

# Contact

Newsletter from the WRU Churches



As we begin a New Year, we often think about other beginnings. I found myself thinking about the beginning of the Bible and how it still applies to mankind today, particularly Christians.

In Genesis 1 we read:

*"So God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth."*

(Genesis 1:27-28 ESV)

We can see in this instruction, God's plan for the progression of His kingdom in that the most important part of creation, mankind in His own image, was to spread throughout creation so that through this, God's image and glory would be multiplied and His kingdom extended as His rule was acknowledged. We should also recognise that, as this was an instruction to the first created human being, it cannot be escaped. The instruction remains that men and women should *'be fruitful and multiply'* while living in obedience and in a relationship with God, so His kingdom continues to be extended throughout history by filling the world with His image bearers.

In pursuit of this objective of progressing His kingdom and extending His image and glory, God has given man *'dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth'*. This may not suit modern sensibilities, as mankind today does not recognise God's purpose in creation to reflect His glory. God had a goal to see a kingdom established where His will was happily and willingly followed.

We know that the first created human being, failed in fulfilling this goal, but that did not mean the goal changed or mankind had escaped the responsibility, as Jesus reiterated the instruction given in Genesis as He ascended to heaven.

*'Go therefore and make disciples of all nations'*  
(Matthew 28:19 ESV)

*President George Phillips*



# 1940'S TEA DANCE AT BEACON COMMUNITY



Good morning, Andy from WRU has asked me to send you some images and a story about our 1940s tea dance at Beacon church in Bradford.

One of Beacons attendees, Grace, had decided to throw a war time party to raise funds for the poppy appeal on the 8th November 2025. The church came together to decorate the church and put the food together. We had dancing, sing alongside and vintage food that would only be found in the war time. We dressed up and danced the afternoon away.

The tea dance brought people together of all ages and backgrounds to celebrate and remember the fallen.

This is typical of Beacon church who always put the community first and work as a team.

Beacon raised a lovely £51 in total for the poppy appeal.

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*Pennie Fisher  
Beacon community Church*

## ANOTHER SPECIAL AFTERNOON

We (Val, Geoff, Karen, Grace, Beryl and me) were thrilled to be able to join the Afghan refugees for another craft afternoon during October half-term. Communication was still a challenge - anyone know the Afghan for candy melt bark? - but smiles, hugs and a lot of gesticulation carried us through. We made cards, did a lot of art work, decorated biscuits, decorated pencil cases, painted glass and China, made flowers, jewellery, angels, jar lights, masks and sweet bark. In retrospect it was a lot to get through but we did it. Everyone had a lot of fun, helpers and visitors alike. We'll be back by popular demand early next year.

Life is hard for the families, they have lost so much and this refuge is only for a finite (Three year period). An afternoon's light-hearted fun is a welcome break.



*The photos can't show the attendees, sorry.*

*Cathy*

# A New Hat



Close observers may have spotted my new hat which is very beautiful and has a story. Jesus said that if we visit prisoners, we are visiting Him. He was also criticized for dining with prostitutes.

Mandrtsara in Madagascar, is a growing town with a big regional cattle market every fortnight. Most people are very poor, but lone women are the poorest of all. For them, there are no good options this side of starvation.

One of the long-term

missionaries, a nurse from Northern Ireland, started several years ago, to visit the women's prison and share the Gospel with them. The authorities were not happy, but the women were welcoming and rejoiced in the message. Some were prostitutes and kept in touch after their release. Their "managers" were even less happy about the gospel contact.

Some accept the message and look to change their life, but there remains a huge problem: how can these women support themselves on release from prison when they are already destitute?

So, our practical missionary started a self-support business: hand-made raffia products, not the local plaited raffia style sold already in town, but crocheted raffia work producing stylish fashion items, previously only

available in Tana (capital city) at inflated prices.

Two women were invited to Tana to spend a month learning raffia crochet from Nehemiah (a Christian social project closely associated with MAF and with the Good News hospital.) On their return to Mandritsara, they started three-month courses for small groups of women to learn raffia work-dying, crochet techniques, lining, finishing and fastenings. They also spent one hour worshipping and reading the Bible,

The finished articles are sold in a little shop under the brand name "Vao Alina", New Life". This boutique must be the most chic and attractive retail outlet in town.

If you want to feel the quality, see my hat!

*Lesley Notghi*

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## ARTICLES FOR "Contact"

We welcome inspirational stories, devotional and encouraging articles, news and events from the churches all enabling us to be inspired and to keep in touch with each other.

