

## **Creative Courage**



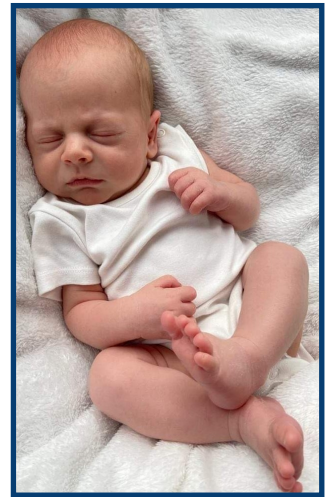
One of my favourite picture books of all time is by a Dutch artist Rien Poortvliet, and is simply titled 'Noah's Ark'.

Through a series of sumptuous wildlife observations, the artist ponders the breath-taking creativity of God as seen through the eyes of Noah. The Ark builder is amazed as he encounters the wonders of the natural world for the first time as they arrive in pairs to reserve a berth.

The artist challenges the reader to look afresh at the extravagant noses of elephant, hog, and proboscis monkey. The impressive ears of the fennec fox and the bush baby. The infinite variety of hooves, horns, colours, patterns and movement in the animal kingdom.

There is no doubt we worship a God who is infinitely creative and who was not just involved in creation but IS involved in ongoing creation and re-creation.

Since welcoming our little Reuben into the world earlier in the year the words of Psalm 139 echo around my mind: *'For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Your works are wonderful, I know that full well. Your eyes saw my unformed body'*.



Alongside the miracle of brand new, utterly unique tiny people, there are also so many verses that speak of the ongoing promise of transformation God brings about in his followers, a constant work of renewal. 2 Corinthians 5:17 is surely one of the most well known: 'if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!'

The Bible is also crammed full of creative folk. David, author of the Psalms leads the charge for musicians. Adam and Eve (and I suppose God himself as creator of Eden) champion gardening. Joseph and Jesus worked as carpenters/ house builders. Even the outdoor pursuits get a look in with Priscilla the tent maker from Acts. Perhaps, however, the most celebrated Artisan was Bezalel from Exodus who seemed to have mastered a vast array of hand skills (from metal work and jewellery to textiles) which he used in the tabernacle and in the creation of a different Ark - that of the Covenant!

Eric Liddell (of Chariots of Fire fame) was a Scottish athlete who later served as a Christian missionary. He is most famous for his stance at the 1924 Olympics when he decided to honour God and refused to run the 100m on a Sunday and instead entered the 400m in which incredibly he won gold.

His most famous quote 'God made me fast. And when I run, I feel His pleasure' is a continual inspiration to me as someone who works in the creative field. I know intimately that deep sense of God's pleasure, not when I run, but in creative endeavours. I feel it when I watch a plant grow or a border flourish! When I plane a billet of wood and see the stunning grain exposed for the very first time. I know it when the paint flows on the canvas in just the right way and I know many musicians, dancers, potters and writers who feel the same favour when applying themselves to their art.

I remember vividly being in my early teens and frustrated that I had been given an artistic gifting. Others had so many useful gifts that God could so obviously use and I felt that all I can do was draw!

How wrong could I have been!

He has employed my gifting in so many unimagined ways: building houses, church furniture, speed painting, puppets and even more bizarrely occasional 'one offs', such as a giant cardboard boat to illustrate God's love. I think the moment that I realised that adding the words 'for Jesus', after the skills I had been blessed with, was a transformational moment.

So let me encourage you in your creative endeavours as the evenings draw in this



Autumn. Be a jeweller for Jesus. Whip out your needles and knit for the Name above all Names. Crochet or cross stitch for Christ. Paint, play or write poems for the High Priest. Bake for the one who claimed to be the Bread of Life. Sing for the Saviour. Make for the Messiah. Yodel for Yahweh... you get the idea!

As you work, take time to focus on The Master Craftsman himself, revel in the utter joy it brings (as that in itself is such a rich gift from God) and ponder how you can honour him in and through using your skills. (1 Corinthians 10: 31). I guarantee that if you offer the work of your hands to the Head of the Church, your dexterity to the Deliverer, the creative journey that follows will be so much more than you could ever imagine!

**Neil Brookes**  
**Youth Director**

## Youth Groups

RISE

Thursdays 6.30pm

Rock Solid

Thursdays 7.45pm

Urban Saints

Saturdays 6.00pm

Altitude

Sundays during 10.30am

For more information about Youth groups, contact our Youth Director Neil



## Children's Sunday Groups during 10.30am service.

For more information about children & families at St Luke's,  
contact [children@stlukeswatford.org](mailto:children@stlukeswatford.org)

## Services in September to November

### 8:00am Holy Communion services

These will be held once a month (on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> September, Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> October and Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> November) in St Luke's chapel. These are a said Communion service and all are welcome.

### 10:30am Morning Service/ Communion Service

These are our main morning services, and are currently available live-streamed on YouTube. All are welcome, and there are usually children's groups provided as well as a crèche for younger ones. The service plan is below, but details may change:

September-21		Theme
5th	Morning Service	Visiting Preacher – Open Doors
12th	Family Communion	Back from Camp ( <i>Acts 14</i> )
19th	Morning Service	Alpha Launch Sunday/ "Try Church"
26th	Family Communion	Life Group Sunday/ <i>Nehemiah 1</i>
October-21		
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Morning Service	<i>Nehemiah 2</i>
10 <sup>th</sup>	Family Service	Harvest (Parade with uniformed groups)
17 <sup>th</sup>	Family Communion	Encountering the Presence of God (visiting preacher Keith Powell)
24 <sup>th</sup>	Morning Service	<i>Nehemiah 4</i>
31 <sup>st</sup>	Family Communion	<i>Nehemiah 5</i>
November-21		
7 <sup>th</sup>	Morning Communion	<i>Nehemiah 6</i>
14 <sup>th</sup>	Family Service	Remembrance (Parade with uniformed groups)
21 <sup>st</sup>	Morning Service	<i>Nehemiah 7</i>
28 <sup>th</sup>	Family Communion	<i>Nehemiah 8</i>

