

Issue 148

# THE LADYGROVE CHURCH



## MAGAZINE

### July/August 2019

The Ladygrove Church meets at the  
Ladygrove Community Centre, Tamar Way  
every Sunday at 10am

*Blessed by God to Be a Blessing to Others*

[www.theladygrovechurch.org.uk](http://www.theladygrovechurch.org.uk)

Minister: The Revd Hugh Boorman Tel: 819036

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## Thank you to all our contributors this month:

Hugh Boorman, Jenny D, Jonathan Farnhill, Paul Hobson,  
Andy Lord, Kathryn Sykes and Terry Young

It would be great to see your name here next time!

The **September magazine** will be available on  
Sunday 1st September and the deadline for articles to go in it is  
**Sunday 25th August.**

Please give your contributions to Hugh Boorman or Mary Parker.

# Thought for the Month

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## Weeds

Lindsey will tell you that I am not really the best person to comment on gardening... but here goes anyway.

We've got some nice flowers in our garden – pink ones, purple ones, blue ones but at the bottom of the garden, right in the centre in pride of place, we have (what Lindsey tells me) is a weed and it's getting bigger and bigger. It's now almost as tall as our fence.

"So why don't you pull it up?" I hear you ask. Well, it's because it would seem that goldfinches like it. Almost every day they light our day by congregating and fussing in and around that one plant. Why, we don't know. They have their pick of some much prettier plants but, no, it has to be that weed. Well, I say that - we don't know, but they have given me a fresh insight into one of Jesus' parables.

In Matthew 13, he compared the Kingdom of Heaven to a man who planted some wheat but, while he was asleep, someone scattered some weeds across the soil. When they started to sprout through the surface,



the problem became apparent. His servants suggested that they pull up the weeds but he told them to leave them in case they pull up the wheat at the same time. Things would get sorted out once the harvest was gathered.

Asked to explain his story, Jesus told them, "The one who sowed the good seed is the Son of Man. The field is the world, and the good seed stands for the people of the kingdom. The weeds are the people of the evil one, and the enemy who sows them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the harvesters are angels. As the weeds are pulled up and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of the age. The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. They will throw them into the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matthew 13:37-42).

But I think that, possibly because of the situation he lived in, Jesus missed something! Israel was under occupation by a foreign power. Obviously we're not.

You see, Jesus urged us to love our enemies and pray for those who persecute us (Matthew 5:44). Obviously that means we need an enemy in the first place. And how can we turn the other cheek (Luke 6:29) unless there is someone to slap us in the first place? Paul advised the Roman church, "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink... Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good" (Romans 12:20-21). Again, there is an assumption that we may have an enemy – someone who is likely to do evil to us.

And of course, this isn't just about "those out there". Scripture recognises that there will be people amongst our closest church fellowship who really wind us up at times so that we can "bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone" (Colossians 3:13).

Now, there needs to be a caveat here. Neither Jesus nor Paul is talking about regular or continuous assaults. If we find ourselves in any form of abusive relationship, whether that be physical, emotional, mental or sexual, then we need to get out, pronto! Nor are they saying that we should not invite the judicial system to deal appropriately with the perpetrator. They comment on our attitude to the person, rather than on the action that they have committed.

Paul continues with his guidance: we should, "teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts" (Colossians 3:16) which again suggests that there will be times when we need to challenge one another about our attitude or behaviour. But that final phrase adds what I think is an important factor.

Yes, there will be people who are deliberately unkind to us and there will be those who just have a natural ability to press all our wrong buttons without even thinking about it. We can respond with an eye for an eye as we see so often in the world today or we can create something wonderful by doing what the world doesn't expect.

I don't ever recall seeing goldfinches in real life before. They really are beautiful. And they're here because of a rather infuriating weed. Let's see what beautiful thing can come out of our attitude to those challenging people planted in our lives.

**Hugh Boorman**

**Minister of the Ladygrove Church**



**Saturday 20th -  
Sunday 21st July**



## **Barbecue and Camp-Out**

**We're holding a barbecue and camp-out after our July Messy Church which is open to our Sunday Church too.**

**With games, puzzles and a film going on during the evening and a light breakfast (cereal and toast) in time for our normal Sunday service.**



**Sign up now!**  
**There is a sign-up sheet on the  
table to help us with catering**

# The Church Meeting

Thank you for all your contributions at our meeting last month. We had some interesting thoughts about the way we do worship on Sundays with the following suggestions:-

*Film clips with food*

*Do not hold formal Sunday School*

*Try polling families to establish likely attendance in the following week(s) so that this can be fed into planning*

*Do children's group before (or after) service*

*Be flexible and don't worry too much. Kids can be in one group as they can learn from each other*

*Tables (with provision of chairs)*

*Forest Church (suggested by two groups) - once a month?*

The church committee will start to explore these further this month.

We've also had lots of suggestions for sermon series, which should keep us busy for the next few years:-

*Practical help with individual walk of faith:-*

- *Reading the Bible*
- *Prayer*
- *Discipleship*

*Tools for sharing our faith with others*

*Imperfect people in the Bible, eg David - what made him a man after God's own heart?*

*Biblical views/perspective on world affairs/current events + how we can influence that*

*Biblical views on youth, elderly, middle-aged, getting old*

*Grief/Terminal illness/loss of a child - how to deal/help others deal (home group - but if in a service might be less intense to deal with)*

*Empowering ourselves to do God's work - hand/feet*

*Humility*

## - Sunday 2nd June

*Change*

*Teaching about the Gifts of the Spirit*

*Spiritual Gifts - what we have and how to develop to enable us to reach out*

*What does God do?*

*What does God think?*

*Friendship*

*Kindness*

*Caring*

*Depression*

*Addiction*

*Climate change/Global warming*

*News stories - reflect how we should respond*

*Personal testimony -> lead into sermon - what the Bible says*

*The hard stuff in the Old Testament - OT and NT almost seeming to counteract*

*"Dummies Guide" to the Bible:-*

- *Who is who*
- *Where they come*
- *What they did*
- *Potted history*

*Focus on what we have already - enable us to focus on the NEDD*

*Be more international*

*Church in other lands*

*Are we too white and middle-class in our outlook?*

*Creation v Evolution*

*Topical talks - perhaps from outsiders*

*Issues our teenagers are facing - social media, county lines, temptation of drugs*

The leading and preaching team will be meeting this month to start working on this list.

