

**Rev'd Amanda would appreciate it if anyone knowing of illness or any other trouble in the Parish would notify her as soon as possible on 020 3940 1897 so that she, or a member of the Church, can call without delay.**

**If you have any enquiry about baptism, marriage or another service, or if there is something else you would like to discuss with a member of the team, please make an appointment, through the Church Office (020 8462 1373) or by emailing:**

**[info@stmaryshayeskent.co.uk](mailto:info@stmaryshayeskent.co.uk)**

## **GIVING SUNDAY**

*'For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son' John 3.16*

Recently as part of our Giving Sunday in September, we looked at our church and how we all contribute to it and its work.

St Mary's is a focal point of the community with a strong sense of family, some of whom have been part of the church for several generations. Many people come and visit, spending time in our beautiful building and peaceful churchyard. We are people of all ages and backgrounds who seek the love of God, made known through the life and mission of his Son, Jesus Christ. We come together in worship and groups that meet to share our Christian experience and learn more. We also join in fellowship, many joining us from the community, and we also go out to local community groups. We are hoping to strengthen our connections with our community.

In our Parish Giving service we looked at how our giving of both money and time supports the mission of God in the world – both here in Hayes and further afield; 'We give to the church because we see God's abundant generosity in the world around us. As disciples of Christ we want to put God first in our lives. In our giving that generous abundance from God flows through us to enable that church to flourish.'

This joins with the Diocese of Rochester vision 'to meet [...] challenges as a family of faith, supporting each other as we seek to grow disciples, enrich communities and resource our mission and ministry.'

We like all those who value St Mary's and all the church does, (and will be able to do for God's Kingdom), to consider prayerfully how much you might be able to support St Mary the Virgin. This is not just financially but by all our different abilities and talents. 'These talents and gifts, like our possessions and wealth, are generous gifts from a

generous God, and we offer them back to God to use within St Mary's and our wider community.'

The Parish Giving focused on 'planned giving'; 'As a parish we have joined the Parish Giving Scheme, which enables us to give by Direct Debit. If you sign up to this, you will make a big difference to St Mary's finances. It will also help our treasurer, who will have a little less admin and a much better idea of how much the church will have and how we can support our vision and plans for the future.' Alternatively, you could give a lump sum (and Gift Aid it) or leave a gift in your will.

In the coming months we will be asking the views of the community and congregations to see how we can work together. 'After three days they found [Jesus] in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions.' Luke 2:46. Let us seek to find the needs of the Parish of Hayes and see where this can lead us!

**Rev'd Amanda**



## **THOUGHTS OF AUTUMN**

As many of you will know, Jim and I tend to go off for two weeks in early autumn to our beloved Lake District. For us, and for many others, it is a most beautiful part of God's creation in this country, and, if the timing is right, the autumn colours are absolutely stunning. We really look forward to this two-week break – which we call "living" in the Lake District - as we self-cater which gives us so much flexibility – i.e. if it's typical Lake District weather we can hunker down until the rain passes! The slight downside is we are also conscious that the long and warmer days of summer are fading rapidly, despite this slightly warmer weather we are experiencing as I write this. (If we have had a particularly unbearably hot summer, autumn can bring a sense of relief.)

However, with the beauty of autumn, come the crisp winter days, which lead us eventually to that glorious period of renewal and new life, which is that wonderful season of spring. I think the only real drawback to autumn is that "they" seem to be obsessed with how many days it is to Christmas!

Whilst on our holiday, we shall be meeting up with some dear friends who have been going through the pain of saying goodbye to their beloved dog – the centre of their lives since before they were married. They were fortunate enough to spend most of that time living and working in beautiful countryside. This enabled me to say that they had given “Alfie” a wonderful life as he adored fell walking and tarn dipping, and he loved them as much as they loved him. Happily they have now reached the stage of their grieving when they can look back and recall the many times he made them laugh and the joy he brought into their lives.

I expect there are many of you reading this who have experienced similar loss. I am sure we have all experienced the loss of loved ones at some time in our lives, and will continue to do so – dying is after all part of living. For Christians we have the hope of eternal life which the resurrection gives us, and we are encouraged to share this knowledge with others. As Pope Benedict XVI said:

**“The cross reminds us that there is no true love without suffering, there is no gift of life without pain.”**

So let's move forward with hope and take the seasons and all they bring in our stride, walking in the strength of the Lord.

