

INSPIRE



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

AUGUST 2024

**The parish of Frome Selwood
in the Frome Local Ministry Group**

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PCC Treasurer	Christine Holland	
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Sacristy Team	Margaret Veakins	
Tower Captain	Matthew Higby	
Flowers	Elaine Gilbert	

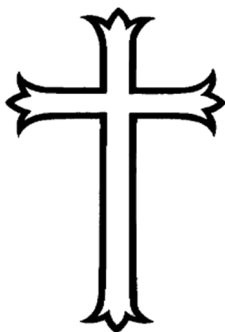
August 2024



Part of the 'pilgrimage' flower display at Frome Festival

Dear Friends

The Olympics have begun! They are the supreme test of sporting ability, where men and women gather from all over the world to compete at the highest level of human potential. Paris will echo to the cheers and groans of spectators, entering heart and soul into the ambitions and heartaches of the athletes. And I'll be watching, as much as I can!



These athletes have had a dream and given their all to realise it: to be the best in the world! They have trained and pushed themselves to the limit; they have got up early, stayed on late, exhausted themselves day after day, eaten special food, in pursuit of their goal. But they are not superhuman, they are like you and me, but willing to give everything to achieve their ambition.

And some stories are inspirational, tales of unspeakable courage and determination

I read one story of a young Afghan refugee, Amir Ansari, a member of the persecuted Hazara community, who fled from Afghanistan in a wild taxi ride. He was smuggled to Turkey, walked 16 hours through snow and finally endured a perilous boat crossing to reach Greece. He eventually reached Sweden. But he had nothing, except a love of cycling. For years he waited for the papers that would give him freedom to move freely: it was his cycling that kept him sane. While cycling, he could forget all the terrible stresses, worries and fears that swirled in his mind. And he was good. So good that he became part of Sweden's elite cycling team, and now he is at the Olympics, - one of 36 refugee athletes, a tribute to the human spirit. Watch out to see how he does!

St Paul uses sporting metaphors – in fact, some people think he must have been a sports enthusiast! He so admires the focus and dedication of athletes that he wants to be like them (1 Corinthians 9.25-27)! “Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training to win the prize, the crown, though it won't last. I do the same” he says, “but the crown I will win is eternal! I'll do anything for Jesus, I won't run the race of Christian life aimlessly or beat the

air, I'll give my all to live as Jesus did and tell others about him.” Can we echo Paul's words? Is our faith that important to us too?

Rt Revd Rob Martin

From the Editor

There's so much going on at the moment that we've decided NOT to make the August edition an August/September edition as usual. This year we will publish a separate September issue at the end of August. It will be a slimmer edition than this – we feel we must give our loyal regular contributors their usual month off – but there will be news for September and October events and the usual services lists etc. Happy holidays to all of you going away this month. **Mandy and Karolyn**

Organ update

We've made it – the appeal for funds to restore our historic organ has reached the target of £10,000. We launched the appeal in March 2023 – our first fundraising event was the St John Passion, performed by musicians from Cambridge, and during the recent Frome Festival two events – the Swan Singers concert and the Choral Evensong – we not only reached our goal but exceeded it! We were helped on the way by the concert given by the One Voice Community Choir in April, and we have also received some very generous donations. Now that the Frome Festival is over, I am waiting to hear from the organ builder, Tim Trenchard, to confirm a date when he can come to start the next phase of work. Once the instrument is restored to its former splendour, I hope to arrange an organ recital so we can hear its glorious sounds, and I would hope that we might promote a series of recitals by different organists – watch out for more details.



I am also very happy that, by exceeding our initial target, we have a fund that will allow us to have the organ regularly tuned and maintained, so we shall be able to enjoy it for many years to come. Thank you again to all those people who have donated to the appeal, and a special thanks to Mandy, Elaine, Angela and Christine who managed the appeal.

Rosemary McCormick



Frome Festival at St John's: an Epic Journey!

Once again, the Festival passed in a blur – so many images, so many sounds, so many incidents, so many lists!

Those lists are crucial to the smooth running of the Festival at St John's: essential reading for the openers, the closers, the stewards, the refreshment suppliers, the emergency contact. The success of the Festival depends on those who organise us so efficiently. And it also depends on those who turn up day, after day, after day, so that our visitors (all 1500 of them, this year, give or take the odd mistake in tallying) can enjoy the warm welcome, the serene atmosphere and the beautiful events which take place throughout the Festival.

Of course, the central beautiful event is the exhibition of floral displays which fills the church. Every year Frome Floral Art Society and our own



St John's flower team astound us with their ingenuity, imagination and skill in producing wonderfully colourful and fragrant interpretations of a different theme.

This year's theme, Epic Journeys, I have suggested elsewhere, has a special resonance for us as we have embarked on the uncharted waters of the Vacancy. It was explored quite comprehensively, you might have thought, in the Well Dressing in May.

But Elaine, who never fails to come up with brilliant ideas, inspired her gifted team to produce amazing, intricate displays depicting epic journeys of exploration on earth and in space; for pilgrimage; for trade; for the benefit of others; to enrich life; to escape to a new life; to experience a last journey.

The stunning displays of animal migration in the Baptistry led into the Lady Chapel where the schools' display continued the theme of the epic journeys of creatures of land, sea and air.





A lovely photo of Pam and Peter Chapman. Pam was one of the members of St Katharine's choir who kindly joined the St John's choir for the Festival evensong.

And of course, people who came to other Festival events in church could sit and admire all these wonderful images while listening to a variety of interesting music. Jon Pickard with his amazing 'Harp-Guitar' and Geoff Robb with his eclectic mixture of musical styles and storytelling both entertained enthusiastic audiences.

St John's Choir, joined by some from St Katharine's, and led by the Revd Ian Pearson, sang a beautiful Evensong: the happy coincidence of the significant anniversaries of three composers, Bruckner, Stanford and Fauré provided us with a number of favourite pieces of church music to savour.

But the musical event which had us all talking was The Swan Singers' compilation of The Musical Roads to Compostela. As we sat among the displays of Epic Journeys we were taken in music and words along the different pilgrimage routes leading to the great Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela. There were thrilling entries to a drum beat, ancient and contemporary songs and accompanying readings, including some diary extracts read by one of the singers who had walked this ancient pilgrimage way herself. An extra, very satisfying detail was that, following the concert, the Organ Appeal group was



able to record thanks 'to the Swan Singers, the audience at their marvellous concert on 7 July and everyone who has donated to our Organ Appeal. We have finally reached our target of £10,000 and can schedule the final phases of the repair works.'

By the final Sunday of the Festival, some of us, including the flowers (despite the careful and constant tending of those who had created the displays), were looking as if we had reached the end of our own epic journey and just wanted to sit with our feet in water, but we had one last treat: Simon's enthralling account of walking alone along the Via Transilvanica in Romania. There were stunning photos, some really stirring readings and music. And I seem to remember that we all finished up dancing in the aisle!

Thank you all for playing your part in another memorable Frome Festival at St John's.

On the day after the Festival ended Angela sent some of us a photo of the church as it appeared when she locked up: all signs of the extensive displays had been miraculously whisked away. Her email had the sad heading: 'Where have all the flowers gone?'

