

OUTREACH

Monthly Magazine

of

CHRIST CHURCH WICKFORD



May

2022



Welcome to Outreach
The monthly magazine of Christ Church

Please note the details for contact (see back page) or
you can always visit us at ...

Christ Church

United Reformed and Methodist Church

Gateway Service Road

Wickford

Essex

SS12 9FW

(Into the main town car park. Follow the road round
then 2nd left)

**We would love to hear from you or welcome you
to one of our Sunday Services**

You will find us through the Ladygate Centre next door to the Co-op

From September 5th 2021 Church Services will recommence in the Sanctuary each week at 10.30am. The first Service of each month will include Holy Communion. Some Services will continue to be live streamed. Look out for further details.

Pastoral Letter May 2022

We proclaim the Crucified Christ, offensive to the Jews and nonsense to the Gentiles

1 Corinthians 1; 23

With Lent, Holy Week, Good Friday and Easter just behind us, I recalled an item that I picked up on the radio a few years ago. (with information included here you can get some idea of when !) I don't remember what the programme was about or where the item fitted in, but it caught my attention and began to trigger some thoughts.

A man called Arthur Blessit is listed in the Guinness Book of Records for the world's longest walk: 39,060 miles through 315 countries & major island groups. This record may no longer hold and I'm not sure how it rates as a record anyway since the walk was not continuous, it took place over 42 years !

But the unique feature of Mr Blessitt's achievement is that he did every mile carrying a cross !

It seems to have been a very large cross, big enough to be the real thing. It had a wheeled frame attached to the base but, even so, it must have got quite heavy. Arthur Blessit, Californian bar owner and Christian, began his walk in 1968, as an act of Christian witness not, as might be suspected, a tasteless publicity stunt. It puts our own walk of witness in the shade for exposure to risks as well as for effort and distance involved.

The cross carrier was arrested in Spain for causing public offence, stoned in Morocco , knocked into the ditch on numerous highways and our worries about adverse or abusive reactions to our cross carrying pale into insignificance compared with comments about him on the internet !

Paul writes that the Cross was an offence and stumbling block to many. To Jews, Crucifixion was all that was degrading, offensive and foreign; a harsh reminder of Roman occupation and, according to the Law of Moses, anyone 'hanged on a tree' was cursed by God. Furthermore, it perpetuated the memory of a criminal, condemned for blasphemy by the nation's highest court. In the Gentile world the predominant philosophy was ' do to others what, given the chance, they would do to you' so how could you

save anyone if you couldn't even save yourself ?

Reactions to the pilgrimage of Arthur Blessitt suggests that the cross is still an offence and stumbling block. In a deeply Catholic society, well accustomed to religious processions, the sight of a bearded hippy character carrying a cross was seen as exposing sacred things to contempt and ridicule while, in an Islamic society, it was seen as an aggressive intrusion by a rival Faith.

Pointless, foolish, well meaning but misguided, offensive, wrong ? – Perhaps, like Paul, Arthur Blessitt would say 'it's something I just had to do – for Christ – and I don't care what the world thinks, says or does about it !

I have taken part in many Good Friday Walks of Witness in different contexts and the prevalent public reaction has generally been to ignore it – like something taking place in another dimension of time and space. Sometimes pedestrians would push through the gathered group and, at Hadleigh, where most of the route is along London Road, beside the huge Morrisons car park, drivers would look for a gap in the walkers to drive through the entrance !

It's very un-British to 'make a scene' so reaction in our 'secular' society might be embarrassment or anger at 'bringing religion into everything' or just causing them inconvenience.

Perhaps it makes others uncomfortable because it never ceases to pose challenging questions.

To participate we have to put aside embarrassment, even be prepared to feel a bit foolish, but Paul was happy to be 'a fool for Christ!

In a carnival procession, a man was dressed in a court jester costume with the words 'I'm a fool for Christ'. on the front. When he turned round, the slogan on the back read 'whose fool are you ? '!

Every Blessing - God is good ! Jack

May

Cherry and Almond blossom, a sign that it is May.
With all the lovely promise of Summer on its way.
The weather is improving, we have even seen the sun.
Now the garden's calling there is plenty to be done.

Family Life - 'Sore Thumb'

I have a sore thumb my poor husband cries.
From the look on his face he thinks he will die!
Salt water will cleanse it and tablets help pain.
Oh please do stop moaning, you will drive me insane.
Yes, I have seen it, ten times or more.
Try to forget it, you are becoming a bore.
Stop being a baby and 'man-up' today.
It's just a sore thumb, please put it away!

