

# The parish magazine of **Hertford St Andrew**

[www.hertfordstandrews.co.uk](http://www.hertfordstandrews.co.uk)

May 2020



"We will get through this, and my prayer is that we will be changed; that we will be kinder; that we will have gained a new depth of faith and a new appreciation of what is really important." Rev Alan Stewart

Here with you Here for you

# HERTFORD ST ANDREW

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**[www.HertfordStAndrews.co.uk](http://www.HertfordStAndrews.co.uk)**

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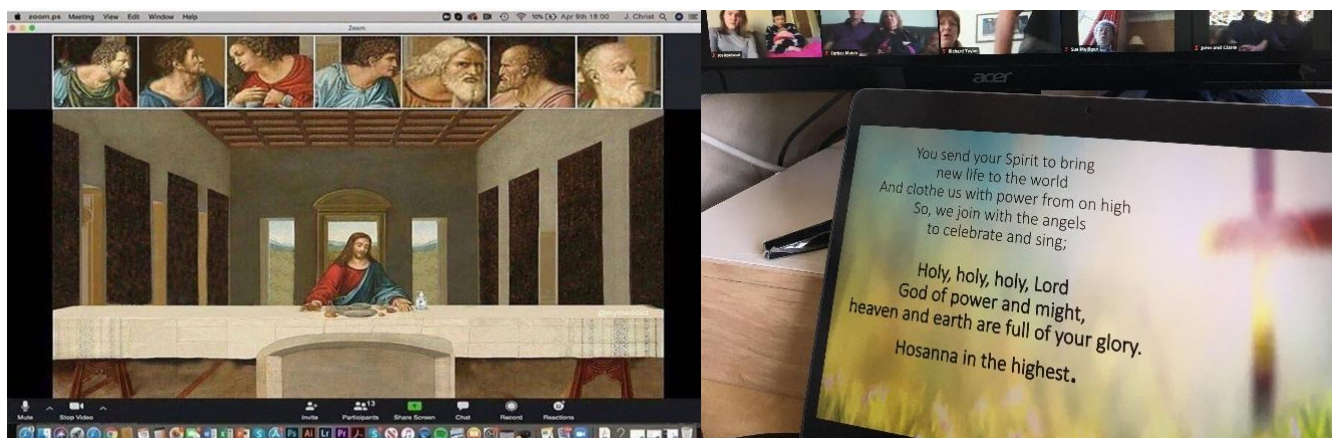
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Richard Taylor (Chairman), Malcolm Fry, Philippa Probert, Laura Ramsay, Judy Sharman, David Spring, Viv Thornton and Rod Willis.



## Who's Zoomin' Who?

Until a few months ago, I thought 'Zoom' was a 1982 chart-hit for The Fat Larry's Band.

In these days of lockdown of course, Zoom has become the go-to online platform for telecommunication within families, businesses and faith communities.

At the time of writing, we have now hosted three Sunday services via Zoom. To say it's been a learning curve is an understatement. As something of a technophobe, I've long resisted many 21<sup>st</sup> Century methods of communication, but with the closure of our church buildings, we've all been forced well beyond our comfort zones.

It's been at times a comedy of errors, causing much laughter (and not a little panic from me, the host!). Thankfully, we're a fairly forgiving lot and, as a few folk have said, it's probably a fair reflection on our generally laid back approach to worship!

Technology can never of course replace the 'face-to-face'. The feedback we've received however suggests that people are feeling a



great sense of connection and communion, with the added bonus of tuning in from the comfort of their own sofas, coffee in hand! For me, this is a reminder that the Spirit of

God is the connective tissue or indeed the Wi-Fi between us!.

We're now hosting weekly Zoom Meditation and Mindfulness sessions on Wednesday evening at 8pm, with several other things in the pipeline.

To access Zoom, all you need is a PC or laptop, a smart-phone or indeed a landline (which allows you to tune in to the audio). If you're currently not receiving invitations to our services and activities and would like to, please do contact the St Andrew's Parish Office at [standrew.hertford@btinternet.com](mailto:standrew.hertford@btinternet.com).

We have already begun to look at what the churches should be doing post-lockdown, and plans are in the pipeline to livestream our services.

Until that day, I pray that you sense that connection to your Source; that you will know that you are not and can never be alone.

Alan

**PLEASE NOTE THE CLOSING DATE FOR THE JUNE MAGAZINE OF SUNDAY 24<sup>TH</sup> MAY.** Please send copy by e-mail to [hertfordsta@aol.co.uk](mailto:hertfordsta@aol.co.uk) or post to Richard Taylor at 22 Highfield Road, Hertford SG13 8BH (Tel. 01992 302995).

# CHURCH MATTERS

Although our services and activities are currently suspended...

We remain  
**Here with you  
Here for you**  
at St Andrew's

## Together while apart

In these times of isolation and uncertainty, it's more important than ever that we should continue to connect and commune with one another, albeit remotely, and in spirit, rather than in person.

*Rev Alan Stewart:*

*"We will get through this, and my prayer is that we will be changed; that we will be kinder; that we will have gained a new depth of faith and a new appreciation of what is really important."*

## Families and younger ones



Although our normal youth activities are suspended, Tracy (St Andrew's Children and Youth Worker) is connecting with families online. You can find all sorts of resources through the Sele Messy Church Facebook page, including a live feed with Tracy on **Sundays at 10am** and **Wednesdays at**

**4pm**. Tracy writes all about her experiences of lockdown later in this magazine.

### Storytime with Rev. Alan

If you go to the website of our sister church, St Mary's Hertingfordbury, there you will find a story read by Alan: [www.hertingfordburystmary.org/storytelling](http://www.hertingfordburystmary.org/storytelling)

## Worship

While our regular services and activities are suspended, there are ways in which we can share in worship:

### Morning Prayer

Morning Prayer is usually said in the Chapel at St Andrew's at 8.30am on Mondays and 8am on Thursdays. Rev. Bill and Keith from St Andrew's will be saying Morning Prayer from home now and you can join them from your own home at the same time (or at a time convenient to you) - together in spirit. We usually use Common Worship on Mondays and The Book of Common Prayer on Thursdays. These can both be found online at the Church of England website, complete with the set psalms and readings. If you go to the 'More Options' tag, you can get all the permutations for every day.

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# CHURCH MATTERS

## Readings, sermons and prayers

You may wish to go to the Worship Resources page of St Andrew's website for readings, services and prayers on Sundays and other days.

## Worship on Zoom

We are now sharing time and worship together through the wonders of Zoom. Those on our mailing list will receive an invitation via email in advance of the event, allowing them to join in at the right time. If you're not already on our mailing list, please email the church office: [standrew.hertford@btinternet.com](mailto:standrew.hertford@btinternet.com)

### **Join worship on Zoom:**

10.30am Holy Communion on Sunday morning

10.30am Holy Communion on Wednesday morning

8pm Meditation and Mindfulness on Wednesday evening

If you are not already a Zoom user, search Zoom on St Andrew's website for more information. It's great for keeping in touch with family and friends as well as for services.