### 6:30pm Evening Worship/ Communion Services

These are quieter services, which are not live-streamed. The Bible reading and sermon are made available online later in the week. The service plan is below:

September-21		Theme
5th	Evening Communion	I am...the Alpha and Omega ( <i>Revelation 1:4-8 &amp; 22:12-17</i> )
12th	Evening Service	Circling in Prayer: Becoming a Circle-Maker
19th	Evening Communion	Circling in Prayer: Little people, big risks & huge circles
26th	Evening Service	Circling in Prayer: Praying Hard & Praying Through



## October-21

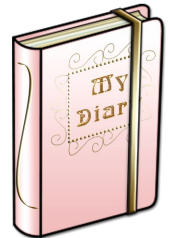
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Evening Service	Circling in Prayer: Praying is Planting
10 <sup>th</sup>	Evening Communion	<i>Nehemiah 3</i>
17 <sup>th</sup>	Evening Service	Healing Service with Anointing
24 <sup>th</sup>	Evening Communion	<i>TBC</i>
31 <sup>st</sup>	Evening Service	<i>TBC</i>

### 10am Tuesday Morning Holy Communion

We also have a weekly Communion at 10am on Tuesday mornings (it is a Service of the Word if the Vicar is unavailable). This is a lovely, reflective service with a couple of hymns, followed by a community tea and coffee.

Please do come along and join us for one of our services, we'd love to welcome you

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY



### September

- 3<sup>rd</sup> CAMEO with Open Doors Speaker  **Open Doors**
- 4<sup>th</sup> Open Doors Men's breakfast
- 5<sup>th</sup> Guest Speaker from Open Doors on Sunday morning
- 11<sup>th</sup> Bike n' Hike
- 11<sup>th</sup> Life Group Leader's training (am)
- 11<sup>th</sup> Simon Huggins Memorial Service (pm)
- 19<sup>th</sup> Alpha Launch Sunday
- 22<sup>nd</sup> Alpha Supper
- 25<sup>th</sup> Creative Space



### October

- 8<sup>th</sup> Cameo Film night
- 9<sup>th</sup> Kisumu Review at St Luke's (2pm for 2:30 start)
- 10<sup>th</sup> Harvest Sunday
- 16<sup>th</sup> } Weekend away and at home
- 17<sup>th</sup> }
- 25<sup>th</sup> Creative Space
- 30<sup>th</sup> Light Trail

### November

- 12<sup>th</sup> Christingle
- 14<sup>th</sup> Remembrance Sunday
- 18<sup>th</sup> Christmas Pudding Day (tbc)
- 20<sup>th</sup> Tearfund Big Quiz





# Toddlers

Thursday mornings  
In the Hall 9:30am

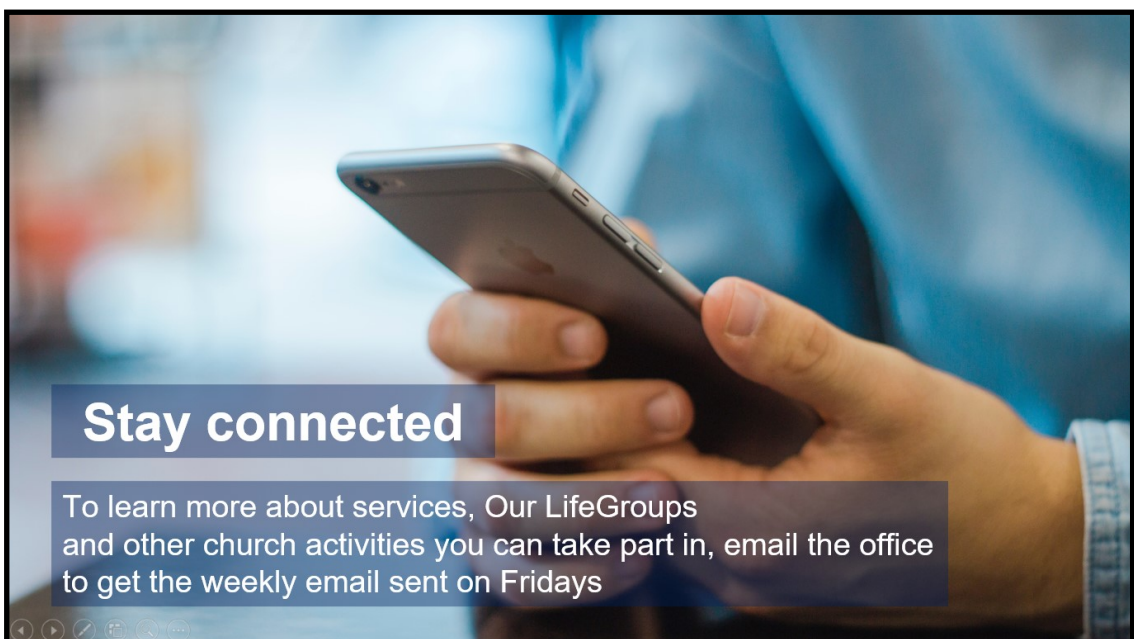
For further details contact Lydia  
([children@stlukeswatford.org](mailto:children@stlukeswatford.org))



# Urban Saints

Saturdays 6pm-7.30pm in Church  
For ages 7-11

For more details chat to Bill or Susan Miller



## Stay connected

To learn more about services, Our LifeGroups  
and other church activities you can take part in, email the office  
to get the weekly email sent on Fridays



## Partnership Fund Update

We have just received some pictures from the school headmaster, Rev Benon, showing the progress on the new teachers' accommodation block at Kamuganguzi School in Uganda. As you will remember, this project was the subject of our most recent Partnership Fund appeal. Currently the builders are fitting the shutters and plastering the inside, and it won't be long before it is ready for use - but already looks a vast improvement on the previous building!



Unfortunately, Ugandan schools are at the moment closed for a 60-day Covid lockdown so it will be a little while before any staff can move in. Rev Benon's main challenge is to decide which of the teachers will get to stay



in the accommodation as it can't accommodate all 27! He is running an application process and thinks the fairest way of deciding is to base it on the current commuting distance of each teacher. Please pray for wisdom for him as he makes these decisions.

