

INSPIRE



THE MONTHLY MAGAZINE
FOR THE PARISH OF
ST JOHN THE BAPTIST, FROME

JULY 2025

July 2025

The parish of Frome Selwood in the Frome Local Ministry Group

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Tower Captain	Matthew Higby
Flowers	Elaine Gilburt



Pentecost: Sunday 8 June – see also pages 5-7

Photo Angela Pater

The Vicar's view

Whilst I was on holiday, I went to visit a church in the centre of Montmartre. I was very struck by the church's altar which had a beautiful enamel portrait of the Montmartre skyline, complete with the Moulin Rouge. For a few seconds I was surprised that a church would acknowledge the existence of something that, in its day, must have been so incredibly controversial, let alone give it pride of place on the holiest part of the church. Surely this is a sacred space, where we escape of all 'depravity' and worldliness, to be elevated up and out, into the divine? And yet that altar challenged me – I think would challenge most Christians to think differently.

The Eucharist is the greatest refutation of duality between Sacred and Profane that we can have, for it is at the Eucharist, week after week, that God gives His very presence to us through the base gifts of the world. Indeed, for Christians, the altar – this table made from wood or stone, the most basic building blocks of our world – is the holiest part of a church and the object around which the whole church is focused. It is the place where we encounter God and, through the Eucharist, where heaven and earth touch, in a way that sanctifies the whole earth because of this communion. If you look at any of our altars (with the exception of the nave altar), you will find that they each are inscribed with five crosses to make the connection between them as channels of Jesus' saving work. The altar pours out the sacred into the mundane, the divine into the human; it continues the work of sanctifying the world.

The beauty of that Montmartre altar was to remind us that the altar of every parish church is a font pouring God into the every place, crevice and person of the parish. Through every Eucharist we celebrate, God is poured into the baker's, the butcher's, and even the Moulin Rouge. The act may take place in this small church, hidden from most of the hub and consciousness of people's daily lives, but having nonetheless the most profound, life-giving and hallowing effect on, and throughout, the entire world. So there is, for Christians, no place that is void of God's presence, no object or creature of the world, where God's redeeming work is not already begun, no person that is less than the

dignity of God's image and likeness.

For too long, and by too many people, the Christian story has been presented as a binary: Spirit good, Flesh bad; The World is Evil, Heaven is Holy. But the message of our Christian faith is precisely that this

awful dichotomy is over, and Jesus' mission and work has been to unite the Body and Spirit, the material and the holy, Heaven and Earth in a single unity, and is drawing all things, body and soul, into a closer communion with his reign. As an aside, historical theologians are beginning to explore whether it was an emphasised divide between body and soul, sacred and worldly, that allowed Christian slave owners to treat their fellow beings so atrociously with, seemingly, not a pang of conscience.

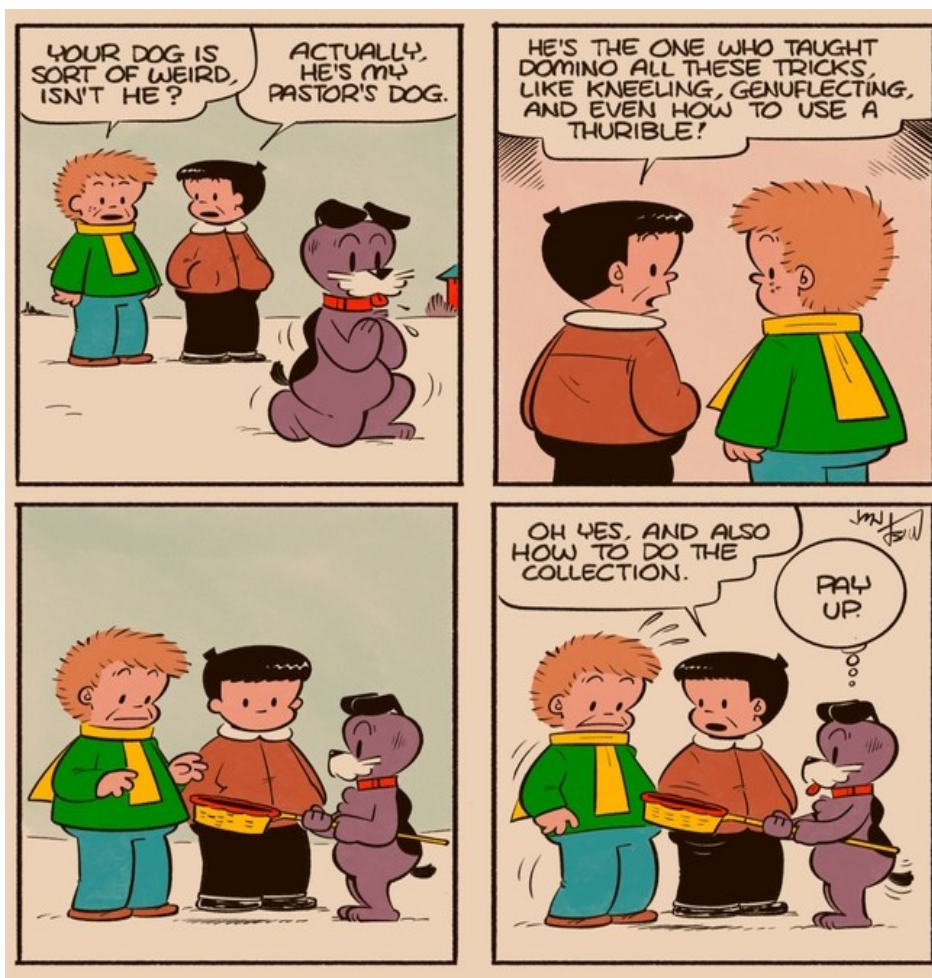
The sacredness of the material world begins with the altar, but there remain numerous ways that Christians can participate in and live the reality of incarnation. God's use and sanctification of the world has been seized in so many ways through our Christian history. When Christians use the material world to reflect, show or manifest their faith, this is called a 'Sacramental', because, most often, the object, ritual etc draws its purpose from its connection to a Christian Sacrament. With these Sacramentals we are able to continue the work of the Altar and Church in our domestic lives, claiming and living, in our every moment, the unity of our work, with the work of the altar and the Church, asserting our faith that we can encounter God in our world.

Throughout the next few months, of which this will be the first, I am hoping to write a few articles about ways that Christians have



traditionally sanctified their world, their day, their lives; at most, in the hope it may be a useful suggestion to some, and at the least, an invitation for us to broaden our understanding of the ways that Christian faith manifests in different cultures, peoples and acts. Likewise, if, on reading some of these, others would like to take up the baton and write articles about sacramentals or devotions that they have encountered and found useful, please do write in with your own examples.

