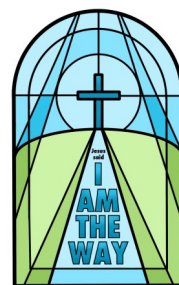




Stockport Sunday School

April 2024 Newsletter 48



April! A new month, a new church season.

We have moved on from Lent, a time when we are called to re-examine how we witness to our faith, and now enter into the rejoicing of Easter Day and the unfolding story of Jesus' appearances to His disciples and followers.

To some extent, in our worship, the actual events of Holy Week, from the welcoming crowds of Palm Sunday through to the events of Good Friday, get compressed into just two Bible readings.

As a result, it is easy to hear the familiar readings as historical records, but overlook the relevance of those events to our modern day situations.

So it seems worthwhile to re-examine the Bible accounts with this in mind.



We have the Palm Sunday crowds rejoicing on Jesus' arrival into Jerusalem, many seeing Him as a saviour who would release them from the yoke of Roman rule. They fail to realise that He came to provide for their spiritual needs, to show us the way to serve God, not Mammon. Whether they were the same groups of people who shouted for Barabbas to be released, and Jesus to be crucified, is not clear. Perhaps the later demonstrators were people who, like the priestly hierarchy, saw Jesus as a threat to their religious beliefs.

We can see similar situations in our modern day - governments stirring up the people by half truths, lies; driven by power and personal gain. We can recognise the power of extremism, for example, in Israel and Palestine, and also in Russia, which leads to injustice, oppression, warfare and civil strife.

When the soldiers first come to arrest Jesus, His first thoughts were to protect His disciples, - "let these men go", He said. In doing so, He was probably aware of how Peter would respond to the situation - when he struck the high priest's slave with his sword. Jesus reprimands him and heals the injured man. His message was that violence is not a lasting answer to violence nor to injustice. Still true today as much as it was then.



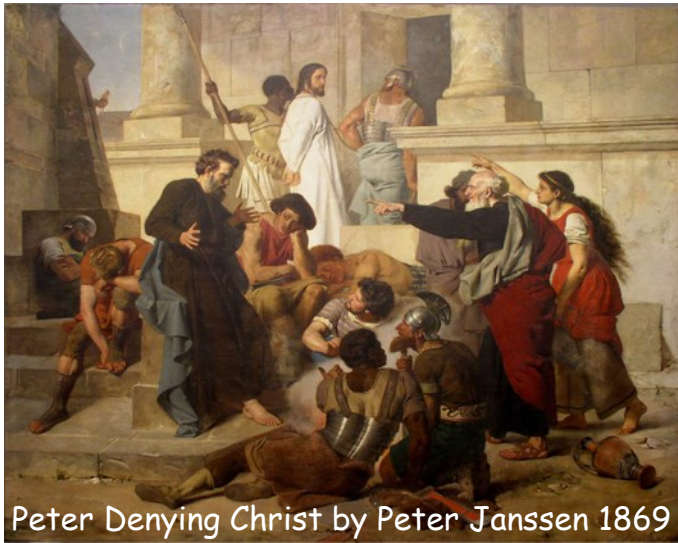
There are other parallels with modern day events. Pilate was a man of the world, whose Lord and Master was the Roman Emperor, used to dealing with uprisings and rebellions. He was aware that they needed to be nipped in the bud if the authorities were to retain control. Unlike many of the people with authority in this moment of

crisis, he did appear to have some concern for the law to be observed. But, when it came to the crunch, he took the easy way out, washing his hands of the affair. Then, when Jesus tells him "I came into the world to testify to the truth", Pilate answers - "What is truth?". In his cynical view, it is something to be manipulated if necessary. In modern times, we seem to have a similar approach - in politics, in business (witness the Post Office scandal) or on the internet.

POST
OFFICE

In contrast, as followers of Christ, we are called to witness to truth in all its aspects, to stand up for what is right in God's eyes. To have the courage not to go along with the crowd when their direction is contrary to our Lord's teaching. To be prepared to challenge those who spread disinformation and prejudice for their own ends.

There again, it is easy for us to be critical of those who fell short in their loyalty to Jesus.



Peter Denying Christ by Peter Janssen 1869

Take Peter, for instance, in his denial of any connection with Jesus when he is identified as one of His followers. Would we have acted differently? We can easily overestimate our ability to deal with such situations, particularly when we are confronted unexpectedly, and feel we are in a vulnerable position.

Or even of Judas. He was obviously expecting Jesus to assume temporal power in Israel. It has been suggested that he may even have been hoping the confrontation of Jesus with the Jewish authorities would be the catalyst for such a change. Whatever the reasons

were for his actions, he was wrong. He realised his mistake too late, which led to him committing suicide.

