

CONTACT

June 2021



Volume 62 - Issue 6
Sawston Free Church – Castle Camps URC

Churches Services and Dates for Your Diary

Future Services-(all via zoom) SFC email: secretary@sawstonfreechurch.org.uk,
Castle Camps email: sarabdavey@outlook.com

06 June 10.30 Holy Communion & Morning Worship - Rev Deborah McVey
13 June 10.30 Morning Worship - David Lloyd
20 June 10.30 Morning Worship - Rev Dr Mike Wilson
27 June 10.30 - Go4th

The closing date for **July Contact** is Friday **18th June**

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

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Contact

The monthly magazine of
**Sawston Free Church United Reformed Methodist
& Castle Camps URC**

Whilst in vacancy please refer Church related matters to:
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An Introduction – Reverend Phil Nevard

Dear soon-to-be friends!

As I write, we are a couple of weeks off Pentecost. My church in Kingsteignton has decided to move back into the building on Pentecost Sunday. We will celebrate communion, make a new member and gather at the end to sing a resurrection hymn in the car park! For many of our members there is still nervousness, but that doesn't entirely outweigh the joy of new hope that they are beginning to feel.

The irony, though, hasn't escaped me, that Pentecost is the day we will be going back into the church building whilst we are celebrating the day when the apostles came OUT from behind that locked door, driven by the Spirit into the streets and the town square to proclaim their faith.



As the disciples emerged onto the streets, Peter preached and the crowds all understood, though their native languages were numerous. Over these last months it is almost as if we have had to learn a whole new language to communicate – Zoom, MiFi, OBS, hybrid worship, virtual audio cable, virtual camera, tethering your 4G (not your donkey!) – and I know that you have folk who are putting their gifts and talents to good use enabling you to move forwards in new ways and retain some of the good things we have learned about communication during lockdowns.

I do love a bit of techy-talk, but in the grand scheme of our work in Sawston and beyond, it is just a tool, like many other things at our disposal – a tool we should use well, but only a tool. The core language that we speak is the same now and in the future as it was during lockdown and before lockdown – the language of LOVE. Our work is simply to love Sawston, the people in it and the people passing through it. I am very much looking forward to joining you in that work and discovering with you all the many and varied ways that we can speak LOVE into peoples' lives.

We are currently saying goodbye to people we love across Devon and beyond, leaving people behind is painful. But at the same time we are both looking forward with excitement and expectation. Mary asked if I would write this piece to introduce myself so that you had an idea what to expect when I arrive!

I'm married to Lythan who will be the new Moderator of The Eastern Synod and we have three fantastic grown-up children (one of whom will be moving with us.) I like riding motorbikes, keeping chickens, singing, taking photographs, trying to grow vegetables, supporting Bolton Wanderers, cooking from scratch, a bit of woodwork, camping in tents and walking on the moors (which you seem to be sadly lacking!) I have ambitions to cycle to Sawston and Whittlesford whenever I can (being as it is so depressingly flat!) but maybe not Castle Camps!

I love preaching and leading worship, I love trying to help people make sense of Christian Faith when "Christian-speak" is not their first language. I am energised by meetings that have purpose and drive and are moving our work forwards, but I am drained by those that don't. I am less interested in how someone describes their faith with "doctrines" than I am in how people describe their faith with the way they love those around them. I prefer dogs to cats, red wine to white wine, I am a vegetarian and I'm a bit of a coffee-snob. Tea has to be properly brown and not milky, I consider myself to be "Northern", I pronounce "scone" as in "gone" (and the jam goes on top!) I think that's all you need to know for now!

Seriously, though, I very much look forward to becoming part of your church family. I was so very grateful and humbled when I heard that you had decided to invite me to join you.

Every Blessing,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Phil Brand', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

From The Elders - SFC Special Church Meeting – Looking Forward

As you will remember, a special Church meeting was held on 2 May 2021 to find out everyone's views on the way forward with respect to Live & Zoom services. It was a really good meeting with lots of views expressed. These were all noted and have been considered in detail by the Elders.

