



Tacket Street, Ipswich, IP4 1AU



COMMENT
OCTOBER 2025

THE MINISTER WRITES ...



Dear All,

In Luke 9:51-62, the story of Jesus' travel ministry begins. Jesus is now on the move! Luke is quick to establish Jesus' resolve to embark on a journey that will end in Jerusalem: ⁵¹ *When the days drew near for him to be taken up, he set his face to go to Jerusalem.* He is also establishing the nature of discipleship here. This passage stresses the radical character of the call to join Jesus in positioning ourselves so fully towards God's will that all other commitments and considerations are relativised. Here we learn from Jesus that radical discipleship is a commitment that will always involve a bit of a shaking-up of our conventional and settled ways of living.

We see that in Luke's story here, we do not encounter a 'standstill Jesus'. Instead, it looks like we encounter Jesus as someone who seems open to whatever comes, to whatever happens. Luke has crafted an account here that is teeming with terms about travel and this offers us a picture of discipleship as a journey. Also, we find that the passage concludes with a reference to the forward movement of a plow: ⁶² *Jesus said to him, "No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God."* Certainly, these are not soothing, settling verses for anyone who suffers with travel sickness!

All this talk of travel invites hearers to consider patterns of living that may be very different from what they are used to. Perhaps, with us mostly, and thankfully, enjoying the gift of being a settled, stable people, attached to the safe environment of a comfortable home, we are not adequately prepared for discipleship. Perhaps, a willingness to move in some way, to change something or some habit or pattern in our lives will help nudge us forward in our journey of discipleship. What might need to change for you? For us as a church?

In this passage, we are reminded that following Jesus means embracing change with courage and openness. As Jesus set his face toward Jerusalem, he modelled determination to move forward despite resistance. His encounters remind us not to cling to comfort, tradition, or excuses, but to trust God's call into new journeys. This will mean welcoming transformation, adapting to new realities, and embodying love in evolving contexts, just as Jesus did. Faith is lived by walking boldly, letting go of comfort, and living with love for all.

With much love,

Neil

Open our eyes, Lord, to see you in others,

open our ears, Lord, to hear your word,

open our hearts, Lord, to put your love into action.

Amen.

SUFFOLK HISTORIC CHURCHES TRUST/HERITAGE DAY

Thanks to those who signed in cyclists and walkers on Saturday 13th September and also to Mike for setting out such an interesting display from church archives and welcoming visitors to the church for Heritage Day. Jenny and Ann completed their cycle rides so a huge thank you to them and to those who sponsored them.

MOSQUE'S 40TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

This was a lavish do on 14th September which Rob and Ann attended as representatives of Christ Church. The leaders of the mosque had prepared a glossy brochure detailing the history and current leadership of the mosque, the oldest in Suffolk, and it included letters of congratulations from eminent people, including King Charles. We at Christ Church also wrote a short note of best wishes. The brochure has pictures of past events and I noticed Stephen Smith and Peter Fox in many of them, as well as past mayors, church leaders and other dignitaries.

The event consisted of speeches, many of them expressing cogently their desire for unity and mutual respect, in contrast to some of the right-wing protests currently in the news.

There followed a wonderful Bangladeshi meal, served at the tables. Just before this we witnessed the unveiling of the new sign at the top of the building announcing the Ipswich Mosque and Community Centre.

Our next contact with our friends there will be the curry night in aid of The Leprosy Mission, and they are being invited to our Harvest meal.

Ann

HARVEST LUNCH

Everyone is invited to Harvest Lunch following the Harvest Festival service on 12th October. Lunch will be served at 12.30pm and will be a selection of quiches, baby potatoes and salad followed by fruit crumbles. There is no need to book and there is no charge.

To allow the hall to be set for lunch, coffee will be served at the back of the church. A chance to have a look at the decorations, some of which will be provided by church organisations. Thank you to Scouts, Guides, Brownies and Rainbows, Junior Church, Tots+ and the choir for offering to contribute.



We're very much looking forward to the new season of Forum. We have Karl Batchelor and John Cousins setting up and laying the tables every other week, alternating with guests from the Papworth Trust accompanied by Oliver Baldry, their caseworker, for the alternate weeks. We also have the chefs lined up, ready to provide a good 'home-cooked' meal, and a varied series of speakers and entertainers up to and including 18th December.