**Yours in Christ,
Rev. Seamus Hargrave**



A busy weekend in June

The Saturday before Pentecost (which some people still fondly refer to as Whitsun) is always busy, but it seemed even busier than usual this year. As it was the first Saturday of the month, we began with our usual United Prayer– a small gathering of people from different congregations in Frome.

And then attention turned to the Whit Branches. In the past, these branches have been hacked down in the morning and put straight into position in church. This year, Longleat forestry did the hacking down, and the branches arrived the day before. They were saved from dying of thirst over night by the heroic actions of members of the choir who, as well as rehearsing the music for Pentecost at choir practice, helped to place the branches in water butts.

Those branches really were enormous! They were laid out in the forecourt before being placed in position by an energetic, large band of helpers. The brilliant suggestion of standing them in large plastic tubs (rather than jam jars) meant that topping up the water and keeping the wretched things alive was made much easier.

While this was happening, I was struggling to display some Pentecost art work which had arrived from St John's School. I was going to pin it up on a noticeboard, but someone had the bright idea of displaying the pieces on red cloths cascading from the pulpit. Some members of the Whit branches team, viewing my increasingly wobbly display, kindly took over and did it properly.



Photo: Angela Pater

Oh yes! And there were some mysterious rehearsals going on above on the Rood Screen...

By the time Robin (whom we still miss from the Old Bakery) had delivered the Whit Buns late on Saturday afternoon, the church was ready, waiting in quiet splendour for an equally busy Sunday ...

Pentecost is always an exciting day, but as the photos show there was extra activity this year. There is a tradition of 'Whit Walking' in Frome, as elsewhere, and some of us began the day by gathering outside St John's School to pray for pupils and staff. Seamus blessed the school and then we set off, singing, in procession down Blind House Lane.

When we arrived at church, where some of the congregation were gathered outside to welcome us, we found the doors closed, intentionally. Following the reading of Bishop Ken's open doors prayer, Seamus and I pushed open the doors and we continued our procession into church.

It was a colourful and stirring start to our celebration of the 'birthday of the church' which continued with splendid music and spectacle



Photo: Tony Hodges

and, of course, it was a High Altar day. It was at this point that the next surprise occurred as we were rather gleefully bombarded with coloured rose petals as we passed into the chancel (that's what that mysterious rehearsal on the Rood Screen was about!). It was unexpectedly moving to see the bright petals resting on the shoulders of people as we walked towards the altar and reflected on the fire of the Holy Spirit coming on that first Pentecost.

For many that was the end of Pentecost, but some gathered for the service of Evening prayer and Benediction at the end of the day . This is usually a more intimate gathering in the Ken Chapel, but Seamus decided that it was more fitting to hold this month's service among the branches in the main body of the church.

We did indeed celebrate the birthday of the church. You will notice, perhaps, that I have not mentioned the names of anyone who worked so hard over this busy weekend. A glance at the photos will give a flavour of many who played their part in ensuring that our worship was so memorable. But it was an impressive team effort and our thanks are extended to everyone!

Janet Caudwell

Thinking Allowed: A weekly discussion group from Thursday 17th July, in the vicarage at 7pm. This group will meet every Thursday and is an opportunity to think, openly, about questions we have always had about Christian Faith. There will be a box in the coming week for you to write questions for consideration in, and anyone who would like to come is invited to write into it. Refreshments will be provided.



Photo: Rev. Seamus Hargrave

My Kitchen Notebook:

Pentecost Cake

Eds: When Rosemary stopped her regular kitchen notebook series, she promised an occasional recipe, and here is one of them—thank you, Rosemary!

This is the recipe for the cake we had after the service on Pentecost (as if the Whit Buns weren't enough of a treat!). Several people have since asked me for the recipe, so here it is! I found it on an American website, Catholic Culture.org, where there are quite a few other suggestions for liturgically themed treats! I have converted the recipe quantities from American cups into grams; these are the quantities I used and it worked! The original recipe calls for a Bundt tin; I tried (not entirely successfully) to create one by placing a small can in the middle of my 8" deep cake tin, but the cake doesn't have to be a circle – a normal 7" cake tin or spring-form tin would work just as well, if not better!

To make the cake you first have to scald (bring almost to the boil, then allow to cool) **160ml milk**. While this is cooling sift together **200 g sugar** (I used granulated), **167g plain flour** and **1 tbsp baking powder**. Sift these dry ingredients together a total of 3 times – this is important, as you need to incorporate as much air into the mixture as possible. Whisk together **2 egg whites**, **½ tsp cream of tartar**, **1 tsp vanilla essence** and **½ tsp salt** until stiff (as if making meringues). Carefully mix the cooled milk into the flour, then fold in the egg whites, then pour the batter into the tin and bake at 180°C until golden brown and firm to the touch. You may need to adjust the cooking time if you use a different type of tin.

For the decoration, mash together **6-8 strawberries**, adding a sprinkling of sugar if required – although the cake itself is quite sweet, so you may feel that this extra sugar is unnecessary. Beat together **30g softened butter** and **190g sifted icing sugar** with about **1 tbsp crushed strawberry pulp**.



When the cake has cooled, spread the icing on top and decorate with whole strawberries which represent the fruits of the Spirit. According to Catholic tradition, there are seven gifts of the Holy Spirit: Wisdom, Understanding, Counsel, Fortitude, Knowledge, Piety and Fear of the Lord (Isaiah 11: 1-2), but when I made the cake I had nine strawberries, and I wanted to use them all, so I substituted the nine gifts of the Spirit as listed in 1 Corinthians 12: Wisdom, Knowledge, Faith, Healing, Miracles, Prophecy, Discernment, Understanding and Speaking in Tongues.

Rosemary McCormick

Lay-led worship

What is it? When is it? Should I come to it? Is it for me?

Will there be tea & cake?

For answers to all these questions, (and maybe some more) come to St John's at 5.00pm on the 4th Sunday of the month (or talk to Janet or Rosemary).

Next dates: 27th July, 24th August 2025

Coffee morning and bring and buy

Wednesday 23rd July

10.30am to 1pm

at Brookside Cottage, East Woodlands, BA11 5LY

(next to the former Horse & Groom pub)

Courtesy of Christine and Phil Holland



Proceeds to the landscaping
of the Bennett Centre courtyard

Please come and support!



Well Dressing 2025 – Telling the Story

A massive thank you to everyone who supported this year's project to decorate St Aldhelm's Well. The schools involved were Hayesdown, Berkley and St John's First School, plus some of the students at Frome Learning Partnership. We have created a new Frome tradition as I now encounter upper secondary age students who recall their own First School involvement!

Also involved were the regular congregation and significant numbers of visitors to the church spanning all ages. The Well Dressing activity stall at the mini-market proved very popular, and I was relieved at the magnificent response to the last-minute request for help with the final cutting, arranging and sticking when it was proving tricky for me to fit everything in around work.

