

THE

September – November 2023

ELBOW

The Magazine of Formby Methodist Church

Hope
for all

From the Editor

September is a milestone in the life of Elbow Lane Methodist Church. After many, many years in the Crosby Circuit, we now belong to the Southport Circuit. This is, of course, exciting in so many ways - but there is also some sadness, especially for those who have made friends with members of the other Crosby churches. So too with certain preachers, such as Andrew Lovelady (see p7), Karen Jobson, Linda Dalton, Alan Lewis and Ian Hu - we certainly will be seeing them a lot less often, though hopefully not losing contact with them completely.

We have also said goodbye to Rev Karen Beecham and our own Carol Shanks. Karen was our Superintendent Minister from 2019 until 2022, although we still saw her from time to time in 2023 after she had taken over responsibilities in the Liverpool Circuits. Karen was a popular and conscientious Minister, although she did not have an easy time due to the outbreak of Covid only six months after she had taken up her new post - her first as Superintendent Minister. We wish her, and Brett and the family, every blessing in their new posting in Loughborough.

Carol has been inextricably connected with Elbow Lane over many years (see p5) and we will miss her greatly. However, it is by no means a final goodbye - we will still see her, if only from time to time.

And so we have a new Superintendent Minister - Rev Marie-Anne Kent. I am delighted to include her first Pastoral Letter (see p4). And we at Elbow Lane have been invited to host the September Southport Circuit Service to welcome us into our new Circuit (see opposite).

Preparations are well underway for 2024 - when our Church will be 150 years old! A lot will be going on, starting with a couple of tasters before the year of celebration even begins - a 150 Quiz will be available very soon and, in November, a mini Christmas Tree Festival will be part of the traditional November Fair (see p25 and back cover).

As always, my sincere thanks to all those who have helped me with the production of the '*Elbow*' - those who have provided contributions, Graham for another splendid cover and Helen not only for '*Our News*' but also her invaluable help with production and distribution of the magazine.

**Copy deadline for the Dec - Feb '*Elbow*' will be
12 NOVEMBER**

SERVICES AT ELBOW LANE

10 Sept, 10.30	Morning Service	Mrs Shirley Potts
10 Sept, 6.30	Service of Welcome to Southport Circuit	Rev Marie-Anne Kent
17 Sept, 8.30	Holy Communion	Rev Derek Bowker
17 Sept, 10.30	Morning Service	Rev Derek Bowker
24 Sept, 10.30	Morning Service	Rev Ernie Grimshaw
1 Oct, 10.30	Morning Service	Rev Marie-Anne Kent
8 Oct, 10.30	Harvest Service and Holy Communion	Rev Sheila Prest
8 Oct, 6.30	Evening Service	Rev Derek Bowker
15 Oct, 8.30	Holy Communion	Rev Derek Bowker
15 Oct, 10.30	Morning Service	Rev Derek Bowker
22 Oct, 10.30	Morning Service	Mr Keith Trencher
29 Oct, 10.30	Morning Service	Rev Sonya Marshall
5 Nov, 10.30	Holy Communion	Rev Sheila Prest
12 Nov, 10.30	Remembrance Sunday	Rev Marie-Anne Kent
12 Nov, 6.30	Evening Service	Rev Patrick Evans
19 Nov, 10.30	Circuit Service NB No Service at Elbow Lane	St Peter & St Paul with Wesley, Scarisbrick New Road, Southport
26 Nov, 10.30	Morning Service	Miss Lesley Goddard

NB. Sunday 10 September at 6.30
Special Circuit Service to welcome Formby Methodist Church into the Southport Circuit.
Please attend if you possibly can. All Welcome

Pastoral Letter

Dear Friends,

A minister was giving the children's message and on this particular Sunday, he was using squirrels for an object lesson. He started out by saying, *"I'm going to describe something, and I want you to raise your hand when you know what it is."* The children nodded eagerly. *"This thing lives in trees (pause) and eats nuts (pause)..."* No hands went up. *"And is red (pause) and has a long bushy tail (pause)..."* The children were looking at each other, but still no hands raised. *"And it jumps from branch to branch (pause) and chatters and flips its tail when it's excited (pause)..."* Finally, one little boy tentatively raised his hand. The minister breathed a sigh of relief. *"Well..."* said the boy, *"I know the answer must be Jesus...but it sure sounds like a squirrel!"*

Well, when you put Formby into your search engine, what comes up is the red squirrel reserve, and that I am afraid is my poor excuse for sharing that terrible joke. Sheila won't ask me to write this again! It is fantastic news that you have joined the Southport Methodist Circuit – I am very excited and if I had a tail I would flip it. I know, however, that there is always sadness when things come to an end. Many friendships have been forged across the Crosby Circuit and we acknowledge all the wonderful mission initiatives that the circuit has supported over the years with grateful hearts.

Our mission *'is to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ by inspiring, encouraging, resourcing and enabling the people and churches of the Circuit to serve and transform their communities and the wider world.'* We know that you are excited about sharing the love of Jesus and we want to support you in any way that we can, trusting that we can encourage and inspire each other in the building God's Kingdom.

As with all things new it will take a little time to get to know each other. Circuits and churches have quirky ways and there are bound to be some misunderstandings along the way. So let us be gentle with one another. But most of all let us celebrate that God has called us to share in his work and say with Dag Hammarskjöld *"To the past: Thanks. To the future: Yes."* I can't wait to see what God has in store for us in this adventure of faith.

I look forward to getting to know you all in the months ahead.

Marie-Anne

Rev Marie-Anne Kent

Superintendent Minister, Southport Circuit

Thank You Carol and Fare Thee Well

September 2023 sees many changes for us here at Elbow Lane as we move into the Southport Circuit, and inevitably this means changes in personnel. For the past year our friend Carol Shanks has been the Lay Pastor for the Circuit but from September she takes on a new role as Local Lay Pastor in charge of Moor Lane and Waterloo. Initially she will hopefully maintain unofficial links with Elbow Lane but as her new role becomes more demanding she will not be as visible a presence as before.

At our Morning Worship on 6th August Sheila thanked Carol for her steadfast service over many years in a variety of roles ... Church & Circuit Steward, member of Church Council, Local Preacher, Outreach & Mission worker, volunteer in our Carers Support Group, participant & leader in various House Groups and Bible Studies, Pastoral Leader, member of the choir, part of CLT, member of the Worship group and Church life team... to name but just a few!!

Carol has been a vital and dedicated member of our church and will be greatly missed, but, Carol, we know you will apply the same dedication to your new role, and we all hold you in our prayers as you face new challenges. We know that Formby Church will always remain dear to your heart and we will see you whenever your new busy schedule allows. (Your house almost backs on to mine so you aren't shaking me off that easily!)

So I repeat, thank you so very much Carol and "Fare thee well"..... Liz

A Heartfelt Thank You

I would like to say a very sincere thank you to my church family (you will always be that in my heart) for the beautiful flowers presented to me during the service on 6th August and for the well wishes as I take up my post as Lay Pastor in charge of Moor Lane and Waterloo. Also to Sheila for her touching words and very moving prayers.