## Meditation and Mindfulness

Alan is hosting a weekly Meditation and Mindfulness session from The Rectory on Wednesdays at 8pm, on Zoom. Please email the church office if you'd like to be added to our mailing list and receive a Zoom invitation: [standrew.hertford@btinternet.com](mailto:standrew.hertford@btinternet.com)

You can also find a rough guide to the practice of Mindfulness here:



[www.hertfordstandrews.co.uk/Groups/289809/Hertford St Andrews/Worship and Prayer/Meditation and Mindfulness/Meditation and Mindfulness.aspx](http://www.hertfordstandrews.co.uk/Groups/289809/Hertford%20St%20Andrews/Worship%20and%20Prayer/Meditation%20and%20Mindfulness/Meditation%20and%20Mindfulness.aspx)

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## **Do you need support?**

We are keen to support the most vulnerable in our community, in particular those who are house-bound and unable to shop. We are making every effort to keep in touch with people who do not have access to the internet for email or social media. If you feel you need support, or you could offer support, please get in touch:

**Jane Cohen, Churchwarden:** [janiedcohen@gmail.com](mailto:janiedcohen@gmail.com)

07818 532154

**Sue Mulligan, Churchwarden:** [suemulligan@ntlworld.com](mailto:suemulligan@ntlworld.com)

01992 421806

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## **When will the church be open again?**

We don't know for how long the church will be closed. We will continue to follow the official guidance and we will resume services, groups and activities as soon as we are advised to do so with appropriate safeguards.

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# CHURCH MATTERS

## WhatsApp

We've found that WhatsApp can be a great way of staying in touch and supporting and encouraging one another. If you would like to be part of a church WhatsApp group please contact either Catherine or David. For St Andrew's: call Catherine 07790 316503. For St Mary's: call David 07544 702241.



## You are not alone

Things might be feeling pretty uncertain right now and that can lead to heightened anxiety. It's also difficult for very many who can't go to a funeral, whether for family, friend or neighbour, so a short reflection has been specially written by a vicar for you to do at home, alone or with those who share your home. You might ask others to take part at the same time from their home. To find the reflection go to St Andrew's website and search "You are not alone". Alternatively, if you do not have access to the internet, you may ask for a copy to be sent to you by emailing or calling Jane Cohen –her contact details can be found at the beginning of this magazine.

When this time of social distancing is over, there may well be an opportunity to meet together at a special time of remembering and thankfulness. Your memories now can be part of that experience when the time comes.

## Lift up your hearts - prayers and reflections from the Church Times

Each week for the foreseeable future, the Church Times plans to produce a collection of prayers and reflections which will hopefully help to support people who are deprived of the gifts that come from churchgoing. Everything there will appear on [www.churchtimes.co.uk](http://www.churchtimes.co.uk) and in the printed paper; but it is designed to fit on an A4 sheet, downloadable for free from their website, so that individuals and churches can print copies for distribution to those stuck at home.

## Prayers

At this time when we are unable to go to church services, many of us might like to pray more regularly at home, either alone or with those with whom we live.

### Prayers of Hope

Every evening at 7pm, we encourage you to pray along with others all over the country. We have produced some short daily prayers which are available on St Andrew's website and which appeared in last month's magazine, copies of which are still available from the church porch.

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# CHURCH MATTERS

## Pray for Hertford

Every Sunday evening at 8pm, you are invited to take part in a shared time of prayer for our town. Please email Luke to get the meeting code: [luke.hertfordwellbeingchurch@gmail.com](mailto:luke.hertfordwellbeingchurch@gmail.com)

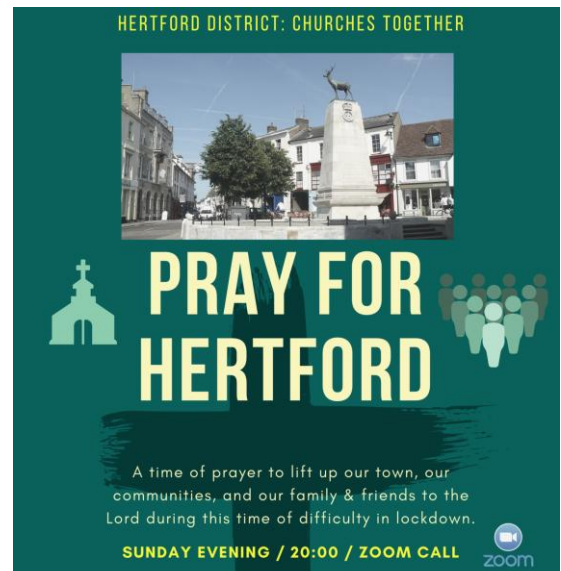
## Prayer resources

It helps to have a structure, so Wendy has offered these recommendations:

- **Church of England Daily Prayer** Available via the website and also through a very convenient app. It includes morning, evening and night prayer (compline) each day, including the readings, and has links to prayers and other useful extras. It is free to use but costs £2.99 if you should want offline access.
- **Church of England Time to Pray** is another free app which gives a more flexible approach to prayer throughout the day.
- **Northumbria Daily Prayer** This is available via a webpage and is updated daily. It is much less formal (and shorter) than the Church of England versions. You may wish to follow it with the Lord's Prayer.
- **Ignatian Spirituality** If you prefer something less wordy then I recommend the website [ignatianspirituality.com](http://ignatianspirituality.com). The backbone of this is the Examen – a time of prayer with space to offer God all our hopes and concerns. [Prayasyougo](#) is an app that offers this form of prayer.

## Thought for the day

Each morning, we post a Thought for the Day on our [Facebook page](#) and via our WhatsApp group and church email. If you'd like to be on our mailing list please get in touch with Phil via the church office email address: [standrew.hertford@btinternet.com](mailto:standrew.hertford@btinternet.com)



*Ever present God,*

*be with us in our isolation,*

*be close in our distancing,*

*be healing in our sickness,*

*be joy in our sadness,*

*be light in our darkness,*

*be wisdom in our confusion,*

*be all that is familiar when all is unfamiliar,*

*that when the doors reopen we may, with the zeal of Pentecost, inhabit our communities and speak of your goodness to an emerging world.*

*For Jesus' sake. Amen*

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# PRAYER

## I am

**I am** the ground beneath you,  
the earth from which you rise.  
I am the arms that hold you  
through the loneliness,  
the terror and the lies.

**I am** the spring that thaws your winter,  
the sun that warms your skin,  
the light bleeding into your  
disappointment.  
I am your horizon.

**I am** the song that speaks for you,  
the symphony you're born into,  
the dance that carries you,  
the breast you lean into.

**I am** the click in your head,  
the language making sense,  
the perspective in your chaos,  
your mother tongue, your present  
tense.

**I am** the strength to reach beyond  
yourself,  
the courage just to be yourself,  
the grace which helps forgive yourself,  
the dreams you harbour inside  
yourself.