**Yvonne Pickford**

## **ST AUGUSTINE BOOKS PASSAGE AT FISHBOURNE**

In recent years we have increasingly looked forward to our short breaks to the Isle of Wight. And after crossing by ferry from Portsmouth to Fishbourne we often pop into Quarr Abbey for a coffee. Quarr Abbey is of course just a few minutes' drive from the ferry terminal. As many have found, it has a lovely atmosphere whether walking in the grounds, the abbey itself, or browsing in the farm shop.

There is also a small but well stocked Christian bookshop, usually manned by volunteers but on occasion also by one of the monks.

Recently, browsing in the bookshop, I came across a book on Augustine. Well, not so much on him, but much better, short extracts from his book *Exposition of the Psalms*.

Augustine is of course a major figure in the history of the Christian church. He lived from the second half of the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD, into the first few decades of the fifth, a critical time in the history of Western

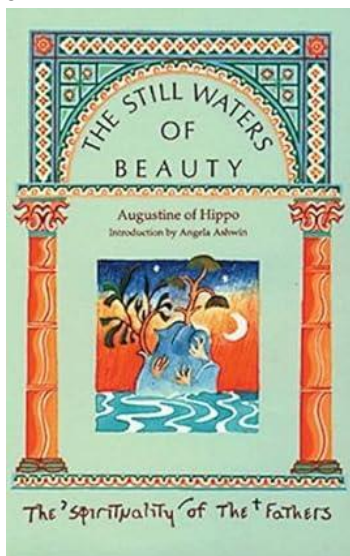
Europe when the power of the Roman Empire was crumbling to such an extent that in 410 AD the once-mighty Rome was sacked.

Augustine had a brilliant mind, and wrote prolifically, much of which has survived. His thought has been profoundly influential for the Christian church, as much for Protestantism as for Roman Catholicism. He wrote for an international audience, but he was also a Bishop, with responsibility for local congregations (in the provincial backwaters of the Empire in North Africa!). And for all his intellectual brilliance, he also had a keen pastor's heart. And that comes out quite clearly in these meditations on the Psalms. His approach is to focus on a key verse or verses in each psalm. Augustine is aware of the day-to-day concerns and struggles of the average Christian, and, in a turbulent and violent age, their fears and how their faith relates to what they see happening around them. Perhaps no different from our own day! So just by way of taster of some of his meditations in this book...

Throughout the church's history, the struggles, and failures, of the Church have deeply troubled, and puzzled, Christians. The age of Augustine was no different. In thoughts on Psalm 11, Augustine uses the moon as a symbol of the church. The moon is like the church because it sometimes appears to be mostly plunged into darkness. But there is hope because the full moon always comes back, reflecting once more the light that has never ceased flowing in its direction, that is the Son of God. With Augustine there is always hope.

Psalm 149 brings out thoughts on what it means to praise God. Not, says Augustine, just by singing praises to God when gathered in Church, but to continue praising God when at home, being careful to ensure what we say and do are pleasing to Him. That is a life that cries out with praises, which God hears. "Our ears are receptive to voices, just as the ears of God are receptive to our hearts".

And what does it mean, practically, to follow Paul's urging (1 Thessalonians 5:17) to pray without ceasing? So, a line from Psalm 38 ('Lord all my longing is known to you') prompts a meditation on prayer. Are we to "lift our hands continuously?" Clearly that is not practical or possible, nor



Paul's real intention. So, Augustine brings into focus "another kind of interior prayer, which is the desire of the heart". "The continuation of your longing is the continuation of your prayer." But, warns Augustine, the absence of that longing, the "silence of the heart", points to a love that is growing cold (Matthew 24:12).

Augustine can comfort the afflicted but also afflict the comfortable!

Clearly the thoughts in his book on Psalms were written in a very different time; yet there is an inheritance we share. For Augustine, as for us, world history changed forever with the life and death of Jesus. Perhaps I should not have been surprised therefore how relevant – and often helpful – so many of these comments on the Psalms still appear and how these insights retain their... insightfulness. Partly this of course comes from Augustine himself; what shines through is not just his burning heart for God but also his love for the people in his pastoral care. He clearly yearned for them to develop in their faith and understanding.

