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60p

# Life



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## MAGAZINE EDITOR LIFE

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Articles for the June edition are due by **Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> May**

There have been some good and varied services and events in our Benefice over Easter, something for every age and likings I would say. A barn dance in Walton village hall, family worship with craft for the younger folk in the Mission Church, an Easter Experience set up in Street Parish Church for Elmhurst school, earlier in the month, a Mothering Sunday service in Compton Dundon village hall, also catering for all ages. An hour at the cross at Street Parish on good Friday gave us all a time to reflect on how Jesus died for us. At St Andrews C.D. with the bells safely up in the tower, we had a short service in the church followed by the walk up Lolover Hill in the rain with the three crosses, (see back). In the Parish church at Street on Easter day after a larger than usual service, (I mean the numbers attending not the length of the service), a selection of flavoured hot cross buns was served with coffee afterwards, among the Easter flowers, (see cross on back). Heidi (Walton school's new head) can also be seen on the back with Ana, and you can read all about it on pages 8 and 9. Back at Street Parish, the recent working party was useful, and I would like to thank Chris, Martin, and Kevin for all that was achieved. Today, I felt privileged to be at St Andrews as the bell ringers rang the peal of six for the first time, it was a joy!! See Judy Skelding's article on pages 4 and 5. Oh yes, the photo of the Lilly on the front was taken near the Easter Garden at the Parish Church. Roger.

# Rector's Letter

Dear Friends,

"We always thank God for all of you and continually mention you in our prayers" 1 Thessalonians 1. 2

When was the last time you said 'thank you' to somebody or someone said 'thank you' to you? Not just the casual thanks you might offer to the bus driver or till cashier but a genuine heartfelt expression of gratitude for either what you've done or who you are.

I'm sure we all value thanks, affirmation and to know that we are truly valued for who we are and what we've done.

One of the traps we can fall into, however, when thanking others and showing our appreciation is 'to do it' only to those we perceive need this, ignoring those that we think 'are fine', or maybe we only remember to thank those we see but forget those we don't.

Expressing thankfulness can come in many different forms, whether a card, phone call, text, bunch of flowers, a meal on the doorstep, or just a word in season, however it's done, expressing our gratitude to others goes a long way.

In his letter to the church in Thessalonica, Paul is continually offering up thankful prayers for God's people which must have been a huge encouragement to them. I know for myself that such affirmation is a huge encouragement.

So, who did you last thank? Who might you thank today? Imagine the encouragement if we grew to be a more thankful people above all, can we thank God for one another as Paul thanked God for the Thessalonians.

With my love and prayers, Ana

## Bishop's letter

It's sowing time! My greenhouse is currently full of seedlings pushing their way towards the light. Soon all this new life will be big enough to be planted out into the garden. Peas and courgettes, dahlias and zinnias; all ready to grow, blossom and be fruitful.

It's not only seedlings that grow. Churches do too! Just like all that's happening in my greenhouse, this doesn't happen by accident. Evidence shows that churches are most likely to grow when they plan and prepare for this to happen. Church growth is intentional.

This article of Manna contains stories about how churches in our Diocese have planned for growth and of the fruit they're seeing as a result. There's no 'one size fits all' for how this has happened. Just as in our gardens, what grows in one place won't necessarily thrive in another.

Important as planning and preparing may be, these things aren't the vital ingredient for growth. Growth comes when God is alive and at work within us and our churches. In his first letter to church he's helped establish in Corinth, St Paul also uses a gardening metaphor to describe the growth he's seeing. Paul says 'I planted, Apollos [Paul's co-worker] watered, but God gave the growth.' (1 Cor 3:6).

Without God's input, any plans we have to grow our churches will be little more than strategy, our efforts like those of ants running frantically to and fro. This is why our prayer for growth is essential. Prayer invites God to give us wisdom about what to do. It opens our treasure stores to resource the plans we want to put in place. It asks God to go before us to touch the hearts and minds of those we'd like to reach. It invites God to bless and prosper the work we do.

So be inspired! Let the sowing time begin!

Bishop Michael.