**I am** your roots, your history,  
your future and your mystery.  
I am the lifter of your head;  
the eyes that simply say,  
"It will be okay".

**I am** your vindication,  
your celebration,  
your consolation,  
your destination.

**I am** the stirring of the waters,  
the waker of your sleep.  
The shout that calls, "Lazarus, arise!"  
The mud I spread into your eyes.

**I am** the one who writes in sand  
as stones fall from your enemy's  
hands.  
I am the foot-washer who bathes  
your wounds, your pride.  
The one who sits with you  
through the cold watches of the night.

**I am** the father who watches your  
desertion.  
The smile that greets you on your  
returning,  
the hands that bless you, the clothes  
that dress you,  
the words that free you, the embrace  
that heals you.

**I am** the bread that meets your hunger,  
the living water for your thirst,  
the One who was and is and is to  
come.  
The last, the in between, the first.

**I am**  
the resurrection  
and the life.  
Whoever comes to me,  
though they die,  
yet shall they live'

Alan Stewart

*When Moses asked God for his name; God replied 'I Am'*

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# CHURCH FAMILY

## FUNERALS:



### *We extend our sympathy to the family and friends of:*

5<sup>th</sup> March      **Phyllis Game** aged 96. Phyllis came from Royston to Hertford to marry Herbert Game and they lived in Stanstead Road. There they raised their children Linda, Roy and Colin. Phyllis was widowed but lived on in the same house for the rest of her life through loving care from her family.

6<sup>th</sup> March      **Jill Wright** aged 87. Jill was married to Charles "Chaz" Wright and they lived in Hutton Close from its early days. She was with Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service all her working life, rising to be Secretary to a senior officer. They holidayed regularly in Greece and Jill learnt Greek. She had a great collection of photographs (Chaz was a professional photographer) and recorded music. She was a longtime member of Sele Farm Church and of the Calton Court Thursday congregation. With care from neighbours and nieces, she was able to stay at home to the end.

15<sup>th</sup> April      **Joan Beagles** aged 88. Joan grew up in Ashley Road, Hertford and, with her mother, was greatly involved in the life of St Andrew's, including helping with the youth club. She was known as the "Sketchley's Lady" having worked in the dry cleaning shop from the age of 16 until her retirement at 60. She was first married to John Goodland who was a server at St Andrew's and following his death married Roy Beagles. It was from that time that she and Roy became much loved members of the congregation at St Mary's Hertingfordbury. Joan had a joyous presence with her beautiful singing. Joan and Roy lived in Windsor Drive and after Roy died she moved to Calton Court. She attended the monthly lunches at St Andrew's right up until this year.

## Grieving in a time of Covid

Grief at any time is a painful thing. During these times, as you can imagine, it is exacerbated by social distancing measures, where families are often unable to be there at the end with and for their loved ones. The grieving process is then further complicated by restrictions on who can attend the funeral and where it can be held. As you pray for all who grieve, please will you also remember our funeral directors who are under such extreme pressure and stress during these times.

Not knowing what was to happen, it was Joan's original wish that her funeral would take place in her beloved St Mary's, and that no-one attend the cremation that followed. The advent of lockdown sadly meant that the funeral could not take place in church, and therefore following Joan's wishes, the decision was made that I alone would be present to bid Joan farewell on behalf of

us all, and to entrust her into the safe-keeping of her Maker.

At that same moment, we asked Joan's family and friends to light a candle not only to remember Joan, but also to remember that light, that hope shines in darkness. On that morning, several folk posted prayers for Joan on WhatsApp and Paul our organist posted a recording of her favorite hymn 'Make me a channel of your peace'.

The experience of standing alone in the crematorium was both humbling and very poignant. As friends and family lifted prayers for Joan, I too, felt held by their power and love. And as I spoke those final words of goodbye, entrusting Joan into God's hands, I too, felt carried by His grace, and that truth we dare to call 'resurrection'.

I take great comfort in the thought that when we are finally through this, we will again gather as friends and family in her

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# CHURCH FAMILY

beloved church to celebrate the life of this extraordinary lady. I look forward to that day.

Until then...

'Into the freedom of wind and sunshine,  
Joan – we let you go.

Into the dance of the stars and planets,  
we let you go.

Into the wind's breath and the hands of  
the Star-maker, we let you go.

So, go safely, go singing, go running  
home'.

Alan



I came across this extraordinary painting online. Unfortunately, I forgot to make a note of the title or the name of the artist. It's a contemporary image inspired by those Renaissance paintings of the deposition or entombment of Christ. Here, the Christ figure is being held and cared for by ICU staff in PPE. At least two lack protective gloves.

Maybe, like me, you've been asking yourself, where is God in this pandemic? This painting I think gives us a clue.

Jesus once famously said, 'I was sick and you looked after me... whatever you do for the least of these; you do for me'.

## Where is God?

God is in and with each person fighting for breath and fighting for life.

He is in and with each one risking their own lives to clean; to care and medicate; to be the surrogate 'family' to those who cannot be with their own.

God is in and with you; wherever and however you are.

For the body of Christ living with this virus in these days, we hold you in the love and light of our prayers.

For those who care for the body of Christ in these days, we are eternally grateful.

Alan

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# CHILDREN & YOUTH

## Quiz Time-We all love a quiz these days!!



1. Fat Larry's Band was famous for what song?
2. What year was it released?
3. What other band released a song with the same title?
4. What year was it released?

Bonus Question: Who's Zoomin' Who? Was released by whom in 1985?

*Answers below*

Pre-lockdown if you had said 'Zoom' to me I would probably have broken out with '... just one look and then my heart went boom!!'

And as far as 'Who's Zoomin who?' goes - we all are!

I am struck by the way we went into lockdown and social isolation yet in many areas we are reaching more people than ever via Zoom and other Social Media platforms. We have spent years talking about 'Fresh Expressions' and 'Reaching New People in New Ways' and here we are doing it; thrown into it. Church, I think will look very different and reach many that just may not feel that stepping into the church building is for them right now but are seeking a connection and finding it via one techy platform or another.

There is no replacement for face to face personal engagement (rather than FaceTime) and a hug (rather than a virtual one via an Emoji) but I am encouraged and excited about the possibilities this time has shown us.

For example, Messy Church sees around 12 children each month coming to St Andrew's School yet through Facebook live stream we are seeing 300-2000 people reached and 40-300 views.

Junior church sees around 20-25 children and young people each week but on Facebook live streams we are seeing 300-800 people reached with 70-170 views.

