

October 2023



50p

Life



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LIFE MAGAZINE EDITOR

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Articles for the November edition are due **Sunday 8th October**

Editorial Notes

Firstly, may I draw the attention to the regular contributors of Life Magazine of the copy date for the November magazine, as due to a long-awaited holiday I will be editing and printing earlier than usual, therefore I cannot except anything after the 8th October.

The cover this month features a Harvest arrangement in Walton Church, which hopefully will be repeated in our benefice churches on the first Sunday of this month, (1st October).

We have so much to be thankful to God for, and even though the global warming is having effect on our climate changes, we are still blessed with all that harvest can offer us.

During the last benefice walk we encountered the 'sculpture'? which made a good feature for the group picture on the back cover. The walk explored the Portland Road area, on the north side of the bypass in Street. Meanwhile earlier in August Trinity handbells were playing to the alighting train passengers on the platform during the last Bank Holiday weekend of 2023. We are looking forward to a return visit during the Christmas events.

The small group of pictures at the centre are at St Andrews and pages 8&9 are relevant to these.

To close, I trust you enjoy this Harvest issue of Life and I will look forward to receiving those early ones for November.

Roger.

Rector's Letter

“One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice.” Luke chapter 17 verse 15.

Dear Friends,

At the very start of October, we are celebrating Harvest Festival in our churches on Sundays as well as elsewhere at Harvest Suppers, Barn Dances, Messy Church, Little Stars and at our local schools.

In the farming year (I have no background in this but am reliably informed) the main harvest time is actually a little earlier in the calendar year. But over time, churches traditionally celebrate harvest in the Autumn. At this time of the year, the leaves are turning, and the created world is truly beautiful, we can rejoice and give thanks for the wonderful colours of nature that are God-given and for us to enjoy.

Harvest is a time when we give thanks, we are grateful for all that God has given us, providing us with our daily and often very practical needs.

The bible verse above comes from the parable where Jesus healed ten men from leprosy and yet only one returned to thank Jesus. He did so in an exuberant way!

How might we respond in gratitude?

I believe that gratitude and generosity go hand in hand. As we have been given, so we are to give.

This Harvest Festival, can we be generous with our gratitude whether that be financially, practically, or just in remembering to thank those who serve us whether in the church or wider community?

There is an old cliché which encourages us to have an 'attitude of gratitude'. Why not try extra generous gratitude this Harvest and see what God will do.

"All good gifts around us are sent from heaven above; then thank the Lord, O thank the Lord, for all his love."

With my love and prayers,

Ana

Worshipping Together

As well as worshipping in our individual churches and congregations, we also have a regular pattern of celebrating together across the benefice. During October, why not join church family at:

Celebrate@6, Sunday 15th October at 6pm (church tbc) and the Benefice Service on Sunday 29th October at 10.30am in the Mission Church, Street. This may not be your normal time or place of worship, but why not come along. We have had some fantastic times together over the past year as we worship as a wider church family at SWCD Churches.

Ana Lawrence

The Bishop's Letter

What an opportunity!

This week I was on a Zoom chat with some of our chaplains around the diocese. I meet regularly with eight or nine of them alongside our Chaplaincy Development Adviser Mike Haslam. These are only a few of the more than 300 chaplains we have, of all ages, lay and ordained, across Bath and Wells.

There are more and more enquiries about chaplaincy from a wide range of communities. They are seeking a chaplain to offer pastoral care and well-being support for an increasingly stressed and anxious workforce. One particular enquiry caught my attention this week.

A local Further Education college has been saying that their first concern is for a chaplain to address the spiritual exploration of its students. What an opportunity! We know from the Talking Jesus research (2015 and 2022) that most practising Christians come to faith before the age of 18. Several of our schools, including primary, have pupil chaplains now and this is a great way of recognising that you are never too young to start in living and telling the story of Jesus!

As a child I was always struck by the Old Testament story of the unnamed little slave girl who served Naaman's wife, (2 Kings chapter 5). Taken from her home to another country, and placed in an alien environment, she was the one who introduced Naaman to Elisha the prophet in Israel. As a result, Naaman overcame his scepticism, was healed from his leprosy, and discovered a faith in God.