Although some people want us to open up straight away, there were others who want us to take it gently. We recognised there are a number of technical issues to be resolved to enhance the experience for both zoomers and those in church. By following the zoom team's emails, I can see they are very motivated, making great progress and working very hard to push this forward, with plenty of research into what other churches are doing on the technical side.

The Elders agreed we should wait until the zoom team feel a hybrid service is technically possible, and we should consider starting slowly with one a month whilst we all build up confidence and recruit more to the zoom team.

An outside Pentecost service was suggested but when looking at Covid safety and the limited time available, unfortunately the idea had to be dropped.

So the zoom team know our thoughts and that the Elders are happy be guided by them on timing. It was really good to hear everyone's views at the church meeting and provided much needed feedback for the way forward. I know some will be disappointed that we are not starting back immediately, but with good reason. We will let everyone know when we know more on timing. ***We have lots to look forward to!***

Regards,

Maggie

Memories from East Tennessee Sara Davey (Secretary)



I grew up in rural East Tennessee, just along the western foothills of the Appalachian mountains. Our churches were usually small white wooden buildings nestled in the deciduous forest backdrops that gave quite a spectacle with the Spring and Autumn season changes.

My family was a singing family, that's not too strange in Tennessee, usually someone in the family is known for their singing or playing, usually banjo or guitar, country or gospel. My family was a little different in that my parents sounded like they had classical training when they hadn't had any! Mom remembered back when we had just moved and found a new church. That Sunday she and Dad sang a duet to a backing track cassette tape (yes, I'm old enough to know what those are). They had loads of people come up to them after the service and say what a blessing the song had been to them. Of course we all know those folks who give a compliment with a little sting in the tail, one lady had said "That was a lovely song!" then she not-so-quietly muttered to herself as she turned away "If you like that Opera stuff!" We laughed about it afterwards. I might be biased but my parents sang like angels and when they sang together in church it truly was as if God was giving you a warm hug.

We all grew up singing and went on to pursue music in some form or fashion - some teaching, some performing. There were 5 of us but my youngest brother Steven, unfortunately, died at the age of 14 due to re-occurring brain tumours from the age of 5. We were certain he would have been a choir director, Dad was always pinning his arms down to his sides for family photos. Any time we grouped together Steven thought it was time to sing so the arms went up, ready to bring us in! God can teach you a lot through the strength exhibited by someone so young. The unwavering faith of my brother Steven through his ordeal sticks with me today and I am sure it will until I die. We miss him terribly and we still talk about him all the time. He was famous for one-liners that we constantly repeat as inside jokes even now, 16 years later!

One of my favourite one-liners was during a service at our church. The pastor had carefully planned a sermon on caring for the family unit, how it was under attack from all sides. My bother Steven always sat on the very front row by himself, we don't really know why, it's just where he wanted to sit. The pastor opened with a dramatic statement "The American Family is in TROUBLE!" then he unknowingly paused just long enough for my 7 year old little brother, who took most things very literally, to pipe up loudly with his finger pointing defiantly in the air from the front row "NOT MY FAMILY!!" The whole church laughed as did the Pastor. He assured Steven that, no, probably "not his family" and the sermon carried on.

When I moved to Castle Camps in 2017 I felt more at home than I had in a long time. Surrounded by cows, farmers, fields, dogs, good neighbours, and nature. I was especially blessed to find a little church family in a chapel. Although it was nestled among the fields instead of mountains and it is made of brick rather than wooden slats it was evident to me that we came from the same family that didn't mind heckling the Minister just a little bit, liked to look after each other, and found the laughter in life.

The Brook

I come from haunts of coot and hern,
I make a sudden sally
And sparkle out among the fern,
To bicker down a valley.

By thirty hills I hurry down,
Or slip between the ridges,
By twenty thorpes, a little town,
And half a hundred bridges.

Till last by Philip's farm I flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

I chatter over stony ways,
In little sharps and trebles,
I bubble into eddying bays,
I babble on the pebbles.

With many a curve my banks I fret
By many a field and fallow,
And many a fairy foreland set
With willow-weed and mallow.

