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50p

LIFE



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MAGAZINE EDITOR LIFE

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Articles for the November edition are due by **Sunday 13th October**

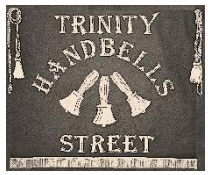
Editorial Notes

As we celebrate Harvest in our churches this month, the front cover is part of a display in the Parish church at Street.

On the back is a group picture of those taking part in the last Bank Holiday Walk led by Tim Hindle. They had a great morning out with nice sunshine. Hannah Hindle said, “It was a lovely time to be together, talking, laughing, and enjoying the wonderful creation around us”.

The bottom group of pictures show some of the few willing volunteers at the Street Parish Churchyard working party day. It was a lovely warm day, allowing notice board cleaning and the fitting of a notice for Harvest, a well needed coat of preservative paint on the shed, part of the ‘wild area’ strimmed and raked to allow the area to rest for the winter, and the removal of the ivy on the church wall to protect the joints. Also, a good clean up around the boundary wall, and a rubbish pick up. Fresh coffee and cake were provided by another volunteer. Thank you to all those who helped make our churchyard a tidier environment for those who pass through, or just sit and enjoy the restful space. Roger.

xx



Trinity Handbells, our church-based Handbell team are celebrating 30 years this year, and to mark the event we are having a get together with ringers past and present in the Parish church in Street on **Saturday 19th October at**

2pm till 5pm. You are welcome to join us. (more details in Life-Line nearer the time). Roger.

Rectors Letter

[Luke 10:2](#)

And he said to them, “The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few. Therefore, pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into his harvest.

If I am ever asked what my favourite colour is, the answer is always the same. October!

I am sat on a hay bale thinking about this article. It is something I have always done from being a child in rural Somerset even if getting on it, takes a bit longer these days! There is something very special about Harvest time down west. There is a shift in the air that can be felt, a rush to get the crops into the barn. Tractors whizzing up and down the roads and lanes, till late into the night. In the words of the famous Harvest Hymn by Henry Alford.

*Come ye faithful people come! Raise the song of harvest home,
All is safely gathered in, Ere the winter storms begin.*

It links us into the past, as this time of year, has been a race against the weather for farmers always. The harvest was a time of celebration when most people in England lived and worked on the land, and years ago a good harvest was a matter of life or death to the working. The landowners would provide a free Harvest supper to thank the workers for their labours and there would be dancing, celebrations and praising God.

Today there are many parts of the world where crops fail, too much heat and not enough rain, it is a disaster for the poorer people who rely on the fruits of the harvest for survival. Our changing climate due to human activity is largely to blame for this. Even here, we have all noticed that the seasons are not as we remember them. Winter is wetter and mild, there has been a lack of insects and pollinators this year. Something for us to regularly pray for in our rural community.

Alfords hymn continues with.

Even so, the lord shall come, Bring thy final harvest home.

Gather thou thy people in, Free from sorrow, free from sin.

Luke 10v2 talks of a plentiful harvest but few workers, Jesus is not talking about crops and farmers but Christians, there are not enough Christians who are going into the harvest field (the world) and proclaiming the salvation of following Jesus.

So, God, we plead earnestly, that you would send out labourers to take the gospel of your kingdom, the good news of your salvation out into the world. God, we plead for that. And God, even as we prayed this, send out labourers into your harvest field. We offer our lives, send us. Sister Rachel.

WAVE OF PRAYER IN THE BENEFICE

Saturday 7th September was designated as a day for a wave of prayer across the Church of England. In the Diocese of Bath and Wells there were a whole series of prayer events including ones attended by Justin Welby the Archbishop of Canterbury.

In our benefice we offered a space for prayer in St Andrews Compton Dundon throughout the day and also created a prayer tent as part of the Merriman Park Fun Day in Street. Here people were invited to hang prayers they had written on a 'prayer tree' or be prayed for. Dozens of people from our community took advantage of this offer.

You only had to stand and watch those coming for prayer to realise reports of our society being uninterested in the 'spiritual' are greatly exaggerated!

Kevin Lawrence

Bishop's letter A light which shines in the darkness

The custodial sentences imposed on many of those involved in the recent riots in communities across our country have highlighted, yet again, the issue of criminal justice and the pressures and strains within the prison system. The seemingly ever-increasing size of the prison population; the appalling conditions within many of our older prisons, especially those in our inner cities; the almost total lack of provision for education and rehabilitation and an apparent unwillingness by those elected to Parliament to consider whether the whole of our justice system needs a radical overhaul have all resulted in much media comment.

