



ST ANDREW'S
SHOTTERY

SEARCHLIGHT



OCTOBER 2023



St. Andrew's Web: <http://www.saintandrewsshottery.org>



Sundays: 8.00am Holy Communion

10.00am Parish Eucharist*

5.00pm Evensong (3rd Sunday)

6.30pm Every other Sunday

1st Sunday: 10.00am All-Age Family Service (without Communion)

2nd Sunday: 10.00am Parish Eucharist .

3rd Sunday: 6.30pm Atrium.

Tuesdays: 7.30pm Holy Communion

Thursdays: 10.00am Holy Communion.

*This Service will also be on zoom. Do check out our website and on Facebook for links.



SUNDAY 1st OCTOBER.

10.00am HARVEST FAMILY SERVICE

We shall be joined by St. Andrew's School and welcome the new Head Teacher

LOUISE WITHERS.

Harvest gifts will be for the Stratford Foodbank. (See page 5 for suggested donations)

The measure of a Christian is not in the height of his grasp
but in the depth of his love

Come, ye thankful people, come!

Come, ye thankful people, come,
Raise the song of harvest home,
All is safely gathered in,
Ere the winter storms begin;
God, our Maker, doth provide
For our wants to be supplied;
Come to God's own temple, come;
Raise the song of harvest home!



So begins one of the traditional Harvest hymns written back in 1844.

The idea of celebrating all we have through song goes back generations. Usually celebrated around the time of the 'Harvest Moon', i.e. the full moon nearest the Autumn equinox, around the end of September. The word itself comes from an old English word '*haerfest*', meaning 'Autumn'.

It's not exclusively a Christian event, within the Jewish faith it is called 'Sukkot' or 'feast of Tabernacles'. (See Exodus 23:16 where its described as '*the feast of ingathering*'). In biblical times it was also customary to give a tenth of the Harvest to God and was one of the special occasions when God's people were to be reminded that God was the source of all.

But a celebration of thanksgiving for the Harvest takes place all over the world in different forms. In times past in this country, it would be a community event and celebrated as the final harvest of crops were gathered. There would be a great procession around the final cartload as it came back to the farm where a great party with food, fun and dancing would take place. This would then conclude with a special service of thanksgiving in Church

However, fewer and fewer churches are celebrating Harvest as they once did. The idea that '*all is safely gathered in, ere the winter storms begin*' does not have the same significance as before. There is little

sense of seasonal food because most things can be bought anytime at a local supermarket!!

However, the more rural churches and those connected with the farming community as part of their parish or congregation will still recognise the importance of gathering a harvest and of giving thanks to God *'for all his love'*.

We continue to recognise Harvest and still celebrate in church at the beginning of October each year as we take the opportunity to recognise God's goodness and provision as well as taking the time to reflect on all we have each day of the year and to pray for those who are lacking in food, water and in many of the resources that we can so easily take for granted.

Harvest is a wonderful time. Let's enjoy it! But let's also be reminded to give thanks to God our loving creator who provides for us so much every day.



God bless you,

Reverend Craig



HARVEST COLLECTION

COLLECTION POINT HERE

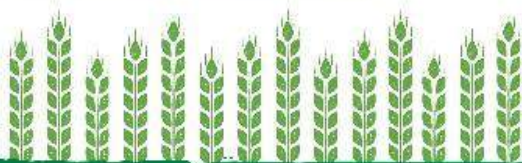
SHOPPING LIST MOST NEEDED

Rice Pudding
Tinned Soup
UHT Long Life Fruit
Juice
Squash
Chocolate
Pasta Sauce
UHT Milk

DONATE NOW!

Help by donating an item or two from the list to support people facing hardship.

You can also donate money to help to cover the costs of storing and distributing emergency food as well as delivering additional support and advice.



PARISH REGISTERS



SEPTEMBER

Wedding:

9th David Anthony Treadwell & Kelly Louise Edwards

Funeral:

26th Donald Michael Maley Bruce (83)

Food for thought!!!

- 1 - I'd kill for a Nobel Peace Prize.
- 2 - Borrow money from pessimists -- they don't expect it back.
- 3 - Half the people you know are below average.
- 4 - 99% of lawyers give the rest a bad name.
- 5 - 82.7% of all statistics are made up on the spot.
- 6 - A conscience is what hurts when all your other parts feel so good.
- 7 - A clear conscience is usually the sign of a bad memory.
- 8 - If you want the rainbow, you got to put up with the rain.
- 9 - All those who believe in psycho kinesisis, raise my hand.
- 10 - The early bird may get the worm, but the second mouse gets the cheese.
- 11 - I almost had a psychic girlfriend, But she left me before we met.
- 12 - OK, so what's the speed of dark?
- 13 - How do you tell when you're out of invisible ink?
- 14 - If everything seems to be going well, you have obviously overlooked something.
- 15 - Depression is merely anger without enthusiasm.



