



# the link

The Parish Magazine of The United Benefice of St Peter & St Stephen, Burnley  
MAY/JUNE 2025



“When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father - the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father - he will testify about me.

*(John 15:26)*

<http://www.stpetersburnley.com>  
<http://www.ststephenschurchburnley.org.uk>

## Congratulations to our new Area Dean!



*Pictured at his commissioning as the new Area Dean of Burnley, Fr Andrew with Archdeacon Mark Ireland, Bishop Philip and Deanery Lay Chair, Lynne Trudgill.*

*The Service took place at St James, Briercliffe during Evensong on 16th March. It was lovely to hear our Young Singers who joined with the Choir especially for the occasion.*



## Confirmation - 8th June 2025

The Confirmation service this year will be at **St Peter's at 10.30 am on Sunday 8th June**. Please pray for all those who are to be confirmed by Bishop Philip on that day, and please do come along to support the candidates.



# WHO'S WHO IN THE BENEFICE?



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<b><u>MOTHERS' UNION:</u></b>		Emma Hopley	☎ 07968 782210
Mrs Carol Waddington	☎ 07846 139241	<b><u>HEADTEACHER:</u></b>	
<b><u>SAFEGUARDING OFFICER:</u></b>		Mrs Jo Roberts	☎ 427848
Mrs Cynthia Bramley	☎ 07903 341700	<b><u>SAFEGUARDING OFFICER:</u></b>	
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<b><u>FLOWER GUILD:</u></b>		Vacant	
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## *In this issue*

### Page

- 2 Congratulations!  
Confirmation 2025
- 3 Who's Who
- 4 From The Rectory
- 6 St Stephen's Churchwardens
- 10 St Peter's Churchwardens
- 11 Saturday Morning Concerts  
A Fond Farewell
- 12 St Stephen's Mothers' Union
- 13 Welcome on Wednesday
- 15 Burnley Prayer Breakfast
- 16 St Peter's Sunday School News
- 17 March & April at St Peter's
- 18 Christian Aid
- 20 From our Vision Champion, Linda
- 21 From our Vision Champion, Joan
- 22 From our Vision Champion, Alan
- 24 Raise Money & Make Friends  
Thoughts on 'Time'
- 26 Taking It All for Granted
- 29 Thoughts on 'God'
- 30 Children's Page
- 31 March & April at St Peter's
- 32 St Stephen's Summer Fair

The next Magazine will be joint  
**JULY/AUGUST** edition. All items to  
be with the Editor by 15th June  
pamelamcgrath1@hotmail.com

"Were it not for the  
work of the Holy Spirit  
there would be no  
gospel, no faith, no  
church, no Christianity  
in the world at all." -



J. I. Packer



## From the Rectory

*Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,*

I write this reflection on Easter Eve, a day of quiet and calm after the business of Holy Week. Holy Week began with a beautiful 'Quiet Day' led by Sisters Judith and Sue from OCMM in Tunstall near Carnforth. We spent time considering the women around the crucifixion in art and prayer, diving more deeply into the Stations of the Cross, and sharing a meal with time for reflection and prayer.

Our daily services have been a wonderful meditation surrounding us in the passion of Jesus. As someone said this week, 'You cannot get from Palm Sunday to Easter Day without the bit in the middle.' During this time, we experienced beautiful liturgy, glorious music, and thought-provoking drama and prayer. I have loved sharing this with you. The Holy Spirit is definitely on the move in Burnley as we grow in love, number, and faith, a direct answer to our prayer.

Spring is always special to me. The grip of winter has eased, giving way to spring flowers and the birth of new lambs, which are never far from their mothers.

