



# Stockport Sunday School

February 2022 Newsletter 24



It is often said that we don't notice many of the good things in life until, perhaps suddenly, they are not there. At a basic level, for instance, football fans will probably admit that we rarely notice a good referee, but are always quick to criticise one who (in our view at least) has not performed well.

But at a more serious level, over the last two years, Covid and the impact it has had on our daily lives, has been a stark reminder of this truth.

There have been the health issues - restricted personal consultations with GP's and hospital doctors, deferred investigations and operations perhaps. Yet, compared with the less developed parts of the world we have still been extremely fortunate.



Maybe we have not been able to visit relatives and friends who are in care, making us realise how important such contacts are to them and us.

Then there have been the practical aspects of daily life. For example, the problems of shopping, with the non-availability of products we particularly enjoy (What! No bananas? - as happened only last week in our local supermarket). It has highlighted our dependence on the complex delivery requirements of the food chain and especially our reliance on HGV drivers and other key workers.



As time has passed, I personally have felt the frustration of not being able to meet up with family and friends to share a meal together, whether at home or in a restaurant or tea shop. In comparison with those matters already mentioned, some might think this is a relatively low level of inconvenience, but we should not underestimate the effect of a lack of social interchange on people's mental health and wellbeing.



We all need personal contact in our lives - people who know us, care about us - despite our various faults. And one special way of experiencing this is in sharing food together. For example, I think a particularly valuable aspect of our Sunday services is the opportunity to have a cup of tea together; to chat and share

news.

At a more elevated level of hospitality, our Christmas lunch, provided so professionally by the catering team, is always a very special occasion. Then there is our new venture of the Community Coffee Lounge at Compass Point, organised by Ken Dean and Beryl Manley, which is beginning to grow - another worthwhile initiative.



Hospitality, in its many formats, is very much part of the Christian tradition, built on the belief and practices of the Jewish faith. That Jesus' first recorded miracle took place at the wedding feast in Cana in Galilee is not without significance. It is interesting to note that this event is only reported in John's gospel, which is more theological in its approach than the other gospels.



This occasion is just one of many examples in the New Testament of Jesus sharing a meal with His followers, or other people seeking to understand His message.

Back in the here and now, let us hope that continuing progress in overcoming the Covid pandemic will enable us all to once again fully enjoy each other's company in these ways.

And, as we do so, may it prompt us to remember, with gratitude to God, the many other blessings we experience in our daily lives. The simple things we so easily take for granted; at home, at work, or in our day to day activities. The times we can share with family and friends, our times of recreation, the times when we can just sit back and relax. And when we do remember, let us also give a thought for all those unknown people in our community and nation who make it possible, day by day.



### **\*\* CHANGE OF SERVICE TIME \*\***

As it begins to stay light longer it was decided at the AGM on January 30th, that **ON MARCH 5TH WE WOULD AGAIN BEGIN SERVICES AT 2.30PM.**

### **FROM THE TREASURER**

The collection taken at the Carols and Readings service on Sunday 18th December amounted to £87.50. This was sent to Francis House Children's Hospice at Didsbury.



**Thank You!**

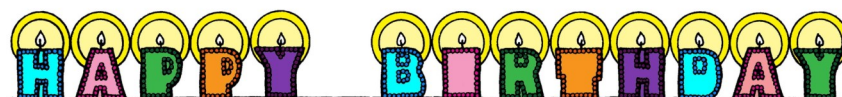
Thank you to Beryl Manley for her donation to School funds.

Thank you to Hilary Wood for her donation to School funds.

We miss you Hilary and hope to see you when the weather improves and you are feeling better.

### WELCOME BACK

We are pleased that Anne Mather is now back at School, recovering from a fall and that Jean Norton and Beryl Manley have now had their long awaited cataract operations and that Garth Higgins is back at School after having Covid. We also send our best wishes to Maureen Jewsbury and Hilary Wood who are no longer able to attend the services.



### HAPPY BIRTHDAY

There are no February birthdays, but we send Happy Birthday wishes to Judith Curry who celebrates her birthday on 5<sup>th</sup> March.



