a great king!  
Then people will praise you always and forever.

There are many commentaries on the meaning of this psalm but for me the message is very simple. It was written, inspired by God as a glowing prophecy that Jesus, Our King would arrive in the future, which he did in a stable in Bethlehem. We, the faithful, are now prophetically being reassured and encouraged that the bridegroom is indeed on His way to meet the bride (the church). Are we tired of waiting or faithfully ready?

### **Luke 12:27-28**

*Look at the lilies and how they grow. They don't work or make their clothing, yet Solomon in all his glory was not dressed as beautifully as they are.*

*And if God cares so wonderfully for flowers that are here today and thrown into the fire tomorrow, he will certainly care for you. Why do you have so little faith?*

Lorraine Roberts

# Harvest Festival 2023

Our Harvest Thanksgiving Service was on 24th September. The Service was led by Richard Canning and Ann Cogle.



It was so good to celebrate all the good gifts God has given to us and thank Him for His provision.

Maureen and team had expertly decorated every surface in Church with all the food donations that had been brought in. These will be taken to Readifood, our local foodbank charity.

The bring and share lunch afterwards was well attended and we all enjoyed fellowship together with a wide variety of foods.



The homemade loaves for the bread making competition were laid out, sliced and tasted by all and voting slips filled in.



## The winners were:



In 3rd place - Valerie Poore



In 2nd place - Chris Addison

And in 1st place came Sonia Ludford, who wasn't there to collect her first place certificate from me (Sonia later revealed the loaf had actually been made by her husband Dave!)



Well done to everyone who entered. Thank you to all those who worked so hard to organize our Harvest Thanksgiving day. We all had a lot of fun.

Lynn Stevens

# Harvest Lunch 2023



## Christian Aid & Harvest



The Christian Aid Harvest campaign this year focuses on the effect of climate change and the BRACK project (Building Resilience through improving the Absorptive and Adaptive Capacity for Transformation) in the Mutoko and Mudzi areas of North East Zimbabwe.

The communities in these hot, dry, drought-prone areas are exposed to an array of shocks and stresses.

The climate in these areas is becoming increasingly variable with frequent droughts and dry spells punctuated by tropical storms.

Most people are farmers, but unpredictable weather patterns, water stress and increasing crop and livestock pests and diseases have contributed to declining productivity and food insecurity

The BRACK Project and follow-up work has reached more than 27,000 people with a goal of ensuring that households and communities' livelihoods are able to become more resilient, leading to greater well-being.

### Pray

That the impact of the BRACK will continue to be felt, for all affected by hunger and crop failures, for the success of farmers seeking to nourish their families and communities. For those who have power to act for the good of the marginalised. For a stronger response to the climate crisis from richer nations.

### Give

By phone - 020 7523 2493  
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Rachel  
I charge  
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## Your family history is waiting to be revealed!

*"I was adopted in the 60s - can you help me find my birth family?"*

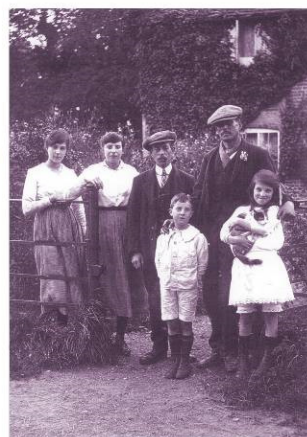
*"In the early 1900s, my great Aunt disappeared leaving her two children to be brought up by her parents. What happened? Why did she abscond, or was her disappearance more sinister?"*

*"Are the Mendums of Bucks. related to those in Massachusetts, USA? How can I find out?"*

*"In the late 1800s, William Raven left Birmingham with the Army. He married and settled in Reading. Were his reasons financial, or to escape from something he'd rather forget?"*

***Do you have unanswered questions about your family  
or where you came from? I can help!***

Give Tracey Horrell a call on **07585 442185**  
or find out more at [www.genetracers.co.uk](http://www.genetracers.co.uk)



*The Thurleys, Three Mile Cross, c. 1918*

# Gene Tracers

*Professional Genealogy Research*



## The emotional journey of a bunch of enthusiastic supporters

This is the story of ordinary people making a difference to the lives of others. They have never met them, nor are they likely to, but they have shown compassion and enthusiasm in helping the citizens of Ukraine. As have some of the parishioners of St Catherine's too I might add!

We are a community group who meet twice a week led by our leader Jenni Harding. A woman with sooo much energy and enthusiasm! We call ourselves a craft group but the group is also about friendship, support, laughter and gallons of tea. Cake also features quite heavily too! We work on our own projects, combine our skills and make items like blankets, quilts and garments to send to Ukraine. Originally set up for hosts and their Ukrainian guests who we are always pleased to welcome, we have become a very important meeting place for people in Tilehurst generally. You definitely do not have to be a crafter to come along.