The theme 'Telling the Story' focused on six of Jesus' parables: The Good Samaritan; The Mustard Seed; The Sower; The Lost (Prodigal Son – plus one of his pigs!); The Lost Sheep; and The Talents. Each school was given two small plaques with a picture to decorate in paint and collage. The clip art included devices for people to colour in – the sort of designs typically found on traditional stained-glass windows. It was so lovely to see that some people had designed their own and, in some cases, added a prayer.

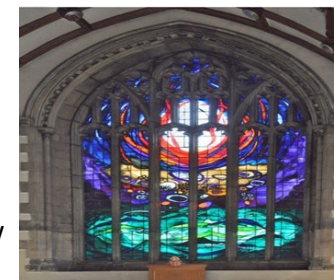
My painted background to the main boards depicts a stained-glass window design inspired by the works of the artist John Piper, interpreted in glass by Patrick Reytiens – in particular, 'Creation', the East Window of the Minster Church of St Andrew in Plymouth, once known as 'The Garden (outdoor) Church' as it was bombed in WW2 and functioned without a roof for some time. I have lovely memories of visiting it with John when he was working in the city. My design was also influenced by Piper's work in the glass 'The Light of the World' in Robinson College, Cambridge, and 'Lantern', featured in Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral ('the Liverpool Wigwam')

The Well Dressing project has once again been dedicated to the memory of my lovely husband John, a skilled artist and previously a co-designer with me. When I am working on the art work, listening to the *Faure Requiem* (amongst others), I am very aware that I am not working alone. This year in his honour I added extra 'jewels and glitter', reworking and refreshing the header board designed by the Year 9 Art Club at Frome College for last year's display.

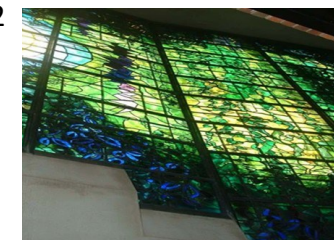
I cannot mention everyone by name but my appreciation and thanks for their essential contributions to Peter and Matt Connew, Janet Caudwell and Tony Hodges, Elaine Gilburd and the Flower Team, as well as the schools, the choir and the lovely Town Band.

There will be another chance to see the Well Dressing Decorations in church during the Frome Festival in July.

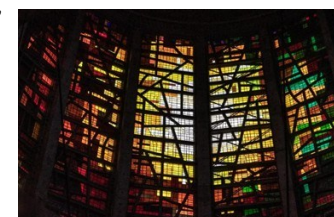
Alison Henderson



Creation



The Light of the World



Lantern



Safeguarding at St John's

Safeguarding in Frome: everyone's responsibility

As a church community in the heart of Frome, safeguarding is more than a box we tick—it must be a way of life. In our homes, our services, our social groups and our outreach, it means living out Jesus' call to care for one another, especially those who are vulnerable.

Why safeguarding matters – even here

Frome is a vibrant and compassionate town, known for its creativity, neighbourliness and community spirit. But even in a place like this, there are hidden needs and silent struggles. Did you know?

- Across Somerset, **1 in 5 children** are living in poverty, increasing their risk of exploitation and harm (Somerset Council, 2023).
- **Avon and Somerset Police** recorded over **20,000 domestic abuse incidents** in 2023 alone—many of which will have occurred in rural towns like ours.
- The **NSPCC** estimates that **1 in 20 children** in the UK are sexually abused—often by someone they know and trust.

Some of those affected are already among us—in our pews, our food banks, our coffee mornings. Vulnerability isn't always visible. It can be found in someone caring for a partner with dementia, a teenager being bullied online or a young parent facing coercive control at home.

Creating an open culture

One of the most effective ways we can safeguard each other is by creating an *open culture* in our churches – a place where people feel safe to speak up and be heard. Safeguarding thrives in an environment of trust, honesty and active compassion. This looks like:

- **Listening carefully** and not brushing off concerns.
- **Training volunteers and leaders** to recognise signs of harm.
- **Clear reporting procedures**, handled with respect and confidentiality.
- **Believing survivors**, and walking with them on the road to healing.

It also means making space for difficult conversations. Sometimes we assume abuse only happens “somewhere else”—but the reality is, no community is immune. In fact, rural areas like Frome can make it harder for victims to reach help due to isolation or fear of gossip.

That's why our churches must be places of refuge, not silence.

Recognising hidden vulnerabilities

Vulnerability doesn't always look like what we expect. A well-dressed lady may be suffering neglect at home. A smiling teenager may be facing pressure online. A long-standing member of the congregation may finally be ready to speak about abuse they endured long ago. In following Christ, we are called to open our eyes and our hearts—to look beneath the surface, and respond not with suspicion, but with readiness, compassion and action.

How you can help

Every member of our church family has a role to play. Here's how you can get involved:

- **Be alert** to the signs of distress, isolation, or unusual behaviour.
- **Raise concerns** if something doesn't seem right. We have a Parish safeguarding officer you can speak to in confidence (details below).
- **Support and pray** for those affected by abuse or neglect, both within and beyond our parish.
- **Take training opportunities** when they arise, especially if you're involved in youth work, pastoral care, or community outreach.

Our commitment in Frome

In Frome, we pride ourselves on being a connected and caring town. Let's make sure our churches reflect that spirit by being safe spaces where everyone can thrive. Whether it's a vulnerable adult joining us for coffee after a service, or someone seeking help after years of silence, **everyone deserves to be protected, heard and loved.**

Let's be a church that looks out for one another, that acts when it sees need, and that offers the safety and security of Christ's love in both word and deed.

If you are concerned about a safeguarding issue, please speak to our Parish Safeguarding Officer, Steve Smith, 07548 250805 / smith.steve.71@icloud.com or contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Team via the Bath and Wells Diocese website: www.bathandwells.org.uk. In an emergency, always call 999.



St. John's Women's Group

This group continues to enjoy a good response from both long-term members of the original St John's 'Young Wives' group and several new members who have responded to our invitations this year. It has been lovely to welcome more people.

We started the year in style with a post-Christmas meal at The Mason's Arms, with partners and friends included, and at a further meeting, we considered the possibility of affiliating with the national

ecumenical network of 'Women in Fellowship' (the successor to the Anglican Young Wives national organisation). Whilst this looked interesting in the longer term, we decided that for the present it was better to continue to grow our existing group.

Peter Connew is thanked for providing the activities for our entertainment at the highly competitive Games Night held in the church, notably a very inventive and absorbing matching game using playing cards and bottle tops (better than Bingo) plus a challenging person-sized Connect 4 contest! The meeting was formally opened with prayers led by our chairman, June Barnes. As usual, we had refreshments and a raffle of modest prizes (£1-2 value), and everyone was a winner. We also had a further discussion about the decision to retain this organisation as an inclusive, safe social space for women. The group is open to all women, and their age and marital status has no bearing at all, in contrast to the previous 'Young Wives' which was restricted to married women under 35 years old!