Elbow Lane has been my spiritual home for 38 years and I will continue to hold you all in prayer and would welcome your prayers for me too in my new role.

God bless you all. Carol

‘Take Time’

What is this, I feel you wondering.... well the answer is, it is the new name for the Formby branch of 'The Neighbourhood Project'. A group of us have been meeting for some time now on the afternoon of the first and third Tuesday of the month, under the auspices of TNP, but for a while we have been conscious of the fact that our name doesn't really convey what we are about or what we do. Our objective is not to create more projects or jobs in already busy lives, but to consider how, within our normal day to day activities and, without drawing attention to it, we show our love, God's love, to those we meet. So.....

...We take time to meet, to talk and share news, to pray, to look for signs of God at work in our lives, to learn, to listen, to grow our faith, to care for friends and neighbours, to show God's love at work in our community, to share hospitality and to enjoy tea and cake! So 'Take Time' seemed to be the obvious choice for our new name whilst still remaining under the umbrella of 'The Neighbourhood Project'.

If you feel that you would like to know more or would like to join us to see for yourselves please contact me. We would love to welcome you whenever and, however often, you can make it.

Liz Morris (870014)

A.S.A.P.

Have you ever considered the abbreviation A.S.A.P. (As Soon As Possible)? Generally, it brings even more hurry and stress into our lives. Yet there is another way to think of A.S.A.P, a way which might help us to deal with those difficult times in our daily lives.

When there's work to do, deadlines to meet, and perhaps your friends or colleagues are rushing around, here's what you can do to help: A.S.A.P. – **Always Say a Prayer.**

When your worries mount up and you don't know how you'll cope with what is coming at you: A.S.A.P. – **Always Say a Prayer.**

God knows how stressful our lives can be, and He wants to ease our cares. In the Bible He promises to respond to all our calls for help. So – why not call Him **A.S.A.P!**

(from the Parish Pump)

Reduce Reuse Recycle?

What do YOU do with your copy of the 'Elbow'?

Perhaps you reduce by getting it online.

Perhaps you reuse it by burning it or composting it.

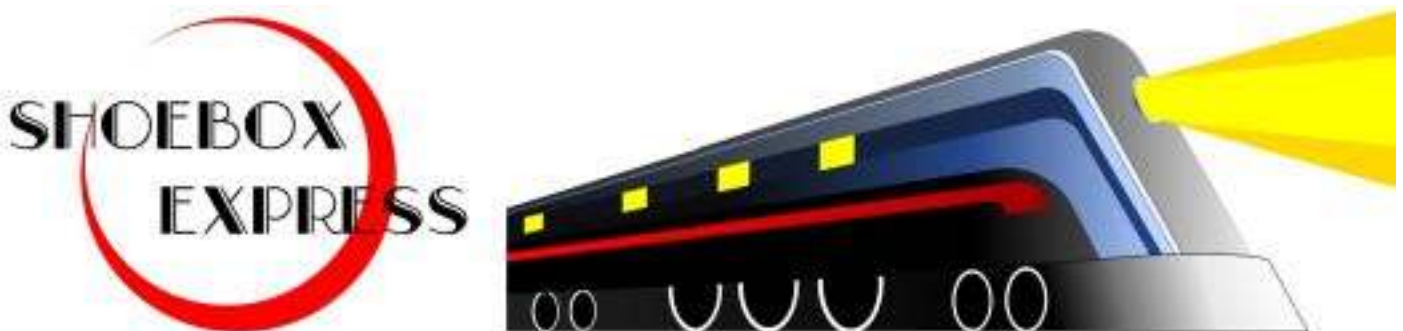
All admirable but can any of you beat this story of one member's copy?

Lily White recycles her copy by sending it to her sister Audrey in Wales who has sent a lovely letter continuing the story:

"It is one of the best Church Magazines I have read, and so, when I have finished it, I pass it on to my friend and her husband - they do not attend a church regularly. It then goes to a lady in the village who is a member of the church in Wales but whose husband has dementia and so does not get to church on a regular basis. She passes it to another friend who has a mentally handicapped son to look after. He keeps her busy and out of church. She gets great pleasure from reading it. I know that she also passes it on but I don't know to whom."

Audrey ends her letter with her thanks for what she calls "your travelling disciple" which she says is very much appreciated in her small corner of Wales. What a wonderful description of the 'Elbow' - but maybe one of you has a copy which travels even further. Do let us know!

Jane



BUILD A CHRISTMAS SHOEBOX FOR A CHILD IN NEED

Join us to fill Christmas shoeboxes for children in need in Ukraine and around the globe. We have everything you'll need and people to help if you've not visited our Shoebox Express Bazaar before.

FORMBY METHODIST CHURCH
SATURDAY 14th OCTOBER
10am – 4pm

FREE ADMISSION

FREE DRINKS, BISCUITS AND BACON ROLLS SERVED ALL DAY

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North Korea – how it all began

Some 75 years ago, in September 1948, the People's Democratic Republic of Korea (North Korea) was established, under Kim Il Sung.

Korea as a whole had been under Japanese control most of the 20th century, with many Korean guerrilla groups fighting to regain the country's autonomy. The Second World War led to the surrender of Japan and the division of Korea, with the Soviet Union occupying the north and the United States the south.



Bob Jenions (see also opposite) while on active service in Korea in 1952

Attempts to create a unified country failed, and two separate governments emerged, each claiming to be the legitimate rulers of Korea. As a result, the Korean War broke out in 1950, resulting in a great deal of destruction, followed by stalemate and a line of demarcation between north and south at the 38th parallel.

The leader of the north, which became the People's Democratic

Republic of Korea, was a famous and accomplished former guerrilla leader called Kim Il Sung (meaning Kim Become the Sun), who because of his earlier exile spoke very little Korean when he became head of government. He had been raised, he said, in a Presbyterian Christian family, one of his grandfathers being a Protestant minister. During the Second World War he was for a time a Major in the Soviet Red Army.

Kim was in office for more than 45 years, being succeeded by his son and then grandson, as North Korea became a totalitarian socialist dictatorship, with a centrally planned economy, closely linked to the Soviet Union. At first the north outperformed the south, but when South Korea stabilised and bloomed economically in the 1980's, the situation was reversed. The tension between north and south continues today.

(from the Parish Pump)

Happy Memories



Recently the Alzheimers Society has been in partnership with the FA (Football Association) and as a result of this, they were showing a dedicated Art Exhibition at Wembley for their Summer Art Trail which involved showing photos of people living with dementia holding an item of memorabilia with

a short explanation of why they followed a particular team. Bob was lucky enough to be chosen and after a visit from a photographer, a photo of him with an autographed football which he won many years ago from the Cup Finals of 1973 and 1976 was chosen. The Exhibition is free and can be seen at Wembley until the end of September.

Vicky Jenions

Formby Methodist Church

CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

The people of Formby are invited to the

FESTIVAL of PRAISE

to mark the Centenary of the Methodist Church
in Formby

SATURDAY, OCT. 26th, 1974

at Elbow Lane at 6-30 p.m.

in the presence of Members of the Sefton Metropolitan
District Council and Altcar Parish Council

The Clergy of the local churches will participate in the service
and the address will be given by **REV. HAROLD ROBERTS,**
M.A., D.D., Ph.D., Past President of the Methodist Conference
and Past President of the World Methodist Council.

