

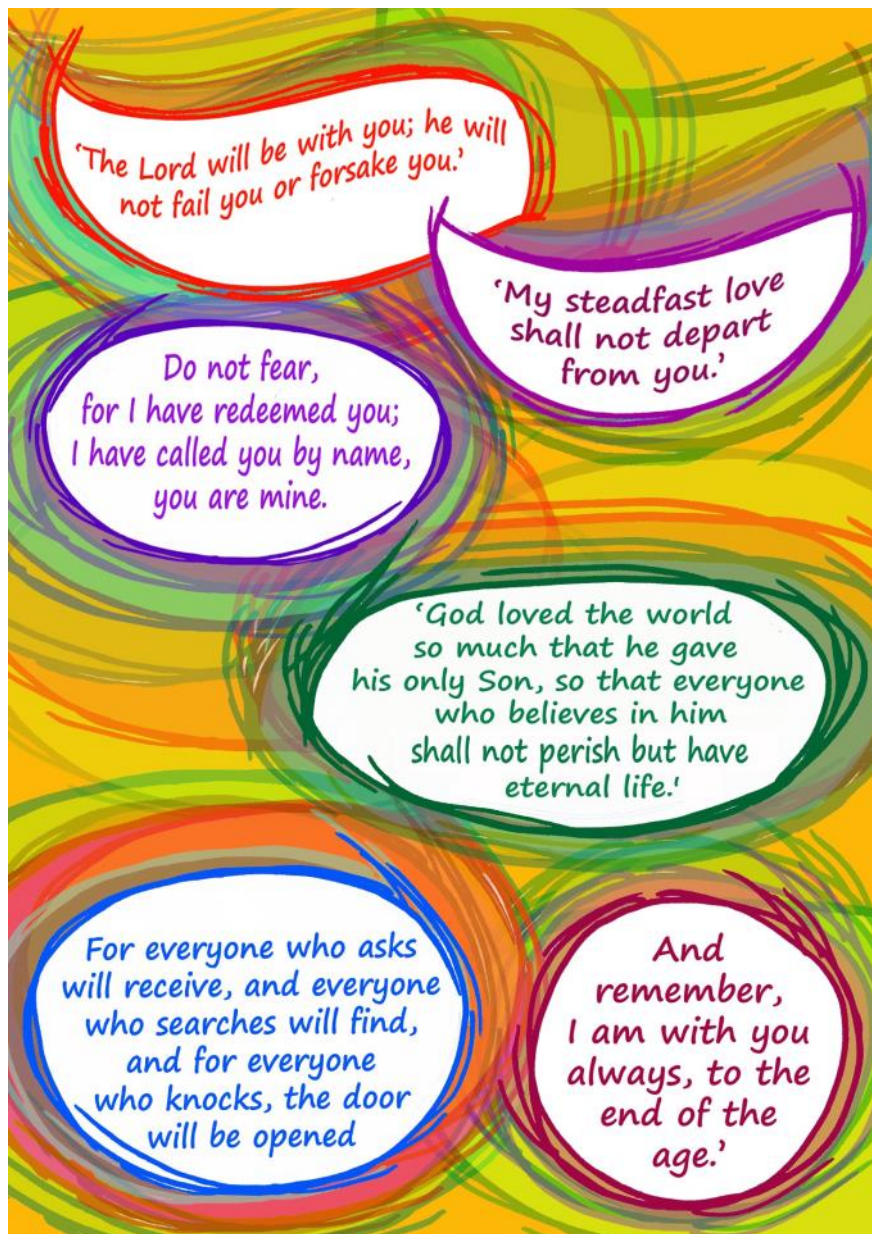
the KEY

Number 239

October 2023

50p

Website: www.bromleyparishchurch.org



News of Saint Peter and Saint Paul

BROMLEY PARISH CHURCH

Church Road Bromley BR2 OEG

"Proclaiming the Word and Work of God"

Member of Churches Together in Central Bromley



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Dear Reader,

Welcome to the October edition of the Key!

We have a sermon from Mike to revisit, the minutes from the latest PCC meeting to keep us up to date with what's going on in the Church and an update from CAP. Baby Loss Awareness week also takes place in October and there is a service at our Church as well as a 'Big Knit' in Rochester Cathedral, that you may wish to be involved in.

I hope you have a great month and 'see' you at the next edition.

With love,

Lisa

Mike has kindly shared his sermon from 24 September for us to revisit, thank you Mike!

TEXTS:

Old Testament: Exodus 16.2-15

Psalm: Psalm 105.1-6, 37-45

New Testament: Philippians 1.21-30

Gospel: Matthew 20.1-16

This morning I have started what may be an occasional series of sermons, although, more than likely, it'll end up like those pilot TV episodes which are never commissioned into a series! Anyway, the title is still work in progress. It could be "Living the Gospel", or "The Gospel in Action", or "The Gospel Message Reinterpreted for Today". Watch this space. More important is that the launch of this series coincides with this morning's Gospel reading about the workers and their remuneration. Which in turn conveniently follows a week after the church clean up last weekend. Let me explain.

Knowing what the Gospel reading would be for this Sunday, I thought last Saturday I could try to put that lesson into practice. Our Vicar had advertised the church clean up would take place between 1030 and 1230 and all help would be appreciated. Ah, my mind wonders, what if I turn up at 1215, 15 minutes before the end, and offer to help? Will the Vicar – and I'm sorry, my impersonations are poor, so I'm going to default to standard comedy tropes of Church of England vicars rather than try to impersonate James – will the Vicar turn to me and say, "Bless you, Mike, your offer of 15 minutes labour when I and others have been hard at it since 1030 is much appreciated. But, before you start, please avail yourself of the assorted pastries – croissants, pain au chocolat [for verily, this is how the righteous and virtuous parishioners of St Peter and St Paul, Bromley are rewarded] – please avail yourself of these before you start!"

