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## MAGAZINE EDITOR LIFE

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Articles for the August edition are due by Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> July.

Compton Dundon are in the limelight of the cover of this magazine, but there has been a lot going on there, both in St Andrews church and in the village itself. On Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> June Bishop Michael was at the church to dedicate the newly installed bells, during a benefice service with a plentiful supply of bell ringers on hand, therefore St Andrews was packed to capacity. You can read Gill's (Churchwarden) report on page 15, and Ana also reports on the event on page 6, with both the front and back cover having pictures of the event.

The following Sunday the village itself was the centre of attention when several gardens were opened up for all to visit and this will feature in the August Life with a display of photographs on the cover, but meanwhile Pat (churchwarden) and helper are pictured in front of the newly refurbished kitchen where they served tea and delicious homemade cakes to the visitors of the gardens, In this issue Kevin has a report on Mfuwe, and 2 pictures on the back, show the newly constructed house and Father Philip and his wife crossing the ford.

Moving on; On page 5 you will find the booking details for the upcoming Garage sale around the village of Walton. This also sounds like a good chance to walk around Walton, finding a bargain, thus raising much needed funds, and enjoying front gardens on the way round!

I'm sorry if this early edition Life has meant less pages, but hopefully articles for August will come flooding in on our return. Roger.

# Rectors Letter

*“Rejoice in the Lord always; again, I will say, rejoice.” Philippians chapter 4 verse 4*

Dear Friends,

I wonder how you celebrate good news. With friends? With family? With a carefully worded post on Facebook? Things to celebrate so often get swamped amidst the gloom and doom of a fractured and broken world and so it was so encouraging to see that our national news channels wanted to cover our recent celebration of the dedication of the newly restored bells at St Andrew's Compton Dundon last month. Those of us who were there celebrated with worship, applause and good food and I hope the pieces on the news channels reflected the joy of the occasion.

We are a people of celebration. In the life of our churches our celebrations are expressed in many ways. In the Summer months we will be celebrating with a number of families as their children are baptised. We have already hosted one wedding with more to come later this year as the celebrations continue.

At Celebrate@6 we are working through the book of Romans. Based on a study by Andrew Ollerton (of the Bible Society) we are exploring all that Paul has to say including the 'purple passages' of celebration contained in chapters 5, 6 & 7. Of course, all our acts of worship are a celebration as we give thanks to God for all that he is and has done for us.

In a dark and often gloomy world, let's continue to be known as a people who celebrate, a church family where joy and love can be found. I don't know about you but when I have something to celebrate, I want to share it with anybody who will listen. As a people with good news, let's find ways to share with whoever is willing to listen. With my love and prayers, Ana

## **A NEW HOME IN MFUWE IS COMPLETED**

As a benefice, we have been supporting our partner parish in Mfuwe Zambia, with funds being sent to complete a house for the priest, Father Philip Mwanza and his family. In Zambia, unlike in the UK, the Diocese do not provide housing for incumbents; this is instead the responsibility of each parish.

We have recently heard that the house is now all but finished (see picture) and we have sent prayers that this will be a place of joy and rest for Father Philip and his family.

As part of our support, we continue to pray regularly for the work of Mfuwe parish and have also begun to discuss future projects that might be a priority for Mfuwe, for which our financial support can be used.

Meanwhile, enjoy the picture on the back cover of Father Philip and his wife fording a river as part of their journey to one of the outlying churches in the parish of Mfuwe. Maybe getting to each other churches for benefice services isn't such a major challenge for us after all?

Kevin Lawrence

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## **Congratulations**

To Liza Markham, (Parish Church) who celebrates her 80<sup>th</sup> Birthday this month. Also, to Dianne Morgan (Mission Church) who celebrated her 80<sup>th</sup> birthday In June. Roger

## **Condolences**

It is with great sadness we share the news of the death of Trevor Plumb. Trevor and Valerie are valued and loved members of our congregation. We send our condolences and prayers to Valerie and the family. Sandra.

