



St Alkmund's
**Duffield
Parish
Magazine**



November 2019

Picture: Kieran Harrod

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[Note: This is the special safeguarding hotline number, as opposed to our home number]

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The Vicar's Letter

JAMES HUGHES



Dear Friends,

We live in interesting times. By the time you read this, Brexit may or may not have been settled one way or another—at the time of writing, it certainly hasn't been. We are rightly concerned about the fate of the Kurds and Syrian refugees in the Middle East, as well as wider issues there. We no doubt have our own concerns closer to home. But for many, there is one over-arching issue that dwarfs the others: the environment.

We may or may not sympathise with Extinction Rebellion. We will be more or less persuaded about different methods of 'saving the planet'. But I imagine we are all concerned to look after the planet that we will hand down to our children and grandchildren. In the modern world we talk about environmentalism and caring for the environment, and some would say that the Bible does not have much to say on it. However, when looking at what the Bible has to say about this, we think about stewardship: how should we care for the planet that God has given humanity to look after? As those made in the image of God (Genesis 1), what is our job?

And when we ask this question, we encounter a great deal of practical wisdom. Wisdom about caring for creation and about caring for the poor and needy. Take for example the 'gleaning' laws of the Old Testament:

"And when you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap your field right up to its edge, nor shall you gather the gleanings after your harvest. You shall leave them for the poor and for the sojourner: I am the LORD your God." (Leviticus chapter 23 verse 22)

The Israelites are told to leave a little in the field for those who are landless and vulnerable at harvest time. They are not to take everything for themselves. Why? So that the poor can be fed, but also to remember who they are—those whom God has put in the land.

And as we think about stewardship and caring for creation today, this is a good place to start: all that we have we have as it were 'on trust' from God, and our goal is not maximal exploitation. As we seek to do our bit, these would be good truths to remember.

I look forward to seeing you.

Yours in Christ,





Services & Events

SUNDAY 3RD NOVEMBER

- 8.00 am **HOLY COMMUNION** at All Saints' Chapel
- 10.00 am **MORNING SERVICE** at St Alkmund's
Acts 17:15–34
- 4.30 pm **HOLY COMMUNION** at St Paul's (with refreshments from 4.00pm)
1 Thessalonians 4:13–18
- 6.30 pm **FIRST SUNDAY SPECIAL:** at St Alkmund's (in the Church Hall)
MEETING THE REAL JESUS: "Why did Jesus die on a cross?"
-

MONDAY 4TH NOVEMBER

- 2.00 pm **SONGS OF PRAISE**
Half-hour service, followed by tea/coffee/cake
-

SUNDAY 10TH NOVEMBER (REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY)

- 10.45 am **ACT OF REMEMBRANCE AT WAR MEMORIAL, FOLLOWED BY UNITED CHURCH SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE** [WITH CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES IN THE HALL]
- 4.30 pm **AFTERNOON SERVICE** at St Paul's (with refreshments from 4.00pm)
1 Thessalonians 5:11
- 6.30 pm **HOLY COMMUNION** at St Alkmund's
Deuteronomy 31
-

SUNDAY 17TH NOVEMBER

- 8.00 am **HOLY COMMUNION** at All Saints' Chapel
- 10.00 am **HOLY COMMUNION** at St Alkmund's
Acts 18:1–17
- 4.30 pm **AFTERNOON SERVICE** at St Paul's (with refreshments from 4.00pm)
1 Thessalonians 5:12–28
- 6.30 pm **EVENING SERVICE** at St Alkmund's
Deuteronomy 32

SUNDAY 24TH NOVEMBER

- 10.00 am **MORNING SERVICE** at St Alkmund's [+ 10 of those bookstall]
Acts 18:18–19:7
- 4.30 pm **AFTERNOON SERVICE** at St Paul's (with refreshments from 4.00pm)
2 Thessalonians 1
- 6.30 pm **HOLY COMMUNION** at St Alkmund's
Deuteronomy 33
-

Regular Events:

SALT CAFÉ—Sunday 3rd, in the Church Hall at 5.30pm. (For young people in school years 7–13)

SONGS OF PRAISE—Monday 4th, in the Church Hall at 2.00pm. (Half-hour service, followed by tea/coffee/cake)

BABES & BOUNCERS—Mondays (4th, 11th, 18th & 25th), 9.30–11.15am in the hall.

