



NEWSLETTER • ISSUE N° 286 • 2022 • 60p DONATION

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# Thatcham United Reformed Church

www.thatcham-urc.org.uk

Have you found us on Facebook? 



## Dear Friends,

**How are we all?** It feels like we are really emerging from the pandemic with the infection rates much lower now. Haven't we **come through** an awful time. However, in April we **celebrated** Easter and its true meaning for us. The Easter story is the crowning proof of Christianity and the pivotal story of our faith. We are still in the Easter season and following Ascension Day on 26<sup>th</sup> May, Easter will end when we celebrate **Pentecost and the gift of the Holy Spirit** on 5<sup>th</sup> June.

At the first Pentecost, the Holy Spirit was poured out onto those first disciples. As a **consequence**, through the miraculous Acts of the Apostles that took place, the **Church** was born and what was soon to be called Christianity spread far and wide. And so, **everything** changed.

Pentecost for us today is the celebration of the Holy Spirit coming into our lives too. It celebrates the **transforming** power of the Holy Spirit and its **continuing** presence in our midst and giving us a **deeper** sense of God. This is the gift of God available to all of us – to encounter the Spirit of truth, who is also the Spirit of Christ, and to enjoy his inner presence.

The experience of the Holy Spirit has changed the lives of millions of people down the centuries. It is one of God's **particular ways** of relating to the world. Alongside God the Father and Jesus his Son, the Spirit gave to people then, and gives to people now, an **experience** of God active in their midst. In the Bible in 1 Corinthians 12, we see the '**gifts** of the Spirit', and in Galatians 5 we see the '**fruit** of the Spirit'. They are all for the Church.

**There is also another big event on 5<sup>th</sup> June.** It is the **Queen's Platinum Jubilee**. We will be celebrating this special and historical event in our morning service that day. I think it is amazing

and more than a coincidence that Pentecost and the Platinum Jubilee are on **the same day**. Why? Because the Queen has often spoken of the guidance and strength of the Holy Spirit during her reign to **equip her** for her role, and to **prepare her** spiritually and emotionally.

A central part of her coronation service in 1953 was a sacred ceremony carried out under a canopy and thus screened from view. It was the **anointing** with oil. The sacred act symbolically sets people apart for service and pours out the **life and power** of God. She was to become a life empowered by the Holy Spirit for an **extraordinary** role. At the beginning of her reign the Queen asked people around the commonwealth to **pray** for her, that, 'she may **faithfully serve** God and her people'. She pledged that to her dying day she would be God's anointed servant. God has **answered** these prayers.

In Christmas broadcasts since then, the Queen has often spoken about Jesus Christ as the **real reason** for the celebrations. She **identified** herself as one of Jesus followers, 'a faithful witness to Jesus'. At her coronation she was reminded that she was not alone in this **monumental** task. The archbishop quoted the book of the Acts of the Apostles, where Jesus says 'you will **receive power** when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and you will be my witnesses everywhere and to the ends of the Earth'.

Those words, spoken by Jesus to his first century followers, **echo** through the ages, to promise God's power and presence to his followers **today**. And so, we will celebrate both **Pentecost** and the **Queens life of joyful faith and service**.

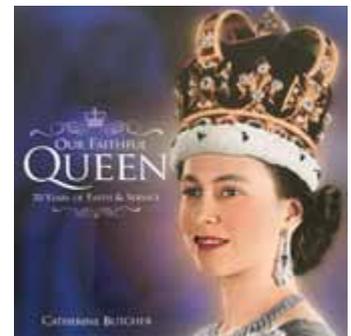
With love in the risen and ascended Lord Jesus Christ

**John**

### Sunday Worship

**JUNE** 10.30am unless specified

- 5 Revd John Lee, Communion
- 12 Revd Keri Eynon  
followed by Church Meeting
- 19 Revd John Lee
- 26 David Weller



### Elders Contact

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**Deadline for next issue: Sunday 12 June**

FAMILY NEWS AND  
FOR YOUR PRAYERS

We continue to think of the Wood family following the sudden death of Adrian's mum.

John's father, who has developed Covid while on the QE2.

Maggie Fidler, whose husband John died recently.

Margaret Gill who has had some time in respite care following a medical procedure.

All our elderly members and friends, some still struggling to return to normal life due to the Covid pandemic.

All teachers, students and school children at this time of exams.

Flowers from the church have been given with the love of us all to:

MAY: Jane (for her mum Jean Logan), Rosemary, Rachel, Sam (birthdays)



**Your Servant Elizabeth**

Gracious God, we give You thanks for the reign of Your servant Elizabeth our Queen, and for the example of loving and faithful service which she has shown among us. Help us to follow her example of dedication and to commit our lives to You and to one another, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



Christian Aid will spend £8m on vital supplies over the next six months to help the Ukrainian people.

The money comes from donations to DEC, the Disasters Emergency Committee, that has raised more than £300m for Ukraine. That's around £3 on average donated by every person in the UK.

Through its local partners, Christian Aid has already provided medical supplies, first aid kits, baby incubators as well as food and shelter for refugees in Ukraine and Hungary.

Ask God to refresh you if you are weary of the suffering in the world.

Ask God to replenish you.

Ask God to renew your resolve.

**Prayer**

God of all creation, we come, together or alone, longing to meet with you to be refreshed and restored, by the spring of living water, by the source of all life.

In your mercy, meet with us here. Amen.

**EMBRACE the Middle East**

*(extracts from Prayer Diary)*

5 June

It is 20 years since construction of the separation barrier began between Israel and the West Bank. The barrier has curtailed Palestinians' freedom to access employment and healthcare, and to cultivate their own land. We pray for peace with justice, and for equality of rights for Israelis and Palestinians.

12 June

Our partners' local knowledge means they can reach people overlooked by international humanitarian agencies. Please pray for the Middle East Council of Churches, helping marginalised women in Lebanon's most isolated areas to improve their lives through health education and vocational training.

19 June

Across our region of focus, Christians are reaching out to those on the fringes of society and showing them that they are seen, heard and valued. This week we pray for all who are marginalised, especially those facing multiple barriers to the enjoyment of their rights.

26 June

Employment opportunities are limited for disabled people in Palestine. Please pray for the Bethlehem Arab Society for Rehabilitation, working with jobseekers and employers to promote inclusion. They are currently helping two Vocational Training Centres to make their premises more accessible for disabled students.

**ST MUNGO'S EVEN LESSER**

On the 20th day of May  
In the Year of Our Lord  
2022

To Uncle Eustace

Rector

St James the Least of All



Dear Uncle,

Thank you for your prolific advice with regard to the Parish Picnic. Fortunately it has now been arranged, so no alterations may be made.

The coach will take the party to Freshwinds Farm, (a two hour journey), where a fish and chip lunch will be provided in the comfort of the barn. Following a tour of the animals, (pigs and chickens), the return journey will be interrupted by a stop for refreshment at the lay-by off Nettlewood Road. Thence home. The weather should not cause any problems.