## SWCD Book Group

Do you like reading? Why not come along to the Benefice Book Group. We meet about 6 times a year. In a relaxed atmosphere we discuss a book we have all aimed to read since we last met. Our choice of books range widely including novels of different styles and content and autobiographies. They are variously inspiring and thought provoking. Our choice of book is often one recommended by a group member. We also welcome suggestions from others. We try to choose books which are available from the library.

Our discussions include whether we have enjoyed reading the book and our reasons for this. We explore relevant themes such as gratitude, repentance and forgiveness. Whether fictional or factual we explore the lessons to be learned from the lives depicted. We recently read *The Spire* (Golding), not an easy read, but we learnt much about the challenges of building cathedrals in medieval times. Prior to that *The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry* resulted in reflections on personal experiences.

Our next meeting is on **Tuesday 22nd July at 11am at Street Mission Church** and the book we are reading to discuss is **'I Capture the Castle' by Dodie Smith**.

You are welcome to join us even if you have not read the book.  
Susan Ripley (Street Parish)



## Men's Breakfast.



The next men's breakfast is on Saturday July 23<sup>rd</sup>, at 8-45am in the Mission Church, Street. At our first one we had four men when Bacon Rolls were served. At the last one, we had 13, with a full English Breakfast, there is room for more fellows.

Put the date down, let Tim Hindle, Edd Reeve or Kevin Lawrence know you would like to come so we can arrange to have enough food. It's Free but donations would be gratefully received. Come and have great food and chat. Edwin Reeve.

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## Walton Garage Sale



We will be holding a garage sale in Walton on the 26th July from 10.00 to 2.00. Anyone wishing to be put on the map please let Andy 210122 or Sandra 741363 know. The charge will be £10. If you are too far away from the church then maybe you would like to rent a table in the church or outside weather permitting. The charge is the same and you will be very near the refreshments. We will be serving rolls for lunch and of course delicious cakes.

Time to sort out some of the things you have been hoarding and give someone else a chance to enjoy it. Sandra.

## Benefice Service

A packed church, TV cameras. our Bishop telling jokes, delicious catering from marquees in the churchyard.....

Just some of the joys that those of us at the joint benefice service at Saint Andrews Compton Dundon on 8th June enjoyed. We met specifically to celebrate the completion of the bell project, with the service concluding with the newly hung bells pealing out across the Somerset countryside.

A huge thank you to all of those involved both at the service itself and as part of the team who has spearheaded the bells project over the last five years – well done!

I get my share of perhaps less than complimentary emails as your Rector and Area Dean, but I wanted to share this lovely message I received 'out of the blue' following TV coverage of the service.

*Dear Ana,*

*I just wanted to email to say congratulations on restoring the church bells at St Andrews. We just saw the story on the news and it brought us such joy. It was beautiful to hear the bells. As an ex-chorister at Sherborne Abbey it was a wonderful thing to see. Sending you and your congregation all the best and God's blessings.*

Ana Lawrence

## A Murder Mystery

As the summer holiday is getting near, don't forget to buy your copy of Walton's murder mystery and entertain the family for a couple of hours. For our older folk, make those brain cells work and stretch those legs and enjoy a stroll around the village. You might spot things you hadn't noticed before.

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

You are invited to  
**Connections@theMission**

**Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> July**

**2-30pm till 4pm**

**Mission Church, Street**

**Margaret Long (Mission Church)**

**Will be talking about**

**The Christian Evangelist, George Muller,  
who was the founder of**

**The Bristol Children's Homes**

**There will be a cuppa, cake  
and time to chat**





# Listening to young people

Later this month I shall be joining young people from around our diocese on a visit to the Taizé community in France. Taizé offers the opportunity to take a step back from daily life, meet people from around the world, join in a week of prayer, worship and Bible teaching, and reflect on our life of faith. In churches we often speak *about* God. To visit Taizé is to have a big encounter *with* God.

This will be the third time I have helped lead a Bath and Wells group on this pilgrimage. Some of our young people will be making a return visit, others attending for the first time. I am looking forward to seeing all they gain from the experience and to simply spending time listening to them and all they have to say. The opportunity to spend an extended time listening to young people is an utter privilege. While more young people are showing an interest in faith, the Church of England is undeniably still dominated by the older generations. Whenever I can, I value immensely the chance to listen to young people – of their hopes and dreams, their fears and perspectives, their insights and understanding. Such listening is essential if young people are to be fully part of the life of our Church. It's vital if we are to continue to see the shoots of growth that are happening across our diocese and the wider church.

