

CONTACT

May 2019



Volume 60 - Issue 5
Sawston Free Church – Little Abington URC – Castle Camps URC

Sawston FC Regular Church Activities but please check diary below for full details or contact the relevant group.

Sunday	1 st Sunday of month	10.30 am	Morning Worship
		3.00 pm	Messy Church
	2 nd Sunday of month	10.30 am	Holy Communion
		6.00 pm	Quiet Time with God
	3 rd Sunday of month	10.30 am	Morning Worship
		6.00 pm	Reflective Service with Communion
	4 th Sunday of month	10.30 am	Go4th:Worship of Song, Prayer, Praise with the Worship Band No evening service
	5 th Sunday of month	10.30 am	Morning Worship No evening service
Monday	Alternate - see diary	10.00 am	Craft Group
Tuesday	Term time only	6.15 – 9.00pm	Boys' and Girls' Brigades
Wednesday	Fortnightly see diary	2.00 pm	Wednesday Fellowship
Thursday	Term time only	10.30 – noon	Time for Tots
Saturday	Last Saturday of month	10.30 am	Monthly Prayer Meeting

For further details of these activities, please contact one of the Elders (see back page).
Four housegroups meet regularly. For information contact the Minister or Church Secretaries.

Three Churches Services and Dates for Your Diary

Date	Sawston	Lt Abington	Castle Camps
Sun 5 May	10.30am: Morning Worship - Rev Mike Wilson 3.00pm Messy Church	10.15am: Morning Worship - Mr Jacob Bali	10.30am: Holy Communion - Rev Bruce Waldron
Sun 12 May	Sawston Fun Run -3.00pm: Afternoon Worship - Rev Bruce Waldron	10.15am: Morning Worship - Mr Chris Salter	10.30am: Morning Worship - Rev Professor David Thompson
Mon 13 May	10.00am: Craft Group (page 14)		
Sun 19th May	10.30am: Morning Worship - Rev Bruce Waldron 6.00pm: Evening Communion - Rev Bruce Waldron	2.30pm: Holy Communion - Rev Bruce Waldron	10.30am: Family Service - Mr Bob Parkin
Sat 25 May	10.30am: Monthly Prayer Meeting		
Sun 26 May	10.30am: Go4th - Rev Bruce Waldron	10.15am: Morning Worship - Mr Bryn Ellicot	10.30am: Morning Worship - Rev Charles Martin

This diary appears on the website. If you know of anything else you would like on the web diary, email: contact@sawston.com

Rotas

	Car	Flowers		Car	Flowers
May 5	Jill Legg 01799 218318	Dawn Houghton	May 19	Jill Legg 01799 218318	Mary Simuyandi
May 12		Maggie Jones	May 26	Jill Legg 01799 218318	

The closing date for **June Contact** is Friday **17th May**.

David Nunn is the editor, so please email your items to contact@sawston.com or anne.nunn@btinternet.com

Contact

The monthly magazine of
**Sawston Free Church, Little Abington & Castle Camps URC's
United Reformed – Methodist**

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From the Minister's Desk

A TENSION OF PRIORITIES



Last week the sight of Notre Dame Cathedral ablaze, exploded onto our television screens. Within hours, President Macron had promised “We will rebuild the Cathedral” and in less than a week, a billion pounds had been pledged to the purpose.

At the same time millions around the world die for want of the most meagre of morsels, or simply some clean water; the millions in Zimbabwe are facing a catastrophe in the wake of a drought that was ended by horrific floods that obliterated what little was left growing. There are few donations for those.

On Sunday I woke to the shocking news of the bombings in Sri Lanka. It seems churches and hotels have been targeted, primarily it seems the violence was aimed at Christians, but the victims have been, as the Sri Lankan Opposition Leader Mahinda Rajapaksa said, Christians, Buddhists, Hindus, Muslims, mothers, fathers, daughters and sons. They are people. At the time I am writing, the death toll is near 300. The wounded are three times that number. The numbers traumatised, devastated, physically and mentally, will go far beyond.

But will a billion pounds be instantly donated?

Notre Dame is an icon, a symbol for the French people, but what is being displayed by the huge disparity in support between the Notre Dame restitution donations and the poverty and misery that is occurring and receiving so little support. What do we regard as Cathedrals? What do we choose as icons, as symbols of our identity.

