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Have you found us on Facebook? 



Dear Friends,

It has been 3 years since we have had a more normal September. At this time of year, it has always seemed appropriate to look back briefly on what we have done or come through, and then to look forward to the new year in the life of the church with its September start. These days following Covid this has never been more important. In years to come we will find it hard to believe that we went through a traumatic pandemic. Pandemics used to be part of the plagues and horrors of history but now we have all experienced one.

This September could well lead us off into a fairly normal year. However, we now have to take on the cost-of-living crisis which touches all of us. Also, we have the continuing threat and impact of the Ukrainian invasion. And how much more now is the climate crisis upon us with evidence breaking out here and all around the world.

During our services in 2020 and 2021 we prayed in our intercessions, asking God, 'to help us to manage the uncertain future, to worship and to care for our people. To hold us fast and walk with us, and guide us on our path for our return to each other again'. And I think it has been safe to say for a while now, here we are, we have come through it, but not without some anxiety and loss.

And in many of those services the call to worship was a brief reflection on a Psalm. The Psalms spoke to us about life in distress and anxiety, and urged us to trust God for his refuge and strength during the pandemic. If there was one thing the Psalms taught us, it was to have gratitude to God amongst the difficult and uncertain times. In the Psalms and in many places in the New Testament we are encouraged to come to God with gratitude, despite our fears, as we come into his presence to worship and pray.

Sometimes gratitude does not come easily or naturally. Self-pity does, and grumbling

does – no one has to remind us to offer them! Yet they don't mix well with the kindness we have been given by God, or from others. Grumbling and gratitude are in conflict. If we are grateful then we won't grumble. Grumble and we can't be grateful.

Yet there is much to be grateful to God for. He has an intimate knowledge and care for each one of us. He knows each of us by name and every aspect of our circumstances. His love for us and patience shown to us is beyond our comprehension as he waits for us to bring our gratitude and worries to him.

Gratitude is an offering that is precious in the sight of God. It is one that the poorest of us can make and be richer for having made it. With gratitude life becomes rich. And Gratitude always leaves us looking at God and away from fear. It does to anxiety what the morning sun does to the valley mist. It evaporates it.

Our **Church** is not an organisation or club we join; it is a **family** coming together where we belong, a **home** where we are loved and a **place** where we might find **healing**. It is where we can find **peace** in the **unity** that God brings about. Church is a **bearer** of burdens and a giver of **hope**. Church is a **refuge** for the broken and lost. It is a place to **serve** each other – no one rules. And when asked, **God** has never failed to meet us there. Let us feel gratitude.

As we move into uncertain times again, let us hold onto our gratitude to God, our heavenly Father. He doesn't change although things around us might. God's truths and promises to us remain trustworthy still. Let us give thanks for God's love. Let us give thanks for our families and friends. Let us give thanks for the church family where God has placed us.

In gratitude to Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

John



Sunday Worship

SEPT 10.30am unless specified

| | |
|----|-------------------------------------|
| 4 | Revd John Lee, Communion |
| 11 | Revd John Lee |
| 18 | Revd Bradley Croucher & church band |
| 25 | Michael Penny |

18 September

Revd Bradley Croucher is a minister from the Uniting Presbyterian Church of Southern Africa, one of our partner churches in Southern Africa. He is living and worshipping in Twyford (Berkshire).



Elders Contact

| | |
|---|-------------------------------|
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**Deadline for next issue:
 Sunday 11 September**

FAMILY NEWS AND FOR YOUR PRAYERS

Rosemary King is in Prospect Park Hospital. Margaret Gill is also there for mobilisation and rehab following a spell in RBH.

Lilian Loveless passed away at Newbury Grove following a short time in hospital.

Viv and Jon celebrated a wedding anniversary and Allan C returned from visiting his daughter Fiona and family in Australia.

Ernie had a fall but is recovering slowly.. Jeanette and Dorothy have both been in hospital for treatment recently.

Alan Osborne from Lambourn has terminal cancer and is being cared for at home. Please pray for Alan and his wife Mandy.

Father,
September – a month of new starts for many. We pray for all starting school, university or college, or moving into a new class or job. We pray for the new Prime Minister to prove to be a person of integrity, dedicated to working for the good of all. We especially ask you to help those struggling with the rising cost of living who don't know how they are going to make ends meet. Have mercy on this nation, Lord and bring us back to Your ways. Thank You for Jesus and that through trusting in Him we can know You, as Father and God of truth, mercy and compassion. Thank You that You never give up on us. You will help us if we turn to You, In Jesus name, Amen.

By Daphne Kitching



Prayer for those affected by monsoon floods in Kerala

The immediate concerns our partners have identified so far:

- Lack of clean toilets and space for bathing
- Debris clearance
- Clean drinking water
- Need for non-food items (tarpaulin, kitchen utensils, clothes)

Another major concern is the loss of livelihood sources such as farmland, labour, crops, stocked grains, seeds, fodder, livestock etc. Many families have no other livelihood options. Please lift these concerns to God in prayer, and pray for our partners IGSSS (Indo-Global Social Service Society) and CASA (Church's Auxiliary for Social Action) as they seek to support and help those affected on the ground.

Sheltering God, For the hundreds of thousands of people in Kerala who will try to sleep under tarpaulins tonight, instead of under the familiar roof of their home, not knowing what the future holds, lamenting the loss of loved ones, or all that they owned on this earth, we pray for your deep comfort and your generous provision through the response of the international family of humanity.

*In your mercy, hear our prayer.
Amen.*

Flowers from the church have been given with the love of us all to:
July: Lillian. August: Viv & Jon, Dorothy, Jeanette, Samantha

EMBRACE the Middle East

4 September

Since 2012, we have worked with the Secretariat of Solidarity to distribute bursaries that enable underprivileged children in Jerusalem, the West Bank and Gaza to attend Christian schools. We give thanks for this decade of learning, and we keep in our prayers the hundreds of young people who have benefited.

11 September

We pray for the Salaam Centre, providing health and social services to the Zabbaleen, or garbage collectors, living on the edge of Cairo. Many children suffer from malnutrition, and the centre addresses this through a clinic for under-5s. The clinic monitors their development and educates parents on child health and rights.

18 September

Lebanon's economy has been in crisis for several years, and the Covid-19 pandemic has exacerbated the country's difficulties. We pray for the Schneller School, which provides boarding places to 100 children from severely affected families so that they have a safe and comfortable home as well as a high standard of education.

25 September

This week (1 October) is the UN International Day of Older Persons. We pray for the rights and needs of elderly people across the world and particularly in Aleppo, Syria, where we help the St Vincent de Paul health centre to provide regular prescriptions for older people living with chronic health conditions.

ST MUNGO'S EVEN LESSER

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

To Uncle Eustace
Rector
St James the Least of All



Dear Uncle Eustace,

Thank you for your commiserations on the break-ins.

Oddly, it would appear that the same team were involved at St James The Least of All. During investigations, and questioning of locals, parishioners, etc., the brother of a friend of the new bell-ringer, mentioned that someone at the local Public House was enquiring as to the possible value of a strange, old, multi-sided coin that he had 'found'.

The miscreant has been apprehended, cautioned, and is set to appear before the magistrate in October. 2032.

Your loving nephew,

Darren

ST. JAMES THE LEAST OF ALL from The Rectory



My dear Nephew Darren

Your church certainly seems to have taken to the idea of green electricity with a vengeance. To have covered the whole of your roof with solar panels was a brave move, and it makes quite a sight – especially when

the sun catches them, dazzling motorists on the by-pass and causing multiple pile-ups. I pity the local pigeons, who try to land on it and then do a gentle glissade into the gutters.

I know there have been objections to your proposal to erect a wind turbine in your car park – although no one could claim that it spoils the aesthetic appearance of your church. Nothing, my dear Darren, could do that.

May I humbly offer you some further suggestions for reducing your electricity consumption. If you cut your sermons by half, then everyone could go home 20 minutes earlier. Similarly, if you only sang each chorus once instead of your customary 17 times, that should cut your service

times in half. And why have lighting so good that everyone can see everyone else? That is the last thing our own congregation ever want to do.

I raised the issue at our last church council meeting, but having only recently gone on to electricity, there seemed little enthusiasm for yet more change. Major Hastings still fondly remembers our old acetylene plant in the churchyard, destroyed during one Mattins when the verger was unaware of the gas leak and lit up a cigarette. We still occasionally find pieces of his cassock when mowing the grass.

Mr Prentice, with a slightly malicious gleam, suggested building a treadmill, to be worked by the Young Farmers – which would also keep them out of the pub while Evensong was

taking place. I couldn't help feeling that our Ladies Group would have far more determination to keep the thing rotating – probably providing enough energy to light the entire County. I was tempted to suggest we invite the vicar from our adjoining parish, St Agatha's, to preach every Sunday, as that would fill our church with more than enough hot air.

