

The Magazine

September 2020



www.callingtoncluster.org.uk

'Come, now is the time to Worship'

These were the words of the song that began Stoke's Sunday Worship Service recently.

I'm sure that many of you will have also found the Cluster weekly podcasts have helped you worship, over these last few months. We're very thankful to Amy and Dave Wheeler for coordinating this and continuing to produce them. And you may have joined in worship through other live-streamed services and BBC's Sunday Worship. But helpful though this has been, I don't believe that this "virtual" worship can really replace "live corporate" worship.

Now that lockdown has been eased, a good number of folk have returned to worship in our church buildings. But I'm rather saddened that more have not returned. Of course some of you will have been "shielding" and will still rightly feel cautious about returning to corporate worship. Others of you may have other health reasons, which mean you are unable to come to corporate worship.

Some folk have raised other concerns, which I'll seek to address below.

Why return to "live corporate" worship in a church building?

We are called to worship God together as well as on our own

Psalm 34: 1 & 3 says "I will extol the Lord at all times; his praise will always be on my lips....Glorify the Lord with me: let us exalt his name together".

Of course worship should be part of our everyday lives and we can also worship through listening on our own to podcasts and live-streamed services. But the New Testament knows nothing of solo Christian faith i.e. only "doing it on my own".

Yes our faith is personal, but as soon as we become a Christian we're part of the Body of Christ, the Church, which has a local expression, in the local church community.

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Corporate worship helps us focus our hearts and minds on God

Jesus said " For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them". (Matt. 18: 20)

Yes of course we know that the Lord Jesus dwells in our hearts through our faith, so we experience his presence with us always. But as we meet with our fellow Christians together, I believe we experience the Lord's presence in a special way, that enriches our worship & faith.

To quote David Watson :-

“There is no relationship so intensely satisfying and enriching as our personal and corporate relationship with God; and it is only when we open our hearts to him in loving adoration that God, in turn, pours his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit.” “I Believe in the Church”)

Corporate worship helps us grow spiritually

What did the new converts get up to after Pentecost? “They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.....praising God” (Acts 2: 42 & 47a)

Worship includes giving to God – praising and praying.

Worship includes receiving from God – through bible-based (the “Apostles”) teaching, through breaking of bread (i.e. Communion together) and through ministry to one another.

Our togetherness aids our spiritual growth, through giving and receiving in worship.

Concern one : “But returning to live corporate worship won’t be the same. We’re not allowed to sing”.

But we can worship in our hearts as we listen to recordings of hymns and worship songs. And our praise of God isn’t limited to sung praise – we praise through our liturgy e.g. joining in an “Affirmation of faith” , perhaps saying a Psalm responsively, and sometimes saying some verses of a hymn, or song together.

Concern two: “But worship isn’t the same without sharing communion.”

But Communion / Breaking of Bread isn’t the only aspect of our worship together, although it is an important, helpful aspect.

And churches in the Cluster are now arranging Communion Services again.



Concern three: “But I can only receive the bread and not the wine, due to corona virus restrictions”.

True – but receiving bread and wine are symbols reminding us of Christ’s once for all sacrifice on the cross for us. We spiritually feed on Christ, asking him to renew us by His Spirit and we still do that as we receive the bread only !!!

Corporate worship builds up our fellowship together

Fellowship is a vital part of our church life. Yes we can aid our fellowship together through phone calls and zoom meetings, but it’s not as effective as physically meeting each other (as those of you with families will know).

Corporate worship together enables us to have fellowship and encourage each other.

The writer of the letter to the Hebrews says :-

“Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another – and all the more as you see the Day approaching.” (Hebrews 10: 25)

Concern four: “Surely it’s much too risky to return to worship in a church building, with corona virus still lurking around.”

But everything is carefully managed in the church buildings. There are hand sanitisers at the entrances. We wear face coverings and sit at 2 metres apart.

