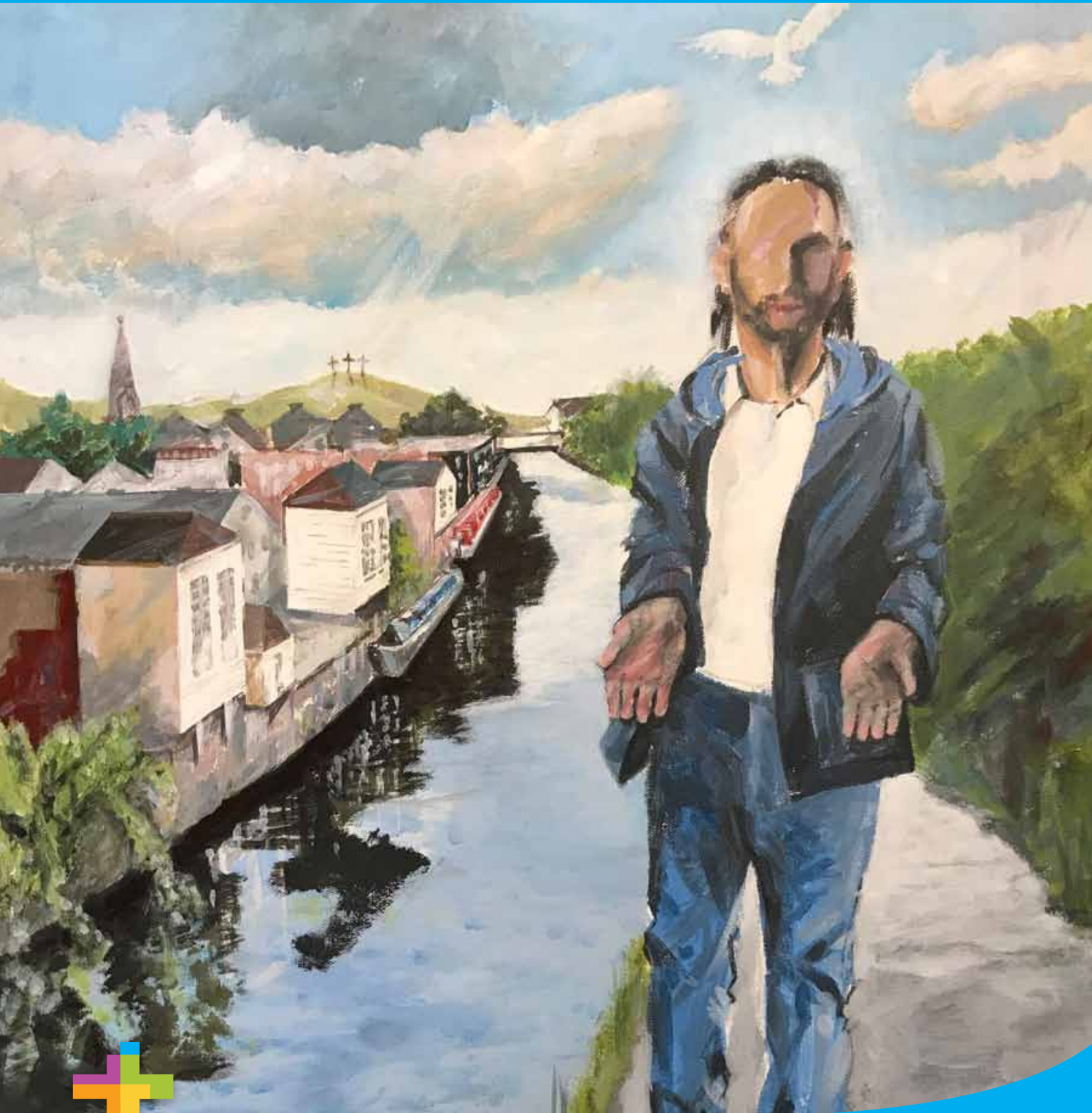


CHRIST CHURCH WARE

Issue 69

Christ Church Ware Magazine Summer 2021



Christ Church Ware
Jesus led, Spirit empowered, Grace based.

www.christchurchware.co.uk

John's Journal



from
Rev. John Hookway

Welcome to the summer magazine. It is great that things are starting to open back up and we are able to fully connect with family and friends again in this new season. Let us make the most of further opportunities to reconnect as a church and also form new connections with other communities around us. This summer is not only a chance to make up for that missed holiday but also to create opportunities for building up relationships again.

"The one who calls you is faithful and He will do it." (1 Thessalonians 5:24) That was our motto text in 2019 and we saw that God was faithful throughout all the redevelopment, has been faithful through 2020, and still is faithful for God is the same yesterday, today and forever, and is still faithful in 2021. He stands alongside us in the midst of all the changes and all the different experiences that we have.

On the 24th of May, I passed the milestone of being ten years as the Vicar here at Christ Church. It's been, and still is, an amazing privilege to be the Vicar here in this place with such an amazing community. The verse that was given to me by God for this church

It's been wonderful to hear of how individuals and Life Groups have supported one another



was Romans 15:13, "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." This is still true today. In this new season, in this time, God still wants to give us His joy and His peace, and He wants to fill us with hope. As you read this magazine, you'll see some of the amazing things that God has been doing, is still doing,

and going to be doing in and through us. During the past few months, we've been able to do the livestreams, Life Groups, The Bible Course, The Prayer Course, The Wellbeing Journey, Christian Against Poverty (CAP), the youths and children online and now back in person to The Parenting For Faith course. So many things where God has been faithful through us as a community. It's also been great that we have been able to open up the children's work and the youth's work, CAP café, the Baby Group, the Toddler Group and other activities are starting to open up in different ways. As we look ahead, I'm often thinking about three Cs as we go forward. Each C is actually the same word and is about connecting.

Connecting with God

The first C is *connecting deeper with God*, continuing to root into Him and to know His strength. For it is God's job to build the church, and it is God's job to change and grow us. As we connect deeper with God, it not only enables us to process some of the trauma, emotions and experiences of this past year and a half but also enables us to look forward with hope, joy, peace and anticipation. There is something about us coming from a place of restoration. It is like a tree planted by a stream in Psalm 1.

ReConnecting with the Church Community

The second C of connecting is *reconnecting for us as a community*. It's been wonderful to hear of how individuals and Life Groups have supported one another, and how other activities have been able to support each other.



It's been great that we've been able to meet back together albeit in a slightly different form, but as times open up, I'm really looking forward to the opportunity of us helping to reconnect our church community together – that ability to sit and chat, that ability to pray for one another, to sing in worship together and that ability to continue to grow in relationship. So, there's going to be times of continuing to reconnect together. Look at the church website (www.christchurchware.co.uk) for those opportunities.

Connecting with the Wider Community

The third opportunity is that of *connecting wider with our community*, both in existing relationships and new ones that are being formed. It's been great the ways that we have been able to connect with the community but there are now new opportunities – through the school, through CAP, through the newly renovated building, through the various courses; new opportunities in so many different ways. We need to continue seeing those opportunities of reconnecting and being able to share God's love in those places in the wider community. For some of us, that will be the places where we find ourselves on the front line, whether it's still working from home or back in our offices, in school or wherever it is that God has placed us. We take the very presence of God into those spaces. The love of God is shown so often by a listening ear.



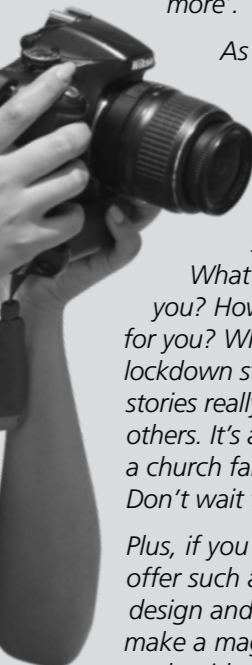
Over the summer, keep checking the church's website for those social events, children's and youth's activities and New Wine's United Breaks Out. In this summer, there is also a sense of holiday and the root word for holiday is holy day. It is one of those connections where God Himself gave us rest – Sunday, Sabbath rest. So I pray in this summer as things open up, as we go deeper with God, as we reconnect with one another and as we reach out connecting wider with our community, we have those opportunities of resting well. Resting, smiling and enjoying each and every day. Enjoying one another. Enjoying God and resting with Him.

On behalf of the church team, have a great summer together.

Your Magazine

Welcome to the Christ Church Summer magazine, it's been a while!

We would like to say a big "thank you" to those who have risen to the challenge of writing for this magazine. It seems as though nothing has been 'going on', but you will see from the many articles here, that actually, 'much' has been happening; and we look forward to all that is to come as lockdown lifts and we are able to 'do more'.



