

February  
2019

# St Michael's Oulton.



# **Services and Events February 2019**

## **Saturday 2nd February: Church Centre Clearing.**

9:30 am: Due to current insurance conditions, it is necessary to clear the old Church Centre in Hall Road of a few remaining items that will need to be transported to and stored at the church. We would most willing to receive any support in that undertaking. Thankyou.

## **Sunday 3rd February: 5th Sunday Before Lent.**

9:00am Book of Common Prayer & Holy Communion led by Rev. Nick Ktorides.

10:00am Morning Worship led by Debbie Allsop and Jill Pirrie preaching.  
Sides persons: Karen Langfield & Carol Keightley.

## **Sunday 10th February: Fourth Sunday Before Lent.**

10:00 am Morning Worship and Holy Communion led by The Venerable David Hayden and Rev. Nick Ktorides.

Sides Persons: Elissa Norman and Stella Saunders.

## **Saturday 16th February: Joint Bell Practice.**

10:00 am to 12 noon. There will be a joint bell-ringing training morning at St Michael's tower for intermediate ringers.

## **Sunday 17th February: Third Sunday Before Lent.**

10:00am Morning Worship and Holy Communion led by the Rev. Nick Ktorides and Jill Pirrie.

Sides Persons: Jill Pirrie and Carolyn Woodcock.

## **Monday 18th February: Knit and Natter Group.**

1:30pm: Meet at 1, Elmhurst Avenue, Oulton Broad.

## **Thursday 21st February: Women's Fellowship Meeting.**

2.30pm: Meet at 1 Elmhurst Avenue. Speaker is Jill Pirrie.

## **Sunday 24th February: Second Sunday Before Lent.**

10:00am Morning Worship and Holy Communion led by the Rev. Nick Ktorides and Debbie Allsop.

Sides Persons: Tim Jones and Jane Boyce.

**Please note that there will be no meeting of the 'Young@Heart' during February, but the meetings will resume in March.**

## Famous Christians.

This month we focus on DAVID LIVINGSTONE (1813—73)

Missionary and Explorer

In January 1871 the New York Herald sent a reporter, H.M. Stanley, to Africa in search of David Livingstone, of whom nothing had been heard for four years. Stanley's nervous greeting of the famous explorer - 'Dr Livingstone, I presume' - is now a classic among casual remarks!

Before that meeting at Ujiji on Lake Tanganyika, Livingstone had spent thirty-one years traversing Africa on foot. He was to trek another two years before death overtook him at Ilala as he knelt at his bed in prayer. In all he travelled more than 33,000 miles of Africa, mapping the journey as he went and encountering unbelievable difficulties. He was, by any standard, one of the most determined and courageous men who ever lived, and a truly committed Christian.

David Livingstone was born at Blantyre, Scotland, of poor parents, and started work in a cotton mill when he was ten. But his sights were on higher things. By self-education and attendance at evening classes, he entered college, qualified as a medical doctor, and offered for service with the London Missionary Society. He arrived in South Africa in 1840, where he joined Robert Moffat, whose daughter Mary he married. Africa's interior beckoned, and he set out on a series of incredible journeys during which he was mauled by a lion and constantly suffered from malaria and dysentery. He crossed the Kalahari Desert and explored the region. He penetrated north west into Makololo territory, and from there set out by canoe, following the Zambezi river to the west, finally reaching the west coast of Africa. He then followed the Zambezi eastwards, becoming the first European to find the mighty Victoria Falls which he named, and reached the Indian Ocean. He had crossed the entire continent. Further journeys continued up to his death, expressing his unrelenting urge to 'go forward', as he put it. The cruel effects of the slave trade which he witnessed hurt him terribly, and nothing stopped his determination to oppose it.



Doctor David Livingstone.

David Livingstone's love for the African people was the extension of his love for Christ. A brilliant explorer, he was above all a missionary who aimed to bring the light of the gospel to the souls of that dark land. In all his endeavours he was upheld, he said, by the promise of Jesus, 'Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.'

Two of Livingstone's prayers reflect his unwavering commitment to the will of Christ:

O Lord, I am thine. Do what seemeth good in thy sight,  
and give me complete resignation to thy Will.

O Jesus, fill me with thy love now, and I beseech thee,  
accept me, and use me a little for thy glory. O do, do,  
I beseech thee, accept me and my service, and take thou all  
the glory.