NEWSLETTER

Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

Galatians
5 22-23

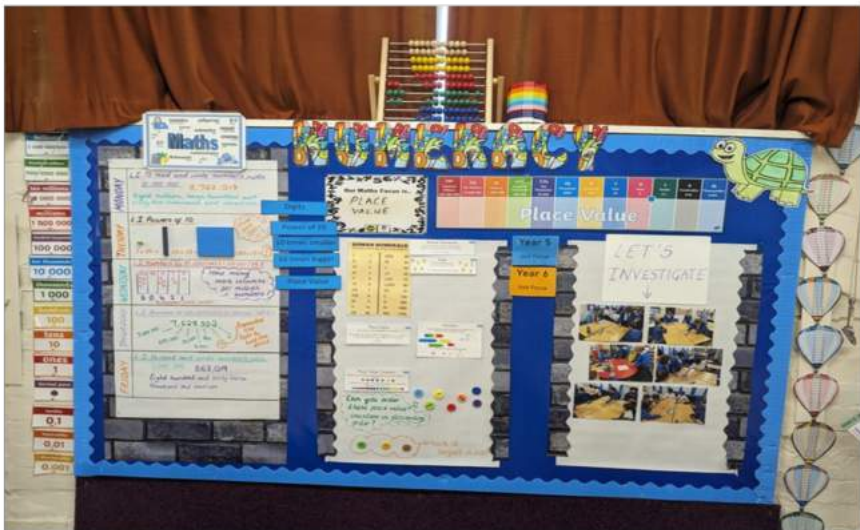
I am very excited about sharing our news from Shottery St Andrew's CofE Primary with the local community - having joined Shottery St Andrew's Primary partway through the year from Stratford upon Avon Primary School, it has been particularly lovely for me to be able to welcome our families back for the start of a brand new academic year. The children, and staff, have returned refreshed, eager and excited about the new and upcoming challenges that lie ahead and I feel confident that the school is now on an upward trajectory and good things are to come! Each week, we worship together as a school and this half term, our theme is Thankfulness. The children have been reflecting on everything they are thankful for in their lives and I have challenged them to show thanks and gratitude at every opportunity. I am thankful for our new Reception children joining the school - they have settled beautifully and have wowed us with their confidence, resilience and independence. The 'hedgehogs' have loved exploring the revamped indoor and outdoor area, which Miss Howlett has worked incredibly hard on developing over the summer. In other news, we launched Democracy Week in assembly on Monday morning, The children talked about what democracy means and have voted for our new School Council/ Safeguarding Committee and Worship Committee members. Pupil Voice is vital within the school and these roles bring about exciting and varied leadership opportunities for the children. This year, we are also launching our pupil experience and careers pathways, as an extension to the school curriculum, to enhance the children's cultural capital.



We are so lucky to live in such a historical town and have rewritten our curriculum to reflect this, ensuring it is localised and rich in learning experiences within the local community. We have also been lucky enough to secure our very own allotment, which Year 5 and 6 are going to be maintaining and caring for. I am very keen to further develop our home/school partnerships and hope our upcoming events will see lots of families and visitors from the local community visit our lovely school - we have an array of events to look forward to, including our Remembrance Poppy Trail, Christmas lunch at The Bell, RSC Theatre visit, Christmas Nativity and Carols and Christmas Fayre and open afternoons.

It's an exciting time for Shottery St Andrew's Primary and I look forward to sharing these moments with the community.

Mrs L Withers



Collective Worship this half term...

In assembly this week, we read the Bible story “The Thankful Leper”, Luke 17: 11-18, to further explore our theme for the half term. **Thankfulness.**

The children were then asked to reflect about what others have done in their life that they are thankful for, what relationships they are thankful for, what abilities they have that they are grateful for and what thankfulness looks like. Finally, they were asked to think about how a thankful attitude makes life more fulfilling.

I was really impressed with the children’s thoughtful and considerate responses and have challenged them to show gratitude throughout the week.





