



## Parish of Stockport and Brinnington

St Mary

Stockport Parish Church

St Thomas

St Luke



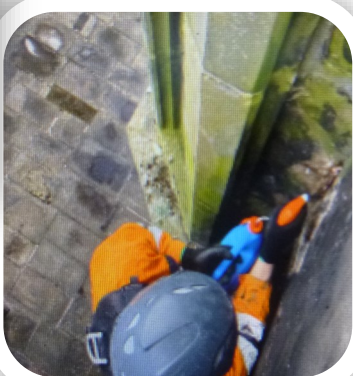
June  
2021

### Welcome to our parish news sheet.

Blue sky and sunshine—what a wonderful sight, with our trees and shrubs having changed from muted browns to vibrant greens. Did you follow NO MOW MAY? Well if you did I guess it is now time to get out the mower if you have a lawn and want that well-kept look for the summer. Although maybe leave part of it to nature, as we do in the graveyard at the back of St Mary's. See our article: What does your lawn say about you?



However, with great sadness to butterflies fluttering around Churchgate we have had removed the large Buddleia from a coping stone joint on the east gable—this is no place for a roof garden—before it re-



moved part of the church". All gone!

Everything cut away, herbicide applied and copper nails hammered into the roots to poison and prevent re-growth. It wasn't the easiest of jobs even for professionals from Heritage Conservation and Restoration Ltd—but a job well done as well as clearing gutters, gullies, down spouts, undertaking some roof repairs and completing a detailed inspection report for us.

Our Environmental Officer has been busy, having registered the Parish Climate Sunday services for the 8<sup>th</sup> August and signed the Climate Coalition's "The Time is Now Declaration" on behalf of the parish (script in April Parish newsletter). In addition to becoming better informed, spending many a happy hour on Zoom sessions Pat is preparing to formulate a plan of action:

**> How can the Parish respond to the prophetic call from General Synod for all parts of the Church to be 'net zero carbon' by 2030.**

*Quite a challenge but an important one and already areas of potential change are being identified.*



A note from our Environmental Officer

**From G7 11-13 June in Cornwall**

**to COP26 1-12 November in Glasgow**

This year is an important year for climate negotiations. In June the Group of 7 (G7: Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, UK, USA plus European Union) leaders are meeting in St Ives, Cornwall. In November, heads of state and international organisations will be attending COP26 (Conference of Parties 26) in Glasgow. Both are under the Presidency of the United Kingdom.

It's a decade-defining opportunity to make a stand for climate justice, to hold our leaders accountable and to protect people, not bank balances. It's a decade-defining opportunity to think about what we, the Church, could do together.



The Young Christian Climate Network (YCCN) are an action-focused community of Christians in the UK aged 18-30, choosing to follow Jesus in the pursuit of climate justice. They are organising a 750-mile Relay from G7 to COP26, walking from Cornwall to Glasgow to raise awareness of COP26 and spark conversations around climate and creation care theology within local churches and communities across the UK. Along the way, church leaders will hold services and events at key cities and join them in praying for climate justice. The symbol of the Relay is a boat, a representation of their hope that we "RiseToTheMoment" and set sail towards a just future.

**Look out for them in Manchester from 11-12 September**



## **Sign the climate justice petition**

**You are requested to sign the Christian Aid's petition for Climate Justice which can be found on the Christian Aid web-site:**

<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/get-involved/campaigns/climate-justice-2021>

Coronavirus disrupted our lives in an unprecedented way. Now we face a choice - we can go back to business as usual, perpetuating the climate crisis and growing inequality perpetuating the climate crisis and growing inequality. Or we can take positive steps to build justice after the pandemic, and towards a healthier, safer future for everybody. This year the UK government has some crucial opportunities to do the right thing.

Sign this petition to the Prime Minister to ensure that the UK fulfils its responsibilities and its promise to build back better.

Call on the PM to:

- Increase financial support to the world's poorest countries and push for their debts to be cancelled
- Invest in a green recovery that leaves no-one behind

Stop the expansion of fossil fuel energy and support clean energy.

## **THANK YOU**

### **TO EVERYONE WHO GAVE TO THE**

### **CHRISTIAN AID WEEK**

### **APPEAL**

Our Treasurer is in the process of collecting the envelopes together for all three churches and processing the payment(s).

*If you used one of our special envelopes or donated directly on-line your contribution is much appreciated.*



## Pentecost Songs of Praise

On the first day of Pentecost Jesus' followers were together in the upper room when the Holy Spirit filled them, empowering and equipping them to share the Good News of Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit manifested in wind and tongues of flames and the followers found that they were able to speak in many languages. They rushed out into the streets and began telling people about Jesus in many languages. What a cacophony of noise and activity it must have been! Some people even thought the followers must have been drunk! They weren't of course; it was only 9 o'clock in the morning! What better way to celebrate Pentecost for ourselves than to get outside and make our own cacophony with Pentecost Songs of Praise. Around 40 of us braved the chilly weather to sing our favourite hymns of praise and thanks outside St. Mary's church on Pentecost Sunday afternoon. After such a long time of refraining from singing together in church it was a wonderful treat to all spend time together raising our voices in songs of praise. It was such a joyful time! – and fantastic witness. It would be great to do something similar again in the future. Thanks to everyone who came along and shared the experience.

Rev'd Marie

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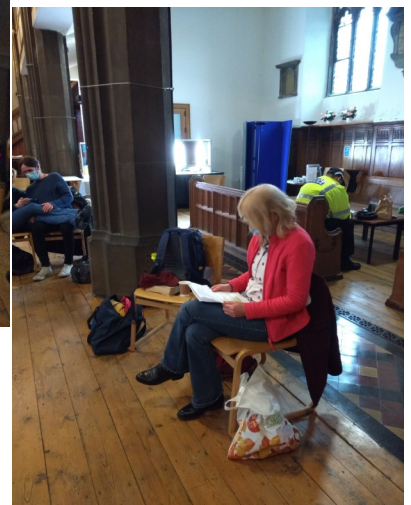




## Who's heard of Traces?

*As a film set St Mary's has moved on from "Yanks" and "A Taste of Honey" - all rather a long time ago to the exterior being used recently by RED Production Company for the filming of Traces 2 —and the interior for a socially distanced "rest area".*