As things start up again, do be thinking about any experiences you have that you would like to share. How has God been speaking to you?

What has God revealed to you? How has God 'been there' for you? What has been your lockdown story with God? Personal stories really encourage and inspire others. It's a great way for us, as a church family, to walk together. Don't wait to be asked!

Plus, if you have relevant skills to offer such as writing, photography, design and any other skills to make a magazine happen, get in touch with us!

Get in touch at:
magazine@christchurchware.co.uk

Next magazine deadline is November 5th 2021, but the earlier we receive your input the better!

The Bereavement Journey



from
Norman Richards

The death of a loved one; a family member or close friend is surely the greatest loss in our lives. Emotions and thoughts like no others, consume us constantly or overwhelm us like crashing waves tossing us around.

The Bereavement Journey is a course of six weekly sessions with a really helpful course booklet and video talks. Emma Dipper, Dave Willis and myself were privileged to lead the course on behalf of Christ Church starting in February of this year. The video talks and subsequent discussion/sharing in small groups all took place using Zoom and ten people took part in the six sessions, the majority of whom were members of Christ Church but we were all very pleased to welcome some from further away, including Suffolk! Oh, the joys of Zoom!

The course is led by Jane Oundjian, an experienced bereavement counsellor of many years with experience of serving in this ministry at Holy Trinity Brompton (HTB). The last session in the series is led by Yvonne Richmond Tulloch, a minister currently serving at HTB in this way.

It is important to stress that joining the course means that you can share in the discussion/sharing small groups as much or as little as you feel comfortable with. The course is very inclusive and open to all and only the last session is clearly from a Christian perspective.

The 6 sessions are:

1. Looking at loss
2. The pain of grief – how it feels
3. The pain of grief – how we deal with it
4. Coping with change
5. Moving forward
6. Faith questions (optional)

I am sure that I can speak for Emma and Dave as well as for myself, in saying how much we learnt from the course videos but also from those participating as we facilitated the small group discussion and sharing.

If you feel this course might be for you then please register your interest with Elaine, the church's office administrator at office@christchurchware.co.uk or on 01920 487267 quoting *The Bereavement Journey*.

Finally it is important to say that the course can also help other types of loss:

- loss of a deep relationship,
- loss of a career/valued job,
- loss of purpose and self-worth

“The Bereavement Journey helped me to understand what I'd been feeling was normal.”

“It was good to share with others in a safe place.”



The Wellbeing Journey

The last year and a half has challenged and stretched many of us in ways that we couldn't imagine. It was during this time that Midweek went through an eight-part video journey focusing on physical, mental and spiritual wellbeing. Heather tells us what that journey has meant to her.

Setting aside time to attend Midweek has long since been a priority, but never did this feel more important or relevant than once lockdown hit. I'm not in a Life Group, so for me this is a treasured time to meet with church members, discussing and reflecting upon biblical matters and applying them to our lives today, all the while continuously learning from one another.

They say timing is everything, and so during the most bizarre and uncertain of times, we were invited to take part in The Wellbeing Journey via Zoom. Here we were, bang smack in the middle of a global pandemic, being offered a chance to focus purely on wellness – what's not to like?



Midweek has always been a place to pause and think, a chance to take stock of what's going on. The course was lively and engaging with presentations on familiar topics including the emotional, spiritual, financial and vocational aspects of our lives that affect just about everyone. There wasn't anything particularly new or ground breaking, but different situations and attitudes to everyday matters were discussed and analysed, allowing us time to focus on various aspects of life, some of which are so often brushed aside or taken for granted. As our attention was brought to each of the topics, we were challenged to go deeper and gain new perspectives. This felt especially relevant and somehow of greater importance during lockdown, when all the usual rules of life, along with daily distractions were no longer applicable.

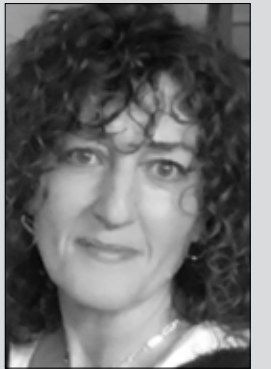
The course presenters brought their own personal experiences to the table, using their own life stories to engage with different people around the country. Issues were explored in a highly relatable way and despite



the seriousness of certain subjects, the overall feel was one of positivity, with an upbeat style that definitely left you feeling more refreshed and not ground down with the heaviness of it all. Some discussions were filmed in a coffee bar setting and this for me, was one of the many highlights. In the absence of the real thing, I grew to really look forward to 'virtually' being in a coffee bar each week, a scenario I could never have imagined pre COVID.

I've thought for a long time that 'normal' has always been underrated. Many of us strive for bigger, better, followed by even bigger, even better. I once wrote a song about this, and how looking at things through God's perspective made "the little things that once seemed small, suddenly seem so tall" and this course certainly chimed with me in that way. By looking at the 'normal' – sadness, loss, finances, relationships, emotions – we see that this is the stuff of life, the essence of what makes us human and gives meaning, both good and bad, to our relatively short time on this earth. Presented with the opportunity to explore these themes, digging a little deeper, we're able to glance at the everyday through the eyes of the One who made the everyday in the first place. Sometimes, when we work through the complex layers of life, we might just see that despite an appearance of tarnished metal, it's here where the real gold lies.

Midweek is a weekly Bible study for women that meets on a Wednesday morning. Chat with Jenny Stratfold or Catriona Baker to join in.



from
Heather Robinson

“Midweek has always been a place to pause and think, a chance to take stock of what's going on.”

How to Read the Bible



from
Mary Salter

The Bible Course, produced by the Bible Society, has helped many of us in our Life Groups to 'see the big picture of the Bible storyline', as well as getting us started on reading Bible passages for ourselves. This course has been really helpful to those who are new to Bible study, while also bringing a fresh approach and new insights to those more familiar with it.

Psalm 119:105 reminds us that God's word "is a lamp to guide my feet and a light for my path" (New Living Translation) and many of us have found that to be true. If we want to get into the habit of regular Bible reading with guidance, where do we start? The good news is that there's something for everyone. If you like a booklet format, Scripture Union produces *Daily Bread* and *Encounter with God*. The Bible Reading Fellowship (BRF) produces *New Daylight*, *Guidelines* and *The Upper Room*. Crusade for World Revival produces *Every Day with Jesus*. Most of these include a short Bible passage and comments on it, and sometimes with questions. You may also like to get a Study Bible which will provide lots of helpful information and comments on each book in the Bible.

"If we want to get into the habit of regular Bible reading with guidance, where do we start?"

If you prefer a digital format, where to start? The BRF booklets mentioned above are also available on apps. Other websites and apps include:

- Lectio 365 (www.24-7prayer.com/dailydevotional)
- Bible Project (www.bibleproject.com/reading-plans)
- YouVersion (www.youversion.com/the-bible-app)

For something a bit different, try *The Chosen* (<https://watch.angelstudios.com/thechosen>).

Bible Gateway (www.biblegateway.com) is another helpful webpage where it not only helps you search for Bible verses easily but also provides reading plans and study tools.

These are just a few suggestions from many resources available but they are all currently used and recommended by Christ Church members. If you need help, please ask Mary Salter directly or through the church office.

The Bible Course

from **Jenny Stratford**

Having been a Christian for many years and having read the whole Bible through a number of times, I found the presentation of the Bible from *The Bible Course* by The Bible Society very refreshing.

The combination of a chronological and a visual view of Scripture gives us the complete picture of God's plan for our world. The presenter, Dr. Andrew Ollerton, speaks clearly in a lively, friendly manner and his use of a wooden frame where he places the different books in order, gives a very clear visual representation of the Bible.

The first session introduces the Bible, explaining its impact, popularity, inspiration and history. In the next sessions, starting with creation, we follow the course of God's relationship with His people. We see them finally enter the Promised Land and hear of the judges, kings and prophets God used to help them to follow Him.

This leads us to the New Testament, with the coming of the Messiah, the early church and the completion of God's plan with the new Creation.

Throughout the eight week course, we are continually pointed to the references in the Old Testament foreshadowing the arrival of the Messiah in the New Testament.

The individual booklets encourage the participants to prepare for each session by reading a daily Bible passage.

These can also be followed during the video and have space for writing notes, as well as a personal reflection at the end.

The discussion time half-way through the video with suggested questions is also very useful to help us apply what we are learning to our own lives.

The course provides an excellent introduction to and overview of the Bible for those who are not very familiar with it. However, for those who know their Bible well, it can also give a fresh perspective on God's wonderful book; His Living Word.

