

# CONTACT

February 2023



Volume 64 - Issue 2  
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](mailto:secretary@sawstonfreechurch.org.uk),  
Castle Camps email: [sarabdavey@outlook.com](mailto:sarabdavey@outlook.com)**

### **Sawston Free Church:**

05 February 10.30 Morning Worship – Andy Nightingale  
3.00pm Messy Church  
12 February 10.30 Morning Worship and Holy Communion – Rev Phil Nevard  
19 February 10.30 Morning Worship – Rev Phil Nevard  
26 February 10.30 Go4th

The closing date for **March** Contact is **Friday 17<sup>th</sup> February**

**David Nunn is the editor, so please email your items  
to [anne.nunn@btinternet.com](mailto:anne.nunn@btinternet.com)**

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<b>Facebook page:</b>	<a href="http://www.facebook.com/SawstonFreeChurch">www.facebook.com/SawstonFreeChurch</a>	

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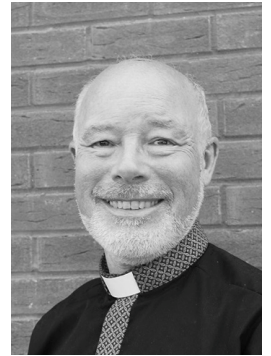
The monthly magazine of  
**Sawston Free Church United Reformed Methodist  
& Castle Camps URC**

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Dear Friends,

In our worship through January we have had something of an emphasis on calling and commitment. We held our annual Covenant Service where we renewed our commitment in service to God as Christ's disciples in all that we say and all that we do. We reflected that taking those covenant promises seriously would mean some serious thought and prayer about how it is that God is calling us in 2023, and how we might match our actions to our words.



In our worship on 15<sup>th</sup> January, we spent some time thinking about the call of the first disciples, and following on from that, our own calling. How do we discern our own calling? How do we know what God is calling us to do? We reflected on some of the factors that might help us think about our calling – and they spell the word SHAPE. Our Spiritual gifts, our Heart, our Abilities, our Personality and our Experience. In this month's magazine and in the next four editions, we will explore each of these aspects and offer some resources for you to delve deeper. This month we will think about Spiritual gifts – look for the article elsewhere in this magazine!

There are always multiple ways to serve in the life of any local church. Most pressing at the moment in the life of our church are the roles of Elder (elections will happen at the March Church Meeting) and someone to look after our Hall Bookings. The first might be seen as a prayerful role where the priority will be helping the church take further strides forward in developing a culture of prayer; the latter is a much more administrative role. Both prayer and administration are listed as Spiritual Gifts in the Bible – and we need to use all the Spiritual Gifts that we have for the church to function at its best!

If you feel that God might be nudging you towards one of these roles – then talk to Phil or Maggie, or to your Elder!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Phil Nevard', with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the signature.

**Every Blessing,  
Rev'd Phil Nevard  
Phil**



## **Reflections from: God Calling**

### **No Strain**

Be calm, no matter what may befall you. Rest in me. Be patient, and let patience have her perfect work. Never think things overwhelming. How can you be overwhelmed when I am with you.

Do not feel the strain of life. There is no strain for my children. Do you not see I am a Master Instrument maker? Have I not fashioned each part? Do I not know just what it can bear without a strain? Would I, the Maker of so delicate an instrument, ask of it anything that could destroy or strain? No! The strain is only when you are serving another master, the world, fame, the good opinion of men - or carrying two days' burden on the one day. Remember that it must not be.

### **A Crowded Day**

Believe that I am with you, and controlling all. When my word has gone forth, all are powerless against it.

Be calm. Never fear. You have much to learn. Go on until you can take the most crowded day with a song. "Sing unto the Lord." The finest accompaniment to a Song of Praise to Me is a very crowded day. Let love be the motif running through all.

Be glad all the time. Rejoice exceedingly. Joy in me. Rest in me. Never be afraid. Pray more. Do not get worried. I am thy Helper. "Underneath are the Everlasting Arms." You cannot get below that. Rest in them, as a tired child rests.