On Monday, 11th September, Hilary Capron welcomed all members and visitors who had come to this Open Meeting. After our usual opening prayers and reading, there were a few notices as well as good wishes to several members unable to come. Hilary thanked the drivers who had helped out with our outing to Hillers and to the Deanery Lunch at Wellesbourne. She was glad that the

Summer (?) Tea Afternoon had been generously supported and £300 had been raised for the Coffee Tots charity at Coventry.

Fiona said she would be pleased to receive the Annual Sub. of £34 by the December meeting. Diaries (£4) could be ordered now.

Our speaker, the Revd. Su McClellan, needed little introduction to us; as a Curate at Coventry, she is involved with the work of the charity Embrace the Middle East (www.embraceme.org), the aim being to act as a bridge with the Church in the Middle East. As she said, the Church in Palestine is the oldest in the world although the number of Christians is decreasing. Embrace the Middle East is responsible for regularly publishing the Bethlehem Carol Sheet.



In 1854, Lord Shaftesbury founded what became the Turkish Aid Mission. Su outlined the troubled history of the region - Lebanon, Syria, Egypt, Israel, Palestine (including the Armenian genocide of 1915). In 1995, Christians and Moslems took up arms, often influenced by family and tribal affiliations.

Embrace the Middle East works in Lebanon, for example, in places such as Beirut, which following the devastating explosion of 2021 has been left with great refugee problems and real poverty and hunger. They are also working with the Joint Christian Community in refugee camps at Beit El Nour where education is such a strong hope for the future, especially for girls and women.

Su then talked about the situation in Gaza; her journey there involves the lengthy and formidable border control crossing from Israel. After the creation of Israel in 1948 and the 6-day war in 1957, Gaza now remains completely fenced off with limited power supply and restricted food imports from Israel. 50% of the population is under the age of 18 and there is a lot of poverty.

Su said we had a lot to learn from the 1089 Christians whose work involves the Y.M.C.A., a mobile clinic and workshops, particularly in view of the difficult working conditions such as the undrinkable water supply.

Maybe somewhat at odds with the work in education, one of the latest achievements of the charity was the installation of an AstroTurf football pitch which was proving a great success and encouragement.

Hilary thanked Su for such an informative talk on the work of the Charity which we now knew a lot more about and could support. There were more questions and discussion before Su could join us in our usual Tea and Cake.

Next Meeting - Monday, 9th October - Nic Carree - demo of flowers and arranging, etc.

Daphne Jones.

One Sunday morning, the Vicar noticed little Johnnie was staring up at the large memorial plaque that hung just inside the large wooden doors of the church, It was covered with names, and regimental flags were mounted on either side of it.

As he'd had been staring at the plaque for some time, the vicar walked up, put his hand on his shoulder, and said quietly, "Good morning Johnnie."

"Good morning vicar" Johnnie said, not taking his eyes off the plaque. "What is this?" he asked.

"Well, Johnnie, it's a memorial to all the young men and women who died in the service."

Solemnly, they stood together and stared at the large plaque. Little Johnnie's voice was barely audible when he asked, "Which one, father? The morning or evening service?"



**Our charity collection on 8th October
will be for WORLD VISION.**

After seven years of sponsoring Edgar it is time to say goodbye.

Dear Friends,

About seven years ago, you sponsored Edgar and began helping him find hope for the future. The road hasn't always been smooth, but there's much to celebrate. Together, we've seen so many smiles on the faces of Edgar and his friends during our time with them. I'm sure you'd agree that those happy faces are one of the simplest, but most powerful signs that a real difference is being made to these children's lives.

Now our work in Khantati is almost done.

Khantati's children are now thriving, the community is flourishing and families are becoming self-sufficient. This means that the positive changes you've helped make possible will last long into the future.

