

RG31 St Catherine's Tilehurst Parish Magazine Spring 2024

Including "Parish Review of 2023" supplement



From the editor



Thank you to those who've re-subscribed to receive the Parish Magazine this year.

Our distribution covers more than just regular church attendees, it includes former church members, and those who are part of a wider church family, who enjoy the social activities that we run.

I try to make the magazine interesting for all of you, but also something that we can give to visitors, that will give them a flavour of St Catherine's church life; what goes on. This tends to focus on past events, as with a quarterly publication not all future events are planned in enough detail to publicise.

As I described in the previous (Winter 2023) edition, the format and content of the magazine has changed over the last 40 years.

In the same way Sunday worship has changed, from something called 'series 3' when we first joined in 1978, on then to the ASB (The Alternative Services Book) and then to the present 'Common Worship'. Each step greater flexibility in the style and format of the service.

Changing vicars had also affected how and when we worship on Sunday; three services, at one time now just one which

means the whole church can be gathered together instead of being divided.

Over the years the incumbents have guided us through changing times; there was charismatic revival and the introduction of a music group, a focus on accessibility, the merging with St Birinus and a major building project, which left us with the current extended building and an efficient heating system. Gill Rowell (ably assisted by Phil Price) guided us through the challenges of the Covid lockdown, and introduced the live streaming of services.

Now we're beginning a new chapter with Jackie as our vicar bringing new experiences and insights, and the added bonus of her husband Paul with all his technical know-how.

I do recommend visiting other churches when you are on holiday. We worshipped at an ancient church on the banks of the river Fowey on Mothering Sunday, a congregation of 20 or so, but everything was very formal and traditional.

When we took a break for a Sabbatical many years ago, we visited churches at both ends of the spectrum; there was Holy Trinity on the Oxford Road; very 'high' with incense and 'veneration of the host' (ask someone to explain). Then 'LifeSpring' that met in a school hall, very free.

It is now possible to sample worship from other churches in the comfort of your armchair thanks to live-streaming' and YouTube.

If you've read this far, do take a look at the cartoon on page 12. Where do you feel comfortable on those sliding scales?

Tony Bartlett

Rev Jackie Fountain

As we approach Easter, I have now been at St Catherine's for almost four months. We have felt very warmly welcomed here and are enjoying getting to know people at St Catherine's and in the wider community.

It is good to see the church building being used so much during the week as well as at the weekends for our services. It is great that St Catherine's can support various different groups in the community through hiring out the hall, and also welcome people from the community in for Toddler groups, Siena Café, Tuesday Get Together and Friday Friends as well as the various groups which meet during the week.



Just this week I was delighted to be able to attend the Vivace Choir concert, as well as the Birch Copse lower junior production of The Wizard of Oz. A lot of time and work had gone into preparing both of those performances, and the audiences thoroughly enjoyed them both. Those attending Friday Friends also had a lovely afternoon a couple of weeks ago when some of the children from Birch Copse came in to play games with the Friday Friends guests. A good time was had by all.

This Easter most of us are very aware of difficult situations around us and in the world. There is so much pain and suffering in the face of war, earthquakes and storms. Across our own communities there are many people who are having to survive on very little with rising prices and fewer resources.

Easter is a time which brings together the “so much” and the “very little”. On the cross Jesus was stripped of everything; he had very little. Yet despite so much sadness and despair on that cruel crucifixion Friday, God was at work which is why it can be called “good.” In this most unexpected way, the love and forgiveness of God is poured out. God Himself experiencing the pain and the suffering to set us free.

On the third day, on Easter morning, when women go to the tomb where Jesus had been buried, they also find so little - the tomb is empty. Yet this is not because anything is wrong, but because Jesus has risen from the dead. The generous love, life and hope of God are so much stronger than despair and fear, and so much more powerful than death itself. Good news.

The hope of forgiveness and new life. The hope that God loves each one of us with a love which is stronger than death itself.

I wish you all a hope filled Easter.

Jackie

**YOU ARE INVITED
TO JOIN US AT**



Wonder Zone

Discovering
God's
wonderful
world

Holiday Club at St Catherine's Tilehurst

**For children aged 5-11
Mon 19th - Wed 21st August
10:00am - 12noon**

There will be games, crafts, songs, science experiments and bible stories.

The cost is £10 per child with a reduction for additional children in the family.

To register, or get more information, please contact us as detailed below.

Places will be allocated on a first come first served basis.

**St Catherine's Church
Wittenham Avenue
Tilehurst
RG31 5LN**

**For more information go to
www.StCatherines-Tilehurst.org.uk
or email Office@StCatherines-Tilehurst.org.uk
or ring Tony Bartlett on 0118 967 8659**

Friday Friends

Friday Friends meet on Friday afternoons between 2 and 4pm in St Catherine's hall.

Our activities are different every week, mainly including speakers, craft, music and exercise. Always with tea and cake halfway through.

We had a special treat in March, when school children from Birch Copse visited to play board games with us, as part of their Community Links project.

The children and the group members thoroughly enjoyed playing and chatting with one another, and we very much look forward to them visiting us again.



A big thank you to all the volunteers who enable this lovely group to happen every week.

Lynn Stevens

Helpers needed

We're excited to be able to put on a Holiday Club after an enforced absence of four years. The poster opposite says it all!

- Monday 19th to Wednesday 21st August 10.00am to 12noon.
- We're starting small, so just 3 days with a maximum of 60 children.
- A thank-you lunch for helpers on the last day.

We need helpers to: lead a small group, help with a small group, 'up front' roles, refreshments, music, AV & video, in fact something for everyone. Yes we need teenage helpers too.