We're pursuing this challenge of listening to young people in lots of different ways. It doesn't just happen at Taizé! Our Young Leaders Hub is one arena. Elsewhere we are looking at how young people can play their full part within the life of our diocesan decision-making bodies and in the national church too. I urge you to do the same where you are.

'Nothing about us without us' is a challenge that's sometimes extended when discussing how young people can participate fully wherever they find themselves. What an aim and a prize this would be for us all to pursue.

By Michael Beasley, Bishop of Bath and Wells

# My Faith Journey

As long as I remember I went to Church, several times on a Sunday. Services, Sunday school, Brownies and Church youth club. I lived in very old terraced housing in Redcliffe, Bristol, and other houses in the same couple of roads housed Aunts and Uncles, cousins and very close friends of my family. We all seemed to have the same routine and us children took ourselves off to the next event that was happening in Church or church hall. Isn't that what everyone did? We never questioned it or questioned what we learnt. Many years later I joined youth groups that would involve more discussions and I was an avid listener but not a speaker ( which will surprise those who know me).

After my marriage to Phil we moved around the country with his job and I joined different churches with different ideas. It was all such a growing time. Thanks to Christian rallies I gave my life to Jesus in the early 70's and am grateful to say there has never been a time when I stopped learning and growing in faith. Even through the sad and difficult times there has been solid friends who have prayed for me and the family, and have got us through. I will always be thankful to God for the people who have come alongside me and prayed for us. Always blessing me and giving me strength.

In these twilight years the people in our churches that are still there, supporting and helping are wonderful and encouraging. God given indeed. Each day is a new start and an opportunity for the Holy Spirit to shape the day. I am so grateful for the place I am in and for the peace that fills me. I pray for each of you that you too might find that contentment in Jesus our saviour. Sandra Gristock (Walton)

# **The Challenge of Good Stewardship**

As I was sorting through books choosing which to recycle, one caught my eye. In 'The Earth Will Teach You' Kevin Durrant writes about the natural world and our treatment of creation in an informative and illuminating way taking biblical passages as his starting point. He cites Job's response to the over-simplistic views of his friends: '...ask the animals, and they will teach you, or the birds of the air, and they will tell you; or speak to the Earth, and it will teach you, or let the fish of the sea inform you.' Job 12:7-8

The idea that the natural world has important lessons for us is a common theme in the Bible which is often overlooked. We have an 'increasing disconnection from the rhythms that God has built into the very fabric of the universe.' This includes 24 hour lifestyles and international trade leading to our consumption of non-seasonal produce. Durrant points out that 'the human race is using up natural resources faster than the Earth can replace them.' A tree takes a long time to grow but can be cut down in a few minutes for paper, or to clear the way for a road or housing. Durrant lists just a few of the instances of people in the Bible who encountered God in or through nature including:

- Abraham hearing God speak through a tree

- Elijah being miraculously fed by Ravens

- Ezekiel's vision of God within an approaching desert storm

- Jesus meeting with God on his early morning hill walks

- Mary Magdalene meeting the risen Christ in a garden

These points and much more in the book are worthy of serious consideration.

Susan Ripley, Street Parish, SWCD Eco Church Group

## New Wine

New Wine is happening at the end of this month! (July 30<sup>th</sup> – August 4<sup>th</sup>) at Bath and West showground near Shepton Mallet. There are still camping tickets available so do come and join a group of us if you want to go. (Do book under SWCD so that we can all be together). If you are coming as a day visitor, please let us know and do visit our section of the campsite. There is bound to be a kettle on for a cuppa and folk around to chat

If you've not experienced New Wine before it is thoroughly recommended. It's a gathering of Christians from all over for a week of worship, teaching and events. There is a lot going on to join in with each day or you can equally just relax on site doing your own thing. There are normally two main worship sessions each day as well as various other events, seminars and teaching sessions. It is an amazing, special atmosphere joining in worship with 4000+ Christians in a tent!

