



# Life

**Out with the old**



**In with the new**





## MAGAZINE EDITOR LIFE

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Articles for the February edition are due by Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> January

'Out with the old and in with the new' that is the sentiment on the front cover. The week before Christmas saw the removal of the blue padded chairs in the Mission Church going to a new home. Luckily the new ones arrived in time for the Christmas events and services. I must say they give the church a more modern look, and there are more of them. The old ones have had a good innings, lasting thirty-five years, haven't they done well? I suspect the new light weight ones will not be around in 2061! Still the work of the caretaker will be easier.

Kevin's piece on page 10 will explain the two pictures (back top).

Arthur our ringing mascot keeps Marilyn and I good company whilst we ring for the Christmas 'connections' which was fun.

While worshipping at St Andrews on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in December I marvelled at the crib displays and models that filled the church and made it feel Christmassy. Walton church must have been the same, judging by the pictures that were sent to me by Jane Tompsett, of which there are two on the back, one includes the banner from the Parish Church and the other shows Sandra behind the Alter and a larger crib display.

This just leaves me to wish all the readers of Life magazine a...

**VERY HAPPY NEW YEAR.**

From the Editorial, Printing, and Collating Team, Roger and Pam.

# Curate's Letter.

## Where are the stars?

Matthew 2. V.1+2.

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem <sup>2</sup> and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him."

How does one follow a star—have you ever tried? How do you know when a star is "over the place" you are looking for? You could travel several hundred miles, and the star would still be 'over' you.

We might ask ourselves, where are the stars in my life? The wise men saw the star and followed it. The people in Jerusalem did not. How, and to what, is God calling me at this time? Where does he want me to find him, to serve and follow him? Some have their priorities already fixed and so have stopped or have never even started to look for the real priorities—the God-sent stars in their lives. That is like first making a right turn at a crossroads and then wondering where you should be going.

We are dealing with meaning, and the meaning is very clear from the general context of Matthew's Gospel. God, in the person of Jesus, is reaching out to the whole world. More than that, the religious leaders of his own people—the chief priests and experts in the scriptures, although clearly aware of where the Messiah would be born, made no effort whatever to investigate. Yet Bethlehem was 'just down the road', so to speak, from Jerusalem.

This very day, let us stop in our tracks. Obviously, at this stage there are many things which, for better or worse, we cannot change; some decisions, right or wrong, which cannot now be

undone. But it is not too late to look for our star and begin following it from where we are now.

The wise men did not know where the star would lead them. They just followed it until it brought them to Bethlehem—and to Jesus. They never, I am sure, regretted their decision however uncomfortable the journey. If we can only have the courage and the trust to follow their example, I doubt if we will have regrets either. If we have not already done so, today is the day to make that start.

Sr. Rachel.

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# Trinity Handbells

As usual we started our Christmas Ringing outings at the Frost Fayre at Glastonbury in November, we were a full team of seven, and despite the weather forecast of a day of rain, we had two good hours in the sunshine, apart from a brief shower when we had to cover our bells and music. After which we were brought a gazebo which protected us from another short shower. We had good appreciation from the passing crowd who were making there way into St John’s Church to see the many goods on display for purchase, or a cup of coffee in the dry.

Two weeks following, on the Tuesday, we entertained a good number in Southlawns and we handed out the carol sheets so they could sing along with the Christmas tunes we played, they were all in excellent voice.

Wednesday found us at Crewkerne, entertaining many members of ‘Goldies’. We were only three, but a Goldies volunteer with musical talents played two bells for us and saved the day!

You can read about our fourth ringing session on page 8. Roger.

# Bishop's Letter

## Time to learn to pray

'Lord, teach us to pray.' In Luke's Gospel it's these words, spoken by the disciples, that cause Jesus to give them the Lord's Prayer (Luke 11:1-4). Jesus says to his friends 'When you pray say: Father, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come. Give us each our daily bread. And forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive everyone indebted to us. And do not bring us to the time of trial.'

Many of us think that we should be able to pray automatically. And that if we can't, it's either because 'it's not our thing' or because we're failing. Yet in Luke's Gospel, the disciples still need to ask Jesus how to pray, even after they've been knocking around with him for ages. So maybe we should give ourselves a break and accept that working out how to pray is not obvious and that all of us need to learn.