I finally stopped all further discussion on the subject when a solar panel consultant arrived at the Rectory and began his sales pitch with the phrase: "I've come to convert you".

Your loving uncle,

Eustace



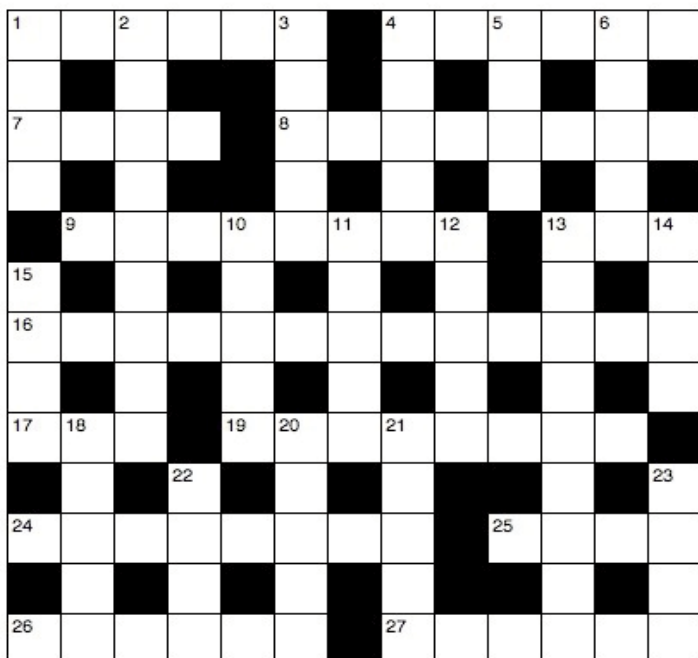
Across

- 1 'Unless the Lord builds the house, its builders — in vain' (Psalm 127:1) (6)
- 4 Season of the year (Psalm 84:6) (6)
- 7 'My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. — here and keep watch with me' (Matthew 26:38) (4)
- 8 It came over the whole land from the sixth to the ninth hour on the first Good Friday (Luke 23:44) (8)
- 9 Paul invariably did this in the synagogues he visited on his missionary journeys (Acts 17:2) (8)
- 13 'It is God who works in you to will and to — according to his good purpose' (Philippians 2:13) (3)
- 16 Members of the Church of Scotland (13)
- 17 'Now when he saw the crowds, he went up on a mountain side and — down' (Matthew 5:1) (3)
- 19 Mock (Luke 14:29) (8)
- 24 Disgrace (Psalm 44:13) (8)
- 25 First month of the Hebrew calendar (Exodus 13:4) (4)
- 26 Christianity of the Britons before Augustine arrived from Rome (6)
- 27 Mean (Numbers 35:23) (6)
- 3 O raid (anag.) (5)
- 4 'If two of you on earth — about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven' (Matthew 18:19) (5)
- 5 Take care of (1 Samuel 17:15) (4)
- 6 What the older son heard as he came near the house the day his prodigal brother came home (Luke 15:25) (5)
- 10 'Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with — judgment' (Romans 12:3) (5)
- 11 Do ten (anag.) (5)
- 12 Architectural style first used in Greek temples in the sixth century BC (5)
- 13 Capable of being used (1 Kings 7:36) (9)
- 14 'Each one should — his own actions' (Galatians 6:4) (4)
- 15 Among the items imported by Solomon's fleet of trading ships (1 Kings 10:22) (4)
- 18 'But I am afraid that just — was deceived by the serpent's cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray' (2 Corinthians 11:3) (2,3)
- 20 Outstanding 18th-century hymn writer, — Watts (5)
- 21 One of the four sons of Asher (Genesis 46:17) (5)
- 22 Be distressed (Proverbs 24:19) (4)
- 23 He was the father of Gaal, who threatened rebellion against Abimelech (Judges 9:28) (4)

Down

- 1 'Whoever finds his life will — it' (Matthew 10:39) (4)
- 2 'My lord the king, let the — on me and on my father's family, and let the king and his throne be without guilt' (2 Samuel 14:9) (5,4)

Answers next page



Some members will remember Mary who for many years contributed to our church as a Junior Church teacher and President of the Women's Own before joining St Mary's and living in Ferndale Court. I have done a good deal of detective work as no tribute appeared to have been made. Mary knew my Uncle Bert who worked in Moorings (Lays), grocery store, north side of High Street.

I am grateful to Alison Jordan (Pinnock) for this information:

Unfortunately, Mary died in the height of when Covid first hit this country. You were only allowed 10 mourners at the funeral, 30 June (2021) and you weren't allowed a wake. The service was taken at the graveside by Rev. Nicola Hulk, St Barnabas, myself, husband, brother and wife, sister-in-law and son (other brother had recently died), plus Beverley (warden of care home) in attendance. It was a nice service, then we all went our own way.

Mary was my dad's cousin (you can work out what my mum Eileen Pinnock's relationship to her was?), she was my second cousin. She had never been married so didn't have any immediate family. If Covid hadn't struck, we would have had a wake afterwards for her and all who knew her.

The last five years of her life she had heart problems and wouldn't go out of her flat, Brian and I arranged meals on wheels, carers, and both looked after her, making sure she had food and medication. At Christmas/Boxing Day and Easter, we took her a Christmas dinner, and over the Easter period. She was well looked after, Brian and I made sure of it.

Best wishes from Alison Jordan (Pinnock)

Please see the plaques either side of the organ (sadly to disappear) witnessing to the dedicated work of the Pinnock and Lay families. I have to date not been able to ascertain the relationship!

This window is erected to the glory of God and in memory of THOMAS EDMUND PINNOCK for many years Deacon and Organist of this church and also for many years Deacon, Sunday School Teacher and Percutor Superintendent of the Sunday School (a person who leads the congregation in singing, - especially where no choir, or musical instrument. as in Gaelic, Isle of Skye). Called to higher service June 20th 1880

On the piano: To the glory of God and in sacred memory of Mr GEOFFREY LAY Organist of this church for many years. Departed this life July 10th 1940. And MR W J LAY Also a life-long worker in the church. Departed January 28th 1947.

Meeting up with our good friend, Canon David Winter. I came home on the bus with him, walked from the Broadway to his house. Unfortunately he tripped over the kerb as his eyesight is poor. With another man we hoisted him to his feet and he said he would phone his daughter. I left a message with friend nearby and informed the vicar. I called the following morning and he seemed to be recovered apart from a large bruise.

One of our lady members visiting the great home on Churchill, for a tour of the house, with recordings of his great speeches and a tour of the reputed garden, finished up in seeing the Peter Rabbit exhibition.

Have noted Synod Gathering dates:

Tuesday 20 SEPT Ringwood 6.30

Monday 26th Bracknell, (6.30)

Wednesday 28th Online GENERAL ASSEMBLY REPORT

Graeme

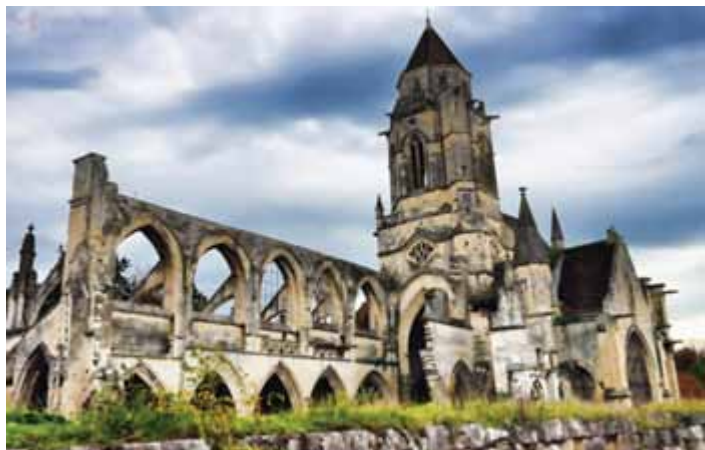
A man walked into a minister's study and confessed: "I think I'm addicted to Twitter."

The minister looked at him and replied, "Sorry, I don't follow you."

Politician: "I dream of a better tomorrow, where chickens can cross the road and not have their motives questioned."

Saturday 10th September

For more information please visit our website:
berkschurchestrust.org.uk/ride-and-stride



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The churches of Berkshire are worth saving for many future generations. One way you can help is by signing up for the annual Ride & Stride event and then please ask all your friends and family to sponsor you generously. Sponsor forms can be printed off via the Ride+Stride website: <https://ridestride.org/berkshire>. For JustGiving sponsorship please follow the detailed instructions in 'Guidelines' which can be found under the Ride+Stride drop down tab on this website.

Ride+Stride happens every year throughout the country. Our wonderful Berkshire supporters raised nearly £25,000 in 2021 – how can we improve on this for 2022?