On the **SUNDAY MORNING, OCTOBER 27th,** at 11 o'clock
the Centenary Celebrations will continue with a

Special Service

at which **Rev. Harold Roberts, M.A., D.D., Ph.D.** and **Rev.**
Norman A. Eastwood (Minister of the Church) will officiate
and the address will be given by **Rev. Reginald Kiseack, M.A.,**
B.D., Chairman of the Liverpool District of the Methodist
Church.



The Centenary of Elbow Lane Methodist Church was celebrated in 1974. The celebrations mainly comprised the return of previous Ministers to preach on several Sundays between June and October. These included Revs Colin Colclough, Raymond Pittam, J Stuart Rhodes, T Lloyd Turney and Malcolm Furness, as well as Rev Eric Okell who, although he was never actually Minister at Elbow Lane, had been born in Formby and been an active member of the Sunday School and Youth Club. The culmination was over the last weekend of October (see opposite).

Our 150th celebrations will be a little different, and the '150 Team' have been busy drawing up a programme of events (see back cover). We will be hanging our events on three major anniversaries of events in 1874 - the decision to build our church was taken in March, the foundation stone was laid in July and the church opened for its first service in October.

There will be guest preachers during these three months; one of these has already been confirmed - Rev David Somerville, whom many of us remember with affection from his years in the Crosby Circuit. We hope to be able to confirm the other two names soon. There will be several concerts, talks and a historic exhibition - and a Flower Festival!

But before all that, there will be a 150 quiz - with 150 questions and an entry fee of £1.50! And there will be a mini Christmas Tree Festival over the November Fair weekend (see p25).

Finally, I am working hard to produce a new 'History of Methodism in Formby' which should be available for purchase either around Christmas or early in the New Year.

In the meantime, my thanks to the Team and everyone else who has helped or will be helping in anyway.

Alastair

A Diamond Couple!

Anne & Alan Roberts were delighted to be surrounded by their friends and family at the recent service to celebrate 60 years of marriage, as well as all the usual congregation and of course our minister Sheila; in fact their two sons were both baptised at this church many years ago. Everyone helped to make it a very memorable occasion for Anne & Alan and it was nice to have tea and cake in the Church hall after the service.



The family went on to the *Fat Italian* in Burscough where they enjoyed a lovely celebratory meal and the happy couple were treated with a replica cake to match

their original one from 60 years ago. Their son Carl and his partner Annie made such a good job of the cake as you'll see from the pictures.



THE LADIES FELLOWSHIP

During the last few months the attendance at the Ladies Fellowship has been excellent. We enjoyed an Afternoon Tea at Dobbies, Alan Lewis brought us up to date with the latest development at the Ukraine Welcome Centre in Blundellsands Methodist Church and Ruth Bloom energised us with her 'Chair Exercises'. We also hosted a Circuit Strawberry Tea to raise money for the MWiB Project AGLIT (Adult Girls' Literacy in Malawi).

At our AGM on 27th July, we agreed to donate £500 to our Church and £400 to the Ukraine Welcome Centre. After a short meeting we were led by 'Maggie and Mandy' on their guitars in a joyful and lively sing-a-long. A donation was given for Macmillan.

On 18th August six of our members attended the Methodist Women in Britain Liverpool District Summer Gathering held at West Kirby Methodist Church. The morning session involved worship, business, and news from the churches. The Guest Speaker in the afternoon was Rev Dr Christine Jones, a former Minister in the District, a prominent member of the Iona Community and a guest at King Charles' Coronation.

Programme September - November

- 7 Sept Rev Sheila Prest
- 14 Sept Members afternoon
- 21 Sept Uganda R.ev Ralph Upton
- 28 Sept 'Maggie & Mandy'
- 5 Oct Rev Ian Hu
- 12 Oct Musical Bingo
- 19 Oct Whitechapel Centre
- 26 Oct Rev Derek Bowker
- 2 Nov Driving Instructing Ray Flanagan
- 9 Nov Remembrance Day Memories
- 16 Nov Southport Lifeboat Elaine Almond
- 23 Bridge Inn Community Farm
- 30 Nov Musical Chair Exercises Ruth Bloom

We meet every Thursday at 2.00pm and extend a warm welcome to all who would like to join us. Contact: Irene Watts (876219)

Eco News

Rev Dr Sheryl Anderson led our Climate Sunday service on 4th June. She reminded us that many of the poorer countries around the world are adversely affected by climate change, as they have less money and resources to survive extreme changes to the climate such as prolonged drought or flooding. Sheryl reminded us that we can all do something to help reduce the pollution and misuse of the environment. Even little things like recycling, signing petitions and being careful in how much energy we use make a difference.

On 12th June a small group of us enjoyed a tour around the Recycling Discovery Centre at Gilmoor. We viewed the factory from a walkway. Rachel



Albrecht talked us through the different processes involved and showed us that despite their best-efforts plastic bags and wrappers still get through and end up in the paper. The paper is bought by paper mills to recycle. If there are too many contaminants, such as plastic, in a bale they pay less or even worse it is rejected! Rachel also pointed out a huge pile of rubbish on the

edge of the factory floor - the reject pile! This often includes batteries and large plastic items. They waste a lot of energy separating what shouldn't have been sent to them in the first place! Their team of pickers visually check for, and remove, dangerous or harmful items. When a potential explosion risk is spotted this can cause a shut down!

We hope to arrange another trip around the recycling centre in the future. If you would be interested, please let me know.

Top tips from Rachel:-

- The only plastic that can go in our recycling bins is plastic bottles. Keep your lids on plastic bottles and do not flatten them otherwise they may not be recycled, and the lids might end up with the paper.
- Greasy/dirty cardboard e.g. from pizza boxes, should go in the general waste. If it is left in the recycling it produces a grease-stained piece of cardboard which is unusable.



On 17th June we were delighted to have Kate and Sam from the Lancashire Wildlife Trust at our eco coffee morning. Their display and the information they told us about Lunt Meadows was fascinating.

We have used donations from our coffee mornings to 'twin' the Ladies toilet in the Family Centre.

'Toilet Twinning' funds Tearfund projects to provide clean water, basic sanitation, and hygiene education.

Just a reminder for those that wish to just send one single Christmas card to 'all their friends at church'. We will display them in the church porch as we did last year.

Our next Eco group meeting is at 7.00 pm on 25th Sept in the Small Meeting Room, all are welcome to join us.

Jenny Wallbanks (873208)

Here, Canon Paul Hardingham reflects on one of the spiritual disciplines.

Solitude

‘Solitude is a time when we withdraw from the company of others in order to give God our undivided attention’ (John Ortberg).