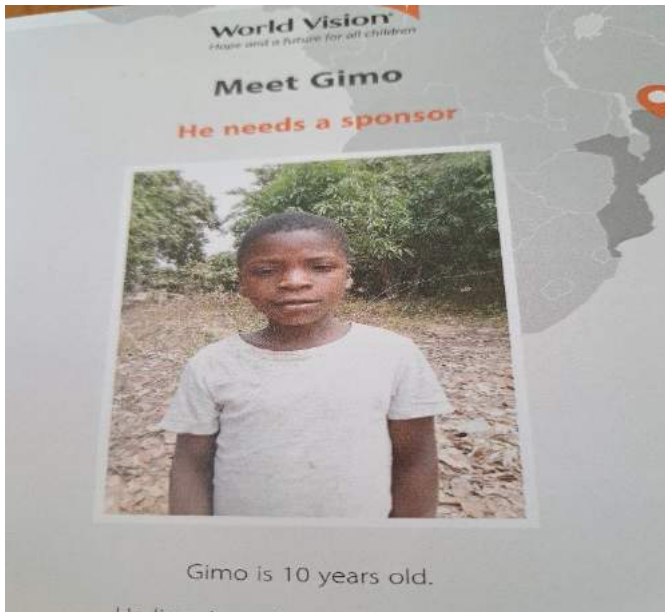
The best source of change is lasting change. You can be proud that thanks to your love and support, the people of Khantati have created their own clubs and groups to make sure all the good work continues. Today's children will benefit – and so will those of future generations. Please know you've played a key part in helping to reach this exciting milestone. All this positive change does mean it's a bittersweet time for you and your sponsored child. It's time to say good-bye.

As the community prepares to lead their own development, it's does mean World Vision will be moving on from Khantati at the end of September. The community now feel able to continue creating an environment where children can live life to the full on their own moving forward.....it can take charge of its own future. You have helped to transform Edgar's life – giving him and his friends a future to look forward to, and for this I truly thank you.

As one journey ends, another begins. You have shown yourselves to be special, willing to open your hearts to a child on the other side of the world and reach out to them, helping them escape fear and grow up with hope for their future.

I want to introduce you to another child who is hoping for a sponsor just as Edgar was before he met you.

His name is Gimo Sergio and he lives in Pheone, a mountainous, rural area in Mozambique. His birthday is on the 25th June. He lives with his parents who are both unemployed and has two sisters. Gimo goes to primary school and is in Year 3. At home, Gimo helps out by cleaning and in his free time he loves playing with dolls.



World Vision began working with the community of Pheone in 2020. Until then, children there faced a future full of many challenges: malnutrition; lack of safe water; and the abuse of their rights through child marriage, child labour and domestic abuse. This means the next few years will be busy as we work with children, their families and the wider community to create change for a better future.

Your sponsorship will help form Community Care groups to protect children from abuse and help them access their rights to safety, education and healthcare. Nutrition programmes will decrease the number of underweight children and the construction of community water points will help children stay well so they can attend school instead of walking miles to collect water.

St. Andrew's will be Gimo's only sponsor. Your donations will not go directly to him and his family. They'll be used to support his whole community. The money you give each month will transform life for children in Pheone by giving them clean water, nutritious food, healthcare, education and a way to earn a living – so that they can enjoy a childhood free from need and full of promise. Meanwhile the friendship you build together will bring him real hope and encouragement, helping him reach his full potential.

God bless you,
Clare Swoboda (Head of Supporter Experience)



Farewell and Thank You!

Adios y Gracias!

Thanks to your support with school supplies that you gave us so I could develop myself better in my school. In the future I want to be an engineer to help my town. May God bless you and continue helping other children in most need. Thank you, St. Andrew's, for your support and giving us help.

Edgar Villca Charca



The cash collection and donations via the card reader in church on that day will go to the charity. If you would like to make a donation and are unable to be in church on the day please make cheques payable to : Shottery St. Andrew PCC, and send to Anne Challis at 259 Alcester Road, Stratford-upon-Avon. CV37 9JG, or if you prefer to do a bank transfer, within 5 days of the charity Sunday, the details are as follows:-

Shottery St. Andrew PCC Sort Code 40-43-19 Account number 80739758 using the charity name as your reference.

Thank you.

Book Review



HOW TO TALK ABOUT JESUS WITHOUT LOOKING LIKE AN IDIOT:

A PANIC-FREE GUIDE TO HAVING NATURAL CONVERSATIONS ABOUT YOUR FAITH BY ANDY BANNISTER.

The Talking Jesus Survey carried out in 2022 indicates that there are many of us in the church today who struggle to talk about Jesus with our non-Christian friends, neighbours and colleagues. From my experience working with churches as an Evangelism Enabler across the Diocese, the results from the Talking Jesus survey came as no surprise.

Sharing our faith in today's culture is something many of us struggle with. It is something we know we should do, but for whatever reason we seem to find a way to put it off and leave it to the 'experts'.

So when I saw that Andy Bannister had a book coming out addressing how to have 'natural conversations about our faith', I hit the pre-order button on amazon. Andy, is the Director of Solas, a Christian organization that seeks to 'persuasively communicate the transforming truth of who Jesus is'. He writes in a way that is engaging, humorous and relevant to how things are in the UK Church today.

