

SEPTEMBER 2019

From the Editors

Welcome back after the Summer break. It certainly has been quite a turbulent time of late what with the extreme weather events and political upheaval. We hope you have been able to keep a level of equanimity. It is easy to get caught up with things. As we move into Autumn, the tempo will change, with children going back to school, youngsters either moving into work or higher education and so on. These can be anxious times so we wish all families peace as they try to keep all the plates of their lives spinning. May God be with you.

This month we commemorate Mary, the mother of Jesus, after whom our church is named. September also brings us the Autumn equinox when nighttime and daytime are equal.

"The breezes taste
Of apple peel.
The air is full
Of smells to feel-
Ripe fruit, old footballs,
Burning brush,
New books, erasers,
Chalk, and such.
The bee, his hive,
Well-honeyed hum,
And Mother cuts
Chrysanthemums.
Like plates washed clean
With suds, the days
Are polished with
A morning haze."

- John Updike, September



SEPTEMBER

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Cycle – and be well

Dr Tom Porter, a consultant in public health medicine, is urging people to cycle more. "It is a fantastic form of physical activity and riding your bike is one of the easiest ways to reduce your risk of ill health while building your cardiovascular fitness. It's also great for improving mental well-being too.

"Not only can cycling to work reduce your risk of death from heart disease by 52 per cent, but it's also a great way to get around the city without using your car, making it good for both you and the environment."

From the Editors

St. Mary's News

Safeguarding

All parishes in The Church of England are now required to make their local safeguarding arrangements clearly accessible via the home page of their parish website by having an obvious link to further information, including contact details. Here at St. Mary's this has been done both on our own website and our page on the A Church Near You website. The policies and processes can be viewed on both websites. Safeguarding is integral to the Church's very life and it remains at the heart of the Christian message.

McMillan Nurses

Most of us have personal experience of family or friends, if not ourselves, fighting cancer and know how much care and support MacMillan Nurses give in this journey that no one wants to make.

McMillan Nurses need financial support to keep this vital work going.

So..... I've booked to have my head shaved (no 2) on 27th Sept this year to raise funds for them. My hairdresser, Bev Jones, owner of Friargate Hair and Beauty, 141 Friargate, Preston always holds a Coffee Morning to raise funds for MacMillan Nurses. I've gone to Bev for years and she's going to shave my head free of charge to help raise funds for this cause.

If anyone wants to sponsor me that would be very welcome.

A bit of embarrassment and discomfort on my part is nothing to what cancer patients, their families and friends go through.

Thank you. Please look for the sponsorship form in church.

Rhoda t'organist

Churchyard.

For many years a dedicated team has met on Thursday mornings to work in the churchyard and keep it looking beautiful and welcoming to worshippers and visitors alike. The team is not getting any younger and we need some help. We thought it might be a good idea to have some sessions on Saturday mornings as well. The work is not onerous mainly keeping the grass cut and looking after the flower beds. If you feel you can help you will be most welcome.

The next date is **Saturday 14th September** between 9.30 am to 12.00. Refreshments will be provided.

Cards for All Occasions

As a result of house clearance I have found significant numbers of unused Christmas cards as well as cards for a variety of other occasions. These will be available in church for anyone to take and use. Donations to church funds will be welcome, however having them used is more important.

Rachel Tuke

FOODBANK REQUESTS.

Penwortham Churches Together Food Bank are very short of the following:
Hot dogs: corned beef, ham, meatballs, Irish stew, Fray Bentos pies: tinned mince, stewing steak & curries, tinned peas, carrots & potatoes, tinned fruit, & rice pudding, custard, small packs of tea bags, nappies(Size 2, 3 or bigger).
Please leave anything with the Churchwardens. Thank you.