### THANK YOU

We would like to thank Margaret and Alan Kitchen and family for donating this lovely tea service to the School. The teapot is engraved with the words:-

'Presented by the Teachers and Senior Scholars of Heaviley Sunday School, (Branch of SSS) to Mr Thomas Kitchen, in grateful recognition of his long and faithful service as librarian (20 years) and School Secretary (14 years), Stockport May 2nd 1903.

Thomas Kitchen was Alan's grandfather.





## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The AGM was held on Sunday January 30<sup>th</sup> after a short service.

Walter said that the last two years had been one of the most difficult periods in the history of the School because of the covid pandemic. He thanked Stuart Dean for enabling us to worship together via zoom and Kirsty and Judith Higgins for producing the excellent monthly newsletter both of which helped us to keep in touch with each other.

Walter thanked Ken Dean for finding visiting speakers for Special Services. Rita Waters had spoke at our Harvest and Frank Dean at our Anniversary. Stuart Dean lead a moving Remembrance Service and Alan Bowdon had provided a display of militaria.

This years Christmas Fair had been on a smaller scale but thanks to the hard work of Judith and Don Curry had been a popular social event.

The Coffee Morning has been relaunched by Beryl Manley and Ken Dean and the numbers are growing slowly. Beryl has also organised the printing and distributions of new leaflets informing the community or our activities.

Norman gave the financial report for the year and members were given a copy of the financial statement. Joyce Sellars asked to have estimates of work to be carried out in advance. Would we get better terms for gas and electricity suppliers if Compass Point and the Triangle used the same supplier.

Walter thanked Joyce and Norman for their hard work on behalf of the School.

Stuart reported that members of The Triangle are still holding zoom services to protect vulnerable members. They are having problems with the roof and facia boards and awaiting an estimate for the repairs. The Kites group will undertake some redecorating.

Election of Officials followed.

Secretary	Garth Higgins	Assistant	Judith Curry
Treasurers	Joyce and Norman Sellers	Assistant	Judith Hadfield
Organist	Ken Dean		
Accountant	Neil Sellers		

Beryl Manley reported that the Knit and Natter group are preparing a display for April 5th when they will be celebrating their tenth Anniversary (a year late because of Covid). Their chosen charity for the year is Kidney Research.

New batteries have been fitted in the defibrillators and Ken is planning a special Mothering Sunday service.

The meeting closed with prayer.







## SERVICES



### SUNDAY 9<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY

On Sunday January 9<sup>th</sup>, the first service of 2022, Walter spoke about Epiphany, a time when we remember the visit of the magi, the manifestation of Jesus to the gentiles.

Matthew's gospel was written for the Jews and showed that Jesus was the Messiah that had been foretold by the prophets. But he also showed the significance of the visit of the magi, learned men, foreigners from afar, who had followed a star that their studies showed would lead them to a new King. Christ was for the whole world, not just the Jews.



Matthew says that the magi visited a child (not a baby) so it seems that they arrived some time after the birth. It might have been as much as two years later as we know that Herod ordered the killing of all boys under two.

Walter went on to talk about Jesus' early ministry after his baptism by John the Baptist and spoke about the early followers of Jesus. He asked 'What does it mean to be a follower of Jesus today?'

After listening to a sermon by Janine Arnold, curate of St George's, Walter decided that there was no easy answer. He did suggest some ideas:-

- First make the decision that we do want to follow Him, don't keep putting it off.
- Let Jesus be our guide.
- Be honest, truthful, care for others and show that we are on Jesus' side.
- Be prepared to be different from modern friends if these are different from His teaching.
- Know that we will not always succeed, but God loves those who try.
- New Year is a time for good resolutions so it is a good time to think about our own faith, what can we do to extend our understanding of the Gospel message?

Thank you, Walter, plenty of food for thought as we enter a New Year.



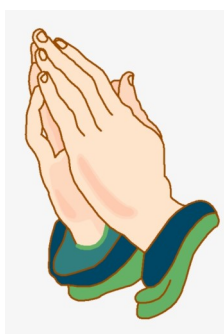
## SUNDAY 16<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY

On January 16th Judith Higgins told us that over the Christmas period she had watched 'The Sound of Music' on TV. It is a musical of a true story about Maria, a young Austrian girl who had become a novice, believing that she had the calling to be a nun. She found it difficult to obey the strict rules of the order and prayed every day to God asking Him to help her become a good nun.



But God had other plans for Maria, a different way to serve Him and He gave her the strength to carry out His work to help a family escape from Nazi occupied Germany.

