

# *Church News*

for the Parishes of  
Bromham, Oakley and Stagsden



**February 2023**



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 **facebook** Benefice of Bromham, Oakley & Stagsden

## Clergy:

Vicar: Revd Catherine Wilson 825665  
vicar@bromhambenefice.org  
Assistant Priest: Revd Di Harpham 918691  
Curate: Revd Petra Yates - curate@bromhambenefice.org 07504 118405

## Benefice Administration

Website &.....} Administrator 07494 069540  
Wedding.....} (Mon & Thurs 9.30 -12.00: Tues, 9.30am -1.00pm  
organisation..}  
Fees Accounts...} administrator@bromhambenefice.org  
Safeguarding Officer - Judith Denyer 07981 928522

## Parish News

Editor Mr Edward Jones stowensnews@btinternet.com 826551  
Distribution Mrs B Cryer 825463  
07767 272584

*Pew Leaflet*      Sarah Smale, as Administrator

## Who's Who in Bromham

## Church Officers

Churchwardens	Ms T Woodcock	340089
	Mrs F Bulmer	602718
PCC Secretary	Mrs Vivien Butler	407351
PCC Treasurer	Mrs Emma Harrison	823121

Organist & Choirmaster Mr David P Williams

Messy Church for pre-school children (birth - 4yrs) & their carers  
Mrs Suzi Webb 07967 311628

Altar Guild Mrs M Parrott 824402

## Who's Who in Bromham cont....

Children & Young	} Carol Jones	823307
People's work	} Rene Farquhar	307996
Electoral Roll	Mrs Rene Farquhar	307996
Ringers	Mr Robert Jones	881741
Thursday Prayer Gp	Mrs C Wisson	306833
Friends of St Owen's	www.friendsof stowens.org	
Secretary:	Mr David Butler	407351
	 <b>facebook</b> Friends of St Owens	

## Who's Who in Oakley

### *Church Officers*

Churchwardens	Mr G Palmer	07710 462535
	Mrs H Worley	262166
PCC Secretary	Mrs C Ord	823477
PCC Treasurer	Mrs S Ball	823133
Organist & Choirmaster - contact Jenny Sudworth		822859
Messy Church for pre-school children (birth - 4yrs) & their carers	Revd Catherine Wilson	825665
Flowers	Mrs A Rolph	824849
St Mary's Ringers	Mr Bill Sellars	823473

## Who's Who in Stagsden

### *Church Officers*

Churchwarden	} Post holders names not published	
PCC Treasurer	} please contact thru Revd Di Harpham	918691
PCC Secretary	Caroline Heaton	
Ringers	Mr Richard Brown	823289
Flowers Team	please contact thru Revd Di Harpham	918691

If you know of further details for this page, or have information or articles to publish please send all material to the Editor by post or (preferably) by email - see details on page 3.

The Editor thanks Contributors and Advertisers for their material with acknowledgements to the "Parish Pump" website. Nevertheless, views expressed, and goods and services advertised are not endorsed by the PCC. **Please send material for publication to the Editor by the 22nd of the month.**



## Principal Services in the Benefice

<u>5th February</u>	<u>3rd Sunday before Lent</u>
9.00am	Holy Communion (Bromham)
10.30am	Holy Communion (Bromham)
<u>12th February</u>	<u>2nd Sunday before Lent</u>
9.00am	Holy Communion (Oakley) <sup>1</sup>
10.30am	LEP Service (Oakley)
6.00pm	Evensong (Bromham)
<u>19th February</u>	<u>Sunday before Lent</u>
9.00am	Holy Communion (Bromham) <sup>1</sup>
10.30am	Holy Communion (Bromham)
4.30pm	Wild Church (Bromham Scout Site)
<u>22nd February</u>	<u>Ash Wednesday</u>
10.30am	Holy Communion (Oakley)
7.30pm	Holy Communion by Zoom
<u>26th February</u>	<u>1st Sunday of Lent</u>
9.00am	Holy Communion (Oakley)
10.30am	Holy Communion (Oakley)
6.00pm	Evensong by Zoom

<sup>1</sup> Location changed due to problems heating St Leonard's

## Weekday Services

Mondays

11.30am Messy Church (Bromham)

Thursdays

10.00am Messy Church (Oakley)

NB 10.30 church services are streamed via Zoom for those who find it difficult to attend in person (details on website [www.bromhambenefice.org](http://www.bromhambenefice.org))



Drafting this at home in mid-January the fairy lights still radiate the light and hope of Christmas. It's my aim to keep them for as long as possible. Every year, until now, I have faithfully boxed them up at Twelfth Night or Epiphany, but not so this year. English Heritage has come to my rescue with their endorsement to 'bring cheer to the winter months following the medieval tradition' by leaving decorations in place until February 2<sup>nd</sup> when the church marks the end of Christmas season.

