

**October
2021**



**To journey in faith and share
God's love.**

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Please email: stgeorgesbrockworthmag@gmail.com
If unable to email, please deliver hard copy to the Church Office.

Editorial Disclaimer & church policies :

Any ecclesiastical or political views contained in this magazine are not necessarily those of the PCC or the Editor. This church promotes good practice in work with children and young people. It has a current and active Child Protection Policy that's available to view at St George's Church & St George's Church Centre. St. George's, Brockworth is a Fair Trade Parish and supports the Parish Giving Scheme.

THIS MONTH'S COVER: St. George's Church. Photo by Pat Hartwell



Which way?

On Saturday 11th September the PCC had some time away to think, pray and discuss **THE FUTURE** and direction of the community of faith at **St. George's**.

Through lockdown, and social restrictions, we as individuals and as a community of faith, have **lived through uncertainty**. As we emerge from that period **how do we re-engage & live out our faith?** Bishop Rachel, and Archbishop Justin Welby have encouraged us as churches to resist the temptation to return to the way we were doing church before Covid. As Bishop Rachel theologically reflected last year, after **Jesus' baptism and temptation** in the desert, the inauguration of his mission, Jesus didn't return to the status quo of doing church: **worship life changed**.

To help us explore & review our assumptions & perspectives of church and community life, the PCC looked at the response of the disciples as they processed the death and resurrection of Jesus. John 21:1-11 tells us the disciples returned to Galilee. In their uncertainty and after being unsettled they wanted **safety and comfort**. For specific reasons Galilee was their place of safety and comfort. However, it's not where God wanted them, he wanted them spreading the gospel of the Kingdom of God to the nations. Our **security and comfort can only come from a deep-rooted connection with God**, not with a place, or things, or routines, but **IN FAITH**.

Through our reflections on tough questions such as, **'What are the consequences of doing nothing?'** And

'what would we like St. George's to look like in 5 years?' Or conversely, 'what would we NOT like St. George's to look like in 5years': we drew the following highlights:

Fear of becoming small and therefore ineffectual
We need fresh energy & fresh ideas
We want to be easily accessible & inclusive
explore new types of worship
Could "home church" work to connect better with the wider community & family life?
doing nothing would be wrong, even "disastrous".
in 5years time we still want to be here.
We need to be leading and participating in the community

These values will start to influence our decisions as a community of faith.

However, as we move forward, we are most powerful and effective when we are of one mind. **United in our prayers, in our decisions, and in our faith:** Jesus' prayer in John 17, "that they may all be one. As you, Father are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe you have sent me".

We would love your help to achieve this.

If you have any ideas of how the St. George's community of faith can become more relevant and connected with the wider community, please let us know.

We are your local church.

Mike
Smith



Strange Coincidence?

I was intrigued to read of Jenny and Paul's adventures in Cornwall, (see p32 September issue). At about the same time, Richard and I were in our holiday house in France and my daughter Katie was camping in Pembrokeshire with her family. Late one afternoon, I received a call on my mobile from an English mobile number I didn't recognise and a man's voice said, "My name is David Gill and I'm calling because I've just picked up the phone belonging to Katie Boag in a wallet with her cards. I believe she is your daughter. Obviously, without the code, I can't get into it to use it, but after some effort found your number as an alternative I.C.E. (In Case of Emergency) contact. I wonder if you can call her husband to pass on my number and tell him I've got the phone?" It was clear that this wasn't 'our' David Gill

and Richard's first reaction was "It's a scam!" Nevertheless, I tried to call her husband, and when there was no reply, I also tried calling both children. Still no replies so I sent a text to all three! After what seemed like an age, I was called by her husband who apologized for not answering the phone as he had been in a café with the children while Katie was anxiously going back into every shop she had visited and asking everyone around if they had seen anyone pick up a phone. Suffice it to say, they were able to contact Mr Gill, who was also on holiday in Pembrokeshire, and to recover the phone. Possibly, she had missed her back pocket as she was putting it back after use, maybe it was the same for Jenny? A lesson for us all! Perhaps also we learn that there are some good honest folk in Pembrokeshire, boding well for Rona and Gordon!

Liz Ashenden

Derek and Lizbeth Harbottle have Christmas cards for sale, in aid of St. George's Church. £2.50 per pack of five, they will be available from Harvest onwards. Please look out for them at St. George's events or contact Derek on 01452 863732.



Message from Bishop Rachel

As a new academic year begins for schools, colleges and universities, as the days shorten and the leaves of trees begin to change colour, September is full of new beginnings as well as endings. It is a time of paradox, and I am deeply aware of that as we enter this month with a sense of the new season in so many different ways, yet wondering what lies ahead as we continue to emerge from a viral pandemic.

This week, and in the days ahead there is much in my diary which is about wonderfully celebrating with different worshipping communities, and I am aware that for many there is a sense of delight and joy, not least as people meet and gather once again. Yet many of my conversations with people across the diocese and beyond, also reveal the pain, whether it be an ever deeper awareness of loss or vulnerability, or pain rooted in particular aspects of personal or corporate life.

Towards the end of August, I was looking out at the sea one night, enjoying its dark beauty, and at peace as I listened to the rhythm of the waves, yet I soon found my thoughts turning to those many people unseen and unknown to me out on the ocean in a place of danger and turbulence, risking their lives to flee a country. In that same week, as I enjoyed the excitement and inspiration of so much of the news about the Paralympics, I could barely bring myself to listen to the news about the unfolding events in Afghanistan.

Such joy and pain are always present at the same time, and the one must never deny the existence of the

other. Every day, unspeakable atrocities are taking place across our world affecting individuals and communities, many of whom we will never even hear about. This is true too of events of celebration and delight, and we are to be attentive to both.

As followers of Jesus Christ, we have entered into his death and resurrection which dwell together, and as this new academic year begins and we live the present, participating in the shaping of the future, may we listen and notice more deeply, Individually and together, as we seek to walk the way of Christ. May we grow ever more attentive to both the beauty and the brokenness of our own lives, the lives of neighbours near and far, and within creation, as we enter Creationtide. And in all of this may we continually be receivers and bearers of Christ's hope because it is this hope which enables us to hold together the tears and the laughter, as we stay rooted in Christ, in whom all things hold together.

At the start of this 'new year,' I give thanks for our shared life together in this Diocese, and hope is writ deep in my heart and mind.

With my thanks and prayers as ever



+ Rachel

My Favourite Poems continued: Wear a Mask

Continuing my series on “My Favourite poems”, dear readers, I was recently reading a little-known 19th century American poet Paul Laurent Dunbar when I discovered a poem that he had written entitled “We wear a Mask”. I thought how appropriate to Covid 19 today. But first a few words on “who was he?” Well, he was born on June 27, 1872 to freed slaves from Kentucky. He became one of the first influential Black poets in American literature and was internationally acclaimed for his dialectic verse collection of poems. Dunbar began writing stories and verse when he was a child. He published his first poems at the age of 16 in a Dayton newspaper and served as president of his high school's literary society.