God always answers our prayers but not always in the way we expect.



We often turn to God in prayer when we are worried or things go wrong, but do we always remember to talk to Him when things are going well? Do we always listen to His answer?

Billy Graham defined prayer as 'A spiritual communication between man and God, a two way relationship in which man should not only talk to God but should also listen to Him.'

Judith told us two stories about the different ways two men spoke to God and how He answered them.

We can choose the time and place and how we talk to God but it is important that we also listen to the answer.

## SUNDAY 22<sup>ND</sup> JANUARY

Judith Curry took the service on January 22nd. She chose hymns that we had not sung for a long time starting with "Have you heard the raindrops?" which gave us a clue to her theme for the afternoon, WATER.

As soon as we wake up in the morning we start to use a lot of water, taking it for granted, flush the toilet, wash or shower, boil the kettle, wash pots and start the washing machine.

The sale of Oxfam Christmas cards this year was enough to provide 4,821 toilets in Bangladeshi homes. How many people in that highly populated country are still waiting?



Do we really appreciate water?

Water is mentioned 722 times in the Bible, more often than faith, hope, prayer or worship. Most of us have been baptised with water, symbolising purification of the soul and admission into the faith.

Judith had been watching a series of short programmes on TV about "People living at 50 degrees". The first showed a farmer in Iraq when it had not rained for three years, the only one left in his village, the others had moved to Baghdad, but the growing population meant Baghdad was short of water.

In Nigeria wells had dried up and fertile land turned to desert. She saw men digging a new well, often 9 days. They were able to draw up half a bucket of water. The next day they would have to find a new site.



In most underdeveloped countries women and girls are responsible for collecting the water. This takes up much of their day, there is no time for education.

Abraham's servant in the Bible first saw Rebekah, Isaac's future wife, at a well and Judith read the passage from the Bible, of Jesus' meeting with the Samaritan woman at the well.

Judith said that it is estimated that 785 million people around the world do not have access to clean drinking water.

Poorer countries are suffering more than the richer ones from lack of clean water but in richer countries like Australia, British Columbia and Canada years without rain means everything is tinder dry and forest fires are becoming more common.

Thank you, Judith, for an interesting service. Perhaps we will all think twice when we turn on the tap and not complain when we have several days of rain and remember to thank God for our green and fertile land.



## SUNDAY 30<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY

Garth took the service on Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> January. He began by asking what is next Wednesday. Several people had things planned for that day but didn't know the answer to Garth's question, which was, it is the official end of Christmas, forty days after 25<sup>th</sup> December.



At the beginning of January we had celebrated Epiphany, the visit of the magi who had been guided on their journey by a star.

Garth then told us the true story of RAF Squadron Leader Edward Howell whose arms had been badly broken in Greece during the Second World War. He felt that God had wanted him to escape from the prison hospital. He put his trust in God to help him and managed to escape over the wall.



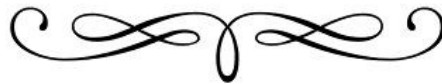
He had no further plans but as he looked up he saw a star, brighter than the rest, low on the horizon. Remembering the journey of the wise men, he walked in the direction of the star, through the town and on to the hills beyond. In the darkness and cloud he could see nothing but trusted God to guide him. He thought of the old Scottish psalm, 'Thy foot He will not let slide, nor will He slumber that thee keep.'

His motto became 'leave nothing to chance and then leave everything to God.'

He had many adventures as he moved from Greece to Turkey and eventually to England.

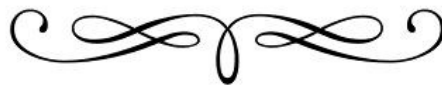
Thank you, Garth, for an interesting story about one man's trust in God.

This service was followed by the AGM.



### COMING SERVICES

February 13 <sup>th</sup>	Walter Stead
February 20 <sup>th</sup>	Judith Higgins
February 27 <sup>th</sup>	Garth Higgins
March 6 <sup>th</sup>	Walter Stead



### THE SON OF GOD

By Jeffrey Archer

He was born in a barn, His father a carpenter, and His mother a decent woman, but they were of no significance, and certainly couldn't have afforded to give the boy a private education.

And yet, as a teenager, He was arguing the toss with His elders and betters in the council chambers.

