

*A Place of Peace
and Reconciliation*

**Harvest 2026
Issue 33**

To find all the latest information about Sunday services and mid-week activities at St Andrew's, visit our website or Facebook page. The address is at the bottom of page 23.

We welcome items for future editions. They should be sent to John Daymond at: john.daymond1@btinternet.com

Deadline for the Christmas Edition is Sunday, 25 October 2026

*Suggested
contribution 75p*



*Praise God for the harvest of orchard and field,
Praise God for the people who gather their yield,
The long hours of labour, the skills of a team,
The patience of science, the power of machine.*

*Praise God for the harvest of mercy and love
From leaders and peoples who struggle and serve
For patience and kindness, that all may be led
To freedom and justice, and all may be fed.*

Brian Wren

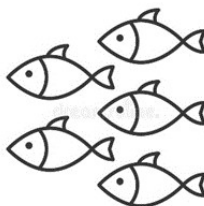
**Praise God for the harvest of science and skill
The urge to discover, create and fulfil.**

A Shoal of Prayer



*Rev'd Canon
Dr Edmund
Newey
writes:*

At the Worship All Together service on the first Sunday of August, Alison and James had the beautiful idea of inviting the congregation to pray for the children and young people of our church. If you were there, you'll no doubt remember writing down your prayers and hopes on a small cut-out fish like this:



Thank you so much for offering these prayers. Over the past few weeks we have spent time reading and offering them in a variety of different settings: at Morning Prayer; at the Children's and Families' Ministry Group, and at the weekly staff meeting.

Space doesn't allow all of them to be included, but I want to share a sample here and give thanks for the inter-generational community of our church where we can truly be a blessing to one another:

- That they never lose their wonder and innocence
 - That they may know God's love is always here
 - That they may be kind to one another, sharing what they have
- For confidence in their faith
 - That they would grow in the wisdom and confidence of the Lord
 - May we and they reach out non-judgementally and in hope
- Time, support and care, kindness, listening
 - Generating ideas
 - Tenacity
- That they may know love
 - Father, take these little people into your heart; look out for them always
 - That steps are taken to mitigate climate change

- God bless every one of them to be in peace and guide them to the right path
 - ‘Suffer the little children to come unto me’ – all children are God’s children
 - Thank you for wonder and playfulness
- Love and curiosity
 - Knowledge
 - Faith in Jesus
- Respect, tolerance, kindness and peace-making
 - May they know that in the darkest of times God is always there
 - That they believe they have worth and live in communion
- Safety, spiritual learning. Community, harmony and peace
 - May they see, enjoy and wonder at the marvels of this world ever day
 - Good, loving friends, parents, carers, teachers
- Let them be used by the Lord to disseminate the gospel
 - Teaching the love of Christ
 - Sharing and enjoying God’s word through singing and music
- To grow stronger, have faith, do good and love their parents

What a blessing this shoal of prayer is! May what we ask in faith be acceptable to our heavenly Father. And may all of us together be drawn up into the miraculous catch of God’s salvation:

Jesus said, ‘Throw the net to the right side of the boat and see what happens’. The disciples did what he said. All of a sudden there were so many fish in it, they weren’t strong enough to pull it in.

(John 21: 6 The Message)

2026 Festival of Christmas Trees

2026 marks the 26th year of The St Andrews’ Festival of Christmas Trees. Last year saw a total of 50 decorated trees on display, provided by and representing local organisations and charities. Each tree was different yet decorated to a common theme. The festival has raised funds for charity over the years and will continue to do so this year.

Each year the trees are judged by The Mayor of Rugby and a public vote also takes place for separate categories. The theme for this year is: ‘All Creatures Great and Small’. So put on your thinking caps for your designs.

Should you or an organisation you know be interested in decorating a tree for this year, contact joanna.bryan@rugbychurch.org.uk and make a note of the set up day – Thursday 26 November.

Thank you to all who will have supported the festival in our past 26 years and will in our future years.

News From The Towers



*Christine Homer,
Bell Captain,*

We have had a fairly quiet time over the summer. Unlike some other local towers, we have not cancelled any practices due to excess heat, but we have often been low in numbers as most of us have been on holiday, sometimes several at the same time. Also, one of our band has been seriously ill in hospital for several weeks: fortunately he seems to be recovering now, but it will be some time before he's well enough to join us again.

We have been ringing on the 5 rather more than was usual, due to the low numbers. This has included some Mondays, as the scaffolding on the church has prevented direct access to the NE tower from outside, so we used our Sunday method of meeting in the back of the church and using the 5 when we did not have enough ringers for the 8.

The good news is that the broken windows on the NE tower stairs were repaired while the scaffolding was in place, although to our surprise, they said they were replacing it from the inside staircase – when we tried to get a quote for that we were told they could only be replaced from outside. They have been broken for several years, we think someone with a BB gun used them for target practice! Something to note if anyone is thinking of removing the protective screens on the main windows ...