But one part of the prison system which has not been mentioned is the invaluable role played by those who serve as Chaplains. Prison and restorative justice have been a constant thread almost throughout the whole of my life beginning with my first visit while still in my teens to what was then called a Borstal. Since then, I've had the privilege of working with chaplaincy teams across the whole of the prison estate. I've witnessed at first hand the extraordinary work done by those teams, lay and ordained, of all faiths, working together to witness to God's love in Christ and caring for all those in the prison system, both staff and prisoners. I've often said to those on the outside, if you want to know what true collaborative ministry looks like in practice, look no further than a chaplaincy team. While each member remains true to his or her particular faith, the barriers which often divide people of faith have no part in that shared work of witness and service.

Sadly, all too often, the work of Chaplaincies not just in prison but in all aspects of our human life, in education, hospital, mental health, care homes and many other places, is barely known – that is, until we need their care. But Chaplaincies are the yeast which leaven our society. The light which shines in the darkness. Society, as we long and pray for it to be, would be the poorer without them.

Bishop Trevor Willmott

Assistant Bishop for the Diocese of Bath and Wells

HARVEST BARN DANCE

**Meadway Hall, Compton Dundon Saturday,
October 19th from 7.30 pm to 10.30 pm
(doors open at 7 pm.)**

Following last year's happy and successful Barn Dance, we have invited the same band, 'Hobson's Choice,' to come and lead us again in another entertaining evening.

The great thing about barn dances is that they truly are for everyone. We can all access the moves, which are expertly called and explained, often demonstrated. So the dancing aspect is fun for the whole family, whatever their ages. And if there is the inevitable slip up, well all the more fun! So do come and join in as we swing, cast off, promenade, do si do and much more...add to this the cash bar and a good selection of table snack platters and a great evening is in store. Hope to see you there.

Tickets are available at £15 for adults and £5 for children from:

Pat King – tel 01458 274926

Julie Gordon – tel 01458 272135 or 07977 005894

Pat King (Compton Dundon)



BIG BREAKFAST

**November 16th 9.30-11.30am Meadway Hall,
ComptonDundon**

The ever-popular Big Breakfast is returning on

Saturday, November 16th !

Come and enjoy a delicious cooked or continental breakfast and browse the stalls around the Hall.



If you would be interested in running a Christmas themed stall on the day, the table hire charge is £10. Please contact Pat King (274926) or Gill Williams (840477) for further information and to reserve your space. Hope to see you there.
Pat King
(Compton Dundon)

Holy Trinity Walton

Harvest supper.

4th October is the date for the harvest supper and it's not too late to get your ticket. There is a 2-course supper with entertainment and music. We promise you a fun evening with lots of good company. The tickets are £12 and it is 7.00pm for a 7.15 start. Tea and coffee will be served but you are very welcome to bring your own drinks. Contact Sandra on 446211 or Liz on 210236.

Operation Christmas Child

We are gathering momentum with this, our regular Christmas outreach. I have received several bags of toys and goodies already that I will be boxing up. You are amazing as always. If you want to fill your own box, they are available from all our churches. If you can't get out to shop then we will happily fill a box for you or you can donate towards shipping costs. Whichever way you choose to help, you are doing your bit towards sending love and prayers to children in other parts of the world who don't have the joy we have at this special time of the year. The collection date this year is the 11th November. Please get your boxes to any of our churches or I will happily collect from your home.

Nativity Weekend.

30th November and 1st December will be an opportunity to see nativity sets from all over the world. If you have a set, you might consider loaning us, we would be very grateful. The church will be manned the whole time so we will keep them safe. Any medium and other size please and if they are handmade perhaps you could tell us who by. The church will be open 10.00 till 4.00 on Saturday and 11.00 till 4.00 after our church service on Sunday. Come and join us for tea and cake after having a look around.

The Macmillan Coffee Morning

What a wonderful turn out for such an amazing charity. The church was buzzing with conversations and laughter. Thank you to all the brilliant cooks who baked such delicious cakes. What an assortment. No lunch needed today. We made a staggering £534.95 and I feel sure a little more will be added to that amount. Bless you for your support and to the team that made it happen. Two things that are always guaranteed is your support for these events and how well we eat cake. Sandra Gristock



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MFUWE UPDATE

Our benefice mission partners in the parish of Mfuwe, Zambia have been in touch to let us know they recently celebrated their harvest festival (the harvest in Zambia is in June and July).