We wear a mask.

We wear the mask that grins and lies,
It hides our cheeks and shades our eyes,
This debt we pay to human guile;
With torn and bleeding hearts we smile,
And mouth with myriad subtleties.
Why should the world be over-wise,
In counting all our tears and sighs?
Nay, let them only see us, while
We wear the mask.
We smile, but, O great Christ, our cries.
To thee from tortured souls arise.
We sing, but oh the clay is vile.
Beneath our feet, and long the mile.
But let the world dream otherwise,
We wear the mask!

Allan Delves
18.03.2021.



Expanding the Airfield: A view from the Village

by Gerald O'Shaughnessy

I hear the drone of planes
Over the low hum of gnats in my garden,
As they sing their hymn of praise to high summer
Above the grass.
Up there over my home young pilots
Spy a countryside still rural spreading out below,
But in these lonely planes quartering my quiet piece of sky,
I see a future more menacing by far.
Great runways rolling over fields where the lapwing used to fly.
Soon vapour trails will cross the sky
And cling in the air for a moment,
Then slowly fade away, falling to earth as roads,
For with the planes the roads are bound to come.

The old manor house will stand at bay,
While all around it, roads like dwelling swords
Criss-cross and pass.
They will surround it like a wounded prey
They dare not kill, holding it helpless
While men reap the bright-haired corn
And fields will be naked to machines
As they rape the land,
The green will go never to return
And men will rope off rooms for tourists
To come and gape.

Yet just next door the old church of St. George
Will stand serene, despite the dire sound of dragons
Roaring in the fields.
It's ancient stones will dare to proclaim,
That though all things which men
Have held most dear must surely die,
Yet their spirit shall endure.

Regular reader Gerald, a former chair of the Cheltenham Poetry Society, adds this note –

Some years ago there was a plan to extend Staverton airport to accommodate large passenger planes. The poem imagines their effect on Brockworth village and the land round Brockworth Court and the church.

100 Club
Sept 2021
WINNERS
 1st – Rena Sparks (75)
 2nd – Ken Holbrook (20)
 3rd – Ann Dunn (4)

From the Church Registers
 AUGUST 2021

Baptisms

No baptisms during August

Weddings

Wednesday 4th August	Joseph Penn & Georgina Fowke
Saturday 14th August	Nathan Emery & Chloe Balster

Funerals

Monday 16th August
 Valerie Dodge
 Tuesday 31st August
 Thomas Jacks



*'The LORD bless you, and keep you.
 The LORD make his face to shine on you,
 And be gracious to you.
 The LORD lift up his face toward you,
 And give you peace.'*

Numbers 6:24-26 (NHEB)

www.lords-prayer-words.com



is currently in need of the following items, which can be taken to the Church office during opening hours. Thank you.

- **TINNED FRUIT (URGENT)**
- **TINNED FISH**
- **TINNED SPAGHETTI**
- **TINNED VEGETABLES**
- **TINNED TOMATOES**
- **TINNED POTATOES**
- **JARS OF PASTA SAUCE**
- **BARs OF SOAP**
- **TOOTHBRUSHES (SINGLE) & TOOTHPASTE**
- **DEODORANT (URGENT)**
- **SHAMPOO (URGENT)**
- **TOILET ROLLS**
- **SIZE 6 AND 6+ NAPPIES**

Smalls for All



Smalls for All is a small charity, based in Scotland. It collects and distributes underwear to help women and children, mainly in Africa but also in the UK. These clothes are not for purposes of vanity or even comfort but in some parts of Africa, if a woman wears a bra, this denotes a high status and she is therefore less likely to be a victim of sexual assault. If you have any bras that you no longer wear, but are still in good condition, they can be sent to Smalls for All Five Sisters Business Park Westwood West Calder EH55 8PN Or you can pass items on to me and I will forward them. As the charity is small, they cannot refund postage or arrange collection but if you would like to know more, the web site is – smallsforall.org

Thank you, Coralie Slade

CHURCH DIARY—October 2021

3 rd	9.00am	Communion Worship Service : Church Broadcast live on YouTube (or watch via Facebook)
	10.30am	Family Worship Service : Hall, Church Centre
4 th	10.00am	Parent & Toddlers : Hall, Church Centre
	10.00am	Coffee Morning : Lounge, Church Centre
6 th	9.30am	Communion : Hall, Church Centre
10 th	9.00am	Communion Worship Service : Church Broadcast live on YouTube (or watch via Facebook)
	10.30am	Family Worship Service : Hall, Church Centre
11 th	10.00am	Parent & Toddlers : Hall, Church Centre
	10.00am	Coffee Morning : Lounge, Church Centre
13 th	9.30am	Communion : Hall, Church Centre
15 th	7.00pm	Evening of Music : Hall, Church Centre
17 th	9.00am	Communion Worship Service : Church Broadcast live on YouTube (or watch via Facebook)
	10.30am	Family Worship Service : Hall, Church Centre
	12.00pm	Baptism: Church
18 th	10.00am	Parent & Toddlers : Hall, Church Centre
	10.00am	Coffee Morning : Lounge, Church Centre
	2.30pm	Mothers' Union : Hall, Church Centre
20 th	9.30am	Communion : Hall, Church Centre
24 th	9.00am	Communion Worship Service : Church Broadcast live on YouTube (or watch via Facebook)
	10.30am	Family Worship Service : Hall, Church Centre
25 th	10.00am	Coffee Morning : Lounge, Church Centre
27 th	9.30am	To be confirmed Communion : Hall, Church Centre
30 th	Tbc	To be confirmed Jumble Sale : Hall, Church Centre
31 st	9.00am	Communion Worship Service : Church Broadcast live on YouTube (or watch via Facebook)
	10.30am	Family Worship Service : Hall, Church Centre
	Tbc	Light Party : Hall, Church Centre

A farewell from Gordon Clifford

I preached a sermon for (*almost*) the last time at St George's Church on the 29th of August expanding the Gospel reading set for that day from Mark c7 vv 1-8, 14, 15 and 21-23 part of which included change being a challenge and that Jesus was no slave to tradition and parted from it frequently. Rona and I have changed our lifestyle recently as by the time you read this article, we will have moved house to West Wales. The potted history included in my talk of my involvement with St George's over the last 50 years created much interest and many have asked for me to include it in our monthly magazine.

It is a sad and emotional time for us both, but to be near our families as we enter into old age, we have few options other than to join them. I was just 30 years old when we came to St. George's Church for the first time and then I had hair! Fortunately we have both been blessed with good health but the dates on our birth certificates don't lie.

