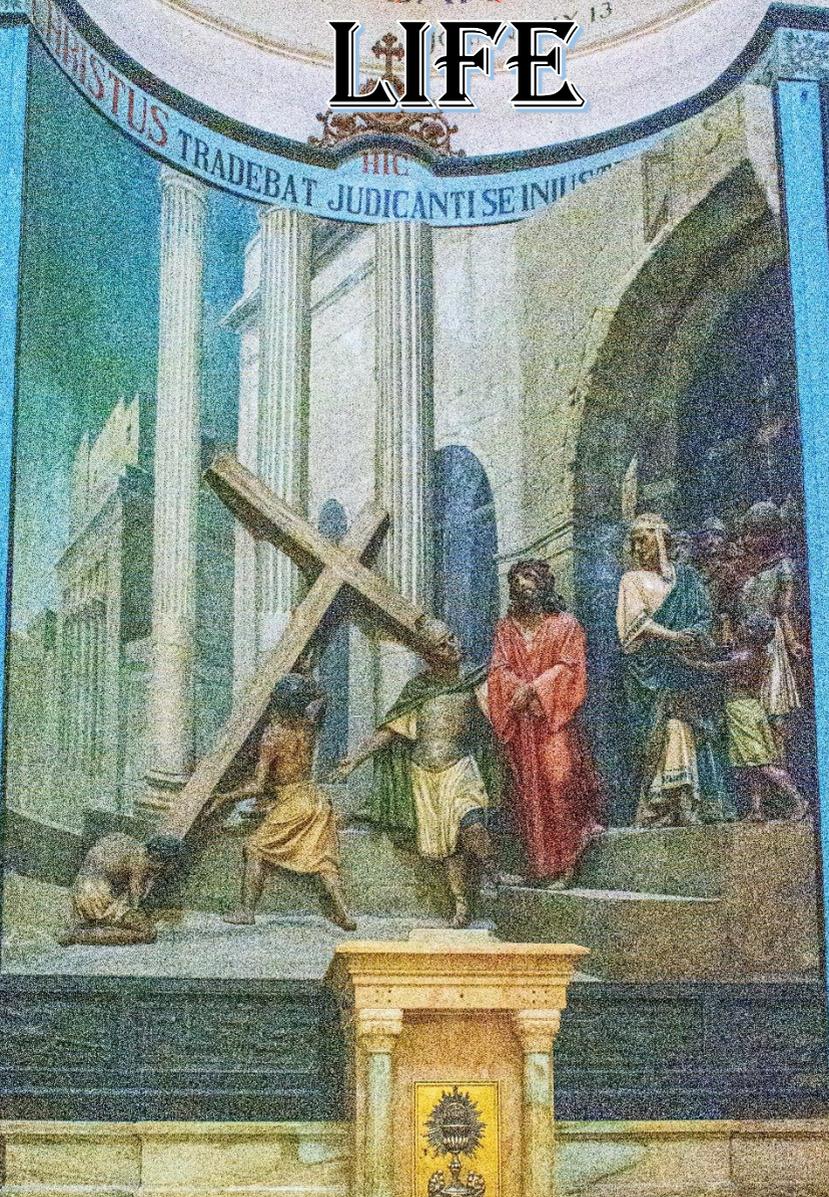


APRIL 2026

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LIFE



SWCD-CHURCHES.ORG.UK



MAGAZINE EDITOR LIFE

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Articles for the May edition are due by **Sunday 12th April**

I've just had a thought! There are lots of Christmas 'Pop songs', but can anyone think of an Easter 'Pop' song? What would Cliff think of this...Easter time, chocolate, all mine, Buns with crosses, that would be fine! Multi millions of Christmas cards are sent out each year, but how many Easter cards do we receive? But for us Christians and indeed, other Faiths as well, Easter is an important and exiting time. Whether we are spending an hour at the cross at the Parish church, or walking up Lullover Hill along with the crosses, we will be celebrating the Risen Christ. If you are down the Parish Church, do take time to visit the Easter garden with it's cross on the hill and the tombstone drawn back.