David Livingstone's embalmed body was lovingly carried by devoted African servants 1500 miles to a waiting ship, and on reaching London was buried in Westminster Abbey. His epitaph reads:

Brought by faithful hands over land and sea,  
here rests David Livingstone,  
Missionary, Traveller, Philanthropist

(Taken from David M. Owen's book 'Something of A Saint' published by Triangle).  
ISBN 0-281-04481-3

## Nature Notes.

The shrill screams of swifts soaring and swooping through the warm air of a June evening conjures up memories of long hot balmy summer days. But surprisingly did you know that Swifts spend just three months of the year in the UK, arriving here in early May and leaving again in early August? This is a shorter period than any of our breeding birds other than the elusive cuckoo.



Now you may well ask what this fact has to do with St. Michael's, and more importantly why are we talking about a summer visitor in the depths of winter? Well, I will endeavour to explain. The RSPB state that Swifts tend to return to the same nesting sites each year. A survey found that

just over half (52 per cent) of the swift nest sites had been in use for at least 10 years.

In the UK, conversion of old houses, barns and derelict farm buildings into luxury homes has reduced potential nesting sites for swallows and swifts plus the removal of manure heaps that were close to old barns before conversion, have reduced the supply of insects. Sadly the numbers of these incredible birds are diminishing.

While you are reading this, the swifts will be well south of the Sahara: British-ringed birds have been recovered in the Congo Basin, Malawi, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Mozambique and South Africa. Swifts are monogamous, and the same pairs will breed together in successive years. Contrary to popular rumour, adult swifts can take off from a flat surface, though they rarely have to do so. Their closest genetic relations are the hummingbirds; believe it or not they are not related to swallows or martins.

Last summer, the Suffolk Wildlife Trust made a survey of the churchyard at St Michael's and made several recommendations for work to be undertaken in order to encourage wildlife to the area, and one of the suggestions was to place swift nest boxes on or in the tower of the church. Now having seen video footage of our tower prior to the bells being renovated and repositioned in 1981, I can assure you the tower was well and truly plastered in bird excrement. Since those renovations metal grills have been positioned on the inside of the tower louvre windows preventing access to birds (namely pigeons) and bats. Following the Wildlife Trusts recommendations, local resident and carpenter, Peter Wood is constructing a series of nest boxes which will be installed on the inside of the tower windows which will have a secure access hole through the mesh into the nest boxes alone. The next problem is enticing the swifts to use the nest boxes, and this will be undertaken by the installation of a small 12 volt amplifier and speakers which plays a recording of the swift's call.

So keep your eye's and ear's open in early May, and we will see if we can entice a family or two of these wonderful birds to make their summer home at St Michael's.



Carpenter Peter Wood working on the new Swift Nest boxes.

## The Woodland Trust.

Continuing in the ‘wildlife’ vein, we are delighted to announce that the **Woodland Trust** are donating to St Michael’s, an assortment of 105 saplings and guards, for planting around the church boundary. The saplings are expected to be delivered in early March, and after a brief acclimatization period, they will be ready for planting after the 22nd March. **The PCC are currently looking to setting-up a working party, to determine the best placement of the trees in the spring and would love to hear from anyone wishing to be involved in the project.** We see this as being a wonderful opportunity to enhance the area, and in so doing encourage more of the our diverse flora and fauna to the area.

The PCC would also like to involve various groups and organisations in the area to assist in the planting of the saplings and raise awareness, and would be grateful to any suggestion you may like to make.

The Woodland Trust are the UK's largest woodland conservation charity.



Established from humble beginnings in 1972 by our founder Kenneth Watkins OBE, they now have over 500,000 members and supporters and more than 1,000 sites, covering over 26,000 hectares, all over the UK.

They protect and campaign on behalf of this country’s woods, plant trees, and restore ancient woodland for the benefit of wildlife and people.

Their vision is a UK rich in native woods and trees, for people and wildlife.

Further information can be found at [www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/about-us](http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/about-us)



WOODLAND  
TRUST

## **Giving to St Michael's by Bankers Standing Order**

Hello - this is just a quick message from me as your (relatively) new treasurer. If Robin asks me, I will write on various money-related topics – this time it's on the subject of BOs where BO stands (at least in this context ! ) for Bankers Order.

