

January 2021



50p

LIFE

swcd-churches.org.uk

Editorial Notes

LIFE MAGAZINE EDITOR

Roger Harmsworth rogerwilliam@talktalk.net 01458 445291

Articles for the February edition are due Sunday 14th January

In December a good number of Jane Tompsett's friends were treated to a cruise on a boat on the estuary at Exmouth. We were picked up at the Mission Church by a John Martin coach which took us to Exmouth via Monkton Elm Garden Centre where some enjoyed a coffee and snack. On arrival at the mooring, we boarded the well-equipped 2 deck boat and soon departed across the low tide waters with binoculars and cameras at the ready. Lots of wildlife were on the water and sandbanks, including, Cormorants, Avocets, Great Crested Grebe, Curlew, Little Egrets, and a Heron, among others.

Back on board there were some rarely seen past members of our congregations including our last Rector, Sharon. Down on the 'warm deck' we were treated to a cream tea, (Devon style of course). We watched the setting sun before sailing back, where we found our coach waiting to take us home. It was a memorable day and our sincere thanks go to the Birthday girl Jane.

Some pictures can be seen on the back cover, whilst on the front is a reminder of the frosty weather, showing the Parish Church with some cobwebs on Bob Lampert's garage.

A note from Jane:

I would like to thank all from the church family who came to Exmouth to celebrate my birthday and making it such a happy and special day.

Lastly, wishing you all a HAPPY NEW YEAR. Roger.

Rector's Letter

“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” Romans chapter 15 verse 13.

Dear Friends,

Happy New Year!

I wonder how many times you will have this said to you or you will say this to others in the early January weeks?

In a troubled world, with stories of destruction and conflict dominating our news screens, it may feel a challenge to be truly happy (whatever that even means).

Yet as Christians, despite what might be going on around us, we can still be ‘hopeful’ people. We may have our own concerns and worries, we may be carrying the burdens of others, we might be feeling weighed down and to be happy may perhaps feel inappropriate, but having the hope of what God can do can shift our thinking and focus in the most transformational way.

Being people of hope is not the same as simply wishing that things were different knowing that probably nothing will change for the better. Being people of hope is about trusting in and relying on God whatever may be going on around us. Being people of hope, I believe is not passive but active. I believe that God is at work in the world, I believe that we all have a purpose and are in the business of doing the work of the Father, this is what Jesus wants of us.

As you look ahead to the coming year, how expectant are you? Do you have the Christian hope that all indeed will be well or are you feeling resigned to a ‘what will be, will be’ way of thinking? How does this hope translate into what we anticipate for 2024 in

SWCD Churches? Are we hopeful that more lives will be transformed and more people will turn to Jesus? Are we expectant about church finances, despite the challenges? I could go on....

Finally, and perhaps most challengingly, what is God calling you and I to do to bring that hope to a broken world and our local communities.

As we greet one another this January, why not encourage one another with the verse about hope from Paul's letter to the Romans.

With my love & prayers at the dawning of a New Year,

Ana

Car parking at our churches

Our churches have limited parking which quickly becomes full on Sundays and at other times. If you are more fit and active, but need to drive to church, please consider parking further away to leave some spaces for those with more limited mobility.

Thank you for your understanding as we seek to welcome everyone into our buildings.

Ana Lawrence

Bishop's letter - Hope in deed

I'd love to be writing a sunny New Year's article reflecting a boundless global optimism about the future. Yet the reality is very different. War in Ukraine drags on and tensions in the Middle East remain dangerous. The cost-of-living crisis continues and many are finding things tough. Pessimism rather than optimism is the order of our day.

In such circumstances, where can hope be found? For Christians, confidence and assurance rest in the promise of the future that God has in store for us. In the Bible God says: 'See, I am making all things new. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end' (Revelation 21: 5-6). Christian hope is that whatever may be happening to us now, God has a very different and favourable future in store for us.

Critically, the point of such hope is not just to enable us to say 'Well don't worry about present circumstances. It's all going to be all right eventually.' Hope's purpose is to shape how we live and what we do now. It's to enable us to live out the words of the old Christian Aid poster that said, 'We believe in life before death'.

