

# CONTACT

## September 2023



Volume 64 - Issue 9  
Sawston Free Church

## 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:**

03 Sept      10.30am : Morning Worship – Rev Mike Wilson  
                 3.00pm - 5pm : Messy Church  
10 Sept      10.30am : Morning Worship & Communion – Rev Phil Nevard  
17 Sept      10.30am : Morning Worship – Rev Phil Nevard  
24 Sept      10.30am : Go4th

The closing date for **October** Contact is **Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> September**

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

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# Contact

The monthly magazine of  
**Sawston Free Church United Reformed Methodist**

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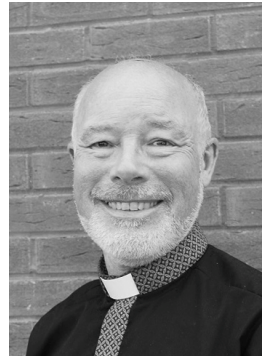
[www.facebook.com/SawstonFreeChurch](https://www.facebook.com/SawstonFreeChurch)

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Dear Friends,

At the start of August we had a fantastic time at our Holiday Club with a great bunch of children and a fabulous team of helpers. Each day was a joy! I hope you were able to catch the video we made of some of the photos we took across the four days.

We followed a theme set in an attic (thank you for all the donations of dusty attic props!) Each day we'd look at a photo from an old dusty photograph album and it would lead us to reflect on a bible story. Day 1 had the theme of Creation and the title "Love is: Creative".



Some of our kids have grown up with a Muslim faith, and it was interesting on my table to note the similarities in the accounts given about creation in both faiths – they are very similar as you might expect. One of the children pointed out that in Islam it is a 6-day creation and in Judaism/Christianity it is a 7-day creation. In Islam, she said, we don't have the 7<sup>th</sup> day of rest, because God doesn't get tired and so doesn't need to rest.

And she's right. I often find myself cringing when people simplify the biblical story of the 7-day creation and end it by saying "and on the 7<sup>th</sup> day, after all that hard work, God needed a rest."

Of course God doesn't need a rest! The Sabbath isn't about God needing a nap or a breather. He's way beyond that – an eternal powerhouse of energy. The Sabbath is more like a beautiful, intentional pause button that God pressed after He wove the fabric of the universe. He wasn't tired; He was setting a rhythm, a pattern for us to follow.

God created the world in six days, and then on the seventh day, He kicked back and rested. Not because He had to, but to show us something essential. It's like a divine symphony where every note, every rest has a purpose. In embracing the Sabbath, we're tapping into that rhythm, aligning ourselves with the heartbeat of creation.

On the radio while we were on holiday I heard a brief discussion of Beethoven's 5<sup>th</sup> symphony. The presenter said that it is often described as beginning with the most famous four notes in musical history. But actually, it doesn't! It starts with a rest, and that rest is crucial to the rhythm.

So, Sabbath is always more than just copying God's day off. We're saying, "Hey, we're part of this masterpiece too!" It's a chance to take a step back from our crazy schedules, worries, and gadgets, and really connect – with God, with our loved ones, and with our own souls. It's a day to say, "Life isn't all about the hustle; it's about finding joy in the quiet moments."

Remember what Jesus said? ***"The Sabbath was made for people, not people for the Sabbath"*** (Mark 2:27). That's gold! The Sabbath is like a love note from God to us. It's His way of saying, "You matter. Rest matters. Come, chill with me." Let's ditch the idea that it's a snooze day for God. Instead, let's embrace it as a soul-hug from our Heavenly Father. It's like a weekly reset button – a chance to breathe, to recharge, and to realign ourselves with what truly matters. In a world that's all about rush and noise, the Sabbath is a radical way to say, "I trust God's got this, and I'm taking a breather."



The Sabbath isn't just a day; it's a mindset. Let's carry its peace and rhythm into our daily lives, reminding ourselves that we're part of God's beautiful, ongoing creation.

Wishing you many Sabbaths filled with joy, rest, and deep connection.



