

Winshill Parish Magazine

October 2021



St Mark's Church

+ Welcoming All +
+ Worshipping God +
+ Reaching out to share His love +

www.stmarkswinshill.co.uk



Services for October 2021

Sunday	Readings	Time	Service & Church
3rd October Trinity 18	Genesis 2.18-24 Psalm 8 Hebrews 1.1-4; 2.5-12 Mark 10.2-16	09.15	<i>Holy Communion</i> St Wystan's
		10.45	Parish Eucharist St Mark's
		18.00	Evensong 1662 St Marks
10th October Trinity 10	Amos 5.6-7,10-15 Psalm 90.12-17 Hebrews 4.12-16 Mark 10.17-31	09.15	<i>Harvest Festival</i> St Wystan's
		10.45	Family Service St Mark's
		18.00	Holy Communion St Marks
17th October Trinity 20	Isaiah 53.4-12 Psalm 91.9-16 Hebrews 5.1-10 Mark 10.35-45	09.15	<i>Holy Communion</i> St Wystan's
		10.45	Parish Eucharist St Mark's
		18.00	Café Church St Marks
24th October Last Sunday of Trinity	Jeremiah 31.7-9 Psalm 126 Hebrews 7.23-28 Mark 10.46-52	09.15	<i>Holy Communion</i> St Wystan's
		10.45	Service of the Word +Holy Communion St Mark's
31st October All Saints and All Souls	Deuteronomy 26.1-11 Colossians 1.1-15 Luke 12.16-30	09.15	<i>Holy Communion</i> St Wystan's
		10.45	Parish Eucharist St Mark's
		18.00	All Souls Service St Marks

A note from the Vicar

Change!!!

The joke goes: How many 'X's' does it take to change a light bulb? The 'X' is usually the high ups of the organisation that you work for, so for me it used to be, 'How many Major-Generals does it take to change a light bulb?' The answer being the incredulous cry of those high ups shouting 'change, change!' in a voice that says nothing must change.

But all things do change, other than God who doesn't.

At this time of year we see the changing landscape as harvest comes and goes, as trees drop their leaves, flowers fade and cast their seed. We see and hear of change in the political landscape from the domestic Cabinet reshuffle of our government to the changes in leadership on the international stage.

We spent last month looking at Creation and the Environment and we see the change in language from Global 'Warming' because that sounds to some a good idea and comforting, to Global Heating which is less inviting and more accurate. Also Climate Change is moving to Climate Crisis.



But to go back to the joke. For the church slant on this it would be how many Bishops? But their cry at the moment would not be one that indicates that there should be 'no change' but rather we need to make 'radical changes'. The Church of England finds itself in a place where it

needs to make changes. We have known this for a while but the process has been accelerate by Covid. We are not, in short, paying our way (not just us at St Marks but across the board). The cost of ministry, which amounts to the paid boots on the ground, be they Bishop, Priest or Deacon, Administrator, Advisor, or Accountant, the cost of running the show called the Church of England is not being met by the giving of the people. The result will be, over the short to medium period, a reduction in paid posts, with the challenge and the change that more will need to be done by the laity and self-supporting clergy.

It is a bit more nuanced than I have painted, but we need to change how we work, how we can be an effective loving caring Church that welcomes all, worships God and reaches out to share his love.

Or as the church might put it, proclaim the gospel to this generation.

An example of change that is taking place, or is about to take place can be found in the Parish of Immanuel, Stapenhill. For the last few months Frank spent his time as Assistant Curate of this Parish on placement at Immanuel providing leadership and support to the congregation of that parish and ultimately to the people of that community. The work he does and the position that he holds in that Parish is to be formalised and confirmed in the coming weeks. Frank will be licensed as 'Associate Priest' to that Parish.

