

 *the* NEW
Messenger

JULY | AUGUST
2020

Faith
LOVE
Hope



Third
Avenue

CHURCH & COMMUNITY

GILLINGHAM METHODISTS | *Part of the North Kent Circuit*

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If you wish to contact Rev Robin Selmes please email
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Also for 'Worship from Home' ideas and 'Live-streamed
services' go to: methodist.org.uk/worship-during-coronavirus
and nkmethodists.org.uk

Welcome to this **July | August** edition of the **New Messenger**, again delivered to you during these challenging times for our country and world. In this edition of the magazine we hear how our faith has been challenged and encouraged through Covid-19; we say a fond farewell to Rev Kan Yu; congratulations for exam results, birthdays, wedding blessings and anniversaries; and with a new set of book reviews; God in the arts; fun & games and so on, we have plenty to keep your hearts, minds and souls nourished, until we can meet again.

A message from our Minister Rev Robin Selmes...

Holidays are supposed to be a time for relaxation, aren't they? Yes, but all things considered, they can also be overwhelming in a way that leaves our stomachs churning with anxiety; lost passports, forgotten tickets, missed connections or if you are flying via Heathrow you could probably include the anxiety of losing your luggage. Added to this will be the stress of trying to navigate through new travel restrictions and rules which will need to be adhered to.

Like most I think we are going to plan a staycation. Now when it comes to driving and directions on holiday, I would have to say that my gender stereotype seems to hold true, as I do not like to stop and ask for directions. Also being dyslexic I have difficulty remembering my left and right, which I have to admit has got me lost on numerous occasions.

So when I arrived in my first appointment I felt it would be sensible to purchase a satellite navigation system for my car. Although, I have to omit it has made me rather lazy but on the other hand it has helped me tremendously by getting me from A to B without too many detours. Though frequently it reminds me that I am driving on a grass track – usually because I am probably driving on a grass track!



The people of God are people of a journey in hope. Trusting in God, the Israelites launched out on the Exodus from Egypt. God went before them - better than any satellite navigation system and their wanderings became the story of a journey that Jews celebrate during the Passover. Yet, sometimes the journey led the Israelites into difficult places, with very little food which at time caused them to complain. Even to the extent that some of them just wanted to go back to Egypt.

If we are honest, we all have to admit that there are times when trusting God is not so simple. Like the experience of the exile the way ahead

can often be perilous and hard, with no end in sight. Equally there are times, like we are experiencing now, when the path we travel becomes very obscure and we cannot see ahead. In these moments we journey on with a degree of uncertainty, not fully understanding what is happening. The truth is, when we are facing difficult situations that we don't understand, one of the best things we can do is to trust God.

I have learned from personal experience that putting my trust in God means there will be some unanswered questions and there will be things I will simply not understand. That was a hard lesson for me because I naturally want to understand everything...to know what's going on and to see what is around the corner. I don't like travelling not knowing where I am going.

But Proverbs 3:5-6 says:

*Trust in the Lord with all
your heart, and lean not on
your own understanding;
In all your ways
acknowledge Him, and He
shall direct your paths.*

Yet, trusting in God does not mean that our paths will be straightened and that we will not face any pain or fear. Equally it does not mean that God abandons us during those times. Instead in the midst of uncertainty God is at work, providing strength and holding every moment in His outstretched hands. Our tears will be his tears; our pain will be his pain. So, no matter what tomorrow brings – God's love will be there for each and every one of us to lean on, to rest in and to journey with. We can trust that He is with us through every challenge we face, and we are ultimately going to come out stronger in the end.

Robin

Coronavirus Church update

For several months, we have all been living in uncharted waters and for which we had no time to prepare ourselves. We have had to rethink what it means to be community and I am so encouraged by the kindness and love you have all shown towards each other during this difficult time. Lockdown has also severely restricted our worship life to online services. However, I am so grateful to so many who have risen to the challenge and provided new forms of creative worship. Thank you.

In June I welcomed the announcement that churches were given permission to re-open from 4th July. However, with this news comes a responsibility for the Church to care for the well being of those who come to gather and worship in our building.

We have now received the comprehensive guidelines for re-opening the church for worship. Over the last few weeks we have been conducting a wide consultation with church officers to work out what is best to do here and whether this is the right timing to re-open. We have now received the feedback from the consultation and it is felt that it is too soon to re-open and that we should delay until September. The vast majority of the churches in the circuit are in agreement and are following similar paths. However, in the meantime it would be unwise not to do anything and so the leadership team will start to look at the guidelines in more depth and put in place the practical steps to enable the church, if the trustees desire, to open sometime in September, even if we just hold teaching and prayer services. This is not going to be an easy task and carries with it a huge responsibility, so please may I ask that you surround this work in prayer.



A message from Helen our Youth Pastor

I write this article to you from the church office, where we are heading towards the end of the summer school term and into the summer holidays.

Normally the next week would be a load of 'lasts' for the term and parties to end with, but that is not the case this year. Although we are not able to meet in person we have been keeping some of our groups going over Zoom meetings.

Our youth group meets weekly for an hour, and it is a really great time, we mainly play games and catch-up, and this has been a real blessing to keep in touch with our young people.

Bible study/God squad has also carried on and again, this is a real blessing to chat with our young people whilst we are not able to see them.

Sunday groups have been doing a variety of activities and videos to continue the teaching to our young people and teaching. Themes such as Jesus' parables and the fruit of the spirit have been taught.

Both our youth group and Bible study young people led two youth services in June, which

were amazing and such a wonderful thing. It can be hard enough to plan these things in person, but online can be harder. Our young people rose brilliantly to the challenge and produced two insightful and awesome services!

We are stopping many of our groups for the summer, to give the leaders a break. I would just like to say a huge thank you to all our volunteers who have helped us to keep some of our youth and children's work going throughout this difficult time – you rock!!!

Please continue to pray for our young people at this time, and please pray ahead to September for them, as many will be going back to school. Things will be very different for them – so please surround them in prayer. Also please pray for us as a church as we discuss how things are going to move forward with re-opening.

Thank you for your continued love, prayers and support.

Helen

Congrats

to Manny
for achieving a

**First Class
Honours Degree**

from Sheffield University
in Business & Information and
Communications Technology

And to Rebecca
in celebration of her
18th Birthday

Rev Kan Yu



Time to go!

Goodbye message to Third Avenue Church & Community

It is harder than I thought to say goodbye to all of you dear friends in this strange time. Thank you so much for your warm welcome and generous hospitality to the Medway Chinese Methodist Church for more than 20 years and myself for the past 5 years.

I will always remember co-leading the worship with the fantastic worship team (with action songs), and sharing my first sermon at the Third Ave. by testing your knowledge on the first word and the last word of the bible, and asking you whether you were a fan of Marmite or not on other occasion. What's more, your hospitable generosity to the Medway Chinese community is tremendous. You have accepted those who are different from you with God's love, and have embraced them with God's grace. Your support and presence to MCMC are the Christlike witnesses to show that we, together, can be "all one in Christ". I am feeling incredibly grateful and blessed to have served in this circuit and to work with you all for God's Kingdom.

No doubt God's timing is always right. *"For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven"* (Ecclesiastes 3:1) It's time to go.

It's time to journey on to share the love that's inside me. It's time to risk trusting Jesus. It's time to listen to the Holy Spirit. It's time to walk with friends and strangers. And truly, it's time to notice the collateral beauty, for God is forever near and he is always with us for his name's sake.

Finally, the Chinese characters of Goodbye is 再見. It means see you again.

再見 my friends. By God's grace, we will see each other again.

God bless you and your loved ones abundantly as we all journey on.

With love in Christ,

再見 Kan x

The Circuit Leaving Service for **Kan and Rev Velma Campbell** will be live streamed on **Sunday 26 July at 10.30am** | Details will be available on Facebook and through the digital newsletter

At home with *the* Gallaghers



Here we are, nearly at the end of June! We've passed the longest day! Can you believe it? The song "June is busting out all over" comes immediately to mind as I look out from the French windows each morning and see the wonderful array of summer blooms in the pots on the patio.

They really lift my spirits and are Derek's pride and joy - he calls it his PPP (Pots on the Patio Project!). As we haven't been inside a shop since March 16th, we are indebted to our friends from Third Avenue and Hartlip who have supplied us with compost and annuals to produce such a splendid display.

However, the success of this project has been marred by a "crop" of garden related incidents! Almost two months ago, Derek realised that he had lost his watch somewhere in the garden after several hours of energetic pruning. He then spent a further frustrating hour emptying an entire brown bin full of garden clippings onto the lawn, in the hope of finding said watch. Alas, no watch was found, so he began to retrace his steps and eventually spied

the watch, perched on a ledge in a narrow gully behind the garage. (Derek wasn't perched - just the watch!). He jumped nimbly down into the three foot gully and retrieved the watch easily. He then proceeded to jump up into the garden again from a standing start! Of course, this might have been possible if Derek had been an accomplished high jumper or perhaps several years younger and lighter! He slammed into the rough stone wall, leaving part of his shin behind and ended up bleeding profusely as he limped indoors.