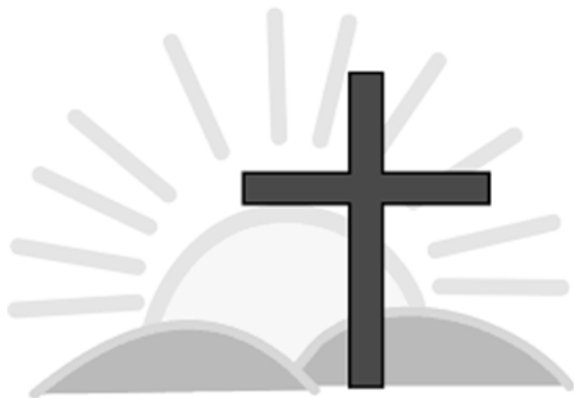
As a Christian, I believe there is that same sense of expectation and hope as we journey through Lent and Holy Week; we can see the brightness of a new dawn emerging. Although we know the Easter Story so well, it is one we are never tired of celebrating or sharing. This is all because of the joy and hope brought to us by God in the crucified and risen Christ. In order for us to experience the joy of Easter to the full, we too must go through the winter, which often has a sting in its tail or final flourish. For Christians, that is the reassessment in Lent, which culminates in Holy Week with all the emotions we experience before the joy of the resurrection and a joyful fifty days of Easter celebration.

As I sit and look at some of our amazing stained glass windows, with the sun shining through, I am attracted to a simple but effective scene of victorious risen Jesus Christ the King. This is, to me, a metaphor for our Christian life: the beauty of God's creation, which we do not necessarily fully appreciate or understand so clearly at times, but at the centre of everything, where our gaze and attention should be drawn, is Jesus, the Good Shepherd, who cares for and loves us all. These windows serve as a reminder of the supremacy and mystery of Christ, who, in his risen existence, can now be present anywhere and at any time.

Love and Easter Blessings

*Fr Andrew*

*May all of us, this Eastertide, have a greater awareness of Christ, the one who brings meaning and purpose into our lives, for we are all one in Christ Jesus. (Galatians 3)*



## *In The Loop*

... with Keith, Jean, Paul & Edith  
St Stephen's Churchwardens



Hello everyone – we hope that you all enjoyed the glorious weather that we experienced during March and into April, and you all had a lovely Easter whether you stayed home or managed to get a break away. The weather managed to last out until Palm Sunday when we saw a change to a more normal pattern, but of course the countryside and our gardens really needed some rain!

**ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING**  
- Monday 19th May at 7:00pm: This official meeting offers you the opportunity to see what we're about at St Stephen's. The church accounts will be presented, important decisions made and reports given by all those involved in the activities of our church. Please put the date in your diaries. We hope that as many of you will be able to attend on the night. Tea/coffee will be available

### **CHURCH MAINTENANCE NEWS:**

**The church clock:** Many people have noticed how our church clock has been somewhat erratic over the past few weeks. Paul has been up the tower and after numerous interventions has managed to coax it into keeping strict time. It once again shines like a little beacon in the night, and we know that a good number of people do rely on it! **New Oven:** The original gas oven that we ordered to replace the old range in

the kitchen was going to be too costly to have fitted due to it requiring extra pipework and being installed by a specialist gas fitter. Another oven is now on order and is due to be installed in May. This will enable us to cater for bigger numbers in a more reliable oven! We are very grateful for all the donations that have been received towards the cost of the oven and installation, with no funds being required from the PCC/church accounts.

**Quinquennial Inspection:** As mentioned in the last magazine, this inspection took place earlier in the year and we are still awaiting the official report; however, we are assured that nothing major was identified that would incur great expense on our part – good news!

**Gardens:** The variety of spring flowers growing all around us have put on a magnificent show this year, particularly in our Remembrance and Memorial Gardens. Our grateful thanks are extended to Jim who keeps both these areas in pristine condition for all to enjoy! It is also very pleasing to see that our gardens have been free of vandalism over the past year. We believe that this is due entirely to Father Andrew

/continued ...

being a constant presence in our community and engaging with the local children, which in turn has had a very positive effect – thank you Father Andrew!

