

CONTACT

September 2025



Volume 66 - Issue 9
Sawston Free Church

Churches Services and Dates for Your Diary

SFC Services-(also available via zoom) SFC email: secretary@sawstonfreechurch.org.uk,

07 Sept 10.30am : Morning Worship – David Lloyd
 03.00pm : Messy Church

14 Sept 10.30am : Holy Communion – Phil Nevard

21 Sept 10.30am : Morning Worship – Mark Hayes from Thaxted
 A Pulpit swap with Phil Nevard

28 Sept 10.30am : Go4th

A big thank you to all the visiting and local preachers who have helped us during Phil's sabbatical by leading Sunday worship. It has been a bit of a juggle at times but everyone has been so kind and accommodating giving us all a lot to think about as well as new songs and tunes to learn.

The closing date for October Contact is **Friday** 19th September

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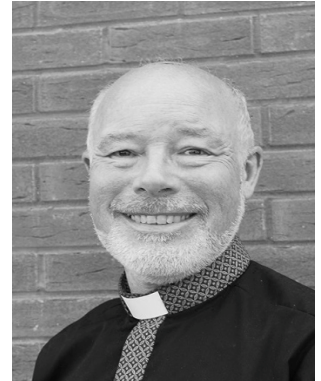
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Dear friends,

September always feels like a new beginning. The school year starts. Diaries fill up. We pull our jumpers out again and breathe the scent of autumn in the air.

In church, too, things begin to stir. Meetings restart. Plans are made. There's a sense of gathering momentum after the quiet of summer.



That energy can be exciting—but it can also feel like pressure. The temptation is to rush in, to be busy again, to measure our days by how much we've done.

But the Gospel tells us a different story. It invites us not to earn grace but to receive it. Not to sprint but to walk with God. Not to prove ourselves but to belong.

So as we begin this new season together, I hope we'll make space for what really matters. For relationships, for prayer, for welcome. For listening deeply to one another—and to God.

Let's not be afraid of starting small. A kind word. A shared meal. An open door. These are the seeds from which love grows.

And remember: whatever lies ahead, we do not face it alone. The God who has walked with us through summer will walk with us through autumn too.

One step at a time. One day at a time. Grace enough for each.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Phil Nevard'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Every Blessing,

Rev'd Phil Nevard
Phil



This year our Christians Together in Sawston Holiday Club was called The Club House and the main message was EVERYBODY'S WELCOME

Nicola Grieves (in her last month before retiring as the Children's and Youth Development Officer for the Eastern Synod) lead our amazing group of volunteers.

We had 28 children, 18 helpers and 1 dog (Mabel) who was a huge hit with the children.



Lucy and Emma were our story tellers and held the children's attention. Over four fun-packed mornings we learned together about three episodes in the life of Jesus and one of Paul's letters.

Richard and Jill did a fabulous job of keeping everyone safe and Abbie led the refreshments team in the kitchen.

Each day we played games, sang, had craft activities and made and ate themed snacks.

We were also treated to some very interesting (but not particularly amusing) jokes from the children!

Everyone had a great time!

It is always a privilege to share some of our heavenly Father's love with young people and in this case it was also very pleasurable as the youngsters really got on well with each other and fully engaged with all of the activities.

It was amazing!

Matthew Jones



A Short Series On Prayer

Petition – Asking with Honesty (Phil Nevard)

Asking can feel vulnerable. Whether it's help, healing, strength, or clarity—we worry we're asking too much, or not the right way. But Jesus said, "Ask." Not because we twist God's arm—but because we're children, and children are allowed to ask.

Petition is where prayer gets personal. It's where we bring what's really going on: the fears, the questions, the daily bread we need. And God listens—not with impatience, but with compassion.

We won't always get the answer we want. But that doesn't mean God hasn't heard. Sometimes, the answer is peace. Sometimes, it's a slow unfolding. Sometimes, it's strength to get through the day.

