

November 2024

50p



Life



swcd-churches.org.uk



MAGAZINE EDITOR LIFE

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Articles for the December edition are due by **Sunday 17 November**

As I write this, I am looking forward to visiting Stourhead the National Trust Gardens at Stourton in Wiltshire, together with one or two others from Street churches, when we will be enjoying the Autumn tints as we circle the lake, marvelling at God's wonderful Creation, and the wonderful work of the volunteers. The front cover picture of the Gothic Cottage was taken there at a previous visit at the same time of year.

Walton's Harvest goodies for the foodbank, adorn the back cover along with the barn dance being enjoyed by the folk from Compton Dundon.

The centre back picture shows Trinity Handbells playing at their afternoon 30-year celebration at Street Parish Church, and a Trinity Handbell ringer and Tower Bellringer Geoff Walker presenting Gillian Allanson-Bailey (also a Trinity Handbell ringer) and Chris her husband with a certificate giving them Life Membership of the Guild of Bellringers. Bob Lampert also in the photo was presented with his previously. Lastly the lovely celebration cake. Roger.

Rector's Letter

Dear Friends,

'God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble'

The most recent conflict in the Middle East has now been raging for over a year, with countless lives lost, mass destruction and fear. Closer to home, the war in Ukraine seems to be unending. As I write, new allegations have emerged about widespread foreign interference in UK political life. We live in turbulent and troubled times.

In church and elsewhere, we continue to pray prayers of peace for so many troubled parts of the world. Yet, even as we pray, some of you might be thinking 'when will this all end?' We don't know, but as Christians, we put our trust in God who is indeed our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Likewise, some of us may be facing turbulent waters in our own families, friendship groups or at home. Just in the last few days, Kevin and I heard from close friends about their devastating news. Whether illness, bereavement, unexpected news or something else, my prayer is that we will know that God is mightier than even the bloodiest war-zone, even the most awful news, even in situations when we are tempted to just give up praying because there seems no point.

And this month, in the context of the above, we take time pray and remember, at our annual remembrance services, as we call to mind the turmoil of war and tragedy of those who lost their lives in the many conflicts.

As we look back with gratitude and prayerfulness, let us also look forward to the future with the knowledge that God is the God of

hope who can satisfy our deepest longings and bring us everlasting peace. I am sharing a verse from the popular modern hymn 'In Christ alone'

In Christ alone my hope is found
He is my light my strength my song.
This cornerstone this solid ground
firm through the fiercest drought and storm.
What heights of love what depths of peace
when fears are stilled when strivings cease.
My comforter my all in all,
here in the love of Christ I stand.

May you know the God of hope and peace, our refuge and strength in
the coming days.

With my love and prayers, Ana

Remembrance across our benefice

We will be holding a 'traditional' act of remembrance as part of our
Remembrance Day morning services at Walton, Compton Dundon and
the Parish Church Street and, as a result, service times may change.
Please see the list of services in 'Life' for details. In addition, in Street,
we will be involved in the civic parade and act of remembrance in the
afternoon at the Merriman Park.

This year, in addition, there will also be a Communion service at
10:30am in the Mission Church during which we will also pause to
remember.

Ana Lawrence

Bishop's Letter

'It takes the whole world to know Christ'

Do you think a fish knows that it's swimming in water? I've been reflecting on this question not because it's some kind of Buddhist koan – the type of question that asks, 'What's the sound of one hand clapping?' Rather it's because I've been reflecting recently on questions of culture and world view. Do I see the world purely from the perspective of being who I am? (A 55-year-old white Englishman who grew up in a small village in the 1970s.) If that's the case, is what I see an accurate representation of the whole of reality? Might other perspectives be possible? If I could see the world through the eyes of others, might my vision be richer, wider, deeper? Like a fish that suddenly realizes that seeing can happen not only through water, but through air as well?

Seeing things from the perspective of others was something that Jesus did. An example of this happens when Jesus heals a centurion's servant in Luke's Gospel (Luke 7: 1-10). The centurion comes from a background and culture that's entirely different to that in which Jesus grew up. Yet Jesus is blown away by the insight that the centurion has about who Jesus himself is. This leads Jesus to exclaim 'I tell you, not even in Israel have I found such faith!'