I chatter, chatter, as I flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

I wind about, and in and out,
With here a blossom sailing,
And here and there a lusty trout,
And here and there a grayling,

And here and there a foamy flake
Upon me, as I travel
With many a silvery waterbreak
Above the golden gravel,

And draw them all along, and flow
To join the brimming river
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

I steal by lawns and grassy plots,
I slide by hazel covers;
I move the sweet forget-me-nots
That grow for happy lovers.

I slip, I slide, I gloom, I glance,
Among my skimming swallows;
I make the netted sunbeam dance
Against my sandy shallows.

I murmur under moon and stars
In brambly wildernesses;
I linger by my shingly bars;
I loiter round my cresses;

And out again I curve and flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

[Alfred Lord Tennyson](#)

As I see it ... Times they are a-changin'.... perhaps.

by Mike Wilson

A major international event just before I went up to university was the Six Day War in 1967. Nasser Hussein was then the president of Egypt, and promoting the Pan-Arab cause. He resigned after the crushing military defeat inflicted by Israel, but was immediately reinstated by his adoring public. He died of a heart attack in 1970 at the end of a meeting of the Arab League. His dream was that all the Arab nations should unite into one federal state. Twenty years earlier he had fought in the 1948 Arab-Israeli war, in which King Farouk (the then king of Egypt) sent his army to invade the newly-declared independent state of Israel. To Nasser, as to so many after him, the very existence of Israel was an affront.

I think I was like most young people in the West in the '60s. I thought the largely secular Israeli state was wonderful. That the victims of the holocaust finally had their own home seemed right. The social experiments, ranging from liberalism to communism, in the kibbutzim (the new farming settlements) were brave and exciting. The reclamation of the desert was to be applauded. That Jerusalem was a sort of neutral zone for Jews, Muslims and Christians alike was as it should be. And so on. That the British had begun by enabling all this to happen and had then fought a war against its fulfilment was embarrassing. That Israel had initiated the Six Day War was awkward, but the brilliance of the campaign was thrilling. In just six days, Israel captured Gaza and the Sinai from Egypt, took over East Jerusalem and the West Bank from Jordan, and seized the Golan Heights from Syria. That the Arab nations should want to sweep Israel into the Mediterranean was appalling. Of course, we lamented that so many Palestinians were subsequently expelled from their homes, and into refugee camps in what remained of Jordan into over-crowded Gaza, but the press told us little about it, and it seemed of lesser significance.

Over the years, all that has changed, and with it, my evaluation of the state of Israel. Its old liberal, visionary, secular leadership is long gone. There are two major landmarks on this road of change (apart from endless warfare and suffering).

The first was in 1995 when an Israeli far-right fanatic, Yigal Amir, shot dead Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin for bringing Israel to the brink of doing a peace deal with the Palestinians. Amir achieved his aim. (At the time, Benjamin Netanyahu was leading the Likud party's bitter resistance to the settlement. He still is!)

The second was in 2000 when Yassar Arafat foolishly rejected the Camp David proposals for power sharing between Palestine and Israel (worked out under President Clinton's supervision) because he believed the head of steam for peace to be so strong that if he said 'No' he would be offered even better terms. He was tragically mistaken. The door to peace again clanged shut and has never since re-opened.

Long gone is the old liberal Israeli consensus. The modern Israeli political leadership is, as Bernie Saunders puts it, 'desperate, racist, authoritarian'(1). It is also a prisoner to the ever-growing Israeli Orthodox/ Zionist extreme right. Gone too is Nasser's dream of a pan-Arab state, now replaced by the far more aggressive dream of a pan-Muslim state with its eyes on Jerusalem, a very different notion driven by radically conservative theology rather than ethnicity, and itself torn asunder by the Sunni-Shia divide. The bitter quarrel between Israel and its neighbours is now conducted in overtly theological, not ideological, rhetoric. And Israel's treatment of the inhabitants of the lands it illegally occupies has progressively deteriorated, as has its treatment of those kettled up in quasi-autonomous Gaza. Consistently, the USA has vetoed censure motions in the UN Security Council condemning the savagery of Israeli reprisals in which so many civilians and children have died. Even in the week in which I compose this, it has used its veto three times in order to give the Israelis more time to achieve their objectives in Gaza.