BOs are different from Direct Debits because with a BO the power lies in your hands to start them, change them or stop them by simply telling your bank. Many parishioners at St Michaels and elsewhere give regularly by BO instead of putting cash in the offertory collection, whether in a weekly envelope or not. A BO usually operates monthly in line with pay or pension, but it can be for any regular period. There are lots of advantages. First, you do not have to plan or worry about having the cash to put on the plate or in your envelope, the bank transfer just happens on the specified date. If you are not able to get to church it happens anyway. The credit goes straight into the church bank account so it is more secure than cash and saves Alan from having to count it and pay it in.

One reason which has been given for keeping up cash payments is the embarrassment factor of not putting anything on the collection plate, and being seen by others not to do so. But now, with a good number of parishioners using BOs and sidespersons recognising this, there need be no embarrassment. At some churches there is no need for a plate to come round during the offertory hymn – the plate is kept at the back for those who use cash and this is brought forward in the offertory procession. Maybe we can work towards this at St Michael's?

Incidentally there is no connection between Gift Aid and BO, even though many who are able to, do Gift Aid their giving by BO. Any identifiable giving, whether by envelope or bankers order or cheque, can be Gift Aided if you pay income tax or capital gains tax. Maybe I will do another article on Gift Aid at some stage.

Therefore, if you are not already using BO please consider doing so. All you need is to fill in a simple form for your bank. There are supplies of forms at the back of church and if you use internet banking the information in the form can alternatively be used to set up the BO on line. Or, for further information please have a word with me on 01502 562301 or e-mail [johnandmaryhunt@gmail.com](mailto:johnandmaryhunt@gmail.com).

With all good wishes in the Lord's work

John Hunt

## In the News.

### Bishops call for a change of tone on Brexit debate.

The Church of England bishops who recently met in London made the following statement:

'The bishops of the Church of England pray for national unity – and courage, integrity and clarity for our politicians. We call on the country to consider the nature of our public conversation. It is time to bring grace and generosity back to our national life.'

'At the heart of the Christian message is Jesus' command to love our neighbour. This includes those with whom we agree and disagree – at home, in Europe, and further afield. We urge everyone – our political leaders and all of us – to bring magnanimity, respect and reconciliation to our national debate.'

'There is now an urgent need for the United Kingdom to recover a shared vision and identity to help us find a way through the immediate challenges.'

'Regardless of what happens next with Brexit, the Church of England, alongside many other churches and other agencies striving for the common good, will be at the heart of local communities; educating one million children, providing 33,000 social action projects and running 16,000 churches across the country. Above all else, we will continue to support the most vulnerable and share Christ's love with all.'

### Poverty on the increase

More and more people in this country just aren't making it, no matter how hard they work. Such is the finding of a recent survey into poverty in the UK.

The Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF)'s recent 2018 poverty report has found that four million adults are in poverty in the UK – despite having a job. That is a rise of more than half a million in the past five years.

The report says: 'In the last five years, poverty rates have risen for every type of working family: lone-parent or couple families, families with full-and part-time workers, and families with different numbers of adults in work. This is the first period in the last two decades when this has happened.'

The report goes on to say that 1.5 million people were living in destitution at some point during 2017, including 365,000 children. It also states that seven per cent of the population live in persistent poverty.

'Rising employment alone is not delivering lower poverty. Rather, in-work poverty is increasing faster than employment. Many workers are caught in the middle of a series of moving currents: stuck in low-paid work, with little chance of progression, subject to high housing costs, and using a weakening social security.'

# Bible Bite

It can be read in the Bible in Joshua chapter 6 verses 1-27

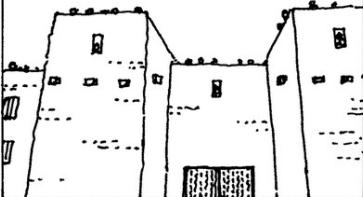
A short story from the Bible

Joshua led the Israelites across the river Jordan. They camped near the town of Jericho and prepared to fight.

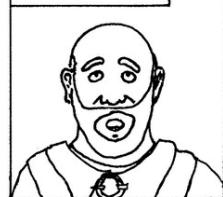
The people in Jericho locked the town gates.



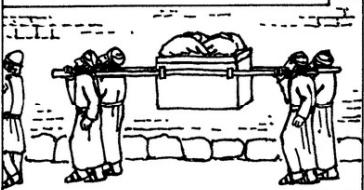
They thought they were safe.



God told Joshua what to do.



On the first day, the priests carried the sacred chest,



they blew trumpets, and walked round Jericho once.



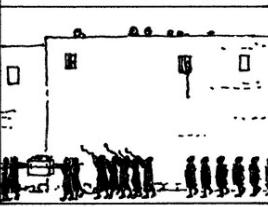
The army followed not saying a word.