The Diocese of Bath and Wells has a link with the five Anglican Dioceses of Zambia. There's much to be celebrated in the friendship that we share: the joy and vitality of the *Zambian Church*, *the opportunities our link offers to help some of the world's poorest communities*. *But for me, the greatest gift we gain is the opportunity our link offers to stand in the shoes of others and to see the world, our faith, and the whole of reality from a different perspective.*

A wise person once said to me 'It takes the whole world to know Christ'. Our link with Zambia enables us to see more of the Jesus we share than we could ever hope to experience otherwise.

Bishop Michael Beasley

SWCD Churches Book Club

The next meeting of the SWCD Churches book club will be on Tuesday 19th November at 11am in the Mission Church. The book we are discussing is 'The House in South Road' by Joyce Storey. There is still time to grab a copy, enjoy a good read on these darker evenings, and join us,

The next book, which will be the focus for our group in early 2025 (date to be confirmed) will be 'The Windsor Knot' by S J Bennett

There are copies of both books available through Street library and to buy second-hand.

For more information, please contact Susan Ripley Parish Church)

New Wine 2025

You may have read, in a recent edition of 'Life' stories from a group of us who went to New Wine, the Christian festival held on the Bath and West showground each summer.

Maybe that inspired you to consider coming next year and joining a group of us who will be celebrating and learning with Christians from across the country only 10 miles from the benefice?

If so, and you like a bargain, the early bird discount for booking tickets does not last much longer and so please consider booking soon to get cheaper tickets. If you book, please link to our church 'Street Walton & Compton Dundon' so the organisers know which church group you are with. You can find details of how to book at <https://www.new-wine.org/events/new-wine-festival-2025/>

We look forward to seeing you there! Ana & Kevin Lawrence

My Faith Journey

I grew up in a Christian family, and we all went to church regularly. My dad was very involved with the Church being a churchwarden for 30 years and so I can't ever remember Church not being a significant part of my life growing up. When I went to teacher training college however, I didn't really connect with any other Christians, and I stopped going to Church. It felt like there was too many other more important things to be doing. Then I left college and went into the Navy and very quickly I was called upon to play at various church services and so I started going to church again at this point. If anyone had asked me I would have said I was a Christian, but I think I would have struggled to say what that meant apart from believing in God and going to Church fairly regularly. When I left the Navy, we came home to live in Street and I started going regularly to church with Joe and my mum and dad, I had taken Joe to church since he was born because I wanted him to have the same Church upbringing that I had had. I'm not quite sure why, but it just felt like the right thing to do. Often I would leave services in tears and not understand why I was so upset and so disturbed by what I was hearing in the sermons the rector of the time was saying. One day I had a chat with him and he suggested I go on the upcoming alpha course. I realised on the Alpha course that I had never really explored my Christian faith in any great depth and certainly when the leader was talking about a relationship with Jesus, I just didn't know what he meant, but I knew that I wanted it. One part of the course was about forgiveness and although hugely painful I realised that this was the pain I had been carrying and had to allow the Lord to deal with. So for me the Alpha course was life-

changing. Following Alpha I joined a housegroup and my faith grew from strength to strength. Close Christian friends and going on courses to develop my faith have all hugely contributed to where I am now. Through thick and thin Jesus was my everything and I knew I could rely on Him to guide me every step of the way. When I've got things wrong, He has gently brought me back to the right path but over the years I have learned to listen, trust and be obedient. The biggest question I always have now is how to people do life with Jesus???

Suzie Williams (Mission Church)

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Prayer – the first option and not the last resort

Jane Tompsett used a phrase very similar to the title of this article when she was giving a talk recently based upon what James (Chapter 5) says about patience. It struck me so much I had to grab a pen and scribble a note on a nearby copy of Lifeline.

At times I too struggle with prayer in my own life with all the usual problems and challenges – giving time, focus, and priority to it and trying to be patient. But when the challenges are the biggest, praying for them can seem like a singular and sometimes lonely task.