On the 4th-6th September, the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers (CCCBR) held its AGM weekend based in Rugby. The main event of the meeting was in the Benn Hall on the Saturday, but on the Friday evening over 90 delegates signed up for ringing, so we we're very busy! There was also be a peal attempt on the Sunday afternoon. The CCCBR represents "*all who ring bells in the English tradition with rope and wheel*". The Coventry Diocesan Guild, which includes the Rugby area, is one of the Council's affiliated societies. With its other member societies, the CCCBR covers all parts of the British Isles, as well as centres of ringing abroad, including Australia, New Zealand, Canada, the USA, South Africa and Italy.

On the morning of Saturday 12th September, we are doing West tower tours as part of the Heritage weekend. This will include seeing the ringing room and bell chamber - and a visit to the clock (for those who are happy to go up the ladder). If you missed it and would like to see what is up there, we could arrange to show you upstairs after a Sunday 10:30 service.

'This is the Moment'

*Rev'd Peter
Beresford
writes:*

As we think afresh of 'Harvest' we cannot avoid reflecting on how early the harvest has needed to be gathered in this year. While the heat has enabled the farmers to gather in their crops earlier than usual their yields are down. The price of the food in our shops is, consequently, likely to rise.

For those farmers with livestock some of the farmer's precious supplies of hay and straw are needing to be used now rather than retained for use during the long winter months. During the recent heatwave there has also been the very real threat of fire on farmland as well as on precious bio-diverse woodland and heathland. One farm close to our home village of Long Lawford has recently suffered a major fire.

This coming summer is expected to be even hotter than this year so the farming community (and indeed all of us) need to think carefully about how best to adapt to the changing climate. The bigger question, of course, is how all of us worldwide adapt to the reality of climate change. It is our children and grandchildren who will need to deal with the effects of our current action — or indeed our inaction. For their sake NOW is the time for us to take the necessary steps to 'grasp this nettle', and reduce our dependency on fossil fuels. 'This is the moment'.

Climate change: If there is one person who, at the age of 100, continues to challenge us to remain engaged and hopeful in this situation it is, of course, Sir David Attenborough. Bless him for his knowledge and understanding of the natural world in all its beauty and fragility — and bless him for his wisdom, and for his humanity.

My wife Charlotte and I have recently come across a song based on words written by David Attenborough. The composer, Brian Beresford, happens to be a distant cousin of mine. He asked David's permission to use his words before recording it. The song is entitled: 'This is the moment'.

'There is a moment when we can change the world and make it better: THIS is the moment.' The song is sung with passion by a children's choir. I encourage you to listen to this little song for yourselves. The composer — and Sir David himself — is eager that it can be shared as widely as possible — especially in and through schools. You can find it here: <https://youtu.be/dZNPdG3MQsE> Piano and instrumental parts are available on line.

Harvest: as Christian folk may we be among the first to celebrate the rhythm of the seasons of the natural world, and express our thanks to our hard working farming community. But may we also be among the first to grapple with others about the effects of climate change. It is now a luxury to simply leave such questions and challenges to the next generation. 'THIS is the moment.'

Being Part of Something Bigger



*Joanna Bryan,
our Community
Events Lead,
reflects on
Tuesday
Concerts*

Volunteering. What does it mean to be a volunteer? Perhaps it's giving an hour or two of your time, sharing a skill, welcoming someone through a door, or simply being willing to help. Whatever form it takes, volunteering is a generous act – giving your time to be part of something bigger than yourself.

We were reminded of just how much volunteering happens at St Andrew's at the Volunteer Thank You afternoon. It was a great opportunity to celebrate and say thank you to the many people who give their time, energy and enthusiasm to make things happen here. I was amazed at how many volunteers are involved across the church community.

So much of what happens at St Andrew's depends on this generosity. The events team collaborates with many external organisations to put on concerts and performances, we work with Rugby Borough Council to host Food and Drink events, we support Heritage Open Days to create events to welcome people into our beautiful building and to share some of it's story. Whether setting up and stewarding an event, welcoming visitors, serving refreshments, starting off community jigsaws or helping behind the scenes, every contribution makes these events happen.

Volunteering at events also offers opportunities to meet people, develop new skills and become part of a team. You may discover abilities you didn't know you had and make new friendships.

All of the events that we run at church have the shared aim of opening up St Andrew's and welcoming people into this special place. If you would like to volunteer at events, or know someone who would benefit from gaining experience, we would be delighted to hear from you. We have a busy Christmas season coming up!

If you would like any more information about volunteering at events please contact Jo at joanna.bryan@rugbychurch.org.uk



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Is This the Face of God?



*John Howes,
Lay Worship
Leader,
writes:*

Recently at the Big Table Gospel group at St Andrew's Church, we had a session talking about the Turin Shroud.

This is a large piece of cloth bearing the negative image of the face and body of a crucified man. For centuries, it has been venerated as the burial cloth of Jesus Christ, despite reservations over its authenticity.

Some members of the group were convinced it was genuine, whilst others were more sceptical. I found myself with a fairly open mind, and not particularly bothered whether this really had lain over the body of our God-made-man, wonderful though this might have been.