The Daphne Barnes-Phillips challenge cup is given to the church raising most money through sponsorship and you can walk, jog, cycle, or ride round any number of churches anywhere you choose. We will have an updated list of participating churches, plus a few routes, on the BHCT website.

You can go by yourself or in a group, any time between 10am and 6pm on September 10th. Sign in at each church you visit; have a look round and enjoy refreshments. Do please take photos of your expedition and send them to me after the event, we will use the best ones on the BHCT website.

Prue Matchwick, Ride + Stride County Co-ordinator
prue.matchwick@gmail.com

Prayer for Central America

Wendy Cooper

Loving God, you constantly remind us that all people are made in your image. Thank you that as we support the work of our partners, we can put names to faces and be challenged by their example to be change makers in our lives.

We pray for our partner countries in Central America, especially as they struggle to cope with the ongoing impact of coronavirus on the most vulnerable. We give thanks: for the inspiring people working together in projects that are transforming the lives of their communities; for those speaking out against injustice, motivating others in the fight against corruption and for transparency; and for those training and empowering indigenous young people. In the love of Jesus, we pray. Amen.

INTERMEDIATE

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| 6 | | 1 | | | 5 | |

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Crossword Answers

ACROSS: 1, Labour. 4, Autumn. 7, Stay. 8, Darkness. 9, Reasoned. 13, Act. 16, Presbyterians. 17, Sat. 19, Ridicule. 24, Reproach. 25, Abib. 26, Celtic. 27, Intend.

DOWN: 1, Lose. 2, Blamerest. 3, Radio. 4, Agree. 5, Tend. 6, Music. 10, Sober. 11, Noted. 12, Doric. 13, Available. 14, Test. 15, Apes. 18, As Eve. 20, Isaac. 21, Ishvi. 22, Fret. 23, Ebed.

They say cheese gives you nightmares.
Ridiculous! I'm not scared of cheese.

Wordsearch for July

Ever wonder why there is both good and evil allowed in this world? Jesus told a parable called the Parable of the Weeds. Consider the world as if it were a field where a Farmer has sown good seed. But then an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat. So, when the wheat came up, so did the weeds. Instead of destroying the weeds, and thereby risking the wheat, the Farmer tells his reapers to wait and let both wheat and weeds grow together until the harvest. So do not despair when evil seems to thrive in this world – there is a reckoning still to come, and justice will be done.

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

Kingdom Reap
Heaven Root
Good
Seed Let
Field Grow
Together
Sleeping Harvest
Grain Bundles
Weeds
Enemy Barn
Servants Burned

Master
Sow
Gather

Easy sudoku

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| 3 | 6 | | | 5 | 8 | |
| 8 | | 4 | 3 | 7 | | 2 |

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How do you fix a broken website?

With stick e-tape

Humour – Why?

(with thanks to David Witts)

Why doesn't Tarzan have a beard when he lives in the jungle without a razor?
Why do we press harder on a remote control when we know the batteries are flat?
Why do banks charge a fee on 'insufficient funds' when they know there is not enough?
Why do Kamikaze pilots wear helmets?
Why does someone believe you when you say there are four billion stars in the sky, but check when you say the paint is wet?
Whose idea was it to put an 'S' in the word 'lisp'?
Why is it that people say they 'slept like a baby' when babies wake up every two hours?
If the temperature is zero outside today and it's going to be twice as cold tomorrow, how cold will it be?
Do married people live longer than single ones or does it only seem longer?
Why do people pay to go up tall buildings and then put money in binoculars to look at things on the ground?
Why is there a light in the fridge and not in the freezer?
Why does Goofy stand erect while Pluto remains on all fours? They're both dogs!
If quizzes are quizzical, what are tests?
If corn oil is made from corn, and vegetable oil is made from vegetables, then what is baby oil made from?
If electricity comes from electrons, does morality come from morons?
Did you ever notice that when you blow in a dog's face, he gets mad at you, but when you take him on a car ride, he sticks his head out the window?

Did you ever stop and wonder...

Who was the first person to look at a cow and say, 'I think I'll squeeze those pink dangly things here, and drink whatever comes out?'

Who was the first person to say, 'See that chicken there; I'm gonna eat the next thing that comes out of its bum?'



'Finally, we're still waiting for someone from last week's Parent & Toddler Group to come and claim this lost property...'



Eventually they decided to hold the pet's service outdoors

Young James finished his summer holidays and went back to school.
Two days later his teacher phoned his mother to tell her that James was misbehaving.
"Wait a minute!" protested his mum. "I had him here for weeks and I never once called YOU when he misbehaved!"

The topic for my class was palindromes, which are of course words or sentences that are the same read forward and backward. I asked the question 'What is the first thing Adam said to Eve?' I was expecting 'Madam, I'm Adam', but one student had a better reply: "Wow."

URC Ministry & Mission

**To: All members and adherents of
United Reformed Churches and our Local Ecumenical
Partnerships**

Dear Friends,

Is anyone back to normal?

After two years of pandemic and lockdown, and Covid still with us (thankfully, for most, in a much weaker form), we can now worship together in person and find fellowship again. But for most of us it is not simply a return to how it used to be; some people have not returned to church, some have died or become too frail, some churches have closed and others considering it.

Now we have significant European turmoil and its likely effect on fuel and food prices for us in the UK.

Thank God that "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever" (Heb. 13 v.8). Whatever else changes, He is our rock, our cornerstone.

Financially, things were extremely tough for churches in 2021. Plate offerings had collapsed; some regular givers had to reduce or entirely stop giving to support God's work; and those churches which hire out their premises had seen income from that source disappear. Even those churches where the majority of the giving was by standing order or bank transfer (if you have not considered regularising your giving in this way, please do – it helps your treasurer significantly) may have seen a 20%+ drop in income.

If this had been replicated in giving to the M&M Fund in 2021, we might have been faced with a serious financial crisis last year.

But no, through the generosity of individuals, churches and Synods, we can report that income only fell by 4.4%. With a similar reduction in expenditure the M&M Fund result was a deficit of only £80,000 (less than one-half of one percent of income), a deficit that can be comfortably covered by reserves.

So, thank you to all who continued to contribute to your local church, thank you to all those churches who met their commitment for 2021 in full, and thank you to all those who, in adversity, continued to treat the M&M Fund as the first priority and paid what they could.

With churches and individuals under financial pressure, 2022 is not going to be an easy year either. The M&M Fund budgeted income (based on Synods' projections) will not be sufficient to cover expected costs and we are reconciled to dipping into our reserves more seriously as a result.

However, if we "ordinary Christians" are to fulfil the call of Jesus to be His witnesses in the world around us we need ministers and other workers "on the ground" and we need shared resources which are often best created centrally. That all comes from the M&M Fund.

Again, thank you all!

If you have any questions or comments arising from this letter, please speak to your church treasurer who has been provided with more detailed information. If they are not able to help directly then they can get in touch with the finance team at Church House.

Yours in Christ,

Ian Hardie (Treasurer)

Vaughan Griffiths (Deputy Treasurer)



While I was giving a sermon one Sunday, two teenage girls at the back giggled and disturbed people. Finally, I interrupted my sermon and announced sternly, "There are two of you here who have not heard a word I've said." That quieted them down.

When the service was over, I went to greet people at the front door. Three members of the PCC shuffled by, apologised for going to sleep in church, and promising it would never happen again.

Look at what's been happening ...

1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8



9



10



1 John's birthday

2-9 Coffee and Bacon Rolls at the Mossmans

10-12 Sam's allotment bears fruit! First time ever that I've grown aubergines and peppers outdoors! Tomatoes doing well, as well! Can't claim all the credit, though; Esther provided the plants

11



12



Iran Liberty Association

Subject: The original contact with Iran Liberty Association was when they spoke at a Mens' Breakfast meeting at the Regency Hotel.

Visit to Stockholm was with the Iran Liberty Association to hear the verdict of the Swedish court on the "Death Commission", which summarily and extra-judicially executed thousands of political prisoners held in jails across Iran.

"To demand in its resolution on human rights violations in Iran. to bring the perpetrators of the 1988 massacre (one of the worst atrocities the post-war world has ever seen"- Geoffrey Robertson-QC) to justice before an international tribunal.

I was able to tour Stockholm, the harbour, the Palace - changing of the guard march and band playing, as well as a ferry to Djurgarden island, with a procession down the main street, view a pop museum (Abba!) and my only non-card purchase in a garden cafe for coffee and cake - they allowed me to pay by my only 50 kronors (crowns) the only time I did not use a card, even for postcards and stamps - in what is largely a cashless country.

The metro trains were very efficient and citizens very helpful in giving guidance.

I stayed in Hotel Comfort, Kista out of the city, and also visited Uppsala (4th largest city) where my niece Carolyn lives and has been at bible school, now a support worker in a day centre for adults with mental health problems. Swedish was one of the languages she studied, hence her interest.