The front cover picture was taken by Martin Kennard whilst visiting the Holy Land with David and Pauline Hatrey in 2022 and shows Dolorosa Station 3 with Jesus falling for the first time. There are more of Martin's pictures on page 16, alongside some of the 'Easter Experience' which was set up at Street Parish Church for the children of Elmhurst recently. Another full colour page contains photos of David's '25 years' ministry service at Walton on the third Sunday in February. The remaining pictures on that page are The Peacock as mentioned on page 22 by Fran Crefield who is moving into a house at Compton Dundon, and whose photo it is. Next to that is Dr Eric Barrett who will be trying to answer the question, can a scientist believe in God? See page 26. I am looking forward to the Easter Monday walk on the Shapwick Heath National Nature Reserve. It was advertised in the March edition of Life, and further details are to be found on page 5 of this edition.

Wishing you all a VERY HAPPY EASTER, Roger.

Rector's Letter

"He is not here; he has risen, just as he said" Matthew chapter 28 verse 6

Dear Friends,

The very first Easter was the most incredible occasion that no-one could have predicted, not least those women who were the first to discover that Jesus' body was no longer in the tomb.

I love the fact that it was the women who were the first to be there as they came to anoint Jesus' body as part of the burial practices of the day. Women, so often overlooked in first century Palestine took centre stage at this pivotal moment. These were just ordinary people who had known Jesus for themselves, who were grieving, whose lives had been turned upside down as they had stood at the cross weeping as Jesus died before their eyes just three days earlier.

If any of us were one of these women, we probably would have responded in similar ways – we all have emotions which sometimes spill over into all kinds of situations. We are not always ready to expect the unexpected. Of course, we see the Easter Story with hindsight – we have the entire bible and know the ending as well as the beginning, but for those women and others that day, such knowledge was not available to them, they were in the thick of things. Their grief, however, turned quickly to joy and celebration as they ran to share the good news of Jesus rising from the dead. "They hurried away from the tomb" (Matthew chapter 28 verse 8).

In our broken, fractured and increasingly polarised world, I hope and pray that we can be followers of Jesus who are also in a

hurry to share the Good News, with family, friends, neighbours and strangers.

Today, Easter in this country for many has become about a long bank holiday weekend, chocolate, Easter Egg hunts, bunny rabbits and the arrival of Spring. And yet, for Christians, there is so much more as we celebrate the risen Jesus.

Let's have the courage to share this Good News with others.

Hallelujah! Christ is risen; He is risen indeed! Hallelujah!

With my love and prayers,

Ana

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Read any good Christian books lately?

It's good to encourage one another with books, podcasts or other things that we have read or enjoyed recently that have built up our faith. One book I am currently reading is 'The surprising rebirth of belief in God' by Justin Brierley. Starting with the New Atheist movement, championed by Richard Dawkins and others, this book charts the rapid decline in the popularity of that movement and, as the title suggests, the surprising rebirth in the belief in God. You may have read that Bible sales are at record highs and there has also been much media coverage around the 'Quiet Revival.' This book sets some of the context and is well worth a read.

If you have read a book or listened to a podcast that has encouraged or challenged you in your Christian journey, why not tell others about it in future editions of 'Life'?

Kevin Lawrence

Walton Holy Trinity Church. Songs of the Sea

Tickets are selling quickly for this event in Walton Village Hall so don't miss out. Come and join us as Bumpy Roads lead us in sea shanties and songs and enjoy a light fisherman's supper. There will be a raffle and tea and coffee will be available but do bring drinks of your choice. Tickets are £12 each and profits are for our restoration and reordering fund. Sandra Gristock.

Public consultation.

On the 2nd May we will be holding a public consultation in Church to show our architects plans and talk about our hopes and dreams for Holy Trinity Church. This will be held from 10-3 so please use this opportunity come to look and comment to help us move forward. Sandra Gristock.

Cream Tea.

We will be having a cream Tea in Church on Saturday 9th May in aid of church funds. Do join us for good company and delicious scones. The Cornish way or the Devon way, whatever your preference. (But don't tell David.) Sandra Gristock

Thank you Hilda and Rachel for our lovely Mothering Sunday service. We all received a posy of fresh flowers and enjoyed a Mothering Sunday bun with our coffee. Thank you everyone for making it such a lovely occasion. Sandra.

St Andrew's Mothering Sunday

On Sunday, March 15th we enjoyed an all-age service in St Andrew's. During our worship time we thought about making choices (would you rather hold a tarantula in your hand or kiss a jellyfish? And you can't say neither!) and having Jesus at the centre of all our choices. The craft activity placed the cross at the centre of cube shaped boxes, (or at the centre of our lives) as the boxes were decorated in many different ways. Intercessions were themed around mothers, with pebbles being symbolically placed in a bowl to represent each individual prayer. Following the hymn "Be still, for the presence of the Lord," discussion flowed in small groups around the presence of Jesus in our everyday lives. It was wonderful to see everyone fully engaged and choosing to come and worship on this special day. Pat.