If anyone wants more information please get in touch with Tim or Hannah Hindle (mission church) [tim\\_hindle62@hotmail.com](mailto:tim_hindle62@hotmail.com) or 07976 615844. Let us know if you would like to go but need help with transport. Tim Hindle.

## Thy Kingdom Come

It has been a joy to join with Thy Kingdom Come again this year and pray for our 5. The resources shown on line have been very powerful and moving. Several people have shared how they have been emotional through the videos. Something to look forward to next year between Ascension Day and Pentecost. Sandra Gristock.

## Equipping the Saints

As we continue to wrestle with some of those difficult questions that we may be asked about life and faith in our Sunday 'Equipping the Saints' sermon series, why not consider joining one of our house groups? Here you can dig into these issues in more detail in a safe environment where every view is heard and every question is OK.

You can find details of our house groups on our website or contact me for more information.

Ana Lawrence

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## Messy Church

Our last Messy Church at Walton, was 'wild' in the Churchyard. We had great fun even if we had to compete with a strong wind. The wind did come in handy for the windmill making but not so handy for the painting and seed planting. We hardy group managed though and the children heard the story of creation and had the opportunity to look closely at what was around them. Hot dogs were served straight off the BBQ and lots of fun was had.

If anyone is passing the library in Street pop in and take a look at some of the art work based on creation. It will be shown for a few weeks. Sandra Gristock.

# **The Dedication of the Bells**

It isn't often that a little church in Somerset makes the national news. But on Pentecost Sunday, Clive Myrie, no less, introduced a feature on the dedication of the newly-refurbished bells by Bishop Michael at St Andrew's (other newscasts were available, on Radio 4 and ITV local news!).

The weather was perfect – sunny, but not too warm – as over 100 people filled the church for the Benefice service. It was touch and go as to whether we would be able to accommodate everyone, but we made it with only a couple of fold-out chairs to go. The Bishop, Ana and Rachel, resplendent in their robes (and Bishop Michael in a rather fetching hat, carrying his crosier) processed down the aisle from the West Door.

It was wonderful to hear the church filled with the sound of people singing. After his address, Bishop Michael stood beneath the ringing platform to bless the bells. There was an awkward moment when he pulled on a rope, strategically placed to represent a bell rope but not actually connected, and expected it to ring, but thankfully he laughed (as did we). We were then treated to a full peal of bells, which was met with a round of applause.

Following the service, we were treated to an impressive buffet lunch, including bubbly, paid for by an anonymous benefactor. Sandwiches and cake in the sunshine rounded off a successful morning and we all went home to watch ourselves on the news.

Gill Williams, Compton Dundon Church Warden.

## Don't Give Place to Pride

'OUR POWER AND ABILITY AND SUFFICIENCY ARE FROM GOD.'  
2 Corinthians 3:5 AMPC

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Before his 1971 fight with Joe Frazier, Muhammad Ali said: 'There's not a man alive who can whup me. [He jabbed at the air with his blinding left.] I'm too smart. [He tapped his head with his glove.] I'm too pretty. [He showed the cameras his profile, like a bust on a pedestal.] I am the greatest! I am the king! I should be a postage stamp – that's the only way I'll ever get licked!' Guess what happened in that fight? To the amazement of all, especially himself, Ali lost to Frazier. When confidence in your own ability and resources becomes pride, and then becomes arrogance, you're heading for trouble. The Bible says, 'Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall' (Proverbs 16:18 NKJV).

So, how do you find balance? By remembering that every gift, ability, talent, and resource that you have comes from God. Confidence is essential to success. There is nothing wrong with recognising the gifts God has given you. But the difference between self-confidence and Christ confidence is found in who gets the credit. A good way to keep this thought in the forefront of your life is to practise the art of thanksgiving each day. It's hard to be too self-confident when you acknowledge that you are nothing without God's grace, which is His unmerited, unearned, undeserved favour. The Bible says: 'All of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble." Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time' (1 Peter 5:5-6 NKJV).

*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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