Janet Hayes, the Director of our Partner organisation, Rafiki Thabo, says: "Thanks again for the support of all at St. Luke's for this transformative project".

**Bill Miller**





## Kisumu Children's Home (KC) Update

Well, I had the great pleasure of (in my imagination) 'sitting next' to my dear friend Philemon, the Manager, this week, having a chat just like the old days! He was in his KC office informing me of the latest news – good and bad and even sad perhaps.

The sad/bad is that Covid has hit very hard in Kenya and right now in Western Kenya, and in Kisumu! Positive news is that Philemon has had his second vaccination, mainly as he is curate at the Cathedral in Kisumu. Not because he is dealing with children! Sadly, he told me people are "dropping like flies". No vaccine now, lack of oxygen etc. We are so blessed here in UK, however much we complain.

My dear friend Joanne in Kisumu, who I used to work with, reiterated this week that she has returned to her house, where she feels safer. No vaccine for her sadly.

### Many changes for 'Homes' in Kenya

The government recently empowered a long-standing law that 'Homes' were to be closed, 'no longer needed', without perhaps realising the consequences of sending children home to poverty, extended family etc. It just may not work! As Phil said, "this creates more children on the streets and Kisumu has many more already". No doubt he has got to know them!

I have seen his giftings in the past, caring for these vulnerable children - they know each other by name and they love him! Thankfully, only a few 'Homes' to date have been closed and naturally a well-run 'Home' like KC, was not chosen – with the likelihood that those being sent home would still be cared for as community family. 'Homes' that are run as family based, with a Mama in charge of each small house, are not affected.

Unreachable children in their rural homes, are provided with food parcels and are checked on regularly. 29 of those living nearby, are continuing thankfully, at their



Tiengre Primary School and are being fed a daily lunch at KC. At least the matrons can keep a check on them.

KC staff are being kept busy by feeding their KC children and others, who the Headmistress has advised might go hungry due to extreme poverty. Now there are 80-100 children being fed daily at the 'Home'. No doubt there could be many more that need a daily meal.

One child, our dear Lillian, with the swollen eye due to Neurofibromatosis, lives near the KC Home with Mum and consequently is one of those being fed and cared for by Matron, Pamela. In recent times Pamela has escorted Lilian to Nairobi for medical care and operations. When Covid subsides, Lilian will return to Nairobi for further advice and care. She will clearly require further operations to improve this condition, in the near future.

The Kisumu team and UK trustees are together considering the way forward as they go into 'a new season' and progress through the best ways to utilise this well-built 'Home'. Consideration is being given into accommodation as a Christian guest house; IT training, plus other training and helping children who are in desperate need of protection, whether able or disabled. The Council was keen for KC to take in children at short notice who were in trouble or abused etc for short term support. The 'Home' would give excellent support doing this with the very caring matrons.

Meanwhile, self-sufficiency is on the agenda! There is now success in crop growing not only in the poly tunnel but also on the Kemri land not far away. So, there are 'greens' of various sorts to help feed the many children that come into the Home. A very healthy diet for all, certainly no fast food here!

Finally, if you would like to know more - the Annual Kisumu Review will be held live at St Luke's on the 9<sup>th</sup> October, God willing and keeping Covid at bay. It will start with a Welcome at 2pm, with refreshments and then commence at 2.30pm. Please pray for real progress to be made meantime, for an exciting 'new season' to take place at Kisumu Children, including changing lives of even more vulnerable children in the community.

*Jos Lawrance*

**If you would like to give by bank transfer the details are as follows:-**

Account name **PCC St Luke's Watford**

Sort Code **20-91-79** Account No **70687472**

*[Donations to the Thanksgiving Fund have same Account name,  
and sort code but the Account number is **13611779**]*

Reference state if the donation is for a particular appeal e.g. Santa hampers, Rebuild, Foodbank etc.

**Please remember to complete a Gift Aid as well if you are a Tax payer**



The Keswick Convention (KC) is a non-denominational annual gathering of evangelical Christians in the beautiful Cumbrian Lake District town of Keswick. It draws speakers and peoples from all over the world. It has been going since 1875 and is now held over 3 weeks in the summer and attracts about 5,000 people per week.



This year because of Covid-19 the numbers were restricted to about 1,900 per week and the KC was held for the first time on the site of the old pencil factory. Called The Derwent Project, this splendid location has extended the facilities adjacent to the Rawnsley site.



The Derwent Project provides an integrated site for future Conventions, a home for expanding teaching and training ministry and a resource for churches throughout the

region and across the UK. This will be a place for encouraging God's people around the rock-solid certainties of the Gospel, and will be open all the year round.

Funding is voluntary and a matter of faith. There is no compulsory charge for the KC, just an advisory sum of what it costs to put on. This allows people of limited means or none to be able to attend.



There are several meetings/seminars each day, the main ones one being the morning Bible Reading and the Evening Celebration. Paul Mallard - the pastor of Widcombe





Baptist Church in Bath – preached on Philippians for the morning Bible Reading.

The Evening Celebration had a variety of speakers – Jonathan Lamb, Gavin Calver, Rico Tice, Alasdair Paine and Andrew Sach – preaching on the Psalms.

We have been to several conferences over the years and they never disappoint. Not only a time of fellowship with other like-minded people but also a wonderful time to recharge our spiritual batteries and a feeling of being close to the Lord in a lovely part of the world He created.

*Philip & Esther Meager  
July 2021*



## NEW WINE ONLINE

When I first joined St Luke's it wasn't long before I heard mention of this slightly mysterious 'New Wine.' Ricky, just my friend at the time, kept saying "You should come along." Others mentioned it too and being ever suspicious of new things I found myself Googling just what this 'New Wine' was (after all I don't drink any wine!) The New Wine website didn't provide much additional detail- it spoke of the vision (see below) but didn't say much about what actually happened at New Wine...

