

June 2025



60p

Life



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MAGAZINE EDITOR LIFE

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Articles for the July edition are due by **Sunday 8th June**

Due to our holiday, I'm afraid I will need all articles in early, but I will extend that deadline for articles and pictures on the Compton Dundon benefice service which takes place on that Sunday.

This month's magazine cover has a Pentecost theme with some craftwork from Mays connections which I thought looked good fun for the arty folk. You can read about this and next month's talk on page 17.

I love the 2 pictures that Ana sent me of the VE day Cream Tea at Walton. It sounded like a good afternoon and a worthwhile fundraising event, and Sandra describes it on page 4. The 2 pictures say... Devon or Cornish cream tea? Looks like Stephen and David were of opposite opinion, what is it for you? Answers on a postcard please and give it to a churchwarden, who I hope will quickly recycle them.

More crafty pictures separate the 'battle of the counties' from the Saturday coffee, snacks and chat folk in the Mission Church, which Rachel describes on page 11.

It was a thrill for me to be in attendance when the first quarter peal was rung at St Andrews, and I am looking forward to the benefice service with our Bishop in attendance. Full details of all this can be found on Bev Perry's page (15).

I have included a poster of the forthcoming Open Gardens at Compton Dundon, which I am looking forward to.

A final reminder to send me articles for the July mag early. Roger.

Curates Letter

I am writing this letter on the 80th anniversary of VE day. My day began at Compton Dundon for morning prayers based around peace and reconciliation. I then went to Walton for coffee morning and was met at the church with the wonderful bunting that has been put in in celebration of the day. I heard stories of those who were children on VE day, of street parties and dressing up in costumes when the community came together to celebrate.

Even though there was peace in Europe, there was not peace in the world as the war continued in other parts. The war was won but the battle raged on.

In our churches there is going to be a sermon series on Christian Apologetics, asking big questions such as 'Why does God allow suffering in the world?' This has been asked for centuries, and I certainly can't answer that huge question in this letter. But what I can say is this. We have just had Easter, where we look to Jesus on the cross. Jesus took all that sin that causes conflict on to himself for us. We look on Easter day to the empty tomb, death and sin are defeated the war is won. But like on VE day, the battles still rage on. The battles of power, control, greed and lack of empathy.

We have war in Europe today; people are dying today. Jesus said, "Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends." We remember the great sacrifice made during the war so that we could be free of tyranny. Jesus also said in the same passage. "My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you." Sounds simple, doesn't it? Love one another.

There is so much in this world that divides us, we forget what unites us. We as Christians are taught to love our neighbour as ourselves. Who is our neighbour? Those who we live next to. Or does this passage go further and have deeper meaning? Jesus meant everyone. Those who look differently to us, those who live differently, those who vote differently the list goes on. There are no buts or provisos, just love one another.

Joyce Terry gave her account of VE day as an entertainer to the troops in Germany on VE day as part of the Ivy Benson Band, (who I am told was very famous back then,) she said.

"We were all brainwashed into believing that all Germans were evil during the war, and we soon realised that they were just like us, they had families and lives that they wanted to get back to."

For now, Jesus has won the war on the cross, and we battle on living the best life we can walking in the footsteps of Jesus and living his life. We continue to lift our prayers to God for peace in our world. Sr Rachel.

Walton Holy Trinity

Thank you so much for the amazing support at our V E Day cream tea. Everyone joined in the fun. Lots of talking and singing along. Table top quiz to get you talking and thinking around the tables. We even had a few people who remembered V E Day and shared their own memories. A lovely scaled model of a Lancaster bomber along with war time memories of Jeff Brewer's Dad was on show. Mike Pople had his dad's scrap book to show and I am not the only one who wished there was more time to sit and read every detail they both contained. What brave people and what a sacrifice.

We had 72 people in the church that afternoon and raised a wonderful £467.10.

So many thanks need to be said. Thank you to all who came. Thank you to the group that came in to clear the Easter flowers and vacuum. Thank you for those that came in to clean the kitchen beforehand. For those who set up tables and made the church look lovely. For those that baked delicious scones and served them along with plenty of refills of tea. For the wonderful washers up and those that put the church back to normal and thank you for all the washing and ironing of tablecloths and tea towels. Every job was done without being asked. I deliberately have not said names as I don't want to leave anyone out but you know who you are and how much you are appreciated. You are all truly amazing and we thank you.