That sounds all very familiar and normal. Well yes and no. The church is confined by certain structures and so to just make Frank Priest of that Parish at the moment is only possible if he is supported by another full-time paid Priest, which in this case is me. I will be licenced as Priest in Charge of Immanuel alongside Frank who will be Associate Priest. With my title comes legal responsibilities, but the way the ministry will be worked out means that I will not be splitting my ministry from 2 parishes to 3, but from 2 to 2+.

The change in the outworking of this post is that my part as Priest in Charge is to facilitate and support Frank, whose ministry it is to be Priest (Associate) to that Parish. Frank will be the 'focal minister' for that church.

The model of focal ministry is not limited to the ordained, the focal minister could be a lay person or perhaps a lay team, empowered to be the ones who the people of the community and parish look to.

This is only one outworking of the changes being called for by the Bishops. The Mission and Ministry of the church remains the same as it has always been, 'God's Mission' (not ours) that we are called to do, and God doesn't change and nor does his mission call to us. So it is about how we go about being church that is changing and will continue to change as it always has. But the challenge at this moment and for the next few years will call us all to look closely at how we are proclaiming the gospel and is our current structure the right one for this place.

The place we start this process, is the place that we always start from, prayer. I ask you to pray for St Mark's, St Wytan's and Immanuel Stapenhill. To pray for these churches and their congregations, as well as the churches of other denominations who share in God's Mission in these places, and to pray also for all people of these 3 localities. Pray that we may have open hearts and minds to the possibilities, and the courage to respond to the way we are directed.

Yours in Prayer, Philip

St Mark's News and Events

Outside steps

We apologise for the inconvenience of the temporary closure of the steps leading up to St Mark's from Church Hill. Concerns over their safety have been raised and to ensure no one comes to any harm when using them they are closed until they can be made safe.



We are making plans for a future project to find a long-term safe solution for pedestrians walking up to church, but for now we hope to simply make the existing steps safe for the winter. We will try to have them back in usable order as soon as we can.

In the meantime, drivers, please be aware that pedestrians take priority on the road. Please hang back and wait for them the ascend or descend. Walkers should not need to step into the gutter or onto the grass.

Christmas Shoe Boxes

We will once again be collecting shoeboxes for the Samaritans Purse Operation Christmas Child. Leaflets will be available in church from the beginning of October and there are some shoeboxes which will also be made available. Please pay careful attention to what can/cannot go in the box. Thank you.



The filled shoeboxes will need to be in church by **Sunday 22nd November.**

St Mark's Church Yard Gardening

One last go before the winter..

This month: Saturday 2nd October

Starting at 9.30am.



**A final push while the weather is good...
more hands make light work.**



We will be there from 9.30am to 12.30pm.

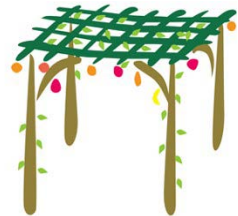
Do come and join us for as long as you can, you will be very welcome.

Refreshments will be served towards the end of the morning.

An enormous **THANK YOU** to those who have been giving up their time, working hard to clear the space beyond overflow carpark/meadow, and in other areas of our church grounds. It has taken a monumental effort to get it to it's current state, battling constant brambles, nettles, hard ground, and all sorts of detritus. Thank you! Your work has been noticed by many, and we look forward to seeing this wonderful outdoor space develop and being used for worship and community events, as well as watching it flourish as a diverse habitat.

Experience Harvest

Thanks to all those who have volunteered their time to help make Experience Harvest a possibility. During the last week of September and the first week of October we have been welcoming KS2 pupils from Tower View & Winshill Village Primary Schools to St Mark's for a learning Experience.



If you have any items for the weekly church pew sheet please email them to Revd Philip (see p3) or drop them off at The Vicarage on Mill Hill Lane by 5pm on the Friday before.

All Souls Service

A Service of Remembering

**Sunday 31st October and
Sunday 7th November 2021**

**Starting at 6pm,
with the Church open for refreshment from 5pm.**



Last year we were unable to hold our All Souls Service in person.