After Easter there will be letters asking for help, listing exactly what needs to be done, but in the meantime do speak to Emma Deacon or Tony Bartlett if you'd like to be involved



Another date for your Diary

Hold the date - Saturday 15th June!

It's St Catherine's Summer Fair

12noon - 3.00pm

Games, Stalls, Raffles, Tombolas and much more!

Fun for all the family!



When things don't happen as quickly as we want them to, we can become anxious, frustrated, irritable, and negative. And if you're a 'make it happen' person, you can rush ahead of God and get into trouble.

'The steps of good men are directed by the Lord. He delights in each step they take' (Psalm 37:23 TLB). Think about it: if you're following the Lord, you can't go faster than the One who is leading.

So, just take the next step and trust Him to work things out for you, God knows what you don't know. At best, you are working with limited knowledge. Do you believe your steps are being 'directed by the Lord'? Do you believe He has a plan for your life? Do you believe He cares for you and has your best interests at heart?

If you do, then stand on this Scripture: 'Don't be impatient for the Lord to act! Keep travelling steadily along his pathway and in due season he will honour you with every blessing' (Psalm 37:34 TLB). God knows what He is doing. He works according to His schedule, not ours.

When will God 'honour you with every blessing'? Answer: 'in due season'. Impatience is a sign of two things:

1. Immaturity. Babies cry until you pick them up, and children don't want to wait for anything. But a wise parent knows that often the child is not ready to handle what they're demanding.
2. Doubt and unbelief. 'You need to keep on patiently doing God's will if you want him to do for you all that he has promised' (Hebrews 10:36 TLB)

This thought is taken from 'The Word for Today', Daily Bible reading notes produced quarterly by UCB (United Christian Broadcasters Ltd) PO Box 255, Stoke on Trent, ST4 8YY. If you would like to receive these free (although UCB do welcome donations) notes or those aimed at Secondary School age, call UCB on 01782 911 000

Why Did the Chicken Cross the Road? (Theological Version)

Billy Graham:

The chicken was surrendering all.

Rick Warren:

The chicken was purpose driven.

John Wesley:

The chicken's heart was strangely warmed.

John Piper:

God decreed the event to maximize his glory.

OR . . . it was an act of Christian hedonism. The chicken realized that his greatest joy would only be found on the other side.

C.S. Lewis:

If a chicken finds itself with a desire that nothing on this side can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that it was created for the other side.

Pluralist:

The chicken took one of many equally valid roads.

Universalist:

All chickens cross the road.

Emergent:

For this chicken, it's not the destination that's important. It's the journey itself.

Accessibility

At the beginning of February, I preached on the Bible passage from Mark's gospel Chapter two, 'Jesus heals a Paralytic' where friends lowered the man through a roof to see Jesus. That got me thinking about accessibility, linking it with a visit in April 2023 by Rev Katie Tupling, the Diocesan Disability Adviser (who is a wheelchair user). Katie reviewed accessibility and made a number of recommendations; some simple and some costly and complicated.

Tony Bartlett

I found this article interesting:

Church of England awards £2.4 million to boost participation of Deaf, Disabled and Neurodivergent people

The Church of England has awarded £2.4 million to fund a series of measures aimed at boosting the participation of deaf, disabled, and neurodivergent people in parish life. This ranges from encouraging vocations to the priesthood, to grants for improved access to buildings.

Under plans over the next three years, the funds will back projects including lay and ordained vocations events, leadership programmes, and guidance to churches on more accessible signage.

The schemes will be developed and managed by the Church of England's Disability and Deaf Ministry Task Groups.

A pilot scheme is planned for seven dioceses for café style spaces in churches, in partnership with mental health professionals and the charity Renew Wellbeing, aimed at providing welcoming spaces.

Another pilot will also be developed in the Church of England's Northern Province providing 20 grants of up to £50,000 for projects that include physical changes to buildings that improve access.

Article from 'The Parish Pump'

Another article focussed on deafness:

Don't hesitate to use hearing aids

Here is something you didn't expect: using hearing aids if you are a bit deaf can be of great benefit to your overall health.

Crystal Rolfe, director of health at the Royal National Institute for Deaf People (RNID) said: "Hearing aids bring enormous benefits for people with hearing loss. Research shows that wearing hearing aids may reduce the risk of cognitive decline, and it is well known that they have positive effects on physical, social, emotional, and mental wellbeing.

According to hearing loss charity RNID, 12 million adults in the UK are deaf, have hearing loss or tinnitus and an estimated seven million people could benefit from hearing aids, but only about two million use them.

The researchers hope the findings, published in The Lancet 'Healthy Longevity' journal, will encourage more people to wear hearing aids. As one doctor said: "If you have hearing loss, get hearing aids. The benefits could be limitless."

Article from 'The Parish Pump'

(Continued on page 8)

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What is Neurodiversity?

Neurodiversity is a concept where neurological differences are seen as natural variations of the brain. These neurological differences are recognised and respected, celebrated and allow people to be themselves.

These differences can include those diagnosed with ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder), Dyspraxia, Dyslexia, ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder), Dyscalculia, Tourette Syndrome and others.

Neurodiversity suggests that there is not a 'normal' or 'right' way for the brain to develop, in much the same way that there is no 'normal' or 'right' gender, race or culture.

Neurodiversity rejects the idea that Autism and other neurological differences should be cured. Instead it advocates celebrating the strengths that come with neurological differences, such as:

- Honesty.
- Attention to detail.
- Unique ability to focus on special interests.
- Problem solving.
- Seeing things from a different perspective.
- Logical thinking.

