

new winepress

40p

January & February 2020



Christ Church Orpington

Devoted to Christ – Dedicated to Community

Sharon's Sharings

Happy New Year!

I hope you have had a merry Christmas and wonderful New Year, and I pray you have a 2020 filled with hope, peace and joy.

And as we journey forth into the unknown, I wonder if you thought about whether or not to make New Year's resolutions this year? I wonder if you are reading this sometime after New Year and are glowing with pride that you have managed to keep your resolutions and maybe shed those extra Christmas pounds or given up smoking or something else? Or are you feeling a bit miserable because you have tried and found it all just too difficult?

Well I'd like to give you all, no matter which category you fall into, some encouragement from the bible.

The Old Testament prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah both likened God to a potter and us to jars of clay. Like a master potter works the clay so that something that starts off formless and not at all pretty ends up in his skilful hands being made into something extraordinarily beautiful, so God skilfully works like a master potter in our hearts until we become made into something extraordinarily beautiful in His eyes.

The problem with jars made of clay though is, nobody has ever asked the clay what it is like to be kneaded, thrown onto the turntable, spun around, built up, pressed down, built up again, pressed down again, until it is fine enough and in

just the right shape to become that beautiful jar. And even when it is just the right shape, in order to let light shine out of it to give light to others, patterns have to be cut out in its sides...and the more light that it shines out, the more holes have to be cut into it. Then comes the process of being put into the fire to be hardened so it can do its job without being squashed again...

Maybe you are in one of those uncomfortable or even painful stages and feel a bit like a failure, or even quite unbeautiful? If so, take heart, because God hasn't finished with you yet! You might be in a "pressed down" stage, or even feel like God is cutting things away from you or that you are going through the fire, but as you go through each stage you are becoming more and more beautiful in His sight, and able to shine out more and more of his light, so that you will become the wonderful creation you were always meant to be.

In 1 Corinthians 6 we find out that our bodies, these jars of clay, are temples of the Holy Spirit whom we have received from God. And because we were bought at a price, we must honour God with our bodies.

You are a temple of God's Holy Spirit. He lives in you. ***God lives in you.*** Just take a moment to let that sink in. God is as close to you as you are to yourself. So even if your jar of clay is going through some pretty rough times or you feel a bit of a failure, remember God's Spirit still lives inside you.

So look after your temple, honour God with your body, whether or not you have already managed to keep that resolution

to lose those Christmas pounds or give up smoking, after all it contains God's Spirit. If at first you don't succeed, ask God's Spirit who lives in you to help you - and He will. And whatever stage of beautification you are going through - let your light shine! You are far more beautiful than you think.



With much love,

Sharon x

Vicar of Christ
Church, Orpington

Who wrote the Psalms?

The third in our little series about the Bible's writers is a bit easier than our discussion on Genesis. Psalms are simply songs, or hymns, strictly songs sung to a stringed instrument. They were the hymn book of the day.

Songs of praise are quite common in the Bible. Miriam's song in Exodus chapter 15 praises God for delivering his people out of Egypt, and everyone seems to have joined in. David celebrated arriving in Jerusalem.

But not all psalms are happy. Some are quite introspective, and express the whole gamut of experience: darkness, laments, uncertainty, joy. Others of them were written to be sung, or to be read out aloud – remember that few people could read, so oratory and the spoken word were important features.

The psalms are a collection of songs and prose; Why 150? Well, we assume

that these were the ones which were most used in the life and worship of God's people - though we don't know exactly what criteria were used in deciding which ones were rejected. Probably, and rather like our hymns today, the popular ones got into the book.

Many Bibles give a little title to say who wrote each psalm. Well, most of them anyway. You will note that 73 of the psalms are attributed to David, the king. Psalm 23, The Lord is my Shepherd, is a favourite, and well known because David had indeed looked after his father's sheep. David enjoyed music (1 Samuel 16 v 14, Amos 6 v 5) and poetry (2 Samuel 1 v 17). Clearly a man of many talents.

Asaph wrote many of the psalms. Look up 2 Chronicles 29 v 30. He was one of the musicians when the Ark of the Covenant was brought to Jerusalem (1 Chronicles 15 v 19). A Levite, he played the cymbals, and landed the plum job of chief Worship Leader (1 Chronicles 16 v 5). He seems to have started a dynasty: his sons were similarly worship leaders (1 Chronicles 25 v 2) and later offspring had responsible positions (2 Chronicles 20 v 14). Asaph and Sons: Worship Leaders – indeed!