Janet Caudwell



News and events at other churches

Pioneer news update

The development of **Mary's House** has been a joy and is making a long abandoned space into something wonderfully usable. Our times there so often include conversation about life, spirituality, God and prayer. The shelter is now equipped with coffee tables and benches from the cafe at the Bishop's Palace in Wells, the greenhouse is glazed, and a beautiful cut flower area is growing. All work is carried out with young adults with whom we are blessed to work. We were very grateful to friends from the Menshed, based with Edventure, from where a team built a semicircle of simple benches around the large tree in the top section of the garden. This has helped to open up an otherwise unused area. We hope that in time it will be used as a shady retreat on hot days, a place for a quiet lunch or space for reading and meditation. One of the young adults, who doesn't worship in a church, has suggested that the garden might one day host 'Wild Worship' – and this area would be a great resource.

A clear priority for the young adults was to make the garden as accessible as possible. We have used some funds that we were given to open up the gate at the top end of the garden, nearest to the carpark at St Mary's. The Garden Nursery, which is hidden away halfway up St Mary's driveway, kindly gave us permission to re-site their gate to reveal an existing gate into The Giant's Garden. The nursery team and parents were wonderfully patient through teething problems with the work. And now we have a new gate that opens to a path along the side wall of the garden. The path has yet to be levelled, but once this is done the gate and path will allow access to the centre of the garden for those requiring a level surface access. We have a work lunch and afternoon on



Sunday 11 August - and all are welcome! Look out, too, for the sign to the Nursery and Garden that will go up over the summer.



We continue to support Liz Dudley to establish a prayerful community around and in the old vicarage. Check out the website www.maryshouse.org, where you will find the Mary's House Prayer and dates for community prayer, to which all are welcome. The foundation of this work is prayer and we are developing a prayer cell from the old stone building next to the garage:

Prayer Shed

Work on restoring the old gardeners shed at St Mary's has begun. This will be a 24-7 prayer shed. It is exciting to see something derelict being rebuilt, and for such an important work. If you would like to give to the restoration of the shed – which is a Mary's House project – St Mary's church has kindly offered to take donations until Mary's House has its own charity bank account. Please make your donation to St Mary's PCC, Sort Code 600831 and Account number 50717898.

We launch on 6-7 September with 24 hours of prayer which the Archbishop of Canterbury will conclude when he visits Frome at 3 pm on Saturday 7 September.

Somehow there is something truly biblical about praying in a gardener's shed. Adam and Eve began their rest and work with the Lord in the garden of Eden, and the Bible ends in the glorious garden city of the new Jerusalem, where trees grow by the river of life and their leaves give healing to the nations. Mary bumped into the Lord in the garden of Gethsemane, mistaking him for the gardener. Who knows? If you book a prayer slot in the prayer cell which will be completed by the end of August, you might bump into the Gardener too!

The prayer slots are open to any praying Christian and can be accessed by following this link <https://signup.24-7prayer.com/signup/1ba5c1>

The **HOPE team** have been faithful in meeting young adults and young people in the parks over the winter months. The pace quickens now as the warmer nights (hopefully!) are upon us. We did our first food outlet on Saturday, serving 20 burgers and meeting some great young people, some of whom hung around to chat. It was a good start to what can be a demanding summer of Saturday evenings. If you have a skill to offer – for example sports or music – we would love to organise a Saturday evening in Victoria Park where young people can have fun together as well as eat food. Let us know!

Andrew and Elizabeth Alden fromepioneers@gmail.com

St Katharine's, East Woodlands

Sad to report another long term resident of East Woodlands, Shane Taylor, has died aged 82. Because of his fondness for the machines, he was taken to the crematorium in a Triumph motorcycle hearse. His ashes are being buried alongside his mother in our churchyard. Our sympathy goes to Anita and her family at this time.

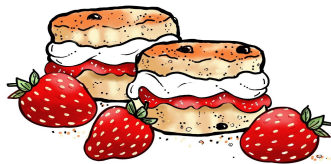
Dates for your diaries:

- **Sunday, 25th August at 5pm Songs of Praise.** Please join us to hear some well loved hymns.
- **Sunday, 6th October at 11.15am Harvest Festival.** Another highlight in our year.

East Woodlands Village Hall

Dates for your diary:

- **Pop up pub** first Friday in the coming months – 2nd August and 6th September.
- **Cream Teas** every Sunday throughout August 3pm to 5pm in the Hall and/or garden, depending on the weather. If you attend this event on the last Sunday in August, you might like to join us for Songs of Praise in the church at 5pm



- **Woodlands Variety Music Hall**, 7th to 12th October at 7.45pm with a matinee at 2pm on the 13th. Tickets £10 on the first night, £12.50 for all other performances. Box Office: Ann Hart on 01373 764291 or 07510 919573. Or email annhart68@ymail.com.

Pam Chapman

Other news from around the deanery

- Revd Liz Dudley (Christ Church / St Mary) is now Area Dean following Revd Caroline Walker's move to Cam Vale. Revd Ian Snares becomes Assistant Area Dean and will be looking after DMPG and mission.
- Kally Dunn has agreed to carry on as Deanery Secretary.
- Sam Thompson has joined Holy Trinity as a Curate.
- Five people in Frome are now debt free because of the help from CAP (Christians Against Poverty) and Phil Gray's input.
- A traditional Alpha Course will start on Wednesday 11th September at 7pm in Holy Trinity: meal to be held in the hall first then video and discussions in the church.
- Revd Harry Wainwright has now been ordained, and will be assisting at Christ Church / St Mary's for the next three years.
- Anna Chaplaincy: A group led by Revd Liz Dudley has been set up to help look after older people. Janet Caudwell is one of the group.
- An Open the Book group has been set up and will be starting at Selwood School in September, with a possibility of being able to join up with other schools within the Deanery.
- Mary's House is progressing although the building works have been slightly held up. A Pristina (Prayer Building) is being renovated in the garden with a view to completion in September in time for Archbishop Justin Welby's visit. See the pioneers' update on the previous page for more details.

Lois Bushell, Area Dean

Reader-in-training: The journey so far

This morning I submitted an essay: the final assignment of my first year of this two-year course, and it seems like a good time to reflect on the past year and share with you some of its highs and lows.

I am one of a cohort of 14 Readers/LLMs (licensed lay ministers) studying alongside a similar number of ordinands. We represent three different dioceses: Salisbury and Portsmouth as well as Bath & Wells, although the net for the ordinands also includes Bristol, Winchester and Oxford. We come from many different backgrounds, and different Anglican traditions; there are those among us who work full-time and also some with young children at home; some, like me, have grown up in the Anglican church, but there are others whose backgrounds are with the Baptists or Brethren. Some are from towns, others come from rural benefices, and several of us share the experience of being in vacancy. One experience we have all shared has been the return to academic study, and I am not the only one in the group for whom the experience of online study has taken quite a lot of getting used to! Learning to navigate modules, e-books, and online tutorials was our first challenge, before we had even opened a book! We have opened many books (now I know why they call us Readers), and some of them are easier to read than others. I have taken over a room upstairs, formerly the children's "den" when they were small, then Alice's study during Covid, and now my "Zoom Room" where I go for my weekly tutorials, and where there are fewer distractions when I am working through the modules. I have already filled several bookshelves, and still they keep coming. Each module comes with a reading list, some of which can be accessed as e-books, but I don't really like reading online, so I try to buy the books, especially the core books, whenever possible (and I



Sarum College library

have become quite good at finding second-hand copies online).