Alongside this, we act as a collect hub for aid and rent a unit at Access Storage, Reading. The staff there have helped us along the way but we hold regular fundraising events to pay the rent. We work in partnership with Vans Without Borders, a non-profit making organisation who take our aid into Ukraine. We are famous for our knitted comfort dolls. In fact we have sent close on 7,000 so far. Distributed to children, those with dementia and those that just need one! We are guided by Vans without Borders and regularly update our list of needed items.

St Catherine's have been collecting paracetamol for us. One box can cost up to £30 in some areas of Ukraine. The list is long. If you have lost everything, you

need everything. If you go to our Tilehurst Fundraising for Ukraine Facebook page you can find a current list.

We are always enthusiastic whether it's making or fundraising. For me the emotion is when we load the vans and wave them off. Vans Without Borders are professional, they know what they are doing, many are ex-military but they are going into a war zone. For some in the group, it is seeing a child with one of the dolls they have knitted or seeing hand tools handed over to those who are repairing bomb damage. Recently we saw a TV we had sent set up in a classroom for children with learning difficulties and the pictures were really touching.

We cannot stop the war or change the outcome, but while Ukrainians are suffering we will continue to meet, make and craft, send aid and offer friendship and support to Ukrainians whether they are in Tilehurst or Ukraine and Tilehurst Ukrainian hosts.

We are always very happy to receive donations and see new faces. We meet at the Tilehurst United Reform Church Hall, Armour Road every Saturday from 11am to 3pm and Wednesday afternoons 2pm to 4pm. £2 a meeting. Stay and craft, just pop in for a chat, have a cuppa, eat cake! You can contact us in a number of ways. We are usually open but you might want to check first.

Phone Jenni Harding on 074946 637 329 or myself Jane Organ on 07837 497 629

Email me at [jorgan6@googlemail.com](mailto:jorgan6@googlemail.com) or via our Facebook page: 'Tilehurst Fundraising for Ukraine'

	Tilehurst Fundraising for Ukraine	
	Supported by Access Storage Reading	

# St Catherine's Gardening Club



We don't have a written report for this issue, but do take time to admire and enjoy all the work that the volunteers put in to making the church grounds attractive. This is the North East corner.



Editor



## THE CHAIRS

WAYS TO ARRANGE THEM

PERFECTLY  
NEAT ROWS



THE REGIMENTAL

EVERYONE SITS IN THE  
SECOND ROW, THEN  
ADDS CHAIRS BEHIND

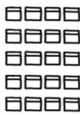


THE SEMICIRCLE

FIRST  
FOUR  
ROWS  
RESERVED

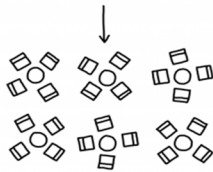


THE BAPTISM

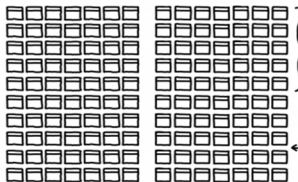


ONE ROW  
AT THE  
BACK  
FOR THE  
CONGREGATION

A GOOD WAY TO  
MAKE THE PLACE  
LOOK A BIT BUSIER  
THAN IT IS



THE CAFE-STYLE



THE FESTIVAL

MOULDY  
CHAIRS  
OUT OF  
STORAGE

REDUCED  
LEGROOM

EVERYONE  
IN THE BACK  
TWO ROWS



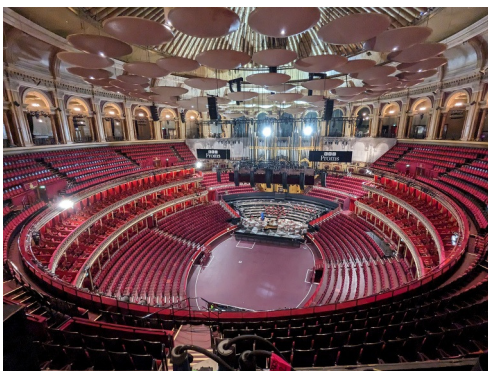
THE USUAL

Over summer, we have a break from our regular monthly meeting in the church and, instead, had a trip to the Albert Hall.

The idea of visiting the Albert Hall began during the pandemic when we had a speaker via Zoom who gave an interesting talk about the history of this iconic building and told us about the tours. This led to our visit in August.

Our tour guides were excellent and gave us both a detailed history of the Albert Hall and an insight into how it operates in the 21st century.

We were lucky as there was a pianist practising for that evening's Proms, so we sat and listened for a short while.



The Albert Hall has a very full schedule of performances with 400 events a year which vary from concerts to tennis and even Sumo wrestling.

This involves complex staging and, to avoid constantly disturbing the neighbourhood, the building was excavated underneath in recent years to a depth equivalent to its height.