Oblivious to all this drama, I had my own problems to contend with because I'd just managed to reserve a slot on the Asda online website. As anyone can tell you- this is not easy. It requires hours of patience and determination. It is not for the faint hearted and needs concentrated effort. "Heather, would you mind helping me?". I heard his gentle tones and didn't respond as urgently as I might have done had I seen the pool of blood under his feet and the nasty gash on his leg.

“Please don't interrupt me, Derek”, I answered, somewhat sharply, “I'm at a really crucial stage and the system keeps crashing. If I don't go to Checkout in five minutes, I'll lose this slot”.

“I think you'd better come”, he said rather more firmly than before, so I turned round and surveyed the gory scene. I'm not heartless, so, of course, I left the iPad and went to his aid, knowing that the slot was a lost cause.

Derek takes blood thinner medication so it took a long while to stop the bleeding and even longer to clean and apply dressings to the injury, which probably warranted a visit to A&E but we were keen to avoid that at all costs.

Over the weeks that followed, the leg slowly began to heal, although we were in danger of running out of dressings until Mark and Ruth Frost managed to find us a fresh supply, going all the way to Rochester to collect them! Just as we had decided that dressings were no longer needed, Derek ran out into the garden on a particularly windy day, to retrieve a fallen shrub in a pot and injured both shins, this time on a wooden cat kennel. Naturally, the rather fragile scar was opened up again and bled heavily, so we had to start applying the dressings again. This injury seems to be taking even longer to heal than the first one but I have become adept at this aspect of nursing over recent months.

So there you are- gardening is not always the gentle, therapeutic experience one would hope for but I'm sure you'll agree that the results are well worth the blood, sweat and tears!

As if this wasn't enough, last week, as Derek was removing utensils from the drainer at the sink, he lost control of a fork! Now, apparently this was because I had placed the fork in the drainer the wrong way up! (I know, ridiculous!) The fork flew up into the air, bounced off the work surface and came down, prongs first, embedding themselves into the base of his



shin. Again, a cry of pain and more blood! Happily, this is healing well but Derek's legs look rather worse for wear.

As for Online shopping, I have become adept at ordering my groceries each week and no longer need to stay up until 2 o'clock in the morning to pounce on a slot when it appears on the website. I don't really enjoy the experience but it has become part of my routine during lockdown. Derek now calls me the “Queen of the Slots”!

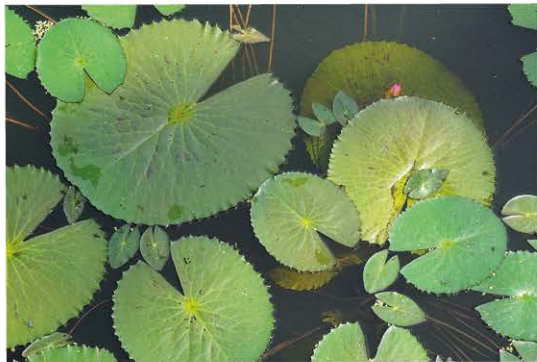
As a little girl, growing up in the fifties, I remember going to Holloway's the Greengrocers in Sheerness High Street with my mum. I was intrigued by the bold sign, nestled among the tomatoes, with the warning “Don't squeeze me till I'm yours!” The somewhat saucy nature of the message wasn't lost on me even then! I'm afraid my mother didn't agree with that particular rule and, like her, I certainly prefer to have a gentle squeeze before I buy any fruit on display!

So, it is very frustrating to discover that whoever picks and packs my shopping has decided that I have a preference for over-ripe fruit and wilting vegetables. What is worse, over the last few weeks, the picker clearly

thinks I have developed a craving for “Flash with Bleach” cleaning spray. Despite the fact that I have ticked the box to say I want no substitutions, he or she has persisted in sending it to me regularly. This week, I found four bottles substituted for two bottles of anti-bacterial bathroom spray and two packets of kitchen surface wipes. I decided to hand them back to the driver, but discovered that he was frantic with worry about his wife who was having tests prior to a serious operation. I realised then and there that my trivial problem was nothing compared to his worries and decided to keep them.

Actually, with Derek's recent accident history, they may well come in handy!

Talking about gardens has reminded me of Brian and Joan Davies. They are both keeping well and Brian has really enjoyed his gardening this year and is very proud of the results of his labours. His garden is looking particularly beautiful. However, he has been keeping us amused throughout lockdown by describing his battles with the pump in his pond. It regularly becomes “Bunged up”! (Brian's technical term when the filtration system isn't working). Joan is convinced that Brian doesn't look after the pond as well as he should but Brian refutes that suggestion. One particular week, he had to change his clothes with increasing regularity because the “unbunging” process meant he got soaked every time! He then decided that it would be helpful if Joan were to hold the hose while he “fiddled” (another technical term!) with the pump. Knowing Brian's lack of success in all things mechanical, Joan was less than enthusiastic about this idea and refused. Brian felt



aggrieved but remained undaunted and determined. Amazingly, he managed to solve the problem the following day but has no idea how he achieved this. He smugly announced that he feels we may have underestimated his natural abilities over the years.

We are not convinced!

I've been meaning to tell you about my aubergine experience! Derek recently asked a friend to buy us some aubergines. Apparently he has always loved them! When exactly did that happen? I have to tell you that in fifty-one years of marriage I have never purchased an aubergine! Has Derek been going off on his own and eating aubergines in secret?

Anyway, the aubergines arrived in all their sumptuous splendour and I thought I'd better find out how to cook them. I googled “How to cook an Aubergine?” and I discovered that Ratatouille was a good option.

Sadly, I didn't have enough ingredients for that particular dish, so I opted to roast the aubergines lengthways in the oven instead, drizzling them with olive oil like a proper chef.

When they emerged, they were a big disappointment - somewhat shrivelled and soggy underneath. After eating them, Derek's comment was rather hurtful and quite frankly, unnecessary. “Well”, he said, “that was a lot about nothing”. I have to say, he was probably right and I couldn't help but think of the versatility of the humble potato. You know

where you are with a potato. It might not always be much to look at but it can be cooked in numerous ways and is always flavoursome, filling and comforting.

I immediately felt moved to pen this little poem:

Ode to an Aubergine

Ode to an Aubergine

Oh Aubergine, dear Aubergine,
I have to send you packing.
Despite your purple, smooth veneer,
your charms are sadly lacking.
For beauty is skin deep, it seems.
When cooked you taste of nought.
I'm sad to say, as veggies go,
you're the worst I've ever bought!
Perhaps I'm missing something here,
so please, do tell me later.
But until then, my course is clear-
I'll stick to the good old taiter!



Heather Gallagher

You might be wondering why I choose to spend my time writing rubbish such as this and I have to admit, that's a question I often ask myself. The fact is, it's something I've always done. I have a file full of poetry - some of it proper, grown up stuff, but a lot of it similar to the above. For me, it's a good way to de-stress and escape from the worries of the world. I read recently that the supermodel, Naomi Campbell, like me, has her own special way of combatting stress these days. She likes to add salt and vinegar to her bath water before she soaks in it! I ask you! I think I'll stick with poetry!

Some of you know that since 1978 we have been lucky enough to keep a caravan on a farm near Herne. The farm is surrounded by open countryside and natural woodland. The view we have from our front window is really beautiful. We haven't always had the same caravan but that view has never changed and it has always been a place of peace and calm for us. When Derek was a serving Police Officer, it provided a welcome bolt hole for him and was the base for many happy family holidays. In fact, Derek likes to call it, rather grandly, our Country Retreat! I am writing this article in cool shade underneath the willow tree in front of our van. Since the restrictions on Caravan sites

were relaxed, we have been able to make day visits here. This has been a real joy for us and has brought a touch of normality to our lives at this time.

Today is the hottest day of the year so far and amazingly, we are the only people here on the site so we consider ourselves to be very lucky indeed. In fact, Derek is just cooking dinner for us and we will eat 'al fresco' before driving home tonight. It doesn't get much better than that and has certainly given us a real boost!

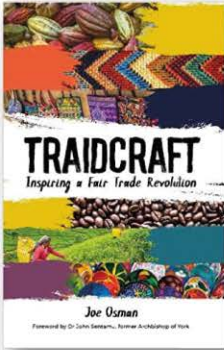
Whatever you are doing to keep your spirits up and to stay calm during these strange and rather uncertain times, we hope that you are keeping well and managing the restrictions that will help to keep you safe.