**David James**



I am sitting in the garden marvelling at the beauty of the day. Our giant sunflower has multiple heads and is giving us such pleasure as it sways gently in the breeze.



At our September meeting we welcomed Ted Venables from 'The Samaritans'. He gave a most interesting talk, telling us that The Samaritans was started by The Rev. Edward Chad Varah CBE in 1953. Edward Chad Varah was born in Lincolnshire on 12<sup>th</sup> November in 1911 and was known as Chad Varah throughout his life. What prompted him to start Samaritans was when he officiated at the funeral of a 14-year-old girl who had taken her own life after she had started her first period. She was terrified about what was happening to her, and thought that she was suffering from some disease. She had no-one that she felt she could talk to so took her own life. This so moved Chad that he decided to do something for people in similar situations who had no-one to talk to.

At the time Chad was the stipendiary vicar of St Stephens, Walbrook, the Wren church next to the Mansion House. He decided to set up a service called "**The 999 Service for the Suicidal**" in the crypt of the church. The first call was on 2<sup>nd</sup> November 1953. To supplement his income as a vicar Chad was co-founder of *The Eagle* comic, and wrote scripts for *The Girl*, *Robin* and *Swift* comics.

Chad used his contacts in Fleet Street, and the number of calls increased substantially in December 1953, and the Daily Mirror coined the name "The Samaritans" and the name has been used ever since. The Samaritans is not a religious organisation. By 1963 they were 41 branches across the UK and now there are 201 branches with 20,000 volunteers in the UK and The Republic of Ireland. Today someone contacts Samaritans every 6 seconds.

Ted's local branch, Bromley and Orpington, was formed in 1965 and cost £400 to run in the first year. Now it costs £20,000 - £25,000 and there is no support from central or local government. They have 94 volunteers and last year took 21,000 calls plus a further 20,000 snaps – over 100 calls a day, 740 emails and 367 face-to-face visits to the branch. 124 of these contacts were in the process of taking their own life.

I do encourage members to attend the Autumn Members' Meeting on **Saturday, 12th October, 9.30am** at St. Martin's church, Bexleyheath, please let me know and I will arrange a lift. There will be rainbow tables by popular demand. Bromley and Bexley have been allocated Green and Red, so if you have anything that is red or green for our table sale please could you give it to Carol, John or myself before 8<sup>th</sup> October. Thank you.

As part of our outreach into the community many members of Mothers' Union have joined the Pen Pal project. If you haven't put your name down already and would like to be a "penpal" with a year 6 pupil at Hayes Primary, please let me know.

Our next meeting is **Monday, 21<sup>st</sup> October, 10.30am** in the Meetings Room, when Trustee Michael Doulas will be talking on "The Chartwell Trust.". We will be meeting on **Tuesday, 8th October at 11.00am** for a social gathering in The New Inn. A few stay for lunch afterwards.

If you would like to join us, please speak to me, Avril Ashford **0208 468 7785**, or just come along to a meeting. You will be most welcome.

## **Avril Ashford**



*[Attentive readers will recall that Ted Venables was a speaker at the Hayes Men's Fellowship in June of this year. To avoid too much duplication this report is slightly shortened. – Ed]*

## ST. MARY'S CHURCH DIARY OCTOBER 2024

**Morning Prayers take place daily at 9.15am Monday to Wednesday on Zoom\* and Tuesdays to Fridays in Church throughout the year (except Bank Holidays).**

<b>Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup></b>	11.00am-12.15pm	Bible Study**
<b>Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup></b>	10.30am	Coffee Morning for the bereaved and those living on their own**
	12.30-3.00pm	Warm Welcome Space**
	2.45pm	Hayes Men's Fellowship Annual Service

### TRINITY 19

<b>Saturday 5<sup>th</sup></b>	12.30pm	Churchyard Tidy Up
<b>Sunday 6<sup>th</sup></b>	8.00am	Holy Communion BCP
	10.30am	Morning Praise: Harvest Festival; Sunbeams (age 3-6)
<b>Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup></b>	12.30-3.00pm	Warm Welcome Space**
<b>Thursday 10<sup>th</sup></b>	10.30am-12.30pm	Craft Group**