Jesus said “As much as you do it to the least of these, you do it to me.”

As Christians, we need to think deeply about what those words “The least of these...” means. It is an interesting exercise in focussing our resources.

Support for “the least of these” brings no fanfare of recognition, no honouring of donors, no accolades of recognition. The least of these are not public icons. Newspapers and social media forget them very quickly. But if our governments, our charity, our resources are redirected in Jesus-value directions, it is always people who are blessed, simply people.

As you read this, whatever day it is, please stop to pray for the people of Sri Lanka, the people of Yemen, the people of Zimbabwe, the millions in refugee camps in Jordan, the people of Palestine. No one will know but you and God, and perhaps a donation might follow, and no one will know but you and God, as you do it to “the least of these”.

Greetings from Castle Camps.



Every year, we are surprised by Spring. I think we forget just how amazing it is. There are Cowslips galore and Plum Blossom like I have never seen it before; a result of the heat last summer. Even the Damsons are laden with flower and usually they are very shy to bloom. The lambing season is in full swing and the lambs look well as it is so dry and they do not like wet weather.

We have been busy too. We had a joint service at the Chapel with the Anglicans, and as they are old friends it was especially nice. Rev Dr Ian Fisher from the Parish Church took the service and it was a good example of how different denominations can work well together.

Our Lent Course has now finished. It has been most enlightening and brought us closer together as a congregation.

On Palm Sunday we had a Songs of Praise in the evening with a choir from Haverhill and guest organist Richard Hart. The offertory of £112 was in aid of the Arthur Rank Hospice.

On Easter Saturday, the Annual Vintage Tractor Run took place, starting from Lordship Farm in Shudy Camps. There are usually 20 - 30 tractors taking part and they are in all various states of repair and age, as well as the drivers. They progress around a prearranged route whatever the weather. This annual event is in memory of Roy Haylock who was an Elder of our Chapel for many years.

On Easter Sunday Jacob took our service which included "The Blossoming of the Cross," with refreshments afterwards and an Easter Egg Hunt.



The Elders and Congregation of Castle Camps URC send you all our best wishes.

Val & friends

Resurrection Sunday

“The day of resurrection! Earth tell it out abroad.”

Familiar words, written by John of Damascus in the 8th Century. On Easter Sunday we celebrated the Resurrection by blossoming the cross at Castle Camps and at Sawston. Resurrection is more than merely an affirmation of our belief that Jesus was raised from death; it is an affirmation of faith that every crucifixion, every death, can be resurrected. It is the faith that God is at work, and whatever may come, there is hope because God is there, named or not named, acknowledged or unacknowledged. So we blossom the cross as a sign of our eternal hope given to us by our crucified and risen Lord.



Edited highlights from the April Elders Meeting

As always we discussed various pastoral concerns – this is always the first item of discussion – our members and friends’ well-being is of paramount importance always.

We welcomed back Yvonne Sparrow as a serving Elder.

We received feedback on the recent Elders’ Study Day which had been held at Newport URC. Jacob led that day with Bruce covering worship. Feedback was very positive. Well done Jacob & Bruce!

Holiday Club is now on our horizon again – **the first priority is to find volunteers – we need lots with various skills and talents to enable Holiday Club to happen.**

With Elders’ support, Bruce was putting a lot of effort into the last Wednesday Fellowship afternoon – their Easter Service – to ensure it has a focus on the Easter Resurrection and a thanksgiving for Wednesday Fellowship.

The Elders have agreed to lead the service on 10th November which is Remembrance Sunday.

This is just a flavour of what we look at in Elders’ meeting. Many other varied items were discussed in detail too.

**Christians
Together in
Sawston**

Maggie

Reaction to the Mosque attacks in New Zealand

As some of you know, Simon, my husband is a Kiwi who has all of his family in Christchurch. On the 18th April we woke up to find out that Christchurch had been in lockdown due to a lone gunman attacking innocent Muslims praying in mosques. Our hearts stopped whilst we waited to hear if our family was safe.

All were physically safe but our teenage nieces and nephews were very shaken up. My sister in law is a nurse and has been helping the casualties in Christchurch.