Let us not be too quick to judge others for perceived failings.

'Judge not, that you be not judged', Jesus warned.

Sadly, we can see that all the faults and shortcomings of the individuals in the Bible record of our Lord's passion are still present in modern society.

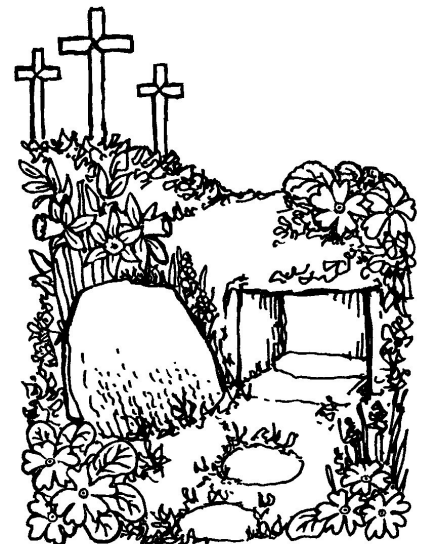
But there is hope! Eventually right and truth will prevail - as was shown by our Lord's resurrection.

The empty tomb, Jesus' appearances, first to Mary Magdalene, then to the two disciples on the road to Emmaus, followed by the other occasions in Jerusalem, were the signs of the start of a new and loving relationship between God and His people.

And that is our reason for celebrating together on Easter Sunday each year.

May that joy, that sense of wellbeing from God's presence among us, be seen by those in the world around us, as we seek to be witnesses to our faith and trust in Jesus, our Lord, our Saviour, Guide and Friend.

Let us bless the Lord. Thanks be to God.





HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Happy Birthday wishes this month to:-

Beryl Manley - 12th April

and

Judith Hadfield - 2nd May



GET WELL SOON

We were sorry to hear that some members have been unable to attend services due to ill health, we wish them all a speedy recovery and look forward to them being able to join us again. You are in our thoughts and prayers.



SERVICES

7th April

Garth Higgins

14th April

Beryl Manley

21st April

Walter Stead

28th April

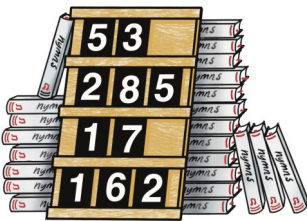
Margaret Forster

5th May

Judith Higgins

12th May

Garth Higgins





SERVICES



SUNDAY 25TH FEBRUARY 2024

Judith Higgins took this service. After hearing Adrian Nottingham's talk on Bible Sunday, she had decided to try to find out more about the men who had written the gospels. This had not been an easy task as they had originally been written anonymously. Over the years, Bible scholars had tried to find out who these men were and now names have been attributed them.



Matthew's gospel had been written for the Jews and shows Jesus as the fulfilment of the Old Testament prophecies of the coming of a Messiah. It is thought he had not witnessed Jesus' ministry but heard about Him from others basing much of the gospel on the work of Mark. Mark was the surname of John Mark whose mother owned a house in Jerusalem where the followers of Jesus met together in the early days of the church. Mark had been a disciple of Peter and after Peter's death wrote down all he had been told by Peter. He spent time with Peter and Paul in Rome when they were founding a church there. He also travelled with Paul on his missionary journeys. He wrote his gospel for gentiles and often explains Jewish customs.

Luke's gospel was written for the Greeks by Luke who was an educated man, a physician of noble birth. He too wrote under the guidance of Paul but also drew from the work of Mark. This gospel contains information not found in the other gospels like the parable of the Good Samaritan. Luke also wrote the Acts.



St Luke's Symbol

John, the youngest of the gospel writers, has been called the disciple whom Jesus loved. He is a man who knew and followed Jesus and his writing is based on personal witness.

Judith learned some interesting facts in her research and spent more time re-reading the gospels. She hoped she had inspired others to do the same.

SUNDAY 3RD MARCH 2024

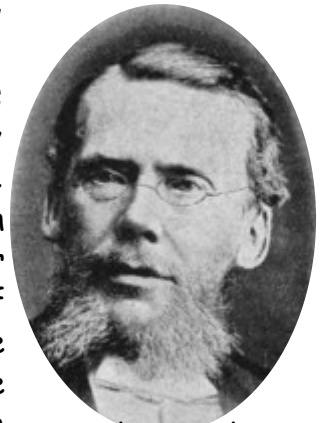
This service was taken by Wendy Hill and Judith Hadfield. Judith read the Bible reading and led the prayers. Wendy's talk was based on two pieces of paper she had found at home and took us all down memory lane.