In 2026, I'm asking all of us across our diocese of Bath and Wells to make the year one of especial focus on prayer. I'm hoping we'll all be able to say the words 'Lord teach us to pray' and that together we'll all grow in our experience, understanding, insight and practice.

How can we learn about prayer? We have to make a start. We need to make some mistakes. We need to learn from others. It doesn't happen in the abstract. Prayer is a 'learning by doing thing' where if we stick at it, we grow and change.

How might you learn to pray more this year? There isn't a master plan designed to get everyone on their knees. Most action will happen locally where we can identify what we need, work out who can help us, and then get underway. Some simple resources designed to be helpful are being made available. More importantly, please do talk to your vicar or other church leaders about what might be possible where you are.

Together, let's say these words in the year that is to come: 'Lord, teach us to pray.' A very happy New Year to you all.

Michael Beasley, Bishop of Bath and Wells

## **New year resolutions – church finance**

Whether or not you are the kind of person who makes and keeps New Year's resolutions, could we encourage you to make and keep some simple financial resolutions to help your church in 2026?

**Gift Aid.** If you are a taxpayer (and most of us are!), could you make a resolution to gift aid your donations to the church if you haven't already? It is a simple matter of filling in a form and passing it to your Treasurer. We will do all the rest, and the church gets an extra 25% on any qualifying gift that you make, at no cost to you.

**Standing order or Direct Debit via the Parish Giving Scheme.** Could you make a resolution to set up a regular standing order or direct debit to support your church if you haven't already? Knowing that we have regular money coming in each week or month makes it much easier for us to plan.

**Increasing your gift.** Could you make a resolution to increase the amount you give to the church either by the rate of inflation, or the rate that your salary, benefits or pension will increase by this year, or some other percentage? Church costs rise each year, and we need to find more money to cover them.

Could you manage one, two or three resolutions for 2026? All the forms and information you need is available on our church website or please speak to one of us in confidence. Thank you

Julie Gordon

Treasurer  
Compton Dundon

Sonia Beaty

Treasurer  
Street and Walton

## **A reminder about charitable giving**

In December 'Life' magazine we provided details of how to nominate charities to be supported by our parishes as part of our charitable giving for 2026.

This is a reminder that you have until the middle of January to get your nominations in, for the PCCs to consider at their March meetings. Generally, our support is for one year only and so, even if a charity has been nominated in previous years, please remember to submit a new nomination if you think the support should continue.

We have, however, agreed ongoing benefice wide support for our partner parish in Mfuwe, Zambia, and more details of how this support will be used can be found elsewhere in the magazine

Please send all nominations, either by email ([lawrencekv.aol.com](mailto:lawrencekv.aol.com)) or via the church office to me so I can collate them for the PCCs. It will be really useful to have both the full name of the charity, their website address and / or their charity number so that we make sure we get the right one. A brief description of why you think we should support this charity and whether you would be prepared to act as a 'charity champion,' passing on information and prayer requests, would be helpful for our PCC's.

Please also remember to let us know your name and Parish

Thank you

Kevin Lawrence

## 2026, a year of prayer in the Diocese.

Bishop Michael has encouraged us to make 2026 a year with a particular focus on prayer, and there will be a range of ideas and resources coming from the Diocese and our Deanery over the coming months.

Prayer should underpin all that we do and a special thank you to the SWCD Churches 'prayer warriors!' Alongside private prayer and the intercessions at each of our services this seems a good time to remind you of the two prayer meetings that are held each week to which all are invited. Each lasts 30 minutes and please join us to pray, whether aloud or in the quiet of the space.

And finally, we meet online as a deanery every Tuesday morning for 'Morning Prayer' (Daily Prayer with Church of England Liturgy) at 8am for half an hour. If you'd like to join this, please speak to me and I can let you have joining instructions.

Whether at 8:45am in the Mission Church every Monday or 9:30am in St. Andrews, Compton Dundon each Thursday, or even online, we look forward to seeing you. We also have a 'Five@5' prayer, where you are encouraged to stop and pray for 5 minutes, wherever you are, for the life of the benefice each Sunday at 5:00pm.

We will be launching our year of prayer with a short sermon series, beginning in mid-January, 'Praying through the Psalms.' where we will be considering some of the Psalms and what they have to teach us about prayer in its different forms.

Ana Lawrence



## December Connections@theMission

On a wet, grey day in December a few of us braved the weather and met up for a Christmas get together.

A prayer was said to start the afternoon.

