

**WITHAM URC CHURCH MAGAZINE**  
**October 2022**

*Our Vision: "To celebrate God and share the love of Jesus.*

## **Pastoral Letter**

Dear Friends

I'm writing this following the death and funeral of Her Majesty the Queen; even a republican like me was moved by her death, until these last few days she was the only monarch that I have known.

It was well known that the Queen was not just head of the Church of England in title but was an active Christian. This must have meant that she acknowledged Jesus as her Lord and King.

The Queen's death will herald many changes: in due course the head on our postage stamps will not just change but will reverse their facing, and of course our National Anthem has changed; unless you manage to outlive Prince George (and his first born is a girl) you will never again sing God Save the Queen.

The Queen lived and reigned so long that we took it for granted that she was our Queen, but in history England has only ever had three Queens as sovereign rulers, it must have been strange when she first became Queen when the words to "God save the Queen..."

We live in a changing world, and while we live, we must expect change whether we like it or not. Over this last year our fellowship has been blessed with many new folk joining us to worship Jesus. Have you spoken to them yet? Have you invited them home to share a meal?

In this ever-changing world, one thing remains constant and that is Jesus's love for each one of us. So, keep your eyes on Him and do your best to follow him: 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' And 'Love your neighbour as yourself.'

Whatever your situation may God give you peace in your heart.

With love, Tony

## **10,000 Steps -House of Grace - Shirley Ratnage**

Thank you everyone so much for sponsoring my 10000 steps a day in August to raise funds for House of Grace. We raised nearly £900 and with Barclays Bank's £750 we have a total of over £1600.

This will give a good boost when we come to furnishing/refurbishing the property we lease. However this is an on-going project which will need financing (repairs/maintenance/running costs) over the years. Leaflets are being printed to give information on the project and how volunteers can help take it forward. If you have any fund raising ideas, please share them with myself/Emmelia/Audrey and others involved.

God Bless

### **Thank you - Mo Webber**

Mo Webber would like to thank everybody who sent her a birthday card marking her 80th year. She received over 100 cards. WOW.

I do not know that many people and even if I did, they would not send me a card. Bob



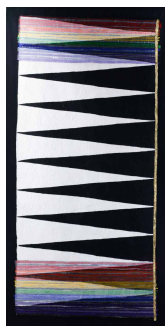
## Friday Afternoon Bible Study Group Outing - Muriel Heppinstall

Over the years we have been on some memorable outings with our leader, Vikki, all related in some way with our faith.

We have been to the National Gallery to look at and pray in front of old master paintings of Biblical scenes. When someone explains all the detail and thought that goes into a painting, it takes on a deeper meaning. We have done several local 'Church Crawls' looking at interesting local churches (after visiting Long Melford during a very frosty December, we resolved always to have summer outings – there was no heating and we froze!)

This summer we went to St Edmundsbury Cathedral in Bury St Edmunds to see the tapestries 'Threads Through Creation'. They were amazing. 'In the beginning God' - how do you draw God?

Jacqui Parkinson thought and thought and eventually came up with a rainbow spiral with three strands for the Trinity. This starts small in the middle and gets larger as it spirals out and the bigger spirals contain tiny images of what will be created. This spiral was repeated in many ways in many of the subsequent panels.

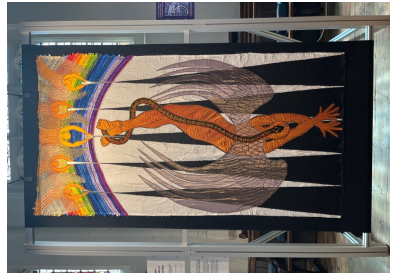


Day two was represented with black and white triangles, but if you looked closely, each triangle was covered in repeated, almost invisible spirals. Panels three and four showed water and the green earth, then panel five was the universe:

We couldn't tear Mary away from this one, she checked out all the astronomy, which got her approval!

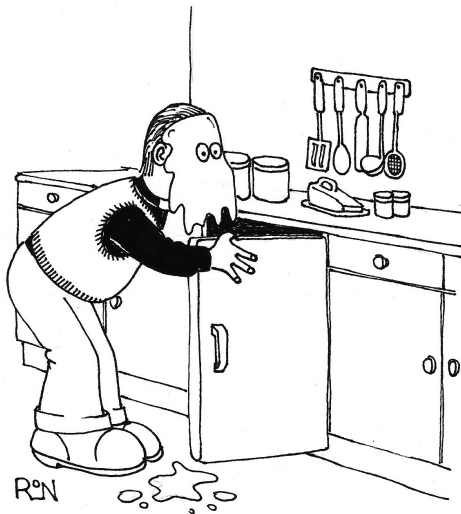
Panel six was the creatures in the sea, and seven the birds and animals. I could go on and on –

On the seventh day God rested so Jacqui embroidered a cross with a spiral superimposed and with all six days of creation in the background, God admiring his handiwork.



Then disaster! The devil takes the form of an angel being cast out of heaven, so the story of the fall is woven in and the final panel is the eviction from the beautiful Garden of Eden.