We were thrown into the deep end back in September with "Introducing Theological Reflection" (helpfully explained to me by Kevin Tingay as: "write your essay and put *Amen* at the end"!) We were subsequently "Introduced" to Pastoral Care (Funerals, for which I spent a fascinating morning talking to Wayne Kelly), Christian Worship, The Bible, and Human Identity. Our second year studies include Mission and Evangelism, Christian History and Doctrine and Preparation for Public Ministry, and during the year we do a "placement" which is intended to widen our experience by spending time in a different worshipping community.

For most of our modules we have a residential weekend at Sarum College. These start with Evensong in the Cathedral at 5.30pm, and for the next 24 hours we have an intensive programme of lectures, seminars and Bible study. Saturday morning starts early with Morning Prayer in the college chapel at 7.30am, which is led by a group of students – fortunately not the same group as were running the college bar the evening before! For the Readers-in-Training the "weekend" finishes at tea-time on Saturday – the Ordinands stay until Sunday lunchtime. One of the things I have enjoyed most about my year has been meeting people: my fellow students and lecturers as well as the clergy from our diocese who are involved in our training – we have three training days a year in Wells, in addition to being invited to the annual Reader Day in October.

I have had many opportunities and new experiences this year, and throughout I have been encouraged and supported by everyone at St John's. In addition to regular formal training supervisions, initially with Colin and since Christmas with Liz Dudley, I have valued several "Ministry Meetings" with Janet in La Strada, as well as the regular chats with our congregation over coffee on a Sunday morning. Your support and prayers have been a great source of encouragement, especially when a looming essay deadline has been particularly daunting. Thank you all – I really couldn't do this without you.

Rosemary McCormick

Candlelit concert in St John's

Friday 13th September

7.30pm to 10pm

St John's PCC and Breathe Music are pleased to present 'Vivaldi Four Seasons', an evening of baroque music in St John's Church, performed by principals from the Bristol Ensemble.

The programme is as follows:

Vivaldi: *String Concerto in A*

Bach: *Air on the G String*

Pachelbel: *Canon*

Boccherini: *Musica*

Notturmo delle Strade di Madrid

Vivaldi: *The Four Seasons*

Our school is going to be involved too! As part of their aim to bring top quality music to local audiences, the musicians – at no extra cost – have invited St John's schoolchildren to join them in the afternoon for part of their rehearsal time when the children will do some singing, learn about the instruments and experience live classical music.

Tickets are available from <https://www.breathe-music.co.uk/concerts> or from Mandy Crook (01373 467828 / 07561 305888 / amandacrook@blueyonder.co.uk)

Do join us to enjoy a wonderful concert and help raise funds for the church at the same time!

BRISTOL ENSEMBLE

VIVALDI

Four Seasons

BY CANDLELIGHT In FROME



13 September 2024 19:30

St John's Church, Frome BA11 1PL

St John's PCC

Breathe Music

BRISTOL ENSEMBLE

www.breathe-music.co.uk

BOOK YOUR TICKETS



Book review

Archdeacon Grantly Walks Again

Trollope's Clergy Then and Now

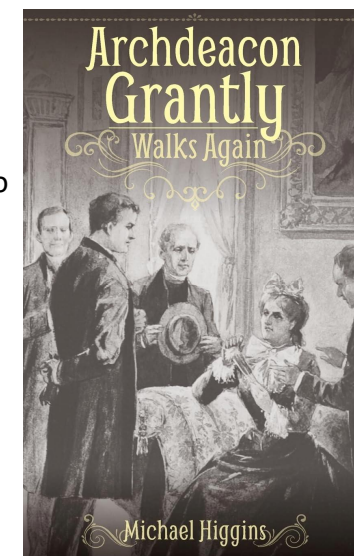
Michael Higgins

Sacristy Press, 2024, £12-99, ISBN 978-1-7859-331-0

In the South Aisle Portrait Gallery, Michael Higgins appears as Vicar of St John Baptist, Frome Selwood, 1974-1979, between Patrick Mitchell and Geoffrey Wrayford. This was his first living, having served a two-year curacy at Ormskirk, then worked seven years as Selection Secretary for the Advisory Council for the Church's Ministry. After Frome he went back to Lancashire as Rector of Preston, 1980-91, then succeeded Bill Patterson (a formidable prospect) as Dean of Ely till his retirement in 2003.

I met the author during my own selection conference in 1970, and again during my ordination training at Cuddesdon, when a party from the college spent a week visiting the Marylebone parish where he had a connection as honorary curate. On both occasions we all felt that we were under his close observation, for that, of course, was his job. Now, an exercise during covid lockdown has been published as a small book, and, once again, we expect to find the fruits of a lifetime of concern for the quality of the clergy of our church.

Having enjoyed reading Anthony Trollope's novels since my teens, when my godfather gave me a copy of *Framley Parsonage*, I was glad to order this new study of twelve of his clerical characters from Hunting Raven. Apart from the Barchester Novels, we find characters from *The Vicar of Bullhampton*, *Miss Mackenzie* and *Is he Popenjoy?* along with reference to Trollope's *Autobiography*. An important source omitted is Trollope's *Clergymen of the Church of England*, ten



essays from the *Pall Mall Gazette*, published in the same year as *The Last Chronicle of Barset*, 1866.

Each of the twelve fictional clergymen from the nineteenth century is compared with a present day one, reflecting Michael Higgins's long experience of caring about the character of our ministry. Chapter headings include *The Pauper*, *The Hen-Pecked Husband*, *The Saint* and *The Man of Power* (Archdeacon Theophilus Grantly himself, of course). It is worrying that things do not seem to have altered much, though of course the outward and visible signs of our millennium feature in the second studies. A striking feature of Trollope's own taste is his preference for the kind of tradition represented by our old parish church. Michael Higgins came from a different tradition, starting in Ulster and being trained for the ministry at Ridley Hall in Cambridge. What interests me is the way his career has broadened his sympathy, while sharpening his criticism of any kind of hypocrisy.

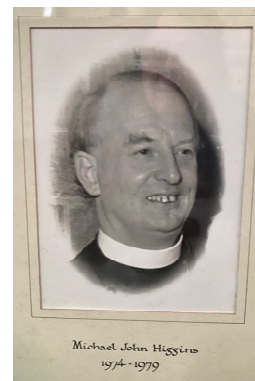
Lastly, here is a little bit of local colour. Chapter 8, *The Scholar*, describes Francis Arabin, the Dean of Barchester, and his modern counterpart, Matthew Gibbs. After an academic career at Oxford, Gibbs comes to a West Country parish, before moving on to be Dean of Bristol. Do you recognise the setting for his first living, matching the experience of our author, Michael Higgins? *Home is a fine Georgian rectory near the church with a large airy study and a private chapel opening off it. Over the study mantelpiece is a stone sculpture of the arms of St John the Baptist, the dedication of the church, with inscribed beneath "A voice crying in the wilderness". They are words he sometimes thinks particularly apt as he prepares his sermons.*

John Hodder

Eds: Many thanks to John – we know this article will spark a lot of interest.