Let me ask you a question “How many of you shop in a supermarket, or have had a meal in a restaurant or pub, or met up with other households socially?” My personal view is that you’re safer worshipping in a church building on a Sunday than the above.

I’ve found it so encouraging to catch up with folks I’ve not seen for months, before and after the services.

‘Come, now is the time to Worship’

So – may I encourage you to consider returning to “live, corporate” worship – it will help us focus our hearts and minds on God in worship, help us grow spiritually and receive encouragement through our fellowship together.



WHAT'S IN YOUR HAND?

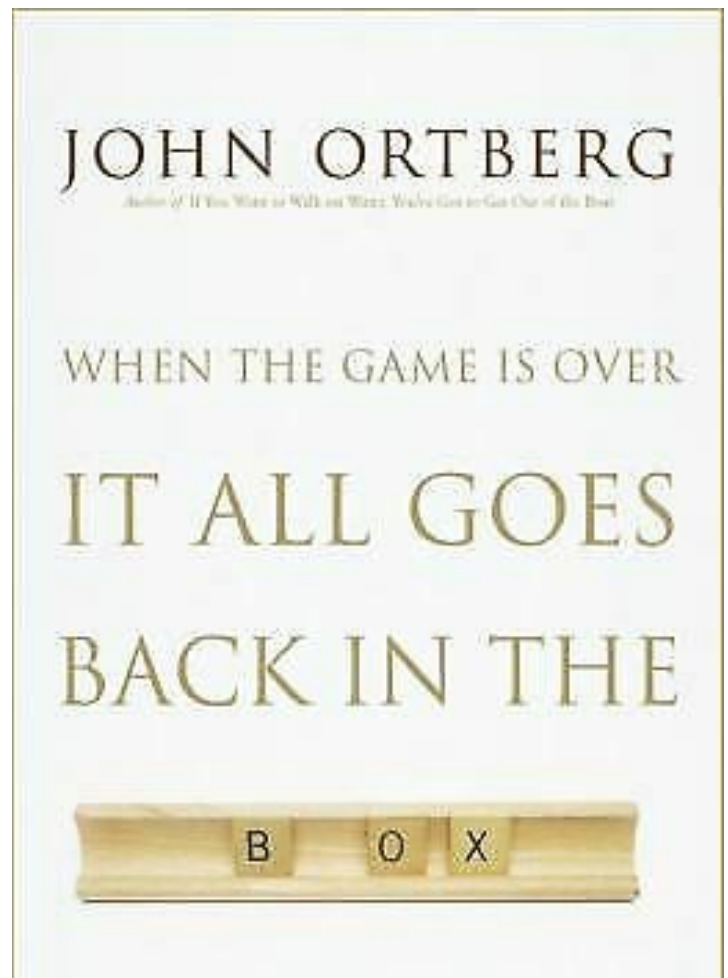
Canon Paul Hardingham considers our personal resources – in light of the pandemic.

September is usually the time when we get back to our normal routines after the summer break. With the current coronavirus pandemic, it's very different this year! However, it is still a good time to consider how God can use us to make a real difference in our workplace, school, family, friends and community. He equips us with everything we need to make His love known.

When God gave Moses the job of bringing the Israelites out of Egypt, He asked the question, 'What is in your hand?' (Exodus 4:2). Moses was holding his staff, which represented his livelihood (what he was good at); his resources (his flock represented his wealth) and his security (which God was asking him to lay down). God asks the same question of us: What has God given you? Our gifts, temperament, experience, relationships, mind, education can be used in the work God has given us to do. How will we use them to make a difference in the places where He calls us to serve Him?

John Ortberg, in his book *It All Goes Back in the Box*, speaks of Johnny, a 19-year-old with Downs syndrome. He worked at a supermarket checkout putting people's items into bags. To encourage his customers, he decided to put a thought for the day into the bags. Every night his dad would help him to prepare the slips of paper and he would put the thoughts into the bags saying, 'I hope it helps you have a good day. Thanks for coming here.' A month later the store manager noticed that Johnny's line at the checkout was three times longer than anyone else's! People wanted Johnny's thought for the day. He wasn't just filling bags with groceries, he was filling lives with hope!