In response our 6 year old daughter Abbie took it upon herself to start raising money to help the families affected. On Saturday we attended my parents' Messy Church in Biggleswade with the theme of Giving and Helping.

The message related to the widow of Zarephath (1 Kings 17: 7-16) and as it was Comic Relief day on Friday it tied in nicely. The minister told a version of the Rainbow Fish challenging us all to help others and think what we can do. Abbie made a money box which she wanted to bring home and take to church.

Her collection started at Sawston Free Church and after 2 weeks she had raised £30.59.

That money has now gone to the crowd funding page for the families in New Zealand.

Abbie thanks you all for your pounds, pennies and change you donated. She is now a keen fundraiser and looking for her next charity project.

If one 6 year old can look at the world and see a need, it is encouraging what good we can all do in the world, both close and far neighbours and family.

Thank you again for your generosity.

Lucy and Simon McGregor on behalf of Abbie

Osiligi/Masai Charity

The photo shows 2 of our school children with their mother outside their hut. As you can see, it is a traditional small mud and stick hut. No light, no toilet, with just a small cooking area and space to sleep. We are expecting many of these children to have some of the best exam results in the county – amazing when you consider the background of most of the children.



Their sponsors should feel really proud of the opportunity they are giving these children. In most families, these are the first generation to have an education. This causes problems with homework as there is no light and the children have to do household chores as soon as they arrive home, such as find the goats (boys) or collect fire-wood or look after the younger children (girls).

Kisames, a small shanty town about 1Km from the school has long been filthy with rubbish. It improved about a year ago when Kenya banned plastic bags (it is illegal to have a plastic bag in Kenya) but it was still a disgrace.

Our school is trying to be a shining light in supporting the local community. A few weeks ago the children took food and water to some of the elderly and recently they had a litter picking afternoon in Kisamis.

We are hoping the locals of Kisamis have been shamed or encouraged by the efforts of our pupils to keep the place clean.

Photo: Children collecting rubbish around the village.



May We Pray

Prayer is sometimes seen as bringing to God the things that are on our minds. Prayer is also sometimes seen as asking God for guidance, asking God for help, asking God to intervene, or simply raising someone up to God, someone we care about.

There is something else we do in prayer, not as commonly thought about, but every bit as important.

Prayer is also entering into the heart of God, a deep communion with God, not about functional matters, not about achieving things, but about giving space to what we already know in faith is in the heart of God. Prayer becomes an expression of our faith that we are of one Spirit with God.

Often, with people very dear to us, we don't talk about things so we can solve them. We talk with them just to hear their voice, to be with them in whatever they are experiencing, a strengthening of the bond between us and them. We sometimes sit and hug people we love for no other reason than to be with them, to be a part of their existence. When someone is very ill, we sit and hold their hand. When someone is very distressed, words may be the last thing needed but presence is the first thing needed.

Our prayer can also be like this. We think of the tragedy of the atrocities in Sri Lanka on Easter Day. We don't need so much to bring this to God's attention; God already knows, but in our unity, our love of God, we sit with God in the heartache and tragedy of those atrocities. We experience our unity with God, and with God's suffering at what has happened. This is an important aspect of prayer, simply being with God in our contemplation of what we know is occurring. I often find this a very helpful way to pray as I consider the things I cannot change, perhaps things that have no answer other than grief. And because God is always present, in our prayer we too enter into God's compassion for those who are suffering, lifting them in the presence of God.

This is mystery, not mechanism; it is an expression of our true self in Christ. He is one with the Father, and we see that expressed in both his suffering and his resurrection, his oneness with God and all of God's creation: suffering, rising again. He prays that we might be one with Him and therefore with The Father. Our prayer is a true expression of that.

