CONTACT October 2023



Volume 64 - Issue 10 Sawston Free Church

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:

01 Oct 10.30am : Morning Worship – David Lloyd

3.00pm - 5pm : Messy Church

08 Oct 10.30am : Communion & Brigades Enrolment – Rev Phil Nevard

15 Oct 10.30am : Harvest & Invitation Sunday – Rev Phil Nevard

Followed by Bring and Share Lunch

22 Oct 10.30am : Go4th

29 Oct 10.30am : Morning Worship – Rev Phil Nevard

The closing date for **November** Contact is **Friday 20th October**

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The monthly magazine of Sawston Free Church United Reformed Methodist

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Dear friends,

As the leaves transform into a breathtaking tapestry of reds, oranges, and golds, and a chill creeps into the air, we find ourselves once again in the embrace of autumn. The changing seasons remind us of the magnificent beauty of the world God has created, and they also hold profound lessons for our spiritual lives.

In Ecclesiastes 3:1, we are reminded that "for everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven." Just as the natural world experiences the rhythm of changing seasons, our spiritual lives also ebb and flow through seasons of growth, reflection, and transformation.



Autumn, in particular, offers us several poignant lessons for our spiritual journey:

- Letting Go: As we watch the leaves fall gently from the trees, we are reminded of the
 importance of letting go in our own lives. Autumn teaches us that there is a season for
 everything, and sometimes, we must release the old to make room for the new. In our
 spiritual walk, this might mean letting go of past hurts, regrets, or attachments that hinder
 our growth.
- Change and Impermanence: The changing colours of autumn leaves are a testament to the impermanence of all things. Seasons change, and so do the circumstances of our lives. This season encourages us to find stability not in the external world but in our unchanging faith in God.
- 3. **Harvest and Gratitude**: Autumn is a season of harvest, a time when we reap the fruits of our labour. It is a beautiful reminder to count our blessings and express gratitude for the abundance in our lives. In our spiritual lives, we are called to recognize the harvest of wisdom and growth that God has bestowed upon us. (Maybe you have been blessed with a shed full of surplus tools! If so why not express your gratitude by blessing someone else and donating them to our harvest Tools With a Mission collection!)

Just as autumn has its unique beauty and purpose, the autumn of our spiritual lives has its own significance. It is a time of reflection, a season to shed what no longer serves us, and an opportunity to gather the fruits of our spiritual journey.

During this season, I encourage you to:

- 1. **Reflect**: Take time to reflect on your spiritual journey. What have you learned? How have you grown? What spiritual "leaves" do you need to release?
- 2. **Let Go**: Release any burdens, fears, or regrets that are weighing you down. Just as the trees release their leaves, allow yourself to let go of what no longer serves your soul.
- 3. **Harvest Blessings**: Count your blessings and express gratitude for the goodness in your life. Share your abundance with others and be a source of light in their lives.
- 4. **Prepare for Winter**: Just as autumn prepares the earth for the stillness of winter, use this season to prepare your heart for the quieter, introspective moments of your spiritual journey. Seek a deeper connection with God through prayer and meditation.

As we immerse ourselves in the beauty of autumn and embrace the lessons it offers, let us remember that the changing seasons are a reflection of the ever-moving tapestry of our lives. Let us trust in God's guidance, find comfort in the beauty of change, and carry the lessons of autumn into the depth of our souls.

May this season be a reminder of the transformative power of faith, and may it fill your hearts with peace, gratitude, and hope.

Every Blessing,

Rev'd Phil Nevard

Phil

God Calling - Sublime Heights

I am your deliverer. Trust in me absolutely. Know that I will do the very best for you. Be ready and willing for My Will to be done.

Know that with Me all things are possible. Cling joyfully to that truth.

Say many times, "All things are possible with my Master, my Lord, my friend.

This truth, accepted and firmly believed in, is the ladder up which a soul can climb from the lowest of pits to the sublimest of heights.

Many blessings to you all

Kate

Cream Teas in Aid of Christian Aid.



