



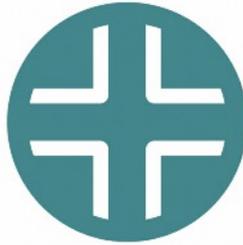
St Paul's
Little Eaton Church

Parish Magazine



Harvest 2021

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The Vicar's Letter

JAMES HUGHES



Dear Friends,

You'll see that this edition of our magazine is focused on harvest—it is that time of year again. Whilst we tend to have our harvest festivals at the end of September or in early October, any farmer will tell you that the harvest begins long before that. At harvest we celebrate God's goodness to us in creation, sing our harvest hymns, and present our gifts for those for whom harvest is not a time of abundance.

And we take the opportunity to think about what harvest is all about. In ancient Israel various festivals celebrated the harvest. The one that fell around our usual harvest festival time was the feast of Tabernacles. John's gospel tells us of a time when Jesus attended that feast, and made this famous proclamation: *'I am the light of the world'* (John chapter 8, verse 12).

This is of course a fitting verse for harvest, as we celebrate all of God's gifts, including the gift of his Son, who came to bring God's light into our world. And this year we may particularly identify with the idea of

a light coming on—as we head back into post-Covid 'normality'. But this verse also reminds us that Jesus came as the light of the world for a particular reason. Look at the rest of John chapter 8 verse 12, as Jesus speaks to the crowd:

'Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.'

There is a recognition here that Jesus' coming into our world is not only a cause for celebration, just as the abundance of the created order is a cause for celebration. It is also an opportunity to hear Jesus' call to follow him, to follow the one who came as light of the world and showed that light as he died on the cross in our place. A call to follow him and not to walk in darkness.

So come and celebrate harvest with us in early October. Join us as we rejoice in God's goodness, but also join us as we hear and reflect on the call that Jesus gives us as the Light of the World—the call to follow him. Do join us at St Paul's as we explore that call together over the coming months.

Yours in Christ,



The Story of Ruth—Love at Harvest



In the Old Testament you can read a number of love stories, such as Jacob and Rachel, but only one where a key influence is the woman's mother-in-law, who is called Naomi. The woman we are looking at has her story recounted in a book of the Bible that is named after her and she is Ruth.

Because of a famine in the land of Judah, Naomi and her husband Elimelech and their two sons moved to the land of Moab. One of the sons married Ruth, but sadly he and his brother as well as his father all died.

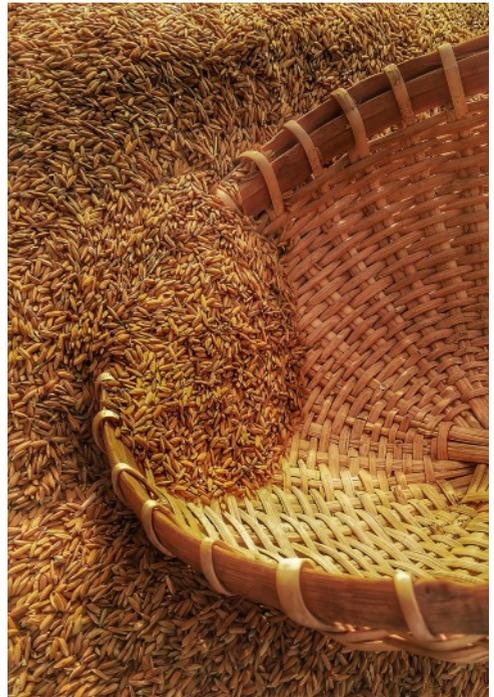
Naomi decided to go back to her home town of Bethlehem because the famine had ended, but told her stepdaughters that they could stay in their native land and return to their families. But Ruth's response from chapter 1 verse 16 was surprising. Her reply to Naomi was 'Where you go, I will go and where you stay, I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God.' Naomi saw how determined Ruth was and didn't argue with her.

The problem for the women was how were they going to survive and eat. But Naomi had a relative called Boaz, a wealthy farmer, and it was the time to

harvest the grain growing in the fields. The tradition was that the poor could follow on behind the people harvesting the grain and collect any that they missed or dropped for their own use. Mainly to make bread.

Boaz spotted Ruth at work and asked who she was. He was told how Ruth had asked permission to glean (following behind the harvesters picking up the leftovers) and had worked hard all day with just a short break. Boaz told Ruth to stay in his fields and continue her work. He praised her for what she had done coming to Bethlehem to look after Naomi and asked God to bless and reward Ruth. He must have really liked her because he also gave her food and water and told his men to leave extra sheaves of grain for her to glean from.

Then we see Naomi get involved. She told Ruth to get dressed up and go to where Boaz was threshing the grain. There she lay down until Boaz discovered her. He was pleasantly surprised that she had chosen to come to see him and not a younger man. He promised to sort out an issue with a field that Naomi's husband had owned and gave Ruth an extra load of barley. The next day he sorted out the ownership of the field and announced to one and all that he wanted Ruth to become his wife, which she was happy to do. Later they had a son named Obed and he became the grandfather of King David and so was an ancestor of Jesus himself.