Don't forget to buy your copy of Walton's murder mystery. With holidays getting near, you might need to entertain the family. Even on a pleasant evening, you can take a walk around the

village and solve the mystery. Who was murdered, when and where did it happen and who committed this dastardly deed.

The clues and elimination details are available from Andy Savage 210122 or Sandra Gristock 741363 and are £5.

We are hoping to hold a garage sale around the village on July 26th. This will be discussed and advertised more later but at the moment pop the date in your diary. Even if you have nothing to sell, there are always delicious cakes and tea or coffee to enjoy.

Sandra

Work with children and youth

Whether in schools, mid-week groups or on Sundays we are seeing growing numbers of children and young people at the activities and events in which we are involved. This is fantastic but is also a problem!

The harvest is indeed plentiful, but the labourers are undoubtedly few. If you could imagine yourself working with children and young people, in whatever capacity, please have a word with me. It might not be on Sunday, and it might not be a work associated with the church where you normally worship, but we would love to find a place for you to support this exciting and growing work.

Let me encourage you! You are not too old, you are not too inexperienced, and you probably do have the time! If not you, then who?

Ana Lawrence

My Faith Journey

My earliest memories of church are going to our local Church of St Alban the Martyr in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanganyika. My Father was a Server there so I followed in his footsteps and became an Acolyte learning the Rites and Rituals of the Anglican tradition. This continued when our family returned to the UK and settled in Glastonbury. After I was confirmed I trained to become a Master of Ceremonies at St John the Baptist. There I became involved in planning Sunday, weekday and Special Services, the annual Glastonbury Pilgrimage, the Archbishop of Yorks visit and Retreat in the early 1960s, and so on. Then in 1966 I joined the Royal Navy, and after my R.N. Service I continued along much the same path as before, but now with my wife Brenda and our young family. We worshipped mainly at St Johns.

In 1989 I had just started a new job at Bristol airport and set off one morning for work when I had a heart attack. I made it to Cheddar and then was taken to Weston hospital. Although I was back to work after five months I was aware that something had changed in me. Church wasn't the same any more, the Rituals, planning, meetings and events were not as important any more. I was confused, what was going on?

Then three years later the same thing happened again. I was driving to work at Yeovilton this time when I had another heart attack and was put into intensive care at Yeovil hospital. Wired and tubed up I thought I was going to die, broken and vulnerable. I now see it as the time when so much was changed in me.

On the road to recovery, I began to experience God working in me, speaking, giving me pictures, guidance, opportunities to share what he was doing. I was guided to become a Reader; join the active healing group we had. On one occasion God said, "Mike, you have always liked drumming, I want you to buy a drum kit and start playing." A way was made possible for me and it happened.

We also had the 'Toronto Outpouring' in the '90's, a huge move of the Holy Spirit at St Johns. We saw a great move of God with many coming to the 6 o' clock service in which we experienced a time of refreshing, healing, prophecy and heard exciting witness to what God was doing.

In 1995 Brenda was very badly injured in a hit and run incident. She spent time in Yeovil and Butleigh hospitals before coming back to us to live downstairs and be confined to a wheelchair for some months. God completely healed her badly broken left arm after he had told me to pray for her. She was able to visit the Toronto Airport Christian Fellowship in Canada with our friend Juanita in 1997 and visit the Niagara Falls.

We moved to Street in 2006. I was able to continue my Reader ministry and play in the Worship band. More recently I had to step back from these things when Brenda became ill with cancer and died in August last year. Thanks to loving and caring family, Church family, relations and friends who have given me so much help and encouragement, I am able to look forward to what God has for me next.

I know God will use my knowledge and experiences, I am excited to see what he will do. Mike Bergner (Street)

New to our churches?

It's been great to welcome new worshippers in each of our churches over the last few weeks and hear stories of how warm and welcoming our congregations have been to those who come through our doors for the first time or for the first time for a long time.