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Easter Walk

Easter Monday 6th April

Meet at Avalon Marshes centre Shapwick Road Westhay at 10-30am.

A 1 hour flat walk taking in the 'Sweet Track'.

Waterproof boots are recommended.

Sorry no dogs. The café is open for Breakfasts and Lunches.

Please E-Mail or phone Jackie and Richard.

richardjackiehoulden@gmil.com or phone 01458 850863

Who have a current menu and will do a 'multi' order and meals

will be ready (9-45am for breakfast before the 10-30 walk or

12noon for a lunch after the walk.

The centre alone is worth a visit, to wander the craft shop and also, the reconstructed iron age village, instead of or after the walk. Jackie and Richard Houlden.



Charitable giving 2026

At their recent PCC meetings, each of our churches decided on the organisations they will be supporting during 2026 as part of their tithed giving / charitable donations.

All three parishes agreed to continue their longer-term support for Mfuwe, our partner parish in eastern Zambia through the Diocese of Bath and Wells Zambia link. This year we are supporting our partners there by buying a motorbike to allow the priest to travel long distances between his congregations where roads and public transport are in short supply, we also committed to a longer-term project to build a second house in the parish, which the congregation can let out to generate a more sustainable income for their work.

In addition, each parish agreed the following support

Walton

Anni Makoni – Zimbabwe

Anni works with young people living on the streets of the capital of Zimbabwe, Harare. The church has supported her work for many years.

Compton Dundon

Christian Aid

A large, Christian, International development agency that works with communities in some of the poorest countries across the globe. Website <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/>

Age UK

A national charity offering advocacy and support for older people (formerly known as Age Concern). Website <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/>

Street

Tearfund

Continuing their long-term support for this Christian international development agency, through who we have been supporting a project in Nigeria. Web site <https://www.tearfund.org/>

Open Doors

A global Christian charity, advocating for and supporting the persecuted church worldwide. Web site <https://www.opendoorsuk.org/>

Given the large number of excellent recommendations received, particularly from the church family in Street, the Street PCC also will be considering not asking for new recommendations next year, but looking again at some of those we were unable to support this year

Our hope is that for each of the above organisations, a champion will take the lead in keeping the church informed about their work and any prayer needs through future editions of 'Life' and in Sunday intercessions etc Kevin Lawrence

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You are Invited to
Connections@theMission

Thursday 16th April
2-30pm

Mission Church, Street
Sister Rachel Pengelly (Curate)

Will be sharing her experience of being part of
the Loaves and Fishes project in Bristol

There will be refreshments Pam.

Our Annual Church Meetings.

Three reasons to come!

Later this month each of our parishes will be holding their Annual Parish Church Meetings with the details for each below.

Walton Monday 27th April 7pm in Walton Church

Compton Dundon Tuesday 28th April 7pm in St Andrew's Compton Dundon

Street Wednesday 29th April 7pm in the Mission Church

Part of the meeting is about 'doing the business,' of receiving reports, accounts etc and it can be easy to think both that this isn't wildly exciting and it has very little to do with you. The temptation therefore is to stay away. Let me offer three reasons why you should reconsider if you were thinking of not coming.

1. Come and find out. I challenge anyone to say they already know everything that's going on at SWCD Churches! This is a great opportunity to come and hear about some of the great ministry that is happening across our churches.
2. Come and look forward. As well as reflecting back on 2025, we will be looking forward to the coming year, and I will be sharing thoughts and reflections as we move ahead together into all that God has for us.
3. Come and say thank you. If we're honest, few of us are as good at this as we should be, but these meetings are a great way of formally thanking those who serve in so many different ways. Your very presence would be both an encouragement and a thank you to them, whilst more volume in the applause 'from the floor' would always be welcome!

So why not come along and I'll see you there (I love them so much that I'll be at all three!).

This is also the occasion when we elect new members to our Parochial Church Councils, Deanery Synod (more elsewhere) and appoint our churchwardens for the year. Nomination forms are available in all our churches. Ana Lawrence

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Holy Trinity, Walton Community

Consultation Day

On Saturday 2nd May we are opening the church from 10.00am to 3.00pm so that the residents of Walton, and any other interested people can come along to look at, discuss and ask questions about the initial plans we have for the restoration and reordering of your church. Along with the repairs that need to be made to the roof, and many other parts of the building, we are planning to create an open, warm space, that can be used not only as a church, but also an asset for the village. Running alongside and working with the Village Hall to provide the facilities that the ever-increasing population of the village will need in the future.