Finally, thank you to all those who offered to play your part in the life of the Ladygrove Church. You'll be hearing from us soon.

## Be still and know...



Life can be so tough at times and for me these last few years have been no exception. Over the years I have been struggling with vertigo, tinnitus and exhaustion. Little did I know that deep inside my ears something had gone awry. Following balance and hearing tests, various medications and months off work, a diagnosis of menieres was provided. For those of you not familiar with this delightful condition it combines tinnitus, hearing loss and attacks of vertigo in a merry mixture.

This has impacted upon my family, a job I am passionate about and life in general. So many people have said to me “but God” but what does that mean or even look like when you are stuck inside (quite literally) and feel like life is passing you by without you being actively in it?

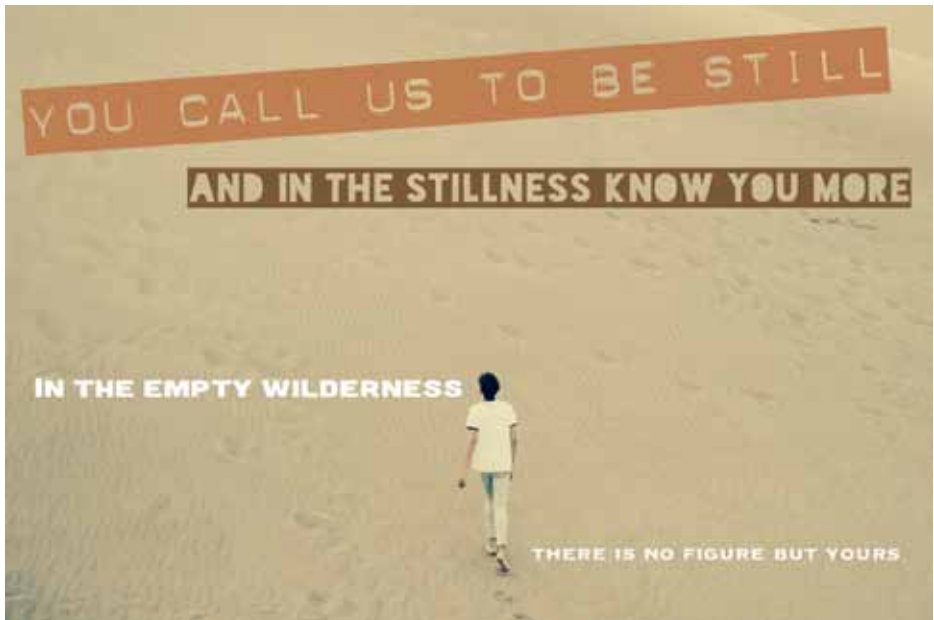
Well “but God” for me has meant I have never been alone, not once, even when the room was spinning at speed, even when I lay having an MRI scan unsure of what they would find and even when I sobbed and sobbed for fear of losing a job I love. So many of my prayers have led to the song, “be still and know that I am God”. I think God must have such a sense of humour, being still was something I dreamt about and hoped for many times but it seemed just beyond my grasp. Instead, I think it meant that even in all of the ridiculousness of feeling so poorly, God was with me, standing alongside me. On the days when resting was all I could do, I could feel his presence resting with me, on days when I could move around more, He was there cheering me onwards.



As I put pen to paper, or in my case press buttons on my iPad, I am celebrating and so grateful for a day of feeling truly like Kathryn, steady and balanced - well mostly.

I do know that God has a good plan, that I am loved completely, as are you and that this rubbish experience will be used to grow my faith and hopefully to bless and encourage others. It is all too easy to assume “all is well” but if like me, life isn’t quite as you expected, know you are in good company and that you are so very loved by your Heavenly Father.

***Kathryn***





## Greetings from Nottingham!

*The new vicar of All Saints' Church, Revd Dr Andy Lord, starts on 10th September. He and his wife, Debbie, have written this introduction:*

We are celebrating the Easter and Pentecost season with the risen Jesus as we look forward to our move to Didcot over the summer. It was lovely to meet some of you back in March and we thought you might appreciate a brief introduction. We have been in Nottingham the last 13 years whilst I have been vicar of three churches in a former mining and steel works area. During that time we have both got involved in the communities and schools, exploring creative ways of sharing faith and building community. There have been plenty of challenges and stimulus to pray! Two renewal projects have stretched us to redevelop our medieval church in Trowell and the Hall in Cossall to better serve the community and the mission Jesus gives us. It has been a joy to see people grow in faith and ministry through the years. Alongside this Andy has continued to explore the nature of the Christian church and mission through MA and PhD studies. He continues research and writing and been involved training those preparing for different forms of ministry. Andy grew up in Hull and his faith came alive at University whilst studying Computer Science and was stretched through involvement with the Church Mission Society, prior to ordination.

Debbie was born in Inverness and had lived in 6 other places by the time she met Andy! After studying at Reading she went to work in a lively and stimulating context, serving a church in the Welsh valleys. Debbie is also ordained and has combined music teaching and accompanying with being a mission priest in the community. It has been exciting to live this way! It has also been a joy for us to see faith come alive for many children and families as relationships have grown, the Christian story presented, and questions asked leading to steps forward. Prayer and a desire to encourage creativity is at the root of this, and events linked to “Thy Kingdom Come” have been



particularly fruitful. We have three children: Peter, Hannah and Simeon. Peter is finishing off at University and looking for work opportunities; Hannah is taking A levels and hopes to head off to University; Simeon is 14 and loves music and friends. It is a time of many significant changes for us as a family.

We are currently attempting to sort through our house and reduce the amount of stuff we have accumulated! Moving house is a good discipline but we expect a certain amount of chaos until some kind of order is restored. It will take time to settle and find our way around but we are very excited about the possibilities in Didcot. We are to be rooted in patterns of prayer and worship that enable us to keep reaching out in love to see God’s kingdom come. We are praying for Jesus to guide us as we move and to be at work in all the churches, people and communities. It will be good to get to know you all better and hear how Jesus has been at work in your lives.

Andy’s licensing service will be during the evening of **Tuesday 10th September** – do put the date in your diary and come and welcome him to Didcot.

# What a wedding could look like

by Jenny D (writing as Arnold the Praying Penguin!)