Youth Ministry

There have been some changes to the monthly cycle for Sparks and FAB (Messy Church). Please see below:

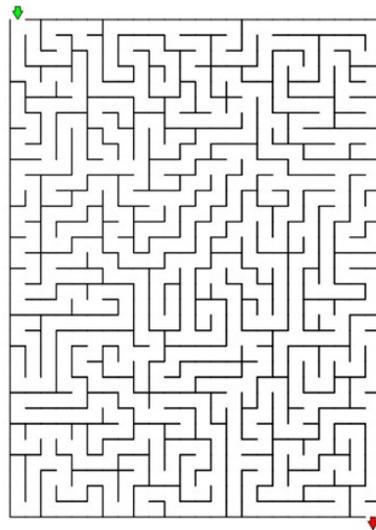
**YOUNG PEOPLES MINISTRY (SPARKS & FAB) -
MONTHLY CYCLE (Revised from September 2019)**

- 1st **SUNDAY:** SPARKS - Cinema Sunday during the 10.15am Service
- 2nd **SUNDAY:** SPARKS - Stories, crafts & games during the 10.15am service
- 3rd **SUNDAY:** FAB (Faith and Belonging) – Between 3pm & 5pm in Church
(All age family “Messy Church” – craft, games, family challenge, story and café)
- 4th **SUNDAY:** SPARKS – Stories, crafts & games during the 10.15am service
- 5th **SUNDAY:** AN ALL AGE FAMILY SERVICE in church the 10.15am service

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

CAROLE CRABTREE (Chair of the Young Ministry Team)

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School blues

A little girl had just finished her first week of school. “I’m just wasting my time,” she said to her mother. “I can’t read, I can’t write, and they won’t let me talk!”

Always on a Sunday

The irate customer called the newsagents, loudly demanding to know where the Sunday edition of her newspaper was. “Madam,” said the newsagent patiently, “We have not delivered your Sunday newspaper because today is Saturday. The Sunday paper is not delivered until tomorrow, on Sunday.”

There was quite a long pause on the other end of the phone, followed by a sigh of wakening understanding. “Well, now ... so that’s why no one was at church today.”

Church News

More than 50,000 people now attend non-traditional church gatherings

More than 50,000 people are attending non-traditional church gatherings, thanks to the success of a drive to attract worshippers with no previous contact with the Christian faith, the General Synod heard this summer.

And members of the General Synod gave their backing to an expansion of 'Fresh Expressions' churches – new forms of church gatherings, meeting often in venues such as cafes, community centres and pubs.

Fresh Expressions churches now account for 15% of congregations in the Church of England and are estimated to attract more than 50,000 worshippers, the equivalent to the size of two new dioceses, the General Synod was told.

To boost the movement, the Church of England is planning for up to 6,000 'pioneer' ministers within the next decade – both lay and ordained - to serve Fresh Expressions churches. There are also plans to give further support for the growth of new forms of church gatherings in 10 dioceses.

Fresh Expressions was called "the most influential missionary movement of the last 50 years, and a significant means of allowing our church to thrive now and in the future." Mark Sheard, Chair of the Ministry and Public Affairs Council of the Church of England, leading a debate at the General Synod said: "I am firmly of the belief that ... what we are witnessing here is a real and exceptional movement of the Spirit."

And so the General Synod voted to approve a new motion celebrating the success of the Fresh Expressions movement, and encouraging every parish and diocese to be part of the movement.

Government accepts recommendations on support for Persecuted Christians

The Bishop of Truro has welcomed the Government's commitment to accepting all of the recent recommendations of the Independent Review into Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) Support for Persecuted Christians.

The Rt Revd Philip Mounstephen, who chaired the review, said he hopes it will now become a significant catalyst for change.

Sir Alan Duncan (who was then the Foreign Office Minister) told the House of Commons that the Government had decided to accept every recommendation in full and outlined how they would take them forward. Sir Alan also said that a bold, whole-government response was needed.

Bishop Philip said he was: "delighted that Sir Alan has formally recognised the need for a response across the rest of Government.

"Our review was restricted to looking at the support from the FCO, but there was a feeling from the outset that this needs a cross-governmental approach, as this crucial issue traverses many boundaries and is not something that can be neatly compartmentalised."