Bruce



Prayer in May



- A little boy, known very well to the Castle Camps congregation, who, with his family, is contending with a terrible cancer. His mum and dad, his grandparents, his family are all struggling of course, and love is the one balm that they can bring to this, as well as your love around them through the presence of God, in prayer.
- A family in Lt. Abington who have just lost a loved nephew and cousin, and the gaps, the huge gaps that leaves in the family. We pray for the church as they support that family.
- Sawston have, with thanksgiving for all it has achieved through the years, concluded the work of Wednesday Fellowship. But many of the people have agreed to meet at Footprints Café on the last Wednesday of the month. We give thanks for Wednesday Fellowship and pray for the people continuing the connections in this way.
- Zimbabwe is in a terrible place. (Our Synod is twinned with the Presbytery of Zimbabwe) Struggling with a terrible drought, what little survived was washed away in the floods. The people are facing an appalling future and the government is still repressive and often unable to help.
- Jacob and Esther Bali are now on Annual Leave, and in the next couple of months will be concluding their time at Westminster and taking up ministry with Crossway Christian Centre, Elephant and Castle. We give thanks for their ministry amongst us and hold them in our hearts and minds and prayer as they go on.
- **Christian Aid Week** is in May from the 12th – 18th. This Christian organisation is one way that Christians respond to God's love for our hurting world. Our support is crucial.
- Christian Aid - we pray for the people who are organising fundraising events, that they will find the resources and volunteers they need when they need them.
- Christian Aid - we pray for the many places Christian Aid is trying to bring relief from the misery of poverty, war, famine, corruption.
- Christian Aid - we pray for our communities that they will get behind the charity.
- Sawston are beginning the long preparation for the week long Christians Together In Sawston holiday club to be held from 29th July to the 2nd August. Please keep the team of the BRAMBLE GROVE HOLIDAY CLUB in your prayers, and particularly Maggie Jones who is arranging this with Nicola Grieves, supported by Faith Paulding who is contributing her expertise.
- **Romsey Mill.** One of their main fundraisers will be the Big Quiz on 30th May. Advert below. They would like your prayer support for
 - Georgina Forbes, their Community and Individuals Fundraiser is leaving to work with East Anglia Air Ambulance. Please pray for them as they seek to find a replacement.
 - Laura Kahibaum, who has been appointed as the Youth Support Worker in Trumpington.
 - Kate Hall has joined the Aspire Team to help set up a new Monthly Network Group in Linton to support families of children with autism.
 - Madeline Kingsford who has joined the team as a Pre-school Assistant.
 - The new social enterprise venture, "Cara Coffee", to be held in the Great Shelford Free Church
- As our country possibly goes to elections for the European Parliament, we pray for our politicians who are struggling with an almost insurmountable problem, and for calm, reason and respect to attend the debate.
- It is laid upon us in scripture to pray for our community leaders. Please put time aside to pray for your Parish Councillors, District Councillors and your County Councillors.

A Brief History of the Wednesday Fellowship.

Wednesday Fellowship evolved out of what used to be the Women's Pleasant Hour. It was a church wide organisation of the Congregational Church and had been going for decades.

In the late '70s its name was changed to 'The Fellowship' and each church had their own group on different days. Ours was on Wednesday, so it became The Wednesday Fellowship. In those days they used to hold District Gatherings and Spring Rallies. All the Fellowships would gather at one of the participating churches for these occasions and they were held all over the place. There would be a combined Service and wonderful cakes afterwards, a lovely time across the churches.

Betty and Yvonne took over in 1995 from Jackie Knight. Jackie had decided she was going into college to take up full time Ministry. Peter Heckles had just left from this church. Some of the strong characters of those days were Mary Irish, Carolyn Bridges and Sue Foakes, and Wednesday Fellowship also had a Lunch Club at John Paxton School, and Rosemary Harriss was very involved with this.

When Jackie was running the Fellowship, she would begin the meeting sitting behind a table from where she would lead prayers and notices in a rather formal way, and then for the rest of the meeting people mostly sat and talked amongst each other.

Betty and Yvonne were asked to take it over and they said from the outset that they wanted a members group, not a leader led group. So they took on the title of "Coordinators". Everyone would be sat in a circle so they could see each other. The idea was for the members to have the input.

Meetings still began with devotions, perhaps a hymn, a prayer, a reading, a meditation, but then a topic would be introduced and it would be discussed and argued, and linked to life and the readings. There was a Wed Fellowship Birthday Song and also Vespers was sung at the end of each meeting.