The large scenery and props lorries can now drive under the Albert Hall and huge lifts which were installed can bring the large lorries straight up into the arena - usually in the middle of the night.

We saw areas not normally accessible to the public such as the Royal Retiring Room where the Royal Family gather.

On the wall are signed photos of all the British Monarchs supplied by the palace.

After our tour of this unique building, we had lunch in the restaurant.



After our summer break, in September we had a social evening with indoor curling and a quiz based on anatomy, so we now know where our clavicle and our mandible are!

We are now planning all our Christmas activities!

With best wishes to everyone at St Catherine's from Tilehurst Triangle WI.

Ros Somerville, Tilehurst Triangle WI  
tilehursttrianglewi@berkshirewi.co.uk

# Is now a good time to grow old?

“Don’t grow old,” a parishioner of advanced years warned me some while back. “You won’t like it.”

Sadly, that dear woman is no longer with us, and I’m a whole lot older than when she offered me that kind advice. But was there wisdom in her words?

It’s true that generally people are living longer and in better health than in generations before, but there are increasing challenges for older men and women in our society.

My friend, Maggie Dodd is an ‘Anna Chaplain’ for older people. She is one of around 300 such chaplains up and down the country. They spiritually support people – of strong, little or no faith – in care homes, sheltered housing or in their own homes.

Maggie has told me how life is becoming harder for older people, and we’ve swapped notes on what we have both observed.

She told me: “Some of the basic services older people need are becoming more difficult to access. I hear about doctor’s surgeries asking for patients to print out their own forms or send photos to or from smartphones. Banks are phasing out high street branches, pushing everyone towards online banking. Many older people feel very uneasy about going online, worried of being scammed out of their savings.

“A trip to the shops is also becoming more complicated. Checkouts in supermarkets are increasingly self-service. Mobility can also be affected as car parks often need an app to be uploaded onto a Smartphone to park.

In many car parks there is no option to pay by card or cash!”

Plans to remove the ticket offices at train stations will make matters worse for many older would-be rail travellers.

Maggie told me “This gradual marginalisation of people can leave them feeling lonely and isolated. Loneliness can have a huge detrimental effect on health and wellbeing. Prolonged social isolation and loneliness are the equivalent of smoking 15 cigarettes a day.”

It’s good that many churches run special events and activities for older people, as well as groups for all ages. But is this enough? Christians are called to follow Christ’s example and speak out for at risk of being marginalised in our society.

Today, that could be our older brothers and sisters.

Revd Peter Crumpler  
Church of England priest in St Albans,  
former C of E communications director



*The harvest produce was taken to the old people's bungalows*



# Musings from Phil French

## KNOW YOUR BIBLE

The preacher told the congregation: "Bible Study is most important! Prepare for next week's sermon - see what you can learn from Matthew Chapter 29!"

Next week he said: "Today's subject is TRUTH and FALSITY! Will everyone who's read Matthew 29 please raise your hands!" DOZENS of hands were raised.

(Have you checked Chapter 29??)

## MAY WISDOM STEER!

Once we had a VERY "difficult" boss. He came to us, proposing a barmy plan! I said, as respectfully as I could: "Sir, I feel there might be a problem with the ... "

He exploded: "What have YOUR \*\*\*\* FEELINGS got to do with anything!!"

We were computer guys: "Logic" was often about numbers etc. If feelings were nothing, then why marry, why have "expensive" kids?

Why do anything much? On a good day, logic/wisdom holds the reins, and emotion is the horse (but don't forget rest breaks!)

Logic and emotion - a big subject! If possible, DON'T RUSH your decisions. Horses can steer badly?

Logic helps IF YOU HAVE ALL THE FACTS. If you haven't, logic can fall flat on its' face! Also, emotions can conflict. For example, as anger fades, warmer concerns return?

Be cautious with new "gospels" etc. Convincing? Hold tight. Give wisdom time to grow.

## SHOY

Thinking about "Kings" led me to other things. A king must manage people and attitudes? Social psychology is complex. Eventually I came across Dr. Catherine Chambliss, "competition" and "shoy" - see below!

My wife often stirred up funny little "competitions" between us. She used apparently "silly" methods to fight my dark childhood memories!

Boring housekeeping tasks became amusing. Sometimes she came first, sometimes I did. But - this is very important! - the loser always congratulated the winner, perhaps with a laugh and a hug.

Dr. Chambliss invented the word "Shoy" (shared joy). It seems that hate, envy, resentment, etc. can really harm us.

But she found that, in competitions, IF the "loser" congratulated the "winner" and shared the joy, it did good, not harm. Contests (formal or informal) were helpful with "shoy" - but only with "shoy".