The Bishop hoped that there was “a recognition at the highest level that Freedom of Religion or Belief is a fundamental human right - and one that is inextricably interconnected with other basic human rights.”

He hoped that “the report will become a catalyst for change and enable Britain to pursue an aspiration to be the global leader in championing this right.”

The Bishop of Coventry, Christopher Cocksworth, said: “The plight of Christians around the world is all too often overlooked. We now expect this important report to provide renewed impetus for the Government to rise to the challenges so clearly identified and for the UK to become, as the report recommends, ‘the global leader in championing Freedom of Religion and Belief for all’.”

Synod unanimously backs call to act on serious youth violence

Churches should play a key role in combating serious youth violence in their communities, according to a motion unanimously backed by the recent meeting of the General Synod.

Members of the Church of England’s national assembly voted by 315 to zero in support of a motion calling on the church’s national bodies, dioceses and education boards to take practical steps both to help prevent violence such as gun and knife crime and to support those affected.

The debate called for Diocesan Boards of Education to encourage alternatives to excluding children from school; for dioceses to provide more training for church leaders and for the church to work more with other organisations to provide support and pastoral care for those affected.

The Revd Canon Dr Rosemarie Mallett, a priest in Angell Town South London, who led the debate, spoke of the need for weapons bins, which provide a “practical and prophetic witness” to Christians calling to be peacemakers in a society where youth violence has risen.

Many of the speeches asked for churches to be open as “safe places” to protect young people from being harmed by – or drawn into – gangs.

Kashmir Garton, a lay member from the Diocese of Worcester who works as a senior manager within the criminal justice system, said: “The Church is in a unique position to be proactive in such situations as it exists in every parish community; it is present at key life events and is involved in the delivery of education in its church schools, Sunday schools, toddler groups and youth groups”

Update on safeguarding in the C of E

An extensive presentation on safeguarding in the Church of England was given by the lead safeguarding bishop, the Rt Revd Peter Hancock, Bishop of Bath & Wells, at the recent meeting of the General Synod.

He said that while “the need for compassion and pastoral care is clear,” it is “action that will bring reform, support survivors and ensure that we keep prevention at the forefront of our work.”

In a wide-ranging speech the Bishop quoted the letter originating from Blackburn

Church News

Diocese that stressed “*there are very few areas of our common life that we will not need to look at very closely and honestly in the years to come. Vague and evasive talk of ‘culture change’ is not enough.*”

The bishop said: “We ALL have a role to play in safeguarding. It is not something that can be ‘done to’ the Church. It is instead integral to the Church’s very life and it remains at the heart of the Christian message.

He said: “There is no doubt that our response to survivors in the past has been inadequate. But there has been good progress.” As an example, he said that the Church has now committed to co-producing a National Victim and Survivor’s Charter, “which will outline the key statements and principles we agree to adhere to when working with victims and survivors.”

C of E and Methodists inch closer to communion with each other

The General Synod has recently given its backing to further steps towards bringing the Church of England and the Methodist Church in Great Britain into communion with each other.

Members voted in favour of starting work on drafting a series of texts including a formal declaration of a new relationship of communion between the two churches.

The texts would include inaugural services to mark this new relationship and practical guidelines on how ministers from each church could serve in the other.

The Bishop of Coventry, Christopher Cocksworth, called the Methodist Church “our close historical cousin and covenant partner”.

The Revd Joyce Jones, from the Diocese of Leeds, said: “Our unity is vital for our mission. If people see our two churches separately then they won’t see Christ easily. If they see us loving one another and working together to serve Christ, they are more likely to be drawn to faith.”

History Corner

FROM THE ARCHIVES : SEPTEMBER 1919

Peace Celebrations

The Festivities to celebrate Peace took place on Saturday, August 30. The arrangements were in the hands of the Parish Council under the chairmanship of Mr, Milner. At a general meeting to which the Clergy and Superintendents of the different Sunday Schools were invited, various committees were appointed—.....The Committees carried out their duties in a most praiseworthy way, and a great deal of the success is due to their efforts. The thanks of the community are offered to them and to the ladies of the catering committee.