**FUNDRAISING COFFEE MORNINGS:** The two coffee mornings that we have held over the past couple of months have raised the most inordinate amount of money. Thank you to all of you who have donated, baked cakes, organised and helped on the day etc., and especially to those who came along on the Saturday mornings to eat all the cakes! It is definitely something we shall be doing more of, not so much to be raising funds per se, but to offer the opportunity for people to get together for a good chin-wag over their cuppas. Watch this space for the next one!

**OTHER NEWS:** Joseph trip:

An absolutely great day out in Blackpool mid-April! We met at church, boarded our luxury coach and headed off to the seaside. It was a lovely sunny day as some decided to walk along the prom and pier or do a little light retail therapy. Following lunch, everyone headed into the Opera House situated inside the Winter Gardens. The show was excellent and thoroughly enjoyed by everyone – young and old alike - all in all, a wonderful day out!

Our 'Knit & Natter', 'First Tuesday Hub', 'Friends, Food & Fun' and 'Let's Do Lunch' continue to go from strength to strength, week by week bringing in new faces. Each event is unique in its own way, so if you're creative and enjoy knitting or sewing etc. - or just want to chat - come along at 1pm on a Monday afternoon to **'Knit & Natter'** in the Community Room;

**'First Tuesday Hub'** is as it says on the tin! The first Tuesday of the month at 11:30am is the time to meet up and make new friends and enjoy a light lunch of soup and sandwich;

**'Friends, Food & Fun'** is afternoon tea, bingo and karaoke and takes place in the Community Room at 2pm on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month; **'Let's do Lunch'** consists of a free 2-course meal on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday at 12:30pm in church. Everyone is welcome to come along and enjoy our hospitality and make new friends!

**LOOKING AHEAD:** 'Sing-a-long-a Mamma Mia': Taking place on the last Friday of April, this bodes well to be another successful night, when everyone can have a great time and a jolly good sing! There'll be Greek bunting, Greek music, Greek quiz, raffle, nibbles etc. Come along for a fun night – bring your own drink (ouzo, raki, retsina, metaxa ... etc!) and glass. We look forward to seeing you there!

/continued ...

(Our next Film Friday will be on 30th May in the Community Room.)

**Annual Summer Fair:** Saturday 14th June, 11:00 – 1:00 pm in the school. The school choir will open the event; we shall be having all the usual stalls together with a tombola, raffle, games and a variety of refreshments will be available. Entry will be free and all will be welcome! (Of note our annual Christmas Fair will take place on Saturday 29 November – make a note in your diaries!) Other events are in the pipeline....watch this space for further information!

**Yellow Wheelie Bin:** This has been most successful and we thank you all for your contributions. We know that the school are extremely grateful for our donations, which are helping local needy families. Please continue to bring tinned/dried foods, baby items (disposable nappies, items of clothing in good condition), feminine hygiene products, toiletries. Thank you.

**Baptismal Shell:** We are very grateful to Edith (Meek) for donating a beautiful new baptismal shell. It was quite fitting that this lovely silver shell was first used for our retiring Ambassador Elena's baptism on Mothering Sunday. Edith has also been very busy in making a new burse and veil to match our 'All Seasons' altar frontal. (Burse: the envelope-like case which is placed on the top of the 'veil' covering the Chalice in the Eucharist.) These two items will be used on Pentecost Sunday on 8th June. Thank you very much Edith for your donation and hard work!

Well folks, we look forward to long, warm, sunny days – wishful thinking that it will only rain during the night! Take care everyone and stay safe.

*Keith, Jean, Paul & Edith*

*Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go.” (Joshua 1:9 )*







## Keith is Retiring!!!

After giving some 10 years of his life to the day-to-day running of St Stephen's Church, our dear friend Keith is retiring as Churchwarden - a job at which he has excelled! The church building is in the excellent state we find it in today due to his diligence, hard work and vision to see that everything is as ship shape as it possibly could be. There is nothing that crops up to which Keith can't find a solution! The highlight of his 'career' would be the total refurbishment of the church undertaken in

2015 – the installation of LED lighting, the re-plastering, painting and re-carpeting. There have been many other projects too. We shall be eternally grateful to Keith for all he has done, but we are also very glad to know that he is still going to be around for the benefit of his expertise! Thank you, Keith – enjoy a well-earned rest!