Our church architect will be in attendance along with members of the planning team to answer any question that you might have about what we are planning. There will also be the opportunity to fill in a short questionnaire and to leave any comments about what we are planning. There will be light refreshments available during the day.

Andy Savage, Holy Trinity, Walton

Eco Church - Lifestyle

‘... ask the animals, and they will teach you; the birds of the air, and they will tell you; ask the plants of the earth, and they will teach you; and the fish of the sea will declare to you. Who among all these does not know that the hand of the Lord has done this? In his hand is the life of every living thing and the breath of every human being.’ Job 12:7-10 (NIV)

This article introduces another Eco Church survey category: Lifestyle.

Living joyfully and sustainably as followers of Christ

As a Church our first action in this category is to have a strategy or plan to promote ethical and environmentally aware consumption patterns by individuals and households.

We have an individual responsibility to take action in our daily lives to tread lightly on the Earth, and use our voices to speak up for nature. We are challenged to integrate creation care into our daily lives out of integrity, as an act of worship and obedience to God and as we grow in discipleship. Churches are encouraged to play a role in educating and informing individual church members, and wider communities, about the actions they can take and the influence they can have.

Andy Atkins, A Rocha UK, challenges us to consider our understanding of the concept of lifestyle: It’s time we revised the narrow definition of ‘lifestyle’. Our purchasing habits, dress, diet and travel decisions are not the only means God gives us to act. Using our time and ‘voice ’to campaign is also a behaviour, a choice about the shape and content of our daily lives; and the combination of the two is much more powerful than either on their own.

Reference in the survey to ‘ creation ’and ‘creation care ’points to our interdependence on, and responsibility for, our God-given common home. ‘Climate and nature crises’ signify our recognition that urgent action is required. ‘Environmental issues ’refers to the wide spectrum of problems we face locally and globally.

The Lifestyle category encompasses the following themes:

Theme 1: Influence

- Sharing of information
- Engagement in campaigning

Theme 2: Carbon footprint

- Personal carbon footprint
- Energy use

Theme 3: Personal choices

- Food
- Transport
- Finance
- Was

Consumption of goods and services

Theme 4: Nature

- Appreciation and experience of nature
- Care and protection of nature

Some themes have been covered in previous Life articles, others will follow. You can also access Lifestyle, as well as other Eco Church resources, on the website: ecochurch.arocha.org.uk

This article is based on material from that website. Comments and ideas are always welcome.

Susan Ripley (Street Parish)
SWCD Eco Church Group

Youth Alpha

Over the last few months, you may have noticed that we have begun to run a regular youth event 'the Hub,' fortnightly on Monday evenings in the Mission Church. This has been a great place for young people from across our benefice to meet, play games enjoy snacks, bring their friends and begin to engage with deeper questions through a regular 'God slot.'

Partly emerging from this, we have recently launched a Youth Alpha course on the alternate Monday evenings. Please pray for those attending and those leading this exciting venture as we seek to share the truths of the Christian Gospel with young people in our community.

The growth in numbers amongst children and young people has been a real source of encouragement over the last few months, but also an area of increasing pressure as we look for leaders to serve this growing ministry. If this is something that you might be interested in, please don't hold back, but have a word with me.

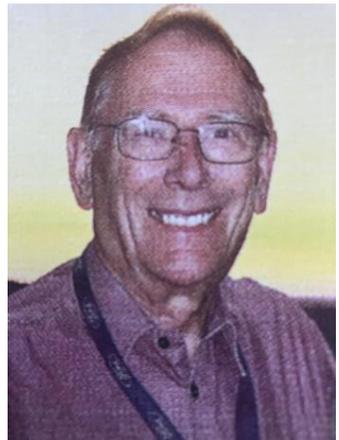
Ana Lawrence

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Mission shaped living – the book of the series

I mentioned in March 'Life' magazine, that we are beginning a sermon series on 'Mission Shaped Living' from mid-April across all our churches. We will be reflecting together in our Sunday sermons and also going deeper in our house groups.