This Year we will hold it over two Sunday evenings allowing us to invite all those who couldn't attend last year as well as those we have ministered to this year.

The services are open to all who wish to remember those whom they love but see no longer, no matter when they died.

There will be the opportunity during the service to light a candle and to remember by name.

All Welcome.

St Mark's Altar Flower Rota

3 rd October	Lynn Tebbs	Lynn Tebbs
10 th October	Helen Duke	Helen Duke
17 th October	Roger & Jennifer Easton	Jennifer Easton
24 th October	Mitchell family	Janice Barratt
31 st October	Janice Barratt	Janice Barratt
7 th November	Jean Waterfall	Jean Waterfall
14 th November	REMEMBRANCE. Congregation	Marie Hopkins
21 st November	Brenda Yates	Marie Hopkins
28 th November – 19 th December	<i>ADVENT. No flowers</i>	<i>No flowers. Advent</i>
25 th December 2nd January 2022	CHRISTMAS. Congregation	All available arrangers

Thank you to all who helped to decorate the church so beautifully for Harvest, for the flowers, produce, and those who donated towards the decorations, and the YMCA food bank collection.

If you'd like to join the flower team next year, please speak to Janice.



St Mark's Church Choir

Do you enjoy singing?

Come and join us in the church on **Wednesday evenings 7pm until 8pm**. Just an hour a week, to sing glorious hymns of worship with friends. (You don't even have to sit with the choir on a Sunday if you really don't want to.)



For more information, please contact Simon on 07481872041 or via email; directorofmusic@stmarkswinshill.co.uk



Saturday 9th October 2021
2:30pm
St Mark's Church, Winshill

Piano Recital by Simon Ackroyd

Admission is free

There will be a retiring collection in aid of the charity
Wonky Pets Rescue and St Mark's Church.

Robert Baker's Hymn of the Month



The Earth Belongs unto the Lord

A hymn from the revised Scotting psalter of 1650.

The first Scottish psalter was produced in 1564 by John Knox and other protestants who had returned from exile in Geneva to lead the Scotting reformation. The revision of 1650 was made by a Westminster assembly of Divines.

The hymn 'The Earth Belongs unto the Lord' is a paraphrase of Psalm 24 – 'The Earth is the Lords and the fullness thereof'. It asserts God's sovereignty over the earth and has a stern message for the human race on the destruction being made on the natural environment.

Verses four and five contain an ancient Hebrew liturgy – 'Lift up your heads O ye gates' which was used as the procession bearing the Ark of the covenant reach reached the entrance to the temple in Jerusalem.

There are various tunes used for this hymn including 'St Matthew' by Dr William Croft (1678-1727) an organist at Westminster Abbey and 'St George's Edinburgh' by Andrew Mitchell Thomson (1778-1831).

.....

Daily Bread

The sheaves of wheat stand bound and stacked upon the sunlit hill; though Empires rock and systems crash – these things are with us still ... the sowing and the harvesting, the ploughing and the toil – the reaping and the garnering; the bounty of the soil

Whatever else may pass, this ancient ritual abides; a wheatsheaf is a symbol of the truth that God provides ... A token of the rich fulfilment of the golden days - calling forth the glad thanksgiving of our songs of praise.

First the young green-bladed wheat – and then the swelling en-ripening to its full perfection with the passing year; cut and bound and threshed and ground, the corn turns into bread. The miracle is wrought anew. A hungry world is fed.

RNIB used postage appeal

There is now a box at the back of church for used postage stamps.



I am happy to trim them ready for posting. (Please leave a good border around them if possible.)

Thanks Janet Rundle x

YMCA FOOD BANK

Can you help to support our local YMCA food bank?

You can donate your items by placing them in the box at the back of church.