This date is set as the Feast of Candlemas when historically all the church candles were brought to church and blessed for use during the coming year. The Feast of Candlemas remembers a special time in the life of Jesus, when baby Jesus was brought to the temple. Mary, Joseph and Jesus were met by Simeon and Anna, who had spent long years waiting for a sign from God, a sign of God's chosen one. On seeing Jesus Simeon declared that Jesus was special, describing Jesus as a light that would grow to change the world for everyone.

In February we steadily move through winter, as each day nudges us closer to spring, although we may not always recognise this in the often-grey days of late winter. I am encouraged that bulbs planted years ago are beginning to appear outside my kitchen window. Small signs indeed of hope, a fresh start and confirmation of new growth on these chilly winter days. Signs too of the promise of light that is remembered at Candlemas each year.

As we travel through the calendar this is a period of transition for me personally. The last few weeks, (at time of writing 32 days, to be precise!), have been a time of momentous change as I move from Ordinand, with my theoretical and theological studies, to Curate where this is put into practice and applied in daily life. It is a privilege and joy to be part of the Benefice community and I have received the most generous and open welcome. Many of you have shown great kindness and patience, for which I am grateful, as I begin to 'learn the ropes'. I look forward to being involved in the many activities that are shared in, and across, our three villages, and getting to know you over a cup of tea.

Looking back over the last month there have been many connecting points shared with others through different activities. Something new for me is Messy Church where we meet to play, sing and share stories, with craft activities each week - where a paper plate is magically transformed into a crown, (with the addition of considerable glue, glitter and pompoms!). Later at Wild Church, as darkness fell, we followed a star led trail, through the dark woods, learning and sharing as we went. Crafting a star with sticks and string, remembering Epiphany and the Magi, and warming up by a camp fire with hot chocolate and star biscuits.

Both activities gave us a sense of community, taking time away from the busyness of life, and gifting us the space for getting to know each other a little better and learn about Jesus. These sessions help us to connect with the Christian year and I look forward to seeing where we will be led next.

*Petra Yates*

*The Ven John Barton considers what you need to remember when you pray.*

### **Some hints about prayer this Lent**

Prayer is instinctive for human beings, even those who don't regard themselves as religious. You are standing at a bus stop in the wind and the rain, thinking 'I do hope the bus will come soon'. It's an inner yearning. It defies logic: either the bus is coming, or it isn't. But we all do it. It's instinctive and it's the raw material of prayer. Hoping for something better is basic. Like all instincts, it needs to be trained.

To whom do we pray? What you pray, and the way you do it will be shaped by your view of God. Christian prayers are fashioned by what we know of Jesus and what He taught about prayer.



We pray by invitation. Again and again, Jesus encouraged His companions to pray. A couple of His parables on the subject have been misinterpreted as instructions to persuade a resistant God to do what we want. Have a look at Luke 18, verses 1-8, about a widow whose perseverance finally persuaded an unwilling judge to rule in her favour. The lesson is that God is *not* like that! Similarly, an unwelcome neighbour who persistently calls for help in the middle of the night gets what he wants (Luke 11:5-13). The lesson? If tenacious lobbying can overcome human unwillingness, *how much more* our gracious God will heed His children's cry.

Pushing at an open door. Jesus is already praying for us. So, when we start to pray, we step on to an already moving staircase. Sometimes prayer seems tougher than it need be.



Jesus invited us to be linked to Him, in the way an inexperienced bullock is yoked to a mature ox. Have a look at Matthew 11:28-29, which concludes “for my yoke is easy and my burden is light”. When Marion Bartoli unexpectedly won the 2013 Women’s Wimbledon final, she said “I believe if you put all your heart and effort into everything you are doing, then God is there to help you.”

Is your prayer on the right lines? Try adding “for Christ’s sake” at the end. “Please let my marrow win the Gardening Club competition”? No. “Not my will but yours” is the key. So, when praying, don’t give God instructions, just report for duty.

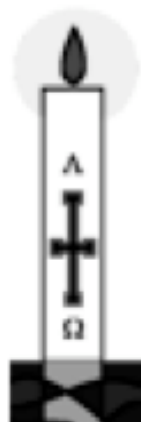
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For Candlemas, 2nd February

Dear Lord,

Here we are in February – month of cold days, winter days,  
but days that promise hope and signs of Spring.  
Snowdrops and lengthening light;  
echoes of the hope and light that Jesus brought  
to Simeon and Anna all those years ago in the  
Temple.

Thank you, Lord, that you always bring light,  
you always bring hope and peace and joy  
when we put our trust in Jesus, our Saviour.  
Jesus, Lord of all our days and seasons.  
In his name we thank you, as we look to his  
Light.  
Amen.



## Living in Love and Faith

As you are doubtless aware from the media and online activity, the College of Bishops met recently to discuss *Living in Love and Faith* [and the implications for same sex marriages]. Our discussion had several outcomes, including a proposal for new prayers of dedication and thanksgiving. We also restated the Church's understanding of Holy Matrimony as being between one man and one woman.