Improve social and mental health? Contests can do lots of good, IF joy is shared. Keep everyone happy. No high rank snootiness. And find something to praise your neighbour for?

## WAITING FOR WISDOM

Sorry; I've been here before. But scientific puzzles never stop.

*(Continued on page 26)*

(Continued from page 25)

If you're very brave, Google for "string theory", muons, spinors, space-time and more, for a wee taste.

Oldish paradox: Time does NOT seem to flow at the same rate "all the time", everywhere. Clocks' speeds ARE affected by gravity, motion, etc.

Now, ask yourself, what is "the speed of time"? In seconds per second, of course, ha ha! Time speed does "vary": do we understand time?

Maths is useful, but it doesn't explain everything.

The Watchmaker has given us "cogs" a beginner's intelligence kit, for everyday use. But we are only tiny little "cogs in the Watch"!

It's not TOO surprising if, sometimes, the Watch puzzles us? And is the Watchmaker not greater, more mysterious than the Watch?

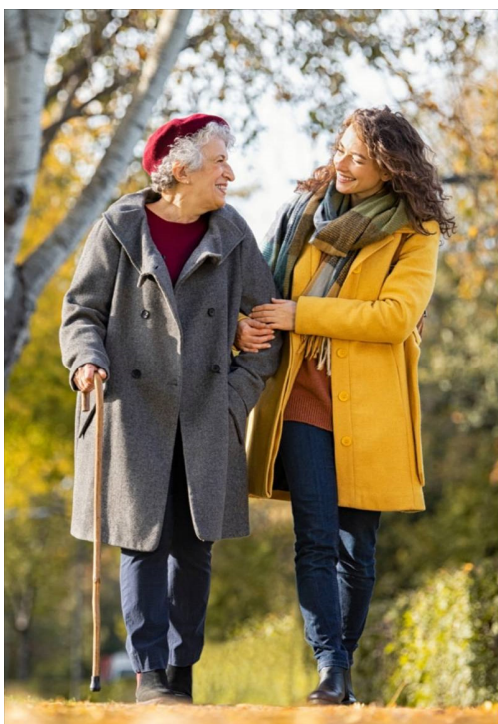
Some folk quote religious paradoxes. They get excited when "pictures" of the Watchmaker seem odd.

But, after a few years of scientific work, paradoxes become almost normal! "Cogs" get used to them.

As a lab worker, I was paid to do useful things, not to theorize much.

One day, I hope "I shall know fully as I am known". But, now I have to cope with today.

Phil French



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# Smile lines

## What would Jesus do?

While waiting in line to check out at a Christian bookstore, a man in front of me asked the clerk about a display of hats with the letters WWJD on them. The clerk explained that WWJD stands for 'What would Jesus do?', and that the idea is to get people to consider this question when making decisions.

The man pondered a moment, then replied, "I don't think He'd pay £17.99 for that hat."

## Don't mention it!

As part of his annual talk to our local Town Council, our minister told some funny stories.

Since he planned to use the same anecdotes at the forthcoming Harvest Dinner at church, he asked the young reporter covering the event not to include them in his report.

Reading the newspaper on the following morning, he noticed that the well-meaning reporter had ended his story on the banquet with the observation "The minister told a number of stories that cannot be published."

## Hereafter

A vicar was talking to one of his parishioners. He said: "When you get to my age, you spend a lot more time thinking about the hereafter."

The parishioner was impressed and asked him to for more details. The vicar replied: "Well, I often find myself going into a room and thinking: whatever did I come in here after?"

## Noise

The wheel of my grocery cart was making a horrible scraping sound as I rolled it through the supermarket. Nevertheless, when I finished my shopping and saw a cartless woman, I offered it up, explaining, "It makes an awful complaining noise, but it works."

"That's okay," she said cheerfully, taking it. "I have a husband at home like that."

## Apples

Mother: "Martin, last night I put two apples in this cupboard and now there is only one. How do you explain that?"

Martin: "I expect it was so dark I couldn't see the other one."



Thanks to technology, replacing the worn-out hymn books didn't cost a penny

# Tilehurst Afternoon Women's Institute

On the 15th October this year we will be celebrating our 10th Anniversary. An advertisement was made in the local newspaper for any women interested in joining a new Women's Institute in Tilehurst to attend a meeting at St. Michael's Church Hall in September 2013. Resulting in 80 women attending and two Institutes being set up at St. Catherine's Church Hall, one in the evening and one in the afternoon.

Coming up we have a lady informing us about life in rural South Africa, a talk

about an English Courtroom, a sing song and a local friend reading her poems, which are very witty, funny and often topical.

In recent weeks we have visited Caversham Court. A very informative Guide gave us an insight into the history and tea was enjoyed at the café there.

We also enjoyed a trip to Englefield House Gardens for the 75th Anniversary of the NHS. There were some interesting areas to it.

