

JUNE 2026

## *From the Editors*

*Welcome to this June edition.*

*On Pentecost Sunday (24th May) we said a sad and tearful farewell to Chris and Jacqui. They have been with us through good times and bad and kept us uplifted. We wish them all the very best for the future. The Mayor of Penwortham presented Chris and Jacqui with gifts and flowers*

*June brings us Penwortham Gala over the weekend of 13th and 14th June. On Sunday 14th there will be the usual Churches Together in Penwortham Service on Hurst Grange Park so there will be no 10.15 service at church on that day.*



**"It is the month of June,  
The month of leaves and  
roses,  
When pleasant sights salute  
the eyes  
And pleasant scents the  
noses."**

**- Nathaniel Parker  
Willis, *The Month of June***



### **VICAR'S RETIREMENT 'DO'**

Jill and myself saw Chris and Jacqui this week and they were still feeling "awesome" and "over welcomed" by the generosity of parishioners retirement gifts and the best wishes for their long and happy retirement by some many people (there were over 130 in church). The church bells were specially rung for the occasion. For those not able to attend last Sunday afternoon, we gave Jacqui a large bowl of plants and flowers and to Chris we split the 2,200 pounds donated into two. A gift voucher for Dobbies Garden Centre for 1,000 Pounds (to enable them to get garden furniture and the balance of 1,200 pounds to enable them to purchase a bed settee (both of these were following consultation with the family). A very substantial buffet was provided and we all toasted Chris & Jacqui with sparkling wine. Our thanks are to all those who helped in any way to make the occasion such a success. Thank you so much and Chris and Jacqui wish to be included with these remarks.

### **CHURCH SERVICES IN THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE:**

We three churchwardens have had informal discussions with the Area Dean Revd Hannah Boyd about church services during the interregnum. It has been agreed that:

- There will be **NO THURSDAY MORNING COMMUNION** for the time being (all regular attenders have already been informed)
- **SUNDAY SERVICES BOTH AT 8.15 & 10.15am will CONTINUE.**
- **Holy Communion at 8.15am and 10.15am will continue to be held this coming Sunday (31<sup>st</sup> May) and Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> June.** This coming Sunday the Area Dean Rev. Hannah Boyd will be the celebrant at both 8.15am and 10.15am and she will outline to everybody what will be happening as and from Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> June.
- **On Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> June the celebrant at both the 8.15am and 10.15am service** will be conducted by Revd Michael Wood a retired clergyman.
- **There will be Holy Communion at 8.15am only on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> June** as it is Penwortham Gala weekend. The usual ecumenical service will take place on Hurst Grange Park at 11am.
- I will keep you all informed by email and a list will be put up in church showing what type of Sunday services will be taking place **from Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> June**

## *St Mary's News*

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Going forward during the Vacancy there will be at least one service of Holy Communion each Sunday. However, because of the shortage of clergy within the Diocese our churchwardens will take Morning Prayer services when we are unable to offer Holy Communion.

Most importantly of all though please continue to come to church because the church needs you more than ever during this time of uncertainty and change.

Below is the service pattern for June.

### **7th June**

- 8.15 Holy Communion
- 10.15 Holy Communion

### **14th June**

- 8.15 Holy Communion
- 10.15 No service—Churches Together Service on Hurst Grange Park

### **21st June**

- 8.15 Morning Prayer
- 10.15 Holy Communion

### **28th June**

- 8.15 Holy Communion
- 10.15 Morning Prayer

Throughout the Vacancy the churchwardens will continue to liaise with our Area Dean the Rev'd. Hannah Boyd to ensure services continue.

If you have any queries or concerns please contact any of the churchwardens.



# PENWORTHAM GALA

A FREE FAMILY EVENT PROVIDED BY PENWORTHAM TOWN  
COUNCIL

Saturday 13th June 2026

- Procession: Starts at 12noon (from Hill Road South) heading towards Marshalls Brow to arrive at Hurst Grange Park from 1.30pm.
- Stalls: Open from 1pm at Hurst Grange Park
- Main Stage Entertainment: 1.30pm – 10pm

SUNDAY 14TH JUNE 2026

- HURST GRANGE PARK: 11AM – 4PM

**For more information please email  
[info@penworthamtowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:info@penworthamtowncouncil.gov.uk)**



**PENWORTHAM FOODBANK**

PENWORTHAM COMMUNITY CENTRE  
KINGSFOLD DRIVE PR1 9EQ

EVERY FRIDAY\*\*  
BETWEEN 0930 AND NOON

**DONATIONS OF NON-PERISHABLE FOODS ARE  
URGENTLY REQUIRED**

*We thank all who have donated food in the past but we need further supplies: particularly pasta, pasta sauce, tins of soup, tins of baked beans and canned fruit*

**BRING YOUR DONATIONS TO CHURCH, OR TO THE  
FOODBANK ON A FRIDAY MORNING**

OR

**ARRANGE A BANK TRANSFER/STANDING ORDER\* TO:**

Account name: Churches Together in Penwortham  
Sort Code: 30-96-85 Account No: 00415955 (Lloyds Bank)

OR

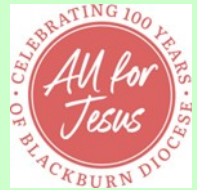
**MAKE A DONATION (cheque or cash)\***

\*We are registered for Gift Aid so if you are able to make a financial donation and are a UK taxpayer then please let us have your contact details so we can arrange for a Gift Aid form to be sent to you.