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## Churchwardens' News from St Peter's

Hello everyone,

We hope you are all staying safe and well and are enjoying the lovely weather we have been having recently.

The annual Halsted Sermon will be preached during the Choral Matins service on Sunday 4th May at 10am. This year's preacher is Miss Margaret Carr, a Licensed Lay Minister in the Lancaster & Morecambe Deanery. This traditional sermon dates back to the death of Henry Halsted in 1845, who charged property in his ownership to secure "*payment for ever of the yearly sum of two pounds*" for a sermon based on Hebrews chapter 13 verse 14, "*For here we do not have an enduring city, but we are looking for the city that is to come*", to be preached on the first Sunday in May.

We look forward to welcoming Bishop Joe to St Peter's on Pentecost Sunday, the 8th June. The Confirmation service for the Benefice will take place at 10.30am, for which the candidates will be preparing with confirmation workshops during May. This will be the first time the new Bishop of Burnley has visited St Peter's since his Consecration last year, which many of us from our two churches had the pleasure to attend.

We now have another way of staying up to date with everything going on at St Peter's with the launch of our new Bluesky account. Bluesky is very similar to Twitter and many organisations, including the Diocese of Blackburn, now have profiles on this new service. You can follow us @StPetersBurnley. Don't forget to follow our existing social media on Facebook, Twitter/X, and the new WhatsApp events channel which gives you updates about what's happening in the Benefice straight to your phone.

We have heard some excellent sermons during Lent about Stewardship and how we can better contribute to church both financially and by volunteering. We have had an encouraging response from people looking to get more involved. You can now donate to St Peter's using our new QR code. Simply scan the code using a smartphone, which will take you to the donation page, and choose the amount you would like to donate. Please remember that all donations can be gift-aided. Thank you!



Take care,

*Sandra and Jason*

## Saturday Morning Concerts at St Peter's



On Saturday 3rd May we welcome Leeds based flautist Jenefer Fraser who will be accompanied by Joanna Garcia (piano) who is well-known to us from previous concerts.

For the summer months, we are promoting a number of additional concerts, the first of which is on 17th May when Isabel Williamson (cello) will perform Rachmaninoff's Cello Sonata with Jonathan Ellis at the piano.

The first of two concerts in June, on the 7th, features Diana Harris (soprano) who will be accompanied by Richard Barnes (organ and piano) a former Professor at the Royal Academy of Music.

We welcome a return visit from Marie Ratcliffe (piano) on the 21st June.

Concerts start at 11.00 a.m. with refreshments served from 10.30 a.m. Admission is £7 (free for U18s) and includes refreshments. Disabled parking is available in the church grounds with additional free parking in the nearby school yard on Rawcliffe Street, BB11 2DL.

Philip.

## A Fond Farewell

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the people who have helped during my church warden stint at St Stephen's. It's been 10 years in total 2 as assistant warden and 8 years church warden, a wonderful time. It's been such a brilliant period for me personally and of course Linda who has put up with my rants over the eight years.

When one door closes another one opens. so they say. I'm happy to say you haven't seen the last of me just yet ...

The adventure begins ...

Thank you,  
everyone!

Keith



### LOOKING BACK

May is coming up fast. Firstly, let's look back to March. We changed our Tuesday date to Monday to accommodate our speaker for the evening. Lorraine Whalley came to talk about domestic abuse and the Burnley women's' refuge. Lorraine has worked for Lancaster County Council for over two years and her role links in with Safe Net which runs the women's refuge centres in Burnley. Her role is one of intervention, trying to stop women's cases escalating to involve social services. Lorraine opened up a discussion between herself and ourselves. What followed was a healthy discussion around different subjects. Lorraine is an energetic and vibrant character who is to be admired for all she does.

Rev Frances Guite led us in our Lenten meditation in April. She presented us with two versions of the crucifixion. Each was accompanied by readings from scripture. Frances welcomed questions and discussion along the way.

