



Diocese of Chester

STOCKPORT PARISH CHURCH


St Mary's in the Marketplace

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www.stmarysinthemarketplace.com

 Stockport Parish Church - St Mary's

Service times at St Mary's

Sunday: 10:30 Holy Communion /Morning Prayer

Normally the first and third Sunday is Holy Communion with Morning Prayer on the second and fourth.

15.30 Zeal Church

Tuesday: 10.00 Holy Communion

12.15 Lunchtime Service

Friday: 10.45 Café Worship

Wedding, Baptism, Funeral and other services by arrangement.

St Mary's and the Nave Café is open – Tuesday, Thursday, Friday & Saturday from 9.00am – 3.00pm

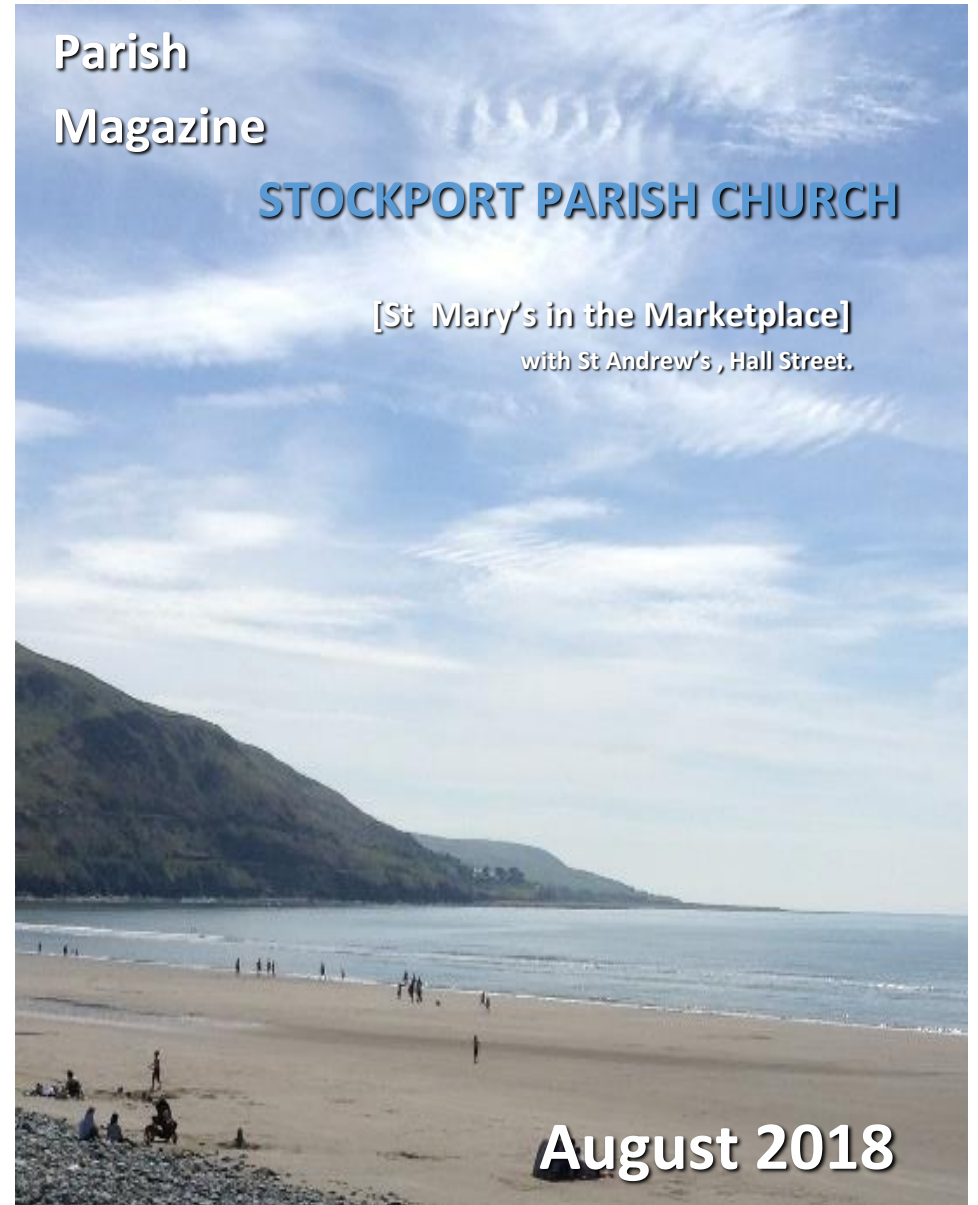
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Parish Magazine

STOCKPORT PARISH CHURCH

[St Mary's in the Marketplace]
with St Andrew's , Hall Street.



August 2018

In memory of Sir Ken Dodd

Diary

August 2018

Sunday, 5 th Aug	Holy Communion Church Lunch with Zeal Church Zeal Church	10.30 13.00 15.30
Tuesday, 7 th Aug	Holy Communion Lunchtime Service	10.00 12.15
Friday, 10 th Aug	Café Worship	10.45
Sunday, 12 th Aug	Morning Prayer Baptism Zeal Church To note: Stockport Classic Vehicle Show in Stockport Market Place 10am-4pm	10.30 12.00 15.30
Tuesday, 14 th Aug	Holy Communion Lunchtime Service	10.00 12.15
Friday, 17 th Aug	Café Worship	10.45
Sunday, 19 th Aug	Holy Communion Zeal Church	10.30 15.30
Tuesday, 21 st Aug	Holy Communion Lunchtime Service	10.00 12.15
Friday, 24 th Aug	Café Worship	10.45
Sunday, 26 th Aug	Morning Prayer Zeal Church	10.30 15.30
Tuesday, 28 th Aug	Holy Communion Lunchtime Service	10.00 12.15
Friday, 31 st Aug	Café Worship	10.45

Sir Ken Dodd, the comedian, died on 11th March 2018, aged 90. He was well-known and loved for his endless string of jokes. Such as:

‘An official told my big Auntie Nellie to come off the beach, because the tide was waiting to come in.’

|

‘On Friday there was a tap on the door. Funny sense of humour, that plumber.’

|

Mohers-in-law: ‘I haven’t spoken to mine for 18 months. I don’t like to interrupt her.’

|

‘I told the Inland Revenue I didn’t owe them a penny because I lived by the seaside.’

|

‘I do exercises every day in front of the television. Up, down, up, down, up, down. Then the other eyelid.’

