

November 2025



60p

Life



swcd-churches.org.uk



EDITOR LIFE MAGAZINE

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**Articles for the December edition
are due by Sunday 16th November**

Remembering those who are no longer with us, because of Wars should always be in our thoughts and prayers, but November is a special time for everyone to give thanks for those who gave there lives in the two wars, and the emblem for this is of course the poppy, and the front cover has poppies amongst a wild garden area. All the Remembrance services are detailed in the centre pages, and hopefully all the SWCD churches will be suitably decorated to mark the occasion.

In the October magazine we congratulated Pat and Steve King from Compton Dundon on their 25th wedding anniversary, (Be it a little early), and at the fourth Sunday service there we were treated to a piece of anniversary cake, and very nice it was too. Pat and Steve are pictured on the back with that cake. The picture of the tree being planted is mentioned in an article inside, as are the lower two pictures.

I am delighted to say that this month's edition of Life is a bumper one, and as I prepare the pages for printing, I am praying that all will turn out all right in the end!!

As usual I hope you will enjoy reading the many articles, and keep them coming in. Roger.

Rectors Letter

“Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.” Proverbs Chapter 3 verse 5

Dear Friends,

At this time of year, we traditionally take time to remember, whether at Remembrance Services, where we think of those lost to wars or Memorial Services, where we remember loved ones who are no longer with us. The pain of grief and loss can take its toll. People find many ways of remembering, for example, roadside ‘shrines’ have become an increasing feature of contemporary life.

It can also feel a difficult time of year for some, with longer darker evenings, the damp and the cold and maintaining personal wellbeing, not least in part through lack of daylight with SAD syndrome a winter issue, it can be a particularly tough season.

As Christians, we remember all that God has done for us in the sending of Jesus his only son into a broken and fractured world, to offer a gospel of peace, hope, joy and salvation.

But how might we cope in the times when things feel too difficult, when painful memories can seemingly ‘assault’ our hearts and minds? In my own life and in personal times of devotion, turning to God’s Word has continually been a source of light, life and healing. Time and again, I find myself drawn to particular parts of the Bible when I find God speaking to me most directly. The verse above from Proverbs is a timely reminder that we can trust God with all of our hearts – we hand it all to him, everything; the

memories, the pain, the current stresses knowing that God is right there with us.

Reading current news stories can at times feel depressing, and it can seem like nothing will ever change in certain national and international situations. Whether yet another scandal that has gripped the nation, wars or rumours of wars, or whatever it is, these things can simply drag us down and potentially lead us into a negative spiral.

As Christians and as people of hope and peace, let's try to remember and acknowledge God for who he is, merciful, awesome and the author of Salvation. Let's trust that He can make our paths straight. Hallelujah!

With my love & prayers,

Ana



Growing social media presence for SWCD Churches

Between Facebook (SWCD Churches) and Instagram (swcdchurchesba16) we now have well over 300 followers on social media and are looking to continue to grow that number as a way of sharing all that we're doing with a wider audience.

If you are on Facebook or Instagram and haven't yet given us a follow why not do so now? If you already have followed us, please like and share our posts and events as it helps to give them more attention on the wider platforms. If this is not your thing, please pass this on to those people you know whose thing it is! Kevin Lawrence

AWARDS
AWARDS

Commendation:
St Andrew's Church
Compton Dundon

The
William Stansell Somerset

HISTORIC
BUILDING
AWARDS
2025

This project to bring the bells of St Andrew's, which were originally cast in the village, back into full use required a new ringing floor cleverly inserted to maintain the view through to the west window, new access from the tower stair and new bell frame all carefully detailed and executed. An exemplary community project the village can be proud of.

Owner: PCC of St Andrew's Church, Compton Dundon

Client:
Compton Dundon St Andrews Bell Restoration Appeal

Designer: Mark Taylor Chartered Architect

Contractor: Chris Baker

Specialist Bell Hanger: Andrew Nicholson



Patrick Stow
Chairman of Somerset Building Preservation Trust



SOMERSET BUILDING
Preservation Trust

The Awards which are made biennially, were launched in 2000. They are sponsored by Tauntfield Limited, in memory of **William Stansell** (1910-1987) whose great love was the conservation and repair of historic buildings, and who was chairman of the family building firm, established in Taunton in 1823. The primary aim of the awards is to highlight the positive contribution that craftsmanship, design and construction can make in care, appearance and appreciation of the historic environment of Somerset.