The first was an article she had found describing how much had changed since the 40s, 50s and 60s. After being born to mothers who smoked and drank and ate all through pregnancy, survived sleeping in cots painted with lead-based paint. Children rode bikes



without wearing helmets, rode in cars without seat belts, they played outside all day as long as they were home before the street lights came on. They were out of contact all day as there were no mobile phones and were told by parents to ask a stranger to see us across the road.

The second part of the service was based on some notes written about the house system started in SSS in 1931. There were twelve houses, six for girls and six for boys. Children could earn points for attendance and bringing new scholars to the School and taking part in games. There was a friendly spirit of rivalry between scholars and the



Judge Leigh

houses that had gained the most points were awarded a trophy each year. The School saw an increase of 200 scholars during the year which they attributed to the start of the house system. Most of the members present at the service had not heard of the house system. Judith Higgins was able to show them the banners of nine of the twelve houses and some of the house badges. Judge Leigh described the house system as a success because each scholar had been doing his utmost not for his own glory but for the glory of the house, and for the glory of the School and for the sake of the glory of God.

What an interesting and enjoyable service. We enjoyed looking back at our own childhood and how things had changed for children today and also learning more about the history of our Sunday School.

Thank you Wendy and Judith.

SUNDAY 10TH MARCH 2024, MOTHERING SUNDAY

We were pleased to welcome back Sandra Woodhead as our speaker on Mothering Sunday, along with several guests.

The fourth Sunday in Lent is also known as Refreshment Sunday when people who have given up some food for Lent are able to break their fast for a day.



Sandra's lesson was from Paul's letter to the Colossians encouraging them to show compassion, kindness, humility and patience. She also read part of Anselm's song from the Book of Common Prayer -

"Jesus, like a mother you gather your people to you."

"You are gentle with us as a mother with her children."

Sandra spoke of Jesus feeding five thousand which is recorded in all four gospels. A thoughtful mother made a picnic basket for her son and this was given to Jesus. Jesus blessed the food and all the people were fed.

A chapel was built at the site where the miracle took place. A hundred and fifty years later it was extended with a mosaic floor showing plants and animals. In the centre a panel showed a picnic basket of rolls and two large fish. In 614 the Persians destroyed the chapel. In the twelfth century the



floor was rediscovered and many pilgrims visited the site. Nine years ago in an arson attack, Jewish extremists set fire to the chapel, which took two years to rebuild and the mosaic floor survived, a record of a mothers care for her son and the boy's gift to Jesus.



Would the people have been fed that day without the boys' gift to Jesus?

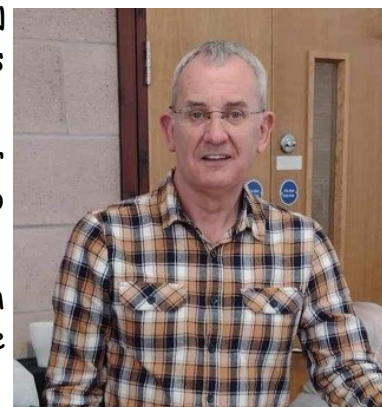
At the close of the service all the ladies received a paper handbag containing mint chocolate and the men received paper briefcases handmade by Judith Higgins.

SUNDAY 17TH MARCH 2024

Beryl Manley had invited Tony McIntyre, a member of the Knit 'N Natter group to speak to us. Tony is a member of St Barnabas Church.

A keen walker, Tony had taken six days to walk the ninety four miles of the West Highland Way from just outside Glasgow to Failtes near Fort William.

Tony brought along the clothes he would walk in and likened them to the virtues mentioned in Paul's letter to the Colossians. He wore several layers to keep him warm.



- | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------|
| Base layer a long sleeved T-shirt | humility |
| Middle layer a fleece | compassion |
| Top layer another fleece | gentleness |
| Trousers | patience |
| Waterproof leggings | love |
| Hat and gloves | |
| Spare socks | |

On his walking, he saw and thought about God's creation.

During the walk, he would stop for a sandwich lunch. He also took a jar of currants, raisins and sultanas in brandy for energy.