### TRINITY 20

<b>Sunday 13<sup>th</sup></b>	8.00am	Holy Communion BCP
	10.30am	Parish Communion CW Blaze Session** (age 6-10)
<b>Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup></b>	11.00am-12.15pm	Bible Study**
<b>Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup></b>	12.30-3.00pm	Warm Welcome Space**
<b>Friday 18<sup>th</sup></b>	10.00am-11.00am	Twinkles – singing, story, snacks**

### TRINITY 21

<b>Sunday 20<sup>th</sup></b>	8.00am	Holy Communion BCP
	9.15am	Fresh Start



	10.30am	Morning Praise
<b>Monday 21<sup>st</sup></b>	10.30am	Mothers' Union**
<b>Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup></b>	12.30-3.00pm	Warm Welcome Space**
<b>Thursday 24<sup>th</sup></b>	10.30am-12.30pm	Craft Group**

**LAST SUNDAY OF TRINITY**

<b>Sunday 27<sup>th</sup></b>	8.00am	Holy Communion BCP
	10.30am	Parish Communion CW
<b>Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup></b>	12.30-3.00pm	Warm Welcome Space**

\*for Zoom link contact the church office      \*\* denotes Meetings Room

The church is also open for private prayer on Tuesdays, Fridays and Saturdays from 10.00am to 12.00noon unless there is a wedding or funeral taking place. Details of these will be given in the weekly pew sheets.



**HALLS FOR HIRE**

The Old Church Schools, Hayes, has 3 halls – two large and one medium, and a committee room available for hire.

For further information please contact Julie Clark on 07538 254508 or email [ocs.hayes@hotmail.com](mailto:ocs.hayes@hotmail.com)

## HAYES MEN'S FELLOWSHIP

As we enter October the first vestiges of Christmas approaching are seen in the shops and even the weather seems wintry as we write these words in September to meet printing deadlines. For us in HMF the month in fact marks the start of another full season of activities: talks, walks and days out. (For latest details see our website at [www.hayesmensfellowship.org](http://www.hayesmensfellowship.org)).

Welcome Back letters have gone out, inviting existing members to enrol at the first opportunity during our October meeting for the modest subscription of £20, again unchanged for another year. Any retired or semi-retired men, of any faith or none, are welcome to join our growing ranks. If you, or someone in your life, would like to get to know us first they would be most welcome to attend our **Annual Service at Hayes Parish Church on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> October from 2.45pm** and afterwards, towards 3.30pm, there is an informal meeting in the New Hall of the Old Church Schools to discuss our forthcoming programme. If you prefer, please feel free to use the contact details at the end of this article for a friendly chat.

And so on to the usual news of our recent events. We don't meet in August and September but there are still two events to report here starting with our Annual Boat Trip. This remains popular and again had the highest number of passengers for any outing this HMF Session with 56 people on board. Our coach set off from Husseywell Crescent promptly at 8.30am reaching Oxford at 11.30am, where we would spend



a couple of hours before taking a boat to Abingdon then, after a bit more sightseeing, boarding our coach for the return trip to Hayes.

The University of Oxford is a major world class institution with over 30,000 academic staff and students and an enviable reputation for research. It is believed that teaching was undertaken here from around 1096, which makes it the oldest university in the English-speaking world. It operates on a collegiate basis with 43 constituent colleges, each a self-governing institution within the overall framework of the university. There are so many outstanding buildings to be seen here, several centred around the High Street (“the High”) including Brasenose, All Souls, Queen’s and University Colleges.

Architectural highlights for our group were not limited to the Colleges as they also included Christ Church Cathedral, the Ashmolean Museum, the Bodleian Library, the Radcliffe Camera (below) - housing a science library - and the Magdalene Bridge (itself 19c but at an historic river crossing) most of which are operated by the University. Time was restricted and lunch was required, so there was limited opportunity to go into the buildings but there was still so much to see.



Shoppers were well catered for with the big Westgate and Clarendon Shopping centres as well as the traditional (and very large) covered market. But, as befits a university town, there were also many independent rather old fashioned specialist shops. There were also two of the very popular and well priced pub chain close at hand, including the

Four Candles which made many of us think of the Two Ronnies sketch on TV!