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

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## **United Reformed Church Finance Dept Ministry And Mission Fund - Annual Letter To Local Churches**

To: All members and adherents of United Reformed Churches and our Local Ecumenical Partnerships

Dear Friends,

When will normal service be resumed?

As we are writing this letter and closing off the URC's accounts for 2022, the country is still torn with industrial disputes, mostly notably with Health Service workers, rail industry workers, teachers etc. etc. Whatever your view as to the wisdom or justice of such action, we suspect all of us are affected by the disruption to some degree.

In church life too, are we back to "normal life"? Some churches no doubt have returned to something like their pre-Covid level of activity and attendance numbers. Quite a few have recommenced their activity but find their numbers have reduced. Some churches have found re-opening too difficult and have decided to close.

Whatever the "new normal" was to be, we suggest its arrival has (like many trains) been disrupted, delayed, or cancelled all together. The URC's finance officers had concerns that the late arrival of the return to normality would impact very significantly on the giving to the M&M Fund in 2022. However, the churches responded magnificently and the giving to M&M was £600,000 ahead of budget. It was also only 2.5% down on 2021's result.

So, thank you to all who continued to contribute to your local church, thank you to all those churches who met their commitment for 2022 in full, and thank you to all those who, in adversity, continued to treat the M&M Fund as the first priority and paid what they could.

With normal service not yet resumed, 2023 is not going to be an easy year either. We now have the added disruption of high inflation, pushing up wages and overhead costs. As the Spirit directs and as our means allow, can the churches once more respond to the call of our gracious, loving and ever-generous God?

Again, thank you all!

If you have any questions or comments arising from this letter, please speak to your church treasurer who has been provided with more detailed information. If they are not able to help directly then they can get in touch with the finance team at Church House.

Yours in Christ,

Ian Hardie (Immediate Past Treasurer)

Vaughan Griffiths (Deputy Treasurer)

## Stained Glass Depicts Covid-19 Scenes

Whittlesford Parish Church is thought to be the first in the UK to have a stained glass window depicting scenes from the Covid-19 pandemic.

It commissioned the £20,000 artwork to mark 1,000 years since the church was first built.

Scenes within the stained glass include doctors working in PPE and a woman delivering shopping to an elderly man. The picture shows part of the window.

The window's project team said they wanted it to be a beacon of hope.

The installation at St Mary and St Andrew's Church was unveiled in a packed church on 29<sup>th</sup> June, with introductions from Reverends Olivia and Alasdair Coles

The Reverend Alasdair Coles, 56, said they came up with the idea of a stained glass window in the autumn of 2020, at the height of the pandemic.

"We decided very quickly to make the theme of it about caring, to honour the caring people that we'd seen during the pandemic, both professionally, but also by people in the village who were looking after one another,"

Reverend Coles set-up a village committee to support the project and interview potential artists.

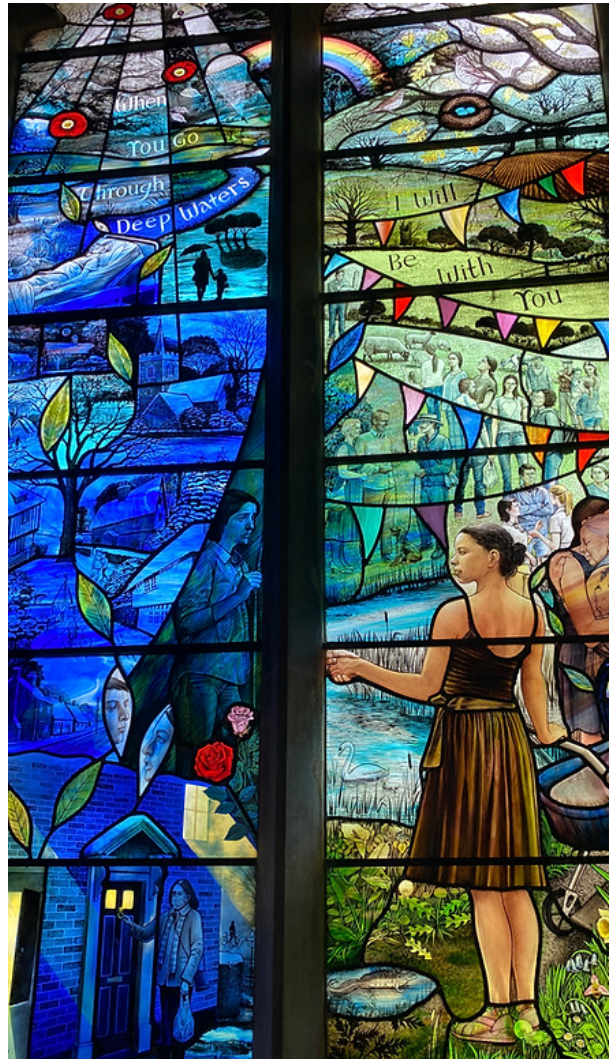
Children from the village school - William Westley Church of England Primary School were also drafted-in to help with the window's design.

