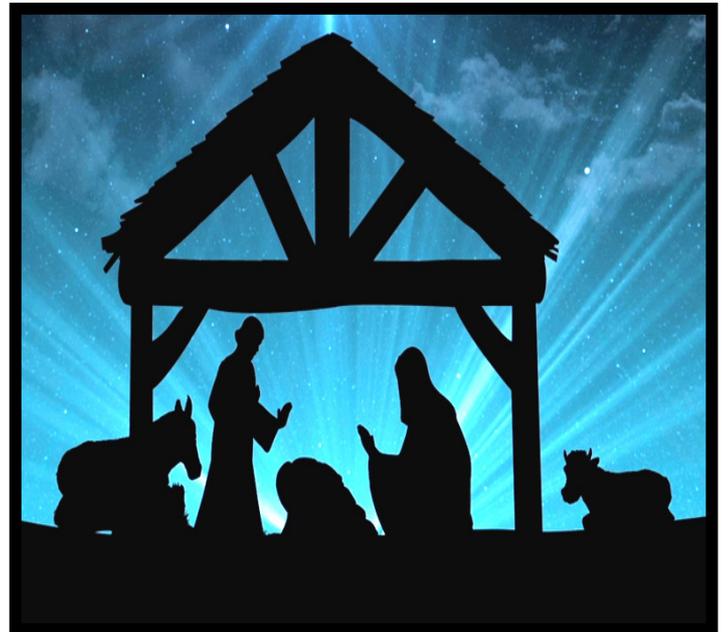


CONTACT

December 2021



Volume 62 - Issue 12
Sawston Free Church - Castle Camps URC



Churches Services and Dates for Your Diary



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

Sawston Free Church:

05 December 10.30 Morning Worship – Andy Nightingale
 12 December 10.30 Christingle Service & Holy Communion – Rev Phil Nevard
 19 December 10.30 Nativity Service – Rev Phil Nevard
 19 December 6.30pm Village Carol Service – St Mary’s – Rev Kathryn Waite & Rev Phil Nevard
 24 December 5.00pm Christmas Family Service – Rev Phil Nevard
 24 December 11.30pm Midnight Carol Serv – St Mary’s – Rev Kathryn Waite & Rev Phil Nevard
 25 December 10.00 Christmas Day Service – Rev Phil Nevard
 26 December 10.30 Service at Whittlesford URC – Rev Phil Nevard



The closing date for **January** Contact is Wednesday **29th December**

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

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

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Dear Friends,

A “false dawn” is largely a phenomenon in Eastern Skies where it is much more visible, and visible an hour or so before the sun rises. It is also known as “zodiacal light” and is produced by sunlight reflecting off dust particles in the Solar System known as cosmic dust. Zodiacal light is a cone of eerie light above the sunrise or sunset point on the horizon. The light looks like a hazy pyramid. It appears in the sky just before true dawn lights the sky. It's comparable in brightness to the Milky Way, but even milkier in appearance.



Not a lot of people know this, but in 2007, Brian May, lead guitarist with the band Queen, completed his thesis, *A Survey of Radial Velocities in the Zodiacal Dust Cloud*, thirty-six years after abandoning it to pursue a career in music. “False Dawn” is also an important concept in Islam where Muslims are called to pray first at True Dawn rather than at False Dawn.

Of course, we no longer think of “false dawn” as an astronomical phenomenon, but as a metaphor. I’m a Bolton Wanderers fan, and believe me, I have known MANY false dawns! So many false dawns have dawned upon Bolton Wanderers that none of us would recognise or believe a true dawn should it ever arrive!

The dominant image in our worship through Advent and Christmas is LIGHT. The incarnation is the new True Dawn, light is coming into the world, the Saviour of the world is born. False Dawns are behind us, they should deceive us no more. This dawning of new light in the world is the place to put all our trust and hope and the direction towards which to orient our entire lives both individual and collective. Our hope is in the Light of Christ, the dawning Light of the World, and we turn towards that light.