\*\*opening times vary over the Christmas period

### Fun, friendship and faith on display at 'truly special' youth camp in Lancashire

**Young people from Church of England parishes in every part of Lancashire headed to Borwick Hall in the north of the County this week, eagerly anticipating 'Endeavour '26' - the latest in a series of much-loved annual youth camps.**



The four-day residential was led by Rt Rev Philip North, Bishop of Blackburn, alongside other leaders from the Diocese and brought the teenagers together for a time of fun, friendship and faith.

Young people attended Endeavour '26 from Burnley, Blackburn, Darwen, Clayton-le-Moors, Chorley, Preston, New Longton, Ribbleson, Goosnargh, Inglewhite, Garstang, Penwortham, Lancaster, Skerton, Morecambe, Scorton, Torrisholme and Cleveleys. Endeavour '26 included outdoor activities, games and shared experiences, alongside Christian teaching and worship.

The annual camp is a key part of the Diocese's ongoing commitment to place children and young people at the heart of church life, creating space for them to explore faith and grow in confidence together.

And the event is proving so popular now that, from 2027, the Diocese hopes to hold two camps to accommodate as many young people as it can. Further updates on that in due course.

Speaking after the camp's closing Eucharist at St Mary's Church in Borwick, Bishop Philip said: "What a brilliant time we've had at Endeavour '26! I headed home exhausted but feeling very thankful and encouraged.

"We have been blessed with beautiful sunshine but, far more than that, by the company of a group of remarkable young people. From playing games on the water to testing their limits on the high wire and holding snakes, in our gathered times and in the quiet beauty of compline it has been a real joy and a privilege to share time with them."

Bishop Philip continued: "The real highlight was the final Eucharist at St Mary's in Borwick. It was so prayerfully and confidently led by the young people themselves. I am deeply grateful to all the leaders who have given themselves so generously and to the guest leaders who joined us too. Their care and commitment shaped something truly special."

### East Meets West – a community of women growing, sharing and celebrating 20 years together

**An inspirational women's group which grew out of Lancaster Priory and involves other Christian denominations and women of many other faiths has just celebrated its 20th anniversary.**

'East Meets West', a wonderful regular gathering, held a special celebration to mark the occasion at the Priory.

Hilary Hopwood, co-chair of the group from 2012-2024, writes about how the group came about and the remarkable journey to today, when they have been able to mark 20 years of friendship and support.



Hilary writes ...

In 2006 a member of the Priory congregation, retired teacher Liz Bagley, became aware of a change.

She noticed that the Asian Muslim women she used to exchange a smile with when she parked her car in Lancaster no longer returned her smile but looked at the ground instead.

Was this the result of growing islamophobia following terrorist atrocities? This concerned her so much she decided to reach out to them.

A couple of other ladies from the Priory joined her, and together they approached Dallas Road School, situated right next to the car park in question. The school was already running a group for the Asian Mums, to help prepare their children for school, so it was easy to make an introduction.

Once the women from 'East' and 'West' had met they decided to start up a weekly cookery project in the Priory Hall, where traditional recipes could be shared. The sound of their laughter could be heard down the street, and as the women began to bond 'East Meets West' was born. The first committee meeting was held in August 2006.

Over the first ten years more creative activities followed including three embroidery projects. Two of the embroideries are on permanent display at the Priory. There were also parties, celebrations, and outings (including one to Blackburn with a visit to the cathedral) at a time when it was unusual to see women, with and without headscarves, out and about and having fun together along with their children.

## *Diocesan News*

Friendships were formed, trust was built, and worlds were opened up for the women from both faith communities. We also visited a Buddhist community in Ulverston, and the Sikh and Hindu communities in Preston and did a 'Healthy Living' project together.

In 2016 women began arriving from many countries as asylum seekers and refugees, and so we started to meet every week and take it in turns to make lunch. The group has continued to grow and there are now over 100 in the group, with 30 of us meeting weekly in the well located and equipped Fellowship Room of Lancaster Baptist Church and members have become our firm friends.

We number up to 17 nationalities, and include women who are here to study or work, refugees, and retired women as well as babies and pre-schoolers. We are very active with a number of projects running simultaneously and involving local people and organisations.

The group is led by volunteers and a committee of 12 from both 'East' and 'West'. Many gain confidence through belonging to the group and go on to study and get jobs. For example Somayeh, an Iranian refugee who went on to do an MA in Film Studies at Lancaster University, has just made a film to celebrate our 20th anniversary.

As we reflect on where we are on our journey, 20 years on, we realise that simple welcome and hospitality is the hallmark of the group. It is an offer that brings hope, and solidarity and transcends language, faith and cultural barriers.

Women have so much in common that it is easy to bond and then find ways to meet the needs of the local community where we live. We have few discussions about our different faiths but celebrate each other's festivals with gusto.

Women of no faith who share our values and ethos also join us. We are doctors, nurses, students, retired professionals, refugees, asylum seekers, mothers, grandmothers, academics, carers, cleaners, with no reliable funding stream but powered by a passion to be together and welcome others to join us.

**In the sky, there is no distinction of east and west;  
people create distinctions out of their own minds  
and then believe them to be true.**

*Buddha*

### **A joy and privilege to be received by the Pope, says Archbishop of Canterbury**

The Archbishop of Canterbury has praised the Pope for speaking out against injustice and about hope; has commended working together for the common good; and has endorsed the strengthening power of common witness, in an address after a recent private meeting at the Apostolic Palace in the Vatican.

She prayed with Pope Leo and said: “It is a joy and a privilege to be received by you, together with this delegation from Lambeth Palace.”

She said: “Your Holiness, you have spoken powerfully about the many injustices in our world today, but you have spoken even more powerfully about hope. The world needed this message at this time — thank you. It reminded us that, despite our sufferings, people long for life in all its fullness, and countless people are working each day for this vision of the common good.”