*Comforting words, and I hope you find them instructive and guiding as much as I do.*

**Kate Leach**

# As I see it ...

by Mike Wilson

## Scapegoats or Sinners?

(Please note that the views expressed in this article are those of the author, Michael Wilson, and not in any way representative of the views of Sawston Free Church.)

It can hardly have escaped your notice that George Pell, Catholic cardinal and archbishop, died on 10<sup>th</sup> January 2023. As bishop and cardinal he had presided with commendable frankness over the early days of the Australian Roman Catholic Church's efforts to address its history of institutionalised protection of child-abusing priests. He was subsequently himself convicted, then acquitted of child-abuse. On the day of his death, the BBC reported without further comment first his death, then his conviction in 2019 for child abuse, then his subsequent acquittal, concluding by reminding us that his acquittal had appalled many who feared that it would make bringing new prosecutions more difficult. Later reporting was more nuanced.

The Birmingham Six were convicted of the Birmingham Bombing in 1975 and acquitted in 1991. In 1980, whilst still in prison, they applied to bring a civil action against the police, alleging (correctly, as it transpired) that the police had tampered with the evidence. Lord Denning, dismissing the action, remarked that to accept that the police had lied would open up 'an appalling vista.' **(1)**

I am reminded also of Caiphas, the High Priest, debating what to do about Jesus: 'You do not understand that it is expedient for you that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation should not perish' (John 11: 50).

The crucial point is that George Pell, the Guildford Six, and Jesus were all *innocent*. That Caiphas, Lord Denning, the BBC (together with every national paper I have consulted), and those seeking to prosecute child abusers find this extremely inconvenient is beside the point. *Beside* the point, but not totally irrelevant to it. Two remarks, if I may:

Firstly, Lord Denning was ineptly alluding to an important truth: when a system of justice is shown to have failed it is simultaneously a triumph for justice and a disaster. But Christians know that injustice for the one *never* buys justice for the many, no matter how tempting the idea might be. Somewhat similarly today, what is happening to our police force is surely a disaster. Nevertheless, obtaining justice for the victims of corruption is far more important than averting disaster by illicitly protecting the reputation of the force. How could Lord Denning ever have thought otherwise? We have, thank God, come a long way since 1980.

Secondly, so many of our social institutions throughout the twentieth century turned a blind eye to the sexual abuse of children. *All* the Christian denominations have their shameful examples. What do we do about those under whose watch the perpetrators operated? The Church of England, agonising over the atrocities conducted by Peter Ball **(2)** and John Smyth under Bishop George Carey's oversight, suspended him (2017), reinstated him (2018), suspended him (2020) and again reinstated him (2021). The problem is not unlike that going through parliament at the moment – should the CEO of a media company face prison for knowingly presiding over an institution that has failed adequately to protect minors from on-line grooming? Perhaps it depends not so much upon whether they knew at all, but upon the degree to which they knew and the degree to which they were in a position to do anything about it. It is not easy to ascribe individual responsibility to institutionalised corruption. The top dog is never completely in control, and is easily scapegoated, carrying the can for misdemeanours elsewhere in the organisation. Cressida Dick is not responsible for everything that those under her command did. She is only responsible for her own failures.

Every deceased 20<sup>th</sup> century bishop, moderator and president of conference, from the saintly Basil Hume (RC), Michael Ramsey (CoE), George Caird (URC) and Donald English (Meth) onwards, including, of course, George Pell, presided with varying degrees of knowingness over an institution that turned a blind eye to its appalling secrets. It seems to me that dealing justly with that knowledge is far from straight-forward.

**(1)** <https://www.independent.ie/irish-news/appalling-vista-judge-dies-at-100-26155585.html>

**(2)** Not to be confused with Bishop George Bell

# Spiritual Gifts

## Understanding the spiritual gifts

The whole subject of Spiritual gifts can be quite confusing, partly because many Christians don't talk about them much. They are the greatest resource God gives us for the life and growth of the church. We need to be well-informed about them, and understand them properly, so that we can develop and use them for God's glory.

*1 Corinthians 2: 12, 13, 16.*

*"Now we have received not the spirit of the world but the Spirit that is from God, so that we may understand the gifts bestowed on us by God. And we speak of these things in words not taught by human wisdom, but taught by the Spirit.....we have the mind of Christ".*

Let's seek more of that understanding, and trust God to give it to us.