He held the world record for cracking jokes: 1,500 in 3 hours 7 minutes, with no script.-

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

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

S	S	S	C	S	M	F						
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E	T	T	D	N	E	G						

A contribution towards the cost of producing this magazine would be appreciated please – in the donations box. Thank You

Sign spotted in a safari park:
Elephants, please stay in your car.





SCRUFFY

By Nigel Beeton

Scruffy is a little dog
 He's less than one foot tall
 His hair, all sticky-outy,
 Doesn't make him look less small.
 But for all his lack of inches
 What sets our Scruff apart –
 Within his doggy ribcage
 There beats a lion's heart.

If Scruffy senses trouble
 His courage does not lack
 He growls and barks and races
 Straight into the attack!
 Twelve inches of pure fury
 The fiercest, big or small
 Turn tail and flee for safety
 They don't like that at all!

For Scruffy loves his Master
 He loves his Mistress, too!
 To keep them safe from danger
 There's nothing he won't do!
 Some dogs are loud and barky
 Some dogs are not so cute,
 Some half the size of horses –
 He doesn't give a hoot!

Despite his fearless ardour
 His vigil, night and day
 To keep his folk from danger
 And trouble, come what may.
 What thanks for all his courage?
 What prize, for all that slog?
 No! All he gets from Master:
 "Be quiet, you stupid dog!"

v	y	d	t	w	c	r	o	w	d	s	l
l	y	r	w	a	b	a	c	k	i	y	q
p	l	o	e	v	y	p	r	f	l	n	y
d	a	w	t	e	a	c	h	e	r	f	d
s	a	n	b	s	g	s	t	o	r	m	e
a	a	o	i	t	e	a	c	h	i	n	g
f	d	i	s	c	i	p	l	e	s	e	s
r	q	g	l	d	k	p	g	i	s	q	s
a	t	u	e	o	c	e	o	f	l	u	k
i	h	m	i	s	r	a	d	w	s	e	t
d	m	z	m	e	a	s	l	e	e	p	e
i	p	b	o	a	t	y	j	m	h	r	o

sea	boat	panicked
Jesus	immediately	power
asleep	Galilee	back
crowds	storm	God
calm	care	waves
wind	disciples	afraid
drown	obey	sailors
teaching	Teacher	quiet

How are you enjoying your summer so far? We have certainly seen some lovely hot and sunny days, when being inside St Mary's is the best place to be – wonderfully cool and inviting – for anyone who wishes to just look round, have a "cuppa" in the café, visit the Heritage Centre, come to our Thursday "Craft Group" or better still attend one of our services.

We continue to offer our Tuesday morning service of Holy Communion in the Memorial Chapel with mainly guest clergy – nice to ring the changes. Our congregation numbers remain relatively low, but we feel that this is important start to our week day worship. Our Tuesday lunch-time service continues to be a great success mainly thanks to the efforts of John (Briggs) and Mike (Newman) assisted by Rita (Waters) and our various guest speakers. Our congregation numbers remains encouraging (an average of 45 attending each week) and come the Autumn our aim is to increase this number further with a little more "promotion" of this important aspect of our ministry within Stockport.

Our new Friday (Café Worship) is organised by members of the Tiviot Dale Methodist Church and started when they needed a new meeting place (again support by our own Reader (Rita) and is now very much part of St Mary's – another exciting venture of more traditional worship than we may see on a Sunday afternoon with our "partners" Zeal Church. Zeal Church offers an exciting (NEW for St Mary's) approach (less CofE tradition) with a more modern style of worship. We have of course retained the familiar Sunday morning services of Holy Communion and/or Morning Worship.

Whatever your personal choice we have something for everyone and all this during an interregnum now into it's third year!

Everyone welcome



Thank You to everyone who contributes to our funds on a regular basis, or by giving what you can when you can, or by giving a one-off donation. It hasn't gone unnoticed when balancing the books each month that some of you have kindly increased your contribution – directly into the bank or by using our brown/white envelopes - this is most appreciated - as has been help paying for specific items to be repaired or replaced etc. Such deeds of kindness keep us going in so many ways as does the income from those using St Mary's on a "hire" basis (concerts and events).

Half Year Accounts.....

We don't expect a great change in our financial circumstances at the present time, although you never know what is round the corner – in a good way (a nice unexpected donation) or not so good way (an unexpected bill or repair)! A snapshot of our accounts for half-year tells its own story - to a point:

Opening balance:	£ 8,344.92	
Income:	<u>£28,227.38</u>	£36,572.30
Less Expenditure/Commitments	<u>-£35,157.50</u>	<u>£1,414.80</u>

Not over "healthy" with expenditure exceeding income by some £6930.12 half way into the year.