Towards the end of last year, I had the privilege of visiting a number of the deaneries of our diocese. On those visits I heard at first-hand how through the work of our parishes, schools and chaplaincies, Christian hope translates into practical action for good amongst the everyday lives of local communities. We are offering debt counselling and food banks, support for families and care of the lonely and isolated. All these and many more were amazing examples of how we can join with God to 'make all things new' right here, right now.

So, as we start a new year, please can I encourage us all not to stare into our glasses, lamenting their being half full? Rather, through how we live and what we do, let us fill them with the new wine of God's kingdom – overflowing to the brim. For that is hope in deed.

Bishop Michael

Compton Dundon's 'Big Breakfast'

The village Big Breakfast is a much anticipated and popular event leading up to Christmas in Compton Dundon. An opportunity for the village community and those from further afield to gather and share in delicious food and good company.

Cooking 180 breakfasts and all to perfection is no mean feat and for that we have to thank Chris, Sarah and Sarah's mum. But of course many more are involved, from the planning meetings to the shopping, rota writing, setting up the hall the night before, organising orders, making tea/coffee/toast, serving the breakfasts, preparing the raffle baskets and selling tickets, sorting and serving at St Andrew's stall, and so the list goes on. All this is well worth the effort when we experience the enjoyment of the day and receive comments such as the 'lovely atmosphere,' 'tasty breakfast' and 'meeting friends.'

Around the perimeter of the hall there was an opportunity for early Christmas shopping from the variety of stalls displaying their goods. Lovely to have Walton Church with some beautiful homemade goods on offer - thank you for joining us. We also witnessed an entrepreneurial spirit among the teenagers who set up their own tables.



All in all this was a most successful event and we were grateful to have received over £1000 in fundraising for St Andrew's Church. Our heartfelt thanks to everyone.

Pat King
(Compton Dundon.)

Walton Matters

As soon as Jesus was baptised, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased

Matthew 3. V's 16&17.

We are the delighted and proud recipients of a beautiful purple altar frontal and pulpit drop. Jacky Daniels has surprised us with this amazing gift sewn by her and measured and fitted by Philip Daniels. What a team. For the first time we were able to greet Advent with the correct liturgical colour. David Hatrey blessed the frontal on the 1st Sunday of Advent but unfortunately Jacky and Philip couldn't be with us so we were able to say our thank-you to them on the 2nd Sunday. From all our church family we send our love and thanks for this amazing gift.

Operation Christmas Child.

I have had an early update from Samaritans Purse saying over 22,000 boxes have been received and beginning to find their way to children in different parts of the world. One of our dear friends who fills shoeboxes with us every year, had a conversation with one of her carers about why she likes to do this and was thrilled to hear her carer was a recipient of a shoe box when she was a child and to know what a difference this made to her.

What an encouragement to us all this is. To be aware of a simple shoeboxes transforming power is an inspiration so thank you yet again and well done.

As we look to the new year and new plans to be made, we look back at the past year and say thank you to everyone who has made such a difference to our benefice and our worship together as a family. Thank you to Ana, David and Rachel for our services

and outreach events. Thank you to our lay readers and lay worship assistants. Thank you to everyone who cleans, makes coffee and delicious biscuits and cake. For the flower arrangers and all the unseen repairs that take place, but most of all for the friendships and love for each other especially when we join together in benefice events as a family and one church. Happy New year to everyone. Sandra.



Flower rota.

6th January.
20th January
3rd February.

Hilda Grint
Sandra Gristock
Jo Pain



tearfund

TEARFUND IN STREET, WHO ELSE FOR 2024?

On Sunday 21st January 2024 we will be welcoming a representative of Tearfund to speak to both our churches in Street about the project Street Parish have been supporting in Nigeria as part of their charitable giving in 2023.

If you want to know more about this project please do come along or contact me

Meanwhile, a reminder that we are currently looking for recommendations for our 2024 Charitable giving.

If you have a charity or mission partner that you think your church should support please pass on nominations to me at lawrencekv@aol.com or by contacting me at the Rectory by the end of January, so that these can be considered by our PCC's. It would be helpful to know not only what organisation but also specifically why you think we should support them and whether you would be willing to act as a champion for that charity in your church.

Kevin Lawrence

‘STUFF’ AND CHURCH FUNDS

People often want to support their church by donating ‘stuff’ that they own, but the church may not always have an obvious use for it or indeed space to keep it. However there is an answer.