Eight handbells were played by two of the Trinity Handbells Team. Some percussion instruments, played by those who came, boosted the music and we sang along with the Christmas Carols that were played.

Rachel, our curate, gave us a Christmas Message before driving home while the roads around her home were still open and not too flooded with the deluge of rain that was falling.

That was December. What will January bring?

Pam Harmsworth (Mission Church Street)

Connections@theMission

Thursday January 15<sup>th</sup>

2-30pm

Mission Church Street

Tim Hindle (*Church Warden Street*)

will be speaking about

*Outdoor Education, Work and Faith*

Welcome to All

There will be refreshments



[swcd-churches.org.uk](http://swcd-churches.org.uk)



# Walton Friends

After 6 months of regular meetings for Walton Friends - bringing together local residents for crafts, connections and community - we've finished the year with a festive mix of mince pies and Christmas carols. We helped with the painting of pebbles of 'Angels of Joy', to be placed around Walton village for everyone to find on their walks.

Some of our crafts are sold with funds going to the Walton Church restoration and reordering of our beautiful church. The group has been a fantastic success at bringing people together, and we'd like to thank our wonderful members for already helping to raise over £500 from donations and sales of handmade gifts. This money will be going to the restoration fund for Walton Church, particularly to help repair the roof. We've also been able to raise a further £140.50 to help with general costs for the church.

Come along and bring craft, knitting or anything else creative you have. Of course, you don't have to bring a craft, just come for the company. Enjoy good conversation, tea and coffee and of course cake! We are a friendly group that meet and enjoy being with others. A very warm welcome awaits you.

Thank you again to all who have attended so far this year, and please feel free to join us every 2nd and 4th Friday each month from 2pm in Walton Church. We'll be starting up again in the New Year from January 9th and would love to see you there.

Pauline Hatrey

## **30 years of our partner Diocese in Zambia.**

Our partner parish in Mfuwe, Zambia recently sent us a WhatsApp, with pictures showing their part in the celebration of 30 years since the creation of their Diocese. The Zambian church may be young, compared to the Diocese of Bath and Wells, but they are vibrant and growing, and certainly know how to celebrate!

We are pleased to be continuing our long-term partnership with Mfuwe parish and in the coming year aim to fund both a motorbike to allow clergy to visit the more far-flung congregations, and the beginning of a construction of a second house. You may recall that we paid for the building of a house for the parish priest, which is now occupied by Father Philip Mwansa and his family, but this second house will be used to generate income for the parish by renting the property out once completed.

We will keep you up to date on progress as things develop and please continue to pray for our brothers and sisters in Zambia as they seek to serve God in the place where he has put them. Kevin Lawrence

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### **NATIVITY WEEKEND**

Thank you so much to everyone who participated in many ways to make this weekend such a success. The church looked lovely and we displayed 84 different nativity scenes from all around the world and made from a variety of materials. The cakes were delicious as always and we were never short of a team to keep the Church open. Thank you also to the many visitors we received, which made for the restoration fund over £500. Well done one and all. Sandra Gristock

## **The Next Men's Breakfast is Saturday January 10th**

All **men** from the benefice are invited to a Saturday morning breakfast at the Mission church on Jan 10th 8.45am -10am. An opportunity to come and start the day by joining with others for food, chat and company.

Please do let us know that you wish to come so that we can arrange for the catering. There is a suggested donation to cover the cost of breakfast ( £3). To sign up or for more information contact Tim Hindle (Mission church) [tim\\_hindle62@hotmail.com](mailto:tim_hindle62@hotmail.com) or 07976 615844

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## **Who loves a traditional village fete?**

Games, stalls, music, food and fun; all the ingredients of a traditional village fete; not forgetting dodgy weather!

There is a plan afoot to hold such a fete in Street during the early summer of 2026 but to make this happen, we need one or two people who are prepared to get involved in organising it. You don't need to be an expert, but we'd love to hear from a few people if we are going to make this a reality.

Please get in touch with one of us if this is something you may be interested in helping with

Kevin & Ana Lawrence

# Monday Evening Youth Group at the Mission

The exciting news is our change of name from 'Youth pizza, chat and games night' to 'The Hub'! This involved much discussion and serious paper voting by the group of up to 10 young people from Year 6 (10 years old) upwards. They put forward various brilliant names for the group, but we all now appreciate the shortened fun name!

We needed to move away from the 'pizza' within the title as we now vary our diet to include such luxuries as toast with numerous toppings and hot chocolate!