He never got a proper job, just roamed around the countryside, unshaven, and living off bread and water and the occasional fish,

while offering His opinions to those who cared to listen.

He became the manager of a football team known as The Disciples, not one of them a star,

in fact the twelfth man rather let the side down by accepting a transfer fee of thirty pieces of silver to play for the opposition.





The authorities eventually arrested Him as a rabble-rouser, but couldn't decide what to charge Him with,

other than the fact He claimed He was the Son of God.

They strung Him up with a couple of criminals, and when He finally gave up the ghost, rather assumed that would be the last they'd hear of Him.

The Disciples were relegated at the end of the season, in fact the captain denied on more than one occasion that he'd ever been a member of His team.



When He died at the age of thirty-three, there were no obituaries in the local press reporting His achievements,

no glossy supplements highlighting His colourful career,

no radio programmes to discuss His legacy, and no box sets recording any of His miracles.

But then, He'd never relied on focus groups to advise Him on current trends, or advertising gurus to spend millions promoting His brand, or spin doctors to sharpen His image, and He didn't require social media to keep His followers up to date,

so you could be forgiven for assuming He'd be forgotten in a few days.

So how can one explain that over two thousand years later, Jesus Christ is still the best-known celebrity on earth?

Could it just be that He was the Son of God?



*Feel free to always ask for help:*

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. (Philippians 4:6)

# LANCASHIRE HILL SUNDAY SCHOOL



## Recipe

### Egg and smoked salmon timbales

Serves 4

*175g smoked salmon, cut into thin strips*

*1 tbsp lemon juice*

*freshly ground black pepper*

*3 eggs*

*150ml double cream*

*Melba toast, to serve.*



Heat the oven to 180C/fan 160°C/Gas 4. Thoroughly butter four 150ml ramekins and set them on a baking sheet. Put the salmon strips in a bowl, toss with the lemon juice and season with pepper. Divide between the ramekins.

Beat the eggs with the cream, then, carefully pour into the ramekins. Bake for 20-25 minutes or until puffed and just set. Serve at once with warm Melba toast.



## KITES

Due to circumstances beyond our control The Kites Group Pantomime for 2022 has unfortunately been cancelled.



When I was a little girl, Mum took me many times to Torkington Park. I loved the stream where I could paddle. (There was no 'play park' then), but my favourite was a walled garden, now called 'the secret garden', where Mum and I spent many happy hours.

### 'THE SECRET GARDEN'

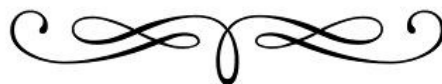
It was there in the corner, a little green gate,  
And it always was open for me.  
It led to a garden of magic and fun  
And to places where no-one could see.

Whilst Mum read her book, I could wander about  
- it was quiet and sunny and bright.  
I could be a princess, or a bird, or an elf,  
With no-one else ever in sight.

But sadly, the time came when home we must go  
And the garden and I had to part,  
'Goodbye, little green gate, I'll see you next week,  
But your magic I'll keep in my heart.'



Margaret Morris-Jones



The need of the world is to listen to God. - *Albert Einstein*

You cannot starve a man who is feeding on God's promises. - *Anon*

We talk about heaven being so far away. Yet it is within speaking distance to those who belong there. - *D L Moody*

The following is taken from Parish Pump.

## 14<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY: CYRIL AND METHODIUS, HELPING THE SLAVS

Cyril and Methodius are saints for anyone with good secular qualifications, who now suspects that God may be calling them to use those skills in His service.

Cyril and Methodius were brothers, born into a wealthy family in Thessalonica, in 826 and 815 respectively. Their upbringing destined them for lives of respect and influence.

Methodius, the elder brother, was appointed governor in a Slav province of the Roman Empire, although within a few years he became a monk on Mount Olympus in Asia Minor. Meanwhile his younger brother, Cyril, went into academia in Constantinople, becoming a lecturer in philosophy and librarian.

But then, in 863, the ruler of Moravia, Rostislav, asked the emperor to send him some Christian teachers who could conduct services and teach his people in the Slavonic tongue. Emperor Michael III chose Cyril and Methodius.

It was a daunting task, for the Slavonic language had not yet been written down. But nonetheless, the brothers methodically set about their great work.