She happened to be back in the family residence in Virginia Water at the time.

Hi Graeme

I hope you are well and enjoying the summer. It was wonderful to have you with us on the Sweden trip, together we made a great impact and it was a great achievement for us all.

With best regards,
Mousa, ILA Volunteer

Above: Viewing in the Natural History museum with alarming illustrations of the deepening effects of climate effects (from the ice age) on the ice glaciers.

Below: Outside Stockholm District Court House



A wise schoolteacher sent this note to all parents on the first day of school: "If you promise not to believe everything your child says happens at school, I'll promise not to believe everything he or she says happens at home."

Roy travels to Salzburg

Salzburger Land or Land Salzburg is one of the ten states of Austria. Salzburg city (population 157,000) is the capital city of Land Salzburg (population 560,000). Salzburg was built on the site of a Roman settlement. Land Salzburg was for many years part of Bavaria before becoming independent in the late 14th century. It subsequently became an Archbishopric State of the Holy

Roman Empire until secularization shortly before annexation by Austria in 1805. It was handed back to Bavaria in 1810 but following the defeat of Napoleon, Land Salzburg was returned to Austria in 1816.

1) Trend Hotel Europa – centre of picture. My room on the 8th floor was on the other side of this hotel. The restaurant is on the 15th (top) floor, providing expansive views over the city.

2) View looking south from my 8th floor room. The Hohensalzburg Festung (High Salzburg Fortress) overlooks the green-domed Salzburg Cathedral. Construction of the fortress began in 1077. The outer walls and towers date from 1462. It is one of the largest medieval castles in Europe.

3) View from the 8th floor looking north. The main railway station is on the right and the central bus station lies conveniently just across the street (centre of picture).

4) The bus in bay D has just arrived

at the hauptbahnhof (main railway station). Notice the overhead electric wires – there are many electric trolley busses in Salzburg.

5) Mirabell Garden was a 10-minute walk from my hotel. The fortress and cathedral can be seen in the distance. Brides and grooms often come here for their wedding photographs.

6) Mirabell garden again.

7) Mirabell garden wall.

8) St Andrew's Church in Mirabell-Platz. A tours' booking kiosk may be



seen bottom left. Christianity is part of Austria's social fabric. Although trains and busses may run a near-full timetable on Sundays, most shops will be closed, especially in villages. 73.6% of Austria's population was Catholic in 2001. However, by 2018 this had dropped to 56.9% (figures provided by the Austrian Catholic Church).

9) The Mozart Wohnhaus (Mozart family residence during 1773-87), number 8 Makart-Platz. The spacious first floor is now home to a museum. In the early 18th century this house

was referred to as the Dance Master's House because dance lessons were held there for the nobility.

10) The River Salzach and the Makertsteg (a steg is bridge for pedestrians and cyclists). The white church (lower right) is the Kollegien Church (church of Salzburg University). It dates from 1694. Incidentally, there are reckoned to be 27 churches in Salzburg City (22 in the old town alone). River tours begin just beyond this bridge.

11) Salzburg Dom (Cathedral). It is

dedicated to St Rupert and St Virgilius. It was St Rupert who founded a church on this site during 767-774 on the remnants of a Roman town. Following a fire, the church was rebuilt in 1181. The present cathedral was built in 1614-28 in Baroque style, a new highly decorative theatrical style, introduced by the Catholic Church as a means of countering the Protestant Reformation with inspiring architecture.

12) Inside Salzburg Cathedral.

13) An organ recital is about to

commence. Two of the cathedral's five organs may be seen in this picture. The largest organ is high up at the western end of the cathedral.

14) A fascinating street sign written in captivating Old German script. Dreifaltigkeits Gasse. The long word has the same meaning as Dreieinigkeits, which means 'Three in One' or Trinity, so here we have Trinity Lane, which leads to the Trinity Church.

15) Behold Holy Trinity Church in Trinity Lane, which I passed on most days, it being on my direct route to



Salzburg Old Town. Said to be the most significant church on the right bank of the Salzach, Trinity Church, was constructed during 1694-1702. It was the first church designed by the great baroque architect Johann Bernhard Fischer von Erlach of Austria. He had a profound influence on the tastes of the Habsburg Empire.

16) End of Linzer Gasse – postcard shop on the left behind the cyclist. Take the left lane here and the City Bridge over the River Salzach to the Old Town is straight ahead.



17) This is Salzburg's Evangelical Christchurch, inaugurated in 1867, situated close to the right bank of the River Salzach. It is the only Romantic style church in Salzburg. It has a tall tower topped with a small spire.

18) The Silent Night Story began in Oberndorf, a village 11 miles north of Salzburg. I took a train to reach Oberndorf. To stop the train at one of the fourteen stations, a passenger needs to press the bell (just like on a bus in GB). On the other hand, the driver will stop the train if he/she sees



anybody waiting at a station. If nothing is seen or heard, the train does not stop. Oberndorf station is on the edge of the village – I had a little difficulty in reaching my objective. Eventually, I came across a sign “Stille Nacht Route”. Further on, I enquired at an open shop (all others were shut – it was a Sunday) – “300 metres on your left” the gentleman said. Strange shop it was – selling US Civil War stuff, with a Confederate flag flying aloft!

19) In 1816, while serving as assistant priest at Mariapfarr (77 miles south of Salzburg), Josef Mohr wrote a poem entitled Stille Nacht, Heilige Nacht (Still the Night, Holy the Night). Two years later Josef was serving in Oberndorf (11 miles north of Salzburg). On Christmas Eve that year (1818) Josef wanted a new carol for his midnight mass that evening, so he walked over to nearby Arnsdorf, where his organist, Franz Gruber, lived. Josef asked Franz to write a melody for his 1816 poem. Franz obliged and Josef sang it while playing

his guitar that same Christmas Eve at St Nicholas Church in Oberndorf. The carol is better known to us as Silent Night, Holy Night, a translation that was made in 1859 by Revd John Freeman Young, who at that time was rector of a parish in Napoleonville, Louisiana.

St Nicholas Church in Oberndorf was seriously damaged by floods in the 1890s and was replaced by a new church in Oberndorf new town in 1906. The old church was demolished in 1913: a small memorial chapel on the site of the old church was completed on 15th August 1937. It is known as 19) In English “The Silent Night Chapel”

20) In German “Die Stille Nacht Kapelle”, Oberndorf

21) Inside the Kapelle

22) Kapelle window showing Josef Mohr and the old St Nicholas Church

23) Sculpture of Josef Francisus Mohr & Franz Xaver Gruber near the Kapelle

24) Receptionist Rada on duty at Austrian Trend Hotel Europe, Salzburg.



Lilian Loveless 1927 - 2022



Lilian was born in Oldham, Lancashire on 19th July 1927; the eldest child of George and Mary-Ellen (known as Nellie) Bailey. She had a younger sister, Vera, who she adored.

Lilian had a happy childhood. She loved sports at school and was a good swimmer. After leaving school she went to work alongside her Auntie Edith in Kent's cotton mill, one of Lancashires many cotton mills. She worked hard but enjoyed her time there. Lilian enjoyed dancing and spent all her spare time at Eddie Cook's dancing school, helping and teaching youngsters to dance.

Lilian married Wilf, her beloved husband of 66 years in 1946. They had three children, Carol, Anne and Nigel. In 1958 the family moved South to Thatcham and although it took Lilian a while to settle in Thatcham, she started to make friends and immersed herself in village life. In those early years she loved helping at the weekly baby clinic, weighing the babies and meeting new mothers. She and Wilf had a good social life together enjoying time spent with friends and they enjoyed travelling, especially to visit Wilfs brother Eric and wife Joan in America, visiting Carol and Mike when they were posted overseas, and family holidays to Europe. However, in her later years, Lilian was never happier than returning to her native Lancashire and Yorkshire, and we have fond memories of our trips with her.

Lilian was a hard worker and had a number of jobs over the years, working at the Ordinance Depot in Thatcham and various catering roles. However, in 1972 she joined the Marks and Spencer team in Newbury, enjoying her work and making many more friends. After retiring from M&S she wasn't ready to stop working and so she joined the Co-op in Thatcham for a few hours a week. Lilian always liked to keep busy!

The church was a great part of her life and initially she worshipped at the United Reformed Church in Thatcham, but as many of you will know, Wilf came from a Salvation Army family and in 1996 Lilian supported Wilfs return to The Salvation Army. Their years at Reading Central were extremely happy ones and they made many wonderful friends, partaking in social gatherings and trips away. Lilian continued to attend services every Sunday up to a few weeks before her death. As a family, we will always be grateful for the love and support shown to her.