### LOCAL CHURCHES CHANGING NATIONS

*'And no one pours new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise, the wine will burst the skins, and both the wine and the wineskins will be ruined. No, they pour new wine into new wineskins.'* Mark 2:22

*'Be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.'* Ephesians 5:18-20

*New Wine's primary focus is on enabling church leaders to communicate effectively the good news of God's promises in this generation. Being a Christian isn't a life to be lived alone, but within effective relationships and family. The New Wine network is designed to nurture these relationships, connecting church leaders to equip, inspire and encourage each other to serve their churches and communities.*

<https://www.new-wine.org/about/>

So it was with some trepidation that I joined Ricky and others from St Luke's at New Wine for the first time in 2018. Within hours of arriving at Shepton Mallet I knew it had been a risk worth taking and I've attended each year since then, including at the new site in Peterborough.

For those of you who have never attended New Wine I'll tell you a little about it to dispel a bit of that New Wine mystery...

...Essentially, it's a gathering of lots of different church communities who gather together over a week to worship God. Worship styles vary and are respected. Church communities, like St Luke's, are given a space for camping together. Some do choose to camp, but others take the luxury route and stay in local accommodation. Whether you camp or not, everyone gathers together at lunch time and at dinner time with the other St Luke's attendees. There is a group of people assigned to cook and wash up every day and food is served and eaten and there are wonderful opportunities to get to know other members of our own church.

There are services, talks, seminars and social opportunities throughout the day and evening. As a St Luke's community, we generally choose to go to the morning and evening worship services together and then outside of that groups split off to attend the talk/seminar that interests them. These are all spread out over a large show ground so you can be guaranteed that you'll work off the delicious food you're being fed at every meal.

Practicalities aside, New Wine for me is a gathering of Christians from across the country - I found it inspiring to see such a large gathering of diverse but at the same time like-minded people celebrating their love of God and in many cases recommitting to it. A love of God draws this community together but within that I found there to be a whole range of difference too. At New Wine there are people with different styles of worshipping God and different opinions on different subjects. While I am comfortable with most, once or twice opinions offered have challenged me. I believe this challenge is healthy - it has helped me to develop my own faith. I have found New Wine to be an exceptionally good 'special time' with God and his community and I've come to rely on this time to reaffirm and recommit to him.

This year we had hoped to join New Wine in real life, but COVID-19 made that impossible for the second year in a row. So instead, between the 29<sup>th</sup> of July and the 3<sup>rd</sup> of August, Ricky, myself and a group of others joined the New Wine online community right here in Watford, thanks to John and Melanie Sills who arranged it for us. It was wonderful to resume the element of eating and fellowshiping together as a church community and while for me the online format wasn't as compelling as being there in real life, the testimonies of some were powerfully compelling. And because I'm not the only one who attended, and everyone has a whole range of views here are some of the other attendees' comments below...

*"A great combination of teaching, worship and fellowship over shared meals." MC*

*"Inspiring and encouraging teaching to prepare us as we ease out of lockdown." DC*

*"Very inspiring speakers, a sense of God's presence with us, especially in sung worship." AM*

*"Great worship, teaching and looking forward to next year in Peterborough." MN*

*"Some very powerful testimonies of God's intervening." JAC*

*"A big thank you to John and Melanie and all for organizing us. The highlight of our August!" WD*

*"Amazing testimonies from some speakers. Lovely eating with others." RS*

*"Really special. Some very moving and powerful testimonies and so good to be back eating with friends." CD*

*"Great fellowship, abundant good food, passionate worship and an excellent teaching programme with Bible verses, practical advice and stunning testimonies." MS*

*"A wonderful five days meeting Jesus, marvelling in God's Word and sharing with one another. Roll on next year in Peterborough." JS*

*"Thank you, John and Melanie, for organising New Wine in church. It has been a great experience to share fellowship and learn more about our faith." PW*

*"We loved United 2019, were disappointed at being on our own for United 2020 and are really grateful to Melanie and John for organising United 2021. Really looking forward to 2022 and have booked our hotel already." MF*



The poster features the text 'NEW WINE 2022' in large yellow letters at the top, with 'UNITED' in large white letters below it. The background shows a crowd of people at night. Below the text, it says 'at the EAST OF ENGLAND SHOWGROUND, PETERBOROUGH'. There is a blue tent on the left and two 'ARENA' signs on the right. At the bottom left, it says 'FLASH SALE NOW OPEN at new-wine.org'. In the center, it says '23 JULY - 28 JULY 2022'. To the right, it says 'Book by 15 September 2021 for best prices' and 'or see John and Melanie Sills (john.sills5@gmail.com)'. There is a circular logo on the bottom right that says 'Uniting thousands in worship one'.

I hope this article has dispelled some of the mystery for those who haven't ever joined, and I hope it has persuaded some of you to join us next year (with or without your tent.)

**Nikki Shome**



## Candle Project

To mark the end of the official lockdown, a group of volunteers from St Luke's delivered a scented candle to every household in our parish. With it came an invitation to our service of 'Reflection, Thanksgiving and Hope'.

The leaflet with the candle offered people a chance to reflect on loss, give thanks for the mercies of the past year and to say a prayer of hope for the future.

The Service of Reflection on a Sunday Evening was attended by a few people who didn't normally come to St Luke's and had the highest evening service attendance at St Luke's since March 2020.

We have had lots of positive feedback from the local community, and have been featured on the Diocese of St Albans website too!

Thank you again to everyone who helped with delivering the candles, for your time and effort. We hope that the relationships we have begun to build with this project (and the other projects through the year) will continue to strengthen our links with the local community.

## New Hope



**New Hope**

New Hope ([newhope.org.uk](http://newhope.org.uk)) is a Christian charity in Watford (supported by St. Luke's) which has been supporting people experiencing homelessness in the town for over 30 years.

Founded by three local Christians, including Dr Tim Robson OBE, the charity now helps approximately 600 individuals per year through a variety of services, including:

- street outreach,
- humanitarian support,
- advice to people threatened with homelessness,
- a range of accommodation services (currently 53 beds per night),
- a horticultural therapy service,
- and a tenancy sustainment team.

We provide bespoke care with patience, compassion and kindness showing God's love to all. A service user recently commented: *"[New Hope] actually has a thought process of where we are going, puts hope in a human being, treats you like a human being, you see the rebirth of humans."*

Many service users return to New Hope as volunteers and staff members, keen to give back and to help others.