We send you our warmest wishes

Heather and Derek



Book reviews... *from Parish Pump*

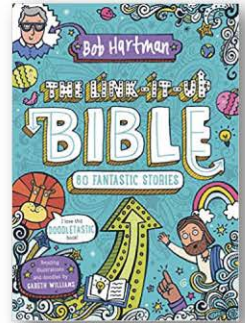


Traidcraft – inspiring a Fair Trade Revolution **Joe Osman | Lion Hudson | £12.99**

Traidcraft was a true pioneer of the fair trade movement, and it played a major role in changing the landscape of ethical shopping. This book charts the history of Traidcraft from its birth in 1979 up until its 40th anniversary in 2019. The story is told through the eyes of one of its longest serving members, Joe Osman. Traidcraft was always an initiative rooted in the Christian faith, and the book explores how the company put its faith into action through a different way of doing business. It also includes contributions from many ex-members of staff, including its founder, as well as external collaborators and producers.

The Link-it-up Bible | Bob Hartman | SPCK | £9.99

Highly visual and interactive, this book of more than 60 stories, highlights the links between stories and draws attention to the wider themes of the Bible. With arrows zipping across the page, pull-out text boxes asking the reader questions and illustration elements bringing each story to life, this book sees the whole Bible linked up and connected to show the bigger story at work – and the God behind it all.



Thank God for Bedtime

Thank God for Bedtime **What God says about our sleep and why sleep matters** **Geoff Robson | Matthias Media & 10Publishing | £5.99**

We all need sleep, but many of us struggle to balance our need for sleep with the other demands and pleasures of our lives. More importantly, we may never have thought through the fact that God cares about our sleep and has much to say about it. In this engaging and practical book, Geoff Robson goes through what the Bible says about sleep. He offers a 'theology of sleep' that helps us to see it as a gift from God to bless His people and to be used in His service.

More than Words | Hannah Dunnett | Amazon | £9.56

Hannah Dunnett's beautiful artwork, interweaving Bible verses and images, has inspired many people. From sailing boats bobbing on the river and lighthouses standing tall, to majestic trees and soaring mountains, to welcoming cottages and cosy kitchens, Hannah paints pictures that help us understand scripture and reflect on God's word in a fresh way. In this book, Hannah has chosen twenty-four of her favourite pictures and tells the story behind each one. As she draws out key verses and their meaning and offers questions to reflect on, readers will gain new insight and understanding. This collection of beloved artwork is divided into four sections: The Wondrous Cross, Father God, Teach me Your Ways, and Let Your Light Shine, and will take individual readers, or small groups, on a journey further towards the heart of God.



The Transfiguration: Beholding the Glory

Fra Angelico

God *in*
the Arts

The Rev Michael Burgess considers 'The Transfiguration' by Fra Angelico. It is found in the Dominican convent of San Marco in Florence.

TQ – Tingle Quotient – is the name given to those things that can produce a tingle down the spine or a frisson of excitement. It could be a piece of music or the sight of an evening sunset at sea. We look, we hear, and our sense of wonder as something sublime unfolds before us produces delight and awe. We see a hint of glory that can even lead us to worship.

I think the monk who lived in cell no 6 at the Dominican convent of San Marco in Florence must have felt that when he entered his room and saw for the first time the fresco of the Transfiguration that Fra Angelico had painted. I am sure the sight would have stopped him in his tracks, just as Peter, James and John were stopped in their tracks as they beheld their Lord transfigured before them on the mount.

From 1436 Fra Angelico painted a whole series of frescoes for the convent from the High Altar to the Chapter House to the cells of the monks. Here in cell no 6 there is a restrained simplicity and directness about the Transfiguration. One of the three disciples looks out towards us, while the other two are caught up in wonder and awe as they look on Jesus with the faces of Moses and Elijah on either side. Here Fra Angelico is not seeking to impress a wealthy patron: he is providing a focus for devotion and prayer for the monks of his community. The scene speaks to us of that sense of awe and reverence.

On August 6 we celebrate the feast of the Transfiguration. The Gospel accounts relate that special moment of revelation to the inner group of disciples. The glory shown to them evoked a sense



of wonder and marvel, but also a sense of loss. For the glory proved elusive and just out of human reach. The moment of revelation passed, and the disciples had to go down the mount again to meet the crying needs of the world, all but forgotten when they were with their Lord on the mountain top.

The monk in his cell would ponder the glory of Fra Angelico's fresco, knowing that he would be called from his cell to take up his monastic duties. But the painting would go with him to sustain and nurture his life. It is the same with us: we have moments of glory. But they pass, and we must return to our daily lives. As we look on this month's painting, we sense that glory and wonder which can sustain us through life. As Thomas Jones says in his poem on this episode:

*Like a pearl we hold
Close to our hearts
what we have heard and seen.*

Parish Pump



Faith through Covid

During this Covid-19 crisis many of us have had to find different ways of maintaining and strengthening our faith through difficult times. Whether creating new prayer or devotional routines, or finding certain scripture or writings encouraging and helpful; tuning into the circuit services each Sunday; listening to Rev Steve Wild's 'Daily Reflections' or joining Wesley's Chapel for daily prayer; joining an on-line choir or feeling moved to write poetry...whatever it was that you've found a struggle as well as inspiring or comforting, we asked you to tell us all about it and we share those with you now.

My Lock-down test of Faith | Paul Abel

I'm not that well read of Scripture and I came to find Christ late in my life, but I always felt His Spirit in me from an early age.

Once I stopped my denial of Him in August 2006 I have been blessed in knowing the Holy Spirit is working in me and Jesus has guided me in the decisions I have taken for our business and my church life particularly. I delight in Jesus' presence and how He

has blessed me with the energy to embrace some of the more challenging tasks required of me in helping to make Third Avenue befitting of worship and a community focus.

So, then the reality of the late March lock down hit us all. In Becky's and my case we had to work really hard to get orders delivered so our clients could fulfil their obligations - that first lock down week was our busiest all year!

Then nothing...not even spam emails as I stared at my home PC screen. I stressed about a large order in our hallway that we were told to hold awaiting further delivery instruction. I fretted about the invoice we had to honour of our supplier and our own invoice just issued to our client. I worried that it was bad enough not to be paid for work done, but also a bigger worry in finding future work to replace the expectation of what a failed client would no longer be giving us.

I overloaded on news in the first two weeks and did not see the connection with my plummet into a deep depression. I felt abandoned by God and even felt He was angry with how humankind has failed to steward His Creation. Political wrangling both sides of the pond, locust plagues reported in Eastern Africa.....

I got upset on the phone with my mum and

hung up on her....and then ignored her call back, letting Becky deal with it.

I could not get out of bed the next morning. I heard Becky sobbing downstairs - great big sobs I'd never heard before and never want to hear again. I looked at the clock - 11am. I am never in bed much past 7am and my average is probably closer to 6am. Those sobs made me shape up and begin to fight back and search for where Jesus was.

Robin called me. I knew it was him and at first did not want to answer - I'm glad I did.

He talked, counselled and prayed with me over the phone. I stopped my news overload, I prayed, I did some reading, I made peace with mum. Most of all, I thanked Becky and gave thanks to Jesus for her.

As His Spirit returned I knew in fact I was never without. I was just disconnected by my state of mind as I was pre-judging my mourning of the loss of my business I have nurtured like a child for the past 40 years.

Now, even though things are difficult, we are in grateful receipt of Government assistance. I am restored in my Faith and rejoice in the gift of returning to Third Avenue recently to engage in some property work and meetings as Kiddiwinks resume.

I am further restored in my Faith as I listen to Becky telling me, as she has for the past 15 years, that Jesus has always told her He will guide and protect us in our little industrial engraving business.

Most of all, I am mindful that I have never been forsaken in the initial turmoil of this lock down and that our Lord will be with us all as we face the difficult times ahead. I give thanks that I have my Faith to acknowledge, and be able to deal with, the pessimistic future - because He is there to guide and love us all as He always is. Even in our own darkest despair when it was I who lost connection with Him, Jesus

never stopped.

He and His love is eternal and I have been humbled to have been reminded of and to have experienced this in April 2020 as much as when I first found my true undeniable Faith in August 2006.

My lockdown survival | Sally Murphy

I have always found myself closest to God when I'm walking with nature around me. His creation for us to enjoy, lifts my spirit beyond words. It has taken me through these strange times and I have discovered every nook and cranny the Darland Banks has. I just walk onto the Banks and feel I can breathe God's breath. I have taken over a thousand photos, scenery,



trees, birds, butterflies, bees, you name it it's on film, even an adder! I am learning different birdsong; I have seen so many wild flowers.

God's creation sounds amazing and looks stunning. I'm back to work on 4th July and will really miss those 2-3 hour walks! My practice retirement, as I called it, has made me realise that, when the real time comes, I will be OK. As for lockdown, I thank God for His creation and the fact I am healthy enough to walk and enjoy it.



Thank you | Daphne Tremain

I would like to say how much I appreciate the services that can be found in the computer each week. There is so much there that helps to keep us in touch.

Also, I enjoy each morning my reading of OUR DAILY BREAD MINISTRIES.