It doesn't tell you that we owe our Gas supplier (before the beginning of the winter season needless to say) £2,085.75 – that the repair of the step-lift in the Heritage Trust area amounts to rather a lot of money (we have a legal obligation to provide full access in that area) and that we are still unable to do anything about the flag pole. It doesn't tell you that we have lighting that needs to be replaced before the nights draw in at St Andrews as well as St Mary's and various service contractors due to want payment at any time soon and whose financial commitments fall outside this particular time frame.



THE GREAT WAR
1914 - 1918

WE WILL REMEMBER THEM

It was: 100 years ago, from 8th August to 11th November that the Hundred Days Offensive in France and Belgium, took place. Allied Victory leading to the end of the 1st World War and the collapse of the German empire.

A Prayer for the way of peace and reconciliation

Lord, strengthen our hearts, hands, and minds,
to work together for peace;
to see you in another way,
and to seek your kingdom above all things;
that your will may be done,
and your Kingdom come,
through Jesus Christ,
the Lord of lords and King of kings.

August wars

August is a month when wars tend to start. For example, both the First and Second World Wars erupted in the month of August. Also, on 13th August 1961, East Germany's Communist regime built the Berlin Wall, separating the city's eastern and western sectors. Then on 20th August 1968, tanks invaded and crushed Czechoslovakia, ending the 'Prague Spring'. And on 19th August 1991, a clique of eight Communist hard-liners overthrew the reformist President Gorbachev in a coup to shore up the sagging Soviet State. (It collapsed three days later.) More recently, even the Russian/Georgian conflict of 2008 began in August.

So – August may be the holiday month, but it seems when leaders go on holiday, bad things happen.

Diary of a Momentous Year August 1918 the Battle of Amiens

Canon David Winter

Many historians of the First World War consider that two battles in the summer of 1918 were the final turning points in the eventual outcome of the war and of the settlement which followed it. The second Battle of Marne was in July, and the even more significant Battle of Amiens was in August, exactly a century ago this month. The Germans had launched an attack in the Amiens area, a strategic target in northern France near the Belgian border. The Allies were ready for it and responded with devastating force. Hundreds of tanks, soldiers from at least four nationalities, and – a new development in warfare – ground attack aircraft, drove the Germans out of the city. In the first few hours of the battle the Allies took 17,000 prisoners of war. Commentators consider that at least some of them were German soldiers who had had enough of a war they were obviously going to lose. The city of Amiens and much territory beyond it were recaptured, but the impact of the victory was greater than territory taken. The whole balance of military strength had changed beyond dispute. In 1946, a year after the second World War ended, my older brother invited me to join him on a visit to France. A family he had been billeted with in Amiens, as a member of the British liberating forces, had invited him to come and spend some time with them in more peaceful circumstances. At 16 I'd never been abroad, so gladly agreed to go. When we got off the train in Amiens I saw for the first time the consequences of what they called 'total war'. We picked our way past ruined buildings and homes in a city that had endured both invasion and four years of enemy occupation. I had seen the after-effects of the Blitz in London, but this was worse. Even outside the city, the landscape bore all the scars of war. There were few trees, for instance, the long-term result of endless shelling over two wars. As M. Deladier, our host, pointed out, Amiens had been a battle-ground four times in his life (I guess he was about 60) – twice in the first World War and then twice in the Second. The experience helped me to appreciate what the people of northern France had gone through. No wonder in 1945 they were adamant that there should never again be war in Europe like this. The embattled city of Amiens, too often a scene of brutal warfare, reminds us of the preciousness of *peace*.



THE GREAT WAR
1914 - 1918

C of E helps protect young people from modern slavery

New resources to be released in September will help schools raise awareness of modern slavery and help protect their students from becoming victims. The resources are a result of a collaboration between The Clewer Initiative, a project helping the Church of England to respond to modern slavery, and Just Enough UK, an educational charity teaching children about difficult subjects like modern slavery and terrorism.

The resources will include lesson plans for five key stages, collective worship, and guides for teachers. They are designed to raise awareness of modern slavery amongst the UK's young people and make them aware that they themselves could be at risk of being victims of this crime.

According to the National Crime Agency referrals of under-18s as potential victims of modern slavery increased 66% to 2118 in 2017, compared to 1278 in 2016. In 2017 559 minors – 497 girls and 62 boys – were found to be potential victims of sexual exploitation, 119 were found in domestic servitude, and over a thousand in labour exploitation.

Modern slavery is thought to be taking place in every town and city in the UK, with high risk areas including hand car washes and nail bars. The Clewer Initiative recently launched the [Safe Car Wash App](#), designed to help raise awareness of modern slavery in hand car washes.

The resources will be available through an online portal on websites of The Clewer Initiative and Just Enough UK.

Drivers urged to join effort to stop modern slavery in hand car washes

Drivers are being encouraged to join an unprecedented national information-gathering campaign launched by the Church of England and the Catholic Church in England and Wales which is aimed at eradicating modern slavery in hand car washes. Anti-slavery campaigners and other key agencies, including the police and councils, are backing the Safe Car Wash App, launched by The Clewer Initiative, the Church of England's campaign against modern slavery, and the Santa Marta Group, the Catholic Church's anti-slavery project. The Safe Car Wash app can be downloaded for free on to Apple and Android devices. Users can open the app when they are at the car wash and pinpoint their exact location using GPS. They will be then taken through a series of indicators of modern slavery. They range from practical details - such as whether workers have suitable protective clothing - to behavioral clues, such as whether they appear withdrawn. If the answers indicate a high likelihood, users will be directed to the Modern Slavery Helpline. Data from the app will be anonymised and shared with the National Crime Agency (NCA) and the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority (GLAA). Clergy are also be asked to raise awareness of the campaign in sermons and Sunday School lessons and hold events to publicise the app. The Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, said: "Over the last few years we have learnt more about the evil of modern slavery and we have begun to understand how it is perpetrated in our communities in plain sight. "Through the Safe Car Wash App we now have a chance to help tackle this scourge which is damaging so many people's lives." Cardinal Vincent Nichols said: "I welcome this very helpful and timely initiative in an area of real exploitation. As we learn to see this example of forced labour and modern slavery in our midst, we will also become more aware of the presence of this evil scourge in other sectors in our neighbourhood."