She continued: “May we continue to work together in that hope, trusting that the one who has begun this good work among us will bring it to completion. Please be assured of a warm welcome for the Church of England should you honour the United Kingdom with a visit.”

### **Stabbing of two Jewish men in Golders Green ‘devastating’ says Bishop of Edmonton**

The Area Bishop of Edmonton, in the diocese of London, Dr Anderson Jeremiah, has expressed shock and sadness after two Jewish men were recently stabbed in Golders Green, north London,

The Jewish men, one in his 70s and one in his 30s, were treated at the scene for stab wounds; both were then taken to hospital. A 45-year-old man was arrested on suspicion of attempted murder.

Dr Jeremiah said: “This was not just an attack on individuals, but on the safety and spirit of our entire neighbourhood. In the face of such darkness, our community must stand firm. We must respond with unwavering resilience and a commitment to the kind of love and unity that overcomes

**Tolerance and compassion are qualities of fearless people.**

**Paulo Coelho**

### **Assisted dying: Proper scrutiny was ‘moral necessity’, says bishop as bill falls**

Adequate scrutiny of the assisted dying Bill before Parliament was a “moral necessity” and not just a “procedural detail”, the Bishop of Newcastle said recently, as the proposed legislation ran out of time in the House of Lords. Bishop Helen-Ann Hartley, said the more closely the Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill had been examined, the more concerns came into focus, not fewer, as she spoke in the final day of the Bill in the House of Lords.

“In our context, where questions of life, death, care and conscience are so closely intertwined, the quality of our scrutiny is not a procedural detail—it is a moral necessity,” Bishop Helen-Ann, who was a member of a Select Committee that examined the Bill – told Peers.

“Some may dismiss my contribution as one which is grounded in a faith, but this is as legitimate and significant as any other viewpoint – grounded in faith, belief or none.

“Whilst my faith informs my alarm at our designation of dignity or the lack of it, it is from my experience on the Select Committee, that I have found that the more closely we have examined this Bill, the more concerns have come into focus, not fewer.

"For a Bill of this magnitude in terms of societal change, the highest level of scrutiny is imperative."

The Private Member’s Bill would have allowed someone with a terminal diagnosis and six months or less to live to be provided with drugs to end their life if they had capacity and met the eligibility criteria.

It has been going through Parliament for the past year and a half, but ran out of time before the current session of Parliament came to an end.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Sarah Mullally, speaking briefly in the debate, emphasised the shared wish of both opponents and proponents of the Bill that those who are terminally ill should be treated with compassion and be able to die in a pain-free and dignified way. She paid tribute to the ‘enormous’ amount of work that had gone into the Committee Stage of the Bill.

**Adam & Eve were the first ones to ignore the Apple terms and conditions.**

## ***Church News***

### **School assembly songs to inspire new worshipping communities for children**

A major new programme will see the launch of worshipping communities for children and families, based on songs that are already popular in school assemblies.

iSingPOP will support 300 churches to create new gatherings where families from local primary schools will be invited to explore faith together, drawing on the energetic worship songs children already know from school.

The aim is to connect collective worship in schools to engagement with church for families interested in growing in faith together. The programme has received £500k investment from the Strategic Mission and Ministry Investment Board (SMMIB).

iSingPOP, from the charity Innervation Trust, produces vibrant worship songs that engage more than 77,000 children every week, alongside resources that equip teachers, clergy and volunteers to lead faith-based music sessions in schools and churches.

It also brings schools, churches, and the community together by giving churches the opportunity to host a large joy-filled concert, teaching children songs that explore the Christian faith over four days, culminating in a whole-school performance to parents. This approach has already inspired many families to explore faith beyond the school gates.

Through the new programme, iSingPOP will help to link worship in schools with the life of local churches.

Miz Porter, Director of iSingPOP by Innervation Trust, said: “For 25 years, we have been working with churches and schools to create inspirational collective worship resources that uplift children.

“We believe intergenerational worship has the power to introduce whole families to the Gospel, and we are delighted that this new programme will help churches across the country to deepen their relationships with local schools.”

## Church News

### **60 years of Girl Choristers at St David's Cathedral**

St David's Cathedral recently marked 60 years since girl choristers first sang in the Cathedral Choir with a celebratory evensong.

It was in April 1966 that the Cathedral Choir were busy preparing for a BBC radio broadcast of choral evensong, when in the days leading up to the recording, numerous boy choristers succumbed to a measles outbreak that was spreading through the local primary schools.

Facing the prospect of no choristers being well enough to perform, Organist and Master of the Choristers Peter Boorman approached music teacher Rosalyn Charles, and asked if the girls of Ysgol Dewi Sant school choir may be able to sing.

The school, Dean and Chapter all approved the emergency measure, and following a successful broadcast on 20<sup>th</sup> April 1966, chapter agreed in July 1966 that the girls were to become full choristers.

Ever since, the soprano line in the Cathedral Choir has been sung by girls aged 8-18, drawn from St Davids and, more recently, further afield in Pembrokeshire. St David's Cathedral pioneered the concept of girls singing in cathedral choirs, decades before similar initiatives were launched in other cathedrals.

To celebrate this milestone, the Cathedral held a special evensong, with the Cathedral Choir joined by former choristers from the past 60 years.

### **Peaceful mind in June**

*June is a time when we tend to spend more time outside, and probably see more of other people...*

A man that has friends must show himself friendly... *Proverbs 18:24*

Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against anyone among your people but love your neighbour as yourself. I am the Lord. - *Leviticus 19:18,34*

How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity! - *Psalms 133:1*

Whoever would foster love covers over an offense, but whoever repeats the matter separates close friends. - *Proverbs 17:9*

### 21<sup>st</sup> June - Father' Day, a time to celebrate male role models

In the UK, USA and Canada, the third Sunday in June is Father's Day. It's usually a good time for sons and daughters to take their father to his favourite restaurant, or to watch a favoured sport, or whatever else he enjoys doing.

