

# THE PARISH OF MELTHAM

## CHRIST THE KING

50p

I lift up my eyes to the hills -  
from where will my help come?

My help comes from the LORD,  
who made heaven and earth.

Psalm 121 v1-2

September 2023

## St. Bartholomew's Women's Fellowship

15 members of St. Bartholomew's Women's Fellowship had an afternoon out at Cannon Hall Garden Centre for our June meeting. A few of the ladies drove their cars so we all piled in to fill them up. We enjoyed a very nice afternoon tea and then we were able to spend our money in the garden centre. A lovely afternoon was had by all and thank you very much to the ladies who drove their cars.

Sue Gregory



## Thanksgiving of Sumaya, Laibah & Hadiyyah

Sunday 3rd September.

St James' Church family were delighted to witness the blessing of Sumaya and her daughters as we gave thanks to God for them.



Sumaya thought it was a great service and a fab way to start September.



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A plan, a purpose, a path for you;  
The Shepherd has something for you to do.  
If may keep you near or lead you afar -  
God's plan for you is as special as you are.  
If you make a wrong turn and lose your way,  
He'll guide you back; just stop and pray.

- Bonnie Rickner Jensen

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**melthamparishmagazine@gmail.com**

Or via The Vicarage, 150 Huddersfield Road, Meltham, HD9 4AL

## Prayer for Growth

God of Mission  
Who alone brings  
growth to your  
Church,  
Send your Holy Spirit  
to give  
Vision to our planning,  
Wisdom to our actions,  
And power to our witness.  
Help our church to grow  
in numbers,  
In spiritual commitment  
to you,  
And in service to our  
local community,  
Through Jesus Christ  
our Lord.  
Amen.



## A note from the editor ...



Welcome Back,

To those of you (like us) who have been away for these holidays, welcome back and I hope you have had a great time. Apologies for the delay to the September issue as I have been on holidays and 'back to school' to organise. However I must say a great BIG THANK YOU to Alison Whiteley for helping me out and getting this issue started, -Thank you!

This month's has lots of interesting articles and updates from many people including Helme Ladies (pg 12) and Chris Sinclair (pg 24). Not forgetting a fantastic time at Keswick (pg31) which I would encourage you to think about join us next year.

They do say Summer is the time for weddings, it sure was, have a look on page 19 as we send our congratulations.

The deadline of the October magazine will be:

**Monday 20th September 2023**

Please send them via:

**[melthamparishmagazine@gmail.com](mailto:melthamparishmagazine@gmail.com)**

or

**via the vicarage letterbox.**  
(150 Huddersfield Rd, HD9 4AL)

God Bless,  
Fiona.

## Meltham Prayer Chain

Meltham Prayer chain has representatives from every church in Meltham and serves to pray for any need or difficulty.

Confidentiality is always respected.

If you would like to ask for prayers to be said, please contact

Christine Rolls      340342

Hester Deacon      657069



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## Letter from your Vicar

This month we will remember and celebrate the lives of two of our parish's great influences. People who have in their own different ways served God in this place with great commitment, faithfulness, and sacrifice.

Peter Rolls' Funeral will be held on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> September at 11:30am in St James Church. Peter was one of the kindest and most faith "filled" people it has ever been my joy to meet. Whilst he was a member of St James Church his influence, pastoral care, and wisdom has benefited our entire parish for many years. I'm sure that the only thing that will be felt more strongly than the sadness of his passing will be the gratitude we share for God having given him to our parish for so many years.

Dorothy Turner's Funeral will be held on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> September at 12:00pm in St Bartholomew's Church. As the wife of one of David Turner who was vicar of this parish during the 1990's I know that Dorothy also served this parish with great devotion. She was caring and always considered others before herself. I am very aware that the work and sacrifices of my own wife can easily be noticed less than those of "the vicar". Surely the value of the service and sacrifice of people like Dorothy should never be understated or underestimated.

In my last letter I asked you to consider Moses and how he faithfully led God's people, trusting in God's plan for the future, in God's ability to provide all that the people of Israel would need. I ask you to consider him once again but also Joshua. Moses himself never had the joy of setting foot in the promised land, the privilege of leading God's people across the Jordan was given to Joshua. Yet even as they crossed the river, they began setting up memorials (Joshua Chapter 4). These memorials were of course, rightly to honour God but I cannot imagine that they did not also remember Moses and thank God for him.

So, God's people took possession of the land flowing with milk and honey. I wish that I could tell you that from this point on everything went smoothly, that things became easy for them, but the truth is there were still a great many challenges ahead.

I also wish that I could tell you that we are now destined to enjoy a similar period of God's blessing. But I do not have any particular promise from God that this is such a time. However, most of the rest of the book of Joshua and the book of Judges tells of how every time that God's people turned to him, he helped them and blessed them. And, that the good news of the Gospel tells us that we, God's people, should always live by and trust in the abundant grace of his blessings.