Instead, I enjoyed the comments of two recent popes. John Paul II called the shroud a 'distressing mirror of Gospel suffering' and a 'challenge to our intelligence', encouraging scientists to continue studying it without interference.

Francis referred to it as the 'Icon of Love', noting that the man in the shroud invites us to contemplate Jesus of Nazareth. Both seem to conclude that we don't know for certain whether this is an image of the actual face of Christ — but the shroud still invites us into a profound meditation on the nature of suffering in our world then, and today.

To me, this is a face which speaks to us across the ages. This is a person who has been to the darkest places, witnessed and experienced the sufferings of the human race, and responded with serenity and calmness.

It is as if he is thinking, 'Yes, I know what you are going through. I have been there. I have lost friends. I have seen the trauma, the anxiety, the despair, the grief. I have seen the violence and the cruelty of this human species. It won't always be like this. I know there is a different way, a better way. Rest awhile with me here. Sit, contemplate'.

Many of us may have experienced times when we have asked God for help, and there has been no

answer. That either turns us away from faith and the idea of God, or forces us to consider why God didn't respond or didn't respond in our favour.

Look again at the face of this figure and imagine it is the face of God. When we ask for help, the eyes remain closed. But that does not mean the figure is asleep or uncaring. It might mean, 'but this has to be so'. It might mean, 'now is not the time'. It might mean, 'there is nothing I can do for now'. When the answer does not come, the answer might be the silence.

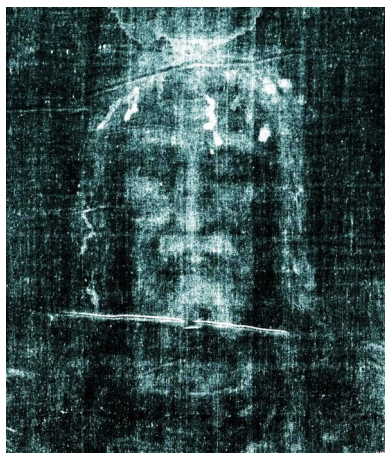
The Quaker John Whittier wrote one of the nation's favourite hymns, *Dear Lord and Father of Mankind*.

Composed in the early 1800s, the hymn is part of a longer poem which is critical of emotion-driven religion. Whittier argues for a calmer, more ordered communion with God. He evokes the 'silence of eternity', a beautiful phrase that takes us deeper into the mystery of God and back to the face on the shroud — not sleeping but contemplating all that humanity has done, the noise, the excess, the cruelty, but all of it 'interpreted by love'.

*O Sabbath rest by Galilee!
O calm of hills above,
where Jesus knelt to share with Thee
the silence of eternity,
interpreted by love!*

So, I invite you to spend some time meditating on this picture of the shroud. To me, it doesn't matter whether it is genuine or not (but just imagine if it was!) Allow this image to lead you into a time of quiet contemplation and to give you an

idea of what God might be like — never sleeping on the job, but sometimes deep in thought or sorrow for what we have made of the world. Perhaps this is as much as we can ask for — to know that God understands, is often saddened, and wants to draw us into the depths of serenity, a place where we can find peace amongst the wreckage.



When I attempt to meditate (very badly), I sometimes use a mantra that goes like this. '*Enter with Christ into the secret life of God*'. I found this in the writings of Sister Maria Boulding, a Benedictine nun, who was reflecting on a line in Colossians about our hidden lives in God. It is a bit long for a mantra, but I enjoy its depth and its mystery. It is like an invitation to go deeper into the silence and to go beyond the words.

Like contemplating the Shroud, the mantra is another way of trying to understand why the world is as it is, why there aren't any simple solutions, and why we cling on to the 'silence of eternity', reflected back to us by God through the image of the Son.



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Inside Out and Upside Down

*Rev'd Hugh Priestner
writes:*

Musing, as I walk with Rosie, my Springer Spaniel: she is doing her thing and I'm doing mine.

'Wouldn't it have been so much better if I had had more of the gift of wisdom when I was younger!' I recall some of the banal comments I have made in times past, memories that make me shudder at my ineptitude and lack of mindfulness. Don't get me wrong: I can still manage to say the wrong thing at the wrong time, even in the autumn of my life!

As Rosie chooses her route on our early morning foray, so my mind also follows the scent of an idea. What if Wisdom and being Childlike had swapped places in the timeline of my life? What if I had been granted a way of seeing things as I do now, when I was a young adult? And what if I could see things now in the way that, as a child, I had my eyes opened in wonder and my mind filled with the questions of an infant!?

On the morning that these thoughts were playing around like two spaniels playing chasey, I believe that God was having fun with me too. Less than an hour later, at the early morning Communion Service, the reading from the Old Testament was the occasion when Solomon asked God for the same gift – more Wisdom! With my earlier thoughts still in my head, the words Upside Down and Inside Out materialised. Would that I had been wiser sooner and more childlike in old age! Let there be a reversal of the way the world tends to work.