On supposedly the hottest day of the year 77 kind people came to the Mary Challis garden to eat a delicious cream tea in the shade of umbrellas and leafy trees. Although it was hot the afternoon seemed to go well and everyone enjoyed themselves.

A huge thank you to all the helpers who came and set up in the morning, moved tables in to the shade, laid up tables, hung up bunting, set the food out, and made tea etc.

That does not mention everyone who kindly baked and donated the food for the tea, which was appreciated by everyone. Also thank you to those who looked after the guests during the afternoon, filling up tea cups, plates of scones etc and clearing up afterwards. It was a huge team effort.

The great news is that £801 was raised for the charity... a huge amount. So, thank you again to everyone involved.

Mary, Pam and Tony.









The Theological Tapestry of the Season of Creation

Throughout September every year, churches across the world mark the "Season of Creation". It is one of the boxes we ticked in our Eco Friendly Church questionnaire – marking the "Season of Creation."

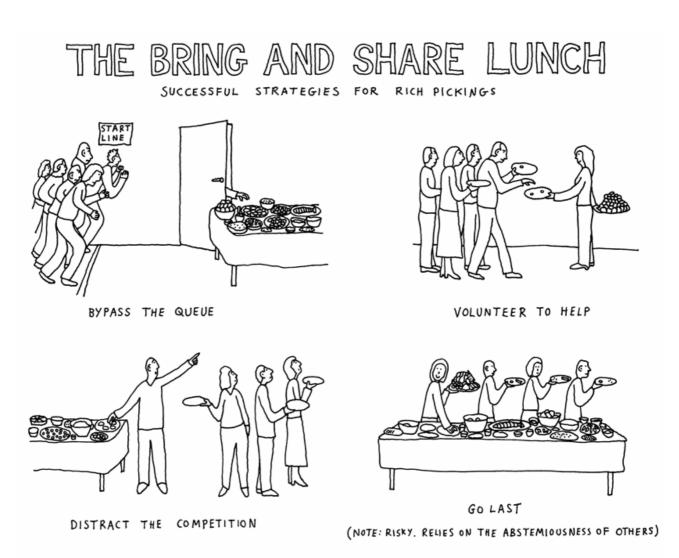
In the tapestry of our Christian faith, the Season of Creation is a thread that weaves together theology, stewardship, and reverence for the natural world. This special liturgical season invites us to delve deeper into the theological underpinnings that make it a meaningful and vital part of our spiritual journey.

- 1. Creator-Creation Relationship: At the heart of the Season of Creation lies the recognition that God is the Creator of all things. Genesis 1:31 reminds us that "God saw all that he had made, and it was very good." This season emphasizes the divine connection between the Creator and the created. It calls us to reflect on God's wisdom, power, and love evident in the intricate design of our natural world.
- **2. Stewardship and Responsibility:** Theological reflection during this season centres on our role as stewards of God's creation. We are not mere spectators; we are entrusted with the care and nurturing of the Earth. This echoes Genesis 2:15, where God places humanity in the Garden of Eden "to tend and keep it." The Season of Creation urges us to examine our ecological footprint and consider the ethical implications of our actions on the environment.
- **3. Incarnation and Redemption:** Another theological dimension of this season is the connection between the incarnation of Christ and the redemption of creation. The birth of Jesus Christ demonstrates God's profound love for humanity and all of creation. Through Christ's redemptive work on the cross, God offers reconciliation not only for humanity but also for the entire cosmos. Romans 8:22 reminds us that "the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth." In Christ, we find hope for the renewal and restoration of all things.
- **4. Justice and Solidarity:** Theological reflection during the Season of Creation extends to matters of justice and solidarity. We are called to recognize the interconnectedness of environmental issues with social justice concerns. The marginalized and vulnerable often bear the brunt of environmental degradation. Our faith compels us to advocate for equitable access to resources and to stand with those affected by environmental injustice.