Both Rona and I have served this church for almost 50 years under six Incumbents stretching back to Vicar Bruce 1954 -1975, Reverend Peter Naylor 1976 – 1994, Rev'd Martin Ennis 1995 – 2004, followed by Rev'd David Gill 2004 – 2011, Reverend Jane Walden 2012 – 2019 and our current vicar Rev'd Mike Smith who was licensed and inducted in January 2020. Names that most of you will recognise.

All these vicars were devoted people of prayer and knowledgeable in the scriptures and if I leave you with any

message of my ministry gleaned from them for the future it would be to be fervent in sincere prayer. Stay connected with God. Speak with Jesus at least once every day. Receive the Blessed Sacrament of often as you can and remember the Saints as each day passes. Read your bible constantly taking the word of God to heart and pray the Lords' prayer regularly.

I could stand here for many more minutes reminiscing about the 'good old days', when and how I became churchwarden here, a position I held for 20 years, ran the Brockworth Village quiz also for 20 years, trained in the late eighties at the Gloucester School for Ministry and became a Licensed Reader holding the Bishops' licence until this present day for almost 30 years. Visits to care homes and private homes with Holy Communion for many years. Officiating at over 200+ funerals since my secular retirement. Ringing the church bells for 30 years until the knees couldn't cope with the ringing chamber stairs. Being a member of Open the Book team visiting Castle Hill School for the last 12 years and running a stationery stall for 40 years at the fairs twice every year from the mid-seventies until I retired from the printing industry in 2008. These stalls selling oddments and offcuts of paper and items of stationery contributed many thousands of pounds to our parish share. Jointly, Rona and I have supported four charities for many years with used postage stamps for James Hopkins Trust, unwanted jewellery for Alzheimer's Society, unwanted spectacles for Africa and occasional

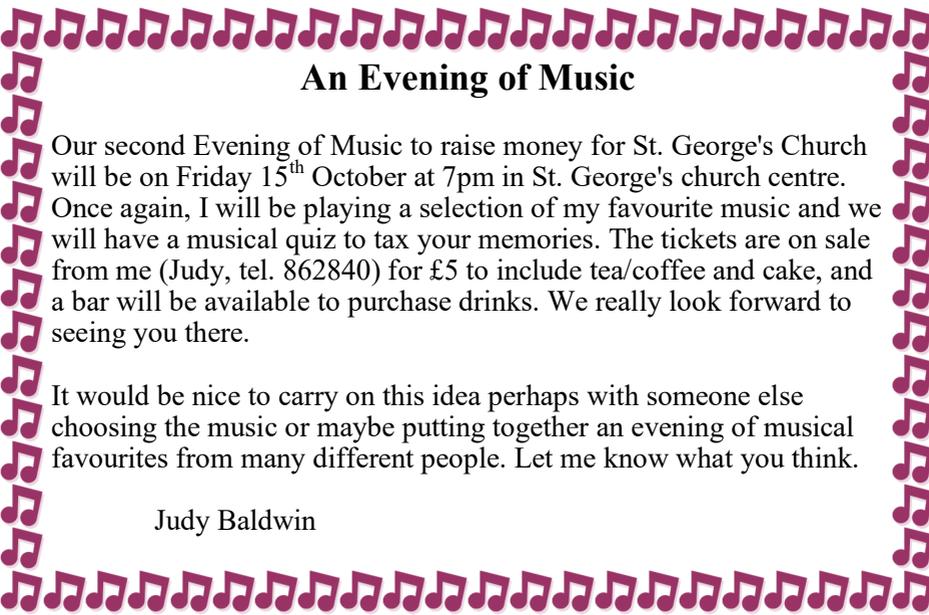
cards for up-cycling at Cobalt in Cheltenham, all raising much needed funds for their finances especially after the last 18 months of Covid -19. I would ask that you continue to donate these items to Pat Hartwell for James Hopkins Trust, Liz Ashenden for Cobalt and Ann Wright for Alzheimer's Society and Sight Savers in Africa.

I have thoroughly enjoyed all of my time at St George's Church, met and made many long standing friendships and have been totally supported by my wife Rona, (and John and Andrea in the 70's and 80's) in every duty and activity that I have been involved with. Rona has had her own ministry with

many aspects of church life including branch and deanery leader of the Mothers' Union for many years and co-ordinator of the two ecumenical teams of Open the Book school visits where we have been so well received by pupils and staff alike and we feel that if we don't tell the children stories from the bible, then who will?

St George's Church has been our life and our life has been St George's Church for the last 50 years and we will miss both this church and Castle Hill School very much.

God Bless you all.



An Evening of Music

Our second Evening of Music to raise money for St. George's Church will be on Friday 15th October at 7pm in St. George's church centre. Once again, I will be playing a selection of my favourite music and we will have a musical quiz to tax your memories. The tickets are on sale from me (Judy, tel. 862840) for £5 to include tea/coffee and cake, and a bar will be available to purchase drinks. We really look forward to seeing you there.

It would be nice to carry on this idea perhaps with someone else choosing the music or maybe putting together an evening of musical favourites from many different people. Let me know what you think.

Judy Baldwin

Listens, Observes and Acts

and is underpinned by prayer

The Branch meeting this month is on Monday October 25th
at the new time of **2.30pm – 4.30pm**
in St. Georges Church Centre Hall
when Denise Fenley is coming to give a talk.

Please do attend as Denise is an excellent and interesting speaker

Lord Jesus, we offer you all we are trying to do in your name throughout the world. Help us to think like you, to work with you and love you with all our hearts. Abide in our homes and in the lives of all we love. Inspire us to touch the minds and hearts of your people everywhere; fulfil, by your grace, the vocations you have given us; help us bear witness to your holy name so that your kingdom may come on earth.

This we ask in Jesus's name. Amen.

I know I have said it before but as I am writing this we are moving in a few days so by the time you are reading these notes we will be living in Fishguard, Pembrokeshire, as far west of southwest Wales that you can get!

I have been involved in St. George's life (MU, choir, bellringing, flower arranging, server, sacristan, verger, written rota's, (hymns etc.) been DJ when no organist, ordered the wine, wafers and candles, 'Open the Book', held many socials at 'Ashdene' and together with Gordon ran the amazing paper sales and stalls or games at 'Fayres' and much more)

and been involved in our Mother's Union branch since we came to Brockworth,

almost 50 years ago. Even serving as Branch Leader (called Enrolling Member in those days!) for 12 years (2 stints of 6 years with no secretary but with the support of the lovely Katie Bartleman as my treasurer) and also as Deanery Leader (Presiding Member!)

I couldn't have done it without the support of our committee, some of them still involved and active.

In all that time I seem to have been 'on the committee'.

Thank you to you all for your kindness, care and love and friendship shown to myself and Gordon and our family, we will treasure many memories and St. Georges will always hold a special place in our hearts.