As we pray for the thriving of the Church here in Meltham, and trust in the amazing grace of our loving God for what might be to come, we should not forget those who have been a source of God's blessing to us in the past.

God Bless, Rev John Dracup (Vicar)



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## Update from St Barts Churchwardens

Many of you will know that Alistair Storey completed his maximum 6 years as a churchwarden for St Barts in May and so he is relieved of his duties. A huge thank to Alistair for all he's done throughout that six years, particularly as he has been 'flying solo' without a second churchwarden for much of that time.

We are now back to the happy place of having two people to share the load.

Stephen (Steve) Asquith and Ruth Murray-Webster were both admitted as churchwardens by the Archdeacon in July. We promised to do a few things and we thought it would be good to share those here:

- To work with the vicar and PCC to further the mission of God and his purposes in the world
- To undertake this task as a spiritual and holy calling, seeking in word and action to promote unity and peace
- To care for the fabric and property of the church, as stewards of God.

We prayed to be given the grace to serve with joy, humility and strength, as witnesses to the gospel of Christ and to build up the kingdom and his Church.

The great thing is that, although we both work full-time as well as this volunteering, we work at different times of the week – so Steve is able to support Wednesday services and Ruth is able to support Sundays. We are also really grateful that Catherine Moulson and Anne Halstead help us with the many tasks associated with the role. And we have active steering groups for both St Bart's Church and the Church Hall to assist as well as the work of our finance officers for church and the church hall.

Worship at St Barts is changing.

We see wonderful growth in worship and fellowship at the Wednesday morning communion service and we know lots of people really welcome the 10.30am start.

On Sundays we are blessed by the services of two wonderful musicians in Simon and Jean, a talented group of people who read the word and a variety of services supported by our worship leaders and readers as well as our ordained ministers.

Gone are the days of 'one size fits all'. We know that some people love to worship with organ, choir, sung gloria and traditional hymns. We know that others really enjoy learning new songs and engaging with a different style of worship. Going forward we plan to communicate more clearly what to expect when – then you can choose.

We know we can't please all the people all the time, but we pray that God will fill you with the enthusiasm to worship him sincerely and faithfully, and with great tolerance of those who might be different to you.

We'll keep you up to date with other things we're doing going forward – watch this space.

# CROSSROADS CENTRE



Volunteering at the foodbank is mostly hard work taking phone requests, packing food parcels and delivering them to clients. However, all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy, so it's good to have some occasional light relief. Early in July, this took the form of a Crossroads entry in "It's a knockout", held on Broadlands Rec, with the proceeds being split between



ourselves and Meltham Wildlife Rescue. Sadly, our demographic is mostly of retirement age, and the athletic prowess that we once possessed has faded a little, but we more than made up for this in enthusiasm and joie de vivre. We managed to cobble together a team of 10 including Anne and myself, without resort to bribery or the press gang, and what a team! ( It may be politic to gloss over the fact that we roped in three of Janet Rockett's teenage granddaughters for the day... ). The Weather Gods looked kindly on us, and we got stuck in to a variety of challenges, mostly involving vast inflatable structures, and soapy water. Considering that we were up against some fitness groups and an amateur football side, we came a creditable fifth out of eleven, and raised north of £900. The added bonus was that we had so much fun doing it, and got clean into the bargain...



It's a quiet time here at the foodbank, as it's the holiday season, so it's a good time to look at whether things are running as they should be. We pride ourselves in trying to address the root causes of why clients come to us, which is important for two reasons: We'd prefer it if our clients are helped back on their feet, as dependency helps no-one in the long run. The other reason is that we rely on acts of kindness from our benefactors, and have to exercise good stewardship of their donations. It's often said that if you send money to the poorest regions of Africa, some of it will be spent on building swimming pools for dictators. The foodbank has a duty of care to do our damndest to make sure we target our resources to those most in need. In the last couple of months, Anne our Warehouse Manager, has been working closely with Chris, our Debt/Benefit Adviser, to engage meaningfully with new clients, and it's paying off.

Although we shouldn't exist in 2023, we do, and we'll be there as long as there's need in our area. Thank you all for the donations that keep us going.

Bless you all          Chris Sinclair

## Crossroads Centre Update

*Matthew 6 verses 25.33*

*'Look at the birds of the air, they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them'*

At the end of June the Crossroads project had their AGM. It was important as we had updated our Constitution and some of our policies. Copies of the report are available from the Crossroads Centre

We were delighted to welcome Kath Heaney and her daughter from the Meltham Wildlife Rescue who spoke about their work, now mainly with injured birds who receive excellent care to bring them back, if possible to full health, The Crossroads Grant Committee had supported them by helping them to purchase more duck huts.