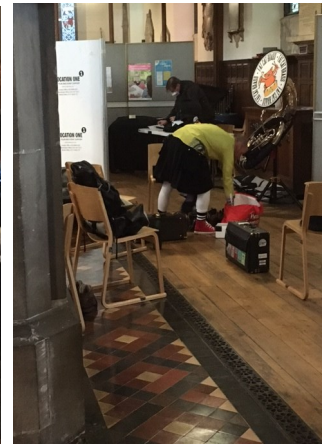
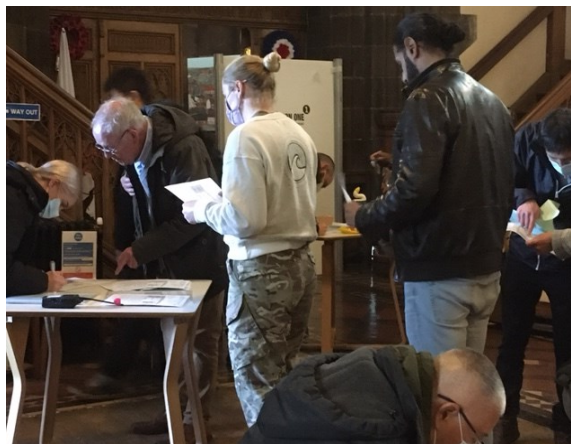
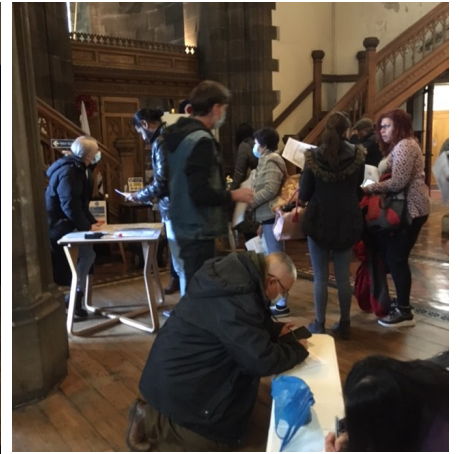
*For the real action guess we'll just have to watch it when it appears on the television—but who is that guy on the right in the photo below? Is it a famous TV star? Or maybe a career change for our very own David Birch.*



Traces is a British television Crime drama produced by RED Production Company (a STUDIOCANAL company). Co-created and written by Val McDermid and Amelia Bullmore based upon an original idea by McDermid, it originally premiered on Alibi on 9 December 2019. The **series** was rerun on BBC One on 4 January 2021.







Photos from David Birch & Catriona Smith — taken with permission from the production team. Thank you both and to “Team St Mary’s” for church sitting 7am—7pm on the day of filming.

## restore

A weekly space for quiet and reflection

20 minutes of music, Bible readings, prayers and silence

No participation required - just come along and find a little peace

St. Mary's in the Marketplace,  
Stockport  
Thursdays at 12pm



### Notice of Eviction

Notice is hereby given that all members of the MOUSE family are to vacate St Marys immediately or risk the POISON boxes now placed at various locations within the church.

For everyone else please be aware that we have had no choice but to contact Pest Control to help us out and that there are closed boxes around church— apologies if there is any smell from these—we will get them removed completely as soon as possible.







**June brings us the 95<sup>th</sup> 'official birthday' of Her Majesty the Queen, although likely to be "low-key" this year for various reasons.**

Had things worked out differently we would no doubt have been celebrating in some way or another the 100th Birthday of the Duke of Edinburgh on the 10th June as well as the official 95th Birthday of Queen Elizabeth II on the 12th (although her actual 95th Birthday was on the 21st April, just days after the funeral of her husband, when the Queen used her birthday to release a message thanking well-wishes for their tributes to Philip).

We already knew that for the second year running it had been announced that (due to the Covid 19 pandemic) the "Trooping of the Colour" would not go ahead as in normal years and that there was more likely to be a scaled down event most probably in the quadrangle at Windsor Castle.



Artwork by Francesca Ross

*This month (10<sup>th</sup> June) the Duke of Edinburgh would have turned 100. This article is from the Archbishop of Canterbury's recent tribute to him in the House of Lords.*

## **Remembering Prince Philip**

"We have thanked God for Prince Philip's life of extraordinary service. There are some rare people who bring energy into a room – the Duke of Edinburgh was very much one of those people. His presence lifted a gathering. He might have challenged and interrogated, but whatever he said, he never bored anyone.

"The Duke of Edinburgh had a profound moral imagination, extraordinary foresight and even vision. He saw the world not just as it is but as it could and should be, as worked out in his commitment to young people, especially through the Duke of Edinburgh's Award, to the Commonwealth, to our Armed Forces, and to engineering, technology and design... In Edmund Burke's words, he had an instinctive sense that the social contract was found in the traditions we inherit from the past, in our obligations to the present and in our responsibility to those yet to be born.

"His genuine and deep sense of humility and his service came from the same place, which was his faith... He had a sincere Christian faith absolutely untainted by false piety... He understood deeply how important faith is for the vast majority of the world's population. He engaged the rich diversity of faiths within the UK and the Commonwealth. He was a pioneer in recognising the crucial role that faith leaders play in advocating for creation care. He was literally half a century ahead of his time in this area."





*The Ven John Barton considers Prince Philip's questions on religion.*

## **A prince's legacy on matters of faith**

Just when we thought the last word had been written about the late Duke of Edinburgh, it emerged that he had a genuine interest in theology. That dashing young naval officer, who became the Queen's dutiful consort and accompanied her to thousands of church services, was someone who listened intently to sermons, thought through what was being said, and then asked questions.

Every Sunday when the royal couple were at Sandringham, a diocesan bishop was invited to preach in the parish church. Afterwards, they were grilled by the Duke who, we are told by one of them, showed that he "wanted to be intellectually and spiritually engaged". That's a polite way of saying he wasn't prepared to swallow what came out of the pulpit if he wasn't convinced by it.

Some Christians are suspicious of people who probe the faith. Should it not be taken on trust? Who are we to question the Almighty? For others, doubt hovers uninvited. Honest doubt won't settle for unbelief but will continue to persevere with its enquiries. The Russian writer and philosopher Fyodor Dostoyevsky wrote: "It is not as a child that I believe and confess Jesus Christ. My hosanna is born of a furnace of doubt." Dostoyevsky had lived a turbulent life, both personally and publicly, and wrestled mentally with himself and God. Some people are like that.

Prince Philip had been baptised into the Greek Orthodox Church and was received into the Church of England just before his marriage. He organised much of his own funeral, and if you followed it, you will remember how traditional it was. Many of the prayers were from the 17th Century Book of Common Prayer, the hymns were more ancient than modern, and the Bible readings confidently proclaimed the magnificence of God's Creation and Jesus' teaching

about the resurrection. These are basic to Christianity and it was from such a foundation that he was able to explore.

So, if you wake up one morning questioning everything you have believed, take it as a spur to dig deeper and ask questions. Be encouraged by Philip, who shunned a second-hand faith because he wanted to know the truth for himself.

The next time you hear a sermon which you can't understand or disagree with, don't let the preacher get away with it. And if, in your private conversations with God, you find yourself praying, 'Lord, I believe; help my unbelief,' you won't be the first. See Mark 9, verse 24.



***It was:***

***175 years ago, on 28<sup>th</sup> June 1846 that Belgian musical instrument maker Adolphe Sax patented the saxophone.***

***125 years ago, on 4<sup>th</sup> June 1896 that Henry Ford completed his first automobile, the Ford Quadricycle, and gave it a test run around Detroit Michigan. It was a simple frame with an engine, two gears, a tiller for steering and four bicycle wheels. It had a top speed of 20mph. Its success led him to establish the Ford Motor Company.***

***100 years ago on 10<sup>th</sup> June 1921 that Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, was born on a dining room table in Corfu. He was the husband of Queen Elizabeth II.***

***90 years ago, on 13<sup>th</sup> June 1931 that Jesse Boot, 1<sup>st</sup> Baron Trent, British pharmacist and philanthropist, died. He had turned his father's Boots Company into a national chain of chemists.***



Canon Paul Hardingham considers our priorities in life.