But that need not be so. Within the SWCD Church network we have the Prayer Support Group whose members, from across the Benefice, have a heart to pray for the needs of others. Those in the group are bound by a duty of confidentiality so that whatever is shared as a prayer request stays within the Group and is not shared outside the Group.

To make a prayer request is simple and don't wait until you feel overwhelmed – just get in touch with me and provide an outline of what you need prayer for.

Jeff Brewer – 07970 881779 or email: prayers.street@gmail.com

BIG BREAKFAST

The ever-popular Big Breakfast is returning on

Saturday, November 16th!

We do hope you are able to join us in Meadway Hall, Compton Dundon between 9 am and 11.30 am for a delicious cooked or continental breakfast.



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.

Thank you. Pat King.

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CAMEO Coffee morning

This month our St Andrew's outreach team liaised with Compton Dundon School for the regular monthly CAMEO ('Come And Meet Each Other') village coffee morning.

We were delighted when a team of pupils joined us to help as Welcomers and Servers.

Villagers were met at the door and shown to their table before an order was taken for cakes and drinks. A good variety of cakes were on offer this month, but the boys excelled and everyone received the correct order in prompt time.

All this was done with exemplary care and politeness. The visit was part of the school's Life Skills programme, and the team were awarded well deserved Certificates of Appreciation on the day. We look forward to continuing this link with the school when a new school team come to help at the November CAMEO.

Thank you Compton Dundon School. Pat King.

October Connections@theMission

Thank you to Vanessa Adams (Walton) for sharing some of her faith journey. She told us about how being a Christian impacted on the role of being a school governor at Walton School. As the talk progressed we heard about how schools are run. Vanessa did well to answer the questions that people asked. We continued talking about lots of things as we enjoyed refreshments. Pam Harmsworth (Mission Church)

Connections@theMission

Thursday 21st November

2-30pm till 4pm

Mission Church, Street

Come along for a crafty afternoon
with Jenny Collins (Mission Church Street)

There will be a cuppa and cake



Harvest.

The whole Benefice celebrated Harvest on the 1st weekend of October and we started off with a lovely harvest supper. Laura started us off with a Deal or no Deal and our grateful thanks to Alex who stepped up and volunteered, playing his part so well. Thank you Laura for entertaining us. A lovely hot supper was enjoyed by us all followed by Rough Round the Edges who played the night away. Thank you to all who cooked and entertained and washed up. Well done everyone.

Our Harvest service was just lovely set in the Church so beautifully decorated by a team on the Saturday. Thank you again to everyone who makes it all possible.

Walton school followed with their own service on Tuesday the 8th, and the year 6 children led so well from beginning to end. The songs they sang were such prayerful insights that I am sure there weren't many dry eyes.

One of the meaningful songs was... 'An empty bowl, a crying child, A mother filled with dread, an empty cup, a scorching sun, a dried up river bed.'

Our churches were full of amazing gifts for the food bank in Street which reminded us of those locally who are struggling and the song reminded us of countries farther away who aren't as blessed as us. Sandra (Walton)

Operation Christmas Child.

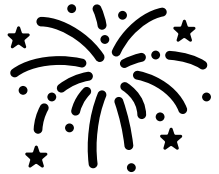
As you read this magazine, we will only have 2 weeks left for our deadline for collection before your wonderful gifts make their way to different countries.

Thank you to those of you who have already filled a box or donated towards filling a box and transport costs. Please drop off your box in any of our churches by the 11th November. Don't forget to pray for the children that will excitedly receive a box maybe for the 1st time. Sandra (Walton)

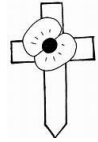
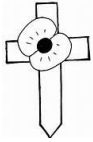


Fun Day

Walton had such a wonderful fun day on the 14th September.