In recent years there has been an explosion of websites and other ways in which people can sell their surplus or unwanted stuff. Whether clothes or CDs, furniture, books or almost anything else, there is usually someone ready and willing to pay good money for it. As the old saying goes ‘one person's junk is another person's treasure’.

So if you have stuff that you want to see used to support your church, why not sell it online from home and donate the proceeds? There are many different ways and lots of different sites on which you can do this and if you're not sure, please ask me or someone else to help you or indeed do it for you - it's actually much simpler than you might think!

What better way to start the New Year than having a good old clear out

Kevin Lawrence

A visit to the Parish Church

by some Avalon School Children

At the beginning of November, a small number of students and teachers from Avalon School visited Street Parish Church, part of a regular excursion to learn about places in Street.

Rachel and myself were there to enlighten them about the history and features of the building and churchyard.

Rachel had brought along some of her stoles which they took great delight in trying on. The pulpit was of great interest to them, as was the graveyard.

We received letters of thanks from the pupils and I publish a few of their comments below.

“I liked the grave stones because they are cool and had lots of history”

“I really liked the stane windows and I enjoyed wereing the stole.”

“I found the Pulpit very interesting, it felt like being a court judge and I liked how you letted us wear the posh clothes they were lovely.”

“I was maybe interested about the font. I was tiny bit suprised that the bible was big.”

The letters above are as they were written (no spellchecker used)!

It was a pleasure showing them around. Roger.

Afternoon Tea

Thursday 18th January

2-30pm till 4-00pm

Mission Church Street

There will be a quiz

Followed by tea, cake and fellowship

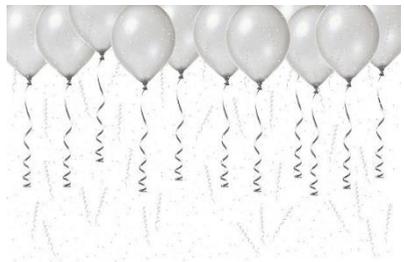
Come and join the fun

Hope to see you there

Delyth Wride and The Team

Congratulations

Congratulations to Jane Tompsett
on the occasion of her 65th Birthday
recently.



Learning more about our Parochial Church Councils

You may see mention of our Parochial Church Councils (PCCs) in 'Life', 'Lifeline' and elsewhere. Many of you will know a fair bit about what they are and what they are for, maybe you have even served on a PCC before; but for others they may be less familiar. In this article I explore a little bit more about what they are and what they do and don't do.

Put simply, the PCCs are the official bodies representing you, the church family in your parish, with members elected at our Annual Parish Church Meetings to serve for a period of not more than three years. In addition to elected members, clergy and other licensed ministers such as Lay Readers are entitled to serve on the PCC as 'ex officio' members and Deanery Synod (we will explain what this is at another time) members are also elected every three years. Either from its members, or co-opted from elsewhere, the PCC also appoints the Church Treasurer and PCC Secretary.

The job of the PCC is to be, effectively, the governing body of the local church, with responsibility for areas of church life including buildings, finance, safeguarding, insurance and all other policies and procedures that are required to ensure the church runs well, safely and legally. They meet regularly throughout the year and report on their activities at the Annual Parish Church Meeting as well as through the minutes which are public documents, available for those who wish to read them.

That, if you like, is the legal bit but what do they actually do?

A 'typical' PCC meeting will open and close with prayer and will include agenda items on mission, finance, buildings, safeguarding, reports from subgroups or working groups and other matters, as well as often including an opportunity to discuss a particular topic in more depth. Recent topics under discussion have included elements of the Deanery wide Mission Plan, the pastoral reorganisation within our local Deanery churches and other items more specific to each individual parish.

PCC members serve as representatives of the church family there to share the views of the whole church, rather than just their own opinions. Please therefore do talk to your PCC reps if you have questions or queries you would like them to consider. Before each meeting members are invited to add any agenda items which lie within the PCC remit and which they might like to see discussed.

PCC members are there to contribute, not just to listen. The PCC is not just somewhere to find out what's going on, but a place where members bring their skills, gifts and passions to serve the church. In all of our PCC's various subgroups and working groups have been formed to discuss particular issues and PCC members play a full part in these as well as in the main meetings.