## The Parable of the Great Banquet

One thing that we've probably missed over the past year is parties. This month should enable us to party again! Lots of Jesus' parables focus on parties, as they are a picture of the joy, hope and life of the kingdom of God. The parable of the Great Banquet (Luke 14: 15-24) challenges us not to miss out on this.

In Jesus' day, when people accepted an *invitation* to a banquet, they were only told the actual time on the day: '*Come, for everything is now ready*' (17). Jesus' invites each one of us to share in the life of His kingdom.

However, the guests made *excuses* for not coming. At the time, this would have been extremely insulting to the host. They said: '*I have just bought a field; I must try out my new team of oxen; I have just got married*' (18-20). These are all good things in themselves, however they reveal their priorities were elsewhere. We too can be pre-occupied with our own routines of work, family, retirement, holidays, friends, home, social media, that we forget God's priorities for our lives. Jesus calls for total commitment from His disciples. *What priority in my life is holding me back from accepting His invitation?*

How did the host *respond*? He ordered His servants to '*Go out quickly into the streets and alleys of the town and bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame.*' (21). He invited the unexpected and unacceptable people to his banquet. Jesus makes the point that *God's kingdom is open to all!* Thinking about our family, friends, colleagues and neighbours, even if they're not like us or show little interest in God: *Are we willing to offer them God's invitation to share His love and life?*



## Or perhaps you prefer a picnic or the dreaded BBQ!

I say dreaded as it is always the same where I live, first nice warm sunny day and the radio is playing at full volume (not my choice of music) and if the wind is in the wrong direction I'm forced indoors until the charcoal is hot and the smoke has cleared as it wafts over the garden fence. Still it is nice to be able to enjoy some outdoor time again in the warmth and is it true—are we set for a heatwave during June, hotter than Ibiza! I for one certainly hope so. Whatever you are doing in the coming weeks, enjoy the sunshine and stay safe.



## Coming up in July Civic Service

If all goes according to plan a Civic Service for the new Mayor of Stockport, Cllr Adrian Nottingham, will be held on **Sunday, 11th July at 2pm [St Mary's]**. Cllr Nottingham is an Independent Ratepayers ward councillor for Heald Green (first elected in 2010) and was sworn into office as Mayor for the municipal year 2021/22 on the 25th May in the Town Hall Ballroom. Arrangements are all a little different this year as uncertainties with Covid 19 restrictions remain, but we look forward to welcoming the Mayor and Mayoress to St Mary's on the 11th July and to other events and services during the year.



Canon Paul Hardingham considers the value of encouraging others.

## Barnabas the Encourager

This month we remember the life of St Barnabas. His real name was Joseph, a wealthy Levite from Cyprus. However, he is known by his nickname 'Son of Encouragement' (Acts 4:36). Throughout Acts we see him encouraging others in different ways.

He was an example of *generous giving* (Acts 4:36-7), when he sold property and offered the money to the church for those in need. In the midst of a caring and sharing community, he was singled out as a symbol of generosity. Are we prepared to be generous to those in need around us? He later *encouraged a new Christian* in the person of Paul (Acts 9:27). After Paul's conversion and aware of his reputation, Barnabas came alongside him and brought him into the fellowship of the church. Are we ready to help those who are new in the faith to find a place in our church?

Finally, Barnabas was sent to the church in Antioch where he '*saw the evidence of the grace of God*' (Acts 11:23). It was a church which brought Jewish and Gentile believers together for the first time. Like Barnabas, do we rejoice when we see God doing new things in people's lives? Are we also willing to embrace these things and facilitate change?

Encouragement is one of the spiritual gifts in the New Testament (Romans 12:8). It can be greatly undervalued, but it is still crucial in growing the church. Like Barnabas, will we nurture gifting; strengthen the doubters and those tempted to give up; show generosity to God's people and beyond and will we strengthen people to move beyond their own comfort zones to help those in need? Be prepared to ask the following questions: '*Are there people alongside us who will encourage us?*' and '*How can we be encouragers to others?*'

The Revd Dr Jo White continues her *Reflected Faith* series with what it can really mean to 'be still.'

## Reflected Faith: Sit and be Still

How do you 'sit' in church? I'm a wriggler and change my position on the seat often. I cross one leg over the other, then swap them over, stretch them out, then cross them at the ankles. I do the same with my arms. I lean one way and then the other. In other words, 'I'm a fidget.' But having been absent from a church building for so long, I wanted to think this month about simply *sitting and being still* before the Lord.

I'm well aware we've done little else this last 18 months – but if you manage to get into a church building, for whatever reason I'd like to encourage us all to just sit still and breathe in the place. To relish being 'back'!

To sit 'heavily' in that spot. To feel the solidity of the surface you are sitting on. Lean into it. Feel how it supports you. Feel each part of your body where it is touching the chair or pew.

Look around you at all the distinctive seating set aside for the different participants of the church: the choir, the worship leader, a deacon or curate, the priest and so on. In an Anglican church there will be a chair especially dedicated for the use of the Bishop.

However plain or fancy each piece of furniture is within your building, they all have the same purpose. To hold the person and keep them safe.

*This month:* As you sit in the church building – or at home if you are not able to do so – think of all those people in the Bible stories who sat with Jesus. The number of times He taught in the Temple or in a synagogue, or to crowds gathered on a hill. Recall the Last Supper and His friends gathered sitting with Him to eat and share the Passover meal, and then recall the meal with the men from the Emmaus Road. So many meal times with the bold and the weak, the saints and the sinners. With you and me.

*Tony Horsfall is thankful for God's constant presence.*



## **Wake up!**

Remember the story of Jacob, and how God met him in a dream when he was sleeping on the desert floor with a rock for his pillow? The story in Genesis 28 says this: 'When Jacob awoke from his sleep, he thought, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I was not aware of it."'

I wonder what place you find yourself in today, and if you are aware of God's presence with you there?

It may be a geographical place, the place where you live or work. That may be a beautiful place to be, or it may be a very hard place to be, and you would much prefer to be somewhere else. Either way, God is with you there, for He is everywhere, and there is no place where He is not.

It may be an emotional place, as when we say, 'I'm not in a good place right now'. How are you feeling today – up or down? Again, whatever mood you are in, God is with you for He knows us through and through. Having become human, He understands all our fluctuating emotions. He can comfort us right where we are.

It may be a phase of life that you are passing through, a stage on life's journey or a transition as you move from one situation to another. You may be passing through the valley of grief and loneliness, or anxiously waiting for news of a loved one who is ill. No matter where you are, you are not alone, for God is with you whether you can feel His presence or not.