# **Welcome Home St Andrew's Bells!**

Seven bells returned to St Andrew's Church in early April having been collected from Bridport by Gerald Doble's team to whom we are very grateful. Fully restored and with gleaming red headstocks they were proudly assembled in the aisle and decorated with flowers and ribbon, ready for the Hallowing, or Blessing, Service on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of April.

This unique service was taken by Rev Ana Lawrence and Sister Rachel Pengelly and contained beautiful words as the bells were blessed and consecrated and sprinkled with holy water before being anointed with oil. It was a moving ceremony because these bells will be speaking to the village for centuries to come as this prayer during the service said

"Blessed are you Lord God of all creation, we join our thanks and praise with everything made that can give voice.

Through your goodness we have these bells to offer, wrought in the fire, the work of human hands. Their sound will ring out to your glory, marking every season of our lives under heaven; a time to be born, a time to die; a time to weep, a time to laugh; a time to mourn, a time to dance; a time for war, a time for peace; a time to seek, a time to lose; a time to keep, a time to cast away; a time to keep silence, a time to speak; until we see and know you in the fullness of eternity; through Jesus Christ our Lord."

The church was full to witness this service and we were particularly delighted to have the children from Compton Dundon school with us. They have been tremendous supporters of the Bell Appeal.

The bells are now in their final resting place back up in the tower and away from view.

The largest bell, the old tenor, will be hung as a tolling bell with the other six bells forming the peal. Trial ringing will be in the week following Easter and the bells will be dedicated by The Bishop on Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> June. There will be an invitation to this celebration in the village magazine 'The Herald'. Judy Skelding.

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## **Thy Kingdom Come**

Thy Kingdom Come or 'TKC' this year is celebrating its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary. This global wave of prayer is a 10-day period starting on Ascension Day (29<sup>th</sup> May) until Pentecost (8<sup>th</sup> June) and is an intentional time of specific and focussed prayer where we are encouraged to 'pray for 5'. The 5 people are people who are not yet Christian and they can be people from our network of family, friends, neighbours, work colleagues and so on. Please do pray about the '5' that you will pray for this year by name each day during the TKC period. Name them before God and regularly pray for them. There is a wealth of resources to use during TKC which can be found on the TKC website

<https://www.thykingdomcome.global/>

You can sign up to receive daily prayer prompts and videos with reflections. I hope you will join with this wave of global prayer around the world.

This year, as a particular focus during TKC, we are dedicating half a day in church where there will be continuous prayer. This will take place on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> June between 12 noon and 6pm in the Parish Church, Street. Nearer the time, there will be sign-up sheets to come into church and pray for 30 minutes or as much as you are able. If there are others, feel free to pray together, if you are alone, enjoy the time and space with God.

Ana Lawrence

## Welcome to our new wardens & PCC members

Following our recent Annual Parochial Church meetings, I am pleased to let you know that the following people will be serving as Church Wardens for the coming year:

Tim Hindle (Street, Mission Church), Julie Sinclair (Street, Mission Church), Sandra Gristock (Walton), Pat King (Compton Dundon, Gill Williams (Compton Dundon).

We are entitled to two wardens per church, and you may notice that there are currently none in the Parish Church and only one for Walton. I will be meeting with a small team in both the Parish and Walton to discuss how we manage this and to divide the role up between various people so that the work is undertaken.

If on reading this, you would like to think about being a warden for either the Parish or Walton, or would like to be involved in the teams mentioned above, please come and talk to me, I'd love to hear from you.

Our new PCCs are made up of the following people (some are ex-officio, clergy, readers, warden, synod and others are elected members).

**Street PCC:** Ana Lawrence, Rachel Pengelly, David Hatrey, Kevin Lawrence, Edd Reeve, Tim Hindle, Julie Sinclair, Andrew Savage, Roger Harmsworth, Martin Kennard, Caroline Fulton, Sue Ripley, Elaine Howard & Michael Long.