As I sit and reflect on these strange times I am filled with great sadness on so many levels at the horrific number of deaths and our NHS which is on its knees and people isolated and alone. I also think of all the teachers and school staff who are providing support for key worker families whilst they too are key workers. Drivers, shop workers, posties and bin men all rallying to keep us up and running in this new 'normal'. So many amazing stories from Captain Tom raising millions for the NHS shared on Facebook to people like Kay from St Mary's making face masks shared on WhatsApp. I am encouraged that, through such a crisis, humanity pulls together and technology is helping us in these strange times. As the lyrics go on to say 'Then my whole wide world went Zoom'

Tracy Plumpton (Children and Youth Worker St Andrew's Church)

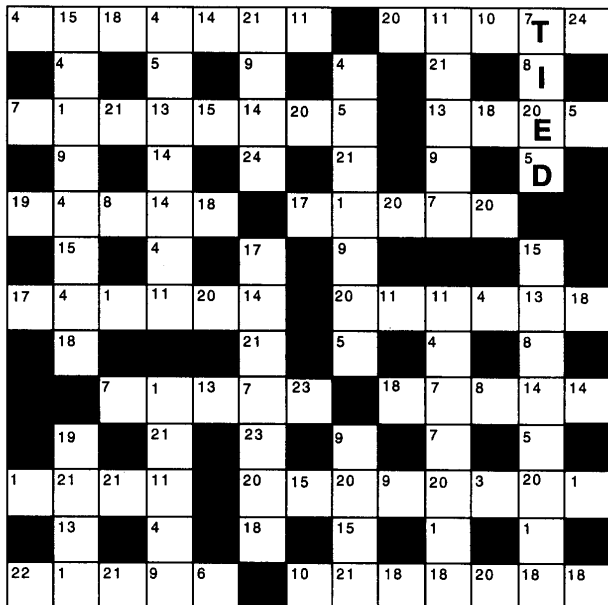
1.Zoom, 2. 1982, 3. The Commodores, 4. 1977; Bonus question: Aretha Franklin

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# Codeword

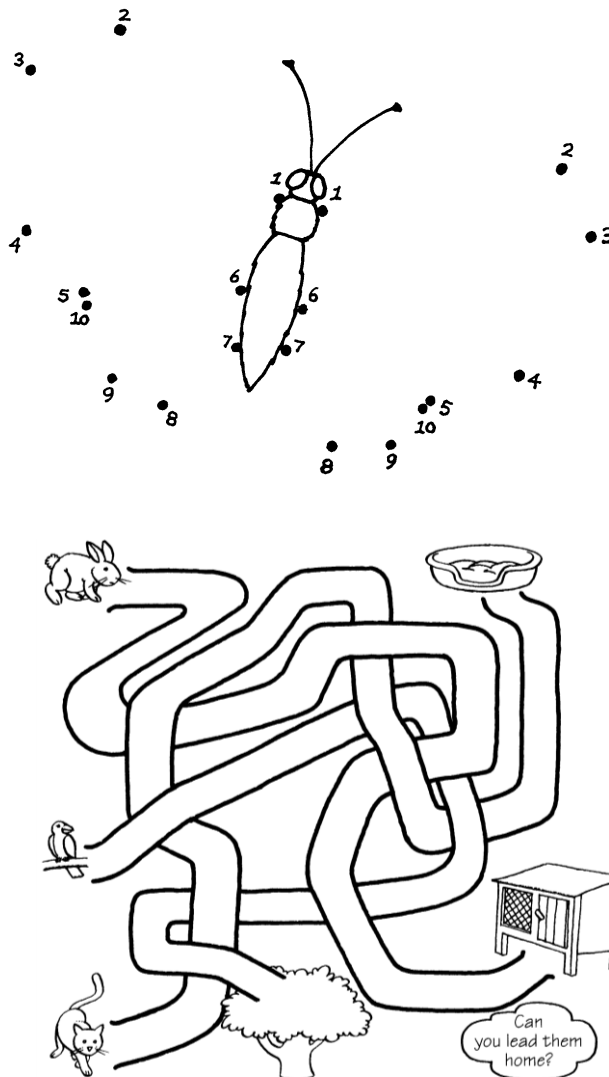
# Puzzle Page

One word has been inserted to help you crack the code. The same letter represents the same number throughout, eg, T is always No. 7. Many of the words are names of either people or places.



A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
			5	20				8				
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
						7						

## God's creatures

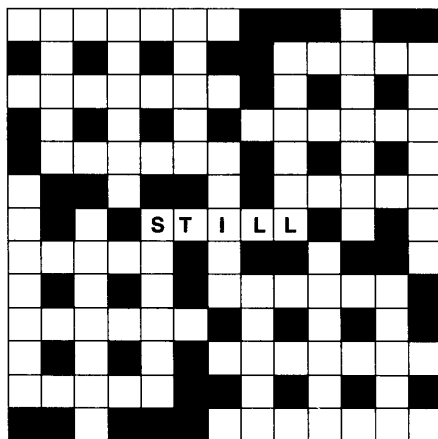


## Spot the crown



## Fix-a-word

Most of the twenty-six words to be entered into the grid are given here, but seven of them are to be found in the bible verses referred to. To help you, the word required in the bible verse is placed alphabetically in the list. Also a word has been inserted to start you off.



### 5 Letters

ABANA  
1 Samuel 17:57  
BREAD  
ERROR  
Daniel 3:1  
NEEDS  
REIGN  
John 3:14  
STILL  
SWORD

### 6 Letters

DEEPER  
DEMONS  
GOSPEL  
Luke 3:31  
RICHLY  
Isaiah 24:2  
SHARON  
SHEKEL

### 7 Letters

ABIGAIL  
Isaiah 7:18  
COLOURS  
DANCING  
DESTROY  
HARNESS  
MARRIES  
John 1:41

Thank you God,  
for making us such a  
lovely world to live in.  
Help us to look after it  
and the other people  
who live here.  
Amen.

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'when this is over...'



Every Storm Runs Out of Rain' Pastel 2020 A Stewart

During these days of enforced isolation, I've been trying to use my time more creatively; to see this as a kind of retreat from the tyranny of the clock, and a time to reflect upon my experiences of lockdown through making art.

Like me, you will have felt many different emotions during these days, and perhaps begin to re-evaluate what is actually important. As a church, we would like to be able to record something of this through hosting an exhibition 'when this is over...', perhaps in Advent, the season of 'waiting'.

This could be an image – a photo, a painting, a drawing.

It could be words – a diary entry, a poem, a joke.

It could be something you've made – a video, an object, a song.

Remember, we are all creative, so this isn't just for those who call themselves 'artists' or 'poets' etc.

Our hope is that this exhibition will be a valuable and powerful reflection upon what we're currently living through and learning from in these unprecedented times.

Please be thinking about how you might contribute, and speak to Kath Oates or Alan if you have any questions.

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# St Andrew's choir under lockdown!

## MUSICAL DIRECTOR, JANE ELDRED, SHARES HER EXPERIENCE OF LOCKDOWN

So far, for me personally, the worst week in the progress of the pandemic was the week beginning 16<sup>th</sup> March, especially the first three days when I received a deluge of emails cancelling all the musical activities I normally do, church services were completely suspended and we received notice that schools would close on the Friday. Feelings of shock and almost bereavement ensued, I'm sure felt by everyone. And I could not hold a choir practice that week, even just for the trebles.