Don't hold back. Say it plainly. "Lord, I'm tired." "Please help me through this." "Be near." These are good prayers.

And maybe, in time, we begin to see that the asking itself is a gift. It reminds us we are not abandoned. We are held.

****A question:****

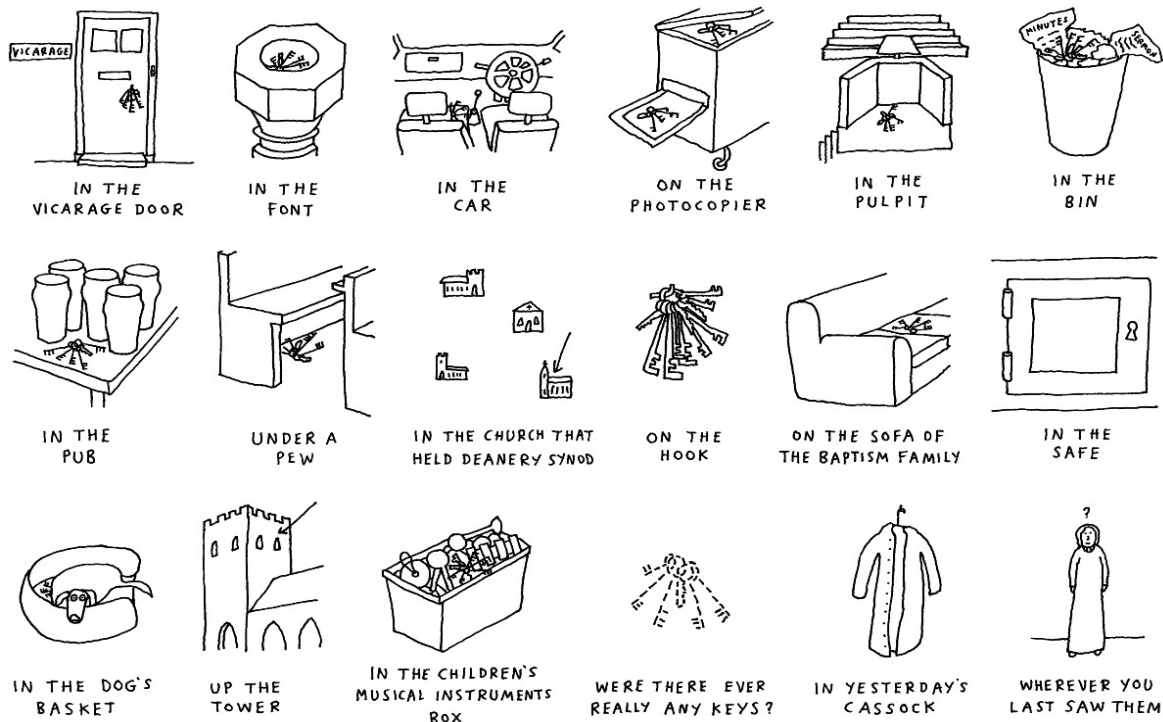
What do I need from God right now?

****A response:****

Ask. Say it simply. Then rest in the knowledge that God hears—and cares.

WHERE ARE MY KEYS?

A GUIDE FOR CLERGY AND CHURCH OFFICIALS



Cartoonchurch.com

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

In recent years, the response to the girls out-performing the boys at school has been 'Good for the girls! Boys, you need to buck up!' This year the tables have, in part, been turned. Far from expressing praise, the headlines have reflected an outraged suspicion that the system has been re-jigged to favour boys. Of 'Well done, boys!' – not a sound.

Also in recent years there has been a growing concern that we are creating a culture in which boys are not criticised for what they might say or do, but for what they are – male.