Your nephew, Darren

**ST. JAMES THE LEAST OF ALL  
from The Rectory**



My dear Nephew Darren

This has been an unusual month: we have moved from hysterical excitement to deep disappointment within the space of days.

For many years, our vestry has displayed an oil painting generously donated by the Dowager Duchess of Stansby – given to us, I suspect, because her son, the tenth Duke, would not allow it in his house. It was

supposed to depict Daniel in the lions' den, although I always thought it looked more like a prospective adopter visiting a dog rescue centre. The Dowager was less than pleased when it wasn't made the centrepiece in the sanctuary, but we managed to persuade her that her exceptional work of art would be safer from theft if locked away.

Then - our cleaner happened to knock it off the wall. If it had landed in her bucket of disinfectant and been totally destroyed, it would have been a sadness I suspect I could have learned to bear. But something more interesting happened. Some of the Dowager's oil was chipped off – to reveal a painting underneath of what looked like a cherub.

The cleaner told the churchwarden, who instructed her not to tell anyone about the find. This inevitably meant that, within the

hour, the entire parish knew of the discovery of what had already been transformed into a priceless pre-Raphaelite treasure. Our churchwarden has yet to learn the fact that if you tell someone something in complete confidence, they assume it means they can only tell one other person at a time.

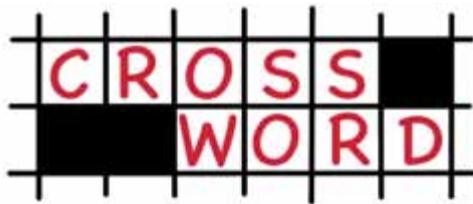
By evening, mutually opposed camps had already formed. Miss Timmins wanted the treasure to be placed in a side chapel, as a shrine, preferably with candles permanently burning beside it. She envisaged St James the Least of All becoming a place of pilgrimage, and that this yet-to-be revealed cherub may work miracles of healing. She was already asking for opinions about where the car park should be built to cater for the thousands of tourists who would soon be flocking here. Another group wanted to sell it as soon as possible

and use the money to repair our church tower. A third group insisted the fortune it would raise be given to African missionaries. Meanwhile, the tenth Duke was consulting his solicitors to see how he might get the canvas back to his castle.

We compromised by getting the thing X-rayed, to see what work of art lay underneath. It turned out to be by a local artist who had painted an advert for the village pharmacist to sell his own brand of gripe water.

Shrines, towers and good deeds were quietly forgotten and the last we heard of the tenth Duke was that he was consulting a second set of solicitors to see if he can get out of paying the first set for the work that they had done to retrieve the painting.

Your loving uncle,  
Eustace



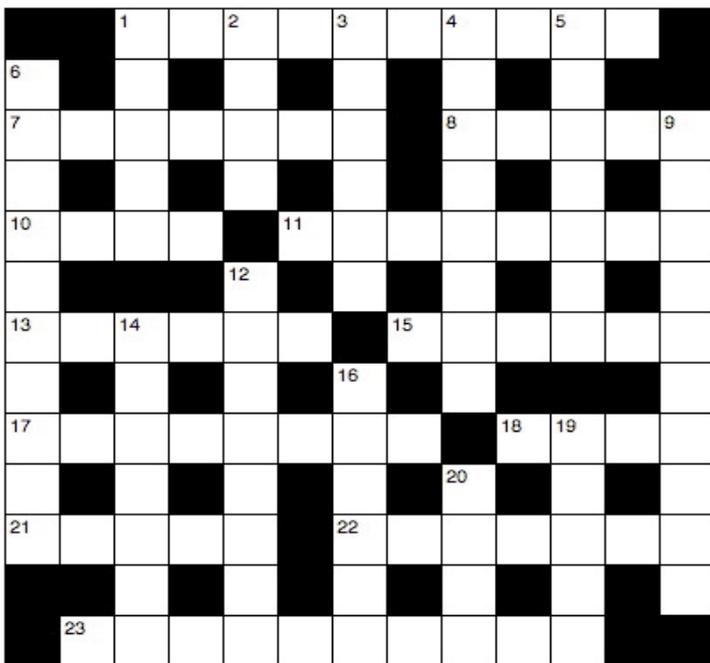
**Across**

- 1 Evil (Genesis 6:5) (10)
- 7 Musician called for by Elisha when he met the kings of Israel, Judah and Edom (2 Kings 3:15) (7)
- 8 The request that led to the institution of the Lord's Prayer: 'Lord, — us to pray' (Luke 11:1) (5)
- 10 'We are hard pressed on every—' (2Corinthians4:8)(4)
- 11 Fraud (2Corinthians6:8)(8)
- 13 'His troops advance in force;they build a siege ramp against me and — around my tent' (Job 19:12) (6)
- 15 Where Rachel hid Laban's household gods when he searched his daughter's tent (Genesis 31:34) (6)
- 17 'Now about spiritual gifts,brothers,I do not want you to be—' (1 Corinthians 12:1) (8)
- 18 Nomadic dwelling(Genesis26:25)(4)
- 21 'As for man,his days are like—he flourishes like a flower of the field' (Psalm 103:15) (5)
- 22 Or I live (anag.)(7)
- 23 Those guilty of 1 Across(Romans13:4)(10)

**Down**

- 1 'God so loved the — that he gave his one and only Son' (John 3:16) (5)
- 2 'Away in a manger, no — for a bed' (4)
- 3 Mob ten (anag.)(6)
- 4 'Each — group made its own gods in several towns where they settled' (2 Kings 17:29) (8)
- 5 Began (Luke 9:46) (7)
- 6 Speaking very softly (John 7:32) (10)
- 9 Workers Ruth joined when she arrived in Bethlehem with her mother-in-law Naomi (Ruth 2:3) (10)
- 12 Put in jail(Acts22:19)(8)
- 14 Aceturn(anag.)(7)
- 16 Discharge(Acts21:3)(6)
- 19 'All these—come from inside and make a man "unclean"' (Mark 7:23) (5)
- 20 'Let us rejoice and be glad and — him glory!'(Revelation19:7)(4)

*Answers next page*



A father is a banker provided by nature. - French proverb

The child had every toy his father wanted. - Robert C. Whitten



*News from our*

**'Roving Reporter'**



As you may have seen in the local press on lobbying of the banks "Ban All New Fossil Fuel Investment" .

A spokesperson said - they were financing investment and not enough in renewable energy.

A report by a coalition of NGO's last year revealed that the world's 60 largest banks worldwide have pumped over \$3.8 trillion into the fossil fuel industry since the Paris Agreement in 2016 which aims to keep the global rise in temperature to below 2°C.

Barclays: We are aligning our entire financing portfolio to support the goals of the Goals of the Paris Agreement.

Nat West Group is determined to play a leading role in addressing the climate challenge by helping to end the most harmful activities and supporting our customers in the transition to a non-carbon economy.

We will only continue to bank oil and gas majors that have a credible transition plan in line with the Paris Agreement in place.