IMPACT (school years 7–9)—Mondays (4th, 11th, 18th & 25th), 7.00–8.30pm in the hall.

IGNITION (school years 10–13)—Tuesdays (5th, 12th, 19th & 26th), 7.30–9.00pm in the hall.

MORNING PRAYER—Tuesdays (5th, 12th, 19th & 26th) at 9.15am. Held in church for around half an hour.

MEN'S 5-A-SIDE FOOTBALL (at Ecclesbourne School)—Tuesdays (5th, 12th, 19th & 26th), at 8.00pm.

MONTHLY PRAYER MEETING—Wednesday 6th, 7.30pm in the hall.

LADIES' BIBLE STUDY & LUNCH—Wednesdays (13th & 27th) at 10.00am in the hall.

GROWTH GROUPS—Normally Wednesdays (13th & 27th) at 8.00pm, at various locations (*see leaders for details*).

TEA, CAKE & CHAT—Monday 18th, 2.00–3.30pm in the hall.

LUNCHTIME CONCERT IN CHURCH—Wednesday 27th at 1.00pm.

Special Events:

CHRISTMAS CRAFT EVENING—Friday 29th, 7.30pm in the hall.

ROCKING AROUND THE CHRISTMAS TREE—Saturday 30th, 7.30pm (in church and in the hall).



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Open the Book Celebrates 20 Years



20 years ago a group of Christians in Bedford wanted to take Bible stories into their local primary school. What was decided then is now something extraordinary. 16,800 storytellers across England and Wales take Open the Book assemblies regularly into 3,099 primary schools, and growing every week, not only in this country but abroad as well!

In Duffield, the initiative to present Open the Book on a regular basis was taken up by a group of enthusiastic church members led by Gill Needle, who visited Bedford 19 years ago and created the first group at St Alkmund's to present Open the Book to primary children at William Gilbert School. There then followed a period of intensive activity making props and costumes to present the stories written by Bob Hartman in a book written to involve children during collective worship each week during term time. It also fulfils both Ofsted and church school inspection requirements.

Over a period of time volunteers have changed within the group. Outstanding service has been given by some, including Helen Proudfoot, June Spruce: 19 years of making props, to reading and presenting the stories. I joined 18 years ago, and currently have a group including Ruth Nichols, Noella Lawrence, and Faith Hanson at William Gilbert on Wednesdays, and there is another group from Emmanuel going into Meadows School each week.

Other people involved over the years have included Joanne Chambers, Ann Stanier, Elaine Aldrich, Brenda Norreys and Rachel Macnab. (Apologies for missing anyone.) Recently, Helen Hawley has come on board—in time of need!

I pray that this wonderful service given to children to enhance their knowledge of the Bible will continue for many years. The children are so receptive and knowledgeable, remembering what has been presented to them the weeks before. I hope that over that 20 years they will continue to take these stories with them into their lives, whatever they do in the future, and that God will be at the forefront of their family life.

Ken Spruce

Music at Duffield presents



*Richard
Jenkinson* (Cello)

Saturday 2 Nov. 2019,
at 7.30pm

**ST ALKMUND'S CHURCH,
Church Drive
(off Makeney Road),
Duffield DE56 4BA**

PROGRAMME

J S Bach Cello Suites I

Bach Suite No. 1 in G major, BWV 1007

Bach Suite No. 5 in G minor, BWV 1011

Bach Suite No. 3 in G major, BWV 1009

Richard was born and educated in Derbyshire and studied cello with Florence Hooton, Raphael Walfisch and William Pleeth. He won a scholarship to the Guildhall School of Music & Drama, graduating in 1994 with Distinction, and was awarded the Guildhall's coveted Gold Medal for a performance of the Dvorak Cello Concerto in the Barbican. Richard has given recitals at London's Wigmore Hall and South Bank Centre, and made several recordings. He has held the posts of principal cello with the Irish Chamber Orchestra and City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and is the cellist of the Dante String Quartet.