Well, if even someone as thick-skinned as, and displaying all the self-awareness of, a Russell Brand, could realise that this would probably not go down very well, I quickly decided to abandon this experiment with the "Gospel in Action." So if turning up as a volunteer an hour and 45 minutes late and 15 minutes before the end of a church clean-up would not be well received, imagine how Jesus' parable of the workers in the vineyard each being paid the same, no matter the hours worked, went down with those who heard it at the time – or have heard it since, right up to today. It just doesn't seem fair or just, or sound like the sort of God I can believe in, or the sort of Kingdom I would want to be a part of.

Before I continue, a brief diversion.

You may remember a few weeks back a bit of a hoo-ha about a survey of clergy which revealed an apparent pessimism among the front line workers in God's

Kingdom about the state of the Church of England in modern Britain. There was a lot of hand-wringing and analysis of this survey, which might have been more depressing if it did not reveal that, even if many no longer attend Church, or believe in “a god” in general or the Gospel message in particular, there is still a feeling that the Church of England and the Christian faith have a role to play in the life of our country.

One article appeared in The Times by AN Wilson captioned “To resurrect the church, try the gospel truth.” It was sub-titled “Faith thrives when worshippers are given Christianity in the raw rather than the liberalism of the C of E hierarchy.” It talked of flourishing congregations in evangelical and Orthodox churches, delivery of an “undiluted faith”, and spoke of Christianity being, of its essence, “contra mundum”: or counter-cultural to apply another label. In this case it was claimed that Christianity inverts the values of liberal modern life. However, without wishing to appear to criticise or take sides in the left/right, conservative/liberal debate, it could quite easily be argued in other circumstances that it inverts the values of conservative modern life. But I’m not going to quibble with someone who talks fondly of an Anglo-Catholic service to celebrate the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, praises a short sermon that was awe-inspiring – we live in fear of both sermon quantity and quality in most congregations – and celebrates the faithful ministry of the retiring priest in charge.

But one thing struck a chord when he wrote “Christianity is a very strange and a very difficult faith. It is difficult to believe, and it is even more difficult to do what we were asked to do last Sunday – take up the cross of Christ and follow.”

If I were asked to resurrect the church and present the gospel truth – would I start this morning with this passage from Matthew? If I wanted to give worshippers – or prospective worshippers – Christianity in the raw, again, would I start with the parable of the workers in the vineyard? A parable which appears to promote just the liberal modern life to which the writer objects – a world where those who do one hour’s work in the cool of the evening get paid exactly the same as those who have laboured all day in the heat of the day. Talk about liberalism and equality gone mad!

It would seem that you choose your mundum – your world – and you can set Christianity up contra – or against – it. But it’s not really about conservatism, liberalism or any other world view. It is, though, about “Gospel truth” and “Christianity in the raw” – but how do you work out what this is when it’s both difficult to believe and difficult to do?

Well, let’s briefly go back to our Old Testament reading where we find the Israelite community wandering in the desert and doing what, if not all, then certainly most, religious communities do best – grumble, complain, whinge that there’s nothing good about what’s happening now and that things were much better in the past. For the Israelites, the life they had left in Egypt, despite its slavery and oppression, seemed much better than wandering hot and hungry with the promise of, what? Some vague promised land at some uncertain time in the future?

The passage raises 3 challenges to our understanding of God, our relationship with Him and the nature of His Kingdom:

When you're journeying with God towards the future he has promised, when you come up against a challenge, will you continue to have confidence in God, or will you revert to your old, bad habits?

When all seems bleak, will you remember that you are travelling with God, even when He seems to be absent or to have forgotten you? Although it seems cavalier to treat with such brevity what Paul writes in the passage from his letter to the Philippians that we also heard read earlier, even in the depths of adversity and suffering Paul can still draw strength and encouragement from the grace of God as revealed through His Son – his life, death, resurrection and the promise of salvation that this offers.

Finally, it speaks to us of the God upon whom this seemingly difficult faith of ours is based: the God who will provide for us as He deems necessary for the needs that He decides require attention, not the needs that we demand be addressed with the solution that we think is required.

Which brings us back to our Gospel reading. As noted, this parable outrages our sense of justice and equality. Even if we can overcome the offence to our secular understanding that those working one hour should be paid the same as those working 12, and see beyond this to a statement by Jesus about the nature of God's Kingdom, we are also likely to be offended by the spiritual understanding that those who spend their whole lives working for God's Kingdom will be rewarded in the same way as those latecomers to the faith.

Before I come to my concluding point about what this says about God and His Kingdom, it is worth pointing out again that the parable also contains a warning about how we see God. For it is easy to see ourselves sometimes as those who turn up early to work in God's kingdom with an expectation of a reward. For in the parable it is these early workers who negotiate the "usual wage". For them it is a transaction, just as for some Christians, including at times Jesus' own disciples, working in or for God's Kingdom is a negotiation with the demand of a reward from God. But note that the last workers make no demand for, nor is there an expectation of, a reward. Note also the comment when asked why they are standing idle; they reply: "because no one has hired us". They are not wanted. No one is looking for them.

When they come to be paid, those late labourers were paid the full daily rate, whereas those who were hired first were paid the same when they expected more. As the owner said, in effect, you were paid what we agreed whereas with those latecomers I was free to pay whatever he wanted. Put in different terms, those who were first attempted to put a limit on God's grace, whereas those who are open to receive whatever God may offer, will find that God's grace is limitless and freely given to anyone who seeks it.

