

Donations

August 2025

**GREETINGS FROM
LUDLOW
METHODIST
CHURCH**



UK Baptists look ahead to the 2000th anniversary of the World Church

UK Baptist churches have been invited to join a global effort from the Baptist World Alliance that seeks 'unprecedented collaboration in God's global mission' to mark the 2000th anniversary of the Church

The Acts 2 Movement is an initiative in anticipation of the anniversary birth of the Church in 2033.

The aim is to 'mobilise the whole of the Baptist family in prayerful pursuit of a global Pentecost, that in the Holy Spirit, overflows in church renewal and holistic Gospel witness in every language around the world'.

At the core of the initiative are five paths, each drawn from Acts 2. Each path has a goal to which Baptists are encouraged to contribute. These include witness and sharing testimonies, Bible reading and translating, social care, and neighbourhood lay chaplains.

As one Baptist leader said: "UK churches can be encouraged by knowing that their church planting and evangelism efforts are part of a global initiative. This is a moment for us to join our Baptist brothers and sisters around the world in sharing the Gospel, building relationships, and reaching out with love, service, and prayer."

Lord's Prayer tops Shakespeare, Dickens, Churchill and National Anthem in public recognition poll

People in the UK are more likely to identify correctly a short extract from the Lord's Prayer – also known as the Our Father – than one from the National Anthem and other sources chosen for their deep cultural resonance, a new poll has found.

The polling, carried out for the Church of England, also found the reference in the prayer to being forgiven and forgiving others was the element people found most meaningful to them.

Pollsters Savanta surveyed more than 2,000 people across the UK. They asked them to match seven famous lines - spanning areas ranging from literature and history to popular culture – with their source, from a list of correct answers.

Overall, the phrase from the Lord's Prayer was recognised correctly by the largest number of people (80.3 per cent), just ahead of Star Wars (79.9 per cent).

They were followed by Hamlet's "To be or not to be" (73 per cent) the extract from the National Anthem (63 per cent); the line from Churchill's 'The Few' speech (61 per cent); and You'll Never Walk Alone (58 per cent).

Overall, 89 per cent of those surveyed said that they had previously heard of the Lord's Prayer or the Our Father. This was highest among those who described themselves as Christian (95 per cent), but also by 88 per cent of those who said they had no religion.

The Archbishop of York, Stephen Cottrell, is currently leading a 'Lord's Prayer Tour' of events at churches and cathedrals across the north of England attended by thousands of people, as part of his *Faith In The North* initiative.

He said: "In a world of shifting cultures and changing circumstances, the Lord's Prayer remains a steady guide - perhaps never more so than now.

"Lines like 'Give us this day our daily bread' speak powerfully to today's challenges, reminding us to seek sufficiency, not excess, and to consider what 'enough' truly means."



Lindsay Beavon

1. God only uses ordinary people, there's nothing else available.
2. We do our best and rely on the Lord to do the rest.
3. If God feels far away - who moved?

Eileen Precious

Assisted Dying

Bishop Sara makes a strong ethical case against the Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill with her arguments in the July magazine, but I submit, the ethics do not all point in one direction.

We are intelligent creatures. We have an aversion to death in general, and a natural will to live. Most of us would only consider assisted death when living becomes intolerable.

Shouldn't we have the option of saving ourselves and our loved ones (who have to watch us suffer) a painful death?

Certainly some will feel pressurized into assisted death a few months early (you have to have a six months life expectancy or less to qualify), but for me the balance tips in favour of the mitigation of suffering.

Pip Hollins

Sounds

Music festival as parent drops off teenagers...

Daughter: Did you ever hear anything so amazing as that band?

Father: Well, I once heard a collision between a milk float and a little van filled with ducks.

Drama

"Did the play have an unhappy ending?"

"Oh no – everyone was glad when it was over."

Spelling

Teacher: Donald, how do you spell crocodile?

Donald: K-R-O-K-O-D-I-A-L

Teacher: No, that's incorrect.

Donald: Maybe it is, but you asked me how I spell it.