There were outings and sometimes a cooked lunch prepared in the church's kitchen and any excuse would do for a party. During this time Sylvia became involved and then, when Betty and Yvonne, after 15 years, came to the point where they knew it was time to hand over, Alan Cleveland rewrote the song "We Did It Our Way."

Hilda and Kathleen took over the running of the Wednesday Fellowship, Sylvia still helping, and Janet too, with our loved friend Janice who died in 2013, to everyone's shock. The Fellowship moved to a more "Speaker based" group, with formal AGMs and a treasurer. With the shift in the wider culture, more people from outside of the church's congregation began to attend. This partnership lasted for around two years and then, about seven years ago, Helen stepped into the breach and took over the coordination of the group.

The last 7 years have had some wonderful moments, some great excursions, great speakers and some wonderful members meetings. We remember boat trips and Ukulele bands and bell ringers and some lovely Carol Services.



On Wednesday 17th April this year, we concluded the work of Wednesday Fellowship with an Easter Worship Service. It was a fitting way to conclude many years of fellowship that this organisation has provided. We offer our profound thanks to Helen for her leadership in these last seven years, and to Janet, Terry, Anne and Sylvia and others who have so ably assisted. We did not conclude the work of Wednesday Fellowship with a sense of sadness and grief, but with a sense of honouring as complete, this part of our church's life and service.

Meeting the Easter Bunny

for the children..

*On Easter morn at early dawn
before the cocks were crowing
I met a bob-tail bunnykin
and asked where he was going.
"Tis in the house and out the house
a-tispy, tipsy-toeing,
Tis round the house and 'bout the house
a-lightly I am going."
"But what is that of every hue
you carry in your basket?"
"Tis eggs of gold and eggs of blue;
I wonder that you ask it.
"Tis chocolate eggs and bonbon eggs
and eggs of red and gray,*

*For every child in every house
on bonny Easter day."
He perked his ears and winked his eye
and twitched his little nose;
He shook his tail -- what tail he had --
and stood up on his toes.
I must be gone before the sun;
the east is growing gray;
Tis almost time for bells to chime." --
So he hippety-hopped away.*

~Author Rowena Bennett, 1930~

Over the last six months or so I have been reading Susan Howatch's Starbridge novels. There are seven of them, all centred around the cathedral town of Starbridge, a thinly veiled version of Salisbury, which has been Howatch's home for many years. I have one volume to go. If you don't know these novels, they are a sort of twentieth century version of Barchester Towers. She tells tales of the inter-related domestic doings of the upper echalons of the Church of England clergy from the 1930s to the 1980s. She is interested in the English class structure and its relationship to the church, changing theological and philosophical fashions (which she charts extremely well), and, of course, sex, without which the romantic novel writer is doomed. Through all this runs her fascination with mysticism, the psychic, and the possibility of paranormal spiritual experiences (which leaves me absolutely cold, I must admit. Novel reading always involves judicious skipping, don't you find?)

Howatch is also preoccupied with the problem of unhappiness. Many of her characters come from unhappy backgrounds, rich or poor, and spend their adult lives repeating the mistakes of their parents as they struggle to break free, be their own person, and find a happiness that their parents never achieved. Some succeed, and some don't. *'The parents have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge'* (Ez. 18:2). Her characters are seeking good, loving, happy lives. They find it very difficult. *'As I live, says the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that they turn from their ways and live'* (Ez. 33:11).

Inevitably, one turns to consider one's own parents: Mine were both good, kind, generous people. I can see that they were caught up in patterns of relationships that they proved powerless to resist. I can see (I *think* I can see) that as a consequence they denied themselves and each other much of the happiness that their undoubted love and commitment to each other ought to have brought them. So much sheer fun squandered. They both thought it was the other's fault, found the other unsatisfactory, and punished them for it. They both felt let down. 'If only they could be content to be the person that I want /need/married them to be it would be all right, but they're so stubborn' Of course, it didn't just apply to their marriage. I can see the pattern of their childhoods in all their lasting adult relationships (of which there were disappointingly few).

And finally, with a certain apprehension, one turns to consider one's own life.....

Sierra Leone is the world's most dangerous place to become a mum. Every day 10 women die from giving birth. In Sawula district, the community struggle with a clinic which has no electricity and only two delivery beds.