**Walton PCC:** Ana Lawrence, Rachel Pengelly, David Hatrey, Sandra Gristock, Hilda Grint, Sonia Beaty, Wendy Devenish, Liz Selway, Pauline Hatrey, Gill Attewell & Edgar Frampton

**Compton Dundon PCC:** Ana Lawrence, Rachel Pengelly, Pat King, Gill Williams, Julie Gordon, Susie Robertson, Helen Thomas, Paul Atkins & Richard Field.

Please keep the PCC members in your prayers, thank you.  
Ana Lawrence

# Walton Primary School

At the Walton Primary School Easter Assembly in Walton Church, we presented Mrs Rachel Toal, headteacher, with a bible on her retirement after 17 years at the school.

At the end of every school year, Walton church gives a bible to each of the year 6 leavers and so it seemed appropriate to do something similar to mark Rachel's leaving the school.

Ana Lawrence

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## Alpha Course

Our next Alpha Course will begin in June, taking place in the Mission Church on Tuesday evenings. Alpha is internationally recognised and is already attended by millions providing a fantastic opportunity to wrestle with those big questions of life and faith with no judgement and no 'right' or 'wrong' answers. Maybe this course would be of interest to you or maybe you know of someone you would like to invite to come along. Please contact Ana for more details or book your place via the church office.

Ana Lawrence

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## Congratulations



To Sue Ripley on recently celebrating her 80<sup>th</sup> Birthday!



# **New Headteacher for Walton CE VC Primary School**

In the early part of the spring term, staff and governors came together to select a new headteacher. This follows Rachel Toal's decision to retire after a dedicated time of leading the school. The school has a fine reputation, both locally and in the Diocese. We extend our best wishes to Rachel for all her work and pray she will be blessed in retirement.

The new headteacher is Heidi Padfield, who joins the school from Dorset. The selection process was a rigorous and challenging test, to discern who was the best candidate to take this church school forward. Heidi showed she has the skills and wisdom to do just that. She has kindly written a brief article introducing herself to the Benefice. We hope to greet her formally in a service of welcome at Holy Trinity Walton as she dedicates herself to growing Walton school. As a church we pray for Heidi as she begins this new chapter at the school and seek to support her in this ministry. David Hatrey Foundation Governor

## ***Heidi Padfield. New Headteacher of Walton CE VC Primary School***

I am delighted to introduce myself as Heidi Padfield, and I am thrilled to be joining Walton Primary School as the new Headteacher after Easter.

I am a proud mum of two wonderful children, Ellen (17) and Jude (13), and have been happily married for 20 years. I grew up in Somerset surrounded by vintage motorcycles, particularly British bikes. On sunny days, my husband and I love to explore the

countryside on our Royal Enfield. Family time is incredibly important to us, especially now that the children are growing up. We enjoy camping and paddleboarding together, though, while the rest of the family are avid golfers, I must admit that golf isn't my strong suit—I'm more than happy to wait for them in a spa! I also have a deep love for animals, and if given the choice, I would happily spend the day at a safari park. Recently, I've become a football fan as my son plays for a local team, and we are often found cheering him on from the sidelines, or occasionally supporting 'Yeovil Town.'

Having always lived in Somerset, I've spent my entire teaching career in Dorset. Since completing my teaching qualification in 2006, I've been part of a primary school in North Dorset, where, for the past decade, I have served as Deputy Head and Acting Headteacher. After 20 years at the same school, I felt ready for a new challenge. When I learned about Walton Primary School's vision and values, I immediately recognised how closely they align with my own. I'm excited to get to know the children, their families, and the wider community at Walton.

During my visits to the school, I have been consistently impressed by the exemplary behaviour of the children. It's clear that Walton Primary fosters an environment of respect and positivity, where students are supported to excel academically and socially. The dedication of the staff has been evident in every interaction, and I am excited to work alongside such a committed team. The involvement of the school's governors has also been truly inspiring.

I look forward to becoming part of this wonderful school community, supporting our children as they create fantastic memories, grow, and flourish throughout their academic journey.

Heidi Padfield.

# Thank you from Tearfund

Last year, across the benefice, we held an emergency collection for the work of the Disasters Emergency Committee in the Middle East. We sent the money via tear fund, one of the mission partners of Street parish, and they have sent the following thank you and an update.