Many paintings of the nativity have a fascinating common feature. If you look carefully at the light and shadows in the scene and ask yourself what the source of the light is, you will find that it is not a candle or a lamp or a window, but the Christ-child himself who is the source of light.

So I invite you to enjoy all the lights this Christmas. On your tree, on your neighbour’s house and garden, in the village centre, in shop windows, on top of Christingles, on our Advent Wreath and at candlelight services. But beyond that, I invite you to seek out the True Dawn, the Light of the World, Jesus Christ born in a manger.

*“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him,
and without him not one thing came into being.
What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people.
The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.”*



**Wishing you a joy and hope-filled Christmas,
Rev'd Phil Nevard**

Sawston Free Church Christmas Giving

In November, Church Meeting decided that we would focus our church giving this Christmas on two charities, one international and one more local. Our giving at some of our special services will be divided between:

UNICEF appeal for Afghanistan

Conflict, drought, and COVID-19 have collided to create an unprecedented humanitarian emergency. The hundreds of thousands of people who lost their homes in the fighting in recent months will struggle to stay safe and warm as a bitter winter approaches, bringing temperatures as low as -7°C.

Around 10 million children across Afghanistan urgently need humanitarian assistance to survive. And, without urgent action, almost one million children could be severely malnourished by the end of the year.

<https://www.unicef.org.uk/donate/donate-and-help-protect-children-in-afghanistan/>

Rooprai Spinal Trust

The Rooprai Spinal Trust (RST or RS Trust) was established in 2005, inspired by Marriane Rooprai who was paralysed from the shoulders down in the summer of 2004. Today RST is a multi award winning charity that has an ever expanding group of supporters from around the world. With no staffing costs or office rentals, we pride ourselves on being a modern, forward thinking, streamlined organisation. We help individuals in the U.K, paralysed by spinal cord injury, to access life changing physiotherapy.

Nick Heald, who is known to many of you, is an ambassador for the RST.

DECORATING THE CHURCH

Advent Sunday is on 28 November!

It would be wonderful we could decorate the windows in church with nativity sets from home, like we have done occasionally in the past. They don't have to be in place for the 28th but as soon as you are able is fine.



Postage Stamps For The Leprosy Mission

We're still collecting used postage stamps to send to the Leprosy Mission for their fund raising.

Please save all your stamps over Christmas (and any other time) and either give them to me in church or put them through my door (11 High Street). It is very helpful to me if they can be trimmed to no more than 5mm round each edge.

Basic UK stamps, Christmas and commemorative stamps, and overseas stamps are all welcomed by the Leprosy Mission to raise funds to continue their valuable work.

Thank you
Pam

Blythswood Care - Shoebox Scheme

It was not easy this year for a lot of people to assemble things to fill a shoebox, but between us we did manage to fill 73 boxes.

Gary and his wife Jan, in their white van, came on 4th November and picked them up before continuing onto Ipswich for another collection and then back to their depot. As well as the boxes we sent a large bag containing around 60 knitted hats. These had been made by our wonderful group of knitters but had not been needed by our congregation. Blythswood were very happy to take these because they often get boxes donated which don't have one. They are then able to top up the box as it is one of the really essential items they ask for.

I spoke to Yvonne Robinson at Blythswood on several occasions and she said how much the boxes are appreciated when they're distributed. This year she thought it highly likely that they would be sent to Serbia.

A huge thank to everyone who made up a box or knitted a hat or scarf, be sure that it was safely despatched to the charity and will bring happiness to someone this Christmas.

Yvonne Sparrow

Thanks to articles in Contact and Sawston Scene, I'm delighted to write that since April 2021, 30 knitters from our Sawston area have made over 600 (619 as of today) red, amber/yellow, or green hats to help the staff at The Rosie Hospital monitor their Premature and Newborn babies. The hospital is very appreciative of the time and effort that is being given, and we know that many parents keep their hats for growing future use as dolls' clothes!

I usually deliver the hats every six weeks or so. If you'd like more information or to join in with our effort, please contact me.