As I write this, there are disturbing reports about national flags being put up in our streets by young men proclaiming 'love, unity and patriotism.' The fear is that they are proclaiming nothing of the sort. (<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cx271162ee30>)

The Persephone Press has just re-published Sylvia Carson's *Crooked Cross* (1934) about the disaffected pre-war German youth and the rise of fascism. (The 'Crooked Cross' is the Swastika.) Carson based her novel (currently being serialised in BBC Sounds) on her visits to her German friends. It is. She was an ignored prophet. Consider this dialogue:

"'Do you *want* another war, Helmy?' asked Frau Kluger quietly, keeping her eyes on the bread she was cutting.

'I don't know,' he answered miserably. 'I don't know what I want. I want something – we all want something – we all want to be somebody, want to have something – make something.'

'You mean you all want to break something,' broke in Lexa sharply. 'And when you've broken everything you can touch – what d'you think you'll do then?'"

Young men *need* a way in which they can be somebody, have something, and make something – a way in which they can earn their self-respect. Otherwise, Carson warned, they will break things. She was horribly correct. Having broken things, they broke people - 50 to 80 million of them, depending on how you count.

Are we currently re-seeing Carson's nightmare in its initial stages right across Western Society, and in particular here in Britain? 'Of course not!' we say. That's what we said in 1934. I ask myself 'What have we Christians to say?' and answer, 'Very little.' That too was true of 1934. Why are we Christians so silent? Because we lack the words we need.

The Old Testament stereotype for manhood is primarily that of the Davidic noble warrior. In inter-testamental times this image was glorified into the Son-of-Man, the semi-divine hero leading the celestial hosts and sweeping all before him. An unresolved question running through the New Testament is, 'Is Jesus this God-Man warrior?' It has remained unresolved. Why? Because, I believe, we Christians find the tensions presented by Jesus unbearable. Rather than seek true resolution, we warp him to our will.

Victorian Britain proclaimed 'Muscular Christianity' to the world. 'Nothing wrong with power,' we said, 'Provided it is in good Christian hands.' Putin and Trump would say as much. The Nazis, having dressed Jesus in Teutonic clothes, said the same.

Can the New Testament Jesus be forced into this Divine Hero image? Of course. But at a price. What about Jesus the healer, reconciler, forgiver, shepherd, restorer, peace-maker, servant, sufferer, champion of the weak and the poor, friend of women, ... the list goes on? 'No problem,' says the Muscular Christian. 'Victory first, then all those other things.' That, I believe, isn't Christianity at all. If that is right, Jesus died for nothing.

Healer, reconciler, forgiver, shepherd etc., the problem, it seems to me, is that none of these images reflects how today's young man instinctively wants to think of himself, nor what today's young woman instinctively looks for in a young man (though after bitter experience she may well come to value gentleness over muscularity). As a result, Christians, then as now, choose between preaching a form of Muscular Christianity – because it is attractive (surprisingly, for women as much as men) - and being helplessly silent in the face of the rising tide of discontent and disaffection in our society.

Over the last fifty years, Christian women, reflecting patterns in secular society, have discovered an entirely new vocabulary in which to express their womanhood and their place in society. Christian feminism is not to be under-estimated or under-valued. It is a mighty theological success, and is to be celebrated. What is not sufficiently remarked upon is that it has been achieved, in significant part, as it has in wider secular society, through implacable opposition to the conventional understanding of what it is to be male.

'It's up to the men, isn't it?' No, it isn't! We will only discover the folly of that when it is too late. Already, in some parts of the church, men, mirroring wider society, are striving to put women back in their box. In such churches, women are allowed in the pulpit to dust, but not to lead. Surprisingly, there are Christian women welcoming this. Presumably, they like being broken by 'Christian' men. Less surprisingly, 'Christian' men like breaking them.

More thoughtful Christian people need, I believe, to discover a new social contract in which all people can be proud to what they are, and everyone can be proud of each other. The nearest thing I can think of is the (sadly, largely fictional) Mediaeval Code of Chivalry. At its theoretical best, it provided a Christian framework in which everyone knew exactly what they had to do to hold themselves (and be held by society) in honour. Only when it failed did the men resort to breaking things.