The App is also endorsed by the National Police Chiefs' Council, the Local Government Association and the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner.

Universal Credit not working, says Churches

A benefit system which drives families into debt and leaves people hungry is a failing benefit system, say a number of Churches in the UK. The Baptist Union, the Church of Scotland, the Methodist Church and the United Reformed Church, have all commented on the recent release of the National Audit Office (NAO) report, *Rolling out Universal Credit*.

In a statement, they say:

'Churches have repeatedly expressed concerns about Universal Credit and the damaging effects it is having on communities. The NAO's findings are deeply concerning but not a surprise.

'The NAO report states that that Universal Credit is not value for money and failing to meet its financial objectives. Most importantly, it is the first official document to take seriously the concerns of claimants and acknowledge the problems they are facing.

'Churches around the country are supporting people who are affected by Universal Credit. It is clear that lives are being damaged by Universal Credit.

'Half of people receiving Universal Credit report going into debt. This is the result of delayed, inadequate, and irregular payments. It makes budgeting impossible and can make debt inevitable. The DWP's own figures show that 4 in 10 people reported serious financial difficulties, whilst 1 in 10 waited more than 11 weeks for payment.

'In Universal Credit areas foodbank use went up 52%, whereas in other areas it was 13%. The case is incontrovertible. Universal Credit is failing, and the poorest are suffering the consequences. A benefit system which drives families into debt and leaves them hungry is a failing benefit system.'

Synod vote to pave way for new links between C of E and black-majority churches

Church of England congregations will be able to share mission and ministry with a range of churches in their area more easily under plans that received final approval by the General Synod in July.

A long-anticipated overhaul of rules underpinning ecumenical relations is expected to open the way for parishes to take part in joint worship with more churches than previously possible.

For the first time this will include churches without a large national structure – something which will particularly affect newer independent evangelical, Pentecostal and Charismatic groups including many black-led churches.

Dr Joe Aldred of Churches Together in England, who serves as an Ecumenical Representative for Pentecostals on General Synod and is a bishop in the Church of God of Prophecy, welcomed the change.

He said: ‘This is a great moment for relations between the Church of England and Pentecostal and Charismatic denominations and congregations, including many black-led churches, as we share the task of building the Kingdom of God in this country.

‘In working together and worshipping together our churches have the potential to transform their neighbourhoods.

Gambling - is it a good idea for churches?



Organising a “Fun Day” or thinking about the next “Christmas Fayre”? There is always the question “Can we have a raffle” – is this really “gambling” or just a bit of fun! Anyone who runs events like this know the pressure to have games of chance.

What does the law say? The law allows for incidental non-commercial lotteries at events. So lotteries at church fetes are permitted. All the sales and the draw must take place during the main event, which may not last more than a single day. Prizes cannot total more than £500. Other small lotteries usually need to be registered with the local authority and again restricted to sales at the event. Anything “bigger” than that and it gets a little more complicated! A “club” could have a ‘not for profit’ lottery as it is only for members – not much good for fund raising! You do not need any permission for a free prize draw either. So, a lucky programme is fine only if it is free. You cannot charge for it. Legislation is complex and this is only a glimpse into it.

So what about the church fete? Should we or should we not - and we certainly didn’t for a good number of years have a raffle ticket in sight. Many Christians think that any gambling in any format is wrong in principle, and don’t want to see a raffle or tombola – or anything else that comes under that heading - others find it quite acceptable of course. Perhaps “safer” all round are those activities that provide a little light hearted fun but involve an element of skill. “Guess the weight of the vicar” (if we had one of course and they wished to play the game) – perhaps guess the weight of a jar is a safer option) – that doesn’t come under the heading “lottery” or “gambling”. *BUT be assured - if we are unsure when we plan events we will always check first what we can and can’t do (at least in law), what we have permission to do and where we would need to apply for a permit or even event licence etc.*

Stockport Classic Vehicle Show **Sunday, 12 August 10am – 4pm**



Celebrating Classic Style with a collection of Classic Vehicles from some of the North West's best Classic Vehicle Clubs. Great Entertainment and up to 70 stalls of authentic vintage treasures. Refreshments available all day

***In Stockport Market Place
organised by the Hare and Hounds Classic Vehicle Club
and supported by Totally Stockport***

***Also
The Vintage Village at Stockport Covered Market Hall***



Beware taking your pills abroad

Are you going abroad on holiday? Be careful which medicines you pack – what is legal in this country may NOT be legal in the country to which you are going. And, as figures from the Health Survey for England show that 48 per cent of us are taking prescription medication, this will affect very many of us.

Officials at the Foreign Office strongly advise you to check the rules online before you travel. For example, even Vicks and Sudafed are illegal in some countries. In others, such as Greece, Diazepam, Tramadol, and codeine are controlled drugs. Sleeping pills, anti-anxiety pills and strong painkillers require a license in Singapore.



The Rev Paul Hardingham considers how 'rest' is based on a relationship and does not depend on where you go.

A Holiday with Jesus

August is the month when schools are off and many of us go on holiday. The trouble is that holidays soon come to an end! Yet Jesus offers us a rest which has no end:

'Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.' (Matthew 11: 28-29). Are you tired or burdened? Jesus invites you to take a holiday with Him!