The Bell Project was nominated for the award (see previous page) and judging took place earlier in the summer.

On their website, William Stansell say

"This award scheme was introduced by the Trust in 2000 to recognise exceptionally high standards of design and craftsmanship. The prestigious awards, given every two years, highlight the positive contribution that all designed and conserved buildings make to their surroundings"

Amongst incredibly stiff competition The Bell Project was shortlisted and the awards ceremony was held on the 18th September at the Rural Life Museum in Glastonbury.

We are thrilled to say that we were awarded a Commended certificate.

It is marvellous that the skills of Mark Taylor, Chris Baker and Andrew Nicholson have been recognised in this way. Not only have they created a wonderful lasting legacy of pealing bells and a stunning ringing gallery at St Andrew's Church but they were a delight to work with throughout the (six year) project. They each helped and guided us every step of the way.

The certificate will be framed and placed in the church for everyone to see, now and in the future.

What a fantastic way to end what has been a momentous year for the Bell Appeal and St Andrew's Church. Judy Skelding

Growing Younger

It has been encouraging to see the growth in the numbers of young people and children coming to our churches, perhaps particularly, but not exclusively, to the Mission Church. In response, we now have two groups for different ages meeting on Sunday mornings and a 'Pizza, Games and chat' session on alternate Monday evenings for school year 6 and above.

As our numbers continue to grow, we are always looking for more people to get involved as leaders and helpers in this vital work and if that is something you could help with, whether or not the Mission Church is your regular place of worship, please have a word with me.

I so often hear, around churches, words to the effect of 'we don't see the young people anymore.' The good news is that we are seeing them, but we now need people to help to work with them. Could that be you?

Ana Lawrence

Commissioning for the new headteacher at Walton

It was a joy to recently join pupils and staff in Walton School, along with David Hatrey, as Chair of Governors, and Sandra Gristock as church warden, to commission Heidi Padfield, as the school's new head teacher following her appointment from Easter 2025.

Please continue to pray for this school community and their growing links with Holy Trinity.

Ana Lawrence

Harvest at St Andrew's

Harvest began when we welcomed the pupils from Compton Dundon School to share in a midweek Harvest service. We are thankful for the many bags of produce that they contributed. Thankful too to our friends Sarah and George, who arranged for special visitors when we talked about the farmers' Harvest – two chickens and a 5 day old calf!

After their visit, the pupils were invited to name the calf and chose 'Belle.'

The following week some of them returned to help pack the food into bags ready for the Salvation Army.

The Salvation Army is one of our chosen charities this year, and they were very pleased to receive so many donations from the school and the church.

As we gave thanks for farmers and food, the Harvest service led by Sister Rachel was also an opportunity to thank all those who have supported the life of St Andrew's in so many diverse ways, whether reading, praying, welcoming, catering, cleaning, gardening, flower arranging, gardening, bellringing, supporting events and regular giving.

We are grateful to you all and give you heartfelt thanks for helping St Andrew's to flourish. Pat.

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A Blue Christmas

A Blue Christmas is a quiet and gentle service for anyone who finds it hard to buy into the forced merriment of Christmas, for anyone who wants space, a quiet place of reflection and for anyone for whom this might be a difficult time of year. There will be readings, poem and songs. For whatever reason you are blue, you will be welcome to join us. We will be holding a Blue Christmas service at The Parish Church on December 15th at 6pm. There will be the Healing Ministry team available to pray with or for you after the service if you would find that helpful. Who could you invite? For more information, please talk to me. Sr.Rachel.

My Faith Journey

Being brought up in the Polden Hills village of Edington my family attended what is now called Edington Chapel. As a child my sister and I would attend with our parents three services on a Sunday and then midweek services that were appropriate for our age group. At the age of 9 I became a Christian as I fully understood what it meant to have Jesus in my life having had the example of my parents as they lived out their Christian lives. By the time I was a teenager my parents encouraged us to meet up with other Christians so we would join up with after church youth activities at Street Baptist Church and the Congregational Church in Street (now the United Reformed Church). The Congregational Church was affectionately known as the Cong, and about a 100 of us would meet up on Sunday evenings and have our own Christian service. These services were run by people in their late teens to early twenties and held in the upper room above the main church. Health and Safety was not an issue then so every space was taken, we even perched on the window sills. In 1979 I married Chris who I had met at the Baptist Church, a year later our son Paul was born, four years later we had Suzanne and then another four years later we had Rose. We were blessed as each of our children came to love the Lord. In 2015 Paul sadly went to be with the Lord as he had a Brain Tumour, this inevitably challenged our faith as by now he was married to Polly and had two young sons. All I can say is we never stopped praying for Paul's healing but God had other plans. Prayer has been such a big part of my life as we are told