They are still pulling together the final figures, but it looks like we may have enough money from our 2023 tithed offering to fully complete the Priest's house at Mfuwe, including solar panels and water supply. We hope to have an update on building progress and some pictures in due course. Hopefully this will be completed before the new priest is appointed.

I have replied to assure our brothers and sisters of our continuing prayers and ask for their prayers for us. Kevin Lawrence

SOME FURTHER FINANCE QUESTIONS ANSWERED

Over the last few weeks, as we have discussed church finances, particularly in Street, a few comments and questions have emerged where I thought it would be helpful to provide some context. I'm only too aware that some secular media reporting (both local and national) about the wider church is at best incomplete and, at worst, wildly inaccurate. I thought it might therefore be helpful to seek, at least in part, to redress the balance.

Here are a few of the issues / questions that I have heard raised, but, if I've missed anything that has been on your mind to ask about, then please do get in touch and let me know.

What is all this about the church giving millions to say sorry for slavery?

Recent media reports suggest that the church is giving away millions of pounds to the descendants of slaves as a way of saying sorry for its historic involvement as a financial beneficiary of the slave trade. Whilst there have been discussions in General Synod (the church's national Parliament) and a recognition that there are historic injustices, what is actually happening is that some of the funds the church hold (see below) will be invested in organisations and businesses that support the descendants of slavery. This is an ethical investment policy rather than, as portrayed in some newspapers, some form of giveaway.

The Church of England / Diocese has loads of money. Why aren't they giving us more?

The Church Commissioners, those responsible for dealing with the funds held by the central church, do indeed look after large sums of money. However, this isn't just sitting in a bank account

waiting to be spent. It represents investments that are used, for example, to pay pensions and other long-term commitments for what is a very large and complex organisation. The church employs thousands of clergy and others. There are also, however, some modest central funds that are offered as grants, but these tend to be focused on evangelism and fresh expressions of church or planting new congregations, rather than just handed out to all the parishes in the country.

The Diocese of Bath and Wells also hold some reserves but, as the Diocese is running at a substantial annual deficit these are rapidly being eroded. To attempt to balance the books the Diocese are, for example, reducing clergy numbers and selling off surplus vicarages etc.

The Church of England / Diocese should take responsibility for maintaining our historic buildings. After all, don't they own them?

Actually, who owns church buildings is a very complicated question, but it isn't simply the Church of England or Diocese. Legally, each parish has a responsibility for maintaining their buildings, but we spend relatively little in percentage terms on such maintenance. Most of our costs are incurred elsewhere (see below for details).

The Common Fund / Parish share is way too high. How do they work the amount out and surely ours should be lower?

If you ever attend Diocesan events, this is something you will hear said a lot by virtually every parish. This begs the question that if every parish wants their parish share reduced, who should pay more?

The Parish Share is not calculated based on the electoral roll or set as some arbitrary figure but rather carefully worked out for each parish based on the ministry cost (paid clergy excluding curates working there) and the average Sunday attendance (that is why we are so keen to count those attending accurately). There are also some other small adjustments based, for example, on the average wealth of the parish (using independent government provided figures).

For those who want to dig into the detail, I can provide a link to a weighty document on the diocesan website which has been agreed by the diocesan Synod.

We have heard money is being spent on upgrading Vicar's Close in Wells. Surely that money would be better spent in the parishes.

There has been recent local news coverage of a large grant for this work. Like all such grants, the funding, which comes from the Lottery, is restricted for the purpose for which the money was given but, in any event, Vicar's close is owned by Wells Cathedral, which is a separate legal entity to the Diocese, and which does not rely on the Diocese for any funding. Therefore, what the cathedral chooses to do in Vicar's Close (whatever you may think of their plans) will have no financial impact on us.

How do I know where my giving is spent?

Each of our parishes are legally required to publish independently examined accounts which give full details of income and expenditure. These are made available at each of our annual parish church meetings and can also be downloaded from our website for those who want to know how the money is spent.

Ana Lawrence

Our Bereavement Café welcomes all

If you, or someone you know, is travelling on the journey of grief, whether the loss is recent or from longer ago, our Bereavement Cafe is here to support you.

Meeting in the afternoon on the 1st Sunday of each month in the Mission Church, we offer support to all who would welcome it, whether they profess a faith or not. You can find cards with more details in each of our churches and why not pick one up and use it to invite along someone you know who may welcome this?

Kevin Lawrence

FREE MONEY FOR YOUR CHURCH?