The Invitation: Our holiday destination is Jesus himself: *'Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened.'* We can come just as we are, with all the burdens, weaknesses and sinfulness that we carry. Jesus doesn't offer a '10 steps programme' to deal with our issues; He simply offers himself!

The Promise: Jesus promises us the gift of refreshing, sustaining and everlasting rest. When we go on holiday, we usually look forward to doing very little and yet this is not the kind of rest Jesus offers. His rest involves taking up His yoke and learning from Him! A yoke was the wooden collar that ran across the shoulders of a pair of oxen and enabled them to work the fields. Jesus says to us: *'My yokes fit well. They do not rub your neck and shoulders. Come to me and get yoked to me. Make an act of loyal obedience and trust in me. And you will find a deep peace and satisfaction that you could never find anywhere else. I have come for you. Come to me!'*

What's so amazing about this holiday is that you don't have to go anywhere; you can find rest by simply staying at home!

David Winter on our craving for 'feedback'...

THE WAY I SEE IT - Rating the 'experience'

'How did we do?' (on a scale of one to ten, where 'ten' is excellent and 'one' is poor?) 'Would you recommend us to your friends?' You can hardly buy anything now, or make use of a service, without an email popping up asking such questions.

Some go further into detail about delivery, courtesy or satisfaction with the 'experience', as they call it. Frankly, buying a hand towel is not an 'experience' for me but an everyday transaction, but perhaps some people get a kick out of it. Obviously enough of them fill them in to make it worthwhile, but it begs the question why do they want to know how we 'feel'? It's surely not a need to be loved and admired; and fairly sure it's not really about improving the service.

Basically, they are gathering material for their PR team and their advertising agency. It will all be used online or in advertisements. '90% of our customers rate our service 'very good' or 'good'. 86% of people using our face cream found it 'helpful' or 'very helpful'. Of course, one wonders what the other 16 % said. 'It gave me a nasty rash'? 'My skin was dry for weeks?' Of course, we shall never know.

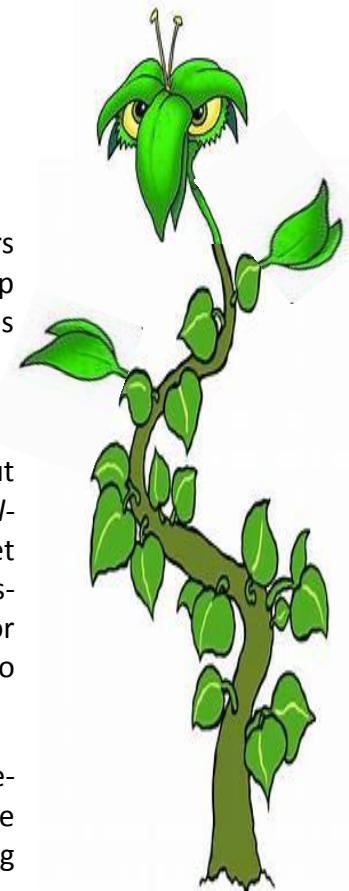
This continual request for 'feedback' is a relatively recent development, which has spread to doctors' practices, hospitals and charities. Soon, perhaps, your church will start doing it. 'How did we do? Did you like the hymns? Were you made welcome? Rate the sermon on a scale of one to ten, where 'ten' is spell-binding, and 'one' is incomprehensible. **Actually, there could just be the germ of a good idea there!**

Beware foreign plants

Gardeners have been told by government ministers not to bring back plants from holiday, in order to stop them inadvertently introducing an invasive species into the UK.

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs officials are becoming increasingly concerned about water-borne threats such as the *Dikerogammarus villosus*, or killer shrimp; *Didemnum vexillum*, the carpet sea squirt, and *Dreissena bugensis*, the quagga mussel. These can clog up waterways and pipes, or smother reefs. As one expert explained: 'we need to raise awareness of biosecurity.'

One of the main risks is for invasive non-native species to be accidentally brought into the UK by people who take part in angling, canoeing, or boating abroad.



Sky fright

An airliner flew into a violent thunderstorm and was soon bumping around in the sky. One very nervous lady happened to be sitting next to a clergyman and turned to him for comfort. 'Can't you do something?' she demanded forcefully.

'I'm sorry ma'am,' said the reverend gently. 'I'm in sales, not management.'

What is breeding on your tea towel?



I'm just lazy and use the dishwasher for everything and hardly ever wash a plate or a cup by hand – and even then leave it to dry on its own. Maybe that just isn't a bad idea as it turns out.

You will never look at your kitchen tea towels in quite the same way again: when you realise that they could be harbouring bugs which will give you food poisoning.

Here are the gruesome details: recent tests on tea towels found that E.coli is more likely to be found on towels which have been used for both dishes and drying hands. Damp tea towels are the worst – with up to a third growing E.coli on them. The bugs found were of *coliform bacteria*, (a group which includes *E.coli*); *enterococcus spp*, and *staphylococcus aureus*. Food poisoning bugs can be fatal for the elderly, the very young, or infirm.

My aim in life is to never use a tea towel again – and to greatly reduce the use of these in the café where technically there is no need to use one at all – where we have a perfectly good professional standard dishwasher. No dishwasher, no café... but we do ask that the ones we do use are washed to government agency standard – our volunteers aware that a 90 degree hot wash is essential – our dish cloths frequently boiled.

Government guidelines in the home recommend changing and washing tea towels, dish-clothes, sponges and oven gloves on a frequent basis, and letting them dry well before re-use.



Is it safe to breath in your home?

Is your home polluted? A recent study has found that indoor pollutants are all around us, and that they may lead to up to 9,000 deaths a year.