In the first chapter "Undercover Christian" Andy starts by sharing his rocky journey sharing His faith in the workplace. The excerpt below shows his journey wasn't always easy:

"I'd grown up on stories like Perpetua or Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who boldly proclaimed their faith in the face of threats of death. Meanwhile, I couldn't even face the banter around the water cooler. In the scriptures, I would read passages like Ephesians 6, which talks about the belt of truth and the helmet of salvation. Meanwhile, my own spiritual attire seemed more akin

to the flip-flops of fear, the socks of silence and the underpants of uncertainty.”

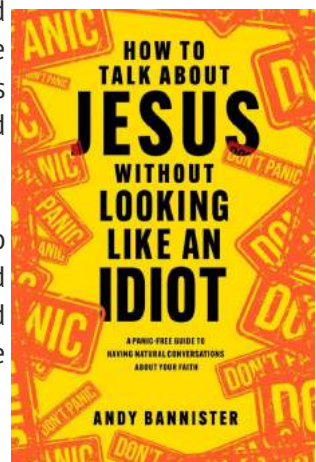
Knowing that the author himself understands the difficulties of living as a Christian in the workplace himself, makes you feel that you are not alone. Andy acknowledges the challenges we can face when it comes to sharing our faith, yet through his humorous stories and the examples he gives, you can't help but grow in confidence and feel that "I could do that"!

One example of this is through simply listening carefully to what our friends say and responding with good questions. Andy unpacks how we can do this by looking at how Jesus [the master of good questions] used questions to open up and guide conversations.

Andy skilfully maps how we can utilize certain questions [what, why, wondering and whether] so that we can grow in the ability of nurturing faith conversations. Sometimes the goal can be to turn an argument into a thoughtful conversation or even simply to guide someone to pause and challenge an existing assumption they might have held.

For those who are wanting to grow and develop in learning to have good faith conversations, this book is a must read! Thankfully, 'How To Talk About Jesus Without Looking Like An Idiot' doesn't demand that you suddenly become an extrovert or a gifted apologist, rather the tools Andy gives can be used by the introvert and the extroverted as well as someone new to the faith or the gifted evangelist.

By listening in a new way and learning to create opportunities through asking good questions, I know this book will inspire you and most importantly give you the courage to be able to share your faith with your friends.



By Gareth Fitzpatrick



Central England Guitar Ensemble

CONCERT

**Saturday, 25 November 2023
at 7:30pm**

In St. Andrew's Church, Shottonery.

Tickets £10.

Proceeds for St Andrew's Church.

***Tickets on Sale
from John Fletcher
(07787 133219)***





MINI PILGRIMAGE TO THE CHURCH OF ST. ANDREW IN WILMCOTE.

31 undaunted pilgrims braced a most unpleasant downfall of rain to start their evening in Wilmcote. In spite of the unfortunate illness of the churchwarden who was to host us we had a most interesting evening exploring the church, and finding out more about the history of such an old, small and beautiful Grade 2 listed building. David Capron knows the church well and told us of his strong links to the Anglo Catholic movement.

This church is reputed to be one of the very first to introduce Anglo Catholic style worship in the Church of England when it opened, and this style of worship continues to this day. It was here that Eucharistic vestments were worn for the first time after the Reformation. The Story of the foundation of St. Andrew's is a small part of the influence Oxford Movement to restore the Catholic teaching and practice of Church of England, which had largely disappeared. St. Andrew's has been a shrine of God, where full Catholic Faith has been taught and practised according to the Formularies of the Church of England, which is part of The One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church.

It was early in 1840 that the parents of E.B. Knottesford Fortescue, who were the Lords of the Manor in Alveston; chose this spot for the erection of a 'Chapel of St. Andrew' to provide for the spiritual needs of the district some few miles from the Mother Church of Aston Cantlow. Knottesford Fortescue was ordained to the tiny living and the Church was consecrated on St. Martin's Day, 11th November 1841.

The church designed by the architect Butterfield, is built in a solidly stone structure, which belies in appearance its comparative youth. It consists of a nave, holding about 100 worshippers, with a well-appointed sanctuary and a small gallery at the west end. At one time it

had a chancel screen, which unfortunately has been removed. The High Altar is of stone, but Victorian and Tractarian influences are to be found by additions of gradins including a Tabernacle for the reservation of the Blessed Sacrament. The church is highly decorated in the sanctuary and by Biblical scenes and texts on zinc plates in the nave walls. They were painted by a former incumbent in the 1870's.