to pray without ceasing and give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18. I have seen the hand of God working throughout my life. Each day I try to reflect on the time I have given to him as I believe God uses us as he gives us opportunities to serve him. If we put our lives in God's hands then through his Spirit, he will direct our paths and give us the gifts we need. Praise God.

Linda Checkley (Mission Church.

SAMARITANS PURSE SHOEBOXES



A last reminder about filling shoeboxes. This is a benefice incentive and we have been sending them for many years. This is a Christian based group that respond to disasters around the world and once a year they take shoeboxes filled with joy to children who have nothing. We don't know where our shoeboxes will end their journey until February when they will have reached a destination. The boxes are given out through churches and I recommend you take a look at the website to see the faces of the children receiving them.

The date for finishing boxes is the 10th November and I will take them to the depot for dispatching. Please don't wrap the contents or seal the box for customs to inspect. Bless you for helping with this outreach. Sandra Gristock

St Andrew's Fundraising Cream Tea for Bonny Downs Urban Abbey

Bonny Downs Baptist Church in east London is a church with a big heart and an even bigger vision. They are planning to knock down their old church building and replace it with a multi-storey Urban Abbey, comprising a worship space, facilities for community living and flats for people moving out of homelessness. This is a project close to my heart, as I was part of the leadership team at Bonny Downs before I moved to Somerset, and I was delighted when St Andrew's adopted it as one of their designated charities for this year.

On 20th September we held a cream tea at the Village Hall to raise money for the project. We showed a short film outlining the history of the church and the future plans for the Urban Abbey. As a result of this, we raised £520 and the plan was for Pat, Steve Gareth and I to deliver the cheque in person!

The following Sunday, we met at Bonny Downs for their service. During the summer, the church holds its services in their community garden and 28th September was to be their last service of the year in the open air. Dave and Sally Mann, co-pastors, met Pat and Steve as they parked up by the old church building and led them across the playing field (also administered by the church) to the garden, where we joined them shortly after. The garden is a glorious mix of raised beds, apple and quince trees, grapevines growing up the perimeter fence, seating areas, a compost toilet and rescue chickens, who wander about happily while people chat, put out chairs and prepare for the service. While Pat and Steve chatted and found out more about Bonny Downs, Gareth and I were delighted to meet old friends and renew acquaintances.

At the start of the service, Gareth and I were invited to read a prayer of St Francis. Pat and Steve were invited up to hand over the cheque and we were very pleased to see that our donation pushed them over the £50,000 target for donations from the community. Bigger grants have been secured from local authority and community funding; demolition of the old church should take place by the end of October and the building work will commence soon after.

It was a lovely service, which ended with everyone singing the Louis Armstrong classic 'What a Wonderful World', which happens to be Steve's favourite song!

We will be following the progress of the building works closely and Dave and Sally have extended an invitation to everyone to visit the new building. It's good to know that St Andrew's has sown into this wonderful project in the east end of London. Gill Williams.

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NATIVITY WEEKEND.

Calling on people who will lend us their sets for the Weekend of 29th and 30th November. Just give me a ring on 741363 and I will collect. They will be on display from 10.00 until 4.00 each day and, as always, tea, coffee and cake will be available. Please come and support us. Sandra Gristock

CHRISTMAS JOY

Joy is the theme this year from the diocese and we are joining in with our pebbles hidden around the village from mid December. Something to make the school run more fun we hope. Look out for your pebble to see what is on them this year

Sandra Gristock

What might a healthy church look like?

Our recent Sunday sermon series has been focusing on the book of Nehemiah and, alongside telling the story of how God used that wonderful man of faith and action, we have been exploring what it might look like to be a healthy church. Each week we have taken a different aspect, based on an excellent book by Robert Warren which in turn was based on careful research amongst a large number of churches.

I thought it would be helpful to put all 7 marks for healthy church in one place, encouraging us to continue to reflect for our own church community both on the things we do well and the areas where we might improve.