And that prompted another memory. Peter stood up and began to speak. He was

addressing the Diocesan Synod in the most northerly part of the Church of England some fifty years ago. He asked the Synod to consider reversing the salaries for clergy, so that the younger clergy received the higher wages, when facing the challenges of raising a family while the older, senior clergy has less need. His plea for Upside Down thinking was rejected. The pay scales stayed the same, with increments according to years of service. [Peter went on to become the Bishop of Worcester, but I never checked whether his proposal in Newcastle became the way of things here in the Midlands!]

But back to the present. I asked my 8.00 o'clock friends for any other examples of Upside Down, Inside Out thinking. It was Patrick who reminded us that life often produces a role reversal with our parents: a mother who has cared for us needing us to do the same for her later in life.

But best of all, we have the example of Jesus who not only taught Upside Down thinking but practised it too. 'The first shall be last, and the last first' *Mt. 20.16*. These words appear at the end of Jesus' parable of The Workers in the Vineyard. But get this: the very next part of St Matthew's Gospel is Jesus predicting his death and in God's amazing Upside Down, Inside Out economy, that is where we receive EVERYTHING as His gift.

And that emerged on the very same day of these thoughts from the opening of the Collect (BCP) : *O God, whose never-failing providence ordereth all things both in heaven and earth; we humbly beseech thee to put away from us all hurtful things, and to give us those things which be profitable for us; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

Remembering Rev'd Pam Gould



Rev'd Pam Gould with Mothers' Union Members

Here are a number of tributes to The Late Reverend Pamela Gould who died on 23 April 2026:

From Mothers' Union Diocesan President, Karen Morris: We remember Rev'd Pam with much love and fondness not only for her steadfast kindness but also when she served, for six years, as Mothers' Union Diocesan Chaplain, having handed over the baton to Rev'd Denise Burgess in 2022. Rev'd Pam's faithful and committed service to Mothers' Union continued; serving as Chaplain to the Mothers' Union

Friendship Group at St Andrew's Church, Rugby, as well as supporting the current trustee board as deanery chair. Her gentle, calm and caring disposition were not just personality traits but were deeply rooted in her inward spiritual life and were a blessing to us all. As we remember the life of Rev'd Pam with grateful thanks, we keep her son Matthew, her family, and her church family at St Andrew's in our thoughts and prayers.

From Former Mothers' Union Diocesan President, Jane Hill: Rev'd Pam was Diocesan Chaplain during the six years that I was Diocesan President. She served on the Trustee Board, always prayerful, supportive and wise. She was fully committed to

Mothers' Union, furthering the Christian principles on which it was built. She led prayers, MU Diocesan services, Quiet Days and Retreats. She truly cared about individual members and MU groups, always willing to do whatever she could to support, pray and reach out to others. I very much valued her calm presence, her wise words and her prayers. Rev'd Pam — a quietly committed Christian woman, who loved others, and served her Lord.

From Mothers' Union Coventry Chaplain Rev'd Denise Burgess:

When I was asked to take on the role of MU Diocesan Chaplain as Pam was preparing to step down from the role I was struck by her commitment to Mothers' Union and her kind, caring supportive manner. Pam was instrumental in suggesting that the Mothers' Union Diocesan Chaplain should have a stole to hand over as part of the Commissioning service. This suggestion was put into effect and Coventry Diocese does now have a beautiful MU stole to hand on to future Chaplains. I'm sure everyone who knew Pam will remember her fondly and we all give thanks and praise God for the sterling work that she did in the name of Mothers' Union. Pam will be sorely missed but we can take comfort in the fact that she is now with her Saviour at rest in God's eternal kingdom.

From Sue Goddard: I first met Pam when the family moved to St Andrew's in the 1970s after Holy Trinity church closed. I had come a

year or so earlier as a stranger to the church and Rugby, and found it a formal and unfriendly place until I met Pam who treated me with warmth and respect. We got to know each other better through belonging to spirituality groups involving silent prayer, such as the Julian Group, which led us deeper into Christianity and church life. As well as this spiritual call, which led Pam eventually into ordination, Pam was also very down to earth, practical, with leadership qualities which had been recognised in her teens when she was made head girl of Rugby High School. She had a flair for working with young people and ran a dynamic group for teenagers across the Rugby Team Ministry called Quest, which organised outings and monthly family services. Pam had great resilience. Despite her academic potential for university, she left school after the tragic death of her father to help her mother run their shop in Regent Street. Later she worked for Warwickshire Youth service, which she loved, but gave it up when her husband Bruce needed her to help run their dry cleaning business. Her sister was tragically killed in a road accident in her 30s, and recently she lost both Bruce, and her daughter Jane to MS. Despite all the troubles and loss in her life, Pam never showed regret or bitterness. She loved her ministry and was highly regarded as a priest throughout the diocese. She had a capacity to find joy in the simple pleasures of life, and see the light in all the people she encountered.