It was really remarkable how quickly everyone started to think of ways the situation could be mitigated, and how speedily we all turned to technical solutions. I was way behind on the tech and it has been a steep learning curve, but now I find it hard to believe that on 16<sup>th</sup> March I had never heard of Zoom! Within a week of the cancelled choir practice I had downloaded it, practised using it, and had a virtual birthday meeting with my family on it! I was ready for virtual choir practice!

So I sent out the link and waited to see whether anyone would "tune in". Lo, at 7pm on Friday 27<sup>th</sup> March most of St Andrew's choir appeared on my screen in their little windows! It was so lovely to see everyone and they seemed very happy to have something to do on Friday evenings and to just connect. And they have been keen to carry on through the school holidays, so we have had four practices at the time of

writing. Of course it's not like a live practice – I have had to get to grips with the muting/unmuting, sharing screens so everyone can see the music and words and doing



my own piano accompaniment which as the choir knows is a challenge for me! And the singers can only hear me and Colin and themselves when they sing along – and I can't hear them. But I'm sure they are note-perfect! Sound quality has been a bit of an issue but I think I have worked out ways of making it a bit better.

Another skill I have learned is the use of software allowing me to record multi-tracks, so Colin (whose assistance has been invaluable – thanks, husband) and I have been able to record things in 4 and 5 parts between us. I've sent these to the choir as study aids but also Phil Probert, our Parish Administrator, kindly put the anthem we would have sung on Easter Sunday on the church website\*.

At time of writing I'm some way off being able to do those clever split-screen recordings you see on social media etc – but in the fullness of time we might be able to do a remote choir recording maybe! I'm also aware that there are those who don't have the technical means to join us on a Friday. If there is anything musical I can do to help you feel connected please do let me know. For example, we did record a

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# St Andrew's choir under lockdown!

**Love Hymns** request and sent it to the person concerned. We'd be very happy to do some more of those, just ask (see below). **Also if you don't normally sing in the choir but would like to try out a Zoom practice**, please email me and I'll send you the link, or phone me. I send all the materials out before the practice by email. Singing is good for the soul!

## Love hymn

Do you have a favourite hymn or one that means something special to you? Alan and Jane have always welcomed suggestions as to which hymns they choose, but now it is even easier to make your choice known to them. It doesn't matter which hymn book it comes from. You just need to email your request to Jane or give her a call.

Jane's contact details:

[jane.eldred.viola@gmail.com](mailto:jane.eldred.viola@gmail.com)

Tel 01992 503658 Mob 07900 144010

**Jane Eldred**

\*to be found on the Choir and Music page on the website (look under the Worship and Prayer tab on the homepage)

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## Can it really be five years since *First Light: A Passion Play for Hertford* was staged at St Andrew's?

One audience member at the time said: *"We watched the drama of Holy Week being re-enacted before our eyes. The atmosphere in the church was electrifying, and the audience, which included several young children, was stunned into silence, and transfixed as*

*each event emerged. Emotions of excitement, horror, fear and elation were all experienced in a truly impressive and unforgettable production."*

And, this year, Producer of *First Light* Julia Thomas (who also acted in the production, pictured below) has recorded a moving piece for Holy Week called *Perfume* - you can listen to it by going to St Andrew's website and finding a link on the Worship Resources



page via the Worship and Prayer followed by the Together While Apart tabs. Here's a taste:

"I wanted to tell him I loved him before it was too late. The seasons of his life passed quickly, so quickly. Spring, summer autumn and, now, winter....."I'd always wanted to read the Torah, to sing and shout God's praises, but I was suffocated by my gender. With him, I could breathe. He let me sit at his feet and listen to his teaching. He allowed me to be myself."

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# GOOD FROM BAD

**Wendy's sermon from 1<sup>st</sup> April reflects on the impact of the pandemic and how she hopes good will come from the lessons we can learn:**

Before I was priested, I had coffee with Bishop Alan. "Let's start," he suggested, "by tackling the 'elephant in the room'". I'm sorry to report that the Bishop doesn't actually own an elephant, although his drawing room is large enough to house one.

He, of course, meant my eyesight problems. And, so, we talked about some of the beliefs that God would never deliberately afflict or grieve us and that our experience of God constantly reveals his great goodness and his faithfulness. The Bishop said that he thought benefit could come from my affliction; that God would use something bad to produce good. After all, God turned Good Friday into Easter.

The past 18 months have been life changing and I am sure that I would be different, both as a person and minister, if I was not visually challenged. I have had to learn to live with uncertainty, to give up some control and to allow others to see my vulnerabilities and support me through those. It turns out all this was good preparation for March 2020.

If God can work good through my eyes, then I am sure he can also work good through this pandemic. Our plans, it turns out, have been torn up and thrown out of the window. But, at the end of it all, I believe we can come out of it learning about ourselves, our society and our church.

None of us can pretend our society was perfect before this. Over the past years there has been an increasing sense of entitlement - that we can and should have it all.

It turns out we can't, and we shouldn't.

We have got too used to having whatever we want: one click and it's yours by next-day delivery. You don't even need to pay - yet. We have got used to going wherever we want; to hop in a car or on a budget airline.

But this current situation has highlighted that this was never true for the poor. We are discovering that many people and businesses in the UK have no resources to get them through a lean period.

This is even worse in the developing world. In India, for example, millions live hand-to-mouth on day wages. The lockdown has left them instantly unemployed, homeless and destitute.

We are discovering that we have not appreciated our universal access to healthcare as we should. It seems many in the world have no healthcare available - including citizens of the world's richest nations. I pray that once this is over, we relearn the value and cost of adequate social and health care.

Nor have we appreciated the willingness of others to, literally, put their lives on the line for us as part of their job. Let's not forget that afterwards.



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# GOOD FROM BAD

The same goes for the education system. Believe me, as a teacher, you tend to get complaints rather than praise. If all this goes on for six months, as suggested, I'm thinking parents might appreciate schools, and all they do, a little more.

Then we have truly realised how many people live isolated and unsupported. As a result, we have seen community and national efforts to support the elderly and vulnerable, so that they can effectively self-isolate. Let's not lose that afterwards. To be honest, I've always seen that mutual care in church communities - but it has spread so much wider now.

We have all become increasingly worried about social media and the excessive use of technology in our lives. Yet now we have seen in a new way how useful technology can be. Here we are 'doing church' online. Technology has kept families and friends together, and I suspect many people are in contact more frequently, rather than less.

After this, will we see a new form of church? One where we can involve people remotely when they can't make it to a service, or just choose to engage with a church of their choice? One where your curate can attend PCC remotely because she can't drive in the dark? One where we proactively check up on people and reach out to people? One where many more people access meditation and mindfulness or story-time with Alan or Tracy?

There is going to be much work to be done to get people back to where they should be mentally and emotionally. We

are, in effect, suffering a huge mutual trauma, because the world has so radically changed in a month. We are going to have to think about how we help with that - how, for example, we help people grieve and mourn when a funeral couldn't be attended.