Explore the BIG Story

For those of you who aren't familiar, *The Bible Course* by The Bible Society is video-based with eight sessions, which has been great to do with our Life Group over Zoom, following along with the well-presented booklet for bible passages and discussion questions. We separated each session into two parts, so we've been doing the course for quite a while now.

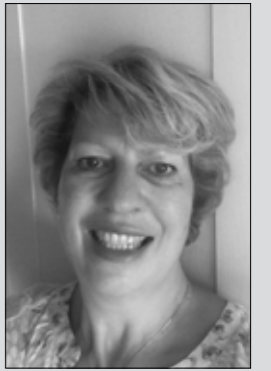
The constant challenge of the course is to ask, "What?" (Bible culture) and "Now what?" (our culture). To me, it seems like a good way to read the Bible. For example, Jesus told His disciples to wash one another's feet. I want to follow the heart of Jesus' teaching but in a way that's appropriate today.

There are so many highlights, but here a just a few:

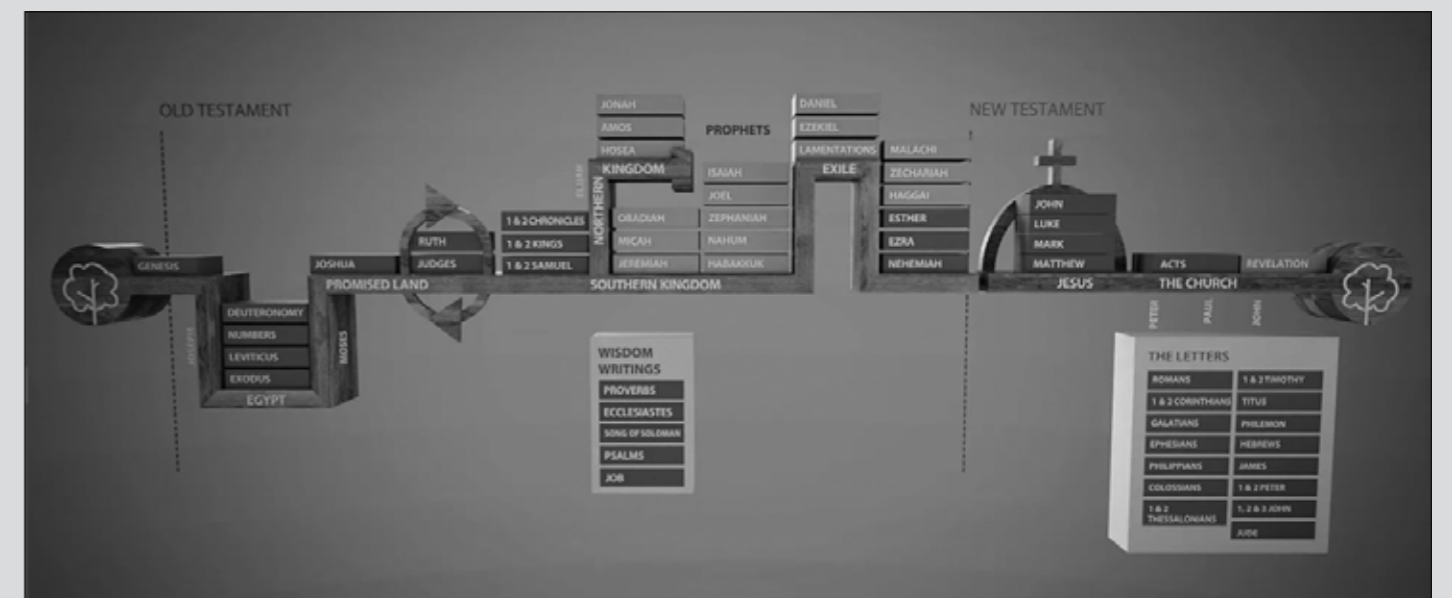
- Seeing the big picture of the bible. This is brilliantly illustrated by the use of a wooden structure into which the presenter places the books of the Bible.
- There is some history attached, but the course makes the Bible relevant for today. For example, when we got to the book of Romans, we found it was as relevant to St. Augustine in the 4th century as it is to Danny, a former drug addict and follower of Christ today.
- I loved the connections which were drawn out between old and new testament. One example is Leviticus 16 which talks about the day of Atonement when, alongside the scarified goat, another goat is released into the wilderness – the scapegoat which takes away sin. This makes John's revelation of "behold the lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29, ESV) all the more relevant to me. Jesus our scapegoat.

- Comparing what happened in Genesis 11, the Tower of Babel to Pentecost and the coming of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2.
- The fascinating differences in the writers' approach to writing their own accounts (the four Gospels) and how the differences are actually a sign of authenticity.

It's full of helpful quotes, for example, did you know Martin Luther King quoted Amos in his famous "I have a dream" speech? Or C.S. Lewis in *The Last Battle* tells readers, "all their life in this world... had only been the beginning Chapter One of the Great Story which no one on earth has read; which goes on forever; in which every chapter is better than the one before". What a great picture of heaven!



from
Sue Ilott



Pray! Pray! Pray!

Prayer is not only an important but essential part in our Christian life. Prayer is our way of communicating with God, allowing us to further build up our relationship with Him. Over the last few months, some Life Groups have been going through Peter Greig's The Prayer Course and The Prayer Course II – Unanswered Prayers. Covering topics including intercession, listening, spiritual warfare and unanswered prayer, here are some thoughts of those who followed the course.

What I Learnt from The Prayer Course

from John Castle

The Prayer Course has helped me to think about the way that I pray to God and listen to him. Being led by God in prayer is not something I have really done outside of a church service before. The course spoke about having a time of meditation by repeating a phrase over and over such as "God is Good" to clear the mind of our daily thoughts and worries.

Following this meditation, the course taught me to have space to listen, and I found this actually worked! I felt drawn to pray for a couple of people. Initially this seemed odd as I felt convicted to pray for two people, both who did not have any obvious problems. If anything, their lives appeared to be going well. I did not know what to pray for so I just held them in prayer for a while. A couple of weeks later, I learnt that one of them had suffered a major health problem. My prayer did not result in God preventing it but I am grateful He led me to pray for them. I need to make space to do more of this.

"Our prayers may be awkward. Our attempts may be feeble. But since the power of prayer is in the one who hears it and not in the one who says it, our prayers do make a difference."
- Max Lucado

Jesus, the Perfect Crack Filler

from Neil Pearce

You know what it's like. You start to pray and your mind loses concentration, or it starts to bring different images or thoughts into your head, some quite bizarre! When this happens, I occasionally ask God, "Are you trying to tell me something?"

On this occasion some weeks ago, while trying to pray, I had an image of a white wall with a crack running from top to bottom. This crack would be filled and the wall was then covered with paint to make it like new. This image would keep on repeating itself in my mind and would not go away.

In our Life Group, we were following Pete Greig's The Prayer Course II - Unanswered Prayer course based on his book God On Mute (I recommend it if you have not studied it) and in one of the sessions, there was a Japanese bowl (kintsugi bowl) which was repaired using gold. The gold repair would be totally visible! Because of this, it became more precious. Pete Greig was trying to say that when God comes into our lives, we are more precious because He has restored us.

While looking at this situation, I thought of the crack in the wall. There are many ways to repair a crack and you can use many types of fillers. In extreme cases, you could have stainless steel spiral bars that are secured in place across each

side of the crack. This stops the crack from opening again. The main reason for cracks to open up is that the foundations are not sound.

Looking at the crack that was now invisible, I thought of Jesus being the perfect filler of the cracks in our lives! Cracks that have been holding us back, or things we are not happy about or ashamed of. What I felt was that this image of this repair was to make it new, and that only God knows those secrets that hold us back in our lives. Jesus would be the ultimate flexible filler and if we came to Him, it would always be repaired and you could come to Him time after time. All those things that we are ashamed of – what we have done, bad thoughts, how we have behaved, the faults that are pulling us apart – He can renew by His grace. We can try to straighten out our lives using the steel bars to hold the cracks together but without Jesus as our strong foundation, the cracks will still exist. I think it's amazing that Jesus can fill that crack in our lives, that gaping hole that is pulling us apart.

Remember the bowl and how the cracks were visible. Well, this image I have is between yourself and God but if you want to share what God has done for you, that's up to you!

This is how I see it.