So far, thanks to the support of generous people like you, approximately 178,538 people have received vital aid.

**In Gaza**, Tearfund's partner, International Health Partners, is providing life-saving medical supplies and desperately needed healthcare in field clinics. Most hospitals and health centres are still not (or not fully) functional and the conflict has also drastically affected supply chains and driven up costs. These field clinics ensure that children and vulnerable people receive essential healthcare.

**In Lebanon**, we supported local partners and churches to deliver vital aid, including food, mattresses, blankets and hygiene kits, to those displaced by the conflict. Many sought refuge in overcrowded schools, public spaces, and with host families, facing harsh conditions exacerbated by cold weather. The hygiene kits contained essential items like shampoo, soap, and sanitary products, addressing both hygiene and dignity needs.

**The West Bank's economy** has been devastated by the conflict. With border closures, thousands of day labourers lost their jobs in Israel, and tourism-reliant businesses closed, leaving countless families unable to afford basic needs.

**Tearfund** is partnering with the Diocese of Jerusalem, supporting clinics to provide vital healthcare, including consultations, tests, and medication. We're also helping students continue their education by covering tuition fees.

Additionally, we're working with Bethlehem Bible College, creating short-term employment opportunities and stimulating local businesses by subsidising wages.

This would not have been possible without you.

Kevin Lawrence, Tearfund 'Champion'

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## **Regular Praying for our churches Sundays at 5pm**

Following a discussion during the recent \*\*Thrive meeting on prayer in our churches – “How, what and why we pray” - We decided that it would be good to start a regular time of prayer for the church family to pray for our benefice. This is a regular time each week (Sundays at 5pm) when we can all set aside just five minutes to bring our prayers for our churches specifically. We can pray in whichever way we choose, either on the move or in a still quiet space. It could be on our own or with a partner or group.

We want to be praying churches. During this regular time of prayer there are many things we can pray for. Particularly we can pray for God's blessings within our churches and for unity and growth in our benefice. We can pray for our faith and love in Jesus to grow. We can pray for our weekly activities, for the way we love our communities, for our leadership team and for those who serve within our churches. We can also pray for the needs of those who belong to the church family.

If some guidance is wanted here is a suggestion for how to use those 5 minutes each week:

Remove other distractions. Put other things aside as we come before the Lord.

- Spend a minute in His presence. Meditate on the God that we are coming to. (1 minute)
- Read or recall a Psalm (or section of scripture). Maybe the one on the daily reading list? (1 minute)
- Give thanks for His character and His answered prayer (1 minute)
- Consider the things in our benefice that God puts on our mind and hearts (1 minute)
- Bring those things to God in prayer. (1 minute)

If you want to use a set written prayer here is one that could be useful. ...

DEAR HEAVENLY FATHER

WE ASK that you bless us as we pray for unity and growth within our Benefice of Street, Walton and Compton Dundon. Unite us, Bless us and Bless our Church family

WE ASK that you fill our hearts and minds with the love and light of your Holy Spirit as we continue to encourage and support all those who currently make up our churches

WE PRAY that, with love and acceptance, we acknowledge the uniqueness and gifts of each of us - and that with humility and grace we minister to one another and are united as we grow in faith

WE PRAY that you will give us confidence, direction and opportunities to reach out to others with the Gospel- just as your Son reached out to us on the Cross

We PRAY that You would draw others into your family.

MAY we, with arms outstretched, welcome others with expectation and joy.

In your name and for your glory we pray

AMEN

\*\* Thrive is the name for a course that is running over 2025 and 2026 for local benefices which comprise of a number of churches/parishes (or to use the jargon multi parish benefices – MPBs). The aim is to help our churches to “thrive” in our mission and ministries. We are looking at a number of themes over this period: how we pray, how we share our stories/testimonies/connections with others, how we support our leaders, how we help bring new people to faith and how we encourage discipleship. The idea is for folk from each of our churches to get together to seek God’s will and to evaluate how we are doing as churches with these things and perhaps ways we could improve and grow in faith and love as a benefice.