What is needed is for us to become more aware of God's surrounding presence, to wake up to His closeness as did Jacob.

### *It was:*

*80 years ago, from 22<sup>nd</sup> June to 5<sup>th</sup> December 1941 that Operation Barbarossa took place. It was the German invasion of the Soviet Union, the largest military operation in history. In the end, it was a Soviet victory, for the German invaders were repelled when they reached Moscow, and then driven out of Russia by a Soviet counter-attack.*

*75 years ago, on 26<sup>th</sup> June 1946 that Field Marshall Bernard Montgomery became Chief of the Imperial General Staff (head of the British army).*

*65 years ago, on 13<sup>th</sup> June 1956 that the first European Cup final (soccer) was held, in Paris. Real Madrid (Spain) beat Stade de Reims (France) 4-3. The European Cup is now known as the UEFA Champions League.*

*60 years ago, on 6<sup>th</sup> June 1961 that Carl Jung, Swiss psychiatrist and psychologist, died. He was the founder of analytical psychology.*

*50 years ago, on 16<sup>th</sup> June 1971 that John Reith (Lord Reith), 1<sup>st</sup> Baron Reith, Scottish business executive and politician, died. He was Manager and Director General of the BBC in its formative years. He also formed BOAC (now British Airways).*





## The story behind the HYMN: ‘Lord, for the years’

Lord, for the years  
your love has kept and guided,  
urged and inspired us,  
cheered us on our way,  
sought us and saved us,  
pardoned and provided:  
Lord for the years,  
we bring our thanks today.

Lord, for that word,  
the word of life which fires us,  
speaks to our hearts  
and sets our souls ablaze,  
teaches and trains,  
rebukes us and inspires us:  
Lord of the word,  
receive your people’s praise.

Lord, for our hopes,  
the dreams of all our living,  
Christ and his kingdom  
one united aim;  
Rulers and peoples  
bound in high thanksgiving,  
Lord of our hopes,  
our trust is in your Name. ...

*By Timothy Dudley Smith*

This well-loved hymn was written in 1967 by the Revd Timothy Dudley Smith, who later became Bishop of Thetford. He later confessed: “I wrote it on a train when I was very pressed for time. I’m thankful if something I write gets picked up, but I suspect anyone who does something in a rush later regrets that they didn’t find time to apply the sandpaper a bit more!”

Dudley Smith had been asked to write a hymn for the centenary service of the Children’s Special Service Mission, now Scripture Union, in St Paul’s Cathedral. His commission was to write words that could be fitted to Jean Sibelius’s *Finlandia*, as it was to be accompanied by an orchestra with this tune in their repertoire. And so – ‘Lord for the years’ was written.

Dudley Smith need not have worried about lack of time – his lyrics were a ‘hit’ in the cathedral on the day, and went on to become so well-loved that George Carey chose the hymn to be sung at his consecration as Bishop of Bath and Wells, and then again later, in 1991, at his consecration as Archbishop in Canterbury Cathedral.

The hymn continued to be widely sung and loved, until in 2002 Timothy Dudley Smith was asked to write an extra verse for it so that it could even be sung around the time of the Queen’s Golden Jubilee.

Many of the words in the hymn are true for the Queen herself, as she celebrates her 95<sup>th</sup> birthday this month. She does indeed thank God ‘for the years your love has kept and guided, urged and inspired us, cheered us on our way’...

And so indeed the ‘extra’ verse added for the Queen has also held true:

Lord for our hopes,  
the dreams of all our living,  
Christ and his kingdom  
one united aim,  
Rulers and peoples  
bound in high thanksgiving,  
Lord of our hopes,  
our trust is in your Name.

### *It was:*

***40 years ago, on 5<sup>th</sup> June 1981 that the first report of AIDS took place. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in the USA reported that five homosexual men in Los Angeles were suffering from a rare form of pneumonia found in patients with weakened immune systems. These were later recognised as the first official AIDS cases.***

## The beginnings of Boots the Chemist

Jesse Boot, the British pharmacist and philanthropist, died 90 years ago, on 13<sup>th</sup> June 1931. He turned the Boots Company started by his father John – a former agricultural worker – into a chain of chemists branded ‘Chemists to the Nation’.

The 1<sup>st</sup> Baron Trent, as Jesse became in 1929, sold his controlling interest to American investors in 1920, but Boots continues to be a familiar name to all Britons. Ironically John Boot had offered his close friend and business associate John Harston the opportunity of going into business with him, but Harston had felt it was not a good investment.

Jesse Boot was a great benefactor to the City of Nottingham. He gave land for what is now the University of Nottingham and was presented with the Freedom of the City of Nottingham in 1920.

He met his wife, Florence Rowe, in a Wesleyan Chapel in Jersey while he was recuperating from illness. She was also an astute businesswoman, who helped to develop the Boots business, and her home island of Jersey benefited from the couple’s generosity. After her husband’s death she commissioned the glass artist René Lalique to refit the Anglican church of St Matthew there as a memorial to him.

*It was: Also 40 years ago, on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 1981 that American tennis player John McEnroe earned the press nickname ‘Superbrat’ when he threw a tantrum during his first-round match against Tom Gullikson at Wimbledon. He hurled abuse at the umpire, swore at the referee, and popularised the phrase ‘you cannot be serious’ when he disputed a line call. Nevertheless, he went on to win the men’s singles championship that year.*

*25 years ago, on 4<sup>th</sup> June 1996 that the Second Severn Crossing was officially opened. The bridge spans the River Severn and links England and Wales via the M4 motorway.*

*20 years ago, on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2001 that two British schoolboys who murdered two-year-old James Bulger in Liverpool in 1993 were released from secret custody after 8 years. They were given new identities and moved to secret locations.*

## New ‘Vision’ as Church of England engages with Further Education Colleges

The Church of England has recently launched a new ‘Vision for Further Education’, which calls for a major shift in its engagement with the sector.

[The report, Vocation, Transformation & Hope](#), highlights three themes, exploring how further education (FE) makes a significant difference to people’s sense of vocation, their personal transformation, and their hope for society.

The Report notes that there are almost 2.2 million students enrolled in 168 FE Colleges, with nearly twice as many 16-18-year-olds as in school sixth-forms. The Church is nonetheless underrepresented in that sector, in contrast to its extensive links with schools and universities.

It therefore recommends that making effective partnerships with colleges should become a core part of the Church’s own planning. The Church should also develop stronger support for these students and community links, as FE Colleges are anchor institutions for the local community, and bring people together.

The Church aims to greatly increase its chaplaincy provision, as chaplains can play a vital role in supporting student and staff wellbeing and mental health.





## Churches to launch nature count with- in the 'National Park' of churchyards

Hundreds of churches have signed up to a week-long 'nature count' occurring this month (June), which will encourage people to visit churchyards and record what they see.

Churches Count on Nature, to run between 5<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> June, is a citizen-science event covering churchyards across England and Wales.

Communities and visitors will be asked to make a note of the animals, birds, insects, or fungi in their local churchyard. Their data will then be collated on the [National Biodiversity Network](#).