On the 3rd March 2018, Jenny and Robin got married. This was a wonderful day and, as far as I am aware, was the very first Messy Church wedding! Fittingly, it took place at the very church that Messy Church was first run.

Recently, we've had lots of people asking us questions about how we made the wedding day messy! So, I thought I'd put together a blog all about how we planned the day, what happened and why we believe this was the best way we could've celebrated our wedding.

## **Why did we want a Messy Church wedding?**

Firstly, both Jenny and Robin are big fans of Messy Church having been involved in leading it for a few years at this point (Robin for many more). Robin had also got to know Lucy (part of the original Messy Church team) whilst she and Paul were still at St Wilfrid's Church in Cowplain. Having invited them round for dinner, shortly after they got engaged, discussions turned to the possibility of a Messy Wedding. From my memory, these ideas were largely made as wild suggestions or indeed in jest, but seeds were sown and quickly grew into a possibility that this could actually be done!

Early on in the planning stage, we realised that we would be inviting a hugely wide range of people – from committed Christians who had been attending Church for 70+ years, to people who had never set foot in church; from 4 months old to

80+ years old. We believed that the best way to engage with all of these people was the use the format and values of Messy Church.

### What makes it a Messy Church wedding?

Our main focus point was upon the Messy Church values. These are:

- Christ-centred
- All-Age
- Hospitality
- Celebration
- Creativity

In planning each section of the day, we considered firstly: why are we doing this? If the answer fell to just “it’s what always happens at a wedding” with no other biblical or practical reasoning, then it didn’t need to be in our day. Then we considered, how can we make sure that the values of Messy Church are reflected in how we do this?

### What did our Messy Church wedding look like?

It began with entering the church and walking down the aisle to meet Robin – as classic starting point with the slight twist of walking the “wrong” way down the aisle due to the practicalities of the space. Then, Robin introduced a time of



activities. 4 of these activities were based upon the passage we had chosen (Proverbs 30:24–28<sup>1</sup>) and included making animal masks, the team skiing game, a table full of patience games, and beer pong. We also had two activities based upon marriage

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1 You can read more about this at:  
<http://arnoldprays.co.uk/2018/03/11/proverbs-3024-28/>

itself: making tissue paper flowers to decorate the church and making ring biscuits. During this first section we also served pastries!

After this, we moved into the church for the wedding ceremony, the celebration element of Messy Church. The ceremony followed the normal liturgy pattern with an opportunity for creative intercessions whilst we were signing the register – guests wrote their prayers on gift tags and attached them to the balloons at the end of each aisle. During the ceremony we also had a camera set up to cast onto the screen, so that everyone could see what was going on.

After the ceremony, we went back into the church hall for a hog roast, cakes, drinks and general time together. We had some of the activities still running and swapped the two marriage activities for a marriage advice table (which still lives in our living room) and a visitor's book for people to sign.

### Why we loved our Messy Church wedding



Obviously, we're a little biased, but we believe a Messy Church wedding was the best decision we could have made. It allowed us a lot of flexibility and freedom that following traditions wouldn't have allowed. I was able to speak with loads of different people

throughout the day without feeling rushed off my feet. I saw so many people engaging with the activities and all that we were doing, even people that I never would've expected to! People of all-ages enjoyed the day and it was a great opportunity for us to see so many of the people we love in a much less formal setting than we had originally expected.

## How can you include Messy Church in your wedding?

During the Messy Church conference, we got a number of questions about our Messy Church wedding. The two main things we discussed were: how can people incorporate Messy Church into their wedding? And how could a Messy Church support members of their congregation in getting married?

### So, here are a few of my ideas for how you could involve Messy Church in a wedding:

- The Messy Church session before the wedding, base your service upon the reading to be used at the wedding
- Get your Messy Church to create a gift or decoration for the wedding (check with the couple first for this one) – we really loved having tissue paper flowers to decorate the church
- Use creative intercessions, perhaps one that you have used in Messy Church before
- Have a prayer activity at the Messy Church before or after the wedding to encourage your Messy Church congregation to pray for the couple
- Volunteer the services of your Messy Church congregation to help at the wedding in some way if appropriate – do the couple need people to give out service sheets? Do they want someone to help serve food or drinks? This is a great way to show hospitality!
- If it's your wedding, ensure that the whole of your day is as inclusive as possible and allows everyone to engage and participate
- Help people to understand what marriage is all about – could you run a Messy Church session on this? Or make sure each part of the ceremony is explained by the person leading the ceremony
- Take a collection for Messy Church BRF – a great way to support Messy Church through your wedding would be to ask guests to consider donating rather than giving gifts (we did this for a different charity and it worked really well!)

First published on the website [www.arnoldprays.co.uk](http://www.arnoldprays.co.uk).

If you like to follow blogs, I'd recommend this one.

Arnold/Jenny offers very honest, thought-provoking discussions on a variety of real-life topics.

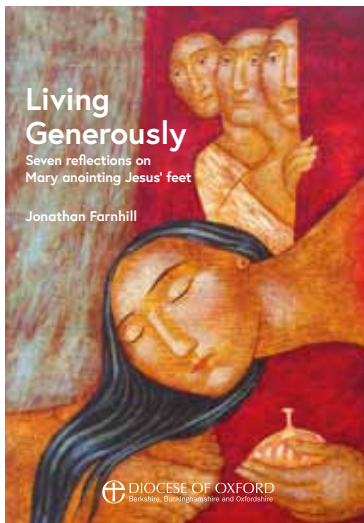
# Generous with Comfort

by Jonathan Farnhill

*Mary took a pound of costly perfume made of pure nard,  
anointed Jesus' feet, and wiped them with her hair.*

(John 12:3)

I once cycled from London to Paris on a sponsored bike ride. On the first training ride with my fellow sufferers, I hit a pothole and fell off my bike. It was bitterly cold and wet and I lay tangled up in the bike on the ice-cold tarmac. I was pretty sure I had broken my leg (I hadn't, as it turned out) so sensibly no-one moved me until the ambulance turned up. To stop the weight of the bike resting on my possibly-but not-actually broken leg, a team mate sat on the freezing tarmac for twenty minutes, holding the bike up. He must have been frozen, and it must have been deeply uncomfortable, but I will always be grateful for his generosity.