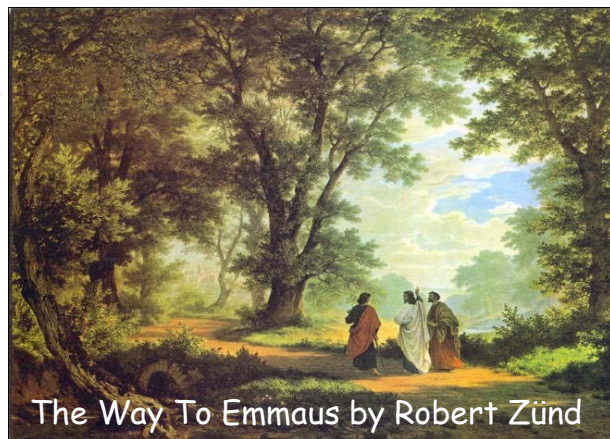
During the break he would also knit. Whilst knitting, he could sit quietly and pray.

Life is a journey, we have to stick together and keep to the path. Jesus walked the road to Emmaus, with two disciples after the resurrection. John's gospel says, "Keep on the straight path those who walk with God always get to the destination."

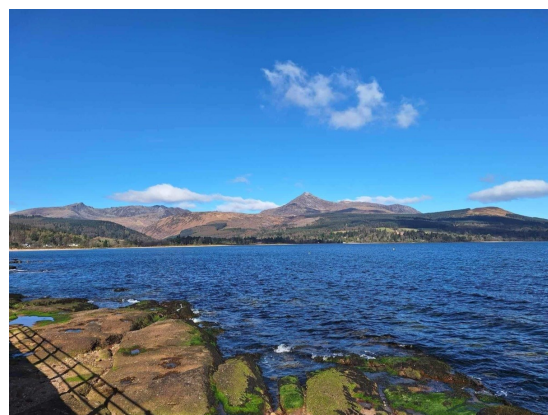
Beryl asked Tony some questions about how he started knitting. His mother, now 90, had been knitting since she was 8. Twelve months ago Tony asked her to teach him. He found the Sunday School Knit 'N Natter group online and joined. He found everyone friendly and helpful. He brought along a lovely sweater he had made and a cable scarf he is knitting.

Recently on the internet he saw about a knitting retreat on the Isle of Arran and the day after our service he was setting off to join them. There will be time during the day to meet people over tea and coffee and there will be services at 9.30, 12.30 and in the evening. The rest of the time, people will knit, sit quietly and listen to the word of God and share the gospel.

Thank you Tony for an interesting and thoughtful service. We are pleased that you found our Knit 'N Natter Group and hope that you will be inspired by the retreat on Arran and hope you will come back and tell us about it.



The Way To Emmaus by Robert Zünd



Photos from Tony's trip

PALM SUNDAY SERVICE, 24TH MARCH 2024

The heading for Cath Brown's Service was Emmaus, familiar to us as the destination of two of Jesus followers making their way home after Jesus had been crucified.

However Cath opened by telling us of her visit to the Emmaus charity shop in Bolton which raises funds to help and support homeless people by providing a basis of home, work and companionship for them.



Emmaus was started in France in 1949 by Abbé Pierre, a Roman Catholic priest, and also a French MP at the time. It's purpose was to provide homes and shelter for former French Resistance Fighters who were living on the streets of Paris, extended in due course to any homeless person.

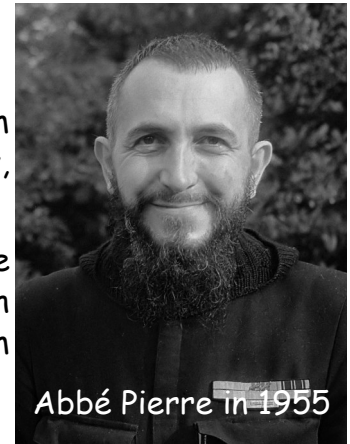
The first centre in the UK was set up in 1991 and currently there are 850 'Companions' being housed in the UK.

A very uplifting story of a need being met.

The latter part of the service included the traditional Palm Sunday Bible reading, prayers and the closing hymn, 'All glory, laud, and honour to Thee, Redeemer, King.'

Written by Theodolph, Bishop of Orleans in about 820 while he was in prison, the king heard him singing it and liked it so much that he designated it to be sung in every church in France on Palm Sunday, - and we joined in!

Thank you Cath for an interesting and enjoyable Service.



SUNDAY 31ST MARCH 2024, EASTER SUNDAY

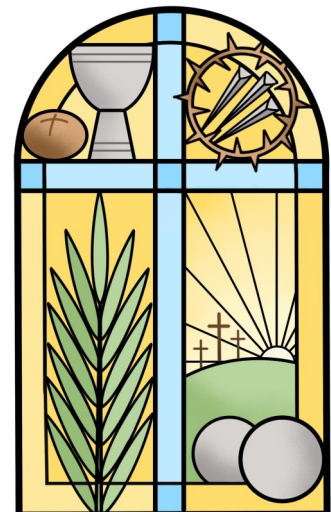
We welcomed back our speaker, Sue Shillito and her husband, Barry, on Sunday March 31st. Sue opened the service by playing a CD of 'See What A Morning'.

