

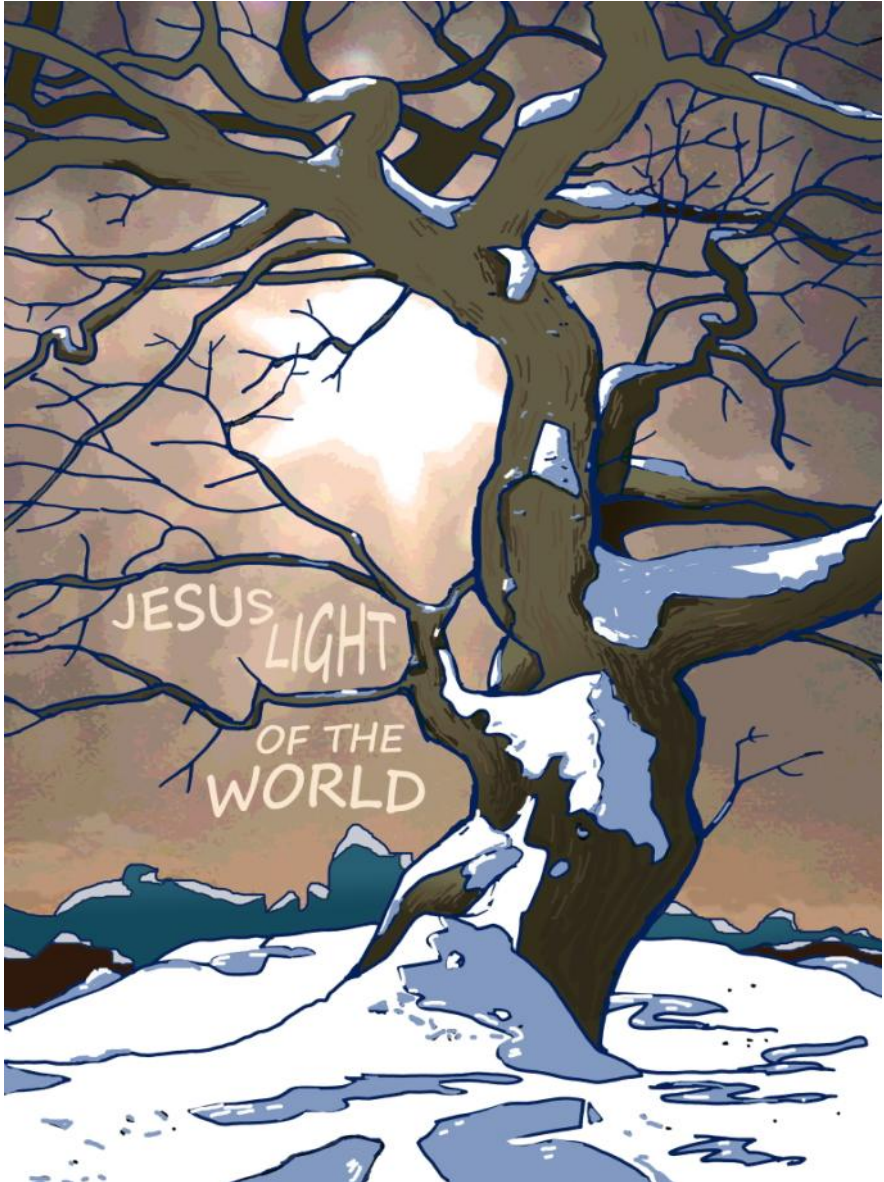


# CROSSROADS

*The Family Magazine of St Hilda's, Ashford, Middlesex*

No. 706 February 2020

*Free - but donations welcome!*



The Parish of **St Hilda, Ashford** in the Diocese of London  
Charity Reg. No. 1134119

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*An item submitted after the deadline  
may be accepted for inclusion IF the  
Editor has been informed by the dead-  
line that the item is on its way.*

**When is the Vicar not available  
in February?**

Every Saturday: day off



The current political climate has unsettled many of us. We crave to belong, as much as everyone else. We want to be heard, to be recognised and accepted for who we are, and ultimately, to be loved. At different levels, we are social creatures, and flourish and thrive in the company of likeminded people. John Donne, the British poet and Anglican divine, was influential in the development of the Anglican Church at a civilised and civilising levels. He eloquently describes what it means to

be part of something bigger than the individual, than the ‘island complex’. His words offer hope as the UK and Europe attempt to reinvent their future, and to the Christian church as it reflects on how to bring about reconciliation, healing and relevance:

No man is an island entire of itself;  
every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main.  
If a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is the less,  
as well as if a promontory were,  
as well as any manner of thy friends or of thine own were.  
Any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind.  
And therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls;  
it tolls for thee.