If you are interested in volunteering at Meltham Wildlife please contact them on <https://www.melthamwildliferescue.co.uk> or 07846 344984. They always need new volunteers.

They also informed us that the best place to take an injured hedgehog is the Shelley hedgehogs rescue and rehabilitation. They can be contacted on **07849104602** or through their websites

Thank you as always for your prayers and support as we move into autumn and again face the cold weather and rising heating costs.

Sue Priestley

### **Please continue to contribute to Meltham Food Bank**

#### **They especially need the following items:**

Semi Skimmed or Whole long life milk, Canned meat meals, Tuna, Eggs, Breakfast Cereal, Jam. Other helpful items include: Coffee, Sugar, washing up liquid, Toiletries e.g shampoo, shaving cream, shower gel, toothpaste, soap and feminine hygiene products.

Drop into the bins at the Coop in Meltham and Netherton. Fresh & frozen veg welcome but these must be delivered to the centre only.

**Financial donations are also welcome.**

Post through the centre door, labelled clearly 'Food bank'.

The foodbank is open **Mon-Fri, 10am - 12.30pm.**





## **Helme Ladies Report**

Well Helme Ladies decided it was time to do something different, we hadn't been to the theatre since before lockdown, so it was time for a trip. The choice was to see 'Buddy' at the Alhambra in Bradford on a Wednesday afternoon matinee. Tickets were booked and on the appointed day various groups made their arrangements as to which bus to catch, some went on the 9.30am from Meltham, then on the first Bradford bus available. Others went on later buses, but all were there for a 2.00pm start. What a show, it took us all back to our teenage years and an era at the start of Rock and Roll. We all made it back to Huddersfield on the same bus with the songs ringing in our ears, 'O boy' what an enjoyable day we had had, where is the next to?

I know we needed rain, and my garden certainly was thirsty, but did we have to have it when it was our Tuesday walk? On the 20<sup>th</sup> June we all woke to torrential rain, so when we met at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir it was a case of discussing what to do. Nobody wanted to get wet (which we would have done had we gone on our walk) so it was decided to go to Hinchliffes for coffee. We whiled away the time drinking and gossiping until it was time to go for lunch which was booked at the Sands House. We had a lovely lunch and the gossip kept on going, we all enjoyed our day despite the rain. When we left to make our way home the rain was still pouring down.

What a surprise, the forecast was for showers on our next walk on 4<sup>th</sup> July. This was in the Netherton and South Crosland area, so plenty of open spaces in which to get wet. The ladies met outside the Beaumont Arms, where we were having lunch later, then took field paths across to South Crosland where we added a loop along tracks and back to South Crosland. We had a very light shower while crossing the fields and then sunshine for the rest of the walk. We now had plenty of time to wander down the road and back to the Beaumont Arms. We have been there a few times before so we knew the food would be good. All I will say is that we were not disappointed and had a good lunch along with plenty of chat. Another successful walk from our summer programme.

Is the weather going to get better? Our next walk on Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> July was along the canal from Marsden to Slaithwaite with lunch at the Vanilla Bean Café. Unfortunately, I could not be there for this walk so I am making this up from what I was told by those who were there. They set off from Marsden in lovely sunny weather and it didn't start raining until they got to Slaithwaite. There were lots of huge puddles along the canal towpath so they had lots of fun jumping and skipping in them (going back to childhood comes to mind). On arriving in Slaithwaite they found the bollards had all got knitted hats on top, a very colourful display.

On to the Vanilla Bean for lunch where the lovely food was served by pleasant and friendly staff. That is all I have been told but they did all have a lovely time.

The walk on August 1<sup>st</sup> (Yorkshire Day) was up through Slate Pits Woods to Meltham Reservoir. The weather was forecast for sunshine and showers and when the showers came they were just drizzle (moor grime in these parts), you couldn't feel them under the trees. We set off up the track which was in very good condition considering all the rain we have had. There was plenty of water in the reservoir and plenty of wildlife on it, various breeds of duck, lots of Canada Geese and a family of Swans, Mum, Dad and five cygnets. The flora was very abundant as well, the Holly will look wonderful when all the berries turn red, lots of berries on the Mountain Ash and the Honeysuckle was full of flowers as it climbed up the trunks of trees. We returned to our cars, which had been parked up the Knowle and drove round to the Golf Club for lunch. We ate our lunch whilst watching the Golfers, rabbits and squirrels playing on the golf course.