'Is there ought I can wish you, that has not been wished before?
Shall I wish that health and gladness be increasing more and more?
Or perhaps that you will be happy and all sadness stand apart?
No, I'll simply wish "God bless you", and I wish it from my heart'.

With Love, prayers and many blessings, Rona.

Severn Vale Deanery Training Day



Saturday 16th October 9:30 am-3:30 pm
St John the Evangelist, Churchdown GL3 2DB

Please book your place via the church Office
01452 855553 or

office@stjohnschurchdown.org.uk

Donations welcome on the day, suggested minimum £5



Spiritual Care for Older People

Programme

- 9:30 Coffee
- 10:00 Welcome and Introductions
- 10:10 Care home worship- a taster
- 10:30 Review of worship
- 10:35 What is spirituality?
- 11:30 Comfort break
- 11:40 Anna Chaplaincy
- 12:30 Lunch—please bring your own; drinks provided
- 13:15 Dementia Friendly Church/Dementia Friendly Worship
- 14:00 Explaining dementia to children
- 14:20 Comfort break
- 14:30 Supporting bereaved older people
- 15:15 Q & A
- 15:30 End

Speakers include:

Rachel Cottell who shares her time between being a teacher at Churchdown Village juniors and as the community engagement coordinator at Badgeworth Court Care Centre, delivering dementia awareness workshops in the community, as a worship leader and Safeguarding Officer for the Greenway benefice, and as a wife, daughter, mum, step-mum and especially Granny.

Gill Ford is the Anna Coordinator for the local Anna Chaplaincy charity, CaBiC, and volunteers, as a befriender, with Age UK and People for You. She qualified as a solicitor and has, more recently, been a lecturer in Law at the University of Gloucestershire and UWE.

Brian Dunlop is Chair of the local Anna Chaplaincy charity CaBiC and is a member of The Bible Reading Fellowship's national working group for Anna Chaplaincy. He is an ordained Anglican priest and was a partner in a Cheltenham firm of Patent Attorneys.

From Louisa Messenger

I would like to say a few words of thanks to my fellow reader Gordon. I am sure that there will be many more! I am not quite sure how long we have worked together but it is a long time!! He has always helped me when I got stuck which was often!! Together, we have stepped up during the various vacancies.

When my grandson died both he and Rona were the first of many to come to see me.

As a reader he loves his lord very much and cares about all he does in his name. I pray that they will be happy in their new home. I wish them peace as they begin their new life in Wales.

I'd like to send them off with something that makes me smile and gives much comfort - don't let your worries get the best of you, and remember, Moses started out as a basket case!!

He has got a lot to answer for, that Jesus!!



Ode to Gordon

Such a kind fellow is Gordon
He once was our Churchwarden
Now the parish bewails
As he's leaving for Wales
So, all we can say is "Farewell and God bless you".

Sheila Watts

Prisons Week edition, 10 to 16 October

What does the Church do to help prisoners and those released from prison?



Prisons Week is when Christians join in prayer for all prisons and prisoners. As Anglican Bishop for HM Prisons in England and Wales and a member of the All-Parliamentary Group on Women in the Penal System, Bishop Rachel supports chaplains in prisons, as well as developing relationships and being involved with people and issues across the breadth of the Criminal Justice System.

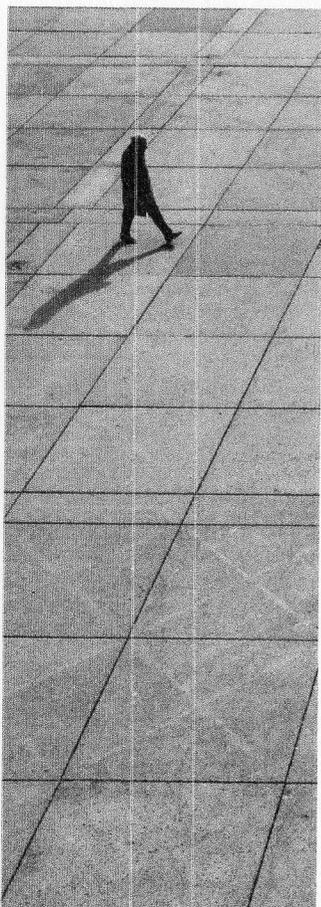
She heads up a Prison Team including Bishop Libby Lane (Derby), who supports work with young offenders, and Bishop Michael Igrave (Lichfield) who supports men in prison. They also work closely with Helen Dearnley, HMPPS Anglican Chaplaincy Advisor.

Bishop Rachel is a Patron of both the Prison Fellowship, and The Welcome Directory and the President of the Nelson Trust and an Ambassador for the Christian charity Restored. Bishop Rachel heads up a campaign called Fighting for Women's Justice and believes the women's justice system needs to change. It costs approximately £47k per year to keep a woman in prison, but Women's Centres can provide a holistic trauma-informed approach of rehabilitation for about 4k a year, with much research showing this is the most effective way to stop reoffending. On release from prison, many women find it difficult to secure suitable accommodation for themselves with their children and so the whole family suffers.

Bishop Rachel uses her voice in the House of Lords to speak out for the transfer of more funds to holistic rehabilitation schemes like Women's Centres, rather than keeping women in prison.

The Welcome Directory

Bishop Rachel is a patron of the Welcome Directory, which lists faith communities who are willing to be a place of welcome and support for people leaving prison. When people are well supported in their new community they are less likely to reoffend.



If your community feels able to support people at this vulnerable time in their lives, you would need to make sure;

- Some of your worshipping community have done basic training on the needs of people who have been in prison.
- You have robust safeguarding policies in place
- You have given some thought to local resources that might be helpful to someone making the transition to life in the wider community.

If you believe people leaving prison need support, and your faith community can give that support, you can register at www.welcomedirectory.org.uk/Register-Now.php

Contact admin@welcomedirectory.org.uk for more information and help in meeting the criteria.



Rachel served a sentence at Eastwood Park Prison and told her story in the House of Commons at an event to highlight the importance of finding suitable accommodation for women released from prison.

She said, “I tried to escape [from my abusive partner, who was dealing drugs] many times but had never been able to get away. I found that if I did as I was told, the beatings happened less often.”

Rachel was drawn into her partner's drug dealing. “I got arrested and ended up on a conspiracy to supply class A drugs charge. I got sentenced to four years in custody and was going to be away from everything I knew for two years. I was scared, I was terrified. My daughter had to go and live with my parents – I know I'm very lucky to have had them.

“In Eastwood Park, I met Jo from The Nelson Trust Women's Centre and built a relationship with her. She would come and see me every week and I felt I had someone to talk to and share my experiences with.

“I got on with my sentence and counted down the days till I could be with my daughter again. Throughout my whole time away, I was concerned about my release – how was I going to get a home for me and my daughter? I wanted my life to be back to normal again.”