Ana Lawrence





Trip to Zambia, Eastern Province

Christians Aware have made us aware of a trip they are planning to Eastern Province in Zambia, where our partner parish of Mfuwe is based.

Christians Aware is an international and ecumenical movement. Its main aim is to develop multi-cultural understanding and friendship, locally, nationally and internationally, in a spirit of sharing.

They describe their international visits as pilgrimages rather than holidays. 'We challenge those who join the visits to be flexible and open to different ways of living and doing things, and to be patient and sensitive, happy to listen and learn as well as to give.'

The trip runs from 23rd July to 7th August this year and costs in the region of £2,613 each. During the visit you will learn about the development work of the Diocese of Eastern Zambia, including farming, health and social care, education and women's development as well as joining worship and meeting many people. There will also be a visit to the Luangwa Valley National Park and a trip to Livingstone and the Victoria Falls.

To find out more and get a booking form please contact Christians Aware

Christians Aware: 53B Jarrom Street, Leicester LE2 7DH

Telephone: 0116 254 0770

Email: Eliam.christiansaware@outlook.com

Website: www.christiansaware.co.uk

Kevin Lawrence

Celebrate@6

At our March Celebrate@6 we welcomed the first of our visiting speakers. John Melia from Street Salvation Army, who spoke about how he has seen God at work in his life and ministry.

We continue the series in April when, at 6:00pm on 19th April in the Mission Church we welcome Ewan Huffman, a member of the chaplaincy team at Hinckley Point C.

Hinckley Point is the largest construction project in Europe and currently employs tens of thousands of construction workers. Come and see what chaplaincy in this context looks like and hear how God is at work in that place.

Ana Lawrence

Thy Kingdom Come

This national and global prayer initiative runs every year between Ascension (14th May) and Pentecost (24th May). We will be marking this in a number of ways including holding a half day of prayer in the Parish Church on Saturday 23rd May (with more details to follow in the May edition of Life).

We will also be encouraging church members to pray specifically and intentionally for 5 people who are not yet Christians. When we pray, things happen and God moves in people's lives. TKC also links in well with the Diocese of Bath and Wells 2026 focus on prayer.

Let us keep praying

Ana Lawrence

PCC Update

Each of our three PCCs met during March and whilst each had different items on their agendas, these are some of the things that they all considered.

Updates on various issues with our buildings including the five-year, Quinquennial inspection that each historic church has to have undertaken by an independent architect. In addition, a number of significant reordering and refurbishment projects are in various stages of development in each of our parishes.

A safeguarding update. Thanks were expressed to our parish safeguarding officers and we reported that we have planned a meeting with the Diocesan safeguarding team to see if we can streamline some of our procedures.

A finance update including approval of the annual accounts from each of our parishes, which will be brought to the APCMs.

Report on some of our mission activities including 'Exploring Faith' and 'Youth Alpha.'

Review and agreement of our lone worker policy, which covers all staff and volunteers who may work in our buildings on their own.

A salary review, which is undertaken annually, for our administrator and, in the case of Street, our caretakers.

if you want to know more about your own parish, please do speak to your PCC secretary (details in Life magazine) and ask for a copy of the latest minutes, which are publicly available for those who are interested.

Kevin Lawrence



DIOCESE OF
Bath & Wells

Living and telling the story of Jesus

Bishop's Letter

Grace, truth, love and courage

Guilt, shame, mercy, and forgiveness. Four words all linked with Easter, which we shall celebrate this month.

The last two of those seem to be in short supply at the moment.

The 'gods' of social media are ready instantly to punish all offenders, now and in the future.

People often offer George Orwell's nightmare vision of Big



Brother as a way to understand our times. I'm more drawn to the image of Jeremy Bentham's Panopticon – a building where a watchman could observe all the inhabitants at all times but without the inhabitants knowing whether or not they're being watched – which ensured compliance. When we hear about

online data harvesting it can feel as if everything you say, or do, can be recorded and held against you, ready to be brought out and used if needed.

Where's the mercy or the forgiveness in that? Where's the grace that understands we all make mistakes and need second chances? There's no possibility of wiping the slate clean and beginning again.

Which is where the astounding grace and mercy we celebrate on Good Friday and Easter Day comes in.