Ruth is faithful to Naomi and all three of the people in the story are faithful to God. We also see kindness displayed by Ruth toward Naomi and by Boaz. Ruth is also very loyal and we see the protection and blessing of God shown in a real way toward Naomi and Ruth.

Andy Hardwick





Below are anagrams of 20 places you can find in the Bible—both Old and New Testaments. How many can you unscramble?

(Answers are on page 10)

1. MHEELTBEH
2. JMASRELUE
3. OMER
4. ANACNA
5. EARILS
6. AGIELLE
7. THORNCI
8. CADMUSSA
9. NEILCHSAATOS
10. RASUST
11. ASHPUES
12. GEYPT
13. SEAMMU
14. HLPAAIDPEIHL
15. ANTEBYH
16. EJIORCH
17. HETRANZA
18. MAIHATARE
19. HIPILPP
20. NOCTIAH

The Men's Group at St Paul's



The men's group at St Paul's Little Eaton warmly invites men from both within and outside the church body to join in a diverse range of social activities which are designed, as far as possible, to cater for all ages. Emphasis is on informality, to enjoy fellowship and to provide the opportunity to hear and raise questions about the Christian faith in a variety of relaxed settings. In recent times such settings and activities have included:

- ◆ Archery
- ◆ A tour of Toyota's production facility at Burnaston
- ◆ An escape room evening
- ◆ Go-kart racing
- ◆ A guest speaker providing an illustrated talk on his career as a pathologist
- ◆ A tour of the National Brewery Centre in Burton-on-Trent.

Staying briefly on the brewery theme, supporting one of the 'locals' has been a popular way of rounding off many an evening's entertainment!



The group normally aims to hold about six events spread throughout the year. Hopefully, we are emerging from what has been far from normal times and we are now aiming to relaunch this programme with a walk on the evening of Friday 3 September. We would be delighted if you could come along and join us.

Please contact either Chris Asker or Andy Hardwick for further information about the group or email men@littleatonchurch.co.uk

Chris Asker

Book Review



If I were God, I'd make myself clearer

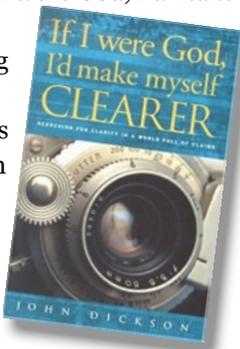
by John Dickson

Many of us have done more on-line shopping in the last couple of years than we imagined we would do.

We've scoured the internet for reviews of our intended purchase to check if it does what the manufacturer claims and whether the price is a rip-off or a bargain.

Recently, I had to buy a replacement tap—how hard could it be? Yet the tap lasted just one year before seizing up and diverting water onto the floor. Being fair, the company did send a replacement tap within a day, but that one only lasted a day before we had a wet floor again. Despite all the claims of quality, it was close to useless. So how do we make sense of the competing claims we are bombarded with? Admittedly, a dodgy tap is not a life-changing issue, but what about the really big issues?

I've been reading a very small book with an intriguing title: *If I were God, I'd make myself clearer*. The subtitle is, "Searching for clarity in a world full of claims". That is (in my language), can I trust what I hear? Is there a truth I can lean on? And the issue John Dickson deals with is the



competing claims of religions. Why doesn't God make it clearer for us? Or did he?

It is especially helpful with the hot issue of tolerance—what does "tolerance" *actually* mean? Is it suggesting that all views are admissible? Yet the religions themselves hold contrary doctrines so they can't all be true. So he explores ideas of verification—can the various claims be supported by hard evidence in some way?

But does it matter what we believe? Well, yes it does. Just like our tap, in spite of all the claims of greatness, it was rubbish—and after two failures I found many more on-line complaints. What idiots we would feel if at the end of our life, our chosen "god-philosophy" was found to be like our tap!

John Dickson exposes the popular views of either "all religions are wrong" or "all religions lead to God" as being flawed, and he skims through the evidence for each of the major religions. He concludes that only Christianity has overwhelming verifiable evidence for its claims. The book logically leads us to the question, "Why not check out the claims of Jesus?"

This is a small book, biggish typeface and just 80-odd pages, yet it challenges us all to examine what our beliefs are based on. It doesn't fill all our knowledge gaps: it is only 80 pages after all! It is published by Matthias Media and is available through 10ofthose.com (and others) at about £3. Alternatively, you could join with us at St Paul's where there are many opportunities to ask questions about what Christians believe and why.

Richard Nicholson

Why do people sing during a church service?



It's a good question, which—even if you've been a regular churchgoer for many years, you may well have pondered over. It's perhaps an even more puzzling question if you're *not* a regular church attendee. Why do they all sing so much when they're in church on Sundays? Especially if they're Baptists. Or Welsh. Or both.

This “peculiarity” of singing during church services is probably heightened by the fact that—unless one happens to be in a choir or other organised singing group—we don't really engage in communal singing these days, other than at football stadia and the like. [And, it's a moot point as to whether questioning the ref's eye-sight, judgement and parentage, plus roundly disparaging the opposition actually constitutes “*singing*”, as such...!].