From Helen Byrne: When we moved to Rugby in 1985, lock, stock and

barrel, I didn't know anyone. Elizabeth Nixon, from St Peter's Church, as it was known then, asked me to have lunch at the vicarage. When I arrived, quite a few ladies were already there and all very welcoming to a newcomer. One of these was Pam and we became friends from that time. Pam helped to run a group for the junior choir boys from St Andrew's and coerced me into cooking tea for them in Church House every week. I don't remember what our family did that day but presumably they didn't go hungry. We had a holiday on the Thames with Pam and her family, the first of many holidays. Bruce was the Captain as he had been in the Merchant Navy. We also went to Morecambe to stay at the Midland Hotel after it was refurbished. Pam had spent time in Morecambe when she was young so it was a happy place for her and she remembered the area well. Pam and I went to Lake Garda and had an amazing week doing all the things tourists do. We went to a Mass on the Sunday. We could follow the service but I'm afraid the sermon went over our heads. We were invited to Pam's family celebrations, her ordination, the special service when she began her prison chaplaincy, which actually took place in the prison chapel, the service when she became Diocesan Chaplain of the Mothers' Union and more. There are not enough words to describe the influence Pam had on my life here in Rugby. We shared many happy and some very sad times and she was always there. She was a true friend in all ways and is missed so much. May she rest in peace and rise with Christ in glory.

From John Howes: I was on a course at Westminster College in Oxford in the early 1990s. Whilst having breakfast in the canteen, I heard the town of Rugby being mentioned on the table next to me. It was spoken by Pam and we found out we were on the same course and from the same town. We formed a small study group and met regularly to support each other and exchange notes. When I returned to St Andrew's Church around 2019, I was delighted to find that Pam was serving the parish and remembered me. I always found her to be patient, kind and encouraging, seemingly never flustered or annoyed, and always full of gentle but pertinent observations borne out of a deep, peaceful faith. She will be much missed.

Priest
Apostle
Mother
Evangelist
Listener
Advocate

Reliable
Observer
Servant
Engaging
Mild
Attentive
Respectful
Interested
Encouraging

Guide
Outgoing
Understanding
Loving
Disciple

COP31

COP31 being The 31st United Nations Climate Change Conference and The Conference of The Parties to The Paris Agreement (COP21), will be held in The Expo Centre, Antalya, Turkey from 9 to 20 November 2026 with a Joint Presidency of Turkey and Australia. This will bring together world leaders, scientists, experts, civil society representatives together with representatives of the private sector to shape the future of climate action, to discuss joint solutions to combat climate change and to build a sustainable future.

This will be another important gathering of the Conference to shape global climate policies. COP31 will build on the achievements of COP30 held in Belém, Brazil in 2025.

Australia will not host but will lead the Conference negotiations amongst delegates and governments under a comparable deal. Negotiations will be conducted under a framework of major topics including, The Zero Waste Forum, The Circular Economy and Waste Management, Water and Food Security, Access to Climate Finance and the Role of Youth and Cities.

COP30 negotiations took place well into the final night and into the following day producing a final draft which disappointingly did not include any reference to fossil fuels at all – a major omission of the parties attending COP30 and as previously the three countries producing the largest Carbon Emissions failed to attend COP30 being China, India and the USA; indeed the USA have once again withdrawn from The Paris Agreement.

We will be holding a COP31 Prayer Event, our sixth COP Prayer Event, in The Lady Chapel in St Andrew's Church on Saturday 7 November from 10.00 to 13.00 with each half hour having a different lead person and will include silent as well as spoken prayer for the negotiations and compromise of those governments, nations and individuals attending COP31.

There is greater need for agreement and more compromise at COP31 as the 1.5% target for Carbon Emissions has been lost and contributes to rising sea and ocean levels and temperatures which are causing devastating losses to creation care and the life of man and all creatures.

Please make a note in your diary and spare even half an hour if you can. Should you be unable to attend please make time to pray on that day for COP31 and bring a single prayer to become a multitude of prayers to affect those attending Antalya in Turkey.

Our beloved Biologist, Natural Historian, Broadcaster and Writer, Centenarian, Sir David Attenborough delivered the following warning statement ahead of COP26 held in Glasgow between 31 October and 12 November 2021

'If we don't act now, it will be too late'

Since this statement the 1.5C is even more in jeopardy than it was.

**This is Now,
Now is all there is.
Don't wait for Then;
Strike the Spark, Light the fire.**

ACT NOW

Brother Sun and Sister Moon



*Rev'd Canon
Sue Hardwick
writes:*

Socrates was definitely not an ivory-tower-thinking kind of guy. This 5th Century BC philosopher much preferred to spend his time wandering around the ancient Athens market-place talking to the stall-holders, the shoppers and whoever else wanted a chat.

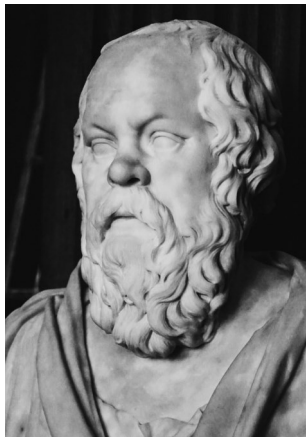
Not for him rarified conversations with rarified people, who would most probably present no challenge to his thoughts and ideas. He preferred dialogue with folk whose feet were firmly on the ground. He would ask the people he talked to a question and then listen attentively, respectfully, to their answer. Then he would pose another question based on their reply – giving them the space to work their own way to their own conclusion; giving them the freedom to dig deep, to come to eventual conclusions that often surprised themselves.