The day in question dawned fair and bright, bringing delight to everyone, as for the whole week there had been a positive downpour The display of fireworks which brought the whole to a close was magnificent—the best ever seen in Penwortham.

All in the Month of September

It was:

500 years ago, from 20th Sept 1519 to 1522 that Portuguese explorer Ferdinand Magellan led a Spanish expedition to the East Indies. It became the first circumnavigation of the world. But Magellan was killed in a battle with natives in the Philippines in 1521.

125 years ago, on 1st Sept 1894 that the General Post Office in the UK sanctioned the use of picture postcards and introduced a half-penny postage rate for them. This led to a boom in picture postcards and the extensive photographic documentation of towns and landscapes.

Also 125 years ago, on 28th Sept 1894 that the British retail chain Marks and Spencer was founded when Michael Marks acquired his first permanent stall in Leeds covered market and invited Thomas Spencer to become his business partner.

100 years ago, on 12th Sept 1919 that Adolf Hitler joined the fledgling German Worker's Part, which would later become the Nazi Party.

80 years ago, on 1st Sept 1939 that Germany invaded Poland, beginning World War II.

75 years ago, from 17th to 25th Sept 1944 that Operation Market Garden took place. The Allies attempted a massive airborne invasion of German-occupied Netherlands but were forced to withdraw. (The story was told in *A Bridge too Far*.)

70 years ago, on 30th Sept 1949 that the Berlin Airlift ended after 14 months and over 270,000 flights.

65 years ago, on 29th Sep 1954 that CERN (the European Organization for Nuclear Research) was established in Geneva Switzerland.

40 years ago, on 29th Sept 1979 that Pope John Paul II became the first pope to visit Ireland.

15 years ago, from 1st to 3rd Sept, that the Beslan school hostage crisis took place in Russia. Armed terrorists took more than 1,100 children and adults hostage. Russian security forces ended the crisis on the third day, entering the school with tanks and heavy weapons. More than 300 hostages were killed, including 186 children, and hundreds more were injured.

Also 15 years ago, on 30th Sept 2004 that the Iraq Survey Group released its final report (the Duelfer Report) on Iraq's purported weapons of mass destruction programme, following the 2003 invasion of Iraq. It concluded that Iraq had not had any weapons of mass destruction since 1991.

10 years ago, on 14th Sept 2009 that Keith Floyd, the British celebrity cook, television presenter, restaurateur and writer, died.

Where now?

A teacher was finishing up a lesson on the joys of discovery and the importance of curiosity. "Where would we be today," she asked, "if no one had ever been curious?" There was a pause, and then one child ventured: "In the garden of Eden?"

Calendar

1 st	THE ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY
	8.15 am Holy Communion (Order 2)
	10.15 am Holy Communion (Order 1) (Cinema Sunday)
4 th	6.30 pm Christian Meditation
5 th	9.30 am Holy Communion
	10.00-12.00 noon Churchyard Maintenance
	10.00-12.00 noon Open Church
	7.30 pm Bell Ringing Practice
8 th	THE TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY
	8.15 am Holy Communion (Order 2)
	10.15 am Holy Communion (Order 1) (Sparks)
11 th	6.30 pm Christian Meditation
12 th	9.30 am Holy Communion
	10.00-12.00 noon Churchyard Maintenance
	10.00-12.00 noon Open Church
	7.30 pm Bell Ringing Practice
14 th	9.30-12.00 noon Churchyard Maintenance (extra)
15 th	THE THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY
	8.15 am Holy Communion (Order 2)
	10.15 am Holy Communion (Order 1) (Sparks)
	3.00-5.00 pm FAB (Faith and Belonging)
18 th	6.30 pm Christian Meditation
19 th	9.30 am Holy Communion
	10.00-12.00 noon Churchyard Maintenance
	10.00-12.00 noon Open Church
	7.30 pm Bell Ringing Practice
22 nd	THE FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY
	8.15 am Holy Communion (Order 2)
	10.15 am Holy Communion (Order 1) (Sparks)
25 th	6.30 pm Christian Meditation
26 th	9.30 am Holy Communion
	10.00-12.00 noon Churchyard Maintenance
	10.00-12.00 noon Open Church
	7.30 pm Bell Ringing Practice
29 th	THE FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY
	8.15 am Holy Communion (Order 2)
	10.15 am Holy Communion (Order 1)