Our most recent outing enabled us to welcome more new members as we all enjoyed a meal at Sterk, the new Turkish restaurant in Palmer Street. The choices on the menu made decision-making extremely difficult! The service was very efficient, friendly and welcoming, and the Turkish Delight with coffee was absolutely 'delightful'.

We are happy to welcome new and returning members, so please do

consider yourself invited to all events. Further details are available in church from June Barnes, Alison Henderson or Jan Scudamore.

Our forthcoming events:

Monday 14 th July	BBQ at June's home – 12 Styles Close –at 7.30 pm. This is a "bring and share" event. June will advise us what is needed. Also bring a modest raffle prize.
Friday 29 th August	Evening drive and bar snack meal at The Bell, Leigh on Mendip. Departing St John's Church forecourt at 7.00pm. Lifts will be arranged.
Monday 6 th October	A speaker is being arranged. We hope to meet in St. John's Church at 7.00 pm.

Alison Henderson

Open the Book

In the Autumn there will be a meeting for all interested in joining a team of people who enjoy going into local schools to bring alive Bible Stories. The meeting planned for 25 June has been postponed. Janet has some more details if you are interested.

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Registered charity number
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Lesson Readers' meeting 14th June

We had a very useful meeting on Saturday to talk about any issues or concerns that lesson readers might have. This is a short account of what we discussed (although many of you do these as a matter of course).

- **Be ready.** This particularly applies to members of the choir who have farthest to move, but please be ready for the reading to follow smoothly after the collect, even if that means moving during the prayer.
- **Read the passage through in advance** (especially if it is from Romans, or contains any problematic words). If you need any clarification (e.g. pronunciation or meaning), do ask a member of the Ministry Team beforehand.
- **Try to check the dates as soon as the list comes out**, either from the magazine or from the list at the back of church, and arrange swaps in advance – don't rely on Karolyn's reminder a few days before.
- **Tell Karolyn your holiday dates etc.** It would be helpful if you could email Karolyn in advance (admin@stjohnsfrome.com) with any holiday dates or other dates when you know you will be unavailable to read.
- **Emergency readers.** It is the responsibility of the sidespeople to check that the lesson readers are in church; Jen and Alison have both volunteered to be 'emergency readers' if the designated reader is not there. Do let us know if you are willing to be added to that list.
- **Other things discussed** were:
 - ◇ Can the font-size be enlarged please?
 - ◇ Can the position of the eagle lectern be changed? At the moment the people sitting on the south side of the church cannot see the reader.
 - ◇ Remember to read slowly and clearly!

Thank you to all those of you who volunteered to do readings for the Stations of the Windows on Tue 24th June. **Rosemary McCormick**

Links in a Golden Chain 12

Walter Hilton

Readers will have noticed that these monthly vignettes leap from age to age in their selection from our Christian family. This is deliberate. It reflects my delight in discovering individuals who have been witnesses to the Christian faith in past times but may have been forgotten in the busyness of modernity. As I range over the centuries it is salutary to glimpse something of the eternal verities of our faith expressed in different words and actions that reflect the circumstances of past times and cultures.

My subject this month is Walter Hilton. He lived from 1343 to 1396 and was, therefore, a contemporary of Julian of Norwich. Unlike Julian, who was not an educated woman, he was a Cambridge educated theologian, familiar with the important teachings of the church, though always a pastor, concerned with the care of people. He became an Augustinian canon, the same Order as the newly elected Pope Leo. He lived in their priory in Thurgarton, not far from Southwell in Nottinghamshire, and wrote in both Latin and English.

His most famous text in English was called *The Scale of Perfection*. It has been described as 'a complete way-book of the spiritual life, from its simplest beginnings to its ineffable end'. It is a book which understands the challenges of ordinary life, and it is said of Hilton that he knew and never forgot the realities of human nature. He understood, through deep psychological insight, the common flaws and self-deceptions to which we all fall under. His mysticism has been described as not merely philosophic or restricted to the cloistered life, nor is it distracted by a quest for ecstatic experience. He criticises a spirituality which tends to neglect practical tasks involving the care of others.

He writes 'Surely He will more thank thee for the humble washing of His feet, when they are very foul and yeald an ill savour to thee, that



for all the curious painting and fair dressing or decking that thou canst make about His head by a devoutest remembrance?’ Hilton seeks to proclaim the important message – as relevant now as in the 14th century – that our calling as Christians is to integrate the love of God with the love of our fellow human beings and the responsibilities of living in the world. We are equipped both with physical eyes and the eyes of the soul. His calling, in common with Julian and other mystics of his age, is to use all our perceptions to encounter God’s truth at all levels of existence. He writes: ‘This opening of the spiritual eye that is that luminous darkness and rich nourishing that I have spoken of before, and it may be called purity of spirit and spiritual rest, inward stillness and peace of conscience, highness of thought and solitude of soul, a lively feeling of grace and secrecy of heart, the waking sleep of the spouse and tasting of heavenly savour, burning in love and shining in light, entrance to contemplation and reforming in feeling. All these terms are given by various persons in holy writing, for each of them as spoken of it as he felt in in grace, and although they all show it in diverse words, nevertheless all are united in the truth they affirm.’

Thanks be to God for all these links in the golden chain of loving wisdom that transcends the limitations of time and distance. May we realise that we too are parts of that chain in our own age and keep our link strong and shining in spirit and in service.

Kevin Tingay

Second Saturday regular activities in St John’s

Next one: Saturday 12th July

Note that there will be no de-cluttering, cleaning and repairing ‘Working Party’ this month because of Frome Festival

Volunteer team meetings: 10.30am –11.30am

Vestry team:	January & July
Sidesmen & Welcome:	March & September
Intercessions team:	April & October
Lesson readers team:	June & December

News from other churches

St Katharine’s, East Woodlands

Rogation Sunday on 1st June was a lovely occasion, starting outside the church with various well behaved dogs in attendance, Rob and Lara Williams' horses and Willow's pony – see photograph below (courtesy of Deborah Bee). No sheep this year - no doubt they were at the Bath and West Show!



East Woodlands Village Hall

Pop up pub 7.00 pm onwards - Friday 4th July and Fri 1 August.