It is being jointly run by the conservation charities Caring for God's Acre, A Rocha UK, the Church of England, and the Church in Wales.

Church land, often uniquely unploughed and undeveloped, can be a habitat for precious, endangered plants and wildlife. Together, churchyards cover a huge area –estimated to be equivalent to a small national park.

The week is open to anyone with a love of nature, and churches are seeking links with local schools and local wildlife groups.

Various online guidance about getting to know fauna and flora is being shared with the churches who are participating. A similar national event [Love Your Burial Ground Week](#) will be combined with this project.

Registration for the webinars is on the [Church of England's website](#) and also at [Churches Count on Nature online](#).

## Churches stepped up support for communities during pandemic

More than 4,000 Church of England parishes have stepped up their support to local communities in the face of rising levels of poverty, loneliness and isolation since the Covid-19 pandemic, according to new research. Church volunteers have delivered food, shopped, walked dogs and collected prescriptions this past year, according to a report by the Church of England and Church Urban Fund.

Church volunteers have also done gardening projects, been 'phone buddies', aided with job-hunting, and helped people get online, as local people struggled with the social and economic effects of the pandemic.

Despite restrictions on meeting socially, nearly a quarter of churches even started a completely new activity during the pandemic. More than of them adapted two or more of their existing community activities in order to meet local needs.

Overall, 37% of churches reported that they were providing *more* support to their communities, with this figure rising to 41% in rural areas.

Food provision and pastoral support were by far the biggest area of support provided by churches, with nearly 80% of churches involved in running or supporting a food bank or similar service. Many opened food banks for the first time.

Church leaders reported that isolation, loneliness and mental health difficulties, food poverty, unemployment and debt are more widespread in their communities as a result of the pandemic.

Church buildings, because of their size and ventilation, have been well used for activities from ante natal classes to socially prescribed exercise. In fact, many became 'symbols of hope', with flags, posters and artwork as a "form of visual encouragement".

Church Urban Fund Chief Executive Rachel Whittington said: "2020 was a year like no other, and yet churches across the UK rose ... with undeterred compassion, displaying the love in action which lies at the heart of the Christian gospel."



*Nigel Beeton writes: ‘*

*We’re still having to listen to the choir singing hymns rather than joining in with them. Ironically, we heard ‘The King of Love’ this morning:*

*And so through all the length of days Thy goodness faileth never; Good Shepherd, may I sing thy praise Within thy house for ever. I suppose ‘Within thy house except during global pandemics’ wouldn’t scan....?! But when you go to an old church like ours (St Mary, Bury St Edmunds) you do become acutely conscious of that legacy of faithful prayer and praise down the centuries:*

## **The Ancient Church**

Sometimes I sit within my pew  
And gaze upon an ancient view  
Of stones, which, set by mason’s line  
Have stood through centuries of time;  
Of glass, whose colours, vivid, bright  
Have told their wondrous tales of light  
And filtered sunshine’s timeless rays  
To countless eyes through countless days.

The pulpit where, through long past years  
God’s servants preached to faithful ears;  
The lectern and its Bible read  
Aloud to both the quick and dead;  
The feet, which down that aisle have trod  
To worship everlasting God;  
The angels, as they downward gaze  
Have heard ten thousand songs of praise!

Songs of joy, and infant cries  
As they gathered to baptize,  
Songs of love and celebrations  
In marriages and confirmations,  
Songs of sadness and of loss  
Sung before the Saviour’s cross.  
So many lives have come, then flown  
Within this ancient house of stone.

So, as I sit and wonder how  
Such history should guide me now?  
Such faithful worship through the years  
May move me to shed humble tears.  
These ghosts bring me joy, not fear  
I know I’m just a tenant here  
And in one way they are my guide –  
They keep me free from pompous pride!

*By Nigel Beeton*



*Nigel Beeton writes: ‘June! And maybe, just maybe, we’ll be able to get out on our holidays this summer! I wonder if you’ll send any post cards? Or will a quick post on Facebook or Instagram get you off the hook? Anyway, post cards or not, let’s hope we can enjoy the summer!’*

## **The Post Card**

A post card from you sent to me  
Causes me to smile with glee!  
I can’t have the blues  
As I read the news  
Of your time with the sun and the sea!

I love how it lands on the mat  
So it’s there when I hang up my hat;  
And no more time passes  
Ere I reach for my glasses  
And happily read all your chat!

A message by text’s not the same.  
And Facebook is all just a game.  
I know some will say  
It’s the new modern way,  
But the lack of a card? It’s a shame!

*By Nigel Beeton*





## What does your lawn say about you?

A perfectly mown lawn may look beautiful, but it is also a sign of male control.

So says Monty Don, the *Gardeners' World* presenter. He is wary of what he calls the 'male obsession' to achieve a closely cut lawn which is of pure and perfect grass, without any other plants in it at all. Monty Don calls such an attitude to gardening "controlling rather than embracing," and reckons it is based on a desire to get just one more "aspect of life under control".

Instead, Don urges that at least part of our lawns should be encouraged to become wildflower meadows, which are much better for the environment. He explains: "Cutting grass burns fossil fuel, makes a filthy noise and is about the most injurious thing you can do to wildlife. Whereas, simply letting grass grow ... is probably the single most effective thing you can do in any garden of any size, to encourage, particularly, insect life, but also small mammals, invertebrates and reptiles."

## Do you yearn for a garden gnome?

### You are not the only one.

Since last year's lockdown, garden centres have been reporting a 'massive upswing' in ornament sales, due to people being forced to spend more time in their gardens. Gnomes top the list of most-wanted ornaments, with a near 100 per cent increase in sales over the past two years.

There was even a gnome crisis a while back, when the Suez Canal got jammed, and thousands of gnomes on their way to UK gardens could not get through.



## Beware Japanese Knotweed this summer

This month (June) could see a sudden bumper appearance of the notorious garden pest, Japanese knotweed.



The Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) experts have warned that the April frosts either delayed or killed other plants who would have helped keep it in check. Unfortunately, the pest is very hardy, and will not have been killed off.

The plant grows up to 2.1 metres (7ft) tall and can destroy the foundations of houses and run riot in gardens. It can even devalue property, and lead to the refusal of mortgages on the land.

## Gardening is good for you...

According to a recent study conducted by the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) and two universities, people who garden every day have well-being scores 6.6 per cent higher, and stress levels 4.2 per cent lower than those who do not garden at all. Dr Lauriane Chalmin-Pui, RHS well-being fellow and lead author says, "The evidence overwhelmingly suggests that the more frequently you garden, the greater the health benefits.

"In fact, gardening every day has the same positive impact on your well-being as undertaking regular, vigorous exercise like cycling or running.

"Gardening is like effortless exercise: it doesn't feel as strenuous as going to the gym, but we can expend similar amounts of energy."