In such a new code, the image of Jesus as healer, reconciler, forgiver, shepherd, restorer, peace-maker, sufferer, and servant would emerge as genuinely attractive and formative, offering men and women a way 'to be somebody, want to have something – make something.' And the image of manhood promoted by the Tate brothers, in which breaking things is glorified, would be utterly despised as the intellectually and spiritually impoverished thing it is.

Amen, Come Lord Jesus!

September Prayers

Please give thanks for the success of the holiday club.

As the new academic year starts please pray for :

Phil and Lythan as they return from their sabbaticals

Brigades and Junior Church returning after the summer break

All returning/starting school/college



At the service on 10th August, Mike Wilson prayed this prayer with us:

Father:

We know we have fallen short at times.

We find ourselves in situations we should never have got into,

and we have not always been as kind and generous as others have been to us.

We are sorry and we come to you, because, for all our faults,

we are and always will be, your children,

and you are and always will be, our heavenly Father.

A joy that knows no limits,

A lightness in My Spirit

Here in the Grace of God, I stand

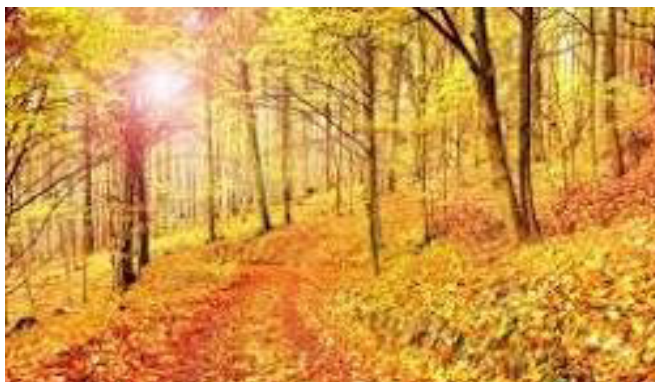
Thanks be to God

Amen

MONTH of ACCOMPANIED PRAYER

Autumn 2025

*Time out — Explore prayer
— Find God in daily life*



Wednesday mornings in person
at 7 Brookside, Cambridge CB2 1JE
OR by zoom or telephone at an agreed time
(see application form; closing date **Friday 5th September**)

Once again the team are offering an opportunity for people to be accompanied individually once a week by a trained guide in Autumn 2025 from 17th September – week ending 17th October. There will be the option of face to face meetings with a guide, limited to Wednesday mornings and held at 7 Brookside. Or at a pre-arranged time during the week via zoom or by telephone. There will be no charge for participation although donations (for Brookside) are welcome.

A prayer in the spirit of the journey we will all be making

*Lord my God, when your love spilled over into creation You thought of me. I am from love of love .
. . . for love.*

*Let my heart, O God, always recognise, cherish and enjoy your goodness in all of creation. Direct all that is in
me toward your praise. Teach me reverence for every person, all things.*

Energise me in your service.

Lord God may nothing distract me from your love....

May I never seek or choose to be other than you intend or wish. Amen

If you are interested, please email (or ring) for more details and an application form

—

Judy Bennett-Prowse cambsprayer@gmail.com

Kay Dodsworth: ekdodsworth@gmail.com; 01223 234493 or 07786910406.

Romie Ridley: romieridley@gmail.com; 07941862435 or 01223 842922

Other members of the team include: Kathy Bishop, Vilma Broadhurst, Rosey Feuall,
Joy Fernando, Janet Witting