Penwortham Farmers' Market

Is held at St Teresa's Scout Hut, Queensway, Penwortham, PR1 0DS on the 1st Saturday of the month. The next market is Saturday 7th September 2019
The market sells local produce which includes Eggs, Cheese, Meats, Vegetables, Fruits, Fresh Fish, Jams, Wine, Plants, Chocolate, Cakes, Pies, Veggie Curries, Soaps, Coffee, Crafts and much much more.

The Parish Thanks

ALTAR FLOWERS

September

- 1st The Wilding family, in memory of Frank & Ian Stuart Wilding
- 8th Keith Greaves, in memory of Jean Greaves & Frank & Grace Markland
- 15th Vacancy
- 22nd Clive Eckersley, in memory of Susan Eckersley

ALTAR LINEN

September
Mrs Jill Howe



*The Churchyard working party
was never seen again*

**Be kind.
Everyone
you meet
is fighting
a tough
battle.**

Organisations

Guild of St. Mary

Welcome back ladies after the Summer break and we are now ready to start our Autumn programme.

Our first meeting at the Community Centre on Priory Lane is on September 23rd at 7.30pm. Mr Tony Warren will be giving us an audio visual display to music of his trips to Yorkshire and Derbyshire.

All ladies from the parish are welcome to join us – we love guests and new members. See you there.

Ann Yates

Matters of Faith

Please pray....

For those recently baptized

- 7th July Alexander William Brown, the son of Alexander William Brown and Catherine Jenkins
- 14th July Eleanor Grace Davis, the daughter of Alexander James Davis and Fiona Louise Davis
- 21st July Lydia Faith Livermore, the daughter of Adam David Livermore and Joy Lydia Livermore

For those recently married

3rd August Peter James Hewetson and Victoria Clare Hayton

For those who have recently died

Margaret Bates
Terry King
Matthew Robinson



HIGH DAYS AND HOLY DAYS

2nd September: St William of Roskilde - standing up for social justice

Here is a saint for anyone who thinks Christian leaders should stand up for justice – even at the risk of angering secular powers.

It all began when William was an English priest serving as chaplain to Canute, king of England, (1016-35), who decided to visit Scandinavia. William went along, and was so shocked by the ignorance, idolatry and superstition that he stayed on to help preach the Gospel. Eventually he became bishop of Roskilde (Zeeland), working tirelessly among the people as a beloved pastor.

But William's main challenge came in his determination to improve the conduct of the king, Sweyn Estridsen. The king had had some criminals killed without trial and in a church, violating sanctuary. William then forbade him to enter the church next

day until he was absolved from the guilt of shedding blood unjustly. Courtiers drew their swords, and William showed himself ready to die. Instead, Sweyn confessed his crime and donated land to Roskilde church as a peace-offering. Thenceforward until the king's death Sweyn and William worked together to foster Christianity in Scandinavia.

5th September: Laurence Giustiniani - the saint who knew how to help a beggar

You are walking down the road when a beggar approaches you for money. What do you do? If, instead of giving money, you buy him/her coffee or a meal, then you are in good company: you are following in the steps of the first ever Bishop of Venice.

Laurence Giustiniani (1381 – 1455) was born of a noble Venetian family, but chose the austerity of the Augustinian monastery of San Giorgio on island of Alga. He became a priest in 1406, Prior in 1407, Bishop of Castello in 1433 and then in 1451 the first ever Bishop of Venice.