Dozens of personal care products have been given the thumbs-down for what they can do to the air-quality in your home: nail varnish, deodorants, gas stoves, wood burners, scented candles, home cleaning products and even soft furnishings, according to the campaign group Airtopia.

As the average person spends 90 per cent of their time indoors, it can become a serious problem. Especially as evidence from the USA and Europe suggest that air pollution can be up to five times worse in your home than outdoors. So – go open a window!



Vulnerable young people

Children's Society's Seriously Awkward campaign has called on the government to provide more support for vulnerable 16 and 17 year-olds. They are inviting people to take a simple quiz on their website which highlights some of the other differences one day can make to young people's lives. How many can you get right?



Go to: www.childrenssociety.org.uk/what-you-can-do/campaign-for-change/how-well-do-you-know-the-legal-ages? And find out!

Dominic: the saint who believed in learning

If you enjoy reading the Bible and in encouraging others to have faith in God, then Dominic is the patron saint for you. His passion for helping Christians to learn and proclaim their faith led him to found the Order of Preachers, or Black Friars, because of the black cape they wore over white habits. They are also known as the Dominicans.

Dominic was born in Castile in 1170, the youngest son of the warden of the town and nephew to the archpriest of Gumiel d'Izan. Becoming an Austin canon of Osma cathedral, Dominic spent seven years as a priest, devoted to prayer and penance. In 1201 he became sub-prior to his community. In 1208 the Papal Legate was murdered. It sparked a crusade or 'holy war' against the Albigensian heretics. Dominic worked for reconciliation, refusing to join in the violence and massacres against them. Instead he used instruction and prayer to woo the heretics back, which led to him playing a leading role in founding Toulouse University. That became the foundation for his work in establishing the Friars Preachers at Toulouse in 1215, which occupied the last seven years of his life. (Three times he refused a bishopric, believing that this work was more important.) Dominic's 'order' provided communities of sacred learning, with monks devoted to study, teaching and preaching as well as the usual prayer. Dominic believed monks should do more than just commune with God; they should proclaim God's love to others. Dominic was an excellent organiser, and soon his order spread rapidly all over Italy, Spain and France. It met an acute need in the medieval church, and in time the Black Friars became a pioneering missionary force in Asia and even (much later) the Americas. Dominic travelled widely from 1216 until his death in 1220. His simple tomb was later embellished by Michelangelo, and his usual attributes in art are a lily and a black and white dog, which is a pun (Domini canis) on the name of Dominic. The dog holds a torch in its mouth as a herald of the truth.

Aidan: the man who brought Christianity to England

31st August is the feast of St Aidan, who brought Christianity to northern England. He is a strong contender for the title of the first English bishop. Not that honours meant a great deal to this austere but captivating character.

In 635 he came to Northumbria at the invitation of the local ruler, Oswald. Oswald had spent several years of his childhood on Iona, and when he succeeded to the throne of his northern kingdom he was shrewd enough to realise that the Christian faith would be an ideal unifying force to pacify rival tribes of warlords. Oswald's invitation was not immediately successful. The first missionary from Iona returned in despair, claiming that the barbarity of the Northumbrians made them unconvertible. But as Aidan listened, he felt the unmistakable call of God to try again.

"Perhaps you were too harsh on them," he found himself suggesting to the travel-stained missionary. Shortly afterwards, Aidan found himself at the head of a party of brothers heading for Northumbria. He was never to see his beloved Iona again.

The monks made the long journey to Northumbria on foot, singing psalms as they went. Their need to ward off the powers of evil with prayer was genuine, for these were dangerous times to travel through remote country unarmed. They arrived safely at Oswald's castle in Bamburgh, where he offered them lavish hospitality and assumed that they would found their community there. However, the brothers realised that to live under the king's protection would make it difficult to avoid the world's temptations and establish a rapport with the local people. They saw the tidal island of Lindisfarne on the horizon and chose it as their base. The rest, as the saying goes, is history. Aidan was much loved as a teacher and evangelist; though

stern in his own self-discipline, he was prepared to travel to the most inaccessible villages, where he cared for the local people with compassion and gentleness. In time his influence grew and noble people joined the stream of visitors to Lindisfarne. After Oswald's death in 642, his brother Oswin succeeded him as king. Oswin was concerned about Aidan's habit of walking everywhere. The saint was ageing rapidly, his body weakened by years of harsh fasting and exposure to the elements. Oswin wondered what would happen to him one day on the road, and also he felt that such a lowly means of travel was not appropriate for a bishop. So he gave Aidan one of his finest horses, complete with a beautifully worked saddle and bridle. Aidan did not feel able to risk offending the king by spurning his generosity, but he rode out of the palace with a heavy heart. He knew that people would relate to him differently now that he had the trappings of affluence, and that it would be dangerous to stop and rest with such valuable belongings beside him. The king had intended to give him comfort, but his gesture had had the opposite effect. Aidan had learnt that possessions, and the need to protect them, make it more difficult to follow God with an undivided heart. The story goes that he gave the horse, complete with saddle, to the first beggar he met outside the palace gates. A more pragmatic Christian might have reasoned that keeping on the right side of Oswin would lead to opportunities that were too valuable to risk. Indeed, the king was angry when he heard what Aidan had done. "That horse was fit for a king, not for some vagabond," he protested. "I could have found you an old nag if you wanted to give it away." Aidan's reply was simply, "What do you think, O King? Is the son of a mare worth more in your eyes than that the Son of God?" There was an awkward silence; then the King removed his sword, knelt at Aidan's feet and asked his forgiveness. When he returned to the banqueting table, it was with a beaming smile. Sadly, he too was to perish in battle shortly afterwards; these were violent times. Yet Oswin, whose culture demanded that he should appear all-powerful in the eyes of his followers, had been publicly humbled by the integrity of a simple monk who had challenged his values.