Following the recent lifting of most Covid-19 restrictions, we are now able to

sing in church once again, and so I thought it was worth considering the question as to why we do. Here are a few brief thoughts:

1. We're created to sing

All of creation—that is all God has made—is designed to reflect God's glory and give praise to him as creator. This is highlighted in the Psalms, where *everything* in creation—from the “...sun and moon... shining stars...sea creatures...fire and hail, snow and mist...mountains and all hills... trees...beasts and all livestock, creeping things and flying birds, kings of the earth and all peoples...” are all to “...praise the name of the Lord” (Psalm 148 vv 3–13).

2. We're commanded to sing

The Bible contains many commands to God's people to sing His praise; for example each of the last five chapters in the

book of Psalms (Psalms 146–150) begins and ends with an exclamatory “Praise the Lord,” or (in Hebrew) “Hallelujah!” The Bible also contains many instances of God’s people singing praises to Him—even in unlikely circumstance—for example Acts 16 v 25 describes the Apostle Paul and Silas, who, though in prison “...were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them...”

3. We sing to celebrate our Salvation

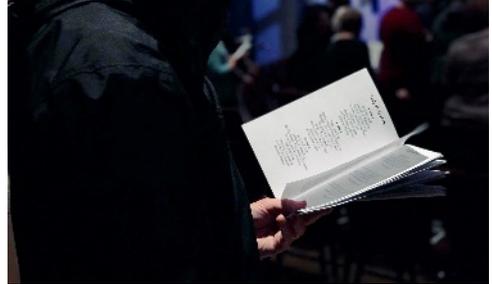
Our salvation through the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ is the single most important thing and we should rejoice, praise and worship God in response to what He has done. Verse 9 of Revelation 5 says: “*And they sang a new song, saying, ‘Worthy are you [Jesus]...for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God, from every tribe and language and people and nation...’*”

4. We sing to reinforce the truth in our hearts and minds

We constantly need reminding of everything that God has done for His people and singing is a great way of “cementing” the truth in our lives; as the Apostle Paul puts it in Colossians 3 verse 16: “*Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.*”

5. We sing to prepare us for Heaven

The Bible teaches that one day God’s people will be with Him—for example Revelation 21 v 3: “*Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God.*” In Heaven, there will be praise and worship to God, and singing together in church is just a little foretaste of this.



As was his wont, Peter, my late father-in-law, once pithily summed it up in conversation at our wedding. With my wife Emma and I both being keen musicians, the music group naturally formed a key part of our service and Peter was chatting afterwards with an old school friend of mine, who—being from a **very** formal “high church” background—remarked he’d found the music rather loud! “*Heaven’s not going to be a quiet place y’ know!*” Peter quipped. “*Not with all that worshipping and casting of crowns before the throne!!*”

James Rollin



Anagram answers — 1. Bethlehem; 2. Jerusalem; 3. Rome; 4. Canaan; 5. Israel; 6. Galilee; 7. Corinth; 8. Damascus; 9. Thessalonica; 10. Tarsus; 11. Ephesus; 12. Egypt; 13. Emmaus; 14. Philadelphia; 15. Bethany; 16. Jericho; 17. Nazareth; 18. Arimathea; 19. Philippi; 20. Antioch.

Padley in Derby

Padley has a tremendous heritage in Derby; founded in 1985 it is one of Derby's longest established charities.

It is also one of the largest local charities. Its purpose is to provide services to the most vulnerable in our City of Derby. This includes helping people with a range of issues, such as homelessness, debt and destitution, drugs, alcohol, mental health issues, physical disabilities, learning disabilities, severe autism and long-term unemployment.



Their ethos is all about growth and move-on; for some this is about moving on from a difficult past, for others it's dealing with overwhelming circumstances or coping with a disability or condition that has limited their engagement with society, robbed them of their self-confidence or changed their life. While they help people rebuild their lives and confidence, they provide a safe environment for those who are most at risk in society.

The day centre at Padley House is a place for people who are or have recently experienced homelessness in Derby to gain access to basic needs, support and advice and is open six days a week. The aim is to provide a basic needs service. This consists of hot food during support activities and emergency parcels of either food, toiletries or clothing, toilet, shower facilities and laundrette.

Padley Emergency Parcels are provided free of charge as a stop-gap to individuals referred by authorised partners. The referring agency/partner must be working with the client to address the client's financial issues so that a dependency is not created.

As a church, for some years at Harvest we have collected produce suitable for Padley to use in their emergency parcels. It is a way of thanking God for his generous provision while also enabling us to show our support for others in Derby who are going through tough times.



This year we will again be collecting non-perishable items such as tinned food and toiletries for Padley. Please contact us if you want to donate items to our collection to help the excellent work that Padley does.



St Paul's Little Eaton Church

Vicarage Lane, Little Eaton, Derby DE21 5EA

You are very welcome to join us for our 4.30pm afternoon services, either in the church building, or alternatively online, via our Benefice YouTube channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/c/TheUnitedBeneficeofDuffieldLittleEaton>

Contact St Paul's at:

admin@littleeatonchurch.co.uk

www.littleeatonchurch.co.uk



St Paul's Church Little Eaton



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