Why should the USA behave like this? Two reasons. Firstly, the Jewish lobby in the USA is very rich, very active, and very powerful. But secondly, and more importantly, Protestantism in the USA has traditionally been deeply conservative and deeply pro-Israel, arguing (in a uniquely American Puritan way) that come the last days, God will redeem both of the Chosen Peoples (the Jews and the Americans – I kid you not! – for the USA is the New Promised Land), and that there is a holy obligation upon the New Israel of God to care for the Old. It is a political point as well as a theological one.

Today, all that is changing, and fast. The Far-Christian Right in the USA is, quite literally, dying out. Latinos, largely Roman Catholic and growing fast in numbers, have no interest in that old Puritan argument. Young white Americans, far more secular than their parents and grandparents, see no point in it either. The Black Lives Matter movement now reaches beyond 'black lives matter' to 'ethnic minority lives matter,' and sees the American-supported oppression and bullying of Palestinians in terms very like it sees the oppression of the African-American minority in the USA. The 'Me Too' movement moves beyond the treatment of women in the Western World at the hands of powerful men to view with horror the suffering inflicted on Palestinian women and children in Gaza at the hands of a macho Israeli establishment. And so, in a very interesting BBC article footnoted below, Jo Biden is reported to be discovering that his instinctive 'defend Israel first' policy is out of step with the people who voted him to office, and is adjusting his own stance in response.

I have been praying for peace and justice in Israel/Palestine for as long as I have been praying for it in Ireland. Could it possibly be that in Israel the horrors of this last eruption, the shift of sentiment in the States sensed by Jo Biden, and the remarkable rapports achieved in Donald Trump's time between Israel and her Arab neighbours (see AISI.88) could possibly all combine to bring peace and justice just a little bit nearer? Let us pray so.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-canada-57161929>

News Update



Spring Fundraising Report



As we approach the start of a new financial year, we just wanted to give you a summary of how your donations over the past year have made a difference

CamCrag raised a total of £6,534 (£3,267 from online donations) to support refugees impacted by the fire at Moria camp.

This funding helped send material aid to people who lost their clothing, tents and day-to-day items in the fire, as well as funding on-the-ground support for front-line organisations on Lesvos.

Thank you to everyone who also sponsored our 'pallet of fish' fundraiser, raising £580 to provide immunity boosting food for refugees in Calais, improving health throughout the cold winter months. Watch this space for more fundraising opportunities in the coming months! Your support really does make a huge difference to refugees.



We Cannot Walk Alone

This call for inclusivity is from Martin Luther King's famous 1963 speech and is the theme for Refugee Week 2021.

It is an invitation to extend your hand to someone new, outside your current circle, who has had an experience you haven't, or is fighting for a cause you aren't yet involved in.

We are beginning to plan some inclusive events for Refugee Week, which falls just before the end of restrictions (14–20 June), and beyond. If you are a whizz at organising events (or just love a party!), why not join our Events Team?

Email volunteer@camcrag.org.uk



Freezing Temperatures on Lesvos

Conditions for refugees living in the new 'temporary' camp are still poor. December and January brought storms from the south, with high winds and very heavy rainfall, interspersed by settled but cold weather, with night-time temperatures touching freezing and a biting northerly wind sweeping across the peninsula on which the new camp is sited. Anyone who has been a 'sleeper' at one of

CamCrag's 'Big Sleepouts' in recent years can imagine what it is like to live in a tent in these conditions: But try doing it night after night, week after week, all winter long. The following is a final report from CamCrag Trustee Ed, who has been volunteering on Lesvos.

CamCrag trustee Ed Sexton was volunteering on Lesvos until March

While the weather on Lesvos has finally improved this week, conditions for refugees living in the new 'temporary' camp are still poor. December and January brought storms from the south, with high winds and very heavy rainfall, interspersed by settled but cold weather, with night-time temperatures touching freezing and a biting northerly wind sweeping across the peninsula on which the new camp is sited. Anyone who has been a 'sleeper' at one of CamCrag's 'Big Sleep Outs' in recent years can imagine what it is like to live in a tent in these conditions: But try doing it night after night, week after week, all winter long.