Cream teas: every Sunday in August

Pam Chapman

Leigh on Mendip Open Gardens and Heritage Trail

**Sunday 13 July 2025
11.00am to 4.30pm**

Tickets/map £7 on the day from the Memorial Hall BA3 5QH
Entry to all the Open Gardens, plus Heritage Trail information

Hot and cold drinks, cakes and light lunches available all day

For further details, please contact folcleigh@gmail.com

All proceeds to Friends of Leigh Church, supporting the repair, conservation and community use of St Giles church

Friends of Leigh Church, Registered Charity No. 1174913

SERVICES at ST JOHN'S – JULY 2025

Regular weekly services in July

Sundays

8.45am Online service via Zoom – see weekly sheet for link

10.00am Choral Eucharist

5.00pm Evening worship in the Lady Chapel:

1st: Evening Prayer

8th: Benediction and Evening Prayer

15th: Come and Sing Evensong

22nd: Holy Hour

29th: Flexible Fifth

Mondays

8.45am Morning Prayer in the Ken Chapel

Fridays

12.30pm Lunchtime Eucharist in the Lady Chapel

Saturdays

5.00pm Evening Eucharist in the Lady Chapel

Additional services in July

Thu 3 July 8.45am Matins – Thomas the Apostle

Thu 10 July 6.00pm Festival Choral Evensong

Tue 22 July 12.30pm Eucharist – Mary Magdalene

Tue 29 July 12.30pm Mary, Martha and Lazarus

St John's Café and Mini Market – 11.15am to 2pm

First Sunday of the month:

Sunday 6th July, Sunday 3rd August, Sunday 7th Sept

DIARY DATES – JULY 2025

July

Wed	2	6.30pm	<i>Inspired to Read</i> Book Club
Thu	3	All day	Setting up for Festival
Fri	4		FROME FESTIVAL BEGINS See below
Sun	6	11.15am-2pm	Café & Mini Market
Sat	12	10.30am	Vestry team meets
			NB No working party because of FF
Mon	14	7.30pm	Women's group BBQ
Thu	17	7pm	Thinking Allowed session (Vicarage)
Sat	19	10am	Fundraising team meeting
Sun	20	12 noon	Baptism
Wed	23	10.30am	Coffee morning at Christine Holland's
Thu	24	7pm	Thinking Allowed session (Vicarage)

August

Sun	3	11.15am to 2pm	Mini-market
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Frome Festival events at St John's

Friday 4 July to Sunday 13 July

'Telling the story in fabric, glass and stone'

Floral and visual displays daily 11am–4pm
(11.30-4pm on Sundays)

by St John's Church, Frome Floral Art Society and local schools

Frome Art for Wellbeing art exhibition 11am–4pm on specific days

An introduction to bell-ringing Saturday 5 July 11am–12.30pm

Andrew Hardy: Dear Elizabeth Saturday 5 July 7.30pm–10pm

Andrew Ziminski A life in ruins – Monday 7 July 6pm–7pm

KANEKT concert Wednesday 9 July 7.30pm–9.30pm

Festival Choral Evensong Thursday 10 July 6pm–7pm

St John's by candlelight Friday 11 July 8pm–9pm

Holy water

Water plays a fundamental part in the Christian world. Indeed, its primacy as a natural resource has led many theologians to describe water as 'the natural sacrament from the dawn of creation'. The wealth of life and good it does for each human has made it a part of religions the world over. The bible starts with water (Gen 1:2), all of creation, like all birth, being brought out of the water. Later in the biblical story, water forms the vessel of baptism which carries us to God's Kingdom; it washes away the uncleanness of our souls and bodies, and it gives us, and the earth, life. Water flowed from Christ's heart when he was crucified, a sign of his giving new life to the parched earth of our souls and washing us of past wrongs. It was water that Jesus chose to turn to wine, forming the basis of Jesus' first miracle.

Holy water can be found in all the apostolic churches. Orthodox, Roman, Anglican and some Reformed Christians have uses for, and services for the blessing of holy water. One of the earliest surviving prayerbooks, *The Apostolic Constitutions*, contains a blessing of holy water, which is not surprising when we consider the Jewish inheritance of the Early Church and the role that ritual washing and sprinkling had in the Old Testament. When Christ gave himself as the new and lasting sacrifice, water flowed from his wounds. Just as sprinkling with blood was seen in the Old Testament as a participation in the work of the Old Covenant, so the use of water for the early Christians was understood as a visible sign of their participation in the New Covenant, sealed in the waters of baptism and the body and blood of the Eucharist.

That the Bible, Our Lord and the Christian faith should start with water, like so many things in this world, is precisely why many Christians choose to begin their day (spiritually) with water – holy water. Often blessed in, or near, the baptismal font to draw the connection between the water of our own baptism, the holy water we use now is just that, a memorial of our baptism. Many Christians make the sign of the cross with holy water when entering or leaving a place as a reminder and renewal of their commission to live their baptismal calling in all their outdoor life and as a request for Jesus' lifegiving help to live that calling through the day, even when things are tough. It is a mini renewal of our

baptismal vows that reminds us of the unique vocation we are called to live in our every encounter, our every journey in the world.

A number of churches – for example, St Mary's in Frome – have holy water fonts by their doors so people on entering may sign themselves as a sign of washing off the dross of the world and entering a new reality and a new world in the form of the church. Just as baptism is the freeing of the soul from the world's oppressions to live the freedom of God's kingdom, so to use holy water on entering the church is a renewal and reminder of this. They might also sign themselves on leaving the church as a reminder that they have been sent out to live as God's baptised ministers in the world. We therefore traditionally sprinkle holy water on a loved one, object, room or pet when we want them to receive a blessing, a share in the life and grace of Jesus at work in the world. It can be applied on injured parts of the body as a prayer for healing and strength.

Holy water has been a constant within the life of the Church of England, and although the Reformation radically narrowed the contexts in which holy water was made and, for a time, used, it still maintained the principle that water used in Christian rites should first be made holy, as in the Book of Common Prayer's baptism of infants: 'Sanctify this water to the mystical washing of sin.' The minister is expected to first bless the water before it can be used in the sacrament, and it is acknowledged that it is precisely that 'sanctifying' of the waters that enables it to fulfil its function in baptism. Anglicans through history have looked at this not just as an acknowledgment, not only as an appropriate blessing on the objects of the world, but more than this, that everyday objects of this world can be set aside and, with prayer and blessing, used as a physical vessel of the invisible work of God in our lives and as a means by which God is enriching and blessing us.

Jesus described himself as the living waters, and the Christian faith is that Jesus didn't deal in nebulous ideals or abstract philosophy but gave physical expression to, and material outworking of, the words he spoke. Whether it was using mud paste to convey healing to the blind, or the sheer healing of a person's body as a sign of the healing of their soul too, Jesus showed that he is Saviour of the material world as well as the

spiritual and interior world. As human beings we are body and mind, just as Christ is God and Human. We cannot engage the one without the other, so holy water, with so many other gifts, is a combining of the physical and spiritual world, the material and the invisible, in a single outworking of God. Saints through history have recognised this. St Aldhelm founded our church for its access to water, a visible sign of the invisible reality that St John's was to be a lifegiving presence in the centre of our town and a place of cleansing and healing. St Aldhelm, upon his death, caused a holy well to spring up in Doultling, a visible sign of the living waters he had given to Wessex and an enduring source for future generations of the holy and, at times, miraculous work that he had done in his time on earth. Before, or on receiving, Holy Communion, some people make the sign of the cross, a fantastic, physical expression of who and what they are participating in, Jesus Christ and his work on the cross. Holy water is just this, a recognition of who and what we have become through our baptism: a people washed, blessed and anointed to go out in the service of the Gospel, in the world.