Lilian loved her home and garden, always pottering around making things tidy. She loved having the family to visit and when we all got together she would often make a recipe passed down by her own mother of meat and potato pie with red cabbage. It became a tradition for New Years Day. Of course, those of you who knew Lilian well would agree she was an expert shopper. She loved shopping for clothes, shoes, bedding, you name it, she would buy it!!

Lilian was devoted to her now grown-up children and their families and enjoyed spending time with them all. She had a unique and individual relationship with each of her six grandchildren (Mark, Jason, James, Melissa, Jordan and Jessica) and was also a loving great-Grandmother to Freya, Lydia, Charlie, Lexi, Dylan, Daniel and Brodie. She was caring, loving, a great listener and confidante, and gave advice when asked. We remember her for her work ethic, sense of fun, enthusiasm for life and for her smile. She will be greatly missed by us all.

Lillian was a stalwart member of Thatcham URC Friendship Club and for many years was part of the organising committee and rarely missed a meeting.

She maintained her love of Thatcham URC, attending services when she was able and from the start of Covid was grateful for the weekly service sheet being delivered, and for the monthly newsletter. Alan and Gill were often able to spend time with her during their delivery round and Iris maintained their friendship over the telephone. It was lovely that Lillian felt able to walk down to Coffee Break not that long ago to meet up with friends in person.



She is gone

*You can shed tears that she is gone,
or you can smile because she has lived.*

*You can close your eyes and pray that she'll come back,
or you can open your eyes and see all she's left.*

*Your heart can be empty because you can't see her,
or you can be full of the love you shared.*

*You can turn your back on tomorrow and live yesterday,
or you can be happy for tomorrow because of yesterday.*

*You can remember her only that she is gone,
or you can cherish her memory and let it live on.*

*You can cry and close your mind, be empty and turn your back.
Or you can do what she'd want: smile, open your eyes,
love and go on.*



Messy Church – Fishing for men

22nd July 2022

This was our second Messy Church since lockdown and we were so pleased to welcome 18 children, 2 babies and their parents and carers to join us for our summer Messy Church session. Our theme was 'Fishing for men' and the nine leaders and helpers had planned some fun activities for the session. These included a seaside area, a fishing activity, making Lego fish and boats, a science activity with magnets, fish shaped biscuits, origami boats, and splatter painted fish. We also made fish hand puppets and a prayer net. As usual we had a drawing and writing table, a babies corner and large Lego building blocks, so we were prepared for a very busy morning!

Everyone had fun with all the activities and after a very busy time we were all ready for snack time when we enjoyed the delicious fish shaped biscuits. It was then time to go into the church for our celebration. We heard the story of Jesus and how he helped the fishermen have a big catch of fish. We sang "My God is so big" and "I will make you fishers of men" accompanied by Karen on the clavivona and Nikki on the trumpet. (They also played an impromptu duet at the end of our time of celebration!). At the end of our time of worship we prayed for our families and friends before we all said the blessing together.

We had all had a lovely morning. Thank you to Esther for masterminding our session and to all



the leaders and helpers for all their hard work and dedication. Thank you, too, to all the children and their parents and carers who came to spend the morning with us. We really enjoyed spending time with you and look forward to seeing you at the next Messy Church session in the October half term.

Diane



The Drama of the Cross

Michael Hopkins reports on a visit to the Oberammergau Passion Play From Reform July–August 2022

Members and friends from all around the United Reformed Church travelled to Germany in May 2022 to see the famous Oberammergau Passion Play. I led a group of just over 50 people for a few days in the nearby Austrian Tyrol, exploring a beautiful area where many friendships were made and renewed.

The Oberammergau Passion Play has been performed every year from 1634 to 1680 and then every ten years since 1680 (with a few exceptions) by the inhabitants of the village of Oberammergau, Bavaria, Germany. In the past it has been criticized as antisemitic but a multi-decade effort has changed this beyond recognition. The revised version of the play also makes more of the resurrection than ever before.

According to legend, an outbreak of bubonic plague devastated Bavaria during the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648). The village of Oberammergau remained plague-free until 25th September 1633, when a man named Kaspar Schisler returned home after working in the nearby village of Eschenlohe. Over the next 33 days, 81 villagers would die, half of Oberammergau's population. On 28th October 1633, the [remaining] villagers vowed that if God spared them from the plague, they would perform a play every 10 years depicting the life and death of Jesus.

Nobody died of plague in Oberammergau after that vow and the villagers kept their word to God by performing the passion play for the first time in 1634.

As is often the case, the actual story differs from the legend. There was an outbreak of plague in Oberammergau but it took place from September 1632 to March 1633, when there was a total of 84 deaths.

Deaths followed an epidemic curve instead of ending suddenly. There was one death in September 1632, rising to 20 deaths in March 1633 and ending with one death in July 1633. There is also no record of a man named Kaspar Schisler.

The production involves over 2,000 performers, musicians and stage technicians, all residents of the village. The play comprises spoken dramatic text, musical and choral accompaniment and tableaux, which are scenes from the Old Testament depicted for the audience by motionless actors accompanied by a choir. These scenes are the basis for the interpretation of some figures and events in the Old Testament as foreshadowing the New Testament.

Attending the Oberammergau Passion Play was much more than just a holiday or a theatre trip; rather, it was a serious spiritual experience. One visitor said, "The passion play is something I shall never forget and I shall be always grateful for the chance to be part of this group and to see it".

The next performances are expected in 2030 – bookings will begin in 2027, which is only five years away. Might you be interested in joining a group visiting then?

Revd Michael Hopkins is the Clerk of the United Reformed Church General Assembly and minister at Farnham, Surrey.



Impressions of the Oberammergau Passion Play – John and Rachel

Continuing from the article in Reform magazine written by Rev. Dr. Michael Hopkins, here are our memories of our time in Oberammergau and impressions of the Play. We were on a tour run by McCabe Pilgrimages, and had the benefit of the knowledge of experienced tour guides. Everyone

who sees the play stays for one or two nights only in the village, and the organisation of parties in and out is a masterpiece of organisation. What a coincidence it was to bump into Mike and Christine, who were seeing the play the same day.

In a village of 7000, more than 3000 are involved in the play – as actors, musicians or behind the scenes (costumes, technical support etc) whilst carrying on to a certain extent, depending on their role, with

their day jobs. Everyone in the village, especially those involved in hospitality or tourism is impacted by the influx of thousands of visitors over the period from May to October, and they do this with a willingness to serve, open hearts and even a sense of gratitude. Realising that they are not bound by the same vow to perform the play which their ancestors took, nevertheless every year before the passion play is due to be performed (normally a year

ending in a 9) they make their own sacred promise in the parish church of St Peter and St Paul.

The year before the production, all the actors let their hair grow long and the men grow beards, for the sake of authenticity. It is such an honour to be asked to perform, but it is not open to allcomers. This is still a community and multi-generational production and there is the stringent requirement for each performer to be born in the village and at least one

parent to be born there as well. If you are an 'incomer' you must have been resident for at least twenty years!

Children and even babes in arms form part of the crowd scene for the entry into Jerusalem; in another ten years that child might play the part of a disciple, and in another ten might be a member of the Sanhedrin, if not playing a main part. Each of the main roles, such as Jesus, Peter, John, Pilate has two actors to share the load of the five performances a week. The owner of the hotel in which we stayed was playing the role of Pilate; in 2010 he was Caiaphas, and in 2000

he was Judas. (He concluded that he must have a 'baddie's' face!). In the shops and waiting at tables for the restaurant meal provided in the interval were young people who were part of the crowd or the choir.

With a cast of 1100 performing to an audience of 4500 on the day that we, and Mike and Christine were there (and also Angela Merkel, we were told), the auditorium is vast and the stage is impressive. It does not seem unusual for there to be animals on the stage, as there would have been in the scenes depicted: sheep, doves in the temple, and Jesus riding

on a donkey into a noisy Jerusalem, later there are two camels, and Pilate always appears on a horse.

At times the play is fast paced, with rapid dialogue (all in German) between the members of the High Council as they debate fiercely the implications of Jesus' words and ministry, but then there are moments of calm as the Chorus or soloists reflect on the action in music which could be from an oratorio. Drama is juxtaposed with meditative points of reflection as moments from the Old Testament are shown in tableaux e.g. Daniel in the lion's den, just before the Jesus' interrogation before Annas and the High Council.