To keep warm many residents use gas stoves and coal fires in and around their tents, which resulted in a fire destroying one tent last week. Thankfully no one was hurt. [Sadly a similar incident this week at Thiva camp, near Athens, resulted in the death of an 8 year old boy](#): Temperatures on the mainland have been even colder than on Lesvos in recent weeks.

[The discovery last month of lead contamination in the new camp was perhaps not a surprise](#), given its previous use as a military firing range. The Greek authorities have stated that samples taken from the residential areas were within international safety levels, with only one sample from the administrative area deemed unacceptably high: But children, who make up over 2300 of the camp's 7000 residents, play in the dirt in all areas. New embankments, concrete floors and more gravel are promised, but are slow to materialise.

There have been some improvements; more hot water showers have been installed, on most days there are now around 300 working toilets, and 250 people were transferred to the mainland in January. In the same period, however, over 100 refugees came to the island, and one man died attempting the crossing. As the weather improves more are coming: In the first two weeks of February there were 170 new arrivals.

Electricity is still scarce, with the camp's generators often overloaded due to demand, resulting in regular cuts to the supply. At night most of the camp is still in total darkness, making it a dangerous place, especially for single women and women-headed households, as there is still no secure area for these vulnerable groups.

We have been told that there will be more transfers to Germany of eligible refugees this month. It can not happen soon enough: [Last Sunday a pregnant woman in the Kara Tepe camp, which mostly houses children and vulnerable women, set herself on fire in the hopes of hastening her relocation to Germany](#). She now faces being prosecuted for arson.

Pandemic Prayer issued by the URC

Loving Lord Jesus,

You told the disciples not to be afraid on the first Easter Sunday.

Help us not to be afraid as the restrictions are eased, but to trust in Your strength.

Give us the strength we need to move towards the uncertainty of a new normal.

Enable us to speak of You to those in distress and those who are afraid.

Fill us with The Holy Spirit and empower us to live our lives for You.

Amen

John Collings – lay Preacher, Rutherglen URC

(Thanks to Helen Sharpe)



Save The Date

**Saturday September 11th 2021
2.30 - 5pm at the Mary Challis garden, Sawston.**

Cream Teas!

(In aid of Christian Aid) Adults £7, Children under 10 £3

Tickets available to purchase in advance

from Pam 01223 834220 or Mary 01223 837433.

If weather wet, Footprints Cafe will be the venue!!

See you there!!

"My teacher wasn't half as nice as yours seems to be"

"My teacher wasn't half as nice as yours seems to be.

His name was Mister Unsworth and he taught us history.

And when you didn't know a date he'd get you by the ear

And start to twist while you sat there quite paralysed with fear.

He'd twist and twist and twist your ear and twist it more and more.

Until at last the ear came off and landed on the floor.

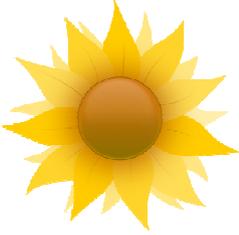
Our class was full of one-eared boys. I'm certain there were eight.

Who'd had them twisted off because they didn't know a date.

So let us now praise teachers who today are all so fine

And yours in particular is totally divine."

Roald Dahl



CAMBRIDGE METHODIST CIRCUIT

With thanks to 'Inform -The magazine for the Methodist churches in Orwell and Royston'

At the time of writing this article, I have just finished reading and analysing the report of the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities. I think the report misses the opportunity to affirm all the good work that the British people are doing towards creating a just Britain, while highlighting the work that still needs to be done.

The report is one sided, divisive and it renders almost insignificant all the efforts of the British people who are keen to build bridges and offer equal opportunities and treatment for All. Denying institutional racism in the United Kingdom is a form of violence. It is a disservice to everyone on the forefront of dismantling the pandemic of racism.

Yes, the conversation on race and inequality is not ending anytime soon, but change is inevitable when the voices and actions of those calling for the change are greater and stronger than the recalcitrant voices.