Artist Benjamin Finn, who's been working with stained glass for more than 30 years, said the commission involved an "enormous" amount of work.

"It was one of the best things I've done," he said. "It was one of the hardest too. A lot of the imagery that I've used [in the past] has been more explicitly religious. But in a way, this was slightly more secular... but it still has meaning in a Christian context."

Mr Finn, who is 59 and from Essex, designed, manufactured and installed the window.

It features glass from five countries around the world including Italy and Germany.



After our 50th Wedding Anniversary party our niece Helen came to stay with us along with her new guide dog Barney. Unfortunately, Helen's last dog died in December last year so she had been without a dog for a long time.

Both Helen and Barney appeared to have bonded together very well. I had never seen a dog so well controlled around food! However, Helen would take him off his harness to have fun times!



Covid meant that guide dog training had ceased for a while but thankfully it is now back on track again.

We took them to Whittlesford station to start their return journey, and we felt so proud seeing them step confidently on the train to London, and then onto to Glasgow. Helen had a large back pack which contained all her possessions and those of Barney. I had to smile as she knew where everything was, and in which pocket, especially his food!

I would to thank all the people who give to the guide dogs charity, these dogs allow their owners to have freedom to live their lives to the full.

**Beryl**

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*Following Phil's words in last month's contact on rest, I thought it appropriate to include a piece from 'God Calling' on the very subject.*

### **Effort & Rest**

Come to Me, talk to Me, dwell with Me and then you will know My way is the sure way, My paths are the safe paths.

Come very near to Me. Dig deep down into the soil of the Kingdom.

Effort and rest - a union of the two.

***Enjoy the sunshine, Many blessings Kate Leach***

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These are the dates that we will be arranging flowers for this month. As you see there is a blank week so it's not too late to offer. If you would like to put flowers in church to remember a special date, please talk to the flower team as they will be happy to arrange them for you.

3rd September- Rosemary Livings

10th September - Margaret Badcock

17th September-

24th September- Sue Lelliot



***Many thanks , Rosemary Harriss and Dawn Haughton***

*(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.)*

Was it last summer or the summer before that articles appeared on local Facebook pages and local media about how eye-watering sums of money had been spent planting thousands of tree saplings on the landscaped slopes of the new A14, but, it would seem, there had been no budget for their ongoing care. Result? They were all dying. Clearly, the argument continued, either total incompetence on the part of the designers of the scheme or else a bonkers funding scheme which provided funds for the purchase and planting of trees, but not for their maintenance. Either way, a total waste of money and another ecological opportunity missed. I was reminded of this as I watched the landscaped slopes gliding past whilst Margaret drove us up the A14 on our way to a golden wedding party thrown by friends as ancient as ourselves.

Whilst the A14 tree planting controversy was still raging, I happened to remark about it to another old friend who happens to be an arboriculturist and who, in his career, has designed many a landscaping scheme for road developments (in Scotland, as it happens). ‘Wait and see,’ was his advice. He told me that it isn’t economic to pay teams of workers to tend thousands of planted-out saplings for years, and anyway, they are supposed to be able to thrive unattended, being mainly indigenous woodland and scrub species. What they do instead is over-plant drastically, in the knowledge that in a good season at least 20% will survive, and even in an horrendous season (like last year) at least some will survive.