It all sounds a very spirited response, but the proof is in the action! HSBC had not responded.

Metro were contacted in February, but a response is still awaiting from their HQ. The Newbury Building Society say they do not get involved in such investments.

Meanwhile, the Coop, as Tricia Davis their Fair Trade expert and our supporter says, they still operate in an ethical way.

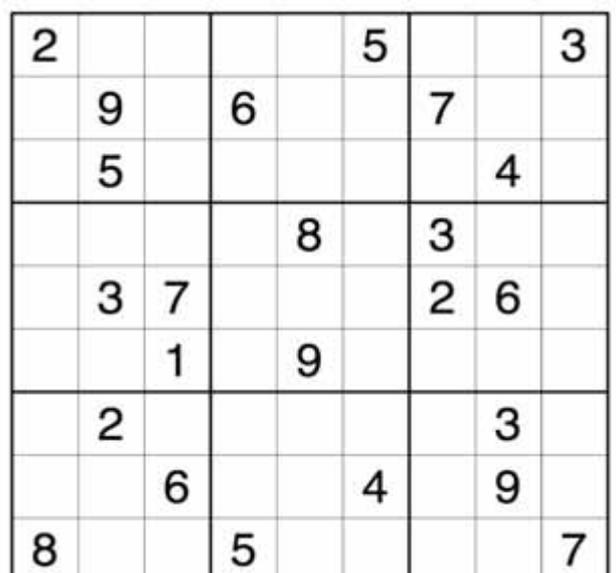
NWN letter - a key issue in enabling our climate objectives is to choose a bank with good ethical investment record.

Question for church meeting and our Environmental Policy. - Suggestion for a speaker on climate change!

*Graeme*

**Kennet Community Lunch**  
**12.30-1.45 £3**  
**Wednesday 22 June**

**INTERMEDIATE**



# All in the month of June

250 years ago, on 22nd June 1772 that the Court of King's Bench ruled that slavery was illegal in England and Wales. But it remained legal in British Overseas Territories and colonies until 1833.

100 years ago, on 10th June 1922 that Judy Garland, American actress and singer, was born. Best known for her films The Wizard of Oz and Meet Me in St Louis. Died 1969.

Also 100 years ago, from 28th June 1922 to 24th May 1923, that the Irish Civil War took place. Led to Pro-Treaty leading to confirmation of the Irish Free State.

80 years ago, from 4th-7th June 1942 that the Battle of Midway took place. The USA defeated Japan in the most important naval battle of the Pacific Campaign.

75 years ago, on 5th June 1947 that the Marshall Plan was proposed. US Secretary of State George C Marshall offered a self-help programme to Europe that would enable countries to rebuild democratic societies and resist communism after WWII.

65 years ago, on 1st June 1957 that the first premium bond prize draw took place in Britain.

Also 65 years ago, on 27th June 1957 that Britain's Medical Research Council reported that there was a cause-and-effect relationship between smoking and lung cancer.

50 years ago, on 17th June 1972 that the Watergate Scandal began when five men were arrested for breaking into the Democratic National Committee headquarters at the Watergate complex in Washington DC.

40 years ago, on 14th June 1982 that the Falklands War ended. Argentine forces surrendered to the British in Port Stanley and a ceasefire was agreed. Argentine president Leopold Galtieri resigned on 17th June.

Also 40 years ago, on 21st June 1982 that Prince William of Wales was born. Son of Charles and Diana, he is second-in-line to the British throne.

25 years ago, on 12th June 1997 that Shakespeare's Globe Theatre opened in London. It is a reconstruction of the original theatre of 1599.

Also 25 years ago, on 26th June 1997 that J K Rowling's first Harry Potter novel, Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone was published in the UK.

15 years ago, on 27th June 2007 that Gordon Brown became British Prime Minister.

Also 15 years ago, on 29th June 2007, that Apple released the first iPhone.

10 years ago, on 24th June 2012, that Lonesome George, the male Pinta Island tortoise died. The last-known member of his species, Lonesome George serves as an important symbol for conservation efforts around the world, and particularly in the Galapagos Islands.

## Crossword Answers

ACROSS: 1, Wickedness. 7, Harpist. 8, Teach. 10, Side. 11, Impostor. 13, Encamp. 15, Saddle. 17, Ignorant. 18, Tent. 21, Grass. 22, Olivier. 23, Wrongdoers.

DOWN: 1, World. 2, Crib. 3, Entomb. 4, National. 5, Started. 6, Whispering. 9, Harvesters. 12, Imprison. 14, Centaur. 16, Unload. 19, Evils, 20, Give.

## Prayer for Divestment from Fossil

### Fuels

Diana Paulding

The fuels that we dug from your earth drove revolution and let us build industries

and create new things. Let us give thanks for the benefits they brought, but accept that it is time to let them go. And having given thanks, let us build a future where you guide us through wind, tide and sun to energy

that does not exhaust your earth. We pray for a renewed and renewable world, where politicians are willing to embrace new ways and we are prepared to let go of practices that do not serve your Kingdom.

Amen.

Commitment  
for Life



On Saturday 9 July 2022,  
from 10am to 12noon,  
come to  
Gill & Alan Mossman's  
home and have

# Coffee and Bacon Rolls

## What better way to start a Saturday!

Gill & Alan Mossman  
19 Victor Road

No charge - donations  
for Thatcham URC  
Refurbishment Fund



# Wordsearch for June

This year Her Majesty The Queen became the first British Monarch to celebrate a Platinum Jubilee marking 70 years of service to the people of the United Kingdom, the Realms and the Commonwealth.

Platinum Jubilee Beacons: The United Kingdom's long tradition of celebrating Royal Jubilees, Weddings and Coronations with the lighting of beacons will also continue. Over 1,500 beacons will be lit throughout the United Kingdom, Channel Islands, Isle of Man and UK Overseas Territories.

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

- Majesty Commonwealth
- Queen Celebrations
- First
- British Birthday
- Monarch Parade
- Trooping
- Platinum Colour
- Jubilee Soldiers
- Seventy
- Years Horses
- Service Buckingham
- Palace
- United Balcony
- Kingdom beacons
- Realms

# Easy sudoku

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

The ability to speak several languages is an asset, but to be able to hold your tongue in one language is priceless. - Anon

# Obituary: Walter Brisk 1928-2021

We have recently found out that Walter Brisk died on 1st October 2021 aged 93 years. His funeral was held on 15th October at Rochdale Crematorium at 1-40p.m. followed by a Church Service at 2-15p.m. at Bamford Chapel. Donations in his memory were made to Cancer Research and Spring Hill Hospice.

He spent his early years in Liverpool where he was involved in the 10th Liverpool Boys' Brigade before moving to Thatcham to work as a Music Teacher at Kennet School.

Here he was the Congregational Church Choirmaster from 1959-61 and in January 1959 founded the 1st Thatcham Boys Brigade with the help of Arthur Smith and Peter Digweed before moving to Gloucestershire. In 1970 he became Head of Durnford High School in Middlleton and lived in Bamford joining Bamford Chapel where he conducted the Church choir for many years, established a Boys Brigade Company and was a Deacon and later a Church Elder.