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Helping Nature: what can we do?

Humans have always interacted with nature. If it hadn't been for St Aldhelm, Frome would still be inside Selwood Forest. Since those days much has changed but Frome is still surrounded by farmed land, providing us with milk, cheese, meat and vegetables, as well as some energy. However, most of our food and energy now comes from much further afield, so we have lost our link with local producers, and our kitchens are full of processed and foreign grown foods. During my lifetime, our interaction with nature has become more dangerous, leading to severe degrading of nature, the extinction of species and a seemingly relentless rise in global temperatures. However, we are not powerless in all this, and I will try in this article to show how we, as individuals, can do some small things to help nature to recover what the last 80 or so years have lost. The first thing to recognise is that the individual can make a difference in the *little things* we do for nature and the planet, just as I have been promoting doing little things as part of daily Christian behaviour. Here are some ideas: not all are relevant to everybody and some clash with other ideas, but if we each do a few little things, then in total they will amount to something big.

If you have a garden, leave part of it uncultivated to allow nature to rewild itself there. This could mean not mowing part of a lawn or not mowing any of your lawns for the month of May or leaving an old tree trunk about to give insects freedom to use the decaying wood. As long as it is safe, leave an old brick or stone wall to crumble away, as it will soon become a really good habitat for insects, reptiles and small mammals. Leave a pile of leaves in the corner of your gardens to be used by hedgehogs, grass snakes and glowworms. Learn to love those dandelions and buttercups. Only use natural fertilisers; install a pond to encourage pond life; only do selective weeding; use plants to encourage bees and insects; plant trees and hedges to allow birds to nest; share garden tools and machinery. If you need **work doing** in the house or garden use local

tradesmen as much as possible; **don't buy peat** or plants grown in peat, as removing peat from its natural environment damages precious habitats and releases locked up stores of carbon.

Stop using pesticides. A plant may be covered in aphids, but soon aphid-eaters will come and gobble them up – a family of blue tits can eat 100,000 aphids a year. Whatever space you are using, be it a window box or a half-acre of garden, just let some of it go and leave nature to do its thing. Reduce the lighting in your garden; don't be afraid of the dark, many animals prefer it. Nocturnal insects navigate by the moon and bats avoid artificial light altogether. Put the hosepipe away: use a water butt to collect fresh rainwater and bark chippings or garden compost around plants to retain water.

When **travelling**, share your car as often as possible when shopping or going to church; take public transport when going to Bath; walk or cycle short distances; shop once a week not every day; buy online; holiday in the UK; when replacing your car think electric; if you have two cars, see if you can make do with one.

When **shopping**, buy British often to avoid having to fly food from far away and don't buy more than you need; respect the seasons and don't demand avocados, tomatoes and cucumbers all year round.

Save energy: when heating your home, keep the temperature down. Most homes now use thermostats, which can be set at, say 20°C or less. **When cooking**, use modern heating methods such as air cookers, instead of electric ovens. Encourage the use of solar panels, especially on factories, schools, supermarkets, etc; and the use of wind turbines, especially in the sea. Lobby for better use of natural phenomena, such as making electricity from the massive tidal rise and fall in the Bristol Channel between South Wales and Somerset.

Make **more use of the countryside:** join walking groups; carry a bag and pick up litter as you go around; pick free eatables from the woodlands – wild garlic in the spring, mushrooms in spring and autumn, sloes and elderberries in September to enliven your drinks. There are many national countryside charities you can support, such as the RSPB looking after birds and other wildlife, CPRE aiming to preserve and enhance the countryside, and the National Trust

preserving our heritage of buildings and landscapes.

Support local groups working to give nature a better chance, such as

- *Heal Somerset* with their 450 acres at Witham Friary, where they are creating a magical place for nature by bringing in Tamworth pigs whose rootling helps with seed germination and dispersal and creating micro-climates, such as tiny, ephemeral pools important for a range of invertebrates and a home for amphibians, dragonflies and aquatic plants. The disturbed ground from rootling also provides warm basking spots for grasshoppers and burrowing opportunities for lots of species of bees, wasps and beetles.
- *Connecting the Culm*, who have a vision for the River Culm in the Blackdown Hills as a lifeline that connects people with each other and with nature, where river water will run clear, wildlife will flourish, and people will easily access and enjoy these benefits.
- *Wild flower meadows* such as those at Stogumber.

St John's is already an Eco-church: the next step is for all its congregation to become Eco-warriors, each in our small way. Together we can make a difference.

Chris Lewis

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The shadows lengthen

An old man's poetry

One of the benefits of being old is reading poetry differently. What were just nice words when you were young are now more meaningful. And poetry puts well the looking back and forward that fills old people's thoughts, as well as the contrast between how you feel and how you look to others. If nothing else, being old today, with our NHS and central heating, is more comfortable than it used to be. This means that Shakespeare's words '*second childishness and mere oblivion*' are less valid.

Here are a few quotations that are in the forefront of my mind as my ninth decade rushes on.

Tolkien's Bilbo Baggins in *The Hobbit* sums things up quite well: first, he looks back at all the good things of life:

*I sit beside the fire and think of all that I have seen,
of meadow-flowers and butterflies in summers that have been;
Of yellow leaves and gossamer in autumns that there were,
with morning mist and silver sun and wind upon my hair.*

Then he muses about the future and the contrast between long dead people and those yet to come.

*I sit beside the fire and think of people long ago, and people who
will see a world that I shall never know.*

He also recognises that, even when old, there are still new experiences to be looked forward to:

*There are so many things that I have never seen: in every wood in
every spring there is a different green.*

Sometimes I feel negative when looking back, as does Yeats when writing to a long-lost love:

*When you are old and grey and full of sleep and nodding by the
fire, take down this book,
And slowly read, and dream of the soft look your eyes had once,
and of their shadows deep;*

Other times, I still feel full of energy and think of new things to do, as

Walter De La Mare reminds us of successful older people:

*Grant me an old man's frenzy, myself must I remake till I am Timon and Lear
Or that William Blake who beat upon the wall till truth obeyed his call;
A mind Michaelangelo knew that can pierce the clouds, or inspired by frenzy
Shake the dead in their shrouds; forgotten else by mankind: an old man's eagle mind.*

Dylan Thomas says the same thing in his villanelle about his dying father:

*Do not go gentle into that good night, old age should burn and rave at close of day;
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.*

Tennyson writes about the aged Ulysses in the same way. As an old man your energy levels may be low but your ambitions can still be high.