Veronica

Streets for Prayer

| | |
|---------------|---|
| May 1-7 | Cunningham Drive, Dunbar Place, Cameron Place, Knox Court |
| May 8-14 | Ozonias Avenue, Ozonias Close, Ozonias Way, Bromfields Drive |
| May 15-21 | West Beech Road, West Beech Close, South Beech Avenue, Wick Beech Avenue |
| May 22-28 | Stilemans, Southend Road, The Broadway, Crouch Drive |
| May 29-June 4 | Grange Road, Delmer Gardens, Almer Close, Swallow Road |

Mary Visits Elizabeth

Mary – the virgin mother of Jesus. For centuries the eastern and western churches have considered her pre-eminent among all the saints.

In the gospels, Mary makes her first appearance as a teenager. Nothing is known of her childhood, and what we do know of her is found mostly in Matthew 1 – 2 and in Luke 1 – 2. If you read both accounts, you'll notice that Luke's account seems to give the story from Mary's standpoint, whereas Matthew concentrates more on Joseph's side of things. In both accounts the virginal conception of Christ is clearly stated. Mary's quiet devotion to God and her total acceptance of His will shine forth.

Her visit to Elizabeth, when both were pregnant, is a moving and poignant account of two humble, ordinary women, suddenly caught up in a great event that would shape world history. Their trusting faith in God and acceptance of His will, shine through.

After Jesus is born, Mary fades into the background, and makes few appearances: when the family visits Jerusalem and she loses her son on the way home; when she urges Him to help the wedding party in Cana with its wine problem; and when Jesus gives her into the keeping of the beloved disciple when He is dying on the cross. Mary's last appearance is in Acts chapter one, just before Pentecost.

Mary obviously joined the early Church, but her role was never one of teaching and preaching, and indeed she remained so much in the background that nothing more about her is known for certain. Both Ephesus and Jerusalem have claimed to be the place of her death.

Mary, chosen to be the mother of Jesus Christ, one who is both God and Man, holds a unique place in the history of mankind. Down the centuries that have followed, the Church has paid special honour to Mary – and well deserved it is. "All generations shall call me blessed..."

Parish Pump



Our Addiction to Plastic

Take a good look next time you go to the supermarket. What is the thing you see most? Plastic.

It is everywhere. Tight around the cucumbers, holding the groups of apples together, protecting the chickens, keeping the sausages in a neat line. The yoghurt pots are all plastic. And on it goes.... Milk, juice, water, pasta, rice, frozen fish.... Almost everything we buy comes with a layer of plastic around it.

In the UK we use around 500,000 tonnes of plastic packages a year just for our food, and we generate 7.7 million single-use water bottles.

As Professor Steve Fisher of the University of Portsmouth points out: "Half of all plastic becomes waste within a year of being made, and the vast majority isn't recycled. Eleven million metric tonnes of plastic ends up in our oceans ever year, a shocking figure which is estimated to triple to near 29 million metric tonnes by 2040, if nothing is done."

Parish Pump

Loneliness

There are many lonely people in our world today.

What has happened to society, has compassion lost it's way?

People are so busy, rushing here and there.

There is not enough time left to show others that we care.

No time to check on neighbours living all alone.

No time to contact old friends by letter or by phone.

Always in a hurry so many things to do,

But see that lonely person - one day it could be you.

Veronica

Friday 6 May 7:30 pm

Comedy
Night



With Paul Kerensa

Christ Church URC

164 New London Road, Chelmsford. CM2 0AW

Tickets £10 each available through

www.christchurchchelmsford.co.uk

or through the church office

cchubdesk@gmail.com

or 01245 354529

*"A comic wave that just keeps
coming ... never fails to be
uniquely funny and interesting!"
- The Stage*

Writer for BBC's "Miranda" and "Not Going Out"

Free Debt Help in Energy Crisis

The national debt help charity, Christians Against Poverty (CAP), is busy responding to people hit by the recent energy price cap rise, which will see households paying around 50% more for their energy bills

Low-income households, says CAP, “are already struggling to afford the basics they need to live with dignity.”