It suggests that people with neurological differences do not need to change, they just need help and acceptance from those around them.

The concept of neurodiversity can be very supportive for young people, as it provides a way of thinking about challenges as differences, rather than as deficits. Celebrating differences is

important. 'It seems that for success in science a dash of autism is essential' (Hans Asperger).

From NHS Children & Family Health
North Devon website

So how does all that affect us at St Catherine's?

A few reflections on those areas of accessibility that the Church of England awards initiative lists.

Deafness

I'm part of the post-war baby boom generation, and whilst an early diet restricted by war time rationing had health benefits, the lack of 'Health & Safety' guidance (no ear defenders) when I was in the school rifle shooting team plus loud rock concerts left me with Tinnitus and hearing loss. Finally admitting that I needed hearing aids in 2022 should, according to the second article, help delay the onset of cognitive decline (we'll see!).

Disability

Whilst wheelchair access is not complete, the building work did make considerable improvements within the constraints of the budget and premises layout.

Neurodiversity

The Cornwell congregation had a high number of people with neurodivergent conditions and people of all ages had found a safe space worshipping there. Whilst we brought many of the strengths listed above, many of us do still struggle with worship at St Catherine's.

Adapting to change is an ongoing factor and so is sensory overload where people are oversensitive to smells or loud & sudden noises. We're all different, so Neurodiversity will affect us all in some way.

Tony Bartlett

Café Siena Christmas Lunch

This was held on 7th December and was attended by about 40 guests who enjoyed a traditional turkey lunch followed by a choice of homemade trifle or apple and mincemeat tart, tea, coffee and chocolates.

The tables were beautifully decorated in a festive theme, and the church windowsills had Christmas knitted figures to get us in the mood for Christmas.

It was lovely to hear chatter going on all around between old friends and new.

This year was the first for our café manager, Karen and also for our new vicar and her husband, Paul. We were so happy to welcome them. A huge thanks to the large team of helpers – cooks, table setters, turkey storers, servers and those doing the dishes.

Karen was presented with a Christmas bouquet by Sonia.



The event concluded with a hamper raffle – many congratulations to the four winners – Keith, Peter, Maureen and Carole.

Rosemary Cunningham



Ceilidh 27th January

Many thanks to those who organised this enjoyable and well attended event. Just what we needed to cheer us up in January!

The St Catherine's Ceilidh Band – Bill, Tony, Nicola, Anna, Rebecca, Daisy, George, and Joseph – entertained us with their lively tunes and we were able to dance with expert instruction from Bill.

Sometimes we forgot the steps or lost our partners, but this only added to the fun.

A team, led by Sonia and Sue, worked so hard to provide us with a wonderful two course home-made meal'.

Many thanks to them and to all those who helped in so many ways. It was so good to see so many people from all age ranges having such a wonderful evening.

Rosemary Cunningham



Avoid the Abyss



" Father I offer you this plaintive little verse
from my heart as a prayer. I don't think I am
alone in feeling overwhelmed, bewildered
and ashamed at how humankind is fast
descending into the abyss".

The First War: THE WAR TO END ALL WARS
NEVER AGAIN: came the vow of the next
LEST WE FORGET: proclaimed 'the' Assertion
They mean nothing? I'm aggrieved and perplexed

War can only ever be futile
No lessons learnt: divisions they only grow worse
Free will was your blessing designed for our good
But sadly has morphed to a curse

Good turned to evil and evil to good
Both hatred and suffering cause strife
The whole world is shaking but this we expect
Lord protect us.. the onslaught is rife

The war to end wars comes when JESUS RETURNS
His Resurrection we believe to be true
The world is adverse to living in peace
But your Son, will make everything new

Father, your plans are unfolding
Your revelations forever are true
Our hopes are not on this earth bound
Our trust lies entirely in You

A Perceived Reply

My earth is imploding with violence and greed

Where are you peacemakers? Arise!

You will be blessed and called Children of God

Take heart.. I AM due soon.. Watch the skies!

AMEN

Revelation 9:2

The star opened the pit of the abyss and smoke arose out of it like the smoke of a great furnace and the sun and the air were darkened by the smoke from the pit.

Lorraine Roberts

THE CONTROL PANEL

WHAT WILL APPEAL TO NEWCOMERS?

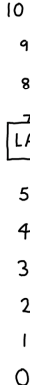
ANCIENT
AND
ALIEN



WE
BESEECH
THEE...



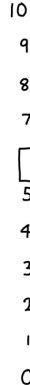
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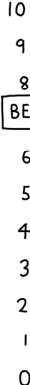
LANGUAGE



RITUAL



DRESS



BEVERAGES

MODERN
AND
FAMILIAR



WE ASK
YOU...



Your family history is waiting to be revealed!

"I was adopted in the 60s - can you help me find my birth family?"

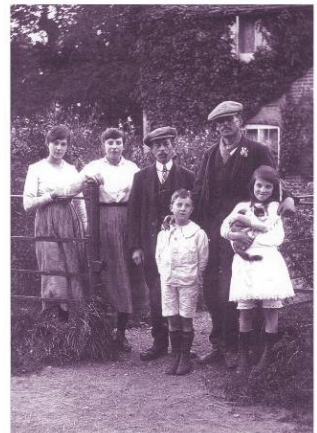
"In the early 1900s, my great Aunt disappeared leaving her two children to be brought up by her parents. What happened? Why did she abscond, or was her disappearance more sinister?"

"Are the Mendums of Bucks. related to those in Massachusetts, USA? How can I find out?"

"In the late 1800s, William Raven left Birmingham with the Army. He married and settled in Reading. Were his reasons financial, or to escape from something he'd rather forget?"