Rachel was able to get a home, which the Diocese of Gloucester provided through The Nelson Trust Project *Reunite Gloucestershire*, to rebuild her relationship with her daughter and finally be a mum. She now has a job, a strong relationship with her daughter and a foster daughter. See her full story at <https://youtu.be/qy8VWS3KF0Uc>

Events and training

More details for all these events at gloucester.anglican.org/events

Mud, Mess and Mystery – Skills Workshop

2 October, 10am to 4pm

Join Gill Traverse, an environmental educator, experienced Forest School practitioner and outdoor worship leader. Discover your 'spiritual wild' alongside practical planning and safely conducting outdoor worship – including how to use fire safely. gloucester.anglican.org/event/mud-mess-mystery-skills-workshop

Carbon Net Zero: Housekeeping and Quick Wins Q+A with Matt Fulford

18 October, 12 pm to 1 pm

The webinar explores easy and cost-effective ways for your church to reduce its carbon footprint. This one-hour Q+A invites participants to watch the recording of this webinar on YouTube **in advance of attending**, and is an opportunity to follow up in conversation with Matt. gloucester.anglican.org/event/housekeeping-quick-wins-oct21

What is Youth Ministry?

21 October, 7pm to 9pm

An introduction to youth ministry in the 2020s for those just starting out or feeling called as a church to reach out to young people (11-18).

Together we'll explore what makes young people unique, and how ministry that bridges the gap between Sunday School and "adult" church is more than eating crisps and playing games. gloucester.anglican.org/event/what-is-youth-ministry

Tewkesbury Festival of Lights

2 to 5 November, 6pm to 10pm

An immersive walking journey featuring a spectacular sound and light show at Tewkesbury Abbey, produced by Luxmaralis. Tickets can be booked for 20-minute segments from www.tewkesburyfestivaloflights.co.uk

Have your say

Visit Facebook [f/Diocese.of.Gloucester](https://www.facebook.com/Diocese.of.Gloucester), email Katherine at kclamp@glosdioc.org.uk, follow us on Twitter [@glosdioc](https://twitter.com/glosdioc), view videos on YouTube [▶Diocese of Gloucester](https://www.youtube.com/DioceseofGloucester) or visit our website gloucester.anglican.org



A trip down memory lane! Mrs. Parry-Jones has shared these photos from our 1983 Sunday School Christmas Pageant. More to come in future editions as space allows. Who can you spot?



Growing God's Kingdom through Generosity

Through the actions of radical generosity, generosity as taught through the Gospels, our communities are being enriched by the life of the Church.

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BIBLICAL CITIES CONTINUED: SODOM and GOMORRAH

Dear Readers, continuing my series on Biblical Cities and Towns did you know that there are 280 Cities and Towns mentioned in the bible? It would take me 25 years with one per month to cover them all. So, where better than to start at the beginning of the Bible. The earliest mention of city-building is that of Enoch, which was built by Cain (Gen. 4:17)

Next, there is a record of the cities of the Canaanites, Sidon, Gaza, Sodom, etc. But the earliest description of a city is that of Sodom (Gen 19:1-22) although Damascus is said to be the oldest existing city in the world.

According to the Bible, "the men of Sodom were wicked" (Genesis 13, verse 13). For its many sins, God destroyed Sodom and all the inhabitants and brought down fire on the "cities of the plain" in an intense conflagration, but not before allowing Abraham's nephew Lot and his family to flee to safety. The biblical account of Sodom and sister city Gomorrah is recorded in Genesis chapters 18-19. Genesis chapter 18 records the Lord and two angels coming to speak with Abraham. The Lord informed Abraham that "the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is so great and their sin so grievous" (Genesis 18:20). Verses 22-33 record Abraham pleading with the Lord to have mercy on Sodom and Gomorrah because Abraham's nephew, Lot, and his family lived in Sodom.

Today, Sodom and its sister city Gomorrah has become a metaphor for

vice, corruption, and sexual depravity. This city and its awful destruction are frequently alluded to in Scripture too numerous to summarise in this article. They do include Deuteronomy, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel and Zephaniah. New Testament references can be found in Matthew, Luke, Peter, and Revelations.

So, where was Sodom and its sister city? No trace of it or of the other cities of the plain has been discovered, so complete was their destruction. Just opposite the site of Zoar, on the southwest coast of the Dead Sea, is a range of low hills, forming a mass of mineral salt called Jebel Usdum, "the hill of Sodom." It has been concluded, from this and from other considerations, that the cities of the plain stood at the southern end of the Dead Sea. Others, however, with much greater probability, contend that they stood at the northern end of the sea

Finally, dear Readers the site of the present Dead Sea Works, a large operation for the extraction of Dead Sea minerals, is called Sdom. Nearby is Mount Sodom which consists mainly of salt. In the Plain of Sodom to the south there are a few springs and two small agricultural villages.

In the second World War "Operation Gomorrah" was the name given to the Bombing of Hamburg in July 1943, in which 42,600 civilians were killed, and where use of incendiaries caused a vortex and whirling updraft of superheated air which created a 460 metre high tornado of fire.

A.K.DELVES

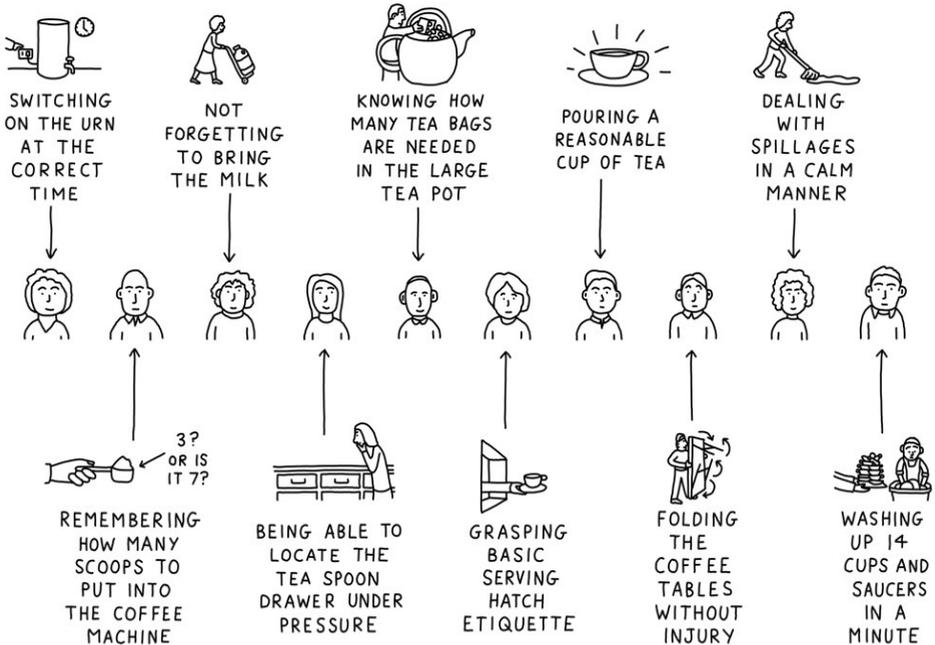
Proposed Events

While we are emerging from the Covid restrictions our planning is still very uncertain, but we hope to hold a jumble sale on the morning of Saturday 30th October. Details will be posted with the e-service and on our website and Facebook page nearer the time. In the meantime, don't forget to get your tickets for Judy and Brian's next music evening to be held in the Church Centre on Friday 15th October at 7pm.