Part of the challenge of leading a generous life is that it takes us out of our comfort zone in so many ways. We have less for ourselves, if we give more to others. We have to forego things we want so others can have things they need. And sometimes living generously has a practical, physical dimension to it.

When Mary anoints Jesus' feet and wipes them with her hair, she must have been down in the dust and the



dirt, and it can't have been pleasant. She took on the position of a servant willingly because she could not have shown her love without doing so. She gave up her comfort for a man she knew would soon be giving up his life. We are often called to be generous with our own comfort, to sacrifice it so that others can be loved and cared for. It is relatively easy to do this when asked but much harder to volunteer. Mary sees what she needs to do, puts aside her own comfort and gets on and does it.

The way Mary so generously gave of herself – her time, attention, wealth, talent, possessions, reputation and comfort – are an inspiration for us, and an encouragement to do the same. By living more generously, we follow her example. We also come closer to the generous God who created us, a God who promises to be with us and help us live ever more generous lives.



**Jonathan Farnhill** is the Generous Giving Adviser for the Diocese of Oxford, and has an MA in Applied Theology from the University of Exeter. He has written seven reflections on this episode in the Bible.

# July/August Prayer Diary

Feel free to make suggestions of topics that we can add and, in the future, if you would like prayer for something particular on a specific date, whatever it might be, please let one of the editors know and we can add it to this prayer diary.

## July

### Monday, 1st July

- Please pray for those who resource and help at the Community Larder and Didcot Foodbank
- People living in Cam Close.

### Tuesday, 2nd July

- Please pray for those working in IT.
- People living in Evenlode Drive.

### Wednesday, 3rd July

- Please pray for those who are troubled by anxiety.
- People living in Tyburn Glen.

### Thursday, 4th July

- Please pray for our various home and fellowship groups that meet during the week.
- People living in Darent Place.

### Friday, 5th July

- Please pray for the church in Laguna in the Philippines and of Pastor Gay Rasgo, her husband Joel and their son, Aijalon.
- People living in Ottery Way.

### Saturday, 6th July

- Please pray for those challenging discrimination.
- People living in Ockley Brook.

### Sunday, 7th July

- Please give thanks and pray for those who over the years have played their part in the journey and development of our church.
- People living in Kew Win.

### Monday, 8th July

- Please pray for those working in development.
- People living in Penpont Water.

### Tuesday, 9th July

- Please pray for those who struggle to be heard
- People living in Ray Court.

### Wednesday, 10th July

- Please pray for the Ladygrove Church Committee meeting this evening.
- People living in Jordan Close.

### Thursday, 11th July

- Please pray for the Bungokho Rural Development Centre, our mission partner in Mbale, Uganda and for Davis Manana, the Director, his wife, Mary and their family.
- People living in Plym Drive.

### Friday, 12th July

- Please pray for the impact that we are having on the environment both local and globally and for wisdom on how we can bring about change for the better.
- People living in Foudry Close.

### Saturday, 13th July

- Please pray for our media and the opportunities that we get to proclaim the gospel through it.
- People living in Swale Drive.

### Sunday, 14th July

- Please pray for our team who offer prayer after every Sunday service.
- People living in Usk Way.

### Monday, 15th July

- Please pray for those working in retail.
- People living in Windrush Mews.

### Tuesday, 16th July

- Please pray for the uniformed movements of Didcot and for all those who give of their time to run them.
- People living in Itchen Court.

### Wednesday, 17th July

- Please pray for David and Dorothy McMillan, our BMS Mission Partners in Amsterdam.
- People living in Colne Drive.

### Thursday, 18th July

- Please pray for the farming community.
- People living in Don Close.

### Friday, 19th July

- Please pray for those who feel unable to share their true identity.
- People living in Weavercroft.

### Saturday, 20th July

- Please pray for our Messy Church, Barbecue and Camp Out happening today.
- People living in Teescroft.

### Sunday, 21st July

- Please pray for those students who are leaving school, college or university this summer to start on the next step of their life journey.
- People living in Wansbeck Wood.

### Monday, 22nd July

- Please pray for the continuing developments in and around Didcot and the churches' response to them.
- People living in Beaulieu Mews.

### Tuesday, 23rd July

- Please pray for those who have recently experienced a sense of loss or bereavement.
- People living in Rother Garth.

### Wednesday, 24th July

- Please pray for those working in the caring professions.
- People living in Blackwater Way.

### Thursday, 25th July

- Please pray for Sharon Jones, our mission partner in Lima, Peru, working with Buena Tierra through Latin Link. See [www.lifeinlima.com](http://www.lifeinlima.com) for her latest news.
- People living in Crookdale Beck.

### Friday, 26th July

- Please pray for those on their way to New Wine today – for safe journeys and spiritual refreshment.
- People living in Grange Beck.

### Saturday, 27th July

- Please pray for all teaching staff as they get some time for R&R as well as prepare for next term.
- People living in Mersey Way.

### Sunday, 28th July

- Please pray for those parts of the world where there is division through ancient animosities.
- People living in Venners Water.

### Monday, 29th July

- Please pray for those who face persecution for their beliefs.
- People living in Ancholme Close.

### Tuesday, 30th July

- Please pray for Didcot TRAIN Youth Project – our local mission partner. See elsewhere in this magazine for their latest news.
- People living in Dulas Close.

### Wednesday, 31st July

- Please pray for those who work for the National Health Service.
- People living in Longford Way.



Photo by Patrick Fore on Unsplash

## August

### Thursday, 1st August

- Please pray for the Treasure Times events being run by CTDD at Didcot Baptist Church every Thursday morning during August.
- People living in Cow Lane.

### Friday, 2nd August

- Please pray for our Music Group and give thanks to God that we are blessed with such a talented bunch of musicians.
- People living in Lea Grove.

### Saturday, 3rd August

- Please pray for those seeking meaningful work.
- People living in Swarbourne Close.

### Sunday, 4th August

- Please pray for those who are facing difficult tasks – that they might have the courage and resources to take them on.
- People living in Tyne Avenue.

### Monday, 5th August

- Please pray for those suffering from post traumatic stress and the families and friends who support them.
- People working in Lostock Place.

### Tuesday, 6th August

- Please pray for those working in the provision of housing.
- People living in Nunney Brook.

### Wednesday, 7th August

- Please pray for those whose work supports the church through Baptist House and the Diocese of Oxford.
- People living in Ashburn Place.