Do you have unanswered questions about your family or where you came from? I can help!

Give Tracey Horrell a call on **07585 442185**
or find out more at www.genetracers.co.uk



The Thurleys, Three Mile Cross, c. 1918

Gene Tracers

Professional Genealogy Research

December

Rita welcomed around 20 members and friends to our Carols and Readings Evening, where we enjoyed various extracts from the Bible, John Betjeman, Gervais Phinn, and Miranda Hart's thoughts on the real meaning of Christmas, not the frantic present buying!

Halfway through the committee served delicious mulled wine and mince pies which helped us to sing the carols more lustily in between readings on Stir – up Sunday and Dickens' 'A Christmas Carol'. Lynn chose the sequence where Scrooge had a change of heart and treated the Cratchit family to a huge turkey and raised Bobs' wages (memorably filmed with Alistair Sim).

Steph gave Maureen Godfrey a gift for accompanying the carols on the piano and Rita closed the evening with prayer and the Grace.

January

Steph welcomed 16 members, husbands and friends to a fun evening of Beetle to banish the winter blues. Aably assisted by Rita with her trusty whistle the evening progressed with Paddy declared the winner and the lowest score achieved by Gill Johnson. For which Paddy received a box of chocolates and Gill a box of tissues!

Some members may recall that Sheila Firth used to collect old jewellery for charity and Sue Burston has kindly offered to continue. Please see Sue for more information – thank you.

Sheila Bryant

Easter Chicks

Mothers Union members have been busy knitting Easter chicks for the Children Heard and Seen Project.

The Children Heard and Seen project supports children who have a parent in prison to let them know they are loved and not forgotten.

We have knitted 50 Easter chicks, each one will be filled with a chocolate egg and given to the children at an Easter party



Any extra will be on sale at St Catherine's in aid of other Mothers Union projects.

Thank you to those of you who donated wool to help us out, this will be used to make more chicks or to knit items for Baby Basics; another Mothers Union project supporting new Mums.

Hilary Smee

Future meetings

Community Prayers

- Thursdays 2.00pm, the Garden Room

After the 9.00am Communion service

- 3rd Wednesday in month - Bible study
- 4th Wednesday in month - Fellowship

Evening meeting open to all

- Wednesday 12th June at 7.30pm, Quiz

Christian Aid Week 2024 (12th – 18th May)



Aline's story

How Christian Aid helped Aline transform her life and climb out of extreme poverty

Pushed to the brink of survival

Poverty pushed Aline to the brink of survival. She was abused, homeless and hungry, but Aline pushed back harder.

Driven by hope, faith and the love of her children, Aline was able to fight against the inhumanity of poverty and build herself a new life.

Life in Burundi

In Burundi, malnourishment and poverty affect more than 70% of the population, making survival a daily struggle. Jobs and food are hard to come by, and those who have homes often have no electricity or running water.

For Aline, life was a constant struggle. She was married young and gave birth to her eldest son, Fisto, when she was just 14 years old. Aline experienced constant abuse at the hands of her violent husband.

A few years later, Aline faced even more devastation. Her husband married another woman, forcing Aline to flee. He prevented her from taking their children with her, and in a further act of cruelty, told the local community that Aline was mentally ill and unable to care for her children.



I wandered the streets, asking anyone for a place to sleep. Those who showed me kindness would let me stay for two or three days, but it was difficult. People would insult me and treat me with contempt. They forgot I was a human being. It filled me with sorrow.

Aline Nibogora.

How Christian Aid stepped in

Hungry, scorned and alone, Aline took her first step towards her new life. She started by participating in a transformative three-day community workshop, funded by Christian Aid.

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(Continued from page 14)

'I came out with amazing knowledge and skills. The trainer restored a sense of hope and energy in me,' says Aline.

She was taught how to form a Village Savings and Loans Association (VSLA) and establish a steady income. VSLAs mean people can save for their future and borrow money to kickstart small rural businesses.

With all she had learned, Aline's dream of getting her children back finally felt possible.



Building a business

With a small start-up loan, Aline started trading avocados and peanuts locally. With her profits, she bought a bicycle so she could transport greater quantities of goods to markets further afield.

Eventually, her hard work had finally paid off, and she had earned the money she needed to rent a house.

Once Aline secured a home for herself, her three eldest sons were able to escape their father and join her.

They told Aline that their father had abused them and sent their three young siblings to live with different members of his family.

Aline still hopes that she'll be reunited with her youngest children in time. Today, she lives peacefully on her own plot of land in a remote village in the Kayogoro Commune in Makamba Province. She's baked her own bricks and is building a strong home for her and her children in every sense.

Now Aline can afford food, clothes and essential healthcare for her family. She's also purchased solar panels so her children can do their evening homework by electric light.

Recovery and resilience

Of course, Burundi continues to be one of the toughest places on earth to live. The future is uncertain and challenges wait for families like Aline's around every corner.

When a ferocious storm destroyed Aline's home, almost killing her and her children, she was able to recover by selling the cows she'd been keeping. Now when crisis threatens her family's survival, Aline has options. Even a small business can provide just enough resilience to weather the most brutal of storms here in Burundi.



Aline can not only look ahead to her
(Continued on page 16)

(Continued from page 15)

children's future now, but her own too. Naturally, Aline wants security as she ages.

In the next five years she hopes to expand her current wholesale business by selling a range of goods, so that one day she can buy a mill.

This will provide a source of income without the need to transport heavy goods over long distances.

Aline told us: 'This is not a dream. It is a plan, and I will do it. I am a woman who is an achiever.'