The weather was beautiful and the village hall and field were packed with so many people having an amazing time. It was lovely to be a presence for the church and thank you to those that supported us. Sandra (Walton)



**Remembrance
Sunday
10th November**

Holy Trinity Parish Church STREET
8-30am BCP
Holy Communion

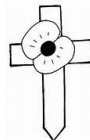
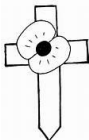
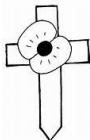
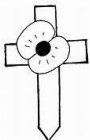
10-30am
Remembrance

Mission Church STREET
10-30am
Communion@theMission
We will Pause to Remember

St Andrew's Church COMPTON DUNDON
10-30am
Remembrance

Holy Trinity Church WALTON
10-50am
Remembrance

Merriman Park STREET
2-pm
Civic Parade and Act of Remembrance



HARVEST at St Andrew's Church

On Sunday, October 6th Sr Rachel Pengelly led our traditional Harvest service at St Andrew's Church. This is a time of year when we can be grateful for all the food we have, and for our local farmers who harvest their crops to provide it. During the service a variety of produce was offered as symbols of our harvested foods.

The children crafted a Harvest garland of fruits and vegetables, whilst others shared in the readings and prayers.

Many generous people added to the Harvest display with donations of non-perishable goods and Mr Bob Burns provided the centrepiece Harvest loaf.

The service ended with a call to 'Tend the earth, care for God's creation.'

On Monday morning the pupils from Compton Dundon School came to church with their own goods to donate, and learnt about the celebration of Harvest in the Christian calendar. All of the food was gratefully received by the Salvation Army in Street, along with a collection from the Harvest service.

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Men's Breakfast Saturday November 23rd

All **men** are invited to a Saturday morning

"Somerset breakfast" at the Mission church on November 23rd 9am - 10am. An opportunity to come and start the day by joining with other people for food and relaxed company. There will be an "after breakfast" speaker.

Please do let us know that you wish to come so that we can arrange for the catering. There may be a small charge (<£3). Contact details and for more information Tim Hindle (mission church)

tim_hindle62@hotmail.com or 07976 615844

Rewilding or Protecting and Restoring Nature?

The earth is the Lord's and everything in it (Psalm 24, verse 1)

The term rewilding is widely used but what does it mean and what relevance does it have to us as Christians?

Scotland

I recently visited an estate in Scotland, Alladale which is 23,000 acres (approx. 36 square miles). It is 'owned' by someone who wants the estate to be managed in an environmentally responsible way. As well as enjoying the wildlife and the glorious autumn colours I learnt about what this meant. Already a million native trees have been planted, land has been fenced to keep the deer away until the trees have grown to a sufficient height. The deer population is being reduced. More tree planting is planned especially along the riverbanks to provide shade for salmon who are adversely affected by higher temperatures. This will also boost biodiversity and carbon storage while rejuvenating the ecosystems. Whilst some call this rewilding, others point out that this is already a wild landscape and prefer what they are doing as protecting and restoring nature and landscape, regarding those responsible for the estate as custodians not owners. Genesis refers to stewardship which is about taking good care of what has been entrusted to us. This means looking after the land for nature, climate and people.

Canada

A Rocha who run the Eco Church scheme are a Christian charity who manage environmental projects around the world. One of these, in Canada, faced an issue with beaver dams. The dams were welcomed as they provided ways of storing water but also prevented salmon from swimming upstream to spawn. A post from A Rocha explains:

Although humans can, and often do, create immense damage in an ecosystem, we can also be a source of healing.

Droughts exacerbated by climate change are an increasingly common occurrence, and in some cases, species struggle against one another for habitat. Through careful management, we can create a healthy home for all the creatures who live in

the Buck Creek Watershed. To protect both the salmon and the beavers, an effective compromise is to create an opening in the dam that the salmon can swim through while leaving the base intact.

England

Throughout the UK how we manage green spaces in urban and rural areas is a much-debated topic. When we think of land owned by the Church, we usually think of churchyards but these are just the tip of the iceberg. The Church of England is one of the top ten landowners in the country owning 200,000 acres (over six times the size of Alladale).

Wild Card <https://wildcard.land/> is a campaign to persuade landowners, including the Church of England, to manage their land more responsibly. They say:

Whilst most churchyards are lovingly tended for nature's benefit by local congregations, half the Church's land is managed by ... the Church Commissioners. ... most of this land is in a dire ecological state with just 4% tree coverage and less than half of their protected sites in a favourable condition. It's now time for the Church Commissioners to set large-scale rewilding targets that match the spiritual calling of the Church.