Dr Alan Smith  
Bishop of St Albans

We, as the College of Bishops, have collectively issued a report, pastoral letter and draft prayers to shed more light on the nature of our discussions, and we commend them to you for your careful and prayerful consideration.

The draft texts, proposed by the bishops of the Church of England, will be considered by General Synod next month alongside other proposals in response to a six-year process of listening, learning and discernment on questions of identity, sexuality, relationships and marriage known as *Living in Love and Faith*.

The bishops have also made a direct public apology to LGBTIQI+ people for the way in which the Church has rejected or excluded them, admitting: "We have not loved you as God loves you, and that is profoundly wrong."

The apology is set out in a pastoral letter from the bishops of the Church of England which also recognises that they disagree over same-sex marriage and proposes a way forward which could be put in action within months.

A report - *Living in Love and Faith: A response from the Bishops of the Church of England about identity, sexuality, relationships*

*and marriage* – sets out the bishops’ proposals and recommends areas for further work.

Opening the letter, the bishops write: “We want to apologise for the ways in which the Church of England has treated LGBTQI+ people – both those who worship in our churches and those who do not.

“For the times we have rejected or excluded you, and those you love, we are deeply sorry.

“The occasions on which you have received a hostile and homophobic response in our churches are shameful and for this we repent.

“As we have listened, we have been told time and time again how we have failed LGBTQI+ people.

“We have not loved you as God loves you, and that is profoundly wrong. We affirm, publicly and unequivocally, that LGBTQI+ people are welcome and valued: we are all children of God.”

Describing the prayers and readings, they explain: “This resource will offer clergy a variety of flexible ways to affirm and celebrate same-sex couples in church, and will include prayers of dedication, thanksgiving and for God’s blessing.”

They continue: “This resource will represent a significant move that is intended as a loving and celebratory response to same-sex couples who are cherished and deeply valued by the Church.”

They explain that the prayers will be entirely discretionary and that the formal teaching of the Church of England as set out in the canons and authorised liturgies – that Holy Matrimony is between one man and one woman for life – would not change.

“While there is a range of convictions held by the bishops about this important matter, we have not found sufficient consensus to propose a change in doctrine at the present time,” they write.

The bishops’ proposals will be discussed in detail at General Synod which meets at Church House, Westminster, from February 6 to 9.

The Bishop of London, Sarah Mullally, who chaired the group which led the process of discernment and decision making, said: “We are so grateful to the thousands of people across the Church of England who have taken part in this unique exercise in listening and learning together.

“I would like to thank all those who took part, sharing often deeply personal experiences, with great patience and courage.

“This has shown us vividly the diverse beliefs and hopes that are found among those who call the Church of England their spiritual home.

“We have taken all of those responses to heart and they have been vital in helping shape the proposals which we are putting forward today.”

**General Synod will debate the following motion on February 8th:**

*‘That this Synod, recognising the commitment to learning and deep listening to God and to each other of the Living in Love and Faith process, and desiring with God’s help to journey together while acknowledging the different deeply held convictions within the Church.*

+Alan



The next link up will be on Thursday February 9th

We plan to have a meal out together so do get in touch if you would like to join us - 822949 *Anne Tombs*

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### **Coffee at St Owen's**

Next coffee morning at St Owen's is on  
Friday 3rd February

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### **AMIGO - Forthcoming Events**

More information, if required, from John Dixon: Tel 01234 824959 or e-mail [jwdixon30@gmail.com](mailto:jwdixon30@gmail.com)

### **Tuesday 28th March 2023**

A light-hearted quiz hosted by Sue Brecknock beginning at 7.30 p.m. in Oakley Methodist Church. *JWD*

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### **Friends of St Owen's**

FoSO AGM on Thursday 16 Feb 2023  
at 7.30pm in

Fellowship Room at St Owen's

There are many ways in which you can support your Parish Church so do come along and find out what we do. **New members always welcome.**

## Fellowship Lunches

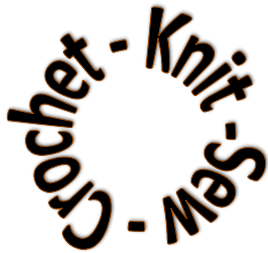
With the change in service times, we have decided to hold the Benefice Fellowship Bring and Share Lunches after morning service on the first Sunday of the month.

### Next event - Sunday 5th February

For more information please contact Anne Tombs 01234 822949 [annetombs712@btinternet.com](mailto:annetombs712@btinternet.com)

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## New sewing group



For those who wish to get together and do hand sewing, crochet or knitting. To take place on 1st and 3rd Wednesday afternoons. in the Fellowship Room at St Owen's Church.

1st February 2pm to 4pm

15th February 2pm to 4pm

1st March 2pm to 4pm

15th March 2pm to 4pm

Anyone interested to contact myself; cost will depend on how many attend but myself and Margaret Parrott will cover the initial cost. Further information from Frances on 07470 032296

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Jesus Christ is the key which unlocks the door of the prison cell of our own making and sets us free to live in the wide world of God's love and purpose.