From a personal point of view, I would say the first meeting on prayer was extremely helpful. There was a good atmosphere of looking for God’s way in these matters. It was particularly good to meet other Christians from our neighbouring nearby benefices- to encourage and be encouraged.

Tim Hindle Mission Church

## Connections@theMission in April

Thank you to Ana, our Rector, for leading us in a Maundy Thursday reflection.

When we arrived there was a bowl, some water and a towel displayed. Foot washing was the immediate thought that went through some of our heads. We were wrong. Ana worked her way around those gathered and washed our hands. There was a discussion amongst us, followed by chocolate cake, Easter biscuits and a cuppa.

On the third Thursday in May, Jenny Collins (Mission Church) will be joining us with some craft activities to try.

Pam Harmsworth (Mission Church)

# Connections@theMission

## Thursday 15th May

### 2-30pm till 4pm

## Mission Church, Street

### Come along for a Crafty Afternoon

### with Jenny Collins (Mission Church Street)

There will be a cuppa and cake



# Walton

What a lovely evening we had at the barn dance on the 12th April. Thank you to everyone who came along to support our event. A big thank you to Rough round the Edges. Andy, John, Susie, Louise and our rector Ana who turns her hand to everything. The music was fabulous. Our caller Peter got people up dancing so well. Thank you also to Gill for organising the hot dogs and to her family for being amazing serving so quickly, and to Liz for her help in the kitchen. Also, to Jim and Diane serving at the bar and to Hannah who raced over to the hall to help set up. Lastly to Jackie and Philip for manning the raffle. Wonderful team work. Bless you.

Our next event is a VE day cream tea in the Church on Sunday 11th May at 3o'clock. Come along to join us with the promise of delicious scones and lots of tea. There will be war time music and maybe a little quiz to make you think. The price is £6 per tea.

What about finding out a little bit more of Walton. We have a murder mystery to solve. What happened to a Rector of Walton cum Street? See if you can solve who was murdered, who did it, where and when it happened.

We have a walking detective mystery to be solved in your own time and it will be great entertainment for families or for a team of friends. £5 for all your directions and clues to eliminate as you find them. An hour or two of fun so do take a look. Available from Andy Savage or Sandra Gristock.

Sandra.



# My Faith Journey

Where do I start? When I first started to go to church regularly? No, I don't think so. That was as a choir boy with school friends. I have a photograph taken in 1949 of me in choir robes. But it was a few years later that I realized that there was more to it than just 'going to church'. My new Parish Priest, Father Ashworth, gives a clue to his background. We always started our services by reciting together John chapter 1 verses 1 to 14, 'In the beginning was the word'. It is still with me today.

1957 was a year of turmoil. I lost my job, now liable for National Service, but medical given was B6, therefore not required for National Service. I wanted to get away from everything. I got a job with an oil company in Bahrain. Worked in the oil refinery, lived in a 'European' village in the centre of the Island, Awali. I spent nearly four years working on 4A Crude Still, refining oil. I helped in our village church, taking services sometimes. Summer of 1961, I decided to return to UK and train as a Youth Leader. Met Betty, the start of a very long courtship, 6 weeks! Proposed, she accepted 4 weeks before I came back to UK. She followed soon after and we were married in March 1962. My faith was on a back boiler during this time other than church wedding.

We moved to Street in 1964 when under the influence and guidance of Reg Andrews and Jim Judge my faith was reignited and I became a Lay Reader. Then Derek Evans came into my life. What an inspiration he was. But it was something quite different that changed my approach to faith. A Good Friday walk up the High Street ended at the Salvation Army Citadel. The Captain gave the address. "Have you been saved?" she asked us. It left me speechless. It put my faith to the test. Yes! I guess I

have. YES, I had never looked at it like that before. I was a Lay Reader, a regular church goer for the want of a better word. Right from early days the Communion Service was central to my faith, the real sense of sharing in the bread and the wine, the Body and Blood of the Lord Jesus was and is, a real relationship with Jesus. His death on the cross and his resurrection assures me that my sins are forgiven. Yes, He is my Saviour and I have been saved.