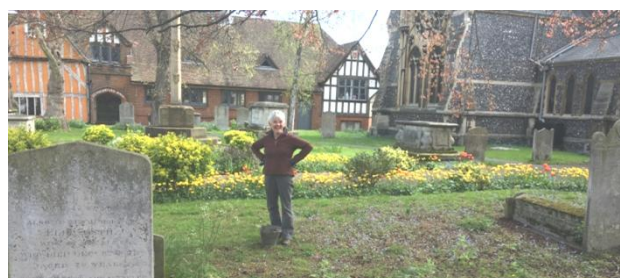
The end of self-isolation and social distancing will not mean business as usual. Or, at least, not just that. Hopefully we can have what we had before in church, but even more. The national church's focus on getting people into the building may well need to be refined by a realisation that times have changed, radically. When something is turned entirely upside down, it has to be viewed anew, creatively. As a result, we will probably choose to do things differently after this.

We know God can do anything: the miraculous, the astounding, the impossible. We often try to limit Him. Even to blame Him. I pray at the end of all this we will allow Him to work in our churches and our world, so that good may result from 'our affliction and our bitterness'.

Rev. Wendy Sellers

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We may not be visiting very often these days, but thanks to Debbie Ledsam the church yard continues to look bright and beautiful in these lockdown days.



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# THE POWER OF PRAYER

## Knots

During Lent we were encouraged to make our own rosary of knots. Each knot tied represented someone we found hard to love, or like, or forgive. The idea was to pray each day a prayer of blessing and gratitude over each of those people... 'God bless you... and thank you'.

These prayers were not designed to change those people, but to change us, in the hope that in blessing our 'enemies', we will find in us a new compassion towards them; a new perspective on how we see them.

For me, it was a powerful experience, sometimes done through gritted teeth. All that I can say is that within a few weeks I began to feel differently; to notice any annoyance or bitterness begin to allay and disappear.

I don't for one moment suggest that this is an easy thing. I have little to forgive compared with many. All I know is that bitterness is a prison, and sometimes just the wanting to want to forgive is a start.

I asked the congregations to share any of their stories anonymously. One person said 'It has been a humbling experience.... Praying about (that person) has helped me empathise more with their mental health'.

Someone else, struggling with a neighbour, said 'That night I tied a knot in my rosary. I was upset and angry with him. On March 16<sup>th</sup> when I started my self-isolation and he passed me in my garden he stopped and said if he could do anything to help me during this period just to let him know. I thanked him and said he was very kind'.

Prayer changes us. These strange and difficult times may also have the power to change us. Both, if we are open to it, can help us discover what's really important; can help us realise that life is not about being in the right; it's about being in right relationship.

Rev Alan Stewart



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# A LONG DISTANCE BIG THANK YOU

Nik Wilson reports on help given to Cabaluan Elementary School in the Philippines



Before we departed for the Philippines in January 2020, St. Andrew's Wednesday Bible Study Group gave us a goodly sum of money for Cabaluan Elementary School out there. With this money we purchased thirty full size Webster Dictionaries (American English) through the National Bookstore Group. The teachers were very grateful especially when we explained where the money came from.

The 2019 calendar I produced also raised another good amount for which we purchased a three-function wireless printer, to go with those dictionaries, for the school's new computer classroom aimed at final year pupils.

**Just to keep you informed:** during our visit of 2018 we were treated to a special Assembly in honour of the books collected by St. Andrew's parishioners that we sent out during 2014/15 to create a school library plus a number of other things we had assisted the school in developing for their educational needs. The main reason we assist this school is that it has served this needy community for many years without Government help until recently and over 34 years a good

number of Mercy's nephews & nieces children have been educated here.

Many years past during our first visit to the school it had almost no watertight



classrooms and only around 50 children; today there are so many children that half go to school in the mornings and the other half during afternoons.

***In the top photo: (fourth from right is Jackelyn) a family member, currently attending final year before High School.***

***Nik Wilson***

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# We Live and Fern

Apologies for the pun, but I just couldn't resist.

On Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> March, the first week the churches were closed up, I preached from my study about hope and the resurrection, and I used as an illustration the ferns in my garden. At the time they were dormant, just rather odd brown lumps with no sign of life at all. They seemed dead. They looked like this, indeed:



As a result of that sermon, I've kept a close eye on them and the day before Easter I was starting to worry they all might actually have died, because in spite of the warm dry weather there was still no sign of life at all. Imagine my joy therefore early on Easter morning when I discovered one single leaf had appeared. Like this to the left:



By late afternoon, I had about fifty leaves. They grow so fast, you almost feel like you can watch them do it. So here are some of them on Easter Tuesday:



Nature never fails to astonish me: the way new life springs up from what seems to be nothing; the way plants can grow so incredibly quickly; the fact that plants like this were on earth before human beings, and yet they haven't really bothered to evolve from their complex and beautiful system of leaf production. It's worked for nearly 400 million years, so why mess with perfection?

I love it that these plants thrive in spite of my benign neglect - I have rubbish clay soil and never feed them or water them. Yet they carry on quite happily. And each year there are, mysteriously, more and more of them. They apparently reproduce in a very complex way using spores not seeds. There are many life lessons to be learned from the fern - about waiting, patience and simplicity. About being content with what or who you are.

One good thing about spending more time at home has been the opportunity to study my garden more closely this spring. Usually I am just astonished to discover one day that the fern leaves have all appeared. This year I have enjoyed each stage of their development. Hopefully, I'll never take them for granted again.

And ferns will now always remind me of this time, when my hope in the resurrection was so much more acute than any Easter beforehand. It will remind me of this time of fear and darkness, when we have all needed to keep alive our hopes of new life and a better future.

Rev Wendy Sellers

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# SHARING A COVID-19 STORY

What strange times we live in! It all changed in a month! March had begun well for me. The diary was pretty full. On 11<sup>th</sup> March we had been on a lovely guided tour of St Paul's Cathedral and were due to go on a trip to Seville to see our son, Edmund (who is teaching there) and his family.

The flight was early on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> and we were all packed, when the phone rang a little before 11pm. "Don't come, Dad! The school is closing. We have heard that Spain is in lockdown because of the Covid-19!"

Needless to say we were terribly disappointed and I thought this was serious over-reaction at the time. With much reluctance we did not go, went to bed but neither of us slept!

As we all know, over the weekend, the UK began to become increasingly unsettled, events were cancelled (including the Rugby Internationals), theatres, concerts and every possible dinner, lunch or meeting.

I had been fairly carefree and believed I would not catch "it" (whatever "it" was) in those few days, enjoying my coffee and chats over lunch with various friends, including Andrew Rixon.

Then, having felt rather low and despondent on the Wednesday and Thursday, (and having an irritating dry cough) Debbie took my temperature...38.5. I was ordered to bed and told to drink lots of water and rest!