Janet writes: As soon as I read the review of *Archdeacon Grantly Walks Again* in *Church Times* I bought a copy which was gleefully passed round at the July Book Club, where one or two venerable members of the congregation (forgive me) remembered Michael as a previous Vicar of St John's. Rather cheekily, I emailed him to tell him that John's review of his book would be appearing in *Inspire*, and he sent me the message at the top of the next page to go alongside it.

Message from John Higgins:



'I was so pleased to hear from St. John's. I spent some happy years with you, and it is where Margaret and I met. We were married in 1976 at St John's by the then Bishop of Bath and Wells. I'm glad to know my recent book is not unknown in the parish! Here is both a hope and a challenge. The **hope** is you will buy a copy and encourage others to do the same. If sales are good, my publishers may then ask me to write another book! The **challenge** is to spot memories of St John's in this book. There are at least two I can

recall. Happy reading – and if my little volume encourages you to read Trollope that will be a bonus!

A decrepit father takes delight:

Let's celebrate our young people

Shakespeare's sonnet 37 speaks of '*a decrepit father [who] takes delight to see his active child do deeds of youth*'. Few of us who have passed our four score years excel at sport, whatever we might have been in the past: we are unlikely to climb Snowden again or row the Atlantic. The steps up from Cheap Street to St John's are enough for us. But we can enjoy ourselves by looking at the achievements of our young people, our children and (great) grandchildren.

Young people don't always have a good press today, but I think they are great in their achievements – not only sporting ones: what about passing music or ballet exams, being awarded Scouting badges, learning to swim or doing gymnastic exercises, qualifying as a life-saver, success in A levels, at university, volunteering for a charity, making a career as a dancer or actor, getting elected to something – at university, local or national level, travelling around the world, learning to drive, getting a Black Belt, speaking a foreign language, appearing as an actress in your first TV series, living away from home for the first time, organising your own gap year, finishing an apprenticeship, acting as a tour guide.

Not all the younger generation can be a success. But we can rejoice at the simple experiences this world offers to them. What must it be like for the first time to see a rainbow, climb Cley Hill, swim in the sea, hear Beethoven's Archduke Trio or see Taylor Swift live, ride your first bike, have your first boyfriend, or go to Glastonbury; to enter Wells Cathedral for the first time to see its chancel arch; to visit the caves at Cheddar, to have a coffee in the main square in Krakow, or to hike around Europe.

The next generations can do things we never thought possible. They take it for granted that they can talk to and message their friends at any time of the day or night wherever these friends happen to be, from Shepton Mallet to Shanghai. With the flick of a button, they have access to the best libraries in the world and to all the music and films the world has ever produced. And they don't have to go looking for interesting things: Algorithms will send them things they should find interesting based on their past behaviour.

They can experience all the sights and sounds the world has to offer without leaving their home: they can sample Christian, Jewish, Muslim or Buddhist ceremonies without commitment. They can listen to the prophets and gurus from all over the world before making up their minds about their own beliefs, behaviours and experiences. There are dangers in all this, and we, the older generations, must ensure it is safe for the young to be able to enjoy these experiences without danger. We must also educate them to know what is safe and what is dangerous.

Most people, in whatever generation, live a relatively simple life, although, as the world develops, this very simplicity gets more complex. But in every generation we have those who go to extremes. No one when I was born had ever climbed Everest or gone to the moon, but today many have ascended to the top of the world and we are soon likely to have a colony of men and women living on the moon.

We all rely on the young so we can share in those moments when a sporting team, predominantly made up of young people, achieves success. Recent successes at football, tennis and the Olympic Games are all examples of this. The younger Alcaraz beats the aging Djokovic. The GB women's team wins the 4x100m Relay at the Diamond League London Meeting, the 20-year-old Shoaib Bashir from Somerset takes five wickets in test cricket.

Experiences are becoming more diverse. It is not so long ago that no woman was allowed to run a marathon, but recently we heard how Jasmin Paris from Manchester became the first woman to complete the 100-mile Barkley Marathons in the US, and on easier terrain my son, chasing his father's 50 marathons, completed a 100 mile walk from Chichester to Frome.

The Frome Festival included two descriptions of pilgrimages, mainly by young people. We heard from the Swan Singers' concert that 487,000 pilgrims a year complete the 400km *Camino* to the tomb of St James at Santiago de Compostela. Also, Simon Keyes explained how longer treks are becoming popular, with dozens of people having walked the 1400km *Via Transilvanica* trail in Romania. We heard that, ever young in heart, he was currently the oldest person to have completed the walk.

Other young people run, walk or swim for charity. Macmillan Cancer Support lists 15 ultra marathons that you can sign up to in its Mighty Hikes Project, essentially spending your summer holidays raising money by walking or trekking 100 miles or more. The charity set up by the late Doddie Weir to raise money for research into Motor Neurone Disease has raised £20 million so far. Coppatrek has raised hundreds of thousands of pounds for Breast Cancer Research through its members trekking in different mountains. Most young people raise much smaller sums, however, doing less active, but often more visible things, using social media as a way of advertising themselves. My student granddaughter raised £360 in May by dyeing her hair purple for Macmillan.

We can rejoice in seeing young people selflessly putting themselves out, either for the sheer fun of it or to raise money for others by feats we are no longer capable of. The church could be more involved in this: what about a St John's Project, encouraging youngsters to complete a 3-day Mendip Way Walk from Frome to Wells Cathedral and then to Weston-Super-Mare, about 50 miles, to raise money for the Frome Food Bank?

Chris Lewis



SERVICES at ST JOHN's – AUGUST 2024

Weekly at 8.45am - Sunday Morning Service on Zoom

Sunday 4th August - Tenth After Trinity

9.45am Holy Communion

Sunday 11th August - Eleventh After Trinity

9.45am Holy Communion

Sunday 18th August - Twelfth After Trinity *

9.45am Holy Communion

Sunday 25th August – Thirteenth After Trinity

9.45am Holy Communion

Sunday 1st September – Fourteenth After Trinity

9.45am Holy Communion

* Note that the Frome Half-Marathon is taking place on Sunday 18th August, so access by car to the church will be restricted.

Early in-person Sunday services in Frome

1st & 3rd Sundays; 8am Christ Church; 2nd & 4th Sundays; 9am St Mary's

Open Doors:

every 2nd Saturday, 10.30am to 12 noon.

Next date: Saturday 10th August

An opportunity for people to deal with baptism/wedding arrangements. No volunteer team meetings this month.

St John's Café and Mini Markets - 11am to 2pm

Sunday 4th August, Sunday 1st September

All offers of help welcome!

Alongside the cafe and stalls, we also offer quiet areas in our church for visitors - somewhere to rest awhile, away from the busyness of the day.



DIARY DATES – AUGUST 2024

August

Thu	1		Deadline for applications for new vicar post
Sun	4	11am-2pm	Café & Mini Market (SJ)
Wed	7	6.30pm	<i>Inspired to Read</i> Book Club (BC)
Sat	10	10.30-12 noon	Open Doors
Fri	16	10.15am	War Graves Walk starting from forecourt
Sat	17	2.15pm	War Graves Walk (starting from churchyard because of wedding)
Sat	17	2.30pm	Blessing of marriage
Sun	18		Frome Half Marathon
		4pm	Teatime at St John's
Mon	19		Shortlisting of vicar applicants
Tue	21	7pm	PCC meeting—only if needed
Mon	26		Bank holiday
Tue	27	11am	Julian meeting

September

Sun	1	11am-2pm	Cafe and mini-market
Sat	7	3pm	Archbishop at Mary's House

Curious About Faith?