The Half Night of Prayer!

from Tommy Davies

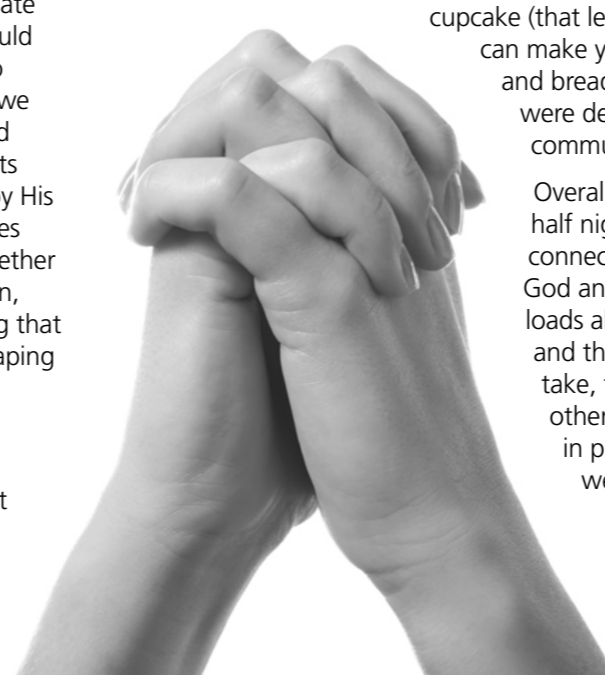
Despite being unable to meet in-person, the youths still continued to remotely meet weekly via Zoom and even managed to have two half nights of prayer.

The prayer nights ran from 7.30pm to midnight where we worshipped, communed, played games and prayed together for each other and the world. The purpose of these nights was to help us to be closer to God (it achieved that for me) and have some fun.

The first half night, which was a popular idea from a member of youth to replace 'weekend aways', was amazing. We played interesting games such as Carrot or No Carrot, a game where you detect a lie about a carrot in a box. Ed Wells spoke and he was also the one who introduced Carrot or No carrot with many introduction songs. We had slots for prayer and worship, and even used a Padlet (online tool) for prayer requests.

The second half night was just as brilliant and was on Maundy Thursday. We prayed for each other using Google Sheets (another online tool), and wrote inspirational Bible verses and encouragement for each other. For me, this was extremely uplifting and when relooking at the sheets, it will easily make me happy to see what others have written for me. We also prayed for the church and the local area as well as worshipped with music provided by members of the youth. In addition, before the session started, a bag with a timetable, a cupcake (that length of time can make you hungry!) and bread and juice were delivered to us for communion.

Overall, the two half nights of prayer connected us to God and I felt I learnt loads about prayer and the forms it can take, from words for others, to singing in praise, plus they were really fun.



Dear God...

Over the years, we have built a strong relationship with the children from Christ Church School, and invited them to pray at one of our Sunday services. Here is a compilation of their prayers.

Dear God,
Thank you for the world and springtime.
Amen.

Roy, Year 1

Dear God,
Thank you for my family and my friends.
Amen.

Solomon, Year 1

Dear God,
Thank you for teachers, food and water.
Amen.

Lucy, Year 1

Dear God,
Please help the people in other countries whose governments don't supply them with food or water. Also, help the people who just don't have the money to survive. Help the government to make the correct choice, and help us get back to normal. Thank you for helping us during COVID and for always being there for us. Please teach the few bad people in the world who choose to make the dreadful decision such as murder and stealing to make the right choices. Also, please help the people harmed by natural suffering such as fires or earthquakes. Please give help to those who have suffered due to loss.
Amen.

Anna, Year 5

Dear God,
Thank you for food, water and all the survivors of COVID-19 and family members. Also, thank you for putting a roof over my head.
Amen.

Pheron, Year 5

Dear God,
I hope we can settle the earth down before we have another normal or natural disaster, and please help the suffering before it costs us our lives.
Amen.

Frankie, Year 5

Dear God,
I pray for anyone that has suffered because someone they love has died. May they rest in peace. I have encountered the same. My world is knocked down, not anyone else's.
Amen.

Felix, Year 5

Dear God,
Please help us through this horrible virus and help to cure the poorly. I pray you will help the sad suffering in life so that the people who are less fortunate will have a brilliant score. Thank you for the books and World Book Day and the kind people around us.
Amen.

Lilly, Year 5

Dear God,
I pray for anyone who has suffered in their lifetime. Please help the people who are suffering, and I would like everyone who is suffering to be helped.
Amen.

Mollie, Year 5

A Day in the Life of...



from
Rob Davies

Each issue, we invite one of our congregation to describe how they invite God into a day in their life. This time, Rob explains a typical day as an Operations Manager for DHL...

Looking at 'a day in the life of' has become quite a regular occurrence for me. However, it's been a while since I stopped to look at a day in my life!

I am a father of three amazing, energetic and enquiring children. For the last seven months or so, I have been mainly working on projects so my working hours have somewhat varied. With the project I am currently on, I tend to wake up around 4.30am. I am not a morning person but the peace and quiet of a sleeping household affords me the opportunity of a slightly less rambunctious breakfast.

After making my lunch, nothing exciting usually, I get into the car for the drive to my warehouse where I work as an Operations



the robots were not originally designed to operate over more than one floor so every day brings its own challenges as new software is developed, tested and implemented. Outside of data and with two floors currently live, my day mainly consists of trying to optimize the robots' performance to ensure we hit the business case. In addition, I am training the floor managers to interpret the data and deploy both the robots and their teams in the most efficient way. It's a whole new way of managing so there is a big focus on change management which gives me a great opportunity to really engage with my team and other warehouse staff.

The robots have become quite adept at dancing as they try to get around each other in narrow aisles. Spending time in the more congested zones can be quite entertaining!

At around 1.45pm, I usually brief the technical team and shift manager coming in on the late shift. Once I am happy that the oncoming shift is set up, it's time for me to return home where the joys of a usually quite difficult workout await me. Coming to the end of my 'day in the life of', I am aware there is scant mention of God. I am not very good at making time to spend with Him. My prayer is to see God in the everyday, to have compassion and to make time no matter what....



"The robots have become quite adept at dancing as they try to get around each other in narrow aisles."

Manager. I often use this time to talk to God with the occasional praise session depending on the music I am listening to. Currently, I am leading the implementation of a fleet of robots in my warehouse. As the first DHL site in Europe to have robots, it is quite an interesting project. Don't worry though, they are not quite clever enough for there to be any risk of Skynet taking over!

Getting in at 5.15am, I am able to review the current day's work and start to plan resources: people and robots. Once I have made a plan, I will pass it onto the floor manager to implement with their targets for the day. It is then time for me to start gathering data from the previous day in preparation for a review meeting with the project team. I enjoy data analysis so this tends to be the most enjoyable part of my work day.

My warehouse is over four floors. However,

Parenting for Faith

The challenges of being a parent are many. For Christian parents, one of those includes guiding their children in the Christian faith. But where does one start? The church ran a Parenting for Faith course to help parents discover that they are perfectly positioned to show their children the reality of a life with God and to empower them to have their own vibrant two-way relationship with Him. Here, Dave and Louise Brett who facilitated and attended the course share their thoughts on it...



from
Dave Brett



and to pray. We could apply this with our own two boys and the children we encounter through children's church. It also gave us the opportunity to just hang out on a Saturday night with a group of lovely people in the church community.

Anything we can try?
Try with/without a child. Just lie on the floor and listen to God, see if he has any pictures or words for you. If you manage more than ten seconds with a three-year-old, you are

doing well! Follow up with expectantly asking them what He told them... maybe He told them He likes disco lights!

Why did you run it?

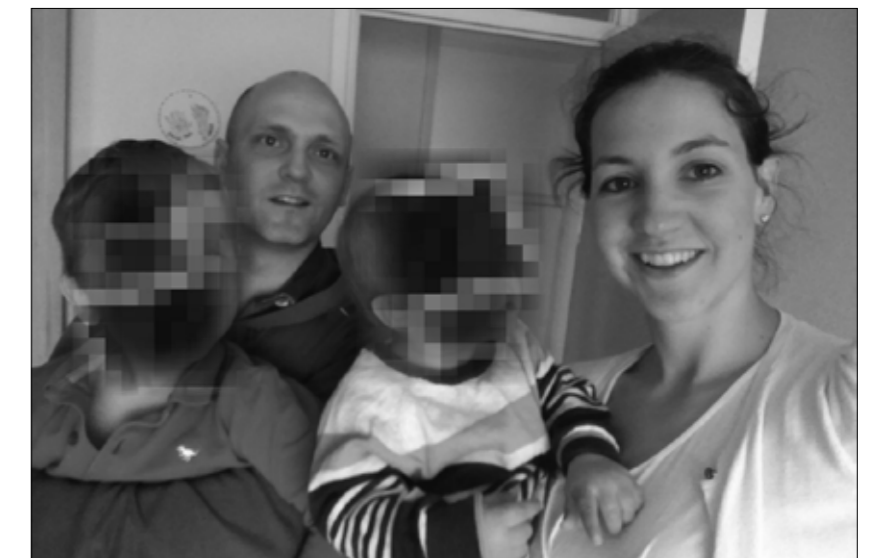
It was mid way through 2020 when Louise and I started thinking about what we can do to support other parents going through the pandemic in the church. There are lots of books out there on parenting but sometimes being able to just reflect and chat through things with other people are so much more powerful. We identified the *Parenting For Faith* by Rachel Turner course as a really good one to run. It applies to all those in church with the responsibility for parenting... not just those with children.