Our local YMCA Food bank currently have plenty of baked beans, soup and pasta, but are short on rice, tinned fruit, tinned potatoes, tinned spaghetti, pasta sauce, coffee, biscuits, jam, cup-a-soups, instant noodles and instant pasta. Extra treats such as crisps and chocolate are also very well received by recipients of food parcels!



Baby Welcome Packs

At St Mark's we support Life Charity "Baby Welcome Packs" which collects newborn clothing and baby toiletries for local agencies to distribute to new mothers. If you have any new or good second-hand baby clothing aged up to 0 - 3 months of age, or if can support by providing new baby toiletries and baby wipes, please place them in the collection box at the back of church.





In an effort to help the whole community to think a little more eco, we will be publishing a simple eco-tip every month. Small actions put together make big differences.

This month's tip is inspired by the Young Christian Climate Network relay to COP26.



TIP 3. Walk or cycle whenever you can

Try to limit the use of cars and buses for short distances.

We all know it makes sense, sometimes it just takes a little extra forethought and sensible timing. But it's great for you physically, amazing for your mental wellbeing and every little bit of fuel saved helps the environment. Have a think about your week and try to work out a journey or two that you could make without a vehicle.

Elsie's Corner

Peace of mind is a treasure of greater worth than gold –
More precious than a jewel, and if this is the prize you hold –
You are rich beyond all telling,
thought time may prove unkind –
It cannot rob you of the treasures of a quiet mind

The Cross in my Pocket

I carry a cross in my pocket
A simple reminder to me
Of the fact that I am a Christian
No matter where I may be.

This little cross is not magic
Nor is it a good luck charm
It isn't meant to protect me
From every physical harm

It's not for identification
For all the world to see
It's simple an understanding
Between my Saviour and me.

When I put my hand in my pocket
To bring out a coin or key
The cross is there to remind me
Of the price He paid for me.

It reminds me, too, to be thankful
For my blessings day by day
And to strive to serve Him better
In all that I do and say.

It's also a daily reminder
Of the peace and comfort I share
With all who know my Master
And give themselves to His care.

So, I carry a cross in my pocket
Reminding no one but me
That Jesus Christ is Lord of my life
If only I'll let Him be.

Verse written by Mrs. Verna Mae Thomas



Bumps, Babies and Beyond



Exciting news!

St Mark's Children in Church team will be extending the Bumps and Babies group to also welcome toddlers from 1 year old up to school age.



We will be accommodating the toddlers and parent/carers in the area at the back of church and the Bumps and Babies will remain in the Lions Den. There will be free play and socialising at the beginning of the session followed by craft and snacks for the toddlers.

Both groups will join together for bible teaching, songs and prayer time at the end of the sessions. The groups will have a distinctly Christian ethos.

The new toddler group will start on Tuesday 2nd November, 10am – 12pm. If you are interested in bringing your little one to the group then please contact Claire Smith on 07890 127848.

The Bumps and Babies group will still be running at the same time during October and going forward, and will remain a safe place for little ones to play and learn without being knocked over by older children.



The Children in Church team would welcome any donations which will help to fund the setting up of the new group. Please label any monetary donations which you may put on the church plate 'Toddler group'.

We would also be grateful for any good quality, clean Duplo, dolls, and dressing up costumes which you no longer need.

Thank you in advance.

Relay walk to COP26

It feels a long time ago now that Julia and I joined with fellow climate conscious Christians to walk our local stretch of the YCCN (Young Christian Climate Network) relay to COP26. Our short stint is over, but the long walk from the G7 summit in Cornwall all the way the COP26 meeting of nations in Glasgow in November still goes on.



We proudly carried our banner showing St Mark's support of the walk and the mission of YCCN, we were proud to share our churches Eco-journey with other. But just as our route was a tiny part of the walk, so is our part a small, though nevertheless vital one, in the Church's mission and indeed the Global mission to combat the climate crisis and unite with other nations on a fair playing ground.