This year marks the achievement of several personal milestones. One of them is living in this country for twenty-five years. In the not so distant future, I will have lived in the UK longer than in my country of birth. I get asked often, do you miss home? Where is your heart? Where do you truly belong?

In the month dedicated to love, through Valentine’s day, there is one saying which can help to shed light with such questions: “Home is where the heart is”. There is a hidden depth to this statement, as it means home can be anywhere in the world. It means home is the place where we can feel the deepest affection, regardless of where we are. It means we can find a home with family in our hometown, overseas, or somewhere in between. It means a place where we long to be. It means to find a sense of home in a friend’s hug, exploring the unknown, through love, in precious moments which warm the soul. It means that home is wherever we take our heart. It means so much more than just a mere phrase. Living in a house does not make it a home, in the same way as a church needs people in order to be more than just a building.

There are times during our journey through life when we do not understand where we belong in this world. We struggle with the fear of not belonging to anyone or anything. We might have families, but our families do not entirely shape how our life should be. It is in that place deep inside us where our soul resides, our ‘hidden heart’, where the Divine is closer to us, that represents who we truly are, and where we truly belong. Our heart is a spiritual source that connects to the things that really matter in our life. This is not to deny that there are many moments in life where we

feel lost, both in a spiritual and emotional way. These feelings can manifest themselves unexpectedly, sometimes surrounded by unfamiliar faces and places. We might start to think, where do I want to be? Where do I feel the most relieved? Why am I here? What is my meaning? What is my truth? What is my purpose? What is my path? Our heart can answer these questions for us. For wherever our heart leads us, we are truly home. For our home is where our heart is, and our heart is with us. God is within us, and where God is, love follows. This love is unconditional and never ends.

As with concerns for the times ahead, the words from the hymn “Be Still, My Soul” seem an appropriate way to end this article:

Be still, my soul: the Lord is on your side;  
leave to your God to order and provide;  
bear patiently the cross of grief or pain;  
in ev'ry change he faithful will remain.

Be still, my soul: your God will undertake  
to guide the future as he has the past.  
Your hope, your confidence let nothing shake;  
all now mysterious shall be bright at last.