Liz Ashenden

SKILLS

GAINED OVER A LIFETIME OF CHURCHGOING



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October 2021

Daily Bible Readings:



1st	Baruch 1:15-end; Luke 10:13-16
2nd	Baruch 4:5-12,27-19; Luke 10:17-24
4th	Jonah 1:1-2:2,10; Luke 10:25-37
5th	Jonah 3; Luke 10:38-end
6th	Jonah 4; Luke 11:1-4
7th	Malachi 3:13-4:2a
8th	Joel 1:13-15; 2:1-2; Luke 11:15-26
9th	Joel 3:12-end; Luke 11:27-28
11th	Romans 1:1-7; Luke 11:29-32
12th	Romans 1:16-25; Luke 11:37-41
13th	Romans 2:1-11; Luke 11:42-46
14th	Romans 3:21-30; Luke 11:47-end
15th	Romans 4:1-8; Luke 12:1-7
16th	Romans 4:13,16-18; Luke 12:8-12
18th	Romans 4:20-end; Luke 12:13-21
19th	Romans 5:12,15,17-end; Luke 12:35-38
20th	Romans 6:12-18; Luke 12:39-48
21st	Romans 6:19-end; Luke 12:49-53
22nd	Romans 7:18-end; Luke 12:54-end
23rd	Romans 8:1-11; Luke 13:1-9
25th	Romans 8:12-17; Luke 13:10-17
26th	Romans 8:18-25; Luke 13:18-21
27th	Romans 8:26-30; Luke 13:22-30
28th	Romans 8:31-end; Luke 13:31-end
29th	Romans 9:1-5; Luke 14:1-6
30th	Romans 11:1-2,11-12,25-29; Luke 14:1,7-11

**SAINTS ALIVE, OR
MEMORIES OF MINISTRY**
by David Sutch

Ecclesiastes

The trouble with pencilled notes hastily written is that they fade or are mislaid. The joy of retirement after 43 years of full-time ministry is that there is now a chance to reflect and to remember a number of incidents.

The following events happened, but not necessarily in this order. Rather like Eric Morecombe playing Brahms piano concerto by hitting the right notes but not necessarily in the right order.

We have met the Captain of the Bell Tower who was only too pleased to hand over the fund raising to cover the costs of repairs to me. We found another foundry whose quote was much more manageable and over the next few years the monies were raised and the work completed. On our first Tuesday, having decided that Daniel, our youngest, had settled in well and was asleep; we realised that in this bigger house we just could not hear him when all the doors were shut. We heard him crying and went to find out why. "I can hear bells, I can hear bells" he said over and over again. Indeed the bells were ringing as it was practice night. The following day we climbed the spiral staircase to the ringing chamber, then on to the bells themselves to show him and explain how the noise was made. He slept much better after that, and we learned to open the door from time to time just after bed-time.

This was my first solo parish. I was

in charge and I made the mistakes and carried the burden of responsibility. I was asked to make arrangements for a burial in the churchyard. "Can we open the grave of Henry Smith 1952?" (all names throughout this book have been changed to protect the innocent). I examined the Church Burial Register and under 1952 found Henry Smith with a reference number to match a plan of the churchyard. L3 was duly dug, or in local common parlance, built as most of the underlying ground was solid rock.

The day of the funeral arrived, all was well, the service proceeded as expected and as we processed through the Churchyard there seemed to be a hesitation by the family following the coffin. They paused a few yards away before catching up. We duly buried Mrs. Smith in L3, and after tidying up, I returned home. At 5pm there was a knock on the door, "Vicar, I think you have buried my mother in the wrong grave". My heart sank. "Let's go over the Church and check the register." I said. 1952 Henry Smith L3, but at the bottom of the page headed 1951 was an entry "Henry John Smith – January 1952". My heart sank lower. "Leave it with me," I said, "I'll sort out something". With visions of Acts of Parliament to allow an exhumation to be carried out, normally under the cover of darkness, I rang the Rural Dean (the next line up in the chain of command and helpfulness." I explained my mistake and asked for advice. "I don't want anything to do with it!" and the phone went dead. I rang the Funeral

Director for his advice. "Well, for £50 to pay the grave digger, we could come back tomorrow morning to correct your mistake." I rang the family and explained that at 11am next morning we would lift "Mrs. Smith" up and place her in the right grave, "but be aware that the coffin may have some mud marks on it." At 11am I was there, the Funeral Director and his bearers were there, but no family turned up. So we completed the task with dignity, and as I thanked the Funeral Director I looked across at the school fence. I had failed to take into account the fact that at 11am it was the Break time and the fence was full of interested faces. I aged years over those 24 hours and always double checked the registers after that. At least there was a decent clear plan of the Churchyard. A few weeks later there was another knock on the door. "Vicar, someone has been messing with my family grave". We looked together. It was L3. "Ah yes" I said, "We had a bit of a tidy up, and I hope that is all-right with you". He kept the family grave area very tidy after that.

We were having the churchyard wall attended to by some lads doing "Community Service". We had arranged for the choir vestry to be open to allow access to the toilets and kitchen area and hoped all would be well. We had a number of callers at the door requesting this or that. One day after being interrupted yet again by their enquiries, they called again. "What do you want this time?" said Megan. "We think we have found something in the churchyard" Over she goes, imagining bones or perhaps a skull, only to be presented with a tortoise which had buried itself in

readiness for the winter's hibernation. So we acquired a tortoise.

Well, Noah liked pairs of creatures and before long we were looking after a friend's tortoise too. To our surprise one of them (we don't which) laid an egg. I found out that it was not fertile and used it thereafter in my Easter Story to the school children (along with an Ostrich, Emu, Goose, Chicken, love bird, and a Cadbury's Cream Egg). One year, following Blue Peter's advice we weighed our tortoise to see if it would survive the hibernation. It was so light that we took it to the vet, and it spent a night in intensive care and 6 weeks in a cage under an infra-red lamp in our sitting room being fed cucumber and cat food (you try it sometime!). To complete the story, our poor tortoise escaped the garden and was trodden on by a cow in the neighbouring field. It is amazing what wire and araldite glue can do in the hands of a Vet. It survived that but when we moved to a new parish, it escaped again and this time was lost for ever to us. We had found the other tortoise and returned it to our friends, as they escaped together and can travel very fast if you watch them.