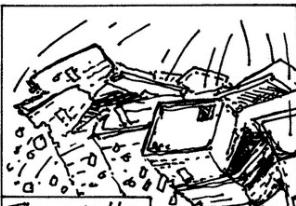
They did this for 6 days.



On the 7th day they walked round 7 times.



The army gave a victory shout!



The walls of Jericho collapsed.

The army rushed into the town and captured it.



Jericho was destroyed.

## Pause For Thought

This month John tells us of St. Clare and St. Francis.

I lived in Assisi for a short time in 1971. We were loaned a small house, which although it retained its Medieval structure on the outside was quite modern inside. Our house overlooked the Cathedral of St Rufinus. On the side of the Cathedral was a very large house. Originally it had been the home of the Scifi family, a very aristocratic family. They were very wealthy. There was a daughter called Clare, who was so inspired by the preaching of St. Francis that she felt called by God to renounce all her wealth and follow Francis. On Palm Sunday night 1212 Clare ran away, with the help of her cousin Buona Guelfuci, to meet Francis and all the brothers at the Porziuncola.

Clare knelt before the altar, her words surfacing from deep within her heart.

' My Lord, my one and only master, stretch your wings over the horizons of my world. I will walk barefoot with you until all the torches of the world are extinguished. For me there is only one voice, one face. Nothing will come between us, save the sword of fidelity.

I am young, I know very few things about life. They have spoken to me about autumns in your spheres.

I have heard that love is threatened by the poisons of tedium and routine. They even speak of desertion and indifference, things that are unimaginable to me. I know that the nag of faith will always flutter in your bell tower, and that you will carefully guard my gift in your golden coffer until the end of time.' She raised her arms and said:

' My Lord Jesus Christ, place your seal on my words and graciously accept my consecration. 'Francis could not control his emotions. Tears streamed down his face. His disciples were sobbing. Clare was incredibly serene. Buona Guelfuci also wept.

In keeping with the precepts of the ritual, Francis took a pair of scissors and, without uttering a word, approached the newlywed and cut off her golden hair. He then placed the hair upon the altar (Clare's hair can still be seen today in St. Clare's Basilica in Assisi) and then she was taken by Buona Guelfuci who helped Clare to



take off her rich gown and jewels and clothed her in the Franciscan habit, with a rope around her waist. She was veiled in a white veil by Francis. Clare then took her vows.

Of course Clare could not stay with the brothers, so she was taken to the Benedictine Convent of St. Paul, approximately five kilometres and stayed with them. The next day there was uproar in the Scifi household her; brothers went to the Benedictines and begged her to come home, but she wouldn't nothing would budge her. They tried force but she hung onto the altar. When they did manage to release her she became heavy, like lead and her brothers couldn't even lift her. In the end they just had to leave her at the Benedictine Convent. Then her sister Agnes decided that she too would like to join Clare. Again her brothers tried to talk them out of becoming religious, but nothing would move the sisters to break the vows they had made.

Francis finally took over St. Damian's, the church he had first restored outside Assisi, and that is where the Poor Clare's lived their closed life until they moved to the Basilica of St. Clare in Assisi after St. Clare's death. The Poor Clares' spent most of their day in silence and prayer; they also worked in their garden producing food to eat, but they did depend on the people in Assisi to give them anything eatable that those who gave it didn't want.

The sisters slept together in a dormitory each had their appointed place. Today you can see the place in the dormitory where Clare herself slept. It was a very hard and uncomfortable life, but others joined Clare and soon other convents opened in Italy and beyond.

We too within the Church of England have our own Poor Clare's - they live in Free-land near Oxford. Like all Poor Clare's are enclosed, they never leave the convent unless there is an emergency. I often ring them and talk to the sisters. I ring and ask for prayer for people who have asked me to pray for them. They like to have a full picture of the situation that the person is going through and of course their name. Our Poor Clares' earn their living by making simple Christmas cards. They also make Communion Wafers for churches throughout the United Kingdom. They keep chickens and grow there own food. They have fruit trees and they bottle and preserve fruit and vegetables.

Next time I will tell you about a Count who gave Francis a mountain.