*Fr. Joseph Fernandes*

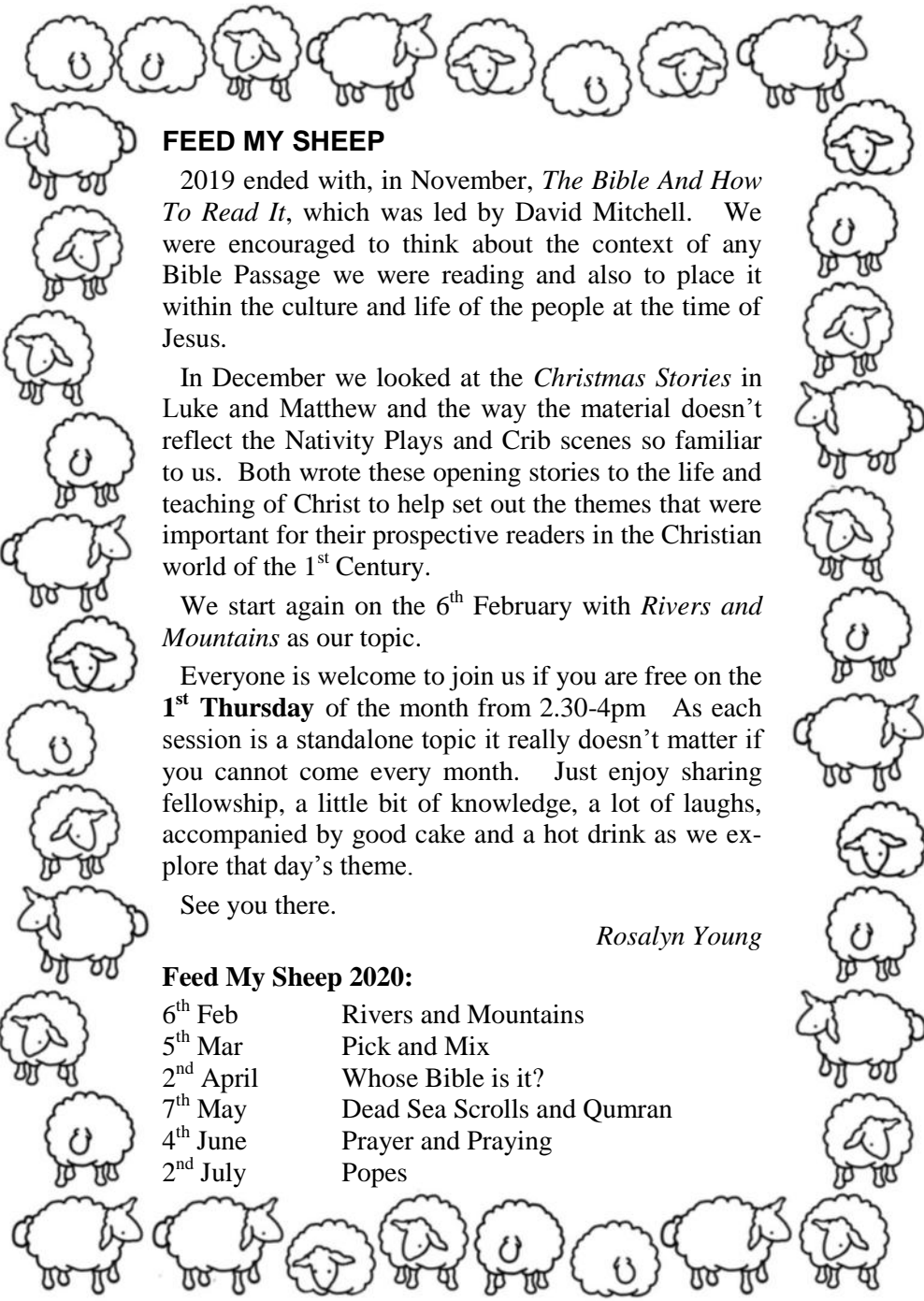


You are invited to a service of **CONFIRMATION**  
with Bishop Graham  
at St. Hilda's  
on **Sunday 23rd February at 6pm**  
Do come and support and welcome the candidates as they  
confirm their faith

## **PANCAKE PARTY**

with activities  
in St. Hilda's Church  
on Shrove Tuesday 25th February at 7pm  
Come and bring your friends





## FEED MY SHEEP

2019 ended with, in November, *The Bible And How To Read It*, which was led by David Mitchell. We were encouraged to think about the context of any Bible Passage we were reading and also to place it within the culture and life of the people at the time of Jesus.

In December we looked at the *Christmas Stories* in Luke and Matthew and the way the material doesn't reflect the Nativity Plays and Crib scenes so familiar to us. Both wrote these opening stories to the life and teaching of Christ to help set out the themes that were important for their prospective readers in the Christian world of the 1<sup>st</sup> Century.

We start again on the 6<sup>th</sup> February with *Rivers and Mountains* as our topic.

Everyone is welcome to join us if you are free on the **1<sup>st</sup> Thursday** of the month from 2.30-4pm. As each session is a standalone topic it really doesn't matter if you cannot come every month. Just enjoy sharing fellowship, a little bit of knowledge, a lot of laughs, accompanied by good cake and a hot drink as we explore that day's theme.

See you there.