Rosemary Heald

rosemary.heald@tiscali.co.uk

Flower Rota 2022

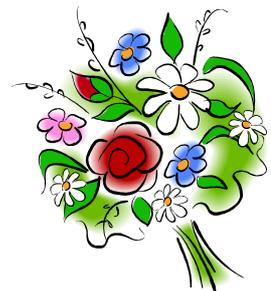
I will be putting the new Rota at the back of the church and would like everyone to consider signing up for just one week.

The flower ladies do need money if we are going to continue to have flowers in church each week. As you know the flowers are given away afterwards to someone as a sign of our love and support or perhaps thanks.

I am sure every member has appreciated receiving flowers from church in the past. If we all give enough for just one week the rota will quickly fill up for the whole year.

Please look out for the new Rota and sign up. Many thanks to the faithful few who have recently given us money.

Rosemary Harriss (Rosemary Livings, Linda, Dawn and Vivien.)



Greetings From Castle Camps



As the nights darken further and the frosts begin, I turn my thoughts to things that make me feel cozy. Physically, emotionally, and spiritually.

Being from another country it has taken me a little while to understand the subtle nuance of the many small joys there are to be enjoyed in a British winter. Take, for example, sitting in front of the fire with a mug of tea or Horlicks, the crackle of the wood, the whistle of the wind, rain, or snow (sometimes all three!) around the corners of our ancient little abode. I remember one of the first winters we were in Camps, the power had gone out and so naturally we went to the pub, the power was out there too but there were two roaring fires and several other folks coming in to keep warm and have a chat on a freezing Christmas Eve.

Emotionally cozy, for me that means a trip down memory lane. My family in Tennessee is very musical and we would all gather around the piano and sing in 4, sometimes 5 part harmony together. My grandmother could play anything! When she passed away we missed her terribly but my brother William took up her piano legacy and now he can play anything too. Hymns, carols, and choral favourites take center stage. When I sing anything in December I feel cozy and connected to my family.

Spiritually cozy is a little different. Cozy may not be the right word for this feeling and these actions. I want to feel I have done the right thing throughout the year, helped whenever and wherever I can and gave what I could. There is part of me that struggles during the cold months, in thinking about the situation of the world. We must acknowledge how very blessed we are to have a home, to have warmth, to have safety, to have family and know that not everyone has these basic needs met. We are privileged.

I heard a lyric in a song only a short while ago that went "Our stained glass means nothing without the light." It really struck me that He is the light and we are the stained glass. We can only be fully useful with His light shining through us.

Sara Davey

As I see it ...

by Mike Wilson

Apologies If I was mis-understood

I'm sorry. I have had the feverish cold of all feverish colds for the last week and more, and am not up to putting a new piece together in time for the deadline.

However, may I acknowledge the very welcome pieces of feedback from my last two pieces?

(1) 'illegal immigrant'

I confess to being completely unaware just how toxic this expression is to many involved in the world-wide migration crisis. I meant the expression in a technically precise sense, but it would have been better not to have used it at all. There are some in this country whose presence is illegal. I had absolutely no intention of implying that the vast majority of those who come to our country by air or by sea without adequate documentation are in any way acting illegally. Manifestly, they are not.

(2) The safety of women on our streets

I was appalled to learn that some, on reading my piece, supposed me to be saying something on the lines of 'These women need to wise up. It's even worse for men.' So, let me be clear, my intention was to say the exact opposite. My point was Nicola Sturgeon's point: the root problem is (at least in part) the acceptability of violent confrontation and bullying in our society. I do not intend to diminish the plight of women on our streets in any way.



5 million pounds raised!



It feels so good to share with you the amazing news that Christian Aid Week donations have peaked at over 5 million pounds! We never fail to be surprised, delighted and grateful for the partnership of churches, volunteers and communities across the UK and Ireland.

As we come closer to the end of another year, we also begin to plan for the stories and offering for Christian Aid Week 2022.