Many people at St Luke's are involved in New Hope, notably Dr Tim Robson who is a

trustee and Polly Odbert, who is the volunteer manager of our charity shop in Queens Road.

If you would like to receive the monthly prayer diary or any other communications, please email Rebecca at [rpalmer@newhope.org.uk](mailto:rpalmer@newhope.org.uk)

**Rebecca Palmer**

*Fundraising and Communications Manager*



You are invited to

### **New Hope's celebration service**

- either in person or online

We will look back at our response to the pandemic and share our Roots strategy. The programme will also feature worship and prayer. Our patron, the Rev Tim Roberts, will share a few words on our scripture for the year.

*"But blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in him. They will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. it does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit." Jeremiah 17:7-8*

**In person:** Monday 27th September at the Wellspring Church Centre, Watford, WD17 2AH starting at 7.30pm. (Please note there is no parking at the Wellspring Church Centre)

**Online:** This event will also be live-streamed. Please check [newhope.org.uk/roots](https://newhope.org.uk/roots) for all the details or send me an email at [rpalmer@newhope.org.uk](mailto:rpalmer@newhope.org.uk)

This event is **open to all** so please do tell your friends who may be interested in the work of New Hope.

Kind regards,

**Rebecca Palmer**

*Fundraising and Communications Manager*

## News from some of Our Mission Partners



### Message from the Gelsthorpes in Japan:

Thank you very much to all of you for praying for us. Yes - it was a disappointment that so much work had gone into Olympic outreach and then it was so different to expected. We are just putting the prayer letter together now and we'll send it soon.

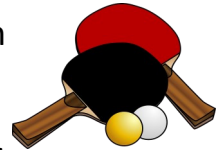
This is an article that Mark did for OMF Japan social media:

#### **Do you play table tennis?**

We live in rural northern Japan where we run a small Japanese church. Sometimes people ask us, "What do you do all day as a missionary?"

It's a good question. One of the answers is that we spend a lot of time thinking about how we can meet people outside the church and how we can deepen relationships with those in the church. We have grand projects like community cafes, Christian Basics [\[WM1\]](#) Courses, English classes, and video games events. God, in his kindness, uses all of these to build and strengthen relationships, but often he surprises us with what he uses to bring people together.

When we moved into our new church building last year, we bought a table tennis table to put into one of our meeting rooms. So, we often asked people, "Do you *takyu*?" (Do you play table tennis?)



Sometimes a middle-aged man, whilst cutting a serve into the far corner, would talk about what it means to join a church. On another day an older lady from the congregation would show surprising skill with her backhand whilst getting to know one of our teenagers better. One young man feels more open to talk as he wipes the floor with us missionaries at the table. Elementary school children pour out hundreds of balls and laugh as they bounce them in handfuls off the table.

How encouraging that the work of the church, that is building and growing gospel-centred relationships, can be done whilst playing a game. Did we expect to see God growing his church whilst we get surprisingly good at table tennis? No, but we have learned something important: God can use simple, unexpected things to grow his church.

What is there in your life that God could use in Japan to grow his church?

By Mark, an OMF missionary

***Thank you and God bless you,  
Mark Gelsthorpe***

### A few prayer requests from Sally Miller in Lancaster (Lancaster Centre Team Leader with Friends International)

- Give thanks for the appointment of Skyler as a Staff Worker in Lancaster (essentially filling my old role). Please pray for him as he raises funds and applies



for his visa.

- Please pray for planning for next year - please pray for wisdom as we finalise plans and put together volunteer teams. Please pray that we would be able to put together flexible events that will work no matter what happens next year! And pray that we would see many students coming along.
- I have recently completed a Mental Health First Aid course - with mental health problems increasingly rapidly amongst students over the past year, this is likely going to become an important aspect of ministry so please pray that this would be really helpful and that it would aid my ministry over the coming year.
- Please continue to pray for us as a centre in Lancaster as we continue to raise funds, particularly after the recent staff changeovers with me taking over as Centre Team Leader and Skyler as a Staff Worker.
- Give thanks for a good break over the Summer, with holidays with family and friends.



And tell everyone thank you very much for praying! I really appreciate it!

**Sally Miller**

**Friends International**

[Sally.Miller@friendsinternational.uk](mailto:Sally.Miller@friendsinternational.uk)

## Flowers in Church

During lockdown, our chief flower arranger Myrtle, stepped down from her role. We have been very lucky that Geoff has felt able to step in and do some of the flower arranging for us. In September, we have been blessed to have two special flower arrangements.



For Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> September, the flowers will be for a wedding which is taking place at St Luke's.

On Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> September, the flowers will be donated in loving memory of Frederick Atkinson, who was a parishioner of St Luke's, by his wife Christine in honour of his birthday on the 16<sup>th</sup>.

If you might be interested in donating some flowers, or in helping with the arrangements, please contact the office. We would be happy to organise some mentoring, so you aren't on your own.

## What Fun you can have with Felt!

**Creative Space** (CS) for Hard-working Women (i.e., not retired) had its first outreach event at the end of July. We enjoyed a Continental breakfast, then a morning of crafting together. Under the skill and supervision of Val Poore, 26 of us were shown how to use wool tops, fleece and needles and we made an array of pretty and practical bowls. We took the skills and equipment home to carry on and experiment with more dry felting.



**Creative Space**, which started in the Vicarage with crochet evenings in late 2019, has continued in 2020/21 on Whatsapp, through sharing photos of crafty projects, ideas and inspirations. So in late July 2021, it was so lovely to be together in person seeing one another, chatting and learning a new craft. We had a most enjoyable time!

A programme of events continues this autumn/winter when there will be demonstrations and the chance to learn the crafts of paper collage, still-life drawing and card-making. The idea is to invite friends who don't yet come to church. After refreshments, there is a short light talk on a theme where God gets a mention, then 1 ½ hours of fun craft.