The spiritual discipline of *solitude* is about spending time alone with God, to grow in relationship with Him and hear Him more clearly. This practice was a priority in Jesus’ life and ministry, especially at crucial moments eg *‘Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where He prayed’ (Mark 1:35).*

Solitude is not so much about what we *do* as what we *don’t* do! If we want to hear God, we need to consciously shut out the external noise in our lives and focus on the quiet inside us. If we are honest, this can be a real struggle. We want to do it, but other things can so easily get in the way: distractions, tiredness, jobs that need doing, wandering thoughts etc. Solitude gives us an opportunity to enjoy God’s presence, as somebody who we really want to spend time with.

Richard Foster (*‘Celebration of Discipline’*) suggests some ways in which we might grow in this discipline:

‘Little solitudes’: small everyday moments to seek inner silence eg, coffee times, travelling to work and time spent outside.

Quiet place: having specific places where we go to be quiet, eg a room or special chair in our home.

Retreat: organising a retreat where we can have time in silence and solitude.

We need to plan carefully how we use our time with God, including silent listening, meditating on Scripture, prayer, journaling, taking a meditative walk, or listening to a worship CD.

‘If we possess inward solitude we do not fear being alone, for we know that we are not alone.’ (Richard Foster)

(from the Parish Pump)

Kristallnacht - Night of Terror

November is when we remember the British and Commonwealth soldiers who gave their lives during the two World and other Wars. But on 9th November 1938, 85 years ago, Kristallnacht (the Night of Broken Glass) began, when the Nazis burned over 1400 synagogues and destroyed thousands of Jewish homes and businesses in Germany and Austria.

It was a major turning point - 30,000 Jews were sent to concentration camps, and by the end of the year, Jews were banned from attending schools and most public places in Germany. From then on, treatment of the Jews steadily worsened, culminating in the Holocaust.

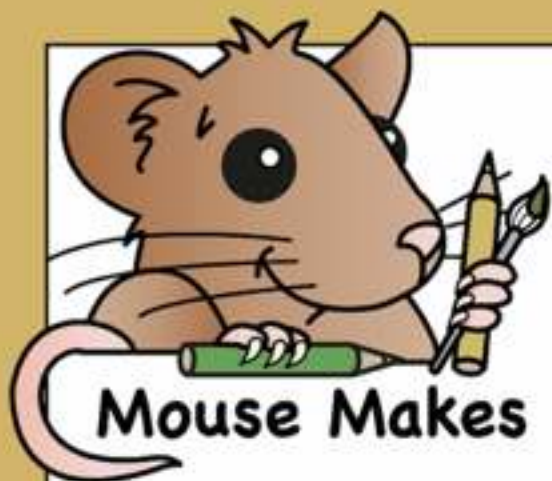
Kristallnacht was precipitated by the shooting of a German diplomat in Paris by a Polish-Jewish teenager, acting alone. But this isolated act was used by the Nazis as an excuse for arousing anti-Jewish feelings leading to savage reprisals against the Jewish community in Germany.

To their undying shame, the German Christian movement - an alliance of pastors, bishops, theologians and lay people who supported Hitler and sought to create a pro-Nazi, unified German Protestant church - stayed silent, and indeed gave their full support to the burning of the synagogues.

And so it was left to individual Christians, such as Pastor Martin Niemoller, to stand alongside the Jews. He wrote these reflective words in 1947:

*First they came for the Communists
And I did not speak out
Because I was not a Communist
Then they came for the Socialists
And I did not speak out
Because I was not a Socialist
Then they came for the trade unionists
And I did not speak out
Because I was not a trade unionist
Then they came for the Jews
And I did not speak out
Because I was not a Jew
Then they came for me
And there was no one left
To speak out for me.*

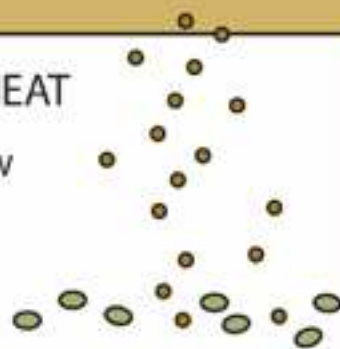




THE WEEDS AND THE WHEAT

What did the enemy sow amongst the wheat?

Matthew 13:25



READ

the parable in

Matthew 13 v24-30, and v36-43

At harvest time the weeds are gathered, bundled then

but the wheat is stored in the

Matthew 13:30



Who sows the good seed?

Matthew 13:37

What does the field represent?

the

and who is the good seed?

The people of the

Matthew 13:38

Who sows the weeds?

The

Who are the harvesters?

The

Matthew 13:39

"He who has ears, let him

Matthew 13:43

T O G E T H E R S H E A R
D S O X F I R E P E N G T
P E O P L E W B A A D E N
E E D L B E H A R V E S T
G D G A T H E R A E V I L
R K T I E K A N B N I P G
O Y I N D I T W L O L E R
W C M B U N D L E B V J A
E N E M Y G V I N U F E I
E W O R L D E S W R I S N
D E A R S O W E D N E U I
S O N O F M A N G E L S M
D I S C I P L E S D D V A

PARABLE • HEAVEN • SOWED • GOOD • SEED • FIELD • ENEMY • WHEAT • GRAIN
GROW • TOGETHER • TIME • HARVEST • GATHER • BUNDLE • TIE
PEOPLE • DISCIPLES • JESUS • EXPLAIN • EVIL • FIRE • END • AGE • EARS

Find the words from the questions too!

A poem for all you gardeners!

God's Garden

Plant three rows of peas:

Peas of mind

Peas of heart

Peas of soul

Plant three rows of squash:

Squash gossip

Squash grumbling

Squash selfishness

Plant three rows of lettuce:

Lettuce be faithful

Lettuce be obedient

Lettuce love one another

Plant three rows of turnips:

Turnip for services

Turnip for meetings

Turnip to help one another

Plant three rows of thyme:

Thyme for God

Thyme for Bible study

Thyme for prayer

Finally –

Water freely with patience

Cultivate with love

And remember – you will only reap what you sow

(from the Parish Pump)

“Gardens are not made by singing ‘Oh how beautiful’ and sitting in the shade.”

(Rudyard Kipling)

The Divine Gardener

This is the time of year for many churches to hold their Harvest Festival services. No doubt, there will be displays of food, some grown in local gardens. While gardeners have pleasure growing fruit and vegetables, it can be hard work tending to them.

Jesus knew about the care given to vines. In John 15:1-8 Jesus compared Himself to a vine and referred to God as the gardener. In this parable, God is responsible for pruning the vine. He sees what parts are useful, and what parts useless. The unproductive parts are cut away, so that growth is encouraged. Jesus is telling us that God will prune our lives, not to harm us, but to encourage our spiritual growth.

God's pruning cuts away wrong attitudes and wasteful behaviour, all of which serve no useful purpose in our lives. This pruning is required so that we become more fruitful. And the fruit God wants is love, joy, patience etc. (see Galatians 5:22-23) These holy qualities are intended to influence the world to change it from the bad to all that is good.

To encourage its growth, a vine has regularly to be cut back. The effect looks drastic, but it is still essential. When God cuts away the dead wood in our lives, He does it because He knows how our lives can grow. The pruning knives are in the hands of our Father God who only desires the best for us. This pruning process can be extremely painful, but Jesus says that it is vital if the Holy Spirit is to flow through us to produce the fruit that God wants.