## Roggie Dog here

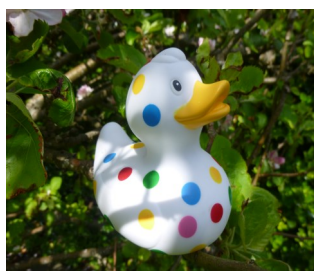
I was so sorry to hear that little Daisy Dog is no longer with us (that is so sad) but I was so pleased that I was able to meet Mummy Pat and wag my little tail to say hello. If you were at "Songs of Praise" held in the graveyard at St Mary's on Pentecost Sunday, I was the small four-legged one so excited to see everyone and wanting to join in the singing. Mummy said "no" so I had to settle for sniffing around and make Mummy keep walking round in circles.

Life seems to be returning to being nearer to normal—but isn't it strange? I had a tiring first morning back at work—so many masked faces but I was again so excited to be sat on my desk again. I do so love all the attention. Mummy didn't seem to be having a good time at all—she locked herself out of the voice messaging machine so it wouldn't talk to her—other than say that the pass code needed to be reset. Mummy hadn't a clue how to do that needless to say—so if you were expecting us to return a missed call—no chance!



I told you that I was worried about my duck being involved in an unfortunate accident. Well I am pleased to tell you that Dottie has been rescued from

the bottom of the bath in Wales and has been out in the garden for a swim in the bird bath to get over the shock.

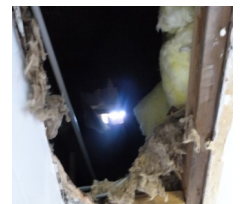


The first thing I did when we arrived in Wales was to put my front paws on the side of the big bath looking for her but I couldn't see Dot anywhere and called for Mummy to look. Mum told me not to worry and (two bags of rubble later) found her, gave Dottie a good wash down and then I was allowed to take her outside into the sunshine and find her a safer home sat on the dressing table.



It was nice to be back at the bungalow, not so nice the problems with the roof—Mummy says it isn't good when you can see sunshine in the loft

or that when it rains it just drips drips and at times pours water on to the plaster board above us—or should I say what is left above us—but directly into the bath.



This is the view if you sat in our bath at the moment open to the elements. Far too open plan for me! But the nice builder Andrew has thought up a plan to cover it over until we can have a new roof—but there seems to be a shortage of roofing tiles. Never rains but it pours—literally in our case.

I thought we may need hard-hats but none have been provided so I tend to sleep (if not with Mummy) with my head under a table. I've heard that is a good thing to do if you fear the ceiling is bout to fall down. But I think my basket is in a safe zone. Mummy says it's quite safe but I was just a bit concerned.







I'd like to thank my Auntie Isobel for my birthday present—the only one I received—I am not counting the new comb Mummy bought me as “appropriate” for my Birthday. BUT we did have fun at grooming time when I ran off three times and Mummy chased me with a blanket trying to throw it over me.

We did have cake too for my birthday — well Mummy did—I refused to eat it and preferred a duck chew that had been left on the floor seven months—thankfully no mice at the bungalow this year.

I suppose I did get my birthday wish—to be out and about again and three hours non-stop in the car sort of covered that. Mummy said we could have had tea and cake in the car had she not left the cake in the boot and didn't want to get soaked going out in the rain to look for it. We didn't even stop at the farm shop—even if though they are open again. We did see cows and sheep, even a horse. Lots of bluebells in the woods (Mummy knows exactly where to look) and roadworks—lots and lots of temporary traffic lights.

Back on patrol—it was nice to see the sea again, but Mummy insists we don't stop to talk to strangers and sniff at other dogs. I think that I was only allowed to sniff around at all was the fact that it had rained and everything freshly “washed down” - I had a paddle in a puddle—so near but yet so far from the waters edge.



If only we could get down the pebbles but no doggies allowed. Still I have been walkies on the sea wall which is always very nice on a warm sunny day and

really enjoyed running around in the garden, although our Christmas tree seems to have moved and is growing in the wrong direc-



tion. Mummy says it has fallen down—fortunately on to the apple tree—and will have to be removed. The Magpies are beside themselves as their nest was at the top of it. Sparrows however delighted at the delay in roof repairs/replacement since no rush to vacate their accommodation just yet, although there was panic recently when a Sparrow Hawk appeared. Are they a bit like those Secretary Bird things—a bird of prey?

Back in my Stockport garden and everything is growing wild—rather think Mummy has taken NoMow May too seriously The main threat to wildlife that cat Dexter!

**Crossword June 2021****Across**

1 Military tactic used by Joshua to attack and destroy the city of Ai (Joshua 8:2) (6)

4 Place of learning (6)

8 'When Moses' hands grew — , they took a stone and put it under him and he sat on it' (Exodus 17:12) (5)

9 Unpleasant auguries of the end of the age, as forecast by Jesus (Matthew 24:7) (7)

10 Stronghold to which girls in King Xerxes' harem (including Esther) were taken (Esther 2:8) (7)

11 Where Saul went to consult a medium before fighting the Philistines (1 Samuel 28:7) (5)

12 Propitiation (Hebrews 2:17) (9)

17 Turn away (Jeremiah 11:15) (5)

19 So clear (anag.) (7)

21 'I have just got — , so I can't come': one excuse to be absent from the great banquet (Luke 14:20) (7)

22 Long weapon with a pointed head used by horsemen (Job 39:23) (5)

23 Musical beat (6)

24 What the Israelites were told to use to daub blood on their door-frames at the first Passover (Exodus 12:22) (6)

**Down**

1 Fasten (Exodus 28:37) (6)

2 Art bite (anag.) (7)

3 'The people of the city were divided; some — with the Jews, others with the apostles' (Acts 14:4) (5)

5 Contend (Jeremiah 12:5) (7)

6 Possessed (Job 1:3) (5)

7 Sheen (Lamentations 4:1) (6)

9 'You love evil rather than good, — rather than speaking the truth' (Psalm 52:3) (9)