### Thursday, 8th August

- Please pray for Andy Lord (the soon-to-be vicar of All Saints' Church), his wife Debbie and their children as they move to Didcot over today and tomorrow.
- People living in Doe Lea.

### Friday, 9th August

- Please pray for the Villa Rosa Church in the Philippines led by Pastor Gay.
- People living in Brunstock Beck.

### Saturday, 10th August

- Please pray for those who are in the midst of challenging relationships.
- People living in Finham Brook.

### Sunday, 11th August

- Please pray for those who have lost hope – that they might become aware of God's presence in their hard times.
- People living in Ingrebourne Way.

### Monday, 12th August

- Please pray for those working in engineering.
- People living in Stort Close.

### Tuesday, 13th August

- Please pray for those who hurt.
- People living in Monks Lode.

### Wednesday, 14th August

- Please pray for our mission partner, the Bungokho Rural Development Centre.
- People living in Lambwath Stream.

### Thursday, 15th August

- Please pray for those receiving their 'A' Level results today, particularly those who didn't get what they hoped for.
- People living in Prestwick Burn.

### Friday, 16th August

- Please pray for those troubled by sleeplessness.
- People living in Bowmont Water.

### Saturday, 17th August

- Please pray for our local radio stations.
- People living in Tarret Burn.

### Sunday, 18th August

- Please pray for those who seem blinkered to the Christian faith – that God might help them to discover reality.
- People living in Blakehope Burn.

### Monday, 19th August

- Please pray for the health and leisure facilities in the town and particularly any special events put on over the summer holidays.
- People living in Medlock Grove.

### Tuesday, 20th August

- Let's give thanks to God for the people who have been influential in our life.
- People living in Chinnock Brook.

### Wednesday, 21st August

- Please pray for David and Dorothy McMillan, our BMS World Mission partners.
- People living in Abbey Brook.

### Thursday, 22nd August

- Please pray for those receiving their GCSE results today.
- People living in Sutherland Beck.

### Friday, 23rd August

- Please pray for those who work to keep our town looking clean and tidy.
- People living in Dudwell.

### Saturday, 24th August

- Please pray for the persecuted church across the world.
- People living in Dart Drive.

### Sunday, 25th August

- Please pray and give thanks for those who operate our mixing desk.
- People living in Dagdale Drive.

### Monday, 26th August

- Please pray for those who experience bullying whether it be at school, at work, at home, on social media or elsewhere.
- People living in Cole Court.

### Tuesday, 27th August

- Please pray for our emergency services.
- People living in Wandle Beck.

### Wednesday, 28th August

- Please pray for elderly people living on the estate.
- People living in Old Bourne.

### Thursday, 29th August

- Please pray for Sharon Jones, our Latin Link mission partner.
- People living in Rawthey Avenue.

### Friday, 30th August

- Please pray for the waste and recycling services for the town.
- People living in Yealm Close.

### Saturday, 31st August

- Please pray that God may open doors for each one of us to witness to his love.
- People living in Tweed Drive.

## September

### Sunday, 1st September

- Please pray for and give thanks for those who have been part of our church who have moved to pastures new.
- People living in Cray Court.

### Monday, 2nd September

- Please pray for our councillors as they meet tonight for a general meeting.
- People living in Brent Avenue.

### Tuesday, 3rd September

- Please pray for those working in surveying.
- People living in Cherwell Close.

### Wednesday, 4th September

- Please pray for Didcot TRAIN Youth Project. Catch with their latest updates at [www.didcottrain.org.uk](http://www.didcottrain.org.uk).
- People living in Ruge Furlong.

### Thursday, 5th September

- Please pray for those who feel that they can't live up to the expectations of others.
- People living in North Bush Furlong.

### Friday, 6th September

- Please pray for those moving into the town that they might feel welcomed. Ask God if there is anything that he wants you to do to help settle newcomers in.
- People living in Bayswater Brook.

### Saturday, 7th September

- Please pray for those who feel at a crossroads in their life.
- People living in Shinmoor Close.

### Sunday, 8th September

- As we share bread and wine today, let's pray for those who will go to bed tonight with empty stomachs.
- People living in The Frith.



Photo: Amy Hirschi on Unsplash

## The Poor

Nobody else was as interested in the poor as Jesus, yet the Church has an underused mandate for entrepreneurial wealth creation to the benefit of others. What role the Christian entrepreneur?

The fourth blog in a five part series exploring how the workplace can inform our faith

### **What is Jesus' take on the poor?**

Luke describes Jesus' mission statement from a synagogue in Nazareth: to preach good news to the poor. Since there were plenty of zealots dying to do something, why not tap into the vibe and act rather than talk?

First, then, a word about talking. I was nine when Jack Swigert announced, 'Okay, Houston, we've had a problem here.' Decades later, Ron Howard's *Apollo 13* revisited the mission



with Ed Harris as flight director Gene Kranz, and I would watch it with a lecture theatre full of final year students as part of their project management module. Kranz could only talk: he could say which switch to throw or which manual to cut up (watch the film) but he couldn't do anything. Reading his book, I grasped the blessing of talking and realised the difference between doing things for people and with them.

### **Is Jesus' offer to the poor just words?**

God is so much more than Mission Control: in dying, Jesus does for us what we could not do for ourselves. Jesus dies for the poor as he dies for the rich, the powerful, the brainy or good-looking and opens the doors of the Kingdom to all. He offers forgiveness with purpose in a Spirit-empowered life now, and resurrection into life to come. While he helps by healing and feeding, above all Jesus' teaching brings hope – nobody else was as interested in the poor as was Jesus.



Photo: freebibleimages.com

According to Luke, Jesus taught subversively: about the Church (a mix of people learning to live together now while learning to worship together for later) and using those strange, twisting, parables. When the disciples try to live this way, they discover that their spiritual bonds demand tangible responses and in Luke's second volume they fund the first foodbank for their widows. Giving is good and generations of Christians have followed suit, even if it is trendy today to discount their pioneering heroism.