An unusual painting by the entrance was of Jesus on the Cross. This was painted by a prisoner at Long Lartin who was in for murder and was given to a parishioner who was a Prison Visitor.



On the north wall above the Choir hangs a fine carved Station of the Cross, possibly 16th or 17th century and of Flemish origin. The font is a copy of the oldest font in England (St. Martin's, Canterbury). The top of the processional Cross is a fine silver pewter crucifix, which was dug up in the 19th century from land where the ancient Chapel of St. Mary Magdalene stood and could either be 14th or 15th century.

In the early days of its history, men sat on the south side of the Church, where racks are still to be found for men's top hats under the book ledges. The women sat on the north side.



The pulpit was interesting. To get to it the preacher had to exit through a door behind the choir stalls, into a corridor, and through another door which then opened into the pulpit. (sounds Irish to me!!!)

The early Tractarian Fathers such as Newman, Manning, Pusey and Keble were constant visitors to the parish. For years there was in use a green chasuble that belonged to Newman.

Clodagh

St Andrews Thursday Lunch



The next lunch is on 12th October in St Andrew's Parish Centre at 12.30pm

The cost is £8 for a two course meal and coffee/tea, but please bring your own drink if you want to (other than water!).

Anyone and Everyone welcome.

Please reserve your place in advance by adding your name to the sheet in the church foyer (available about 2 weeks before the event) or phone Fran on 07906355064, and let us know of any dietary requirements, or if you have difficulty getting there.



Our two chefs {Rodney Grinnell and Andy Abercrombie (brother of the late Christine)} at the September lunch (bookending Jenny Gregg, organizer of the lunches.)



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Little was I aware when I volunteered to re-launch the Fair Trade initiative at St Andrews that it would become a personal educational opportunity. Apart from refocusing my mind on the inequalities amongst global communities it has taught me about the geographical importance and indeed, history, culture and ingenuity, of certain areas of our increasingly over-run and seemingly constantly diverging continents.

No wonder that: **every day, those impregnated with exceptional perhaps even eternal vision, identify new evidence of brilliance.**

Shame we can't concentrate and coordinate that vision for global well-being but there I go philosophising and my Dad always said that, had I been born with a brain I could have been dangerous and he had to learn to live with an Austrian "Bonaparte".

Had I known where I was being led by investigating the origin of our best selling Fair Trade coffee I should have probably brought out my permanent white flag which I have at perpetual arms length for when my brain is starting to hurt. But then, every day is a so-called school day, so.....

Not being a coffee guru I have been persuaded by the many questions I get asked by you, the knowledgeable patrons, to learn about the options we have available particularly the very favourite Machu Picchu, whether that be in ground or instant format; instant being the version, for practical reasons, that is used for church inspired events in the parish centre. Described as full-bodied with dark chocolate overtones, it has an intensity influenced by its high-altitude source and the hundreds of microclimates** within the mysterious and legendary Inca heartland of the Peruvian Andes. Well!! What better invitation could one have for further interrogation.

***variations in altitude, humidity, sun, and heat allow coffee plants*

to develop unique flavour profiles found nowhere else. (Look for alternative to hundreds. Somewhere the microclimates are better described!!)



Almost 8,000 feet above sea level (i.e. 2.5 times the height of Snowdon) in the Andes Mountains, Machu Picchu is the most visited tourist destination in Peru. A symbol of the Incan Empire, often referred to as “The Lost City of the Incas”, it was established around 1450AD, Machu Picchu was designated a

UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1983 and was named one of the **New Seven Wonders of the World in 2007** describing it as “an absolute masterpiece of architecture and a unique testimony to the Inca civilization”.

What has all this to do with coffee you ask!!

In the realm of champagne, the Cornish pasty and Bakewell Tart, the Machu Picchu brand has to have affinity with the region. As such, Fair Trade Machu Picchu coffee derives from coffee beans, typically the Arabica variety, grown on the lush foothills within the Inca heartland of the Peruvian Andes and close to the sacred site of Machu Picchu. This brand uses hand-picked Arabica beans, expertly roasted to release a really full-bodied coffee taste, pure, mellow, and importantly organic.

The number of coffee growing regions in this South American populace is consistently expanding as the country becomes recognised as one of the most important and successful in the world. With more cooperatives and exporting companies emerging, the number of organic and Fincas** is consistently growing as well.

** *Finca = a piece of rural or agricultural land, typically with a cottage,*

farmhouse or estate building present, and often adjacent to a woodland or plantation.