Try Alpha.

Starts 11 September
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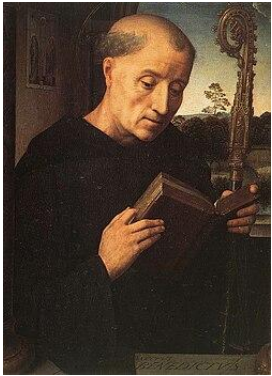
Alpha is a series of sessions that explores the basics of the Christian faith. It will be running at Holy Trinity on Wednesday evenings beginning on 11 September. Each session starts at 7.15pm with a meal, then a video and discussion groups - as ever it's totally free. For more information go to

holytrinityfrome.com/alpha

We're also looking for people to help set up and to host discussion groups and to pray. There will be a planning and training session on Wednesday 4 September – 7.15pm at Trinity. Let Ian Snares know if you'd like to help (vicar@holytrinityfrome.com).

Links in a Golden Chain 2

Saint Benedict



On July 11 we celebrated the Feast Day of Benedict with a Choral Evensong. Fr. Ian spoke of the saint in his homily. I thought it appropriate to add some further thoughts on his life and ministry.

He lived in the early sixth century in Italy and died in AD 547. We do not have many details of his life, and it was not until nearly fifty years later that we have an account of him from Pope Gregory,

He wrote "... I would not have you ignorant of this, that Benedict was eminent, not only for the many miracles that made him famous, but also for his teaching ... he wrote a Rule for Monks, which is of conspicuous discretion and is written in a lucid style. If anyone wishes to know Benedict's character and life more precisely, he may find a complete account of his principles and practices in the ordinances of that Rule; for the Saint cannot have aught otherwise than as he lived."

Monasticism was not new in the sixth century but such was the number of people seeking to live as Christians in community that the need arose for clearer guidance on the conduct of monks (and nuns) and on the administration of monasteries, and the spirituality that they strove to embody.

There are seventy-three short chapters to the Rule. Some of them relate to the specific needs of a religious community, but others remain relevant to the Christian life today. Ch.4 "The Tools of Good Works" is a concise summary of how we should strive to live our lives. The practical organisation of the community, its leadership, the sharing of work amongst all the members, the virtue of hospitality, the care of the sick and elderly, embody principles that can be applied widely in modern life, in both Christian and secular circumstances. We could say that Benedict might be regarded as the patron saint of domestic management – the Rule certainly can be a help to

integrating a prayerful life with the practicalities of a busy family. Ch.72 exhorts us:

Let none follow what seems good for himself, but rather what is good for another. Let them practice fraternal charity with a pure love. Let them fear God. Let them love their abbot with a sincere and humble affection. Let them prefer nothing whatsoever to Christ. And may he bring us all to life everlasting.

The text was widely copied and used in manuscript form by religious communities and seems to have remained in print since the invention of printing. I am pleased to find that several editions of English translations are available in e-versions at very little cost. I have a copy published by a monastery in India describing how that text had been used by Christian monks in dialogue with their brethren in Buddhist and Hindu monastic communities.

Kevin Tingay

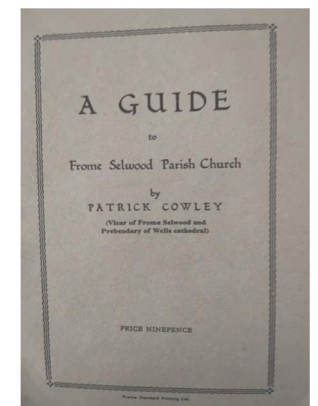
A guide to Frome Selwood Parish Church

A few months ago Carolyn, our Parish Administrator, and I were engaged in an interesting email communication concerning this Guide to St John's. The first message arrived out of the blue:

I have been going through some boxes of papers etc from my parents' house and have come across a small booklet entitled A Guide to Frome Selwood Parish Church by Patrick Cowley (1964 reprint).

I wondered whether it would be of any use in your archive or to anyone connected to the church.

We have no connection to the area. However, we visited Dr Dobbie Bateman who used to work with my mother at Dickens & Jones in



London. She was living at The Hermitage in Gentle Street and I understand her husband was the assistant curate at the church. I'm pretty certain we visited the church on that occasion which would have been in the mid to late 1960s (after 1965). I was very young and my only real recollection of the visit was how inappropriate the name of the street was!

Anyway, if the booklet is of any interest, I'll drop it in the post if you could let me know who to send it to. If not, is there a local museum or archive who may want it? It seems a shame to throw it away!

Kind regards, Ivor Lobel

Karolyn and I replied enthusiastically and I was able to add a little extra :

Thank you, Ivor-this sounds fascinating and well worth looking at.

I remember meeting Dobbie Bateman in the Hermitage when I moved to Frome in the mid 1970s and I believe her husband was one of the assistant clergy.

Incidentally one of our churchwardens lives in the Hermitage now (it's very much a church family – his wife is our musical director and is in training to be a Reader) Janet Caudwell

The Guide duly arrived at the Parish Office, carefully strengthened with extra cardboard to prevent it being damaged in transit. We probably already have a copy of this in the Parvise Room, but I will make sure that it is added to our collection, together with this memoir of life in the 20th century*.

After a history of the church from St Aldhelm to Vicar Bennett, the Guide Book continues with 'A descriptive tour of the church', beginning with the saints' statues at the West End, continuing along the north aisle where the 'interesting copper inscription of the Cromwellian period' is noted. It 'represents Mr Avery, who certified the removal of all coloured glass from the church, and his wife and 11 children.'

I felt a guilty pang when I read this, because this interesting object was removed and placed for safe keeping inside the Parvise Room when John Brockman and I were churchwardens. We had already lost at least one brass inscription in the church and we noticed that the nails attaching this to the wall were somewhat loose...

The Guide Book continues to the passage leading to the Vestry along which I frequently scuttle trying to remember the code for the burglar alarm. I am rather surprised to learn that here is 'a large Tudor window and the sign of an old doorway.'

Perhaps I ought to go on one of Elaine's and Neil's Church Tours.

I am also surprised to learn that there is an altar on the rood loft. Really? And on the south side: 'one of the comparatively few remaining mediaeval piscinae to be found on rood-lofts.'

Elaine will be pleased that to read that the South Porch has 'a Norman doorway and has a modern representation of St Peter and St John healing the lame man at the gate of the Temple'. You can see her recent photo of this, by the South Porch, created for this year's Church Tour.

Prebendary Cowley's slim volume ends,

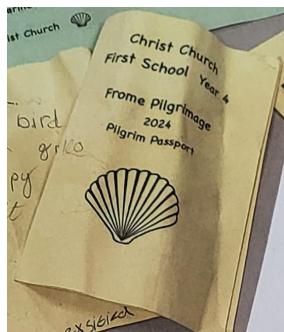
Now you, kind visitor, have had a brief and hurried tour of this ancient church. Quickly we have tried to show you some of our treasures which we so highly value.

As we bid you farewell and thank you for your interest, we of this church would ask your prayers. Pray for us that we may always be able to keep this church worthy of its past, and pray also that here adults and children may be taught to believe and live as true members of Christ's one holy, catholic and apostolic Church.