Please note that we are not meeting on 9th October. The clash that made the cancellation necessary is not happening now, but it is too late to reinstate Forum.

On 29th October, if you happen to be free to listen to Ipswich Community Radio, at 1pm, you may hear a bit about Thursday Forum and what it aims to achieve!

Ann

ECO CHURCH – CREATION CARE

Many denominations globally have, during September, been observing The Season of Creation (also known as Creationtide), a period when Christians are invited to reflect on and advocate for God's wider creation. Here is a prayer offered by A Rocha for The Season of Creation, but appropriate at any time.

Creator of all, we praise you for the gift of life and for the faith that unites us in care for our common home.

We confess how estranged we have become— from one another, from your Creation, and from our truest selves. We acknowledge that our greed and destructive impulses have fractured our relationships with you, with others, and with the Earth. Fertile fields have become barren, forests lie desolate, oceans and rivers are polluted. Thriving communities have become places of suffering, and the earth cries out.

Beloved Christ, who spoke "Shalom" to frightened hearts, stir us to compassionate action. Inspire us to work for the end of conflict, and for the full restoration of broken relationships— with you, with the ecumenical community, with the human family, and with all Creation.

Prince of Peace, through your wounds, teach us to stand in solidarity with the woundedness of others, of creation, and of the world. Through your resurrection, make us people of hope— with a vision of swords turned into ploughshares and tears transformed into joy. May we come together as one family, to labour for your peace— a shalom where all your people may dwell in safety, and rest in quiet places.

Amen.

Eco-Tip for October: There is a lot of plastic merchandise for sale for Halloween, much of which will be thrown away after one use. Is this good for the planet – or our children?

PRAYER CALENDAR FOR OCTOBER

5th October

We pray for Thursday Forum which has just started a new season. We pray for all involved, the organisers, speakers, caterers, that this group will continue to enrich lives and raise awareness of the work of different charities and other organisations represented by the speakers.

12th October

As we hold our Harvest Festival and Harvest lunch today, we give thanks for having sufficient food to eat, and for this opportunity to celebrate God's goodness with a shared meal together with friends and visitors from Living Waters, St Pancras, the Mosque and Ipswich Minster.

19th October

We are holding a First Aid course this week, which reminds us to pray for all those who work in the Emergency Services, and in providing health care, both within the NHS and privately.

26th October

We move the clocks back today reminding us that winter is coming, with dark evenings and colder days. We think of all those who will struggle to heat their homes. We also remember those who might become depressed in the darker months, and those who live in fear and isolation.

Thursday Forum

at Christ Church
Tacket Street (next to Cox Lane car park)

Thursday Lunchtimes

Refreshments at low cost 12 noon - 1.00 pm

A short talk 1.10 - 1.50 pm

You are welcome to either or both



Season 2025/2026

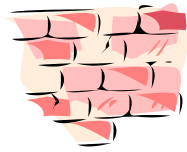
- Sep 25th **The Eyes of the Few**
Graham Murchie, Trustee, Bawdsey Radar Trust
- Oct 2nd **Ipswich Minster**
Rev Tom Mumford, Vicar
- Oct 16th **Ipswich Central and All About Ipswich**
Melanie Willis, Communications Manager
- Oct 23rd **Look beyond the Label: Insights from SIFRE**
(Suffolk Interfaith Resource)
Cynthia Capey
- Oct 30th **Two Months in Thailand: a Grandparent's Journey**
Elene Marsden

www.christchurch-ipswich.org.uk

Twitter at @ThursdayForum and Facebook: Thursdayforumipswich

OVER THE GARDEN WALL

... from our neighbours at St Pancras



Dear Friends,

I've just been planning my talk for our next national fundraising for CAFOD. It will be on 4th – 5th October which is when I think many of you will read this. CAFOD in England and Wales is part of Caritas, the global Catholic aid network which I think is the second largest aid agency worldwide. The project is connected with water. I've seen many such projects in Uganda. When I first worked at the boys' school which was my main base, boys went off to the local river at lunchtime to collect water with which to bathe later. You can imagine that some loitered and were late back for lessons! I raised several thousand pounds to buy huge black plastic water tanks. These were connected via drainpipes to guttering on classroom roofs and provided welcome water in the rainy season, stored for the months when there was no rain. This is probably the easiest way to collect water, but many villages have also been able to drill a borehole where people, usually women and children, queue up to fill Jerry cans with water. Sometimes they can be a long walk away, and then there is the job of carrying, maybe several miles, the heavy cans of water. I know of one parish that has real luxury - an underground water tanks. This is what the CAFOD project is about. They are planning to build such tanks in remote Ethiopian villages, hopeful that each tank will provide water for up to 300 families in the dry season. They will be in the village centre, saving women and children a long walk with a heavy Jerry can.