### Some rules to remember:

- Articles must arrive on or just before the deadline
- If possible, a picture or a photograph should accompany the article
- Make sure that pictures/articles you send have no copyrights, or you have permission to use them
- Word count per article should not exceed 750. Shorter articles are preferred.

### Deadlines:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Dec – for Jan-Feb issue (because of Christmas break)
- 15<sup>th</sup> Feb – for Mar-Apr issue

- 15<sup>th</sup> Apr – for May-Jun issue
- 15<sup>th</sup> Jun – for Jul-Aug issue
- 15<sup>th</sup> Aug – for Sep-Oct issue
- 15<sup>th</sup> Oct – for Nov-Dec issue

# THE MOB BOZEAT

I have found that the people at TLC Bozeat are willing to try something out, especially if someone feels God's call to do a different outreach.

Well ---Tom Partridge Underwood and Chris Brett (Church warden at the local Parish Church), thought there was a need for a men's group in the village to accommodate retired and widowers from the village. Tom and Chris have been the "go to people" for funerals in Bozeat for a long time. They were aware of the need, so started the group Men Of Bozeat, MOB.

The message went out via Facebook and word of mouth. Several wives thought it was a great idea..... and some men. We set a date for the first meeting wondering if anyone would come! We set the time for 12-30 to 2-30pm on the last Thursday of the month.

Tom catered, it was a make your own plough-mans lunch, we provided the ingredients the men filled their own plates, along with cups of soup.

We waited that first Thursday, unsure of what the response would be, (even though we had prayed about it). The first week



about a dozen men came along, we were pleased, and talked, listened and ate for the following two hours. At the end lots joined in with the washing up, clearing tables and talking, it was great!

We now average twenty plus attendees and have found out that we have a European champion cyclist for the over 60s. Someone else who has climbed to base camp on Everest, another one who with a friend rode motor bikes from London to Australia! Others have given talks on Morse-code, Tom spoke on public service and interviewed me so I could give my testimony. We have made friends and hope we have shared the love of God with these guys.

Because we can't remember names very well, everyone has a sticker to write their name on. We have found this to be one of

the most encouraging things to be involved with. A refreshing look into the world of others, and we don't need to advertise much now since they bring their friends, mates/neighbours, also ex-work colleagues along.

We don't prescribe what would be considered bad language, but find on the whole they are careful and we are not surprised if "something" slips out.

On the outskirts of Bedford there is a place called Bromham, we have a connection with the Baptist church there. They heard of our men of Bozeat (MOB) and have started their own MOB (Men of Bromham.)

SO.... come on Men of Bradford, Barnsley. It does not need to be in places starting with B but for us it was convenient. Reaching men is so important.

**Rev Peter Norton**



# THOUGHT FOR THE DAY



Do you ever feel that you are of no value to anyone, or that you are unimportant in the great scheme of things. I want us to see over the next few editions just how special we are as Christians. We are going to do so by looking at the verse from 1 Peter 2:9 above.

Notice those words: Chosen ...Royal ...Holy ...Belonging to God. They could hardly be called ordinary titles, yet they apply to every Christian without exception and if you are a Christian - those titles apply to you!

So, we see that a Christian is someone special. We will look at four aspects of this over the next few editions - all found in that one little verse.

## 1. THE CHRISTIANS DYNASTY (A Chosen People)

Firstly. Peter describes the Christian as a "Chosen People" Perhaps the phrase "God's chosen people" brings to mind the people of Israel in the Old Testament. Indeed, that is

*"But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His wonderful light" (1 Peter 2:9)*

where the phrase had its origin. God's promise to Abraham - "I will make you a great people" We see the birth of Isaac against all odds, the sacrifice of Isaac - and the miraculous escape.

So the story goes on - Jacob... Esau...Joseph...A story of God dealing with His people and preserving them. They were "God's chosen people" - and so are we! We need to realise the implications of being God's chosen people. I'm going to mention just two.

### a. As God's chosen people, we are involved in the purposes of God

Oliver Cromwell once said: "What is history, but God's unfolding of Himself?" Someone put it even more succinctly: History is "His story". The Christian who knows their Bible can rejoice that we are caught up in the purposes of God. Your birth ...life...conversion, circumstances are not accidents or blind fate They are part of history - they are prepared, planned and purposeful. As Christians, we are involved in the purposes of God.

### b. As God's chosen people, we inherit the promises of God

The scriptures are full of promises from God to us and God has always been true to His promises.

I once had a poster which read "You will never starve if you are feeding on the promises of God" If you are a Christian - you are a child (a son or daughter) of God, a member of His family - one of His chosen people. And as such all the promises of God are yours. I'd encourage you to find them, get to know them, claim them for yourself and live by them - it is part of your heritage to do so.