5. Sacramental Awareness: This season also encourages us to embrace a sacramental awareness of the world around us. The natural world is not just a backdrop but a means through which God communicates grace. Just as the bread and wine in Communion become vehicles for God's presence, so too can the beauty and complexity of nature reveal the divine.

In the Season of Creation, we find a profound theological tapestry that reminds us of our interconnectedness with the Earth and with God's creative and redemptive work. It challenges us to live out our faith in practical ways by caring for the environment, advocating for justice, and deepening our appreciation of the world as a sacred gift. As we journey through this season, let us be inspired by the rich theological foundations that underpin it and commit to living out our faith in ways that honour the Creator and all of creation.

Phil Neva	rd
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Footprints Café - A Thank You

At our August Directors' Meeting, Malcolm announced he planned to retire as a Director at the end of September.

We owe a huge debt of gratitude to Malcolm without whom Footprints [formerly OWL] would not have re-opened.

His passion and belief in the original purpose and ethos of the café has been amazing.

So, a BIG thank you Malcolm for all your hard work and dedication.

We trust you can finally enjoy your retirement and feel you are "going" to the café without having to be "doing"!

October Prayers

This month please pray for our Brigades Enrolment Service on 8th October at 10.30 am. Please pray for the members of the Brigades and their leaders and continue to pray for them throughout the year.

Please pray for our Invitation Service on 15th October at 10.30 am. This will also be our Harvest Service followed by a Bring and Share lunch. This year as well as bringing the usual produce we are collecting for Tools with a Mission.

Please pray for Phil as he leads these services.

Please pray for Footprints Café, for new people to feel called to support this area of the church's mission.

Finally, let us pray for the wider world where there is so much pain and suffering.

Anne Pegram

The UK "Illegal Immigration Act"

As Sawston Free Church we have been blessed by our partnership with Our Lady of Lourdes and "Hope into Action". Through that partnership we have got to know refugee families from Syria, Afghanistan and Ukraine. Getting to know real people and hearing their stories is always more powerful than reading outraged internet posts from people who have had no such encounters. The denominational leaders of the Methodist Church and the United Reformed Church – our parent bodies – have added their signatures to a letter lamenting the passing of this act, as follows...

As a coalition of 290 organisations representing the human rights, migrants' rights, refugee and asylum, anti-trafficking, children's, violence against women and girls, LGBTQI+, disability rights, health, housing, racial justice, criminal justice, arts, international development, environment, democracy, pan-equality, faith, access to justice, and other sectors, we condemn the passage of the Illegal Migration Act today, and stand in solidarity with all who will be affected.

We all deserve to live safe from harm. But this senselessly cruel Act will have a devastating impact on people's lives. It turns our country's back on people seeking safety, blocking them from protection, support, and justice at a time they need it most.

In abandoning the UK's moral and legal obligations, the Act risks breaching multiple international human rights treaties including the Refugee Convention and the European Convention on Human Rights while shielding the Government from accountability. The UK Government has admitted that it cannot confirm if the Act is compatible with the UK's obligations under the European Convention on Human Rights.

The Act will force people into situations that threaten their lives – whether by placing children in detention or sending people off to countries where their lives might be at grave risk. Moreover, the Act attacks the very core of human rights, which is the principle that we all have them regardless of who we are or where we are from. In stripping the most basic rights from people seeking safety and a better life, the Act dismantles human rights protections for all of us.

Either all of us have human rights, or none of us do. While the UK Government's plans will harm those seeking safety the most, this is an attack on all of us and the values we hold dear.

The government has rushed through this law despite broad and deep opposition. But our fight is not over. As caring people, we will continue to fight for the right for people to seek safety and a better life without being forced to take dangerous journeys and without being punished for how they enter the UK. We will keep holding those in power to account for upholding the UK's international obligations. We will strive for an asylum and immigration system that treats everyone with dignity and respect. We will stand in solidarity with and fight alongside everyone who makes the UK their home and build a society that treats everyone with compassion.