The difference with Christian Aid

Aline's long and difficult journey out of extreme poverty began with a little support, knowledge and faith from Christian Aid supporters like you.

'When we see Christian Aid, we feel comforted; we feel we are not alone. You helped us to change our poor living conditions. I really thank you from the very bottom of my heart.' - Aline.

No one should have to live on the brink of survival. During Christian Aid Week 2023, you raised £5 million to help transform lives just like Aline's.

This year, you can help us support even more people living in poverty.

With 7 days and so many ways to raise funds for our Christian Aid Week appeal, what will you pick?

- A quiz at St Michael's
- or a special collection
- or anything to raise a little cash

for people like Aline.

Let's make a difference in 2024!!

Churches Together in West Reading
Challenge You to Join Our Grand
Inter-Church

Quiz for
Christian Aid

Saturday 11th May
7.00pm at
St Michael's Church Hall,
The Meadway

Tickets £10 per person
include a Ploughman's Supper
Bring your own drink.

Teams of up to 6 people

Email
office@stmichaeltilehurst.org.uk
or talk to Richard Canning
to book your place



Our very full and successful year ended with learning a tap dance from some pupils at Kingsclere Performing Arts College. Great fun was had by those participating and members watching.



We also held a skittles evening in February which was great fun and raised money for our charity of the year MND (Motor Neurone Disease).

We started 2024 more sedately with a talk about WW2 rationing and cooking – A Fair Share for All. After learning about why rationing was introduced and how the rationing system worked, we were shown examples of a week's rations.

In 2024, it is difficult to imagine being so limited about how little of certain foods could be bought, for example only 1 egg, 56g of cheese or tea, 3 pints of milk and very small amounts of meat, butter and margarine. It was fascinating to hear about cooking and providing for families with limited ingredients.

Afterwards, we were able to sample some 1940's recipes including: vinegar cake, the national loaf and mock banana. The vinegar was used to replace eggs and with the bicarbonate of soda acted as a raising agent. The vinegar cake tasted surprisingly good!

A number of our members enjoy quizzes and in February, we had an interesting and amusing insight into the history of quiz shows.



In addition to our charity fundraising, we collected food for Readifood at our Christmas meeting and members have donated over 250 packets of paracetamol for the Tilehurst Fundraising for Ukraine group.

With best wishes to everyone at St Catherine's for a very Happy Easter, from Tilehurst Triangle WI.

Ros Somerville
Tilehurst Triangle WI
tilehursttriangewi@berkshirewi.co.uk

The Easter Glow

For three years Jesus had held the tiny band together, through journeyings, storms and opposition. And now – following a public trial and execution – He was gone.

Take away the dominant figure, and an organisation can quickly crumble. Take Theudas, an earlier messianic claimant. Once killed, his 400 devotees melted away. Then there was Judas the Galilean. When he, too, was removed, the movement scattered.

Now, it was Easter Day. Here were two disciples walking to Emmaus. As far as they were concerned, their leader was dead. The ‘scattering’ process had already begun.

It had started on that fateful Thursday evening of Christ’s arrest, when Jesus had quoted to His disciples from the prophet Zechariah: “It is written ‘I will strike the shepherd and the sheep of the flock will be scattered’” (Matthew 26:31).

The dream was over. “Let’s go home - back to Emmaus.” Yet Luke 24 is the glowing account of the entire re-building of a worldview.

As the apparent Stranger joins the two, it was like the uncorking of a bottle; the story pours out. Surely crucifixion and the future Redeemer of Israel had nothing to do with each other!

Then began a fascinating Bible study on the road. Evidently in their studies, the two had skipped the passages that spoke of a suffering Messiah.

The Stranger says, “Let me fill in those bits for you.” Now the figures of a Conquering King and a Suffering Servant begin to coalesce into a single photo fit.

Then, at supper with the two, comes the familiar action of the breaking of bread, and – Why.... it’s Jesus.

The disciples rush the seven miles back to Jerusalem. They can’t keep the glowing news of the risen Christ to themselves!

If Jesus had not been bodily raised from the grave, the demoralised movement – like those of Theudas and Judas the Galilean - would have folded within days. And you and I would never have heard of Him!

From The Parish Pump
adapted from the LICC website

Emmaus **(Luke 24:13-32)**

In the breaking of the bread
Our eyes were opened,
We knew Him then.
The Lord was with us
In Emmaus,
There was no doubt.
He was alive and with us,
The scriptures made sense.
What a difference!

But thinking back
To that journey –
To the grief that overwhelmed us,
The discussions, disagreements
And debilitating disappointment –
A different opening of the eyes,
We never were alone.

Before the word and bread,
Because of the word and bread
He was there,
He is here,
Always,
Walking with us.

By Daphne Kitching

St Catherine's Gardening Club



Hello again. It's not really surprising that not very much gardening has been going on since I last wrote in our Autumn magazine. The end of last year was extremely wet, and then suddenly it was Christmas.

We enjoyed the Nativity scene which was displayed beautifully again on the buttress bed next to the wooden doors into the sanctuary. Our thanks for this go to Tony Bartlett and also to Pete Broomfield for lighting up the stars in the "sky" above.

Now this year so far has also been exceptionally wet, and mostly mild. There were a few short days in February when it was possible to get outside and do something useful in the garden.

I made the most of the opportunity to prune the roses, and weed the rose bed outside the north entrance. Fortunately, the rose bed is next to a pathway, making it possible to avoid walking on the sodden grass. I can still hear my father's voice telling us children to "Keep off the grass!" when we were out in the garden in winter time.



However, although the gardeners were not working, God was!