How did you run it?

The course is typically run in person. Babysitting and in person meetings were out. Instead, we met together on Saturday nights on Zoom. We met every three weeks and followed up with ideas and encouragement on WhatsApp. The course sessions are a combination of videos, self-reflection and group discussions and are written so well that we ended up doing minimum preparation. We'd definitely run it again and remotely just to remove the potential childcare barrier.

What did you get out of it?

While we facilitated it happening, we also attended. We thoroughly enjoyed the videos and the discussions the course generated. It gave us so many ideas both for approachable ways to talk about Jesus in our everyday lives



"Signing up to a parenting course, we didn't quite know what to expect. I was imagining being instructed on how to deal with a toddler tantrum, however the focus was really about including children in our own spiritual journey, explaining our prayer/devotional life and our relationship with Jesus. The short videos were instructing and entertaining, but for us, the standout part of the course was sharing inspirational stories, suggestions and experiences with other members of our wider church family. Thanks to Dave and Louise for facilitating and getting us involved."

Rob and Liz Swaile, parents of Daniel and Luke

Yes and Amen!

The season of Lent is a time for people to think about 'giving something up'. But the COVID pandemic has caused us to give up so much more and in many ways than we expected. It has said 'NO' to us all in many ways – lockdown, illness, hardship, bereavement.

However, Easter reminds us that instead of saying 'NO', Jesus made good his 'YES' to the purpose of His becoming human. He gave up His life in order to give us life in all its fullness, to know our sins forgiven, to know a way to be in God's presence. We just have to say 'YES!' and go on saying it in all circumstances.

Hence, the 'Yes and Amen!' project which was initiated by Richard Jarvest was born, and church members were invited to respond creatively by sending in their pictures or artwork that showed or represented their experiences of God's YES and their Amen. Here are just a few of them...

"His love for each of us is so great that He sees past the brokenness of our lives."

It was during the height of the lockdowns when we weren't able to meet as a church community that the idea came. I longed for a project that could bring us together as a community, something everybody could contribute to, something that would allow creative gifts in our community to flourish in the worship of God. Easter season was the perfect focus for this. With this vision of purpose but a very vague idea of content, I spoke to Rosie Watson. Rosie, with input from Sian Woodward, developed the concept of Yes and Amen!

I was delighted and amazed by the range of interpretations of the creative pieces that individuals, couples and families produced. Touching, worshipful, thought provoking are some of the words for my responses to them.

For June's and my contribution, we wanted an explicit Easter reference. Neither of us is very technically skilled at visual arts so we opted for



a craft based and cut-out method. The stark red and whites with a cross led us to the words and images of Isaiah 1:18, and then the use of brightly coloured materials for the joyful "Amen!" for all Jesus has done for us.

Richard and June Jarvest

As an occasional worshipper at Christ Church, I am frequently struck by the sense of a positive energy force emanating from the congregation in their worship and love of Jesus.

In an acrylic painting, I boldly applied the vivid colours of acrylic paint to give visibility in pathways of colour to represent this otherwise invisible positive force from the congregation.

Brian Gibson



"They did not recognise him"

The painting is based on the text from Luke 24:13-16, 'On the road to Emmaus' where two followers do not recognise the risen Christ.

The face of Christ has always fascinated me. Throughout history, Christ has been painted as white, brown, black, short hair, long hair, bearded and no beard. In this painting, I've left the face blurred and unfinished as I didn't want to guess what His face looks like, but would rather invite the viewer to put their own interpretation to it.

I take a long time painting, constantly revisiting and evolving the image. I'm rarely satisfied and have a tendency to overwork projects. Everything becomes work in progress. However, in this case, it was two weeks before Easter and I was determined to use this timescale to produce this image which had been on my mind for some time.

The painting shows the River Lea and town at Ware. The church spire can be seen. Calvary is on a hill behind the town. The sky is darker on the left side of the painting but brighter above the figure.

I've changed the road to Emmaus to the river towpath. A person on the towpath, dressed in jeans and casual jacket is holding out his hands. Who is he? A dove hovers above his head. The dove is much used in religious art to represent The Holy Spirit.

Malcolm Jobling



Even as a little girl I had a passion for flowers. I remember running through a field in the South African spring and stopping to smell the nectar rich, low growing flowers or just soaking up the beauty of another flower. This gave me a huge sense of joy and wonder!

Many years later, I became a freelance wedding florist so to portray God's greatest gift to us using flowers was second nature to me.

His love for each of us is so great that He sees past the brokenness of our lives. No matter how we have been uprooted and tossed about, twisted or broken, or how strong we have become through life – God loves us and wants us to be right with Him. Through the crucifixion of Jesus, that brokenness is restored and we become clothed in the beauty of his love.

I can only say "Yes and Amen"!

Joan Turner

A Place for Little Feet

from Jess Cole

The Toddler Group (or better known as Toddlers) is a fantastic ministry that has been running at Christ Church for many years and is spoken of very highly in the community. It has been valued by so many as a place for connection, support and fun. Those things are vital now maybe more than ever and so we are excited to have restarted this group.

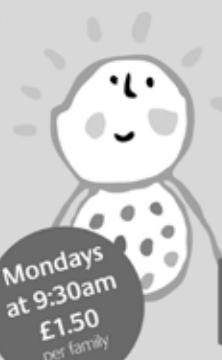
There is time for playing and then we gather together for a story. It has been special to watch the children born during a pandemic realise that there are indeed other small people like them around! It is also wonderful to see the parents' excitement and eagerness to come to the group. They are incredibly thankful for this space.

The importance of relationships and places of connection has been highlighted to many of us this past year. We are seeing this in Toddlers.

Even when you strip it back to just an hour and without refreshments, even when all you can do is provide a few toys and some friendly faces, it is vitally important. This is what people need and this is what we as a church can provide.

There is a faithful team of volunteers who have returned to welcome these families and we appreciate all that they do. One team member says, "I love being able to help at Toddlers. It's such a happy place to see God's love in action. When my children were small, I was able to go to a toddler group at the church in the town where we lived and I remember how good it was to relax for an hour or so with other mums. I love that I can now give that chance to others and feel privileged that I gain so much personally from being involved."

Toddlers currently runs for an hour on a Monday morning. If you would like to come and join in the fun, we would love to hear from you! Contact the church office if you would like to help or to book a place.



Toddlers
A place of friendship and community

Mondays at 9:30am
£1.50 per family

To book your place please call the Church Office on 01920 487267. Bookings taken on a Wednesday, for the following Monday's session.

A Welcoming Place for New Mothers

from Sally Crowther

"She is clothed with strength and dignity; she can laugh at the days to come." (Proverbs 31:25)

A comfortable welcoming place and an opportunity for mothers to meet other mothers. To be able to relax with their babies and to share experiences. We are a team of volunteers, willing to listen and support where needed.



Baby Group
A place to relax with your baby and to meet other new parents and a team of experienced volunteers.

Fridays at 1:30pm
£1.50 per family

Admission is by appointment. To book your place please call the Church Office on 01920 487267.

The restrictive measures of lockdown have been particularly tough for new mothers. Health professional contact has been limited, family support has been from a distance and contact with other mothers and babies has either been virtual or by text message. The birth of a baby is a life changing experience and can be overwhelming. Traditionally, new parents would turn to family members or the community for support. As a midwife and lactation consultant, I have had the privilege of being able to continue to meet face-to-face with mothers. One new mother told me how her elderly parents were leaving cooked meals on her doorstep as they were afraid of giving or catching COVID. There are many stories of lack of support and isolation. Many of us at Christ Church remember the lifeline of practical support that we have received in the way of meals during the early days following the birth of our babies.