*Though much is taken, much abides; and though we are not now that strength which in old days
Moved earth and heaven, that which we are, we are, one equal temper of heroic hearts,
Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will to strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.*

Being old also means you can sympathise with those who died young and never achieved their full potential. Keats was frustrated that he would not be able to write or see his friends much longer:

*'When I have fears that I may cease to be before my pen has gleaned my teeming brain...
And when I feel, fair creature of an hour, that I shall never look upon thee more'*

One important thing about aging is that although others see your loss of energy, inside yourself you still feel the same as when you were 23. Maya Angelou gets this right:

*When you see me sitting quietly, like a sack left on the shelf,
Don't think I need your chattering, I'm listening to myself.....
I'm the same person I was back then, a little less hair, a little less chin,
A lot less lungs and much less wind. but ain't I lucky I can still breathe in.*

Jenny Joseph has a different take on being old, saying you can be outrageous as no one will dare to tell you off:

*When I am an old woman I shall wear purple with a red hat which doesn't go, and doesn't suit me.
I shall spend my pension on brandy and satin sandals, and say we've no money for butter.
I shall sit down on the pavement when I'm tired, gobble up samples in shops and press alarm bells
And run my stick along the public railings and make up for the sobriety of my youth.
I shall go out in my slippers in the rain and pick flowers in other people's gardens and learn to spit.*

None of these poems so far are specifically religious but my final quote is from Cardinal Newman, our latest English Saint.

O Lord, support us all the day long of this troubled life, until the shadows lengthen and the evening comes, the busy world is hushed, the fever of life is over and our work is done; then Lord, in thy mercy, grant us safe lodging, a holy rest, and peace at the last.

This evening prayer has a series of delightful images which come more and more into focus the older one gets. The whole reminds me that it is the same God of my childhood who has been supporting me during the last 80+ years. The shadows in my life are now quite long and my evening is at hand: no longer do I need to strive to make an impact on the world or to rush at everything. As to my work being done, I cannot say: God may grant me another 10 years or more and show me new horizons: or this may be my last article.

Chris Lewis



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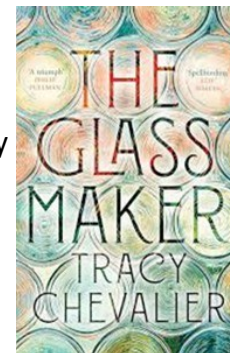
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Inspired to Read

***The Glass Maker* by Tracy Chevalier**

When the book group met in June to talk about Tracy Chevalier's latest novel, *The Glass Maker*, we enjoyed the additional bonus of being hosted by Christine – so we had an interesting and far-reaching discussion enhanced by beautiful surroundings.



About the Author

American by birth, but now living in Dorset, Tracy Chevalier is famous for her meticulously researched historical novels, several of which are based on creative art forms: 16th century Dutch paintings, *The Girl with the Pearl Earring*; 15th century French tapestry-making, *The Lady and the Unicorn*; 1930s cathedral embroiderers, *A Single Thread*; and in this, her most recent book, she explores Venetian glass making over five centuries. As part of her research Chevalier visited the glass workshops of Murano, not only learning to make her own beads using the centuries-old technique of lampwork, described in the book, but also learning how to row a gondola.

From the Back Cover

Across the lagoon lies Murano. Time flows differently here – like the glass the island's maestros spend their lives perfecting.

Women are not meant to work with glass, but Orsola Rosso flouts convention to save her family from ruin. She works in secret, knowing her creations must be perfect to be accepted by men. But perfection may take a lifetime.

Skiping like stones across the centuries, we follow Orsola as she hones her craft through war and plague, tragedy and triumph, love and loss.

The beads she creates adorn the necks of empresses and courtesans from Paris to Vienna – but will she ever earn the respect of those closest to her?

A short extract

If you skim a flat stone skilfully across water, it will touch down many

times, in long or short intervals as it lands.

With that image in mind, now replace water with time.

Start at the northern edge of Venice, stone in hand, facing the glass island of Murano, half an hour by gondola across the lagoon. Don't throw the stone yet. It is 1486, the height of the Renaissance, and Venice is revelling in its position as the trade centre of Europe and much of the rest of the world. It seems the City of Water will always be rich and powerful.

Orsola Rosso is nine years old. She lives on Murano but has not yet worked with glass.

Everyone in the book group agreed that this was an exceptional book, well written, and clearly well researched. It is hard to write too much about it without giving away a huge element of the plot, but I can say that part of its appeal was the clever way in which it managed to tell an epic story – one which covered several hundred years – while still being a simple tale of the changing fortunes of those involved in the glass industry. On the way we meet some of the influential people who left their mark on the city, from Maria Barovier, who first created the Rosetta beads, through to Casanova and the Emperor Napoleon's wife, Josephine. As the story weaves its way from plague to Covid, the reader does need to exercise 'suspension of disbelief', and some of the less favourable reviews of the book seem to be from readers who have not been able to do this. I found it to be one of the best books I have read this year; I would certainly give it a 5-star rating, and encourage anyone who enjoys historical fiction to read it.

For our July meeting the book group will be back in church, where, for our discussion about local authors, we will be joined by Claire Crowther, poet in residence at the museum, who will share her experiences of being a writer living in Frome.

Wednesday 2nd July: discussion about local authors and an opportunity to share some of the books we have been reading.



Wednesday 6th

August: Book – *Precipice* by Robert Harris, a political thriller set on the eve of WWII.

All our meetings start at 6.30pm, and are usually held in church during the summer months. For more information, contact Rosemary:

rosemarymccormick@hotmail.com or speak to me in church and I will be happy to send you our programme for the year.

Rosemary McCormick



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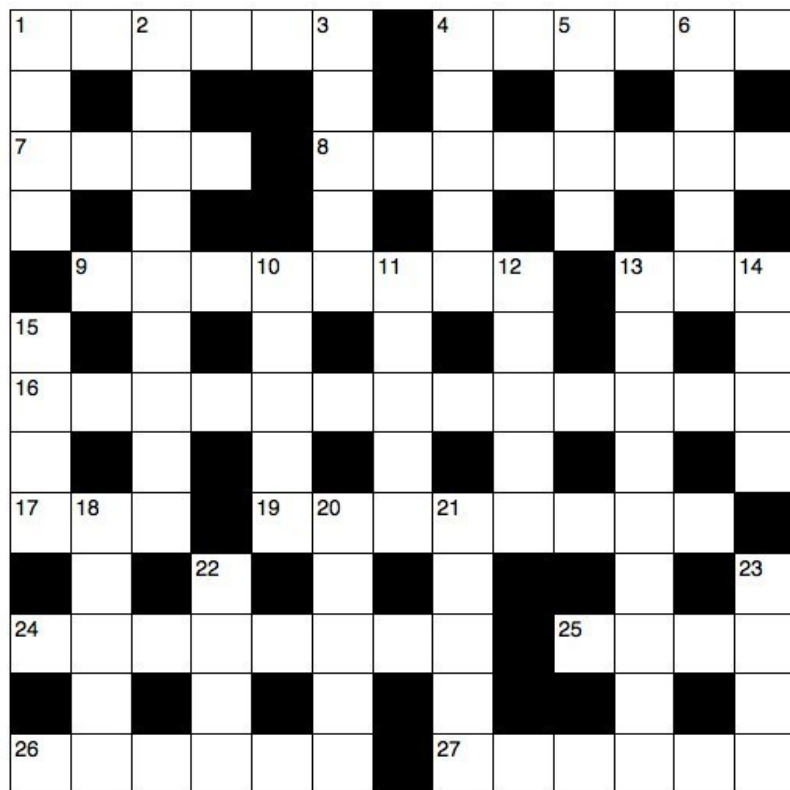
References Available