What has God given you that will help and encourage others?



**“HOW WILL WE USE THEM
TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN
THE PLACES WHERE HE
CALLS US TO SERVE HIM?”**

PSALM WE - A PSALM FOR THE PANDEMIC

There are few psalms as personal and real as Psalm 23. It records David's experience of God as his Shepherd going through dark times. In the midst of the effects of a global pandemic, this psalm speaks to the fears that can overwhelm us.

He Knows Me: 'The Lord is my shepherd...' Just as a good shepherd knows every sheep in his flock, so God knows each one of us intimately.

He Provides for Me: 'He makes me lie down in green pastures...' Just as the shepherd knows the needs of his sheep, so God will provide what we need in our lives and circumstances.

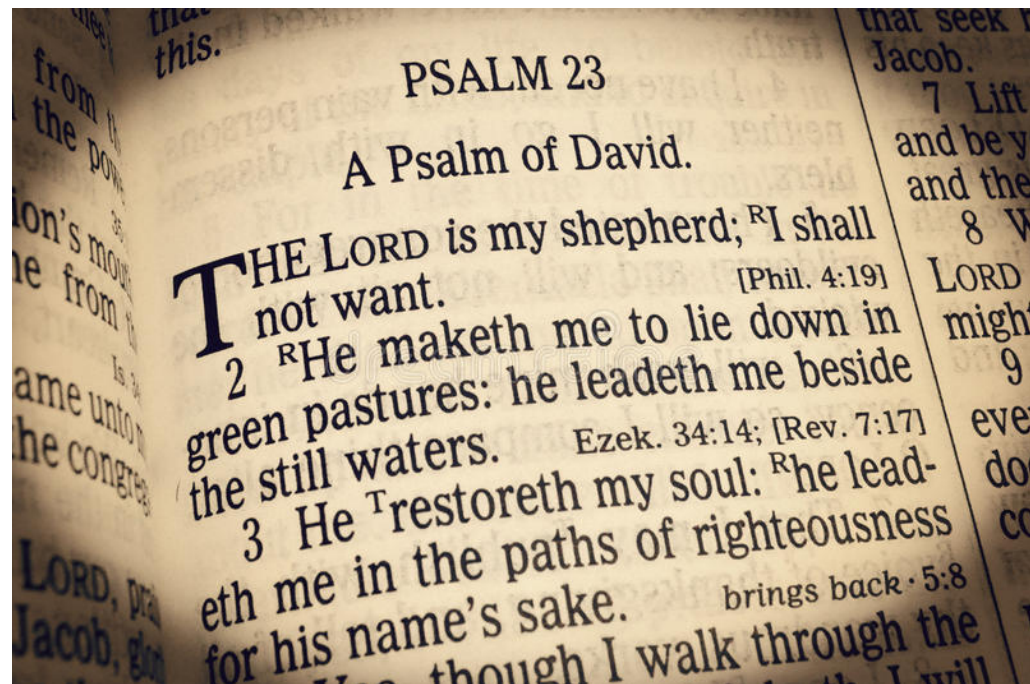
He Guides Me: 'He guides me along the right paths...' Just as the shepherd leads the sheep to the best pastures, so God provides the best for us, as we listen and follow Him.

He Protects Me: 'Even though I walk through the darkest valley...' Just as the sheep have no need to fear danger when following the shepherd, so we live knowing God's presence and protection.

He Comforts Me: 'your rod and your staff, they comfort me.' As the shepherd's rod defends the sheep, and the staff enables him to control the sheep, so God comforts us through His Word and discipline.

The final verses of the psalm (v5-6) offer the security of knowing that our lives are in His hands, even through death, as He leads us to the home we've been looking for all our lives.