This edition we have seen the Christians Dynasty - a chosen people, next time we will look at the Christian's Dignity – a Royal Priesthood.

*Rev Colin Braithwaite*





# PRAYER The Pilgrims' Magazine

## If I get dementia... SEVEN PRAYERS

Dear God,

If I get dementia, don't let people talk to me like I'm a child but help them remember I'm an adult.

If I get dementia and start to mix up names or places, please help people around me to know I'm doing my best.

If I get dementia, please bring me people who will read the Bible with me or sing me favourite worship song.

If I get dementia, give me ways to keep doing the things I love like listening to music and seeing friends.

If I get dementia, please bring me people who will talk to me about stories from my past.

If I get dementia and live in a care home, please remind my family and friends to come and visit me often.

If I get dementia, please bring me people who know how to comfort me.

Amen

Publication acknowledgement

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This article first appeared in the autumn 2025 edition of Pilgrims magazine, produced by Pilgrims' Friend Society.

To receive your own copy of the magazine, you can sign up at [www.pilgrimsfriends.org.uk/magazine](http://www.pilgrimsfriends.org.uk/magazine)

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## BEACON COMMUNITY CHURCH INDUCTION OF PASTOR TONY BROWN

On the 20<sup>th</sup> September we held an induction service for our new Pastor **Tony Brown**. As a locally based evangelist working nationally, Tony has been a regular visiting preacher to our church. For him now to become our pastor has been the answer to much prayer.

Around 100 people attended including representatives of the Union, local churches, Tony's family, friends and past

colleagues, as well as our own congregation and community. The service was an uplifting time of worship and anticipation for the future, with contributions from our own members and a message from Pastor **Paul Hinton** on *Matthew 16:13-20* asking the question: 'What is the Church? The induction ceremony was conducted by our Union president, **George Phillips**.



There were refreshments afterwards with a real buzz of excitement for this next stage in the life of **Beacon Community Church**.

# NEW BEGINNINGS

*"Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for His compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness." (Lamentations 3:22-23).*

Every January feels a little like a clean page, a space waiting to be written on. We make lists, set goals, and perhaps wonder what this new chapter will hold. Yet before we rush ahead, it is good to pause and remember who holds the pen.

God's faithfulness is what steadies our steps when we are not sure which direction to take. He has been with us through the year just gone, through its joys, its difficulties, and its unexpected turns and He walks with us into the year ahead. His compassions are new every morning and that means His grace never runs out.

The New Year can bring mixed feelings. For some, it is a time of excitement and fresh energy; for others, it can feel uncertain or even daunting. Yet God meets us in both our confidence and our hesitation. Whether we feel ready to run or only able to take one small step, He is there—the same yesterday, today and forever.

Sometimes, the turn of the year brings memories of what has been lost—people no longer with us, or hopes that did not unfold as we imagined. Even those quiet sorrows can be places where God's renewal begins. Out of endings He brings new beginnings and into the cold ground of disappointment, He plants the first seeds of spring. His mercies are not a one-time gift; they keep arriving, like light

spilling gently over the horizon each morning.

We can see that same quiet faithfulness in the rhythm of our own church life. Each week we open the doors, put the kettle on, share fellowship and lift our prayers together. To the world outside it may seem ordinary, but within those simple acts, God is constantly doing something new—restoring, encouraging and strengthening His people. The fellowship of believers is one of His greatest gifts, reminding us that we never walk alone into a new year.

New beginnings do not always arrive with a fanfare. Sometimes they come quietly, in a renewed prayer life, a softened attitude, or a rekindled hope. The Lord rarely shouts His renewal; He whispers it into willing hearts. Often it is in the ordinary moments that His presence becomes most real: a shared meal, a quiet walk, a kind word, or the sense that we are not alone in what we face.

Think of Peter, forgiven beside a charcoal fire after his denial. Or Ruth, beginning again in a foreign land, unaware that her faithfulness would become part of God's great story. Or the first disciples, leaving their nets to follow an uncertain path, not knowing that it would lead to the world's salvation.

The same God who gave them courage to start again offers that same courage to us. He can turn even our smallest steps of faith into whole new directions.

Perhaps this new year is not about resolving to do more, but about trusting Him more. Maybe the most faithful resolution we



can make is simply to stay close to Christ—to keep listening, to keep loving and to keep saying "yes" to His gentle promptings.