He is survived by his wife Glenda,

his two sons Mervyn and Phil and their wives, his 7 grandchildren and their partners and 8 great-grandchildren. He had recently celebrated 70 years of marriage to Glenda who he married when she was just 16.

Whilst we are saddened by the news of his passing, we are grateful for his Christian service particularly with the Boys' Brigade and thankful that he is now at rest with his heavenly Captain.

**David Brazier & Iris Matthews**

Photographs supplied by Iris, shows Walter Brisk, Arthur Smith and Peter Digweed at dedication of first set of 1st Thatcham BB Colours which now hang on Church wall over left side of pulpit.

*Acknowledgements*  
Sources of Information  
Dignity Funeral Director  
Bamford Chapel & Norden URC  
Newsletter November 2021  
BB



*Thatcham Life Boys and Leaders before holiday at St Mary's Bay, Kent, 1962. John Boyd, mayor of Thatcham is front row, 3rd from left. Iris Matthews on left and Barbara Smith on right.*



*1st Thatcham Boys Brigade and Life Boys, April 1962, with new colours*



*Boys' Brigade Captain and Officers, April 1962, Walter Brisk is middle back row*



*Life Boys at St Mary's Bay station on the Hythe-Dungeness railway, 1962. John Boyd is front row, 3rd from left*

## Iris Matthews Lifetime Award



*On 5th May, Iris was presented with a Lifetime Award by the Mayor, John Boyd, a former member of the Life Boys in the photos above. Well done Iris!*



# John and Rachel at Spring Harvest – 18-22 April 2022

On Easter Monday, after a wonderful Resurrection celebration we joined with thousands of Christians from all denominations at Spring Harvest to worship, learn and be refreshed. This was the first time since 2019 that the event had been able to occur, so there was a great deal of excitement in the air.

Spring Harvest takes place at Butlins in Minehead (and also Skegness, which is more bracing) where there are opportunities for fun (fairground, high ropes, swimming, bowling alley, 5-a-side football), as well as chatting with church groups and friends in one of the many coffee bars. The aim of Spring Harvest is to equip the Church, to help make us ready for what God is calling us to do. Many come to Spring Harvest from small and medium-sized churches, and it is a great thing to realise that they are not alone, and we can all strengthen each other.

Ages range from 0 to, let's say, 90+! There are children's groups of all ages, with experienced leaders, and splendid active sessions of All Age Worship, which start the day. Scooters whizz around the site, children weaving in and out of the

routes of the mobile scooters of the grey-haired.

This year, being more cautious about large gatherings following the pandemic, the meetings for Bible teaching in the mornings and worship celebrations in the evenings were held in the new purpose-built huge spacious warehouse called Studio 36, which accommodated comfortably 2000 people. We often queued for half an hour before entering!

The main theme was 'Restore, renew and rebuild', using the book of Nehemiah to show us how. As the Church enters a season of change, how do we create a more hopeful, faith-filled future? What is our vision? We need to restore our hearts, renew our focus and rebuild our world. The challenge is to see the need and do the tasks which are in front of us so that the Church can thrive and join in God's heart for restoring all things.

We were privileged to hear well-known speakers who possess gifts of wisdom and insight give inspiring talks on contemporary issues such as refugees, fake news and human identity. The 'Kintsugi' man (remember a previous 'Dear Friends' letter) talked about well-being and

mental health. So many opportunities to learn and grow in faith ... but not enough time in just 4 days to do everything!

We would spend many happy hours in the comprehensive resources centre looking at (and purchasing) many books and Christian gifts, and also visiting the exhibition stands - charities such as Open Doors and MAF (John supports), and Care for the Family (Rachel).

From experience, we know that there also needs to be times of reflection and drawing away from talks and heightened experiences. And lo, just across the road 'Behold, the sea!' especially beautiful first thing in the morning.

We have been to Spring Harvest many times, sometimes in a big group, and in these last few years, just as a couple. We go in expectation, knowing that God will speak - through his Word, through the music, through prayer. As we travel, we also wonder who of our many friends/acquaintances from past years we shall meet and how we shall all be used to encourage each other. This year we saw Karen Frost

from the Methodist church, who was working on the Count Everyone In team, making Spring Harvest accessible for all (as seen on Songs of Praise), a school colleague of Rachel's who was volunteering as a steward, a couple who used to sing in the Reading Phoenix Choir (he is a vicar, so there was lots of mutual support) and a couple with whom we travelled to Oberammergau in 2010!

Each of these encounters led to conversations which enriched our experience of Spring Harvest this year. People are living out God's calling to them, in their situation, being faithful through life's highs and lows. Perhaps you heard some stories from people interviewed on Songs of Praise on 9 May. We came away encouraged, determined to be more disciplined in our discipleship and to 'press on towards the goal' of our high calling in Jesus.

1 and 2: The site (with some help from BBC cameras). 3: Our chalet. 4: The wonderful resources centre. 5: Queue for the main meeting - yellow is always a good colour! 6: (crowded hall) We are in here somewhere! 7 and 8: in studio 36. 9: the sea and headland





## Around our church

### THE THREE WIVES OF JOHN BARFIELD

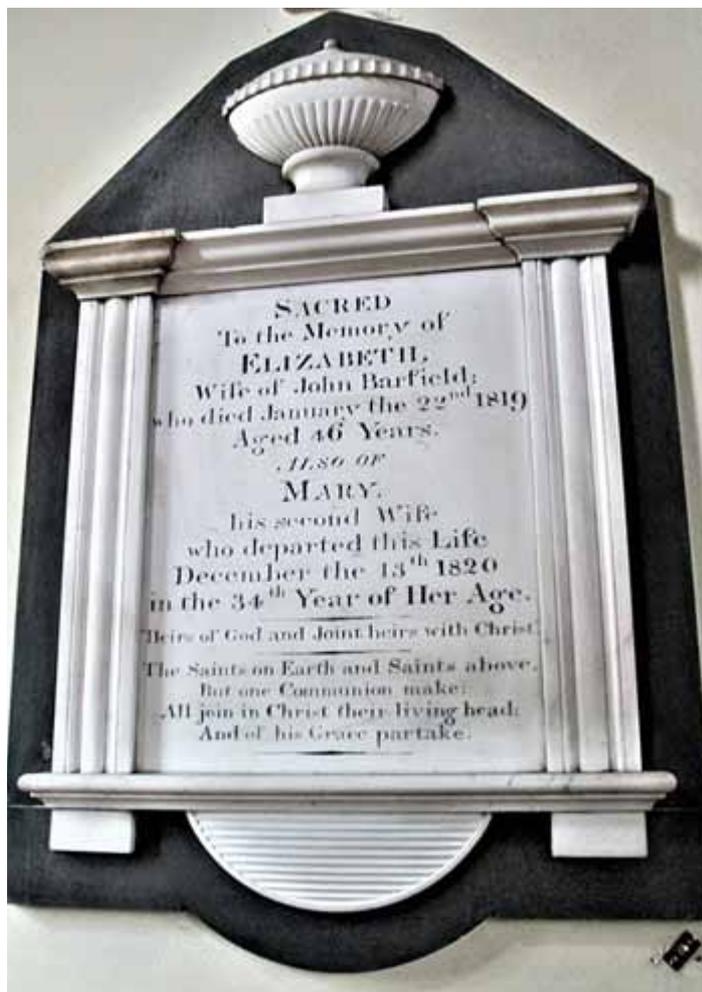
Further to last month's article on John Barfield, I think that a little more should be recorded in this newsletter about the three women to whom John was married during his years in Thatcham.