The tapestries are in Guilford just now but will be on tour again next year.



*Dark forces were at work in Dave's fridge*



Join us for  
*Afternoon Tea*  
Monday October 3<sup>rd</sup>  
at 2.30pm

*Sandwiches, scones  
with Tiptree jam & cream  
Home-made Cakes*

*Please book  
with the office  
if you would  
like to come.  
01376 500958*

*Price: £5.00*



**Sunday Services at Great Totham URC for October**

2nd Pat Good all  
9th Gill Heathcote  
16th Cyril Clarke  
23rd Sarah Wilson  
30th Service at Witham URC

All are welcome. Services start at 10:30am followed by tea / coffee  
and time to chat.

Also welcome to the following:-

8th October, a Saturday Coffee Morning, 10:00 – 11:30am in aid of George  
Mills Humanitarian Aid to Ukraine.

**Article Written by Rev Dr Peter Stevenson**  
**Forwarded by Jean Moody, Great Totham URC**

Unsurprisingly I have been reflecting on Ecclesiastes 3 and time; when things can be done and when it is better not to do things – when the time is wrong. It sounds easy and indeed would be if the decision was taken in isolation without having to refer to anyone else.

Life is often controlled by time; when we rise and have breakfast; when it is right to take a shower, groom neatly, leave the house, arrive at an appointment, break for lunch and catch a train. While I do not have an alarm clock to remind me, I usually rise at 0600 and give myself a certain amount of time to attend to the routines of the morning. When something alters that routine, the day can become disoriented and lead to concerns, or be a wonderful distraction from the normal.

The writer of Ecclesiastes was a philosopher who was trying to make sense of God within the context of human existence. He could not understand the ways of God, who controls human destiny. Yet, in spite of this, he advised people to work hard, and to enjoy the gifts of God as much and as long as they could. He concludes eat, drink and enjoy what you have worked for.

Following the deaths of Queens Elizabeth II and Benjamin Cobbinah last month, many of the plans I had made were changed and time stood still for a while, enabling me to reflect and change my timings and expectations. We are reminded that there is a fine gossamer separating the things (and timings) of this world from the next. With this in mind perhaps we could all listen to the philosopher and consider what are the important things in our lives and organise our timings so that we get the most of the time we have.

Invest your minutes wisely, every blessing.

## **SMALL TALK taken from October 2016 Magazine - Eve Murfitt**

After a chat with Jill Ellis in 2011 asking how Small Talk was coming along, she told me she had a long waiting list.

I felt God guiding me to start an afternoon session which we had never had before.

With Ann Wood, Jill Barker and my granddaughter, Sheree with my great grandson, Oscar who was 3 years old, we soon had a regular group, but not as big as a morning session; it was a nice size and good to see young mums making friends.

We then started getting grandparents, aunts and uncles attending, it really has been a family group.

Then Jill Barker left and soon after Ann also left due to ill health, so I asked Jo Stibbards to join us which she did.

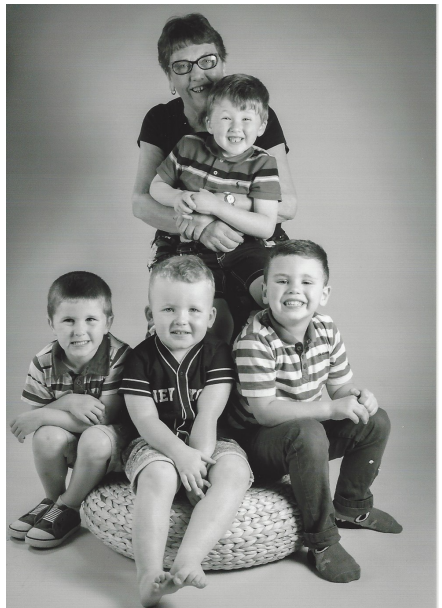
Sheree had to have a year off as Max went to nursery on a Wednesday, but rejoined the following year, when Sheree was able to choose her own days for nursery. Now for the first time I have had 5 boys all moving on to full time school, three of them had been coming since before they were born! One, his nan has brought him since we was very young and the fifth one joined us a year ago.

We will really miss them and with the parents' permission we are sharing photographs that were taken by one of the mums who has started a new photography company.

I thank God for the privilege of leading Small Talk over the last five years and all the lovely families I have come to know.

Lastly, but not least, a very big thank you to Jo for running Small Talk while I have been recovering from my operation. God bless you, Jo

Eve Murfitt



## Update on Small Talk from article in October 2016 Magazine Eve Murfitt

After some decorating and sorting things out I came across the Church Magazine October 2016 which brought back happy memories. It made me think of the boys in these photographs who were just starting school: they are all now in their last year of primary school.

I keep in touch with two mums, a nan I see sometimes and one is of my great grandsons. It has been a joy to see them growing into lovely, kind young people. Sadly one of them lost his dad to covid and more than stepped up with older brother who also came to Small Talk on the first week I opened the afternoon session, have been a great help and support to their mum.