The Raid on Zeebrugge

Part 3: The Plan

Rear-Admiral Roger Keyes, recently appointed to command the Dover Patrol, produced a plan to block U-Boat access to Ostend and Zeebrugge. A special force of volunteers, 82 officers and 1698 men, was assembled and started two months of intensive training. A force of 165 vessels gathered in the Thames Estuary, many were adapted according to their role in the operation, some were filled with concrete and explosive charges.

The force sailed on April 11th 1918. Both ports had received a very heavy bombardment from ships and aircraft, designed in part to hide the noise of the approaching ships and to provide a smoke screen. A change in the wind direction started to disperse the smoke screen and so there was little option but to abort the raid. All ships returned safely to port, except for a Coastal Motor Boat (CMB), which had run aground and the crew taken prisoner.

A second attempt was made two days later, but was cancelled again when a gale blew up in the Channel.

A third attempt was made on the eve of St George's Day, April 22nd. The weather held and the force split as one part went towards Ostend and the other to Zeebrugge. Against strict orders, the captain of the captured CMB had taken with him the written operational orders for the raid and the whole of the German coastline defences were on full alert. The usual German efficiency failed this time, however, as they had neglected to inform the battery of guns on the Mole at Zeebrugge!

A thick coastal fog protected the attacking force and they were only 1,500 yards from the battery when they were spotted. German guns opened fire immediately and decimated the storming parties on the superstructure and upper deck. Just one minute after the scheduled time the ship, *HMS Vindictive*, was alongside the mole. The storming party was under intense fire and were unable to destroy the gun battery, although they did manage to destroy the battery control position.

In the meantime, to prevent German reinforcements moving on to the mole, a submarine (C3) rammed the viaduct connecting the Mole to the shore, she penetrated as far as the conning tower. Explosive charges were lit and the crew abandoned the boat under heavy fire. The explosives blew and created a breach in the viaduct some 120 feet long.

Three block ships, *HMS Thetis*, *Intrepid* and *Iphigenia*, managed to enter the channel under heavy fire and were scuttled in place. Their crews abandoned ship and were rescued.

Well within the time allowed, the storming parties were recalled to *Vindictive* and she was on her way home.

Losses had been heavy, with 214 killed and 383 wounded. The list of gallantry awards for the raid was impressive: 11 VCs, 21 DSOs, 29 DSCs, 16 CGMs and 143 DSMs.

Although the raid was considered a success, German torpedo boats were using the canal as quickly as two days after the raid, and by May 14th German U-Boats once again had unrestricted access to Bruges via Zeebrugge.

Keyes was keen to plan another operation, but the Royal Navy no longer had a need to risk men and equipment on an operation that had no more chance of success than the last. The belated introduction of a much needed convoy system was protecting merchant shipping from U-Boat attack. The loss of merchant tonnage dropped dramatically. The Royal Navy once again ruled the waves, above and below.

Germany approached the Allies to seek an armistice. American President Wilson, however, made it clear that there would be no negotiations whilst U-Boats were carrying out unrestricted warfare. On October 21st all U-Boats were recalled to Germany and a few weeks later the war was over.

Keyes, the architect of the Zeebrugge raid, was appointed to Admiral of the Fleet in 1930 and was given a peerage in 1943, taking the title Baron Keyes of Zeebrugge and Dover. He died on December 26th, 1945, and following a state funeral in Westminster Abbey, he was buried alongside his fallen comrades from the Zeebrugge raid, in St James' Cemetery, Dover.

Source: Geoffrey Bennett '*Naval Battles of the First World War*'

Ron Gittings

WHEN NIBBLING IS A NECESSITY

Lower Broad Street residents recently enjoyed a 'drinks and nibbles party'. For us nibbles probably fall into the 'naughty but nice' category, yet for millions the word 'nibbles' conjures carries very different associations. Nibbles in this context may indicate a few crumbs (or not much more) available intermittently. According to a Christian Aid leaflet 'Guatemala is a hunger hotspot' with one of the highest global rates of stunted growth (45.5%). In some areas it is as high as 90%. Malnutrition is robbing children of their health and opportunities for development. According to BBC Radio 4 hunger, deforestation, land exploitation, denial of human rights and human exploitation are all commonplace in the Alta Verapaz region.