*Kenneth Pillar (1924-2011); Bishop of Hertford 1982 - 1989*



**'Messy Church for All' continues this school year!**

**Do come and join us next on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> February**



After school from around 3.30pm till 5.30pm  
Oakley Methodist Church, High Street, Oakley MK43 7RQ

**Future Dates:**

**March 21<sup>st</sup>, May 16<sup>th</sup>, June 20<sup>th</sup>**

All ages welcome - all children accompanied.

If possible, please do let us know that you can come

01234 824504 [mcarr49@hotmail.com](mailto:mcarr49@hotmail.com)

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***Sessions for pre-schoolers meet in term time***

***Every Monday at St Owen, Bromham 11.30am – 1.30pm  
and every Thursday at St Mary's, Oakley 10am -11.45am***

## George Herbert, vicar and poet

On 27<sup>th</sup> February the Church Calendar celebrates George Herbert. For those who are muttering 'never heard of him', just think of the hymns which he wrote, which are still popular, even if they are well over 300 years old. Our hymn books include:

- Let all the world in every corner sing,
- King of glory, King of peace
- Teach me, my God and King,
- The God of love my shepherd is,

In the course of his short life (1593 – 1633) he was a graduate of Cambridge University, a favoured politician of King James, a distinguished poet of the so-called 'metaphysical' school, and a much-loved parish priest at Bemerton, in Wiltshire.

It is of course his hymns for which he is chiefly remembered today, though his Collected Poems are also regarded as jewels of English poetry.

*Parish Pump website*

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### From the Registers

#### **Wedding:**

28th January

Mila Rooney and Tim Salt  
(Bromham)

#### **Funerals:**

12th January

Colin Chapman (Bromham)

#### **Burial of Ashes:**

25th January

Paul Fawcett (Bromham)



## Remembering Ukraine – one year on

24<sup>th</sup> February is the first anniversary of the war in Ukraine, which has seen nearly eight million people displaced and thousands killed. This winter is the worst in living memory for most Ukrainians, with medicine, food, water, and heating in short supply. If you would like to mark the first year by helping the people Ukraine, here are some charities from which you might choose:

**The Disaster Emergencies Committee (DEC)** is an umbrella group of UK charities.

<https://www.dec.org.uk/appeal/ukraine-humanitarian-appeal>

**Christian Aid** was founded in 1945 by British and Irish churches to help refugees after the Second World War. Sadly, with war back in Europe, it is now back at work on the Continent.

<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/appeals/emergencies/ukraine-humanitarian-appeal-2022>

**Barnabas Fund** distributes food through local churches to Christians in the poorer areas, both in Kyiv and in rural regions.

<https://www.barnabasfund.org/gb/latest-needs/help-ukrainian-christians-in-their-hour-of-need/>

**Samaritans Purse** has been airlifting medical supplies into the country, distributed more than 45 million kilos of food, and built water systems providing more than 30 million litres of water.

<https://www.samaritans-purse.org.uk/idr-crisis/crisis-in-ukraine/>

## God in the Sciences

*This series is written by Dr Ruth M. Bancewicz, who is Church Engagement Director at The Faraday Institute for Science and Religion in Cambridge. Ruth writes on the positive relationship between Science and Christian faith.*

### Fearfully and Wonderfully Made

Every person who ever lived was once a sperm and an egg. Those two cells fused together, and in nine months they turned into a living, breathing, human being. Each of us emerged from this same embryonic development process, which is highly complex and organised, but variable enough to turn out a unique individual every time.

If you like order – such as neat piles of stationery, or tidy colour-coded files – you will enjoy this story. One of the most important stages of an embryo's development is when each section of the body, from head to rump, takes on its identity. Each part is told what shape to take, and which limbs or internal organs to grow: legs or arms, lungs or kidneys, and so on.

The most beautiful part of this body-patterning process is that it brings the dimensions of time and space together in such a neat way. The DNA instructions for the procedure, known as genes, are organised in the order in which they are needed during development *which is also* the order in which they appear on the body. No other sets of genes are known to be arranged in such a tidy pattern.



So, as the embryo develops, the tissues near the head end activate the first sets of genes. Those active genes then make

all the proteins needed for that part of the body to grow and develop in the right way. The tissues just below the head then switch on the second set of genes, and so on. A wave of activation passes down the embryo, specifying each section of the trunk in turn.

The Wisconsin-based developmental biologist Jeff Hardin often quotes Psalm 139 to express the wonder of embryonic development. The Psalmist did not understand how this process happened, but he knew that it was a marvellous thing. *"For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb...your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place, when I was woven together in the depths of the earth."*

The story of the tidy genes brings out the hidden beauty in the very early stages of embryonic development. The more biologists get to find out about how we came to be born, the more we can say, *"I am fearfully and wonderfully made"*!