Judith Curry read the first reading, John chapter 20 verses 1 - 18, the first Easter morning. Sue then read a beautiful meditation that had been written as from a friend of Mary Magdalene. It described how Mary had been mocked by people and described as a mad woman because of her sudden outbursts of shouting. The two women had joined a crowd of people listening to Jesus and then Jesus had turned to Mary and healed her. After that day the two women had followed Jesus and heard Him preach. They became part of the group of women who were followers of Jesus. They were horrified when Jesus was arrested and crucified but the women remained with Jesus at the foot of the cross and watched as



He was placed in the tomb. The friend was worried how Mary would react to Jesus' death. Early on the Sunday Mary went to the tomb and found it empty. She called the disciples, but after they left, she remained in the garden and was the first person to see the risen Christ. She returned to the others full of joy. It was a moving meditation on the events of the first Easter Day.

Margaret Forster read the second lesson, Colossians chapter 3 verses 1 - 4, 12 - 14. Paul tells the people you have been raised to life through Jesus, Paul preached with conviction in the risen Christ and encouraged his followers to see others as God sees them, loving as Jesus loved.





Sometimes we cannot see God in the world. The media publicises the evil in the world but God calls us to see the world through His eyes. Despite difficult times there are good people at work. Sue mentioned the large sums of money raised to help others through Children In Need and Comic Relief and the many gifts of food and medical supplies sent to people in disaster areas. Jesus uses people when He can. It is said that a Christian keeps his feet on the ground and his head in the stars.



Like Mary, we should sit, seek and ponder and look for Jesus at work in the world.

Thank you, Sue, for a different and inspiring Easter Service.

At the close of the service, we had chocolate cake decorated with mini eggs made by Judith Curry, and Judith Higgins handed out heart shaped paper baskets containing mini eggs to everyone.



**You abundantly water the ploughed fields,
You settle
its furrows and soften the earth
with showers. You bless its growth. Ps 65:10**

LANCASHIRE HILL SUNDAY SCHOOL



Recipe

Roasted cauliflower salad

Serves 4 - 6

- 1 large cauliflower, broken into small florets*
- 2 tbsp olive oil*
- 115g mayonnaise*
- 2 tbsp grainy mustard*
- 3 tbsp freshly chopped parsley*

Preheat oven to 220°C/200°C Fan/Gas 7.

Scatter the cauliflower florets over the base of a large roasting tin. Drizzle the oil over the florets and season well with salt and freshly ground black pepper. Roast in the oven for about 15 minutes until lightly golden and just tender. Set aside to cool.

Measure the mayo, mustard and parsley into a bowl. Add the cold cauliflower. Mix together and check the seasoning.

Transfer into a large dish to serve.



The probability of life originating by accident is comparable to the probability of the complete Oxford dictionary resulting from an explosion in a printing factory.

- Edwin Conklin



Everyone else my age is an adult, whereas I am merely in disguise.

- Anon

KNIT 'N' NATTER

Spring Fair was a fantastic result raising £700 for Bury Tandem & Cycling Club for the blind and partially sighted. We did this for a lady who lives near the School who is blind and she raised money for them. Her name is Laura Whittaker, she has been with this club for 9 years and over that period of time has raised £20,000. She explained to me Bury was the nearest place she could go to for cycling, there was nowhere nearer for this activity. Our knitting group ladies, and not forgetting Tony, our only man who knits and makes some lovely things, organised the Spring Fair, which included a Raffle, Guess the Weight of the Cake, Name the Teddy, a Bottle Tombola and several stalls, and all did well.



On Tuesday 26th March all the helpers started coming from 11am to set up, I was in earlier to set the refreshment area up. Everyone has specific jobs to do, Janet Moore oversees the kitchen with her helpers, cakes were arriving, some were homemade and some bought, and then they all had to be plated up ready to go on the hatch when Pre-School catering had finished. All our group love doing Fairs and were getting very excited to help to raise money for this good cause. Everything went well, the amount we raised was the most we have ever raised out of all the charity events we have done. Everyone worked hard and were very tired when they got



home after all the clearing up. I would just like to say a big thank you to Jean Forrest who oversees these fairs, does a plan of what stalls we have and what we are selling, and also to Chris Beswick, our group's Treasurer, who makes lots of lovely knitted or sewing gifts and is a great help in the running of the group, along with Janet Moore who helps our group. It is very popular and we do get a lot of enquiries and people coming with carers, they really enjoy it and Age UK once a month have activities on a Wednesday for older



people and some of our group have been to a couple of events at Stockport College and have really enjoyed them.