There are also attributions to Solomon (72), Moses (90), the sons of Korah, and Ethan. Some were clearly written while God's people were in exile, with the reference to the rivers of Babylon, the famous Tigris and Euphrates, in Psalm 137.

The psalms are the first book in the Writings section of the Hebrew Bible. Oddly the 150 individual songs which comprise the book do not fit into any standard order, so do not try to find a logical system, either for authors or subject matter. These days, church Hymn Books tend to vary in the way they order their material – perhaps thematic, perhaps alphabetical! Do note that there are five separate sections in your Bible, each ending with a rousing praise song, as at the end of Psalm 41. The second Set starts with Psalm 42.

Look out for a feature of Hebrew poetry, the parallel. A thought is expressed in the first part, then it is either repeated in a slightly different way, or as a contrast, or as a sort of echo, in the second part of the verse. This happens quite often in other parts of the Bible as well.

Also, look out for the longest psalm! Why is it so long? There is a very good reason. If you don't know, you may wish to attend the series of Talks

“Behind the Bible”

which will be taking place early in 2020!

It's not my remit to advise you how to read your Bible, but please be aware that the Psalms are poetry, much of the time using metaphor, idiom and expressive ideas rather than the historical prose of much of the Old Testament. Actually, give a prayer of thanks to the Bible translators who have generally done an excellent job of working out the best English equivalents, but translating poetry is

never easy. If you use a fairly literal-translation Bible, try reading each psalm a second time using a more freewheeling paraphrase. Reading aloud may be helpful – remember that originally most were designed to be read out loud. Of course, a bit like hymns, your choice of favourite psalms will be your subjective decision!

Bob Kendall

Old words, new meanings

In the 1990s a stream was a small river, the web was what spiders built in your shed, a net was something you used to catch things, the cloud brought rain, and tweeting was what birds did.

Not anymore. In recent years these words from the 'natural world' have been so overtaken by technology that now they are used more in technology than in their original, natural state.

For example, the word 'web' is now used only seven per cent with regard to nature, and the word 'cloud' is down to 77% for nature. The research was commissioned by the National Trust, who are concerned that 'as a nation, we are losing our connection with nature.'

As one academic in the study explained: "Language represents what is important to a culture or society. Nature language being replaced or used less frequently suggests nature potentially becoming less important or being replaced by other things."

The Carer's Corner

Welcome to the first article from

The Carer's Corner!

My name is OLUFUNKE ADELOYE. A lot of people call me **Funke**...and some **Olu**. I prefer 'Funke' but I'll deal if you call me Olu too...its fine ☺

I am a wife to a gentleman simply called AJ and privileged to be a mum to 3 girls. The first two are in their teens while the youngest is age 11 and a child with complex medical needs and disability.

In 2002, someone challenged me to write three things I had come to know about God - let me share them with you. I wrote in my note back then, that **I KNOW** and very sure that:

- 1. **God loves me**
- 2. **God can never fail**
- 3. **God's words are true and can be trusted**

When I come to very difficult terrain (*which seems to have been quite familiar in these past 10 years*), I think back on these points and they keep me going. I have experienced and seen how much difference a relationship with God can make in one's life - challenges, illness, disability, success, breakthroughs, lack, troubles, grief, loneliness, loss and so on, notwithstanding. So, what should you expect from

The Carer's Corner?

SIMPLE...REAL...HEARTFELT.

I believe strongly in **John 10:10b** where Jesus said,

"I have come that they might have **life** and have it **more abundantly**".

I believe in living life to the full, no matter your circumstance or situation. Like everyone else, carers deal with issues relating to relationship, work/career, mental and emotional wellbeing, finances, health, just to mention a few. We have our hopes, dreams, ambitions etc. and it makes a lot of difference to talk about these issues especially with someone who is also walking the path.

I hope to relate these topics to our faith as children of God and as carers. I will keep it real and hopefully uncomplicated.

I am trusting that these articles will educate, encourage and generally be a blessing to all readers.

Come with me!