Jebbeh is heavily pregnant but as her baby grows, it's not joy that fills her heart, but fear. When Jebbeh's sister Fatmata went in to labour, there were so few ambulances that Fatmata had no choice but to walk for three hours under the baking sun, to the nearest hospital. The journey was long and with every step Fatmata struggled to keep walking.

Jebbeh told us: 'My sister was crying out with hunger. She died on the side of the road. She never gave birth.'

Tenneh's Story

Tenneh plays with her precious baby Ansumana. She blows raspberries on his belly. Lifting her baby up high she beams with joy. Tenneh gave birth to Ansumana three months ago. Thankfully, he's a happy, bouncy baby. But Tenneh has lost and loved another baby before. When Tenneh's labour started during her first pregnancy, there was no health centre in the village. Her mum took her to a traditional birth attendant. For the two days of her labour, Tenneh was in agony. She fell unconscious and was bleeding heavily. With very little medical training, the birth attendant was way out of her depth.

In the days and months after her labour, Tenneh felt very weak and her baby wouldn't breastfeed. Tragically, her baby died when he was three months old.

'That day I will never forget,' she recalls. 'I felt sick like I've never been sick before. If God would not have saved me, I would not be alive today.'

New Hope

Through our partner RADA (Rehabilitation and Development Agency), Christian Aid saw how difficult the situation in Sawula village was and began working to ensure that mums and babies have fullness of life.

RADA has been working locally to help vulnerable women access healthcare, improve hygiene with simple interventions like handwashing and, with your support, build a bigger, better health care centre.

Thankfully, when Tenneh was pregnant a second time, things had changed for good. This time, she had nurse Judith by her side. With her expert love and care, Judith helped Tenneh deliver her baby safely.

Tenneh said: 'During my second labour, I was scared. But nurse Judith was with me, assuring me of everything. When I delivered, I felt so good.'

'With the coming of Judith, so many lives have changed,' Tenneh continued. 'We know that with Judith, as long as we see the light at the end of the tunnel, we'll be OK.'

Thanks to nurse Judith and the medical training you helped provide, Tenneh could hold her beautiful baby boy in her arms.

A Health Centre For All

The community in Sawula dream of having a health centre that can meet their needs. The current health centre is the size of a small bedroom. Operations, deliveries and baby check-ups all happen in one single room with only two delivery beds.



Nurse Judith works around the clock to meet the needs of mums and young children who

come to the clinic. But the need is great, and sometimes she's forced to send people away. When women come to the clinic at night, there's no light for Judith to use. So she has to ask her patients to bring a torch to see by.

In addition to this, there are often not enough drugs at the clinic. Judith sees diseases like malaria and typhoid, especially in children. She has to go on a motorbike or sometimes walk for three hours to collect drugs.

'I need help,' nurse Judith says. 'Women are dying from childbirth, children under five are dying, because of poverty. Please help us.'

For Tenneh, and many mums like her, a new health centre would be like a dream come true:

'We'll dance for three days when we have the new health centre,' she says.

With your support today, we could work alongside Judith's community to build a bigger, better health centre to help more mums like Tenneh give birth safely.

Christian Aid Week brings Christians together with a common purpose to achieve something incredible. Can your church come together to raise £300 this Christian Aid Week?

A gift of £300 could provide a delivery bed for a new health centre giving mums a safe place to deliver their babies. We need your support.

Pamela Richardson

Cambridgeshire Regional Coordinator – Christian Aid

PLEASE REMEMBER CHRISTIAN AID WEEK

Christian Aid Week May 12-19



To follow on from the previous article, this is just to remind everyone when Christian Aid week is this year. We shall be marking it with the following:

- Car boot sale on Sunday May 5th at the Trumpington Park and Ride site. Thank you to everyone who has donated so much for this. We will have a wide variety of goods to sell.
- Tea Dance and Cream Teas St Mary's Hall on Saturday May 11th from 2.30 to 5pm. Please come along even if you can't dance, the tea and entertainment from the dancers are worth coming for. Tickets from Mary 01223 837433, or Pam 01223 834220. £6 per head.
- Collections outside the Sawston Co-op on Saturday May 18th from 9-1pm. Please sign up in the church if you are free to help.
- Christian Aid Service with a speaker on Sunday May 19th - 10.30am.