1. **Energized by faith** rather than just keeping things going or trying to survive
 - *worship* and *sacramental* life: moves people to experience God's love
 - *motivation*: energy comes from a desire to serve God and one another
 - *engaging with Scripture*: in creative ways connect with life
 - *nurtures faith in Christ*: helping people to grow in, and share their faith.
2. **Outward-looking focus** with a 'whole life' rather than a 'church life' concern
 - deeply rooted in the *local community*, working in partnership with other denominations, faiths, secular groups and networks
 - passionate and prophetic about *justice* and *peace*, locally and globally
 - makes connections between *faith* and *daily living*
 - responds to human need by *loving service*

3. **Seeks to find out what God wants** discerning the Spirit's

leaning rather than trying to please everyone

- *vocation*: seeks to explore what God wants it to be and do
- *vision*: develops and communicates a shared sense of where it is going
- *mission priorities*: consciously sets both immediate and long-term goals
- able to call for, and make, *sacrifices*, personal and corporate, in bringing about the above and living out the faith.

4. **Faces the cost of change and growth** rather than resisting change and avoiding failure

- while embracing the past, it dares to take on *new ways* of doing things
- *takes risks*: and admits when things are not working, and learns from experience
- *crises*: responds creatively to challenges that face the church and community
- *positive experiences of change*: however small, are affirmed and built on.

5. **Operates as a community** rather than functioning as a club or religious organisation

- *Relationships*: are nurtured, often in small groups, so people feel accepted and are helped to grow in faith and service
- *leadership*: lay and ordained work as a team to develop locally appropriate expressions of all seven marks of a healthy church
- *lay ministry*: the different gifts, experiences and faith journeys of all are valued and given expression in and beyond the life of the church.

6. **Makes room for all** being inclusive rather than exclusive.

- *welcome*: works to include newcomers into the life of the church
- *children and young people*: are helped to belong, contribute and be nurtured in their faith
- *enquirers* are encouraged to explore and experience faith in Christ
- *diversities*: different social and ethnic backgrounds, mental and physical abilities, and ages, are seen as a strength.

7. **Does a few things and do them well** focused rather than frenetic.

- *does the basics well*: especially public worship, pastoral care, stewardship and administration
 - *occasional offices*: make sense of life and communicate faith
 - *being good news* as a church in its attitudes and ways of working
 - *enjoys what it does* and is relaxed about what is not being done.
- Ana Lawrence

Holy Trinity Walton

MacMillan Coffee morning.

What an amazing morning eating delicious cakes and drinking coffee and tea with friends. A brilliant way to raise money for this much needed cause. We raised £411.07 and our grateful thanks go to all of you. Well done.

Harvest Festival.

A little different format this year due to lack of caterers but we had a breakfast after the 9.15 service. This was such a relaxing social event with a chance to stay longer and talk to various friends. Thank you all for taking part and making it a special occasion.

Quiz Sheets.

Our wonderful Quiz compiler Liz Brown has produced a Christmas quiz sheet in aid of our refurbishment fund. These sheets are available at £2 and there will be a cash prize. Ask anyone from Walton who will pass the message on, or Sonia in the office and we will make sure you get one.

Christmas Card Writing.

Although last year we were unable to hold our informal card writing evening, we are keen to get back to it this year. On the 21st November we will be meeting in church from 6.30 to write our own cards with company, carols, mince pies and mulled wine. Tea or coffee also available. Come and join us as we no longer put off the inevitable, and start writing.

Sandra Gristock (Churchwarden, Walton)

The Bishop's Letter

Let's walk into the light

A story that's often told in our churches comes from the fourth chapter of John's Gospel. It tells of Jesus, in the blinding heat of midday meeting a Samaritan woman at the well in a town called Sychar. The woman is hoisting up heavy buckets of water in the hot sun. She's there because she's a woman with 'a reputation' and it's the only time of day she can avoid the muttering of her neighbours who meet at the well at cooler hours.

In an extraordinary encounter, Jesus sees deep into the woman's heart. Through their conversation Jesus brings about her healing and restoration into the community from which she is estranged. It's a story of life, possibility, new beginnings and forgiveness.

