

# CONTACT

## November 2025



Volume 66 - Issue 11  
Sawston Free Church

## Churches Services and Dates for Your Diary

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

02 Nov	10.30am : Morning Worship – Mike Wilson 03.00pm : Messy Church
09 Nov	10.30am : Remembrance Service at War Memorial – Phil Nevard Morning Worship SFC – Tess Maddin
16 Nov	10.30am : Holy Communion – Phil Nevard
23 Nov	10.30am : Go4th
30 Nov	10.30am : Morning Worship – Phil Nevard

The closing date for December Contact is **Tuesday** 18<sup>th</sup> November

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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Dear friends,

First of all, thank you — truly — for your patience and kindness over these past months. After my sabbatical, I hadn't expected to be away again so soon, yet life sometimes unfolds in ways we don't plan. I'm writing this from Canada, where I've accompanied my mum to be with my sister, Erica, following the death of her husband, Terry. I'll be leading his funeral service in the coming days. It feels both a privilege and a heartache — to stand at that tender place between memory and hope, grief and gratitude.

Once again, I'm so grateful for your understanding and the many messages and prayers you've sent. To be part of a church community that gives its minister space to care for family, and to grieve as a brother and brother-in-law as well as a minister, is something I don't take for granted.

Last weekend, I joined Erica and some of her friends for a Canadian Thanksgiving meal. Around the table were people who had been through a great deal this year — illness, bereavement, broken relationships, upheaval. Yet as we went around sharing what we were thankful for, there was a quiet courage in what they said. Not a denial of pain, but a deliberate choosing of hope.

They gave thanks for small mercies: for a friend who called, for a neighbour who brought soup, for the beauty of the autumn trees. Their thanksgiving wasn't about pretending everything was fine; it was about noticing what grace still remains — the light that still breaks through.

And as I listened, I thought of all of you — of the tables we share back home, the kindnesses that pass between us, the way we hold one another through joy and sorrow alike. Perhaps that's what real thanksgiving looks like: not counting up our blessings as if they were possessions, but recognising that love and friendship, even in times of loss, are themselves the truest gifts of God.

*Prayer:*

*Gracious God,*

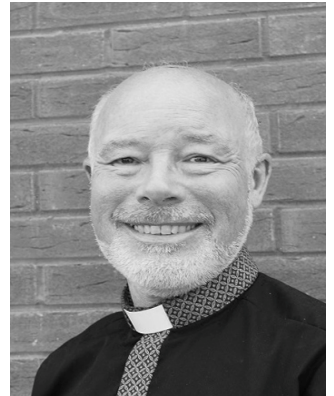
*for love that holds us when life hurts,*

*for friends who walk beside us,*

*and for hope that rises quietly within us,*

*we give you thanks.*

*Amen.*



A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Phil Nevard'. The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line that extends to the right.

***Every Blessing,***

***Rev'd Phil Nevard***

**Phil**

## God Calling

### Extra Work

*Our Lord and our God. Help us through poverty to plenty.  
Through unrest to rest, through sorrow to Joy.  
Through weakness to power.*

I am your helper. At the end of your present path lie all these blessings. So trust and know that I am leading you. Step with a firm step of confidence in Me into each unknown day. Take every duty and every interruption as of My appointment.

You are My servant. Serve Me as simply, cheerfully, and readily as you expect others to serve you.

Do you blame the servant who avoids extra work, who complains about being called from one task to do one less liked? Do you feel you are ill served by such a one?

Then what of Me? Is not that how you so often serve Me? Think of this. Lay it to heart and view your day's work in this light.

***Much love to you all.***

***Kate Leach***

### **SFC - Church Workday – Nov 8th - 8am till noon**

Please come and help keep our premises looking good.

There are various tasks to suit all talents and capabilities from painting to gardening, and a chance for a chat over cake and coffee.

**Please let me know if you can come it really helps me to plan the work.**

***Thank You     Gordon (833983)***





## Junior Church

Last month I was pleased to report how Junior church was able to give a presentation of gifts to the children in Junior Church. I am happy say that we continued with the presentation of Bibles and Christian books to the remainder of the children the following week.



Now all eleven of our children and young people have received their gift and we hope they will treasure them.

Junior Church continues every Sunday apart from occasional Sundays when we have an all age service such as Harvest. There will be no Junior church on Remembrance Sunday as we will join the village parade and service at the war memorial that day.

Please note that the children's nativity service will be on **Sunday 14 December** and we look forward to your support of this special occasion.

**Julie Robinson**

## **A short series on Prayer**

### **Blessing – Letting Love Flow Through You (Phil Nevard)**

Some prayers are about asking. Some are about listening. And some are about releasing—letting love, grace, and peace flow outward into the world. That’s what blessing is. A kind of prayer that opens our hands and says, “May God’s goodness rest on you.”

We often hear blessings at the end of a service. Words of peace. A promise of God’s presence. A sending-out. But blessing isn’t just for ministers or formal moments. It can be part of our everyday lives—a quiet way of holding people in God’s light as we go about our day.