As last year, we had exclusive use of our Salters Steamers cruise boat. This year it was the Goring which was built in Oxford in 1912. Our captain explained to us that the Thames was 650 miles long, rising from four streams in Gloucestershire and had 44 locks. The Goring offered seats in an indoor lounge, on the foredeck with a roof or on the aft deck in the open air – both of the last two got a bit cool and breezy as the winds blew up in the afternoon. Again there was plenty of space for us to move around and chat. The scenery was gorgeous – some attractive, mainly modern, houses and lovely countryside in between.

We arrived in Abingdon at about 3.45pm which gave us a little time to explore this pretty market town. It has a claim to being the oldest town in England because of archaeological evidence of a neolithic settlement there which developed into the current town. A further claim to fame is its famous Bun-Throwing ceremony to celebrate royal occasions, and the midsummer Election of the Mock Mayor of Ock Street in which the town comes alive with Morris Dancing and mayhem. We were there on a quiet Wednesday so saw no such excitement but did have the opportunity to admire the local buildings like the magnificent stone County Hall and have a tea or coffee before the coach arrived to pick us up for the homeward journey.

We set off for Hayes at 4.45pm and had another good run on the motorway arriving back in Hayes just after 7.00pm. On our motorway journeys we saw increasing numbers of solar panels in what looked to be fertile fields, as we struggle to reduce our dependence on fossil fuels.

Our latest walk was again blessed with sunny weather and pleasant for walking; the route was through a mix of wooded areas and fields, occasionally crossing main railways and stiles. “The Old Eden” provided a good lunch. The total distance walked should have been 4.4 miles but was nearer to 5 miles (because of the walk leader’s navigation skills, he admitted!). As they were in the middle of the holiday season, there were four walkers who were joined over lunch by a friend of the walk leader.

We look forward to meeting you, either in person, or in future months in these pages.

**Allan Evison, HMF Chairman                      Graham Marsden, HMF Secretary**  
**Contact details: [secretary@hayesmensfellowship.org](mailto:secretary@hayesmensfellowship.org)**  
**or phone 07764 153383:**

## STREET GIRL

I've been to see some art today  
I want to catch the twelve fifteen.  
The autumn sun is on my face  
The crowds are striding at a pace  
As if the world is ending.

I nearly missed you sitting there  
So quietly wrapped against the cold  
Avoiding all the frantic rush  
Of London feet and cell phone chat  
Thinking your world is ending.

I catch your eyes and all I see  
Is emptiness and soul-less gaze.  
It's easy just to carry on  
I'll miss my train if I stop now.  
Maybe your world is ending.

Your story's sad and fills my eyes  
With tears and sad emotions.  
I've got a room at home for you,  
It's hardly used, it really would  
Transform your situation.

Yours are the eyes of God's own Son  
Who shares this world's deep sadness  
I give you cash and wish you well.  
It's such an easy thing to do.  
You smile and thank my kindness.

I miss my train and say a prayer  
Hoping you'll find some shelter  
Instead of living on the street  
Alone and cold and friendless  
Feeling the world is ending

My journey home was miserable.  
I'd done so very little.  
The Son of God had looked at me,  
I'd walked away and left Him there.  
It seemed regret unending.

**David Langford**

## **GOD AND THE SPARROWS**

Jesus said that our Father God sees every sparrow that falls and we are more precious to him than many sparrows. It is impossible to understand fully God's interest in every detail of our lives but I was reminded of it this week.

In my second year of high school in Cardiff, a boy from Newport joined my class. We became close friends. He left to study chemistry at Cambridge and I went to Guy's Hospital to study medicine. We both married and had two children and maintained our friendship mainly through Christmas cards after he went to live in Belgium. He moved to France and soon my Christmas cards received no reply. I have tried to locate him many times in the past 25 years to no avail and with increasing sadness.

This week I was sitting in my garden in the sun and my thoughts returned to him. I realized that I had never sought God's help in my fruitless search and I felt a strong desire to pray and I asked him to find him for me. I felt I had laid it to rest with God but I thought I would try one more search through the UK death records just in case God had not really heard my prayer! I was astounded that his full name and date of death appeared as the first name on a long list. Beside his entry was a gravestone with the colours of the French flag upon it. He died in 2023 in France as a UK citizen. All my memories came flooding back from our shared past and I felt so sad that I would never know in this life what caused the break in our friendship or how he died.