Steve Wild Reflections | Roger & Ruth Barrett

Several years ago Derek Gallagher created the 'The 139 Club' where we share photos on WhatsApp when we've been able to leave a bible, often Gideon's, open at Psalm 139, in, though not exclusively, a hotel room and not just in the UK. Maybe someone will have read it and been moved to learn more.

With no chance of any 139s as we went into lockdown, I started (and continue) to share the Daily Lent Reflections by the Methodist Chair of Cornwall & Isles of Scilly, Rev Steven Wild with the group. The most recent theme has been prayer, not least arrow prayers, and how these can be impactful and will be heard in just the same way as those longer times of prayer. I dropped Steve a line a few weeks ago, to let him know about the 139ers, then the other week Steve took Psalm 139 for his daily reflection, whilst taking time to tell others of the '139ers' it seems we may no longer be a 'club' but a 'movement!'

For us its been the clarity, honesty and sincerity of Steve's daily reflection, they're not long, often no more than 3 minutes, but they've been impactful, uplifting and offered hope in these strangest of times.

Lockdown for the Gallaghers | Heather Gallagher

When all Church buildings were closed at the start of this pandemic, I really didn't know what to expect. Although I assumed that something might be

organised to bridge the gap until the churches could open again, I was nevertheless unprepared for the wealth of worship possibilities available online. I feel that Derek and I have been inspired and encouraged by the new ways of worshipping that are open to us as we sit in the safety and comfort of our own home.

One of the most important features of our day

during this lockdown period has been our regular visit to Wesley's Chapel in London. There we meet with Jen Smith, the Superintendent Minister of the Chapel and Keith Riglin, her husband who is an Anglican priest and a Recognised Minister for the Methodist Church. They actually live on the premises so are perfectly placed to take it in turns to lead the simple Morning Prayer service at 10am every day, from Monday to Saturday. Steven Cooper, who is the Minister of Wesley's Chapel also leads the service occasionally, broadcasting from his Manse nearby.

The service is based on the section allotted for Morning Prayer in the Methodist Worship Book and we are glad that we have been able to follow it in the copy I bought for Derek on the occasion of his sixtieth birthday.

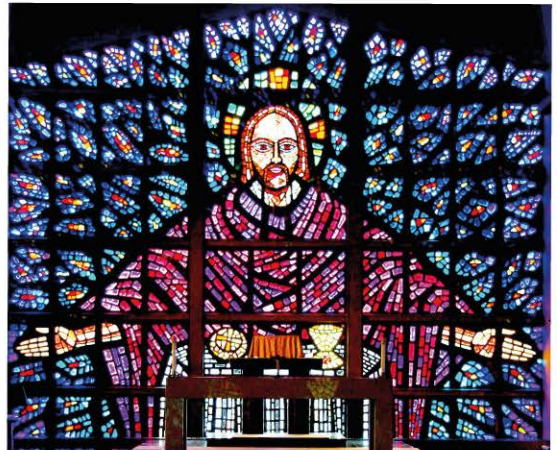
We have been much comforted by repeating the passages of scripture and responsive prayers each day and have discovered that the presbyters have become our friends over the last few months. We have been encouraged to email them with our prayer requests and have been touched by the sensitive way in which they have included these in the services. This is the first time that Derek and I have regularly prayed together in the morning in over fifty years of marriage. In fact, I feel sure that this daily appointment at the Chapel has helped to bring structure and stability to our day in these strange times and has certainly become something to treasure.

Then, of course, we have been lucky enough to be able to join with so many others from our Circuit and beyond for the live streamed service on Sunday mornings at 10.30am. This has become a really helpful and welcome worship resource and we have realised that there is again much comfort to be had in feeling part of a group larger than our "home" congregation. It is easy to become used to worshipping in the same place at the same time each week and perhaps to become a little too comfortable. I, for one, have been pleased

to be reminded that we are indeed part of a wider worshipping family and it is good to see familiar names appear at the side of the computer screen throughout the service. We both think that the intercessional prayer requests have become a very powerful and perhaps less intimidating way of contributing for some folk.

At Hartlip, as you know, we usually worship on Sunday evenings at 6.30pm and we have continued to follow the Connexional weekly Service sheets at that time along with all our members, in their homes. We agreed, from the start, that we would pause at the end of the service each week and visualise the Chapel and the members of its congregation and say the Peace to one another at that time. We really find this very moving and it seems to bring us all closer together.

Meanwhile, Derek, as a member of the Lay Community of Saint Benedict (LCSB) - an interdenominational group of likeminded people, has been joining with others from all over the UK through Zoom in replicating the pattern of Daily Prayer set out in the Benedictine Rule. This follows all the offices carried out by monks and nuns in Benedictine Abbeys across the world. Derek has chosen to mainly attend Vespers at 6pm and Compline at 9.30pm and has gained much from the gentle rhythm of this aspect of regular prayer.





He especially likes Compline because it reminds him of his frequent Retreats to Buckfast Abbey in Devon. At the end of this service in the Abbey, it is expected that everyone retires in silence and the same thing is encouraged at the end of the Zoom service for the LCSB. Silence, of course, is not generally something that Derek is known for, so he's not always able to fulfil that particular discipline!

Before we go to sleep each night, Derek and I read the short passage allotted for that particular day from the "Daily Bread" publication that we distribute to our members at Hartlip. Over the years this has become a much valued part of our shared worship resources. We then follow this with our favourite evening prayer by William Barclay that describes Jesus as "our pillow and our peace". Isn't that a beautiful thought?

It goes without saying that we do miss physically worshipping together with our friends at Hartlip but at the same time, we feel that new

and inspirational opportunities have been opened up for us that are perhaps more flexible and wide reaching. Throughout this period of complex challenges, God has clearly moved in our lives by leading us to new levels of our faith journeys. Whatever our "new normal" will become, it would be a pity to lose all of what we have gained in the meantime.

Holy Fire | Tony Crowcroft

I was a bit surprised to receive the letter informing me that I was identified, as someone who was at risk of severe illness if I caught Coronavirus, and therefore I was locked in for 12 weeks (managed 8 weeks then slowly but carefully entered the real world).

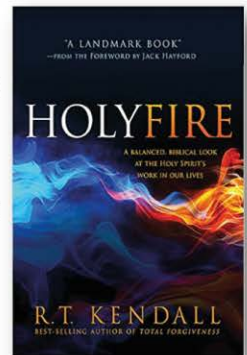
I am not a big reader but decided if I was going to survive without watching day time TV constantly I needed to look at my bookshelf and see if there was anything I could read. I found a book I bought many years ago sitting, unread. I must have thought when I bought it that it was a book worth reading but I guess life took over and on the bookshelf it remained.

So I took it down, brushed off the dust and found I had a treasure just waiting to be opened.

The book is by RT Kendall, entitled 'Holy Fire'. RT Kendall was the pastor of Westminster Chapel in London, for 25 years, born and educated in the USA and after pastoring a few churches he was appointed to minister here in England.

Being a church goer for many years I was very much aware of the work of the Holy Spirit but I guess over time I became a bit blasé about things and don't really fully understand the power we have as Gods chosen people.

The Holy Spirit is a person, the third person of



the Trinity and when you read the Bible you see from Genesis right through to Revelations the importance and influence he has on all areas of our lives.

He is eternal; he was involved in creation; he gives warning; he vindicates; he gives gifts; he transfers anointing; he speaks through us; he works supernaturally; he is the Spirit of Truth; he is our teacher; he convicts us of sin; he is our guide and he does and will continue to awaken His church; he points us to Jesus.

There is of course much more that could be said and I guess like yourselves I have listened to many sermons, over the years on the work of the Holy Spirit.

I conclude with a warning and an encouragement.

John 14:17-17 reads "I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth..... he dwells with you and will be in you".

A W Tozer: If the Holy Spirit was withdrawn from the church today, 95% of what we do would go on and on and no one would know the difference. Blessings.

Lockdown Pressures | Becky Abel

I've had many thoughts about the pandemic. When the first news of it came over the airwaves no restrictions were in place. Then as the weeks went on: church had to close; stay home; only go to work if you can't work from home; wash your hands frequently; only go to the shops for food or prescriptions; stay home; don't go out; don't go anywhere in your car; Airports shut; borders closed; you can't see your extended family; protect the NHS; if you have any signs of Covid self isolate; stand in queues to get the essentials; restaurants and pubs closed; some take away places stayed open but very few. Did I mention stay home..... ?! The news 24/7 reporting non-stop on almost every channel; people dying; opinions on who to blame.