As Margaret and I trundled along, I noticed with surprise just how many trees were beginning to poke up from those protective sleeves that they plant them in. In some places, there were already far too many survivors, which will, presumably, be weeded out not by employees but by natural selection. In other places, the survivors were admittedly pretty sparse. But nowhere were the banks absolutely barren.

I was reminded of how, back when all our friends’ marriages were being formed and we were all in or just out of college, I read Austin Farrer’s description of how God, in ‘designing’ creation, would appear to have been at the same time extremely caring and generous, extremely wasteful, and extremely callous. Death and failure abounds. Have you watched a Yew tree spewing its seed in the wind? Or a pond of carp spawning? The success rate built into the design must be a million-to-one at the very most in both cases. Wastefulness is integral, it would seem, to God’s generosity.

Our highway landscape designers echo this. It doesn’t matter that 90% or more of the money spent on planting roadside saplings goes down the plug hole. What matters is the 5% or 10% that works, resulting, twenty years later, in a roadside crammed with all sorts of shrubs and trees, and all the wildlife associated with it. Our roadside verges, particularly now we have decided to save public money by not mowing them, are not only dazzling displays of colour all summer, but are also important ecological resources. (Why, by the way, has the hemlock been so spectacular this year?)



That drivers have to slow down approaching junctions because they cannot see sufficiently early to make a dash for it, strikes me as yet another benefit.

So let me encourage you, as you are carried along by foot, bike, car, bus or train to theologise about the glorious wastefulness of God in creation. And let me discourage you from flying, because you cannot see a thing up there above the clouds, and your theologising is, in consequence, less fruitful.

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# Cream Teas



in the  
Challis Garden  
High Street, Sawston



(If wet the event will be held at the Footprints Café at the rear of Sawston FC)

**Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> September**

**2.30 – 5pm**

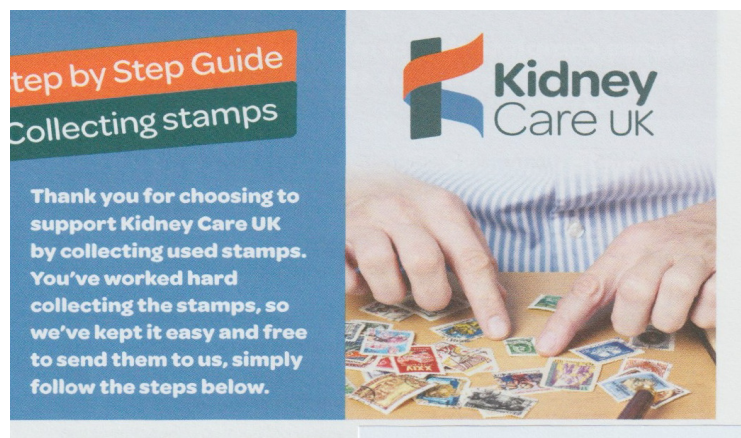
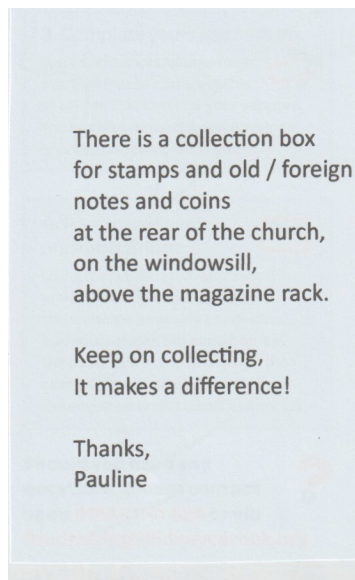
**Entrance by ticket: £9 (10 years & under £4)**

**from Mary tel: 01223 837433**

**or Pam tel: 01223 834220**







Thanks to everyone for their donations of stamps, which have filled three large A4 envelopes and have been sent. Hopefully, there will be enough coins to send very soon. **Pauline**

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## Sowing Hope: Cultivating Faith Through Seed Saving

In July we had a flurry of readings in our morning worship from Matthew's Gospel and I brought in a big jar of saved marigold seeds and spoke of the excitement of seed collecting. Well, this is about the perfect time to do it! Why not give it a go? As you do so, there are also spiritual lessons to be had...