Next year's appeal will focus on Zimbabwe. We will be exploring the lives and livelihoods of women in rural communities through the lens of climate justice.

Thank You for all your wonderful support.



Auction of Promises

Our upcoming Auction of Promises will open on 20th November and run until 11th December.

Some of this year's promises so far: a cream tea; custom-made home-knitted woolly socks; a day's decluttering of your home/office/garage; a trip to the roof of King's College Chapel; gardening services; even a bungee jump!

If you are interested in putting in a bid, please check the website and bid!!



Poncho Campaign

We wrote previously about our poncho sewing project and this month, we're highlighting the fundraising we're doing to support their amazing work. Our target is £4,000 and while we're making some headway thanks to some generous donors, we need your support and word of mouth to keep those donations coming.

Remember: just £5 will fund a poncho to be made and sent to Calais, so £20 could provide ponchos for four people in need this winter! Meanwhile, if you have a sewing machine and thread, why not volunteer to sew at home! Or, if you're without a machine, volunteer to help with cutting out. For more information, sign up to the Ponchos campaign on the website.

Update on Donations

Izzie in Donations would like to give a huge shout out and big thank you to everyone involved with collecting, sorting and boxing donations. At the end of October, a group of us loaded a van with a grand total of **287 banana boxes** full of donations from the shed, which were then driven to the Feed the Hungry warehouse. They were then put onto pallets and loaded into containers, which are now on their way to The Free Shop in Lebanon.



Thank you to all of you who continue to support this charity. Every item is very gratefully received. Mary.





COFFEE CHAT & BABY

Wednesdays 10.00 to 11.00am
Starting 5th January 2022

*new to Sawston? miles away from family? missing your job?
wanting to meet other new mothers and babies in this area?*

Welcome to a series of 6 sessions for new mothers and their babies living in Sawston or very nearby. Chat with others, form new friendships and enjoy sensory toys in a calm, supportive, small group.

Hosted by Sawston Free Church volunteers and linked to South Cambs Child and Family Centre

Please ask questions and book directly with
coffeechatbaby@sawstonfreechurch.org.uk

Coffee Chat & Baby has been meeting at SFC since late summer, welcoming several young babies with their mothers.

The Covid era has been extraordinarily difficult for new families, welcoming their first babies without the previous face-to-face support from groups and services. So we have adapted the former Time for Tots group to one for new mothers with their young babies. Working alongside the Children and Family Centre, we began these sessions at Sawston Free Church in August 2021, and look forward to starting another series on 5th January 2022. The groups have been deliberately small, and much appreciated. Please do mention this group to people expecting their first baby. At the moment, booking is essential through coffeechatbaby@sawstonfreechurch.org.uk

Rosemary Heald (on behalf of Mary Simuyandi, Pam Moss, Beryl Penny, Jill Legg, Margaret Wilson, Rosemary Harriss, Sue Lelliot and Joan Kerins)

Tools With A Mission was the name of a charity I managed to dredge from the dark recesses of my brain when we sorted out tools in our shed which we, or rather Tim, no longer needed. Tools inherited from Grandfather, Father, Uncle and others, together with things accumulated over the years for our own projects.

After a bit of Googling (how did we manage without this?) I found that Tools With a Mission is now known as TWAM and that there was a contact in Royston.

Tim has always been a DIY person and until recently, dealt with our own car maintenance replacing shock absorbers, brake pads, carburettors and all sorts of other bits - there always seemed to be something which needed to be dealt with and to see our kitchen table covered in newspaper and car engine bits was not unusual. We also had saws, hammers, planes and other tools, I really didn't recognise, needed for wood work, building or gardening jobs.

Realistically we have reached an age where there is a limit to what we need. Our son's tool box was topped up and there was still spare so after making contact with a lovely couple in Royston we arranged to deliver some things to them. I also had a manual Singer sewing machine, complete with bobbins, tools and attachments which had belonged to a relative which I really didn't need so that too was delivered.