These were my first thoughts and believe me after hearing it so much, cleaning my house seemed to be the way to get away from it. So I did just that, I started in our bedroom and did a bit each day. Dust everywhere it seemed, but it beat listening to the depressing news, so on and on I went. While I was cleaning and trying to make something good from what seemed really horrible, Paul seemed to get deeper and deeper into the news taking it all in. I tried to tell him to stop listening to it and find something else to do. He didn't though and in a few weeks of the lockdown, I found myself scared as I had never seen him so down and depressed. I knew the day when he hung up on his Mum, this was not good. It was confirmed by him staying in bed the next morning til almost 11am. I sat in the spare room where I have a card table set up to do jigsaw puzzles...and between crying my eyes out and praying to God for help in what to do... I heard a voice saying "Honey are you alright?" and my answer was "no I'm scared for you" that is when our days started to change for the better. Paul got dressed and came downstairs,we hugged and then had lunch together. I told Him we needed to start only listening to the news once a day and pray when we felt down. I also told him he needed to call him Mum and apologise to her.(which he did)!

We then worked together in the house as he took over and decluttered the kitchen. I cleaned and straightened out the cupboards and then he painted the walls. We got the house deep cleaned and now keeping it managed. Paul has been managing the garden both front and back, we've been cheered by the bird song and sparrows, blackbirds and starlings building their nests and seeing their babies coming to the feeders. Now through the lockdown we have discovered a new way to use our local shops. We have two nice shops quite near us that Paul walks to, one of them has a post office we use regularly and when we go to Parkwood, where our chemist and Co-op are, we also found a very good butcher, fish & chip shop, Chinese takeaway (that closed briefly) and a bakery.

We will continue to use these shops as they have all we need.

The best part of lockdown has been the Sunday Morning Church services that have been provided by the Circuit and our own Third Avenue Worship Group and friends. All of the hard work that has gone into each week's services and all the message sheets, plus the New Messenger online, for me hasn't gone unnoticed and so appreciated. Along with phone calls from different ones and jokes going around trying to keep in touch with our church family.

It will take time, I am sure to get back to church as we have known it before lockdown, but I do hope that when we do get there we will appreciate the fellowship that we have missed these past few months.

Lockdown 2020 | Colin Waldock

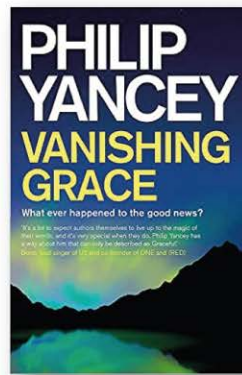
My feelings at the beginning of the pandemic were not fear but anger, anger that we the human race are responsible for COVID 19 by poor animal welfare practice ie the wet markets in China. It would have been completely avoidable if we had respected animals, part of God's creation.

I asked God for forgiveness for the damage and pain we had caused in his world.

However as the planes ceased to fly and cars remained parked on drives, we heard birds, not traffic. We smelt flowers and not diesel fumes, the world seemed to start to recover from the human activity that is causing our planet to warm at an alarming rate. I read that we have just over a decade to halve our emissions to avoid the most devastating impacts of climate change on our food supply, national security, global health, extreme weather, and more. Again I was angry that we the human race were responsible.

I asked God for forgiveness for the damage and pain we had caused in his world.

God's reply to me and to the human race was 'I forgive you, I love you'.



I took the opportunity to re read some of Philip Yancey's (author of 'What's so amazing about grace') books.

His book 'Vanishing Grace' speaks of grace not being fair, that we never ever deserve it but that God gives it freely. He speaks of Christians having the

role of being grace-givers on earth.....what a challenge !

Yancey spoke about the importance of social justice by John Wesley. Methodists should not only be interested in welfare of the poor, prisoners, widows and orphans, they were concerned to remedy social injustice, and John Wesley's last known letter urged the abolition of 'that execrable villainy' slavery. Methodists are encouraged to work to their utmost to improve the lives of others. John Wesley exhorted them to "Make all you can, save all you can, give all you can. The "Black Lives Matter" campaign is still in the front of our minds and it must remain there until something changes and not be forgotten until someone else dies.

I have been challenged greatly by God during this time of lockdown; I have known his forgiveness and love for me personally, and for the whole human race. However if I have really learned anything from this time I need to change my behaviour, I need to love more and I need to ensure that in all my actions I am becoming one of the grace givers Philip Yancey describes.

Imaginative contemplation | Mandy Harris

During the past few months when some of us have been staying safe indoors, I have been fortunate to find myself with more quiet time to stop and observe nature thriving and growing in our garden. I've been fascinated watching damselfly hatch from their larval bodies;



crawling up green pond stems, gradually extracting themselves from their shells and allowing their wings to dry out in the sunshine. The change in their form from swimming and crawling nymphs to azure blue bodied flying adults with delicate lace-like wings is incredible to see. Time spent well - amazing at God's imaginative and creative powers and his attention to tiny details I usually overlook.

I confess I've sometimes rushed through my bible reading and prayer time with God eager to get on with things in my day. I'm sure you never think to do that. I might read a bible passage, pray for a country in the world, pray for the government, something from the news, key workers, friends or family who've asked for prayer and I'm sure other things got overlooked as I rushed on.

One of the resources suggested on the North Kent Methodist Circuit was a 'Pray as you go' app for phone use. You can find it and listen to podcasts here: <https://pray-as-you-go.org/> and download the app.

It is written by the Society of Jesuits and whilst similar in Roman Catholic in teaching,

the passages read, the music and spoken word are based on Ignatian patterns of imaginative praying. In the introduction they state:

Saint Ignatius believed that God could speak to us just as clearly in our imagination as through our thoughts and our memories. In his Spiritual Exercises he writes of contemplation as a very active way of engaging your feelings, emotions, and senses to place yourself in the (biblical) scene described. Contemplation isn't about trying to place yourself in a historic setting, like dreaming you were back in the Middle Ages, it's about trying to encounter Jesus in a personal and unique way. Through the contemplation, the Holy Spirit makes present the mystery of Christ found in the particular passage, and helps you to explore things in a way you might not find possible through our normal podcasts. Go at your own pace; God is in no rush. Let the events of Jesus' life described in these reflections be present to you right now. Visualize the event as if you were making a movie. Pay attention to the details: sights, sounds, tastes, smells,

and feelings of the event. Lose yourself in the story; don't worry if your imagination is running too wild. At some point, place yourself in the scene and meet Jesus there.

Each day there is a 10 to 15 minute meditation to listen to which you can download if you wish. There is music to enable you to focus and relax; a bible passage is read slowly for you to listen to using your imagination and then suggested questions follow with quiet music to help you ponder and meditate. The passage is then read again and a closing prayer.

I have found these really encouraging to help me to focus on God and what he is saying to me right at the moment as I am listening for his voice in the bible passage or questions to ponder. Later I've found I've also been listening for God more while watching nature, cooking dinner, sewing or anything else I'm doing.

The reflections have literally travelled with me as there is a great 'Walking prayer' meditation which you can listen to as you go on your daily walk and listen to what God is saying to you. On the website, there are additional meditations for Health Care workers to use; those staying at home isolating; those with mental health concerns (such as anxiety, depression, grief, loneliness and isolation).

Finally, there are retreat sections which focus on seasons of the Christian year such as Lent, a series based on Acts and one teaching the practice of 'Examen' or reviewing a day's events with God.

Since I first read some

Ignatian prayers I have always been a fan of using my imagination in prayer and feel a bit like the nymph gradually exploring a new environment and finding light new wings. Why not give it a try too? – You may be amazed at what you discover.

A heartfelt 'thank you' to all those who have shared their thoughts, thanks and inspirations, as well as the resources that have got them through these difficult times. And thanks too for your honesty, for those who have shared your personal struggles and challenges. Editorial Team.



Our very own Kirstie appeared in the KM 'KentOnline' this last week...



KentOnline

Avid reader Kirstie Bottiglieri became concerned when libraries and charity shops selling books closed because of lockdown.

So the mum-of-two set up a mini book exchange outside her Gillingham home.

The 32-year-old, who works for a special needs secondary school, registered with the US-based charity Little Free Library.

It encourages children with reading difficulties or who cannot afford books.

With help from friends and an appeal on social media, she has created a waterproof book shelf and fixed it to a wall of her house in York Avenue.

Pallets, roof felt and extra strength glass were donated and her artist friend Edina Szalai painted it for her.

The "library" is open 24/7 with the message – leave a book, take a book.

Kirstie said: "I feel reading is important. I have read like mad since I was a child and I believe it shapes your personality."

"When lockdown came, I thought what are people going to do if they can't go into a charity shop and buy a book for £1 or go to the library?"

"The response has been brilliant. People just walking past have dropped in and want to contribute to a community focused idea."

Kirstie, who is mum to Luca, five, and Nico, two, goes out twice a day to check if she needs to restock.

At any one time she has a collection of about 20 fiction, non-fiction and children's books.

“ I feel reading is important. I have read like mad since I was a child and I believe it shapes your personality ”

She added: "Reading really is even more important today than ever. It is a way of transporting out of a world which is not so enjoyable and healthier than looking at a screen for hours."

Married to Paolo, 32, she said: "I have two young children and a full-time job but always make sure to find time to read to them."