Slowly the tips of the bulbs were emerging and gradually flower buds



appeared and then opened to give us the fabulous uplifting sight of golden daffodils in good time for St David's day. Tulips are also getting big and strong, and will soon make their beautiful contribution with glorious colours.

So far this year it has been totally impossible for the lawn mower to be used, and of course the long grass from last autumn has thickened up beautifully, which will present quite a challenge for the first cut, whenever the weather allows.

But there is some good news! A friend from Tilehurst Methodist Church, has generously offered herself as Paddy's apprentice. We are hoping for some dry weather soon, so she can have a chance to try out our lawn mower.

Hazel had made good steady progress in her recovery from her knee replacement. Hopefully it will not be too long before she is able to get active again in the church garden.

Maybe you would like to help regularly to keep our church garden looking good? Come and have a chat to see what we do, and you may find you enjoy yourself so much you want to be part of the team. Contact Jo Day 07941 002 946 or Chris Addison 07966 105 056. We'd love to hear from you.

Wishing you Easter blessings and happy gardening.

Jo Day

"I always see gardening as escape, as peace really. If you are angry or troubled, nothing provides the same solace as nurturing the soil." – Monty Don



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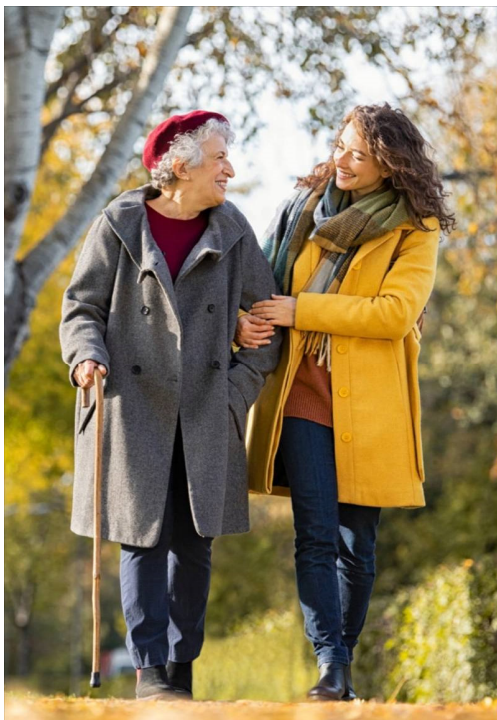
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Rachel

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Tilehurst Afternoon Women's Institute

Our Groups are doing well with an Art Group and Lunch Club adding to our already successful Book Group, Knit and Natter and Quiz morning sessions.



Our new year started with two speakers not being able to attend.

This did not deter our team and we quickly found a person to speak to us about scams via the telephone and emails etc. It reminded us to be on the alert for those trying to catch us out.

In February we again had to find an alternative person, and Steve Wilkinson came to our aid. He was a "Mentalist", someone who professed to reading minds. Lots of laughter followed as volunteers were involved in his act, and this left us wondering how on earth he did things.



Our programme for the coming year has been completed with some more interesting events for our members to enjoy. On 13th April we will be taking over the Art Café in Whitchurch where we will be making and serving cakes and coffee etc. We will also hold a craft stall which we hope will increase our funds. Why not come along.

Visitors are always welcome to come to our meetings to see if they would like to become members. We meet on the 3rd Tuesday of the month at 2.00pm. until 4.00pm. in Café Siena.

Diane Wakefield



Good likeness

Some children were asked: "What do you think of Jesus?"

"Jesus," said one little boy, "is the best photograph God ever had taken."

Our God

- Our God is able – (Daniel 3:17)
- able to save (Hebrews 7:25)
- able to help (Hebrews 2:18)
- able to provide (2 Corinthians 9:8)
- able to do far more than we ask or think (Ephesians 3:20)

How to secure your accounts

Data from Action Fraud, the national fraud and cybercrime reporting service, shows that 22,530 people reported that their online accounts had been hacked in 2023, with victims losing a total of £1.3 million.

How are accounts hacked?

On-platform chain hacking

This is when a fraudster gains control of an account and begins to impersonate the legitimate owner. The goal is to convince people to reveal authentication codes that are sent to them via text.

Many victims of this type of hacking believe it's a friend messaging them, however the shared code was associated with their own account and the impersonator can now use it to access their account.

Usually when an account is taken over, fraudsters monetise control of the account via the promotion of various fraudulent schemes, while impersonating the original account owner.

Leaked passwords and phishing

The other predominant method of hacking reported is leaked information used from data breaches, such as leaked passwords, or account details gained via phishing scams.

This becomes prevalent as people often use the same password for multiple accounts, so a leaked password from one website can leave many of their online accounts vulnerable to hacking

- Use a strong and different password for your email and social media accounts. Your email and social media passwords should be strong and different from all your other passwords.
- Combining three random words that each mean something to you is a great way to create a password that is easy to remember but hard to crack.
- Turn on 2-Step Verification (2SV) for your email and social media accounts.

2-Step Verification (2SV) gives you twice the protection so even if cyber criminals have your password, they can't access your email or social media account. 2SV works by asking for more information to prove your identity.

For example, getting a code sent to your phone when you sign in using a new device or change settings such as your password. You won't be asked for this every time you check your email or social media.

If you live in England, Wales and Northern Ireland and have been a victim of fraud or cybercrime, report it at:

www.actionfraud.police.uk

or by calling 0300 123 2040.

If you receive a suspicious email, you can report it by forwarding the email to: report@phishing.gov.uk.

Find out how to protect yourself from fraud: Gov.uk/stopthinkfraud

Prayer Walking in the community

Prayer walking is just what it sounds. You pray as you walk.