For the next eight days, I remained in bed. I had a horrible dry cough every time I tried to speak (some say that might be good!), headache, temperature and was completely exhausted.



After those eight days of professional care from Debbie (a former Middlesex Hospital nurse), thankfully I began to recover. Debbie had great support from friends and family and I am sure there were lots of prayers.

It took a further week or so to regain my energy and feel like doing any jobs. However, we have been able to enjoy the Spring weather, catch up with jobs, mow the lawn and teak oil the garden benches. Our hour out is mostly spent on the allotment. Had we travelled to Seville on 13<sup>th</sup> March, I might well have shared Covid-19 with both strangers and our family too!

As I write this it is over a month since I succumbed to Covid-19. Andrew Rixon picked it up from me (I am sure) a week later. It was not a nice experience, and although we are not on any Government statistics, I have made a full recovery and realise now that I am one of the lucky ones, as is Andrew! Phew!

Charles Ledsam

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# HELPING OUR NHS WORKERS WHERE WE CAN

## Socks

When you see images of doctors and nurses in full scrubs wearing masks and visors the last thing you think about are their socks. But a few weeks ago a request was put out via St Mary's Hertingfordbury and St Andrew's social media feeds for urgently needed old socks. It came on behalf of Emma, who is an ICU nurse at Princess Alexandra Hospital in Harlow through her friend, Kerrie Jaynes.



Kay overlocking while "modelling" a scrub hat made from the many lovely pillow cases donated

Why socks? Because the PPE provided by the hospital does not include socks and as there is a risk of the virus being transmitted through them it was felt that the socks they were wearing had to go at the end of each exhausting shift. The request was to leave the socks in the porch of St Mary's and when, a few days later, Kerrie arrived to collect them she was astounded to find 4.5 large bin bags full of socks, not just old ones but also brand new packs as well! There was also a lovely donation of toiletries from someone. On behalf of Emma and her colleagues at Princess Alexandra Hospital, Kerrie sends a heartfelt thank you to all who took the trouble to dig through their sock drawers, find matching pairs and deliver them to Hertingfordbury as well as to those who gave new packs of socks and the toiletries.

Both Emma and Kerrie were moved to tears at your generosity which will help in protecting our nurses and doctors in

their vital work in looking after their very sick patients.

## Scrubs, Hats & Bags

Kay Juniper would like to thank everyone who has so kindly responded to her request for sheets, pillow cases and duvet covers as materials for making scrub hats and bags for our NHS staff.

Within 24 hours her dining room was full of donated linen! Kay is also making the full scrub outfits, from

specialised material supplied to her, to be used at Watford and Luton & Dunstable Hospitals. Special thanks also to Nigel Bateman of Hertford Picture Framing, who has donated thread, overlocking thread, cord and a sealing gun as well as material. Kay is also getting help from her neighbour, Margaret, and Sue Bennett from St Andrew's and Marilyn Smith from St Mary's.

**Save the Date**

**YOUNG LIFE**

**Audio Visual Zoom**

**Fundraising Quiz**

**Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> May**

**7.45pm for an 8pm start**

For more information and

to join contact

[hertford@ylinternational.org](mailto:hertford@ylinternational.org)



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# MISSION GIVING

**Andrew Goodman tells us where St Andrew's mission giving is being spent last year and this:**

**Looking back at 2019**, allocations were split 46% to overseas-based organisations and 54% to UK-based organisations. In our opinion, this represents a backward step compared with the 2018 split of 48% - 52% which the Committee is seeking to reverse in 2020.

Allocations were made to the following overseas-based organisations:

**Living Hope** is a Christian non-profit organisation whose vision is to reach people for Christ, bringing hope and breaking the despair of poverty and disease. It undertakes community development within eight communities on South Africa's Southern Cape Peninsula through educational, social, income generation and health related programmes, and also plays a vital role in the prevention, care and treatment of people infected and affected by HIV/AIDS and chronic illnesses.

(Kevin and Dawn Carter set up a UK-based charity to support Living Hope. They have direct experience of the work and can provide further information.)

**International Health Partners (IHP)** co-ordinates and moves donations of medicines and health supplies made by healthcare companies to NGO partners who have identified what they need in some of the world's poorest and most challenging places, where people lack access to basic healthcare. These include Gaza, Haiti, Iraq, Myanmar, Sierra Leone, South Sudan and Yemen

(Forbes Mutch works for IHP and can provide further information.)

**Latin Link** has over 140 members (mission workers) from around 20 countries serving in 15 teams across Latin America and Europe. We support projects that Julie Noble is involved

with in Oruro, Bolivia. She works with Prison Fellowship and supports the Angel Tree Centre, engaging with prisoners' children and their families.

She also coordinates Restoring Hope, which focuses on discipleship and restorative justice with offenders.

(Julie was introduced to St Andrew's by Jenny Aitken.)

**Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW)** have a team of specialist advocates which works in over 20 countries across Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East, to ensure that the right to freedom of religion belief is upheld and protected:

- gathering evidence and documenting abuses;
- training, equipping and empowering advocates for justice; and
- enabling policy-makers to stand up for freedom of religion or belief within the United Nations, UK and US governments, the European Union and other regional and international bodies.

**Tearfund** helps communities in over 50 countries learn how to escape poverty. It keeps ready to respond when disaster and crises strike the most vulnerable communities, and helps supporters and partners to influence powerful decision-makers around the world.

In 2019 we gave to their Southern Africa appeal which sought to alleviate some of the devastating consequences of the climate crisis in the region. The immediate needs included food and water for people in Angola, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Malawi and Mozambique.



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# MISSION GIVING

Allocations were made to the following home-based organisations and people:

**Young Life International** works in more than 70 countries, offering hope with spiritual values to around 2 million teenagers each year. We continue to support **Michael and Beth Ann Hunter** in their regional and area roles, and also separately support **Young Life Hertford**.

**Future Hope** is a free, confidential service working holistically with young people aged 11-19 across Hertford and Ware. Their primary goal is to empower young people to have a hope and a future and reach their full potential. In 2019, they relocated their office to the Pioneer Hall (Zoo Cafe) in Ware Road, Hertford.

**Herts Welcomes Refugees (HWR)** started out as Herts Welcomes Syrian Families (HWSF), but changed its name in 2019 to reflect a widening scope of work. It provides a range of assistance to refugees and asylum seekers in Hertfordshire, particularly Syrian refugee families. It complements the assistance and support provided by local councils and the British Refugee Council's Hertfordshire Project.

**Bridge Builders Christian Trust** works in partnership with primary school teachers, church leaders and volunteers in Stevenage and the surrounding area. St Andrew's children's worker Tracy Plumpton is able to borrow extensively from their resources and equipment stockpile for her work in the church and schools.

**In the current year**, and bearing in mind the current global pandemic situation, the Mission Committee is prioritising mission giving in two particular ways:

1. A minimum 60% of the £9,062 budget will be allocated to overseas projects;
2. Priority will be given to projects/NGOs that are working to reduce

the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the poorest/those most in need.