Some years ago, a great actor was asked to recite Psalm 23, but asked one of the other guests to do the same. His remarkable rendition was followed by the other man, an older Christian speaking from the heart. Afterwards the actor said: 'The difference between us is that I know the psalm, but he knows the shepherd.'



THE SPIRIT OF FRUITFULNESS

As Harvest and the theme of fruitfulness approaches, Joe Warton of the LICC considers the effect of the Holy Spirit on our lives. You can find more inspirational articles at <https://www.licc.org.uk/> Word for the Week

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. (Galatians 5:22-25)

**“THE SPIRIT MAKES
US MORE LIKE
CHRIST, THE MOST
FULLY ALIVE
HUMAN OF ALL.”**

It was quarterly review time for Max, a personal banking manager. He sat opposite his area manager, cup of tea in hand, as shoppers pootled along the High Street below. “So”, the area manager began, “How do you feel things have been going since we last met?”

“Pretty good,” answered Max. “I’ve definitely been feeling calmer at work; you know, less stressed... I guess more at peace with myself.”

“I’ve noticed that too,” she responded. “You do seem calmer; less irritable. I’ve not really heard you complain about anything. Can I ask why you think this is?”

That conversation happened just a few months ago, and Max was able to share how he’d recently become a Christian, and what a difference God was making in his life. When God’s Holy Spirit makes Himself at home within us, our lives change. St Paul calls this ‘the fruit of the Spirit’.

Fruit is a great metaphor. The fruit of the Spirit isn’t something we stick onto the outside of our lives, like baubles on a Christmas tree. Rather, it flows out from us, as we soak up the nutrients of God’s Word and His holy presence. We cannot force out this spiritual fruit by tapping into our inner resources or by trying harder. This really is about God changing us, as we ‘keep in step with the Spirit’.

Healthy fruit is a sign of a healthy tree, and it shares its harvest with the surrounding ecosystem: birds, insects, Homo sapiens, and even our mortal enemies, wasps... Paul has already shown us how sin dehumanises and robs us of life, but the Spirit makes us more like Christ, the most fully alive human of all. And when we are like Him, it’s good for everyone.

Fruit brings blessing. It’s a manifestation of the life of God’s kingdom, bringing the sweetness of His presence to the people and places where it’s tasted. In that way, it furthers God’s mission. The fruit in our lives is a signpost to the life-giving God.

So today, do not hide your fruit under a bowl! Instead, put it out on the table, that people may taste your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.

Important Notice: All churches follow strict Covid guidelines and face coverings need to be worn at all times whilst inside the building. For services at South Hill, please take your own service sheets and common worship book.

Callington Services: Social Distancing rules means there are only 30 spaces within the building. You will be directed to one of the places. Toilets will be open. In order to manage services at this time anyone attending will need to fill in the on-line form at <http://callingtoncluster.org.uk/whats-on/smc-services/register> by 6pm on the Friday or ring Amy Wheeler 07984 199 930 by 6pm Thursday. Any in excess of 30 will be transferred to the following week's list. Only bookings by phone and via the website will be accepted.

Wk	Time	Callington	South Hill
6th September	Early Morning		
	Mid Morning	10.00 Together@10 Family Service	11.15 Morning Worship Modern
	Evening		
13th September	Early Morning		
	Mid Morning	10.00 Morning Worship Modern	11.15 Morning Worship Modern
	Evening		
20th September	Early Morning		
	Mid Morning	10.00 Morning Worship Modern	11.15 Morning Worship Modern
	Evening		
27th September	Early Morning		
	Mid Morning	10.00 Holy Communion Modern	10.00 All Age Worship Modern
	Evening		

Important Notice: All churches follow strict Covid guidelines and face coverings need to be worn at all times whilst inside the building. We ask everyone attending to follow the guidance for seating and that you give your contact details on entry to the church, these will be kept for 21 days in line with the Governments Test and Trace Requirements. Please use the hand sanitisers provided. Unfortunately there can be no singing during Worship however there will be music.