Thank you to all of you for your part in offering this welcome. I heard from an old friend only a few weeks ago how a heartfelt welcome by another member of the church family was, for her, the main reason she joined that fellowship, a church family where she then stayed, worshipped with, gave to and served alongside for many years. A good welcome matters!

If you do meet new people in church, please introduce yourself and encourage them to complete a white welcome card, which you should find at the back of each of our churches. This should be passed on, via the wardens, to me. I will then be in touch with them to introduce myself and arrange to meet them if they would like that.

We also hold, approximately once a year, a new members evening where we introduce those who have joined us to the life and ministry of this church in a little more detail.

Joining a new church where everybody seems to know everybody else and everyone else seems to know exactly what's going on can feel quite daunting. I do encourage new members I meet to give themselves at least six months to find their feet, get to know other people and understand how everything works before they rush into signing up for rotas and ministry. Some might feel ready for this sooner but please don't pounce on new people to join the coffee rota on week 1!
Ana Lawrence

May the 4th be with you!

This misquote from Star Wars hints at a very special blessing that the congregation at Walton experienced at its Communion service on 4th of May. The usual congregation were joined by a couple that no one knew. The service proceeded as expected until we were celebrating the Peace. Everyone, including this couple, milled around sharing the Peace when the 'husband' sat down at the piano and started playing.

What did he play - I couldn't say - it was familiar.

How did he play - wonderfully, confidently, a real God given blessing (some might say the 'force', the Spirit, was with him as he played).

We all felt blessed by this unexpected but wonderful contribution to the service.

It transpired that the couple were visitors from Holland who just popped into Walton Church and found a welcome. Apparently, in their Church in Holland the Peace is shared at the end of the service and music follows.

Jeff Brewer (Walton)



Thy Kingdom Come Half day of Prayer

On Saturday June 7th (the day before Pentecost) we are planning a half day of prayer as part of the global prayer initiative, Thy Kingdom Come which I wrote about for the May Life.

We will be praying in the Parish Church between 12noon and 6pm and you will be invited to sign up for a 'slot'. You can sign up for as many or as few prayer 'slots' as you are able. In church, you can either pray alone or with others if there are others present.

There is much to pray for including the 5 you know who are not yet Christian. If you don't have the names of 5 people to pray for, ask God to show you for whom you should be praying.

Ana Lawrence

Alpha (pray)

The Alpha Course begins at the start of June on Tuesday evenings from 7 – 9pm. If you would like to be involved in Alpha but cannot physically help out in church, why not set aside some time to pray for the course, those attending, those leading and hosting and those catering.

We would love some of our church family to commit to pray for Alpha particularly during Tuesday evenings.

Thank you.

Ana Lawrence

Coffee chat and snacks.

We had a very successful winter season together with a hot meal provided for those colder and darker days. I wish to offer my thanks to those who made it possible.

Coffee and chat is a space where people are getting together for company and a coffee together. We have been blessed with some new faces joining us but there are plenty of spare chairs. Would you like one? Or do you know someone who would value a space to play board games, have a chat and be with others? Then point them towards us on a Saturday morning at 10:30-12. There is a warm welcome and wonderful people to meet. I have watched friendships grow and flourish and it is a joy to see someone come out of their shell. Don't just take my word for it! There are some comments below from some of our guests.

We have been blessed with some new volunteers, and we are very thankful! We are always looking for more volunteers on a rota basis. Could you make teas and coffee and chat to someone? We always work in pairs so you will not be on your own. Please do email or chat to me if you can help or would like to know more about Coffee and Chat

On Saturday 19th July we will be enjoying a cream tea together, there will be a sign-up sheet in the Mission Church nearer the time. The team will be there too, so come and meet us, you will be very welcome.


“We appreciate Neville’s piano playing.”

“We are a blessed group in many ways, which makes for some interesting conversations.”

“Saturday morning would not be the same without the opportunity to have a cup of tea and a chat to our lovely friend group. ”It’s something to look forward to start the weekend off, we have a cup of tea and a biscuit and chat to different friends about all sorts of things. Well done and keep up the good work!!”