If you want to find out more about how God's Holy Spirit works in us, try reading:

*Michael Green "I Believe in the Holy Spirit" Kingsway 2004*

## Looking at motives

1 Cor. 14: 1 "Pursue love and earnestly desire the spiritual gifts....."

- a) We should seek and pray for God's gifts. But there is always the danger that people may seek them for the wrong reasons, especially un-loving reasons:-  
*eg power, control, success, admiration, affirmation, popularity etc.*
- b) The right motives for seeking Spiritual gifts include:-  
*eg to bring glory to God; so God's will can be done and his Kingdom grow; to build the Church; to serve and care for other people.....*

## Beware of these attitudes:

- a) "I don't have any Spiritual gifts." (This denies the promises of God and the power of the Holy Spirit).
- b) "My Spiritual gift is more important than yours." (See 1 Cor. 12: 4-6, 19-25).
- c) "Do as I do" (expecting or pressurising other people to exercise the same gifts as you do).

## Using the gifts to build the body of Christ

*Read Ephesians 4: 4-6, 11-16.*

*especially verses 11 & 12 – "The gifts He gave were .....to equip God's people for the work of ministry for building up the Body of Christ....."*

*Reflect further on these questions in relation to our church:*

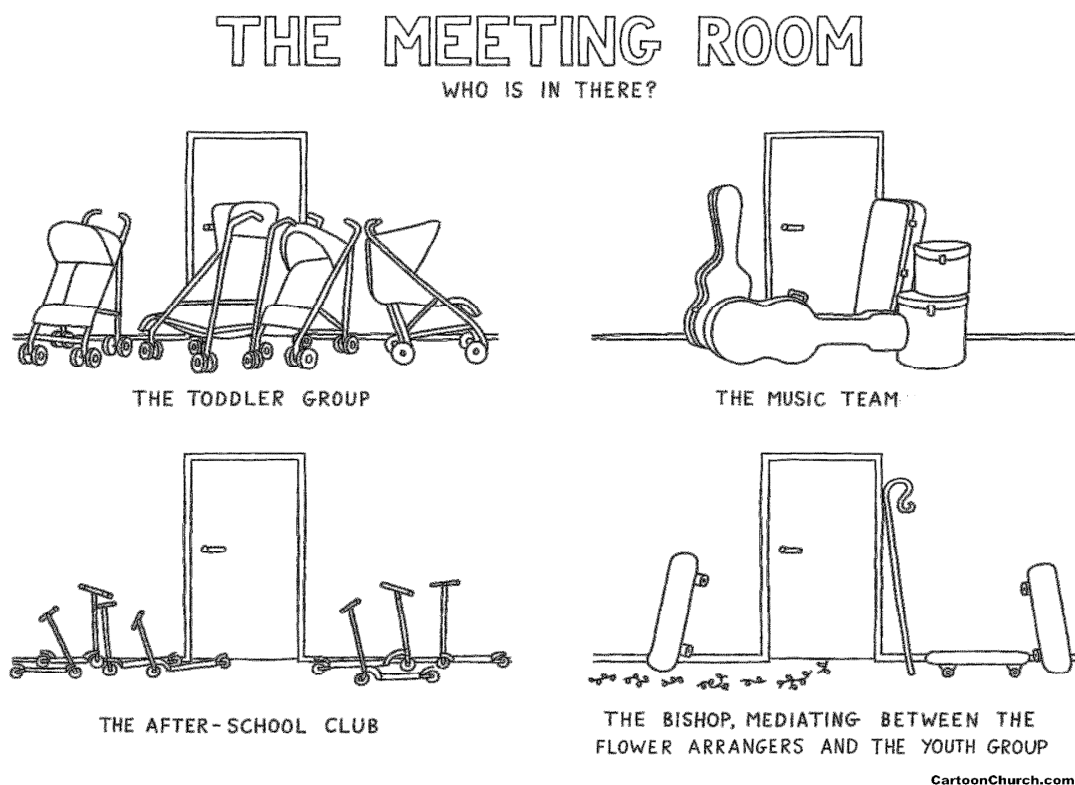
- a) How can you see the gifts at work already in building up the church?
- b) Are there any Spiritual gifts which you do not think have been used within the last few years in our church/congregation?  
Why do you think this is the case?  
Should anything be done about it, and if so, what?
- c) Are there any Spiritual gifts which you think our church particularly needs to seek and ask for at the moment?  
Relate this to the church's current vision, priorities and plans, and the Spiritual gifts that might help them to be fulfilled.  
Also relate this to any areas of ministry and mission which are currently weak or neglected, and the Spiritual gifts that might help to strengthen them.
- d) How do you think we could encourage other church members to seek, pray for and use the Spiritual gifts?