What is the point? Think of it as stepping out as God's children, to intercede for those who are living in your community. Be intentional about praying for God's blessings on what you see and feel.

Simply praying: "Your Kingdom come, your will be done..." is an excellent start.

Prayer walking is NOT about being seen to be praying, you are not doing it to 'show off'. It is about seeing your neighbourhood with compassion, and then praying for God's mercy and blessing to be upon it.

So, as you go along, you can pray quietly, or in silence. If you do want to pray out loud, take a friend along, so that it will seem merely as if you are chatting. In fact, when you do a prayer walk, it is best not to do it alone. Always try and go with someone else. After all, Jesus sent His disciples out in pairs.

On your prayer walk, try and be aware of what God is saying to you as you move around the community. As the former Archbishop of York, Lord Sentamu, once advised: "If any Bible verses pop into your head or if you have any pictures, visions or words of knowledge, turn these into prayer."

At the end of the prayer walk, share with others what you prayed for, and heard from God. Write any impressions down, so you can keep track of how you have prayed for your area.

Again, to quote Lord Sentamu, "If you feel that God has highlighted specific

needs or challenges, think about how to take action. Could you or the church be part of God's solution practically, as well as prayerfully?"

Article from 'The Parish Pump'

Our Calcot Prayer Walk and Litter Pick

The Calcot prayer and litter pick team have been meeting for two years now. We usually meet monthly, on a Sunday afternoon.

We walk around the Calcot area, praying for the community in twos or threes, picking up litter as we go.

We chat to the people we meet on the way, and offer prayer where appropriate.

Often we are thanked for our litter picking efforts, or cars toot and wave as they go by.

We always have fun, being out in the fresh air exercising and chatting to friends. I feel it is a worthwhile activity.

Praying is always a good thing to do.

If you would like to join us; we will next meet on 7th April, 2.00pm at the Calcot Centre car park.

Lynn Stevens





The Leprosy Mission

Thank you all for the money raised during February for The Leprosy Mission. Please see acknowledgements received.

We have a speaker on 16th June and so hopefully we can help them again then. Meanwhile there is always the opportunity to donate online, go to their website: www.leprosymission.org.uk

Lorraine Roberts, TLM Rep

unseen 

Because of you, people like Rajisha at Muzaffarpur Hospital can laugh again!

Tilehurst St Catherine Church
You raised an amazing
£576 plus Giftaid on 12th February 2024

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Tilehurst St Catherine Church

March 1 2024

Dear Friends

Thank you so much for your tremendous kindness and generosity towards people affected by leprosy.

Tenderness and mercy abound at Muzaffarpur Hospital in Bihar state, India. Everyone is welcome here, no matter their background or social status. This is a place where inclusivity is in action every day, and no one is turned away. Staff treat each patient with dignity, compassion and understanding. Love pours from their hands and hearts, and they work tirelessly to meet the needs of their patients.

However, the fabric of the hospital is run down and can't cope with the demand of the volume of people seeking help and assistance. On average, over 600 people walk through the gates of the hospital entrance each day. The Outpatient Department is particularly affected, with people queuing outside in all weathers and cramped consultation rooms with little privacy. The doctors and nurses do the best they can with the facilities they have, but conditions are far from ideal.

But, across the miles and oceans, you're reaching out your hand in friendship. Staff and patients are encouraged, knowing they are not alone and that you 'see' them. When many others turn their backs on these forgotten people, you're standing by them, refusing to look the other way. Thanks to your kindness, shown through your gift of £576, an improved OPD at Muzaffarpur Hospital will rise like a beacon of hope and light to people affected by leprosy in Bihar. Along with the excellent care and treatment they already receive, patients will have new and improved facilities to make their visits as comfortable as possible - thank you!

A heart full of gratitude and thanks,

Gabby

Gabby North, Community Partnerships Manager



Musings from Phil French

"Oh, Lord, grant me wisdom - but gradually, please, I don't want too much of a shock!"

Silly me

A few days ago, I had a little "shock" - by chance I was reminded of a terrifying moment when I was about 2 or 3 years old. Yes, it happens! Sometimes (not always!) I can feel a bit afraid as I go into our Church. SILLY ME, because that's rooted in memories from around 90 years ago!!

Today, lucky, lucky me! Back then, I was often made to feel that I was disliked, etc. -- but recently many kind friends have sent me lovely Christmas cards! Thank you SO much! I'm afraid this may sound daft, but you have actually helped me cope with my ancient past! Thank you again!

Try again?

The girl cycled out very carelessly, just as the vicar's car was passing. His car clipped her shoulder, and she ended on the ground. The vicar came back to check. She was standing up. She said: "Oh, I AM SO SORRY! I'm OK, really!" The vicar was relieved, but he gave her his visiting card, just in case.

He hurried off. The card had all the usual info - plus a line in small print, saying: "Sorry I missed you today! I'll try again soon."

Leakage

The Rev was VERY widely known (he'd made sure of that!). He'd had a fat book published (at his own expense, some said) about how to preach. He arrived at

the Central Church, glowing with self-confidence, and ready to preach to the multitude. But the pews were almost empty.

"Hey, I say, my man! Did you tell the people I'D BE HERE?"

"NO, BOSS, NO! I SWEAR I DIDN'T! But I suppose it must have leaked out somehow ...?"

Am I merely a robot?

Scientists keenly study our brains. Clever techniques keep coming. Now, a few atheists tell me that we are "programmed" like computers! HORRORS! NO FREE WILL?

'Free will' is a complex issue. It seems clearish when a gunman makes me give him my wallet. But everyday affairs are less simple. For instance, a depressed bloke wakes in his bed. "Oh dear, I should be getting up, I suppose!" But is he clear about what his "will" really is?