The first wife was Elizabeth Leach. She was baptized on 17th September 1772 (during the reign of King George III) at Brandon, Suffolk, near Thetford (Norfolk). She was twenty-three years of age when she married John on 22nd Aug 1795, also at Brandon. They were married for just over twenty-three years but apparently, there were no children from the marriage. Elizabeth died 22nd January 1819 and was buried eight days later in the front garden of our church.

The second wife was Mary Summers, possibly born in Gloucestershire in 1786. Her father was Revd William Summers of Wickwar, Gloucestershire. Mary & John were married at Wickwar on 2nd March 1820. Tragically, Mary died in childbirth on 13th December that same year, aged thirty-four. She was buried nine days later in the front garden of our church.

There is a monument of both these ladies on the south wall of the organ bay in our church, with this epitaph –

*Heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ,  
The Saints on Earth and Saints above  
But one communion make:  
All join in Christ, their living head  
And of His grace partake.*



Sarah Barfield, third wife of John, was forty-nine when John died in 1851. At that time their son Samuel was living with them at The Priory. It seems that not long after John's death, both Sarah and Samuel moved from Thatcham. By 1861 Samuel, then a qualified solicitor, was living at Regent Street Club Chambers, Westminster. In 1867 Samuel married Isabel Charlotte Martin: they had moved to Lewisham by 1871.

No trace of Sarah Barfield is evident in the censuses for 1861 and 1871 but she may also have moved from Thatcham to Lewisham, Kent. She died at Blackheath, Lewisham, on 14th October 1877 (aged seventy-five) and is buried in the Ladywell cemetery, Lewisham. A gravestone stands at the head of her grave. It includes the inscription - Sarah Barfield, widow of John Barfield of The Priory, Thatcham, Berks. **RBT**

## RIDE + STRIDES for Churches

**Does your church need extra funding?**

**If so read on....**

Berkshire Historic Churches Trust (BHCT) helps churches in Berkshire by giving grants to help with restoration projects.

Our funds are raised through subscriptions (from churches and individuals), from events held during the year and from our annual

sponsored Ride & Stride event in September, this year it is happening on Saturday 10th.

People find a route visiting various churches by walking, cycling, driving and it is often lovely weather and a great day out. Our churches have such a wealth of wonderful architecture, they are well worth a visit.

For every Rider and Strider signed up by your church who raises money through sponsorship, your church will receive half of the total raised.

The other half goes to the Berkshire Historic Churches Trust (BHCT)

Everyone in BHCT is a volunteer who is keen to see our precious churches preserved, please join us in this quest.

For more information please visit our website: [berkschurchestrust.org.uk/ride-and-stride](http://berkschurchestrust.org.uk/ride-and-stride)

**Prue Matchwick**  
Berkshire Ride & Stride Co-ordinator



# Vintage Adventure

42 of us celebrated the Queen's Platinum Jubilee at Vintage Adventure on 19 May. As you can see from the photos, we set up the church like a street party. The children from Pied Piper Preschool sang to us, and even wrote a song especially for our party, sung to the tune 'What shall we do with the drunken sailor!' We had six younger volunteers -Year 4 pupils at Thatcham Park CE Primary School, who joined us to help, in particular with the craft and to serve tea to our guests. They were fantastic ambassadors for their school. Every king and queen needs a crown so we coloured and stuck on jewels to decorate cardboard crowns.

We sung three hymns and reflected on Matthew 22:15-22; all included in the Queen's coronation.

We enjoyed afternoon tea generously donated by Waitrose. We toasted Her Majesty with non-alcoholic fizz and sang The National Anthem. The new mayor, Councillor Jeff Brooks visited and chatted with everyone. We waved our flags and sang 'Rule Britannia' and 'Land of Hope and Glory', and closed the party with a blessing.

One guest told me, "I haven't had as much fun as this since I arrived in Thatcham 5 years ago."

Another said, "it's so lovely being with the children. Can they come again?" It was truly an intergenerational event and we hope to build on our relationship with Thatcham Park Primary School in the coming months.

**Karen Frost & the Vintage Adventure Team**



THE QUEEN'S  
PLATINUM JUBILEE 2022

The Churches of Thatcham invite you to

## The Big Jubilee Lunch

**Sunday 5 June 10am – 4pm**  
**Kennet School Field, Stoney Lane, Thatcham**  
 (inside if wet)

**Family Games & Activities**  
**Local Community Stalls**  
**Free Barbecue in our Marquee**  
**Live Music & Good News Stories**  
 on our Stage featuring 8-piece band *The Sense*

**Three Competitions** with prizes presented by the Mayor of Thatcham:

- ❖ **Jubilee Crown**  
Wear your crown with pride. The brighter, the better. Take part in the parade after lunch!
- ❖ **Jubilee Cake**  
Bring along your cake. Enter it in the competition. Share it out after lunch!
- ❖ **Five-a-side Football**  
Competition starts at 10.30am. Play for the honour of your team!  
To enter a team, please contact us on 07922 170503 by 29 May.

# The Big Day Out at Hollycombe – 7 May 2022



To celebrate the Jubilee (50 years) of the URC, Wessex Synod hired the site of Hollycombe Steam Fair near Liphook. It was billed as 'a great day out for all the family and for all ages', and so it was. There was plenty to do – synod marquees, outdoor games, and a bouncy castle on the upper field, and the main fairground attractions and the train, all powered by steam near the entrance.



There were interactive zones, workshops, including a pop-up choir (see Graeme there), and worship times with brass band at the start and with worship group to end the day. In the middle of the day the fairground rides, especially the carousel, were a big attraction, and every train ride was full of excited passengers of all ages! Others found time to explore the woodland gardens and the labyrinth and take part in the treasure hunt.



Our church was represented by John and Rachel and Graeme. John and Rachel's daughters and grandchildren also came to enjoy the festivities, and it was good to see friends from other URCs in the area. The photos give some idea of the fun that was had.



Thank you to all who organised the event.



# Hollycombe cont'd



## Mouse Makes

It was the festival of Pentecost, fifty days since Passover and Jews from many countries had come to Jerusalem to celebrate. The Apostles and other believers were all together in one place when they heard a sound like a strong wind and saw what looked like tongues of fire which spread out and touched each person. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to talk in other languages as the Spirit enabled them. A crowd gathered outside, they were all excited because each of them heard the believers speaking in their own language about the great things God had done. About 3,000 people heard, believed and were baptised that day!