For More Details Please Call

Jeanette

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JULY CROSSWORD



Across

- 1 'I pray that out of his glorious — he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being' (Ephesians 3:16) (6)
 4 'Saul's father Kish and — father Ner were sons of Abiel' (1 Samuel 14:51) (6)
 7 'Praise the Lord, O my — ' (Psalm 103:1) (4)
 8 See 5 Down
 9 Laws (1 Kings 11:33) (8)
 13 'Who of you by worrying can — a single hour to his life?' (Luke 12:25) (3)
 16 Artistry (Exodus 31:5) (13)
 17 'Your young men will see visions, your — men will dream dreams' (Acts 2:17) (3)
 19 How David described his Lord (Psalm 19:14) (8)

- 24 'If this city is built and its — — restored, you will be left with nothing in Trans-Euphrates' (Ezra 4:16) (5,3)
 25 'The holy Scriptures, which are able to make you — for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus' (2 Timothy 3:15) (4)
 26 Intended destination of arrows (Lamentations 3:12) (6)
 27 Eve hit (anag.) (6)

Down

- 1 'For I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find — for your souls' (Matthew 11:29) (4)
 2 Where Peter was when he denied Christ three times (Luke 22:55) (9)
 3 Remarkable early 20th-century Indian evangelist, a convert from Hinduism, — Sundar Singh (5)
 4 'Now the king had put the officer on whose — — leaned in charge of the gate' (2 Kings 7:17) (3,2)
 5 and 8 Across The Lover describes this facial feature of the Beloved thus: 'Your — is like the tower of Lebanon looking towards — ' (Song of Songs 7:4) (4,8)
 6 'Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled — your waist' (Ephesians 6:14) (5)
 10 Trout (anag.) (5)
 11 Easily frightened (1 Thessalonians 5:14) (5)
 12 The ability to perceive (Ecclesiastes 10:3) (5)
 13 One of the clans descended from Benjamin (Numbers 26:38) (9)
 14 "It is one of the Twelve," he replied, "one who — bread into the bowl with me" (Mark 14:20) (4)
 15 Resound (Zephaniah 2:14) (4)
 18 Traditional seat of the Dalai Lama (5)
 20 Precise (John 4:53) (5)
 21 Build (Ezekiel 4:2) (5)
 22 Beat harshly (Acts 22:25) (4)
 23 Darius, who succeeded Belshazzar as king of the Babylonians, was one (Daniel 5:31) (4)

Answers to the crossword in the June magazine

ACROSS: 8, Grandchildren. 9, Pro. 10, Marvelled. 11, Strut. 13, Startle. 16, Babysit. 19, Orate. 22, Eucharist. 24, Map. 25, Commissioners. **DOWN:** 1, Egypt's. 2, Favour. 3, Edomites. 4, Thorns. 5, Blue. 6, Armlet. 7, On edge. 12, Tea. 14, Adoption. 15, Lot. 16, Breach. 17, Become. 18, This So. 20, Armies. 21, Expose. 23, Avid.

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JULY WORD SEARCH - St Thomas

If you ever struggle with doubt, take heart: so did one of the apostles, whose Feast Day is this month. St Thomas just could not believe that the Jesus he had seen crucified and dead on the cross could ever come back to life. But Thomas was an honest sceptic, because he really wanted to know the truth. Jesus could help such a man. And so He appeared to him and the other disciples. Instead of scolding him, Jesus simply showed him the wounds. Thomas's response was immediate: "My Lord and my God" (John 20.26ff). Ancient legends tell how Thomas went on to India as a missionary. There are rumours that Thomas even built a palace for a king's daughter in India, and thus he is the patron saint of architects. It is believed that he was martyred by a spear on 3rd July, 72 AD in Mylapore, near Madras. Forty-six ancient churches in England are dedicated to him.

Thomas
Doubt
Apostle
Cross
Dead
Truth
Sceptic
Wounds
Lord
God
Appeared
India
Patron
Martyred
Spear
Mylapore
Missionary
Showed
Saint
Madras

T N I A S I N D I A D
D M I S S I O N A R Y
D A O M Y L A P O R E
O R E T R A P W E O I
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JULY SUDOKU

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Date/Week	Services	Readings	Duties for the 10am service			
			Readers	Prayers	Sidespersons	Chalice
Sunday 6 July Third after Trinity	8.45am Zoom Service 10.00am Holy Communion	2 Kings 5.1-14 Psalm 30 Galatians 6 (1-6) 7-16 Luke 10.1-11, 16,20	B Essex S Caden	Rev Seamus	C Holland D Bardgett J Davies	A Crook
Sunday 13 July Fourth after Trinity	8.45am Zoom Service 10.00am Holy Communion	Amos 7.7-end Psalm 82 Colossians 1.1-14 Luke 10.25-37	The Hudson Family S Smith	J Caudwell	J Bruges M Veakins	J Davies
Sunday 20 July Fifth after Trinity	8.45am Zoom Service 10.00am Holy Communion	Amos 8.1-12 Psalm 52 Colossians 1.15-28 Luke 10.38-end	A Barr-Sim C Holland	A Henderson	A Crook B Essex	C Holland
Sunday 27 July Sixth after Trinity	8.45am Zoom Service 10.00am Holy Communion	Hosea 1.2-10 Psalm 85 (or 85.1-7) Colossians 2.6-15 (16-19) Luke 11.1-13	C Harrison J Arnall-Culliford	J Bruges	M Smitherman K Gurr	A Crook
Sunday 3 August Seventh after Trinity	8.45am Zoom Service 10.00am Holy Communion	Hosea 11.1-11 Psalm 107.2-9,43 (or 107.1-9) Colossians 3.1-11 Luke 12.13-21	N McCormick E Gilbert	Rev Seamus	D Bardgett B Essex C Holland	J Davies
Vicar: Rev Seamus Hargrave Reader: Janet Caudwell		Sundays at 5pm Evening Worship (Third Sunday - Choral Evensong) Mondays at 8.45am Morning Prayer, Fridays at 12.30pm Lunchtime Eucharist Saturday at 5pm Evening Eucharist Tuesday 29 at 11am Julian meeting				

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Inspire magazine

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NATIONS
MATTHEW 28:19