A thriving agricultural industry is essential in order to feed everyone. In Alta Verapaz the majority of men work away from their communities, leaving the farming to the women. Typically, women make up 75% of the farmers being trained by Congoop (Christian Aid's local partner). This training is vital. The women see it as their responsibility to give nutritious food to their children. Amelia has two young children and, looking around, she states, "This is my land - my plantations have been dying due to the lack of water. It's affecting me, there is no food for my family".

Congoop provides women like Amelia with tools such as dehydrators so that fresh produce can be transformed into nutritional long-life products. Amelia and many others were empowered to cascade their newly acquired skills to



Amelia

other women leading to a further increase in food production. Congoop also provides advice and guidance on how to make and sell products like chocolate and cacao bread locally.

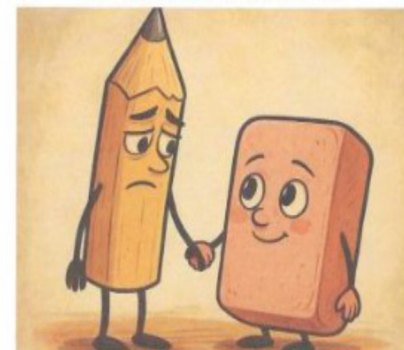
By working with, rather than against, nature farmland can be made more resilient to droughts and floods optimising land use, protecting crops and enjoying plentiful harvests. Farmers can push back against poverty, hunger and malnutrition. As a global community we urgently need to support our global brothers and sisters, so that children everywhere can thrive. By introducing vital nutrients direct, mothers like Amelia can protect their children from stunted development and ill health.

The news from Gaza is more frightening by the day. Please spare a thought and a prayer for our starving brethren, particularly as we stand in front of the full fruit and vegetable market stalls enjoying the privileged position we are in to have such choices.

Claire Wilcox



Smile a while !



Source not traced

"How are you?" the eraser asked the pencil kindly.
 "I'm not your friend," the pencil snapped. "I hate you!"
 Surprised and hurt, the eraser asked "Why?"
 "Because you erase everything I write."
 "I only remove the mistakes," the eraser replied gently.
 "That doesn't make it right" said the pencil.
 "But that's what I'm here for. It's my purpose."
 "Then your job is meaningless," grumbled the pencil. "Writing is more important than erasing."
 "To erase the wrong is just as important as writing the right," the eraser stated.
 The pencil paused, then quietly said, "But I see you getting smaller each day."
 "That's because I give a little of myself every time I correct a mistake."
 "I feel smaller too," the pencil admitted.
 "We can't do good for others, unless we are willing to sacrifice something," the eraser smiled.

Stephen Dalton

Observations on our Christian faith

Don't bother much about your feelings. When they are humble, loving, brave, give thanks for them; when they are conceited, selfish, cowardly, ask to have them changed. – *C. S. Lewis*

Wherever you are, be all there. Live to the hilt every situation you believe to be the will of God. – *Jim Elliot*

If God maintains sun and planets in bright and ordered beauty, He can keep us. – *F. B. Meyer*

The solution of the riddle of life in space and time lies outside space and time. – *Ludwig Wittgenstein*

Faith is the capacity to trust God while not being able to make sense out of everything. – *James Kok*

Faith is not idle; it works while it waits. – *Ronald Dunn*

Whatever our trust is most in, that is our God. – *Richard Sibbes*

If God forgives us, we must forgive others. Otherwise, it is almost like setting up ourselves as a higher tribunal than Him. – *C. S. Lewis*

What we can know about God is so great and glorious that we can confidently trust what we do not know about Him. Our God is a good God. – *Frank Retief*

The great of this world are those who simply loved God more than others did. – *A. W. Tozer*

Experience is the one thing you can't get for nothing. – *Oscar Wilde*

What we desire our children to be, we must endeavour to be before them. – *Andrew Combe*

Every child has a right to be both well fed and well led. – *Ruth Smelter*

Green Pages

A round-up of environmental
and climate-change news

August 2025

Work begins on local plastic recycling facility

Construction has begun on a £70m plastics sorting and recycling facility in Shrewsbury. Veolia say the site will process 80,000 tonnes of mixed plastics every year, sourced from businesses and homes across Shropshire.

It will be based in Battlefield, close to Veolia's existing household recycling facility, and is expected to be operational by 2026.