John Bunyan – the man who wrote Pilgrim's Progress

After the Bible, John Bunyan's wonderful Christian allegory, the Pilgrim's Progress, is one of the most celebrated and widely-read books in the English language. It has been translated into more than one hundred languages around the world and keeps its place as a Christian classic. Names of people and places from its pages have been commonplace wherever English is spoken. We need only recall Mr Great-Heart, Mr Valiant-for-Truth, Giant Despair, Madame Bubble, the Slough of Despond, Vanity Fair, the Delectable Mountains, the Hill Difficulty and the Celestial City. Bunyan was born on 28 November 1628, at Elstow, near Bedford, England, of a poor family. He had little formal education and his father taught him to be a metal worker. His first wife died young. His second wife, Elizabeth, helped him considerably with his blossoming literary career. His conversion was the result of reading the Bible, and the witness of local Christians. From that time the Bible became the great inspiration of his life. He wrote more than fifty books on Christianity. A Baptist by conviction, he had little time for the Established Church. Bunyan became a popular preacher, but because of his opposition to the Established Church and because he did not have a Church of England preaching licence, he was imprisoned in 1661. It was in prison that he wrote Pilgrim's Progress. It was not only Bunyan's greatest book but was destined to become one of the most popular Christian books in the world. Pilgrim's Progress is an allegory, using the names of people and places from the Bible to teach spiritual lessons. The vivid and unforgettable imagery in the Pilgrim's Progress covers the whole Christian gospel from sin and condemnation all the way through faith, repentance, grace, justification, sanctification, and perseverance to heaven itself. Bunyan died on 31 August 1688. His portrayal of the death of Mr Valiant For Truth is Bunyan at his allegorical best. This brave old soldier of Jesus Christ had received his summons to 'go home.' Calling his friends together he says, *'My sword I give to him who shall succeed me in my pilgrimage ... My marks and scars I carry with me, to be a witness for me, that I have fought His battles, Who will now be my rewarder.'* ... So he passed over, and all the trumpets sounded for him on the other side...

Totally Stockport have making parking a little easier for visitors to Stockport Town Centre from the 1st June until the 31st August by offering totally free parking [for up to 4 hours] on the 6th floor of the Heaton Lane Car Park [Monday to Sunday 6am-6pm]. To register log-on to the Totally Stockport web-site and follow the instructions.



www.totallystockport.co.uk



Athanasius said:

'Most Scripture speaks to us; the Psalms speak for us.'

They are powerful tools for devotion and prayer in our lives.

Psalm 1, sets the scene for the whole book. The psalm tells us how we can be blessed by God, as it contrasts the life of the righteous and wicked. How can we find true happiness in our discipleship?

- ¹ Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers,*
- ² but whose delight is in the law of the LORD, and who meditates on his law day and night.*
- ³ That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither— whatever they do prospers.*
- ⁴ Not so the wicked! They are like chaff that the wind blows away.*
- ⁵ Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous.*
- ⁶ For the LORD watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked leads to destruction.*

Continued

Delight in God's Word: 'whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and who meditates on His law day and night.' (v2). Righteous people delight in God's Word: 'the most precious thing this world affords' (Coronation Service). They are preoccupied with the Word and don't miss any opportunity to meditate upon it. They recognise that by reading and studying the Word, God will speak into their lives and direct the way they live. Have we found this to be true ourselves?

Delight in God's Way: 'that person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither – whatever they do prospers.' (v3). How secure is our faith in difficult times? A tree can only survive storms with a good root system, which will also provide necessary water and nutrients for the tree to grow and flourish. Just like the tree, if we want a secure and fruitful Christian life, we must give space to our hidden life. This means giving time to reading God's word and praying, as we listen for his direction for our lives. Does what people see on the outside, reflect our inner life?

Athanasius (296-373) was born into a prosperous family in Alexandria in Egypt, studied in the Christian school there and entered the ministry. He was twenty-nine years old when he accompanied Alexander, the bishop of Alexandria, to the Church's first ecumenical Council, at Nicaea in 325. [See our article in the May 18 magazine]

Athanasius is venerated as a Christian saint, whose feast day is 2 May in Western Christianity, 15 May in the Coptic Orthodox Church, and 18 January in the other Eastern Orthodox Churches. He is venerated by the Oriental and Eastern Orthodox Churches, the Catholic Church, the Lutheran churches, and the Anglican Communion.

Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in
Mk 4:35-41, Mt 8:23-27, Lk 8:22-25

Jesus had spent the day teaching big crowds by Lake Galilee, and when evening came he told his disciples...



There's a tattoo for that

Don't look now, but tattoos are everywhere, and with people stripping off, more of them have been exposed than ever this summer.

Tattoos were once the domain of sailors and eccentrics. Not anymore – a walk down any high street will confirm that tattoos are now big business. Nowadays shops offering tattoos and body piercing are a thriving high street activity. Many thousands of men and women are covering their arms, legs, bodies, neck and even faces with a fantastic variety of tattoos.

A modest tattoo might be a single design. But serious tattoo lovers may cover their whole bodies with decorations – from dragons to spider webs to huge vampires.

Many people choose tattoos to mark significant life events, from childbirth to marriage. A tattoo can also be a declaration of commitment or belonging; football club logos are much in demand. As the writer Ted Harrison says, 'in some respects, having a tattoo is the equivalent of taking a life vow.'