They ask that Church Commissioner Rewild 30% of their English land by 2030, in support of this they have published '95 Wild Theses', statements from a wide range of people leading with **Dr Rowan Williams** Former Archbishop of Canterbury:

God saw that it was good. Do we? Letting the natural world be itself – not just a reserve bank for our convenience – is an act of grace, and one that we should be glad to embrace, because when the world around us flourishes, so do we. The material life in the midst of which we live is the neighbour we must learn to love – and love for itself.

Many people are taking action to protect and restore nature, we should support them and encourage others to do more.

Sue Ripley (Street) SWCD Eco Church Group

Little Stars This group is run on Friday mornings in the Mission Church, Street, from 9-30am till 11am during term time. The group is for children, from babies up to school age, along with a responsible adult. Preparation for the group includes buying snacks, preparing suitable craft activities, preparing the Mission Church space; and the team of volunteers pray together before the families arrive. Recently we welcomed child minders, a range of family members including parents, grandparents, aunts and family friends and of course, the children.

During a recent group we asked the adults what they liked about the Little Stars group. Some of the answers are printed below.

The automatic doors are good, especially with the double buggy.
Warm and welcoming group.
It's affordable, no commitment to come every week.
Somewhere to go and meet up with friends.
Very relaxed.
Very friendly. A good place to meet other mums and share experiences.
Good group for first time parents.
Comfortable environment, we love it.

Fantastic range of activities. I have been coming for two years.
Really friendly. Lots of activities for different ages.
We really enjoy singing time.
Always so many options for play.
Love the space.
Our first time, lovely to have a good choice of toys.
Our first time, really welcoming.
Nice to have a choice of seats to sit on, especially when you have a young baby.

When all the visitors have left the building there is lots of clearing away to be done. We have a team of volunteers who help with washing up, furniture moving, checking toilets, hoovering and more... Want to know more? Talk to Julie Day (Mission Church)

Events, social and fundraising group for street?

As a result of some of the conversations we have been having recently about finance in Street, I've heard a couple of comments saying that it would be great to have more social and / or fund-raising events in our churches.

In both Walton and Compton Dundon there are already groups who do a great job of organising events throughout the year. It would be fantastic to have a similar group of people willing and able to put a schedule of events together for the church family and wider community in Street.

I have already had some expressions of interest in being part of this, but if you think this is something you could get involved in please do have a word with me. Ana Lawrence

Journey through Advent with us

In addition to our house groups, during lent, we plan a series of weekly daytime meetings during which we will journey through the season of Advent, offering the opportunity to learn and eat together in this season of waiting and preparation.

As I write, plans are still to be finalised, but please watch out for more details in the coming weeks.

Ana Lawrence

Support our Confirmation candidates in Wells

I am delighted that members of the SWCD churches family will be presented for confirmation by our Bishop in Wells Cathedral on Saturday 23rd November.

Please pray for these candidates and consider coming along to support them at this joyful service.

If you would like more details, please contact me. Ana Lawrence

Walton Reordering update

The Walton Parochial Church Council recently met to discuss progress on our plans for the major reordering at Holy Trinity, previously reported in 'Life.'

We have had a good and positive response from the various consultations that we have done but there was a feeling that we probably need to give more opportunities for the community to have their voices heard and this will be done early in 2025.

Meanwhile, in the consultations so far undertaken there was unanimous agreement that repair to the church roof was a priority and we will be talking more about this and the funding required, again, early in 2025.

If you would like any more information on this project or our plans please talk to Andy Savage (Walton) about building specific questions and me about any fund raising and finance questions.

Kevin Lawrence

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Tearfund Big Quiz Night

Don't forget this fantastic event, run in aid of one of Street' Mission partners.

Join us on the evening of Saturday 16th November for an evening of quizzing for a good cause.

More details on our website, on Facebook, or in lifeline.

Kevin Lawrence

Easyfundraising is as easy as it sounds

All of our parishes are now set up to receive donations via 'Easyfundraising,' an online shopping site. Once you set it up, if you buy things online from hundreds of different retailers, Easyfundraising make donations to your parish at no cost to you. It would be great to see more people using this free way of raising money for us and you can find details of this and other ways to give at [https://swcd-churches.org.uk/Groups/304053/Give to us.aspx](https://swcd-churches.org.uk/Groups/304053/Give%20to%20us.aspx).