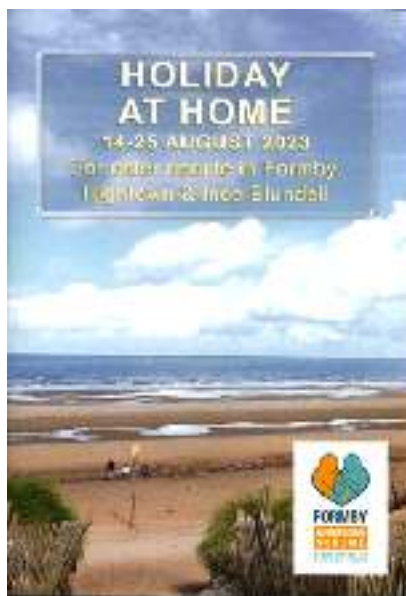
Also in this parable, Jesus said that He was the Vine, and we are the branches. We have no existence apart from Jesus. We can do nothing for God on our own and must be joined to Jesus. In the same way a vine utilises the life-giving sap to flow into the branches, so we need the Holy Spirit to flow His life into us. It is only by us remaining in Jesus, that He can give us the inner resources for an effective fruit-producing life.

Jesus said, '*Abide in Me*' (John 15:4). Abiding speaks of sustenance, being upheld and supported, enduring and withstanding. So, if we are to reap a harvest of holiness, may we be prepared for God's pruning, and continue to abide in Jesus, our Lord and Saviour.

(from the Parish Pump)

Lorraine's Happy 'Holiday at Home'

I am one of the older persons who have been participating in 'Holiday at Home'. I also pick up brochures for coach trips and cruises as I'd love to do both. Circumstances do not allow but I like to dream a little.



However, during the last fortnight of August, I have had such a lovely time doing new activities, meeting people – some I knew already, others I didn't. The events were so popular, especially as most of them included refreshments!

My fortnight began with chair based exercises by the wonderful Sefton OPERA (Older Persons Enabling Resource and Action – a charitable body to enhance wellbeing of older persons. The exercises were appropriate for all abilities. As Lesley the leader said, simple to do exercises at home while watching TV.

My second activity was singing. I cannot sing well but still enjoy joining in. Maggie and Mandy are a treat! Their songs were broken up by humorous poetry readings. Homemade cakes and teas were served at the interval; there was a lovely atmosphere.

Event three was lunch and chat at the Gild Hall. Beautifully laid tables, with waitress service; all the food was freshly and carefully prepared. My next activity was Chair Aided Balance and Strength, led by Alison. A good workout, more than you'd think for sitting in a chair.

Listening to the wonderful 'Make Noise' Choir was a pleasant way to spend a sunny Saturday afternoon. Their leader introduced each song and performer, and all were warmly received and applauded. I enjoyed bobbing along and clapping from my seat.

So, what has been my holiday? Physical exercise; singing, rhyme and poetry; learning a new game; more social life than usual. A huge thank you to everyone who made this all possible.

Winnie - who herself has put in a huge amount of work both before and during the fortnight, and without whom the fortnight would not have been possible - has asked me to pass on a big thank you from the Team to everyone who helped in any way with the 'Holiday at Home' events at Elbow Lane. Ed.

Our Christmas Fair – 1949 & 2023!



Saturday 25 November 2023

Early warning!! All kind of help is required for the November Fair this year as it is a very special one. Our 150th Anniversary celebrations in 2024 will be launched on that day with a mini Christmas Tree Festival. It is hoped that each of our various organisations will set up and decorate their own contribution and maybe groups that hire the hall will also become involved. Those attending the Fair will go through the Church where the trees will be set out, then on into the hall as usual.

Therefore, some assistance will be required with setting up the tree display during the preceding week, as well as on the day of the Fair, when help will be needed on the stalls and in the kitchen, serving tea and clearing up. **If you feel that you could help in any way, please talk to me.**

Contributions for the raffle and tombola would be gratefully received and in a month or so, here will be a box in the church porch for these.

Margaret Nicholas

The Story Behind the Hymn

'Take My Life and Let it Be'

Frances Ridley Havergal was a famous hymn writer and poet. *'Take My Life and Let it Be'* was probably her best known hymn - and it was written in 1874, the very same year as Elbow Lane Church opened!

Frances was born in December 1836 in Astley, Worcestershire, one of six children of a devout Church of England clergyman - and himself a hymn writer. Her middle name was in tribute to the martyr Nicholas Ridley, to whom the family was related. She was educated in England and Germany, and became particularly proficient in Greek and Hebrew, as well as a number of modern languages. She was also a talented musician - and indeed had the prospect of an outstanding career in that field.

However, from an early age she had decided to dedicate her career to the Lord. So much so she even refused to sing anything that was not sacred.

Although she was always sickly, she still managed to travel during her short life, to Scotland and Wales and even to Germany and Switzerland,.



In February 1874, she was staying in a home of mainly non-believers; her earnest prayer was that they would all give their hearts to Christ. Her prayer was duly granted, and on returning home - too happy to sleep - she lay awake and composed her beautiful hymn, which would be the benchmark for her own life.

She had cards made with the words of her hymn on it, and would ask people at the end of her meetings to take them home and, if they felt it appropriate, sign the card to show their commitment.

Frances wrote many hymns - including 'Lord Speak to Me that I May Speak' and 'I Am Trusting Thee Lord Jesus'. But her best known is her hymn of devotion and submission, 'Take My Life and Let it Be'.

*'Take my life, and let it be
consecrated, Lord, to thee;
take my moments and my days,
let them flow in ceaseless praise.'*

She then goes on to identify the various human physical attributes - hands, feet, voice, lips - and how they can best be used in divine service. Everything must be dedicated to the service of her Lord:

*'Take my silver and my gold,
not a mite would I withhold,
take my intellect, and use
every pow'r as thou shalt choose.*

*Take my will, and make it thine,
it shall be no longer mine,
take my heart, it is thine own,
it shall be thy royal throne.'*