The woman at the well is not the only Biblical story set in Sychar. There's another, contained in the 34th chapter of the Book of Genesis. This is a tale of terror that's never heard in our churches; the rape of a girl called Dinah. It's a dark, nasty tale of violence that wrecks the life of individuals, families and the entire community. So, we don't speak about it. We keep it hidden.

Sometimes people say to me of safeguarding 'It's just a tick box exercise', an onerous compliance requirement. Rather I would say that our work in safeguarding asks fundamental questions about the kind of places we want our churches to be. Just like the Bible passages I've mentioned, we can be places of hiddenness, silence, and hurt. Or places of life, new beginnings and restoration.

Accounts like the Makin review have shone light on our story. We've also been working hard to bring about change. While we cannot be complacent, I am intensely proud of all that was revealed about safeguarding in Bath and Wells by our independent audit that happened earlier this year. This told us that we are moving towards a much better story. So, let's build on the momentum we have created. Let's walk into the light.

Michael Beasley Bishop of Bath and Wells

Water

O God, you are my God; ... my soul thirsts for you, ... as in a dry and weary land where there is no water. Psalm 63:1

I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground Isaiah 44:3

Let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream. Amos 5:24

The Bible makes many references to water. Water is symbolic as well as practical, it represents cleansing and renewal. Our attitude to water has changed over time. Some, like me, might remember, as a child visiting grandparents, having to prime a pump to encourage water to flow. Others may have visited communities where water is carefully managed, having to be collected from a central source.

How often do we think about water in our everyday life? We do not (usually) have to collect water but are able just to turn on the tap and there it is, we take it for granted. Where your tap water comes from depends on where you live. Here in Street, it comes mainly from reservoirs which are seriously depleted at present. It will take time for them to be fully replenished.

Many uses of water are hidden, every item we buy is likely to have required water at some stage, it's needed for growing crops and is used in manufacturing processes. Cyberspace uses water to cool data centres.

We are mostly aware of obvious ways to save water such as taking spending less time in the shower, installing water butts to collect rainwater, not over filling kettles, only running washing machines and dishwashers for full loads.

Indirect ways are less obvious: - Deleting emails saves water, as does unsubscribing from unwanted emails, reducing 'screen time' and cloud storage. Buying less and not wasting food saves water, energy and money.

Water is a precious resource and we should use it wisely, whatever the weather, remember that when you turn on the tap, give thanks and do not squander it. Susan Ripley, Street Parish.

Confirmation Service in Wells Cathedral

It was a joy and a privilege to attend this year's Confirmation Service in Wells and present Theo Main for Confirmation. Please see photo of us both outside the Cathedral. Theo is a longstanding member of the Mission Church and currently a student at Birmingham university. We did the confirmation preparation online (the wonders and convenience of video conferencing). Theo was confirmed alongside 34 others from across the Diocese, and let's keep Theo and those recently confirmed in our prayers.

Ana Lawrence

Benefice Service to welcome our Archdeacon

On Sunday 30th November, Advent Sunday, we meet together for one of our 'fifth Sunday' benefice services, this time at 10:30 am in the Mission Church, Street.

As we mark the beginning of Advent we will be joined by the Archdeacon of Wells, Ven. Anne Gell, who will preside and preach at this Communion service.

Our benefice services are designed to reflect the breadth of worshipping styles across our four churches and three parishes, and we look forward to welcoming you to join the church family on 30th November. Even if the Mission Church is not your usual place of worship, please come along rather than being tempted to take that day as a 'Sunday off.'

Ana Lawrence

Christmas at SWCD Churches

As we approach the Christmas and Advent season the plans for services and outreach across our churches are rapidly developing. Please keep an eye on our website, Facebook, Instagram or Lifeline for more details of the plans and how you can get involved.

The Church of England will be running a media advertising campaign over the Christmas period around the theme of 'Joy,' something which seems too often in short supply in our world, and which we will be using as part of our Christmas offering. There is no better time of year than the run up to the festive season to invite people to come along to a carol service, event or other church activity and please be thinking about who you might invite to join you as we worship together and celebrate the 'Good News of great joy!'

The national church has also produced a small booklet of reflections for the twelve days of Christmas called 'Twelve Joys of Christmas'. This is a beautifully produced resource that may be useful for you and others as you continue your Christmas journey beyond Christmas Day. If you would like to order copies, for you and to give to others (it would be an excellent stocking filler!) please let Sonia have your payment and order. The cost is £1.00 per copy.