## ***My Favourite Hymns.***

*Songs and hymns can become special to us for a number of reasons. In this case it was the story behind its author that made it special to me. The hymn I am referring to is the inspirational, ‘Amazing Grace.’*

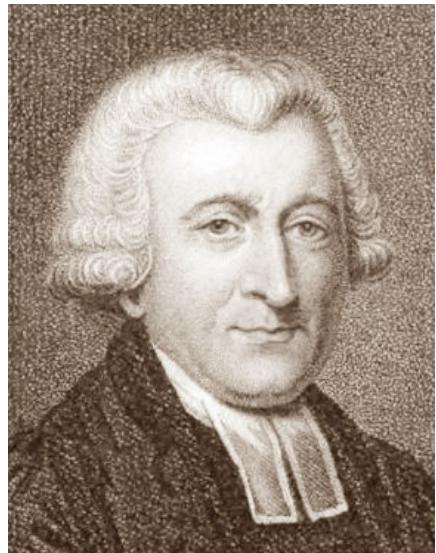
*John Newton at a young age went to sea and worked on the infamous slave ships. He was born in London in 1725. In 1743 while visiting friends, he was press-ganged into the Royal Navy. He became a midshipman but was not happy and tried to ‘jump ship’. Unfortunately he was caught and was given eight dozen lashes in front of the ship’s company.*

*Following this harsh punishment he was mentally drained and contemplated murdering the Captain and committing suicide, but he eventually recovered both mentally and physically.*

*He later transferred to a slave ship where he fell afoul of the ship’s crew and they dumped him in West Africa.*

*In 1748 he was rescued and returned to England. It was on his return to England that he had a spiritual conversion. When off the Irish coast his ship was caught in a terrible storm and holed. He awoke in the middle of the night with the ship filling with water. He called out to God and suddenly the ship shifted, and the cargo slipped and blocked up the hole in the hull and the vessel drifted to safety.*

*Eventually he returned to working on the slave ships. In 1748 he became ill and professed his full belief in Christ asking God to take care of his destiny. In 1754 he suffered a stroke and gave up seafaring but continued to invest in slaving operations.*



Following his work as a tax collector in Liverpool he was eventually ordained in 1764. In 1788, 34 years after he had retired from slave trading, he published a pamphlet on the horrors he had experienced on the slave trade and the cramped conditions on the slave ships. In it he apologized for being part of the practice. He eventually became an ally of William Wilberforce the abolitionist of the African slave trade. He lived to see the passage of the slave trade act in 1807. John Newton died on 21 December 1807 in London. He was buried beside his wife in St. Mary Woolnoth in London. Both were reinterred at the Church of St. Peter and Paul in Olney in 1893.

As a hymnist he wrote numerous anthems including 'Glorious things of thee are spoken, Come my soul, and of course 'Amazing Grace. It has become a universal favourite and there have been over 1,000 recordings of the music.

Every time I hear or sing this wonderful hymn I cannot but be affected by the words and the life of the man who wrote it.

Amazing grace, how sweet the sound

That once saved a wretch like me.

I once was lost

But now I'm found

Was blind, but now I see.

Finally on a lighter note did you hear about the Vicar who had very strict views on alcohol? One Sunday he was completing a temperance sermon: with great expression he said, "If I had all the beer in the world, I'd take it and throw it into the river."

With even greater emphasis, he said, "And if I had all the wine in the world, I'd take it and throw it into the river."

And then, finally, he said, "And if I had all the whiskey in the world, I'd take it and throw it into the river." He sat down.

The Deacon then stood very cautiously and announced with a pleasant smile, "For our closing song, let us sing Hymn number 594 in: the Anglican Hymn Book; 'Shall We Gather At the River.'"



**Hymn Sing**

## 14 February - Valentine's Day

I always look forward to Valentine's Day, not because of any particular romantic reason, but it is on, or certainly near to this date that an ardent football supporter can leave Carrow Road Football ground after a match, and it is still light! A sure sign that the days are drawing out and spring isn't too far off.

That aside there are two confusing things about this day of romance and anonymous love-cards strewn with lace, cupids and ribbon: firstly, there seems to have been two different Valentines in the 4th century - one a priest martyred on the Flaminian Way, under the emperor Claudius, the other a bishop of Terni martyred at Rome. And neither seems to have had any clear connection with lovers or courting couples.

So why has Valentine become the patron saint of romantic love? By Chaucer's time the link was assumed to be because on these saints' day -14 February - the birds are supposed to pair. Or perhaps the custom of seeking a partner on St Valentine's Day is a surviving scrap of the old Roman Lupercalia festival, which took place in the middle of February.