Every sunrise is a reminder that His mercy is renewed; every morning is another chance to walk with Him. The past may have left its scars, but God's grace is never finished with us. He takes all that we have been and weaves it into what we are becoming. He brings light out of shadow and hope out of weariness.

When we look back months from now, we may see that what felt like an ordinary beginning was actually the start of something God was quietly shaping for His purpose. He is the God who writes straight with crooked lines, who turns mistakes into testimonies and waiting into worship.

And so we step forward together—as friends, as a fellowship, as His people—trusting that each day ahead will hold something of His goodness. Whatever the year may bring, may we face it with gratitude for the past, faith for the present, and hope for the future. For the One who began a good work in us will carry it through to completion.

**Mac McKechnie**  
**Staincross Christian Fellowship**

# E 2 S

## Equip to Serve

### “SHAPING THE SHAPERS OF GOD’S PEOPLE”

This was the title of the Day of Ministry 2025 which was held on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> October at The Little Chapel in Bedworth. Ian Buchanan, CEO of LWPT

(The Leaders of Worship and Preachers Trust), led us in three workshop sessions on how to speak and preach more effectively. The sessions covered:

- Sermon Creation
- Sermon Visualization and
- Sermon Application.

The first session focused on how to deliver a sermon which is clear and Bible-based. Ian encouraged us to have a manuscript with colour coding (see the slide above). He suggested we read it through at least 10 times (!) and also practice in front of a mirror. (I've tried both and I hope they have improved my preaching!). In the second session Ian showed us a number of ways of bringing our sermons to life by using a variety of visuals.

**If you would like to view the PowerPoint slides from the sessions please let me know!  
It's a pdf file I can email to you.**

[dtuckett@btinternet.com](mailto:dtuckett@btinternet.com)

In the third session Ian showed us how these principles could be applied. We looked at Gen Z (those born between 1997 and 2013) and he explained that although they are immersed in digital technology and have been told by the “new atheists” that life has no purpose or ultimate meaning, some are desperate to find purpose and meaning. They are finding there



#### Manuscript preparation

##### 13. Use colours on the text as mental cues

- Pink for ~~the text~~
- Yellow for ~~transitions~~
- Red for ~~words of the Bible~~
- Green for ~~bridging the principle~~ (how does this reinforce the Big Idea)
- Blue for ~~illustrations~~
- Lines for ~~pauses~~
- Light blue to ~~remind them of the BIG IDEA~~

##### 14. Close in ~~prayer~~ – allow the sermon to be your

are people in churches who **do** have a purpose and are wanting to know more about the Christian faith. He highlighted the fact that the gospel gives to the believer a sense of purpose and meaning and encouraged us to preach the whole Gospel.

He closed with this quote from Dr Joshua Jipp, of Trinity University:

**“The purpose and meaning of human existence is found in the person of Jesus Christ. He is God's definitive definition of what it means to be human.**

**He is the One who allows humans to participate in the life and character of God.”**

Twenty-four of us met on the day and shared a fish and chips lunch together.

A big “Thank You” to Graham and Natalie of The Little Chapel at Bedworth for their warm hospitality throughout the day.

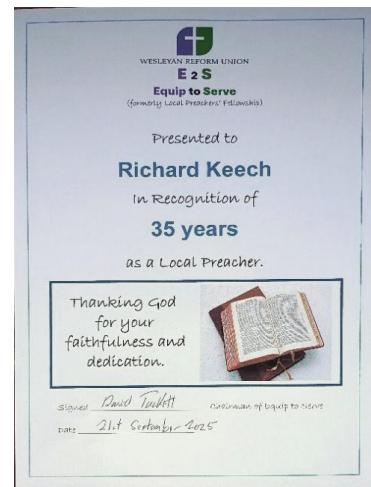
**David Tuckett**

# DAY OF MINISTRY 2026

Next year our Day of Ministry will be on **Saturday 3rd October 2026** when our speaker will be **Dr Ian Coffey** of Moorlands College. We will be meeting at Bozeat TLC.

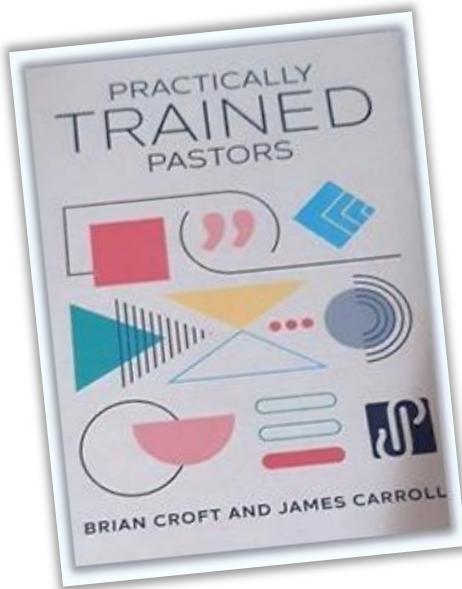
## Certificate Presented to Richard Keech in Rushden

We have been continuing to celebrate our faithful local preachers by presenting certificates to them in our churches. There are more people who we would love to honour in this way, so please do contact Jackie Clarke, Dave Tuckett or any of the E 2 S committee if you have someone in mind and we can arrange this.