Seen through a subversive lens, much of Luke springs into new life:

The wise and foolish builders (Luke 6: 46–49)

Feeding the 5,000 (Luke 9: 10–17, Note v 13)

The parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10: 25–37)

The parable of the fortunate farmer (Luke 12: 13–21)

The parable of the shrewd manager (Luke 16: 1–12)

The stories of the rich ruler (Luke 18: 18–30) and Zacchaeus (Luke 19: 1–10)

The parable of the 10 minas (Luke 19: 11–27)

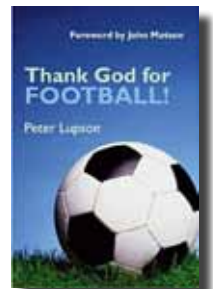
The parable of the thieves who try to steal the vineyard (Luke 20: 9–19)

The narrative around paying taxes (20: 20–26)

So much that relates, one way or another, to the workplace!

My take is that the first church had an unsustainable model: they could not sell property forever to generate funds. It is hardly surprising that they suffered when famine struck or that Paul had to run a collection from the new churches to tide them over.

In *Thank God for Football*, Peter Lupson describes how Victorian churches targeted the pubs in which men would drink away the weekly food budget, by setting up athletic, boxing, and football clubs, some of which are still in the Premier League. They were soon incorporating their clubs – and a league to play in!



While many Victorians saw the workforce as something to be mined ruthlessly for riches, Christians were starting to work out their creative calling in business. Today, we are comfortable with the idea of Christian medics in hospital or Christian lawyers in court or Christian musicians in the studio. What role the Christian entrepreneur?

### **Sustainable good**

We know the adage about giving a fish to feed someone for a day or providing a net to feed them for life. The trouble is that we keep the give-a-fish mentality when we venture into provide-a-living territory. A net doesn't fix everything, especially if it keeps snagging or if the tide goes out for a decade. But a job may be more dignifying and sustaining than anything else we can offer. However, you can't give a proper job, you can only employ someone.

Earlier this year, I met a Christian teacher working with disabled children in the Americas. The poverty and isolation were appalling but any fix would cost a fortune to set up and maintain. As we played the options back and forth, it emerged that many local Christians were into a prosperity gospel, believing that God's greatest desire for them was that they should be rich.

What if there were a way, I wondered, to subvert one community's prosperity gospel into creating jobs for the other community, where a little imagination and investment would guarantee self-sufficiency? An accountant in a wheelchair is very employable here, but not there. On-line accounting businesses work anywhere, and the on-line world is just opening up. It won't feed everyone, but it might be a start for the right Christian with the right background and the right idea.

Some of the first feedback I got (from two widely separated countries) was that corruption would soon kill off any Christian business. So, when Paul urges us to pray for rulers in order that Christians can live in peace, we can pray against corruption in business as well as praying for Christians in prison or for the

fulltime workers we support from our church. It would be a wild way to pray if we followed it through.

Like the first disciples with the hungry crowd, we cannot imagine how to raise the funds to ameliorate the surrounding need. The workplace is a natural environment for generating income to pay the bills. In some cases, a Christian entrepreneur may achieve what a country full of givers could not. This is not our normal agenda: we tend to look at our bank balance, or seek to influence government, or ask someone much richer than us to give. In its place, each may be an appropriate response.

But we can also look to the workplace. Since it is often a mess, this leads us to the last blog in the series: redeeming the workplace.

**Terry Young** was born to missionary parents working in the Middle East. He has always tried to unify his life of worship and secular missions, and has been part of church leadership teams in Essex, and at Slough Baptist Church. He has written a few books that link worlds, including *After the Fishermen*, and *Jake, Just Learn to Worship*.

After a mobile early childhood his family settled in the UK to the northwest of Birmingham, and eventually he studied at the local university. After his doctoral studies he worked for 16 years in Chelmsford undertaking research and business development in the aerospace sector, where his interest was in fibre optics and photonics. In the end he gravitated to healthcare systems and move to Datchet with a position as a university professor.

This article was first published by *The Baptist Times* and is reprinted here with permission. We will share Terry's last blog in the September edition of this magazine.



## Where do we grow from here?

That's the challenge and invitation posed by new Baptist Union President Ken Benjamin, writes Paul Hobson (*Baptist Times*).

Ken, the senior minister of Chichester Baptist Church, was inducted as Baptist Union President on Saturday 18th May at the Baptist Assembly in Telford.

His theme for his presidential year is 'Where do we grow from here?', and is directly linked to the Baptist Union's vision of 'Growing Healthy Churches in Relationship for God's Mission.' It's a question that he hopes as many churches and ministers as possible can engage with.

'Where do we grow from here?' can be summarised by two "what if" questions, Ken explained.

Firstly, what are things likely to look like for the group of churches in our Union in the next 10–20 years if we simply keep doing what we are doing now?

The answer is not likely to be positive overall – there's not likely to be growth overall; and we're not likely to be seeing growing numbers coming to faith, especially from younger generations.

'We can't be ok with that happening on our watch, when it need not be so,' Ken said.



He proceeded to break down the “Where do we grow from here?” question.

- He wants to invite churches to pray through “where do we grow from here?”
- Then to consider who we mean by ‘we’ thinking: more Kingdom than individual
- Then to prayerfully and carefully consider the current state of play in our churches and society, which is to say, where ‘here’ is.
- Then to recognise that we seek real growth from God in all the forms he describes in his word, rather than just numerical growth which might be at the expense of others, and let’s recognise that *he* does growth ultimately, not us.
- Then, when we have done that we can look meaningfully at the ‘where’ question.

Ken explained that part of the answer in his own church has been emphasising whole life discipleship, particularly picking up resources from the London Institute for Contemporary Christianity. He highlighted the new resource *Frontline Sundays*, launched at the Baptist Assembly.

Ken also spoke of the importance of alternative gathering, or missional communities, at his church. One Sunday a month, members are encouraged to do something in the community, in a variety of contexts and locations, instead of attending the more traditional service. These gatherings are aimed at reaching those who foreseeably won't come to any of the churches in Chichester.

Different churches will have different answers to the questions. He said he hopes the responses will reflect 'our great diversity', but added, 'I suspect there will be some common themes and transferable lessons.'



The second 'what if' question is more positive: what if a good number of churches prayerfully engaged with this question? Could we see a real momentum shift for the better as we go for bold experiments together and share lessons learnt along the way?

'My prayer,' Ken concluded, 'is that great growth stories emerge from surprising places.'

He invited delegates to take this question, invitation, and challenge; make it a prayer; and take it back to their home churches.