In just the first two months of this year, the charity saw requests for emergency fuel vouchers double, compared to the first two months of 2021. The charity has also delivered over £23,000 worth of crisis support, which includes emergency fuel vouchers, food shops and essential items. CAP is in regular contact with suppliers, Ofgem and the Government to help them understand the impact these increases are having on the people it supports.

It is also wants to hear from people in need: “With the expected increases in energy costs running into October and beyond, it’s more important than ever that people who are struggling don’t wait until their debts get out of hand.”

If you are struggling with debt and need free help, get in contact with CAP today on 0800 328 0006 or visit capuk.org.

Parish Pump

Remember the NEW Highway Code

When did you last read the Highway Code? Various ‘fundamental’ changes were recently made which will surely affect you.

For example, there is a new hierarchy of road users, where drivers now have new responsibilities to watch out for people who are walking, cycling, or riding a horse.

Another example is that cyclists are now advised to cycle in the *centre* of lanes in slower-moving traffic.

Finally, do you even know how best to open your car door? According to the Highway Code, you should use your hand on the opposite side to the door you are opening; for example, use your left hand to open a door on your right-hand side. This will make you turn your head to look over your shoulder. You are then more likely to avoid causing injury to cyclists or motorcyclists passing you on the road, or to people on the pavement.

Parish Pump

The Cost of Petrol

Here is a sobering thought: petrol selling at 1.649p per litre in the UK is equivalent to £7.50 a gallon!



Knit a Corgi

Thousands of people across the country are buying in light brown and white wool just now, in order to knit up a corgi in honour of the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee. It is a fun way in which anyone with knitting needles can get involved in the coming celebrations.

If you google ‘knitting patterns for corgis’, you will find a wide variety of free patterns on offer. Knitted corgis could help decorate house windows, local shops and churches as the big day approaches.

Parish Pump

Take a Walk on the Wild Side

How neat do we like our gardens to be? Full of manicured lawns, with immaculate flower beds? Well, yes and no. A recent survey by BBC's Gardener's World magazine has found that more than half (54 per cent) of gardeners now include 'uncultivated areas' in their garden. And some 44 per cent of gardeners have also set up a wildflower area.

Certainly, Nature could use a helping hand just now. In 2019 32 per cent of us saw a butterfly in our garden. By 2020 that was down to 21 percent. By 2021, that was down again, to just 16 per cent.

Simple tips to rewild your garden:

- Avoid chemical pesticides and herbicides, which also kill 'good bugs', butterflies and bees.
- Tolerate as much mess as you can. Leave wood and leaf piles for hedgehogs and invertebrates.
- Set aside some room where grass can grow longer, and wildflowers can bloom.
- Don't pull up all your weeds – they can be a critical source of pollen for bees.

The Longest Overdue Library Book

If you have ever been late in returning a library book, take heart: the 1704 copy of *The Faith and Practice of a Church of England Man* was recently handed back to Sheffield Cathedral.

A handwritten inscription inside reads: "This Book belongs to ye Lending Library in Sheffield Church 1709." It left the library just over 300 years ago.

Sheffield Cathedral's Reverend Canon Keith Farrow said that the family of a deceased woman who lived locally had asked in her will for it to be returned.

"Now it's come back home. It's a joy to have this little jewel back in the cathedral."

With overdue fines of 50p a day, librarians could have charged the family more than £54,000 for the book — which itself is worth about £300.

The canon joked: "We might have got a new roof or something."

Parish Pump

MY FAVOURITE VISITOR By Keith Schofield

I have a friend who calls each day
As soon as daylight comes,
He never fails to, come what may,
And we've both become good chums.

My friend is somewhat different
From the other friends I know
And, just like Mary's little lamb
Where I am, he's sure to go.

He really comes for breakfast
Which never varies much,
He simply loves sultanas
To show his gourmet touch.

I've known him now for two years or more
And enjoy his every visit,
He eats his breakfast from my hand
With manners quite exquisite.

I know one day he'll disappear
Without any parting word,
Then I'll miss him terribly
My lovely tame blackbird.

Submitted by Maureen A.

Take Responsibility for Your Health

Did you know that nearly one half of the NHS budget is spent on diseases that could have been prevented? And that Britain's overall health budget is now bigger than the GDP of Greece?

So says the Health Secretary, Sajid Javid, who has recently warned that the NHS cannot continue spending "vast sums" on lifestyle conditions that are "wholly avoidable".