By then, Laurence had seen a lot of human nature, and was wise as well as good. Frugal in his private life, and happy to help the poor, he made sure that he gave *wisely* as well as generously. Hence the poor who came to him for help were given food and clothing - but only very occasionally small amounts of money. Bishop Laurence also devoted himself to peace-making and other pastoral work, for which his contemporaries held him in high esteem. As he lay dying on a bed of straw, very many clergy, laity, beggars and destitute folk came to grieve: he was greatly respected and loved. Wise giving and peace-making – Laurence's example still shines true today.

8th September: The Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary

In both eastern and western Churches, Mary has always been held as pre-eminent among all the saints. The unique, extraordinary privilege of being the mother of the One who was both God and Man, makes her worthy of special honour. Thomas Aquinas believed she was due *hyperdulia*, or a veneration that exceeds that of other saints, but is at the same time infinitely below the adoration, or *latria*, due to God alone.

The gospels of Matthew and Luke give Mary most mention. Luke even tells the story of Jesus' infancy from Mary's point of view. Her Song, or *Magnificat* appears in Luke 1:46-55.

The virginal conception of Christ is clearly stated in the gospels. But after Jesus' birth, Mary fades quietly into the background. During Jesus' public life, she is mentioned only occasionally, as at the wedding at Cana. She reappears at the foot of the Cross (John's Gospel), and is given into John's care. In the early chapters of Acts, Mary is with the Apostles, and received the Holy Spirit along with them on Whitsunday. But her role was not the active one of teaching and preaching.

Matters of Faith

Mary's significance grew with the centuries. By the fifth century she was called *Theotokos*, The Mother of God, and from the seventh century onwards, she was given four festivals: the Presentation in the Temple (2nd February), the Annunciation (25th March), the Assumption (15th August) and her Nativity (8th September).

Marian devotion has played an enormous role in the church down the years. Mary has been the object of countless prayers, accredited with performing many miracles, and the subject of thousands of artistic endeavours. She has had hundreds of chapels or parish churches named after her. During the Reformation many images of Mary were destroyed. The Second Vatican Council 1962 made an extended statement on her, stressing her complete dependence on her Son, and regarding her as a model of the Church.

Principal Marian shrines of today include Lourdes (France), Fatima (Portugal), Walsingham (England), Loreto (Italy), Czesochowa (Poland) and Guadalupe (Mexico).

21st September: St Matthew

Matthew was one of 12 apostles. But he began as a publican i.e. a tax-collector of Jewish race who worked for the Romans, before he left all at the call of Christ. From earliest times, he was regarded as the author of the first of the four Gospels. The Gospel of Matthew is in correct, concise style, very suitable for public reading. His usual emblem as an evangelist is a man, because his genealogy emphasised the family ties of Christ. In art, he has been represented as either an evangelist or as an apostle. As an evangelist, he has been depicted sitting at a desk, writing his gospel with an angel holding the inkwell. In the Middle Ages he was even given a pair of spectacles.

Matthew was martyred by a sword or a spear, some think in Ethiopia.

23rd September: When the sun goes edgewise – and daytime equals night

23rd September is the autumnal equinox (if you live in the northern hemisphere) or the vernal (Spring) equinox (if you live in the southern hemisphere) The equinoxes occur in March and September, when the Sun is 'edgewise' to the Earth's axis of rotation, so that everywhere on earth has twelve hours of daylight and twelve hours of darkness.

29th September: Enter all the angels, led by Michael

By Canon David Winter

What is an angel? Easy, people think: a shining figure with glorious wings, who appears from time to time to do some mighty work for God or bring a very special message from him.

Well, that's right in one sense (apart from the wings, which owe more to stained glass windows than the Bible). But the fact that not all 'angels' in the Bible are 'glorious' or 'shining' should make us hesitate to categorise them in this spectacular way. After all, the three apparently ordinary men who visited Abraham and Sarah to tell them that she would have a son even though she was long past child-bearing age had none of those outward embellishments. Nevertheless, Abraham recognised them as divine messengers.