That is not to say that we should be idle and not work for God's Kingdom, but we should do so joyously and without expectation of a reward, because whatever we may expect is unlikely to be anything like as large or as wonderful as what God is actually offering. As the Israelites found out, God is always there and will look after us even when we are lost and suffering in whatever wilderness we may find

ourselves. And as the final labourers find out, be grateful to be offered a chance to work in God's Kingdom and do not seek to negotiate the terms on which you will be rewarded for that work – because you will find that, if you let God determine the reward, it is much greater and more wonderful than you can ever imagine.

To those who are yet to starting working in God's kingdom, be reassured that it is never too late – don't be surprised if you hear grumbling and complaining, that comes with the territory – but God sets no limit on the time when you start or the reward that will be given to those who do: but don't delay – when you do start, you are likely to kick yourself for waiting so long, wonder why you didn't start earlier and avoid missing out on all the wonderful experiences you could have had along the way.

And to those who are already working in God's kingdom, as Tom Wright put it, God is already out in the marketplace looking for those everyone else ignores.

Are we doing the same?



**We are lighting up church pink and blue
for Baby Loss Awareness Week**

9th - 15th October

Remembering precious lives lost

Saturday 15th October 4pm

Wave of Light service

for those affected by baby loss

Ss Peter and Paul, Church Road, BR2 0EG





9 -15 October 2023

Remembering young lives lost
and those who miss and mourn them

A service for Baby Loss Awareness Week

Sunday 15th October 2023 at 4pm
Bromley Parish Church
Church Road BR2 0EG

All are welcome

The service can be joined from home by following the link

<https://youtube.com/live/9GkOBs7172c?feature=share>





The Big Knit 2023

National Baby Loss Awareness Week is in October every year when people join together in various ways to raise awareness of the loss people face. Did you know that 1 in 4 pregnancies end in miscarriage and that 1 in 20 babies are still born? Here at Making Miracles we are the only registered charity in the UK that supports the whole family through their loss from the parents, siblings and grandparents.

Prior to the pandemic Making Miracles, registered charity covering Kent and Medway, held an annual Big Knit and Natter at The Rochester Cathedral where knitters and those who also crochet across the whole Diocese come together for a morning of fun, meeting other crafters and knit as many 6 x 6 inch squares as possible in the time available. This year we are back on **Saturday 28th October**. The morning starts at 9 am and finishes at mid-day (as the Cathedral has another event in the afternoon so we have to start earlier than previously).

The squares are sewn up after the event and made into blankets which we then sell to pay for much needed professional bereavement and trauma services for families who lose a baby either through miscarriage, at birth or up to the age of 1 year old. This includes up to 8 sessions free of charge of bereavement or trauma counselling provided by a specialist counsellor, step down services following counselling, supports groups and a range of other services. We also have a Baby Memorial Garden where those who have lost may have a pebble or slate to remember their lost baby on land owned by The Rochester Cathedral and the now Dean, Phil Hesketh, has been a Patron of ours since we started back in 2014.

Ideally each square would be one colour only and if people would like to knit prior to the day as well we would appreciate any squares knitted be kept to the same colour so that we can match them together (as we know that people knit at different tensions and its sometimes difficult for us to match them all up). One blanket will be either 36 or 49 squares so 6 x 6 or 7 x 7 squares. However, if someone would like to knit the whole blanket and sew it together that would be even more amazing.

So, as a parish is this something you feel you would like to support? We would love to see you on the day itself. However we appreciate not everyone will be able to get transport to Rochester so we are also happy to receive blankets or squares in the post.

For catering purposes, we do need to know the numbers attending on the morning, so if you have any questions or need to confirm your attendance please email jodie@makingmiracles.org.uk asap.

We really hope to see as many parishes represented as possible at our beautiful Cathedral on 28th October.

Thank you.

The latest edition of the Bromley CAP newsletter is available, some key points below.

If you would like more information please speak to Ed Tree.

Praise

▪ Our 40th client recently went debt-free, taking the total amount of debt written off over £850,000! Praise God for the impact this has had on these households and those that love and care for them. ▪ In August, over £3,000 were raised through fundraising ventures!! This will help us to continue to serve those in need and look at developing this work further.

Can you get involved?

- We need more people to serve in the Bromley Job Club. This involves building relationships, encouraging those who attend and supporting them with the course material. Please contact Ralph if you are interested or would like to visit: ralphbrandhorst@capjobclubs.org.
- Could you run a CAP Money Course? They are a great tool to help with budgeting and money management. If you think a course would benefit your church, please get touch with Martin.
- We would love to run another fundraising event for the CAP Bromley Partnership, could you help?
- Or maybe you could support the CAP Bromley Partnership through a special Christmas Collection.



Please pray

For the new Life Skills course that starts with a taster session on Wednesday 20th September. Please pray that the course would attract a good number of new faces who would engage fully in the material. Pray for opportunities to share Jesus with those who attend.

Continued overleaf

- The next Bromley Job Club will run from Brook Lane Community Church in October. Please pray that this new venue will prove helpful in drawing in more people. Also pray for more volunteers to strengthen this team.
- We have been approached about starting a new Job Club in the Crays. Please pray that God will guide those involved in making this happen and for straight paths as we seek to develop ministry in another area in the borough.
- We are looking for help with administration for the Bromley CAP Partnership. Please pray that God would provide the right person to help in this area.
- Pray for salvation and lives to be transformed through the work of CAP in Bromley.

If you would like to support us financially either monthly or a one-off donation, here are the details:

Bank: Metro Bank, Bromley
Account: CAP Bromley Partnership
Account N°: 22731629
Sort Code: 23-05-80

Please email Martin as above if you set up monthly giving so we can keep you in touch with developments from time to time.

giftaid it If you're a UK taxpayer you could donate through Gift Aid, meaning that as a charity we can claim back £0.25 from the Government for every £1 you donate, at no extra cost to yourself. Let us know if you'd like us to send you a Gift Aid form to complete.