One of the main issues YCCN want to highlight and put pressure on is the unequal balance of finances different nations have in tackling climate issues. Those most immediately effected are often those who are crippled by international debts so have nowhere to draw the finances required to act until these can be abolished.

The moto for the walk was 'we're in the same storm but not in the same boat'. We are called by them to 'Rise to the moment', to act and not sit back, to make our voices heard.



“The climate crisis is a reflection, and a cause, of deep injustice in the world. This crisis arises from our abuse of God’s creation, and our broken relationship with our neighbours worldwide who suffer most from its consequences. We are convinced of the biblical mandate to care for creation, and lament its exploitation. We want to see systematic change on a global and a local scale. ”

Do have a look at their website to read more about their mission and purpose. www.yccn.uk



Throughout October they will be walking from Durham, through Newcastle, across to the Holy Island, to Dunbar, on the Edinburgh, and arriving in Glasgow on the 31st.

Please do remember them in your prayers this month.

Our thanks to those who supported our little part. Especially those from the churches whose parishes we went through. For St Peters’ Netherseal, St James’ Smisby and Melbourne Methodist Church for your hospitality and your company as fellow walkers.



For Interest

Houseplant profile

House plant of the month

African Violets- *formerly known as Saintpaulia, but recategorised under the Streptocarpus genus.*

A rewarding and beautiful flowering plant with a range of varieties to choose from. They do have a reputation for being a bit picky. Some struggle to keep them alive, others love them and propagate them regularly to share.

Location. Somewhere with good but indirect natural light. This one is thriving on Bethany's north facing bedroom windowsill. Others in our house with lower light levels have significantly less flowers.

Planting medium. Use a compost with a good quantity of organic matter, but with added vermiculite or similar as it won't like to be waterlogged– nor to dry out entirely.

Watering. Take care to avoid getting water on the leaves or allowing it to sit in water and get soggy, it will quickly rot if you do. It will prefer water that is room temperature or even tepid, cold water might give it a little shock. Allow water to stand for a day or so if you can as they can be fussy with the chemicals in our tap water. Or save your rain water!

Care. Pinch out blooms once spent, they can go on flowering for you for months on end if they're happy.

Propagation. Take a medium sized leaf with a good stem, insert the stem in seed compost so that the base edge of the leaf sits on the compost. Water and allow to drain, place in a propagator or give it a makeshift one with a clear plastic bag. Wait for new little leaves to develop.

Advice on plant care varies depending on the book, blog or website you look at. So if you disagree let me know and I'll make a note in next month's mag.

Helen



Simple Chocolate Cake

An easy favourite

200g soft baking spread

200g sugar (I sometimes use 150g caster and 50g dark brown for extra flavour)

150g self raising flour

50g cocoa powder

1tsp baking powder

4 eggs

Optional- for additional flavour, 1tbsp coffee powder and 1tsp vanilla extract.

For the buttercream filling

80g unsalted butter

160g icing sugar, sifted

1tsp vanilla extract

Preheat oven to 200/180 fan

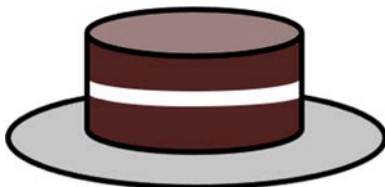
Grease/line 2x 8" (20cm) cake tins.

Using your preferred method (stand mixer, electric beater or a wooden spoon), beat together spread and sugar until pale light and fluffy, alternately add the eggs and dry ingredients and beat until combined.

Divide equally into two cake tins and bake for 25/30 mins, or until the cake springs back when given a light touch, the edges are coming away from the sides and a skewer/cake tester comes out clean.

Allow to cool slightly in the tins, then turn out onto a cooling rack.

Beat together butter, icing sugar and vanilla until light and fluffy. Fill the cake when cool, and dust with icing sugar for a final touch.