Christian Aid does so much work in the world to relieve suffering, PLEASE support us.
Mary and Pam

URC Media Update from the Moderator of General Assembly

The Revd Nigel Uden, Moderator of the United Reformed Church General Assembly, reflects on what to do before, during and after a crisis.

The idea of crisis has been lingering in my mind for various reasons.

The entirely unanticipated illness of a dear friend, has found him in intensive care. He is in a crisis, because things are difficult and worrying. It's a sudden crisis.

The progress of the negotiations about the United Kingdom's relationship with the European Union is often termed a crisis. The arrangements for after the UK leaving the EU on 29th March seem to be less than finalised. It's a crisis that some saw coming, whatever their views on whether we should leave or remain.

The ecological recklessness with which many believe the planet has been treated over a sustained period is increasingly summed up as a crisis. The consequences, including things like climate change, might mean some of us complain about summers hotter than we prefer, but for Polynesians they are destructive of their home, even of their island, as sea levels rise, extreme weather events increase and marine ecosystems are irreparably damaged. It's a crisis long in the making.

And it is not difficult to find people for whom the state of the church in Western Europe is best described as a crisis. Decline of The Church's influence, profile and size, and of the place of organised religion in many people's lives, combine to suggest that we face a future that is unrecognisable from the past. That is certainly the trend over the thirty-four years of my ordained ministry.

The word crisis doesn't have to imply disaster. It probably comes from the Greek word for decision, and perhaps that is a useful way for us to understand what a crisis is about, and what it asks of us. So, in ICU, the doctors respond to a patient's crisis by deciding on the treatment to be offered. The UK/EU crisis requires decisions to be made, timeously. And the world's return to ecological stability is about decisions that governments, businesses and each of us as individuals make, urgently.

So, what is the relevance of 'decision' to the Church's crisis? For me, the vital point is not to deny it.

In January 1979, the then Prime Minister, James Callaghan, earned some media derision when he returned from a summit in Guadeloupe, during which he'd enjoyed a swim. He suggested the press was over-reacting to the industrial unrest that was severely affecting the UK's economy and productivity – the so-called *Winter of Discontent*.

The next day *The Sun's* headline characterised the PM's comments as 'Crisis? What Crisis?' – borrowing the title of *Supertramp's* 1975 album. Trying not to over-state the reality of the Church's current situation runs the risk of it overwhelming us. We will not respond well to the mission imperatives and opportunities of our current era if we think The Church can go on as it is. We face some decisions.

They need not be decisions that suggest panic, nor lack of trust in God's providence and grace. Rather, as I appreciate the privilege of visiting United Reformed Churches around these islands, I realise that the decisions we make need to be shaped by a careful listening.

First, I find real value in listening to those whom we as a church ask to lead us – in the General Secretariat and all the departments we commission and equip at Church House. People of experience, knowledge and passion are constantly striving to resource us in the local churches. They know things I don't and are worth listening to as we face up to today's realities and try to decide what's next.

Then, secondly, I find it vital to listen to the people in the churches I am visiting – and, indeed the three I am serving – in order to understand how it is for them, and what we can learn from the realities of being the church in their context. A crisis maybe a decisive point, but the decisions it inspires must be well informed.

Essentially, is this not a question of faith: Christianity urges us to respond to our crises with trust in God.

Perhaps it's what Bryn Rees is hinting at in his hymn: 'God's love for us sinners brought Christ to his cross, our crisis of judgement, for gain or for loss.'

For me, that's the decision which ultimately makes our decision-making worthwhile – and it's why a crisis is so often pregnant with opportunity.

Nigel Uden

February 2019

Sawston Free Church

Craft Group

We meet in the Church back hall, alternate Monday mornings : 10am - 12noon.

Dates for May: 13th. For more detail please contact **Yvonne** 473937 or **Pam** 834220



Flower Rota 2019

It is always welcoming to see the flowers in church. So please remember to put your name down on the **flower rota**, which is at the back of the church.