'Funke Adelaye

Olufunke.adeloye@oakonsult.com

Last edition's sudoku solution

NGE	K!T	AL	ING	HAR	ER	LSS	DA	HEH
HAR	ER	ING	HEH	DA	LSS	K!T	NGE	AL
LSS	DA	HEH	K!T	NGE	AL	ING	HAR	ER
DA	ING	LSS	HAR	K!T	HEH	AL	ER	NGE
HEH	NGE	K!T	ER	AL	DA	HAR	ING	LSS
AL	HAR	ER	NGE	LSS	ING	HEH	K!T	DA
K!T	LSS	HAR	DA	HEH	NGE	ER	AL	ING
ER	AL	DA	LSS	ING	K!T	NGE	HEH	HAR
ING	HEH	NGE	AL	ER	HAR	DA	LSS	K!T

HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING

Visit to the Beckwith's in Mareeba



While we were in Australia in October, we were able to meet up with Mark and Jenny Beckwith who work for Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF) in Mareeba (near Cairns in Queensland). Mareeba is a small town of about 8,000 in the flatlands. Having visited the nearby area of Kuranda the previous day in the tropical rain forest, we were surprised how dry and dusty Mareeba was.



They were kind enough to take the day off work to show us around the area – Granite Rocks where we were able to feed the small wallabies and a shop selling coffee and chocolate being the highlights.



Mark then took us to the Mareeba airfield where MAF has its workshops. At

the moment they lease two hangers but are looking to have ones built in 2020 which will be more cost efficient. Mark is part of a team of engineers that service aircraft flying in from Arnhem Land (near Darwin in Australia), Bangladesh, Papua New Guinea and Timor-Leste. He is sometimes required to fly out to these areas as well.

Planes have a major overhaul every 2,000 miles. This is a major piece of work and takes many months - everything is removed, all working parts are checked and repaired or replaced as necessary, the engine is replaced and the aircraft repainted.



An aircraft part way through its 2,000-mile service.



Chairs waiting to be refurnished

An engine waiting to be sent off to be refurbished – as this takes time, they receive another one in exchange



We were surprised to see a room that looked like a sorting office for a delivery company. Mark explained that many of MAF’s workers out in the field are unable to get parcels from Amazon etc delivered to them. So, they are sent to MAF in Mareeba and get flown out on the next plane!



MAF at Mareeba also trains pilots and has quite a large, up-to-date training building – some go on to work for them, others just want to learn to fly. They also have an engineer training programme.

Alan & Andy Goddard

Mark and Jenny and their two girls are coming to England in the New Year. They will be at Christ Church Orpington on Friday 10th January at 10.30am

Dear Friends of Kondoa,



It is with very great sadness that I must inform you that Bishop Given’s mother Marina died on 9th November 2019. She has been suffering painfully since Good Friday and we thank God that she is now with him and her suffering has ceased.

The picture above, shows what a beautiful woman she was and this brief testimony written by Rev Canon David Kitley gives some indication her life’s journey, of her strength and courage and how much her love and faith has shaped the Bishop and his family:

[https://kondoa.anglican.org/Groups/281315/Bishop Givens testimony.aspx](https://kondoa.anglican.org/Groups/281315/Bishop%20Givens%20testimony.aspx)

Her funeral was held in her home village of Lugala on 12th of November at a service led by the previous Archbishop of Tanzania, Bishop Jacob Chimeledya, and attended by Bishops and clergy from all over Tanzania.

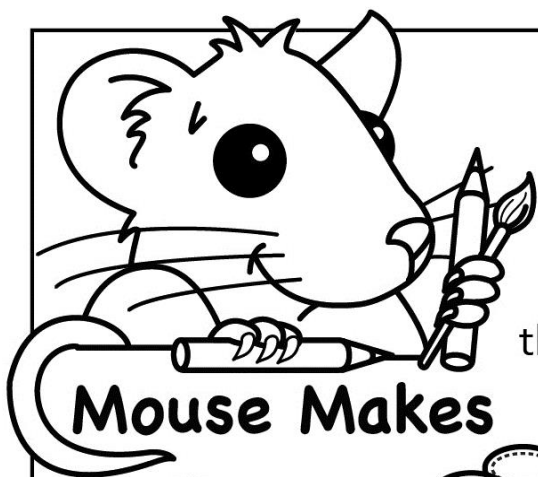
Praise God for Marina and her life which was such a gift to us all!

I know that we will all be praying for Bishop Given and his family now, may God be with them.