The firm say it will be first of its kind in the UK and employ more than 130 permanent staff, as well as supporting construction jobs in redeveloping the site.

The facility will use the 'closed-loop' approach to recycling, which allows an object to be recycled into the same sort of thing over and over again. This is often regarded as the most efficient form of recycling.

The facility will shred, wash and flake PET (plastic water bottles and much of the food packaging we use), which will be recycled into food grade low carbon new packaging.

Estelle Brachlianoff, Veolia's chief executive officer said: "This innovative facility will not only advance our commitment to reducing waste and carbon emissions, but also positions us to meet the growing demand for effective recycling as 'Simpler Recycling' legislation comes into effect, ensuring more of this material is responsibly recycled for years to come."

Chloe Hughes, BBC News

It's good to see Shropshire leading the way!

Talking about climate change

This article is from Katharine Hayhoe, a Canadian professor at Texas Tech University and chief scientist at The Nature Conservancy.

I was very influenced by growing up in a home where my dad was both a teacher in a local church and a science teacher. The Bible tells us that God created this incredible universe that we live in. So what is studying the universe other than studying what God was thinking about when he set this whole thing up in the first place?

I was planning to be an astrophysicist. I had almost finished my degree. I looked around, and there was this brand-new class on climate change. I thought, "Well, that looks interesting. Why not take it now?" First of all, I was really surprised to learn that climate science was the same physics I'd been learning in my physics and astronomy classes. I was also surprised to learn how urgent it was, because I still thought of it as a future issue. And the third thing (that changed the trajectory of my entire career) is that climate change is not only an environmental issue: it is also a poverty issue, a hunger issue, a water issue, a disease issue; it's an economic issue; it's a geopolitical issue; it's a national security issue.

It's taking all these inequalities that we already have and making them worse! Since the 1960s, the economic gap between the richest and poorest countries in the world has grown by as much as 25% thanks to climate change. If we think of all the work and all the effort and all the missions and all the organisations and everything that Christians have done to try to narrow that gap - climate change is pushing that apart even farther.

Could I make a difference in people's lives who are suffering today, as well as prevent measurable, quantifiable amounts of suffering in the future? I care about that because I'm a human, and I care about that because I'm a Christian. In John 13:35 Jesus told his disciples that we are to be recognised by our love for others. And what is climate change other than a failure to love? It says in Genesis 1:28 that God gave humans responsibility over every living thing on this planet.

Because of what it says in the Bible, not because of what it says in the science, I realised that as a Christian I had to do everything I could to help with this urgent global issue.

I practice hope. In Romans 5:3-4, Paul talks about hope, and he begins with suffering. He says that suffering leads to perseverance and perseverance to character and character to hope.

If you wait for hope, it will not find you. So where do we find hope? We have to go out - we have to find it, we have to hunt it down, we have to practice it, we have to dwell on it.

In Philippians 4:8, the Bible talks about how we can practice what our mind dwells on: "*whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable, if anything is excellent or praiseworthy, think about such things*". It talks about training your mind to think on the things that are hopeful, that are full of love, that will lead to positive outcomes.

I'm not talking about wishful thinking, but I'm talking about recognising that change is possible. Then you have to go and make it happen. But you're much more equipped to go out and make it happen if you realise that it is already being done in other places; that you can make a difference, that people can make a difference, and that a positive outcome is possible if we do everything we can to make that happen.

As part of my practice, I look up good news stories. I subscribe to channels on social media and news sources that are positive, that share good news. More than ever, I think, it's essential to be grounded in what the Scriptures actually say, what our theology really teaches us, what it really means to be recognised by our love for others.

Today, more than ever, we need that understanding and we need that message, and I believe that if we have that right, everything flows from it.

Katharine Hayhoe, from 'Faith and Leadership', a resource for Christian Leaders.

Editor's note: *We have been studying Philippians in our Bible Discussion group on Tuesday afternoons. Ch.4 v.8, in particular, proved to be a real tonic.*

Turning plastic into paracetamol

In a groundbreaking blend of biotechnology and sustainability, researchers at the University of Edinburgh have figured out how to turn plastic bottle waste into paracetamol, one of the world's most widely used painkillers. Their innovative method transforms discarded PET, the plastic commonly used in drink bottles and food packaging, into a valuable pharmaceutical, with the help of genetically engineered E.coli bacteria.