Bromley CAP Partnership CIO
Charity Number 1189103

CAP Bromley
Debt Centre



12th October Edith Cavell, nurse

Edith Cavell is a good saint for NHS workers: she cared for the sick despite the danger to her own safety.

Edith was a vicar's daughter from Swardeston in Norfolk, where she was born in 1865. She became a governess, but her heart was for nursing, so she went on to train at the London Hospital, before nursing in various hospitals such as St Pancras and Manchester.

When Edith was 42, she decided to go abroad, and was appointed matron of a large training centre for nurses in Brussels. She was still there seven years later, when the First World War broke out and German troops invaded Belgium on their way to Paris and the Channel Ports.

Edith's nursing school became a Red Cross hospital, and she turned down the opportunity to return to the safety of England. Instead, her nurses tended wounded soldiers from both German and Allied armies.

Sadly, in 1915, when the Germans began their occupation of Brussels, they took a dim view of Edith's work. But they would have been even more unhappy had they known she was helping to smuggle 200 British soldiers across the border into the Netherlands!

Finally, the Germans arrested Edith in August 1915, and put her into solitary confinement. They tricked her into confessing to a charge which carried the death penalty. But Edith refused to show either regret at what she had done, or any fear or bitterness towards her captors.

On 11th October 1915, the night before her execution, Edith was visited by the Anglican chaplain to Brussels, the Revd Stirling Gahan. Together they said the words of *Abide with Me*, and Edith received her last Holy Communion.

She told Gahan: "I am thankful to have had these ten weeks of quiet to get ready. Now I have had them and have been kindly treated here. I expected my sentence and I believe it was just. Standing, as I do, in view of God and eternity, I realise that patriotism is not enough. I must have no hatred or bitterness to anyone."

Edith was shot by a firing squad next day, on 12th October 1915.

After the war her body was exhumed and buried in Norwich Cathedral. Her memorial service in Westminster Abbey attracted thousands. A commemorative statue of her stands near Trafalgar Square.



We clean your oven..... so you don't have to.

Call today to have your oven, hob, extractor or Aga professionally cleaned

Rob Hadgiyianni contact details

Tel 01689 253525 Mob. 07957 325452

E mail robhadgiyianni@ovenwizards.com

www.ovenwizards.com

Please note the change of date.

Don't miss this!



Really Super Sale

in the

Youth Centre

Bromley Parish Church, Church Road

(off Market Square)

BR2 OEG

10.00am – 4.00pm

on

Saturday 4th November 2023

in support of

Mercy Ships, Sightsavers

and The Bible Society

A huge selection of items being sold at

unbelievably low prices to clear.

Refreshments available, too!

Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in
Genesis chapters 39: 20-41:44

Joseph's brothers had sold him as a slave
and he had ended up in Egypt. Then he was
wrongly accused and was sent to prison.



Joseph was trusted to look
after the other prisoners.

Then Pharaoh's butler and baker were sent to
the prison. One night they had strange dreams.



.. I made
juice from the grapes
and gave it to Pharaoh..

.. all the
bread in my baskets
was eaten by birds.

God knows what your dreams mean -
you will be pardoned ... but you won't.



The two men
left the prison.



But they did

Two years later
Pharaoh had a dream



None of his advisors could
explain it...



.. then his butler
remembered Joseph.

So Joseph was cleaned up
and sent to Pharaoh



and then the seven thin cows ate the
seven fat cows but they were still thin.

God says there will be
seven bumper years, then
seven years of famine.



You must choose someone
trustworthy to store the
spare food in the good years

Pharaoh was so impressed
he gave Joseph the job!



b	i	r	d	s	w	e	g	y	p	t	j
b	a	f	k	a	r	t	h	i	n	r	u
b	r	p	a	r	d	o	n	e	d	u	i
d	r	e	a	m	a	v	i	n	n	s	c
n	b	i	a	r	i	z	i	e	d	t	e
b	u	k	a	d	n	n	v	s	j	w	t
a	m	h	e	o	d	e	e	o	o	o	r
k	p	n	s	o	s	p	i	m	s	r	u
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p	h	h	g	c	o	w	s	n	h	y	e
k	c	p	j	b	u	t	l	e	r	q	d