Just one example is obesity. Obesity rates have doubled since the 1990s, with two out of three adults now overweight or obese. Our lifestyles have also become increasingly sedentary. The result? An eighth of the NHS drugs budget is now spent just on treating cases of diabetes, 90 per cent of which are caused by excess weight.

Parish Pump

Understanding The Bible

The Bible is a popular book, with five billion copies sold worldwide every year, as well as a uniquely precious book. At her coronation the Queen was given a Bible, *'the most precious thing this world affords'*.

The Bible isn't simply one book, but a library of 66 books, composed by some 44 writers over a period of 1500 years in a range of styles including history, poetry, prophecy, letters and apocalyptic (looking at the end times). Despite having a number of different writers, the Bible claims one author – God Himself!

As the Word of God, it is the primary way by which God speaks to us. *'All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work'* (2 Timothy 3:16). The Bible is inspired (*'the word of God in the words of men'*) and is a *manual for life*, equipping us to live for God in every aspect of our lives. We also have the promise of the Holy Spirit, who helps us to apply its words to our lives: *'But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all truth'* John 16:13.

The Bible can also be described as a *love letter* from God, as it deepens our relationship with Him. Jesus said: *'You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about Me, yet you refuse to come to Me to have life'* (John 5:39,40). Christians follow a person not a book, and the Scriptures are intended to help us to know Jesus better. Like a signpost, the Bible points us to the person of Jesus.

Parish Pump

MOVING STORIES

Committed to supporting | our global partners | in Zimbabwe

Prayer and Reflection

It helps, now and then, to step back and take a long view. The kingdom is not only beyond our efforts: it is even beyond our vision. We accomplish in our lifetime only a fraction of the magnificent enterprise that is God's work.

Nothing we do is complete, which is a way of saying that the Kingdom always lies beyond us.

No statement says all that could be said.

No prayer fully expresses our faith.

No confession brings perfection.

No pastoral visit brings wholeness.

No program accomplishes the Church's mission.

No set of goals and objectives includes everything.

This is what we are about.

We plant the seeds that one day will grow.

We water seeds already planted, knowing that they hold future promise.

We lay foundations that will need further development. We provide yeast that produces far beyond our capabilities.

We cannot do everything, and there is a sense of liberation in realizing that.

This enables us to do something, and to do it very well.

It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning, a step along the way, an opportunity for the Lord's grace to enter and do the rest.

We may never see the end results, but that is the difference between the master builder and the worker.

We are workers, not master builders; ministers, not messiahs.

We are prophets of a future not our own.

Ken Untener, Saginaw.

One of the partners we support in Bangladesh is ActionAid. They do outstanding work, like helping 10-year-old Jesmin who lived on the streets of Dhaka.

Jesmin's family was so poor they barely had anything to eat. Now **Jesmin lives in an ActionAid funded 'Happy Home'** - where she can enjoy a proper meal, learn, and play with other girls, and gain skills for the future, safe from harm.

*"When I used to live on the street, **boys used bad words against me and they were beating me,**" Jesmin said. "So, my understanding is girls are not safe on the streets."*

*"Now I love living in Happy Homes. **I can eat healthy food regularly.** I've learned to make necklaces, bracelets, anklets, and I can do embroidery. **And I can study.** I am in class 5. My favourite subject is Social Science and English."*

Thank you for your prayers, advocacy, and generosity in support of remarkable young people like Jesmin, who thrive if only given a chance.



The Revd Wilbert Sayimani is a URC minister in Bournemouth, with extensive links to the Commitment for Life partner country, Zimbabwe.

Recently, Wilbert submitted a grant application for the installation of a solar geyser for the school, which was, I'm pleased to report, successful. Wilbert wasted no time in purchasing the geyser and having it installed.

He writes:

I would like to thank Commitment for Life so much for the grant you gave to Falcon School in Zimbabwe for the provision of Green Energy. I forwarded the money to the school the moment it got to me, and they did not waste time. The very next day they had a Solar Geyser installed for the school. They now have hot water.

He goes on:

Of priority on my list is the installation of solar energy so they can bring computer lessons and power to the school. Computer Lessons are now part of the school and government curriculum and yet this school is still far from achieving this all because of lack of electricity.

Your support for Commitment for life makes a big difference!



SPRING IS IN THE AIR By Sheila Webb

Tiptoe through the tulips
And ramble by each rose
Then take in all the beauty
Through you eyes and nose.

Trees give forth their blossom
As lambs come out to play
And we can only stand in awe
As it takes our breath away.