### LOOKING FORWARD

#### May Events:

Tuesday 13/5	2pm	Community Room Lucille Porter, Being a Bishop's Wife
Monday 19/5		Quiet Day, Whalley Abbey
Tuesday 27/5	7pm	Community Room Mitch - A Change of Subject

#### June Events:

Tuesday 10/6	2pm	Community Room, TBA
Thursday 19/6	2pm	Senior Members Service and Tea St Margaret's Hapton
Tuesday 24/6	7pm	Community Room - Ruth Bradley

#### Let's Celebrate May and June 🍷🍰🎉

##### May

Happy Birthday Wishes to Margaret Booth on the 13th and to Jean Gidley on the 24th. We hope you both have a lovely day.

Join me in wishing Pam and John McGrath happy anniversary as they celebrate fifty-five years of married life on the 23rd.

One week later Nancy and Howard Mitchell will celebrate their golden wedding anniversary on the 30th.

### June

Happy Birthday Beverley Laycock as you celebrate your birthday on the 13th. Enjoy your day.

Jackie

## **WELCOME on WEDNESDAY** Every FIRST Wednesday 1.30 - 3.00 pm

### **at St Peter's**

At our first "Welcome on Wednesday" in March, an inspired title chosen by Heather Slater, we welcomed several young families with pre-school children and a few more mature adults. The children enjoyed a story, colouring and just playing. The adults drank coffee/tea and chatted. Everyone enjoyed their time and asked for more.

At the second one, in April, there were more children and many more adults. The meeting followed the same format as previously, and Sarah Earnshaw, the Diocesan Children's Worker, joined us. Again, it was enjoyed by everyone who attended.

We look forward to many more.

### **Carol**





Stephen

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St Stephen's Church, Oxford Road, Burnley BB11 3JA

SATURDAY 10th MAY

at 9.00 am

All welcome!

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## Sunday School News from St Peter's

The season of Easter has Bible readings to inspire and excite our children and young people. The growing understanding of what Jesus' Ministry had been about showed the disciples in moments of amazement, doubt, confusion and desire to spread the Good News. Emotions that we can explore on Sunday mornings .

Our Confirmation workshops begin and we look at 'Journeys' - our life to date, our life as a follower of Jesus and our future.

It is really good to see our Young People developing in confidence to lead in Sunday School, in our Welcome on Wednesday and to contribute to our Vision Action Plan. They buzz with excitement about their life in church

Our very busy Sunday School is a joy to be a part of .

Love from  
*Meena*







*The Baptism  
of Meysam  
and Sajad*



*The Young Singers Preparing the  
flowers for Mothering Sunday with  
Alice and Maureen*



*The Young Singers at  
Towneley Care Home ...*



*Happy  
Sundays*



*... and afterwards at  
MacDonalds*



**March &  
April  
at St Peter's**



Before Christmas (that seems a long while ago; due to a publishing mix up this article was intended to be earlier!) I decided to try and raise the sum of £130 for Christian Aid to purchase essential medical supplies for those displaced and/or in refugee camps. I wondered if our people would rise to the occasion and get to the target. I needn't have worried. We in fact managed to raise and send £141.50. And it was heartening to see that as well as our congregations, some of the donations were from people who follow us on Facebook.

In the spirit of Christian generosity we, in our relatively prosperous and peaceful country, have provided for our neighbours who happen to find themselves in a place and situation that we can barely imagine, in order to help in a small way to relieve their suffering.

Thank you so much to all who gave and thus helped us to achieve this magnificent result.