The Pandemic saw changes for us, as it did for so many people, but during the latter days there were the first signs of dementia in Betty. Then in 2023 she suffered from a stroke which proved fatal. God has a way of moving life on. She was full of love for the hundreds of children she taught, her family and everyone she met. I am sure she is in the nearer presence of the Lord, much better than a future with dementia. As for me, I am sure the Lord has something more for me to do. My faith is stronger than ever and I am so grateful for all the love and support I have received from my family, the church family and friends: but most of all from God the Father, the Lord Jesus Christ and 'The Go Between God' the Holy Spirit. I am never on my own. Brian Moreby

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## **Sermon series Apologetics**

During the summer months at our Sunday services, our preaching will tackle some of the tricky questions that we sometimes have to deal with as Christians such as 'if God is a God of love, why does he allow suffering in the world?' Sometimes known as apologetics these issues will be explored in our Sunday teaching and in our midweek groups. More details will follow.

Ana Lawrence

# APCM Address

In this month's magazine I have included my brief reflections shared at this year's APCM meetings. If you haven't yet read the APCM reports, it's not too late, you can download them from our website or request them from the church office.

Much of what I shared in my written report in the APCM booklet looks back over the past year (2024) at what has happened, both the good and encouraging as well as the more challenging aspects of our church life.

As a benefice, we are primarily here to share God's love in our respective communities. This should be at the heart of all we do and are as Christians.

Therefore, as I said in my written report: 'My heart and prayer is that our mission statement 'worship God, love our communities, grow in faith' continues to underpin all that we are and do within the life of the benefice of Street, Walton and Compton Dundon.'

Also, in my report, I reflected on the numerical growth we have experienced taking the benefice as a whole. This is of course exciting, and yet growth brings new and different opportunities and challenges.

In order to minister to our growing congregations and beyond we are going to need more resources in terms of people to step into a whole range of ministry areas.

To give one example of the reality of what is needed. Recruiting church wardens has not always proved easy as this role can be perceived as too busy and demanding for many. In response, going forward, we are looking to develop this role as more collaborative, involving working within a wider team, particularly in the churches where we don't currently have wardens or not the full quota.

Beyond the role of warden, there are countless opportunities to serve in and beyond the life of our churches. For example, with growing numbers of young people, we need more leaders and across our churches, I want to release people to welcome, lead prayers, do bible readings, serve refreshments etc.

Often in church life, the bulk of the work is done by relatively few, but I'd love to see everyone involved. We are a church family that works best when everyone is helping to share the load and ease the burdens so that we don't risk the few burning out. 'The Harvest is indeed plentiful but the labourers are few'

Alongside our ministry day by day and Sunday by Sunday, there is a lot else going on in SWCD Churches, including bell project and reordering projects in St Andrew's and Walton respectively. These are great examples of where church members are using their gifts and talents in the service of God's Kingdom.

We've talked a great deal about finances, some would say too much, but this is also part of our ministry. Whether by regular giving, Fundraising or other activities, how we give to the life of our churches forms a part of who we are and how we reach out beyond ourselves. There's been some fantastic progress and answers to prayer in this area but we can't be complacent.

Because it's really important, I want to quote what I wrote in my report: 'I also sense a growing depth in faith with church family seeking to 'go deeper' in their faith journeys. Two well attended weekly prayer meetings, growing midweek house groups, Celebrate@6 services are just some examples of this. Let's continue to want to go deeper and see what God will do in our midst.'

Finally, as I say in my report, we're not done yet! Let's dream big, let's pray big, let's be a people who are ambitious, not for ourselves, not for our churches but for God. We serve a God who we believe can do great things. Are you up for exciting times ahead?

I can't conclude these comments without offering public thanks, again this is in the report in more detail, but can I here extend my thanks to our Parish Safeguarding Officers, Sonia, our benefice administrator, our wardens, our Treasurers and the PCC. A huge 'thank you' to all those who lead and preach at our Sunday and Midweek Services: licenced Readers, Lay Worship Assistants, intercessors, welcomers, and readers. I want to also

thank my clergy colleagues, Sister Rachel Pengelly & Rev'd David Hatrey for their support, commitment and partnership as we lead our churches together.