How will you celebrate it this year? If your own father cannot be with you, how about a Zoom meeting?

How do these special days ever get started, anyway? Well, Father's Day began because way back in 1909 there was a woman in Spokane, Washington, named Sonora Louise Smart Dodd. That year she heard a church sermon about the merits of setting aside a day to honour one's mother. Mother's Day was just beginning to gather widespread attention in the United States at this time. But Sonora Louise Smart Dodd knew that it was her father who had selflessly raised herself and her five siblings by himself after their mother had died in childbirth. So the sermon on mothers gave Sonora Louise the idea to petition for a day to honour fathers, and in particular, her own father, William Jackson Smart.

Sonora Louise soon set about planning the first Father's Day celebration in Spokane in 1910. With support from the Spokane Ministerial Association and the YMCA, her efforts paid off, and a 'Father's Day' was appointed. Sonora Louise had wanted Father's Day to be on the first Sunday in June (since that was her father's birthday), but the city council didn't have time to approve it until later in the month. And so on 19<sup>th</sup> June, 1910, the first Father's Day was celebrated in Spokane.

Gradually, other people in other cities caught on and started celebrating their fathers, too. The rose was selected as the official Father's Day flower. Some people began to wear a white rose to honour a father who was dead, and a red one to honour a father who was living. Finally, in 1972, President Richard Nixon signed a presidential proclamation declaring the third Sunday of June as Father's Day - a permanent, national holiday.

**“Of all the titles I've been privileged to have, 'Dad' has always been the best.”**

**– Ken Norton**

### **What's the Big Idea? - an Introduction to the Books of the Bible: Colossians**

This month we return to look at the books of the New Testament. Many today are asking: *'How does Jesus uniquely reveal God to us?* This question lies at the heart of Paul's letter to the Colossians. The church in Colossae was a fruit of his three years ministry in Ephesus (52-55 AD). Paul went on to write this letter while in a Roman prison around 61 AD.

Paul was dealing with gnostic false teachers who denied that Jesus was fully God and man. They taught that enlightenment could be reached through special knowledge and rigorous self-discipline. Paul attacked this false teaching by focusing on the supremacy of Christ: *'in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, and you have this fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority'* (2:9-10). He affirms that Jesus is:

Lord of all Creation, who sustains everything. As the exact representation of God, He is first-born over all creation (1:15-17) and there is no place for worshipping angels or any other power (2:18). Head of the Church (1:18), to whom the Colossians should submit (2:6, 7) and not be seduced by vain speculations (1:16-18).

Supreme Saviour (3:11), who has defeated all spiritual powers on the cross (2:15), allowing them to share in the power of His resurrection (2:20). All are adopted into His family and so there are no special qualifications needed to experience God's favour (2:8-20). In chapters 3&4 Paul demonstrates the practical implications for the Christian's daily life. We are challenged to abandon the old life and cultivate our new life in Christ (3:5-4:6). If we maintain Jesus as our Lord, He will prove truly sufficient for all our needs.

*Editor: Canon Paul Hardingham continues his seven-part series.*

#### **The Seven Deadly Sins: Gluttony**

*'They're called deadly because they lead to the death of the soul.'* (Richard Newhauser).

This month we are looking at *Gluttony*. Which food do we find hardest to resist?

It is reported that 66% of adults in the UK are overweight or obese. Gluttony is indulgence to excess, usually involving food, but can also include drinking, screen time, shopping etc.

Paul warns us about the dangers of gluttony when he refers to those whose minds are set on earthly things: *'their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame.'* (Philippians 3:19). Our struggle with gluttony is often the outward sign of a spiritual hunger for acceptance, love,

or self-worth. This desire for satisfaction cannot be satisfied by food alone.

How can we overcome gluttony?

*Glorify God with your body: 'Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God?' (1 Corinthians 6:19). Paul reminds us that our bodies belong to God; as temples of the Holy Spirit, we should use them to glorify God.*

While we have freedom in the things we consume, we are also called to honour God in our actions.

*Exercise self-control: 'live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.' (Galatians 5:16). Paul goes on to list self-control as one of the Fruit of the Spirit (5:23). As we examine ourselves and identify those areas where we lack self-control, we can entrust them to God, asking for the strength of the Holy Spirit to overcome gluttony.*

We recognise that true satisfaction is only found in a desire for God alone: *'Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.'* (Matthew 5:6).

*Editor: The Revd Dr Jo White continues her series on aspects of Christianity.*

### **Reflected Faith Series: The Creed (Part 2)**

Last month we considered where the Creed is placed within the service. This month let's think about what is in the Creed(s).

It's important to know that the earliest known Creed, which is still substantially used today was first found in a letter from around AD 341. This is known today as the Apostles' Creed because it is widely thought to have been originally written by the Apostles themselves.

Every phrase in it can be noted as derived directly from biblical texts and it is the compilation that has taken so much thought and discussion until we arrive at the versions we use in churches today.

Because the Creed succinctly includes everything Christians believe, it unites us all in those truths; whichever Christian denomination you choose to worship within.

So, establishing wording that expresses the faith of all Christians has been the challenge.

Protestants sometimes wonder at the phrase, 'the holy catholic Church' being included, but the word 'catholic' here has the meaning of 'universal' rather than denominational.

We are ALL united in our basic faith.

This is what makes us Christians and distinguishes us from other 'churches', whether they have the name of Jesus in their title or not.