Ticket prices: Adult £15, Concession £14, Student £7

Individual tickets are available at the door or from Caroline Morgan (Tel: 07977 091171) and also online at www.musicatduffield.com

For further details about Music at Duffield and future concerts please visit our website www.musicatduffield.com

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Book Review



Can science explain everything?

By **John C. Lennox** (2019)

(£7.99 THE GOOD BOOK COMPANY)

In brief: This 2019 book by Prof. John Lennox is a compact but full introduction to the literature on Science and Christianity, and well worth reading for anyone at all interested in the subject.

John Lennox is a well respected academic, a retired Oxford Maths professor, who has also lectured on business ethics, theology and the philosophy of science. He has also debated with Richard Dawkins on many occasions.

As Lennox states in his introduction: "... many people conclude that God and science do not mix But what if there were another way of looking at this whole business? What if we have been fooled into a pointless war based on misinformation and wrong thinking?" We do not learn science from the Bible, nor do we expect to.

On one hand, there are many people who assume that science has displaced faith as their world view. This includes both practising scientists and a much larger group who don't know, but assume, "that the scientists know." At the other extreme is a (much smaller) group of people who interpret the Bible in a very narrow way, which then raises unnecessary conflicts with science.



Science and Christian faith do not approach the problems in the same way. Science seeks to explain how things happen. Faith seeks to explain why things happen. Galileo said that the Bible teaches "how to go to heaven and not how the heavens go".

Lennox leads the reader through the historical background of the debate, then addresses the myths (as he says) that "Religion depends on faith but science doesn't", and "Science depends on reason but Christianity doesn't".

He discusses how we should approach the Bible as a historical document with exceptionally strong textual evidence. He also discusses miracles in some depth. He follows this with the challenge: "How to disprove Christianity" (by disproving the resurrection of Jesus). He concludes with the personal issues to be addressed in following his argument through to faith in Jesus Christ.

As a Christian, I found it challenged me to look at ideas from a different point of view. For both Christians and those who would deny the place of Christianity in the modern world, it is well worth reading to get a better-informed view, and to recognise that the issues are more complex (from both points of view) *than often presented*. In a world where belief may be belittled it is useful to be prepared, and where either side over-simplify the argument, it is a good place to start.

I would recommend this book to anyone who is interested in the subject. For both Christians and those who have chosen other belief systems, this is a useful book to understand the often-oversimplified discussions.

Andrew Jackson



St Alkmund's
Duffield Parish Church

First Sunday Specials Autumn 2019 Meeting the Real Jesus

3rd November - Why did Jesus die on a cross?
1st December - Did Jesus rise from the dead?

Join us for a cafe style service in the church hall.
A relaxed atmosphere with refreshments.
Opportunity to ask questions after the talk.

For more information see www.stalkmundsduffield.co.uk

Facebook: St Alkmund's Church Duffield. **Twitter:** @StAlksDuffield

Office: 01332 840536 Monday to Friday 9.30am-3pm

God is here! as we his people

During his long life Fred Pratt Green MBE was commissioned by the Dean and Chapter of Norwich Cathedral to write a hymn for the Celebration of the Queen's Silver Jubilee. The words of his hymns are very much grounded in daily Christian living. Fred Pratt Green, perhaps the most prolific hymn writer of the 20th century, encouraged Christians to practice what they preach. One of my favourites is 'God is here! as we his people.' Often used as the opening hymn for services, it reminds us of the presence of God within the physical surroundings of the church.

God is here! As we your people
Meet to offer praise and prayer,
May we find in fuller measure
What it is in Christ we share.
Here, as in the world around us,
All our varied skills and arts
Wait the coming of the Spirit
Into open minds and hearts.

Here are symbols to remind us
Of our lifelong need of grace;
Here are table, font and pulpit;
Here the cross has central place.
Here in honesty of preaching,
Here in silence, as in speech,
Here, in newness and renewal,
God the Spirit comes to each.