Following a snatched opportunity for dinner with our vicar, John and his wife, Heather in October 2020, we talked about a shared vision for the support of mothers and babies at Christ Church. John had been struck by a comment from a new mum, that her baby hadn't yet seen the face of another baby. Later, when praying for the group, John had a picture of "a spring meadow beginning to burst forth with life". So, a new Christ Church Baby Group was conceived. Unfortunately, no sooner had the plans been made, another lockdown delayed the restarting of the group for another four months! Eventually, the team of volunteers was recruited, the group was advertised and finally launched in April 2021.

Postcard from...



Paul and I honeymooned in The Lake District and Whitby before returning to Northern Ireland when we moved into our new farmhouse.

I love being Mrs Crawford! We look after 200 sheep and also foster calves. I now milk cows (which means a 5.35am alarm!) but it's amazing and gives me time to pursue my writing. We're getting ready for lambing season. We're grateful to Rev. Hookway and the team for enabling us to get married in Christ Church. It will always hold a special place in our hearts.

Dreams do come true, for on this day we said 'I do.' These were the words our guests saw as they entered the church on our wedding day.

At times, it felt like we would never get there, as our original plans for a May wedding were postponed due to Covid-19. But we waited and eventually, on Saturday, 18th July 2020, Paul and I got married in Christ Church.

So we had to cut our guest list in half, scrap the reception in the swanky hotel and find a new location for our photos, but none of that mattered. All along, Paul and I just wanted to get married, and our dreams were realised.

Having my dad walk me down the aisle and seeing Paul waiting for me at the altar along with my mum and mother-in-law to be, watching, was, and always will be the best and most magical moments of my life.

Paul looked so handsome in his kilt and sheep waistcoat and we had tears in our eyes as we stood side by side. I thank God for having brought us together and for enabling some of our family and friends to see us make our vows in church. Modern-day technology also meant those who could not be with us could see our wedding online.

I'm so grateful to Paul, my gorgeous husband, for all his hard work in putting together such a beautiful wedding so quickly and under such restrictions. He made the orders of service, bought and arranged the flowers, decorated the church with the beautiful bows we were meant to have on the chairs at our reception and even made the cake!

After the service, Paul made a speech in the grounds and we had our first dance. There can't be many couples who can say they cut their wedding cake in the boot of the groom's car, but we can! We had a lovely family meal and spent time with our nearest and dearest before going on honeymoon.

We'd like to thank you for your prayers and support during those few months. We got there in the end! Also, a big thank you to Rev. John Hookway and the Christ Church team who worked so hard to make our day so special. Thank you also to my Alpha Ladies who attended and waved to us outside the church. It meant the world to us that you came and supported us. Thank you.

To see our wedding photos and video, visit:
<https://hollypaul.weebly.com>

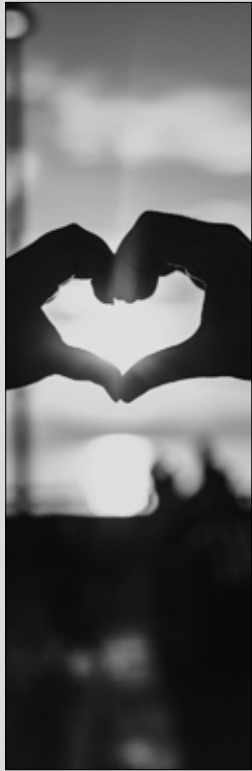
Paul and Holly Crawford



Please pray:

- Our Islandmagee and Christ Church families as we emerge from lockdown and thank God for their kindness and support.
- We thank God for enabling Paul and I to meet and marry – we're so grateful and happy.
- Farmers, their families and the animals they care for. We thank God for all creatures great and small and for the joy they give.





Love

from Margaret Walton

Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also should love one another - 1 John 4:11

There are so many forms of love and here are my thoughts.

Firstly, there is the love we have for our God, which is a profound, reverential love.

That is different from the love we feel for our life partners, which, initially is passionate, evolving into a comfortable solid love.

Thirdly, for our children, it is a fierce and protective love when they are young; and an all encompassing love as they grow older and share their love with their partners.

Then, there's love for grandchildren. It is a joyful love, with all of the love and none of the responsibility!

If we are lucky enough, we may experience the love for our great grandchildren, which is

a wonderful love, because we are now at the stage in our lives when we are able to devote all our love to them, as we are free from commitments.

Next, there is the love of all that is beautiful, that God has given us - flora and fauna - and it is a free gift for us to enjoy and marvel at every day of our lives.

Last, but not least, our friendships. This again is a different kind of love but nevertheless something to treasure.

Yes, love is the most wonderful of God's creations.

A CAP Celebration

Christ Church's CAP debt centre has continued to provide free debt counselling to our community throughout the last year and has just resumed doing face-to-face visits. This period has enabled us to introduce a new hybrid model for all appointments where our clients can request telephone or video appointments as an alternative to a home visit. This new model enables us to adapt our service better to our client's needs, although the home visit model will usually be the best option as finding paperwork remotely is a bit of a challenge!

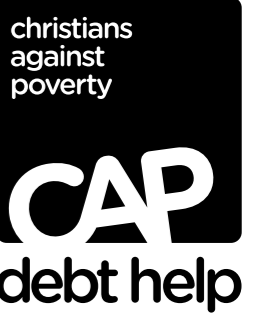
As we return to face-to-face visits, we can offer the opportunity for church members to become involved as client supporters. The primary skill required is to be friendly and a good listener! When I introduce the supporter to my client, I would normally describe them as their "chief cheerleader" so if you think that could be you, drop me a line and I'd love to tell you more!

We have just celebrated freedom from debt for our 5th ever client who started on a repayment plan seven years ago and has stuck with it, with all the various ups and downs along the way. It has been a privilege to walk that road with him and to see him reach this

milestone after all the hard work. Seeing our clients achieve freedom from debt is such a delight and to have had the opportunity to shine the light and hope of Christ into places of despair is something we will never take for granted.

If you'd like to share that journey with someone, then do get in touch with me on 07725 607425 or email me at samantharich@capuk.org.

If you, or someone you know, is struggling with debt, then please don't wait as help is available. Just call 0800 328 0006 to book an appointment.



from Sam Rich

God is Good



from Carol Robinson

What a year I have had. Not only have we faced all of the challenges of COVID, but I have also had my faith stretched and tested to breaking point as I dealt with a life threatening illness.

I have been fighting cancer and had to have a lifesaving operation last year. There was not really any choice - I would die from the cancer without the operation but there was a high chance I wouldn't make it through the operation, and if I did, the recovery was expected to be long and difficult.

All my hope was in the skill of the medical teams who have been wonderful and in our Lord Jesus Christ.

There were times when all hope seemed lost and God was so distant. But it was in those dark days - which were the longest and when all was lost - when God was at His most real.

I have seen the power of prayer at work - finding Christian sisters on my hospital ward, listening to and reading God's word on my electronic tablet, and in simple random acts of love from folks. My husband, John and I have felt as though we have been carried through the last year by the love of those at Christ Church and by the power of prayer. Words cannot express how grateful we are to you all for those prayers, for the plants, gifts, lifts,

listening ears and encouraging words. We are truly blessed to be part of this wonderful Christ Church family.

Whilst I have been dealing with my illness, John has had the stress and worry of watching from a distance and not being able to visit me in hospital. He is a man new to faith, young in faith years but he has found such solace and comfort in crying out to the Lord, and has been overwhelmed by seeing how powerful prayer is. Indeed he is turning into a prayer warrior himself and is so grateful to the Friday prayer group at church.

I have been for follow up tests and am grateful that those were positive and clear, and we are praying that the next set in September will see me in full remission. I continue to grow in physical strength and take such pleasure in the simple things in life such as pottering in the garden and being able to walk into town again.

God is indeed God.

Judith Greaves MBACP
Counsellor and Psychotherapist

Professional and Confidential Counselling
Therapy

St Andrew's Centre, St Andrew's Street, Hertford, SG14 1HZ
07910 724495 judithgreaves@gmail.com

 **HEATHER Carmel MUSIC**
PIANO AND SINGING TUITION

Piano & Singing Lessons continue online now

Fun - Creative - Imaginative

Encourage your child's musical exploration
Trinity/ABRSM/London College exam boards

Email: heathercarmelmusic@gmail.com

CAP DEBT HELP

Lifting the weight of debt

Free debt advice and personal support in your community

John - became debt free through CAP

Book your free appointment
0800 328 0006 capdebthelp.org

Facebook CAPuk Instagram CAPuk_org YouTube CAPukorg

Charity Registered No. 1097227 (England & Wales) SC0382776 (Scotland). CAP is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.