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## **Breath deep**

Now here's a trick that you probably haven't tried before: next time you forget something, try taking some deep breaths. It seems that inhaling stimulates our brain, creating electrical activity where emotions, memory and smells are processed. In a recent American study, individuals were able to identify a face two seconds more quickly if they were breathing in through the nose, rather than breathing out.

The study was carried out at Northwestern University in Chicago, and it may also explain why we breath rapidly when afraid. "If you are in a panic state, you spend proportionally more time inhaling. .... Faster breathing could have a positive impact on brain function and result in faster response times."

*Parish Pump website*

## **All in the month of FEBRUARY**

It was:

175 years ago, on 21<sup>st</sup> Feb 1848 that the Communist Manifesto was published in London. It was written by Karl Marx, with the assistance of Friedrich Engels.

150 years ago, on 7<sup>th</sup> Feb 1873 that Thomas Andrews, Irish/British shipbuilder and businessman was born. The naval architect in charge of the plans for the RMS Titanic, he perished along with 1,500 others during her maiden voyage.

100 years ago, on 16<sup>th</sup> Feb 1923 that British archaeologist Howard Carter opened the sealed doorway to Tutankhamen's tomb in Thebes, Egypt. The following day he entered the burial chamber and discovered a wealth of treasures.

70 years ago, on 28<sup>th</sup> Feb 1953 that British scientists Francis Crick and James D Watson announced that they had discovered the double-helix structure of DNA.

65 years ago, on 6<sup>th</sup> Feb 1958 that the Munich air disaster took place. A plane carrying the Manchester United football team ('the Busby Babes'), plus support staff and journalists, crashed while attempting to take off from a slush-covered runway at Munich-Riem Airport. 23 people were killed, including 8 players.

65 years ago, on 17<sup>th</sup> Feb 1958 that St Claire of Assisi (1194-1253) was declared the patron saint of television by Pope Pius XII – on the basis that she had been too ill to attend Mass, but had reportedly been able to see and hear it on the wall of her room.

50 years ago, on 8<sup>th</sup> Feb 1973 that the US Senate established a select committee to investigate the Watergate scandal. This led to US President Richard Nixon's resignation in August 1974.

40 years ago, on 8<sup>th</sup> Feb 1983 that champion racehorse, Shergar, was kidnapped in Ireland and a £2million ransom demanded. The horse was never seen again.

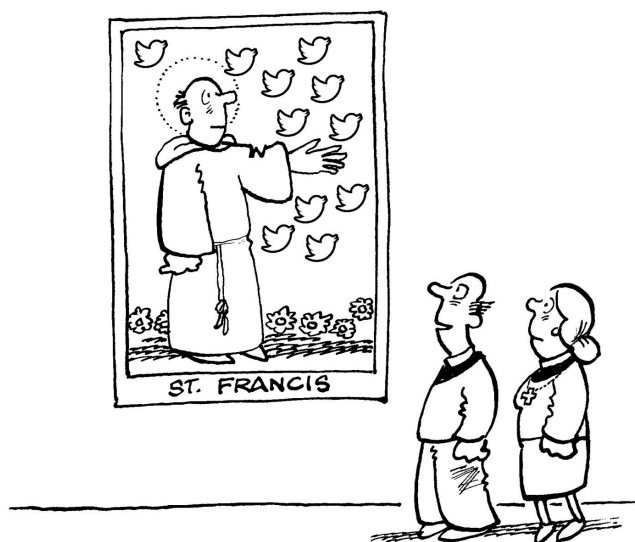
30 years ago, on 24<sup>th</sup> Feb 1993 that Bobby Moore, British footballer and captain of the England team that won the 1966 World Cup, died.

25 years ago, on 23<sup>rd</sup> Feb 1998 that Osama bin Laden issued a fatwa against all Jews and Crusaders.

20 years ago, on 1<sup>st</sup> Feb 2003 that the US space shuttle Columbia disintegrated over Texas during re-entry, killing all seven astronauts.

10 years ago, on 1<sup>st</sup> Feb 2013 that the Shard, a 72-storey skyscraper in London, was officially opened. It is the tallest building in the UK and the sixth tallest in Europe.

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He's been updated -  
he's now the patron saint of tweeting

*A group of 4-to-8-year-olds was once asked: 'What does love mean? Here's one answer:*

*"When someone loves you, the way they say your name is different. You just know that your name is safe in their mouth." Billy - age 4*

Sudoku -

medium

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

Solution on

page 31

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## FRIENDS OF ST OWEN'S 100 CLUB PRIZE WINNERS

### JANUARY 2023

First Prize: Barbara Crawford

Second Prize: Edward Jones

Third Prize: Derek Cryer

Fourth Prize: Ken Sanders

Fifth Prize: Rene Farquhar

## Keep the love going all year round

Valentine's Day is for February, but love is for all year round, and that is not always easy. Relationships have their ups and downs, and sometimes a bit of encouragement helps a lot.

So this year, you may find Care for the Family to be worth a visit. Its blog, podcasts and other resources offer a wide variety of tips, advice and encouragement, and are aimed at supporting your marriage and your family.