I would like to take this opportunity to say a **BIG THANK YOU** to all those who supported this event and to all our Knitting Group for all their hard work and wonderful things they make to help to raise all this money, we are very proud of you.

Our next fair will be in October, dates to be decided, Pre-School will inform me when they are off, so there is nobody in, I know there is a problem with parking, some are students but there are others who park going to other places and in general streets round about are full of cars. Bowling club season will have finished by then, Pre-school are not off the same time as college.

More news next time.

Beryl Manley



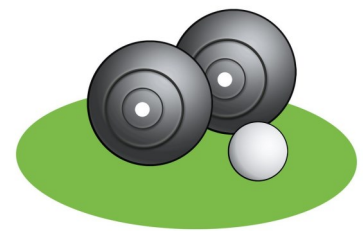
BOWLING CLUB

Season opened today, 30th March, it was a lovely day and there was a good turn out. The members stand in a circle on the Green and put the hand they don't bowl with behind them and then they count down hand bowl to an Easter Egg / chocolates, then our newly elected President, Ian Phillips, welcomes everyone to a new season of bowling and declares the club open so our bowling days start from this Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Saturday, all starting from 1.30pm through to September.

We are getting a lot of interest in the bowling, one or two of our members have had to give up bowling because of medical problems but have come as social members now, so hopefully we should not have any problems filling the gaps. We are all very friendly and work together.

More news next time.

Beryl Manley Club Secretary



TAI - CHI - QIGONG



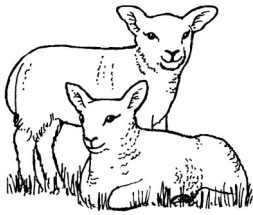
Class doing ok, numbers fluctuate, but people who come enjoy it, Jolie is an excellent teacher, fully qualified in aspects of health issues, These exercises can be done sat down. We have one or two ladies who come to the community coffee morning, bring their lunch and go to Tai Chi and then come to knitting and enjoy the full day. Hopefully things will improve, it's that time of year for holidays, off ill, medical appointments.

I was recently reading through one of my poetry books, and found a short verse, written by Henry Neville Maughan and taken from "the Husband of Poverty".

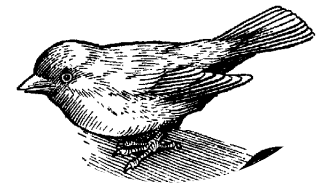
It was a verse which I first sang, set to music, and in Stockport High School choir, around 1951 and I've never forgotten how beautiful the words are, and they have been in my memory ever since.

I thought that I would share it for you all to enjoy.

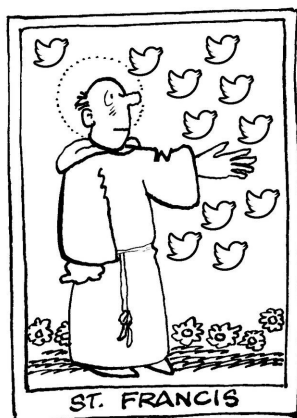
Margaret Morris Jones



"There was a Knight of Bethlehem,
Whose wealth was tears and sorrows;
His men-at-arms were little lambs,
His trumpeters were sparrows.
His castle was a wooden cross,
Where on He hung so high;
His helmet was a crown of thorns
Whose crest did touch the sky.
There was a Knight of Bethlehem
Whose wealth was tears and sorrows;
His men-at-arms were little lambs,
His trumpeters were sparrows.!



St Francis of Assisi,
who 'The Husband of
Poverty' was about

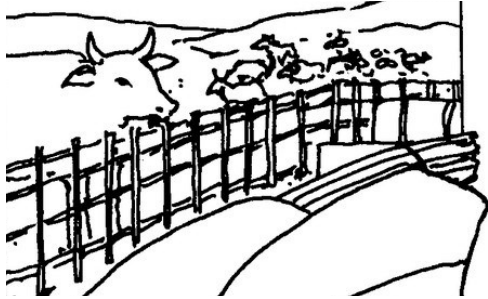


*He's been updated. He's now the
patron saint of tweeting!*



THE RAINBOW

The world was so wicked that God made it rain
For forty long days and long nights
The floodwaters covered both mountain and plain
They covered the highest of heights!



But Noah survived, because he - free from guilt
Kept the Word of his God in his mind
So he and his kin, in the ark he had built
Lived with two beasts of every kind.