Stoke Climsland: church is also open for Private Prayer is on Wednesdays from 1pm to 4pm. A recording the Sunday Service and these are available for viewing on Facebook.

<https://www.facebook.com/StokeClimslandParishChurch>

Please note this is not streamed live so will not be accessible until a short time after the service.

Linkinhorne	Upton Cross	Stoke C	Wk
A short service of traditional Morning Prayer is held at St. Melor's on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at 10.00 am.	9.30 Morning Worship Modern	10.00 Morning Worship Modern	6th September
	9.30 Morning Worship Modern	10.00 Morning Worship Modern	13th September
	9.30 Morning Worship Modern	10.00 Holy Communion Modern	20th September
	9.30 Holy Communion Modern	10.00 Family Service Modern	27th September

ENTER ALL ANGELS, LED BY MICHAEL

What is an angel? Easy, people think: a shining figure with glorious wings, who appears from time to time to do some mighty work for God or bring a very special message from him.



Well, that's right in one sense (apart from the wings, which owe more to stained glass windows than the Bible). But the fact that not all 'angels' in the Bible are 'glorious' or 'shining' should make us hesitate to categorise them in this spectacular way. After all, the three apparently ordinary men who visited Abraham and Sarah to tell them that she would have a son even though she was long past child-bearing age had none of those outward embellishments. Nevertheless, Abraham recognised them as divine messengers.

The Bible is full of angels, from the early chapters of Genesis to the last chapter of Revelation, and often they had a key role in crucial events. It seems, from just two instances, that Michael was their leader, an 'archangel'. In many stained glass windows he's seen with a sword, because in a vision in Revelation he led the angelic host who fought and defeated Satan and his army.

In the Gospels, an angel of the Lord appeared to Zechariah in the Temple, to tell him that his elderly wife was to have a son, the forerunner of the Messiah, John the Baptist. An angel, Gabriel, appeared to Mary to tell her that she would be the mother of the Messiah, the Son of God. An angel appeared 'in a dream' to Joseph, the village carpenter in Nazareth, to tell him to go ahead and marry his fiancée, Mary, and later - also in a dream - warned him not to go back to Bethlehem. A 'young man', whom we take to have been an angel, was sitting in the empty tomb on Easter morning, waiting to tell the startled women that Jesus wasn't there - He had risen (Mark 16:5).

Without going into every biblical reference to angels, those should be sufficient to show that the word covers an enormous diversity of experience. So the Letter to the Hebrews speaks of those who practice hospitality as sometimes 'entertaining angels unawares'. Sometimes people recognised angels for who they were, and sometimes they didn't. Angels, quite simply, are God's agents or emissaries, messengers and ministers of His will. Sometimes they are human; sometimes they seem to be spiritual beings.

Perhaps we could even say that anyone, in any situation, who is at that moment God's 'messenger' to us, or serves us graciously, is an 'angel'. So, when we say, 'Oh, be an angel and pop up to the chemist for my prescription', we may be nearer the heart of the matter than we think!

September 29th marks the feast of Michael and All Angels

'TIDAL WAVE OF POVERTY'

Churches warned to prepare for 'tidal wave of poverty'

Church leaders are being urged to be ready to respond to the lasting impact of the pandemic on the country's poorest people.

The effect on urban, suburban and rural communities is likely to be severe with many thousands of jobs being lost and livelihoods threatened. The poorest in society may find themselves hardest hit.

Churches are being encouraged to respond to the devastating impact of the pandemic and to build on the numerous social projects already in place.

The Trussell Trust that supports around 1200 UK foodbanks is warning of a 'tidal wave of poverty' poised to engulf the country. Chief Executive Emma Revie has called on church leaders to talk to their congregations about justice and compassion and to work to address the root causes of poverty. Speaking at a Bible Society webinar she encouraged church leaders "increasingly to talk to their congregations about God's concern for justice and compassion to characterise the structures of our society: the way our benefit system works, the way our economy functions, people's employment conditions and wage levels.