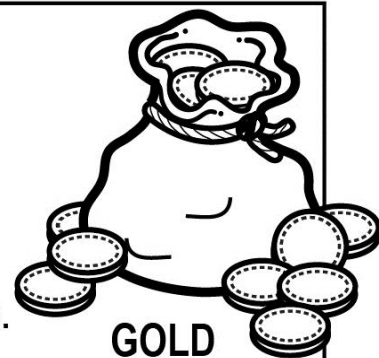
God bless

Canon Sue Chalkley, Chair
Kondoa Companionship Group
Rochester Diocese

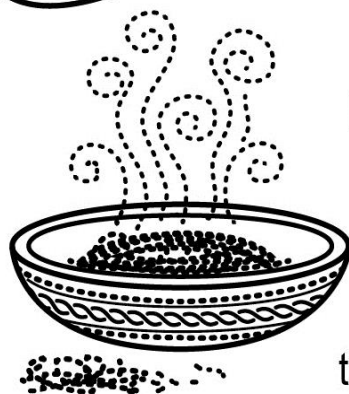
<https://kondoa.anglican.org>



EPIPHANY is the time in the Church year that we remember when the 'wise men' or 'Magi' followed a star that led them to the Christ child Jesus. They bowed down and worshiped him and left *three* special gifts:



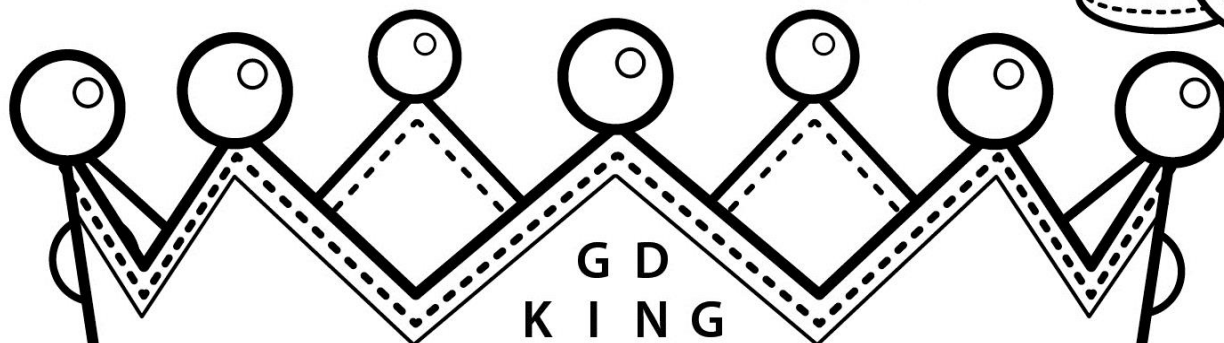
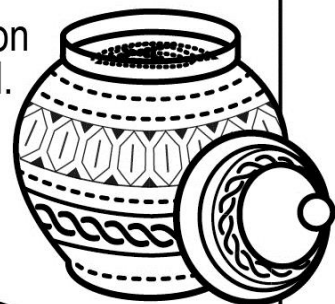
GOLD
A valuable metal. Reminds us that Jesus is **King of Kings**.



FRANKINCENSE
A sweet smelling incense used in the Temple to worship God. Reminds us that **Jesus is God**.



MYRRH
A fragrant spice put on a body before burial. Reminds us that Jesus was to die so that he could be our **Saviour**.



G D
K I N G

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

Can you find these words below in the word search?

How did God warn the wise men?



READ
Matthew
2:1-12

JESUS • BORN • BETHLEHEM • JUDEA • WISE • EAST • JERUSALEM • KING
STAR • WORSHIP • HEROD • PRIESTS • CHRIST • PROPHECY • SHEPHERD
ISRAEL • GO • FIND • LOOK • SAW • JOYFUL • MARY • BOWED • GIFTS
GOLD • FRANKINCENSE • MYRRH • WARNING • DREAM

The Presentation of Christ in the Temple/Candlemas

Candlemas, 2nd of February, comes exactly 40 days after Christmas. In New Testament times 40 days old was an important age for a baby boy: it was when they made their first 'public appearance'. Mary, like all good Jewish mothers, went to the Temple with Jesus, her first male child - to 'present Him to the Lord'. Thus, we have the Festival of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple (Luke 2:22-40). So where does the Candlemas bit come in? Jesus is described in the New Testament as the Light of the World, and early Christians developed the tradition of lighting many candles in celebration of this day.