Connecting Through the Digital Church



from
Sarah Chappell

Eager to be part of a church community yet unable to meet in-person, Sarah shares how she became part of the Christ Church family without meeting anyone or even stepping into the building thanks to finding the church's live Sunday services online.

Hello, my name is Sarah Chappell. I'm a chemistry student at the University of East Anglia in Norwich. Over the last year and a half, I've been on my industrial placement year at Makevale Ltd. based here in Ware.

Moving to a new place, starting a new job and joining a new church can be both exciting and nerve wracking in normal circumstances, but all of that happening in the middle of the COVID pandemic made it even more daunting. I was brought up in a Christian household. Then when I started university, I joined the Christian Union and attended a local church. So, joining a church in Ware was important to me and being part of a church community.

I found Christ Church though Googling local churches in Ware, seeing which churches had online services available and through social media channels. Very 2020! After watching a few online services, I emailed the church and they put me in touch with Antonia Preston. I quickly joined Antonia and David's Life Group. They were all so welcoming and lovely. Gladly over the summer period, I got to meet a few more members of the group and began to feel

part of the Christ Church family.

Over the following lockdowns, Life Group continued but obviously over Zoom. Completing *The Bible Course*, followed by *The Prayer Course* were perfect interactive ways to grow in my faith, but also 'meet' other members. *The Prayer Course* was particularly relevant at that moment, with the pandemic, the sadness in Israel and other personal and global events. Taking time to reflect, pray over the positive and negative helped create some emotional and faith stability.

Previous Life Groups I've been in have been with people my age or other students. So being part of a Life Group with a mixture of ages and different life experiences has really helped with my faith.

It is strange that I've been attending Life Group with Christ Church without actually being inside the building! One day maybe! I would love to thank everyone I've met and who has welcomed me into the Life Group and the Christ Church family.



Climate Change – What's the Big Deal?



from
Keith Chamberlain

I was a climate change sceptic, until recently. Don't get me wrong, I have a lifelong belief that we are workers with God as custodians of the planet; which is to be treasured. Our duty is to hand it on to the next generation in as good a condition as we inherited it. *'The earth is the Lord's and everything in it'* (Psalm 24:1). The earth's resources are not to be squandered. Refuse, re-use, recycle, should be our mantra.

My argument was: climate is forever changing, otherwise ice would still cover most of Northern Europe. Extreme weather events happen – the Bible and other historical records tell us that. By 2050, the average global temperature will increase by 1.5 degree Celsius. So what?

Actually it's a tipping point leading to an irreversible human-created climate disaster in the lifetime of my children and I woke up to the crisis. My generation ignored the signs. I've listened to and read the science.

We discharge into the atmosphere greenhouse gases (GG) that trap heat, mainly carbon dioxide and methane, which is less common but 120 times more warming. We produce 51 billion tons net of GG each year where we need to reduce that to zero by 2050 at the latest.

Why zero? We can liken the atmosphere to a bath with a dripping tap (greenhouse gas). The plug hole is blocking up (less carbon absorption). The faster the drip, the sooner the bath will overflow. That is the catastrophe. Slowing the drip will only delay the disaster. Last year because of the impact of COVID, GG's were reduced, but by only 1 billion tons.

Climate change does not affect all populations equally. Its impact is already affecting the world's poorest peoples, subsistence farmers, people who contributed to it least, which is unjust.

What can we do? Governments hear but often don't listen, we NEED them to listen. Generally, they don't plan further than five years ahead. They are easily distracted – financial crisis 2008, Brexit, COVID, what's next? The Climate and Ecology Emergency Bill has been deferred again. So, why not write to your MP in this year of the Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP 26) to ask what they are doing to promote climate change?

We know the science, we have the technology and can innovate. Governments demonstrated this recently with the design, production and

distribution of the COVID vaccine. They can respond quickly when the pressure is great enough. Has the COVID crisis given us the energy for change, especially as we have now seen what can happen when financial support is given to science and technology to solve an urgent problem?



The Church accepts there is an emergency. Christ Church was one of the first churches to sign up to A Rocha UK Eco church scheme. We hold a silver award, we need to strive towards gold! This affects our worship, teaching, management of buildings and land, community and global engagement. We need to practice these reforms at home as well.

For further ideas, why not look up Tearfund (www.tearfund.org), Operation Noah (www.operationnoah.org), Climate Emergency (www.climateemergency.org) and Care Climate Change (www.careclimatechange.org).

"My generation ignored the signs. I've listened to and read the science."



Success or failure?



from
Gary Parkes

When you think about mission or any other aspect of your Christian life, I wonder how you think about judging success or failure?

There are lots of examples of human failure in the Bible. For example, great king David failed when he committed adultery and had Bathsheba's husband killed. David confessed his sin and repented, "Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions. Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin." (Psalms 51:1 – 2)

Peter famously failed to be faithful to Jesus as written in Matthew 26:74 – 75, "Then he began to call down curses, and he swore to them, 'I don't know the man!' Immediately a rooster crowed. Then Peter remembered the word Jesus had spoken: 'Before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times.' And he went outside and wept bitterly."

There are some amazing examples from missionary history about apparent failures.

Here is one such story: *100 years ago, a medical missionary, Dr. William Leslie went to live and minister to tribal people in a remote corner of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. After 17 years, he returned to the U.S., a discouraged man believing he failed to make an impact for Christ. He died nine years after his return.*

80 years later, a group visited the area only to find a network of churches in all of eight villages scattered across 34 miles. The visiting team even found a 1000-seat stone "cathedral" in one of the villages. They learnt that this church got so

crowded in the 1980s – with many walking miles to attend — that a church planting movement began in the surrounding villages.

Marjory F. Foyle, is the psychiatrist who interviewed Debbie and me before we first went to Nepal over 30 years ago, to determine if we were resilient and sane enough. Dr. Foyle wrote a classic among missionary readers called *Honourably Wounded* which is about stress and failure among cross-cultural missionaries.

So how does God assess success or failure?

According to Wikipedia, Paul Tournier was a Swiss physician and author who acquired a worldwide audience for his work in pastoral counselling. His ideas had a significant impact on the spiritual and psychosocial aspects of routine patient care, and he has been called the twentieth century's most famous Christian physician. He is quoted as saying:

"It is extremely difficult to define failure and success. The line between them is so elusive. Today's failure may turn out to be tomorrow's success and today's success, tomorrow's failure. The infinite value of Biblical perspective, is that it changes our attitude to the events of life... It is no longer a matter of whether they constitute success or failure, but rather what they mean in God's purpose. So let's not worry about whether we're being successes or failures, let's concentrate on seeking God's purposes in all our activities." (Adapted from *Choose Life: 365 Readings for Radical Disciples* by Simon Guillebaud)

Can you help?

Some of us from Christ Church help All Nations Christian College (ANCC) with their simulation exercise. This is a practical training morning helping to prepare students for challenges they may experience while serving abroad. It is a chance to be difficult, obstructive or, when appropriate, helpful to students.

These exercises are held three times a year, once a term. ANCC are always looking for 'role

players' to help to make the exercise as realistic as possible. There is an opportunity for anyone, male or female, to help with these mornings; one reward is lunch at the conclusion!

It is an enjoyable occasion and an opportunity to support one of our Christian partners; if you are interested in helping in the future please speak to Bob Barker, Keith Chamberlain or Bill Griffiths.

A Jew for Jesus

All Nation Christian College has had a long association with Christ Church particularly supporting students with their placement here. Ethan is currently doing his ministry placement with the youth group. Here, he shares something about himself and his passion for sharing Christ with Jews.

Shalom, I am Ethan. I am also a Jew. My surname is Hocking, which is not a Jewish name because my dad is not a Jew. But I am a Jew because my mom is Jewish. Sadly, I don't have any siblings, but I do have two wonderful Bengal cats named Arwen and Cowrie.

I like the weird, interesting topics of history, and seeing how they can be made exciting in books. One of my all-time favourite novels is *The Advocate* by Randy Singer, which imaginatively explores the life of Theophilus, that mysterious guy who Doctor Luke talks to at the beginning of the Gospel and the Book of Acts. The novel takes the idea that he was a lawyer who defended the Apostle Paul during his trial before Nero. I like seeing how the times in which the church first started were not all that different from our own, when you really grasp the complexities of Roman society. All of that history reminds me that the world is a very big place, even though the age of the Internet has made it seem small. There are so many probing questions to ask about the world, and that's why I also like to get into deep philosophical and theological topics.

Having been home-educated, I have not had many friends until coming to study at All Nations Christian College. I am already expanding my world, discovering what God has prepared for me in advance (Ephesians 2:10), and to meet new people and find out what it means to serve others in a Christian context. I thank God that I was raised by Christian parents who showed me that the Good News of Jesus dying and rising to save people from sin is the most important thing in the universe.