As the seasons change and nature's canvas transforms, we find ourselves at a crossroads of reflection and anticipation. Amidst this rhythm, we have a unique opportunity to embrace the sacred practice of seed saving – a practice that mirrors our journey of faith and reminds us of the hope we carry within. Let's explore the profound significance of saving seeds from our UK gardens and preserving the native beauty of our wildflowers for the years to come.

### Nurturing the Earth, Nurturing Our Souls

Our gardens are more than just patches of soil – they are spaces where we partner with God in the creation process. Just as God created the heavens and the earth, we too are entrusted with tending to this beautiful planet. Saving seeds from our gardens is a tangible way to participate in this divine act. As we select the healthiest plants and cultivate them with care, we witness the miracles of life unfold. The act of seed saving echoes our spiritual journey, as we nurture the seeds of faith within us and watch them grow, just as Jesus spoke of the mustard seed's potential (Matthew 17:20).

### Preserving God's Paintbrush: UK Wildflowers

Beyond our garden gates lies the untamed beauty of UK wildflowers. These delicate wonders are not only a testament to God's artistic hand but also an integral part of our ecosystems. By saving the seeds of native wildflowers, we participate in God's call to stewardship. Just as the Bible urges us to care for His creation, saving wildflower seeds is an act of stewardship that supports pollinators and sustains the fragile balance of our environment.

## Lessons of Patience and Hope

The process of seed saving teaches us valuable spiritual lessons. As we patiently wait for the right time to collect seeds, we learn the importance of timing in God's plans for us. Just as seeds lie dormant, waiting for the right conditions to sprout, we too must trust in God's timing for our lives. Seed saving also embodies the concept of hope. We save seeds with the intention of planting them next year, anticipating the new life that will emerge. This mirrors the hope we have in Christ – the hope of renewal, growth, and transformation.

## Community and Connection

In our faith journey, community plays a pivotal role. Similarly, the practice of seed saving can foster a sense of unity among fellow gardeners and believers. Sharing saved seeds with others nurtures a sense of connection and camaraderie, reflecting the unity we find in the body of Christ. As we exchange seeds, we share not only in the promise of future blooms but also in the promise of God's love and provision.

## Planting Seeds of Faith

As we embark on this journey of saving seeds, let us remember that our gardens and wild spaces are not just physical landscapes but spiritual ones as well. Just as we tend to the earth, we nurture our faith and deepen our relationship with the Creator. Through the act of seed saving, we are reminded of the eternal cycle of life and the hope we have in God's promises.

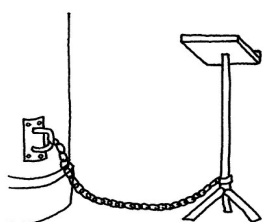
May this practice bring us closer to God, to each other, and to the world He entrusted to our care.

*Blessings,*

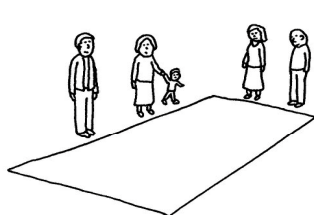
**Phil Nevard**

## SACRED ITEMS

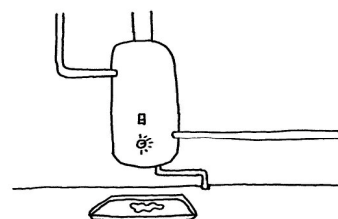
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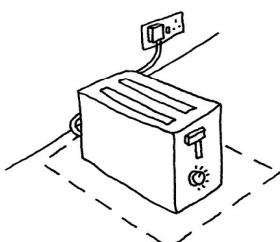
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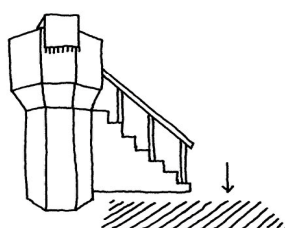
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CARPET IS FORBIDDEN