Chaplaincy opens up a diversity of contexts in which we can share our faith and I invite you to pray for those here in Bath and Wells who are treading new ground to open up the way for others to discover the love of Jesus for themselves. However, each one

of us has our own possibility of being a chaplain, coming alongside another in our daily life and community. Sometimes our timidity prevents us from speaking up about faith and our personal spiritual journey other than in church where we are known and on familiar territory. How about taking some time to reflect on where you might live and tell the story of Jesus outside of church, in your everyday context? Is there someone, like a Naaman's wife who is desperate to find help and hope for a loved one but doesn't know where to find it? Maybe you are the only one who could tell them!

With love and thankfulness for you all! +Ruth

Serving and supporting our local schools

As churches, we are partnering with a number of our local schools and there is already an active Open the Book Team who visit all of our primary schools to take the Gospel in a story based and interactive way in collective worship. If you would like to be part of the team, Pauline Hatrey (Walton) would be delighted to hear from you.

We also have a space for a new foundation governor at Walton Primary, our local Church of England School. Serving as a foundation governor is an immensely rewarding experience bringing a distinctly Christian perspective into the life and ethos of a school. No educational background is required, but if you have a heart to serve one of our local schools in this way, please speak to Ana.

We have also been approached by other local schools seeking governors.

Finally, if you have any other ideas as to how you might feel you can serve in our local schools, please have a word with Ana.

Ana Lawrence

Walton Matters

"I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your word. Now they know that everything you have given me comes from you. For I gave them the words you gave me and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I come from you, and they believed that you sent me. I pray for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given me, for they are yours."
John 17. V's 6-10. N.I.V.

Walton fun day was a marvellous occasion and the weather was incredibly good to us. With so much going on we were able to catch up with lots of folk and several of our church community were able to help in different ways. The evening ended in a magnificent fireworks display. Thanks to the Parish council and to the Walton trust for all their hard work.

As soon as you receive this magazine it will be Harvest festival and all are welcome to our harvest communion at 9.15 Sunday 1st. The Harvest supper is on Friday 6th October in the village hall where we will share a two course supper and some great entertainment. Tickets are available at £12 from Liz Selway 210236, Andy Savage 210122 and Sandra Gristock 446211. We look forward to seeing you there.

As a church we are hosting a Macmillan coffee morning on October 3rd 10.30 - 12.00. Lots of cake, a stall to browse and maybe a few games so that we can raise some money for this wonderful cause. Please come along and join in.

Shoebboxes and leaflets will be available in all our church's now as we have a month to gather them and delivery them ready to start their journey to needy children anywhere in the world. We do so well as a benefice showing our love to others and I thank you for your ongoing support. As always, you can fill your own box, give

me a donation so I can fill a box for you, or give a donation to help towards the carriage costs. No donation is too small so please pray about this charity and for all involved in it. Every blessing.

Flower rota.

30th September church decorating for harvest.



14th October. Liz Selway

4th November Jane Doyle.

Walton's Barn Dance

What a fantastic night we all had at the Barn Dance at Walton Village Hall. Everyone was made to feel so welcome with Sandra and Hilda at the door selling raffle tickets. We got there early with all the tables laid out. People kept coming in and the tables were soon filling up.

Then the dancing started and the caller instantly getting willing dancers to the floor. He went over the dances several times for people to try to remember the steps. The music started and off we went. It was such good fun, with lots 'joining in', and if someone went wrong I didn't matter because it all added to the laughs we all had!

We had a break and some tasty hot dogs were served, and the Raffle to give everyone a rest!

Well done to the musicians, caller, and kitchen helpers for a night to remember and hopefully do again.

Val Lake.

A Community Church

It began with a few jars of jam on the windowsill. Outside and in the porch a selection of plants.

We were sharing homemade or homegrown items for sale and finding them to be popular with villagers, visitors and walkers alike. Gradually more jam makers provided a good variety of jams and marmalade, and chutney was added to the mix, along with garden fruit.

Trish kindly contributed her hand-crafted cards for Christmas and other occasions and is now busy replenishing them as they are quickly snapped up.

She also offered a spare bookcase, but this was too large to fit between the back pews. Hugh to the rescue, adapting the bookcase to a perfect size, and Jackie provided the initial selection of books.

The contents of the bookcase constantly evolves as books are donated and others borrowed.

Our next project is to sell potted bulbs, for a bright display in Spring. No doubt other ideas will be up for discussion at the next events meeting.

A result of these sales in our church building is not only for fundraising, although to date we have raised almost £100. It has also been lovely to welcome both local people and those from further afield who pop in and are keen to take home some of our wares. Many a conversation about the church, the bells project or the yew tree have been initiated as they shop or borrow books.