Ana Lawrence

## **Benefice service June**

Our next benefice service will be on Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> June where we will welcome the Bishop of Bath and Wells, the Rt Revd Michael Beasley who will preach and preside in St Andrew's Church, Compton Dundon. This will be a particularly special service as the recently restored bells in St Andrew's which have been blessed and anointed with oil at a 'hallowing' service in the church will be dedicated by Bishop Michael. In addition to our church family, there will be some invited guests to the service who have played a particular role in the bell project.

The service will begin at 10.30 and conclude by 11.45am. It will be followed by a light lunch in the grounds of St Andrew's Church. For those who have been to St Andrew's before, you will be aware that parking close to the church is limited, so we would like to reserve those spaces for those who are 'less mobile'. We are hoping to be able to park in the village hall and run a 'shuttle service' in various church members cars to and from the church. There is always the option of walking to the church from the hall too. Please do try and car share where you can as part of our call to be good stewards and to allow plenty of space in the village hall car park.

Above all, please come! Ana Lawrence

## **Mothering Sunday at St Andrew's**

Mothering Sunday dawned bright and early – an hour too early, if truth be told, as British Summer Time made its appearance – in Compton Dundon, as we made our way to the Village Hall for our Mothering Sunday service. But the sun was out- a perfect Spring Day.

We set to work. Tables covered with bright, red and white-checked tablecloths, croissants warmed, coffee brewed, technology (thankfully) up and running, craft activities placed on every table. All ready.

So we met and greeted, served warm croissants with butter and jam, tea, coffee and apple juice. Sister Rachel led the service. It was wonderful to be able to use the big screen in the Village Hall, allowing us to show a cartoon of baby Jesus being presented by Mary and Joseph in the temple, as well as a version of 'He's Got the Whole World in His Hands' complete with actions. Of course, we all joined in!

Mums were presented with a jar of fresh flowers, labelled with personal messages written by the children. There was chocolate for everyone. After the service, people stayed and chatted. Donations raised £65 for the Children's Hospice.

All in all, it was a lovely morning, and we are grateful to the Village Hall Committee for allowing us to use the hall free of charge. See you next year!

Gill Williams.

# Living Simply

*The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it. Psalm 24:1*

Churches and congregations are increasingly addressing issues relating to 'Caring for Creation'. Many Retreat Centres are also linking with schemes such as those coordinated by A Rocha or simply working to become more environmentally conscious and to encourage individuals to be aware and take action themselves. The following is taken from a notice in one Retreat Centre, adapted to make it relevant to our local situation. It aims to help with living simply and treading lightly on our planet and is headed: A few things we can all do to help the environment and to make our lives more sustainable.

- Avoid buying single use plastic
- Take soft plastics to the local supermarket for recycling
- Blister packs from medicines can be taken to Superdrug pharmacies for recycling\*
- All types of pens including felt-tip can be recycled at Ryman's
- Refill plastic bottles such as washing up liquid rather than buying a new bottle each time. Refills are usually available at Repair Café sessions in Street.
- Consider swapping liquid shampoo and conditioner for a shampoo bar
- Buy milk in reusable glass bottles from a local milkman
- Try to make clothes last longer between washes
- Don't leave computers TVs etc on standby when they are not in use; switch lights off when leaving a room
- Try not to throw anything away if someone else can use it, donate it to a charity shop or someone else, or re-purpose it
- Plan car journeys to avoid using unnecessary fuel and time

- Walk, cycle or use public transport whenever possible
- Shower less often and for shorter times
- Grow some of your own food
- Shop locally; use in season foods wherever possible
- If buying meat or fish look for responsibly sourced, reared and organic produce
- Consume less meat and dairy produce
- If you are a gardener, make and use your own compost either on a compost heap or in a wormery
- Plant flowers that will attract wildlife and leave suitable wild spaces for creatures such as hedgehogs to shelter in
- Ensure your house is insulated
- Switch to a green/renewable energy provider or at least opt for a green tariff
- Write to supermarkets to raise concerns about excess and unnecessary packaging that is not environmentally friendly
- Sign up to campaigns relating to protection of the environment and reducing carbon
- Write to your MP with environmental concerns
- Share ideas and practices with others

\*There is growing interest in having a local scheme for recycling blister packs, ask at your pharmacy

Susan Ripley, Street Parish, SWCD Eco Church Group



# Discerning what God is doing in our churches?

Let's not miss out on good news when there is anger and hostility across our world.