I've been to Ethiopia three times, running courses funded by the Royal Society of Chemistry, based in Addis Ababa. Addis is a typical city but the outlying villages are very different and there can be great poverty. I know that, like St Pancras, you support Mary's Meals. They now have projects in poor Ethiopian villages, giving children one good meal a day so they are better able to concentrate on lessons.

We hear frequently on the news about problems in our own country, but dire poverty in some parts of the world is on an entirely different scale. In both our Christian communities we can remember the Gospel:

'Inasmuch as you do it for these the least of my brothers and sisters, you do it for Me.'

This is one area of our witness where we are united. Let us continue to do what we can for those far less fortunate than ourselves,

Your Catholic friend

Jean

CHRISTIAN AID RESTORE CAMPAIGN

In low-income countries across the world, climate breakdown and government debt are colliding to trap millions in poverty.

Reckless polluters have caused the climate crisis, robbing communities of their livelihoods.

In Guatemala, gruelling heatwaves are destroying Aurelia's farm. Many of her vital crops are withering and dying before her eyes. Aurelia's community is fighting to overcome these challenges. But they shouldn't be tackling this alone.

At the same time, greedy corporate lenders have trapped countries in debt, preventing governments from providing basic services like healthcare and education. In Malawi government debts mean only 15% of children complete secondary school and under half have access to healthcare.

What has this got to do with the UK?

For too long, the UK Government has backed those with wealth and power, but it can help repair the harm being caused. The UK has the power to confront reckless polluters and greedy lenders.

With many fossil fuel companies headquartered here, the UK Government has the power to make them pay for the climate crisis. Furthermore, most debts owned by low-income countries to private companies are governed by UK law. The UK government is uniquely placed to legislate on how these debts are negotiated.

'Lenders put profit before people. The UK government could help end the crisis for countries like Ghana. It could pass a new law that would make the debt relief process fairer.' said Bernard Adaba, a Ghanaian debt campaigner.

You can help make change happen

Just as you helped create the Fairtrade movement that has benefitted farmers worldwide, you can stand with our global neighbours again.

Just as you joined together to ensure the G8 cancelled billions of dollars of debt as part of the jubilee movement, you can force the UK to stand up to corporate power.

For 80 years Christian Aid and its supporters have challenged those in power to make the world a more beautiful place. We can do so again.

Join God's work to restore creation and see the flourishing of all people. Call on the UK Government to make polluters pay for the climate crisis and to introduce new debt justice laws that could pull millions out of poverty.

[Find out more at \[caid.org.uk/Restore\]\(https://caid.org.uk/Restore\)](https://caid.org.uk/Restore)

Extract from Commitment for Life 2025/26 Update Life-giving Faith/Defiant Hope/Generous Love

DIARY DATES FOR OCTOBER

Emmaus Groups

Mondays at 10.30am in the Lounge

2nd & 4th Wednesdays at 7.30pm

1st & 3rd Thursdays at 10.30am in the Lounge

Thursday 9 th	Deacons' Meeting (7.30pm)
Sunday 12 th	Harvest Lunch
Sunday 19 th	Service at Chappel URC (6.30pm)
Tuesday 28 th	Prayer Lunch (midday)
Saturday 25 th	First Aid Course

SERVICES FOR OCTOBER

All Services will be led by our Minister, Revd Neil Coulson unless otherwise stated.

Sunday 5th October

10.45am Family Worship with Holy Communion

Sunday 12th October

10.45am Harvest Thanksgiving and Parade Service

Sunday 19th October

10.45am Family Worship

Sunday 26th October

10.45am Family Worship led by Mr Keith Scarff

Keith is a URC Lay Preacher and Elder at Stowmarket URC

Sunday 2nd November

10.45am Family Worship with Holy Communion