However, PCC members are not expected to do everything in the church. We believe in 'every member ministry', in other words all of us, whether PCC members or not, can bring particular gifts and talents to serve the church as we seek to worship God, love our communities and grow in faith.

Finally, PCC members are there to make decisions. PCC members receive proposals and papers in advance of the meeting on many of which they are asked to decide. This can be about financial expenditure, approval of policies or fees, proposals from PCC working parties groups or other matters.

Please pray for and encourage our PCCs in all the decisions and discussions that they are called upon to make. Their role is a vital part of church life and ministry. With the Annual Parish Church Meeting due this spring, please also be prayerfully considering whether you could stand for election to your PCC, whether you have served in the past or have never done so before. If you want to know more please have a word with a current member of the PCC or with myself.

We aim to publish the names of the elected PCC members on our church noticeboards but in the meantime, here are the lists of those elected members currently serving on our PCCs:

Street: Edd Reeve (warden), Andrew Savage (secretary), Linda Wilson, Sonia Beaty (treasurer), Tim Hindle, Martin Kennard, Caroline Fulton, Jane Tompsett (deanery synod), Roger Harmsworth, Kevin Lawrence (ex officio), Ana Lawrence, David Hatrey, Rachel Pengelly (all ex officio).

Walton: Sandra Gristock (warden & deanery synod), Yvonne Guerin (deanery synod), Hilda Grint, Sonia Beaty (treasurer), Wendy Devenish (secretary), Liz Selway, Pauline Hatrey. Andy Savage (ex officio), Ana Lawrence, David Hatrey & Rachel Pengelly (all ex officio).

Compton Dundon: Pat King (warden & deanery synod), Susie Robertson (secretary), Julie Gordon (treasurer), Helen Thomas, Judy Skelding, Gill Williams, Angela Harper. Ana Lawrence, David Hatrey, Rachel Pengelly (all ex officio).

Ana Lawrence

***Soulful Nature: A spiritual field guide*, by Brian Draper and Howard Green**

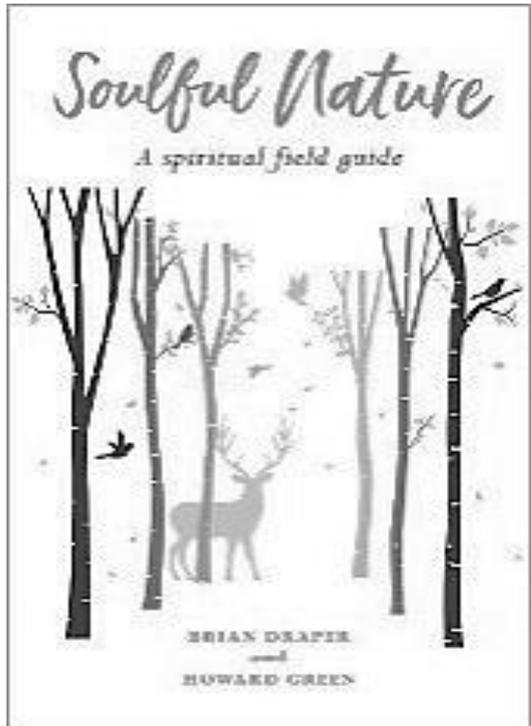
Following Sue Ripley's article in November Life, we are excited to announce that in January we will start a new group that will aim to work through this book throughout 2024.

Once a month we will look at a chapter of the book and a spiritual discipline, discussing what it practically means. We will start on Wednesday January 10th at 11am at the Mission Church with the question 'What is Bible meditation?', then on Wednesday 14th February discussing how to keep a spiritual journal.

ALSO once a month we will go on a short meditation walk, starting Wednesday 24 January meeting at 2.45 at the Mission church to go to Ham Wall hoping to see the Starling murmuration.

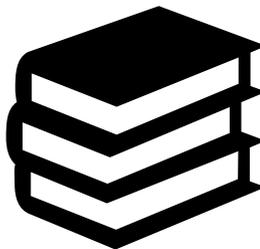
This is an open group. You are very welcome to come to any or all of the discussions and/or the meditation walks throughout the year.

For more information, please talk to Rachel Pengelly, Sue Ripley or myself, Jane Tompsett.