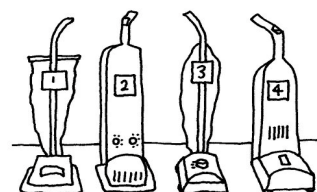
LEAVE THIS TRAY UNDER THE  
BOILER TO CATCH DRIPS



THE CHURCH KITCHEN TOASTER  
MUST REMAIN WITHIN THESE LINES



THE NATIVITY CAN ONLY BE  
PLACED IN THIS SPOT



THIS IS HOW WE PARK  
THE VACUUM CLEANERS

# Prayer

Pray at all times Thessalonians 5 v17

As part of our reflections on fulfilling our desire to enhance our church prayer life, we are starting two new initiatives.

There will be a prayer “post box” in the foyer just inside the front doors. This is for anyone coming into the building to put a prayer request in.

A prayer request can be for anything - giving praise/joyful thanks or for someone or something.

We will also have a “Prayer Ministry Team” who will be available to pray with you after the morning service if you wish.

The team will be wearing yellow lanyards and at least one of them will go to the area to the side of the organ (where some chairs are placed), but anyone of the team will be happy to pray with you.

Alongside these initiatives, I would like to thank everyone who has indicated they are happy to pray at home. Please look at the weekly news sheet that Phil sends out and pray for any listed prayer requests and events/activities that are taking place.

**Anne Pegram**

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## Harvest Festival October 15<sup>th</sup>

### Tools with a Mission

This is a charity which collects used “tools” from people and gives them out to those who can use them to create livelihoods and transform lives. Its headquarters are in Ipswich with other centres across the UK.

Locally it provides volunteering opportunities to older retirees who are struggling from isolation and loneliness. It also supports and offers skill training to community groups such as learning disabilities and refugees .

Through our 'local to global' model, we prevent over 400 tonnes of tools from crowding UK landfills annually (increasing to over 600 tonnes in 2023) and engage local communities, offering volunteering opportunities that nurture skills and foster social connections. The impact of our work resonates globally, as we supply refurbished tools to over 500 organisations in Sub-Saharan Africa.



These tools equip individuals with the skills needed to completely transform their lives and communities.

By refurbishing and recycling, we save over 1,100 tonnes of CO2 emissions annually (increasing to over 1,600 tonnes in 2023), demonstrating our commitment to environmental sustainability. Our toolkits serve as catalysts for change, from supporting families and education to strengthening communities. Our local efforts have a global impact, helping to create a world where everyone has the chance to thrive.

It sends equipment to Sub Saharan Africa, Zambia, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Malawi, and DR Congo. It helps vulnerable people, eg single mothers school dropouts, street orphans, homeless people, physical disabilities and ex sex workers.

Through these links it helps people to come out of poverty for those who cannot afford to buy their own tools and are willing to be trained to new skills.

Please help us support this worthwhile charity at our Harvest Festival on Sunday October 15<sup>th</sup>. If you have donations which need collecting, please contact Phil or Mary. We will also be supporting Jimmy's Night Shelter and Huntingdon's charity food bank with food donations.

***Thank you, Mary.***

## Yes please

**Agricultural tools:** fork, spade, hoe, garden rake, hand fork and trowel, lopper, secateurs and hand shears

**Builders' tools:** spade, shovel, 3ft spirit level, axe, crowbar, fork, sledgehammer, bow saw, bolsters, chisels, all types of hammers and trowels, pin and lines, tape measures, hacksaws and Stanley and hacksaw blades

**Carpenters' tools:** bevel, braces, clamps, hand drills and bits, all types of files and hammers, Stanley knife, all types of planes and saws, pliers, rules, all types of saws and screwdrivers, squares plus screws, nails and bolts

**Electricians' tools:** allen keys, hand drills and bits, all types of pliers and hacksaws, screwdrivers, spanners, soldering iron, voltmeter

**Motor mechanics' tools:** allen keys, cold chisels, breast drill and bits, all types of hammers and pliers, punches, metric socket sets, spanners, adjustable spanners, cantilever toolboxes, tyre pressure gauge

**Plumbers' tools:** basin or tap wrench, wire brush, breast drill and bits, various grips and saws, screwdriver, oil can etc