Mark Greene of the London Institute of Contemporary Christianity highlights how the wonder of Easter speaks words of grace and hope to our unmerciful world:

All this judgement serves to highlight the majestic, counter-cultural grace of the Christian gospel. Yes, God is a God of justice, opposed to the degrading of any human on any grounds. Yes, he has seen our every furtive action, picked up every sly whisper, logged every darkling thought ... yet his mercy flows from the cross like an ocean, drenching the universe. As today's media Pharisees rage, God's offer is 'mercy, mercy, mercy' to all who would repent and receive him. And our watchwords: grace, truth, love, and courage.

May this encourage us all as we continue through Lent, experience Holy Week, and finally reach the joy of Easter.

By Fiona Gibson, Bishop of Taunton

What a welcome to Peak(ock) Lane.

I had never been to Compton Dundon before we came to view a house on Peak Lane at the end of February. We instantly fell in love with the house because it was filled with light and nestled beautifully between Dundon Beacon and Lollover Hill - I have since learnt that the word Compton means 'settlement in a valley' and that Dundon was in the Domesday book of 1086 as 'Dondeme'. We could certainly feel the magic and peace of the place and felt sure it was the house for us.

As we were standing on the doorstep saying goodbye to the estate agent Mark and admiring the view, I saw this beautiful peacock walking up Peak Lane. It turned into the drive and strutted right up to us. It stayed a while pecking in the grass which allowed me to take some lovely photos before it wandered off up the hill.

We were totally enchanted and decided there and then to put in an offer for the house which has, I'm happy to report, been accepted. There are still a few hurdles to jump before we are resident in the village and I ask for your prayers to support this move.

The following Sunday Anna and I went to the service in St Andrews and what a warm, lovely community of people welcomed us. We had met the church warden Pat and lovely John the week before and they were delighted to hear our offer had been accepted and introduced us to the other parish members. I used to be the church warden at St Nicolas Church in Bratton Seymour and am very excited to get involved in church life at Compton Dundon especially the Eco church group. Looking forward to more magical moments with you all.
Fran Creffield.

A SEVENTEENTH CENTURY PRAYER

A CALL TO MEDITATION

Come now, little man and woman

Turn aside for a while from your daily employment,

Escape for a moment from the tumult of your thoughts.

Put aside your weighty cares, let your burdensome distractions wait,

Free yourself a while for God,

Rest awhile in Him.

Enter the inner chamber of your soul,

Shut out everything except God and that which can help you in seeking Him

And when you have shut the door: seek Him.

Now, my whole heart say to God, I seek your face.

Lord it is your face I seek" This is a lovely prayer to bring you close to God, and shut out the world, before your quiet time with Him.

Contributed by Julie Sinclair Churchwarden, Mission Church.

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PRAY FOR IRAN.

Elam Ministries (see <https://www.elam.com/old-pray-for-iran>) you will find resources and a very good App with a 30-day cycle of prayers of what to pray for. Elam have contacts within the growing house church movement inside Iran who depend so much on our prayers. It is first-hand information on their needs and really inspiring: I can't speak of it too highly. These guys are not afraid of daily putting their lives on the line for Christ. We can learn so much from them as well as supporting them in their hour of need. Hebrews 13: "Continue to remember those in prison as if you were together with them in prison, and those who are ill-treated as if you yourselves were suffering. Bernard Sinclair.

Fed up with what's going on in the Church of England?

I get plenty of 'feedback' about the good old C of E as I go about my ministry day by day. Some is positive but it's fair to say that most isn't! We all love to complain and wish that things could be different, but how many of us knew that is in our power to begin to make the changes we might want to see?

The Church of England has a democratic system, known as 'synodical government', with congregational members, who are on the electoral roll of their parish, being able to stand for election to the local Deanery Synod and from there, the Diocesan Synod and up to the national, General Synod, The General Synod meets twice a year in London and York. The reason for mentioning this now is that General Synod elections are due later in the year and, to be elected to General Synod, you first need to be a member of Deanery Synod, the elections for which are coming up fast.

Nomination papers for Deanery Synod are available in our churches now and if you want to be part of changing the church 'from the bottom up' why not consider standing?

Kevin, my husband, is a 'lay member' of Diocesan Synod, and would be happy to chat to anyone interested in finding out more.

Ana Lawrence

Free Books

‘Landscape illustrations of the Bible’ (2 volumes)

We have received a letter from a local charity ‘The R S Surtees Society’ enclosing 2 volumes as above. Originally published in 1836, this has been re re-published by the society in 1998, and they would like it to go, free, to a church member who would find them of interest

They say; ‘We very much hope your members will enjoy the original research on geographical locations within the Bible, and also the sumptuous pictures of the important biblical scenes we know and love!’

if these books will be of interest to anyone in the benefice please contact the church office. They will go to the first person who asks. If no one requires them we will seek to sell them in aid of church funds for Street parish, the parish to which they were originally donated.