*"In all this I have given you an example that by such work we must support the weak, remembering the words of the Lord Jesus, for he himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"*

*St. Paul to the Ephesians in Acts 20:35*

Looking to the future --- because generosity should never stop, and bearing in mind the awful events in Myanmar and Thailand, take note that:

**Christian Aid Week 2025 begins on 11th MAY**

Alan Roadley

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*June 2023, carehome.co.uk*



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## ... From our Vision Champions



PRAYER FOR  
GROWTH AND RENEWAL

Hi everyone,

First of all, Keith and I would like to thank everybody for all your cards and good wishes for our Golden Wedding Anniversary. One of the cards we received listed events and statistics from 50 years ago. The population was 4.07 billion it's now 8,23 billion more than double! Bill Gates and Paul Allen established Microsoft. Lots of things have changed over the last 50 years. Especially how people attend church. Sunday is no longer treated as a special day by many in this country. With shops open on Sundays, community football, dance classes and lots of other leisure activities happening on Sundays.

As I mentioned in the last magazine the diocese have made this year a year for growth and discipleship. We need to look at how we can encourage people to come to church and that doesn't have to be on a Sunday.

During Lent this year we followed the diocesan course on prayer. We discussed different types of prayer, How to pray. When to pray. Do we pray? Do we feel, "Well I went to church on Sunday so I've done my bit". We discussed how we can and should set aside time for prayer. Prayer should be a constant in our lives. Not just when we have a specific need. We should pray with Thanksgiving (expressing thanks to God) Confession (Naming sin before God) Intercession ( Asking God) Silence (Listening to God).

Jesus prayed for himself and for others and he prayed to commune with the Father. Jesus gave us the model for prayer in the Lord's Prayer. The first part includes praise and worship of God. The second part moves onto praying for God's will to be done. Then there is supplication for ourselves and for others as well as asking for strength to deal with temptation.

/continued ...

Then there is communal prayer. This is something that is missing from St Stephen's. The Vision team will be meeting in May to discuss , among other things how we can establish a prayer group at St Stephen's.

I would encourage you to think about your prayer life, to make it a constant in your daily routine.

*Linda.* (St Stephen's Vision Champion)

***"And whatever you ask in prayer,  
you will receive, if you have faith."***

---



Last October I attended a Healing and Wellbeing Conference at the Cathedral. As a result we are starting, on 4 March, First Tuesday Hub at St Stephen's Church.

What is a Wellbeing Hub and who is it for?

We hope to reach into our community to provide a warm space and a safe space. Somewhere people are listened to, all people treated with respect and love. We will be sharing our hobbies and trying new ones. There will be a free soup and sandwich lunch too.

Sometimes, because of life circumstances such as retirement, sickness or bereavement we lose contact with friends or families. The Hub's purpose is to provide a safe space to find new friends and hobbies. Everyone is welcome, if you want to make friends or share your hobbies, or know someone who is alone come along, bring them along we want your ideas and input.

I hope to see you on 4 March 11.00 am for a Healing & Wholeness Service and/or 11.30 am for First Tuesday Hub and lunch.

*Joan*  
Vision Champion (St Peter's)



## GROWING LEADERS:

... Some thoughts from Alan Roadley

Recently there was a three part TV series on Channel 4 featuring presenter Sandi Toksvig and her wife. They had bought a piece of woodland. The wood was not in a healthy state, and the aim of the series was to show what, with advice from many specialists, they did to restore it to a healthy state. We found it an interesting and informative watch, helped along by Sandi's humour and infectious laugh.

But here's what seemed to me, who has no real knowledge of woodland management, a strange thing. Because the first job, according to the experts, was to get rid of some trees. Yes, cut them down and get rid of them. And get rid of some undergrowth. *In other words, create space for new things to grow alongside and in harmony with the more established trees.*

I sort of made a connection in my mind between growing trees and growing leaders. The direction my thoughts took me in is this:

During the course of the life of the Church, any Church, new volunteers and new leaders will need to be recruited and developed, as older ones decide to pass on the baton or new projects are started. And very often, it's established leaders that volunteer of their own volition or are suggested by someone, and accept taking on an extra duty. And in a way, that makes sense. Because existing leaders have generally already proved themselves and are a known quantity. In many cases they will have completed at least some of the necessary Safeguarding requirements. They will probably know their way around the various Church committees, and have contacts in their own and other Churches that they can call upon if needs be. And especially now the required "Safer Recruitment" procedures have to be taken into account, it's easy to see why any PCC would jump at the chance for one of the existing leaders to take on an extra duty rather than go down the much more time and effort intensive process of developing a completely new leader. But actually, that easy solution ... is in many cases, the **WRONG** solution. The most obvious consequence is that you can end up with a two tier Church, comprising those who have often large portfolios of positions and responsibilities, and those who are playing no part in taking on any leadership roles or any tasks at all. You can also end up with all of the same people sitting on the same committees.