Egypt
grapes
butler
pardoned
advisors
someone
forget
trusted

baker
famine
prison
trustworthy
food
birds
cows
Joseph

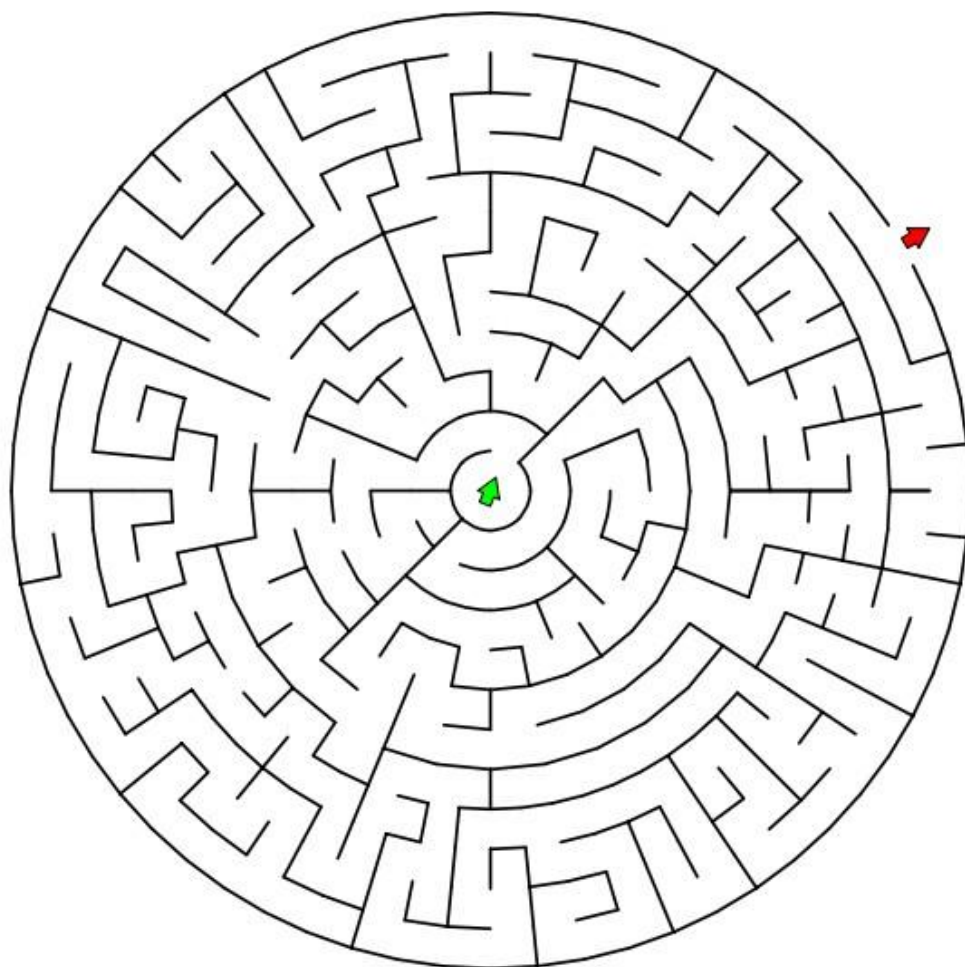
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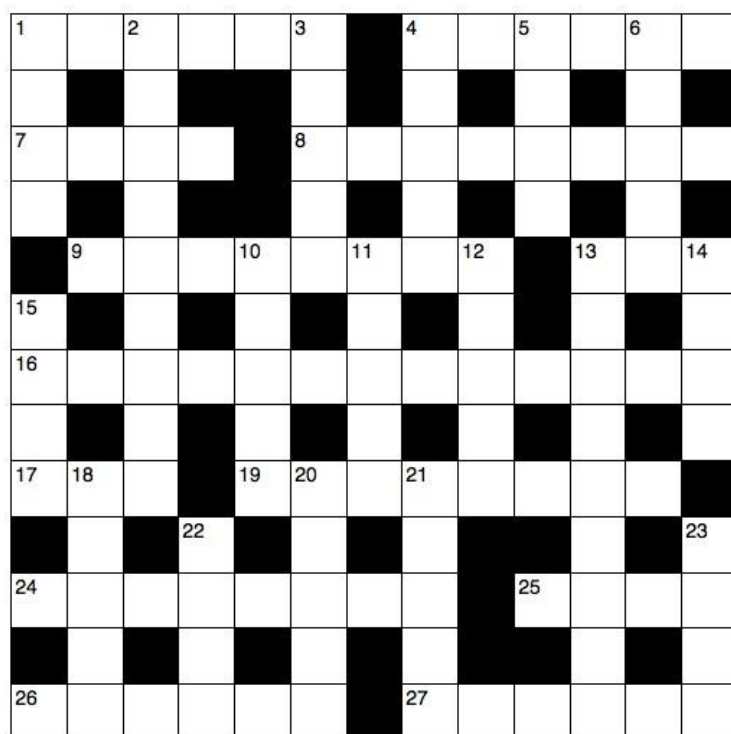
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				3			5	
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3		6		7				4
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			9		3		2	

Sudoku:

Insert numbers 1-9 in every row, column and 3x3 box.

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Answers:

ACROSS: 1, Deacon. 4, Appear. 7, Wits. 8, Heavenly. 9, Argument. 13, Mob. 16, Broken-hearted. 17, Ran. 19, Suddenly. 24, Obstacle. 25, John. 26, Enable. 27, Market.

DOWN: 1, Dawn. 2, Afternoon. 3, Nehum. 4, Again. 5, Prey. 6, All to. 10, Users. 11, Ephod. 12, Trace. 13, Metalwork. 14, Body. 15, Eber. 18, Alban. 20, Uncle. 21, Dream. 22, Stab. 23, Gnat.

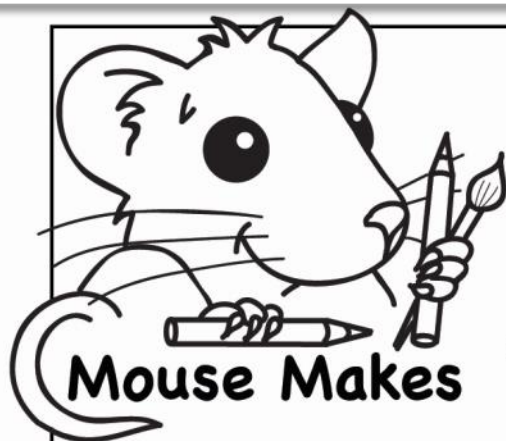
Across

- 1 He must be 'the husband of but one wife and must manage his children and his household well' (1 Timothy 3:12) (6)
- 4 'For we must all — before the judgement seat of Christ' (2 Corinthians 5:10) (6)
- 7 'They reeled and staggered like drunken men; they were at their — end' (Ps 107:27) (4)
- 8 See 19 Across
- 9 It concerned who among the disciples would be the greatest (Luke 9:46) (8)
- 13 Formed by the Jews in Thessalonica to root out Paul and Silas (Acts 17:5) (3)
- 16 'He has sent me to bind up the —' (Isaiah 61:1) (6-7)
- 17 Moved rapidly on foot (Matthew 28:8) (3)
- 19 and 8 ' — a great company of the — host appeared with the angel' (Luke 2:13) (8,8)
- 24 Hindrance (Romans 14:13) (8)
- 25 Comes between Luke and Acts (4)
- 26 Empower (Acts 4:29) (6)
- 27 'Get these out of here! How dare you turn my Father's house into a —!' (John 2:16) (6)