CANDLEMAS	APPEARANCE
FORTY	MARY
DAYS	JEWISH
AFTER	TEMPLE
CHRISTMAS	FESTIVAL
NEW	PRESENTATION
TESTAMENT	DESCRIBED
IMPORTANT	LIGHT
AGE	WORLD
BABY	CANDLES
BOY	LIGHTING
FIRST	EARLY
PUBLIC	

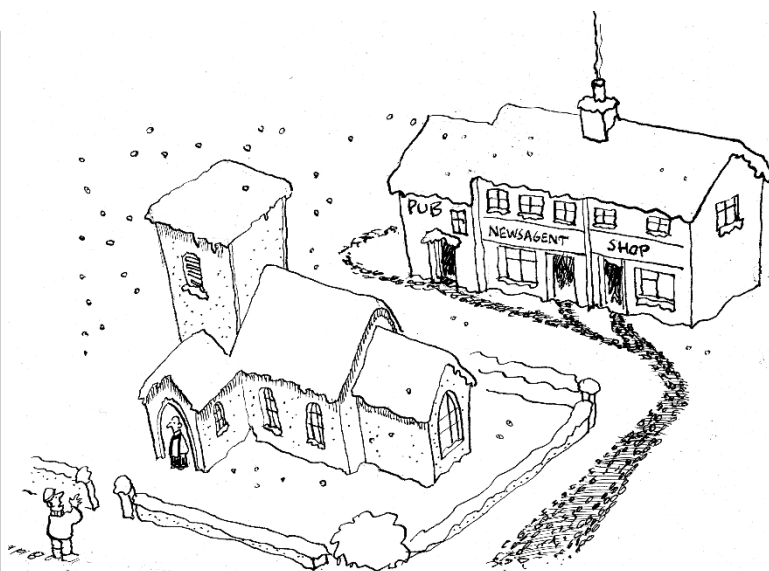
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P B P Y O D E I B P N N M G
T N W F R M L S I A N I H R
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T W T S N D M P O S I Y A F
N F N T A G E R A W D M I A
A N O I T A T N E S E R P V
D E C V R Y N J L L S H L R
A E A A O T E T D T C Y I I
B T N L P P M N N H R L G T
S C D D M S A M T S I R H C
E E L B I C T P J G B A T I
S W E Y E A S A H O E E I B
A W S Y A D E T Y N D F N A
P U B L I C T I Y G C I G G
  
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A T I C S E S C U I A C E
L N A M R E G R O E G C A
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A M T I O E E I N C U L N
N R K S R R M D T A A A Y
T A F I M R B O D N R I V
I W C L A S R N D A R F O
L A O E N Y A I E D Y I D
L S E N D B N R E A U O Y
T I I C Y G C O M R L T L
L I V E S S E C R O F O Y
  
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Last edition's solution



...I am so sorry Vicar – but with all the snow – no-one has managed to get to church...

Introducing...

Kim Curle our Interim Youth Minister



John and I were pleased to join the church family at Christ Church Orpington at the end of October to join God in his mission to the young people connected to the church through the ministry of ReD and Friday Night @ the Base, Saturday ATSOC at Costa Tesco, Pathfinders and Juice on a Sunday. We had an eventful half-term, culminating with Christmas celebrations and socials, and praise God for all that has been achieved collaboratively in the work including planning for a Churches Together *EPIC* Youth Service on 5th January *Every Promise in Christ* hosted by Orpington Baptist Church.

Prior to this, we had been worshipping at Cudham Church where, earlier last year we started up a *Space to Breathe* project for staff at Cudham CofE Primary School based on a similar initiative at St George's CofE Primary School which we launched in early 2018 with reflective activities and fellowship over breakfast.

For two years before this, I worked for the parishes of St George's Bickley and The Annunciation, Chislehurst as their

Families Missioner, leading the Children's Church, starting up holiday clubs and Family Fun Days, partnering too with Ichthus Fellowship and Churches Together and taking Collective Worship in local schools.

Before this, I was employed by St Paul's Beckenham as their Children & Families Worker: leading Sunday Squad, starting up holiday clubs and establishing a monthly after-school project: *Families Together at St Paul's*. I enjoyed taking Collective Worship and leading workshops in local schools and organising creative activities for Churches Together initiatives on Beckenham Green.

John and I moved to the local area in 2010 when I took up the post of Family Worker with Orpington Methodist Church. I led Pentecost Celebrations, twice yearly holiday clubs, started up *Families Together at OMC* and organised popular *Holiday at Home* events for those of more senior years. I was also part of the leadership of the *Big Breakfast* and *Moving on Up* Children's and Youth events under the banner of Churches Together in Orpington.

From 2004 to 2009, I was employed as an Evangelist in Bristol Diocese, working in a Team Ministry in a parish of three churches, initiating evangelistic enterprise and helping Christians to share their faith with others. Projects pioneered became a springboard for other ventures, inspiring similar initiatives in subsequent posts such as intergenerational café style worship events along the lines of *Messy Church*.