Richard Keech with Rev Phil Hearson and Rev Peter Norton, presented with his certificate for 35 years as a local preacher at a service at Rushden High Street in September.

## PRACTICALLY TRAINED PASTORS



By J. Carroll and B. Croft and is available on 10ofthose and other good websites. 'This is a 52 week field guide for those in the trenches.' (intro)

May I recommend this book to you if you are a lay preacher, voluntary pastor or approaching ordination. It will sit well alongside theological study courses and offers practical insights which will be very useful on a day to day basis.

Its workbook style with sections to complete for your answers is very practical. There are sections on the Pastor's ministry, including care of

the sick, setting an example, finances and what oversight means. Part two talks about the Pastors soul and calling. Personal and spiritual care, rest and spiritual friendships, depression and anxiety. Whilst part three covers authority and adversity. It then goes on to church planting and finally self-awareness.

This book can be used alongside other people so that you can learn together and discuss topics. If I had had this book prior to taking on a pastorate I would have found it extremely useful as a barometer for myself and the ministry.

*Jackie Clarke*

# Introducing our NEW Youth Resource: More Than Words



Safeguarding isn't just a policy or a checklist. It's a calling – a way to live out God's heart for justice, safety, and love. As those supporting young people, we're called to protect them, but policies and training aren't enough if they don't know how to speak up or feel safe to raise concerns.

You may be familiar with our Children's resource – [Raise Your Roar with Roarry](#). This has been hugely successful, but we've been asked many times for something for young people, especially given the scale of youth work across the UK. So in response, we're pleased to announce that in collaboration with [Youthscape](#), we have created **More Than Words**, a brand-new resource designed to help youth workers and leaders have meaningful, faith-informed conversations with young people about safety and care.

This resource explores safeguarding as a theology of care through the parables of Jesus. Through six interactive sessions, **More Than Words** empowers young people to:

- Recognise when something isn't right
- Find the language to express their concerns
- Speak up for themselves and others with confidence

Each session is practical, accessible, and designed to spark honest conversations that build communities of safety and compassion.



[Read more about More Than Words](#)

More Than Words can be [purchased online](#). Each pack contains one leader's guide and eight participant guides. Additional participant guides are [available separately](#).

Peter Wright,  
Head of Communications



**P. S. A note to youth workers. Please review the resource before purchasing.  
Links for further information are life in the digital version of this newsletter.**

# LIGHT OF THE WORLD



As I write this article we are in early December, the days are dimmer, the nights are longer and dark. Most of us

spend more of our time indoors with our artificial lights switched on. We long for Springtime, lighter evenings and the return of life outside of our homes. There is some respite though, many

places are artificially lit by millions of light bulbs, tempting and welcoming visitors to visit and enjoy marvellous light displays at a cost to our bank balance! I'm sure many readers will have wrapped up warmly in thick coats, scarves, hats, gloves and boots and tramped around parks, parades and a variety of places to gaze in delight at some spectacles of light.

Of course lights are always seen better in the darkness and these artificial lights do brighten up the dark nights. I'm sure many of us will by now have trimmed and lit our Christmas trees, maybe our gardens or even the outside of our homes as we prepare for our Christmas celebrations.

A song we particularly enjoy singing at Church begins with:

*"Light of the world you stepped down into darkness.*

*Opened my eyes, let me see. Beauty that made this heart adore You.*

*Hope of my life spent with You."*

We can take great comfort from **John 1 v 1-5**:

*"In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him and without Him was not any thing that was made. In Him was life and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it."*

Jesus is light and He came to earth to save humankind. The darkness of sin is conquered by Jesus giving His life for us.