This solution doesn't just address the ever-growing issue of plastic pollution; it also provides a cleaner, more sustainable route to producing an essential medicine. The process takes less than 24 hours, operates at room temperature, and emits no carbon, making it an efficient and environmentally friendly alternative to conventional drug production methods.

The process begins by chemically treating PET waste and introducing it to the specially engineered E.coli. The bacteria get to work breaking the plastic down. Remarkably, this process converts roughly 90 percent of the plastic-derived terephthalic acid into usable paracetamol.

The study's recently published findings demonstrate not only the technical feasibility of the method but also its potential scalability. While the method isn't ready for commercial deployment just yet, the team is optimistic, and are involving AstraZeneca to work with them.

For now, the innovation marks a hopeful step toward a circular future where the plastic waste cluttering our landfills and oceans could one day help relieve human pain. It's an elegant example of how science can tackle two major problems at once: plastic pollution and the carbon-intensive nature of pharmaceutical manufacturing.

Optimist Daily



Insight into one aspect of Life in Ukraine

Rev. Dr. Barry Sloan, Mission Partner with the Methodist Church in Britain, reflects on one of the issues he encountered on his recent visit to our partner church in Ukraine.

This work is supported from the Ukraine Appeal Fund, initiated jointly by the Methodist Church in Britain and its relief and development partner, All We Can. Barry, a minister with the Irish Methodist Church, has been working in Germany for the past 20 years.

There was no guarantee that my colleague, Oleg Starodubets, Superintendent minister of the United Methodist Church (UMC) in Ukraine, would be at the station, on the Slovakian border with Ukraine, to meet me, because all men of military age in Ukraine are being conscripted to fight in the ongoing war with Russia, including pastors.

I will visit the site of what will become the UMC's new trauma and rehab and spiritual centre, in Uzhorod, western Ukraine, close to the Slovakian border. At the checkpoints all cars are stopped, and the documents of the male occupants meticulously checked. Men that do not have the correct papers exempting them from military service are seized and taken straight to the military training centre. No going home. No goodbyes. Three weeks later they will be on the battlefield.

There used to be wider protections for civilians, including for pastors, which exempted them from military service. But in recent months, as Ukraine has struggled to defend itself, the previous exemptions have been dropped, and the controls made much tighter and stricter.

The fear of being forcefully taken from the street, and conscripted into the military, means that many men of military age do not leave their homes. They live almost a reclusive life, only daring to come out at night time, when they feel a little more safe. They cannot drive anywhere. They cannot go about their daily business. No meeting up with friends. No social events. No going to church. The men that actually still have jobs have to choose a route to their place of employment that evades the road blocks and the patrols. patrols.

The Green Pages of the Ludlow Methodist Church monthly magazine are brought to you by the Care for Creation Group.

For more information please contact Elizabeth Wright.

This pressure, this fear and uncertainty, this social isolation, are already negatively impacting the mental health of these men, causing wider problems in families. Domestic violence is not uncommon. Alcohol abuse and other addictions are on the rise. This is one of the reasons why the UMC's Trauma and Rehab Centre will be such a necessary and relevant expression of church, even long after the war ends.

Now I know, you could say that this way of living, as bad as it is, is still better than actually being in a war zone. I agree. And there are those who will perhaps find it difficult to understand the stance that these men take in order to 'dodge the draft'. One could argue that these men should be doing their patriotic duty and serving their country. I am not writing to address these matters. You can have that discussion elsewhere. I simply want to highlight an aspect of the Ukraine war that we do not hear about in our media, or in our churches.

There really are no winners in war!

Even those who stay behind find themselves in terribly difficult situations, and are confronted with impossible choices: like, do you send your 17 year old son out of the country, because you know that once he becomes 18 he will not be allowed to leave? Or, do you choose to 'buy' your way out of the war? A bribe can usually get you released, if you are seized on the street. And I am told that for €10,000 you can even get smuggled out of Ukraine. This option is obviously only available to the wealthy causing the average Ukrainian adult male to ask himself, "Why should I fight in the war, when sons of politicians and business leaders excuse themselves?"