One of the joys of parish ministry is the opportunities to visit schools within the parish, especially the Junior Schools. The Church of England Primary School was our next door neighbour – quiet by night as the other neighbour, the Churchyard was quiet by day. Our large garden contained five conker trees and was one of the persuading factors to show that a move was going to be a good thing to our eldest, who at 5 did not want to leave his friends. At Harvest Festival, the school were led into church

by the headmaster. All the children had been told to be quiet and well behaved. For my talk, I used the Parable of the Sower and from a bucket produced and flung around the church, conkers to indicate the scattering of the seeds. I enjoyed it, the children enjoyed it as they learned that if they caught a conker they would be involved in the story later on, even if it meant miming withering and dying on a hot hard baked footpath. But the teachers were not amused!

With the written permission of Roger Hargreaves, I used the Mr Men to illustrate Gospel Stories – with Mr Me Me and Mr You You being introduced to them to urge the copying of Mr You You. The Mr Men were to follow me to every school in my Ministry and my Mr Men Christmas story has been developed into a DVD for our grandchildren. Even as I retired and we were visiting our grandchildren to collect them from School some 60 miles from where we used to live, a young mum who had attended the primary school with our middle son, came up and said “I remember the Mr Men stories you told at school”. Out of the mouths of babes....or into the ears of babes perhaps, but at least they were remembered.

In 1980 I joined the Royal Army Chaplain's Department to serve as Chaplain with a Royal Signals Regiment (Volunteer). My memoirs of the first Regiment I served with are in another diary “Praying Soldiers”. I went up in the boys estimation when I went into uniform, and the parish thought that my Missionary work was of enough value for me to attend the two week annual training camp as part of my holiday

entitlement. I served for 23 years and had great fun along the way and met some very wonderful dedicated people. It was as a result of my new found awareness that one day, as I looked out of the kitchen window, I noticed that the church shed door was open. I went to investigate. Inside was a canvas bag from which a ticking could be heard. Underneath the oil tank was another bag. My first thought was “a bomb!”. Charles was playing the organ inside the church and I suggested, forcefully that he leave. I called the police and from a safe distance watched a constable pull the bag out, open it to reveal some old clothes and an alarm clock obviously abandoned by a tramp on his way from Bristol to Gloucester – as we were on the route between Salvation Army Hostels. During the Falklands War, an Army car was parked on my drive in case I was called out to be with a relative of a seriously wounded soldier who could have been brought to a local hospital.

Being on the regular tramp route meant we were bothered fairly frequently for cups of tea and a sandwich. In most cases our visitors would sweep leaves or collect twigs for kindling. Every so often we would clean the bus shelter at the end of the drive to remove chalked messages showing we were a soft touch, even though we had dogs. One day glancing through the window, Megan saw another tramp like figure opening the gate and called for me to deal with him as she had had enough already. I opened the door to Professor Flower in his duffel coat who had come to announce to us the safe birth of their third son. We often reflect on his appearance.

While we lived in this parish, we celebrated the centenary of the rebuilt church with a grand dinner dance. A friend in the parish had a neighbour who was a water colourist and painted lovely flower pictures. He painted a mixture of local flowers and presented the painting to me as a prize in the Centenary Raffle. Megan and I bought many tickets as we really liked and wanted the picture. My mother bought just one ticket. The climax of the dinner dance was the drawing of the winning ticket. I drew out, quite randomly of course, my mother's ticket. She said she would leave us the picture in her will, but in fact gave it to us when they moved house, We have it still with the photograph of the artist presenting it to me on the reverse side.

Another delight in parish ministry is the conducting of marriage ceremonies for couples of every age. Some early ones I remember (more later) included the request for bagpipes to be played as there was a serious Scottish connection in the family. I agreed and learned the hard way that bag pipes sound better in the open air as the acoustics in church meant that singing the two Scottish hymns chosen ended up slower and slower as the voices tried to keep pace with the pipes and the pipes tried to respond to the singing echoing back.

Another couple came with a strange request. They were students of history and scouts, and could they have a medieval wedding and then a blessing in the open air chapel in the Scout Camp site nearby? By a medieval wedding they meant just costumes appropriate to the

era. We had a wonderful array of outfits; from ladies in tall pointed hats and veils and hoops; a knight in armour, a monk in full habit, and strangely sitting at the back, a dragon – how he/she managed at the reception I do not know, as perhaps the knight killed the dragon and saved the young bride.

Another couple from one of the traveller sites – we had winter parks for fairground workers – wanted the full works for a blessing of a marriage. The bride wore what I describe as “meringue” and all her wealth in gold, I was asked to provide three hymns which I sang almost solo as many could not or did not want to read, and the church fee was paid from a roll of notes kept in the bride's father's back pocket. About three years later, I had a phone call from the coroner's office asking if I had married this couple. “No,” I replied, “I only blessed their marriage. Why?” The man had died and there were two women claiming his body as widows. I learned to see the wedding certificate before conducting a service of wedding blessing for a couple.

One Christmas time as we were preparing to go out to a clergy party, the phone rang. “Be that the Vicar?” said a voice. I wondered which of my idiot friends was pulling a fast one on me. “I be the Vicar.” I said. “Oh Vicar, do you know that you have rabbits in your churchyard?” “Do I?” “I could get rid of them for you, Vicar. I be a honest poacher and at this time of year it is very difficult with all they security people and game keepers about”. I had

to sit down for the rest of this phone call. "You would not know that I have been. I park about a mile away and I could clear your churchyard of rabbits, Vicar." What could I say to an honest poacher just before Christmas? "Do you have any farmers in your congregation, Vicar?" "Well yes. I do from time to time." "Oh I don't like farmers, Vicar. Do you have any policemen in your congregation, Vicar?" "Yes, again from time to time." "Oh I don't like policemen, Vicar. They make it hard for an honest poacher like me." "Do you like salmon, Vicar?" "Yes, I do, as long as it is honestly come by" "I could leave one on your door step when I have cleared your churchyard of rabbits, Vicar." "Don't do that," I replied hastily, "We have a cat, please leave it on the windowsill." Needless to say we did not get a salmon for Christmas, and I do not know if the churchyard was ever cleared of rabbits. Oh, the joys of a country parish.