What a privilege to have known them; three from birth and one also had a new baby sister last year and is overjoyed to look after her.

God is good.



"Never mind, let's just be happy that Baz came to church in the first place."





# September and Harvest

## SHOPPING LIST

### URGENT:

Sponge Pudding (Non Chilled)

Instant Mash

Packet Soup

Long Life Juice (1 litre)

UHT Milk (1 litre)

Shampoo

Shower Gel

Toothbrushes

Deodorant

### TO MAINTAIN STOCKS:

Rice

Tinned Spaghetti

Tinned Fruit

Tinned Rice Pudding

Chocolate Bars

*We follow the Food Standards Agency standards.*

*We can only accept donations of unopened and undamaged goods well within their "use by" date. Items that do not meet these requirements cannot be used and your donation may be wasted.*

[www.braintreearea.foodbank.org.uk](http://www.braintreearea.foodbank.org.uk)  
[info@braintreearea.foodbank.org.uk](mailto:info@braintreearea.foodbank.org.uk)

Registered Charity in England & Wales (1148762)



## **A few reflections from afar - Bob Stibbards**

Well not really that far at all. Recently we spent a few days in the Cotswolds before spending a week in Blakeney in Norfolk. We had forgotten how good it is to get away albeit that in retirement it may seem that we are on holiday every day !

### **Driving standards.**

Maybe it is because that I am getting old, no response to that one please, but driving seems to have got worse since lockdown particularly with what I call bumper huggers. Do people really need to get so close so that they can inspect the condition of my rear tyres or perhaps they are trying to remodel my car into a hatchback. I thought I would get away from this in the Cotswolds but it was worse!

### **Odd sighting**

A site being cleared for what was claimed to be the largest EV charging station in Europe ( electric car charging centre) in a remote location outside the pretty village of Lower Slaughter in the Cotswold. Having followed diversion signs in the area we were able to see this twice!

### **Mobile phones in restaurants very annoying!**

In a restaurant a women on the next table was on the phone in a very loud voice giving parenting advise to what I think was her daughter on public schools. It was impossible to avoid this conversation and whilst not having children I felt that I could have offered her some advise ! Meanwhile her husband got through his main course and started on desert and when she finished her telephone call after about half an hour she proceeded to eat her main course which must have been very cold by then!

## **Designer dogs.**

We certainly saw lots of dogs and Jo managed to have a moment with most of them. I have not mentioned this disloyalty to our cats. We strangely realised that lots of designer dogs end in poo, cockapoo and so on.....

## **Service without a smile.**

One evening we were served by a young lad with a serious attitude problem and had obviously not heard of the word hospitality but in total contrast we were served by staff in another restaurant who were delightful. What a difference this can make to eating out.

## **Overseas visitors**

Why do Americans seem to speak so loudly and there seems to be a lot of American women called Alice!

## **Kitchen appliances.**

In the house we stayed at in Norfolk they had a very fancy oven which was impossible to operate. However it was not only us as Jo's nephew and family spent a couple of days with us and could not work it out either and he is a whiz at these type of things. At home we have a freezer which is the same brand which looks very smart but is certainly not one of our better buys. Note to self never buy this brand again.

## **Greetings to fellow walkers**

Blakeney has some lovely coastal walks . I always try to greet fellow walkers with a Hello, Hi, good morning/ afternoon and a smile. The response is very mixed from people who respond, to a begrudging acknowledgement, to complete absence of eye contact or acknowledgement and a full inspection of the ground below !



## **Reading**

Jo 2 books, Bob nil, but I did read a motoring magazine.

## **Where does the time go on holiday.**

They seem to start slowly but before you know it you have only 3 days to go which wiz pass and you are on to the final day.

**Articles for November Magazine  
to be sent by 21st October to  
[bjstibbards@gmail.co.uk](mailto:bjstibbards@gmail.co.uk)**

Minister	Minister	Lorna Bantock	571757
Children and Youth Pastor	Mrs	Viv Sollis	500958
Associate Children and Youth Pastor	Ms	Tracey Eagling	500958
Centre Manager	Mrs	Ana Martin	500958
Children & Youth Elder	Mr	Keith Meredith	
Church Secretaries ( also Elders)	Mr Mrs	Tony Deighton and Muriel Heppinstall	518866
Discipleship and Growth Elder	Mrs	Sarah Campbell	
Mission and Outreach Elder	Mr	Gavin McCall	
Property Elders	Mr Mrs	Billy Kennedy and Rocio MacDonald	
Church Treasurer (also Elder)	Mr	Ian Hardie	
Worship Elder	Mrs	Fenella Hardie	
Centre Director	Mrs	Fenella Hardie	
Kitchen Manager	Mrs	Heather March	500958
Community Cafe Pastoral co-ordinator	Mrs	Eve Murfitt	
Prayer Chain Co-ordinator	Mrs	Rosemary Stinson	516602
Pastoral Team Co-ordinator	Mrs	Ruth Blackett	07546 838825
Magazine Editors		Jo and Bob Stibbards	bjstibbards@gmail.com