Community News and Events

22nd Burton-on-Trent (St Mark's) Scout Group



September is always an exciting time for the Scout Group. It is when we welcome all the Scouts, Cubs and Beavers back to Scouting after the summer shutdown. This year is no exception. We are already seeing the Scouts and Cubs back and have started our programmes. The only section not back are the Beavers.

During the pandemic, the Beavers either found Zoom too difficult or got too old and were moved to Cubs. I am really excited to report that we have Beavers registered ready to go; we have the leaders and programme in place. We are just waiting for a few more items to be finalised and we will be back! If you know of a child (girl or boy) aged between 5 years and 9 months and 8 years old, and think they would benefit from being a Beaver, please get in touch.

You may have heard that The Scouts have introduced Squirrels as a new Section for 4- and 5-year-olds. There have been pilot projects being held around the country. So far, all reports have been positive. Our Group are not looking at starting Squirrels at the moment – but who knows what the future holds.

Raksha

SCOUTING GIVES YOU
SKILLS FOR LIFE

We help young people and volunteers develop the practical, employability and character skills they need to succeed



Do you have any news you would like to share?
Or perhaps some writing or a picture that could others will find interesting? Are you part of a community group with an upcoming event?

Let us know by contacting Pat
kp.mannclan@gmail.com 01283 516605

For Interest — from the archives

Garden Hints for October

In memory of John and Margaret Thacker, we are continuing with Garden Notes and the following notes were published in 2002.



Bedding plants and spring displays. Remove summer bedding plants from where you intend to plant out wallflowers, myosotis and bulbs for a spring display.

Plant these this month while the soil is still warm so that they will make new roots before the hard weather sets in.

Also, prepare containers for winter once the summer bedding has been removed—there is a splendid selection of bulbs, heathers and pansies to choose from.

Bushes, trees and perennials. If you have not already done so, now is the time to order fruit trees and bushes, roses and other plants from the specialist nurseries. Plant herbaceous perennials—divide old clumps and replant the vigorous outer shoots.

Fallen Leaves. You may wish to start collecting fallen leaves to create mulch, or to leave in a corner of your garden for wildlife.

Dahlias. Cut down the top growth as soon as blackened by the frost, then lift carefully and stand tubers upside down in a frost free environment to dry out.

Fuchsias. Non-hardy or bedding fuchsias will need to be protected from the cold winter weather.

Plants also benefit from being cut back by up to one third. Remove any soft growing tips that may not overwinter.

JST



St Mark's Church Winshill

Restoration of the parish church clock and the installation of electric winding by English clockmakers, Tissington, which took place in 2004.

Advised by the Derby Diocesan Clock Advisor Michael Applebee.
Funded by The Consolidated Charity of Burton upon Trent.

The parish church clock is a flat bed turret clock which was manufactured and installed by John Smith of Derby in 1880. The clock is located in a very prominent position and is the only public clock in the village.

As far as is known it has run without any major overhaul for 129 years. After so many years of operation, the chiming and striking mechanism became very temperamental and various bearings in the clock were also showing signs of wear. It was decided therefore, to have the clock overhauled and to have electric winding added to the clock and to the chiming and striking mechanisms.



The original weights had to be raised by hand from the ground level to just above the dials.



The twice weekly wind of the clock, chimes and striking mechanisms is now a thing of the past.

"The motion work", that is located behind the dials, converts the minutes to hours. This was also cleaned and overhauled.



The new Cumbria clock winding gear fits at the bottom of the clock case behind the pendulum.



The clock mechanism is in three parts. On the left is the chiming mechanism; on the right is the hourly striking mechanism and in the middle is the clock mechanism.

Our thanks to Roy for bringing this information to our attention.

Science and Religion

Part Two.

This month I would like to start by looking at one particular aspect of God's creation. This is the observation that when we look at ordinary everyday things, we see that the ways in which they interact with each other are governed by certain set laws. Laws that seem to bestow upon the world a high degree of order and regularity. These are the laws of nature which are revealed by science and, at one level, make God's creation predictable.