John and I first met in 1993 before I went out to Uganda to serve as Mission Partner with the Church Mission Society, teaching at Bishop Kivengere Girls' School, Muyebe, SW Uganda. Before this I had been studying theology at St John's College, Nottingham. Sadly, John's first wife, Mavis, died of cancer in 1996. She and John had supported me in my mission work. On returning to the UK, I joined London City Mission, training at Limehouse Christian Centre, appointed as Schools' Worker in the Borough of Southwark and Evangelist at Peckham Christian Centre.

Following my marriage to John in 1999, I joined him in his family home in the New Forest where I taught part-time consecutively in secondary schools in Southampton and we were both very involved in a voluntary capacity in the life of St Luke's, Sway where I led the Junior Church.

I had a yearning to return to full-time Christian service, hence our move to Bristol in 2004. A year later, I had an opportunity to visit our diocesan links in Uganda and to make use of the Rukiga I had learnt from previous tours. I served on General Synod, representing Bristol Diocese, and the Council of Christian Unity. I have my missionary experience to thank for such fervour.

I first visited Uganda in 1991 when evacuated following a coup d'état in Ethiopia where I taught for two years in a school in Addis Ababa during a time when this most fascinating of countries was gripped by civil war and famine. It was my prayer that one day I might return

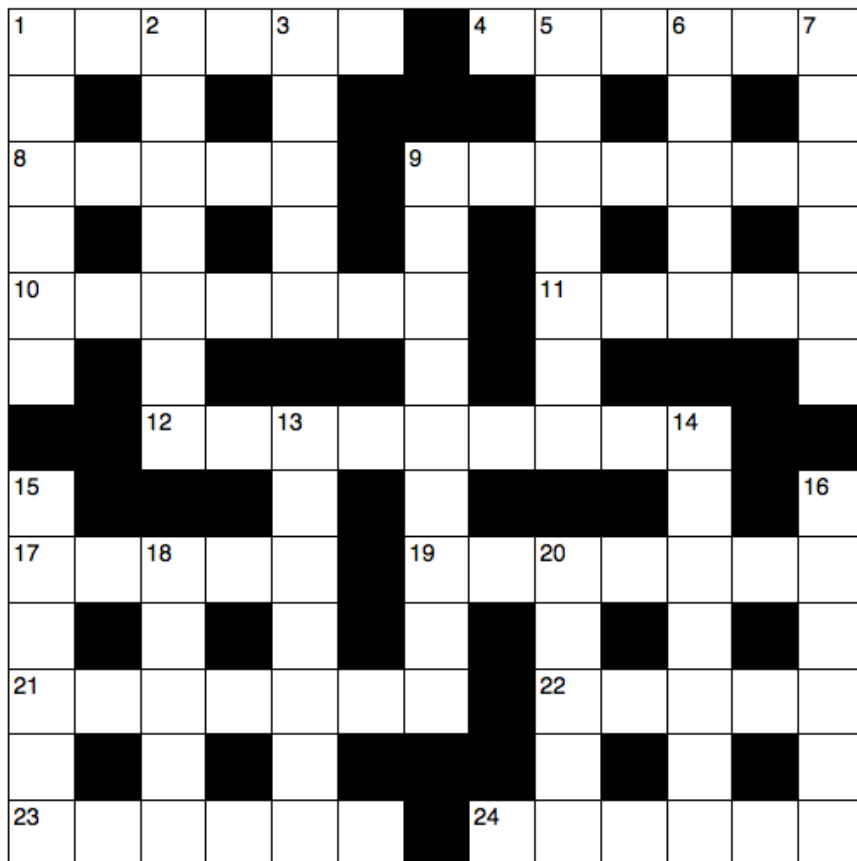
which I was blessed to do a few years later as a mission partner with Mid-Africa Ministry, formerly Rwanda Mission operating in the Great Lakes region of Africa.

God gave me a great love for the people and a heart for evangelism. This turn around in my walk with Him stems back to a cross-cultural venture when, in 1988 as a young schoolteacher I had opportunity to go and share in the life, witness and worship of the Church of North India. One afternoon, sitting on the bedside of a leper, I was transformed by God's grace. From that day forth, the Lord opened the door for me to preach the Gospel with great enthusiasm.