The tools are picked up from Royston and taken to the nearest refurbishment centre which is in Ipswich. There they are sorted, refurbished if needed and sorted into trade kits - carpentry, building, motor mechanics, agricultural and ground working tool kits plus sewing and knitting machines, haberdashery and fully working IT equipment- computers and laptops .

On average two containers a month are sent overseas to receiving partners, packed with tools destined for up to forty applicants. The journey ends as lives are transformed by the donated tools and equipment. TWAM has partners in countries like Uganda and Zambia who train young people in various trades which then enables them to earn a living and become part of their local community. All this is made possible by the donated equipment. Our excess really does make a huge difference to people who have very little.

If you have tools or equipment you no longer need please do consider donating to TWAM. The local contact number is 01763 244775 where you will reach Mr and Mrs Smith. They will be happy to tell you more or I am happy to talk to you about what I know.

Yvonne Sparrow



As greenhouses gases continue to soar, what might God be saying?

Salvation apparently looms, if we will all only do 'our bit'! So claim climate change activists and extinction rebels, who, when they're not gluing themselves to busy roads and orchestrating mass campaigns for non-violent civil disobedience, are agitating for a global cut to carbon emissions and improved home insulation, which, they say, is the only way to save planet earth.

The UN global climate change conference, COP26, now taking place in Glasgow, is a response to growing fears of global destruction if the rise in temperature is not brought under control. It is being hailed as a last chance for countries to band together to try and agree measures that will turn back the tide before it all becomes too late – which time, if Sir David Attenborough is to be believed, was actually round about yesterday!

Nevertheless, scientists say that there remains a narrow but rapidly closing window, so COP26 is, amongst other things, aimed at getting agreement for achieving carbon net zero emissions by 2050. To paraphrase the words of Alok Sharma, COP President-Designate, this is our chance not just to save the planet, but to build back better and greener!

How realistic is this? Despite the much-hyped aspirations, Prime Minister Boris Johnson, who is hosting the summit, is reportedly less than sanguine over its prospects for success, saying that it is 'touch and go' whether key goals will be met

And given the track record for co-operation and collaboration that exists between nations, one suspects he may well be right. China, after all, is already proving reluctant to commit itself, while President Xi refused to attend due to Covid. Similarly, Russian President Vladimir Putin and Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro have also both declined. And while US President Joe Biden did put in an appearance, there are question marks over American commitment to carbon reduction policy.

So does this mean that planet Earth is now doomed, with temperatures set to rise beyond those which can support life; with rising sea levels swallowing up vast chunks of habitable land; and with extreme weather conditions, bringing in their wake apocalyptic devastation?

The answer you give to this will depend on where you sit in the debate. Climate change activists scream planetary doom, unless we take immediate action – science, properly applied, they say, can fix it all. We must fly less, give up meat, and live more sustainably!

But, on the other side, those who remain unconvinced point to the normal climatic fluctuations already experienced over the lifetime of our planet, producing at various times both extreme heat and extreme cold. Indeed, all things considered, there seems strong evidence to support this view. And yet ... and yet the scale and speed of change does appear extraordinary, and it does raise concern. So what is God saying to the world in all of this?

VfJUK suggests that humanity is being given a warning. The reality would appear to suggest that nothing we can do will reverse the disaster looming over us, as even the UN admits (<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-59049770>). If we are lucky, and by some miracle COP26 succeeds in forging agreement for zero net carbon emissions by 2050, that doesn't resolve the problem of how we then compensate for the carbon being released into the atmosphere as a result of the melting of the permafrost, conservatively estimated as containing four times the combined amount of CO2 emitted by modern humans

Yes, the world is at a tipping point. But while we try and combat rising temperatures and extreme weather by our own puny efforts, we don't stand a chance; nature will always be one step ahead. To have any chance of winning this battle, therefore, we need the help of the One who called all of life into being, and who alone has control over nature.