For many families in poorer countries, being in lockdown means no longer being able to earn enough to feed their children. In places where malnutrition is already a problem, even more people are going hungry and risk starvation. Those who are living in vulnerable communities may get very ill from coronavirus and have no access to healthcare.

You may have seen the certificate of toilet twinning in the church toilet. Toilet Twinning have launched a new campaign called '**Tap Twinning**'. We know how hand-washing is vital in beating coronavirus, but many vulnerable communities simply don't have the necessary knowledge of good hygiene practices. A £60 donation provides hygiene promotion in a community. Therefore, since we have a total of 9 sinks and basins across the Church and Centre, we have donated £540 to the Tap Twinning project.

We have supported the work of **International Health Partners** previously (see above). At the beginning of April, they had shipments going out to Lebanon, South Sudan, Guatemala and Venezuela. We have donated £700 towards the shipment costs to Guatemala and Venezuela which had not been covered at that point.

We have also supported the work of **Living Hope** in Cape Town previously (see above). At the beginning of April we received an update on how Living Hope are involved in the response to COVID-19:

1. *Living Hope is doing all the door-to-door Chronic Medication Distribution for False Bay Hospital clients. This is a massive undertaking - we are literally delivering to thousands of patients. We are delivering medication from Cape Point to*

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# MISSION GIVING

*Retreat. It is a significant undertaking for us, requiring drivers, cars, fuel and careful organisation and admin once delivered. False Bay Hospital and their service providers are giving us the sealed packs of medication which we then deliver. We have had to re-deploy staff to undertake this.*

- 2. Living Hope is doing all the screening in the area for COVID-19. At this point, we are screening Masiphumelele, Ocean View and Capricorn [townships]. This, too, is another major undertaking in addition to all the normal Community Based Health Care which we do.*
- 3. Our Farm continues to work at full speed. For your information, we are the major supplier of salad vegetables into the MediClinics and Retirement Centres as we supply Western Province Catering with a variety of lettuce, tomatoes, cherry tomatoes, green peppers, cucumbers etc. We are also in the process of planting about an acre of open fields for other vegetables which we will be distributing to those in need.*
- 4. We are also investigating legal and appropriate ways of getting food to the neediest. The current Lockdown legislation does not allow for feeding schemes (understandably with physical distancing and crowding etc). We are working with other NGOs on a plan to get food in a systematic way to those who don't have food.*

*Another email arrived at the end of April:*

*As the national shutdown continues into a fifth week, Living Hope is experiencing a time of astonishing miracles! The response of financial support from our local donors in our South African community has been incredible! We can't say thank you enough for the generosity of friends like you. We feel like we are part of the*

*Biblical miracle of feeding the 5000 with a few loaves and fishes! In fact we have been able to feed over 6735 families with food for about 10 days. This translates into feeding about 27,000 people for ten days which roughly equates to 270,000 meals!!!*

*While our other programmes such as the Farm, HIV testing, Home Based Care and Health Care Centre continue to run as normal, we have taken on door to door medication delivery around the South Peninsula of Cape Town (over 100 packages of chronic meds delivered daily to people's doors) as well as front line COVID-19 screening in Masiphumelele together with Department of Health doctors doing the actual testing.*

*We have also been incredibly busy with the feeding programme in Masiphumelele. While we support feeding efforts in other communities, we have taken a forefront leadership role in the Masi feeding scheme and have redeployed other staff like our Life Skill Educators into helping in this monumental task.*

*What we know is that between 35,000 - 45,000 people live in Masi and that unemployment in that community was as high as 43% prior to COVID-19. So we already knew that up to 17,000 people needed assistance before the economic impact of COVID-19 started to be felt!*

The Mission Committee's budget is a 12.5% tithe from the church's planned giving. If you do not give regularly, please consider doing so as this supports all of the church's strategic aims, as well as raising our mission giving.

**St Andrew's Mission Committee comprises Joan Cheeseman, Maria Henriksson-Bell, Kathy Kennedy and Andrew Goodman.**

[andrew@goodarchitecture.co.uk](mailto:andrew@goodarchitecture.co.uk)  
07939 044357

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## A LOOK BACK

Monday 1<sup>st</sup> May 2000 was a memorable date in the short but glorious history of St Andrew's Church FC. The "Saints" were formed in 1994 with boys and men ranging from teenagers to players well into their forties. After playing friendlies with churches such as Christ Church Ware and Hertford Baptists, the team joined the East Herts Christian League in 1996, with a few players from All Saints' and a Methodist joining the squad. The Saints owe a great deal to Mike Hardy, the team's player manager in its early years; his initiative and drive led to the team being formed and joining the League. He organised matches and training sessions and took many Saturdays off work from his work as a Met Police officer to be at matches. Mike took the team to its first cup final on 4<sup>th</sup> May 1998, which the Saints won against Hertford Baptists on penalties after drawing 2-2 after extra time.

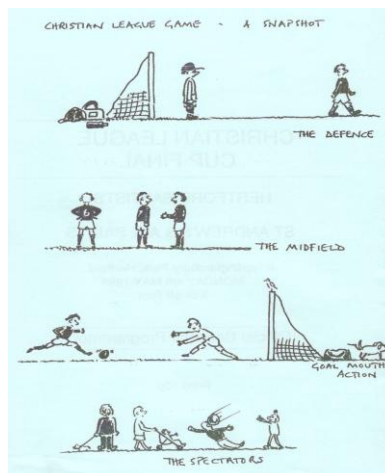
Back to 1<sup>st</sup> May 2000: this was the date of the team's second cup final and by this time the league had expanded geographically to become East Herts/West Essex Christian League and the team was up against Lea Valley Pentecostal Church based in Enfield. Like the first final, it was played at Hertingfordbury Park, the home of Hertford Town FC. It had been a good season for the Saints, contesting the league championship until the very last game and ending up runners-up, two points behind the champions, Hoddesdon Baptists. Ed Ledsam (Debbie & Charles' son) was joint top scorer with 14 goals in the season.



Many of the team fielded that day remain part of, or are family members of, the current congregation. One of the back four was Stuart Penson, as was Michael Thane who many will remember, while the midfield was made up of Kevin Carter, Mike Giddings (Rhoda & Brian's son), Colin Harding and Nick Sharman. The strikers were David Spring and Ed Ledsam. The manager was Rod Willis. It was good that Stuart Penson was able to play as he missed the 1998 final having broken his leg in a friendly match a week beforehand. Colin Harding was also unfit for the first final. Both played important roles in the 2000 final which turned out to be quite a match, enjoyed by a large vociferous crowd. The Saints were 2-1 up at

half time with goals from Kevin Carter and Michael Giddings, and went on to win 4-2, with Ed Ledsam scoring at least one goal. Perhaps whoever scored the fourth would let me know. Throughout its short existence, there was great camaraderie within the team and a sense of fair play not always associated with football, and that made it enormously enjoyable to be part of it.

Richard Taylor (team member 1994-99)



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