Yes, you did read that right and yes, it's actually true!

We have all heard recently about the financial pressure facing our churches. Here is a really easy way in which you can help at absolutely no cost to you.

If you ever shop online, whether for groceries or holidays, insurance or consumer goods, there's a good chance that your shopping could raise money for your local church if you use Easyfundraising.

It's simple to register and use, costs nothing to do and won't commit you to anything extra.

Please visit <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/> and get started. I'm not the world's greatest online spender but so far, I've raised nearly £150 for Street PCC through Easyfundraising and it has cost me nothing. If you need some help to get set up, I'm more than happy for you to give me a ring and I'll talk you through the process.

Kevin Lawrence

Oh yes you can! Casting call for the SWCD Churches Christmas entertainment

Coming again this winter will be the now famous / infamous Christmas entertainment. We are gearing up for an evening of silliness as we once again present a festival of bad jokes, overacting and unusual costumes for your delight and delectation.

We would love to hear from people who would like to be involved. As we believe we have amply demonstrated, talent is not a prerequisite, rather come along if you'd like to have fun, join in and take part.

To find out more and register your interest please contact Sarah Woodward at the Mission Church

Kevin Lawrence

Tearfund Big Quiz

We are delighted at the welcome return of the Tearfund Big Quiz Night, this year to be held at the Mission Church on the evening of Saturday 16 November.

By the wonders of modern technology, we will be joining with churches across the country to raise money for Tearfund's vital work through churches in some of the poorest countries in the world, whilst enjoying an excellent evening of quizzing.

Tearfund is a mission partner of Street parish but teams from across the benefice are welcome to come and join in. Why not put together a team of four to six people and take part? Donations to the work of Tearfund would be welcome on the night.

Kevin Lawrence

September Connections@theMission featured Jane Tompsett (Street) telling us about her recent visit to the Isle of Man. One of the first things that you see as the boat docks is a tower on the Conister Rock reef, built as a tower of refuge for sailors back in 1832. A bible verse from Psalm 46 reads, *God is our refuge and strength an ever-present help in times of trouble. Therefore we will not fear....*

Jane says, "It was as I was looking at a unique horse drawn tram that one of God's blessings for me happened. I saw a John Martin coach from Radstock. Some of you will remember they provided the transport from church to Exmouth for my 65th birthday cruise in December. John saw me and offered a free ride to the village of St Johns for the Island's national celebration of over one thousand years of self-government."

The TT races started in 1907. The race happens on 51 miles of public roads. In 1907 the average speed for the race was 40mph, now the average speed is 131mph, and some get up to 200mph on the flat. There is a road closure act in force during the races.

These are just some of Jane's memories that she shared with us.

Pam Harmsworth (Mission Church)

Connections@theMission

Thursday 17th October 2-30pm

Mission Church Street

With Vanessa Adams (Walton)

Talking about

'My Faith being a School Governor'

Everyone Welcome!

There will be a cuppa and cake

My Faith Journey

My faith journey began very young, at the age of 4 I asked Jesus into my life. This followed a Children's Christian Crusade on the Wirral where every afternoon the 2 leaders would tell us an adventure story of a missionary working abroad. I decided I wanted an adventure with Jesus for myself, and inspired in me a love of reading the missionary stories and life with Jesus that has continued to this day.

At 16, I decided that it would be a good idea to learn some bible verses off by heart and I began with the well-known verse Proverbs 3v 5-6. But I learnt it from the Good News Bible version: 'Trust in the Lord with all your heart. Never rely on what you think you know. Remember the Lord in everything you do, and He will show you the right way.'

This has helped me through life, especially the phrase 'never rely on what you think you know', as I have given the Lord the things I understand and those I don't!

One of those things was the 3 year illness and subsequent death of my Dad at the age of 56. I was 18 when he died and had just started my nursing career in Leeds. Much prayer was said for, and over Dad and he would say two things to me during that time – 'all who came to Jesus were healed' and 'always trust God Steph, always trust God!' However, despite his faith he wasn't healed and with all my subsequent questions and queries, I 'parked' God on the shelf of my life.

One day, soon after, as I was working on the wards a patient asked me, out of the blue, if I was a Christian. I was completely taken aback – I was not reading my bible, praying, going to church or sharing my faith. 'How did you know?', I asked, 'I just knew!' he replied.

From this small conversation and the courage of this man to speak out, God was saying to me,

'You may have parked me, but I have not done the same with you!'. Although I had no answers to why my Dad was not healed, I knew God loved me, and saw me in my sorrow and had not given up on me!