For too long humanity has treated God with contempt. We can do whatever we want, we've said. We can live as we want, have what we want ... behave as we want. We don't need a kill-joy fairy in the sky and His outdated morality! We're all 'god' now. So, in our hubris, we've rebranded good as evil, and evil as good. But to echo the words of St Paul, 'God is not mocked ... whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap' (Galatians 6:7).

The climate is only part of the world that God created and of which He made us stewards. If we wish creation, including ourselves, to remain healthy and flourish, we must strive to obey God's will for the whole. We can't pick and choose. We can't ask Him to 'fulfil' our desires ... unless we obey His will. And if we are alerted to something going wrong in one part of creation, then we must ask whether it signifies that there other things we must put right in order to restore balance.

We cannot ignore God's commands and reject the values on which life is founded, without consequence. *We do not have the right* to determine who may or may not be born, merely to allow satisfaction of our desire for sex without commitment. *We do not have the right* to play God, deciding at the end of life when a person is no longer of value and should be terminated. *We do not have the right* to redefine God's gift of marriage and question our creation as men and women, together and jointly made in His image.

In recent world events – including climate change, Covid-19, and disruption of the global economy – we are surely reaping the whirlwind. Yet God, because of His love, is giving us a chance to repent. Before it all becomes too late. The question is, are we listening? Will we hear?

Rev Lynda Rose

CEO VfJUK

This article by Lynda first appeared in Christian Today and is reproduced with permission. (written before the COP26 conference)

JHC News Autumn-Winter 2021



“JHC offered us a lifeline and helped us get back on our feet when we needed it the most. From housing to one-to-one advice for getting back on track, the charity is there to support people out there,” JHC resident

2021 has been another challenging year so we hope this Christmas will be more sociable, at least, for everyone. Nevertheless, JHC knows and understands that life can sometimes seem too much to cope with if you're facing health, debt, work, or housing concerns, when finding a way out seems impossible.

Our Support service will remain available for calls and emails right up to midday on the 24th December and will reopen at 9am on Tuesday 4th January 2022 – see our contact information below.

It is always better to get in touch sooner than later and we'll do our absolute best to assist, discretely and in confidence. To make an initial appointment with one of our friendly Support workers please call 01223 492492 or email office@johnhuntingdon.org.uk.

Did you know?

During 2020 JHC provided almost 1300 food bags - that's over three-times the number in 2019 - and our Support service helped over 400 clients. We also delivered 144 food hampers before Christmas 2020 (an increase of 50 from 2019).

- In the first half of 2021 we saw 330 clients and gave out 441 bags of food
- The top Support service enquiry was about grants closely followed by benefits, with questions relating to utilities doubling during that time!

Donations to the charity have continued to come in thick and fast during 2021. These included unprecedented levels of non-perishable items for our Food bank as well as a large increase in cash contributions.

Thank you to everyone who contributed this year.

There really are too many people and organisations to mention individually, but we are very appreciative of everyone's support and never take them for granted.

However, a special mention goes to ARM who donated £2,000, Chris Hall from Sawston Discount food, drink and household goods' charity group for the enormous number of items delivered to us recently, as well as Sawston's schools and churches.

Local partners

The charity understands the value of collaborating with local partners to maximise resources and opportunities, and share knowledge and expertise, to support people living and working in Sawston.

For example, we continue to work in partnership with Great Shelford Parochial Charity so if you are a Great Shelford resident and need help or advice, please contact us directly. The same applies to Little Shelford and Duxford residents as we have money available from their Parish Councils.

In addition, the Citizens' Advice debt specialist offers remote appointments for those with Debt issues - please call us in the first instance.

Finally, South Cambs District Council's housing advice sessions resumed on Tuesday 2nd November and will continue on the first Tuesday of every month between 10am & 1pm. However, these are by appointment only; again, please contact JHC directly for more information.

All our services are subject to change or adaption depending on government advice relating to Covid. However, we will remain operational, albeit with differing opening hours and working practices, whatever the advice.

More information about all our local partnerships is available on our website.