13 Large flightless bird (Job 39:13) (7)

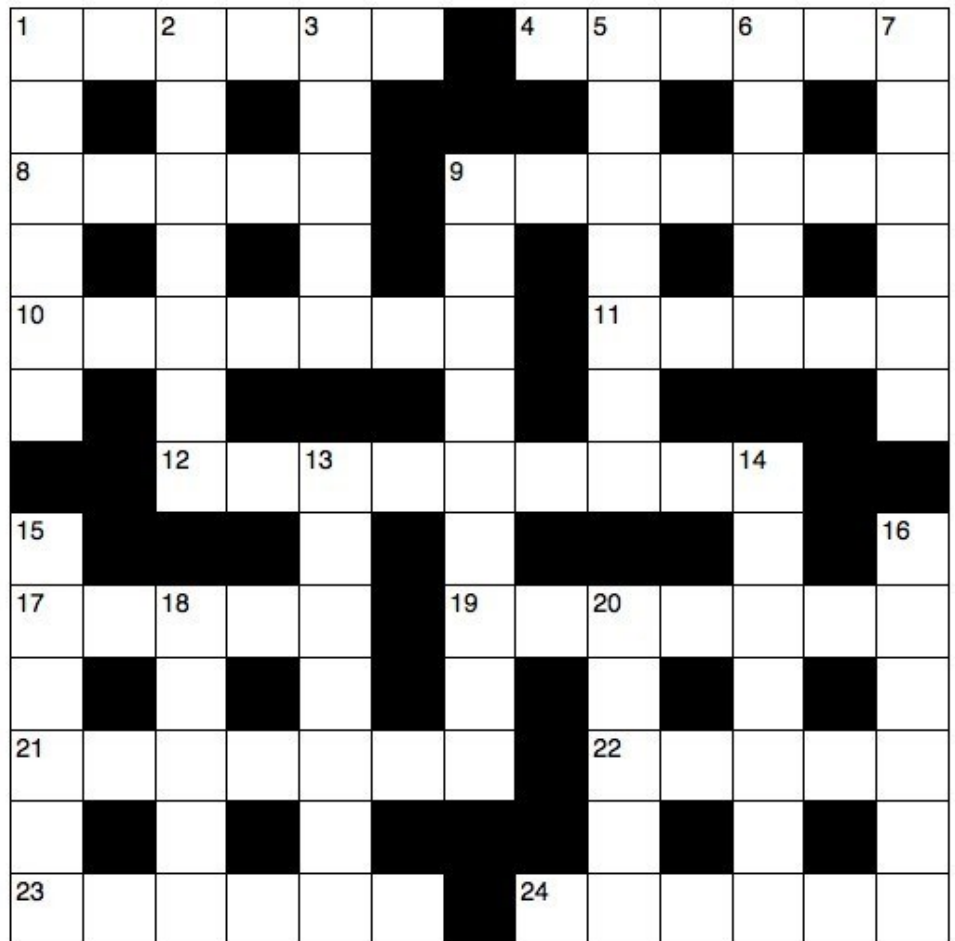
14 They were worth several hundred pounds each (Matthew 25:15) (7)

15 'A — went out to sow his seed' (Matthew 13:3) (6)

16 How Jesus described Jairus's daughter when he went into the room where she lay (Mark 5:39) (6)

18 The part of the day when the women went to the tomb on the first Easter morning (John 20:1) (5)

20 Narrow passageway between buildings (Luke 14:21) (5)



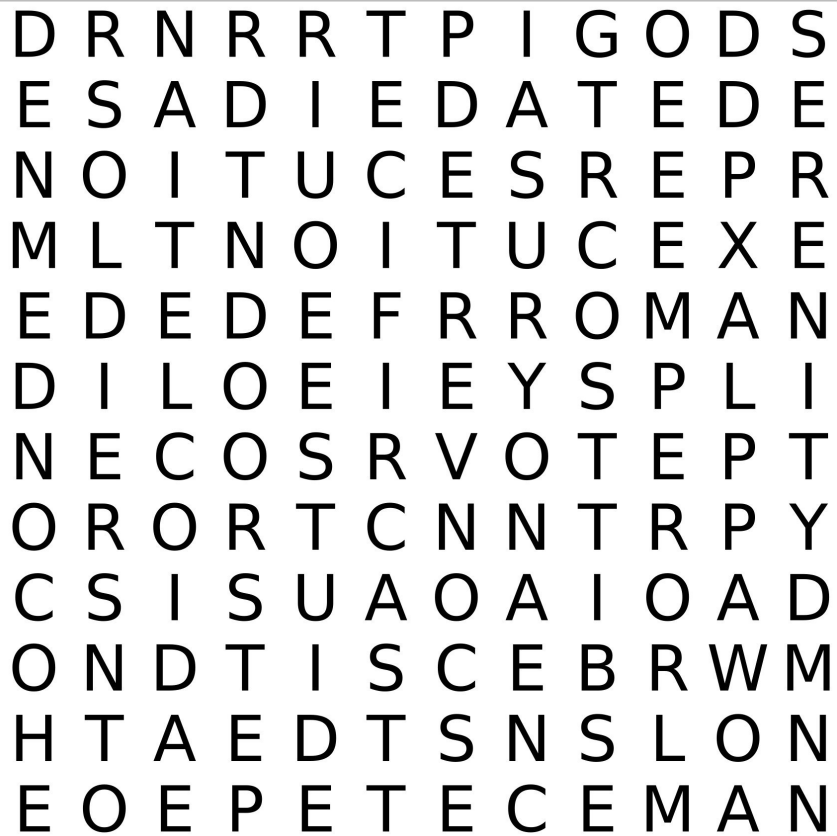


## Wordsearch

### St Alban - the first British martyr

Persecution of Christians worldwide is rising fast, so it is worth remembering St Alban, the first British martyr. Alban was a Roman citizen living in England when the Roman emperor, Diocletian, began a fierce persecution. Soon Alban found a desperate priest on his doorstep, hunted by local soldiers. Alban gave the priest shelter, and within days was converted. When the soldiers arrived, Alban took the priest's place, refused to offer sacrifice to the Roman gods, and was condemned to death. Alban went to his execution on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 250AD with such serenity that one of the executioners was converted. He died on the site of the Hertfordshire town that now bears his name.

|           |           |             |
|-----------|-----------|-------------|
| Alban     | martyr    | persecution |
| Roman     | emperor   | Diocletian  |
| Priest    | converted | soldiers    |
| Sacrifice | gods      | condemned   |
| Death     | execution | serenity    |
| Died      | site      | town        |
| Name      | doorstep  |             |



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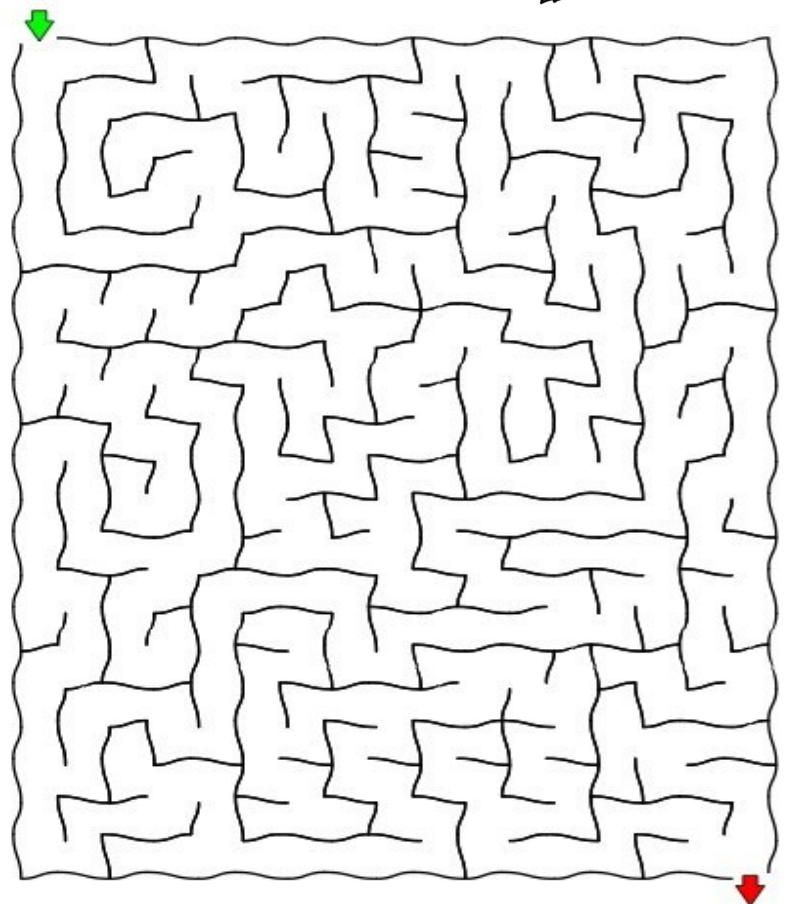
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capital  
cheered  
tribe  
Jerusalem  
crowd  
laws  
holy  
angry