Socrates was a grounded thinker; which is probably why his thoughts and ideas have endured for so many centuries, and why his style of philosophy has had such a profound and widespread effect through the ages. There can be few other philosophers who have had such a consistently rich harvest of ideas and which are still bearing such rich fruit today.

Fast forward from 5th Century BC to 2026 AD – and three Dominican Sisters who, in January of this year, decided to set up an Open Mic Podcast. The Sisters recorded themselves spontaneously chatting and laughing with various people in the local community, about everyone's thoughts, views and generally. Clips of small extracts of these chats have found their way on to TicToc, where they have gone viral and been viewed and liked by millions.

When interviewed the nuns, who were very surprised about the widespread success and fame of their little Podcast, seemed so free and full of laughter. Our vows, they explained, of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience, free us from a desire for material goods – and so we are free to love and praise God's world,

and the people within it in all its wonder and beauty, to God's greater glory. It's surprising what He calls us to do.



Socrates

On the 12th August, 2026, whole communities world-wide gathered in larger or smaller groups, to gaze heavenwards in awe and wonder at the eclipse of the sun by the moon. So many reports world-wide of there being just peace and harmony . . . sharing of the special glasses, of food and drink, of laughter, of hush, of wonder in the face of this awesome cosmic event. Confronted with this wondrous happening, both petty and huge differences were dwarfed.

A momentary vision for us of God's vision of his beautiful world gifted to us, and of its potential in each of our lives, and together.

Back in our time machine to 1225 AD to Assisi, Italy – and a monk named St Francis, who walked upon this Earth, hugging lepers and lambs alike. Every bit of God's Creation,

from spiders to flowers, bees to whatever you care to name, with a love full of awe and wonder and joy. In 1225, St Francis composed a famous religious hymn, praising God through the beauty of the natural world, addressing elements and heavenly bodies as brothers and sisters, seeing all aspects of creation as a shared family.

Brother Sun: praises God for the days and the light, bearing a likeness to the Creator.

Sister Moon and Stars: praised as bright, precious and fair in the heavens.

Brothers Wind and Air....Sister Water....Brother Fire....Sister Mother Earth....

My Harvest 2026

Socrates and his harvest of the mind. The Dominican Sisters and their laughter and joy in their lives and the precious community in which they are set.

The awe and wonder at the cosmic event of the Eclipse.

St Francis, who embraced the whole of Creation in the Song of Praise that burst forth from his soul and his love of God.

These are my Harvest gifts that I bring and lay on the Altar.

Thank you, Lord, for your bounty, your so-beautiful world, your love for each and every one of us. Amen.

'Take the water of life as a gift'



*Rev'd Sharon
Crofts, Associate
Minister, writes:*

In a country where we are known for our 'fields of green' it has been quite devastating to see just how parched, and in parts even torched, our land became through the summer. I don't think I've ever witnessed every area of grass and green fields become yellow hay and staying like that consistently for weeks and into months. News reports told of the lack of rain and intense heat between June and August in the Midlands and other parts of the UK.

This year has proved difficult for many, not least seeing a significant lack of yield for farmers of both agriculture and livestock, and life threatening to those who are frail, elderly, already sick and the youngest and most vulnerable of our population. Working conditions for many became extreme particularly for those who work outside and those who work inside without sufficient means of cooling. All the while our water tables and levels dropped lower and lower. Perhaps you've witnessed events you've not experienced in your lifetime this year? Rivers and ponds at their lowest ever or maybe even depleted completely?

All this proves the importance of water.

I have always been drawn to water myself. I was privileged to grow up in a seaside town in Devon through which a river flowed to the estuary. As a child I spent many hours dipping in the river, looking for minnows and frog spawn whilst our pet spaniel fished for stones underwater and warm summer months swimming or boating with my sisters in the sea.

As a Christian I often find myself drawn to Bible passages that relate to water, which I find nourishing to my soul and as a new Christian I found myself drawn to the book of Ezekiel in the Old Testament. This book is fascinating but also can be a difficult read as God's judgement is pronounced. Ezekiel, a priest and prophet in exile, experienced vivid and detailed visions which honoured God's sovereignty and judgement for the Israelites idolatry as they struggled with their identity and relationship with God under decades of captivity. Ezekiel's prophecies then move from God's disappointment and judgement to offer future hope and covenantal restoration if the Israelites would return trustingly and faithfully to God again. Chapter 47vs1-12 provides a stunningly beautiful picture of the rebuilt and restored temple and the city of Jerusalem post exile. God's glory once departed from the temple (chapter 10) now returned, his presence renewed amongst his

faithful people. I personally love Ezekiel's picture of water flowing from the new temple, from God, and out into the city and beyond. The water rises and becomes a river which runs to the sea and 'wherever the river goes, every living creature that swarms will live and there will be many fish, once these waters reach there. It will become fresh and everything will live where the river goes'. ... And 'on the banks, on both sides of the river there will grow all kinds of trees for food. Their leaves will not wither nor their fruits fall, but they will bear fresh fruit every month because the water from them flows from the sanctuary. Their fruits will be for food and their leaves for healing'. *Ezekiel 47vs9-12*

I find this picture of flowing water with it's healing and restorative powers a truly beautiful allegory for who God is and how God works for his beloved children. There are many other Biblical pictures, visions or prophecies that we can read that include the cleansing and restorative powers of water which God gifts. May I encourage you to look some of these up:

Isaiah 12 v 3 'With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation'.