### Personal Reflection

The discernment of Spiritual Gifts is best not done alone, but with the help of trusted friend. A trusted friend will often see a strength where we refuse to acknowledge it, either out of our own lack of confidence or misplaced sense of humility or even because we know that this is the direction God is calling us and, like Jonah, we are running in the other direction!

At this link: <https://tiny.one/2adrrm8e>

Is a questionnaire and instructions designed to help you get a sense of where your Spiritual Gifts might lie. Remember, you HAVE been given Spiritual Gifts, that is a given. Our task is first to discern them, and then to use them for the building up of the body of Christ!



## Nominations for Elders

**On 8<sup>th</sup> March at our AGM we will again be choosing people to lead our church. It is time again to start praying and thinking. Who might God be calling to be Elders in our church?**

The Elders, meeting together, are called to help us understand God's leading for our church, the directions God would have us take, and how we are called to fulfil those directions.

They are called to be responsible for the good order and conduct of our church, to make sure worship is provided appropriately, that pastoral care is as it should be, that our people are nurtured in their faith, at whatever stage of the journey they are living through, and to make sure that we as a church, fulfil all of our mission.

In our church, a person is Ordained to the role of Elder for life. It is a serious commitment. An Elder may take a break from the role, and is then a **non-serving Elder**, but still an Elder, and may be called on in a time of special need.

**Serving Elders** are those who are chosen by church meeting to serve for a 3 year term, and they may be nominated to serve again if they wish to continue being active.

### **What should we look for?**

1. It must be a person who is already faithful in the promises they make as members, that is:

**they are faithful in their attendance in worship**

**they are faithful in their responsibility to regularly attend church meetings**

**they are wholeheartedly committed to this particular community of faith.**

**they are faithfully living out the Christian life**

2. An Elder needs to be a person whom you perceive as prayerful.

3. An Elder needs to be a person who is mature in their faith and has thought about it deeply; a person who is reliable and constant. They've proven that they will run the distance and can stick it when things are tough.

4. An Elder needs to be a person who lives God's graciousness; they help heal wounds and find ways to work for reconciliation

An Elder does not have to be perfect. No one is. Probably, a good nominee will feel unworthy of the calling. God uses flawed and imperfect people to do his perfect will.

A person who accepts God's calling to this role is doing a sacred thing, and all church members should support them in prayer.



## **The Process: Every Member's Responsibility!!**

1. If you believe that God has called a person to be ordained as an Elder, it is asked that you speak first to the Minister (Phil), Church Secretary(Maggie) or one of the Serving Elders(Mary, Mike P, Beryl or Rosemary L) about your perception.

The Elders are responsible for the good order and conduct of the church, so they will consider nominations prayerfully before names become public. This will happen around mid – late February.

2. The nominated person will be approached by the Minister or designated Elder, to prayerfully discuss their nomination.

3. If the person accepts nomination, their name will come before the church's Annual General Meeting. If the church clearly affirms the person's call to minister amongst us as an Elder (our church requires a clear affirmation by asking for 75% of those present to be in agreement), the nominee takes their place as a serving Elder.

If a person is elected:

## **We have an Ordination and/or Induction Service**

If it is a non-serving Elder or an Elder who has completed their term and is now elected to extend their term, they are inducted to the role for three years.

If they are a member who has never been ordained in the URC, then they are ordained in a Communion Service and then inducted to the role for three years. As part of the Ordination and Induction, all of the church make a commitment together to accept and support the elected Elder's ministry.

If you have any questions about these matters, please talk to Phil, Maggie or your elder about it.