With grateful thanks to Ivor Lobel.

Janet Caudwell

*Coincidentally, The Very Revd Michael Higgins (see John Hodder's book review) would have known Dobbie Bateman and her husband.



A Frome pilgrimage

The weather forecast wasn't good as the children from Year 4 Christ Church First School set off on a pilgrimage with Reverend Liz and Reverend Harry. Tying scallop shells to their bags and with Pilgrim passports at the ready we said a prayer and made our way to the Dippy.

After a grounding exercise we walked in silence the length of the Dippy, noticing everything ... the sights and sounds, the smells and the feelings ... birds singing, water flowing, dogs barking ... the smell of fresh cut grass and a drop in temperature. At the far end we said a prayer of thanks and got a pilgrim stamp.

Walking along Adderwell Road we noticed the houses and thought about the people who lived in them. We stopped and smelt the flowers growing in the gardens.

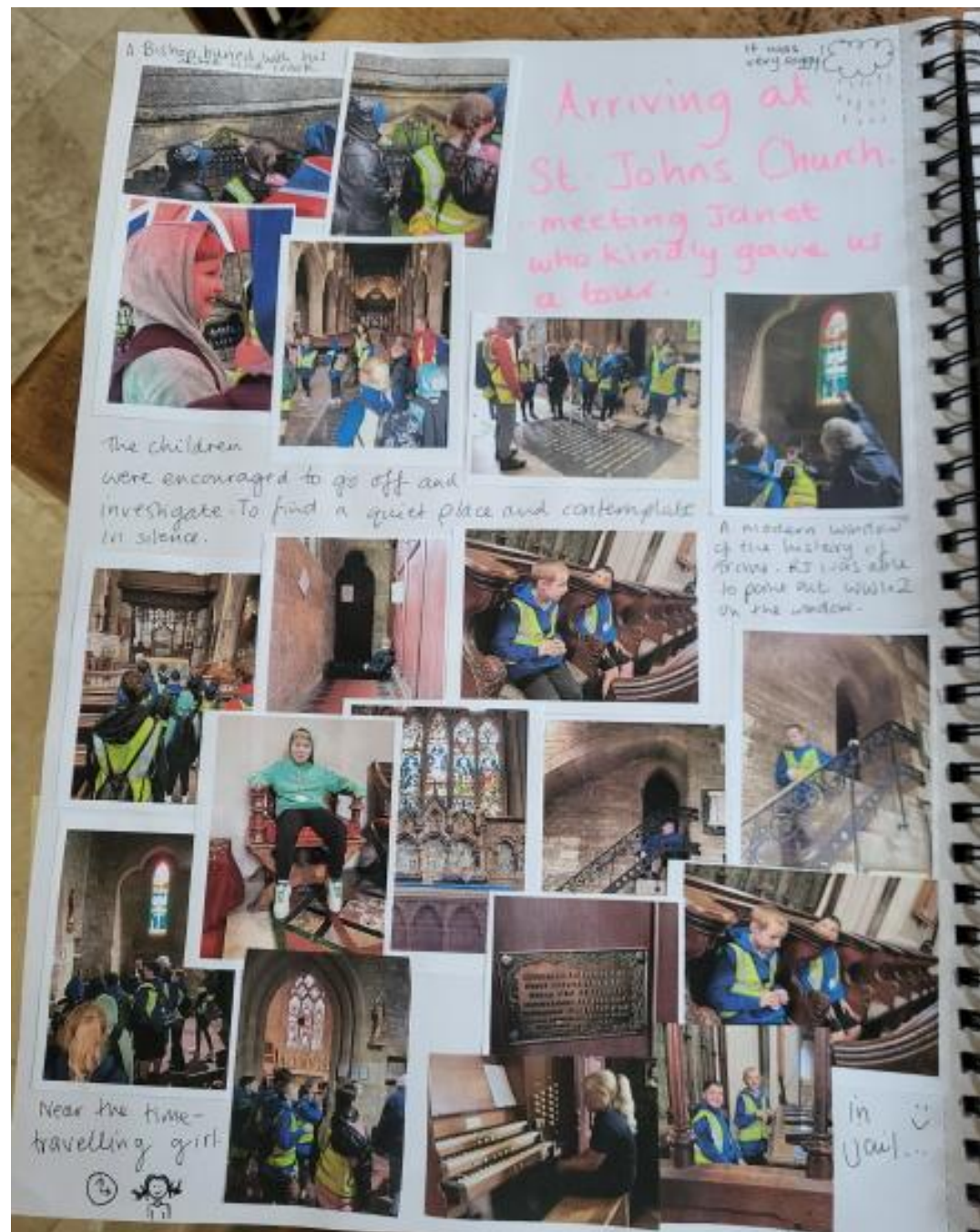
Arriving at St John's, we visited the tomb of Bishop Ken before going inside and meeting Janet. She gave us a whistle stop tour before we went to find a quiet place to sit and behold something in the church that had caught our attention. We spent more time in silence before having a snack, saying a prayer, getting another pilgrim stamp and signing the visitors book. Before leaving St John's, Janet had created three prayer stations, so more prayers were said and candles lit.

Our next stop was the well, where we heard the story of St Aldhelm and said prayers of thanks for the gift of water. Listening to it flowing under the road, we made our way down Cheap Street to the fountain in the market place.

Gathering storm clouds meant a change of plan, so rather than heading along the river to St. Mary's, we walked back up to Christ Church where we had lunch, lit candles and sang songs. Fortified by pilgrim biscuits and with passports stamped we made our way back to school. We were nearly there when the heavens opened and the rain arrived. Sheltering under a tree we waited before making a run for it.

A great day of walking, talking, listening and praying ...

Thank you year 4.



Church buildings that no longer exist

Two of the churches that I recall from my childhood now no longer exist, both having been demolished and replaced by modern housing. When I was five, we moved to the small village of Maesycwmmmer on the east side of the Rhymney Valley, in Monmouthshire, 20 miles north of Cardiff. It was surrounded by mining towns, and I could see the coal waste being dumped on the 'slag heaps' from my bedroom window.



Maesycwmmmer's only claim to fame was and is the massive 1853 viaduct, taking the coal trains across the Rhymney Valley. By 1900 the village had 1000 people, eight chapels and a church. The Victorian church was built 100 yards from the viaduct on the river bank. It was a solid stone structure, mock gothic in design

and built to last for 200 years.

In those days nearly everyone in Wales went either to church or, in most cases, to non-conformist chapels. Maesycwmmmer church had a vicar, a curate and a congregation of 100. The main services were morning and evening prayer. I can't recall any choral tradition and there was only one bell. These were my formative years in religious understanding.

Preaching, Sunday School and the associated sports and leisure clubs were the main reasons to go to church in those days. Our Sunday School met in the crypt: I recall Mr Tombs, the curate, teaching us 'why is Pontius Pilate in the creed?', something I have never heard preached on since. It was something to do with the power of the state being nothing compared to the power of God but it mostly went over our heads: at least expectations of children were higher then.

Going back in 1980, I was astonished to find the church and most of

the chapels had been demolished or turned to other uses. The site of the church is now occupied by large executive houses, with a few gravestones set into the boundary stone walls. I am not sure why the church was

demolished: church attendance was much higher than in 2024, so other factors were clearly important. Much of the Victorian infrastructure of the area was being demolished at that time: churches were probably part of this. In the village, only Mount Pleasant, a massive 1860s chapel next to our house, still remains.