*Rosalyn Young*

### Feed My Sheep 2020:

- |                       |                             |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| 6 <sup>th</sup> Feb   | Rivers and Mountains        |
| 5 <sup>th</sup> Mar   | Pick and Mix                |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> April | Whose Bible is it?          |
| 7 <sup>th</sup> May   | Dead Sea Scrolls and Qumran |
| 4 <sup>th</sup> June  | Prayer and Praying          |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> July  | Popes                       |

# WHAT'S ON in FEBRUARY 2020

SUNDAY		
2nd } 8am	Said Eucharist (BCP)	Presentation of Christ in the Temple 5th Sunday after Epiphany 6th Sunday after Epiphany Last Sunday after Epiphany
9th } 9.30am	Eucharist and Junior Church	
16th } 11am	Confirmation Preparation	
23rd }		
23rd 6pm	Confirmation Service with Bishop Graham	
MONDAY:		
TUESDAY		
Every Tuesday	9.45am	<b>Eucharist</b> ; 4th is MU Corporate Communion
11th	12.45	Mothers' Union Lunch in Small Hall: <i>Sally's Swans</i> by Sally Goulden
25th	7pm	Pancake Party (see page 4 for details)
WEDNESDAY		
Every Wednesday	8pm	Bible Study Group at 6 Seaton Drive (not 26th)
5th, 19th	7.20pm	Ladies' Home Group at 148 Feltham Hill Road
26th	7pm	ASH WEDNESDAY service
THURSDAY		
6th	2.30pm	<b>Feed My Sheep</b> in church: <i>Rivers and Mountains</i>
FRIDAY		
Every Friday	7pm	<b>Choir Practice</b> in church
7th, 21st	8.15pm	<b>Community Singing</b> in church - all welcome
SATURDAY		
Every Saturday	9.30am-noon	<b>Church Open</b> , refreshments available; Knitting Project for the Upper Room
8th	7.30pm	Quiz night at St. Mary's, Stanwell (see page 8)
22nd	2pm	Mothers' Union AGM in Large Hall



It's here! February is the month when the Bishop of Kensington, the Rt Revd Dr Graham Tomlin, is having the first of his Kensington Deanery Missions - in Spelthorne.

As explained last edition, this is for a mission of reconciliation, based on 2 Cor. 5.17-20.

Events planned for this month in the Deanery include:

Sun 9 <sup>th</sup>	6.30pm	All Saints, Laleham	Challenging Questions: Suffering
Fri 14 <sup>th</sup>		St Mary's Lower Sunbury walled garden	Valentines Dinner (details to follow)
Sun 16 <sup>th</sup>	6.30pm	St Peter's Staines	Challenging Questions: Evidence
Tue 18 <sup>th</sup>		St Mary's Littleton	Beer and Bible (details to follow)
Sun 23 <sup>rd</sup>	6pm	St. Hilda's	Confirmation
Tue 25 <sup>th</sup>	7pm	St Hilda's	Pancake Party
Ash Wednesday 26 <sup>th</sup>			Ashing at Ashford:
	7.30-8.30am	Ashford Station	
	12.30	Bronze field	

With the exception of the event at Bronze field these events are open to anyone, and most offer an opportunity to invite non-Christian friends to join us. Let us make the most of our Bishop's time!

### **A Prayer for the Spelthorne Deanery Mission**

Generous God,  
 source of all life and growth,  
 grant us your vision for our planning,  
 your wisdom for our actions,  
 and your power for our witness;  
 that through your Holy Spirit  
 your church may grow in number,  
 in faithful service to our communities,  
 and in love and commitment  
 to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.  
 Amen.

## SAYING YES TO LIFE

This year's Lent Study course will use the book which the Archbishop of Canterbury commissioned for this Lent: *Saying Yes to Life* by Ruth Valerio.

The book draws on the creation stories from the book of Genesis to illuminate the most vital issues of our times. It relates their themes, including light, water, the seasons, other creatures and Sabbath rest to matters of environmental, ethical and social concern. It will challenge us to do the same this Lent, asking ourselves foundational questions about what it means both to be human and to be a follower of Jesus.