When I arrived at the train station I was glad to see my colleague, Pastor Oleg Starodubets waiting for me. His trip across the Ukraine border into Slovakia was uneventful. Oleg is exempt from military service on health grounds. He has papers to prove it. And he never leaves the house without them! But even then, at a time of war, he can never be certain.



I am, however, certain of one thing. God is using Oleg and his wife, Julia, to bring God's peace to the weary in innovative and courageous ways at this time of war.

Elizabeth Wright

The People's Creed

I believe in a colour blind God,
Maker of technicolour people,
Who created the universe,
And provided abundant resources
for equitable distribution among all his people.

I believe in Jesus Christ,
Born of a common woman,
Who was ridiculed, disfigured and executed,
Who on the third day rose and fought back;
He storms the highest councils of men,
where he overturns the iron rule of injustice.
From henceforth he shall continue
to judge the hatred and arrogance of men.

I believe in the Spirit of Reconciliation,
The united body of the dispossessed;
The communion of the suffering masses,
The power that overcomes the dehumanising forces of men,
The resurrection of personhood, justice and equality,
And in the final triumph of Brotherhood.

Written by the first President of Zimbabwe

Elizabeth Wright

Hymns for People Over 50:

Give Me the Old Timers' Religion
Precious Lord, Take My Hand, And Help Me Up
Just a Slower Walk with Thee
Go Tell It on the Mountain, But Speak Up
Nobody Knows the Trouble I Have Seeing

From the Treasurer

How do you start an article for the magazine when your core message is asking for more money? That is what I have been puzzling about over the last few days. Please keep reading!

We've had some large, unexpected items of expenditure this year, not least the £1000 for the vandalised window in the Zion room so I expect a deficit in the budget by year end. Our income as a church depends on the generosity of our people and, during my first year as treasurer, I have been amazed by that generosity. However, sadly, it has been a year when we have lost a number of well-loved members. We miss their company in the life of the church and we will miss their giving.

It has to be said, we are not in any danger, we have reserves, but we cannot be complacent about dipping into them. Everyone works hard to minimise expenses but, for income, we depend on people. Our fundamental aims as a church are to serve our neighbours and, especially, to spread the good news about the love of God and the joy of knowing and being known by Him. We pray for more people to join us on that adventure.

Until they do, I'm asking you all to review your financial offering to the church. Prices go up all the time for everyone and we need to take care with our money – but that applies to the church too. Please think about when you last increased your giving. If you don't already do so, would you consider setting up a Standing Order? Do we already claim Gift Aid on your donations? Have you any ideas about fundraising? Please give all of this prayerful consideration.

Please contact me if you need help with Standing Order set-up, Gift Aid or if you have any questions.
Thank you

Joyce Evans 01584 890670 deap.evans1@gmail.com (my Treasurer's email address)

Prayer Handbooks

It's that time again. Time to order the Prayer Handbook for 2025/26.

I will be contacting those of you who have it regularly but would love to hear from new customers.

The Handbook provides for every day of the month – prayers for the church around the world, around the country and for ourselves. When you come to the end of the month you start again from Day 1.

There are also suggested daily Bible readings, hymns and Psalms. I expect it will still be £4.50.

Please save me time by telling me if you want to re-order. If anyone would like the job of co-ordinating the order, that would be lovely.

Thank you

Joyce

EARLY THOUGHTS ABOUT THE NEXT CHURCH DIRECTORY

Our Church Directory is refreshed every two years and the last one was published in November 2023.

I have done the compilation job for a while now. If anyone else would like to take it on or help then let me know please. It needs some basic IT skills, I use Excel and Word for the lists and printing.

Thanks

Joyce

Holy Days

6th August: The Transfiguration of Jesus

It's an unusual story. One day, Jesus is with three disciples on a high mountain in Galilee, when His appearance dramatically changes. Also, Moses and Elijah suddenly appear, and from a cloud comes the voice of God. What is this all about?

This event was witnessed by James, Peter, and John. They were close friends of Jesus. In the future, they were to become prominent leaders in the Early Church. They needed to see something special that would help them remember Jesus in the difficult years ahead. They had a glimpse of Christ in His divine glory. His face shone like the sun and His clothes turned white as light.