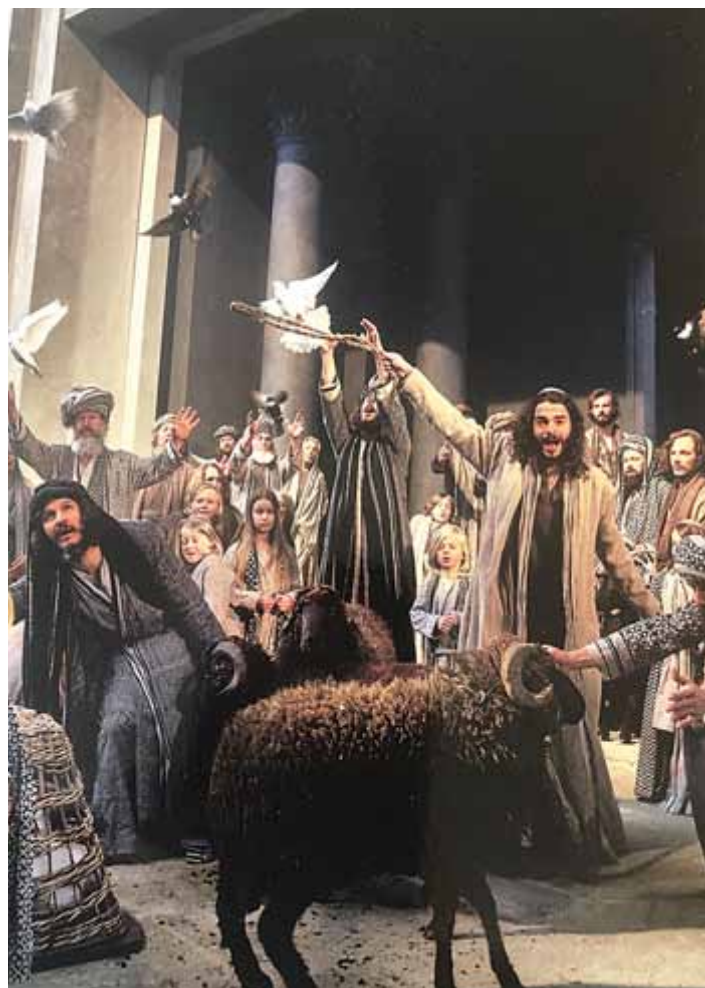
Performed every ten years, each new production seeks to update the play and make it more relevant to contemporary audiences. Spectators in 1960 or 1970 would have had very different attitudes and more Biblical knowledge, and even the audience of 2010 did not have the hopes and fears which we have today. So, according to the words in the English translation book 'in the depiction of Christ's suffering and death, the questions regarding the meaning and future of human existence come into view in dramatic ways. Jesus does not immediately drive the money

changers out of the temple, but first introduces himself as the Messiah'. Only after his core message of spiritual redemption has become clear, with words from the Sermon on the Mount, does he overturn the tables.

Moments (of so many) in the play which made us catch our breath: the awareness of the oppressive political situation with the presence of Roman soldiers in every outdoor scene; the humility and love shown in the feet-washing scene; the grief and utter brokenness of Jesus in Gethsemane, the tragedy of Judas, who was portrayed as one deceived by Caiaphas; the scenes shown in parallel of Judas and Peter realising they have both betrayed Jesus – and the different outcomes; the three crucifixes, so tall and filling the stage, with the central figure of Jesus dominating and indeed 'towering o'er the wrecks of time'; briefly but so powerfully, and off stage, the empty tomb and the words 'I know that my Redeemer lives', emphasising that the Resurrection is a 'mystery of faith'.

For us and for many, in 2022 and over the years, this is indeed a powerful and unforgettable theatrical and spiritual experience.

Rachel Lee-Johnson



The Oberammergau Passion Play – Mike and Christine

You have already been told that, by sheer coincidence, we met up with John and Rachel in Oberammergau on Saturday the 2nd July.

We had been in the village since the Wednesday and the full details of our journey to Oberammergau we will give you in our annual “Travels in Lottie” article later in the year.

When one wanders around the village it is amazing to see so many people of all nationalities amassing to go into the Passion Play auditorium after lunch and, on the Saturday, we were part of that crowd!

It was during the interval while we were having a coffee after dinner that we spotted John and Rachel walking past and we joined them in queuing for the evening session.

Though Mike could understand a lot of what was said in German, Christine found the English text extremely helpful, which she had for the second half of the Play.

There is very little we want to add to Rachel's reflection on the content of the Play, though we have to say we found it to be very authentic in replicating what the week preceding Christ's crucifixion must have been like.

Rather than elaborate on Rachel's comments we thought you may be interested in a few historical facts.

Ironically, the Play came about because of a pandemic (the Plague in 1633); in 1920 it was postponed due to the continuation of another pandemic, The Spanish Flu, and now postponed again in 2020, due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

You will recall that the Passion Play was initiated following a Vow, made by the villagers in 1633 in response to The Plague, to perform Christ's Passion. In the beginning, (1634) the Village performed the Passion just once and spectators came from the region and admission was free. Then in 1674 the performances were adjusted to every decade.

Many Passion Plays are still performed around the world but only Oberammergau has succeeded in keeping the tradition alive by communal effort.

The Village has not always had an easy time financially, for the longest time, namely more than 200 years, the Passion Play meant financial sacrifice for the Village, ending each Passion year in the red. More recently, the Play has paid for itself

and has turned out to be a blessing.

Other interesting points include the fact that the table used for the scene of the Last Supper is the same table as has been used for the last 200 years!

The Village strives for punctual performances from the actors and spectators. A quarter of an hour before the performance a fanfare from the loudspeakers of the auditorium chase the actors from their houses, shops and, sometimes, even the cow shed! The fanfare also reproduces the opening motif of the Play: “Heil Dir” (Hail to You), the song sung by the people when Jesus enters Jerusalem. The fanfare sounds again, twice, a few minutes before the Play and then three times shortly before the very start when time is critical. Originally this used to be a gun when one, two and then three gunshots called attention to the stage when, on the final shot, the play started!

The actors have to be quite disciplined as if he (or she) is late or even misses the performance they have to pay a fine of one Euro and their name goes into the ‘punishment book’ which is in each of the changing rooms! With about two dozen

changing rooms, this can add up to quite a bit of money. But then, at the end of the season, this is often used to throw a party for everyone!

The Play is made up of eleven scenes, each preceded by The Chorus. (a choir of some 100 singers). Since 1980 the 21 leading roles have been double cast; there are about 100 smaller speaking roles, but traditionally only two large female roles.

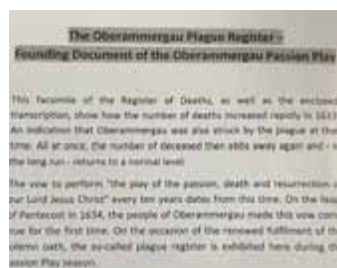
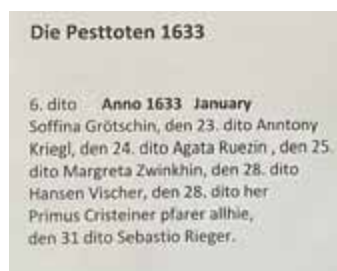
The Play takes place from May to the end of October, 5 days a week, adding up to over 100 performances.

We end our comments with a quote from the introduction to the English text of the Play, which we think is very apt and very right for this day and age:

“The people of Oberammergau have tackled the Passion Play of 2022 with the same enormous commitment as they have done in the decades before. They know their duty. They keep the vow of their ancestors in a way that fulfils the aim of the promise at that time, namely, to strengthen confidence and faith for the future. So, the play is not a ‘popular theatre of bygone times’. It is a ‘theatre of the people for the people’ that seeks to convey hope.”



***The Plague Dead, Jan 1633
The Plague Register***



***Altar of Crucifixion (right)
The Plague Register***



All in September

1900 years ago, from 13th September 122 to 128 that Hadrian's Wall was built in northern England. It ran for 80 miles from coast to coast and marked the northern limit of the Roman Empire to separate the Romans from 'the barbarians.'

200 years ago, on 11th September 1822 that the Catholic Church admitted that the 16th century astronomer Galileo Galilei might have been right about the Earth orbiting the Sun. Galileo had spent the last nine years of his life under house arrest for publishing his work on the subject. He died in 1642.

100 years ago, on 13th September 1922 that the highest temperature ever recorded in the world was reported to be 57.7 Centigrade (136 Fahrenheit) in Al'Aziziyah in Libya. (Unofficial record)

90 years ago, on 23rd September 1932 that Saudi Arabia was founded when the Kingdoms of Hejaz and Najd were unified.

80 years ago, on 10th September 1942 that the British Royal Air Force launched a massive air raid over Dusseldorf Germany.

70 years ago, on 6th September 1952 that the Farnborough Air Show crash took place in Hampshire. A de Havilland fighter jet broke apart and fell into the crowd, killing 31 people.

65 years ago, on 2nd September 1957 that the Everly Brothers best-known song 'Wake up Little Susie' was released.

50 years ago, on 5th September 1972 that Palestinian terrorists invaded the Olympic Village in Munich, West Germany during the 1972 Olympic Games and took 11 members of the Israeli team hostage.

All the hostages were killed, as well as five of the eight terrorists and a German police officer, when a rescue attempt failed.