**Next events** are all at St Luke's Church:

- |          |  |
|----------|--|
| Saturday | 25th September 9.30am to 12 noon (Paper Collage)   |
| Monday   | 25th October 7.30pm to 9.30pm (Still life drawing) |
| Saturday | 27th November 9.30am to 12 noon                    |

(Card-making for Christmas)









# CHILDREN'S HOLIDAY CLUB

TUESDAY 27TH AND  
WEDNESDAY 28TH JULY

## GOING BANANAS!

### Going Bananas Holiday Club

Early in the summer holidays we set sail to Banana Island! Over two days we played games, sang songs, got artsy & crafty, and looked at a couple of people from the Bible who went bananas for God – Noah and Elijah. Noah built the ark even when there was no water around, and Elijah tipped water all over his bonfire to reveal the power of God. It was a really special time watching the children have fun, engage and ask questions and we all learnt more about God's character. We learnt of God's infinite love for us, his mercy of second chances, and that with him anything is possible!



Children sometimes say and do the craziest things without any fear of judgement - spending time with them was a real encouragement to become more child-like as adults as we step out in faith and do things for God that may seem a little strange to other people. Go bananas for Jesus!

Many thanks to all the volunteers that helped make it happen and made it so enjoyable for the children.

**Lydia Davies**  
**Children & Family Team Leader**



## Urban Saints Houseparty at Bethany School

As I write this, Neil and I are currently at a boarding school in Kent surrounded by young people. Don't worry! We aren't being held hostage against our will! For this is a take-over of all the brilliant facilities here at Bethany School as we help to lead an Urban Saints summer camp, now in its 103<sup>rd</sup> year.

We've been having lots of fun in the sun with activities, jokes, and laughter and have been challenging the campers to go deeper in their faith with God. It's such a joy to be back together again after last year's online virtual camp.

Our theme for the week is based upon a line from the song *When the Music Fades* - 'I'll bring you more than a song' as we look at why God is worthy of our praise and how we can worship God in all areas of our lives. Even though, by the time you read this, camp will be over – please do continue to pray to for our young people that they will not easily forget the things God has done for them but hold firm in their faith, keep their eyes fixed on Jesus and be a light to others.

**Lydia Davies**

**Children & Family Team Leader**

## InterAction



Interaction camps are bilingual, residential weeks for teenagers that take place in France, Belgium and Germany. I have been involved in the French version, run by the French Scripture Union and Crosslinks, over 8 Summers since 2009. It takes place at a chateau in the Pays de la Loire, set in large grounds, with a lake, basketball court and football pitch: ideal surroundings for a week of fun, fellowship and faith!

We are very grateful to God that for the past two years the camp has been able to take place in person despite the ever-changing restrictions. In normal times, the camp would have both British and French participants, but it has necessarily been very French-dominated during the pandemic. In fact, the usually large party travelling from St Pancras on the Eurostar this year consisted only of me, although I was joined by a few other British leaders at the chateau. Unlike most potential UK participants, I was just old enough to have had my second jab in time and thus to avoid the need to quarantine on arrival (and thankfully the rules changed the day before my return to ensure I was spared that fate in the UK too)!

For the last two years, I have been helping to lead the team of student-aged





Animefs: animateurs en formation (leaders in training), who this year were entirely French except for one Portuguese girl. Several of the team were former campers and three of them were in the dorm group I led 7 years ago, so it is great to see how they have grown spiritually in that time. Camp is a definite highlight of the year for them (as it is for me!) and they arrive each year full of questions and an appetite to learn from in-depth Bible studies: something to which several have limited access during the year. It is a privilege to be able to support them, and this year we had wonderful times studying Titus together. The Holy Spirit was at work throughout the week, and many testified to it having been a spiritually significant time for them.

As well as taking part in the spiritual programme, the Animefs are responsible for keeping the site clean and doing the washing up, as well as helping the leaders to run various games and activities. This year we were blessed with an incredibly harmonious team and it was inspiring to see how they worked with such joy and servant-heartedness.



Due to a smaller number of leaders than usual this year, we had just one main meeting a day, but we still managed to do a whistle-stop Bible overview across the week. I gave the last talk, on the resurrection and the great commission, from Matthew 28, and it was amazing to be able to share that message of hope with the whole camp before we headed home. It seemed even more poignant this year due to the fact that Edward Nelson, who relaunched the camp 15 years ago and whose family is heavily

involved in it, died in a tragic accident just after camp ended last year. Edward was a visionary church planter in Paris and someone I admired greatly having attended the congregation he led when I lived in France.

Like the Animefs, many of the campers have limited or no involvement in faithful churches during the year, so camp is a precious opportunity to present the teaching of the Bible to them. The leadership is careful not to do this in a way that exerts undue pressure, but to give them time to consider things and to leave the outcome to God. Each year we pray that he would establish the work of our hands and looking back over the years it is amazing to see how he has done so.

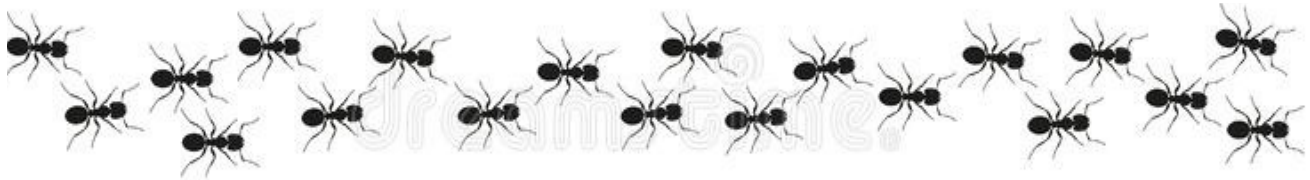
It is also very much a priority to give the campers the best summer holiday we can and it is always a week full of smiles and laughter. This year we had excursions to a paintball centre and trampoline park, as well as many games on site. Leaders also lead workshops according to their passions, so of course I have offered a maths session for the last few years! Given a few prodigious mathematicians attend it can be struggle to find a topic sufficiently challenging for them that I can explain in French, but this year we ended up

venturing into Cantor's theory of infinities!

The other distinctive of Interaction camps is the bilingual element. Sadly, opportunities for the usual interaction between French and English speakers was limited this year, but all talks and announcements were translated into the other language and a language café was held for those wanting to practise their English. Hopefully next year the fully international feel of the camps will return!