In 1952 we moved again, to the leafier village of Wenvoe. I attended both the village church and St Paul's, Barry, the first church built in 1892 for Barry, then a new town. St Paul's no longer exists. It was closed in 2017 by the bishop, faced with having more churches than he could afford. Many were against the closure, but the authorities felt Barry needed supermarkets and leisure centres more than churches. Now it is Church Court.

In the 1890s all the farms in my parish were owned by the Jenners of Wenvoe Castle, as well as much land in the nearby town of Barry, just as in Jane Austen. Barry Town FC still play at Jenner Park. The land for St Paul's was given by Lady Jenner: its first parish priest established the tradition of high church services with beautiful ceremony, incense, many candles and outstanding singing.

The great east window and the gold canopy over the high altar were erected in memory of the first Rector, David Weatherill, and beginning with his leadership, St Paul's stood for a tradition re-born by the Oxford Movement which depended not on a love of what has been described as *Technicolour worship*, not on ceremony for ceremony's sake, but on a right understanding of God and the Sacrament of the



Altar, with worship focused on beautiful and holy chancels and sanctuaries. This is similar to the tradition started by Vicar Bennett in St John's.

There was a memorial window to the crew of the liner *Royston Grange* destroyed by fire after collision in the River Plate in 1972. All officers and crew lost their lives. Her captain George Booth was from Barry, and the window, presented by his wife, bears the inscription 'Remember Captain George Booth and crew of the Royston Grange lost with all hands.'

St Paul's also hosted many classical music concerts. I remember the first time I heard the Mendelssohn Violin Concerto was there in 1958. This was when St Paul's was at the peak of its fame, when the church was chosen to sing at the Festival of Britain and to record Choral Evensong for the BBC. One of the boy trebles was Robert Tear. As an adult, for over 30 years he was probably the best-known classical voice in England. His recording that most brings back to me his very individual voice is Britten's setting of 'The splendour falls' or 'blow, bugles, blow' for tenor, horn and strings.

But it is not as easy to bring back the loss of a church building, and we should all be worried about these changes. It is relatively easy for authorities to close a church when it is only 60-100 years old as these are usually in towns and there are other churches around for people to drive to. In the countryside, parishes are merged and buildings kept.

But 'once departed [we] may return no more'. We should recall that it is not only those who attend churches who regret their passing. Countless people in Frome pass St John's and our other churches every day and would be sorry to see them demolished or turned into warehouses. And what are we to do with the stained-glass windows, the reredoses, rood screens, statues, fonts and pulpits that vanish when a church goes: not to mention the impact of the many years of prayers, worship, teaching and memories that have created a mass of religious capital that we all feel when we enter an old church.

Chris Lewis

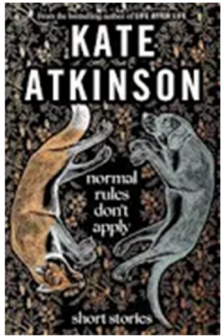
Inspired to Read

Short Stories

For our July meeting the Inspired to Read book group discussed short stories. We had read books by a range of different authors, ranging from Saki, through Daphne du Maurier, to Alice Monroe; I have always enjoyed reading a good short story collection, but I was still surprised by how many authors had written in that genre. The discussion raised questions such as: why are so many short story collections written by women, when does a short story turn into a novella, and what sort of short stories do we find the most satisfying? I had read stories by several authors, including those named above, as well as Elizabeth Jane Howard, Angela Carter and A.S Byatt, and during the course of the evening we were introduced to others. I hadn't realised that J.D. Salinger and Susan Hill had both written short story collections, and Chris Lewis introduced us to the work of one of his former teachers, Gwyn Thomas, whose stories might be more difficult to find, but, he assures us, they are worth looking for in second-hand book shops.



There are two books I am going to recommend to you: the first is a slightly different take on the short story: Marple is a collection of twelve stories about Agatha Christie's famous sharp-eyed detective written by different authors. What intrigued me most about these was the way in which the authors write about Miss Marple without really deviating from their usual style; thus Val McDermid's *The Second Murder in the Vicarage* is a typical who-dun-it, while Lucy Foley's *Evil in small places* is more of a thriller. Natalie Haynes's *The Unravelling* references Greek myths, while American author Alyssa Cole and Chinese author Jean Kwok transport our detective to Manhattan and Hong Kong respectively. As a collection I found some of the stories to be more satisfying than others, the weakest being those where I didn't feel that the writer had really captured the essence of Jane Marple.



More satisfying (for me, at least) is Kate Atkinson's 2023 collection of stories: *Normal rules don't apply*. Not everyone in the book group shares my enthusiasm for this book, but for me it encapsulates all the best attributes of the short story. I have long admired Kate Atkinson's writing: her novel *Life after Life* has recently been dramatised successfully on the BBC, as have her Jackson Brodie detective novels. Her early novels, *Human Croquet* and *Emotionally Weird*, had something of a surreal quality which is still present in her later writings, but she has refined it, and I find it less challenging.

From the back cover of the book we learn that in *this dazzling array of eleven interconnected stories ... we meet a queen who makes a bargain she cannot keep; a secretary who watches over the life she has just left; a man whose luck changes when a horse speaks to him*. The stories are linked by place and minor characters, yet all are strong as stand-alone stories. I shall try not to give away too many spoilers, but the book begins with an apocalypse, while the penultimate story is of creation, but both of these events have an unexpected twist.

A short extract from the first story, *The Void*. *In the beginning was the Void. Then came the Word and with the Word the World began. Then one day, to everyone's surprise, the Void returned, and darkness rolled over the land. At 09.12 GMT on Thursday 4th May 2028, to be precise.*

As I have said, this book divided opinion within the group; for me it had all the features that I most enjoy in a collection of stories. Each one was self-contained and held an element of surprise, but there were common threads running through them all, with the same characters recurring, and the same location. I shall leave you to draw your own conclusions.

We have meetings planned for the first Wednesdays in August and September:

Wednesday 7th August: We will be discussing: *One night in winter* by Simon Sebag Montefiore: winner of the political fiction book of the year 2014. Set in Stalinist Russia this is actually part of a trilogy, but it

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can be read as a stand-alone novel.

Wednesday 4th September: we will meet to discuss our summer reading experiences: the books we have enjoyed and possibly the book shops we have discovered on our travels!