The birds will be returning
To our beautiful land
How they will ever find their way
We'll never understand.

So spring is not to be sneezed at
Enjoy the seasonal scene
But don't forget to take your
Antihistamine!

Little sleepy hedgehogs
Now begin to peep
From their winter hideaways
Shaking off their sleep.

Submitted by Maureen A

Ducks

Pulled back the curtains this morning
And much to my surprise,
Two ducks were floating on my pond,
A treat for sleepy eyes.

My pond is only tiny
But they were having fun.
Spent two hours in my garden
Paddling and dozing in the sun.

They waddled amongst the flowers,
Kept other birds at bay,
Had a final paddle,
Then quacked and flew away.

Veronica

Preachers for May - in the Sanctuary

| | | |
|------|---------------------|----------------|
| 1st | Rev Trevor Williams | Holy Communion |
| 8th | Mrs Binnie Butcher | |
| 15th | Rev Trevor Williams | |
| 22nd | Al-Hassan | |
| 29th | Michael Wood | |

Readers and Intercessions Rota for May

| | | |
|------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1st | Maureen Abbott | Leader's choice |
| 8th | Phil Bayard | Michael Wood |
| 15th | Charlie Wyper | Debbie Grant |
| 22nd | Doris Westgarth | Janette Stevens |
| 29th | Helen Pattle | Leader's choice |

Flower Rota

| | |
|------|--------|
| 1st | Jeni |
| 8th | Debbie |
| 15th | Vacant |
| 22nd | Vacant |
| 29th | Carol |

Thank you to the volunteers.

Can anybody help with July 17th and all of August please.
More vacant dates to come in the next Outreach.

All volunteers gratefully received - thanks, Ruth

01268 730956/07845411800

More from BLOOMERS AND BLESSINGS compiled by Judith Merrill

TIME FOR THE SERMON

A sermon should have a good beginning and a good end and they should be as close together as possible. (George Burns, American comedian 1896-1996)

A preacher once started his words, "I have so much to say, I don't know where to begin." A little boy piped up, "Could you start somewhere near the end?"

I don't mind if people look at their watches while I'm preaching, but I get worried if they take them off and shake them.

When preaching of heaven let your face light up with joy. When preaching of hell your ordinary face will do. (Charles Spurgeon, Baptist preacher, 1834-1892)

If all the people who fell asleep during sermons were laid out end to end..... They would be more comfortable!

A young vicar said to his wife, "Do I put enough fire in my sermons?" "Darling," she replied, "I don't think you put enough of your sermons in the fire."

The deeds you do today may be the only sermon some people will hear today. (Francis of Assisi, Italian Catholic friar 1182-1226)

A mother finally discovered how to get her fidgety 7-year-old son to sit still and be quiet. About halfway through the sermon, she leaned over and whispered, "If you don't be quiet, the pastor is going to lose his place and will have to start his sermon all over again."

Remember, to make a speech immortal you don't have to make it everlasting!

Submitted by Maureen A.

Church News

Birthdays : May

13th Roger Riches

16th Doris Westgarth

Trevor Williams

25th Diane Sheehy

26th Sue Shrimpton

28th Janet Hurrell

Andy Stevens

29th Muriel Diss

Alan Pattle

We wish them all a Happy
Birthday and an enjoyable day.

Family News

Janette has just recovered from Covid and thanks everyone for their prayers and good wishes.

Pam Dent, who some of us may know from Shotgate Baptist Church passed away on Good Friday.

Jack and Terry continue to have tests, please pray for them.

Peter sits his GCSEs in May and June. Please pray for him during this stressful time, and for a college place for September.

It was lovely to see Christine J, her daughter and granddaughter at the Easter Day Service. Christine sends her love to everyone. The Easter Day Service was live streamed/recorded and is available to watch on line.

Lilian returned safely from a wonderful trip to the Caribbean. Maureen and Roy will no doubt have lovely stories to tell from their cruise.

Collated by Janette, in Maureen A's absence

Ian visited Eileen over Easter - the first time he had been able to do this since before Christmas due to restrictions enforced by the local health authority. He reports that she is well and seems more settled now that things are returning to some sort of normality.

The home are now planning to live with COVID but ask that all visitors take a lateral flow test before going and also let them know if you are planning to visit.