Sr Rachel Pengelly

sisterrachelp@hotmail.com



COME AND ENJOY THE BEAUTIFUL
GARDENS OF COMPTON DUNDON

SUNDAY 15TH JUNE
FROM 1PM TO 6PM

TICKETS AVAILABLE AT THE MEADWAY HALL
£5 PER PERSON, UNDER 16S FREE

PARKING AT THE VILLAGE HALL, CHURCH AND AT
VARIOLS LOCATIONS AROUND THE VILLAGE

TEA AND CAKES FOR SALE
PLANT AND BOOK STALLS

PROCEEDS TO BE SPLIT BETWEEN ST ANDREW'S
CHURCH, COMPTON DUNDON AND CANCER RESEARCH UK

FOR FURTHER DETAILS PLEASE CONTACT
JACKIE 07918 105523

OPEN GARDENS

Belfry News - Compton Dundon

On Tuesday 22nd April a band of ringers assembled at Compton Dundon to try out the new installation. The bells were raised without incident; although one proved difficult to set. A few tweaks and they were declared fit to go. On the following Sunday six ringers who had been associated with the project in some way. met to ring a quarter peal on the bells.

Sunday 27th April 2025 1260 Grandsire Doubles in 42 minutes (10-1-21 in G)

Treble Beverley Perry (conductor). 2. David J Kelly. 3 Penelope I Hooper 4. Graham A Darke. 5 Michael C Hansford. Tenor Harry A Dudden. Geoff Walker would like to be associated with this performance.

This is Believed to be the first quarter peal in this church, as the Bells were recently augmented and rehung with the support of the village. Several villagers turned out to listen to the ringing and we celebrated afterwards with a cream tea on the terrace of the Old Vicarage, hosted by Judy. The bells will be dedicated by the Bishop of Bath and Wells, The Right Reverend Michael Beasley, on Sunday 8th June in a service starting at 10:30am.

Bev Perry (Street Parish Captain)



EASYFUNDRAISING REALLY IS EASY

If you do any shopping online then easyfundraising is a really easy and free way of raising money for your church.

Each of our parishes are registered and it's simply a matter of a couple of extra clicks to get a percentage of your purchase donated to the church absolutely free to you.

There are still only relatively few members of the church using this, but we have already raised several hundred pounds for church funds between us. Imagine how much we could raise if more people got involved?

What's not to like? Visit <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk>, search for your church and get started.

Kevin Lawrence



Congratulations



To Sonia & Jim Beaty (Walton), on
recently celebrating their 30th
Wedding Anniversary



Also, we congratulate all our young church people who have recently graduated from university, especially those in our church family, known to us. We hold them in our prayers for what lies ahead of them.

Connections@theMission in May

Our May 'Connections' gathering happened on a beautiful afternoon. It was good to welcome a few different people. Jenny Collins (Street) provided an array of craft materials for us to make Pentecost brooches and doves. We were all engrossed in the craft and there was lots of conversation amongst us. All too soon it was time to finish the craft activities and move on to the tea and cake part of the afternoon. The conversations continued through the washing up time at the end of the afternoon. The next Connections@theMission get together will be on the third Thursday in June. Hope to see you there.
Pam Harmsworth (Street)

Connections@theMission

Thursday 19th June

2-30pm till 4pm

Mission Church, Street

Listen to Pat King (Compton Dundon)

Who will be talking about

'Christian Journeys'

There will be a cuppa and cake



Spring Harvest 2025

As usual Spring Harvest at Minehead was hectic but lots of fun with so much to offer for all ages. I travelled there with our family for the week and once we had the water and loo fixed in our chalet we were ready to begin.

The days started with a good breakfast and on to the Big Start, 9 to 9-30 in Studio 36 which seated 1800 people. The big start team and band led us in worship with lots of fun, acting and dialogue all based on Isaiah6:1-8 with dashes into the past and future to tell the story.

Leo Evans, the lead Pastor of Lifecentral Church in Halesowen, wrote the theme book for the week titled 'No Greater Story' (rediscovering your place in God's epic adventure). He writes "We need to discover a big story once again, and to help us with that we need a story teller...enter stage left... Isaiah. Before he started writing someone said to him, if you want to know about Isaiah ask the Reverend Doctor Helen Painter, he did, and realised how little he knew, so he invited her to give the Isaiah6:1-8 Scripture teaching in Studio 36 after the big Start, it was excellent.