I am very grateful to God for the chance to be involved in the camp again this year, despite all the barriers, and for the way he blessed the week. I know several members of St Luke's have been praying for the venture too, so thank you very much indeed for the part you are playing in supporting of the cause of the gospel in France.

*Phil Matthews*



### **A Quote From Sir David Attenborough**

If you collect 100 black ants and 100 fire ants  
and put them in a glass jar, nothing will happen.

But if you take the jar, shake it violently  
and leave it on the table,  
the ants will start killing each other.

Red believes that black is the enemy,  
while black believes that red is the enemy,  
when the real enemy is the person who shook the jar.

The same is true in society:

Men vs Women

Black vs White

Faith vs Science

Young vs Old

Etc ...

Before we fight each other,  
we must ask ourselves:

**'Who shook the jar?'**









## International Gathering

An August Sunday afternoon in the Vicarage Garden saw a vibrant International Gathering celebrating our differences in culture and background. We had an amazing spread of food from different nations, we played World dictionary and chatted together.

There were people there from every continent (except Antarctica) and we got to know each other better. After so long apart, a social gathering was most welcome and the fact that we had sunshine and no rain was a bonus.

We hope to do it again another time next year - God willing.

*Pam Norman*



# alternatives

Pregnancy Crisis & Support Centre

Your local pregnancy crisis and support centre is very busy and working hard towards our mission statement of ***'offering life-changing emotional and practical support to anyone facing pregnancy-related challenges'***

The pandemic has hit ante-natal and post-natal care quite badly with many families not getting the support they normally would at this important time in their lives and so our services are needed more than ever.

We offer emotional support through one-to-one counselling; we have 9 counsellors and in the past year have given over 2,000 counselling hours of support via phone and video calls whilst not able to meet clients in person. We have a long waiting list and demand as we struggle to meet the high demand with limited funding and resources.

We offer Baby Boxes to mums-to-be in need of practical support – the boxes become baby's first bed and we fill them with clothes, nappies, blankets and other essentials for families in need. We give an average of 2 boxes per week.

Our Mother & Baby Charity shops in Watford and Hemel Hempstead are full of bargains and are busy places, offering good quality items at affordable prices for local families.

We have survived the pandemic thanks to some grants and by making use of the furlough scheme and we continue to strive to support people through all the different aspects of pregnancy and pregnancy loss.

Our greatest need is for regular funding- £20 per month could pay for a counselling session and make a world of difference to someone. Shop volunteers are always welcome too.

Full details of our charity are on our website [www.alternativeswatford.co.uk](http://www.alternativeswatford.co.uk)



*This is our wonderful team of counsellors at a recent training day held at St Luke's Church.*

**THANK YOU TO  
EVERYONE AT  
ST LUKE'S CHURCH  
FOR YOUR ONGOING  
SUPPORT AND PRAYERS**

***Angela Such***  
**CEO**



## Rotas

Please let the office know when you feel safe to come back onto the rota and we will be happy to welcome you back.

Newcomers to the rotas also welcome, please let us know.

One event for your diary in the autumn...  
is our away and at home weekend,

**Saturday 16<sup>th</sup>/Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> October**

We will be going to Hope Latimer for the Saturday,  
there will be youth and children's work provided  
as well as times of  
fellowship,  
worship and  
teaching for all.

The Reverend Keith Powell  
will be our guest preacher for the weekend,  
as he is our new advisor  
to the Mission Advisory Group.

Keith is the Diocesan Renewal Advisor  
for the Bath and Wells diocese  
and he has a prophetic ministry



An organisation that supports mothers with young babies  
A nappy and sling library for those who want to try out  
reusable items.

Drop in sessions @ St Luke's on alternate Thursdays  
at 10:15



## The DOVE

This quiet, unassuming bird has played major roles in Biblical history - as a messenger for Noah in Genesis, and as a physical representation of God himself in the Gospels. The word "dove" is used as an endearing term, murmured by the sweethearts in the Songs of Solomon, and as one of the names for Israel (Ephraim) in Hosea (7v11). The Psalmist looks to the dove to exclaim his longing for freedom "*Oh for the wings of a dove!*" (Ps 55 v 6 )



### Read Genesis 8 verses 1 - 22

The first mention of a dove in the Bible is in this passage. As the waters of the great flood begin to recede, a female dove is released by Noah to help him judge whether it is safe to exit the ark.

**Imagine:** After 150 days in a dark musty cage, a man reaches in and takes you out and up to a window. Light and fresh air greet you. You are released from his grip and fly away, soaring high, stretching your wings, free! But there is nowhere to land, so you return and the man "reaches his hand out to you and brings you back into the ark". A week later, you are released once more. Plants are now growing and you find an olive branch to take back to your master who seems pleased. Seven more days and you fly again, this time finding somewhere else to rest, there are trees to perch on, a cave to make your nest, so you don't return to the ark.

This was a sign to Noah - he used a dove to give him hope that life was springing up and things would be normal again. Hope and freedom lie ahead.

The dove with an olive branch in its beak is an internationally recognised sign of peace and has its origin in this Genesis account. In early Christianity, it depicted peace of the soul and peace with God. It has even entered our language to represent peace between nations and people.

### Consider: Is there anyone you need to offer an olive branch of peace?

The first instance of the sacrifice of doves was when Noah, with his family, animals and birds, had disembarked. He built an altar and used doves as a way to thank God for saving them. This began a tradition of sacrificial offerings to God.

### Read Luke 2 vs 22 to 40

There are doves in the account when Mary and Joseph took Jesus, then just 40 days old, to the temple in Jerusalem. These birds were an integral part of Jewish religious life, and the poor were permitted to offer a pair of doves (or pigeons) if they could not afford a goat (Lev 1 v 14 and 5 v 7). Jesus' parents fulfilled this required sacrifice, as part of the law at the time, during the ceremony of cleansing and the commitment of

their first-born child to God. They may have taken two doves with them or purchased them in the temple courts. As an adult, Jesus would later kick over the chairs of the dove sellers in his anger at their extortion (Mark 11 v 15). Perhaps a sign that soon there would no longer be any need for animal or bird sacrifice because Jesus would go on to make the ultimate once-for-all offering of his life, to reunite humanity with God.