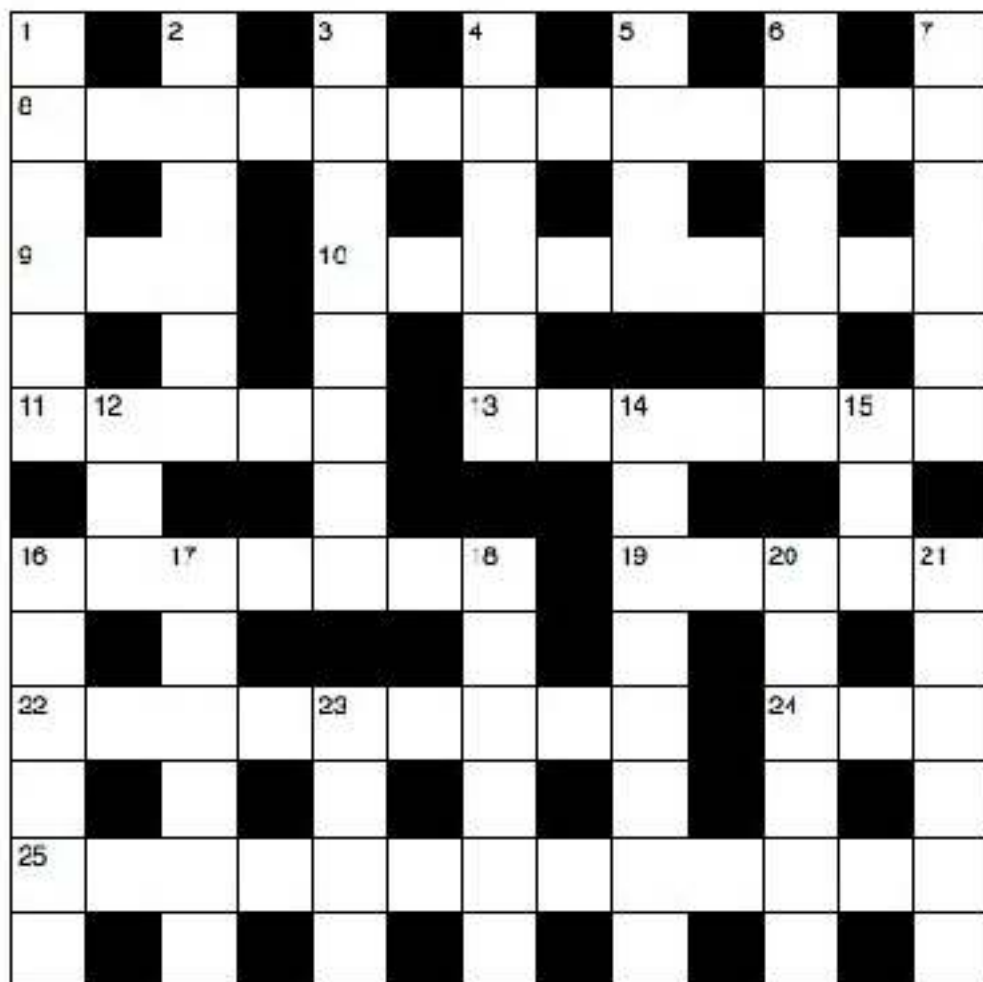
Her final verse was the one about which she had some real regrets; here she felt she had failed to measure up to her exacting demands regarding divine service and commitment - her love to her Lord had been lacking:

*'Take my love; my Lord, I pour
at thy feet its treasure-store;
take myself, and I will be
ever, only, all for thee.'*

Frances Ridley Havergal died, from peritonitis, near Swansea in June 1879, aged only 42. She was buried in Astley, her birthplace. On her tombstone was engraved, in accordance with her wishes, her favourite text:

"The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin."





Across

8 Where the Ark of the Covenant was kept for 20 years (1 Samuel 7:1) (7,6)

9 One of the parts of the body on which blood and oil were put in the ritual cleansing from infectious skin diseases (Leviticus 14:14-17) (3)

10 Uncomfortable (3,2,4)

11 'Yet I have loved Jacob, but Esau I have — ' (Malachi 1:3) (5)

13 Where Paul said farewell to the elders ... in Ephesus (Acts 20:17) (7)

16 'Jesus bent down and — to write on the ground with his finger' (John 8:6) (7)

19 Prophet from Moresheth (Jeremiah 26:18) (5)

22 Comes between Exodus and Numbers (9)

24 and 2 Down 'Then Elkanah went home to Ramah, but the boy ministered before the Lord under — the — ' (1 Samuel 2:11) (3,6)

25 There was no room for them in the inn (Luke 2:7) (4,3,6)

Down

1 Rough drawing (2 Kings 16:10) (6)

2 See 24 Across

3 Underground literature (including Christian books) circulated in the Soviet Union (8)

4 Lo, mash (anag.) (6)

5 The Bible's shortest verse: 'Jesus — ' (John 11:35) (4)

6 'Can a mother forget the baby at her — and have no compassion on the child she has borne?' (Isaiah 49:15) (6)

7 Can be seen in a dying fire (Psalm 102:3) (6)

12 'Send me, therefore, a man... experienced in the — of engraving, to work in Judah and Jerusalem' (2 Chronicles 2:7) (3)

14 Second city of Cyprus (8)

15 United Nations Association (1,1,1)

16 One of the women who first heard that Jesus had risen from the dead (Mark 16:1) (6)

17 Braved (anag.) (6)

18 — of Evangelism, outreach initiative in the 1990s (6)

20 'Woe to those ... wise in their own eyes and — in their own sight' (Isaiah 5:21) (6)

21 'Neither — nor depth ... will ... separate us from the love of God' (Romans 8:39) (6)

23 What Jesus shed in 5 Down (4)

(Answers on p39)

Confidence in God

Alone with none but Thee, my God,
I journey on my way.
What need I fear, when Thou art near
O King of night and day?
More safe I am within Thy hand
Than if a host did round me stand.

St Columba

"Be still and know that I am God" (Psalm 46:10)

Have you ever thought of taking some time out of daily life, to simply *"be still"* with God? To hear His voice, enjoy His presence, and perhaps receive His direction for your future? When one lady was told that her friend was *"taking some time out to 'be still' and listen to God"*, she responded with curiosity: *"What does His voice sound like?"*

For many Christians, the response would be this: "His voice for me is always calming, always reassuring, it always makes me feel overwhelmingly loved. It always gives me a sense of peace, which is deeper than any pain and stronger than any fear. No wonder the Scriptures talk of a *'peace that passes all understanding!'*"

God speaks to us individually, through His Word, the Bible. And sometimes, when we are outside, He can also speak to us through His beautiful world.

The blue sky says; *"always look up"*, the sun says; *"shine,"* the birds say; *"sing"*, the trees say; *"be fruitful"*, the flowers say; *"consider the lilies"*. The open road ahead says; *"Go into all the world and preach the Gospel"*. The gentle rustle of the wind in the trees says; *"though you can't see My face, you can hear Me, see reflections of Me, feel Me, touch Me and know Me through all I create, if you just take the time to be still!"*

Norma Murrain

(Norma is a jewellery designer at www.silverfishjewellery.co.uk)

Vase of Flowers

In this month of September, we give thanks for God's blessings in all that the earth yields us. Those blessings are focused in this wonderful painting of Jan Davidsz de Heem. He was born in Utrecht in Holland in 1606 and studied art under his father's guidance. De Heem then moved to Antwerp, where for the rest of his life he created paintings of such beauty and depth that one of them – a portrait of Prince William III surrounded by blossoms and fruits - received the highest price ever paid for a painting at that time.

In the '*Vase of Flowers*' de Heem has gathered together a bouquet of variegated

flowers and plants for our delight. Time stands still in his painting in two ways. First, these 31 blooms could never have flowered at the same time, but through the magical touch of the artist, they do for us. Caught on canvas, they are as fresh and vibrant as the day they were painted in 1645.