Is there a better way of working? I suggest there might well be. For a start, if you've already got a lot on your plate, and you're asked to take on a bit more, stop and think. Is there not someone else in the wider Church community with less to do that could take on this role? It might seem that we are being heroic in stepping into the breach yet again, but actually, we could be storing up problems for the future by not discerning who else might be able to take on a new task and investing some time to nurture and develop them.

But even better, is to anticipate, to think ahead, and to start to discern and develop new leaders BEFORE it becomes a necessity. Because we know people get older. We know that there is a natural turnover of people and that, for a variety of reasons, some will move on. We know that new roles will emerge that require people to oversee them. And that if new projects are successful and grow then additional leaders will be required to sustain them and keep them growing.

Therefore, the best policy, be it for a business, voluntary group, or as in our case Church, is to make identifying and developing new leaders an ongoing process. It's a great idea to give newer members a chance to work alongside established leaders and volunteers. With a pipeline of potential volunteers and leaders transitions into new roles can happen smoothly, and already busy people need not feel obliged to take on yet another role "because there's no-one else to do it".

I learned from Sandi and her expert advisers that woodlands cannot just be left to do their own thing forever but require planning and action to ensure they stay healthy and sustainable. The same goes for Churches.

*Alan*



## Raise Money and Make Friends

I happened to come across a Charity named “Young Epilepsy”, which co-ordinates and funds research into Epilepsy and other Neurological conditions in Children and Young People. St Peter’s is one of many places that have been touched by these issues.



Thinking about that led to an idea beginning to take shape. What if we, as a Church, could raise some funds for Young Epilepsy by for example a sponsored walk? Something that young and older people could take part in together, and thus get to know each other a little better whilst raising some money for a good cause. Maybe a shared meal afterwards? And just maybe, one or two people who haven’t as yet got involved in things like this, might lend a hand, thus fulfilling our brief to Grow Leaders. I would love to see this happen in some form.

BUT ... I’m not going to do it all on my own. Because I know it will cause me too much anxiety, and I have other commitments which take up my time. But I would be prepared to work with two or three others or a small team to make this or something similar happen. So if you would like to see us as a Church put on an event that raises money and awareness of a good cause and brings people together as a Church family, then let’s get talking.

Alan Roadley [alan@alanroadley.net](mailto:alan@alanroadley.net)  
07588 556640

*‘You can’t make footprints in the  
sands of time sitting down’*

**Some thoughts on  
the subject of  
‘TIME’**

**‘You may delay, but time will not’**

**Don’t say you don’t have enough time. You have exactly  
the same number of hours per day that were given to  
Helen Keller, Leonardo da Vinci, Thomas Jefferson and  
Albert Einstein**

From ‘Christian Crackers 3’



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## Taking It All For Granted by Christine Harbour

In April the Benefice had two baptisms. One held at St. Stephen's was the baptism of Elena, one of the family of believers in our congregation. What a joyful occasion to share with friends and family the baptism of a young person in our church. It was a warm feeling as Elena was supported by friends, parents and family.

That same Sunday there had been a quite different baptism at St. Peter's. This time two grown up men from Iran. They had never had the opportunity to be baptized into the Christian faith, as it is forbidden in their country. Neither of those men could speak a word of English. Fr Andrew had obtained an English and Farsi service translation. There were no families to rejoice with them, but those of us who watched their baptism were visibly moved as, instead of saying the words of assent, they just smiled and nodded their heads in agreement. However, hugs are hugs in any language, and they did not have a shortage of those! As the service ended their nervous expressions had turned into broad, joyful smiles.