Whilst enjoying our food break, one of our leaders will lead a 5 minute 'God slot' which has led to good interaction from the group as they chomped on their food!

We meet in the Mission Church on alternate Monday evenings 6 – 7pm for fun games of badminton, pool, table tennis and very noisy highly tense board games! We might only be fairly small in number, but the volume emitting from the room is deafening on occasions!!

We hope to extend our activities in the Spring Term to more 'cooking and decorating' – the teens could teach the leaders some imaginative skills on this topic! And maybe dodge-ball and 'chippy' nights. It is thrilling to offer this evening of fun to our increasing number of youngsters at the church, along with their friends as well.

Jackie Houlden on behalf of Hannah and Tim Hindle, Ana Lawrence and Richard Houlden (Mission Church)

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## MESSY CHURCH (Walton)

Messy Church followed the Christmas theme and what a wonderful afternoon it was with the Christmas story, crafts, games and delicious food. Lots of fun was had by all.

Sandra Gristock

## News from our PCCs

All three of our Parochial Church Councils (PCCs) met during November 2025 and, whilst each one had some parish specific business to do, there were also things that all of them considered:

Each year, in November, we agree the 'local' fees we will charge as a parish for weddings and funerals for things like heating, organists and vergers. This year we raised our charge for heating in the winter months slightly to reflect the increased costs that our parishes are facing. Most of the fees are set nationally by the Church of England.

We spent some time looking at the progress we are making on safeguarding with reports from our parish safeguarding officers and the actions the PCC had to agree or approve.

We have a number of benefice wide policies and procedures and PCCs agreed to renew our purchasing and spending policy as well as our health and safety policy as part of our regular programme of review.

We heard feedback on our recent Alpha course and plans for future courses and nurture groups across the benefice.

Two of our parishes received 'Quinquennial inspections' on their church buildings, carried out by independent architects. which revealed some work that needs doing both urgently and into the future. The inspection for the third parish is overdue, and we agreed to try and arrange this as soon as possible.

We approved one more person to act as a 'Chalice Assistant,' distributing communion at services, which requires a Bishop's licence to undertake.

If you would like more information about what your PCC has discussed or want to read the most recent minutes, please have a word with your PCC Secretary. You will find their contact details on the inside covers of this magazine.

Kevin Lawrence

# Revival

I recently went to Bedford to a two-day conference on revival. We were told about the revivals that had happened in the past and the revival that is taking place today in the lives of young adults, who are week by week filling up the churches in U.K.

One speaker that made a big impression on me was a lady, Carol Wilthew. She was part of a street gang in her teens and cried out to God when her friend, aged 16, died from an overdose. She told us that revivals always started with persistent prayer and encouraged us to pray and never give up.

The New York revival started with a businessman Jeremiah Lanphier, who started a prayer meeting in his lunchtime in Manhattan in 1857. The first week, 6 people turned up, the following week there were 14, then 23 people prayed every day. By March 1858 every church and public hall in downtown New York was full. A reporter was sent out on a horse and buggy to count how many men were praying. He could only get around to 12 of the meetings, but he counted 6,000 men attending. Then it spread to the evenings as well and people began to be converted; 10,000 each week in New York City alone. People were baptised in the Hudson River by cutting a hole in the ice! A million people were converted to God in one year and the effects felt for 40 years.

The Welsh revival in 1904 was sparked by a testimony from a young woman, Florrie Evans. The revival affected people of all ages and classes; 85,000 in 5 months and 100,000 in 6 months. Lists of converts were published in newspapers. Debts were repaid, feuds ended, stolen goods returned and so many coal miners gave up foul language that the pit ponies pulling the coal carts could no longer understand their instructions. The fire of revival lasted 2 years but went global. Visitors carried the flame back home to India, Korea, Africa and Latin America.

I love this quote from Carol, "Prayer releases the power of God into situations". Carol has a cousin called Andrew who from

a young age was a heavy drinker who eventually became an alcoholic

and drank 7 bottles of wine plus spirits a day, starting at 9 a.m. His life was a disaster, his marriage gone and his children estranged. He was frequently arrested and hospitalised. He had cirrhosis of the liver, high blood pressure and was jaundiced. Carol had been praying for him for 31 years. One day he happened upon the book written by the Christian author of Alcoholics Anonymous. He got down on his knees and asked God to take him or heal him. He fell asleep and had a vision of Jesus holding a dirty rag. As he watched, Jesus squeezed the rag out and out came dirty alcohol and sin. Then Jesus lifted up the perfectly clean rag. In the morning Andrew woke up healed, with no desire for alcohol and no side effects of withdrawal. His cirrhosis was completely healed – he was fit and healthy and now lives for Christ.