But there are signs that the gifts of nature do wither and die, as we look closely and see on the marble slab a snail. Nearby is a salamander eyeing his next meal as a spider hangs on a thread from one of the flowers. In the centre, another snail looks at his food, the



beautiful and rare red and white tulips. Yet we look again and see also signs of new life: the reeds of wheat are symbols of the Eucharistic bread; the caterpillar and butterfly on the striking white poppy at the top are signs of resurrection; and the peas in their pod and the blackberries mark out the fruitfulness of creation.

The artist shows us a glorious range of flowers - some well-known, others more exotic and brought back to Holland through the colonial expansion of the 16th century. Tulips and poppies dominate, but to the left are some small-scented roses. Each is a testimony to the beauty and goodness of the wonderful world we live in.

A century later, Christopher Smart wrote in his poem *'Jubilate Agno'*:
"For the flowers are great blessings...for the flower glorifies God...for the flowers are peculiarly the poetry of Christ."

And 200 years later Gerard Manley Hopkins wrote:
"I do not think I have ever seen anything more beautiful than the bluebell I have been looking at. I know the beauty of our Lord by it."

And we today can echo poet and painter as we praise God, the author of such flowers and plants that make up a world of *'all things bright and beautiful.'*
(from the Parish Pump)

FLOWER ROTA

10 Sept	Audrey Almond	Barbara
17 Sept	Barbara Hilton	Vicky
24 Sept	Mabel Walsh	Vicky
1 Oct	Winnie & Mark Pickering	Margaret
8 Oct	Hazel & James May	Margaret
15 Oct	Millie Hughes	Barbara
22 Oct	Ann & Alan Roberts	Barbara
29 Oct	Liz Morris	Vicky
5 Nov	Alan Sullivan	Vicky
12 Nov	Anne Webb	Margaret
19 Nov	Maureen & Trevor Simpson	Margaret
26 Nov	Eve Cant	Barbara
3 Dec	Joy Thomson	Barbara
10 Dec	Jean Horne	Vicky

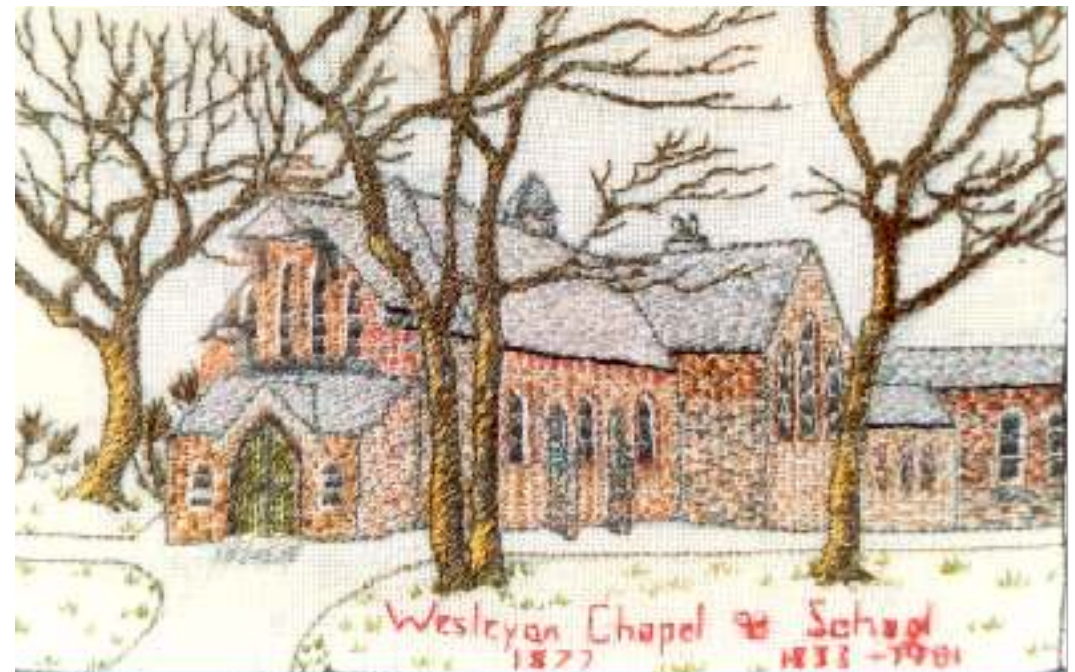
Please put your donation in the envelope provided and give it to the flower arranger mentioned. Thank you.
Vicky (873317)



Formby's Answer to the Bayeux Tapestry!

This splendid artwork, featuring many of the historic buildings of Formby, was created by Lillian Rushworth, who for some years was a member of our church. Sadly, she died in 1982, shortly before its completion, and it was finished - though not quite to Lillian's high standards - by members of the Formby Society. Can you spot Elbow Lane (right) in the Tapestry above?

The Tapestry was accessible for some years in the Library, and we hope we will be able to display it once again in Formby's new Heritage Centre, opening in late 2023.



William Wilberforce

William Wilberforce was born in Hull in 1759. He became a Christian at an early age, and was a close friend of John Newton, a long time slave trader before his conversion. He became an MP at the age of 21.



Wilberforce was a devout Christian from an early age, and his faith led him to support a huge variety of charitable causes, including the Church Missionary Society, the British and Foreign Bible Society, the Society Against Vice and Immorality, the School Society and the Sunday School Society.

But it was for his involvement in the anti-slavery movement that he is best remembered. His opposition to the slave trade meant he was subjected to a lot of hostility, even death threats. Nevertheless, he put forward a bill in parliament in 1793 advocating gradual abolition. It failed by eight votes, most members absenting themselves from the House so as not to have to vote. He then proposed a bill prohibiting British ships from carrying slaves to foreign territories - this was lost by just two votes, in a near-empty House. Indeed, he reintroduced an Abolition Bill almost every year - until in February 1807 the House of Commons finally voted to abolish the slave trade, by a vote of 283 to 16.

For the next 25 years, Wilberforce devoted himself to ending the institution of slavery itself. Finally, in July 1833, although by then he had resigned as an MP due to ill-health, he heard that the House of Commons had passed a law emancipating all slaves in the British Empire. He died just three days later, and was buried in Westminster Abbey.

Sadly, however, as Rev Karen Jobson poignantly reminded us in a recent Sunday service, slavery still exists today, and even in our own country.

Alastair

Halloween is on the way!

It's that time of year again – when the pumpkins with scary faces appear in our shops, surrounded by skeleton costumes, zombie masks, witch's hats and sweets with gruesome names. But how do Christian parents deal with this annual celebration of evil and death? For of course 31st October has pagan Celtic roots – it was the evening when the souls of the dead were meant to revisit their old homes on earth.

But most children just want the fun of dressing up and scaring their friends half to death. They are oblivious to the darker forces behind it all, or at least do not take them seriously.

Many Christian families and churches have resolved the problem not by ignoring Halloween, but by taking it as only the starting point in a festival, not the end in itself. Hence, they allow their children to dress up, but then take them to a Lights Party, where the whole story is told, not just the pagan bit. Instead of discouraging any thoughts of evil and death, they encourage the children to consider the darkness – through a Christian lens.