Ana Lawrence

What goes on at PCCs?

Our Parochial Church Councils (PCCs) meet four times a year for each of our three parishes, with the most recent meetings having taken place in September. Each of the parishes has slightly different items on their agenda depending on what's going on in that particular context, but some of the things we have all been discussing recently include.

- Beginning to develop a policy for 'Children and Communion
- Discussing and agreeing action for repairs and issues around our buildings
- Reviewing our finances Including the salaries we pay and other bills
- Focusing on safeguarding and agreeing an updated safeguarding policy
- Finalising a health and safety policy for the benefice.
- Approving future events and activities to ensure they are covered by our insurance policies.
- Receiving and discussing reports from subgroups including those planning reordering, events and outreach.

PCCs represent you, as the church family and their agendas and papers are public documents. If you would like to see a copy of the most recent minutes of the PCC for your parish, please have a word with your PCC Secretary, whose details are on the inside cover of Life. We are enormously grateful to all those who serve the church family in this ministry.

Ana Lawrence

Village fete for Street in 2026?

Who doesn't love a good village fete? Cake, competition, stalls, dodgy weather and bunting? Perhaps it brings back fond memories of the past, or maybe more recent ones as, for example, what took place in the Mission Church for the late Queen's Platinum Jubilee?

As part of our vision to be 'loving our communities' we would love to hold a village fete in Street in the early summer of 2026, and Ana and I are ready to spearhead the planning and organisation. However, we would really like a team to work with on this and if it's something you are interested in being part of, please have a word with me.

As well as a church that loves its community, we want to be a church that worships and grows and our aim would be to include all three elements of our vision in anything that we organise.

Meanwhile, anyone got a risk assessment that they prepared earlier for a coconut shy! Kevin Lawrence

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St Andrew's Olive Tree

Helen and Hugh Thomas, who have now moved to Oxford, kindly gifted St Andrew's an olive tree for the churchyard. After seeking advice from Kate Towers and the village Tree Group, we decided to plant it amongst the 11 crab apple trees. These symbolise each of the 11 fallen soldiers in the wars, so what better place for an olive tree, the symbol of peace. Thank you to the volunteers who helped to plant our lovely tree. Pat

SWCD Churches Walks

I know many have enjoyed walks organised by church members, often on bank holiday Mondays throughout the year. We would love to continue to offer these but could really do with one or two more people who are willing and able to organise and plan a walk.

You don't have to be a 'mountain leader' or even particularly energetic, as many of the walks are quite short (and have a habit of ending up in coffee shops!). But if you know your local area, love walking, and maybe can read a map if we look like getting lost, this might be something you could offer for the benefice as a whole.

Please have a word with me. Kevin Lawrence.

Future support for our link parish of Mfuwe

In recent editions of 'Life' I have reported on the completion of the priest's house at Mfuwe, in Zambia, funded as a result of our charitable giving from across the benefice.

We have been discussing possible future projects with Mfuwe, and they came up with two future needs, which were taken to our recent PCC meetings in September.

At our PCC's we agreed to fund both needs over the next few years, continuing our commitment to our partnership with our Zambian brothers and sisters.

Mfuwe parish have asked for a motorbike. Few people own vehicles in the parish and the distances between congregations in this sparsely populated rural area means it can take many hours to walk from church to church. A motorbike will allow those

leading services to reach more worshippers more quickly. We plan to fund this purchase out of this year's tithe.

They also asked for funding to build another house, this one to be rented out to provide a long-term income for the parish. This will be funded by us over two or three years from our charitable giving and tithe.

I will keep you updated on progress and meanwhile please continue to pray for the people of Mfuwe, as they continue to pray for us.

Kevin Lawrence

Congratulations

To David Hatrey, on his appointment as Chair of Governors at Walton School

Coffee, Chat and snacks

will be changing to the warm space on November 8th. The times will change to 11-1pm and we will be serving simple hot meals till March. We would be thrilled to hear from you if you would like to get involved on a rota basis. Please do let me know! Rachel.

Compline Service

During Advent this year we will be offering a service of Compline on a Wednesday evening starting on November 26th in the four weeks of Advent. All will be welcome for this quiet, ancient and reflective service. We will be moving around our four churches and following a seasonal book for reflection. Details to follow. Rachel.

Alpha feedback and next course.