If you were to pour water into an electric kettle and turn the kettle on you would know that when the temperature of the water reaches 100 deg C the water will boil. This will always happen when the water temperature reaches 100 deg C, at least in your kitchen, and so is predictable. In a similar manner, if you were to put water into an ice tray and put it in your freezer the liquid water will turn to ice, a solid. This, too, is predictable. Something a bit harder to predict, though nevertheless still predictable, is that if an aircraft speeds up to a certain velocity on a runway it will begin to lift off the ground. This is because the air pressure on the underside of its wings becomes so much greater than the pressure on the top of the wings that the force difference causes it to lift off the runway. There are many things about our world that follow certain set laws and because of that they are predictable.

Every now and again we are treated to the phenomenon of a total eclipse of the sun by the moon. This is an amazing event during which day turns to night. What is more amazing, though, is that through the laws of nature we can accurately predict when total eclipses will occur. The next one will occur in the southern hemisphere on 4th December 2021. I found this out by googling 'total eclipse.' Not only does the website I found give the date of the next total eclipse it also gives a map of the world showing precisely the path of the moons shadow over the earth during it. Similar dates and maps are given for every solar and lunar eclipse until the year 2099. That this can be done is due to the fact that the way in which the earth orbits the sun and the way in which the moon orbits the earth are known precisely and their future paths can be predicted accurately. These paths are predicted through the use of various mathematical equations which were discovered by Sir Issac Newton and which connect the force of gravity with the planetary orbits. The very same equations are used today to send space probes to the outer reaches of our solar system and were used to put a man on the moon. All of this is a very practical illustration of the predictability of God's creation through the laws of nature, laws, of course, that God also put into place at the creation.

The seventeenth century mathematician and scientist, Laplace, developed the ideas of Newton and put forward the idea that the whole of nature is like a deterministic machine. In this machine one could, in principle, if given sufficiently accurate information about the current positions and velocities of all the particles in the universe, uniquely determine the future course of events. After all, we, including our brains, are made up of particles so surely, it was believed, our behaviour, controlled by our brains, should proceed in accordance with the same laws which controlled the motion of the heavenly bodies. This caused Laplace, in 1814, to make this statement. 'We may regard the present state of the universe as the effect of its past and the cause of its future.' For Laplace God's creation was like an enormous clockwork machine and was completely predictable at every level.

These ideas supported the theological view of a God who created all things together with the laws which govern their interactions in such a way that the future course of events could be predicted given sufficient data. In this understanding God is seen as controlling everything, including ourselves through what we see as the laws of nature, and, in this scheme, our lives have been mapped out completely, by God. In the same way that we can predict the future paths of the planets, God knows fully the future course of our own personal history and, what's more, has planned it that way.

These ideas are implicit in Calvin's theological concept of predestination. In this idea God created all people but has only selected a few of them to be saved. These are referred to as the elect and have been foreordained to eternal life while the rest of us are eternally damned. I find this quite an horrific idea, but if God's creation was, in reality, a deterministic machine, as Laplace believed, then the creation would have to be like that because it would be fully determined from the start. In a never ending chain of cause and effect each event would be the result of a preceding one and would be connected to it through the laws of nature. We would simply be automatons following the laws of nature decreed by God and there would be no freewill. We would therefore have no choice about our actions, whether they be good or bad.

If Laplace were correct and God's creation blindly followed the course laid down by the laws of nature then fate would be a reality. Everything that happened would have been preordained by God through the laws that he put in place and this would include the evil and suffering in the world. Thankfully, though, especially as we believe in a God of love as revealed by Jesus Christ, the idea of predestination holds about as much water as Laplace's idea of a clockwork creation. Today, it is recognised that there are many aspects of God's creation which are not predictable at all, especially when we look at it in the

very small. It isn't always orderly and regular at small scales and only seems that way on the scale of things we can see. There are processes, such as planetary motion, that are predictable but we now know that there are other processes which are chaotic and others in which even random events can occur and there is no relationship between cause and effect. Things just happen.