### **Read Luke 3 vs 21-22**

The first event recorded of Jesus as an adult is his baptism. As Jesus comes up out of the waters of the River Jordan, John the Baptist witnesses heaven opening. A dove comes down and alights on Jesus. This dove is the Holy Spirit “in bodily form,” visible proof to John that Jesus is the Messiah. Why did the Holy Spirit not appear as an eagle, a raven, or a sparrow? What is special about a dove that God would choose it as a physical representation of Himself?



The dove is a meek, gentle, yet wild bird. It speaks with a soft cooing sound, perhaps showing us that God speaks in hushed tones, needing from us an inclined ear and intent focus to hear Him. As we look back to Noah’s dove, the Spirit is also one who guides us, signals freedom and brings peace.

**Imagine:** A dove flies down and lands on you. The fragility of this soft, featherweight creature delicately rests on your shoulder. Do you smile in welcome feeling privileged, afraid to move lest you startle it, or do you shoo it away?

**Consider:** Is your attitude to the Holy Spirit one of welcome? Do you listen carefully to his quiet voice?

**Activity for the day:** Imagine a dove perching on your shoulder all day through. See it as an assurance of God’s constant presence to guide you and give you peace.

**Further study:** Jesus’ description of a dove in Matthew 10 v 16. “O for the wings of a dove” in Psalm 55 v 6.

**Pam Norman**

## **St Luke’s Covid-19 Emergency Fund**

If anyone has any needs caused by the Pandemic, or knows of people who need help, and a one-off gift would be useful, please contact the vicar or a churchwarden and we will try to help.

## Children's Page

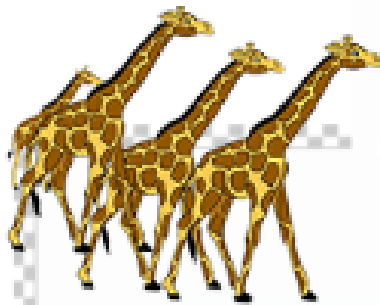
Colour in this picture





## Read about Noah in the Bible

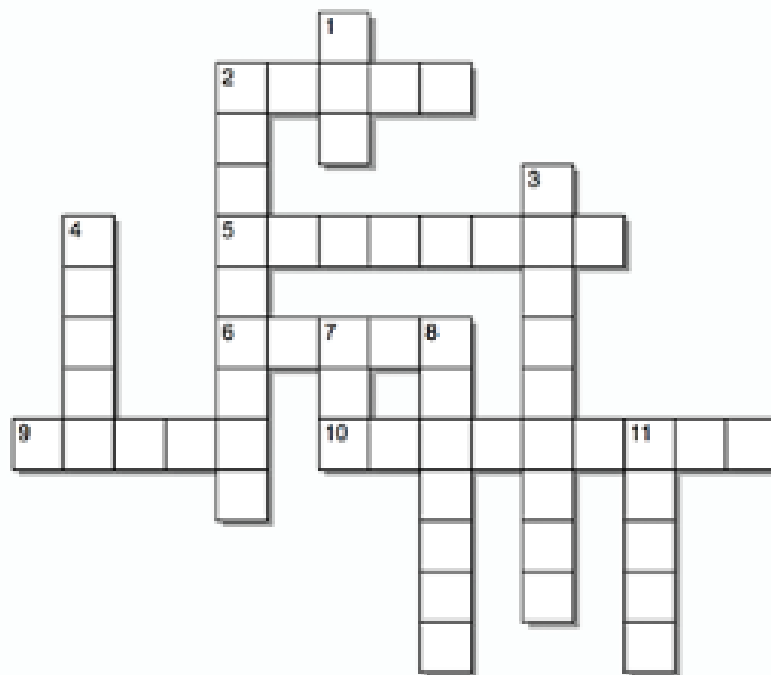
Genesis chapters 7 and 8



### Bible Pathway Adventures

CROSSWORD

## NOAH'S ARK



### ACROSS

- 2) "The flood continued \_\_\_\_ days on the earth." (Genesis 7:17 ESV)
- 5) "The \_\_\_\_\_ were on the earth in those days." (Genesis 6:4 ESV)
- 6) Noah made an \_\_\_\_\_ when he left the Ark. (Genesis 8:20 ESV)
- 9) On the Ark, there were \_\_\_\_\_ pairs of all clean animals. (Genesis 7:2 ESV)
- 10) What type of leaf did the dove bring back? (Genesis 8:11 ESV)

### DOWN

- 1) Yah (God) told Noah to build an \_\_\_\_\_. (Genesis 6:14 ESV)
- 2) "The \_\_\_\_\_ of the great deep broke forth..." (Genesis 7:11 ESV)
- 3) Noah was a \_\_\_\_\_ man. (Genesis 6:9 ESV)
- 4) How many sons did Noah have? (Genesis 6:10 ESV)
- 7) On the Ark, there were \_\_\_\_\_ of every kind of unclean animal. (Genesis 7:8 ESV)
- 8) A sign that Yah (God) will never flood the earth again. (Genesis 9:13 ESV)
- 11) How many people entered the Ark? (Genesis 7:7 ESV)

For free Bible resources and Teacher Packs including coloring pages, worksheets, quizzes and more visit our website at: [biblepathwayadventures.com](http://biblepathwayadventures.com)

The next edition of St. Luke's News will be in at the end of October. You are welcome to submit an article, of not more than 450 words, by the 22nd October to be considered for the next magazine.

Please email articles to the editor, Margaret Forester or to the Church Office

If you wish to receive St. Luke's News regularly, either delivered to your door or emailed, please contact the Church Office (246161). Large print is also available. Alternatively, please let us know if you no longer wish to receive it.

The magazine appears on our website, [www.stlukeswatford.org](http://www.stlukeswatford.org)

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	Pam Norman
	Wendy Somerville
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Youth Director	Neil Brookes
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	John Williamson
PCC Lay Chair	Richard Waddington
PCC Treasurer	Paul Evans
PCC Secretary	John Sills
Safeguarding Officer	Mary Bowen

Please leave a message for any of the above on the Church Office answerphone -  
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