Email received by Maureen who is thoroughly enjoying her cruise enhanced by lovely sunny weather. She reports "It was 79 degrees in Cadiz yesterday (Easter Sunday)- really too hot!! Today we are in Malaga cooler temps. of about 70 degrees forecast for today".

Christian Aid Week - 15th to 21st May 2022

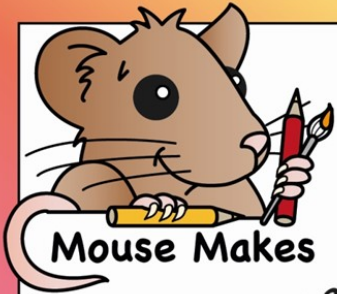
Note from Ruth B

I recently managed to get mum out in the sunshine for a 'wheel' around Hanningfield Reservoir where she was pleased to also meet with Trevor, Carol, Jan and Fred in the car park. Its amazing who we meet up there. She said she really enjoyed it. She doesn't get out very much so this was a treat for her. Also this week, 21 April is my birthday and I am going to Colchester Zoo to do a shadow keeper experience with the Mandrills. I'm looking forward to it, hope I don't get eaten.... . I hope everyones doing well and look forward to seeing you all in church soon.

Performing Arts and Drama Group

A group of people in and around Rettendon are trying to revive the Drama Group, which was very successful and enjoyable for many years. If you are interested, either in performing or backstage help, or would like to know more, please phone Sue on 07753 106589 or contact her on suechilds96@hotmail.com. Meetings are at Rettendon village hall (committee room), on the first Monday evening of each month at 7.30pm.

THE KINGDOM SEEKERS



Mouse Makes

"Give thanks to the Lord for He is good, His love endures forever"
Psalm 136:1



I praise you Lord for...



I thank you Lord for...



I pray for the Church and world



I pray for my family and friends



I am sorry for...

"Never stop praying."
1 Thessalonians 5:17



I ask for...

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God."
Philippians 4:6

Jesus said,
"This, then, is how you should pray:

Our _____
in _____
hallowed be your _____
your _____

_____ come,
your _____ be
done, on _____
_____ as it
is in _____.
Give us this day our
daily _____.
And _____

_____ us our _____,
as we also have
forgiven our debtors.
And _____
us not into
temptation, but
_____ us from the
_____ one."

Read Matthew 6:9-13
to fill in the words.

We are the Generation ... 'Youth'

Bible Bite

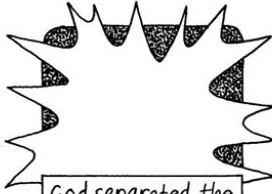
A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in Genesis chapter 1 to 2 verse 3.

This story is at the start of the Bible, and the start of time...

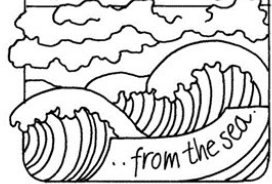
When God first made the universe it was empty and shapeless. God said...

Let there be
Light!



God separated the
Light and dark.

On the next day, God separated the sky...

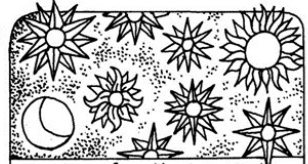


...from the sea

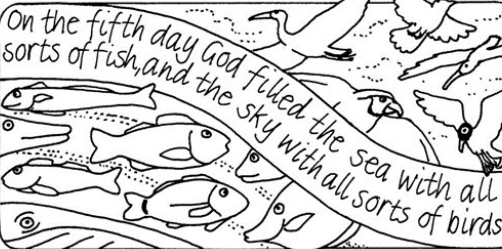
On the third day God separated the sea ...



...from the dry land. Then He made plants of all kinds grow on the land.



On the fourth day God made lights shine in the sky for day and night.



On the fifth day God filled the sea with all sorts of fish, and the sky with all sorts of birds



On the sixth day God made all kinds of animals ...



and then He made people, men and women.

God told the people ...

Take care of all I have made



God saw that everything He had made was very good.

On the seventh day God rested...



and so did everyone else!

Contacts

Weddings, Funerals, Baptisms, Pastoral Matters

Please contact the Church as below.

Meetings and Hall or room bookings

For further details of any meetings or events, or to amend meeting details that may have changed, please contact Ruth Pierson 01268 730956 or email rbrenda@sky.com

Outreach Team

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The latest date for articles for the next Outreach

is 23rd May 2022

(If possible, please email your contribution; hand written articles are also acceptable and can be handed to Helen or Linda)