I have a mobile phone that can tell me what weather we are going to have for the forthcoming seven days. A couple of weeks ago I was looking forward to a temperature of 20deg C on Saturday so I planned to mow the lawns. All week the phone reliably informed me that it would be dry and hot. When Saturday came and I was mowing the lawns it was quite chilly and began to rain. Whatever laws of physics were used by my phone to calculate what the weather was going to be certainly didn't work for me. This is one of the problems with predicting the weather. I'm sure you have all heard about the proverbial butterfly that flaps its wings in Brazil and the following week we have a hurricane in Skegness. Weather prediction remains more of an art than a science because the physics which lie behind it permits chaos to occur. From very tiny changes in the causes, extremely large changes in the effects can, and do, occur.

In summary, although there are laws of nature which govern certain processes, like planetary motion, in God's creation other processes, like weather systems, are not predictable. There are other processes, too, which are not simply unpredictable but which result from random events and these will be the subject of the third part of the series next month.

Our thanks to Mervyn John for providing these essays for us and for taking the time to tinker and update them. We look forward to the continuation of the series.

From October 2007

SERENDIPITY

This word was defined by Horace Walpole as "The faculty of making happy and unexpected discoveries by accident."

I thought of these words when I looked, for perhaps the first time with real attention, at a tall jug that has been in the family for almost a century. It is simple in shape, the formal design that of tulips and anemones, in soft shades of green, cream, golden brown, clover pink and deep blue. The design is slightly raised and glazed to give a sheen to the surface. Until that moment, I had failed to realise the pleasing beauty of shape, design and colour. It is the appreciation of those things that we already have, often overlooked, that give unexpected pleasure.

On a country walk, there was the discovery of a hidden lane, a narrow, gentle lane with fields on either side, blackberries and rosehips in the hedgerows. A bend in the lane revealed a shallow stream flowing across; beyond a long, stone cottage, and a garden fronting the lane. In the still warmth of a September afternoon, all was wonderfully tranquil.

There is the happiness of a new friendship. Someone may have been an acquaintance for years, then it is as though a key is turned and that person becomes a friend. And one does not always know why.

Serendipity is the calming, sustaining power of words; of picking up a book and finding joy, or speaking to a friend and receiving guidance and support. Another gift is hearing music not heard before, or rediscovering music, music that stirs the memory and now becomes known.

The individual beauty of flowers is a discovery. A white geranium, translucent petals delicately veined, a rose, deep gold in bud opening to paler gold, dark orange poppies lit by sunlight to a glowing flame, all are unique.

This quality of serendipity encourages one to be more awake to everyday surroundings and events, for often there is more of interest and reward than one had dreamed of.

Monica

For Fun

D	A	D	G	I	B	S	A	E	S	S	C	F	H	D
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I	I	A	X	D	H	E	H	Y	E	A	T	F	N	E
D	P	Z	G	M	O	T	R	A	N	I	P	T	Z	R
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E	I	L	O	J	E	A	R	U	N	A	T	E	T	T
B	V	I	D	R	M	A	U	S	K	V	P	E	X	O
A	D	C	R	W	P	Y	D	G	X	B	E	T	C	P
W	N	M	F	T	R	I	C	E	R	A	T	O	P	S
H	P	Y	O	I	G	A	G	Z	I	J	B	O	E	I
R	C	R	F	J	M	K	O	R	D	U	N	K	P	A
F	A	N	H	A	L	D	S	B	F	M	L	D	T	E

DINOSAUR WORDSEARCH

APATOSAURUS
 CERAPODA
 CERATOPSIA
 DIPLODOCIDAE
 DIPLODOUS
 MANIRAPTORA
 STEGOSAURUS
 TETANURAE
 THEROPODA
 TRICERATOPS



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