Dear Member,

## **ELECTION OF ELDERS**

Our Elders are elected for a period of three years and may, if they are invited and so desire, stand again when that term has expired.

This year Mary Simuyandi & Maggie Jones are eligible for re-election.

In order for you all to give this prayerful consideration we are starting the process now. If you have the name of someone you feel would make a good elder, please fill in the slip on the following page and give it to the Church Secretary. Please do not approach the nominee at this stage. This will then enable those concerned time to consider the calling and to talk and pray about it before the 'official' nomination takes place.

The actual elections will take place at the AGM on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2023 at 7.30pm

With warmest Christian greetings,  
Maggie Jones Church Secretary

## How Have You Kept Your Marriage Together?

A few weeks ago I was chatting to the cashier at a local garden centre about planning a Golden Wedding party for Terry and myself. She looked at me with amazement and asked how we had kept our marriage together as she had not managed to keep any of her romances going. As there were no other customers we had a chat about the subject!

Afterwards, I started thinking about how Terry and I had met and all the changes that had taken place in our married life together. Also, how we had faced them together. When we met we had both lived independent lives for quite a while, and were used to being single.

The first year of marriage proved to be a testing time as we both had tempers! Instead of talking things through I would retire to the bathroom, lock the door and have a good cry! In the end Terry announced that he would give me ten minutes and then he would turn the power off. This only happened once as I did not like the dark! We gradually got used to discussing things more calmly and worked out strategies for some independence with our shared income. We agreed to have pocket money each Monday and a clothes allowance once a month. This helped us a great deal and we have kept this plan going!

Over the years we have seen that on marriage one gains the other's family, so both deaths and births troubles appear to be doubled. When my lovely nephew Richard committed suicide that took a long time to get used to. We were aware that together we could help one another.

Our faith in God and reading His word has helped us through life.

Last but not least, always have "a good night kiss".

Beryl

=====

**Please cut here.....**

**To the Secretary**

I believe .....

would make a good Elder/should be nominated for a further term and would like them to have the opportunity to explore this further.

Signature of proposer .....

***PLEASE RETURN THIS SLIP TO MAGGIE JONES, 21 HILLSIDE, SAWSTON by Monday 13<sup>th</sup> February 2023.***

## Mrs Bright's Shop

*(From – Sawston Historical Times – Issue No2)*

One of my fondest childhood memories is of Mrs Bright's shop in the High Street, now Searle's the butchers. My friends and I passed it each day on our way to school and never missed looking in the window. It was lovely, full of sweets, toys, jewellery, gifts, knitting wool and sewing materials. I never remember the window being changed as it would be today, but as new things came in they were put to the front, and the goodies at the back taken out. There was never a space left, which made it impossible to seeing everything at once, and at Christmas it looked like wonderland.



When you went inside the shop a bell would ring, I think it must have been a metal one that rings when the door hits it. I can still remember the sound, but not what it looked like. The shop was small and dark with lots of shelves and a long glass fronted counter along one side. At the back of the room three steps led to a lace covered glass door. Behind this was Mrs Bright's sitting room where she gave piano lessons which you could hear while you waited to be served.

The shop was full from floor to ceiling with boxes, bags, jars of sweets, coloured wools and any knitting pattern you wanted to use with the wool. When you asked for something, her answer was always the same "Well I know I've got it my dear, but where it is I'm not sure", but 10-20 minutes later she would find just what I wanted.

I remember the sweets most of all, white marshmallow baths each containing a jelly baby (you often had to blow the dust out before eating it!), coloured eggs made of sweet stuff and rice paper which when you bit the end open you found a ring or lucky charm, also marshmallow boxes with a ring inside, no plastic to throw away, you just ate the empty box. There were coloured baked marzipan animals and in the summer you could buy a lemonade tablet with a straw which when you dropped it in a glass of water made a bright lemon fizzy drink.

Another popular buy for the girls were the balls of rainbow wool with little wooden knitting pins. I think all the little girls in Sawston learnt to knit on these.

I remember one Christmas in the middle of the window was a lovely clockwork ballerina made of tin. When you would her up, she would turn round and round. That year I think my letter to Father Christmas must have got lost in the post.