Nicola Jordan | Kent Messenger



Support your local charity shops

Are you feeling the financial squeeze just now, but still enjoy shopping? Why not visit some of your local charity shops?

Never have charity shops needed you so much. Coronavirus has meant a huge drop in donations, and many charities face huge financial shortfalls.

The good news is that charity shops are well worth visiting this summer. Vast amounts of clothes and household items were donated following the lockdown this Spring. Grounded at home, people decided to declutter and clear-out!

The result is that, as a spokeswoman for Oxfam says: "People can expect to find some really great treasures to buy."

It should be very safe to shop, for as Julie Byard of Cancer Research UK, explains, the charity shops put all donated items into isolation before putting them on the shelves. She adds: "We're grateful for all donations and to everyone who volunteers and shops with us."

Parish Pump

PRAYER

Gathering

Every **Thursday**
via **zoom** at **9am**

Meeting ID: **975 4583 7350**
Passcode: **05807**

zoom.us

Third Avenue

Our friend David Brock, one of the organists at Hartlip, continues his series of articles on 'Hymns', with ...

See How Great a Flame Aspires

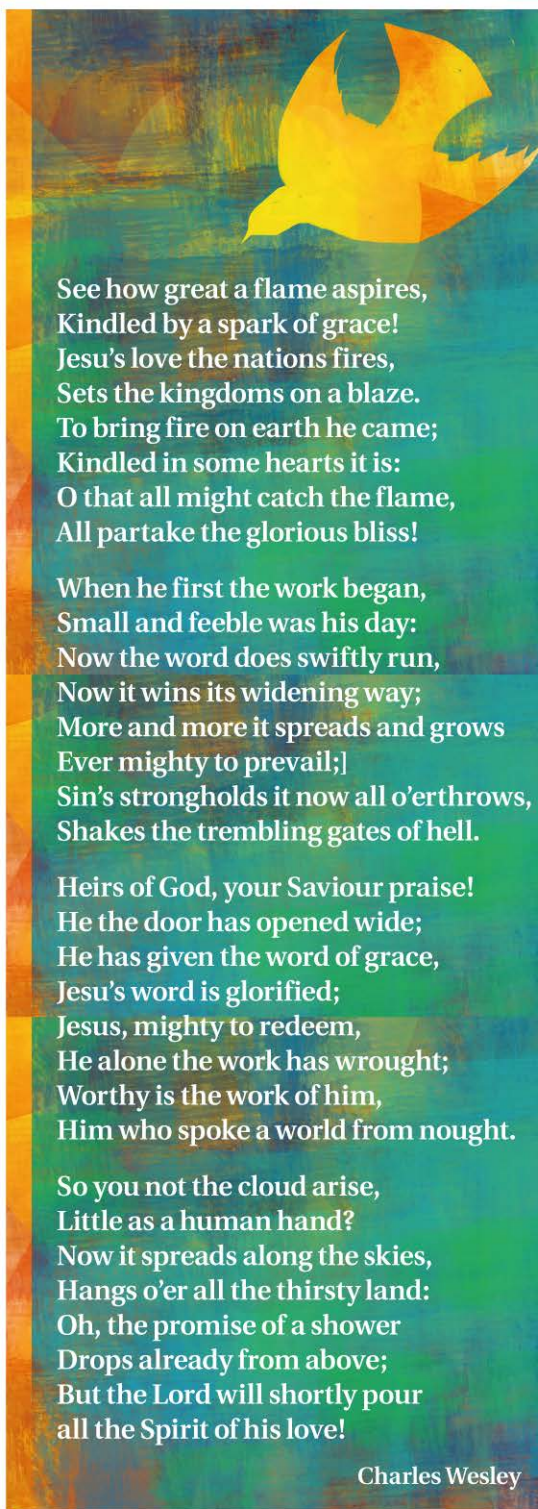
Charles Wesley wrote four hymns headed **After Preaching to the Newcastle Colliers** of which this is the fourth. They appeared in Hymns and Sacred Poems of 1749. It is suggested that the imagery of the hymn was inspired by the large fires connected with the collieries, which illuminated the whole of that part of the country in the darkest nights.

There were also hymns written after preaching to the Staffordshire colliers, so whether this hymn resulted from preaching in Newcastle-Upon-Tyne or Newcastle-Under-Lyme is open to question.

Of the many hymns written by Charles Wesley the Methodist Hymnbook included 242, Hymns and Psalms 156, and Singing the Faith 79.

The set tune is St. George's, Windsor by G.J. Elvey (1816-1893) who was born in Canterbury and was a chorister at the cathedral there. He was organist of St. George's Chapel, Windsor from 1835-1882, and was knighted in 1871. His elder brother Stephen was also a chorister at Canterbury, and is represented in Hymns and Psalms with two chants. G.J. Elvey wrote the hymn tune in 1858, and it was set to Come, ye thankful people, come in Hymns Ancient and Modern in 1861. I am very glad that we have two hymns in Singing the Faith to which this fine tune is set.

David Brock



See how great a flame aspires,
Kindled by a spark of grace!
Jesu's love the nations fires,
Sets the kingdoms on a blaze.
To bring fire on earth he came;
Kindled in some hearts it is:
O that all might catch the flame,
All partake the glorious bliss!

When he first the work began,
Small and feeble was his day:
Now the word does swiftly run,
Now it wins its widening way;
More and more it spreads and grows
Ever mighty to prevail;]
Sin's strongholds it now all o'erthrows,
Shakes the trembling gates of hell.

Heirs of God, your Saviour praise!
He the door has opened wide;
He has given the word of grace,
Jesu's word is glorified;
Jesus, mighty to redeem,
He alone the work has wrought;
Worthy is the work of him,
Him who spoke a world from nought.

So you not the cloud arise,
Little as a human hand?
Now it spreads along the skies,
Hangs o'er all the thirsty land:
Oh, the promise of a shower
Drops already from above;
But the Lord will shortly pour
all the Spirit of his love!

Charles Wesley

I am a Christian

When I say, "I am a Christian," I'm not shouting, "I've been saved!" I'm whispering, "I get lost! That's why I chose this way".

When I say, "I am a Christian," I don't speak with human pride. I'm confessing that I stumble – needing God to be my guide.

When I say, "I am a Christian," I'm not trying to be strong. I'm professing that I'm weak and pray for strength to carry on.

When I say, "I am a Christian," I'm not bragging of success. I'm admitting that I've failed and cannot ever pay the debt.

When I say, "I am a Christian," I don't think I know it all. I submit to my confusion, asking humbly to be taught.

When I say, "I am a Christian," I'm not claiming to be perfect. My flaws are all too visible, but God believes I'm worth it.

When I say, "I am a Christian," I still feel the sting of pain. I have my share of heartache, which is why I seek His name.

When I say, "I am a Christian," I do not wish to judge. I have no authority... I only know

I'm loved.

by Carol Wimmer

We must be determined to be 'anti-racist'

Selina Stone, tutor and lecturer in Political Theology at St Mellitus College, considers the current outcry against racism.

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George Floyd is the latest in a long line of black people who, in recent years, have died at the hands of the police in America. This has led to a global outcry against racism, demanding fairness and equality in interpersonal relationships. But more than this, justice requires us to root out and re-order any system, structure, or narrative which privileges white people over people of colour and their cultures, norms, and perspectives.

Many consider racism against black people to be an American problem, but Britain's imperial history has given us our own particular brand. While many white people would publicly denounce overtly racist behaviour, many of our systems are inherently racist and some people remain willing and conscious participants in them.

That's why it's not enough to check our unconscious biases. We must be determined to be 'anti-racist', to work against the status quo wherever it disadvantages black people. This is fundamentally theological: affirming the inherent dignity of all people created in God's image.

In the UK, recent research demonstrates that black children are twice as likely to live in poverty than white children. Black people face discrimination in employment and health care. They are more likely to be stopped and searched by the police, to get sentenced to prison time



and to be given longer sentences than white people. As a country, we have our own

stories of excessive force and of the deaths of black people in police custody. Stories that do not end with justice.

These realities are well-known by black people in the UK, including black Christians. Black Brits share the pain of African-Americans suffering under the weight of the same sin and injustice, the same racism.

Yet, the lack of solidarity displayed by many white Christians and leaders has deepened this pain. The unity and witness of the church – as an institution and through its members in society – depend not just on shared faith, but also on shared love and shared burdens. The racial inequities of our churches often fail to speak prophetically to the world – this is a week for lament and repentance.

For those moved to compassion, it's also a time to listen, learn, and practise solidarity with your black brothers and sisters. Action is the way we bring about a new world. A world that cares, principally, for the 'least of these'.



Paul & Claire

On Saturday 18th July 2020 at 4pm, we were due to get married in a gorgeous little venue just outside Gretna Green. This has had to be postponed to 2121 due to Covid-19. The date itself had become very important to us, as we had been counting down to it for nearly 2 years.