I began to think how much we take our freedom to worship for granted. How in places like Iran and Afghanistan and many other countries their young people will hardly ever hear the word Jesus. How they will never be able to be baptised or express the Love of God and to learn that Jesus died for them. We often scorn religion here in the Western world. We take for granted God's word as it's available, but not sought after. We walk the path of our lives forgetting those words of Love that can fill us when our lives are empty. We forget the prayers of our parents, of fierce grandma's or aunts who battled in prayer, so that we may find Grace.

Who were those people who sowed seeds who formed our lives?. Who were the people who gave us nuggets of information and gems from the bible that shaped us into our being? If we didn't have a family to bless us, we have all the saints who trod this path before us, whose mission in life was to love and to share Christ's gospel, bringing the faith that has a God who gives us himself in His son, who died for us ,and rose again to give us Resurrection life and everlasting Joy.



How can we free ourselves from these chords that bind us in this increasingly complicated world, where we get fettered by materialism, love of power and the clawing greed of wanting more? We can focus on those who have little in their seemingly desperate lives. Those who are hungry or lack clean water, have no medication, whose hospitals are just heaps of rubble. Those who are abused and humiliated and have lost their hope and self worth. Their fetters are hopelessness and despair. Our hope is in our God.

The power of prayer can change lives. The anguished cry of a humble few can cause seeds of love to grow into thriving communities, small monthly donations, the price of a coffee in the UK, can help swell the coffers of charities who are seeking to help others in diverse ways.

Most of all we can be grateful for what we have in our democratic land, remembering that our country's laws were based on Christian values. Although we are now a multi faith society we must, by our example, live out our belief and rejoice in our freedom to worship. Living out our lives in the power of the Holy Spirit can change things in unimaginable ways. Those fetters that bind us and those that imprison others by indoctrination and fear can be broken. Our prayers can release the power of Love to change a broken world.

Christine H xx

*Bind us together, Lord,  
bind us together, Lord  
with chords that cannot be broken.  
Bind us together with Love.  
Release the power of your Holy Spirit  
into our hearts  
to heal your broken world. Amen.*



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I BELIEVE IN God  
like I believe in the  
sunrise; not because I can see  
it but because I can see  
see all that it touches

Some thoughts on  
the subject of  
**'GOD'**

God loves each of us as if  
there were only one of us'

St Augustine

God gave you  
a gift of 86,400  
seconds today.  
Have you used one  
to say,  
**'thank you'?**

'I have discovered that when  
the Almighty wants me to do  
or not do a particular thing,  
he has a way of letting me  
know it.'

Abraham Lincoln

**God will never  
lead you where  
his grace cannot  
keep you.**

When someone challenged  
Galileo to explain how God could  
be so powerful and yet care for every  
person, he replied: "The sun, with all those  
planets revolving around it and dependent  
on it can still ripen a bunch of grapes  
as if it had nothing else in the  
universe to do.

Peace on  
the  
outside comes  
from knowing  
God on  
the  
inside

From *'A Bundle of Laughs'*  
J John & Mark Stibbe



# Children's Page



# PENTECOST

## Find a word

X T E D U N W M K Y J D K S N  
P O L K R W P T R U S E O F Q  
Z N U F F I C E I S V P S V Q  
S G B T Z N L A N G O D E U E  
F U A X I D N A I T U G Q A S  
I E P M W U P J N R E S H C K  
R I T I O L Y A V G V C K E M  
E E I O X F H F V Z U L O G K  
H C S J M I W C S B Z A G S Y  
C M E V A P O S T L E S G X T  
N E D K B S L L E I M O B E X  
N F R C R K C H U R C H B S D  
U L X Z H E A V E N D F D V S  
W G B D S E Y F L A M E F X F  
R E B S P I R I T G V D N W B

pentecost

spirit

Jesus

God

apostles

tongue

speak

fire

baptised

church

dove

wind

heaven

flame

language







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