<https://www.careforthefamily.org.uk/support-for-you/family-life/couple-support/>

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*And another definition of love:*

When my grandmother got arthritis, she couldn't bend over and paint her toenails anymore. So my grandfather does it for her all the time, even when his hands got arthritis too. That's love." Rebecca - age 8

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### **Fellowship Room**

at

### **St Owen's Church**

in Bromham Park

**Available for Hire**

from £12 per hour

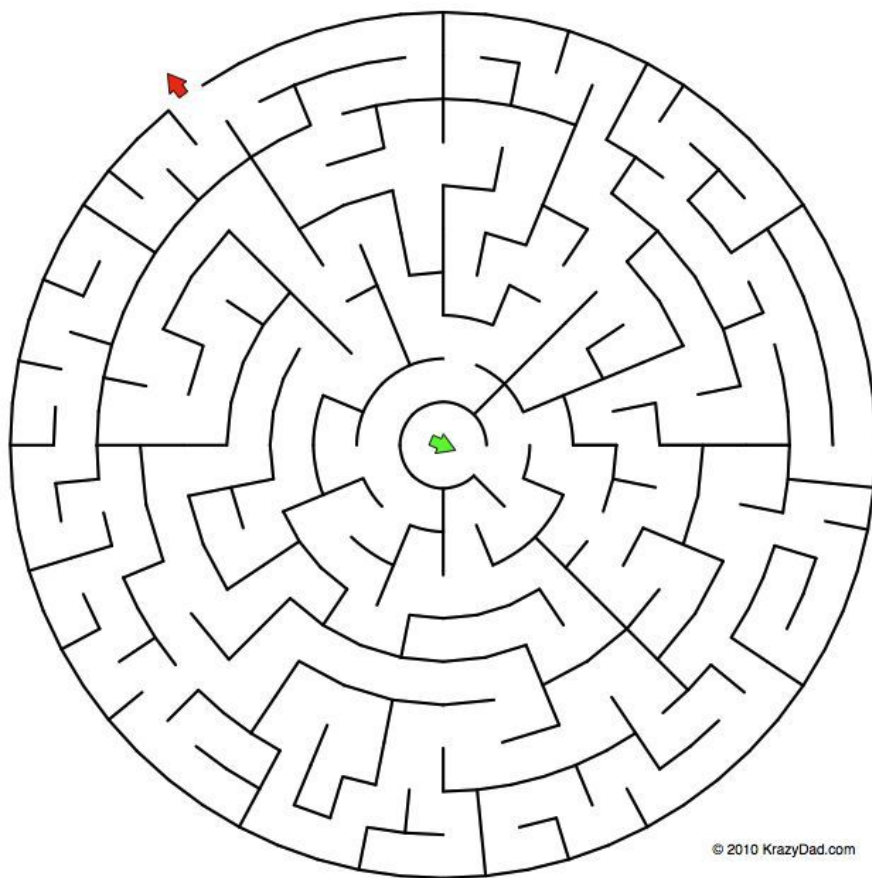
Contact Edward on

01234 826551 or at

[stowenshire@gmail.com](mailto:stowenshire@gmail.com)



Can you find your way out?

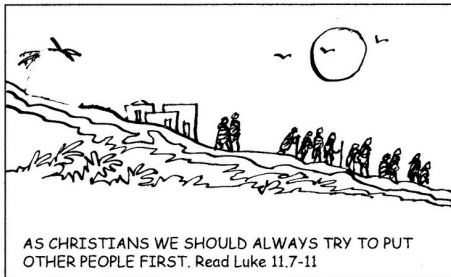
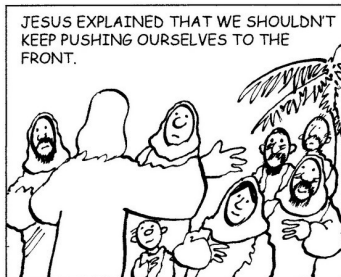
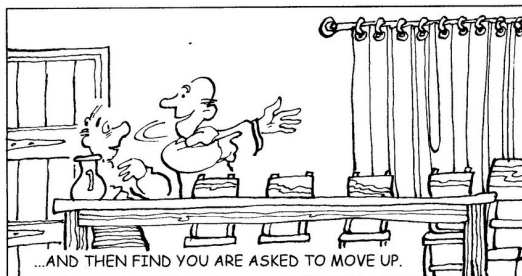