From 1984 to 1989 I taught Economics, Maths and Business Studies at Invicta Grammar School for Girls in Maidstone. I helped lead a flourishing Christian Union. I sang in the choir of Holy Cross, Bearsted and was active in sharing my faith. I praise God for how his hand has been upon my life since my youth. I studied at the London School of Economics and did my PGCE at the Institute of Education. Over the years, God has enabled me to be a part of the nurture and care of so many young people. Now for a season at least He has brought me to serve amongst the youth at Christ Church. Do pray that He will equip me for such task and enable the work to go from strength to strength over the coming months.

Yours in Christ,
Kim Curle

word



Across

- 1 Protective covering recommended to the Ephesians (Ephesians 6:11) (6)
- 4 The number of apostles (Matthew 10:2) (6)
- 8 Tenth-century Bishop of Augsburg for 48 years, who became the first saint to be canonized by a pope (5)
- 9 'Do not — what is evil but what is good' (3 John 11) (7)
- 10 Reading desk in a church (7)
- 11 'He looked up and said, "I see people; they look like — walking around"' (Mark 8:24) (5)
- 12 One of the qualities that Paul exhorted Timothy to pursue (1 Timothy 6:11) (9)
- 17 One of the meaningless pleasures acquired by the Teacher (Ecclesiastes 2:8) (5)
- 19 'Like — babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation' (1 Peter 2:2) (7)
- 21 Jesus said that Moses allowed this only because men's hearts were hard (Matthew 19:8) (7)
- 22 Girl's name (5)
- 23 Most sagacious (Judges 5:29) (6)
- 24 How Stephen, the first Christian martyr, died: after being — (Acts 7:59) (6)

Down

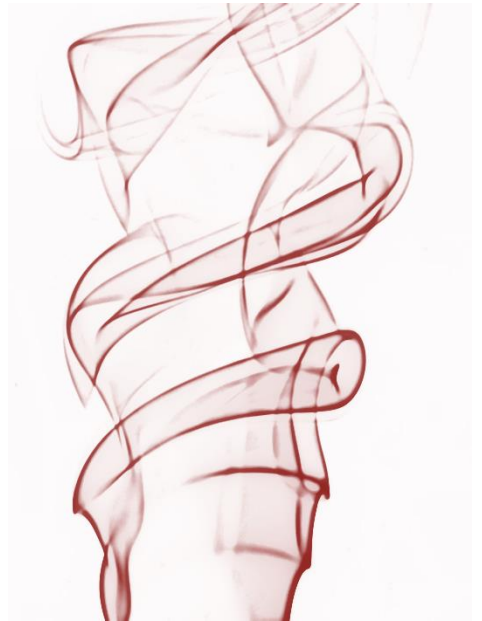
- 1 A Jew whom Paul met in Corinth, whose wife was Priscilla (Acts 18:2) (6)
- 2 For example, turning water into wine, feeding the five thousand, walking on water (John 7:21) (7)
- 3 Abram's relationship to Lot (Genesis 14:12) (5)
- 5 'Jesus answered, "It is —: 'Man does not live by bread alone.'" (Matthew 4:4) (7)
- 6 'Peace I — with you; my peace I give you' (John 14:27) (5)
- 7 'May the Lord deal with me, be it — — severely, if anything but death separates you and me' (Ruth 1:17) (4,2)
- 9 Lack of knowledge (Acts 17:30) (9)
- 13 This woman 'followed Paul and believed' after his words to the Areopagus in Athens (Acts 17:34) (7)
- 14 Or noise (anag.) (7)
- 15 'Even though I walk through the valley of the — of death, I will fear no evil' (Psalm 23:4) (6)
- 16 ' — Christian soldiers, marching as to war' (6)
- 18 Saver (anag.) (5)
- 20 'Unless a grain of — falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed' (John 12:24) (5)

Prayer

Someone, somewhere is praying . . .
Twentyfour hours a day;
The prayers rise up like incense
In a marvellous, wonderful way.

It might be a prayer of thanksgiving.
A plea, or a cry of pain,
A request for safety or guidance,
Or a cry for help once again.

And we know that our Lord in heaven
Hears every faltering word,
And his angels surround and protect us
With their sharp and bright shining swords.



So join hands one with another,
Be bold and see, when you dare,
That each prayer that you add
to the other
Rises up to God and his care.

His arms will surround and uphold you,
Give you comfort and strength
through the strife,
For his hands are held out to receive us
Right now, and all throughout life.