Diane Wakefield  
tilehurstafternoonwi@berkshirewi.co.uk



Seen in the gardens at Englefield House



# Purley Players

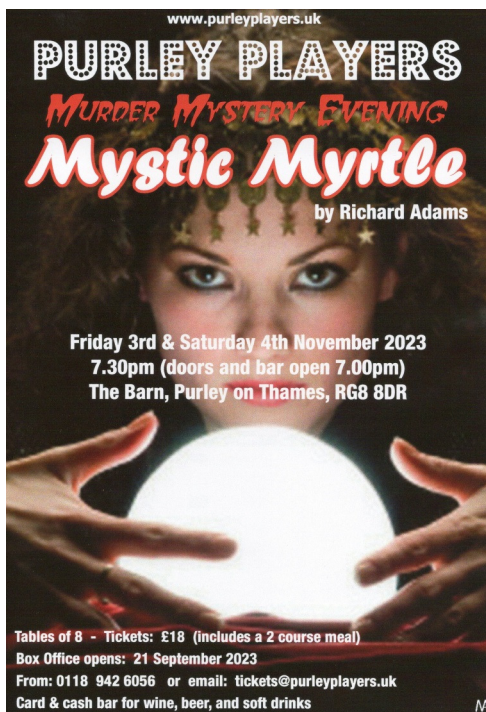
Purley Players are in the throes of rehearsing for their Murder Mystery play entitled "Mystic Myrtle".

*"When Laura Dent visits Mystic Myrtle, the fortune teller confides that she is a fraud, and that she hates her husband Hubert. Meanwhile, Laura's husband Lionel, an insurance agent, is having an affair with Laura's sister Joyce. Joyce wants Lionel to divorce Laura and marry her. Hubert discovers the affair and threatens to tell Laura unless Lionel produces an insurance policy designed to benefit him when Mystic Myrtle dies."*

The show nights are Friday 3rd and Saturday, 4th November at The Barn, Purley on Thames, RG8 8DR. The Box Office opens on 21 September 2023 and tickets can be obtained by:

- Ringing 0118 942 6056
- or email: tickets@purleyplayers.uk.

Tickets are £18 which includes a two course meal and there is a card and cash bar for wine, beer and soft drinks.



www.purleyplayers.uk

**PURLEY PLAYERS**  
**MURDER MYSTERY EVENING**  
**Mystic Myrtle**  
by Richard Adams

Friday 3rd & Saturday 4th November 2023  
7.30pm (doors and bar open 7.00pm)  
The Barn, Purley on Thames, RG8 8DR

Tables of 8 - Tickets: £18 (includes a 2 course meal)  
Box Office opens: 21 September 2023  
From: 0118 942 6056 or email: tickets@purleyplayers.uk  
Card & cash bar for wine, beer, and soft drinks

## The Trefoil Guild

The Guild meets once a month on the fourth Thursday in St Catherine's Church. There are approximately 24 members, all of whom have been involved with the movement over the years.



We have a varied programme with interesting speakers. During the summer months we tend to be out visiting interesting places or having a meal out locally. We would always welcome new members.

Joan Burbidge

### What is Trefoil?

We welcome everyone aged 18 and over to find friendship, get involved, give support and get active.

Trefoil is part of the Girlguiding family, and we aim to support them and help others by carrying the spirit of Girlguiding into our communities. We ask our members to agree to this when they join us. Many members support Girlguiding directly by assisting or leading units, and others give support in different ways.

Offering opportunities is a key part of Trefoil.

(Continued on page 30)

(Continued from page 29)

So when you meet with your Trefoil Guild you can find like-minded friends to share your adventures and challenges with. The great part is that you have the choice to get involved with what works best for you.

We have over 1000 Trefoil Guilds across the UK, online, and in other countries. Join us today start your Trefoil adventure and make new friends for life.

## Aims and objectives

- To keep alive among members the spirit of the Girlguiding and Scout promises and laws
- To carry that spirit into the communities in which members live and work
- To give practical, financial and moral support to Girlguiding and Scouting

Source - [www.trefoilguild.co.uk](http://www.trefoilguild.co.uk)

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## How can a Christian be a scientist?

I used to ask this question as a student. I wondered what it was like to have a career in science, and how being a Christian might make a difference.

Eventually I met a good number of successful scientists who were sincere Christians, and I learned that science and faith are a great combination.

Dr Francis Collins, former Director of the project to decode the whole of human DNA, wrote that it is “possible for the scientist-believer to be intellectually fulfilled and spiritually alive, both worshipping God and using the tools of science to uncover some of the awesome mysteries of His creation.” So, what do people like this make of the opportunities and challenges of a life in science?

Although our beliefs may affect what we notice about the world and how we interpret our data, they don't affect the outcome of the experiments themselves. If a Muslim and a Christian drop the same ball from the same height under identical conditions, it will fall at the same speed.