Isaiah 35 v 6-7 'streams in the desert ...'

Isaiah 55 v 10-11 The good news of God's love for his people offering abundant life.

John 2 v 1-11 Jesus' first miracle changing water into wine.

John 4 v 14 Jesus tells the Samaritan woman 'those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give them will become in them a spring of water, gushing up to eternal life'.

John 7 v 38-39 Jesus speaks of 'living waters' flowing from within God's faithful people.

Revelation 22 v 1-2 The angel shows John the 'river of the water of life...'

Revelation 22 v 14 'Blessed are those

who wash their robes, so that they will have the right to the tree of life and may enter the city by the gates'.

Revelation 22 v 17 John hears Jesus say '... let everyone who is thirsty come. Let anyone who wishes take the water of life as a gift'.

Water is a powerful symbol used sacramentally in baptism which unites us to Christ's dying and rising and is a sign of new life as we are born again by water and the Spirit, as Jesus was at his baptism. Baptism with water as well as receiving the sign of the cross and a lit candle begins our new life and journey with God.

Water is used in our Eucharist too, reminding us of Christ's sacrifice on the cross, 'his side pierced with a spear and at once blood and water came out'. *John 19 v 34*. Wine and water, elements used to remember Christ's blood shed for us, God's love for humanity poured in Christ's dying.

Water gives us life and is vital for human survival, not least for our cell and organ function, temperature regulation, waste removal, circulation and nutrient transport, joint and tissue protection and brain function. We are made up of approximately 60% water.

Water has essential qualities for the whole environmental and ecosystems throughout the world. Where water is scarce we know that life suffers. We know too that sometimes water can cause destructive floods and devastation. Water is a precious and valuable commodity, key to sustaining the whole of life and in Christian faith is a key element of symbolic practice. I love to read water being used as an allegory of God's abundant goodness, cleansing and healing. I wonder whether you can think of other Bible passages that speak similarly?

St Andrew's Peace Garden

*Eric Wood, Chair,
Friends of St Andrew's,
Writes:*

As a tribute to Rex Pogson, and in memory of The Rev'd Geoffrey Studdert-Kennedy, (Woodbine Willie), Assistant Curate of St Andrew's from 1910-1912, the Friends of St Andrew's are supporting the fundraising efforts to establish a Peace Garden in the grounds of St Andrew's.

At a time when the drums of war are beating across the globe there has never been a better time than now to create a space for peaceful reflection about our individual and collective humanity, and loved ones who have gone before us.

Earlier this year I was in Lille and hoped to travel to Messines Ridge, where Studdert-Kennedy was awarded the Military Cross for conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty.

Unfortunately, a strike by train drivers prevented that, but I was able to travel to Vimy Ridge where I met some young Canadians doing voluntary civic service overseas, who gave me a guided tour of the memorial and the military strategy employed.

What follows is a tale of two ridges, two battles and two lessons: Vimy Ridge was a battle fought in April,

1917 and involved 100,000 Canadian troops advancing up a steep slope. After three days they secured victory and the battle became a defining moment for Canadian identity. Three thousand young men fell and over 7,000 were injured.

The victory was secured by meticulous planning, using a rolling artillery barrage and ensuring that every man knew the battle plan, with every soldier being issued with a copy of the battle orders before the assault began.

The Battle of Messines Ridge began at 3.10am on the 7th June when 450 tonnes, (1,000,000 pounds), of explosive, packed into 19 underground mines, which had taken British, Australian, Irish, Canadian and New Zealand troops two years to dig, was detonated.

The resulting explosion was heard in London and Dublin and was the largest manmade explosion in history, prior to the atomic bomb, killing 10,000 Germans instantly. The fighting that followed was intense.

During the battle, Studdert Kennedy repeatedly went forward to help wounded men. He searched shell holes and assisted casualties whilst under heavy enemy fire, putting his own life at considerable risk.

His actions were recognised with the award of the Military Cross, for

conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty.

He demonstrated care and compassion for his fellow man under unimaginable circumstances.

The experience of Messines Ridge had a profound effect upon Studdert Kennedy and accelerated his growing belief that war was a terrible waste.



The two battles were successful in achieving their military objectives for different reasons.

At Vimy Ridge careful planning and shared purpose came from a shared plan ... something not done in previous encounters.