While this was an extraordinary sight for the disciples, it served to encourage Jesus who once had glory and majesty in Heaven. One day He would have it again. But firstly, He had to fulfil His mission: to suffer on the cross and die.

Why were Moses and Elijah standing with Jesus? Moses was the giver of the Law and Elijah represented all the prophets. They had pointed people to the promised Messiah. Jesus was about to complete God's plan of salvation.

God's voice was heard to remind Peter there was no need to build shelters. They were not going to stay on the mountain. God spoke to get the disciples to fix their attention of Jesus. The wonder of the Transfiguration was a short interlude before Jesus had to return to His work and subsequent death on the cross.

This story is a reminder that our times of spiritual blessing have to be followed by down-to-earth commitments and responsibilities. In the same way that Jesus gave His friends a glimpse of His awesome glory, to help them face challenging and traumatic times ahead, our special times in His presence are provided to encourage us and equip us for the trials we may have to face.

Our journey through life may sometimes rise to the peaks but we can't stay on a 'high' all the time – no matter how much we want it! We have to descend to face everyday challenges if we are to fulfil our calling in Christ. From *our* mountain-top experiences we all need to find a balance between times alone with God and serving Him in the company of others.

The vicar who won Wimbledon

Ninety years ago, on 21st August 1935, John Hartley, the British tennis player, died. He was the only clergyman ever to win Wimbledon and was World Number One in both 1879 and 1880 – winning Wimbledon both years.

The Revd John Thorneycroft Hartley was born in 1849 in Wolverhampton and was well connected: his parents were both from Staffordshire industrial business families, and he married Alice Lascelles Murray, daughter of the 4th Earl of Mansfield and a granddaughter of Henry Lascelles, 3rd Earl of Harewood. They had no children.

He won the 1879 Gentlemen's Singles title against Irish champion Vere St Leger Goold in three sets on 15th July, retaining his title the following year. But in attempting the hat-trick in 1881 he lost the shortest ever men's final, 0-6, 1-6, 1-6, in 37 minutes. He was said to have been ill at the time.

Hartley had become a priest in 1873. He was firstly curate of Christ Church, Southwark, and then became vicar of Burneston, a village in North Yorkshire, from 1874 to 1919. In 1891 he became Rural Dean of East Catterick, and later he was Honorary Canon of Ripon Cathedral.

As an amateur, he received no cash for his Wimbledon wins, and in the course of his first finals win he caught a train to Yorkshire so that he could do his duty and take his services at Burneston on the Sunday. Not only that, but he stayed with a dying parishioner until he passed away on the Monday – the day of the semi-finals. A train delay helped him to get back to London in time.

At the Golden Jubilee Championships in 1926 he received a silver medal from Queen Mary as one of 34 surviving champions.

Pope Leo is a distant cousin of Madonna

Pope Leo has some surprising relatives.

For one, he is related to the pop singer Madonna, who has clashed with the Roman Catholic Church over her use of religious imagery.

But the Pope is also related to politician Hilary Clinton, actress Angelina Jolie, pop star Justin Bieber, former prime ministers Justin and Pierre Trudeau, and novelist Jack Kerouac.

It was a recent New York Times investigation into the Pope's family tree that found the connections. The celebrities all share one common ancestor with the pope – a Canadian called Louis Boucher de Grandpre. He was born about six generations ago and lived in the late 1500s.

Pope Leo also has some African American ancestors.

In praise of olive oil

Olive oil is surprisingly good for you. It has been found to be able to ward off chronic disease and to boost your brain health. So, when those ancient Greeks praised it as an aid to staying young and healthy, it seems they were right.

While the Mediterranean diet can include up to four tablespoons of olive oil per day, a recent study at Harvard has found that even just half a tablespoon of olive oil per day helps protects your heart and brain from disease. It may even slash your risk of Parkinson's or Alzheimer's by 29 per cent, and cancer by 17 per cent.

Olive oil is packed with monounsaturated fats, and even has anti-inflammatory properties, which have been compared to Ibuprofen. The best way to eat it? Add it as a dressing to your salads. Frying with it can degrade some of its properties.

Sudoku (medium)

		7	3					
		4			6		3	9
	9			7				4
5		9		2				
						4		2
2				6			1	
1	3		5			2		
					4	5		

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