Read the full story in Acts 2:1-11

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

*All the words in bold type in the story are in the word search, can you find them?*

## The Best Seat

JESUS OFTEN TOLD STORIES WITH HIDDEN MEANINGS

PLEASE COME TO MY PARTY

ON ONE OCCASION JESUS TOLD THE STORY ABOUT SOME PARTY INVITATIONS

HE EXPLAINED THAT WHEN YOU ARE INVITED TO A MEAL

IN-CASE YOU ARE ASKED TO MOVE DOWN THE TABLE

DON'T RUSH TO SIT IN THE BEST SEAT...

IT'S MUCH BETTER TO TAKE THE LOWER SEAT

...AND THEN FIND YOU ARE ASKED TO MOVE UP.

JESUS EXPLAINED THAT WE SHOULDN'T KEEP PUSHING OURSELVES TO THE FRONT.

AS CHRISTIANS WE SHOULD ALWAYS TRY TO PUT OTHER PEOPLE FIRST. Read Luke 11:7-11



*St Mary's Church, September 17-18th 2022*

## Mousefest!

Mousefest is a joint fundraising project between Thatcham URC & St Mary's. It was inspired by a similar event that Kate & Esther visited early in Spring at a friend's church near Bristol.

The idea is that we create a number of tableaux featuring knitted, themed mice, to represent the life of our churches, we then display them over the weekend, welcoming people to visit, offering refreshments and other activities and selling the mice for collection after the event.

So, to kick off we need- knitters, sewers, stuffers & finishers.

The mice are all knitted using the same basic pattern but finished to represent the themes, and, because we are sharing our skills, if you would prefer to just knit or sew, that's fine, just let us know how you would like to help. We can supply patterns, wool, needles & stuffing if needed. We would also welcome any donations of double knit & 4ply wool.

There are a couple of other ideas that we would like to get underway now, could you build us a replica tower for our Bell Ringer Mice??- basic & simple is what we're looking for!

We would also like someone to take on refreshment co-ordinating, we will be offering tea, coffee & cake to all visitors so need someone to organise cakes in advance & the kitchen during the weekend.

Nearer the time, we will be asking for volunteers to help welcome, steward, bake cakes & serve refreshments.

What a wonderful way to join together to share our ministry with the community of Thatcham.

If you can help in any way, please let us know.

Esther Lewis- URC

Kate Jones – St Mary's

Email [thatchammousefest@gmail.com](mailto:thatchammousefest@gmail.com)

Tel 01635 861332



# URC Wessex Synod: Sharing the Vision

## ***How do you study the Bible with people who have no faith background?***

Sharing Jesus is an evangelism resource designed to help you introduce Jesus in a group setting.

To find out more and learn how to use this resource in your context, join us for one of our free Fresh Expressions SHARING JESUS WORKSHOPS!

- Wednesday 15th June, 1pm
- Monday 4th July, 7:30pm
- Wednesday 21st Sept, 1pm
- Thursday 20th Oct, 7:30pm
- Tuesday 8th Nov, 1pm
- Monday 5th Dec, 7:30pm

These workshops are a great opportunity to invite your friends, congregation members, small group and leadership team to, so that you can think through the next steps of introducing spiritual content into what you're already doing.

## ***Generating Income and Grant Applications – 1st October***

Sat 1st October 2022 – 10am–4pm in Bristol (in person)

This ACAT course is for those who are looking to source funding for their church or for a church project. It has been designed to provide delegates with the skills and confidence required to identify potential sources of funding before successfully applying for it.

The day long course will cover such topics as:

- Objectives, permissions, and processes.
- What funders look for.
- Where funding sources can be found.
- Practical advice on applying for funding.

Further details and to book a place visit: [www.acat.uk.com/product/generating-income-and-grant-applications/](http://www.acat.uk.com/product/generating-income-and-grant-applications/)

## ***Hybrid Church Meet-up Wednesday 8th June: 7.30–9pm Come along to YOUR space to share and learn.***

Share ideas and good practice  
Hear valuable, experienced input.  
Gain inspiration on Children's and Youth Work, Community Outreach, Technology and Worship

For more information contact

Jenny Mills

Zoom Meeting ID: 892 8553 7599  
Passcode: 655777

Church at the Edge - Thursday 9th June at 1.30pm

If you are a busy activist, a passionate disciple, a minister, and/or engaged in community ministry (however you might chose to interpret that term), and need a space to meet with others, to be inspired and to be open and honest about current difficulties, and to seek support from each other in living through these challenging times, then please sign up for the third series of monthly Zoom sessions, brought to you by Church Action on Poverty and the URC's 'New Reality Same Mission' group (CRCW, Church & Society, Children's & Youth, Walking the Way).

Sign up to receive further information and reminders for each session here: <https://forms.gle/9kdPpVtQgy1PRqiu9>

Our next session will be led by Eunice Attwood, Church at the Margins Coordinator for the Methodist Church in conversation with an inspiring local leader, exploring what it means to be a Church at the Margins in practice.

Eunice brings over twenty years' experience of ordained diaconal ministry from a variety of contexts, including city- and town-centred ministry amongst marginalised and vulnerable communities, where she helped start and grow many fresh expressions of church. Serving as the Vice-President of the British Conference in 2010-2011, she has significant experience of working with diverse groups of people across the Methodist Connexion.

Over the last eight years, Eunice has been the Tutor in Pastoral Theology at the Queen's Foundation for Ecumenical Theological Education, Birmingham. She is also one of the launch team leaders for New Inclusive Church Birmingham, a church plant started out of a deep commitment to living out the love of Jesus in practical, unexpected, and transforming ways.

The final session of this series will be on 14th July: Poverty Truth Commission - Lucy Zwolinska

Lucy will reflect on her two years as facilitator of the Gateshead

Poverty Truth Commission, which recently had it's final 'celebration event'.

## ***New show from LAMPS Collective this summer!***

Salt & Light is a dynamic ensemble-based drama exploring how a small fishing community on the shore of lake Galilee is thrown into confusion by the advent of a radical new teacher - his miracles, healings and teaching. The same questions are on everyone's lips: Who is this man? Can we believe in him? And if we can't, can we believe in what he does?..

Packed full of shanties, stories and spoken word, Salt and Light is a great show for reaching out to your whole community this summer.

For more details please see Salt and Light - Lamps Collective or email Gillian on [bookings@lampscollective.com](mailto:bookings@lampscollective.com)

## ***The URC's 50th Jubilee Service of Thanksgiving and Celebration***

If you asked for a seat or two to be reserved for the October 1 service, you should now have received an email from Eventbrite with your ticket/s. Please keep these safe as the codes will be needed to gain entry to the venue. You can bring a print out of the PDF or show them on your phone. You can also visit the Eventbrite website to amend the number of tickets required or cancel them if needed.