Down

- 1 Sunrise (Psalm 119:147) (4)
- 2 The part of the day when Cornelius the Caesarean centurion had a vision of an angel of God (Acts 10:3) (9)
- 3 He was one of those who returned with

- Zerubbabel from exile in Babylon to Jerusalem (Nehemiah 7:7) (5)
- 4 'No one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born —' (John 3:3) (5)
- 5 Animal hunted or killed as food (Ezekiel 22:25) (4)
- 6 'He encouraged them — — remain true to the Lord' (Acts 11:23) (3,2)
- 10 Ruses (anag.) (5)
- 11 Jewish priestly vestment (Exodus 28:6) (5)
- 12 Visible sign of what had been there (Daniel 2:35) (5)
- 13 This was the trade of Alexander, who did Paul 'a great deal of harm' (2 Timothy 4:14) (9)
- 14 'This is my —, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me' (1 Corinthians 11:24) (4)
- 15 One of Noah's great-great-grandsons (Genesis 10:24) (4)
- 18 Traditionally the first British Christian martyr (5)
- 20 Relationship of Ner to Saul (1 Samuel 14:50) (5)
- 21 Jacob had one at a place he named Bethel while on his way to Haran, fleeing from Esau (Genesis 28:12) (5)
- 22 Bats (anag.) (4)
- 23 'You strain out a — but swallow a camel' (Matthew 23:24) (4)



Mouse Makes

CONNECT THE BIBLE FOOD PAIRS

MANNA	HONEY
OIL	WINE
WATER	FISH
LOCUSTS	QUAIL
LOAVES	FLOUR

What drink ran out at the wedding?

_____ and what did Jesus use to make more?

John 2:3 and 7

What food did God supply for his people in the wilderness?

_____ and _____

Numbers 11:7-9 and 31

After Elijah came to visit, what never ran out?

_____ and _____

1 Kings 17:14

What food did the ravens feed Elijah?

_____ and _____

1 Kings 17:6

What food did John the Baptist eat in the wilderness?

_____ and _____

Matthew 3:4

What did the boy give Jesus to feed 5,000 people?

Five _____

and two _____

John 6:9

FIND THE BIBLE VERSE

Change each letter in this bible verse to the letter **before** it in the alphabet.

NBO TIBMM OPU
MJWF PO CSFBE
BMPOF, CVU PO
FWFSZ XPSE UIBU
DPNFT GSPN UIF
NPVUI PG HPE.

NBUUIFX 4:4

DID YOU KNOW?

As Lot escaped Sodom with his family an angel told him not to stop or look back, but Lot's wife did look back and became a pillar of salt.

READ Genesis 19 v15-26

E B R E A D H O N E Y Q J S F
L O A V E S G Q W A T E R C I
M Q I W M F R U I T F I S H G
E U S H A L A A N O L I V E S
A I I E N O I I E G R A P E S
T L N A N U N L O C U S T S Y
M U S T A R D E I H D A T E S
E V E G E T A B L E S A L T H

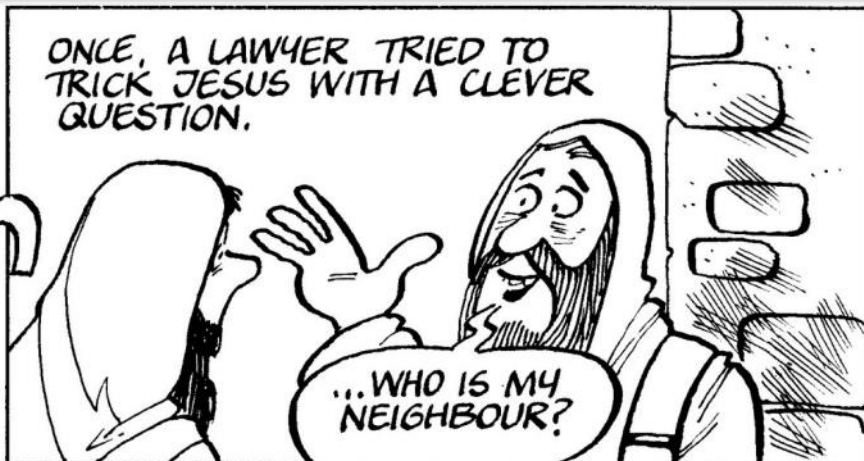
Find the words below and the answers to the questions all in the word search

OLIVES • CHEESE
FIGS • DATES
MUSTARD
RAISINS • WHEAT
SALT • GRAIN
FRUIT • GRAPES
VEGETABLES

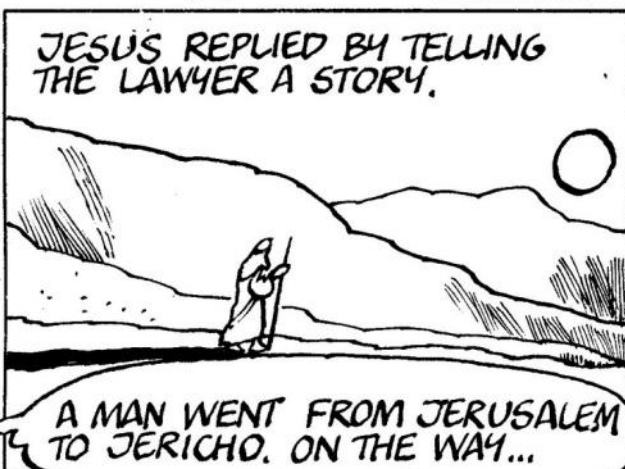
The Good Samaritan

JERICH0

ONCE, A LAWYER TRIED TO TRICK JESUS WITH A CLEVER QUESTION.



JESUS REPLIED BY TELLING THE LAWYER A STORY.