There were many Seminars during the day and evening, the first one started at 8-45am and the last one finished at 11-15pm. Some of the subjects covered were: - Breaking into prisons, Mental health- dealing with overwhelm, Parenting- social media, smart phones and self-esteem, and many more.

On Wednesday we had a visit from Bear Grylls in the afternoon. He came on site about an hour before he came to a very full Studio 36. He told us that he became very nervous before coming on stage, strange because the lady who interviewed him had listed up his great achievements; Marine, author, Chief

Scout, climbed Everest, and so on, but on stage he seemed so relaxed and ordinary. He was interviewed for half an hour which was so interesting, then he was asked about his latest book, 'The Greatest Story ever told', (an eye witness account). He was promoting this book which was released especially for us at Spring Harvest. In it he tells the Jesus story as a thriller and mystery novel and says, "I don't change a word that Jesus spoke but just bring it to life by filling in all the details around what he did and said." 'Let's raise a hand and pray for Bear' we were asked, and to our surprise he ran off stage. "I can't take that", he said. Bear Grylls in full retreat! We did pray for him and he did come back on stage to thank us. I then joined an epic queue to buy the book and have it signed.

The evening 'Gathering in Studio 36 was in two parts, 6-30pm till 8pm, then 8-30pm till 10pm with a full house each time. There was Worship and Praise, Leon Evans introduced the events both morning and evening- he almost lost his voice by Friday- and welcomed three speakers for the evening sessions, Tuesday Amy Orr-Ewing, Wednesday Pastor Rick Warren by video from America, Thursday Doctor Richmond Wandera, all so inspiring.

But It's important to remember that you are at a seaside holiday destination. It is good to spend time with family and friends, meet new people, enjoy the activities offered at Butlins, go into town, or put your feet up and have a rest.

What did I come away with? I felt so lifted by the Worship, it was exciting to hear from our speakers what God is doing near and far- smuggling bibles into China, what a story- learning about our place in God's epic adventure.

If you can, do go to Spring Harvest, I can thoroughly recommend it.

Mike Bergner (Street)

Easter Celebrations at Compton Dundon

St Andrew's celebrated Easter this year with a combination of old and new traditions. On Good Friday, we anxiously scanned the weather forecast to see whether it would be raining for the annual carrying of crosses up Lollover Hill. After the service in the church, led by Sister Rachel, it seemed that the trek up the hill would be marred by only the slightest hint of drizzle. There was a slight setback, as our usual route was too overgrown to be used, and the crosses, as well as our less-than-sprightly selves, had to be conveyed over a none-too-sturdy fence before we could reach the track leading up to the summit. By the time we reached the top, the slight drizzle had metamorphosed into driving rain and a howling wind. I am told that it's not the first time that the crosses have been planted in similarly dire weather conditions. However, by the time three crosses had been erected, Sister Rachel had led the very brief service and the requisite photograph had been taken, we were all pretty soggy and ready to go home.

Our newest tradition took place on Easter Sunday morning. At 5.30 am, just as the sun was rising over the village, eleven souls gathered around a table set with candles in the form of a cross. It was a beautiful, clear morning and the sunrise, coupled with the sound of the dawn chorus and sheep and lambs bleating in the distance, was both glorious and uplifting. Again, Sister Rachel led the simple service and, what's more, cooked breakfast (bacon rolls) for us afterwards. It was well worth the effort of getting up in the dark for what was, undoubtedly, an extremely moving start to Easter Day.

We were back in church later that morning for the Easter Sunday service proper. Sadly, due to 'slippage' in the schedule for the restoration of the bells, we were unable to hear them peal as planned. But after the discipline of Lent, where many of us had given up sweet things, there was the double joy of being able to proclaim, 'He is risen! He is risen indeed, alleluia!' and being able to indulge in a chocolate treat provided by Pat.

Gill Williams

Equipping the Saints – A sermon series on ‘Christian Apologetics.’

In our lives we meet all sorts of people. Some would call themselves atheists, with no belief in God, some aren't sure, sometimes called agnostics, whilst others may have been Christians for many years. In the conversations we have with them all sorts of questions may arise and this sermon series, throughout June, July and into August, is designed to help us be ready for some of the things that might come up, especially when we are challenged or questioned about what we believe. We all know it can be daunting to gather our response into a coherent argument and my prayer is that the sermons over the next few weeks will help us.