Only Churches which acknowledge and include one of the recognised creeds can join the international organisation of 'Churches Together'.

Essentially, this is a sure way to know that you are at a Christian service.

In more recent years the Church has authorized several Affirmations of Faith which contain the key tenants of faith but are shorter and, if you like, simpler to understand.

### **This month**

Because the Creed has to be universally accepted within established churches, deviations from the texts are not permitted. However, just for the joy of thinking ... what would you include in a statement of faith if you were drafting it? Which friends would you want to include on your 'committee'?

### **Who was Evelyn Underhill?**

Evelyn Underhill was an English Anglo-Catholic writer, poet and novelist. She is known for her numerous writings on religion and spiritual practice. Underhill was born in Wolverhampton in 1875, and during her lifetime published 39 books and more than 350 articles and reviews.

She married Hubert Stuart in 1907. Together they travelled regularly to Switzerland, France and Italy, where she pursued her interests in art and Catholicism and visited numerous churches and monasteries. She pursued a daily routine that included writing, research, worship, prayer and meditation.

During the First World War Underhill worked at the Admiralty in the naval intelligence (Africa) department. In 1921 she became an Anglican and later changed her views about conflicts and in 1939 she became a Christian pacifist.

From 1924 she became widely respected as the creator of Anglican retreat houses in the UK. Her first was at Pleshey, a small village in Essex. These were havens of peace and prayer where many drew closer to God; sought His will for their lives and found renewed strength on their return home. Underhill also believed that retreat attendees should be warm, comfortable and well-fed as their physical well-being was just as important as their spiritual needs.

In her 50s, her writings became more focused on the Holy Spirit, and she became a prominent figure as a lay spiritual director, guest speaker, radio lecturer and a proponent of contemplative prayer.

Underhill died in Hampstead, North London, on 15<sup>th</sup> June 1941, aged 65 years.

*My religion is very simple. My religion is kindness. ~Dalai Lama*

### God in the Arts

*Editor: Have you ever thought how an actual church building might provide a series of visual aids to spiritual meditation? The Revd Michael Burgess continues his procession through a church building, this month pausing to consider the significance of the church monuments.*

#### **‘He gave us eyes to see them’ – Church Monuments**

This month as we continue our walk through the church building, we focus on monuments. George Herbert has a poem on this theme which contrasts the body we see represented in marble, but now consigned to dust, with the soul released to perform its eternal devotions. Such monuments are often a reminder of the frailty of life and the certainty of death, symbolised by an hourglass or a skull or classical urns.

In St Cuby’s Church, Duloe in Cornwall there is a fine slate memorial of an Elizabethan lady, Anna Coffyn, depicted in a richly embroidered dress with gloves and a prayer book, ready for church. Underneath are the skull and crossbones, a *memento mori*, a reminder that death has visited even this elegant lady. That sign of death can come as a shock to us when we are committed so much to living and getting the most out of life today. Death intrudes violently into the world we would like.

But in St Bartholomew’s Church, Much Marcle in Herefordshire, there is a monument that tells us something of the serenity of death. It is the effigy of Blanche



Mortimer, who died in 1347. The church is filled with superb monuments, but this one has its own distinct and moving beauty. The carving of her dress shows buttoned sleeves and a wimple, while one hand holds a rosary. She impresses us with her loveliness, even in the midst of her death.

Leonardo da Vinci wrote, ‘While I thought that I was learning how to live, I have been learning how to die.’ As we dedicate ourselves to God in this life, we can trust with Blanche Mortimer in the 14<sup>th</sup> century that His will is for us to be with Him forever. This life is not just our preparation for death: it is our schooling for heaven, and life in heaven means life with God.

### God in the Sciences

*This series is written by Dr Ruth M. Bancewicz, who is Church Engagement Director at The Faraday Institute for Science and Religion in Cambridge. Ruth writes on the positive relationship between Science and Christian faith.*

### **Re-joining the Choir: Why people are the helpers, not priests, of Creation**

Urbanisation has taken us away from the rest of Creation, often reducing it in our eyes to a resource that we draw on when we feel like it, or need it. But Jesus said the stones would start praising Him if people didn't (Luke 19:40), and in the Psalms and Job, all of Creation is praising God. There is no hint here that people are needed to enable Creation's praise to happen. The singing is metaphorical, but it draws attention to fact that all creatures praise God by being themselves. They don't only praise with their 'voices', but with everything else they do as well: eating, running, hopping, grooming, reproducing, and so on (which is a reminder to us that our whole lives can be an act of praise to God).

Our isolation from Creation's praise can add to our sense that the whole world revolves around us and our needs. In reality, Creation is God-centred and 'His name alone is exalted' (Psalm 148:13). The value of Creation for God is not necessarily linked to its value for us – it is of value to God because He made it, He cares for it, and it praises Him.

Genesis 1:28 says that we must "rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground". To rule wisely we need to get hold of the fact that, although we have a special responsibility, we are creatures alongside all the other creatures. One way to ground ourselves in this idea is to re-join the choir and worship God together with every other living and non-living thing on earth.

Rather than being needed to help Creation praise God, we can actually rely on it to help us in our worship. Sharing God's delight in Creation, we can learn to delight in God. In return, the best thing we can do is to let living things recover their full fruitfulness as much as possible so they can praise God fully. We are called to a life of humble service, taking care of each other and everything else on this planet. In this way, we can choose to see other creatures as they are, pointing our attention away from themselves towards God – until we are caught up in their praise of Him.

# Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in  
1 Samuel 17:1-50

The Philistine and Israelite armies  
faced each other. For 40 days, the gigantic  
Philistine champion, Goliath, taunted them..