For more information please contact Rosemary Harriss on 832854

or any of the other flower ladies: Rosemary Livings, Linda Moxon, Janet Parr or Vivien Ford (when in Sawston)



Time For Tots at Sawston Free Church

Showing and Sharing God's love

Time for Tots is a church run group for babies and preschool children and their carers. During our weekly session there is time to play, make things, chat, have a drink and snack, have a bible story and sing some songs.

For more information please contact **Rosemary**. Email:

timefortots@sawstonfreechurch.org.uk



Another baby and toddler group you could go along to is Refresh – 2pm-4pm every Monday (except bank holidays) in St Mary's Church.

This is a 'drop in' session with refreshments and CAKE!

For more information please contact **Becca**. Email: rebecca.r.herrick@gmail.com



Events for May 2019

Circuit Diary

CAMBRIDGE METHODIST CIRCUIT

For more details contact The Circuit Administrator: Mrs Miriam Webb
 Circuit Office: Wesley Methodist Church, Christ's Pieces, Cambridge CB1 1LG
 Office: 01223 352115 www.cambridgethodistcircuit.org.uk
 Email: office@wesleycam.org.uk or office@cambridgethodistcircuit.org.uk

MAY			
Fri 3 rd & Sat 4 th Sun 5 th Mon 6 th	10am - 4pm 2 - 5pm 10am - 4pm	Quilts and Flower Festival at Histon Methodist Church All welcome to enjoy the fantastic display. Why not pop in sometime over the bank holiday weekend? There will be quilts for sale and refreshments. Donations to Histon Methodist Church and Macmillan Cancer Support. Contact Mary Easy mary.easy@bigease.net for more information	Histon MC
Sun 12 th	6.30pm	Circuit Service for the Easter Offering. All welcome. There will be light refreshments after the service. See Lynn Taylor for more details.	Castle Street
Mon 13 th	7.15pm for 7.45pm	'Science meets Faith: An Eastern Orthodox Perspective' With Revd Dr Christopher Knight, Senior Research Associate, Institute of Orthodox Christian Studies, Cambridge and Fellow of the International Society for Science and religion. All welcome. Light refreshments from 7.15pm talk will start at 7.45pm. Retiring collection.	Wesley MC
Sat 18 th	10am-12.30pm	Creating Safer Space Foundation Module Training. Please book a place at the Circuit Office office@wesleycam.org.uk so that a resource pack can be prepared for you.	Chesterton MC

The next Creating Safer Space Foundation Refresher Training is Tuesday 11th June 7pm – 9pm at Chesterton Methodist Church. Please book into these sessions via the Circuit Office.

Church Directory

Minister		Tel
Rev. Bruce Waldron	The Manse, 3 High Street, Sawston Email: revbruce@sawstonfreechurch.org.uk	836786 07814 920187
Secretaries:		
Maggie Jones - Sawston	21 Hillside, Sawston	565637
Lynne Riecanisky – Lt. Abington	7 Meadow Walk, Great Abington	893295
Val Spencer – Castle Camps	20 South Road, Abington	892214
Elders: Sawston		
Mary Simuyandi	28 New Road, Sawston	837433
Anne Nunn	10 London Road, Sawston	832913
Mike Purdy	42 Granta Road, Sawston	830903
Sue Sisk	63 Babraham Road, Sawston	833508
Sue Lelliott	26 Park Road, Sawston	520383
Yvonne Sparrow	25 Edinburgh Ave, Sawston	473937
Joint Treasurers:		
Lynne Hays	Baggot Hall, Station Road, Harston	871800
Terry Penny	April Lodge, 81 Brewery Road, Pampisford	833635
Contact Editors		
David & Anne Nunn	10 London Road, Sawston Email: anne.nunn@btinternet.com	832913
Church Bookings	Maggie Jones, 21 Hillside, Sawston	565637
Church Website:	www.sawstonfreechurch.org.uk/	
Facebook page:	www.facebook.com/SawstonFreeChurch	

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The Footprints Café



at
Sawston Free Church

The Footprints Café is a community café offering a wide range of reasonably priced Snacks and Meals together with Teas & Coffees, Cold drinks, Cakes and Pastries.

We are open Monday to Friday from 8.30 am to 3.30 pm. Breakfasts are served until 11.30 am.

The Footprints Café is located where the OWL Café used to be; at the back of Sawston Free Church.

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