Cyril used his academic ability to create an alphabet for the Moravians, which eventually became the Cyrillic alphabet. The brothers then used this written language to teach Christianity in Slavonic, and to provide a way for the Moravians to worship in their own language. The brothers translated much of the liturgy and the gospels to this form.

During their time in Moravia, the brothers faced opposition from missionaries of the German Church, who believed that the official languages of the church should only be Hebrew, Greek or Latin. But the Pope pronounced that both brothers were orthodox, and made them both bishops, with Methodius ending up as Archbishop of Rastislav and Svatopluk.

Cyril and Methodius have been held in high honour, as men who pioneered the use of the vernacular language in church services. Cyril would have been astonished if he had known the eventual consequences of his hard work. For not only did the Slavonic language spread quickly, with him becoming known as the Father of Slavonic Literature, but Slavonic went on to become the language of the Liturgy in the 9<sup>th</sup> century Russian Church.



### **He Prayeth Well**

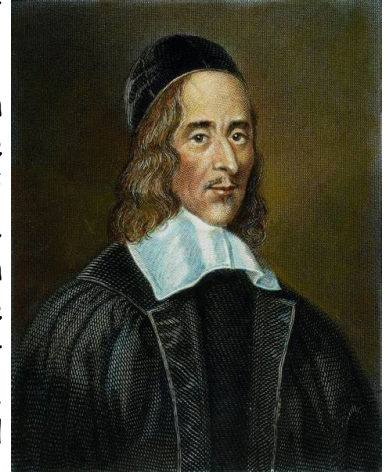
He prayeth well, who loveth well  
Both man and bird and beast,  
He prayeth best, who loveth best  
All things both great and small;  
For the dear God who loveth us,  
He made and loveth all.



## 27<sup>TH</sup> FEB: GEORGE HERBERT, VICAR AND POET

On this day the Church Calendar celebrates George Herbert. For those who are muttering 'never heard of him', just think of the hymn 'Let all the world/ In every corner sing', which he wrote, along with several other hymns which are still popular, even if they are well over 300 years old. In the course of his short life he was a graduate of Cambridge University, a favoured politician of King James, a distinguished poet of the so-called 'metaphysical' school, and a much-loved parish priest at Bemerton, in Wiltshire.

He was born in Wales but grew up in a wealthy family in England. As a student he felt called to ordination, but when he had graduated, he was drawn instead into the government of the time. As a protégé of King James (yes, the one of the 'King James Bible') he could have pursued a career in government, but that youthful call persisted and after a while he turned instead to the ministry of the Church of England. It was an era when many clergy were absentee incumbents, paying someone else to do the parish work while they lived elsewhere, but Herbert set himself to be a true parish priest, noted for his pastoral care and practical support of his parishioners. The whole of his ministry was fulfilled in that one parish, until he died at 39 from what we would now call tuberculosis.



It is of course his hymns for which he is chiefly remembered today, though his *Collected Poems* are also regarded as jewels of English poetry.

### GOD'S VALENTINE

For God so loved the world He sent His Son  
There was no other way to let us know,  
So Jesus came to us from heaven's realm  
To bring God's love to all of us below.

He took on flesh, became like one of us,  
Taught and healed and loved wherever He went  
Showing the Father's love for all to see  
He truly was a gift from heaven sent.

The Bible is God's precious Word of Life  
A living breathing word like no other,  
It is a heavenly letter of love to us  
Sent 'From your God the Everlasting Father'.

*By Megan Carter*

## JUST FOR SMILES



"I'm updating the 'rota notice-board' rota, rota... do I see a hand...?"

### Forgiveness

A Sunday School teacher asked her children: "Can anyone tell me what you must do before you can obtain forgiveness of sin?"

There was a short pause and then, from the back of the room, a small boy ventured: "Sin?"

### Say it with flowers

A man stopped by his local florist shop to buy flowers for his new girlfriend on Valentine's Day. He asked the proprietor, "You know the expression, 'Say it with flowers'?"



"I do indeed!" the florist enthused. "How about three dozen of my finest roses?"

The man hesitated. "No, make it just a half dozen roses. I'm a man of few words."



"The knitting circle are playing their part in our heating efficiency programme."