I will fight the best soldier in Israel's army and if I win, you will be our slaves




David's brothers were in Israel's army. He came to bring them food, and he heard Goliath.

He is insulting God!




David's brothers were not happy.

You just came to watch the fight. Go back to your few sheep.



But David didn't stop..

and King Saul heard what he said.



We shouldn't be cowards. I will fight him!

You don't stand a chance.



I have killed lions and bears with God's help.

Then go ahead. You can wear my armour.




I can't move with all this on!

So David took it off.



He took his sling and chose 5 stones from the stream bed.




Goliath couldn't believe what he saw.

Do you think I'm a dog that you have come with a stick?




I have come to fight you in the name of the All-powerful God. The Lord always wins His battles

As Goliath came forward..



David slung his stone and hit him on the head.

Goliath fell down dead.



The Philistines ran away, chased by Israel's army.



## Miscellaneous

### All in the month of June

It was:

**250 years** ago, on 11 June 1776 that the Second Continental Congress appointed John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, Robert R Livingston and Roger Sherman to create the first draft of the Declaration of Independence.

**Also 250 years** ago, on 11<sup>th</sup> June, that John Constable, British landscape artist, was born.

**150 years** ago, on 19<sup>th</sup> June 1876 that Nigel Gresley, railway engineer, was born. He designed some of the best-known steam locomotives in Britain, including the Flying Scotsman.

**100 years** ago, on 10<sup>th</sup> June 1926 that Antoni Gaudi, Spanish architect died. Known for his unique Modernist style. Best remembered buildings such as the Basilica de la Sagrada Familia in Barcelona.

**90 years** ago, on 14<sup>th</sup> June 1936 that G K Chesterton died. Novelist, short story writer, journalist, essayist, poet, social/literary critic and theologian, and remembered for his stories about the priest-detective Father Brown.

**80 years** ago, on 8<sup>th</sup> June 1946 that the London Victory Celebrations following WW2 took place. Allied forces paraded through London, cheered by crowds that stretched from Buckingham Palace to Regent's Park. Countrywide, an estimated 12 million people joined in various celebrations.

**65 years** ago, on 6<sup>th</sup> June that Carl Jung, Swiss psychiatrist and psychologist, died. Founder of analytical psychology.

**50 years** ago, from 23<sup>rd</sup> June to 27<sup>th</sup> August, the 1976 British Isles Heat Wave took place. One of the hottest and driest summers on record, it dried up rivers and evaporated reservoirs. Domestic water supplies were rationed, and public standpipes were installed in some areas. September and October both saw very heavy rainfall.

**40 years** ago, on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 1986 that the 'Hand of God' goal took place during the quarter-final of the 1986 FIFA World Cup in Mexico City. Argentine football player Diego Maradona scored a goal against England using his hand, which the referee mistakenly thought was his head, and allowed the goal. England was knocked out of the World Cup as a result, and Argentina won it.

**30 years** ago, on 4<sup>th</sup> June 1996 that the Second Severn Crossing was officially opened. The bridge spans the River Severn and links England and Wales via the M4 motorway.

**20 years** ago, on 18<sup>th</sup> June 2006 that American bishop Katherine Jefferts Schori became the first woman to be elected as a primate in the Anglican Communion. She became the Presiding Bishop and Primate of the Episcopal Church from November 2006 until 2015.

**10 years** ago, on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2016 that Muhammad Ali, American world heavyweight boxer, died. He was regarded as the greatest heavyweight boxer of all time.

**Also 10 years** ago, on 16<sup>th</sup> June 2016 that Jo Cox, Labour MP for Batley and Spen, was murdered by a far-right extremist. She was 41.

**Also 10 years** ago, on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2016 that the UK European Union (EU) membership referendum was held. 52 per cent of voters voted to leave the EU, and 48 per cent voted to remain. The UK left the EU on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2020.

## Miscellaneous

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*Editor: by Tim Lenton*

### **Remembering John Constable**

It was 250 years ago, on 11<sup>th</sup> June 1776, that John Constable, British landscape artist, was born.

Widely known as a painter in the Romantic tradition, Constable had a deeply conservative faith centred on the Church of England, which he viewed as an essential stabilising force in society. His painting of Salisbury Cathedral is regarded as a symbol of this.

Born in East Bergholt, Suffolk, to a wealthy corn merchant who owned Flatford Mill, he was expected to take over the business: although he was the second son, the eldest was regarded as incapable. But John Constable was always focused on painting, and the business was eventually taken over by his younger brother.

Constable enjoyed painting the areas he knew well – primarily those on the border of Suffolk and Essex which is now known as Constable Country.

“Painting is but another word for feeling,” he wrote to a friend. He regarded nature as a reflection of God’s creation and his own work as spiritual, though a tour of the Lake District in 1806 did not convince him of the attraction of mountains.

He is now highly valued, but he was never successful financially in his own lifetime, though he was elected to the Royal Academy at the age of 52. He was more popular in France than in England, but refused invitations to travel to promote his work, saying he would rather be a poor man in England than a rich man abroad.

After the death through tuberculosis of his wife Maria Bicknell at the age of 41, Constable became depressed: it had been a love match that triumphed over opposition from her wealthy relatives, and he was left a widower with seven young children. He continued to paint, but in a different style, darker and semi-abstract, but still compelling.

### **Country roads can be beautiful – but deadly. Beware.**

Be careful on rural roads. In the ten years to the end of 2024, nearly 10,000 people died on Britain’s rural roads. And so NFU Mutual launched an on-going campaign in 2020, to warn people of the dangers. The website offers some excellent, practical tips to staying safe. Visit: [Ruralroadsafe-ty@nfumuutal.co.uk](mailto:Ruralroadsafe-ty@nfumuutal.co.uk)

Above, don’t speed, because anything might be waiting for you in the road just around the next bend: bales of hay, cows, sheep or even a tractor!