What a wonderful day for our last walk of the summer on August 15<sup>th</sup>, we were all hoping that the weather would behave itself. We met in Carlile Street car park then car shared to Castle Hill where we parked in the layby on Lumb Lane. I hope we don't have to climb those steps was the cry from one of the ladies. I told her not to worry as I knew a better way to the top. We left the cars and headed down the road for a few yards then turned left onto a track, this takes you around the bottom of Castle Hill. Along here, in the sunshine, we enjoyed looking out for the flowers and fruit growing alongside. The birds will have a feast in winter with sloes, blackberries, holly and we even found some Hazel Nuts. Another left turn and it was the final climb to the summit, a more gentle climb up this side, and with all the stops to look at the views it didn't feel very difficult. When we reached the top we found the wind, it had been hiding, but it was beautiful with the far-reaching views. We could see the windmills on Cold Edge, between Halifax and Haworth, to the right we could make out the North York moors and left up to Holme Moss and West Nab. Closer there was Huddersfield before us with the Town Hall easy to see and we spent ages picking out places we knew. We walked up to the Tower then back to the cars down the road and on to Farnley Tyas for lunch at the Golden Cock. This had been booked in advance and was very good, served by two pleasant girls who had difficulty in making themselves heard over all the gossip that was going around.

### **Upcoming Events:**

Sep 12<sup>th</sup> A celebration of 50 years of Helme Ladies in Helme Church

Sep 26<sup>th</sup> Talk about lifeboats by Andy Ingham

Oct 10<sup>th</sup> Auction



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## St Bartholomew's Organ Repairs and Choir Notes

We have recently had some work undertaken on the organ at St Bartholomew's to hopefully keep it going for a few more years yet. Built in 1926 by Huddersfield based organ builders Peter Conacher & Co. it is approaching the grand old age of 100 years old and having last had major cleaning and maintenance work over 30 years ago back in 1989, it has been long overdue some TLC. Gradually over the years we have lost a few notes up the top end (fortunately ones that are not used too often) and various wind leaks have occurred as the leather work has started to perish in places due to its age. In the main the organ has continued to work reasonably well but this has mainly been due to various things being 'patched up' by the organist over the years using such things as blu-tac, gaffer tape and bits of paper!

The organ is of an age where in an ideal world, a full refurbishment would be undertaken which would include a full clean and overhaul along with electrification and modernisation of the pneumatic action. The cost to do such work however would probably be in the region of £100,000 which in the current climate is neither feasible or justifiable. We therefore spent a small amount from the organ fund to have some minor repair work done to fix the current leaks and try to get all the notes working again - this involved having some leather work repaired and some of the pneumatic action piping replaced. We enlisted this work to Jardine Organ Company from Manchester who spent a couple of days in August doing the required work. They used to look after the fine Jardine organ at St James' Meltham Mills up until its sad demise following a roof leak back in 2008 and were pleased to undertake some work again over this side of the hill again and reacquaint themselves with Meltham.

I would like to thank anyone who has contributed to the organ fund over the years that has enabled us to have this work carried out. The work was successful, and we now have the major air leaks fixed and all notes working (barring 1 which was unfortunately inaccessible without further dismantling work).



We had a special meeting of the remaining choir members recently to decide how we might move forward with the choir at St Bartholomew's. Whilst acknowledging that times have changed both in terms of service patterns and number of remaining choir members, we agreed that we were keen to at least try and get back into some kind of regular pattern of singing. One problem we have is that unless pretty much everyone is available, it is difficult to have an effective choir that can lead the singing. We discussed various options but ultimately decided that we would commit to singing on one Sunday every month and rehearse the Thursday prior. In addition to this we will also try and get a choir together with additional helpers for special services. As things stand, we shall therefore have a choir on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of each month. As always, we would be delighted to welcome anyone who would like to join us for a sing - it is no longer a weekly commitment like it has been perceived to be previously, so please do get in touch with any member of the choir or myself if you feel you can help us out occasionally.

Simon Ball

## The Alpha Course

Have you ever thought to yourself - I've been going to church for years but I've never really got to grips with questions like:

*Who is Jesus?,*

*Why did he die for us?*

*How can we have faith?*

*How does God guide us?*

*Why do we pray?*

*If God loves us, why is there so much pain in the world?*



Alpha is a space to ask the big questions like these and explore faith in an open, pressure-free environment.

The Course is made up of a series of sessions exploring the Christian faith, typically run over eight to eleven weeks. Each talk looks at a different question around faith and is designed to create conversation. The Alpha episodes are designed to engage and inspire conversation. They're about thirty minutes long and explore the big issues around faith and unpack the basics of Christianity.

Probably the most important part of any Alpha is the chance to share thoughts and ideas on the topic, and simply discuss it in a small group. There's no obligation to say anything and there's nothing you can't say (seriously). It's an opportunity to hear from others and contribute your own perspective in an honest, friendly and open environment.

If you think you might be interested but want to know more before committing yourself to do it, there's a number of people you can ask who have done the course – and who have really benefitted from it. For some it's really changed their life; for others, it's quietly strengthened their faith.