**Garage workshop:** hydraulic jack, axle stands, battery charger, ramps and large engineer's vice

**Power tools:** hand and bench drills, sander, planer, jigsaw, circular, band and chop saws, lathe, cultivator, rotavator, welding machine and generator

**Sewing machines:** manual, electric, treadle and industrial

**Knitting machines:** machine and hand wool, needles and patterns

**Haberdashery:** needles, cottons, large material pieces/rolls, buttons, zips, tapes

**Fully working IT equipment:** desktop computers and laptops running a minimum of Microsoft Windows 7, tablets

**Bibles:** in modern English

## No thank you

It's not about what we want, it's about what people can use. What may be useful to us, may not be useful to recipients in our partner countries. If we say we can't take something, we're not being ungrateful, we're just being honest.

All broken tools - we can sharpen and remove surface rust, but can't repair or take tools with woodworm.

Ladders and step ladders

Lawn rakes/long-handled shears

Electric and hand lawnmowers

Printers, scanners, typewriters

Disability aids: walking frames, wheelchairs, medicines and glasses

Clothes and shoes

Bikes: men's, women's and children's

Books

Embroidery materials, curtains and weaving materials

Cooking pots, pans and kitchen utensils, crockery and cutlery, household appliances and musical instruments

This isn't an exhaustive list, just the main things we're offered by well-meaning supporters on a regular basis

### ***Please note:***

*Sometimes people donate tools that are not suitable to send to Africa, either due to their age or because they would not be used. We also have some tools donated in such quantities that we cannot use all of them. On these occasions, we will attempt to sell the items to raise vital funds for our work.*

# Representing the Methodist Church at the Coronation

By the Revd Graham Thompson, President of the Methodist Conference

It was an amazing privilege to represent the Methodist Church at the Coronation of King Charles and Queen Camilla. The arrangements for the day were kept from public attention for as long as possible. My invitation came about three weeks beforehand and the requirement to attend a full dress rehearsal about a week later. All of which meant that plans had to be changed and I am grateful to those (especially the Methodist Diaconal Order) who accommodated these.

The Faith Leaders who were invited to attend the Coronation were led into the Abbey just after 10a.m. and seated in the North Transept behind the pulpit. We couldn't see all that was happening but had the benefit of television screens that we could watch but we could hear everything. The music was incredible; chest pounding and moving.

The overall message - I have come not to be served but to serve - was clearly enunciated from the beginning of the service and reinforced throughout, including a reference by Prince William in his speech at the Coronation Concert the next day.

The call to service; to live for the benefit of others, is a call that we should all recognise. After all, we are disciples of the Servant King and discover how much we can receive as we give ourselves to meet the needs of others.



Hugely significant were the number of departures from the Coronation of seventy years ago. On Saturday, ecumenical partners took part (including Helen Cameron as Moderator of the Free Churches Group) as they invoked a corporate blessing on the king. Leaders of other faith groups also took part as they brought some of the symbols to the throne. And, right at the end of the service, they met the newly crowned king at the door of the Abbey and declared, "Your Majesty, as neighbours in faith, we acknowledge the value of public service. We unite with people of all faiths and beliefs in thanksgiving, and in service with

you for the common good."

We are all called by God to serve and to do so in partnership with others. This clear message ran through the whole occasion, whilst also assuring everyone who would listen that God's leading and a positive response to God's call is all that we need so that we might know life in all its fullness.

**(With Thanks to Inform – The magazine for Methodists Churches in Orwell and Royston)**



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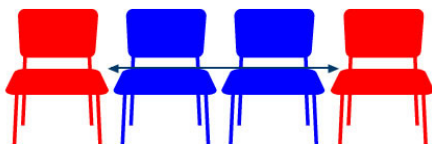
[contact@sawstonfreechurch.org.uk](mailto:contact@sawstonfreechurch.org.uk)

**We're back to normal  
Every Sunday at 10.30am  
but with a difference!**

You can now join us in church,  
or from the comfort of your home using Zoom!

Email [secretary@sawstonfreechurch.org.uk](mailto:secretary@sawstonfreechurch.org.uk) for more details

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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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