For more information about the book group please contact Rosemary:
rosemarymccormick@hotmail.com

Rosemary McCormick



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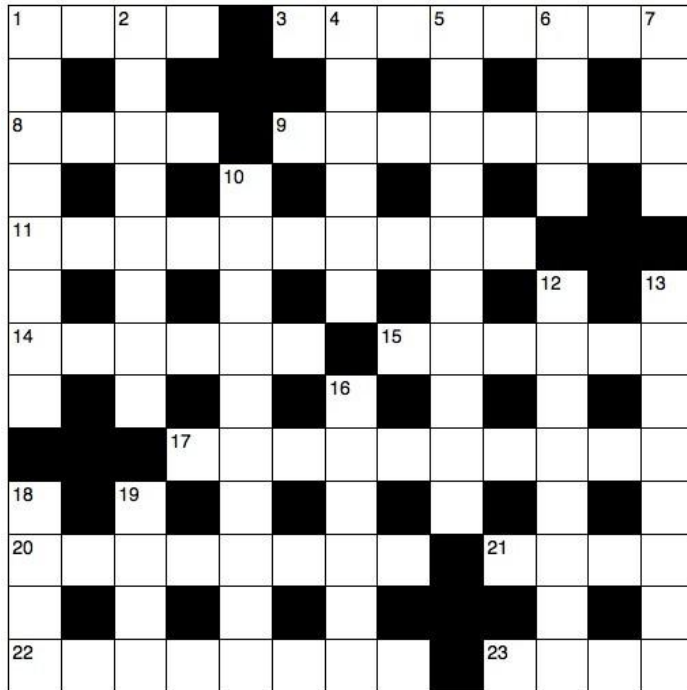
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AUGUST CROSSWORD



Across

- 1 and 3 Two of the disciples who witnessed the transfiguration of Jesus (Luke 9:28) (4,3,5)
 3 See 1 Across
 8 'Let us draw — to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith' (Hebrews 10:22) (4)
 9 O Simon is (anag.) (8)
 11 Form of government under the direct rule of God or his agents (10)
 14 How Jesus found his disciples when he returned to them after praying in Gethsemane (Luke 22:45) (6)
 15 In The Pilgrim's Progress, the name of the meadow into which Christian strayed, which led to Doubting Castle (2-4)
 17 Glad sin rat (anag.) (10)
 20 Spinal column (Leviticus 3:9) (8)

21 Valley of the Balsam Tree with a reputation of being a waterless place (Psalm 84:6) (4)

22 'The oracle of Balaam son of Beor, the oracle of one — — sees clearly' (Numbers 24:3) (5,3)

23 Adam and Eve's third son (Genesis 4:25) (4)

Down

- 1 David's great friend (1 Samuel 20:17) (8)
 2 'The Lord... will bring me safely to his — kingdom' (2 Timothy 4:18) (8)
 4 'I, Daniel, mourned for three weeks. I ate no choice food; — — or wine touched my lips' (Daniel 10:3) (2,4)
 5 Seeking to vindicate (Job 32:2) (10)
 6 Female servant (Isaiah 24:2) (4)
 7 'For Christ died for — once for all' (1 Peter 3:18) (4)
 10 'Offering spiritual sacrifices — to God through Jesus Christ' (1 Peter 2:5) (10)
 12 Jesus said that some people had renounced this 'because of the kingdom of heaven' (Matthew 19:12) (8)
 13 One of the three men thrown into the furnace for refusing to worship Nebuchadnezzar's golden image (Daniel 3:20) (8)
 16 'You have — of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry' (Luke 12:19) (6)
 18 'There before me was a white horse! Its rider held — — , and he was given a crown' (Revelation 6:2) (1,3)
 19 Equipment to Charity Hospitals Overseas (1,1,1,1)

Answers to the crossword in the July magazine

ACROSS: 1, Sabbatical. 7, Opinion. 8, Laing. 10, Olga. 11, Galilean. 13, Sardis. 15, Severe. 17, Adultery. 18, Flea. 21, Swazi. 22, Acetate. 23, Revelation.
 DOWN: 1, Sling. 2, Brim. 3, Annual. 4, Ill-timed. 5, Abilene. 6, Colossians. 9, Gennesaret. 12, Diatribe. 14, Roulade. 16, Errata. 19, Learn. 20, Levi.

Crosswords reproduced by kind permission of BRF and John Capon, originally published in Three Down, Nine Across, by John Capon (£6.99 BRF)
The Bible version used in this crossword is the NIV.

WORD SEARCH - John Bunyan - August 30th

After the Bible, John Bunyan's Christian allegory, the Pilgrim's Progress, is one of the most celebrated and widely read books in the English language. It has been translated into more than 100 languages around the world and is a Christian classic. Names of people and places from its pages are known wherever English is spoken. Bunyan was a popular preacher of Baptist conviction, but because of his opposition to the Established Church and because he

John
Bunyan
Pilgrims
Progress

he did not have a Church of England preaching licence, he was imprisoned in 1661. It was in prison that he wrote Pilgrim's Progress.

Great
Heart
Valiant
Truth
Giant
Despair
Madame
Bubble
Slough
Despond
Vanity
Fair
Delectable
Mountains
Hill
Difficulty
Celestial
City
Prison
Preaching
License

E	A	C	T	H	R	H	A	L	L	I	H	R
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E	S	N	E	C	I	L	T	S	O	G	I	T
L	N	P	P	N	P	A	M	U	U	T	N	L
E	N	R	H	T	R	I	N	O	Y	A	I	F
C	A	O	N	N	E	T	L	O	I	O	A	Y
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A	F	R	Y	I	C	E	A	R	R	I	M	I
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E	A	S	B	V	N	C	V	T	S	S	T	S
T	R	U	T	H	G	U	B	U	B	B	L	E
T	R	A	E	H	E	D	E	S	P	O	N	D



AUGUST SUDOKU

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5		9		2				
						4		2
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					4	5		

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Editors: Mandy Crook, Karolyn Curle

Printer: Karolyn Curle

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SERVICES ROTA FOR AUGUST 2024

Date/Week	Services	Readings	Duties for the 9.45am service at SJ				
			Readers	Prayers	Sidespersons	Chalice	Sacristy
Sunday 4 August Tenth after Trinity	8.45am Zoom Service <u>9.45am Holy Communion</u>	2 Samuel 11,26-12,13a Ephesians 4,1-16 John 6,24-35	T Bushell S Smith	J Bruges	G Fone R Gosling	J Davies	M Veakins M Smitherman
Sunday 11 August Eleventh after Trinity	8.45am Zoom Service <u>9.45am Holy Communion</u>	2 Samuel 18,5-9,15,31-33 Ephesians 4,25-5,2 John 6,35,41-51	The Hudsons N McCormick	J Caudwell	E Gilbert C Holland	A Crook	R & N McCormick
Sunday 18 August Twelfth after Trinity	8.45am Zoom Service <u>9.45am Holy Communion</u>	1 Kings 2,10-12, 3,3-14 Ephesians 5,15-20 John 6,51-58	B Essex S Caden	R McCormick	M Veakins A Crook	M Smitherman	P Connaw
Sunday 25 August Thirteenth after Trinity	8.45am Zoom Service <u>9.45am Holy Communion</u>	1 Kings 8,(1,6,10-11)/22-30, 41-43 Ephesians 6,10-20 John 6,56-69	E Gilbert R McCormick	L Bushell	B Essex J Bruges	J Davies	M Veakins M Smitherman
Sunday 1 September Fourteenth after Trinity	8.45am Zoom Service <u>9.45am Holy Communion</u>	Song of Solomon 2,8-13 James 1,17-end Mark 7,1-8, 14-15, 21-23	C Holland S Smith	A Henderson	G Fone R Gosling	C Holland	R & N McCormick
Vicar: Vacancy Reader: Janet Caudwell		Sun 18th Tea Time at St John's Tues 27th - Julian meeting at 11am					

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Inspire magazine

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Psalm 36:5
Your steadfast love, O Lord
is as vast
as the heavens, your faithfulness beyond the clouds.