And so my faith journey was back on track.

Steph Hall (Mission Church)

HARVEST COLLECTIONS FOR THE FOODBANK

As a symbol of our gratitude for all that God has given us this harvest festival, each of our churches will be collecting non-perishable food items and toiletries to be donated to Street food bank, run by our friends at the Salvation Army.

It is a sad reality that many in our communities struggle to put food on the table and the food bank provides a vital lifeline for those living on the margins of our society. We not only take collections of such items at harvest but each of our churches also has a collection box and ongoing donations throughout the year are always appreciated; as supplies can get very low at other times in the year.

Please check in with the food bank to see what items are in particularly short supply but, generally, be aware that tinned vegetables and other tinned meals, UHT milk and toiletries are always appreciated. Please consider donating items in smaller packet sizes as many of those who receive support from the food bank live in accommodation with very little storage.

Kevin Lawrence

Introducing.....MISSION WITHOUT BORDERS

(supported by Holy Trinity, Walton)

We are all familiar with Western Europe: after all, we are physically part of it - even if we're not in the EU! But what about our neighbours in Eastern Europe, the ex-communist countries which until around 1990 were largely cut off from us by the 'Iron Curtain' imposed by the former USSR?

These countries - some of them - are where Mission Without Borders (MWB) operates:

Ukraine, Romania, Moldova Bulgaria, Bosnia, Albania. They are some of the poorest countries in Europe. It is hard for us in our relatively prosperous, well-fed comfort, with free healthcare and accessible education, to imagine what life is like for those in desperate poverty. MWB seeks to reach out to the needy in these countries with help both practically - such as with soup kitchens, winter clothing, school bags and materials for children whose parents have no money for them, 'Christmas Love' parcels for needy families, and also spiritual: summer camps for children and reaching out to people with the good news of the Gospel of Jesus wherever possible. I haven't visited Eastern Europe since the 1990s but the warmth of the welcome I received in spite of their desperate poverty - many in poor health dying far younger than they would here - left a lasting impression which time has not erased. Supporting Mission Without Borders is one way in which we can do something to help our neighbours on the other side of Europe who are so easily overlooked but so deserving of our support.

Bernard Sinclair (Walton)



COMING NEXT MONTH - THE REAL ADVENT CALENDAR

Christmas is coming! As in previous years, we will be placing an order for The Real Advent Calendar. Each Calendar includes a Christmas story book and fairly- traded chocolate behind every window. Details of

how to order will feature in the October edition of Life, so watch this space!

Congratulations

To Maisie Day (Mission Church) on gaining a place at Plymouth University starting September 2024,



Glitter and Glow is BACK

Let's bring the light of the world as an alternative to Halloween.

On Thursday the 31st October we will be holding our Glitter and Glow party at the Parish Church Street from 5.30-7pm for Primary School aged children.

If you would like to help out with this fun event either on the doors, doing crafts/games or helping with food please speak with Hannah Hindle 07890189938 hhindle25@gmail.com

Energy and our Churches

The subject of energy is rarely out of the news. We rely on energy to heat, light and power appliances in our homes, this is so for our churches too. As part of Eco Church I have been reviewing the EFT (Energy Footprint Tool) results for the churches in the Benefice. Those who have seen the notices on each of the church notice boards may have realised that the carbon footprint figures, reflecting the energy use for our four churches differ from 2.6 tonnes for Compton Dundon to between 8.9 and 10.1 tonnes for the other three churches. One tonne is equivalent (according to one source) to driving the return journey from Lands End to John O'Groats twice.

Why such vast difference between Compton Dundon and the other churches? Compton Dundon is a much smaller church, they also only use electricity; the other churches use gas for heating which, though cheaper, is less efficient and is a fossil fuel.

The figures given represent the total energy used however some of this is offset by our using renewable energy. All electricity supplied in the UK is likely to include some renewable energy, many suppliers now have renewable tariffs but only those who generate their own or buy directly from renewable electricity generating companies are truly 'green'. Renewable supply contracts are now competitively priced.

One way to look at energy consumption is to compare the average use of each of our buildings, the estimated number of people attending individual events/sessions including church services each week is:

Compton Dundon: 26
Street Parish Church: 48
Street Mission Church: 327
Walton Parish Church: 41

These figures are arrived at by adding numbers attending services to those attending other events in each building. The annual figure is then divided by 52. Please note these are comparative rather than accurate figures.