For the last two years, starting in Autumn the Parish has run two Alpha Courses. One of them has been face to face lead by Captain John Smith at the Crossroads Centre in the evening and one has been online using Zoom lead by Nigel Priestley. People of faith and no faith have come along. It's for people of all ages and with widely different backgrounds.

And if there's someone you've always wanted to share your faith with but didn't know how to, then a Alpha is perfect place to do so. Bring them along.

If you would like to know more call/text Nigel on 07885430085 or email:

[nigel.priestley@ridleyandhall.co.uk](mailto:nigel.priestley@ridleyandhall.co.uk)



## Parish Services for September

You are welcome to join any of the following weekly services,

St Bartholomew's, Meltham 9:30am

St James', Meltham Mills 9:30am

First Sunday of the month is a 'Family Sunday' service

Christ Church, Helme 11:15am

St Mary's, Wilshaw 11:15am

Please keep an eye out or follow us on the Church facebook page: 'Parish of Meltham - Christ the King' for updates on services and events.

## Vacancy

The Parish needs a new member of the finance team for St. Bartholomew's Church, Meltham. This has arisen as Peter Blackburn will step down at the end of 2023. Peter was St Bartholomew's Independent Examiner for 2 years whilst also serving as Barbara Sheard's apprentice and elf, then becoming St Bartholomew's Treasurer in 2017.

There are a number of aspects to the role, from banking the cash to keeping computer-based records. If you are interested in finding out what it might entail and if you could help, we'd be really happy to speak to you. It's not absolutely necessary for one person to do all the work, so if you have a little time and an interest in serving God and the Parish in this way, please do ask.

You can contact Peter Blackburn on 01484 850128/07761 978064, or the Parish Treasurer: Ruth Murray-Webster on 07974 943443 or , Rev'd John Dracup on 07983 937132.

## Saturday Coffee Mornings

9.30am - 12pm at Meltham Church Hall, hosted by local organisations.

**9th September** - Stage Company

**16th September** - Hospice

**23rd September** - Meltham Memories

**30th September** - RNLI (see back page)

**7th October** - Stage Company



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Jacob Watson & Katie Nobles,  
Miles Crawshaw & Rae Maclaren

James Abiett & Jessica Bull,  
George Wood & Arabella Brook,  
Daniel Wadsworth & Kate Priestley,

Baptisms - *We welcome you into the Lord's family*

Freddie Lando Seymour Sims

Funerals - May they rest in peace

Lesley Mary Woodcock

Sandra Greaves

Anyone wishing to have their loved ones names included in the book of Remembrance at St Bartholomew's please contact Jean Collison : Telephone 851816  
(there is a small fee of £5 for church expenses)  
To contact our vicar Rev John Dracup: 07983 937132 parishofchristtheking@gmail.com

## 200 CLUB :

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887	£10	Vacant Number
376	£10	Mrs. P. Redfearn
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**The August winners are:**

337	£50	Mr. W. Flanagan
361	£10	Mrs. G. Schofield
439	£10	Mrs. F. Whittaker
630	£10	Mrs. W. Legge
413	£10	Mr. P. Kaye

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Michael Farrel 07768258257  
m.farrellphd@btinternet.com  
David Earnshaw 341968,  
Cath Moulson 850171

## St Bartholomews Flowers

Flowers have been placed on the communion table in St Bart's Church by:

3rd September: David Earnshaw

10th September: Vacant

17th September: Mr & Mrs P Whittaker

24th September: The Glover family

1st October: Mr & Mrs M Farrell

Flowers are a lovely way to remember loved ones or to celebrate that special occasion. If you would like to put flowers on the Communion table in church we do have dates available if you would like to.

Please contact:  
Catherine Moulson (850171)