Where: St. Hilda's church

When: Wednesday evenings 4th March - 1st April at 7pm

This will tie in with the Church of England's Lent campaign for 2020 - #LiveLent: Care for God's Creation. Resources for this, including an app for Android and iOS and the opportunity to sign up for daily reflections by e-mail, are available from the web site <https://www.churchofengland.org/more/church-resources/lent-2020-church-resources>

If you want to know more about the book, the author will be talking about it in the Sunday Forum at St. Paul's Cathedral (Wren Suite in the crypt) at 1pm on Sunday 2nd February. Admission is free and there is no need to book. More details at <https://www.stpauls.co.uk/sundayforum>

*Rosemary Greenwood*

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## MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS ON LIFE by Anon

Blessed are the flexible for they shall not be bent out of shape.

A grudge is a heavy thing to carry.

He who dies with the most toys is still dead.

If you worry, you didn't pray. If you prayed, don't worry.

God wants spiritual fruit, not religious nuts.

Dear God: I have a problem. It's me.

Silence is often misinterpreted, but never misquoted.

Laugh every day - it's like inner jogging.

Growing old is inevitable, growing up is optional.

Worry is like a treadmill - it wears you out and gets you nowhere.



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## Mark Gilson contact details

Tel 07961 247550

[markgilson@ovenwizards.com](mailto:markgilson@ovenwizards.com)

The branch had a busy end to 2019.

In October we hosted a very successful Deanery Supper that was attended by about 50 members who enjoyed a delicious supper served by the committee. The Rainbows made some beautiful cards to decorate the tables and a most interesting after supper talk was given by Maureen Body who is the chaplain at Ashford Hospital.

Sally Goulden gave an extremely entertaining talk at one of our lunch meetings about her life as a vet and Beryl Rickson gave a thought provoking talk about her involvement and commitment to HMP Bronzefield through the Mothers' Union.

A group of us attended the London Diocese AGM in November where the main speaker was Father Simeon Sturney the chaplain from from Bronzefield who gave us an even greater insight both into life inside the prison after the women are released.

A group of us produced over a hundred Christingles very early on a December Saturday morning and the service was led the following day by Rosalyn Young to the delight of the many children who attended. It is always a magical moment when the candles are lit, the lights turned down and the children sing "Away in a Manger".

The evening of carols and mince pies was as usual a mixture of well loved singing, some Christmas music, Christmas readings and poetry and was it enjoyed by everybody.

We look forward to welcoming you to our lunch meetings in 2020 and to another active year for our branch.

*Joyce Rouse*

Thank you to everyone who donated goods, helped, and bought at January's Jumble Sale. You raised more than £780 for St. Hilda's Mothers' Union.



# MISCELLANY

*from Parish Pump*

## AN OPEN LETTER TO THE PRIME MINISTER

The President and Vice-President of the Methodist Conference have written to the new Prime Minister, assuring him of their prayers and asking for clarification on key issues including climate change, poverty and social cohesion.

### The letter says:

We wish to congratulate you on being given the responsibility by the British electorate to form a government, and assure you of our prayers and the prayers of the Methodist people as you take on that responsibility.

Churches are rooted in communities around Britain. It is our task to emphasise, from our ground level experience of British society, issues which we believe must be seen as key priorities.

Creation does not belong to us. Our task is to nurture and recognise our place within it. Many of our members see climate change and environmental degradation as the most pressing issues of our day. ***Can you tell us what steps you will be taking internationally and domestically to help the UK to reach its climate change targets? What kind of lead will you be taking at the 2020 UN Climate Change Conference in Glasgow?***

Many of our churches and church members are involved in running foodbanks and offering support for people caught up in poverty. Foodbanks should not have to exist. ***Can you clarify for us what steps your new government will take to address the scandalous levels of poverty, and particularly child poverty?***

The church is an inter-generational, multi-ethnic, socially diverse collection of communities. It is far from perfect. But we have seen in our communities growing forms of hostility, divisiveness and hatred, and have sought to support people who have experienced such discord. ***What active steps will your government now take to work towards healing and greater concord in society?***

We wrote to you, Prime Minister, in July 2019 to express our concern that a No Deal Brexit was likely to impact the poorest communities very hard indeed. We wish to reaffirm our concern that the poorest in society face huge risks as our trading relations with EU are rewritten. We seek your reassurance that needs of families facing poverty will be central to the proposed trade deal and that should it not be in place before the transition period expires that comprehensive measures are put in place to protect them from the ensuing upheaval.