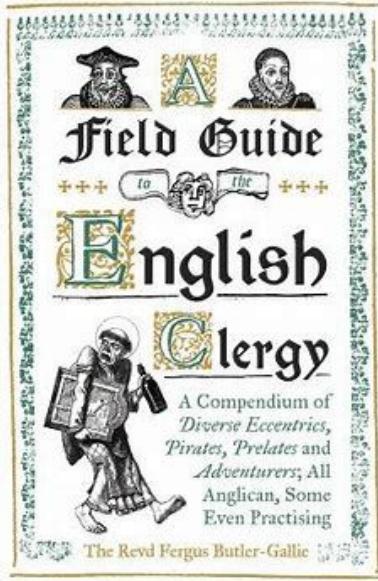
One of the Roman gods honoured during this Festival was Pan, the god of nature. Another was Juno, the goddess of women and marriage. During the Lupercalia it was a popular custom for young men to draw the name of a young unmarried woman from a name-box. The two would then be partners or 'sweethearts' during the time of the celebrations. Even modern Valentine decorations bear an ancient symbol of love - Roman cupids with their bows and love-arrows.

There are no churches in England dedicated to Valentine, but since 1835 his relics have been claimed by the Carmelite church in Dublin.

And finally, if you intend sending a Valentine card this year, the following quote by Rupert Brooke might be appropriate.



*'A kiss makes the heart young again and wipes out the years.'*



## Book Review

A colleague said to me on returning to work after the Christmas break, “I’ve just read a cracking book on the English clergy—it was brilliant!” Such a high recommendation, especially from a non-church goer, induced me to read it and I whole-heartedly agree with him.

*If you have a birthday coming up, you could do a lot worse than suggesting that this little book might be a suitable gift, if not then just go and buy it. I don’t think will be disappointed.*

*A Book of the Year for The Times, Mail on Sunday and BBC History Magazine Judge not, lest ye be judged. This timeless wisdom has guided the Anglican Church for hundreds of years, fostering a certain tolerance of eccentricity among its members. Good thing, too. The ‘Mermaid of Morwenstow’ excommunicated a cat for mousing on a Sunday. When he was late for a service, Bishop Lancelot Fleming commandeered a Navy helicopter. ‘Mad Jack’ swapped his surplice for a leopard skin and insisted on being carried around in a coffin. And then there was the man who, like Noah’s evil twin, tried to eat one of each of God’s creatures... In spite of all this they saw the church as their true calling. After all, who cares if you’re wearing red high heels when there are souls to be saved?*

*The author the Reverend Fergus Butler-Gallie is a young curate in the Church of England who once accidentally appeared on Only Connect. He holds a bachelor’s degree in history from the University of Oxford and a bachelor’s degree in theology from the University of Cambridge. He is (according to his own taxonomy) a Bon Viveur first and foremost, with a soupçon of Roguishness and Prodigality.*

## The Final Word

It was not ‘swimming’ at the pool in the hotel at the Dead Sea, it was ‘floating’ because the pool was filled with Dead Sea water. The high level of salt in the water meant the need to float on my back and I had to push my legs down when I wanted to stand up. Floating was not easy as I had little control and would find myself bumping against other people. It reminded me of the time on the wild water rapids at Center Parcs when I lost control in the rush of water and ended up on top of two young ladies. Fortunately I had taken my clerical collar off before entering the pool! Over Christmas is not a good time to have severe tooth ache. Most dentists are on holiday. It is even worse if it happens when your wife is undergoing chemotherapy in hospital. I had four emergency visits to the dentist. Eventually it led to having my tooth out. I was told to wash out my mouth three times a day with salt water. I am sure that, when I was a boy, I would have been given something from the pharmacy downstairs.

Before the days of deep freezers my mother used to preserve our favourite vegetable, runner beans, in large jars of salt.



At this time of year we might find the roads have been salted.

Salt makes a big difference to whatever it touches whether it is in the food we eat, in the pool we swim in, the mouthwash we use, the food we want to preserve, or the accidents we want to avoid on the road.

Jesus called his followers, ‘the salt of the earth’. We do not believe in Jesus or worship with others just for what we can get out of it. We are to make a difference, as salt does, as we serve others and use the gifts God has given us to be a blessing to people.

*David Hayden.*

If you have any contributions for the next monthly edition of the ‘Pew News’ please send your material to Robin Keightley

[robinkeightley175@btinternet.com](mailto:robinkeightley175@btinternet.com)