They floated by night and they floated by day
No sign of the land could they spy;
Till at last came the day when the flood drained away
And a rainbow was seen in the sky.



And God said to Noah, "You see that bright bow?
"That rainbow up there in the sky?
"Now I've put it there as a sure sign to show
"Of a promise twixt mankind and I.

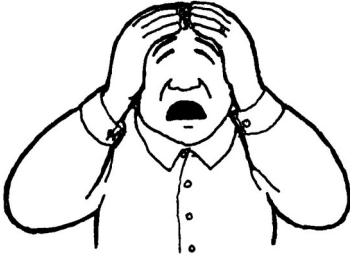
"In future you'll know that I won't make it rain
"So the whole earth is flooded that deep.
"Now the rainbow is there and will be again -
"And you'll know that this promise I'll keep."



On days when it seems that the rain just won't go
And the floodwaters fill us with fear;
At last comes the sun and the bright coloured bow
Our God made that rainbow appear.

By Nigel Beeton

SMILE LINES



Worry

I have so many problems that if a new one comes along today, it will be at least two weeks before I can worry about it.

Heaven

Seen in a parish magazine: "We shall be meeting on Wednesday, when the subject will be 'Heaven - how do we get there?' Transport by bus is available at 6.45pm opposite the King's Arms.



Choir

Seen in a parish magazine: 'Next Sunday the choir will give a recital, after which the church will be closed for repairs.'

Running

Insanity runs in some families; in others it positively gallops.



What headstones are for

In the 1950s, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother, visited the church of Scotland in Dumfries. As she was walking through the graveyard after the service, she asked the Lord Provost who was with her, why the headstones were so large? He replied "To hold them doon, Ma'am."

Problem

I don't have a problem with caffeine. I do have a problem without it.