To bless someone is to look at them with God’s eyes. Not to fix them or change them, but to want good for them. To say, in effect, “May you know you’re loved.”

In scripture, blessing is woven through everything. God blesses creation. Jesus blesses children. Paul ends his letters with blessings for the early churches. And we are invited to join in—not just blessing our friends, but even our enemies.

It’s not magic. It doesn’t mean we agree with everything someone does. It’s an act of faith. A decision to trust that God’s grace is big enough for all of us.

Sometimes I bless people silently—a stranger on the train, someone walking past my house. “May you know peace today.” “May you feel seen.” Other times I say it aloud: before a journey, before sleep, at the end of a phone call. A simple “God bless you” still carries weight.

You can bless a meal, a home, a moment. You can bless your child’s head as they sleep. You can write a blessing in a card. What matters is the intention: to pour out grace, not keep it to yourself.

#### **A question:**

*Who in my life could use a blessing this week?*

#### **A response:**

*Speak or whisper a blessing today—even if it’s just one line. Let love move through you.*

## Update on 1st Sawston Brigades

It was wonderful to see the church full for our annual enrolment service at the beginning of October. This is an important date in the Brigades calendar as Girls' Brigade and Boys' Brigade come together to make promises about being kind, loyal, supportive members on a Tuesday evening as well as continuing on their personal faith journey knowing something of the love of God.



At the church service, Lythan (stepping in for Phil and doing a wonderful job!) spoke about showing God's care and love for each other using the verse before one of the most well known verses in the Bible.

**John 3:14** states, "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up."

Lythan drew a parallel between Moses raising a bronze serpent on a pole for the Israelites to look at and be healed from snakebites, and Jesus' future crucifixion and





resurrection. The lifting up of the Son of Man is a sacrifice that provides eternal life to those who believe in him.

Every child enrolled in Girls' Brigade and Boys' Brigade received an enrolment certificate with the verse that the girls shared with us in the church service: For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not die but have eternal life. **John 3:16**



Not only that, the Brigades leaders made promises to prepare and plan activities showing God's love to the young people we are privileged to work with.

We are very fortunate and truly blessed to have a church community that is so supportive and encouraging to the leaders and the young people and their families so on behalf of all the young people who come on a Tuesday evening, and their families, ***THANK YOU for your support!***



Here are some photos of the enrolment morning, collecting and sweeping leaves and the fundraising evening.

The fundraising evening and donations from individuals made over £300! If that isn't a sign of God's love in action, I don't know what is!

As the responses at the enrolment said, "With God's help, we will!" And you are very willing to show support.

That will go a long way to help support the work of Brigades, both the young people in 1st Sawston Brigades but also Girls' Brigade nationally who encouraged us to have a fundraising sale in the first place as part of the national GB fundraising initiative.



We hope to go to an activity centre for our Summer camp next May with the Girls' Brigade district and we will be able to subsidise the cost as well as buying uniform and craft resources for our group.

***If you want to know more about the work we do, or how to sign up, please be in touch with me.***

**Thank you for your ongoing support and generosity.**

***Lucy McGregor***  
***1st Sawston Brigades team leader***

***David Lloyd***  
***1st Sawston Boys' Brigade captain***

## November Prayers

Please pray for remembrance day and remembrance Sunday services and all who grieve. Give thanks for the work of the Royal British Legion.



Eternal Father, we give thanks for those who have served and sacrificed for our country. We remember their courage and commitment. We pray for those who have suffered and those who continue to serve.

Gracious Saviour,

Thank You for the gift of memories and loved ones we have known.

Bless their souls Lord and grant them eternal peace.

Please pray for the Church Meeting to be held on 12<sup>th</sup> November and the Four Rivers Mission Partnership.

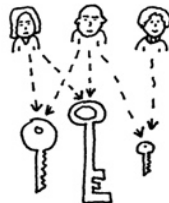
**Anne Pegram**

## THE TEN WEEK COURSE

FOR NEW CHURCHGOERS



WEEK 1: BASICS  
OF CHURCH  
KITCHEN ETIQUETTE



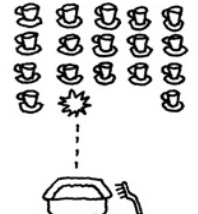
WEEK 2: KEYS.  
WHO HAS  
WHICH ONE?



WEEK 3: STANDING/  
SITTING/KNEELING  
MASTERCLASS



WEEK 4: A GUIDE TO  
HOLDING MULTIPLE BOOKS  
AND SHEETS OF PAPER



WEEK 5: WASHING  
UP FOR CHURCH  
FUNCTIONS (LEVEL 1)



WEEK 6: HOW TO  
USE THE DEVICE THAT  
FOLDS THE TABLE LEGS



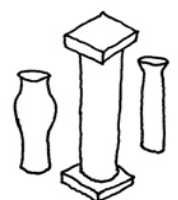
WEEK 7: STAYING  
WARM - HINTS  
AND TIPS



WEEK 8:  
THE  
PHOTOCOPIER



WEEK 9: STACKING THE  
CHAIRS-AN INTRODUCTION  
TO THE '5 HIGH' RULE



WEEK 10: VASES  
AND PEDESTALS  
ORIENTATION

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## Psalms of Ascent

Continuing from last month with the series of reflections on the Psalms of Ascent.