Emma Revie said that the Trussell Trust was "very clear that food banks are not a solution to poverty" and the charity wanted "to see people experiencing fulness of life and not being trapped by poverty."

She praised the vital role played by churches in running foodbanks and encouraged congregations "That when we pray for our foodbanks, that we would also allow ourselves room to lament the injustices that make them necessary in the first place and seek wisdom about how we might be part of bringing about change.

"Because if we don't concern ourselves with these things, the tidal wave of poverty is going to be too high and too powerful for us to respond to and we will see many more people being swept into destitution in the UK."

At the webinar 'Mission during lockdown and beyond,' the Bible Society published research showing that church leaders are expecting increased demand for food banks, poverty relief, mental health work, bereavement support, relationship counselling, as well as courses such as Alpha that introduce people to the Christian faith.

The insights resonate with responses to the impact of the pandemic from other church leaders. The Bishop of Tonbridge, Simon Burton-Jones, warned a Church of England webinar that the pandemic would cause growth in the 'precariat', the numbers of people on zero-hours contracts or juggling several jobs to survive.

The bishop also forecast an increase in tension between the generations, with the future particularly bleak for many young people who have lost their jobs, and those living in insecure rented accommodation.



ABBEY'S 'BLACK JESUS' STIRS UP A STORM

A large-scale painting of the Last Supper depicting Jesus as a black man has sparked controversy and heated debate in the UK and around the world. I reckon that's no bad thing. In fact, it could be really positive.

St Albans Cathedral, 20 miles north of central London in leafy Hertfordshire, has installed the painting – on show until 31st October – to “stand with the Black

Lives Matter movement to be allies for change – building a strong, just and fair community where the dignity of every human being is honoured and celebrated, where black voices are heard, and where black lives matter.”

The installation is a striking piece of art and it's provoking strong reactions – just as good art should do. People are responding with a wide range of opinions. Many have welcomed the artwork, but others are outraged, accusing the Abbey of pandering to a 'political correctness' agenda. Some have described it as seeking to be 'trendy' and riding on the bandwagon of a popular movement.

The painting's artist, Lorna May Wadsworth, said: “I cast Jamaican-born Tafari Hinds as my Jesus to make people question the western myth that He had fair hair and blue eyes. I also knew that, from a previous portrait of Tafari, there is something in his countenance that people find deeply empathetic and moving, which is the overriding quality I wanted my Christ to embody.”

Not everyone shares the artist's perspective. A Facebook post from the Abbey promoting the installation drew 400 comments within an hour, as people from around the world hotly argued the case for and against the artwork. One person responded: “The church has not changed the colour of Jesus, they have decided to put on show a piece of art that happens to depict Jesus as black. Let's hope it just gives people a chance to question things they have always just accepted as being right.”

Other comments were more critical, with a typical response, “More shameless pandering to Black Lives Matter, bringing trendy identity politics into what is supposed to be the traditional church.” People may object strongly to Lorna May Wadsworth's artwork, or they may welcome it. Either way, it provokes an important debate about the role of race in our society and how we have depicted Christ in western culture.

The Abbey has stirred up a storm, but maybe that's the only way for ingrained attitudes to be challenged, and new perspectives formed.



The Revd Peter Crumpler, a Church of England priest in St Albans, Herts, is a former communications director for the CofE.

THE VOYAGE OF THE MAYFLOWER

Celebrating 400th anniversary of the voyage of the Mayflower

If we find it difficult to cross the Atlantic just now, it was even worse 400 years this month.

On 6th September 1620, 102 determined Puritans climbed on board the Mayflower and set sail from Plymouth. They had 30 crew to steer them across 3000 miles of open, perilous ocean.