I genuinely commend the work that the Methodist Church continues to do in an effort to eradicate racism both in church and society generally. As I continue to work alongside those trying to find helpful ways to address racism and all other inequalities within the Methodist Church, I have been led to reflect more deeply on what we all need to either continue doing or begin to engage with, in order for a just church to become a reality.

This led me to the work of Martin Luther King Jr, who called his country to its highest ideals. I am intrigued by how Martin Luther King Jr's notion of "the beloved community" grew to embrace all the people of the world. When Martin Luther King spoke of the "Beloved Community" he spoke of it as an ideal to be realised and as a "realistic, achievable goal that could be attained by a critical mass of people committed and trained in the philosophy and methods of nonviolence."

For King, the beloved community was a global vision, in which poverty, hunger, and homelessness would not be accepted because simply international standards would not allow it. King understood that conflict was a part of human nature, and that the beloved community was not without conflict and confrontation, but he was convicted that conflict could be resolved by peaceful means, instead of violence, or military power. In a Beloved Community, love and trust would triumph over fear and hatred.

In his April 3 Speech, delivered on the eve of a protest march for striking sanitation workers in Memphis, Tennessee, King said, "I just want to do God's will and He's allowed me to go up to the mountain. And I've looked over. And I've seen the Promised Land. I may not get there with you. But I want you to know tonight, that we, as a people, will get to the Promised Land." The next day he was murdered.

Friends, I believe that, this “lost cause,” of resistance, nonviolence, justice and love, must be our inheritance, as hard, painful, and scary as it is. If the church, is to realise its calling in the world, she must be accountable to all those, in and outside of its walls, who desire a “Beloved Community.” Evidently, we are not there yet, but this “lost cause” of a beloved community is beginning to take root in the work of the Methodist Church in Britain. I wonder what would happen if at every church meeting, the central question, no matter the agenda, was: “What is best for us?” and “us” included black people, those of the LGBTQ community, people of different class backgrounds, ages and abilities?

The Beloved Community asks us to do hard, risky, soul work, because anything less betrays the hope of reaching the promised land. As Marcus Borg says, imagine if Moses had chosen the easy route and gone into Egypt and said to the Hebrew slaves, “My children, your sins are forgiven.” They would properly have responded, “What? What does that have to do with us? Our problem isn’t that we are sinners, you idiot. Our problem is that we are slaves, oppressed by Pharaoh!”

The “lost cause” of Beloved Community, demands more than lip service for it to be realised. I invite each one of us to consider rededicating ourselves to the “lost cause” worthy of our very lives, a beloved community!

Rev Charity Nzegwu

Six Little Stories With Lots Of Meanings

1 Once all villagers decided to pray for rain. On the day of prayer, all the people gathered, but only one boy came with an umbrella. *That is faith.*

2 When you throw babies in the air, they laugh because they know that you will catch them. *This is faith.*

3 Every night we go to bed without any assurance of being alive the next morning, but still we set alarms to wake up. *That is hope.*

4 We plan big things for tomorrow in spite of zero knowledge of the future. *That is confidence.*

5 We see the world suffering, but still, we get married and have children. *That is love.*

6 On an old man’s shirt was written a sentence “I am not 80 years old; I am sweet 16 with 64 years of experience”. *That is attitude.*

Have a happy day and live your life like these six stories.

Remember – Good friends are the rare jewels of life, difficult to find and impossible to replace!!

(Thanks to Jennie Harris for these thought provoking little stories-Orwell & Royston Methodist Church)

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The Footprints Café



at
Sawston Free Church

The **Footprints Café** is a community cafe 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 at the back of Sawston Free Church. Car parking behind the church.

NEW! Children's menu

ALAN CHAMLEY COUNSELLING, SAWSTON



Has 2020 been a tough year for you?

I provide a safe, encouraging, non-judgemental space for you to explore issues, such as social anxiety, stress, low self-worth, depression, rebuilding confidence, in areas of work, relationships, friendships and family issues.

As a visually impaired man, I have become aware that this has further facilitated my non-judgemental attitude towards clients.



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