So, on Saturday, we headed to Rochester Castle gardens for 11am, where we met our closest family members and Rev Robin Selmes. Robin had very kindly agreed to bless our relationship. We found a nice spot under a tree and the blessing commenced, we exchanged eternity rings as a symbol of our continuing commitment and love for each other and as a promise for the wedding that is yet to come. Robin made the blessing so personal and so special for us, it was very beautiful, and we shall treasure these memories together.

The best thing is that we still get to look forward to our wedding, which will now take place on 14th July 2021.

Love and hugs

Paul & Claire



CONGRATULATIONS
RUTH & MARK



SILVER WEDDING ANNIVERSARY
1995 | 8TH JULY | 2020



Love is patient, Love is kind.
Love does not insist on its own way.
Love bears all things, believes all
things, endures all things.

Love Never Fails



1 Corinthians 13

Lola News...



Hello to everyone. It does seem such a long time since we have seen some of you! Trudy and I do wonder when things will ever be back to how they were before.

I do hope all of you are well and keeping safe and trying to keep busy as much as you are able to?

I have been indoors more than usual recently, and got up to a bit of mischief as you can see! Well the bin needed emptying and I was just trying to help!

As for the bag, Trudy left some of my food in there! Waste not want not. Well, I always want and never waste any!

Towel not dry, still a bit wet behind my ears .

Must be nearly time for my food so better look as though I've been good.

Woof... woof...
love lola x



Fun and Games...

To keep us all going and occupied during these strange times, we thought we would double up on the fun and games! Double the crosswords, word searches, maizes and sudoku.

Good to keep your brain active as well as your body!



Keep your distance!

I never thought the comment, "I wouldn't touch you with a six-foot pole" would become national policy, but here we are!

What am I?

A teacher gave her young class a lesson on Zoom on the magnet and what it does. The next day in a short test, she included this question: "My full name has six letters. The first one is M. I am strong and attractive. I pick up lots of things. What am I?"

When the answers were sent in, the teacher was astonished to find that more than half her students had answered the question with the word: "Mother."

Multiply

Noah opened up the ark and let all the animals out, telling them to "Go forth and multiply!" He began to close the great doors of the ark when he noticed that

there were two snakes still sitting in a dark corner. Concerned, he said to them: "Didn't you hear me? You can go now. Go forth and multiply."

"We can't," said the snakes sadly. "We're adders."

Sick of preaching

Our new vicar had just been prescribed bifocals. The reading portion of the glasses improved his vision considerably, but the top portion of the glasses didn't work so well. In fact, he was experiencing dizziness every time he looked through them. He tried to explain this to the congregation on Sunday: "I hope you will excuse my continually removing my glasses. You see, when I look down, I can see fine, but when I look at you all, it makes me feel sick."

Some miscellaneous observations on modern life...

Success is relative - the greater the success, the more relatives.

If at first you succeed, try to hide your astonishment.

You must have learned from others' mistakes. You haven't had time to think all those up yourself.

People like criticism - just keep it positive and flattering.

It's okay to let your mind go blank, but please turn off the sound.

A babysitter is a teenager acting like an adult while the adults are out acting like teen-agers.

St Mary Magdalene, the woman with a past

It is easy to understand the popularity of Mary Magdalene over the centuries: she is the patron saint both of repentant sinners and of the contemplative life. Jesus drove seven demons from Mary, who came from near Tiberius in Galilee. Mary has also sometimes been identified with the woman who anointed Christ's feet in the house of Simon.

She became His follower to the bitter end. She followed Him to Jerusalem and was present during the crucifixion, standing heart-broken at the foot of the cross. Her love for Jesus did not end there, for she went to the tomb to anoint His body on the Sunday morning. Such faithful, humble devotion was richly repaid; it gave her a unique privilege among all mankind: she was the first person to whom the Risen Lord appeared on Easter Sunday morning. She thought He was the gardener at first.

Jesus told Mary to go to His disciples and tell them about His return to Heaven. She was obedient and became the first emissary of the resurrection. In those days, the witness of a woman was worthless. Despite ridicule, Mary had the courage to speak about Jesus in a place of great disbelief.

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

- Mary
- Patron
- Repentant
- Sinners
- Contemplative
- Life
- Seven
- Demons
- Tiberius
- Galilee
- Anoint
- Feet
- Follower
- End
- Jerusalem
- Crucifixion
- Foot
- Cross
- Tomb
- Body
- Morning
- Faithful
- Humble
- Devotion
- Privilege
- Mankind
- Risen
- Appeared
- Easter
- Gardener
- Disciples
- Return
- Obedient
- Resurrection
- Witness
- Courage

The Transfiguration

August is a quiet month as far as the Church calendar is concerned, except that during the 11th century, some church fathers slipped in an important day - the Transfiguration of Jesus, when His disciples were given just a glimpse of His future glory (Matthew 17, Mark 9, Luke 9).

Jesus took Peter, James and John, his closest disciples, up a high mountain. This is often identified as either Mount Tabor (there is a great church up there today), or one of the three spurs of Mount Hermon, which overlook Caesarea Philippi. High up on the mountain, Jesus was suddenly transfigured before His disciples. His face began to shine as the sun, His garments became white and dazzling. Elijah and Moses, of all people, suddenly appeared, and talked with Him. A bright cloud overshadowed the disciples, and a divine Voice spoke out of the cloud, saying that Jesus was His beloved son, whom the disciples should 'hear'. God's dwelling with mankind depends upon our listening to Jesus.

Then, just as suddenly, it is all over. What did it mean? Why Moses and Elijah? Well, these two men represent the Law and the Prophets of the Old Covenant, or Old Testament. But now they are handing on the baton, if you like: for both the Law and the Prophets found their true and final fulfilment in Jesus, the Messiah.

That day made a lifelong impact on the disciples. Peter mentions it in his second letter, 2 Peter 1:16-19 - invariably the reading for this day.

Transfiguration

Jesus

Mountain

Tabor

Hermon

Caesarea

Philippi

High

Shine

Face

Cloud

Transformed

White

Dazzling

Elijah

Moses

Dwelling

Mankind

Law

Prophets

Peter

James

John

Fear

Glory

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

Sudoku

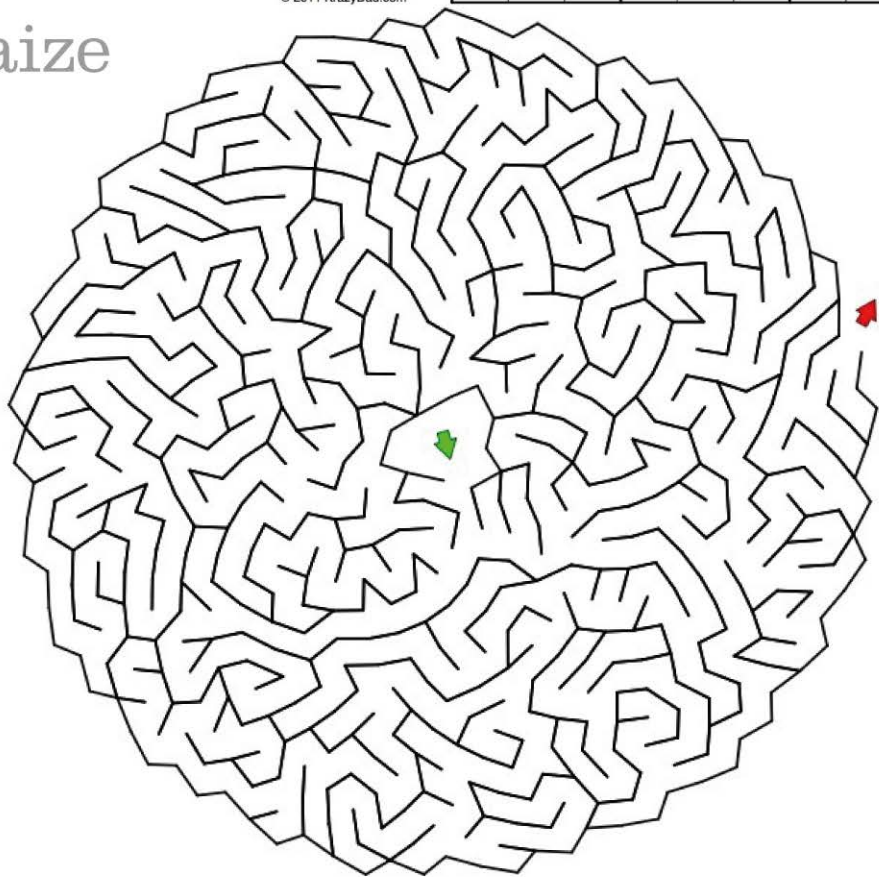
Easy...