Christians do not deny death and dying and evil, but they know that death has no real terrors for us, because it has been defeated through the cross and resurrection of Jesus. Halloween is only half the story: Christianity is the completion, because God in his love sent Jesus to save us from darkness.

So - Halloween is a time to remind our children that Jesus is with us in both the good and bad times of life.

(from the Parish Pump)

Some Anonymous Thoughts on Our Christian Journey

You are a Child of God. Please phone home

They stand best who kneel most

When praying, don't give God instructions – just report for duty

When considering your future: give God what's right – not what's left.

WARNING: Exposure to the Son may prevent burning.

Remembering the Genius of JRR Tolkien

Fifty years ago, in September 1973, JRR Tolkien, the fantasy writer, poet, scholar and educator, died. He was best known for his novels *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*.

Born in Bloemfontein and descended from a family that originated in an area that was then East Prussian and is now Russian, Tolkien – always known as Ronald – thought of himself as unmistakably English. He was brought up in the Birmingham area after the death of his father, who had stayed in South Africa while his wife and children visited England.

Ronald's mother then died when he was 12, and he was raised by aunts, uncles and a guardian who was a Roman Catholic priest, Father Francis. Tolkien later became a devoted Catholic and insisted that his fiancée, Edith Bratt, join him in that faith. She did so, reluctantly, and



they had a long and extremely happy marriage. His beliefs were a significant factor in C S Lewis's conversion to Christianity.

Tolkien had a longstanding fascination with language and became an acknowledged expert in both linguistics and mythology, which led to his writing his two most famous works – and several others. Despite assumptions by some, none were intended as children's books, and *The Lord of the Rings* was never a trilogy – it was printed in three volumes for cost reasons.

The huge success of his writing led to unexpected fame. He and his wife eventually moved to Bournemouth and lived there until she died in 1971. He was then given rooms in Merton College, Oxford. He said in an interview shortly before his death: "*A pen is to me as a beak is to a hen.*"

Since 2003, The Tolkien Society has organised Tolkien Reading Day, taking place on 25th March in schools around the world.

(from the Parish Pump)

World Animal Day

Thursday 4th October

Many of us love animals and would be happy to help them on a regular, local basis. Here are just some ideas to consider:

The local animal shelter. Why not volunteer some time this winter to help them? The survival of many shelters – there are three in the Formby area – depends on volunteers, who can do anything from admin to dog walking.

Pets as Therapy. This national charity has many local branches. If you have a friendly, calm pet, why not take your furry friend along to visit the ill and disabled in hospitals, nursing homes and hospices? Visit: <https://petsastherapy.org/> for details of how to get involved.

Cinnamon Trust. This national charity helps care for the pets of elderly people when they are ill or indisposed. They urgently need more dog-walkers. Could you help? Visit: <http://www.cinnamon.org.uk/>

Coffee is good for you!

If you like coffee, then good news: it seems that coffee is quite good for you. For one thing, coffee contains chemicals called polyphenols, which protect against inflammation in the body and repair damage to cells.

One study found that people who drank more coffee were less vulnerable to a range of chronic illnesses. Another study found that drinking coffee can help prevent a toxic protein called tau from clumping together – which might help in fighting Alzheimer's. Coffee drinkers have also been found to have different species of bacteria in their gut microbiomes, compared with non-coffee drinkers. This is believed to be one of the strongest protective factors against colorectal cancers.

But Health Warning! As with most things, moderation is key! The NHS recommends drinking no more than five cups of coffee per day, and no more than about two and a half cups in one sitting.

(from the Parish Pump)

Wednesday Morning Coffee and Chat

20 September at the home of Vicky Jenions

If you would like to join us, we would be delighted to see you. Please ring me on 873317 for future dates and the address of the venue.

FORMBY LITTLE THEATRE

I have received the programme for the Little Theatre for the 2023/24 season. Booking is via their website and payment is by debit/credit card only.

The House Amongst the Willows

17-21 and 24-28 October

For this production, FLT are putting on a matinee performance for those who prefer not to go out at night. At the minute I do not have the time when the matinee starts. Booking for this production has now opened.

Dick Barton Special Agent

16-20 and 23-27 January 2024

Ladies Unleashed

9-13 and 16-20 April 2024

The Father

11-15 and 18-22 June 2024

Despite Covid, FLT are still giving us first class plays with excellent actors, set builders and a lovely drink and biscuits at the interval.

PS For those of you who used to listen on the radio to Dick Barton, have you stopped humming the tune yet!

Vicky

The Power of Prayer?

A businessman asked for planning permission to build a nightclub complete with dancing girls. The local church started a vigorous campaign to block it from opening. A petition was launched and prayers were held in public. Work progressed, however, right up until the week before opening. Then one night a bolt of lightning hit the nightclub and it burned to the ground.

The church members were rather smug after that, until the nightclub owner sued them all - on the grounds that they were responsible for the fire. Loudly protesting their total non-involvement and innocence, the church members were all taken to court. As the case began, the judge commented: 'I don't know how I'm going to decide this. It seems we have a nightclub owner who believes in the power of prayer, and an entire church congregation that doesn't!'

(from the Parish Pump)

How Not to be a Grumpy Old Man (or Woman!)

Marvel. Marvel every time you see a child learning to walk and speak at the same time. Share in their delight. Wonder at the dawn of each new season: sunshine and shadows, falling leaves, frost, sudden new growth. You are still alive to take it all in. That's an unexpected bonus.

Appreciate. Have a look around your living room and concentrate on items designed for your comfort and entertainment, which your forbears never had. Think of someone you don't like; now ponder a couple of their good points. Try to desire their welfare more than their downfall.

Forgive. (That's a condition for being forgiven). You may have to do it over and over again for the same person. Unearth grudges which have been lying under the surface. Are they worth preserving that much? Think of the damage they are doing you.

Married or Single? Don't envy. The grass on the other side of the street isn't greener, it's just different. Count your blessings – some will be uniquely yours. Be concerned for the welfare of someone whose circumstances are unlike yours.

Deal with disappointment. If you have become grumpy it's probably caused by a deep-down dissatisfaction with yourself. Stop raking over past failures. Each morning when you wake up, say with the Psalmist, "This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it."

Change. No, it isn't too late. It will only be too late to change when you are in a coffin. In the meantime, there's still room for manoeuvre. Remember John Henry Newman's words, "To live is to change, and to be perfect is to have changed often."

(from the Parish Pump)



Anniversary year celebrations

Here's what to look forward to as our church celebrates its 150 year anniversary...



Coming up this year:

- Christmas Fair - 25 November
(including Christmas Tree Festival)



And in 2024:

- Publication of a New History of our Church
- Music events - March, June and October
(featuring G:Force Gospel Choir, Sefton Ladies Choir and Aughton Male Voice Choir)
- Flower festival - June
- Anniversary weekend - 5-7th July
with a guest preacher and family celebrations!
- Special Anniversary service - October
(led by former Crosby Circuit Minister, Rev David Somerville)



*Exhibition, quizzes, talks and more
details to follow!*

Look out for regular updates in the 'Elbow'