### **Our British bumblebees**

Did you know we have about 270 kinds of bee in the UK, including 24 types of bumblebees? Here are just six of them:

**Early Bumblebee:** - Found throughout the UK. Rather small, with distinctive lemon-yellow bands on thorax and abdomen, and an orange tail. An important pollinator of our soft fruit.

**Common Carder Bee:** - One of our most common bees, and often still feeding in November. Fluffy, brown and orange, with sometimes darker bands on the abdomen.

**Tree Bumblebee:** - Found in England and Wales, and recently Southern Scotland. A fuzzy bee, with brown-orange hairs on its thorax, a black abdomen, and a white tail.

**Red-tailed Bumblebee:** - The female is very large, with a big red 'tail', while males are smaller.

**Garden Bumblebee:** - A scruffy-looking large bee, with a long tongue and face. It has yellow bands at the collar, rear of the thorax and at the first segment of the abdomen, and the tip of the tail is white.

**Buff-tailed bumblebee:** - The biggest of our bumblebees, with a yellow collar near the head and another on the abdomen. The queen has a buff-coloured 'tail', while the workers have white 'tails' and black hair on their faces.

Be kind to our bees. They are in steady decline across the UK.

### **Parents blamed for children's bad behaviour in class**

A government schools tsar has said that weak-willed parents are to blame for the increasingly bad behaviour of many children in the classroom.

In the autumn term of 2024-25 alone, 16,000 pupils were suspended for violence against an adult. Some teachers are now forced to wear bite sleeves, to protect themselves from their pupils' teeth. Other teachers keep an emergency radio on hand, so they can call for back-up in the event of their pupils mounting a physical attack on them in the classroom.

Tom Bennett, the Department of Education's ambassador for attendance and behaviour, says there is a growing dispute between parents and teachers as to who is responsible for such disruptive pupils. Bennett claims that unruly children think "they can do what they want and that they're the most important person in the room and that their feelings are the only feelings that matter". The schools think otherwise.

### **Need total darkness to sleep?**

According to followers of 'The Dutch Method', it is good to sleep with your curtains open.

That way, in the morning your bedroom slowly floods with natural light, which coincides with your circadian rhythm, the internal body clock that regulates your sleep cycle. Natural light also stops the production of melatonin (your sleep hormone) and triggers a natural rise in cortisol. That lets you know that the new day has begun. It is considered a gentle way to wake up.

Nevertheless, others of us prefer the curtains to be shut, and need pitch black to sleep.

Whichever you prefer, here are some tips on sleep and waking up.

~ Natural light in the morning is good for you. It is better to go for a walk at the start of each day, rather than to head straight for your phone and computer.

~ Melatonin levels decline as we get older, which makes it harder to fall and stay asleep.

~ Our body clock can shift to earlier, leaving us sleepier at night, but more awake earlier in the morning.

~ As we age, we become more sensitive to disruption during the night, and things like stress, life changes, noise or light can have a bigger impact.

~ A good routine before sleep is essential. Aim for bed at the same time, empty your head with a to-do list for tomorrow, clear your thoughts, and relax.

**I heard there were a bunch of break-ins over at the car park. That is wrong on so many levels.**

**There are three kinds of people, those who can count and those who can't.**

## Miscellaneous

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### **Well-dressing in Derbyshire – May to September**

Derbyshire is known for its wells and well-dressing. The annual tradition followed in many villages of decorating the village wells, or 'well dressing', attracts sightseers from miles away.

By ancient, centuries-old tradition, five wells are decorated. Boards are set up around each one which is then covered in clay. The clay is then impressed with thousands of colourful flower petals to create pictures and tableaux. Often the stories illustrated are from the Bible.

It is thought the practice may date back to the 14th century, and it may have started as an act of thanksgiving when the community escaped the Black Death. Over the years, and before piped water became available, it also became an act of thanksgiving for the village's supply of clean, clear water.

Today more than 80 Derbyshire villages still follow the tradition, and the season extends through the summer. Many well dressings have a biblical theme, or are inspired by royal occasions or sporting events.

Generally, the Derbyshire wells are *not* considered holy or named after saints. Most were just the original village water tap. However, Buxton does have a celebrated holy well, where people regularly line up to collect its special waters.

Buxton mineral water is bottled and available in supermarkets, but in the town itself, at St Anne's well, it is free. Through medieval times there was a chapel on the spot, and pilgrims came seeking cures and to leave offerings.

Later the town became a spa and patients came to bathe and drink, much as the ancient Romans had done in pre-Christian times. Today the free Buxton water emerges from a pipe set in a modern plinth containing a statuette of St Anne, the mother of Mary and Jesus's grandmother.

**Be willing to be a beginner every single morning.  
Meister Eckhart**

## Poems and Prayers



...well you cannot fault the efficacy of  
the new 'Planned Giving' scheme...



Perhaps he's heard that we're  
losing our churchwarden

All but God is changing  
day by day.  
C Kingsley

### Trooping the Colour

A National occasion in crimson and black  
No button misplaced; no harness is slack.  
The rhythmic precision of mass marching  
feet –  
The pulse of the nation and heritage  
meet!

The beat of the drums, the sound of the  
band  
The parade is exquisitely, perfectly  
planned.  
The long months of training, hard effort  
applied  
Build up to this moment of national  
pride!

The horses and soldiers all form up in  
ranks  
The audience watching can't help but  
gives thanks!  
For those standing tall out there on the  
sand  
Prepared to give all for our King and our  
land.