Tattooing is even mentioned in the Bible, but not favourably. Leviticus 19.28 is very clear on the subject: 'Do not cut your bodies for the dead or put tattoo marks on yourselves. I am the Lord.'(NIV) *It seems that God prefers our skin as He made it.*



Addiction of course isn't restricted to the Raffle and Tombola tables at the Christmas Fayre –

We are all aware of addiction to serious gambling (on-line, gaming machines or even going to the Casino), we are aware of addiction to drugs and booze (we see plenty of both around St Mary's) but what do we know about "computer games". In particular the dangerously addictive Fortnite. Do parents really know what is going on, and grand-parent - do you? Fortnite is one of the most successful – and most addictive – games ever. Thousands of worried parents worry that the game is taking over their children's life. One father found his primary school aged daughter sitting on a urine-soaked cushion – after a non-stop ten-hour gaming session. And so, in desperation, parents pull plugs, lock bedroom doors, or try other methods to get their offspring off line. Endless family rows erupt over how much time the kids are now spending on Fortnite, instead of schoolwork, their friends, or even eating and drinking. One parent says that before Fortnite came along, 'our family life wasn't The Waltons, but it wasn't the war zone of today – with perpetual negotiation, confrontation and disappointment.' Therapist Sally Bakers, who counsels gaming addicts, explains: 'It is sensory overload. The games create unnatural highs and compelling behaviour. Children don't have the mental capacity to deal with that situation. It's toxic.... Remember, manufacturers in Silicon Valley won't let their kids play, because when they're gaming, ... they are becoming robotic and hyper-charged.' Meanwhile, one mother confesses, 'thousands of parents are, like us, bumping along with not enough control, along with a gnawing anxiety that gaming will soon replace real life.'

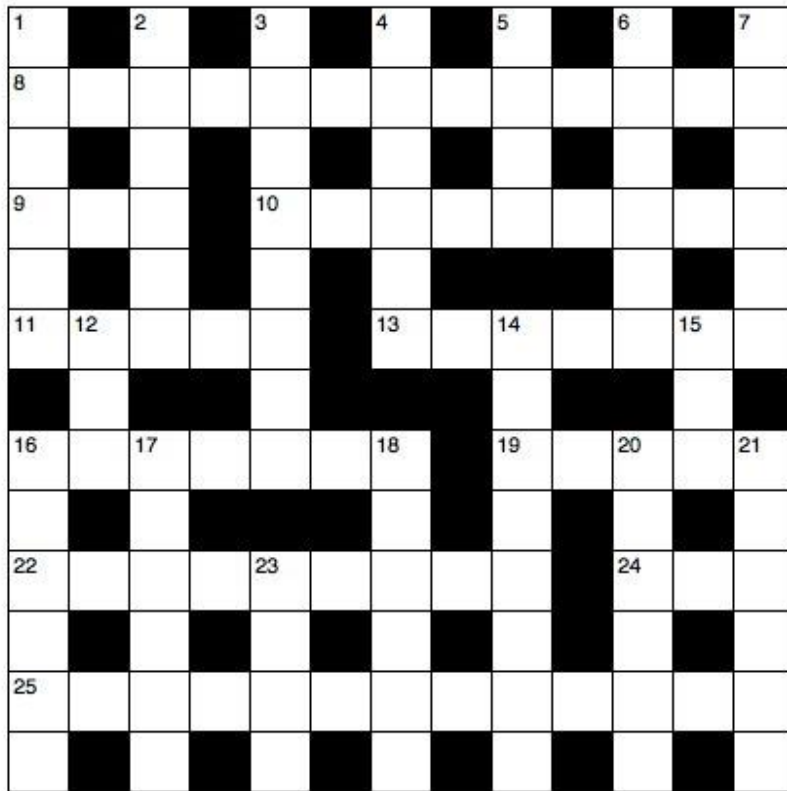
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Crossword



Across

- 8 One of the titles given to the Messiah in Isaiah's prediction (Isaiah 9:6) (6,2,5)
- 9 International Nepal Fellowship (1,1,1)
- 10 Single(1Corinthians7:27)(9)
- 11 Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's seminal book about Soviet prison camps, The — Archipelago (5)
- 13 Treachery(2Kings11:14)(7)
- 16 Of India(anag.)(2,3,2)

- 19 'God has put us apostles on display at the end of the procession,like men condemned to die in the — ' (1 Corinthians 4:9) (5)
- 22 Follower of a theological system characterized by a strong belief in predestination (9)
- 24 'Put these old rags and worn-out clothes under your arms to— the ropes' (Jeremiah 38:12) (3)
- 25 They brought together all the elders of the Israelites in Egypt (Exodus 4:29) (5,3,5)

Down

- 1 The season when kings 'go off to war' (2 Samuel 11:1) (6)
- 2 Simon Peter's response to Jesus by the Sea of Galilee: 'Go away from me, Lord; I am a — man' (Luke 5:8) (6)
- 3 Beaten with whips (1 Kings12:11) (8)
- 4 'You shall not — adultery' (Exodus 20:14) (6)
- 5 Encourage (Hebrews 10:24) (4)
- 6 Service of morning prayer in the Church of England (6)
- 7 'Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for you, and — — him in your heart by faith with thanksgiving' (4,2)
- 12 Run(anag.)(3)
- 14 Member of 17th-century party that denied the right of autonomy to the Church (8)
- 15 'We will triumph with our tongues; we—our lips'(Psalm12:4) (3)
- 16 Earnings(1Corinthians16:2)(6)
- 17 'I rejoice greatly in the Lord that— —you have renewed your concern for me' (Philippians 4:10) (2,4)
- 18 How Paul described Philemon (Philemon 1)(6)
- 20 Multiple territories under the rule of a single state(Daniel11:4)(6)
- 21 'You have been unfaithful; you have married foreign women,—to Israel's guilt' (Ezra 10:10) (6)
- 23 This month(abbrev.)(4)