Revd Dr Tessa Henry-Robinson, Moderator of General Assembly, United Reformed Church

Revd Gill Newton. President of the Methodist Conference

Haslingfield Christmas Market

We have decided to move our Market forward this year and it will be held on Saturday 18th November. We would like to invite anyone from around the circuit to have a stall - either promoting a charity or selling their crafts. If you are interested and would like more information, please contact Christine Kipping (grahamkipping@aol.com or 01223 870227).

We began holding this outdoor Market in 2020 when we were recovering from our 2nd Covid lockdown. It was a great success that year and it has grown since then and we also have a small number of stalls indoors.

We would be so pleased to welcome you.

Best wishes,

Miriam

Miriam Webb

Circuit Administrator

These are the dates that we will be arranging flowers for this month. As you see there are 2 blank weeks 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.

1st October

8Th October - Isabel McCubbin

15th October - Harvest / Mary Simuyandi

22nd October - Sue Sisk

29th October

Many thanks, Rosemary Harriss, Dawn Haughton, Linda Moxon & Rosemary Livings

Friend or Foe?



(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.)

David Attenborough, the nation's favourite pensioner, recently celebrated on TV the diversity of British wildlife. If I understood him correctly, he said that it is the fungus in the soil that feeds the roots that feed the trees. No fungus, no nourishment, and trees die. So far so good.

In woodlands where the soil has been long undisturbed, he said, the fungus builds up into complex networks. During harsh times such as droughts, mature trees with deep roots survive, but young trees, with shallow roots, struggle. Now the astonishing part. At such times, mature trees detect distress signals sent by young trees via the shared fungal network. The mature trees are then able to direct nourishment that they are deriving from their deeper roots through the fungal network, thereby sustaining the younger trees.

I was reminded of this while tapping out my piece last month about how, on new roadside verges that have been deliberately over-planted, survival-of-the-fittest will, over time, reduce the tree population to a sustainable density.

I conclude that sometimes trees co-operate to ensure that their species thrives, and at other times they compete viciously, to ensure their individual survival. Richard Dawkins, author of *The Selfish Gene* (1976) and notorious trasher of all religious beliefs, would not be surprised (though what Attenborough was telling us about fungus was not known in 1976). Dawkins wrote about how all animal genes, including human genes, use the body that hosts them to engineer their own survival, not the host's. Sometimes that means destroying their host. Sometimes that means helping their host to survive.

Genes do it. Animals do it. Even trees do it, Attenborough now tells us. And humans do it too. Sometimes we collaborate to ensure that we all thrive. Sometimes, we even engineer our own deaths for the common good (like 'Titus' Oates saying 'I am just going outside and may be some time,' as he walked out to die in the Antarctic snow in the vain hope that he was enabling Scott and the others to survive). At other times, we fight, not heeding the deaths of others, in order to ensure our own personal survival, deeming that to be the most important thing. I thought about this, too, as I tapped out my piece last month. How do we decide?

Dawkins would say, I think, that this balance between individual and group survival is worked out by a kind of natural calculus hard-wired into all living things, and controlled not by us (however much we might wish it were), but by our genes. His is a brutally 'bottom-up' view of life, driven completely by empirical scientific methodology at its most fundamentalist.

Christians, it seems to me, are not in a position to argue about the empirical realities identified by Dawkins or anyone else. Facts are facts, whoever articulates them. What I notice about Attenborough, though, is that he talks about trees 'noticing distress signals' and 'helping each other out.' These are not 'bottom-up' expressions. These suggest that trees, in their mysterious tree-like way, can take an overview of the situation, and make an overall, best-option, 'top-down' decision.

When we humans take an overview in that way, we call it making a moral decision, based not just on facts, but on human values. When we Christians make moral decisions based on values as well as facts, we pray. That is, we consider the facts and evaluate them in the spirit of our risen Lord.

On the 2nd September we held the Horticultural Show in the Challis Gardens and it was very successful with lots of exhibits and a lovely village atmosphere. It reminded me of an old article I had put in Contact in April 2017 regarding the Sawston Flower Show.