Imagine that I've made a super chess machine! I win games! Have I lost my free will? Am I submitting to a robot? Our "will" evolved over the ages, to promote our well-being, and to keep us away from hungry tigers. It's real. It must keep learning about today's risks and benefits. Have I learnt to care for my neighbour? Not always too spontaneous(!) but it can be blessed for all concerned.

Don't be TOO upset by those half-baked claims that there's no free will! We ARE all "programmed", in order to behave fairly sensibly. That's not very nasty, is it? But we aren't perfect! We often need to choose our Father's help, to keep making our programming better.

On why a church should always resist change

The Rectory,
St James the Least of All



My dear Nephew Darren,

I am not the least surprised you have got yourself into trouble; innovation is never to be encouraged. New ideas tend to cause revolutions. The move from incandescent lightbulbs to energy saving ones may ultimately change the Church of England.

Change is something everyone claims to be in favour of – provided it has no measurable effect on their own lives. I remember as a young curate once suggesting that at the Harvest Supper, tables might be enlarged so that eight people could sit together rather than the traditional six, thus helping more people get to know one another. The response would have been similar if I had suggested we travel to London to murder the Prime Minister. I was firmly told that tables for six had been perfectly adequate for parishioners in Queen Victoria's day. For the rest of my curacy, I was regarded as a revolutionary, to be watched carefully.

So, at your last visit to our church, to suggest that our 11.00am Mattins might be moved to 10.30am, in order to encourage those who wanted to have more of the day free to themselves, certainly lobbed a hand grenade among the post-Service coffee cups. The only person who was mildly in favour was Colonel Wainwright, who quickly realised that it would give him an extra half-hour at the gin and tonics before lunch.

Should you ever feel that people lack imagination, you should watch them in action when they find reasons for resisting an unwelcome suggestion. One said that the time couldn't be moved, since it would then be too early for the local bus – omitting to mention that none of our congregation travel to church by bus and that the service doesn't run on Sundays anyway. Another pointed out that it would confuse those who didn't attend church – not explaining why if they never attended, it mattered what time the Service was. A third, rather touchingly mentioned that it wouldn't give the rector time to enjoy his breakfast after the rigours of the 8.00am Service.

Your suggestion did, however, serve one useful purpose; it brought our congregation together in united opposition. They may not necessarily always know what they are for, but they certainly know what they are against. For that, I thank you.

Your loving uncle,
Eustace

St Catherine's Centre
 Church and Hall regular bookings
 (* is term time only)

Monday
 After School Club - 3:30-6.00pm *
 Exercise Class - 7.00-8.00pm *
 Yoga - 8.15-9.15pm

Tuesday
 Breakfast club - 7.30-8.45am *
 Childminders Drop-in 10.00-11.30am *
 Seated Exercise 1.00-2.00pm
Tuesday Get Together - 10.00am-12.00noon
 After School Club - 3:30-6.00pm *
W.I. - 2.00-4.00pm (3rd Tuesday)
 AA - 7.00-9.30pm

Wednesday
 Breakfast club - 7.30-8.45am *
Communion Service 9.00-10.00am
 Yoga - 10.30-11.30am
 After School Club - 3:30-6.00pm *
Vivace Voices 1.45-3.45pm
 Kettle Bells - 6.30-7.30pm
Mothers' Union - 7.30-9.30pm (2nd Weds)
W.I. - 7.00-10.00pm (3rd Wednesday)
 YogaSculpt - 7.45-8.45pm

Thursday
 Zumba - 9.30-10.45am
Cafe Siena - 10.00am-2.00pm
 Over 60's exercise - 1.15-2.15pm
 After School Club - 3:30-5.30pm *
 Zumba - 6.00-7.00pm
 Stretch & Flow Yoga Class 7.30-8.30pm
Trefoil - 7.30-9.30pm (4th Thursday)

Friday
Tots Praise - 9.15am *
Cafe Siena - 10.00am-2.00pm
 Friday Friends - 2.00-4.30pm

Saturday
 Yoga - 9.30-10.30am and 10.45-11.45am
 Crafty Space - 1.30-5.30pm (once a Month)
 Bowls Club - 7.00-9.00pm

**RG31 - The Parish Magazine
 of Tilehurst St Catherine
 & Calcot St Birinus**

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All details and events are correct to the best of our knowledge at the time of going to print.

The P.C.C. and Editors are not necessarily in agreement with the views expressed by contributors in this magazine.

We welcome contributions of articles or letters for future issues from anyone living in, or connected with the parish.

All contributions for the next (Summer) edition must be received by the editors by 7th July 2024

Contributions may be sent to: magazine@stcatherines-tilehurst.org.uk

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Cover Picture by Stuart Poore; the tomb is empty - He is risen!.

The Anglican Parish of Tilehurst St Catherine & Calcot St Birinus

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Please check these websites for up-to-date information on services and other events



We are 'live-streaming' our 10.00 am Sunday services so that they can be viewed via our Facebook page. Simply go to: www.facebook.com/st.catherines.tilehurst (you do not need an account to view - if asked to login or join, you can click 'Not Now'). Once shown on Facebook, all our videos can be found again on our Web Site: www.stcatherines-tilehurst.org.uk

Every Sunday, The Ten O'clock Service - varies in style and contents each week, but will always aim to be 'family friendly'. It will contain praise and teaching, with communion on the first and third Sundays and usually include a time of sharing what God is doing amongst us. Refreshments afterwards in the Hall.

On Wednesdays at 9.00 am - there's Holy Communion in church, everybody welcome.

Who's Who in the Parish



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