A MAN WENT FROM JERUSALEM TO JERICH0. ON THE WAY...

HE WAS ATTACKED BY ROBBERS!!



THEY TOOK EVERYTHING HE HAD AND LEFT HIM FOR DEAD!



LATER A PRIEST PASSED BY, BUT DID NOTHING TO HELP - NOR DID THE RELIGIOUS MAN FROM A TEMPLE!



BUT A MAN FROM A FOREIGN COUNTRY STOPPED TO HELP THE INJURED MAN. HE DRESSED THE MAN'S WOUNDS AND EVEN PAID FOR HIM TO STAY AT AN INN.



JESUS THEN ASKED "WHO WAS THE NEIGHBOUR?"

- ☐ PRIEST
- ☐ TEMPLE MAN
- ☐ FOREIGN MAN

WHICH DO YOU THINK WAS THE ONE THE LAWYER CHOSE?

A Prayer for October

Dear Lord and Creator of all things,

In this fast-moving and high-tech world, help us to slow down – just occasionally – to notice the rhythms of Your creation; the beauty of the colours of autumn; the annual ritual of falling leaves and darkening evenings. All part of Your cycle of the year that we often take for granted.

And yet Lord, there is evidence of changes in our climate – extremes of temperature, droughts, floods and wildfires. There is evidence that our behaviour might be responsible for damaging Your world.

Lord, we thank You for Your goodness and faithfulness and grace to us. We are sorry when we get things wrong. Thank you for sending Jesus to show us the way to be in a right relationship with You. Help us to put our trust in Him and as part of living Christian lives, to accept our responsibility for caring for the world You created.

In Jesus' name, Amen

By Daphne Kitching

Loaves and Fishes

They came together from far and wide
All wanting to hear what the preacher would say
Hanging onto His every word
Nobody ever taught this way.

The crowd were hungry, so many to feed
As a young lad offered the Master his lunch,
Five barley loaves and two small fish -
For such a crowd it wasn't much.

Who could imagine what He would do
As He blessed the crowd on the mountainside?
And looking up and giving thanks
Bread and fish were multiplied.

Whatever we give the Master to use
Just like the lad with an offering small,
Placed in the hands of the Miracle Worker
He multiplies the gift bringing blessings to all.

By Megan Carter

God our Help

With floods and storms thus we be tossed,
Awake, good Lord, to Thee we cry.
Our ship is almost sunk and lost.
Thy mercy help our misery.

Man's strength is weak; man's wit is dull:
Man's reason's blind. These things to amend,
Thy hand, O Lord, of might is full;
Awake betime, and help us send.

In Thee we trust, and in no wight:
Save us as chickens under the hen.
Our crookedness Thou canst make right
Glory to Thee for aye. Amen.

Anonymous, 17th century

Falling Leaves

Fall, leaves, fall; die, flowers, away;
Lengthen night and shorten day;
Every leaf speaks bliss to me
Fluttering from the autumn tree.

From a poem by Emily Bronte (1818-48)

Nigel Beeton writes: 'Matthew 15:21 -28 is a tricky part of the gospel to understand. Jesus seems to be terribly dismissive to the point of rudeness to a Canaanite woman asking for help with her demon-possessed daughter. But you know, it's only tricky if we arrogantly consider ourselves to be the equals of the golden children at the table. We're not, you know. We, like the Canaanite woman, are not worthy of God's grace, and yet Jesus rewards us, too, for our persistent faith.'

The Crumbs beneath the Table

The crumbs beneath the table
May feed the dogs as well
As golden children able
With those above to dwell.

We see their radiant smiles
We gaze upon each face
But we are lowly gentiles –
Just pleading for God's grace.

He tells us we're not worthy
To eat the children's bread
Our hunger makes us nervy –
We plead the more instead.

Yet Jesus came from Heaven
For Gentile as for Jew;
Persistent faith's like leaven,
We'll rise to life anew!

By Nigel Beeton

John has kindly provided a summary of the minutes from the 20 September PCC meeting in order to improve communication between the PCC and wider congregation. Please read on to follow some of the issues and resolutions being discussed on behalf of our Church.

Thank you to John for providing this and to the PCC members for giving their time to serve the Church.

BROMLEY PARISH CHURCH

PCC NOTES for the meeting on Wednesday 20th September 2023

Car Parking at BPC

Members discussed options for the future of car parking, in the light recent problems. Sam Sammons summarised the current position: the permit system contributes around £10,000 pa to BPC funds, mostly from external sources. He said that there had been only occasional complaints about lack of space, although there were some instances of abuse of facilities, partly by people making shopping trips but also in connection with hire of the Rooms and Youth Centre. PCC members gave examples of problems they had experienced, particularly at peak times of day.

Three options for the future were discussed:

- a number-plate recognition system (ANPR), which would be externally managed, with fines for unauthorised parking. Members felt that, while unauthorised parking might be reduced, such a system would have a bad effect on BPC's reputation, and would probably divert most of the revenue to the agency.
- A locking system linked to the main gates, with key fobs issued to regular users. Although technically feasible, members considered such a system as costly (about £9,000 plus maintenance costs) and likely to cause a range of practical problems.

Continuing with the current system, but making efforts to minimise current problems.

After a lengthy discussion the meeting agreed on the third option, and identified a number of supporting actions. These included improving signage in the area, asking users to close gates, producing a standardised letter to apparent abusers and asking hirers of BPC facilities to explain the parking policy to those attending their events. It was also noted that users of a nearby dance centre often used the car park, and it was agreed that the centre should be asked to help discourage this.

Matters arising from previous minutes

- Hammelton Road property. Members were pleased to learn that the sale of the freehold was being completed that day. This would relieve BPC members of any further responsibilities for the property. Gratitude was expressed to Philip Townsend for managing affairs relating to the property for BPC over many years.
- CCTV and door security. Installation of the new system was under way. Existing door keys will no longer work, and it will be necessary to inform users that door codes will need to be used in future.