David

(This is a copy of the article that appeared in Contact in August 1966 – by Dorrie Peters)

The Judge Of All Knows Best

I have often felt that I should like to relate this little incident, which happened when I was a child, and now I have the opportunity to record it in CONTACT.

It happened about 60 years ago, and as the older folk in the village know, the Flower Show was held annually down 'The Squires' and it was a great occasion. A large tent was erected to the right of the drive, and there was much rivalry between the men of the village over their garden produce, and sometimes this almost led to blows.

At the further end, past the Hall, was a field where sports were held and I remember that my brother (he was killed in the first world war) won the high jump for many years running and we were very proud of him. Believe it or not, but I used to run in the girls races and was once the proud winner of a silver topped umbrella.

I think the Show was held on August Bank Holiday Monday and my story begins on the Sunday evening previous. I had entered for the Wild Flower competition and naturally the flowers had to be picked the evening before the Show.

That particular year I was privileged to take my small cousin out in her pram (now Mrs. Eva Fairlie) while her mother went to chapel at 6.00pm. After going to Sunday school in the morning and afternoon I was always pleased to be able to take the baby for a walk, but on this particular Sunday I did not want to do so because I wanted to go and pick my flowers ready for the show. I asked my

mother's advice and she told me it was my duty to take the baby out as usual and that I could pick some flowers as I went along.

I started off towards Windmill Road, which you now know as Babraham Road. On the right hand side of the road stood a big windmill, the pride of the village, it saw to the grinding of the corn for the farmers of Sawston and surrounding villages; also I suppose for the



housewives who gleaned their own corn. Incidentally, in later years a strong wind broke the sails of the windmill and as it was past repair it was pulled down. Mrs Allen had her bungalow built on this site. The dwelling house of the miller stood for many more years but it eventually emerged with new bricks into what we now know as 'The White House'.

Past the mill I trudged with baby Eva and I'm afraid she had more scowls than smiles that evening. Some of my school friends passed me and I knew that they were going to Babraham Common, where I also knew some lovely bulrushes were growing by the river. My heart sank as I made my way into the small drift that led to North Farm, with a cornfield one side and a hedgerow on the other, but it was surprising what flowers I was able to find in this cornfield.

When I made my way home I encountered my school friends with smirks on their faces and lovely bulrushes peeping over their shoulders, and my heart sank even lower. I delivered my small charge to her mother, took my flowers home and put them in a jam jar. "I know what I'll do", I said to my mother, "I will get up early in the morning, go down the railroad and gather some wild grasses". This I did, and when I had found a very choice grass called "Maiden Hair Fern" and mixed this with my flowers, there was quite an improvement.

At 10.00am the next morning, we carried our jars down to the Squires, into the tent where we placed them on a table allotted to us, and were given a card to place beside our jar. As I left the tent I gave a swift glance back and saw my friends bulrushes, which I felt sure would gain first prize.

Having gone home for a midday meal, I then donned my best frock – no pretty frocks as seen today, just one for all the week and one for Sundays – and then it was time to go for the opening of the Show, and we all trouped through the iron gates leading from Church Lane. I had not taken many steps inside when a girl friend came running towards me. "Dorrie Nunn" she said "you have won First Prize for your flowers, and you don't deserve it as my bulrushes look much nicer than your wild flowers!" I remember answering with a lump in my throat "Oh well, the judge must know best".

In after years, on recalling this incident to mind, I realised it was our heavenly judge who knew best and I feel sure that it was he who had put it into the heart of the earthly judge to award me that prize, because I had fulfilled my duty the previous evening.

So I hope that if any of the older scholars of the Family Church read this little story, you will take a tip from Aunt Dorrie and if you can't decide upon duty and pleasure, always put duty first because you will be rewarded. Perhaps not as quickly as I was on that Flower Show day, but sometime later you will receive your reward, and as the motto says:

Do your duty that is best Leave unto the Lord the rest.

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The Footprints Café



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.

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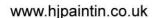
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