**John 8 v 12** tells us: *Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."*

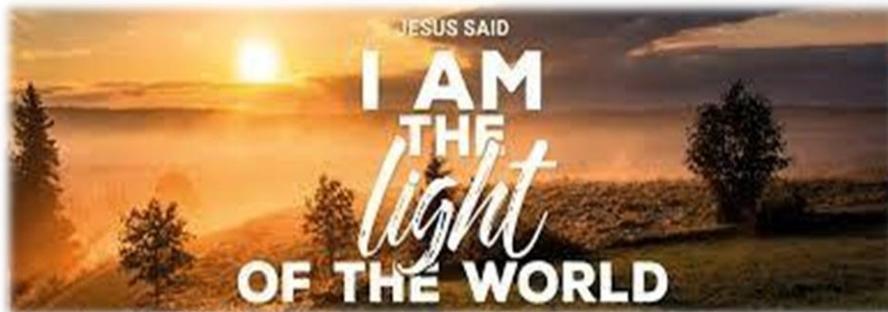
In turn **Matthew 5:14** reminds us: *"You are the light of the world,"* encouraging believers to reflect God's truth and live righteously so others see their good works and glorify God. Jesus brings spiritual illumination, while His disciples are called to be beacons of His light in a dark world.

We don't have to necessarily be a floodlight or a searchlight, even a candle or a night light will do, allow your **"little light"** to shine. Light, life and love to combat darkness, death and disconnection.

Jesus is the light of the world and we celebrate the victory of light over darkness and remember the reason He came at Christmas. The bright light of Jesus gives us hope and positivity especially when life looks bleak. As we walk forward into 2026 let us all reaffirm our trust in the light that Jesus brings us, true light, there is nothing artificial in Him.

Happy New Year.

**Marie Nichols, Staincross Christian Fellowship.**



# SHINE WOMEN'S DAY

On 18<sup>th</sup> October 2025, I had the privilege of attending the Women's Day at Heath End Church, Nuneaton. Having spent the day immersed in the beautiful testimonies of Jackie, Lisa, and Sandra, I returned home with a powerful personal epiphany.

Jesus does not want me for a sunbeam. He wants me for a table lamp.

Now, before you briskly move on to the next article seething with righteous indignation, I must assure you that this revelation was pretty surprising to me too. I thought He at least, wanted me for something fancy like an air fryer or a heated towel rail. But, as it happens, a spiritual table lamp is a rather lovely thing to be. Here's why:

## 1. God doesn't do energy bills.

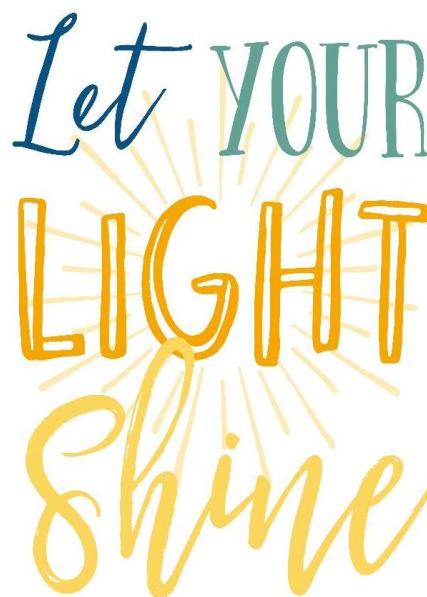
In an age of self-care, self-actualisation and rising electricity prices, we often shine our lights with a certain reluctance. We fear giving away too much of ourselves. We tell fun little lies about energy conservation and saving the planet when, in reality, we just dread how much it will cost us each month. We forget that a lamp wasn't made to sit on the sideboard gathering dust. It was made to *shine*. We, as women, were made to *shine*.

Luckily for us, as spiritual table lamps, we aren't locked into a contract with British Gas. Instead, we enter willingly into a covenant with our Lord. He provides unconditional, unwavering, unshakeable love – and asks only for faith and fellowship in return. We need not fear letting our lights shine bright. God *wants* to fuel us, we just need to plug ourselves in: because, as spoken in John 8:12, "whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have eternal light."

## 2. It's as simple as flicking a switch

If you want a lamp to work, you need to make sure it's actually

switched on. Seems obvious right? But the modern world is full of convenient distractions. We walk around plugged in but not switched on. We don't have time to pray or read the bible. We convince ourselves that maintaining a meaningful relationship with God is an arduous journey we face alone – but this isn't true. As John 10:10 reminds us, "the enemy comes to steal, rob and destroy", NHS convinces us that we are not worthy of God's love, that we are too broken



to shine. In reality, cracks and splinters let God's light shine through. All we need to do is show up. Like 2 Corinthians 12:9 says, "my power is made perfect in your weakness". He will fuel our lamps infinitely. Our job? Just flick the switch.