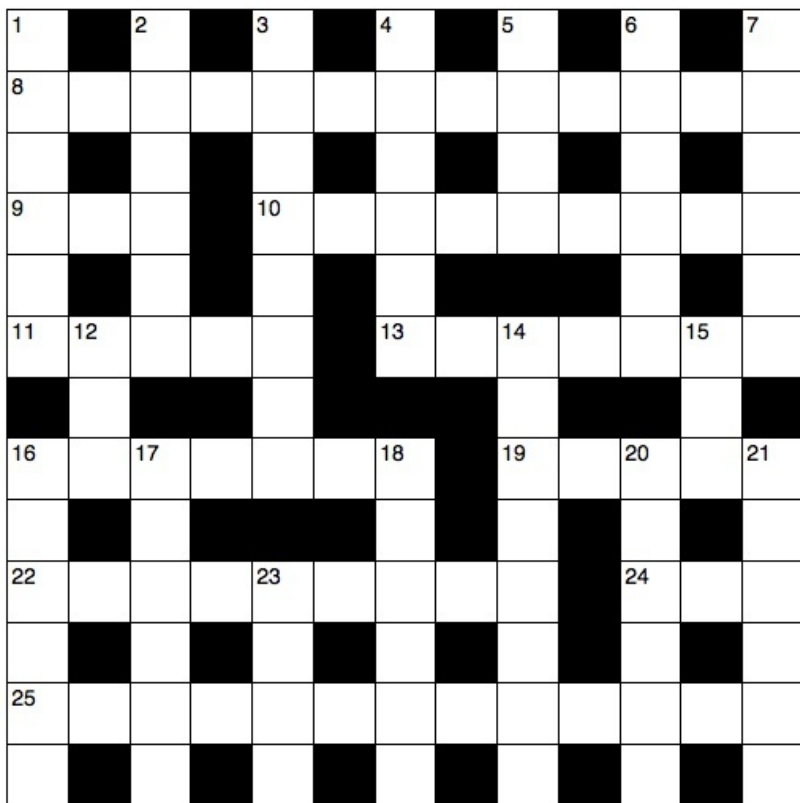
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Love is when you go out to eat and give somebody most of your chips, without making them give you any of theirs.”  
Chrissy - age 6



# For younger readers.....





## Across

8 Interrogated (Acts 12:19) (5-8)

9 'Burn it in a wood fire on the — heap' (Leviticus 4:12) (3)

10 Tobit, Judith, Baruch and the books of Esdras and the Maccabees are part of it (9)

11 Science fiction (abbrev.) (3-2)

13 Clay pit (anag.) (7)

16 Went to (John 4:46) (7)

19 'Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to — your bodies as living sacrifices' (Romans 12:1) (5)

22 David's plea to God concerning those referred to in 14

Down: 'On — — let them escape' (Psalm 56:7) (2,7)  
24 Royal Automobile Club (1,1,1) 25 How the book of  
Ezekiel refers to God more than 200 times (Ezekiel 2:4) (9,4)

### **Down**

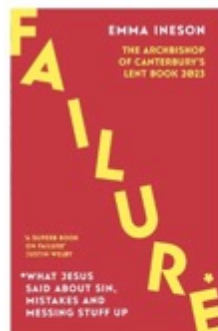
- 1 Seas (Proverbs 8:24) (6)
- 2 One of the sons of Eli the priest, killed in battle by the Philistines (1 Samuel 4:11) (6)
- 3 Specialist in the study of the Muslim religion (8)
- 4 'Do not rebuke an older man harshly, but — him as if he were your father' (1 Timothy 5:1) (6)
- 5 One of Esau's grandsons (Genesis 36:11) (4)
- 6 Taking a chance (colloq.) (2,4)
- 7 God's instructions to the Israelites concerning grain offerings: ' — salt to — your offerings' (Leviticus 2:13) (3,3)
- 12 Confederation of British Industry (1,1,1)
- 14 'All day long they twist my words; they are always — to harm me' (Psalm 56:5) (8)
- 15 The crowd's reaction to Jesus bringing back to life a widow's son in Nain (Luke 7:16) (3)
- 16 Disappear (Psalm 104:35) (6)
- 17 How Jeremiah was likely to die if he wasn't rescued from the cistern where he was imprisoned (Jeremiah 38:9) (6)
- 18 What the prophets do to a wall, with whitewash (Ezekiel 13:10, RSV) (4,2)
- 20 Made by a plough (Job 39:10) (6)
- 21 Noah was relieved when the flood waters continued to — (Genesis 8:5) (6)
- 23 Jesus gave the Twelve the power and authority to do this to diseases (Luke 9:1) (4)

*Solution on page 31*

## **Failure: What Jesus Said About Sin, Mistakes and Messing Stuff Up**

By Emma Ineson, SPCK £8.99

### **The Archbishop of Canterbury's Lent Book 2023**



In 2019, Emma Ineson wrote about ambition and what it means for Christians to be successful. And then there was a global pandemic... Suddenly failure began to feel very much more familiar than success.

But what is failure? What did Jesus think of it? What did He say about sin, mistakes and generally mucking things up? At the start of this wonderfully humorous and encouraging book - which will end at the cross - it's suggested that our tendency to lump all kinds of failure together could be a bit unhelpful. A more nuanced understanding of what sort of failure we're dealing with might just allow us to make friends with it and respond more appropriately.