This means that a scientist can be respected by her colleagues for doing good work, regardless of what she

believes and what her colleagues think of her worldview.

Science is an exercise in observing and measuring things, and coming up with general principles about the way things are.

The world has been declared by God to be ‘very good’ (see chapter one and two of Genesis), and exploring it is a way to express our gratitude to Him. Scientific discoveries can also bring a sense of awe and wonder that feeds into our worship.

Some people don't want to get involved in certain lines of research because of ethical concerns. On the other hand, there are many issues that make Christians want to get stuck into new research that will help care for people and the rest of creation, such as medical research, ecology or developing appropriate technologies.

Organisations such as Christians in Science and the Faraday Institute gather together scientists who are also people of faith, and others who are interested in the subject.

They come from a wide range of

(Continued on page 32)

# Bible Sunday – 29<sup>th</sup> October

At the recent Coronation the King was given a Bible with the words ‘the most valuable thing that this world affords’. As Bible Sunday is celebrated this month, let’s ask why we should read the Bible?

The Bible isn’t a single book, but a library of 66 books, composed by some 44 writers over 1500 years in a range of styles including history, poetry, prophecy, letters and apocalyptic (looking at the end times).

Despite having a number of different writers, it claims one authority - God Himself! ‘All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work’ (2 Timothy 3:16).

The Bible is inspired (‘the word of God in the words of men’) and equips us to live for God in every aspect of our lives.

We also have the promise of the Holy Spirit to guide us when we read: ‘when the Spirit of truth comes, He will guide you into all truth’ (John 16:13).

How should we read the Bible? Let’s consider the following guidelines:

- **Right time:** We need a regular routine, which will meet our needs. This will vary according to our circumstances: e.g., a mum at home with young children, somebody with a demanding job or a retired person.
- **Right Place:** We need to find a space where we can be undisturbed (e.g. lounge, bedroom, train or kitchen).

- **Right Version:** We need a version of the Bible which we can readily understand and use. A number of versions are available (e.g. NIV, The Message), as well as Bible apps we can access on our phone.
- **Right Help:** Reading notes also help us to understand a passage and apply it to our lives.

Let’s get reading!!

Canon Paul Hardingham

## Bibles for all

How the Bible Society was inspired to begin its work.

Think for a moment about something you really want. How much would you spend to buy it? How far would you go to get it?

Young Mary knew what she wanted. It took years before she could afford it. She was ready to walk 25 miles over mountainous terrain to get it. Mary just wanted a Bible.

Mary Jones lived in a small village in Wales at the end of the 18th century. From an early age, Mary loved to hear stories from the Bible. Every Sunday she attended her local chapel and enjoyed listening to people reading from the Scriptures.

When Mary was only nine years old, she decided on the most important thing in her life. She wanted to read from her own Bible. Unfortunately, Bibles were hard to come by. They were expensive and Mary’s parents couldn’t afford to buy one. So, Mary decided to do odd jobs for

*(Continued on page 32)*

(Continued from page 31)

people and earn enough money to buy a Bible.

Six years later, Mary had saved enough money for her special book. Although the nearest shop which sold Bibles was in Bala, 25 miles away, undaunted she set out on her long journey. In Bala, she discovered that the book shop had sold out of all the Bibles! We can only imagine how upset and disappointed she was.

When the bookseller, Thomas Charles, heard about her long walk and that she would return home empty handed, he gave her his Bible. Later, Thomas Charles wondered if there were other children (and adults) around the country who wanted a Bible but had problems getting one.

Soon after Mary's visit, Thomas Charles went to London. Here, he met influential people including William Wilberforce and shared with them the story of Mary Jones.

From this meeting came a response to Mary's situation. On 7<sup>th</sup> March 1804 the British and Foreign Bible Society was formed. Its purpose was to provide Bibles throughout the world, in a language people could understand and at a price they could afford.

After this, other national societies were created and in 1946 the United Bible Societies was established to co-ordinate

the work worldwide. Today, there are over 100 Bible Societies, working in nearly 200 countries. While they are busy with translation, production and distribution programmes, there are still countless numbers of people who do not have the Scriptures.

If we own a Bible, let's give thanks we have God's Word in our hands and, where possible, support a Bible Society with their valuable work.

Lester Amann



*"That's two t's in Matthew", said Osrice*

(Continued from page 30)

backgrounds, and express their beliefs in a variety of different ways. What they have in common is the conviction that you don't have to choose between science and God. As the young people in our churches prepare to return to their

studies, online if not in person, let's encourage them that science (along with many other fields) is a great way to serve God.

Dr Ruth M Bancewicz,  
Church Engagement Director, Faraday  
Institute for Science & Religion Cambridge.