*Revd Dr Barbara Glasson, President of the Methodist Conference  
Professor Clive Marsh, Vice-President of the Methodist Conference*

## REMEMBERING ERIC LIDDELL: OLYMPIC GOLD MEDALLIST & PRISONER OF WAR

Eric Liddell, the Scottish athlete who became a 400-metre Olympic gold medallist in 1924, died 75 years ago, on 21<sup>st</sup> February 1945, in a Japanese internment camp in China. He was 43 and had a brain tumour.

Because of his Christian convictions he had withdrawn from the 100-metre heats in the 1924 Paris Olympics because they took place on a Sunday. He entered the 400-metre heats instead – and won.

He also got bronze in the 200 metres, where he finished ahead of his Jewish teammate Harold Abrahams, the 100-metre gold medallist. Their story is told in the classic 1981 film, *Chariots of Fire*.

Born in China to missionary parents, Liddell went to boarding school for 12 years at Eltham College, South London, where he continues to be recognised as inspirational. He was always an outstanding sportsman but never failed to put God first. He returned to China after studying pure science at Edinburgh University and married a Canadian missionary, Florence Mackenzie.

While in internment camp, despite his tumour and weakness, he gave hope to others, being seen as a great unifying force. He helped to ease tensions through his selflessness and was admired for the way he forgave his captors.

*Tim Lenton*

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## 14 February:- VALENTINE'S DAY

There are two confusing things about this day of romance and anonymous love-cards strewn with lace, cupids and ribbon: firstly, there seems to have been two different Valentines in the 4th century - one a priest martyred on the Flaminian Way, under the emperor Claudius, the other a bishop of Terni martyred at Rome. Secondly, neither seems to have had any clear connection with lovers or courting couples.

So why has Valentine become the patron saint of romantic love? By Chaucer's time the link was assumed to be because on these saints' day -14 February - the birds are supposed to pair. Or perhaps the custom of seeking a partner on St Valentine's Day is a surviving scrap of the old Roman Lupercalia festival, which took place in the middle of February. One of the Roman gods honoured during this Festival was Pan, the god of nature. Another was Juno, the goddess of women and marriage. During the Lupercalia it was a popular custom for young men to draw the name of a young unmarried woman from a name-box. The two would then be partners or 'sweethearts' during the time of the celebrations. Even modern Valentine decorations bear an ancient symbol of love - Roman cupids with their bows and love-arrows.

There are no churches in England dedicated to Valentine, but since 1835 his relics have been claimed by the Carmelite church in Dublin.

## **15 February: THOMAS BRAY, FOUNDER OF SPCK**

Thomas Bray was once called a ‘Great Small Man’, with good reason. This diminutive 18<sup>th</sup> century English clergyman (1658 – 1730) not only helped to establish the Church of England in Maryland, but he was also founder of the Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge (SPCK) in 1698 and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (USPG) in 1701.

Those are long names for societies whose aim was to get Christian books and resources into the hands of those who desperately needed them. For the early 18<sup>th</sup> century was not an easy time for poor clergymen: books were expensive, and many of them had few, or none to guide them in their ministry. And so Thomas Bray, who had been educated at Oxford, joined with some other clergy friends to help them.

After a trip to assess the needs of the young Episcopal Church in Maryland (he was sent by the Bishop of London), Bray became rector of St Botolph’s, Aldgate in London in 1708. From here he served his parish, and through SPCK eventually established 80 parish libraries in England and a further 39 in the Colonies. SPCK and USPG worked by asking learned authors to donate copies of their books. They also appealed to merchants to the foreign plantations for financial help in establishing the libraries.

Thomas Bray’s life has affected hundreds of thousands of people over three centuries. Not only was his work in America the first major coordinated effort to establish libraries in the New World, but SPCK is still one of our leading UK Christian publishing houses today.

As if that was not enough, Bray also worked to help poor debtors emigrate to better lives, and homeless children to get care in England. He helped feed prisoners at Newgate prison in London and joined in the political fight against slavery. He also supported outreaches to Africans and Native Americans in their home countries.