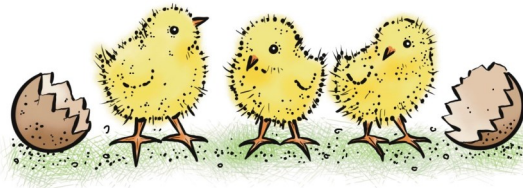


PUZZLES

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



Sudoku

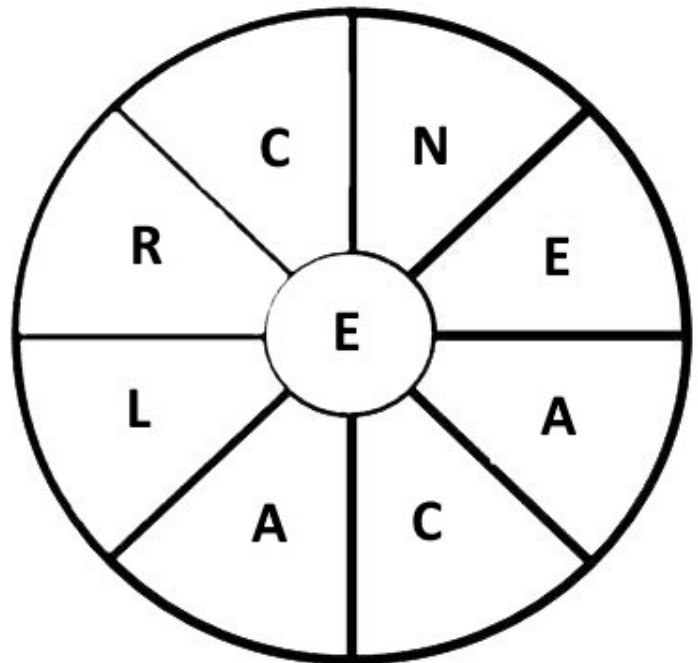


WORD WHEEL

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 20+



WORDSEARCH

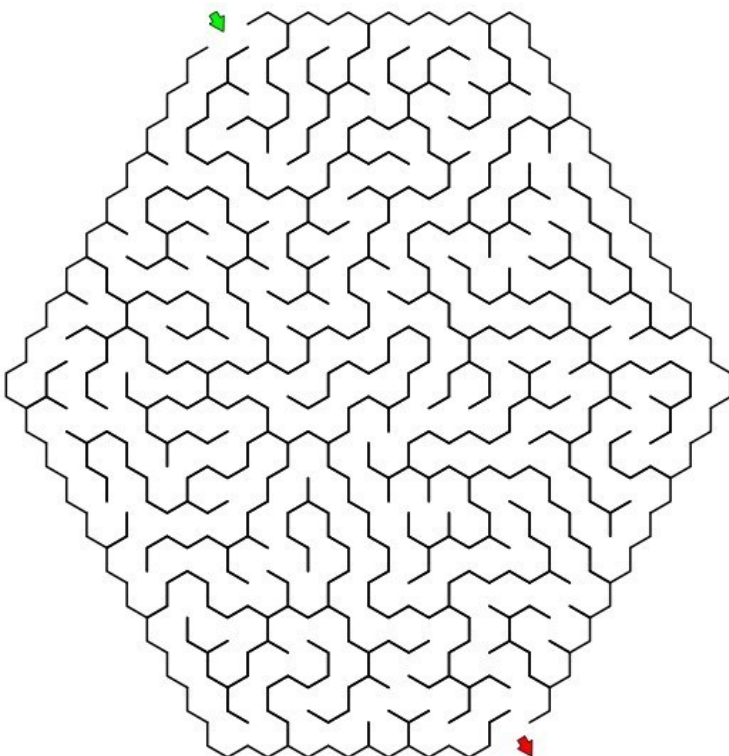
ST GEORGE OF THE GOLDEN LEGEND

St **GEORGE** is **PATRON SAINT** of **ENGLAND**, but he never actually came here. He was a Christian **OFFICER** in the **ROMAN ARMY** under **DIOCLETIAN**, who refused to abandon his faith during the **TERROR**. George was therefore **MARTYRED** in **PALESTINE** about 300 AD. His **COURAGE** became legendary, and St George became the **EXAMPLE** of a Christian fighting-man, a powerful **HELPER** against **EVIL** powers affecting individual lives. He was the **SOLDIER-HERO** of the Middle Ages. In the **GOLDEN LEGEND** of the 13th century, Jacobus de Voragine tells the story of how St George helped rescue the people of Sylene in Lybia from a **DRAGON**, especially the **PRINCESS**, who had been offered to the dragon as a sacrifice. With the dragon dead, and the princess returned to her father the King, the people of Sylene **CONVERTED** to Christianity.

Can you find the words shown in bold capitals in the passage above in the grid? They can be found in any direction.



E	G	E	N	L	E	G	E	N	D	S	N	N
R	G	C	A	E	P	L	R	R	Y	E	H	E
E	O	O	I	A	I	E	P	O	M	E	E	D
I	E	U	T	V	R	R	M	M	R	S	E	L
D	A	R	E	C	I	F	F	O	A	R	I	O
L	O	A	L	N	G	D	M	I	Y	X	E	G
N	L	G	C	E	I	R	N	T	L	L	E	T
L	C	E	O	D	E	T	R	E	V	N	O	C
I	S	R	I	I	E	A	S	X	R	N	E	E
S	G	D	D	N	M	N	H	E	L	P	E	R
E	R	L	A	D	T	E	N	G	L	A	N	D
N	O	G	A	R	D	H	R	O	M	A	N	E
S	R	O	E	L	R	L	I	L	E	D	P	O

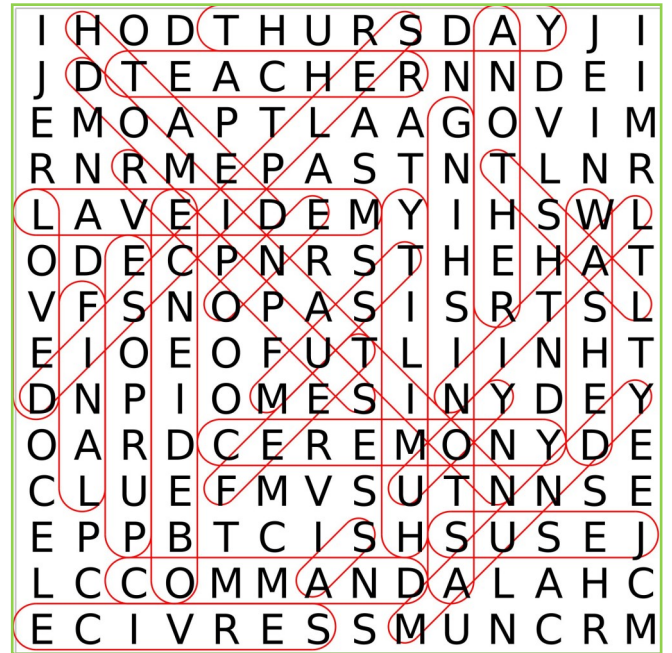


MAZE

Starting at the green arrow, can you work your way around the maze exiting at the red arrow?

ANSWERS FROM LAST NEWSLETTER

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



SUDOKU ANSWERS

WORDSEARCH ANSWERS



"Police? This is St Mary's Ladies' Knitting & Vigilante Circle. We've detained two gents trying to nick the church silver."



Regular worshippers were upgraded to first class