South Cambs District Council - update

Evictions were banned in the private rented sector throughout 2020, but the restriction was lifted on 31 May 2021. This means that many people will be facing eviction over autumn/winter. We also expect that a number of landlords will now be issuing valid notices where they hadn't previously because of the restrictions. Notice periods have also been reduced from 6 months to 2 months.

We want to encourage anyone who has received a notice to contact us as soon as they can. If you are in a privately rented property or a social tenancy and have been given notice or are likely to be evicted, contact us early and don't wait until eviction.

We would also like to remind landlords that we can give them advice and support on how to end a tenancy legally and how to ensure a notice is valid.

Our Housing Advisors are able to help prevent homelessness in many cases, by either negotiating with the landlord to resolve issues or by helping people to secure alternative accommodation. They can support you to address rent arrears and tell you if the notice from your landlord is valid. And they can help you to access Debt and Benefits' advice, supporting you through the process of making a homelessness application and collaborating with you to create a Personal Housing Plan to prevent or relieve homelessness. We can also refer you to tenancy sustainment support, CAB and other agencies that may be able to assist.

Please call 03450 450 051 and ask for Housing Advice if you are at risk of losing your tenancy or email housingadvice@scams.gov.uk

Importantly - please note that SDCDC has a newly appointed Income Maximisation Officer who works within the Benefits team. Together they help people on low incomes struggling to meet their housing costs and/or Council Tax payments to ensure they have accessed all entitlements and benefits.

Please get in touch via welfare.officer@scams.gov.uk

The Besom

The Besom is a Christian charitable organisation, run by people who want to make a difference to the lives of others. It provides a bridge between those who want to give time, money, skills or things and those local people in need. The service it provides is free.

In Sawston, and within a 10-minute drive radius of the village, people who are struggling can request a Baby Bundle box for babies aged 0-3 or 3-6 months through a referral from a Support Worker, Health Visitor or JHC team member. We can also help by either clearing a

garden or painting a room and by passing on items of good quality furniture, white goods, bedding and kitchen starter packs, where we have them available.

For more information go to www.thebesom.com or contact JHC or your Support Worker to access our services.

Relate

Relate Cambridge is delighted to announce it has resumed face to face couples' counselling, based at the John Huntingdon Centre, 189 High Street, Sawston CB22 3HJ. We are offering this as a limited service on Monday mornings.

We are also continuing the option of online counselling for those unable to come to the venue. This service for Sawston residents, and those who work or study locally, is provided free of charge thanks to JHC's generous support.

Those wishing to enquire about all our other services, which include counselling for individuals, couples, families, sex therapy, children and young people can call Relate Cambridge's appointments line 01302 347710

John Huntingdon's Charity, John Huntingdon Centre, 189 High Street, Sawston Cambridge CB22 3HJ

Telephone: 01223 492492

Email: office@johnhuntingdon.org.uk.

"Thank you so, so much I really appreciate everything you do. You are all amazing people and I would be lost without the help I've had from JHC,"

JHC client



You may already be aware that we are now holding our monthly support groups at Sawston Free Church.

We would like to let you know about Cam Sight's support groups, for those living with sight loss in and around the Sawston and Stapleford areas. The Sawston support group is now held at the Sawston Free Church, and the Stapleford support group is held at the Cox's Close Community Centre.

The Sawston group meet every 3rd Thursday of the month: 10.00am – 12.00.

The next dates are 16th December, 20th January and 17th February.

Cam Sight provides a range of support and services to those with sight loss and welcomes new members and attendees.

I would be most grateful if you could share this with anyone who may benefit from our groups and services.

Kind regards,

Githa St.John-Ives - Support Worker to Alex Innes

167 Green End Road, Cambridge, CB4 1RW - Tel: 0122 342 0033

Donations can be made to support people living with blindness and low vision in Cambridgeshire by visiting – www.camsight.org.uk



Arthur Rank Hospice Charity

making every moment count

Hospice needs volunteers, vans and van drivers to support Christmas Tree recycling scheme!