Tower clock. Repair and cleaning have now been completed, and the clock has been keeping good time subsequently.

Financial statements and issues

- The meeting reviewed financial results from January to July. These showed a 'housekeeping' surplus of £11,839, with income some £14,600 and expenditure about £1,700 above budget. Much of the difference was due to timing issues, but on the income side receipts from Fair Shares were performing strongly following the stewardship campaign last autumn. The expenditure position had been affected by the timing of repair and maintenance work, and increases in utility bills and insurance costs had contributed to the overspend. The Rooms and Youth Centre account showed a surplus of £3,681 for the period, reflecting the continuing increase in their use.

Most Fair Shares contributors were now using the new Metrobank account for payments. It was agreed that the Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer and Churchwarden should be given online access to the account and be authorised to make payments online to avoid delays through the need to use cheques.

BPC Office re-development

Lynn described plans for re-developing the Office, which are part of a wider plan that aims to use the balcony area as a base for ministers and staff to work together and to establish a welcome area for visitors near the main entrance. She said that over time the Office had become cluttered and inefficient, inappropriate for modern ways of working and the changing needs of visitors to the church.

Quotes had been obtained from two carpentry companies for replacing shelving and establishing new work-top and storage areas. In discussion members agreed that investment in high-quality material was justified, to ensure that benefits would be long-lasting and ensure that the appearance of the Office linked in with that of the wider church. It was unanimously agreed that RWL Carpentry should be contracted, using their option of solid oak at a price of £5,680. The Office desk and chair would also be replaced and the

tiles on the floor removed to reveal the original parquet flooring.

Organ Camera

Tim Yeo had provided additional information on his recommendations for a new system. It would provide 'picture in picture' views, with images of both the keyboard and pedal board. This would link to the AV system in the west gallery, allowing pictures to be shown live in organ recitals. It was unanimously agreed that the recommended system be installed, at an estimated cost of around £3,100.

Committee Reports

The meeting adopted a report from the Standing & Finance Committee. Key points had been discussed under specific agenda items..

Any other business

- Tree work in the churchyard. Most of the work had been completed a few weeks earlier, and the contractors had done an excellent job. However, work was still outstanding on two trees listed in the specification: payment would be withheld until this was completed.
- Children and Families Worker. A draft job description agreed by the Children's and Youth Committee had been circulated just before the meeting. It had been developed as a part-time post with development potential, designed to attract someone already working in this sector or seeking to move into it: training would be provided as required. Members were asked to look through the specification and let James have any comments.

Kitchen refrigerator. It was agreed that a like-for-like replacement for the existing fridge would be purchased, hopefully ahead of the next health and safety inspection.

Sunday 1

8.30am Holy Communion (CW)
10.30am Harvest Festival
6.30pm Compline

Monday 2

10.30am Bumps & Babies
7.30pm Ministry Team meeting

Tuesday 3

11.00am Toddler Praise
7.30pm Bell ringing practice

Wednesday 4

12noon Midweek service
12.30pm -2.00pm Church open for private prayer
12.30pm Lychgate Lunch
7.30pm Hope Into Action meeting

Thursday 5

7.30pm Choir practice

Friday 6

2.00pm Funeral Ralph Skelton

Saturday 7

10.00am Starter Pack donation morning

Sunday 8

9.00am Breakfast Church
10.30am Parish Eucharist
6.30pm Choral Evensong

Monday 9

Baby Loss Awareness Week
10.30am Bumps & Babies

Tuesday 10

11.00am Toddler Praise
7.30pm Bell ringing practice

Wednesday 11

12noon Midweek service
12.30pm -2.00pm Church open for private prayer

12.45pm Bible reading group

8.00pm Standing & Finance Committee meeting

Thursday 12

2.15pm Fellowship
7.30pm Choir practice

Sunday 15

8.30am Holy Communion (CW)
10.30am All age Worship with Communion
4.00pm Service for Baby Loss Awareness Week
6.30pm Compline

Monday 16

No Bumps & Babies – half term

Tuesday 17

No Toddler Praise – half term
7.30pm Bell ringing practice

Wednesday 18

12noon Midweek service
12.30-2.00pm Church open for private prayer

Thursday 19

7.30pm Choir practice

Friday 20

12noon Thanksgiving Service for the life of Richard Lane
7.00pm Half peal of bells

Sunday 22

9.00am Breakfast Church
10.30am Parish Eucharist
6.30pm Compline

Monday 23

No Bumps & Babies – half term
12.30pm Bereavement group meets

Tuesday 24

No Toddler Praise – half term
7.30pm Bell ringing practice

Wednesday 25

12noon Midweek service
12.30pm – 2.00pm Church open for
private prayer
12.45pm Bible reading group

Thursday 26

7.30pm Choir practice
2.15pm Fellowship
3.00pm Wedding rehearsal

Saturday 28

1.30pm Wedding Jo Hale & Alex Davan Wetton
7.00pm Bromley Homeless meal +
Sleepout

Sunday 29

Clocks go back at 2am
8.30am Holy Communion (CW)
10.30am Parish Eucharist
6.30pm Compline

Monday 30

10.30am Bumps and Babies

Tuesday 31

11.00am Toddler Praise
7.30pm Bell ringing practice

Morning Prayer is said daily at 9.15am in the Children's Chapel, everyone is welcome.

The Children's Chapel is open daily for prayer and **Church is open for private prayer on Wednesdays** between 12.30pm and 2pm, consecrated bread is available for those who wish to receive

To join Sunday worship online please visit our website
www.bromleyparishchurch.org and follow the link on our homepage.

Updates to services and events are posted on our website
www.bromleyparishchurch.org