Amongst those regions is **Cusco** which many might exalt as the epitome of coffee plantations in Peru. There are even coffee fincas right behind the famous World Heritage Site and farmers in Cusco have also been globally recognised in the renowned Cup of Excellence, the universal speciality coffee competition that acclaims superiore coffees and rewards the farmers and pickers who make them available to a fastidious audience. Farmers such as *Dwight Aguilar Masias at Nueva Alianza farm who is promoted by Amazon as Peru's version of Jeremy Clarkson of Didley Squat fame. (I couldn't resist making that last bit up!!). Well you can only be serious for part of the time in this Parish!!.....can't you Craig??*

Rodney Grinnell, one time aspirational Barrister. In reality, part time barista!!



'Say what you will about the Ten Commandments, you must always come back to the pleasant fact that there are only ten of them.'



ECHOES FROM THE PAST

I had rather a surprise recently whilst listening to a Premier Christian Radio programme as I shaved and showered early one evening.

My attention was suddenly sharpened as I heard the young presenter excitedly recommending a book that he was reading. Always looking for a challenging Christian 'read' I awaited the details of what I assumed would be a new title. Imagine my surprise when he gave the title and I realised that I had studied this book in the early 1990's. After my ablutions were finished I went to my still overloaded bookshelves and there I found my copy, its pages now yellowing.

"Knowing God" was first printed in 1973 and written by Dr J.I. Packer a Christian academic who had been ordained in the Church of England in 1953, moved to Canada in 1979 and died in 2020 just 5 days short of his 94th birthday after a distinguished academic career and with a number of books defending biblical orthodoxy to his credit.

J.I. Packer was much influenced by the writings of C.S. Lewis, and was, I believe, one of the 'greats' of his generation and, today, his equal is possibly N.T. Wright. Packer, I believe, embodied the saying 'The Bible means what it says and says what it means' and gives a most welcome riposte to the liberal theology of our era.

We live in times when it seems, in our western societies, Christianity is in decline. However, is this decline caused by Christianity being tried and found 'wanting' or has Christianity been tried and found to be 'too difficult'?

Even in the institutions of the Churches there are those of all denominations who have jettisoned the 'difficult' basics that are the unique foundations of the Christian Faith. The Virgin Birth (more correctly the conception as Our Lord's birth was no doubt no different to any other human birth), the miracles of healing, the suspension of physical laws

(such as Our Lord walking on the water), the restoring of life to the dead, and probably the biggest stumbling block - the Resurrection.

And, of course, what were often known as the "Four Last Things" - death, judgement, heaven and hell - have long disappeared from most pulpits. The attempted rationalisation by 'worldly wisdom' of the basics of the Christian Gospel has led to the loss for many of a vibrant and challenging faith and instead - as I remember one person once describing much of to-day's Christianity - we have so often a humanist offering vaguely influenced by Christian values.

But why this seeming loss of confidence in what The Bible plainly records? It was C.S. Lewis who once wrote that Jesus Christ was either mad, bad or He was who He said He was. If Jesus was who He claimed to be then how would humanity recognise Him beyond any doubt? Surely the answer is simple? *Would He not do the very things that the Gospels record Him as doing?* In other words, the miraculous beyond the normal as recorded in The Bible were the 'calling cards' of God. It is obvious, surely, that when one attempts to 'rationalise' the recorded miracles you abandon God's own witness?

The areas of growth in world-wide Christianity are to be seen today where there is challenge to the Faith by religious and political opponents and where a plain and uncompromised view of the teaching and ethics of The Bible are lived out. Where Christianity is struggling in "the West" The Bible, historically understood as the written Word of God, is often no longer accepted as such by so many people and this has led to a terrible loss of confidence and thus decline.

How can we remedy this? J.I. Packer would be a good place to start.

Alan Minchin.



A visit to my daughter in Co.Kerry.

The plane landed in Cork late in the night. We had to drive to Castle-
maine in Kerry - 70 miles.

A beautiful still evening; Ireland was asleep.

No comfort stops open , so we just stopped along the way .

Dawn by an Irish River

On the little bridge we stood
 Looking at the rushing water
Lit by the moon
 Black with shining flecks of white
Caught by the moon's fluorescent light.

Along the bank the trees bowed down
 By a light and chilly wind
Doing obeisance to the moon.

It was late in the night
 And the stars had gone
Venus had slipped away
 The lovers spell that she had cast
Quiet for another day.