We won't be offering an academic lecture, theological essay or scientific thesis but we will be trying to help to explore some of the following questions:

Does God exist?

Does science disprove the Bible?

If Christians believe in the God of love, why is there suffering in the world?

Does God answer all our prayers?

Does Jesus make a difference in people lives?

Was Jesus really raised from the dead?

Do all faiths lead to God?

Can you be a Christian without going to church?

Alongside the sermon series at our services, our house groups will be exploring these questions in more depth, and this may be a great opportunity for you to join a group and begin to talk these subjects through with other members of the church family. I'm looking forward to us exploring these questions together.

Ana Lawrence

THANK YOU FROM SOME OF OUR 2024 MISSION AND CHARITY PARTNERS

Each year our parishes distributed some of their income to mission and charity partners, both local and further afield. For your encouragement here are some of the grateful responses we have received in recent months

Walton. *Annie Makoni in Zimbabwe, caring for Street children*

A massive thank you to you and Walton Church for the gift you sent in last week.

We are very excited because it is the exact amount which we need in order to put solar power at the cottage and the cabins where the boys are staying.

At the moment they do not have electricity, so they have to rely on candles and it's difficult especially for those who are studying. It really is a huge relief that this money has come in just at this point when this need was weighing heavily on my mind.

Thank you all so much for your incredible enthusiasm and commitment. You have all made such a difference to people's lives here on the ground.

With much love, Annie and team xx

Walton. *Mission without borders. A Christian charity working in Eastern Europe*

Thanks to the generosity of the church family at Holy Trinity Walton our staff and volunteers can continue the work of being Christ's hands and feet to children and families in Albania, Bosnia – Herzegovina, Moldova, Bulgaria, Romania and Ukraine.

David Chavannes

Benefice wide. Link parish of Mfuwe parish Zambia, where our funding is helping to complete a house for the priest.

It is with great pleasure that I inform that the completion of the house is progressing well. We have now finished inside and outside plastering. We about to finish plumbing. We have also bought part of the PVC ceiling. The septic tank and the sewer soakaways are progressing well.

From this stage, we are going to start ceiling and end with the tiles and painting.

Kindly continue praying for our parish so that we finish the house in good time. Your financial and spiritual support is highly appreciated.

We are also praying for you and your parish so that God will continue giving you blessings and guidance.

Mfuwe parish is greeting you all.

Fr Philip Mwanza

Street. Tearfund, The Christian development charity, where we are supporting a water and recycling project in northern Nigeria

Thank you so much, so glad you would like to continue supporting this project, when there's some written info on this year's work, I will send it across.

Serena Dalton, local Tearfund rep

Compton Dundon, Winston's Wish, a Southwest based charity offering hope to grieving children

A huge thank you to St Andrews Church for raising money through carol singing and coffee mornings.

Compton Dundon, Street Salvation Army, support for their foodbank ministry

I'd like to say a huge thank you for your generous donation for our food bank. The food bank has seen a much higher demand recently and we're having to purchase large quantities of food to keep it stocked up. Helen Stevens.

During 2025 we will be featuring some of the charities and mission partners that we are supporting this year in these pages as well as praying for them regularly in our services.

Kevin Lawrence

=====Good news from Zimbabwe

Walton Church recently heard from Annie Makone about the tithe money sent from Walton. They have around 5 boys who are former street kids living in a small house near Annie in Harare.

Not being homeless and sleeping on the street is great for them, but they had no electricity. So they couldn't do anything after the sun goes down in early evening. The tithe money was exactly the amount they needed to buy some solar panels and a storage battery so they now have electric light and can read or study or play games in the evenings! The boys are so grateful and sent a number of voice messages on WhatsApp which were played at the morning worship service at Walton on Sunday. And also another ex-street kid, Tonde, finally graduated from University last Friday, May 9th. He again has been supported from here in the past and it is just so wonderful to see what he has achieved. It is so good to see lives being transformed through our support for God's work. Bernard Sinclair.

Editorial. Apologies for repetition of the letter from Annie, but I felt it was right to put in both versions.