At Messines long planned engineering works paved the path to victory, achieved with multinational co-operation, ingenuity and patience.

Working closely together with a shared plan was crucial in the both victories.

However, the price of victory, and the human toll, of both battles was immense ... with over 60,000 young men from both sides of the conflict falling and many thousands more suffering injury.

In 1919 Studdert Kennedy put his thoughts on paper in a poem he wrote:

WASTE

*Waste of Muscle, waste of Brain,
Waste of Patience, waste of Pain,
Waste of Manhood, Waste of Health,
Waste of Beauty, waste of Wealth,
Waste of Blood, and waste of Tears,
Waste of Youth's most precious
Years,
Waste of ways the Saints have trod,
Waste of Glory, waste of God, -War!*

It's a worthy ambition to build a Peace Garden here in Rugby as places for stillness are rare.

To have somewhere to pay tribute to those who served, those who serve, and those who exercised compassion and humanity, along with a space for prayer and hope for the future, will serve current and future generations of our fellow citizens well.

We will also remember, with affection, the life of Rex Pogson and pay tribute to Studdert-Kennedy and his care for others, his courage and his spiritual journey.

Charity Concert Raises £500

A joint concert between Rugby Recorder Ensemble and Leicestershire's Phoenix Saxophone Orchestra, which took place on Sunday 19 July at St Andrew's Church in Rugby, has raised £500 for Rugby's Myton Hospice.

This unique concert saw 27 musicians performing music from the 16th Century to the modern day on 14 different instruments – eight types of recorder, ranging from soprano to sub great bass, and six types of saxophone, ranging from soprano to bass.

The concert featured separate ensemble pieces from Rugby Recorders and Phoenix, plus a joint piece – Viadana's *Sinfonia 'La Bergamasca'* (1610) – and the world premiere performance of Steve Marshall's *'Concertino'*, a concerto for recorders and solo soprano saxophone, played by Samuel Beddard.

The recorder group also performed *Dunholm Suite* by nationally respected Rugby composer, Rosemary Robinson and William Byrd's *Six Part Fantasia*. Rugby Recorders' Musical Director Caroline Jones said: 'We were delighted to have Steve Marshall in the audience to hear *Concertino* being played so beautifully by the recorder ensemble and Samuel on soprano sax. Although recorders and saxophones are centuries apart – with recorders dating back to pre-

1100 and the saxophone being patented in 1846 – the instruments worked really well together, both for the *Concertino* and also the final number *La Bergamasca*, an antiphonal piece which saw the recorders and saxophones playing in separate choirs at either end of the church'.

Phoenix Saxophone Orchestra's Jane Smith said: 'This was an entirely new collaboration for Phoenix, but one which came together beautifully. The very different sounds and styles of the recorders and saxophones resulted in a varied programme of music for the audience to enjoy. From Byrd to The Beatles and Viadana to Van Morrison, there really was something for everyone, and the two joint pieces ably demonstrated what a versatile instrument the saxophone can be. We'd like to say a big thank you to Rugby Girl Guides for organising the interval cakes and refreshments and to everyone who came along to the concert. It is certainly one to remember'.

The Guides raised £135 from refreshment sales, which will go towards the 1st Overslade Guides and Rangers' international trip to Ypres in July next year, to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Menin Gate.

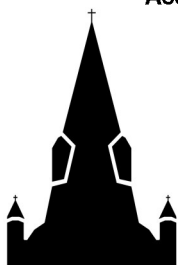
This article was provided by Jane Smith, Communications Director, Phoenix Saxophone Orchestra.

Who's Who at St Andrew's

- Rector:** The Rev'd Canon Dr Edmund Newey
01788 574313 mobile: 07414 904931
rector@rugbychurch.org.uk *Note: Day off Saturday*
- Associate Minister (Compassionate Communities):**
The Rev'd Sharon Crofts, sharon.crofts@rugbychurch.org
- Associate Minister (Mission Hub):** The Rev'd Alison Baxter,
missionhub@rugbychurch.org.uk
- Retired Clergy:** The Rev'd Canon Graham Hardwick,
The Rev'd Peter Privett, The Rev'd Peter Beresford
- Curate:** The Rev'd Dr James Sampson-Foster,
james.sampsonfoster@rugbychurch.org.uk
- Lay Ministers:** Sue Goddard, Gwyneth Hickman, Sue Minton
- Community Engagement Lead:** Joanna Bryan, joanna.bryan@rugbychurch.org.uk
- Director of Music:** William Uglow, directorofmusic@rugbychurch.org.uk
- Young Choristers' Trainer:** Rachel Cliffe, youngchoristers@rugbychurch.org.uk
- St Andrew's Community Singers:**
Amie Boyd amiemusic01@gmail.com
- Administrator:** Kate Foster, 01788 565609, office@rugbychurch.org.uk
- Wardens:** Joyce Woodings, warden1@rugbychurch.org.uk
Hash Mistry, warden2@rugbychurch.org.uk

Assistant Warden: Ian Sheppard, asstwarden1@rugbychurch.org.uk

Bell Tower Captain: Christine Homer



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