Kevin Lawrence

A regular reminder about free money

This is your regular reminder that, if you shop online, many hundreds of retailers will give a donation to your parish if you use ‘Easyfundraising.’ Is completely free for you and requires minimal extra effort. I’ve been using it for a while and have already raised over £300 for the church through online purchases which I would have made anyway.

If you want to know more or need a bit of help in setting yourself up on ‘Easyfundraising,’ please have a word with me.

Kevin Lawrence

The Benefice Women's Breakfast.

On the first Saturday in March women from across the Benefice gathered in the Meadway Hall, Compton Dundon, to enjoy food and fellowship at our Women's Breakfast. There was a wide array of breakfast items on offer, including croissants, toast, pastries, rolls with various toppings, yoghurt, granola and a delicious spread of fresh fruit prepared by Linda. After grace and introducing ourselves by name and church, we enjoyed sharing the meal and sharing friendships too, with those both known to us and new to us. Margaret gave her personal and moving testimony about how she came to faith, thank you Margaret. We plan to have a Women's Breakfast every few months and here is a date to save: **Saturday, June 20th in Holy Trinity Church, Walton at 9.30 a.m.** Contacts are Linda Clark in the Mission Church and Pat King in St Andrew's. We look forward to welcoming you. Pat King, St Andrew's

Can a scientist believe in God?

This is one of the intriguing questions posed in the "Exploring Faith" group which meets on Tuesday evenings at the Mission Church.

To try and answer that question, we are privileged to have Dr Eric Barrett come to speak to us on this subject.

Eric C Barrett, BSc (Hons), MSc, PhD, DSc etc. etc. is an internationally-honoured Earth and Space scientist, who has held academic posts in two English and two Australian Universities, in addition to his long career in the University of Bristol. Here he became the Founding Director of the Research Centre in Satellite Remote Sensing. He frequently served as a consultant or contractor to national and international bodies on space related matters, including NASA and the United Nations.

All are very welcome to come to this event, please do come along to the Mission Church on Tuesday 14th April at 7.00pm to see Eric's presentation and hear him share his thoughts on the above question. Steve Clark, Mission Church.

What kind of love is this?

What kind of love is this?
That gave itself for me.
I am the guilty one.
Yet I go free.

What kind of love is this?
A Love I've never known.
I didn't even know His name.
What kind of love is this?

What kind of love is this?
That died in agony.
He who had done no wrong
Was crucified for me.

What kind of love is this?
Who laid aside His throne
That I may know the love of God
What kind of man is this?

By grace I have been saved
It is the gift of God
He destined me to be His son.
Such is His love.

No eye has ever seen.
No ear has ever heard.
Nor has the heart of man conceived.
What kind of love is this?

A poem from the book, *Wonderful Love*,
A Collection of Poems by Jenny Hall

Double Jeopardy

‘THEREFORE, HAVING BEEN JUSTIFIED BY FAITH, WE HAVE PEACE WITH GOD THROUGH OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.’ Romans 5:1 NKJV

In the legal system, there is something known as ‘the law of double jeopardy.’ It means that, except in some very specific circumstances, you can’t be tried twice for the same crime. Now, let’s apply this principle to your salvation. Jesus has already been tried and punished for your sins – all of them! So don’t let Satan, the accuser, convince you that God will also punish you for them and send you to hell. Christ’s last words on the cross, ‘It is finished,’ are translated in the Greek text as ‘paid in full’. All your sins – past, present, and future – were atoned for at Calvary. Think of the word ‘finished’. Imagine a master carpenter putting the finishing touches to a beautiful table. Would you take a wood plane and say, ‘I think I can make this look a little better and give it a little more value?’ The carpenter would say, ‘Stop; if you touch it, you will ruin it!’ And they would be right. The same goes for your salvation. You can add nothing to it, but by trying to merit it by your performance and good works, you can definitely take something away from it. The word *justified* simply means declared or made righteous in the sight of God. The moment you place your trust in Christ as your Saviour, that’s how God sees you.

‘Therefore, having been justified by faith [not works, human effort, or performance], we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand’ (vv. 1-2). How can you stand before God clothed in grace? By faith in Christ alone and nothing else.

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