***In memory of the late Molly Hurst***

## Sawston Free Church ECO page

### Some dates for your diary:

#### **Big Garden Birdwatch 27-29 January**

The RSPB's Big Garden Birdwatch is fun, free and for everyone. And you don't need a garden to take part! Counting birds from your balcony, or your local park will play a vital role in helping them understand how UK birds are doing. Find out more on their website.

[rspb.org.uk/get-involved/activities/birdwatch/](https://rspb.org.uk/get-involved/activities/birdwatch/)

#### **Star Count 17-24 February**

A starry sky is a magical sight. Light pollution not only limits our views of these skies, but also disrupts wildlife's natural patterns. Help CPRE, the countryside charity, map light pollution by counting the stars in February. Find out more on their website.

[cpre.org.uk/what-we-care-about/nature-andlandscapes/dark-skies/star-count-2023/](https://cpre.org.uk/what-we-care-about/nature-andlandscapes/dark-skies/star-count-2023/)

#### **Earth Day: 22nd April**

EARTHDAY.ORG's mission is to diversify, educate and activate the environmental movement worldwide. Growing out of the first Earth Day in 1970, EARTHDAY.ORG is the world's largest recruiter to the environmental movement, working with more than 150,000 partners in over 192 countries to drive positive action for our planet.

One idea that EarthDay are encouraging this year is for groups to organise "Great Global Cleanups" in as many places as we can. Could we host/organise this at SFC? Would YOU be interested? Who else might we involve?

A prayer for Earth Day from Tearfund.

*Creator God, we thank you for the beauty and bounty of your creation.*

*We repent of the ways we have neglected, abused*

*and taken for granted your good gifts to us in creation.*

*Help us to take better care of the natural resources we've been given,*

*For your glory. Amen.*

## **Traidcraft plc going into administration**



It is with tremendous sadness that we announce that Traidcraft PLC is going into administration.

The business has been in a weak financial position for some years and the Covid-19 pandemic presented a significant new set of challenges. Just as we were emerging from the pandemic, like many other retailers, we faced the combined effects of the war in Ukraine, rising energy prices, and increased transport costs.

Sadly, despite the heroic efforts of our team at Gateshead, low consumer confidence during the critical autumn trading period led to a sales result significantly short of what was required to sustain the operation. December sales were also negatively impacted by the uncertainty created by Royal Mail strikes.

After much deliberation and following advice from external advisors, we have come to the conclusion that the only honourable course of action is to appoint administrators. Our hope is that by doing this in a timely manner, we can minimise the impact on our suppliers and creditors.

It is heartbreaking to bring the Traidcraft plc story to an end in this manner but we can at least take some consolation from the knowledge that we have been a major force for good in the ethical retail sector for over forty years. We have championed the cause of trade justice to the point where we now have better standards and procedures in place to protect the rights and dignity of growers and producers all over the world.

We would like to offer our heartfelt thanks to all those who have journeyed with us as employees, board members, shareholders and suppliers. We would particularly like to thank our loyal band of "Fairtraders", many of whom have been with us since the very beginning.

The mission to combat trade injustice and poverty is far from complete. It is important to recognise that Transform Trade (previously Traidcraft Exchange, the charity arm of Traidcraft) will continue its vital work supporting producers and fighting for trade justice and people centred trade.

Our hope and prayer is that others will also emerge to pick up the torch that we have carried for four decades.

***Board of Directors  
Traidcraft plc  
January 2023***



# Part of the 'Ode to the West Wind'

By Percy Shelley

O wild West Wind, thou breath of Autumn's being,  
Thou, from whose unseen presence the leaves dead  
Are driven, like ghosts from an enchanter fleeing,

Yellow, and black, and pale, and hectic red,  
Pestilence-stricken multitudes: O thou,  
Who chariotest to their dark wintry bed

The winged seeds, where they lie cold and low,  
Each like a corpse within its grave, until  
Thine azure sister of the Spring shall blow

The trumpet of a prophecy! O Wind,  
If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?

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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**

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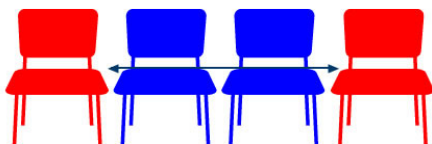
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