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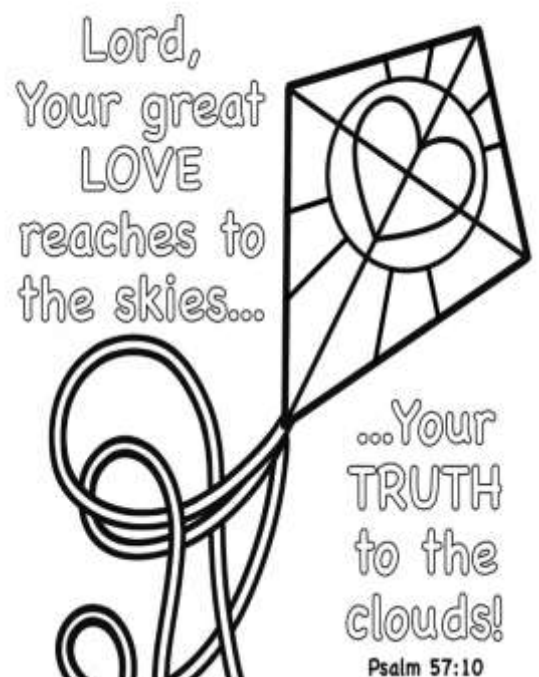
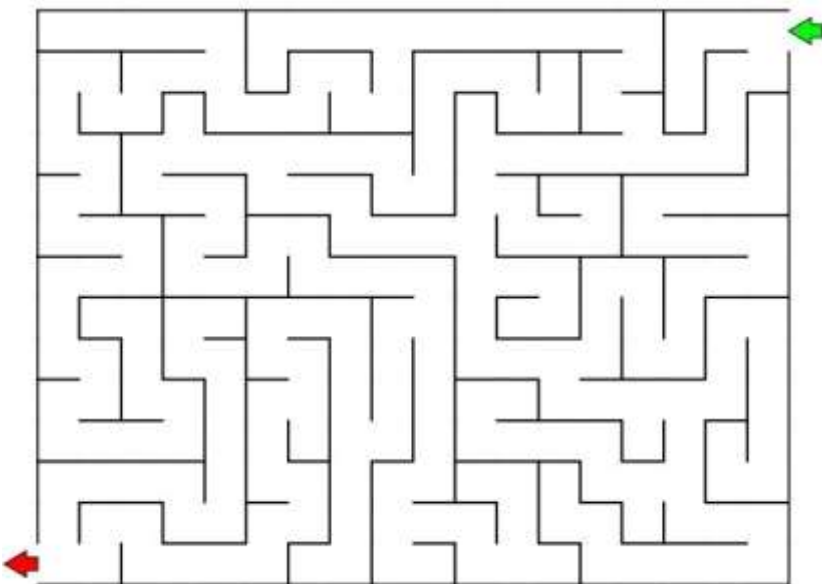
# JUST FOR FUN!

## We all love a good sing, but how well do you know your favourite hymns?

Whilst clearing out some papers recently, I came across a fun quiz I devised for a Zoom get together during the Covid lockdown days and thought it would be fun to share to a wider audience. Have a go and see how many you can get right - some are easy, and some a bit more cryptic. Any choir members not getting 10/10 will get their pay docked! Enjoy! (Answers on the next page)

Simon Ball 😊

1. In the harvest hymn, 'We plough the fields and scatter' what is fed and watered by God's almighty hand?
2. In which popular hymn does the 'Sun and Moon bow down before Him'?
3. Which hymn features a thirsty animal?
4. What part of the body does the shepherd anoint with oil?
5. When you needed a neighbour, what 3 things don't matter?
6. Which 3 things are we being still for?
7. What happens when you knock on the door?
8. Which hymn features a loud organ and a sweet harp?
9. What is the first hymn in the Mission Praise hymn book?  
(Hint: they are in alphabetical order)
10. On Trinity Sunday, what part of the day do we sing 'Holy, Holy, Holy'?



## Funeral of Rev Peter Rolls

The funeral of Rev Peter Rolls will take place on Saturday 16th September at 11.30am in St James' Church, Meltham Mills.

In recent years Peter has had a passion for cake, in fact his eyes would light up at the sight of cake. On a Friday morning he was always keen for coffee time so he could have a piece of cake (or two). Martins cake was always a favourite.

So after the service everyone is invited to stay behind - share memories of Peter and join us for a cup of tea/coffee and cake.

Christine Rolls.



## **A message from Elisabeth Turner.**

Dorothy Turner (wife of the late Rev'd David Turner - former vicar in this parish) passed away very peacefully on Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> August. Elisabeth would like to thank everyone for their prayers. She firmly believes that it was the power of these prayers that ensured Dorothy was pain free during these last few weeks of her life and they were much appreciated. Dorothy's funeral will be a celebration of her life and take place at St Bartholomew's on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> September at 12 noon followed by a private cremation.



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## **Quiz answers,** **How well did you do?**

Answers to the Hymn quiz from the previous page are below:

1. The good seed on the land.
2. Praise my soul the King of heaven.
3. As the deer pants for the water.
4. My head (thou dost annoint with oil).
5. The creed, colour and name.
6. Be still for the presence, glory and power of the Lord.
7. It shall be opened unto you!
8. O Praise ye the Lord!
9. A new commandment.
10. Early in the morning... (our song shall rise to thee).

## **St Mary's Report**

We hope you have all had a good rest over the summer, enjoyed a holiday of some sort and managed to find a bit of sunshine in and among all that rain. Up at St Mary's we have shared in four services of Holy Communion and one Service of the Word. We have also supported the Mustard Seed coffee morning and provided a welcome break for rest and refreshments for the walkers taking part in the Sponsored walk that day.