The Bible is full of angels, from the early chapters of Genesis to the last chapter of Revelation, and often they had a key role in crucial events. It seems, from just two instances, that Michael was their leader, an 'archangel'. In many stained glass windows he's seen with a sword, because in a vision in Revelation he led the angelic host who fought and defeated Satan and his army.

In the Gospels, an angel of the Lord appeared to Zechariah in the Temple, to tell him that his elderly wife was to have a son, the forerunner of the Messiah, John the Baptist. An angel - Gabriel - appeared to Mary to tell her that she would be the mother of the Messiah, the Son of God. An angel appeared 'in a dream' to Joseph, the village carpenter in Nazareth, to tell him to go ahead and marry his fiancée, Mary, and later - also in a dream - warned him not to go back to Bethlehem. A 'young man', whom we take to have been an angel, was sitting in the empty tomb on Easter morning, waiting to tell the startled women that Jesus wasn't there - He had risen (Mark 16:5). Without going into every biblical reference to angels, those should be sufficient to show that the word covers an enormous diversity of experience. So the Letter to the Hebrews speaks of those who practice hospitality as sometimes 'entertaining angels unawares'. Sometimes people recognised angels for who they were, and sometimes they didn't. Angels, quite simply, are God's agents or emissaries, messengers and ministers of His will. Sometimes they are human; sometimes they seem to be spiritual beings.

Perhaps we could even say that *anyone*, in any situation, who is at that moment God's 'messenger' to us, or serves us graciously, is an 'angel'. So, when we say, 'Oh, be an angel and pop up to the chemist for my prescription', we may be nearer the heart of the matter than we think!

Theology degrees at risk

The number of students opting to do theology and religious studies at university has almost halved in just six years.

More than 14,000 were enrolled in 2011-12, but that fell to 7,585 by 2017-18, putting the degrees at some risk of disappearing from university curriculums.

Prof Diarmaid MacCulloch, an expert in church history at the University of Oxford, described the decline as 'alarming'. "I am extremely concerned. Teachers are not directing people in this important direction and not seeing the value in theology and religious studies."

Miscellaneous

Editor: An iconic store celebrates this month. By Tim Lenton

Marks & Spencer – celebrating 125 years

The origins of the iconic British retail chain Marks & Spencer (often known as M&S) were laid 125 years ago, on 28th September 1894, when Michael Marks, a Polish Jewish immigrant, acquired his first permanent stall in Leeds covered market and invited Thomas Spencer to become his business partner.

Ten years earlier Marks had opened a market stall in Leeds with the slogan ‘Don’t ask the price: it’s a penny’. Spencer was a cashier from Dewhirst – a wholesale company whose owner Isaac had backed Marks. Spencer’s £300 investment grew to £15,000 by 1903. He died two years later, but his wife continued to fund charitable work in Middlesbrough.

After Marks’ death, the St Michael brand was created by his son in his honour. The store has always been seen as a retailer of British quality goods, and its attitude to its customers was encapsulated in the 1953 slogan ‘The customer is always and completely right.’

In 1998, the company became the first British retailer to make a pre-tax profit of over £1 billion. At present there are well over 900 stores across the UK, including more than 600 that sell only food, but there are plans to close about 100 of them.

Give nature two hours a week

If you want to improve your health and higher psychological well-being, spend at least 120 minutes a week in a park, woodland, country park, beach or elsewhere in nature.

Recent research at Exeter University found that people who spend at least two hours a week walking among trees, listening to birdsong, and engaging with nature have lower stress and blood pressure. The study was published in the journal *Scientific Reports*.

The reason behind food allergies?

Could junk food be behind the rise of food allergies? Scientists have found that children who eat more takeaways are more likely to suffer from dangerous intolerances. Researchers at the University of Naples found that children with food allergies also had a large build-up of sugary fatty substances under their skin which develop after eating processed and sugary foods. It is thought that these ‘advanced glycation end’ products (AGEs) may cause the gut to leak. That could trigger an overactive immune response that makes the body more sensitive to food consumed.