40 years ago, on 14th September 1982 that Princess Grace of Monaco, formerly the American film and TV actress Grace Kelly, died in a car crash, aged 52.

30 years ago, on 7th September 1992 that the radio station Classic FM began broadcasting in the UK.

Also 30 years ago, on 16th September 1992 that the Black Wednesday sterling crisis took place.

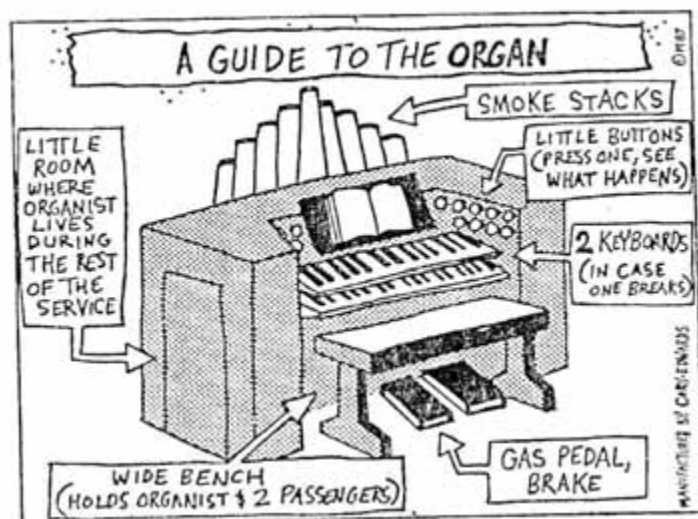
25 years ago, on 5th September 1997 that Mother Teresa, Macedonian-born/Albanian India nun and humanitarian died. She founded the Missionaries of Charity and was winner of the 1979 Nobel Peace Prize. She was beatified in October 2003.

Also 25 years ago, on 9th September 1997 that Sinn Féin formally renounced violence and committed itself to resolving the troubles of Northern Ireland through peaceful means. This eventually led to the Good Friday Agreement in April 1998.

Also 25 years ago, on 11th September 1997 that the people of Scotland voted in a referendum to establish their own parliament. (Opened 1st July 1999.)

Also 25 years ago, on 18th September 1997 that the people of Wales voted in a referendum to create the National Assembly for Wales, with devolved powers from Westminster. (Opened May 1999.)

Also 25 years ago, on 29th September 1997 that British scientists announced that they had established a link between BSE (mad cow disease) and the human brain disease vCJD.



Old British School plaque

To be unveiled on Sunday 9 October following the morning service, by descendants of John Barfield.



It is hoped to have a display of old memorabilia on the day. Do you have anything interesting and suitable? Please contact Roy Tubb

Comfort Dolls



These are the comfort dolls that Diane and Viv have made. Andrew Peach on BBC radio Berkshire is campaigning on behalf of the children of Ukraine, many of whom have nothing and are very traumatised. The idea is to give them one of these dolls to keep in their pockets as something of their own when they need reassurances. Patterns for both boy and girl dolls are available from Diane if anyone would like to have a change from knitting mice for Mousefest!

THATCHAM MOUSEFEST

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

Saturday 17th September 10.30-4.00
Sunday 18th September 1.00-4.00

Display of knitted mice, created by our church members & friends,
showing scenes from Church & Community Life in Thatcham

Including-

Carol Singing Mice, Church Choir Mice
Wedding Mice, Messy Church Mice, Footballing Mice



CHILDREN'S MOUSE TREASURE HUNT
LIVE MUSICAL INTERLUDES THROUGHOUT THE EVENT

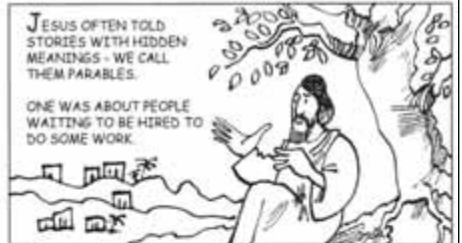
REFRESHMENTS & CAKE AVAILABLE
OPPORTUNITY TO BUY A DISPLAY MOUSE
FREE ENTRY, DONATIONS WELCOME



Funds raised will be split jointly between
Thatcham United Reformed Church
& St Marys Church Thatcham



The Hired Workers



A HOUSEHOLDER HIRED A GROUP OF WORKERS FROM THE MARKET PLACE, FIRST THING IN THE MORNING. HE AGREED UPON A FAIR WAGE.



A BIT LATER ON THE HOUSEHOLDER RETURNED TO THE MARKET PLACE AND HIRED SOME MORE WORKERS.



HE RETURNED SEVERAL TIMES DURING THE DAY, EACH TIME HIRING MORE WORKERS. HE EVEN HIRED SOME PEOPLE JUST AS THE SUN WAS SETTING!



WHEN THE DAY WAS OVER THE HOUSEHOLDER BEGAN TO PAY THE WORKERS, STARTING WITH THOSE WHO HAD ONLY JUST ARRIVED. HE PAID EVERYONE THE SAME.



THIS UPSET THOSE WHO HAD WORKED ALL DAY. THEY THOUGHT THEY SHOULD GET MORE.

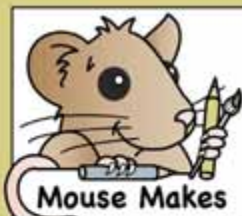


BUT THEY WERE BEING PAID WHAT THEY HAD AGREED AT THE START OF THE DAY.

JESUS CONCLUDED "SO THOSE WHO ARE LAST WILL BE FIRST, AND THOSE WHO ARE FIRST WILL BE LAST" - IT'S A HARD PARABLE!



see Matthew 20:1-16



Everyone who hears Jesus' words and does them will be like a



man. On what did he build his house?

The _____ fell,
The floods came and the _____ blew.
Matthew 7:25

_____ man.
On what did he build his house?
Matthew 7:24

_____ man.
On what did he build his house?
Matthew 7:26

Matthew 7:24-27
and
Luke 6:46-49

What happened to the houses?
Read Matthew 7:25 and 27

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

What was the reaction of the crowd to Jesus' teaching?
Read Matthew 7:28-29



Look up the Bible references to find the missing words then look for them and the words below in the word search
JESUS • HEAR • LISTEN • WORDS
DOES • BUILT • FOUNDATION • MAN
DUG • DEEP • SOLID • GROUND
STREAM • RIVER • BURST • FLOODS
TORRENT • HOUSE • FELL • COLLAPSED
RUIN • DESTROYED

How many other words can you make from the word
FOUNDATIONS



Sept 22 © dafarrah robin



We invite you to join us at our

Vintage Adventure

A time of fun, making friends, singing, informal Christian worship, activities, drinks and homemade cakes

For the young at heart in our community

Inclusive and dementia friendly

Led by the Churches in Thatcham



Theme: Vintage Adventure's 1st Birthday

Thursday, 15 September 2022

2.30-4.00pm

Thatcham Methodist Church

(Chapel Street, RG18 4QL)

Book your place: contact Karen on 07444 851606 or email:
pastoraldevelopmentworker@outlook.com

Rev'd Ebenezer White, our minister during 1849-1859



Ebenezer White of Andover was invited to come and preach, firstly on Sunday 24th June 1849 but it was not until 20th October in that year that he was formally invited to become the pastor. His salary was set at £20 per annum "payable from the rents of the sittings, with the benefit of any excess that may be desired from that source, in addition to which there is the minister's house".

Rev'd White was formerly a deacon of the Independent Church, Andover. He was ordained "Pastor of the Congregational Church, Thatcham" on 24th April 1850. After the ordination service a large party was held in the British School. Ebenezer appears to have made quite an impression in Thatcham. Membership of the church increased by 50% during his first year here. There were twenty-two members listed in December 1849. This had risen to thirty-three by January 1851.

At the latter date the following were listed as members - John Adnams, Mrs Adnams, Mrs Allen, John Barfield (deacon), Sarah Barfield, Thomas Burgess, Ann Carter, John Carter, James Child, John Collins, John Drinkwater (deacon), George Emmans, Mr Ford, Thomas Giles, Mary Giles, John Harper, Mrs Harper, Matilda Hopwood, Mrs R Hunt, Mrs Keen, Ann Longman, Lydia Marshall, Mary Mathews, Mrs Minchin, Mrs Northway, Sarah Pinnock, Edmund Pinnock, Stephen Pinnock, Ann Tull, Richard Tull, Mr Watson, Mrs Watson and Sarah White.

Ebenezer had a varied life - at an early stage he was destined for the ministry in the Church of England but

abandoned his studies at Queen's College, Oxford, to enter the merchant navy and travelled widely, including in South America and China. He eventually settled at Andover as a school teacher and became a member of the Independent Church there. He is said to have become an amateur doctor, dispensing free medical advice to the poor of Thatcham.