The good news is that some people at Walton church have stepped forward to become part of a team who will pray for healing. At present, they come together to offer prayer and/or the laying on of hands for those who feel they need God's wholeness. For some, this will be because they are unwell, in pain, worried, upset or for a variety of reasons. They come to the Father, seeking his touch. We pray that God will work through them to bring wholeness to many.

Now we seek to extend this by creating a group of people from the Mission and Parish church who discern that God is prompting them to respond to his call. Surely though you need special gifts to be part of this. I believe the one quality required is that you are a person of prayer, who will listen and allow God to guide us. As a Bishop concluded, those who are part of a healing team are those who let God's power move through them to fulfil his purposes. The roll is to get out of the way and let God do his work. Please don't just consider that this is for others. Reflect, pray, talk to friends - what is God saying to you?

To find out more please talk to me. Together we will embark on some study and reflection, drawing upon Jesus' example of healing. We hope to start this sometime in May. If nothing else pray that God will call out people who will bring his blessings to our community.

David Hatrey

# DIOCESAN BUDGET CONSULTATIONS

From 9 June to 9 July there will be an opportunity for people from the parishes to attend a session to discuss the plan for a three-year budget for the Diocesan Board of Finance (DBF). This represents a change from the annual budget agreed in previous years.

Diocesan Secretary, Jenny Hollingsworth says, “By setting a three-year budget we will give both the parishes and the Diocesan Board of Finance greater clarity and stability. During last year’s consultation on how our benefices and parishes pay into the common fund, people expressed a desire for greater transparency and understanding about how the diocesan-wide budget is constructed and spent. I gave that undertaking to do that and I hope this consultation will help us continue our conversation and help us consider together, as we are charged with growing our churches and transforming our communities, how does our budget support that, for both the parishes and the DBF?

“We have arranged for meeting dates in morning, afternoon, evening, in person and online and in different parts of the diocese. We want as many people as possible to attend so we can garner the wisdom as widely as possible from across our diocese.” Local / online dates include....

- ☐ **19:00 to 21:00, Monday 9 June – Flourish House, Wells (Wells Archdeaconry)**
- ☐ **9:30 – 11:00 – Thursday 26 June – Zoom online session**
- ☐ **10:30 – 12:30 on Monday 30 June – Flourish House, Wells (Wells Archdeaconry)**
- ☐ **19:00 – 20:30 on 7 July – Zoom online session**

Kevin Lawrence

***'I DO NOT THINK THE WAY YOU THINK...'*** Isaiah 55:8 TM

You can tell how strong you are, by what it takes to discourage you! Sometimes our discouragement has nothing to do with what God does or does not do, and everything to do with our mistaken assumptions of how we think things should turn out. When we try to second-guess God we are usually wrong because He says, 'I do not think the way you think.' God always has a plan and His timing is perfect!

Henri Dunant, a wealthy 19th Century Swiss banker, was sent to Paris by his government to work on a business deal with Emperor Napoleon III. But when he arrived he discovered that Napoleon III was off fighting a war. So he went to the battlefield to find him. Once there, Dunant watched in horror as cannonballs ripped open flesh. Maimed and dying men lay all around him. He was so devastated by what he saw that he stayed at the front for weeks, helping doctors tend to the wounded. Even after returning home Dunant was haunted by those images of war. He could not keep his mind on banking and became so distracted that he lost his fortune. But even with his career in ruins, he had an unmistakable sense of God's leadings in all that had happened. Later he wrote 'It seemed to me that I had something to accomplish, a sacred duty that was destined to have infinite consequences for mankind.' And he was right. Out of his pain came purpose, and Henri Dunant founded The Red Cross. For establishing it, he received the first Nobel Peace Prize. So, look for the purpose in your pain!

*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](mailto:ucb@ucb.co.uk)*

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