These were songs for people on the move, heading up to Jerusalem. They remind me of my own walk on the Pennine Way – or rather, my almost-walk, because I didn't finish it. That unfinished journey has stayed with me, and it's given me a way of looking at these psalms. After all, most of our lives are like that too: not neatly tied up, still in progress. My hope is that these reflections might give us space to think about our own unfinished journeys, and to notice how God is with us along the way.

### **Psalm 121: an unfinished journey to safety (part 1)**

*(written by Rev'd Phil Nevard)*

*I will lift up my eyes to the hills—  
From whence comes my help?  
My help comes from the Lord,  
Who made heaven and earth.*

*He will not allow your foot to be moved;  
He who keeps you will not slumber.  
Behold, He who keeps Israel  
Shall neither slumber nor sleep.*

*The Lord is your keeper;  
The Lord is your shade at your right hand.  
The sun shall not strike you by day,  
Nor the moon by night.*

*The Lord shall preserve you from all evil;  
He shall preserve your soul.  
The Lord shall preserve your going out and your coming in  
From this time forth, and even forevermore.*

Psalm 121 seems to be coming from a very different place than Psalm 120. Whilst it begins with a question about where to find help, it seems much less raw, much less in-the-moment. It doesn't sound like this Psalm is uttered "in my distress..." rather, after some time and reflection has passed.

Its opening lines are very familiar, even to those who never read psalms, maybe people know it from funerals or mistake it for a piece of school poetry that they learned... "I wandered lonely as a cloud"... "I lift mine eyes unto the hills..." (it doesn't sound unlike Wordsworth!)

The psalm has a sense of surety. It isn't filled with doubt and anxiety. It says unequivocally, "yes - you are safe." Unsurprisingly - this is something people want to hear!

It starts in the first person..

*I will lift up my eyes to the hills—  
From whence comes my help?  
My help comes from the Lord,  
Who made heaven and earth.*

I have a lot of sympathy for the idea that as this is reckoned to have been a pilgrimage psalm, and people sang it as they journeyed to Jerusalem for a religious festival, and the "hills" are the hills around Jerusalem - the Judean Hills - which they can see for pretty much the whole journey. The Psalmist, as he walks, raises his head and looks to the distant hills - his help is in that direction - at the festival he is going to. "Will I find the help I need?" he asks. "Surely the God who made those hills, our God, the One God, can help me?"

Maybe looking up is the first important thing. Travelling to a festival might have been one of the few times that ordinary people got to look or see much beyond the daily grind of life - keeping the wolf from the door. Having the space and opportunity to step back from it for a moment is a gift, such an important gift.

Even here in Cambridgeshire, one of the most tediously flat places in the UK, were you to ask any congregation where they feel closest to God, the top answer (possibly given a close run by "in my garden") will probably be "up a mountain" - even if none of them have been up a mountain in twenty years. I always find that kinda sad. I'd LOVE people to say things like "last week it was Tesco's carpark" or "in the lab where I work", but they never do.

But maybe I should just get over myself - people do seem to have an inbuilt sense of God being in the high places.

To stop, to look up and to acknowledge you need help has to be the first step.

Asking where to go for that help is the second.

I am notoriously bad at stopping and asking for help. I am sure it has prevented me from succeeding at many things in my life. It's just sheer stubborn-ness. Jesus was always ready to accept help. He needed help getting water from the well (he had no bucket!) - and he asks a woman... he needed help to carry his cross, and Joseph stepped up...

To ask for help means accepting your own weakness, accepting your need of others, accepting that you are not omnipotent, accepting that you are part of something bigger...

The Message version of the opening of Psalm 121 goes like this:

*I look up to the mountains;  
does my strength come from mountains?  
No, my strength comes from God,  
who made heaven, and earth, and mountains.*

The Psalmist knows where his help comes from. It's not Dr Google, it's not MumsNet, it's not GBNews - it's the Lord who made heaven and earth, and those mountains! And he's heading for an encounter with the Lord - near those distant hills - just a few more days of walking...

And then the voice changes... (which I will explore next month in part two!)

=====

**Please Note:**

**Footprints Cafe is now taking bookings for Christmas Dinners.**

**For more information or to book, please enquire in the Cafe or phone 01223 839323**

**November Flower Rota**

Thank you to everyone who has kindly put their name down on the Rota which is now full to the end of November. We will then decorate the window sills for Advent and over the Christmas period.



However I will also be preparing the new Rota for 2026. I will be putting a reminder in the Weekly notes to sign up as we will need your help again to fill up, especially for the first few weeks in the New Year.

***Thank you again for your support from the flower team.***

***Rosemary Harriss, Rosemary Livings, Dawn Haughton and Vivien Ford.***





Pauline Purdy  
42 Granta Road  
Sawston  
CAMBRIDGE  
Cambridgeshire  
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**Thank you!**

Yours sincerely,

Kathryn Abraham  
Fundraising Assistant

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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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