It was during Ebenezer White's ministry in Thatcham that the founder of the Independent Chapel, John Barfield, died on 5th July 1851. Only two deacons had been appointed at this time - John Barfield had been one and the other was John Drinkwater, who was elderly (about eighty-six). On 31st October 1851 Messrs John Adnams and Edward Hunt were appointed as deacons.

On 30th July 1852, the church meeting agreed that a private collection be made for the past services of Mr Terry, the organist. It was agreed that 40/- be given out of the "Incidental Fund" to Mr Terry and that he be requested to continue as organist. Furthermore, members agreed that he should receive a sum of 40/- annually from the same fund. Subsequently Mr Terry was given a total of £4-10-0 (the 40/- plus 50/- from the private collection) but he expressed dissatisfaction with this and sent in his resignation.

During 1852-53 there was a regular weekday evening service at 7 pm, except during December and January, when it began at 6:30 pm.

On 4th June 1855, the Finance Committee resolved that Mr Ellson ask "two shillings for each sitting in

the middle pews of the chapel" and "that one shilling be asked for each sitting in the side pews of the chapel". The front pews and the gallery were to be five shillings.

In May 1856 the church meeting was concerned about "the mode of warming the chapel". In October that same year, it was decided "to take the necessary measures for warming the chapel" and by 30th January 1857 a stove had been installed under the direction of deacon Edward Hunt - it was considered to have met the heating need satisfactorily.

In July 1857 some members of the congregation had complained to the minister "of the inconvenience produced by the light from the windows on either side of the pulpit". Furthermore, sunlight from the window behind the organ (in the gallery) was believed to be adversely affecting the instrument so Edward Hunt was requested to get some blinds and have the window behind the organ darkened or blocked.

The church meeting agreed on 30th October 1857 "that the pew opener be authorized to fill up, after the singing of the first hymn, those pews that may be unoccupied".

Ebenezer White had served ten years as pastor in Thatcham, when he died on 27th November 1859, aged forty-five. A note in the church minute book records that "he was greatly endeared to his people". He was buried at Norwood Cemetery, London. There is a plaque to his memory in the United Reformed Church at Thatcham - it is fixed to the north wall of the 'chancel'.

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IN HOPE OF THE GOSPEL
OF WHICH HE WAS A FAITHFUL
MINISTER
NOW RESTETH FROM HIS LABOURS
THE REV'D EBENEZER WHITE
WHO FOR TEN YEARS WAS
THE BELOVED PASTOR OF THIS
CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
HE NOW LIES BURIED AT THE
NORWOOD CEMETERY
DEARLY LAMENTED BY HIS FAMILY
WHOM HE LOVED
AND BY THE CHURCH AND
CONGREGATION
TO WHOM HE MINISTERED
DIED NOVEMBER 27th 1859,
AGED 45 YEARS

Angels Unawares

One of those surveys which some newspapers love to publish claimed recently that a large number of British people believe in angels - almost as many, in fact, as claimed to believe in God. They didn't tell us what people meant by 'angels'. I suspect quite a few were thinking of young children who die, who are often now said to be 'angels' 'up there'. They're not, of course. They are transformed human beings. Be that as it may, when Christians celebrate the feast of St Michael and All Angels later this month, there will be many of us, inside and outside churches, who will wonder exactly what or who we are celebrating.

Most simply, the word in the New Testament means 'messenger'. An 'angel' is a being who brings to us God's message or his help. In the Bible angels are variously described. The familiar notion of wings and flight comes from a vision given to Isaiah in the Temple when he was being called as a prophet. The angel Gabriel, who told Mary that she was chosen to be the mother of the Messiah, is not described at all, but his words are recorded in detail. Angels speak to people in dreams (Joseph, the husband of Mary, for instance) and Jesus spoke of 'angels' who particularly care for children ('guardian angels').

Most people, even very devout ones, have never knowingly encountered an angel, I guess. However, the New Testament tells us that in 'showing hospitality to strangers' some of us have 'entertained angels without knowing it'. Clearly wings and eyes of flame are not obligatory. Just human care. 'Oh, go on, be an angel and make me a cup of tea!'

by Canon David Winter

*Some musings on
everyday life....*

*I don't do drugs or alcohol,
because I find I get the same
effect just by standing up
really fast.*

*I love being married. It's so
great to find that one special
person you want to annoy for
the rest of your life.*

URC Wessex Synod: Sharing the Vision

Hybrid Church Meet-up – 7 September – 7.30-9pm

Come along to YOUR space to share and learn.

Share ideas and good practice.

Hear valuable, experience input.

Gain inspiration on Children's and Youth Work, Community Outreach, Technology and Worship

For more inform email: jenny.mills@urc.org.uk or dan@media4ministry.co.uk

Zoom meeting ID: 892 8553 7599

Passcode: 655777

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 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.

Newbigin Pioneering Hub

Pioneering is about releasing ordinary people to do the extraordinary things they dream about – enabling crazy, and not so crazy, ideas to take shape as part of the mission of the church.

The Newbigin Pioneering Hub is a new initiative which will offer:

- spare-time training in pioneer ministry for those starting out
- a community for pioneers within the URC and beyond
- all led by people with deep lived experience of the ups and downs of starting new things in a wide variety of settings

More information available from bookings@urcwessex.org.uk

Springs Dance Company Productions

Springs Dance Company invites churches to host a performance of

the live dance tour A Time to Mourn, A Time to Dance, in October 2022 and Journey of the Magi during Advent 2022. Bring your community together to watch two exceptional new dance works performed by a company of five outstanding dancers. For more information about these projects please get in touch by emailing touring@springsdancecompany.org.uk or by calling 07876 752 910

Further information can be found on the Springs Dance Company website

<https://springsdancecompany.org.uk/productions/>

Become a certified Mental Health First Aider

2-day courses in-person or online equivalent across two weeks which includes four live zoom sessions with the trainer. Wessex Synod will cover the cost. Please register via Wessex Synod, not direct. Booking is essential and places are limited so book early to avoid disappointment. Email bookings@urcwessex.org.uk to receive the link to register on the course.

Development and Support

Development and Support Officers Mary and Ray continue to support churches, elderships and ministers, individually and through their work with the pastoral committees.

The DSOs are planning training and support events for 2022 (subject to Covid restrictions). Dates are listed below and further details will be published when available.

Mary Thomas will be on sabbatical from July to mid-October 2022 so you will need to contact Ray Stanyon during this time.

If you or your church feels that the DSOs can be of assistance, please do be in touch with them.

Ray Stanyon

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Ukraine



The poet laureate Simon Armitage has written a poem about the war in Ukraine. Titled 'Resistance', Armitage read it on BBC Radio 4's Today programme on Friday 11 March. The poem includes these lines: "The next scene smacks / of archive newsreel: platforms and trains / (never again, never again)."

It concludes: "False news is news / with the pity / edited out. It's war again: / air-raid sirens can't fully mute / the cathedral bells - / let's call that hope."

Armitage told the Guardian: The poem was a "refracted version of what is coming at us in obscene images through the news". Reports from Ukraine were both compelling and difficult to watch, he said.

The poem repeats the words "it's war again" several times, in reference to successive conflicts in recent history. "There's a weariness in the poem; here we go again," said Armitage. "But [the poem] is also a form of resistance, I hope. There's not a lot I can do, sitting here. But writing it down, taking ownership of the terrible images, feels a positive act."

While evoking the desperate urgency of escaping death and destruction, Armitage's poem ends on a note of hope: "An air-raid siren can't fully mute the cathedral bells."

He added: "I was talking to somebody the other day who'd been a young man at the height of the cold war and the Bay of Pigs crisis, and he said he used to go to bed not knowing whether he'd wake up in the morning."

"I don't think we're quite there yet. But in terms of catastrophe, tragedy, this feels as real and raw as anything I can remember. And the stakes are very high."

The legacy will be a massive destruction to the environment.

Resistance

It's war again: a family
carries its family out of a pranged
house
under a burning thatch.
The next scene smacks
of archive newsreel: platforms and
trains
(never again, never again),
toddlers passed
over heads and shoulders,
lifetimes stowed
in luggage racks.
It's war again: unmistakable smoke
on the near horizon mistaken
for thick fog. Fingers crossed.
An old blue tractor
tows an armoured tank
into no-man's land.
It's the ceasefire hour: godspeed the
columns
of winter coats and fur-lined
hoods,
the high-wire walk
over buckled bridges
managing cases and bags,
balancing west and east -
godspeed.
It's war again: the woman in black
gives sunflower seeds to the
soldier, insists
his marrow will nourish
the national flower. In dreams
let bullets be birds, let cluster
bombs
burst into flocks.
False news is news
with the pity
edited out. It's war again:
an air-raid siren can't fully mute
the cathedral bells -
let's call that hope.

Simon Armitage



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Be sure to download them and then send as attachments – copying and pasting into an email will not work!