More than 600 tickets have been reserved and so if you have yet to reserve any, please do so soon:

All the details can be found at: <https://urc.org.uk/who-we-are/our-50th-anniversary/>



## Intercession for Ukraine



God of all peoples and nations,  
Who created all things alive and breathing,  
United and whole,  
Show us the way of peace that is  
Your overwhelming presence.  
We hold before you the peoples of  
Ukraine and Russia,  
Every child and every adult.  
We long for the time  
When weapons of war are beaten  
into ploughshares  
When nations no longer lift up  
sword against nation.  
We cry out to you for peace;  
Protect those who only desire and  
deserve to live in security and safety  
Comfort those who fear for their  
lives and the lives of their loved ones  
Be with those who are bereaved.  
Change the hearts of those set on  
violence and aggression  
And fill leaders with the wisdom that  
leads to peace.  
Kindle again in us a love of our  
neighbour,  
And a passion for justice to prevail  
and a renewed recognition that we  
all play a part in peace.  
Creator of all hear our prayer  
And bring us peace. Make us whole.  
Amen

Lord God, we ask for you to be with  
all – especially children who are  
suffering as the crisis in Ukraine  
deteriorates. Lord for those who are  
anxious and fearful. For those who  
are bereaved, injured or who have  
lost their lives. And for those who  
have lost loved ones.  
Amen



# What the papers say...

## **EARLIEST-KNOWN EAR OPERATION TOOK PLACE IN STONE AGE**

By James Badcock in Madrid, *Daily Telegraph*, 15th March 2022

Stone Age surgeons carried out what may have been the earliest ear operation, cutting through bone with a hot flint to drain an internal infection, Spanish archaeologists have discovered.

The skull of a woman uncovered at a 6,000-year-old megalithic burial mound near Burgos has revealed signs of what would have been a brutally blunt medical procedure. Researchers discovered that the woman underwent the same procedure on both sides of her skull around 5,300 years ago, moving back the first-known example of ear surgery close to four millennia from operations performed in the proto-Byzantine era in Greece.

After examining the skull found at El Pendón dolmen in 2018, researchers concluded that the woman had two mastoidectomy surgeries, in which a hole is made in the skull to access the middle ear. The study on the skull is published in the journal *Nature*.

## **ASSANGE LOSES BID TO APPEAL US EXTRADITION**

From *Daily Telegraph*, 15th March 2022

Julian Assange has been denied permission to appeal against the High Court's decision in December 2021 to extradite him to the United States, the Supreme court has confirmed.

Yesterday, the UK's highest court said that senior judges had refused Assange's bid to challenge the decision as his application did not raise "an arguable point of law".

Assange, 50, is wanted in USA over an alleged conspiracy to obtain and disclose national defence information following WikiLeaks' publication of documents relating to the Afghanistan and Iraq wars.

## **UK COURT BACKS CARIBBEAN GAY MARRIAGE BAN**

By David Millward, *US Correspondent*, *Daily Telegraph*, 15th March 2022

The Privy Council has dealt a double blow to supporters of gay marriage by upholding the ban enforced by the governments of Bermuda and the Cayman Islands.

Supporters of same-sex marriage had asked the Council, which acts as the final Court of Appeal for British territories, to declare the bans unconstitutional.

Same-sex marriages have been legal in England and Wales since March 2014, Scotland in December 2014 and Northern Ireland since January 2020.

The Cayman Islands and Bermuda, in the socially conservative Caribbean, are two of five British Overseas Territories where gay marriage is still outlawed.

Much of the legislation dates back to the anti-sodomy laws when the islands were still British colonies. In Bermuda, the 2018 Domestic Partnership Act, which allowed civil partnerships but outlawed gay marriage, was declared unconstitutional by the island's Supreme Court.

The Bermuda Government argued that partnerships offered the same protections as marriage and that the ban was supported by a substantial proportion of the island's 60,000 population. Four out of five of the Privy Council judges agreed, ruling that the island's constitution does not require the government to recognize same-sex marriage and that the Act did not interfere with freedom of conscience.

The judges accepted that the historical background of marriage is "one of stigmatization, denigration and victimization of gay people and that the restriction of marriage to opposite-sex couples may create among gay people a sense of exclusion and stigma" but they argued that other countries' constitutions could not be applied to Bermuda.

In the Cayman Islands, which has a population of approximately 70,000, the gay activists there believed they had secured the right to same-sex marriage in March 2019 following a ruling by the chief justice, Anthony Smellie. He ruled the government's ban was illegal, upholding a case brought by two women - Chantelle Day and Vickie Bodden Bush - who had been denied a marriage licence.

That ruling was overturned by the island's Appeal Court, although it ordered the government to give the

two women a status equivalent to marriage. The government failed to comply, said the couple's lawyer, Leonardo Raznovich. Again, the Privy Council declared the ban on gay marriage was not unconstitutional: It decreed that the decision was a matter for the islands' legislators.

## **AFGHANISTAN IS STILL THERE**

By Jam Sta Rosa, *The Guardian* 22nd March 2022

"I came to Kabul a few days ago and what I saw here made me devastated, children starving and their parents begging for a single piece of bread. I tried to help as much as possible, bought rice bags, oils, flour, clothes, blankets to many families but I cannot do this alone. I wanted to create a go-fund-me link but it's not possible here since I am in Afghanistan. I urge all of you to pray for everyone here and if possible, help them financially. You don't have to be a Muslim to feel the pain of Afghans, you just need to be a human".

## **RUGBY CONSIDERS 20-MINUTE RED CARD**

From *Daily Telegraph*, 12th April 2022

World Rugby will consider rolling out the 20-minute red card as a global trial after a series of controversial refereeing decisions. The law, which is being trialled in Super Rugby in the Southern Hemisphere, means a player who is sent off can be replaced by a substitute after 20 minutes. Such a move, had it been in place, would have meant England returning to 15 men in their Six Nations match against Ireland after Charlie Ewels was sent off 82 seconds into the game.

## **SHELL REVIVES PLANS FOR HUGE NORTH SEA GAS FIELD TO HELP CUT RELIANCE ON IMPORTS**

By Rachel Millard, *Daily Telegraph*, 19th March 2022

Less than 3% of UK gas comes from Russia but Kwasi Kwarteng wants to exclude Russian gas imports altogether. Both the UK and the US are banning imports of Russian oil and Mr Johnson is believed to want the EU to follow suit. However, Rishi Sunak, the Chancellor, has warned that an EU-wide ban on Russian oil and gas would tip economies including the UK's into recession and knock about 3% off British GDP "straight away", according to the *Financial Times*.

Shell Plc has submitted new plans to develop a huge gas field in the North Sea - six months after they were rejected by environmental regulators - in an attempt to help Britain become less dependent on foreign suppliers. The FTSE 100 company said it wanted the Jackdaw field, about 155 miles east of Aberdeen, to start operating by 2025.

It argued it would make "a significant contribution to UK energy security" and could be developed with relatively low carbon emissions. The submission comes as the Government encourages UK producers to increase output to reduce reliance on Russian oil and gas.