### **Resources to engage with the question**

can be found on the Where do we grow from here? website:

**[www.wheredowegrowfromhere.org](http://www.wheredowegrowfromhere.org)**

and on the Baptists Together website

**[www.baptist.org.uk/wdwgfh](http://www.baptist.org.uk/wdwgfh)**





Dear Supporters,

Whilst the weather has been growing warmer and the school year is racing towards its end, the past month at TRAIN has seen us busily preparing for our France residentials, delivering another positive activity filled holiday programme and continuing to deliver our regular timetable of youth work provision. Please read on to hear more about all we've been getting up to!

## **NEWS**

### **Annual General Meeting**

The 14th May saw us hold our Annual General Meeting, clearly a very important yearly event for TRAIN. The evening proved to be very successful and a marked reminder of the number of achievements made over the year. These include engaging with 461 young people for which a multitude of positive impacts have been achieved, successfully transitioning from an unincorporated charity to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation and progressing ahead of our 4-year business plan, after being granted funding from Thames Valley Police's Early Intervention Youth Fund for another full-time youth worker. Thank you to all who came along and to Brian, Alice and Nicole for their brilliant presentations.

### **Stop and Search Workshop**

PCSO Jason visited on the 16th to deliver a talk to young people on the Stop and Search procedure, with it being due to be carried out on an increased basis in the local area. Lots of good information was shared and it was great to see a large turnout. Thank you very much to PCSO Jason for your delivery of the workshop. Here are a few words from him on how it went:

***"This was the first, of what we hope to be many talks with the kids of the Didcot area. I was surprised that the kids were interested in what I had to say about the Stop and Search powers that the police use and***



*how we use this power. I felt that it helped bridge the divide between the police and the younger generation.”*

### **May Half-term**

This month's half term programme was a little more relaxed compared to our last, but still involved a number of brilliant developmental opportunities for young people to get involved in. As some of the young people who engaged throughout the week are going through particularly challenging times at the moment, the activities offered a valuable distraction through the opportunity to have a bit of fun.

They also proved to be a well-deserved reward and break for the hard work a number of the young people are currently putting into their GCSE exams. In addition to detached and Dinner and Debate sessions, activities held included:

- **Thorpe park** – the Tuesday saw us take 6 young people who have demonstrated particularly positive behaviour at TRAIN over the past term to Thorpe Park. As a few had never been to a theme park before, it was their first experience of rollercoasters, so a huge push for them outside their comfort zones. Despite the challenges posed, all thoroughly enjoyed the day.



*“Thorpe Park was such an amazing opportunity with TRAIN. The lines were kind of long but it was so worth it. Thank you TRAIN” Reece, 13*

- **Drugs, Alcohol and Stop Smoking Workshop** – Phil delivered a brilliant workshop on the Wednesday to enhance young people's awareness of different types of drugs and the risks, regulations and myths associated with each. Particular young people have especially shown concern for the health risks associated with smoking following on from the session, suggesting it was successful in encouraging them to reflect on their current habits. We will continue to offer support and encouragement to reduce motivations to take and experiment with substances.

- **Walk to Long Wittenham** – on the Thursday Holly, Phill and volunteer Aisha guided a group of young people on a 6 mile walk to and from Long Wittenham. Many positive conversations were held throughout and fortunately the sun was shining. It offered a particularly good opportunity for staff to get to know young people who had not engaged with TRAIN before and for them themselves to learn more about the support we can offer. Thank you Aisha for your support and also to Rhonda and Darren for helping with the route planning!

### Explore More

Last Thursday saw the first group of young people signed up to our Explore More Programme gather excitably at the office in the early hours to head off for their flight to France! After months of anticipation, passport applications and activities to prepare the young people physical and mentally, it feels quite surreal that Camp 1 of 3 has come around. We are hugely looking forward to observing all they come to learn from the week, following the adventurous challenges they will undertake throughout, from hiking to canyoning and carrying out farm work a number of mornings.

### **WEEKLY YOUTH WORK PROVISION**

#### **Detached and Outreach**

There has been a mix of Detached and Outreach sessions over the month, some proving to be fairly quiet, yet others very lively, with TRAIN youth workers meeting large numbers of young people out and about. These have included both young people who have already been engaging in our provision and groups of new young people to TRAIN. In addition to the continuation of our regular young women's and men's football sessions, outreach activities have also included a couple of rounders matches after a young person's enthusiasm for us to purchase a kit! Sure enough, both games have been hugely





enjoyed by the young people who have taken part, one game being attended by a brilliant 18 young people.

Activities such as these prove valuable for the mental and physical health of the young people taking part, as well as offering a distraction from potential opportunities for anti-social behaviour.

### **Mentoring**

Communication with Didcot Girls' School has led us to begin carrying out one to one mentoring with new young people this month, as well as continuing with young people we are already supporting on this basis. We look forward to observing how the young people come to receive their continued sessions over the weeks and all we hope they will gain from them. In regards to our group mentoring sessions, Young Women's, Young Men's, Dinner and Debate and TOPAZ (LGBTI) have covered a number of topics this month including:

- Knife crime
- First aid, including practicing the recovery position
- Identity and Self-esteem
- Friendships
- Healthy eating (smoothie making!)

### ***UPCOMING MONTH***

Following the return of the 8 young people away on Camp 1 of Explore More, two weeks later it will be all go again as the next group of 8 head off for Camp 2. So it's a hugely exciting month ahead as we await to hear how both trips go and of all we anticipate the young people to gain from them.

We are aiming to do our best to continue to offer as much of our regular provision as possible while the trips are running, despite running lower on the ground in terms of staff. We will continue to publicise sessions through our staff Facebook pages (Justina Train, Holly Train, Alice, Phill and Charlotte), but feel free to give us a call for further enquiries.

An addition to our provision this month includes careers advice mentoring from 3:30-5:30pm on Wednesday 12th June with new volunteer Andy Crowe. As Operations Development Manager at M&S, Andy is keen to share his skills, experience and advice with young people on developing career aspirations and planning ahead to achieve them. Appointments are available for 15-17 year olds by booking through the appointment facility on the Didcot TRAIN Facebook page or alternatively by contacting us or visiting the office.