Another joy, especially for our boys growing up, was the large garden we had. Almost the size of a football pitch, with trees and an orchard, a netted vegetable patch and a hen run. I bought a ride on grass cutter and the boys, as they grew old enough, delighted in this chore as they turned the grasses area into a version of Brand's Hatch and would not even accept the money we offered for cutting the grass as they had such fun. Our hens were a treat – fresh eggs on demand. When one hen became broody, the only fertile eggs we could buy were duck eggs. She duly sat on them until the first one hatched and she left the rest to fuss over this duckling. "It's called Roast" I said, "Roast Duck",

fully intending to fatten it up for the table. Mother hen was a bit worried that her darling liked to wash and paddle in the water bowl, and when 12 weeks were up it was conveniently forgotten; it was too late to kill Roast for the table. He lived with us for four years, ruling the other ducks we now kept, and fighting of the fox on many an occasion, sleeping with his beak propping him up as his wounds allowed. He then spent two years with army friends in the middle of Bristol, again fighting of fox attacks and being repaired by the local vet. He returned to us as they were posted on and eventually, I had to put Roast out of his misery when the fox got the better of him this time. The vision Megan shares is of me running across the garden in a nightshirt and wellies chasing away a fox as we had been awakened by the noise Roast made in defence of his flock. We made use of the barn next door to rear some duck for the table. I had been taught how to kill poultry cleanly and Megan had learned how to pluck and dress them, as long as I started by removing the breast feathers. One time, feeding the reduced number, accompanied by our middle son, he realised that the numbers were going down (into our freezer). "I don't think this is a very safe place for our ducks, Daddy", and I had to explain that they were being fattened up for the table. It did not put him off his liking for meat

Along with our hens and ducks, we had cats, for a time anyway. We had brought one from Swindon but as it had only one eye, the other being dislodged by a vile kick, we assume, Tolkein did not

survive the countryside too long. Returning from holiday in North Wales one year we went to the Cats Home and saved Chester and Slate (Lleckwith slate mine had been visited, but I was not allowed to call the cat lleckwith). We used to feed them away from the dogs and on one occasion we opened the door to find Chester as stiff as a board, all bloated. Of course it was a weekend so we had to drive 15 miles to the Vet Hospital with Chester sitting on Megan's lap. As we drove, Chester began to deflate and relax. It turned out to be an expensive case of indigestion – as Chester had hurriedly eaten his food before finishing Slate's.

Chester was to become a victim of the main road and a friend's son kindly scraped up the pieces. Slate was to move with us

We had a number of dogs. Penny succumbed to an internal blockage having swallowed fishing gut. Her replacement Nicky was an adorable mixture of collie, collie cross. She would encourage my jogging – as the army wanted a fit for purpose Padre. We thought she was going the same way as Penny and an exploratory operation proved us wrong, but diagnosed Addison's Syndrome, which the Veterinary Department of the University were delighted to treat and use as a teaching aid, at no cost to us. We were asked to look after a 14 year old Golden Retriever called Rug, by her owners who were going to Saudi Arabia to work. We were told we would

have her for three months or three years. It turned out to be the latter, despite her failing eyesight and aching limbs. We bought a Golden Retriever puppy to overlap her. We called her Bounty as my T A bounty – an annual bounty if training was satisfactorily completed – was enough for her pedigree.

So she, Slate and the tortoises moved on with us when the time came. I returned home one day for Megan to say “The Bishop rang and he wants you to make an appointment. Oh, and Yate is vacant.” Well, I don't argue with my wife and we planned our move to Yate which was a huge new town on the other side of Bristol.

To be continued.....



Pronunciation Poem

I take it you already know
Of tough and bough and cough and dough?
Others may stumble, but not you,
On hiccough, thorough, laugh and through.
Well done! And now you wish, perhaps
To learn of less familiar traps?

Beware of heard, a dreadful word,
That looks like beard and sounds like bird.
And dead – it's said like bed, not bead –
And for goodness' sake don't call it deed!
Watch out for meat and great and threat
(They rhyme with suite and straight and debt)

A moth is not the moth in mother
Nor both in bother, broth in brother
And here is not a match for there,
Nor dear and fear for bear and pear.
And then there's dose and rose and lose –
Just look them up – and goose and choose,
And cork and work and card and ward,
And font and front and word and sword,
And do and go and thwart and cart –
Come, come, I've hardly made a start.
A dreadful language? Man alive
I'd mastered it when I was five.

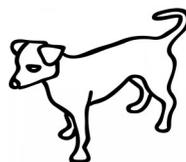
Contributed by Joy Curzon

Bottle tops for Guide Dogs.

It is with regret that I am no longer collecting milk bottle tops for Guide Dogs. I took 3 sacks full to Dundry Nurseries & bumped into Chris Evans, the owner. He told me that he put word out on Facebook that the value had plummeted & a ton of tops is now only worth £25.

As a result, it is not worth Downton's journey to Portsmouth to deliver them. If anyone has bulk collections for me, could they dispose of them in their recycling bins please. It was good while it lasted & thank you all for your support.

Jenny Farmer



The further adventures of Jenny and Paul

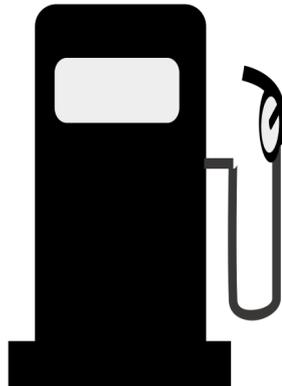
You will have read in September's magazine about our disastrous last day of our holiday. Well here is the final episode for you . Once we were on the road back to our caravan it occurred to me that we had only enough petrol in the car to get us half way home the next day. Having spent an hour earlier cancelling both my debit & credit cards I couldn't use them & only had about £4 in my purse, I turned to Paul. He had his debit card with him & although he had never used it, I thought I could just swipe it at the petrol station. But oh no, that was too easy. I stopped at Tesco in Wadebridge, pulled up at the pump & scanned Paul's card & it was rejected. So plan B was put into operation. I drove across the road to M & S garage where I could pay cash. I forgot to mention Paul had £50 in his wallet. I put £30 worth of petrol in the car, which was enough to get us home in the morning. With the other £20 we were able to enjoy Rock's best fish & chip supper & take back to the caravan to enjoy. Problem solved.

Until we got home. I had forgotten that we needed fresh fruit & vegetables & milk etc to see us through. I was able to take some money out of Paul's account, with his permission of course, before any of you report me for theft., & buy enough to get us through the weekend until Monday. When I

went to the bank on Monday demanding to know why Paul's card had been rejected despite there being plenty of money in his account, it was explained to me that because Paul had never had a PIN number, the card needed to be used with a PIN before it could be used by just swiping it. This has now been sorted & my new cards were delivered on Tuesday & Wednesday following our holiday.

We are going away again in September so I shall be a bit more careful about where I keep my phone & cards this time otherwise there will be another saga to relate to you all.

Jenny Farmer



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This is *your* magazine. We need your interesting stories, facts, jokes, poems, quotes, recipes, brain teasers, photos, notices or anything else that others would enjoy reading.

All contributions will be gratefully received by the church office or, preferably, please email:

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**The DEADLINE
for the November issue
is 15th October
Thank you!**



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