Helen's electric chasuble was the envy of everyone

### Those who want to get married

A minister was preparing to marry a local couple within a couple of weeks. At the close of the morning service, he saw them both in the congregation, and wanted to ask them to come forward, but he couldn't think of their names. So he said: "Will those wanting to get married please come to the front?"

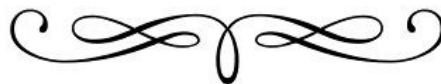
Immediately, nine single ladies, six single men, three widows, and four widowers walked up the aisle.

# PUZZLES

		5						
				8	6	9	4	
3						7	2	
					5		1	
	7						8	
	4		2					
	8	2						3
	1	9	4	7				
						6		



**Sudoku**

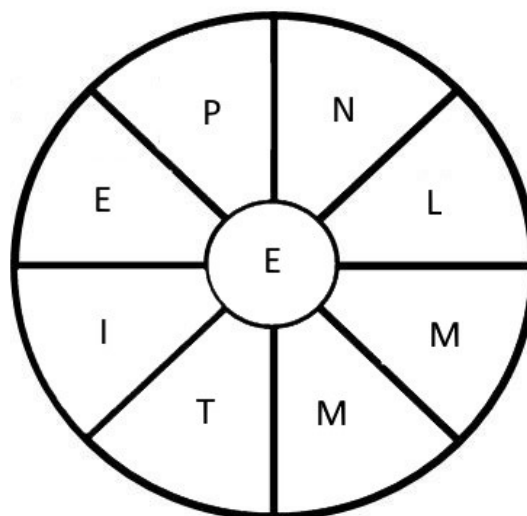


## WORD WHEEL

How many words can you make using the letters in the word wheel?

Words must be four letters or more, each word must contain the central letter E. Plurals and proper nouns are not allowed. There is at least one nine letter word.

Good score 12+ Excellent 18+



## ANSWERS FROM LAST NEWSLETTER

3	7	9	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	2	8	1	4
<b>4</b>	2	6	1	3	8	<b>7</b>	<b>9</b>	5
<b>8</b>	5	1	4	7	9	<b>2</b>	3	6
<b>9</b>	3	5	8	4	<b>7</b>	1	6	2
2	<b>1</b>	7	5	6	3	4	<b>8</b>	9
6	8	4	<b>2</b>	9	1	5	7	<b>3</b>
1	4	<b>3</b>	7	2	6	9	5	<b>8</b>
7	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	9	8	5	3	4	<b>1</b>
5	9	8	3	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	6	2	7

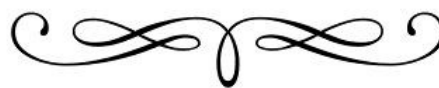


### SUDOKU ANSWERS

Apologies if you struggled with this one as a mistake was made

N	R	E	H	T	U	O	S	S	R	H	R
E	E	N	I	T	S	E	L	A	P	E	E
A	L	A	N	N	E	A	O	O	I	R	T
K	I	N	G	Q	U	E	E	N	M	O	N
Y	G	O	L	O	R	T	S	A	A	D	O
R	I	D	S	A	S	R	G	P	A	R	M
N	O	I	T	A	N	I	V	I	D	E	O
R	U	S	C	L	L	G	B	H	S	A	L
S	S	C	H	O	L	A	R	S	H	M	O
V	M	B	L	R	H	I	R	E	S	S	
S	C	A	R	A	V	A	N	O	B	A	S
U	R	T	A	M	H	O	S	W	A	N	I

### WORDSEARCH



### CROSSWORD

A	■	S	■	W	■	F	■	U	■	A	■	A
B	O	T	T	O	M	L	E	S	S	P	I	T
D	■	R	■	N	■	O	■	C	■	A	■	H
I	C	E	■	D	E	C	A	L	O	G	U	E
E	■	A	■	R	■	K	■	■	■	A	■	N
L	I	M	B	O	■	S	E	C	O	N	D	S
■	O	■	■	U	■	■	■	R	■	■	■	■
C	R	I	M	S	O	N	■	E	A	G	E	R
R	■	N	■	■	■	E	■	A	■	A	■	E
A	B	H	O	R	R	E	N	T	■	L	A	P
V	■	O	■	E	■	D	■	I	■	L	■	E
A	L	P	H	A	A	N	D	O	M	E	G	A
T	■	E	■	D	■	O	■	N	■	Y	■	T