Community involvement is something we really wish to encourage and develop at St Andrew's, enhanced we hope by our exciting proposals for the interior of the church. Pat

STREET FOODBANK NEWS

The foodbank remains busy each week and we're still having to regularly buy food to restock the shelves. Below are the items we have the lowest stocks of:

Tinned Tomatoes/ Tinned Carrots, Tinned Tuna, Cooking Sauces (not tomato based), UHT milk, Fruit Squash, Tinned Fruit

The 'Foodbank News' above appeared in the most recent Street Salvation Army Newsletter.

Both at St Andrew's Church and in Compton Dundon Village Hall we have a collection box for food items, which are regularly taken to the Salvation Army in Street.

The last time I visited, I had the pleasure of chatting to Louise about the essential service the Foodbank provides. She informed me that there are on average 30 regular foodbank users each week. There is a need to go shopping to 'top up' the donated food items and this has increased from fortnightly to weekly. Louise said that the current week's shopping bill was £300, a considerable amount.

We are so pleased to be able to support this wonderful work and will continue to do so, through food items or the monetary collection box in church. It is also possible to use the QR code for giving, displayed on the window of the Salvation Army building.

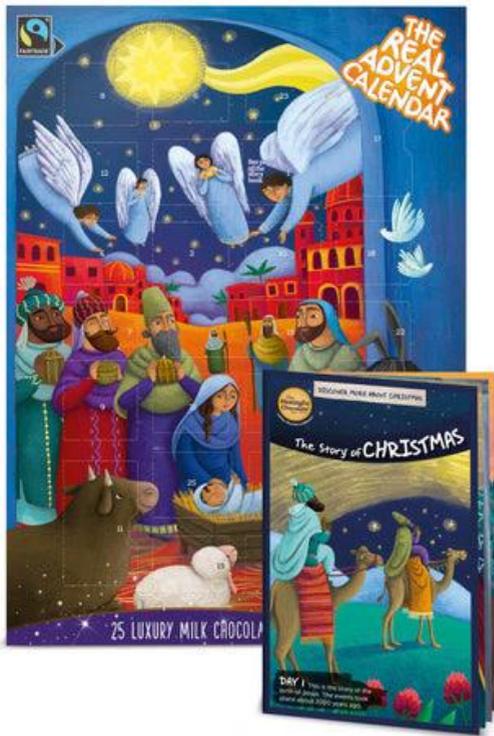
Thank you everyone for your support. Pat

Compton Dundon Bell Appeal

On 21st October the Compton Dundon bell appeal committee are pleased to present a **COMEDY NIGHT adults only (16 and over)** in the Meadway Hall, Compton Dundon. Paid bar from 6.45 for a 7.45 start. Three great acts with Eddy Brimson, Burt Williamson and Pierre Hollins. Tickets are £15 each from Coxley Kitchens (behind Compton Dundon Garage) The Castlebrook Inn and The Old Rectory, Peak Lane, Compton Dundon.

Judy Skelding (Compton Dundon)

The Real Advent Calendar



Is the UK's only Fairtrade Advent calendar which comes with a free 24 page Christmas story-activity book and supports charitable causes.

The 2023 Calendar is a fun way for parents, grandparents and Godparents to share the Christmas story. There is a Fairtrade Chocolate and a line of the Christmas story behind each of the 25 windows. The free book has a page for every day of Advent, expanding on the Christmas story and includes some fun challenges.

It is made using Fairtrade chocolate. Money raised from the sales of the calendar will help provide care and support for mums and new babies in African villages supported by the Funzi and Bodo trust.

The Real Advent Calendar is designed to share and celebrate the true meaning of Christmas so that Christ is not written out of Christmas.

The calendars are £4.50 each. Order forms will be available at the back of your church. Please return completed forms with payment to Sonia Beaty, or Gill Williams (St Andrew's) by **Sunday 5th November**. Sonia

INVITATION to Jane's 65th celebration

On Friday 15th December I would like to celebrate my 65th Birthday with you.

I have hired a John Martin Coach to collect us from the Mission church about 11am to take us to Exmouth for an afternoon river Exe Estuary cruise on the Stuart Line boat (EX8 1FE). Boarding 1.45 for a 2pm sailing for a 2½ hour cruise.

We will stop at a Taunton Garden centre for you to eat your sandwiches on the way down.

I am now asking for names, and if you want a seat on the coach a donation of £10 to secure the seat.