Ana and I use this for our online shopping and have so far raised well over £150 for the church at absolutely no cost to us. Imagine how much we'd get if more of us got involved?

Kevin Lawrence

Congratulations



To Walton Village Hall, celebrating 25 years since they opened.

To John Greed, former rector of Street and Walton, on recently celebrating a significant birthday.

To Trinity Handbells who are celebrating 30 years of ringing.

Christmas is a time for....inviting?

Over the next few weeks, look out for details of all our Advent and Christmas services and events, which will be published on our website, in Lifeline and on Facebook as well as December 'Life.'

What better time of year than Christmas to invite friends, family, neighbours or colleagues to something at your church? Whether it's a carol service, a Crib or school service or one of our other events, to misquote the Christmas film 'Love Actually' 'after all, if you can't say it at Christmas, when can you say it.'

If you don't issue the invitation, it might be that nobody else does and it is a widely accepted reality that all of us are far more likely to go somewhere or attend something if somebody personally invites us to come along.

I look forward to seeing you and many others over the Advent and Christmas season.

Ana Lawrence

An update on Street finances

A number of people have asked for an update on the current situation with Street parish finances, following our presentation to the Parish and Mission Churches over the summer.

Details of what individuals give are rightly never shared with me as Rector, but I do understand from Sonia, our treasurer that there has been a response to that appeal and that, consequently, our financial position is gradually improving. However, at our September Parochial Church Council (PCC) meeting, the improvement was not yet sufficient for us to avoid having those

difficult conversations about cutting expenditure we outlined in the summer. As it stood, we were still facing the situation that we would run out of money within the next few months, albeit increases in giving meant that would not now happen quite so quickly.

Accordingly, with a heavy heart, the PCC felt it had no choice but to suspend payment of our tithe to our mission partners this year. In addition, we are taking active steps to reduce heating costs in both of our buildings, and you may notice the impact on the temperatures in our churches over the coming weeks.

I can assure you that this was not a decision that the PCC either wanted to take or took lightly, but we had little choice as stewards of church finances with a legal responsibility to manage them well. The PCC is due to meet again at the end of November and, at that time, we will carefully review our updated financial position and future budget projections. My hope and prayer remains that the decisions we made in September are ones we will soon be able to reverse. Indeed, I am sure we would all far rather be talking in the future about new ministry and mission initiatives, because our finances were now in a sufficiently healthy state that we can consider investing further in growing God's Kingdom in this place.

if you want to see the current figures or discuss your own giving please have a word, in confidence, with our Treasurer, Sonia Beaty

Ana Lawrence

The Gift of Freedom

'CHRIST HAS SET US FREE ... SO TAKE YOUR STAND!'
Galatians 5:1 TM

On top off the Capitol dome in Washington, D.C., is a 20-foot statue of the 'Freedom Lady'. Her face is framed in a crest of stars and she's holding a shield of stars and stripes in her hand. She was shipped from Rome and during a fierce storm the captain ordered some cargo to be thrown overboard. The sailors wanted to ditch the 'Freedom Lady', but the captain refused, shouting above the wind, 'Never! We'll flounder before we throw freedom away!' Ben Franklin said, 'Those who give up liberty for safety deserve neither liberty nor safety!' A wise man once said, 'If we value anything more than freedom, we'll lose our freedom. And if we value comfort or money more, we'll lose those too.' In 1945 Martin Niemoeller said, 'When the Nazis came for the Communists I didn't speak up, because I wasn't a Communist. When they came for the Jews I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Jew. When they came for the Trade Unionists I didn't speak up, because I wasn't a Trade Unionist. When they came for the Catholics I didn't speak up, because I was a Protestant. When they came for me, there was no longer anyone who could protest.'

We must guard against apathy, and never forget that much of the world doesn't enjoy the political and religious freedoms we take for granted. Remember, 'Christ has set us free ... So take your stand! Never again let anyone put a harness ... on you.'

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