*By Nigel Beeton*

### God, the Port of Peace

Now come all, you who have been  
brought  
In bondage full of busy bitterness,  
Earthly desire abiding in your thought!  
Here is the rest from all your busyness,  
Here is the port of peace and restfulness  
To those who stand in storms and in dis-  
ease,  
Open refuge to wretches in distress,  
And all comfort from trouble and mis-  
ease.

*Adopted from John Walton, about 1410*



## **A lesson in lies**

A minister told his congregation, "Next week I plan to preach about the sin of lying. To help you understand my sermon, I want you all to read Mark 17."

The following Sunday, as he prepared to deliver his sermon, the minister asked for a show of hands. He wanted to know how many had read Mark 17. Every hand went up. The minister smiled and said, "Mark has only 16 chapters. I will now proceed with my sermon on the sin of lying."

## **Boasting**

Three boys in the schoolyard were bragging about their fathers. The first boy said, "My Dad scribbles a few words on a piece of paper, calls it a poem, they give him £50."

The second boy said, "That's nothing. My Dad scribbles a few words on a piece of paper, calls it a song, they give him £100."

The third boy said, "I got you both beat. My Dad scribbles a few words on a piece of paper, calls it a sermon, and it takes eight people to collect all the money!"

## **Home visit**

Several women visited a sick elderly lady in their church. After a while, they rose to leave and told her, "Well, don't worry, we will keep you in our prayers."

The old woman replied: "Actually, if you would just wash the dishes in my sink, I will do the praying."

## **Golf**

Golfer: "I'd move heaven and earth to break 100 on this course."

Caddie: "Try heaven, you've already moved most of the earth."

## **Motoring holiday**

Lost Husband: Where are we now?

Wife: Halfway between Paris and Marseilles, dear.

Husband: Don't bother me with details. What country are we in?

## **Quiet prayers**

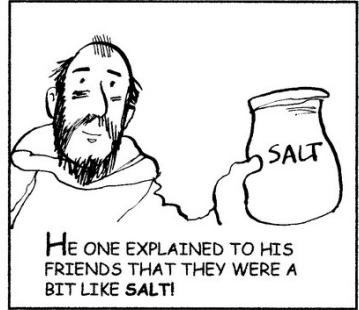
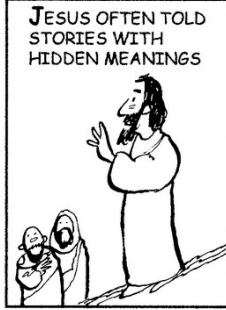
The little boy was saying his go-to-bed prayers in a very low voice.

"I can't hear you, dear," his mother whispered.

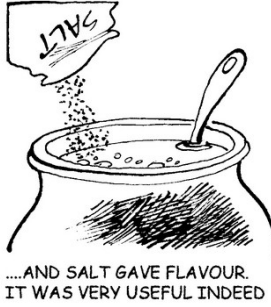
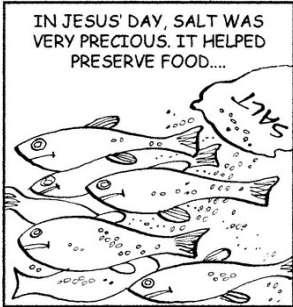
"Wasn't talking to you," said the small one firmly.

# Picture Parable

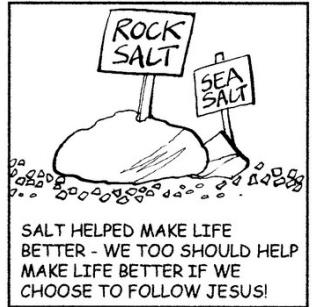
## The tale of the Salt and Light



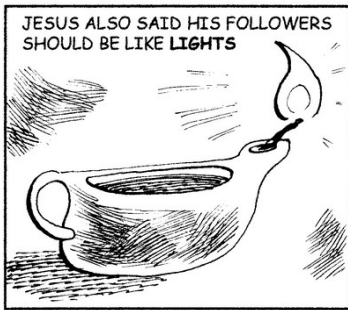
HE ONE EXPLAINED TO HIS FRIENDS THAT THEY WERE A BIT LIKE SALT!



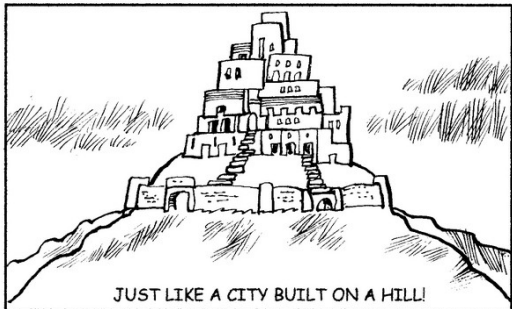
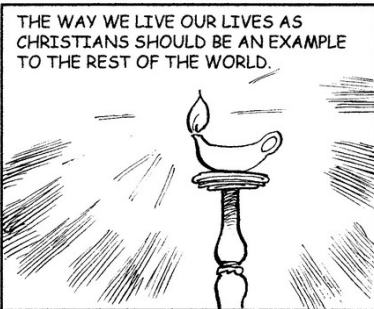
....AND SALT GAVE FLAVOUR. IT WAS VERY USEFUL INDEED



SALT HELPED MAKE LIFE BETTER - WE TOO SHOULD HELP MAKE LIFE BETTER IF WE CHOOSE TO FOLLOW JESUS!



'NOBODY LIGHTS A LAMP - THEN PUTS IT UNDER A BOWL', SAID JESUS



JUST LIKE A CITY BUILT ON A HILL!