### **Volunteering**

You may have noticed a few adverts for volunteering opportunities we have posted on Indeed over the month. Our dedicated team of volunteers are so important to us in enabling the delivery of our core work - we can't thank them enough. We are looking to grow our existing volunteer team to ensure each of our sessions is well supported and we can increase our provision further.

Specific roles we are looking to fill include support with our Youth Participation meetings and Detached youth work. For more information on each opportunity and to apply, search for 'Youth Work Didcot' through [www.indeed.co.uk](http://www.indeed.co.uk) or alternatively contact us for further information. Additional voluntary roles we are looking to fill include recruiting an Operational Lead Trustee to join our Trustee Committee and support in managing our SO Charitable Lottery page so look out for adverts for these over the coming couple of weeks on Indeed. If you would like to get involved in another aspect of our provision or feel you have alternative skills you could offer, we would still love to hear from you, so please do get in touch.

Unsure about volunteering with us? Here are a few words from current volunteers to inspire you!

***'Being a part of TRAIN has been so rewarding; I always come home with a smile on my face. It's amazing the impact you can have with young people simply by treating them with the same level of respect and kindness that you'd expect to be treated with yourself.'***

*'It's so refreshing to find a charitable organisation that makes it easy to get involved and stuck in, with loads of flexibility around the activities you can volunteer for, and ways you can contribute.'*

*'Volunteering for TRAIN is fun, worthwhile, gratifying, challenging and amazing. The young people are wonderful and it feels so good when we're recognised and accepted.'*

*'I enjoy working as a volunteer with young people and seeing them develop and grow whilst developing my own skills and capabilities.'*

## **THANKS**

Thank you to you all for your ongoing support towards TRAIN – something which the AGM particularly reminded us of our gratefulness for. Whether this has been through collaborative work, donations, volunteering or offering any other means of support, a really huge thank you to you all for helping us achieve as much as we have over the past financial year. Particular thanks this month to the Wallingford and Didcot Rotary Club and Saint Birinus for the generous donation raised for us at your successful Bingo event - and all the hard work put in of course! Also a big thank you to the team at Mountain Warehouse Didcot for donating profits made through selling charity canvas bags – the campaign finishes at the end of June so bags will still be available to purchase till the end of the month! Thank you for reading and if you would like to receive the newsletter by email, are interested in volunteering opportunities or have any other enquiries, please feel free to contact us through one of the means below.

Kind regards,

The TRAIN team



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@DidcotTRAIN



info@didcottrain.org.uk

TRAIN is a charity registered in England and Wales  
Registered Number: 1176258  
Registered Address: 118 Broadway, Didcot, OX11 0AB

## July Diary

Date	Time	Event
Wednesday, 3rd	9.30am	Ladygrove Parents/Carers and Toddlers Group
Thursday, 4th	9.30am	Ladygrove Parents/Carers and Toddlers Group
Sunday, 7th	10.00am	Morning Service Galatians 5:16-25 Come, Holy Spirit: Transforming
Monday, 8th	8.00pm	Prayer Hour at 12 Trent Road. All welcome.
Tuesday, 9th – Wednesday, 10th		Prayer Spaces at South Moreton Primary School
Wednesday, 10th	9.30am	Ladygrove Parents/Carers and Toddlers Group Party
	7.45pm	Ladygrove Church Committee Meeting at 12 Trent Road
Thursday, 11th	9.00am	Leading & Preaching Team Breakfast Meeting at 12 Trent Road
Sunday, 14th	10.00am	Anglican Communion Service Luke 24:45-49, Acts 1:1-9 Come, Holy Spirit: Empowering
Thursday, 18th	1.45pm	All Saints' School's Leavers' Service at All Saints' Church. All welcome.
Saturday, 20th	3.00pm	Messy Church followed by Barbecue and Camp Out in the School Field (see elsewhere in this magazine)
Sunday, 21st	10.00am	Worship All Together Pack Your Bags, You're Going: Journey into the Unknown
	12.30pm	Picnic
Monday, 22nd	8.00pm	Messy Church Planning Meeting. All welcome.
Sunday, 28th	10.00am	Worship All Together Pack Your Bags, You're Going: Journey of Reconciliation

## August Diary

Date	Time	Event
Thursday, 1st	10.00am	Treasure Times Family Fun Morning at Didcot Baptist Church. All welcome.
Sunday, 4th	10.00am	Unplugged Worship All Together Pack Your Bags, You're Going: Journey to Escape
Thursday, 8th	10.00am	Treasure Times Family Fun Morning at Didcot Baptist Church. All welcome.
Sunday, 11th	10.00am	Worship All Together Pack Your Bags, You're Going: Journey of (Renewed) Hope
Thursday, 15th	10.00am	Treasure Times Family Fun Morning at Didcot Baptist Church. All welcome.
Sunday, 18th	10.00am	Worship All Together Pack Your Bags, You're Going: Journey of Realisation
Thursday, 22nd	10.00am	Treasure Times Family Fun Morning at Didcot Baptist Church. All welcome.
Sunday, 25th	10.00am	Worship All Together Pack Your Bags, You're Going: Journey to Disaster

## September Diary

Sunday, 1st	10.00am	Worship All Together Pack Your Bags, You're Going: Journey into the Wilderness
Monday, 2nd	8.00pm	Prayer Hour at 12 Trent Road. All welcome
Sunday, 8th	10.00am	Anglican Communion Service

## Homegroups

There are a number of homegroups meeting throughout the week at various times and venues - some with a specific focus; others more generic.

For more details, speak to Hugh.

Tuesdays	7-8:30pm	RGB youth group at the Children's Centre Contact Hugh 819036
	8:00pm	Re-hydrate Men's Group on the first Tuesday of the month for Bible study Contact Jamie 07881 710171
Thursdays	7:30pm	Kitchen Table for 20's and 30's at Sarah and Vaughn Lawfull's home Contact Sarah on <a href="mailto:sarah@wherethefruitis.co.uk">sarah@wherethefruitis.co.uk</a> and Vaughn on <a href="mailto:vl@lawfull-associates.com">vl@lawfull-associates.com</a>
	8:00pm	Refresh Ladies' Group - check with Lindsey for venue Contact Lindsey 819036
	8:00pm	Re-hydrate Men's Group on the third Thursday of the month for a social gathering Contact Jamie 07881 710171
	8:00pm	Home Group at Ian and Kathryn Sykes' home Contact Ian and Kathryn 850085