Some latest news taken from the website. Any donations between our 'official' collections are very much appreciated. Thank you.

Lorraine Roberts, TLM Rep

“The chasm between those living comfortably and those living in the world’s poorest neighbourhoods has struck me afresh this week. Particularly as the two worlds have seemingly collided. Rather unusually, smack bang in the sunshine state of Florida!

It’s always a little surreal to see leprosy hit the national and international news agenda. I always view this as a good thing though. So many people in the UK don’t realise that leprosy remains a 21st Century disease. It gives us a real opportunity to lift up the voices of these people, all too often pushed to the fringes of society.

No doubt, and quite understandably, many families will be left questioning their trip of a lifetime to Florida. Is it safe? After all, the US Centres of Disease Control and Prevention’s report on

Monday states Central Florida could be an endemic location for leprosy. The report cites there were 159 new cases of leprosy diagnosed in the US in 2020, with Central Florida being particularly problematic.

Statistics can be misleading, can’t they? This does sound alarming! Particularly as the CDC report goes on to say, ‘travel to this area, even in the absence of other risk factors, should prompt consideration of leprosy.’ An excited prospective visitor to Disneyland Florida could certainly be forgiven for raising an eyebrow!

But to put this into context, there were 159 cases of leprosy found and cured in the US in 2020 compared with 65,147 in India alone.

I have been humbled so many times during visits to Africa and Asia. Sitting with people who have travelled night and day to reach a Leprosy Mission hospital. Many had suffered by then heart-wrenching rejection from their families after suspecting the disease.

Yet because of the kindness of a stranger in the UK, who they had never even met, they were given a glimmer of hope. They had heard about these special hospitals that wouldn’t turn anyone away. That they wouldn’t even need to find or beg for money for treatment!”

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## News from St Joseph’s

We offer a very warm welcome to our new Parish Priest, Fr Jude:

Fr Jude Mbonu is Nigerian. He joins us following 4 years, as Parish Priest, which included the pandemic, at St Thomas More parish in Twyford.

Fr Jude is happy to be here and to work with our local churches to help the community of Tilehurst.

Sheila Jones - Parish Secretary  
St Joseph's, Tilehurst

# On the absurdity of a vicar ever retiring



The Rectory,  
St James the Least of All

My dear Nephew Darren,

Beware of being invited by bishops to drop round for a chat. My first mistake was to answer the phone when he rang; what are answerphones for, but to avoid having to talk to anyone - ever. My second mistake was not to be able to think of a meeting I had to attend - preferably on another planet - on the day he suggested.

I therefore found myself in his study this morning, waiting for the point of the meeting while we negotiated the obligatory five minutes discussing the weather and his summer holiday in France. I made it quite clear that I had been far too busy to swan off to foreign parts – although I suspect the implication of what I said passed him by.

We then got to the point. He was toying with the thought of my retirement and linking us with the adjoining parish of St Agatha's. I patiently explained, using simple words and speaking slowly for his benefit, that at 85 and with 40 years at St James the Least of All behind me, I was just getting into my stride and that the vicar of St Agatha's, a stripling at 63, had nowhere near enough experience to organise the hymn list, let alone two parishes. This, too, seemed to drift somewhere above his head.

He had clearly done his homework. There were already plans for my Queen Anne rectory to be sold and my five acres of garden be turned into a housing estate. This news would be received by our parishioners with as much equanimity as if they were told that Buckingham Palace was to be converted into a sports centre.

The matter, I was told, was confidential – which meant that I only relayed the news to one parishioner at a time. By the end of the day everyone in the village knew, and a counter attack was being planned. Inevitably, the most outraged were those who never attend church. People do so love having a church not to go to. Congregations have soared, gardeners are being brought in to tidy the rectory grounds, and the church council is now well attended. The latter is a mixed blessing, as I always think that the time to get worried is when people start to turn up to meetings.

It may surprise our bishop, but the threat of a merger has been the greatest impetus to mission outreach we've had in years. Retirement indeed! I'm sure Zadok was never asked about his pension plans.