I am left with a lesson of life – my need to involve God in any and every problem I may face in the future.

**David Langford**

## **THE PROBLEM WITH SWIPING THROUGH VIDEOS**

When you're bored, do you follow the growing popular trend of flicking from one short video to another on your phone?

It is a habit many people have picked up from visiting YouTube Shorts, Instagram Reels, and TikTok. But if you do it for hours on end, it is called 'doomscrolling'.

Now a recent study has found that the habit can increase your malaise, instead of helping it. Scientists at the University of Toronto in Canada admit that while it is hard to "quantify exactly how *much* more



bored a person feels when swiping”, nevertheless “there are “small but noticeable increases.”

So, scientists advise that “More enjoyment comes from immersing yourself in online videos, rather than swiping through them.” The study was published in the *Journal of Experimental Psychology*.

[Or maybe just put down your phone and read a book – Ed.]

## **PERSECUTION CONTINUES IN RUSSIA**

In Russia, an outspoken Christian preacher is facing trial for posting a question on social media. And in occupied Ukraine, a Christian woman could be jailed for up to ten years for remarks made in a prayer meeting.

‘Both cases reflect the rising persecution of Christians in Russia and in Russian-occupied Ukraine,’ says Paul Robinson, the CEO of Release International, which supports persecuted Christians around the world.

‘Christian leaders have been tortured, disappeared, and murdered for taking a Christian stand, in what looks worryingly like a return to the bad old days of Christian persecution under the Soviet Union.’

Eduard Charov, a Russian preacher with Orthodox and Pentecostal roots, posted online the question: ‘Would Jesus Christ have gone to kill in Ukraine?’

He is set to stand trial on charges of discrediting the Russian armed forces and is expecting a prison term. In the meantime, he has been forbidden from leaving his home district or from using the phone or the Internet.

***PP News Sept 2024***

## WHERE DO POSTCODES COME FROM?

Some 65 years ago, on 11<sup>th</sup> October 1959, Britain began introducing postcodes. They started in Norwich, and by 1974 had been rolled out across the whole country.

The idea was to speed up sorting following the mechanisation of the postal system. But for the process to work, people had to use it, and it was therefore important to make sure that people could remember their postcode easily. So, psychologists from Cambridge University were asked to assist in their design.

This worked so well that a survey in 2016 revealed that people are now more likely to remember their postcode than their debit card PIN (92%, compared with 77%). And the information sticks: apparently 17% of people questioned could still remember the postcode of the house they lived in up to 30 years earlier.

When the first postcodes were trialled in Norwich, the first three characters were NOR (now NR followed by a number) representing the name of the city, and the last three signified a particular street or large business. Why Norwich? Because of its new sorting machines.

The main point of a postcode is to ensure that a letter or parcel gets to the correct Royal Mail sorting office, where it can then be sorted into the correct round. So the “outcode” will specify a postcode area and district, and will have up to four characters. The “incode” designates a particular postcode sector and delivery point, and always has one number and two letters.

What is a delivery point? It could be a street, part of a street or a single property. Or in rural areas, something a bit bigger. The postcode area is of course much larger: the smallest in Britain is WC in London, covering one square mile. The largest is IV, Inverness, at 6,243 square miles.

*Tim Lenton PP Community*

*Photos of Oxford on p. 10 and 11 by Graham Marsden*

**Items for the November magazine by 16<sup>th</sup> October please. Copy to the Editor – see below.**

**November magazines will be ready for distribution on 29<sup>th</sup> October.**

**Editor: Clare Wickert, 3 Hayes Garden, Hayes.**

**Tel: 020 8462 7161 [wickerts@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:wickerts@hotmail.co.uk)**

**Business Manager: Gordon Barclay, 29 Hurstdene Avenue, Hayes**

**Tel: 020 8462 2568 [gcb Barclay@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:gcb Barclay@hotmail.co.uk)**

**Church Website: [www.stmaryshayeskent.co.uk](http://www.stmaryshayeskent.co.uk)**