Arthur Rank Hospice Charity is asking the local community for their support with its annual Christmas Tree collection. The 'treasure hunt for trees' will be taking place on Thursday 6, Friday 7, Saturday 8 and Sunday 9 January 2022.

It is the seventh year of the fundraising scheme which last year saw more than 2900 pre-loved trees collected and composted, raising over £54,000 for the Hospice's vital frontline services! The scheme depends on a unique collaboration between the Arthur Rank Hospice Charity team, Just Helping, Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire County Council, local businesses and scores of volunteers who generously donate their time.

This year's recycling scheme covers the CB1, CB2, CB3, CB4, CB5, CB21, CB22, CB23, CB24 and CB25 postcodes. In exchange for taking away your tree, the Charity welcomes a donation to the Hospice.

The trees will be chipped at temporary drop off points and either used as mulch or chippings in the Hospice gardens, or at the drop off sites.

There is one element of the plan which still requires some extra support. Alison Pinney, Community Fundraiser explains:

"We are appealing for more volunteers who can drive (preferably their own van) and crew members, to help us this January so we can achieve our target. We will be running the scheme in line with the any current government guidelines, to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all our volunteers."

If you, and/or someone you know, might be able to help, please contact the Hospice's fundraising team on 01223 675888 or email christmastrees@arhc.org.uk.

If you live within the postcode areas listed and would like to register your tree for collection, we can do all the hard work for you! Visit arhc.org.uk/tree-recycling and register your tree to avoid awkward tree handling, needles in your car, queuing at the tip and petrol costs! Registrations close at 10am on 4 January 2022.

From the Minister's Desk – (with thanks to Inform: The magazine for Orwell and Royston Methodist Church.)

Letting Go

Nature has a way of gazing at us so many times, but we really never pause to interact with the gaze. More recently, I find myself cleaning up a lot of lovely coloured leaves both from my front and back gardens. It is messy, and it creates a lot of work for me!

This led me to reflect on the reasons why trees shed their leaves in autumn. I wondered whether trees simply shed their leaves to protect nature or to prepare themselves for winter when it's cold and dry. Leaves fall from trees as soon as they cease to produce food for the tree. Therefore, the tree decides to preserve the nutrients back into the stems and roots. Through a very controlled process, trees shed their leaves. This happens during the season of autumn, so that in the winter, trees do not expend any energy on protecting the fragile organs. Dropping the leaves, gives trees a fresh start in the spring, and nutrients from the decaying leaves, which are then recycled to help grow the next leafy generation.

However, letting go is necessary for our well-being. For example, we are all aware of the problems caused by too much weight for many of us. Many make a lot of money out of those who are seeking to lose weight. We have to take proactive actions to reduce the weight. However, there are times we just think about losing the weight without intentionally taking any action. This may be likened to letting go of addictions. There are those who act in order to achieve their goals and others just think about it and take no action.

The story of the rich young ruler told in the gospel of Saint Mark 10: 17 -31. When he went to Jesus seeking the best way of entering heaven, Jesus' response made him realise that letting go is not an easy task. The young man was invited to let go of his riches. Is it possible that as human beings, there are times we hang on to things that no longer serve us, or from those activities or things that no longer nourish us?

The reading from Ecclesiastes 3: invites us to live in the present. Trees set themselves on a journey, we too are now in this season of letting go, so that we can embrace some life-giving activities. I invite you to reflect on your personal and corporate journey of faith. You may find the questions below helpful:

- Is there anything that you should let go in order to re-engage with the gospel for today.
- Is there anything you are carrying that might be parasitic and therefore draining you?
- How can we prepare ourselves as individuals or together to find balance?

Letting go is not easy, it takes a lot of work and it is expensive and painful. Not just financially, but emotionally, psychologically, spiritually and even physically too. It requires commitment, dedication and perseverance! So, we hold on to biblical wisdom:

*“For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven: a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted; a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; a time to throw away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; a time to seek, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to throw away; a time to tear, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; a time to love, and a time to hate; a time for war, and a time for peace.”
Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 NRSV*

Rev Charity Nzegwu

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