When he died on 15<sup>th</sup> February 1730, thousands mourned him. A great small man indeed!

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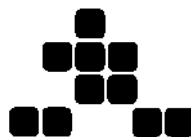
## **HEDGES**

A hedge around your property is good for you. A recent study has found that the humble hedge, when in full leaf, can cut air pollution around it by up to half.

A recent study by the University of Guildford measured traffic pollutants on either side of a hedge in a park on the road to Guildford. The survey found that the level of particulate pollutions – those tiny particles of soot and other matter that cause illness – was cut by half after the hedge reached full leaf in April.

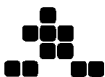
So – if your home is along a busy road, grow a hedge!

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# CTAS QUIZ night



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**Teams of up to 6 people**

Price £8  
which includes fish and  
chips. Please bring your  
own drinks other than tea  
and coffee which will be  
provided.



Please contact John Hillman on 07545646509  
with Team names and numbers by the latest  
**Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> February 2020**

# BEYOND THE PARISH

*from Parish Pump*

## CHURCH OF ENGLAND APPOINTS NATIONAL ENVIRONMENT OFFICER

Jo Chamberlain has been appointed as the National Environment Officer for the Church of England, taking forward the strategy developed by the Environment Working Group. This is a new post reflecting the Archbishops' Council's focus on the environment as a theological and mission priority.

Jo joins the Mission and Public Affairs team from Christian Aid and the Diocese of Sheffield where she volunteers as their Environment Adviser. She will work closely with the Environment Consultant, David Shreeve, and link with the Cathedrals and Church Buildings team where Open and Sustainable Churches Officer, Catherine Ross, forms the third part of a new environment staff 'hub'.



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## PSALM 23 GARDEN COMING TO RHS CHELSEA

The Bible Society has announced that “We’re absolutely thrilled to be working with award-winning garden designer Sarah Eberle, to bring Psalm 23 to life at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show in May 2020!”

The Psalm 23 Garden at RHS Chelsea Flower Show 2020, designed by Sarah Eberle, will offer visitors the chance “to stop, reflect, and feel refreshed”.

The Bible Society said: “This powerful psalm, with its visual imagery of green pastures, still waters and the valley of the shadow of death, just cries out to be turned into a garden.

“We hope you’ll love it. And after the Chelsea Flower Show, the garden will find a permanent home at the Winchester Hospice in Hampshire, where it will be a blessing to patients and families.”

The Bible Society says it is also hoping that people will “join us in creating community gardens across the country inspired by the Psalm 23 Garden. You can do this outside your office, in your school grounds, or in your churchyard. Let’s get gardening!”

## 'TAP AND GO' – STRAIGHT INTO DEBT

The increasing use of contactless payments is leading young people into debt. A recent study has found that one in five Londoners below the age of 45 are struggling to pay their debts, because of the ease of making 'tap and go' payments.

Now more than one in 10 young people are thinking of stopping their contactless and online payments, and moving back to cash, as a better way to control their spending.

The study was carried out at the University of London. It comes after data from the Insolvency Service showed that the number of young people going bankrupt has increased 10-fold over the past three years.



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Articles for Crossroads

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Anyone can contribute, young or old.

Group leaders: you could tell us about  
what your group is doing.

Interesting memories?

An unusual hobby?

A future event to publicise?

Let us know!

*Ed*

**GRACE**

**God**

**Ran**

**Alongside**

**Carrying**

**Everything**

**God's**

**Riches**

**At**

**Christ's**

**Expense**

**TEAR HERE**

A biscuit pack can bring great cheer,

But therein lies a trap –

You pull just where it says 'tear here'

And they all land in your lap.....

*Nigel Beeton*



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[www.ashfordhelpinghands.btck.co.uk](http://www.ashfordhelpinghands.btck.co.uk)

WANTED: used British and foreign stamps for Princess Alice Hospice, trimmed ¼" all round. Place in box at back of church or give them to

*Pauline Milton*

### **Our Mission Prayer:**

*Bless our Community.  
Make its people;  
Strong in Faith,  
Steadfast in Hope,  
And Generous in Love.  
Amen.*

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