Orion had put up his sword
 His hunting finished for the night.
And the plough weary from his labours
 Stood still and laid his shears to rest.
The dawn was coming
 So all must away, away, away.

Win Smith



In the 1970s a replica of the 16th century Coventry Cross was built at the top of St Michael's Avenue at the instigation of a group of heritage-minded Coventry businessmen. It stood there in the shadow of St Michael's spire until January 2019 when it was demolished by Coventry City Council to make way for more outdoor eating and drinking areas.

In August this year the re-built Coventry Cross was unveiled on its new site between Holy Trinity Church and Broadgate.



The pictures show (1) a 19th century print of the original Cross, (2) a picture of the 1970s Cross before demolition and (3) a picture of the latest and improved Cross. Photos 2 and 3 show the relationship to the Cathedral spire.

The 16th century design of today's Cross followed receipt of the legacy of £200 from the estate of Sir William Hollyes, who died in 1541. Born in Stoke, Coventry, he had gone on to become a Mayor of London. By the date of his death the ancient medieval Coventry Cross had weathered away, and a Cross replacement fund had been launched.

Detailed descriptions of the Hollyes design still exist. Over the years it became a tremendous source of pride to the citizens of Coventry. The Cross did well to survive some 200 years before it too fell victim to the weather. The decayed pieces were finally removed in the 1770s.

An innovation of the new Coventry Cross is the installation of actual windows at ground level. Looking through them you catch sight of a statue of King Henry VI within the cross. It is a 3D print replica of the statue currently held in The Herbert that is believed to have featured on the 16th century Coventry Cross.

Why King Henry VI? In Coventry there was a particularly strong Cult of Veneration of King Henry VI following his death in 1471, with many calls for his beatification. Henry features in the St Mary's Hall tapestry that was created some 30 years later. That tapestry is well worth a visit as it is the oldest tapestry in the UK still hanging in the place for which it was created.

Martin Williams.

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Coffee Morning
With Bring and Buy
Everyone Welcome
7th & 21st October
10am till noon.
In PARISH CENTRE

The poster features a central image of a white coffee cup filled with dark coffee, with coffee beans scattered around its base. The text is arranged in a vertical stack, with the title 'Coffee Morning' in a large, elegant script font at the top, followed by 'With Bring and Buy' in a bold sans-serif font, and 'Everyone Welcome' in a smaller script font. The dates and time are listed in a bold sans-serif font, and the location 'In PARISH CENTRE' is at the bottom.

Stockton And Darlington Railway

Dates are very important in families, whether they be wedding anniversaries, birthdays or commemoration of deaths. Likewise in the church with respect to Saints, March 1st when I wear the daffodil, being half Welsh, There is also St Clare who is commemorated on August 11th which I remember as a Companion of the Franciscan order and last but not least being an Anglo catholic, there is the Assumption of our Lady on August 15th. Then on September 27th 1825, glory of glories the Stockton and Darlington Railway ran its first train, not the first passenger, or the first freight or even with the first steam engine, but from that date the world was changed for ever.

Early that morning, newly mined coal from Witton le Wear colliery was hauled up the Etherley Incline by special winding engines ten lowered down the hill to reach St. Helens Auckland. A horse drawn train hauled it across the River Gaunless valley and then up the Brusselton Incline and finally down the other side to the Masons Arms which had been doing a roaring trade. And awaiting patiently was Locomotion 1. The weather was fine, so I am told but there had been one problem which could have caused a total break down and that was fire for the engine. The loco had been delivered by road to a station down the line at Heighington, but nobody had any matches and they had to resort to glass to encourage the rays of the sun to fire up combustible material.

It took 65 minutes to reach Darlington, averaging 8 miles per hour. At that point the train was joined by the town Band of Yarm and after a break the train proceeded to Stockton reaching at times 15 miles per hour. On arrival at Stockton the train was greeted by a 21 gun salute and the National Anthem. There then followed a prolonged period of feasting and drinking. By the way, the driver was George Stephenson and the guard was Timothy Hackworth.

In two years' time it will be the 200th anniversary. What are we going to do to celebrate this most auspicious of events. At the very least there has to be a Special with all the trimmings but that is the decision of others, but please let us do something!!!

David Capron

Sometimes,

I forget to thank the people who make my life so wonderful in so many ways. Sometimes, I forget to tell them how much I really do appreciate them for being an important part of my life. Today is just another day, nothing special is going on, but thinking of them makes me smile. So thank you, each and every one of you, my family and friends, just for being here for me."

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