We hosted the United Parish Communion on 30th July when we welcomed friends from all the four churches. Rev John Dracup led this and it was based on "God's Creation". There were no services on four Sundays ( two in July and two in August) but we were able to share worship at one of the other churches. It is good to share isn't it?

On Saturday 5th August the Wedding of Arabella Brook and George Wood took place at St Mary's. Rev John married the couple, Elizabeth played the keyboard and George's mum read two poems. Arabella's dad, Michael was in hospital but he and her stepmum, Rachel, were able to join the service on zoom. Following the wedding a reception was enjoyed at Wilshaw Village Hall. We wish Arabella and George a future full of love and happiness.

One other highlight of the summer was the Animal Service which was held on Sunday 13th August in the church croft. It was good to welcome around 25 people, 7 dogs, a cat, out some wild birds and a couple of ladybirds! Lay Reader Jacqueline France led this, Mary Greenwood and Lynda Dunn read the lessons and Elizabeth played the keyboard. We played a guessing game about animals, said prayers for well loved pets no longer with us and each pet was individually blessed. Three generations of the same family played in the music group and Jacqueline gave a short talk. Unfortunately we had to miss the last hymn and head for shelter as the rain arrived.

Our thanks for to all those who have led worship and provided help in so many ways over the last couple of months and what a happy time it has been. Let's also remember to ask for God' blessing on our young folk as they return to school.

### **Meltham G&S Society (MGASS)**

Following the success of Ruddigore in May, Meltham Gilbert & Sullivan Society are starting rehearsals for their Autumn Concert. The concert will be on Friday 20th October at 19:30. The first half will be Trial by Jury by G&S. The second half will be a collection of Old Time Music Hall pieces where audience are cordially invited to join in.

Rehearsals will be every Friday from 1st September, in the Carlile Institute, from 19:30 to 21:30

Please call Martin Luke on 07859 401244 if you need more information.

## Letting your hair down

It's a time honored saying from the 17thC, when courtly ladies wore their hair raised two feet or more, replete with flowers and feathers ( meaning they may have had to limbo into their own houses ), and liked to relax by "letting their hair down". In the literal sense, I haven't been able to do this for a long time – there simply isn't enough of it. Around twenty years ago, I queued in a shop, idly gazing at the in-store CCTV screen, and wondered who the bald guy wearing the same coat as me was. Needless to say, it was me, looking like a modern-day Friar Tuck.

In the metaphorical sense, it doesn't come easily to me either – I've a tendency to be self-conscious and reserved. When I get asked to an upcoming social event, it looms uninvitingly on the horizon like an approaching thunder cloud. The day arrives, and it all goes just fine – why was I worrying? The big bugbear of my life has been having to dance. Most events are a simple format of eating, drinking and dancing, in that order. I can usually nail the eating and drinking – it's the dancing. A few years ago, I told a prospective Plus One that we'd be going to a charity party, before she uttered the dreaded words – "Brilliant! I absolutely love dancing". Panic set in, so there was only one thing for it. I rang a local dance group, and said - "Help"! The time came, I met up with teacher Elaine, and she said "Right, we'll start with the waltz". I explained that it was an informal works party, and just needed to sway appropriately and not stand out. I spent half an hour moving the bare minimum to some excruciating 80s disco music (and shelled out £12), before setting out to practice in the evening having forgotten what I'd just learned. The evening came, I ate, I drank, I danced, and I think I got away with it.

The most recent "Letting my hair down" event was the Meltham Family Fun Day "It's a knockout" on Broadlands Rec with the Crossroads team. Being charity volunteers, we're no spring chickens, but Team Crossroads was augmented by three "ringers" in the form of Janet's athletic granddaughters Tilda, Daisy and friend Emily. I think Tilda can actually fly, and if the event had happened hundreds of years ago, her sporting prowess would have been denounced as witchcraft. Most of the contests involved racing through bouncy castle type structures with copious volumes of soapy water. When my turn came, I experienced the three ages of man while competing. The Alpha Male in me dived headlong into it. Once inside it was comforting, warm, and wet, like being back in the womb. The final and old man stage was realizing that I hadn't glued my denture in, and it was close to going AWOL. I couldn't imagine the shame of puncturing the inflatable structure, and being the inadvertent cause of the whole event being cancelled. Overall, I think we did ourselves proud coming in the dizzying top half of the leaderboard! Somewhat pessimistically, we'd set our sights on not coming last, but rather perversely the team who came bottom were all given individual, and rather fetching wooden spoons. The winners received a trophy, and the now obligatory Formula 1 style champagne shower. Sometimes, there's no justice in this world...



Apprehension about letting your hair down in public is a modern day version of the age old “Fight or flight” response, and we have it for a reason – to protect ourselves from harm. The trouble is that sometimes it’s plain unnecessary, and a result of overthinking things. In olden days, it was a valuable safeguard against for example, being eaten by a bear, but we saw them off a long time ago, so what’s the problem! I’m making a conscious effort to keep certain fears in proportion. So bring on dancing, bring on “It’s a knockout” – just make sure you let me know if there’s a bear stood behind me...