SWCD Book Club

An Invitation



The SWCD Book Club is a small, friendly group who meet about 6 times a year. Currently we meet at 11am on a Wednesday at the Mission Church with, at present, exact dates decided from meeting to meeting. We discuss our chosen book which is selected from our own recommendations or from another Book Club list. Our aim is to introduce members of the group to books they might not otherwise have read, and to reflect on them. Individual responses vary; even if a participant hasn't read or finished the book their reasons can be interesting. A variety of books are chosen, mostly fiction but sometimes non-fiction. We select books which can be ordered from the library; they are also usually available to purchase secondhand. In 2023 we read books as varied as 'The Five People You Meet in Heaven' (M. Albon), 'The Salt Path' (R. Winn). 'Mrs Palfrey at the Claremont' (E. Taylor) and 'The Island of Missing Trees' (E. Shafak).

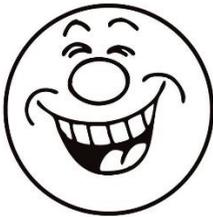
Our first meeting in 2024 is on Wednesday 17th January when we will be discussing 'The Warden' by Anthony Trollope. The group is open to church members across the Benefice, please do join us. Contact me if you have any questions, would like to know what we have been reading or have a book to recommend.

Susan Ripley (Street, Parish Church)

ANGELS IN THE WINGS

THE SWCD CHURCHES PANTO (OH YES IT IS!)

Join us in the Mission Church on Saturday 13th of January at 7:00 PM as SWCD Churches Players, fresh from their triumphant tour of somewhere or other, take to the stage to perform, for your delight and delectation, 'Angels in the Wings'.



Whether you laugh with us or at us does not matter a bit, what matters far more to our star-studded cast is seeing lots of you come along. Roll up, roll up to enjoy a fun evening at 7:00pm, ready to enjoy the show, hopefully share

some refreshments and definitely be involved in a bit of audience participation.

To find out more please contact either David Hatrey or Sarah Woodward. However, there is not much more we can tell you to be honest, so why not just come along and enjoy the evening?

Bring your friends and neighbours (unless, of course, they are theatre critics)!



See you there

David Hatrey and Sarah Woodward (Mission Church)

My Faith Journey

At our morning Celebration service, the question was asked by Jane who was leading: 'What does it mean to pray in the name of Jesus?' and we were given time to discuss and explore this question on our tables. I was reminded of the time when I called on Jesus to save me from a terrifying time and Jane invited me up to the mic to relate my experience to the church, after which Pam invited me to write my account for the Lifeline magazine, so here's my account:

Starting in April 1983, I would occasionally be seized and paralysed by a terrifying presence soon after going to bed late at night. I cannot begin to describe the terror I felt which was accompanied by a noise so loud, it was as though I was standing next to a jet engine at full throttle. It felt like my eardrums would burst. These episodes would last seemingly a long time but after it went away, it was like I had returned from another dimension/reality. During one episode, I recall a being trying to drag me away but somehow I managed to break free.

So these experiences would happen several times a year usually when I was very tired but, not long after I recommitted myself to Christ in September 1991 after another attack had begun, in my mind I frantically called JESUS! JESUS! JESUS! after which it immediately left me. To this day, I haven't had to endure another of those terrifying experiences. So this is part of my faith journey; oversight and coordination. To find out more or volunteer come to from which even the demons flee.

Shaun Purchase.

Eco Church report

2023 has been a time of consolidation for our Eco Church group, supporting existing activities and making plans for the future. Management of churchyards in sensitive ways has continued. The value of this was seen in Compton Dundon and Walton Churchyards and the grounds of the Mission Church. The Churchyard at Street Parish Church presents more of a challenge as it is managed by Somerset Council, but as an open space it still provides a wildlife habitat and parts are being managed in a 'wilder' way. Thank you to all those involved in caring for these spaces.