There is a sign-up sheet at the back of the Mission church, or you can e-mail me and if you could pay Jane or Sonia in the office £10 by the end of October, I can then confirm enough of you are coming to warrant hiring the coach.

Please come and help me celebrate this Birthday as part of God's family here in the Street area.

If you want to drive direct to Exmouth that is fine just let me know names of those coming. Blessings Jane Tompsett

Congratulations

To Edd Reeve (Mission Church) who will be formally welcomed into the Diocese as a Reader at the annual reader's service in Wells Cathedral on Saturday 7th October. Warm congratulations to Ken and Diana Dunthorne (Parish Church) on recently celebrating another wedding anniversary marking many years of marriage.

More from Ana

Confirmation

This year's Confirmation service will be taking place in Wells Cathedral on Saturday 4th November at 2pm. Being confirmed is a public declaration of faith and a profound and moving occasion both for candidates and for those supporting them. If you have considered Confirmation, or would like more details, please speak to Ana before 9th October.

Remembrance

This year's Remembrance services will be taking place on Sunday 12th November in the Parish Church, Street at 10.30am, Holy Trinity, Walton at 10.50am and St Andrew's Compton Dundon at 10am. We will also be involved in the civic act of Remembrance in Street on the Sunday afternoon of Remembrance Sunday joining with local uniformed organisations, the Royal British Legion and others. Please join us if you are able.

Memorial Service

On Sunday 5th November, at 3pm in the Parish Church, Street and at 6pm in St Andrew's Compton Dundon, we will be holding our annual memorial services, a space to remember with gratitude loved ones whom we have lost. Special invitations will be sent to families of those whose funeral services it has been our privilege to conduct in recent times; however, these services are open to all who would value them, whether the loss remembered is recent or some time ago. More details to follow.

Messy Church

Messy Church is an alternative to 'traditional' church and a very special way of reaching out to families in our communities. The reality for many churches is that we are not attracting families to

our regular Sunday Morning services for many reasons. The world and our culture has in many respects moved on from what perhaps some of us remember from our childhood.

Messy Church offers games, craft, worship and food after school on a weekday. It is particularly aimed at primary school aged children and their families and our prayer is that for many, this will become church, a place to worship and belong.

Currently, almost all of the team involved are from Walton. It would be wonderful to also have some on the team from Street. If this might be you, please speak to Ana or one of the Messy Church team.

Home Communion

We have an active home communion team who faithfully serve those in our community who for whatever reason are no longer able to get to church.

If you or someone you know would value a regular visit (usually monthly) from one of the team bringing communion into your home, please speak to Sonia in the office or Ana and we will ensure that we put you in contact with one of the team.

Plans at Walton and Compton Dundon At Holy Trinity, Walton and St Andrew's, Compton Dundon, we are in the midst of exciting times as we seek to make our buildings more fit for modern use. I am very grateful to the reordering and bell subgroups who behind the scenes are making things happen and in due course, we look forward to seeing the plans come to fruition. In the meantime, please keep this in your prayers that we would make godly and wise decisions.

Ana Lawrence

Syria and Turkey Earthquake Update

Many of you will recall that, in response to the devastating earthquake in Syria and Turkey, we took a collection across the benefice which we sent, via Tearfund, to support their emergency response through the local church.

We have now had a report on how our donations were spent, a full copy of which is available from me if you would like to read it. The story below may, however, help to illustrate what has been possible as a result of generosity of our churches

The local church at the heart of the communities



Father Afram (pictured left) and his family live in a parish in Syria. At around 4 am, the earthquake hit and the ground began to violently shake. Father Afram, his wife and children initially stood under a doorway. But as soon as they realised the shaking was only getting stronger, they put their jackets over their pyjamas, and fled from their home, driving away as fast as they could.

They spent the night in their car, turning the engine on and off trying to keep warm in the cold weather.

This is when they started to realise the extent of the damage. All around, the family witnessed destruction and ruin. People were stranded on the streets, out in the cold. They started to receive news about people they knew who had been killed, including one priest from the parish. The situation was devastating.

As a church leader, Father Afram felt the weight of his responsibilities. Not only did he have to take care of his family in this distressing time, but as a priest, he also felt great responsibility towards his church family. He explained, “It is difficult for me to think about my responsibilities (as a priest) because I also have a responsibility towards my children. What have they seen of this life? Ten years of conflict and now this. At the same time, I can’t just look after my family because **I have a larger family to think about. I have a responsibility towards the people... God has chosen me to live in this situation with our people.**”

Initially, Father Afram felt overwhelmed and unsure if the church would have the capacity to help the community. But the bishop soon told him that Tearfund would give support for the church to open its doors and provide shelter to the victims. “By noon that same day, because Tearfund had reached out and told us that they would support us in opening our doors to shelter people, **we felt confident that we would be able to meet peoples’ needs**”, he recalls.