On an unrelated note...I went on a recent road trip to see my aunt in Stromness in the beautiful Orkney Islands recently. On the evening after I arrived, I told her that I’d go out to the back garden for a crafty fag. Her disappointment was tangible, but she went on to recount how she’d smoked as a young woman. She would meet all her girlfriends at the Town Dance, and one of them would have brought a packet of Balkan Sobranie coloured cigarettes. Remember them? They had gold filter tips, and were all in different and gorgeous pastel shades. They would then allocate the different colours to match each of the girls’ dresses. What a glorious picture of charm and elegance!

Chris Sinclair

## **COMMUNITY CARDS – MELTHAM GROUP**

### **Working to support the work of the Welcome Centre.**



Meltham Community Card group recycles old greeting cards and produces new greeting cards to sell to raise money for the Welcome Centre in Huddersfield.

Why not have a go? Each Friday at St James’ Church from 10.00 -12.00. No experience or fantastic skill required just a willingness to work alongside others to produce the cards – and let’s face it where else can you get a really good quality greeting card for 50p?

If you would like to get involved please contact:

Christine Rolls: 01484 340342 or [p.c.rolls@hotmail.com](mailto:p.c.rolls@hotmail.com)



**Thank you!**

We were delighted to receive a cheque for £6,600 from ‘Community Cards’ last week. It’s been a tough few years for the card making groups due to Covid and smaller groups but we are amazed at what they continue to do to support us.

Thank you to each of you involved.

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## Picnic in the Park

'Picnic in the Park' looks like becoming an annual event for the August Bank Holiday. The event is arranged and planned by members of Meltham Town Council. There are stalls and live music, not just from Meltham and Meltham Mills Band. 'Teams4U' ran a very successful stand.

The role of the Parish has been to provide large games including 'Connect 4' and 'Jenga' although the very non-technical 'Splat the Rat' is always well used!

This year, the weather forecast was not great but it turned out to be very pleasant day. The threatened downpour made a guest appearance just as the last gazebo had been put away at the Church Hall.

Why are we there? The Church has a really good relationship with the Town Council and they need us, in part simply because Rev John provides the electricity, but mainly because we provide fun for children and families with our games. It was striking how many young families came to the event and drifted down to our games area. We were able to engage in some conversations and to hand out leaflets about Toddler Church and the All Age Worship at St James'. This is the generation that is missing from our churches - what better way to chat than over a large 'Snakes and Ladders' game!

St James' church was open as a quiet space and visitors were welcomed by a prayerful team. Our toilets provided an additional bonus! We didn't do coffee or hot chocolate as we were keen to support the coffee guy in the Park!

There was a hard-working team who made it all work. There were plenty of conversations with total strangers who were amazed by all Meltham has to offer and it's vital for us to be there helping them to have fun and games. As ever it needs volunteers and to be underpinned in prayer.



Nigel Priestley



## Keswick Convention 2023

For the second year running the Still family headed off for a week camping at the Keswick convention. The convention takes place annually bringing together thousands of like-minded Christians who want to hear God's Word, become like God's Son and serve God's Mission.



It was great to have with us Veronique, Nathan and Delia, Fiona, Rebekah, Jack and Isaac, plus for 24 hours, John. Well done to Nigel and Sue for making a 240 mile round trip to come and visit Thursday evening. As you all know the weather this summer has not been great and for the first 24 hours we camped in a torrential downpour. But it didn't dampen our spirits and the rest of the week we even saw sunshine, the children enjoyed playing together and it was great spending time together getting to know each family better.

This year's theme was 'Being Human'. There were many thought-provoking seminars and the children seemed to really enjoy their meetings. It's great to be celebrating our faith with thousands of other Christians.

Next year's theme is 'Resurrection'. Why not join us?

The Convention says *"Our prayer is that through the Convention, the Lord will help us to live in the light of Jesus' resurrection. Join with thousands of believers in worship to our God in the beautiful setting of the Lake District."* This is our prayer too.

The convention is set in the centre of Keswick and not on a showground miles away from everywhere; it's relaxed and you can go to as much or as little as you like; the teaching is good and no meeting is too long; but mostly it's about sharing fellowship with friends and deepening relationships.

We camped, and although it would be lovely to have lots of tents and caravans together, you do not have to. However the accommodation in the area does book up early. The event itself is FREE to attend, all that you need to do is find somewhere to sleep. We are going Week 2, Sat 20th - Fri 26th July 2024.

Talk to any of us for more information and start making plans for 2024.

Mike Still





**Lifeboats**



# Coffee Morning

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