I first heard about All Nations Christian College from Richard Harvey of Jews for Jesus, while I was enquiring about the possibility of going on a mission trip to Israel. Unfortunately, circumstances did not allow that to take place. However, I did end up attending an Enquirer's Day event at All Nations, thanks to Richard's recommendation. Coincidentally, Richard personally knew my great-great aunt, Maisie



from
Ethan Hocking

Pillemer, who was an influential pioneer in evangelising the Jewish community of South Africa, representing the Hebrew Christian Alliance of Great Britain.

So, I have been inspired to tell other Jews about Jesus because my interests in reading and writing about history and philosophy have combined to make me care about apologetics. I really began this journey while reading *Seeking Allah, Finding Jesus* by our late brother, Nabeel Qureshi, in which he tells his story of how he left Islam to find faith in Christ.

Right now, I am simply learning to share life with my fellow humans, and that's why it has been so good to participate in playing games and having discussions with the youth at Christ Church, as part of my ministry placement. I look forward to seeing how the youth work continues to grow and develop. I do not yet know exactly what I will do in the future, except continue my studies for Biblical and Intercultural Studies degree and see what God leads me after that.



"I like seeing how the times in which the church first started were not all that different from our own, when you really grasp the complexities of Roman society."





FUTUREhope



from
Tim Simmonds

“Firstly, we just want to say a massive thank you to all at Christ Church Ware for your continued support and prayers. It really does mean a lot.”

FUTUREhope empowers young people to have hope for their future and reach their full potential through outreach, education and support; and has been greatly blessed by its long association with Christ Church. Tim, their youth work coordinator updates us on their work during challenging times.

Firstly, we just want to say a massive thank you to all at Christ Church Ware for your continued support and prayers. It really does mean a lot. Like most charities, it has been a tough year but we are glad that we have continued to get alongside and support young people through this time.

In the last few lockdowns, most of our mentoring has been able to continue which has been fantastic but I am sure both the mentors and mentees are now glad they can meet inside once again! We are currently meeting with 15 young people and have four in the assessment process. We have seen an increase in referrals in regards to young people returning to ‘normal’ life. Hence, we are in need of new volunteers and are currently running volunteer training. If you have a bit of spare time every week to meet with a young person, to listen and get alongside them, then we would love to have a chat!

We have continued to run online parent courses that focus on *Handling Anger in the Family* and *The Teenage Years* which have been well received. Whilst we can’t take our mobile youth centre out, we have been doing detached work – walking around the streets/parks and chatting to young people who may be out. This was busy until the cold and wet weather!

Some of you may have seen us in our mobile youth centre either out and about, at



LoveWare: LiveWare events or on the Ware Dickensian night. Over lockdown last year, we thought about what we wanted to use the vehicle for and if the current vehicle met those needs. We decided that it was time to reimagine our outreach work to maximise the impact we can have. We have chosen to go for a smaller vehicle that has a small space inside for young people to come in, sit down, have a drink, play a game and chat. We also will have a bar at the rear of the vehicle so we can serve drinks, have educational games and information about our work. The main reason for this decision is that even with a team of two people we will still be able to have a presence in the community. We also hope to use it after school as well as school lunch time sessions and Friday nights. We look forward to showing it to you once it’s finished!

Earlier this year, we were able to share the exciting news that we are being given a building! Pioneer Hall (aka Zoo Café) on Ware



Road. We are still in the process of the transfer but when this is finalised, we are keen to freshen it up with some new paint! If you think you might be up for a bit of painting, then please do get in touch. We are looking forward to the space being used by the community but also more of our activities/initiatives to get alongside more local young people.

News from Nepal

Greetings from Nepal!

We hope and pray that this finds you in good health, and that you are experiencing a sigh of relief from strict lockdown for months. Here in Nepal, the rate of COVID infection was nearly under control during the winter months but unfortunately, from May, it increased significantly again. This time, it is even more serious, affecting youths and children as well and the death rate is also much higher than before. During the winter months, the government, private agencies and the general public remained relaxed. There were large political rallies and demonstrations. So, now we are in lockdown again. The rate of infection is increasing every day and restrictions are tighter. Schools and colleges are closed, examinations cancelled and no transportations. All domestic and international flights are suspended. Even in this serious situation we have been coping well.

In May, we were in Kathmandu. Prem has been involved in conferences and training programmes for the church network and Indira was there to do some essential repair and maintenance work at our house in Kathmandu. We have both received the first dose of vaccination but do not know when the second dose will be available.

We communicated in our last news that we have started prison ministry and that is continuing. In the last couple of months, we have made a number of visits to the nearby prisons and last month, we visited another prison in Morang (neighbouring) district. This



time, it was a women’s prison and we met twelve prisoners. We had a blessed fellowship, read the scriptures, heard their stories and prayed together. It was encouraging for us as well. They are separated from their loved ones, especially their children which is very depressing for them. Most of them are in need of legal support and Indira, as a lawyer, is trying to provide the help they need. She receives regular phone calls from them asking for help. This has increased our workload. Please pray for work-rest balance.

Previously, we mentioned a man called Man Bahadur who was put in prison for 12 years. He was released at the end of April. He has a wife and a daughter but nobody visited him in all those years as he is from the west and has been kept in a prison in east Nepal. After his release, he was brought to our place and stayed in the church for a few days before returning home. We have shared about Jesus in our prison visits and during his stay with us in Chakraghatti. He is open but not yet a believer. It was good for him to spend a few days with us as a transition. He is excited but also overwhelmed with other emotions. Please pray that he opens his heart for the Lord and has a good family reunion.

Church activities are growing well. About a dozen new believers are ready to take baptism after necessary classes. Please pray that faith grows and bears fruits.

Thank you very much for your prayers and support.



from
Prem and Indira Subedi



We have been supporting ‘S’ (a widow with two young children). They live with us and she runs a snacks shop as part of income generation

If you would like to find out more about missions and our mission partners, go to christchurchware.co.uk/missions

The Last Word



from
**Peter & Claire
Gratton**

“We are moving house to be closer to our (now grown up) sons and our new home is to be in Haslemere”

Our first service at Christ Church was a Doctor Who themed children’s Christmas service and our last was a virtual service through YouTube. Who says God doesn’t speak in many and mysterious ways?!

We arrived in Ware in 2006 with our three sons, and Christ Church quickly became our spiritual home. We feel truly blessed to have been part of such a lively church where we felt welcome and accepted as part of a family. We have valued the Bible-based teaching and the encouragement to be an outward looking community that seeks to share God’s love to those around us.

One of the highlights has been being part of our Life Group over the past 14 years. As well as spending time reading and exploring the Bible, it has been a privilege to be able to share with each other, to develop deep friendships and to be there when life throws up challenges – big and small. Our group has always felt a safe space where we could be open and honest about our Christian experiences, our day-to-day concerns and just to be there for each other. We would encourage everyone to consider joining such a group if you have not already done so.

Some of you may know that our home, being an old watermill, literally sits on a river (The River Rib) and so Psalm 1 has always been



special to us - *“He is like a tree planted by streams of living water, which yields its fruit in season.....”*. Living on a river has been amazing; season to season, we have wondered at the wildlife that comes to visit us, from the large swans to the small, beautifully coloured kingfishers. The river also gave us a unique opportunity as a family. When our sons decided to be baptised, they asked if they could be baptised in our river. And why not? So in 2009, David Proud baptised Charles and James and in 2011, the then newly arrived incumbent, John found himself waist deep in our river baptising Thomas! Many from the Christ Church family were able to join us on both occasions for the service as well as our neighbours who had not witnessed anything like it before in the Westmill hamlet.

We are moving house to be closer to our (now grown up) sons and our new home is to be in Haslemere, although our arrival there is slightly delayed. As we say goodbye, we also say a big thank you to all our friends at Christ Church for your love, support and guidance over the years.



Please pray:

- That we will be able to find a Church that is right for where we currently are on our journey with God and that we are able to quickly integrate into the life of the local community.



Christ Church, New Road, Ware, Hertfordshire. SG12 7BS

Vicar: Revd John Hookway (01920 487267- ext 204)

Associate Minister: Revd Norman Richards (01920 487267)

Operations Manager: Martin Dudley (01920 487267- ext 200) **Treasurer:** Sam Rich (01920 487267)

Church Wardens: Lucy Davies & Bob Barker

www.christchurchware.co.uk email:office@christchurchware.co.uk Parish Office: Open Mon-Fri 9am-12:30pm (01920 487267)