Those Puritans, or 'Pilgrim fathers', could never have dreamed that their journey would become one of the most influential in world history. Their courage and purpose for the voyage would help shape the very history and culture of the USA.

The Pilgrim fathers themselves were in search of religious freedom and a new life. Years before they had rejected the Church of England, due to its Roman Catholic past, and in 1608 they had moved to Holland, where they could worship freely. But life was very hard there, and so the New World beckoned to them.

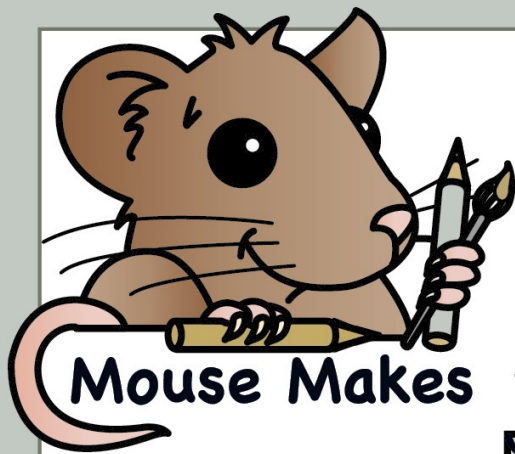
They had originally intended to use two ships, but the Speedwell sprang a leak shortly after sailing, and so they crowded as many as possible into the Mayflower. After a long and difficult 10 weeks at sea, they reached America, but could not reach their intended destination, Virginia, because of heavy seas. They finally landed in Provincetown Harbour, Cape Cod, Massachusetts on 11th November.

That presented the next great challenge: the bitter, harsh winter of Massachusetts. Half of the Pilgrims perished that first winter, of hunger and cold. Without the help of the local Indigenous peoples to teach them food-gathering and other survival skills, all of the colony would probably have perished.

After months of hard work, by the 'Fall' of 1621 the tiny colony had its first harvest. They celebrated this great achievement with their new Indigenous friends. It became Thanksgiving. The Pilgrims had been convinced that God wanted them to go to the New World. They wrote: "We verily believe and trust the Lord is with us, and that He will graciously prosper our endeavours according to the simplicity of our hearts therein."

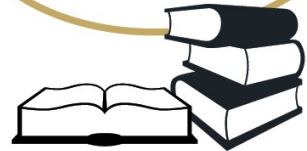
The Mayflower was one of the earliest pilgrim vessels, and so became a cultural icon in the history of the United States. This year, until coronavirus put a stop to things, many celebrations in the USA, England and the Netherlands had been planned.





The **Bible** is a collection of **books** that took over 2,000 years to write! The books were written by many different people, all helped and inspired by God. The Bible has books about:

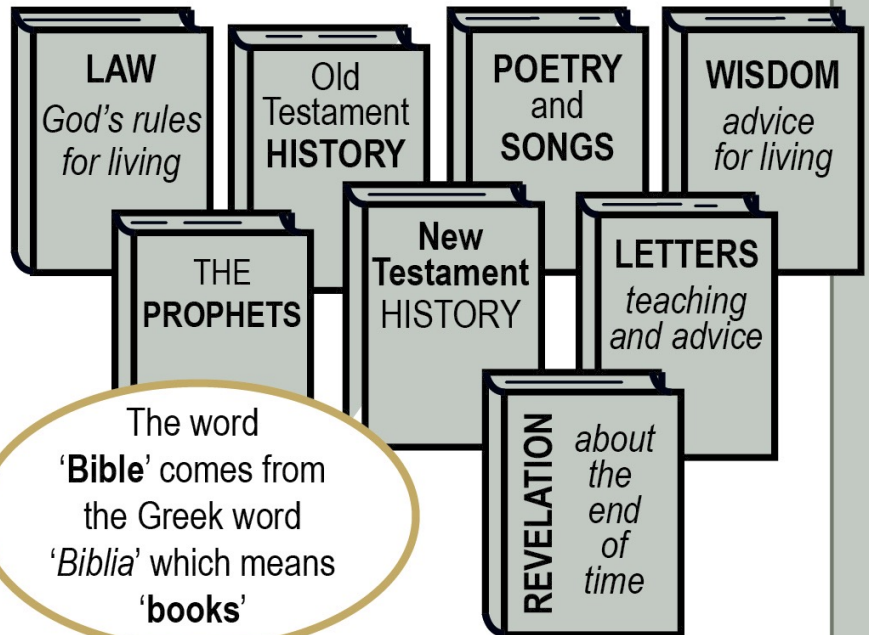
There are **66** books in the Bible. How many can you name?