Repair Cafe

A new venture for 2024 is, in collaboration with the Quakers, establishing a Repair Cafe in Street. I recently read: *'I suspect many people think our impacts on nature are visible (such as planting trees or looking after flowers). But our interaction with nature is a lot more profound than that. The materials we use come from nature but they have come from places which are generally out of sight.'* It is because these materials are precious in many senses of that word that we should treat them with respect and not discard them thoughtlessly. There is a focus on recycling but prolonging the life of an object should be uppermost in our mind before disposal. Repair Cafés address this issue. Street Repair Café will meet monthly on the 4th Saturday from 10am-12 noon beginning on February 24th 2024 at the Street Meeting House. We are holding a public meeting to discuss our plans on Saturday 13th January from 10.30-11.30am at the Crispin Community Centre. We have a list of potential volunteers but would welcome more to join the team. Could you help? We need: repairers - people who can fix or mend, cake makers, refreshment servers, volunteers to meet and greet, help with oversight and coordination. To find out more or volunteer come to the meeting on 13th January, email streetrepaircafe@gmail.com or contact me.

Sue Ripley (Street Parish) Eco Church Group

Richard`s Legacy for The Mission Church

Richard had fond memories of The Old Tin Church, where we attended for many years with our two young sons. When we were raising money to replace The Old Tin Church Richard was one of many who helped with the fundraising. As he was a self-employed builder, he owned a van that was used to transport things from place to place. When we had a sponsored bike ride Richard used the van to transport signage and other things around the route. He even transported a few weary people and bicycles to the end of the route.

He was very proud to be asked to alter the existing hymn number board and make a new one to match it. Another task was to extend the communion rail to fit the new space.



Once The Mission Church was up and running Richard was pleased to do various maintenance jobs over the years. Painting the outside of the church was one of the jobs that he did. This included repairing the old wooden bell tower and painting it.

Sadly, Richard passed away after a short illness on 15th September 2023. Richard`s wishes were respected and there was a private funeral with just immediate family present.

I would like to thank the church family for their support and help.

CHRISTMAS SHOPPING ON-LINE? YOUR PURCHASE COULD RAISE FREE FUNDS FOR YOUR CHURCH.

Whether you are a forward planner or a last-minute dasher, the Christmas shopping season will soon be upon all of us. Increasingly, many of us do some or all of our purchasing online and, if this is you, please consider registering with and using the Easyfundraising website, choosing your church as your chosen charity. <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/>. Through this site, shopping with a wide range of retailers automatically generates a donation to your chosen charity. Whether you shopping for Christmas, holidays, insurance, ordinary household items or something else, why not give it a go?

We already have separate Easyfundraising charity accounts setup for all three of our parishes with just a few of us in the church already using Easyfundraising, it has already raised several hundred pounds in free donations and would raise far more if more people got involved. It's simple, its quick and its free!

This is just one of many ways you can support the life and ministry of our churches financially. On our church website all the options are listed on the 'Giving' pages at <https://swcd-churches.org.uk/Groups/304053/Giving.aspx>, or speak to your Church Treasurer

Kevin Lawrence

For the benefice stewardship group

The Performance/Acceptance treadmill

'FOR IN HIM WE LIVE, AND MOVE, AND HAVE OUR BEING ...'
ACTS 17:28

God loves you as much on your bad days as He does on your good ones. Really? How is that possible? Because His acceptance of you is based on your position (in Christ) not your condition (in the flesh). Listen: 'For our sake He made Christ [virtually] to be sin Who knew no sin, so that in and through Him we might become [endued with, viewed as being in, and examples of] the righteousness of God [what we ought to be, approved and acceptable and in right relationship with Him, by His (not our) goodness]' (2 Corinthians 5:21 AMP).

At Calvary God took every sin you could ever commit and laid it upon His Son. When you come to the cross as a sinner, He takes all of Christ's righteousness and wraps you up in it. From that point on He sees you only one way – in Christ! How liberating!

Liberating – yes! Because now we see that our worth is not based on what we do, but on who we are in Christ. God actually assigned value to you by allowing Jesus to die for you. 'But I cannot believe that God does not care about what I do?' You are right! God wants you to do good works – but He does not want you to depend on them; He wants you to do them out of love for Him. Once you understand your position, who you are in Christ, you can get off the performance/acceptance treadmill and begin doing the right things for the right reasons.

From the daily readings in 'The Word for Today'. This booklet of devotional readings is published every three months and is available free of charge through the generosity of supporters, from: UCB Operations Centre, Westport Road, Stoke-on-Trent, ST6 4JF. Tel: 0845 60 40 401. Email: ucb@ucb.co.uk

UCB is short for United Christian Broadcasters, who also produce Christian radio and TV programmes available on DAB digital radio, TV and online. Details at ucbmedia.co.uk