This idea leads us 'Towards an (Imperfect) Theology of Failure', based on key Christian thinking, and Emma poses the question of whether sin is an individual or corporate thing. Looking at the church, we consider, what is God's purpose for it? And in the light of key concerns such as safeguarding and racial justice, how might we re-examine concepts of success and recognise and measure failure?

We are reminded of our calling to live life to the full, to take risks despite our fears. We are bound sometimes to fail! Yet gazing at Jesus - who looked like the greatest failure of all - we may discern in the heartache, vulnerability and humility of failure, the glory of the cross.

## **Images of Grace: a Journey from Darkness to Light at Easter**

By Amy Scott Robinson, BRF, £9.99

### **The BRF Lent Book for 2023**

At the heart of the Christian message is a collection of abstract nouns: love; sin; forgiveness; grace. It is quite difficult to explain what the gospel message is without using some or all of those words. But the problem with abstract nouns is that when we use them, we assume that the person we are talking to understands them, and not only that, we assume that they have the same understanding of the word that we do...

Lent is traditionally a time of repentance, fasting and prayer as we prepare to celebrate our salvation at Easter. Through daily readings and reflections from Ash Wednesday to Easter Day, Amy Scott Robinson explores different biblical images of repentance, sin, forgiveness and grace, bringing them together in Holy Week as a lens through which to view Christ's work of reconciliation on the cross.

\*\*

## **Prayers Around the World**

By Deborah Lock and Helen Cann,

**Lion Children's Books, £7.99**

Across the continents, **this beautifully illustrated book of prayers** reflects on God's amazing world, celebrating different countries, landscapes and traditions. From fishing villages to the African plains, farming in Peru to the snowy landscape of Greenland, blossoms in Japan and leaf kicking in Eastern Europe and to the shores of the Pacific Ocean, these prayers share God's love and care for His world.



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## Judgement?

This true story concerns the visit of a visiting preacher to a little village chapel... ‘

He was a few minutes into his sermon when, without warning, about twenty square feet of thick and decayed Victorian plaster fell from high on one wall and crashed into a group of empty pews below. As the dense fog of dust began to settle, and it became clear no one was injured, the minister prepared to resume his sermon.

Then he paused, and looked heavenward and in a slightly pained voice, asked: “Was it something I said?””




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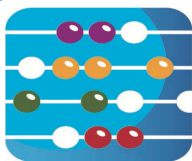
Solution to puzzle  
on page 22

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

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Solution to puzzle  
on page 26

O		H		I		E		O		O		A
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## On why rural churchgoers like to freeze in church

The Rectory  
St James the Least

My dear Nephew Darren

Winter certainly exposes the difference between those of you who live in cities and us rural folk. While you bask in your centrally heated flat, with every modern convenience that could be imagined and complain about the half an inch of slush that makes your life so inconvenient, we country folk wear overcoats in our houses, open all doors and windows to let the heat *in* and battle through snow drifts, measured in feet, to get the morning paper.

Colonel Wainwright has acquired a new toy: a snow blower, of sufficient power that I believe it could clear the Antarctic. He kindly volunteered to clear the paths around the church. Working outwards from the church door, the path to the church soon became snow free. Unfortunately, he only realised when his job was complete that the blown snow then formed a five-foot drift under the lychgate. We now have to climb over the churchyard wall and negotiate buried gravestones before we can reach his pristine paths.

Miss Margison, ever meaning to be helpful, decided to unfreeze the pipes in the church hall. A blow torch was not the ideal solution, although the resulting burst did make some rather attractive ice sculptures round the kitchen equipment. The village badminton team that uses the hall has now temporarily changed sport, to ice hockey.

Inevitably, our congregation has soared these past few weeks. There is nothing like adversity for making people want to prove they have the moral fibre to overcome it. Much

*cont on p34*

satisfaction seems to be obtained on discovering who has *not* dared venture out, which is taken as judgement on their strength of character. The Prentices upstaged most people by arriving on a sleigh. Mr Prentice was warmly wrapped in a travelling rug, while his wife pulled it. As her husband explained, he couldn't possibly let the pony work in such conditions.

What I momentarily thought was applause during my sermon was merely people keeping their hands warm and the hymns were drowned out by the stamping of feet. Our organist complained that the cold made his fingers so numb that he couldn't play properly – although I didn't notice that things were much different from normal.

No, my dear nephew, you continue to fret about your church heating dropping to temperate, and a few flakes of wet snow obliging you to close your carpark for health and safety reasons. We shall continue to triumph heroically over adversity and return home after Mattins, feeling we have proved our Christian commitment by being utterly uncomfortable.

Your loving uncle,

Eustace

---

## Talking theologically...

Jesus asked His disciples who men said that He was. And one of His disciples replied: "Master, thou art the supreme eschatological manifestation of omnipotent ecclesiastical authority, the absolute, divine, sacerdotal monarch."

And Jesus said, "er - What?"

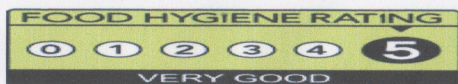


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