The Mission Church has a much greater usage but similar energy costs to other churches partly because of the solar panels. Any energy generated is available for use in the Mission Church and therefore we are not incurring the cost of purchasing that energy so providing a saving on expenditure. Any energy not used is exported to the National Grid. At present we are not receiving payment for this; when we renew our energy contracts if we change supplier we should get some small remuneration for the excess exported. Solar panels are most beneficial in situations where buildings are in regular use throughout the day, every day such as the Mission Church, in other situations the only way to benefit most is to install battery storage.

Making savings

We should be aiming both to reduce costs, and to reduce our carbon footprint. With the proposed reordering of Walton and Compton Dundon churches part of the work proposed aims to reduce energy costs by providing more responsive and therefore more efficient heating. Although there are no major works currently considered for Street in the light of the current financial constraints the situation is under active review. Ideas that could be explored are switching to LED lighting, this might have an initial cost if light fittings needed to be changed but would contribute to longer term savings. Another idea is to turn thermostats down by one degree.

These are ideas that could also easily be applied in many of our own homes.

Sue Ripley (Street Parish)
SWCD Eco Church group

An invitation to 'Thrive'

Do you want to see your churches and benefices grow, in numbers, in leaders, as followers of Jesus and in sharing their faith?

'Thrive' may be a way to help this to happen!

What is 'Thrive'?

It is a collection of resources, to help parishes and benefices to evaluate where they are in each of 6 areas:

- Our Praying
- Our Stories
- Our Leaders
- Our Disciples
- Our Faith Sharing
- Our Future

There is a book which accompanies the course, and the course happens through a learning community, which meets as a whole community once every 3 months or so, with follow up and implementation in benefices or parishes. There are also prayer guides for benefices and PCC sessions.

The aims are:

- To step back and evaluate how churches in your benefice are doing across the six areas
- To make focussed plans to improve current practice in each area
- To help your benefice to grow in each area.

How will 'Thrive' happen in the Glastonbury Deanery?

We are proposing to use the autumn of 2024 to publicise and for benefices to identify their teams. There will be a taster session at Deanery Synod on 16 October to which anyone in our benefice is welcome to come. We then plan to start in January, our meetings will take place in the evening in Street or Glastonbury.

Members of the Deanery and Parish Support team in Flourish House are supporting us in this and will provide a copy of the book for each parish that participates. There will be support from Jane Durham, as Deanery Mission Enabler for benefices and parishes, in between sessions (if they would like it).

To find out more.

Contact Jane Durham rev.jane.durham@gmail.com 01458223417 or 07421700242

Come to Deanery Synod on 16 October at 7:15pm

Ana Lawrence

First Sunday breakfast to launch in October

Before our FirstSunday@themission service, we will be launching a regular, monthly open breakfast to all who would welcome it from 9:45 to 10:15 AM in the Mission Church.

Come and join us for a simple bacon roll, cereal and a drink as we share time and food together before we come to worship.

We will ask for donations to cover the cost of the food, but all are welcome.

Kevin Lawrence

It is a matter of character

'I WILL ... MAKE YOUR NAME GREAT; AND YOU SHALL BE A BLESSING.' GENESIS 12:2 NKJV

George spent his early years shuffled between foster homes until one day Maria Watkins, a childless washerwoman, found him asleep in her barn. But she did not just take him in; she took him to church and introduced him to Jesus. When eventually he left her home, he took with him the Bible she had given him. Maria left her mark on his life – and George Washington Carver left his mark on the world. This father of modern agriculture was a friend to three Presidents as well as Henry Ford and Gandhi. He is credited with over 300 inventions!

The remarkable thing is, despite his early disadvantages this orphaned boy never became bitter or spent so much as a minute getting even. Instead, when he went into his lab each morning he prayed, 'Open my eyes that I may see ...' (Read Psalm 119:18 NIV). How could God fail to bless someone with that attitude?

Great challenge requires great maturity, so God takes the time necessary to develop our character to match the assignment. After telling Abraham, 'I will ... make your name great ...' it took 25 more years of testing before God finally entrusted him with a son to establish the Jewish nation.

From the daily readings in 'The Word for Today'. This booklet of devotional readings is published every three months and is available free of charge through the generosity of supporters, from: UCB Operations Centre, Westport Road, Stoke-on-Trent, ST6 4JF. Tel: 0845 60 40 401. Email: ucb@ucb.co.uk

UCB is short for United Christian Broadcasters, who also produce Christian radio and TV programmes available on DAB digital radio, TV and online. Details at ucbmedia.co.uk