Revival starts with prayer. Let us pray and never give up. “Thy Kingdom Come”.

Glynys Ruddle.

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## **Experience Easter**

This year, in the weeks before Easter, I’m delighted that we will be hosting ‘Experience Easter’ for two of our local primary schools. Elmhurst Junior school will be returning for ‘Experience Easter’ to the Parish Church, Street over a 4-day period 16<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> March and in addition, for the first time this year, we will be welcoming pupils from Walton Primary to Walton Church for ‘Experience Easter’ on 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> March.

Experience Easter is a visual and interactive way of telling the Easter story through a number of ‘stations’.



Last year, we had a fantastic team enabling this to happen as we shared the Easter story and I'd love to invite you to join us this year. If you're interested in taking part in either Walton or the Parish Church or both (no previous experience necessary) please have a word with Ana. This is not restricted to people from Street or Walton parishes, all who want to help tell the Christian story to the next generation are welcome to be involved.

Ana Lawrence

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### **'This is my body; this is my blood.'**

Holy Communion, the Eucharist, the Lords Supper, whatever words you are used to use in describing the sacrament of Communion, it is an important part of our life and worship together as we remember what Jesus did for us on the Cross.

Coinciding with Lent, and culminating in a 'Seder meal,' held in Walton Church on Maundy Thursday (more details to follow), I will be encouraging us to explore what Communion means in more depth, through a short series of Sunday sermons.

With more children and young people in our services, our PCC's have also recently been considering developing a policy around children and communion and this sermon series should help to ground our thinking on what can be a complicated theological and practical set of issues. Our Sunday children's groups will be also thinking about the meaning of communion alongside the adults

If you want to dig deeper into this issue can I recommend a good read, 'The Meal Jesus gave us' by Tom Wright (published by SPCK) available as they say from all good book shops.

Ana Lawrence

# The Whole Easter Story

No sooner is Christmas over than the shops think it is Easter! For Christians there is an important time for study and reflection before the celebration of Easter. Like the shops who anticipate seasons far too soon it might seem a little early to be discussing Lent. However Lent 2026 begins in mid-February so I would like to suggest a Lent book for study. The Whole Easter Story by Jo Swinney is published by the Bible Reading Fellowship. Use it for personal study or join a weekly discussion group through Lent exploring the book's themes. More details nearer to Lent.

I can do no better to commend this book than to quote two of many endorsements, the first from Professor Paul S. Williams, Chief Executive, Bible Society: *Jo Swinney's delightful, engaging and provocative Lenten devotional is aptly named. So often we tell a truncated Easter story, but this series of reflections opens us out to the depth, breadth and grandeur of God's love for his whole creation, including us people. Narrated with honesty, warmth and the insightful perspective of a storyteller, The Whole Easter Story helps us see afresh the immense power and wisdom of the cross for the salvation of the whole world.*

Martin Hodson, principal tutor of Christian Rural and Environmental Studies writes: *Do something different this Lent. This is your chance to look at the relationships between God, people and the environment in an entirely new way. Join Jo Swinney as she takes us on a special journey through Lent, accompanied by birds, bugs, mammals, reptiles and, yes, people!*

Susan Ripley, Street Parish, SWCD Eco Church group

# QUIZ EVENING

We had a very profitable Friends meeting after our Church service one weekend and we planned a whole year's events. Our first one will be a quiz evening at the end of February. These are always fun, informal evenings and you don't have to have a team to join in. Do come along and make up a team on the night. More details next month.

Sandra Gristock.

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## New Midweek Groups

Alongside our existing midweek groups, I'm excited to say that 2 new groups are 'on the stocks' for 2026.

Growing out of the Bible course from last Autumn there was a hunger to explore more of the basics of the Christian faith, and we plan to set up a group allowing the space for people to do this together. The core of the membership will be those who attended the recent Bible Course, but this group is very much open to anyone who would like to join.

I'm also aware of conversations around starting another new midweek group and again, if you'd like to join such a group you will be more than welcome.

Please have a word with me to find out more

Ana Lawrence

## **Giving Christian Christmas cards a new life**

Do you ever wonder what to do with your old Christmas cards? If so, I may be able to help.