## 3. Tables lamps are mighty useful

As women, we are often deterred from taking up too much space. We get called 'bossy' whilst our male counterparts get called 'natural leaders.' I admit that, as a rather bossy woman myself, I

never felt connected to the role of "suitable helper" assigned to Eve in Genesis 2:18. Little did I know that, as per usual, the English language failed to do justice to God's Word. I am not a "suitable helper", I am *ezer kenego*.

*Ezer*, the Hebrew word for helper, can be found twenty-one times in scripture, the majority referring to the spiritual resolve and guidance provided by God. In this way, we are reassured that *ezer* does not denote weakness or subservience. Eve was designed to carry out a Godly responsibility, made in His image to be an equal, strong ally of men. Womanhood is an honour, not a sentence.

The word *kenego* can be translated as face-to-face, further highlighting the equality God intended between man and woman. In Genesis, dominion and stewardship were placed on both Adam and Eve as joint responsibilities. Man and woman were made to guard, cultivate and multiply life together. In a patriarchal society, it's hard being a table lamp when there always seems to be a bright, important, man-shaped ceiling light above you. But are we really that different? We have the same bulbs, the same wires, we give off the same light. Duct tape a table lamp to the ceiling and it does the job just as well. As stated in Galatians 3:28 "there is no male or female... all are one in Christ Jesus."

We were made for the same divine purpose: to shine.

In fact, Jesus repeatedly elevated women. Women were the first witnesses to the resurrection, present at Pentecost, full leaders in the early Church. So shine your strength for the glory of God. Be a quick-thinking lamp, a resourceful lamp, an empathetic lamp, a resilient lamp. Be nothing more or less than the table lamp God made you to be. Shine.

*Erin Broadhurst*

# REJOICING IN THE SPOKEN WORD

*Word of Life Church, Ashington, celebrates 15 years of God's faithfulness*

*"I rejoice at Your word as one who finds great treasure." — Psalm 119:162 (NKJV)*

On Sunday, October 26, 2025, **Word of Life Church, Ashington**, joyfully celebrated fifteen remarkable years of God's unfailing faithfulness. The anniversary, themed "**Rejoicing in the Spoken Word**," was a vibrant expression of praise and thanksgiving to God for His steadfast love and the power of His Word that continues to transform lives.

From its humble beginnings in 2010, Word of Life Church has grown into a thriving family of believers, passionate about sharing the light of Christ and touching lives in Ashington and beyond. Through seasons of challenge and triumph, the church has remained a beacon of hope, anchored in God's promises and guided by His Spirit.

The celebration service was marked by **multicultural praise, heartfelt testimonies, and joyful thanksgiving**, reflecting the diversity and unity that define the congregation. Members and guests came together in an atmosphere of gratitude, rejoicing over fifteen years of divine faithfulness and spiritual growth.

As Word of Life looks ahead, the church remains devoted to **proclaiming God's Word, building strong faith foundations, and shining His light** to the community and the nations. Truly, to God be all the glory for the journey so far — and for the greater things He has prepared for the years to come.

*Rev Michael Hedley*

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# SYRESHAM: SMALL CHAPEL, BIG PRAYERS, MASSIVE MIRACLES...

Karen D's story. (By Karen Irvani, November 2025).

She'd got the letter. She was holding it in her shaking hands. She tried to read it in its entirety, but only one word, half-way down the first page, stood out: *cancer*.

Earlier this year, Karen D, a dear friend of mine discovered a lump under her right arm, next to her breast. She had a history of cysts, so had been expecting the outcome to be that she needed a routine cyst draining. So, seeing that word, in print, was truly shocking... She telephoned me immediately.

We both shed tears during that telephone call, but when we respectively regained our composure, I said that we *must* give this to God. For He is the God of miracles. Karen D readily agreed and we prayed there and then. I asked God to reknit her as he first made her in her mother's womb. We cried some more and I pledged, "I'll pray every day that when you go to that appointment there will be *nothing* for the medics to see, for God will have melted the cancer away..."

Karen D had been coming to Syresham Chapel with me for a few months by this time, so I asked if I could share her news and put her onto our prayer list. "Yes, yes, they're my church family..."

Over the coming days and weeks, all of our church fellowship at Syresham prayed online and in person with Karen D, mirroring my first prayer that God would 'melt' away the cancer.

Karen D says, "In March this year, I found a lump in my right breast. I had an urgent appointment to see my GP and she confirmed that she felt a lump there, so referred me to the breast clinic. After an anxious time of waiting for the emergency appointment, the day came, and a scan confirmed that I had a cancerous mass.