For All The Family

Cryptic Clues For Birds



- | | | | |
|-----|------------------------------------|-----|--|
| 1. | Blackpool has a large one of these | 21. | Very Blustery Evening |
| 2. | 2 Under par at golf | 22. | Eating Action |
| 3. | Lady Sailor | 23. | This name could be given to William the Barber |
| 4. | Flying Toy | 24. | Shell Seizer |
| 5. | Movement, left or right | 25. | He could have been the wizard |
| 6. | Royal Angler | 26. | Greedy Person |
| 7. | A Prank | 27. | Street or room decoration |
| 8. | Chess Piece | 28. | Babies Mouth Infection |
| 9. | One who conceals themselves | 29. | These tunnel underground |
| 10. | Rapid Move | 30. | Mrs Ross' son, Albert |
| 11. | Bend Quickly | 31. | Could describe a couple of beers |
| 12. | News Carrier | 32. | Scottish musician playing on the sand |
| 13. | Act of Theft | 33. | Heavenly Jape |
| 14. | Sometimes difficult to undo | 34. | Timber Rooster |
| 15. | You can lift with this | 35. | Part of a timber joint |
| 16. | Section of hill top | 36. | To carry about for sale |
| 17. | Land and travel fee | | |
| 18. | Bright coloured tool | | |
| 19. | Grain husk and twelfth of a foot | | |
| 20. | Precious Hill Top | | |

Some clues are truly cryptic..... You are bound to think ...OHHHHHHH

If you need the answers! See page 12

1 Timothy Study (Phil Nevard)

The final chapters of 1 Timothy offer a mix of warning and encouragement. Paul urges Timothy to stand firm, to keep teaching, to avoid endless arguments, and to hold onto what is good.

There's a realism in Paul's tone. Some will walk away from faith. Some will chase after wealth, or novelty, or power. But Timothy is called to be different: "pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, gentleness."

These are slow-growing virtues. They don't happen overnight. But they are what help us stay faithful, especially when life is hard.

Paul's advice to the rich also rings true today: "Do not be haughty, or set your hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but... be rich in good works, generous, and ready to share." That's not just advice for the wealthy. It's an invitation to all of us—to hold things lightly, to give freely, to trust deeply.

In the final verses, Paul entrusts Timothy with a powerful charge: "guard what has been entrusted to you." Each of us carries something precious—the story of God's love, the light of Christ, the call to be salt in the world. We don't carry it alone, but we do carry it faithfully.

Faithfulness doesn't always look dramatic. Sometimes it's just showing up. Praying again. Serving quietly. Loving anyway.

****Reflection question:****

What helps you stay grounded when life gets overwhelming?

****Simple response:****

Write down one practice or prayer that helps you return to God. Keep it close this week.

=====



URC Finance Department Ministry and Mission Fund - Annual Update Letter to Church Treasurers

Dear Valued Colleagues in Financial Stewardship,

Your dedication to managing church finances continues to be a cornerstone of our collective mission. Through your expertise and faithful service, you enable transformative ministry across our communities, and we are deeply grateful for your commitment to this vital calling.

Welcome Service for The Reverend Kevin Highfield

New Superintendent of The Cambridge Methodist Circuit



From 4pm on Saturday 6th September 2025
Wesley Methodist Church
Christ's Pieces
Cambridge
CB1 1LG

We would be delighted if you could join us in extending a warm welcome to Kevin as he becomes a valued member of our community.

The service will take place at 4pm in The Nave, with light refreshments to follow afterwards in The Refectory.

We anticipate the service will last for around an hour.

The Church has level access and is generally accessible to all. Please contact us further if you have any specific requirements.



Cryptic Clues For Birds

Answers to Page 9 -

1	Dipper	21	Nightin gale
2	Eagle	22	Swallow
3	Wren	23	Razor bill
4	Kite	24	Oyster Catcher
5	Tern	25	Merlin
6	King fisher	26	Gannet
7	Lark	27	Bunting
8	Rook	28	Thrush
9	Eider	29	Mina
10	Swift	30	Albat ross
11	Duck	31	Toucan
12	Pigeon	32	Sand piper
13	Robin	33	Skylark
14	Knot	34	Wood cock
15	Crane	35	Dove
16	Part ridge	36	Hawk
17	Field fare		
18	Yellow Hammer		
19	Chaff inch		
20	Gold..crest		

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Every Sunday at 10.30am

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join us from home using Zoom!**

Email secretary@sawstonfreechurch.org.uk for more details

in person



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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.

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