If you have cards with a Christian image (Nativity scenes and angels rather than reindeers and snowmen) my plan is to recycle them into prayer and praise aids for use in our worship.

So, as you take your cards down this January, please could you let me have any Christian ones you no longer want. They can be delivered to the church office marked for my attention or left in the box in the foyer of the Mission Church.

Thank you

Julie Sinclair  
Mission Church

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## **SWCD Walkies in 2026?**

In previous years I know a number of people have enjoyed Bank Holiday walks with members of the SWCD churches family (and their dogs).

We would love to continue this tradition a few times a year but, to do so, we need one or two more people who are happy to organise a local walk in their area. You don't have to be a 'mountain leader,' just somebody who likes walking and can find a route that suits all abilities, and maybe even ends in a coffee shop.

If that is something you think you might be able to do, please have a word with me.

Kevin Lawrence

## **‘Your Church, my church, our church, God’s church’**

One of the things that our Parochial Church Council members have learned gets a reaction from the Rector, is if they say to me that one of our churches is ‘your church.’

It's often said about the Mission Church, probably because I live just behind the building, but my response is always to say that I am Rector of all four churches and all three parishes in SWCD Churches, so all of our churches are ‘my church’ and ‘your church’.

But even saying ‘my church’ isn't quite right. Usually, it's said when people mean the church building they go to, but the church is much more than a physical location or bricks and mortar. It's something we do and are together, so a better phrase might be ‘our church.’

But as I write that I think that that phrase, too, may be problematic. After all, we don't own the church. It's not ‘ours’ whether we are talking about the people or the building. It's actually God's church. This may seem like nit picking over words, but it may help us to focus on the main thing about church, which is it's a place where we go to encounter and worship God.

So, with all of you at SWCD Churches, I'm proud to be part of ‘God's church’ in this place.

Ana Lawrence

# WALTON SCHOOL

What a joy it has been to be involved with the Christmas events of the school. The Open the Book team have enjoyed another term of storytelling and were delighted to be invited to the Nativity play key stage 1 put on.

The whole school made Christingles in their classrooms and many brought them back to Church in the evening for a lovely service with their parents and grandparents. Our curate Rachel proudly shone in her Christingle costume. All donations went to the Children's Society. Sandra Gristock

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## Alpha 2026

We are beginning to think about a new Alpha course, to start sometime early in 2026.

A number of people have already expressed an interest in coming along but if you, or someone you know, would like the opportunity to come and explore some of the bigger questions around life and faith in a safe, non-judgmental environment (with food!) Please have a word with me. Ana Lawrence

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## WOMEN'S BREAKFAST

**Save the date!** Saturday, January 24<sup>th</sup> at 9 a.m. in the Mission Church.

Come and join us for good food and good conversation.

There will be cooked items as well as yoghurt, granola and fruit.

A suggested voluntary donation of £5.

Please book your place with Sonia in the Church Office by **Thursday, January 15<sup>th</sup>**

for catering purposes. Thank you. Pat

## **Don't Look Back**

**'REMEMBER LOT'S WIFE.'** Luke 17:32 KJV

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Before God destroyed the city of Sodom, He sent two angels to rescue Lot and his family from it. Their instructions were clear: 'Do not look behind you nor stay anywhere in the plain. Escape to the mountains, lest you be destroyed ... But his wife looked back behind him, and she became a pillar of salt' (Genesis 19:17, 26 NKJV).

Jesus recalled this story in three words: 'Remember Lot's wife.' Here are two lessons you should learn and remember:

1. Don't look back with longing to your old sinful pleasures and pursuits. The promise sin made was false then, and it's still false now. 'Each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death. Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren' (James 1:14-16 NKJV).
2. Don't look back with regret on the mistakes you've made. Lot's two sons-in-law wouldn't heed the message of the angels or the pleading of their father-in-law, so they stayed behind. Perhaps that's why his wife looked back. But it was fatal then, and it's fatal now. Don't wallow in the regrets of your past. Stop dwelling on the injuries inflicted on you by others. Get your eyes off the rear-view mirror and onto the road ahead. God has great things in store for you; that's what the battle in your life is about. Jesus referred to Satan as a 'thief' (see John 10:10). He has already stolen too much from you; don't let him steal any more. Today commit your life to Christ, and watch His blessing begin.

*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)*