About half of the UK's gas is produced domestically with the rest imported via pipelines from Norway and Europe or shipped in from countries including the US, Qatar and Russia.

The Government has already had to intervene to soften the blow of climbing energy bills due to high wholesale gas prices, with households (values A to D) due a £150 rebate on council tax and a £200 rebate on energy bills, apparently for all domestic customers.

## **COAL PLANTS ORDERED TO STAY OPEN**

By Rachel Millard, *Daily Telegraph*, 28th April 2022

Coal-fired power stations have been asked to stay open for longer as part of government plans to avert an energy crunch amid the Russia-Ukraine war.

Kwasi Kwarteng, the Business Secretary, has written to the owners of Britain's three remaining coal-fired power plants to ask them to explore keeping turbines running next winter. The turbines were due to close this September.

It marks a significant change of tone towards the heavily polluting fuel source, which is due to be phased out from UK power stations by 2024 in line with the push to slash carbon emissions. That timeline remains in place but the request highlights the potential threat to the UK's energy market as economic disruption pushes up the price of natural gas that is used to produce more than one third of UK power.

In a letter to coal-fired power station owners EDF, Uniper and Drax at the start of April, Mr Kwarteng said: "The UK is not dependent on gas

from Russia. However, I am mindful that a shortage of gas in Europe could put significant pressure on the European gas market.

We shall of course therefore, take all prudent steps to be ready to support National Grid Electricity System Operator in delivering our energy security. Maintaining our remaining coal-fired power stations would provide us with additional backup security while we pursue more enduring solutions."

Wholesale gas prices leapt 18% yesterday as Russia cut off supplies to Bulgaria and Poland, in a significant escalation of tensions. The UK gets less than 4% of its gas directly from Russia but prices track those on the Continent, which is heavily reliant on Russian importation of gas.

## GP WAITING TIMES SHORTER THAN BEFORE COVID

By Paul Gallagher, Health Correspondent, *The Independent* 25th April 2022

Waiting times for face-to-face GP appointments are now shorter than before the pandemic, according to a survey of doctors across the UK. The average waiting time for a non-urgent face-to-face consultation currently stands at ten days, down from 2016-19 when the average was 13 to 15 days, according to the recent poll of more than 800 GPs carried out by Pulse magazine.

The average wait for non-urgent remote appointments, such as via phone or video, is eight days.

GPs say this is because there is a greater drive to deal with patients on the day and triage - where trained call-handlers direct patients towards the best health professional - has enabled the use of remote consultations or other healthcare staff where appropriate.

The number of GPs in England has fallen every year since 2015.

## PATEL BLAMES "XENOPHOBIA" FOR CRITICISM OF ASYLUM PLAN

By Nick Duffy, *The Independent* 25th April 2022

Priti Patel has claimed that criticism of her plan to send asylum seekers to Rwanda with a one-way ticket is motivated by "xenophobia".

The Home Secretary defended her proposals after opposition parties, human rights campaigners, the Archbishop of Canterbury and the United Nations refugee agency united against it.

Ms Patel claimed that opponents were resorting to "lazy and sloppy characterizations" to attack the deal with Rwanda. The country's President, Paul Kagame, has been accused of human rights abuses.

She told *The Telegraph*: "When we hear the critics start to stereotype, start to generalize... it's based on ignorance and prejudice". She added: "There are under-currents of just sheer xenophobia, which I think is absolutely appalling. For others, who speak in disparaging, belittling and prejudicial, ignorant ways about a country that is our partner, quite frankly [it] is offensive".

## NUMBER OF COVID INFECTIONS HALVES IN THREE WEEKS

By Tom Bawden, *The Independent* 25th April 2022

The number of new daily symptomatic covid infections in the UK has almost halved in three weeks, from a record high at the end of March, according to the latest figures.

However, experts have warned that the public should remain vigilant as cases remain much higher than they were in previous waves and are set to jump again in the autumn.

New cases fell to 187,400 on Friday 22nd April, 46% below their 31st March peak of 349,011, helped by warmer weather, the school holidays and rising levels of immunity among the population, according to the ZOE Covid study app.

Meanwhile, the total number of people in the UK with symptomatic infections stood at 3.5 million, well down on the 4th April peak of 4.6 million but considerably higher than 2.4 million on 1st January, the app showed.

The Office for National Statistics said on Friday that infections fell simultaneously in all four UK nations in the previous week for the first time since January.

Tim Spector, the King's College London professor who runs the ZOE app, says symptomatic infection numbers won't dip below 100,000 a day for the next three to four months.

After that, they could briefly drop to around 50,000 cases a day before jumping back up to around current levels towards the end of the September, he says. "New cases are dropping but we're still at much higher levels than we were in January and it's dropping much slower

## Proverbs 6: 16 - 19

There are six things that the Lord hates, seven that are an abomination to him: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that hurry to run to evil, a lying witness who testifies falsely, and one who sows discord in a family.

## Reflection

We may be tempted to think that this passage only applies to criminals. However, it sounds like an average day on social media to me.

"My opinion matters the most."

"I'm going to share this article without fact checking it or checking the source."

"People may die from misinformation shared, but that is not my problem."

"I'm going to really upset this person with my version of facts."

"I'm going to be quick to respond, because they need to know how wrong they are."

"Truth is irrelevant anyway."

"We are already divided."

shrug emoji - Welcome to UserVoice!

Not just for criminals, these words serve as a warning to you and me too. Typed words can lead to as many deaths as a weapon. Don't believe me? In a recent White House Press Conference (July 2021), people were warned about misinformation on the internet being initiated by just a handful of people and then subsequently "shared" many times - leading to thousands not taking up the vaccine in the States and to many more hospitalisations and deaths.

So those articles and memes we share matter.

What if...

- we humbled ourselves and considered what others think or have to say?
- we fact-checked things and carefully read articles before "liking" or sharing?
- we work to help stop the spread of false information (and gossip)?
- we had conversations, rather than fought to "win" an argument?
- we waited 24 hours before responding to something?
- we celebrated truth?
- we acknowledged our divisions and sought to build bridges?
- we applied this not just to social media but to church, family and community?

## Prayer

God, we seek your wisdom. In this quiet space, speak to us your truth. Guide our interactions with others. May they be grace-filled conversations that celebrate truth. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Today's writer: The Rev'd Angela Rigby, minister of Christ Church URC Tonbridge and St Johns Hill URC Sevenoaks

Signing the register at a wedding, the groom had difficulty in making his ball-point pen work. "Put you weight on it," said the vicar. So the groom complied: 'John Smith (12 stone, four pounds)'

Stress makes you believe everything has to happen immediately.

Faith reassures you that everything happens in God's timing.

# Facebook favourites

Please submit your Facebook favourites to [thatcham.urb@ntlworld.com](mailto:thatcham.urb@ntlworld.com)  
Be sure to download them and then send as attachments – copying and pasting into an email will not work!