With your generous gift, Father Afram and his parish were able to provide shelter, food packages and hygiene items to around 650 people for an entire month. While most of the people staying in the church were staring at the ceiling looking for any sign of shaking, the church also helped to keep spirits up by holding Bible quizzes and playing games.

Your care for the victims of the earthquake has helped the church in Syria to unite and to remain strong despite Christians being a minority group in the country. **You have enabled them to stand in the midst of chaos, and provide shelter and love to their neighbours in need.**

Kevin Lawrence, for the benefice charitable giving group.

Harvest and Climate

October is traditionally the time for our Harvest Festival services when we celebrate the 'good gifts around us' and thank God for his bounty. We should use these gifts wisely and not squander them. Many are conscious of the threat that increasing global temperatures pose to our food supply and the effects on communities around the world. Some are expressing fear of what is happening. We can combat fear with prayer, and also with action. As individuals and a community, we can all do something to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions. Here are a few ideas:

- Switch to renewable energy.
- Food: Reduce meat and dairy consumption. Eat fewer (or no) ready-made meals. Eat food produced locally. Waste less. Grow (some of) your own.
- Water: Use less, take shorter showers, wash clothes less often and run machines on a full load.
- Kettles: Boil only as much water as you need.
- Heating: Use thermostats to control heating in individual rooms. Try turning the thermostat down by 1^o (one degree).
- Household equipment: Repair rather than replace*. If you do replace buy energy efficient.
- Transport: Walk, cycle or use public transport. If you do drive, car share.

These will be easier for some than for others but each, though just a small step, added with those doing the same makes a difference. Telling others helps them to make changes too.

Your Involvement Would be Appreciated

*If you find it difficult to get things repaired there is good news, Street may soon have its own Repair Cafe. Repairs give items a new lease of life and at Repair Cafes are made for the cost of new materials and a voluntary donation. If you would like to know more or could offer your help please do get in touch.

We would also welcome new faces to our Eco Church group. Please contact me for further information.

Sue Ripley, Eco Church Group (Email: sripley63@btinternet.com)

My Faith Journey

I got to know Jesus when I was in my late 20s. My wife, Gill, and I had recently had our first baby and we wanted to give him a place of security, so we decided to go to church. After going to a few different ones for a few Sundays, we began going regularly to a Baptist church. On one of our first occasions attending there, we were invited by a family to join them for a simple lunch at their house. I was amazed by how friendly and fervent this family was. Their hospitality and friendship encouraged us to continue going to church.

After a few weeks, one Sunday morning, we were singing a hymn (I've no idea which one) when I had an overwhelming feeling of the loving presence of Jesus. I found I was crying. This must have been God because I never get particularly emotional and never cry. That week I began reading the Bible (John's Gospel) and finished it in a few days. I'm a slow reader so that was a real indication that God was working on me.

From that moment I've followed Jesus. I've let him down on many occasions, like we all do, but he's never let go of me. The two things I'm passionate about are people coming to know the love of Jesus and football. I love running the monthly walking football session in the village and taking part in a weekly 'normal' football game on the field at the back of the Castlebrook Inn (with post-match analysis in the pub afterwards). This has helped me get to know some great people. In football, Birmingham City and West Ham United have been a disappointment to me at times, but Jesus is good all the time, even if we don't always immediately understand why certain things happen. I hope Gill and I can be good witnesses in our village.

Gareth Williams Compton Dundon.

Listening at Afternoon Teas in September

When people arrived for the September Afternoon Teas in the Mission Church, they were invited to join the listening course group for about half an hour. After doing several talking and listening activities, we had tea and cake, sang Happy Birthday to one of the SWCD church members and shared some memories.

At Afternoon Teas

On Thursday 19th October

Martin Kennard will be giving a talk entitled, 'Around the World in Seventy Years' which will include many photos of his travels. The talk will be followed by tea, fellowship and chat.

Do come along as I know you will not be disappointed.

The time, as usual is from 2-30pm till 4-00pm, in the Mission Church, Street.

See you there.

Delyth Wride and the Team