In the summer months we ran the latest of our 'Alpha' courses, a chance to explore the Christian faith and ask questions, with no pressure or judgement.

Here is some of the feedback we received from participants about the things they enjoyed:

'It teaches you a lot'

'Lovely food and lovely people. Having thought provoking conversations.'

'An opportunity to learn, grow and meet new people.'

'The food was excellent.'

'Hearing testimonies.'

'Welcoming friendly team.'

We are planning to run another Alpha course in early 2026, and if you or someone you know would be interested in attending or finding out more, please get in touch with me. Ana Lawrence.

BIG BREAKFAST

Meadway Hall, Compton Dundon

Saturday 15th November

9 a.m. – 11.30 a.m.

Everyone is warmly invited to this much-loved village event.

It provides the ideal opportunity to catch up with friends and neighbours and meet new people in the run-up to Christmas.

Choose individual food items from the menu of sausage, bacon, egg, tomato, mushrooms, baked beans and hashbrowns, or if you are hungry, select the full breakfast!



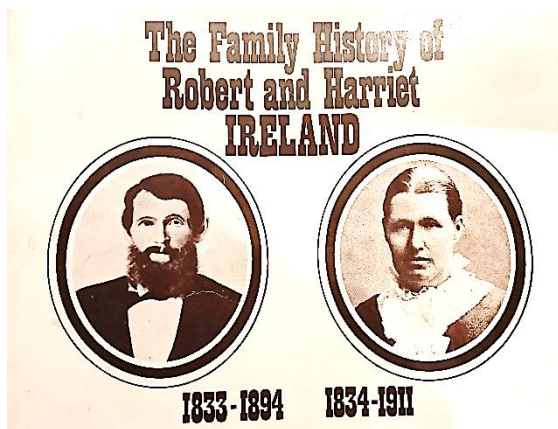
Coffee, tea, toast and marmalade or jam is £2.

A continental breakfast of croissants and jam is also served for those who prefer a lighter start to the day.

Gluten free, vegetarian and oat milk options are all available. Pat

A Family History Search. (Can you help)?

We went to water flowers in the Parish church this afternoon and met a couple called Brett and Colleen Ireland who travelled from Australia to visit the church where his several great-grandparents married in in 1852. I gave him a copy of the Life magazine and he asked if an article could be put in the magazine to see if anyone knew his family or could provide any further information. He has given us his email address and is happy for anyone to contact him. Fleur



Editorial.

I often have visitors to the Parish Church who are trying to trace their ancestors, and I try to help them. I have further information on this couple,

so, if you are able to help in any way, please contact me or Fleur and any information will be sent on to them. Thank you, Roger.



Church of England in Street, where Robert and Harriet were married in 1852.

**Parish Church
Working Group**



Saturday 8th November

10am – 12 noon

Please can we have volunteers to clean up the churchyard area. A list of work required will be put together and presented on the day. All tools and safety equipment will be provided, as will refreshments. Roger.

Connections@theMission

Thursday 20th November

2-30pm

Everyone Welcome!

Christmas Craft

With Trish Cox (Compton Dundon)

And Jenny Collins (Street)

There will be tea,
coffee, cake, biscuits
and time to talk.



Be Totally Committed

'I HAVE SUFFERED THE LOSS OF ALL THINGS, AND COUNT THEM AS RUBBISH, THAT I MAY GAIN CHRIST.'

Philippians 3:8 NKJV

Ever hear of 'one-way missionaries'? They purchased a one-way ticket to the mission field, and instead of packing a suitcase they packed their belongings into a coffin, knowing they would never return home. A.W. Milne was one of them. He went to the New Hebrides in the South Pacific, knowing that head-hunters had martyred every missionary before him. But he didn't fear for his life because he had already died to himself. For thirty-five years he lived among them and ministered to them. When he died, the tribe buried him in the middle of their village and inscribed these words on his tombstone: *When he came there was no light.*

Nowhere in Scripture does God send us to safe places to do easy things. Faced with the cross, Jesus prayed the ultimate prayer of commitment: 'Not my will, but thine, be done' (Luke 22:42 KJV). And today He's asking you to be totally committed to Him. Paul wrote: 'What things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ ... that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings' (Philippians 3:7-10 NKJV).

It's when you're willing to fellowship with Christ in His sufferings that you get to experience the power of His resurrection. So the word for you today is: be totally committed.

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

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