© M.R.G.
June 2003

2020 Diary

Sunday 5th January

10.30am Holy Communion
3.00pm CTiO Epiphany
Service at
Holy Innocents'
Catholic Church



Every Promise
In Christ

7.00pm Youth Event
at Orpington
Baptist Church



Saturday 1st February
6.30pm Burns Night Ceilidh

Sunday 2nd February
10.30am Holy Communion (Candlemas)



6.30pm Evening Worship

Friday 10th January

10.30am with
Mark & Jenny Beckwith
Mission Aviation Fellowship



Wednesday 5th February
10.00am Holy Communion

Friday 7th February
Articles for *new winepress*

Sunday 12th January

9.00am Holy Communion
10.30am Morning Worship
6.30pm Evening Worship

Sunday 19th January

10.30am Morning Worship
6.30pm Evening Worship

Sunday 26th January

9.00am Holy Communion
10.30am Morning Worship



6.30pm Evening Worship

Sunday 9th February
9.00am Holy Communion
10.30am Morning Worship
6.30pm Evening Worship

Sunday 16th February
10.30am Morning Worship
4.00pm Songs of Praise

Sunday 23rd February
9.00am Holy Communion
10.30am Morning Worship
6.30pm Evening Worship

Ash Wednesday
Wednesday 26th February
8.00pm Holy Communion

On the Grapevine...

With sympathy

We remember those who have recently passed away

Olwen Norwood
Alison Pauls

new winepress

By writing articles, readers are reminded of forthcoming activities and events; provide accurate factual information; communicate a Christian message; educate and entertain readers, and provide a service to the church and local community.

The closing (copy) date for articles for the
March & April 2020 issue is
Friday 7th February 2020

Please email your articles to our editor Vernon at vandjmapp@gmail.com If you need more time, contact Vernon on 01689 832433

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Acknowledgements

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Children's Groups

On Sunday's

During Morning Services:

The Rainbow Room Crèche is a fun, supervised soft play facility available on Sunday mornings for babies and children aged 0-3 years (inclusive)

CLIMBERS is for children aged 3 to 7 years and meet in the Small Hall. Activities each week include singing, Bible stories, games and craft

EXPLORERS is for children aged 7 to 11 years and meet in the Large Hall for singing and crafts in a framework of Christian teaching

Pathfinders is for young people aged 11 to 14+ and meet in the basement of the church for games, videos, drama and discussions, looking at the Bible and discussing relevant issues

During Evening Services:

Juice for young people who are year 10+ in a place where you can be yourself and hear something about how great our God is!
Juice meet on alternate Sunday evenings (6.30pm – 8pm) in the Undercroft at Christ Church.

ATSOC POD (for those year 11+) meet bi-weekly at Costa, Tesco, 4pm - 5pm

Science and Miracles

We live in a world where we can expect the sun to rise tomorrow and the milk to pour out of the bottle when we tilt it over our cereal. But for God, the properties of matter and the biological processes that we know and read about in text-books are simply the usual ways He works. If He chooses to do something unexpected to demonstrate something about His character, His relationship with us, and His purposes, then He will.

A group of 14 UK-based science Professors wrote to the Times in 1984, saying that “We gladly accept the Virgin Birth, the gospel miracles, and the Resurrection of Christ as historical events. We know that we are representative of many other scientists who are also Christians standing in the historical tradition of the churches.” For the non-believer, I would suggest a thought experiment: if God exists, why should He be bound by the same laws of physics as us?

Professor Christine Done is an Astrophysicist at the University of Durham. In the book *True Scientists, True Faith*’ (Monarch, 2014) she writes: “Even when I was an atheist, I used to get cross at discussions...on how all Jesus’s miracles could be physically explained. To me, once you have believed in a God, a supernatural being, then it’s obvious that supernatural stuff could happen, since any God who can make the physical universe and its laws can presumably suspend those laws in any time and way He chooses.”

There are also miracles which appear to be a case of wonderful timing. The wind blew all night and the Israelites crossed the Red Sea on dry land, for example. The biblical writers don’t seem especially interested in distinguishing between wonders that seem to break the usual rules of how things happen and those that don’t.

Many in Jesus’ audiences were not won over by His wonders. Most of the people in the crowds who ate the food He produced out of nowhere were quite happy to turn on Him when the religious authorities decided He was dangerous. We can only make sense of something unexpected, such as an answer to prayer for healing, in the context of a growing relationship with God. The exciting task for a Christian is to explain what this interaction looks like, and to demonstrate what ‘your kingdom come’ looks like in our communities. God works through us in words, works *and* wonders.

Dr Ruth M Bancewicz
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