Levites  
hill  
soldiers  
Ark  
respect  
stored  
cart  
organised

Uzzah  
Obed  
fall  
trumpeters  
stumbled  
David  
afraid  
musicians





# Bible Bite

## A short story from the Bible

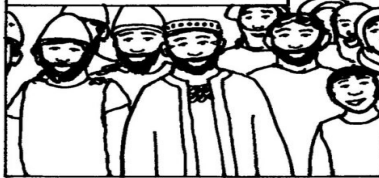
It can be read in the Bible in  
2 Sam 6: 1-10, 2 Chron 13, 15: 1-28

Copies of God's Laws for the Jews were kept in a special holy chest - the Ark. It had been stored at Keriath Jearim for 20 years...

When king David made Jerusalem his capital, he decided to bring the Ark there.



David brought his soldiers and a huge crowd came too



They put the Ark on a new cart and set off down the hill.



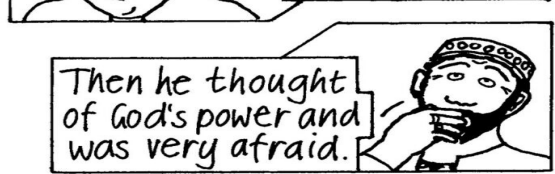
The oxen stumbled, and Uzzah thought the Ark might fall off the cart.



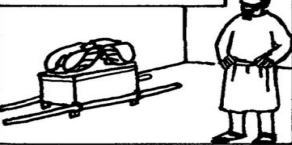
He forgot the Ark was holy and held on to it.



David was very angry with God that Uzzah had died



So he left the Ark stored at the house of Obed Edom.



David realised that they had not treated God's Ark with respect.



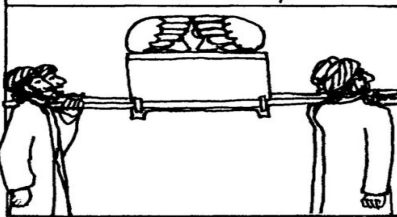
He talked to the Levites, the tribe that God had chosen to be His priests.



They organised musicians and trumpeters, and people to carry the Ark.



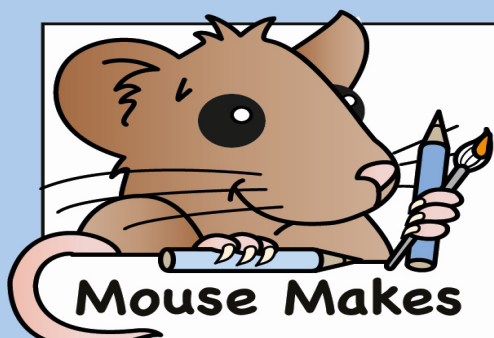
God's holy Ark was treated with respect.



Everyone cheered and sang as the Ark was carried into Jerusalem.







## JESUS HEALS

Who was the first person  
Jesus healed?  
*John 4:46-54*

Who did Jesus heal  
from fever?  
*Mark 1:29-31*

How was the the  
paralysed man  
brought to Jesus?  
*Mark 2:1-12*

Jesus **healed** and  
made the...

|           |          |
|-----------|----------|
| SICK      | ABLE     |
| DEAD      | WALK     |
| BLIND     | FORGIVEN |
| DEAF      | ALIVE    |
| CRIPPLED  | SPEAK    |
| SINNER    | MOVE     |
| MUTE      | SEE      |
| PARALYSED | WELL     |
| DISABLED  | HEAR     |



Where did the  
demons ask Jesus  
to send them  
when he drove  
them out?  
*Mark 5:1-20*

How long had  
the man by  
the pool been  
disabled?  
*John 5:1-15*

What did Jesus say made  
the woman well?  
*Matthew 9: 20-22*

How many men were  
healed from leprosy?  
*Luke 17:11-19*

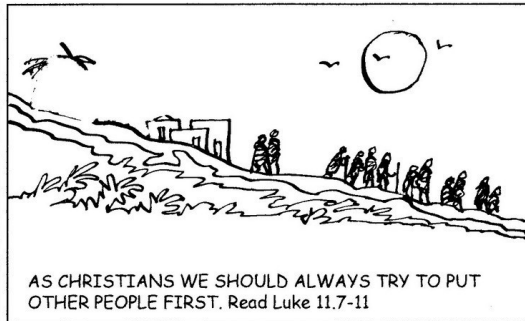
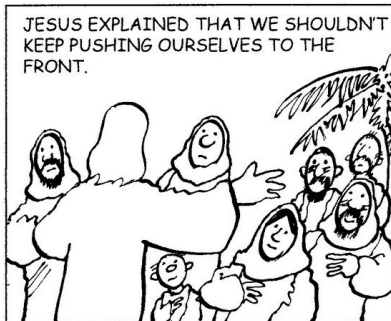
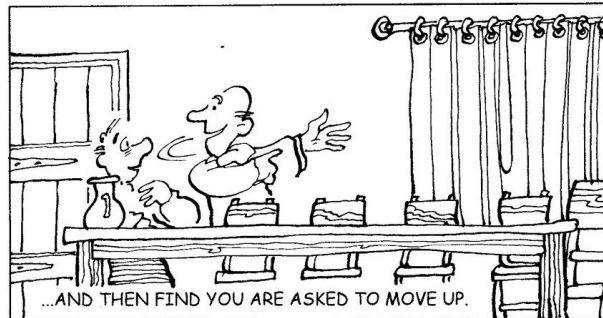
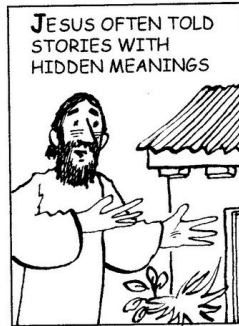
What did Jesus heal  
Bartemaus from?  
*Mark 10:46-52*

Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead,  
how many days had he been buried?  
*John 11:1-45*

"There are **many** things that  
Jesus did. If every one of them  
were written down, I suppose the  
whole world would not have room  
for the books that would be written."

*John 21:25*









Diocese of Chester

[Parish of Stockport and Brinnington]

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