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

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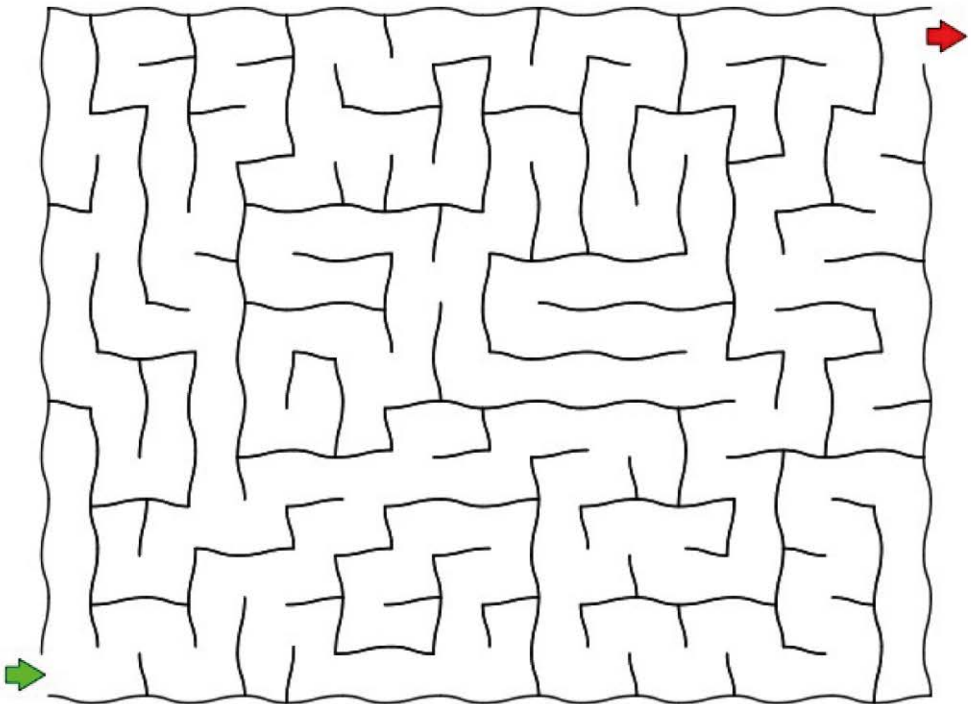
Maize

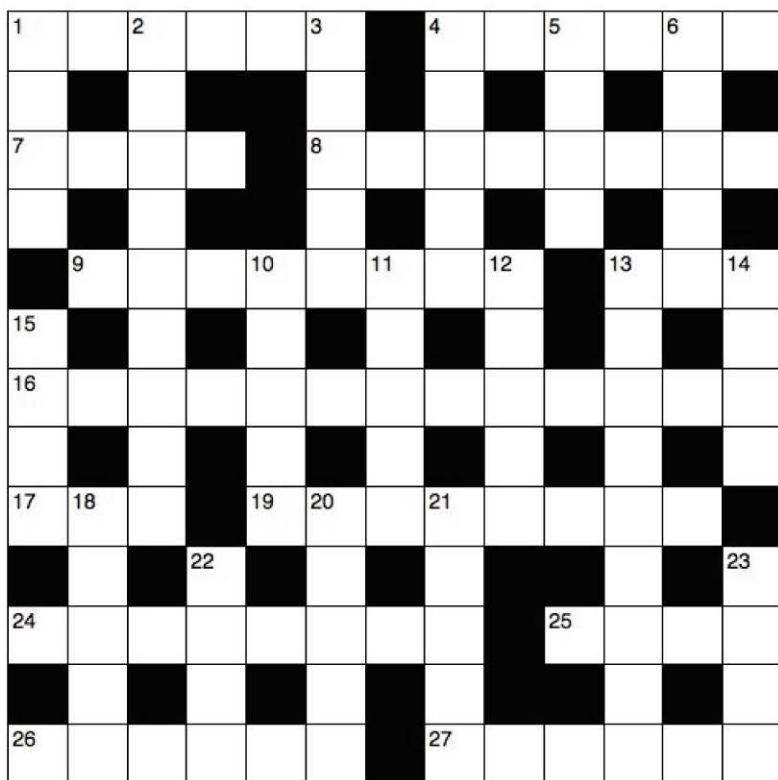


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	4			6			7
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7	3				6		
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7				2	1			3
		8	3	5				
		4						
	9	1			4			
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				8			1	5
							6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





Across

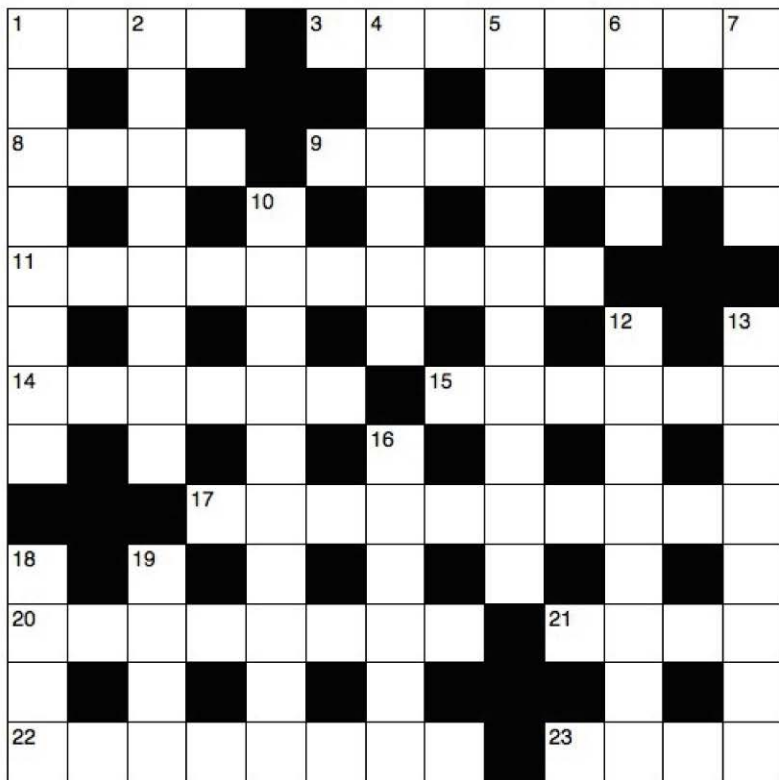
- 1 'I pray that out of his glorious — he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being' (Ephesians 3:16) (6)
- 4 'Saul's father Kish and — father Ner were sons of Abiel' (1 Samuel 14:51) (6)
- 7 'Praise the Lord, O my —' (Psalm 103:1) (4)
- 8 See 5 Down
- 9 Laws (1 Kings 11:33) (8)
- 13 'Who of you by worrying can — a single hour to his life?' (Luke 12:25) (3)
- 16 Artistry (Exodus 31:5) (13)
- 17 'Your young men will see visions, your — men will dream dreams' (Acts 2:17) (3)
- 19 How David described his Lord (Psalm 19:14) (8)
- 24 'If this city is built and its — restored, you will be left with nothing in Trans-Euphrates' (Ezra 4:16) (5,3)

- 25 'The holy Scriptures, which are able to make you — for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus' (2 Timothy 3:15) (4)
- 26 Intended destination of arrows (Lamentations 3:12) (6)
- 27 Eve hit (anag.) (6)

Down

- 1 'For I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find — for your souls' (Matthew 11:29) (4)
- 2 Where Peter was when he denied Christ three times (Luke 22:55) (9)
- 3 Remarkable early 20th-century Indian evangelist, a convert from Hinduism, — Sundar Singh (5)
- 4 'Now the king had put the officer on whose — — leaned in charge of the gate' (2 Kings 7:17) (3,2) and 8 Across
- 5 The Lover describes this facial feature of the Beloved thus:

- 'Your — is like the tower of Lebanon looking towards —' (Song of Songs 7:4) (4,8)
- 6 'Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled — your waist' (Ephesians 6:14) (5)
- 10 Trout (anag.) (5)
- 11 Easily frightened (1 Thessalonians 5:14) (5)
- 12 The ability to perceive (Ecclesiastes 10:3) (5)
- 13 One of the clans descended from Benjamin (Numbers 26:38) (9)14 "It is one of the Twelve," he replied, "one who — bread into the bowl with me" (Mark 14:20) (4)
- 15 Resound (Zephaniah 2:14) (4)
- 18 Traditional seat of the Dalai Lama (5)
- 20 Precise (John 4:53) (5)
- 21 Build (Ezekiel 4:2) (5)
- 22 Beat harshly (Acts 22:25) (4)
- 23 Darius, who succeeded Belshazzar as king of the Babylonians, was one (Daniel 5:31) (4)



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)

"The world and all
that is in it belong



to the Lord, the
earth and all who
live on it are His."

Psalms 24:1

Sudoku Easy...

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

Intermediate...

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

Crossword...

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

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

Wordsearch...

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

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

May the road rise up to meet you.
May the wind be always at your back.
May the sun shine warm upon your face;
the rains fall soft upon your fields
and until we meet again,
may God hold you in the palm of His hand.

Traditional Gaelic Blessing

Faith
LOVE
Hope

Rev Robin Selmes

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