BIBLE WORDS

The Bible words in **BOLD** type on this page are also hidden in the word search, can you find them?

P L B O W I K
R I O S I L G
O G O N S W O
P H K E D O L
H T S W O R D
E R L T M D O
T E A E G O D
S V W S E E D
L E T T E R S
T L W A N L O
H A M M E R N
O T I E H I G
N I R N I R S
E O R T S A B
Y N O R T I I
F I R E O N B
P O E T R Y L
F O O D Y O E



The word '**Bible**' comes from the Greek word '*Biblia*' which means '**books**'

God speaks to us today as we read the Bible. The Bible encourages us, corrects us and shows us how to live, it also describes itself as:



Mirror
James 1:23



Food
Hebrews 5:12- 6:1



Honey and Gold
Psalm 19:10



Light
Psalm 119:105



Rain
Isaiah 55:10-12



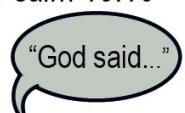
Seed
Mark 4:14



Hammer
Jeremiah 23:29



Fire
Jeremiah 20:9



Living Word
Hebrews 4:12



Sword
Ephesians 6:17

...but most of all The Bible teaches us about **God** and how we can be friends with Him.

WHO'S WHO ACROSS THE CLUSTER

Rector

Vacancy

For bookings, please contact - info.callingtoncluster@gmail.com

Families' Leader Amy Wheeler 07984 199930 amywheelerfamlead@icloud.com

Church Wardens

Callington

Garry Morris 01579 382944 gdandmkmorris@btinternet.com

Dave Wheeler 07971 072459 davewheeler90@gmail.com

South Hill, St Sampson's

David Brent 01579 362312 (no email)

Miranda Lawrance-Owen 01579 382863 mlawranceowen@icloud.com

Stoke Climsland

Steve Brocklebank 01579 370243 steve.brocklebank@icloud.com

Rob Stewart 01579 370943 wellhouse01@gmail.com

Linkinhorne St. Melor's/St Paul's

Sarah Doney 01579 362602 thedoneyclan@gmail.com

Micheline Norris 01579 363515 michelenenorris@hotmail.com

PCC Secretaries

Callington

Pauline Farr 01579 383482 paulinefarr44@gmail.com

South Hill, St Sampson's

Judith Ayers 01579 384617 judithayers@yahoo.co.uk

Stoke Climsland

Kathryn Carnegie 01579 370187 kathryn@pempwell.co.uk

Linkinhorne St. Melor's/St Paul's

Maxine Browne 01579 362611 linkinhornechurches@yahoo.com

Cluster Magazine contacts

Stoke Climsland Kathryn Carnegie 01579 370187 kathryn@pempwell.co.uk

Callington Pauline & Michael Farr 01579 383482 paulinefarr44@gmail.com

South Hill Miranda Lawrance-Owen 01579 382863 mlawranceowen@icloud.com

Linkinhorne/Upton Cross Brian Norris 01579 363515 briannorrisics@hotmail.com

ISAIAH 12:2

SURELY GOD IS
THE LORD, THE LORD HIMSELF
MY SALVATION;
IS MY STRENGTH
I WILL TRUST
AND MY SONG;
AND NOT
HE HAS BECOME
BE AFRAID
MY SALVATION