"I'm a mum of four – and grandmother to four grandchildren – and my youngest child is just 13, and neurodiverse. How could I.. and would I, explain this to him in a way he would understand? At that point, I'd not told the adult members of my family.

"After a couple of months of worry and waiting, I was called for an update scan to plan for pre-op and operation and felt sure that the mass had grown and there would be no choice but to tell everyone. But to my utter amazement the doctor said 'I can't believe this, there is nothing there to see, the mass has gone!' I said that I know why, it's God!

I've been attending Syresham Chapel, where the congregation have been praying for me so deeply. My church family has pulled me through with love and prayers. God listened – He knew it wasn't my time..."

Then God did it again. Karen D continues, "Within a month of being healed, came another miracle: my youngest son, who had been waiting for a special school place for two years, was awarded one. Karen (Irvani) has supported me from the start as my son's Autism Advocate. She's also a dear friend, fellow nanna, and part of my church family.

**Two miracles in one family –** God had answered all of those prayers! Thank you, Lord. Amen."

We give the very last words to Father...

**Jeremiah 17:14:**

**"Heal me, O Lord, and I will be healed; save me and I will be saved, for you are the one I praise."**

**Matthew 7:7-8:**

**"Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you" from Matthew 7:7."**



# **SNOWDROPS**

**(Scientific name  
Galanthus meaning  
milk flower)**



Snowdrops are one of the first signs of spring, a sign that winter is drawing to an end and that warmer weather is on its way. Planted in generous drifts, they are sturdier than they look, even pushing up their heads above a carpet of snow. The flower has long been viewed as a symbol of hope for better times ahead. However, to see a single snowdrop flower was once viewed as a sign of impending death and it was considered bad luck to take one into a house.

Last year, Barry and I visited a local Parish Church in Darfield, South Yorkshire on a cold, drizzly day, to walk around the churchyard following a snowdrop trail. It was amazing how many of these beautiful, delicate looking flowers there were. If you get the chance to visit a similar trail, enjoy your visit, it's worth the effort even on a rainy day!

The flower has a long association with the Christian festival of Candlemas, the feast of when Jesus was presented at the Temple and was often used to decorate churches during the

celebration. This earned it the alternative name of Candlemas Bells.

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a compound in the bulb has been used to develop a dementia treatment. However, snowdrop bulbs are poisonous if eaten.

Traditionally, snowdrops were used to treat headaches and as a painkiller. In modern medicine a compound in the bulb has been used to develop a dementia treatment. However, snowdrop bulbs are poisonous if eaten.

Snowdrops will grow in most soil types, apart from permanently wet soil, preferably in partial shade – around deciduous trees and shrubs. As they flower so early, snowdrops don't rely on pollinators to reproduce. Instead, they spread via bulb division. However, they may still be visited by bees and other insects on a particularly warm day.

Snowdrops are not native to the UK, although exactly when they were introduced is unclear. It's thought they may have been grown as an ornamental garden plant as early as the 16th century. Apparently soldiers in the Crimean battlefields (1853 - 1856) were so enchanted by snowdrops that they brought them back to plant in their gardens. However they came to grow in our country...I'm very glad they did.

*Marie Nichols  
Staincross Christian Fellowship*



# THE GOOD SAMARITAN 2025 STYLE

George was driving his car along a country lane in wet weather conditions. He took a bend too fast, skidded, hit a tree and ended up in a ditch, having knocked himself unconscious.

Before very long, a minister who was already late for a preaching appointment, drove by. He was due to preach to a packed congregation at the Methodist Central Hall in London and could not possibly be late. He glanced at the car, sighed and carried on his way.

Next came a middle-aged couple who were on their way to collect their daughter from the airport. She had just returned home having spent a year backpacking.

They were anxious to be on time and had no time to look in the car in the ditch.

The car that followed, was driven by a young man on his way to a wedding. He was the Best Man and a nervous bridegroom sat by his side. The wedding was due to start at 11 am and it was now 11.15! He had phoned ahead to explain the situation with the unexpected heavy traffic, but he could imagine that the bride, having been worried, was now very annoyed.

The two men drove by at speed.

Next came a man who had recently arrived in the country. He had fled persecution in his

own country and had entered the country legally but was not well received by the people in the town where he was living. When he saw the car in the ditch, he stopped and got off his bicycle and went to investigate. He saw the driver who was still unconscious and alerted the emergency services on his mobile phone. He sat with George until an ambulance arrived to take him to the hospital.

*See LUKE 10 v 25-37*

**Elizabeth Wright Moira  
Church, Ashby Circuit**

*Illustration by her Grandson  
Jacob Wright aged 9*



# PICTURE PARABLE