Two per cent of adults and seven per cent of children suffer from food allergies; a five-fold rise since the Nineties. Recent decades have seen a dramatic rise in highly processed food in the West.

The sound of music

Joe's wife liked to sing. She decided to join the church choir. From time to time she would practise while she was in the kitchen preparing dinner.

Soon, whenever she would start in on a song, Joe would head outside to the back garden. His wife, with hurt feelings, said, "What's the matter, Joe? Don't you like my singing?"

Joe replied, "Well, put it this way, if I stay outside, the neighbours won't assume that I'm beating you."

Money

One day a small boy started pulling handfuls of money out of his pockets – several notes as well as many coins. Bewildered, his mother asked, "Where on earth did you get all that money?"

"At church, of course," the boy replied, surprised. "They have bowls of it there."

Fair cop?

While taking a routine vandalism report at an infants school, I was interrupted by a little girl about six years old. Looking up and down at my uniform, she asked, "Are you a cop?"

"Yes," I answered and continued writing the report.

"My mum said if I ever needed help, I should ask the police. Is that right?" she ventured.

"Yes, that's right," I told her, and added expansively: "We are always here for you."

The little girl looked reassured. "Well, then," she said, as she extended her foot toward me, "would you please tie my shoe?"

Toothy grin

While working for an organisation that delivers lunches to the elderly, I used to take my four-year-old daughter on my afternoon rounds. She was unfailingly intrigued by the various appliances of old age, particularly the canes, walkers and wheelchairs.

One day I found her staring at a pair of false teeth soaking in a glass. As I braced myself for the inevitable barrage of questions, she merely whispered, 'The tooth fairy will never believe this!'

The great thing, if one can, is to stop regarding all the unpleasant things as interruptions of one's own or real life. The truth is of course that what one calls the interruptions are precisely one's real life – the life God is sending one day by day.

C S Lewis

Miscellaneous

Easy Sudoku

		5			9	3		4
4	6	3	8	2	1	7		5
7	8		1	3		9		
		6				1		
		1		6	7		2	3
1		4	3	8	5	2	6	9
6		8	4			5		

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A little harder

		5				1		7
				1	3	8		
	3	1						
6				7				2
			8		4			
1				3				9
						6	5	
		9	1	5				
8	4					3		

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Last month's
Easy solution

2	6	4	3	7	1	8	5	9
5	1	3	9	6	8	2	4	7
8	9	7	5	2	4	1	3	6
6	4	5	1	3	2	9	7	8
9	3	1	8	5	7	4	6	2
7	2	8	4	9	6	3	1	5
1	5	2	6	8	3	7	9	4
3	8	6	7	4	9	5	2	1
4	7	9	2	1	5	6	8	3

Harder solution

3	6	5	4	9	7	8	2	1
8	2	7	6	1	5	9	4	3
1	9	4	3	2	8	6	5	7
2	7	9	8	4	3	5	1	6
5	4	8	2	6	1	3	7	9
6	1	3	5	7	9	2	8	4
7	3	2	1	5	6	4	9	8
4	8	1	9	3	2	7	6	5
9	5	6	7	8	4	1	3	2

**When
God or-
dains,
He sus-
tains**

Open the window!

How often do you think about the air quality within your own home?

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (Nice) has found that many of us are living with 'indoor pollution'. It has recently issued advice on keeping kitchens and bathrooms well ventilated to combat the problem.

Nice warns that bathing, cooking, cleaning, drying clothes, using candles or open fires all impact on the air quality within a room. Poor ventilation leads to a build-up of pollutants which can exacerbate illnesses such as asthma.

Cycle – and be well

Dr Tom Porter, a consultant in public health medicine, is urging people to cycle more. "It is a fantastic form of physical activity and riding your bike is one of the easiest ways to reduce your risk of ill health while building your cardiovascular fitness. It's also great for improving mental well-being too.

"Not only can cycling to work reduce your risk of death from heart disease by 52 per cent, but it's also a great way to get around the city without using your car, making it good for both you and the environment."