Your loving uncle,  
Eustace

<b>St Catherine's Centre</b> <b>Church</b> and Hall regular bookings (* is term time only)	
<b>Monday</b>	Breakfast club - 7.30-8.45am * Mums & Bubs Yoga - 1.30-2.30pm After School Club - 3:30-6.00pm * Exercise Class - 7.00-8.00pm * Yoga - 8.15-9.15pm
<b>Tuesday</b>	Breakfast club - 7.30-8.45am * Childminders Drop-in 10.00-11.30am * Seated Exercise 1.00-2.00pm <b>Tuesday Get Together - 10.00am-12.00noon</b> After School Club - 3:30-6.00pm * <b>W.I. - 2.00-4.00pm (3rd Tuesday)</b> AA - 7.00-9.30pm
<b>Wednesday</b>	Breakfast club - 7.30-8.45am * Yoga - 10.30-11.30am <b>Communion Service 9.00-10.00am</b> After School Club - 3:30-6.00pm * <b>Vivace Voices 1.45-3.45pm</b> Kettle Bells - 6.30-7.30pm <b>Mothers' Union - 7.30-9.30pm (2nd Weds)</b> <b>W.I. - 7.00-10.00pm (3rd Wednesday)</b> YogaSculpt - 7.45-8.45pm
<b>Thursday</b>	Breakfast club - 7.30-8.45am * Zumba - 9.30-10.45am <b>Cafe Siena - 10.00am-2.00pm</b> Over 60's exercise - 1.15-2.15pm After School Club - 3:30-5.30pm * Zumba - 6.00-7.00pm Stretch & Flow Yoga Class 7.30-8.30pm <b>Trefoil - 7.30-9.30pm (4th Thursday)</b>
<b>Friday</b>	<b>Tots Praise - 9.15am *</b> Glow Tots Sensory - 9.30am-12.30pm <b>Cafe Siena - 10.00am-2.00pm</b> Friday Friends - 2.00-4.30pm
<b>Saturday</b>	Yoga - 9.30-10.30am and 10.45-11.45am Crafty Space - 1.30-5.30 pm (once a Month) Bowls Club - 7.00-9.00 pm

## RG31 - The Parish Magazine of Tilehurst St Catherine & Calcot St Birinus

**RG31** is published quarterly by the P.C.C. of Tilehurst St Catherine & Calcot St Birinus to subscribers (contact editor to subscribe, the cost is £6 for the year) or in digital form accessed from our website: [www.stcatherines-tilehurst.org.uk](http://www.stcatherines-tilehurst.org.uk)

### Editor:

Tony Bartlett ☎ 0118 967 8659

### Assistant Editor:

Rosemary Cunningham ☎ 0118 942 0713

### Advertising:

Richard Canning ☎ 0118 942 8238

All details and events are correct to the best of our knowledge at the time of going to print.

The P.C.C. and Editors are not necessarily in agreement with the views expressed by contributors in this magazine.

We welcome contributions of articles or letters for future issues from anyone living in, or connected with the parish.

All contributions for the next (Winter) edition must be received by the editors by 3<sup>rd</sup> December

Contributions may be sent to: [magazine@stcatherines-tilehurst.org.uk](mailto:magazine@stcatherines-tilehurst.org.uk)

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Cover Picture by Stuart Poore  
of Church Harvest flowers

# The Anglican Parish of Tilehurst St Catherine & Calcot St Birinus

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## ST CATHERINE OF SIENA

Wittenham Avenue, Tilehurst, RG31 5LN

[www.stcatherines-tilehurst.org.uk](http://www.stcatherines-tilehurst.org.uk)

[www.facebook.com/st.catherines.tilehurst](https://www.facebook.com/st.catherines.tilehurst)

***Please check these websites for up-to-date information on services and other events***



We are 'live-streaming' our 10.00 am Sunday services so that they can be viewed via our Facebook page. Simply go to: [www.facebook.com/st.catherines.tilehurst](https://www.facebook.com/st.catherines.tilehurst) (you do not need an account to view - if asked to login or join, you can click 'Not Now'). Once shown on Facebook, all our videos can be found again on our Web Site:

[www.stcatherines-tilehurst.org.uk](http://www.stcatherines-tilehurst.org.uk)

**Every Sunday, The Ten O'clock Service** - varies in style and contents each week, but will always be 'family friendly'. It will contain praise, teaching, communion and usually include a time of sharing what God is doing amongst us.

Refreshments afterwards in the Hall.

**On Wednesdays at 9.00 am** - there's Holy Communion in church, everybody welcome.


## Who's Who in the Parish


Whilst we're currently without a vicar, for initial enquiries regarding baptisms funerals and weddings, please email us at [info@stcatherines-tilehurst.org.uk](mailto:info@stcatherines-tilehurst.org.uk).



Licensed Lay Minister

Mike Heather


 0118 962 4852


 [michaelheather@btinternet.com](mailto:michaelheather@btinternet.com)

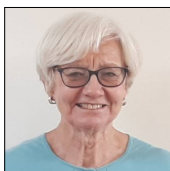


Licensed Lay Minister

Tony Bartlett


 0118 967 8659

 [tony.bartlett.ccc@ntlworld.com](mailto:tony.bartlett.ccc@ntlworld.com)



Churchwarden


Caroline Heron

 [caroline.heron123@btinternet.com](mailto:caroline.heron123@btinternet.com)



Churchwarden

Lynn Stevens

 07917 132 519

 [lynn@stevensfamily.co.uk](mailto:lynn@stevensfamily.co.uk)