Here our children find a welcome
In the Shepherd's flock and fold;
Here as bread and wine are taken,
Christ sustains us as of old.
Here the servants of the Servant
Seek in worship to explore
What it means in daily living
To believe and to adore.

Lord of all, of church and kingdom,
In an age of change and doubt,
Keep us faithful to the Gospel;
Help us work your purpose out.
Here, in this day's dedication,
All we have to give, receive;
We, who cannot live without you,
We adore you! We believe!

Fred Pratt Green (1903–2000)

Sent by Paul Wiggins

Saturday 16th November 2019 at 7pm

The Derbyshire Singers
Derbyshire Sinfonia

Britten Saint Nicolas

Ola Gjeilo Song of the Universal

Gerald Finzi Eclogue op. 10 for Piano and Strings

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Choristers of the Cathedral Choir

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Amanda Kornas and Eleanor Kornas piano

Andrew Henley tenor

Lynne Clark conductor

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A display at the Harvest Festival held at
St Alkmund's on Sunday 29th September



...I don't care what your Sat-Nav's telling you - I'm telling you
you are definitely **not** on the M6, nine miles south of Derby!!

Why do people sing during a church service?

It's a good question, which—even if you've been a regular churchgoer for many years, you may well have pondered over. It's perhaps an even more puzzling question if you're *not* a regular church attendee. Why do they all sing so much when they're in church on Sundays? Especially if they're Baptists. Or Welsh. Or both.

This 'peculiarity' of singing during church services is probably heightened by the fact that—unless one happens to be in a choir or other organised singing group—we don't really engage in communal singing these days, other than at football stadia and the like. [And, it's a moot point as to whether questioning the ref's eye-sight, judgement and parentage, plus roundly disparaging the opposition actually constitutes "*singing*".....!].

My wife Emma and I recently attended a music seminar/workshop event over at Cornerstone Church in Nottingham, organised by the Music Ministry UK organisation, where we heard from Paul Mallard (a Christian speaker/writer and Pastor of Widcombe Baptist Church in Bath), Adrian Reynolds (Associate National Director at the FIEC¹ and author of several Christian books and commentaries) and others. Here's a summary of their answers to the question of why we sing:

1. We're created to sing

All of creation—that is all God has made—is designed to reflect God's glory and give praise to him as creator. This is highlighted in the Psalms, where *everything*



Paul Mallard speaking at the music seminar

in creation—from the “...sun and moon... shining stars...sea creatures...fire and hail, snow and mist...mountains and all hills... trees...beasts and all livestock, creeping things and flying birds, kings of the earth and all peoples...” are all to “...praise the name of the Lord” (Psalm 148 vv 3–13).

2. We're commanded to sing

The Bible contains many commands to God's people to sing His praise; for example each of the last five chapters in the book of Psalms (Psalms 146–150) begins and ends with an exclamatory "Praise the Lord," or (in Hebrew) "Hallelujah!" The Bible also contains many instances of God's people singing praises to Him—even in unlikely circumstance—for example Acts 16 v 25 describes the Apostle Paul and Silas, who, though in prison “...were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them...” →

¹ Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches.

3. We sing to celebrate our Salvation

Our salvation through the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ is the single most important thing and we should rejoice, praise and worship God in response to what He has done. Verse 9 of Revelation 5 says: *“And they sang a new song, saying, ‘Worthy are you [Jesus]...for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God, from every tribe and language and people and nation...’”*

4. We sing to reinforce the truth in our hearts and minds

We constantly need reminding of everything that God has done for His people and singing is a great way of “cementing” the truth in our lives; as the Apostle Paul puts it in Colossians 3 verse 16: *“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God”.*

5. We sing to prepare us for Heaven

The Bible teaches that one day God’s people will be with Him—for example

Revelation 21 v 3:

“Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God.” In Heaven, there will be praise and worship to God, and singing together in church is just a little foretaste of this.



As was his wont, Peter, my late father-in-law, once pithily summed it up in conversation at our wedding. With both of us being musicians, the music group naturally formed a key part of our service and Peter was chatting afterwards with an old school friend of mine, who—being from a very formal ‘high church’ background—remarked he’d found the music rather loud! *“Heaven’s not going to be a quiet place y’ know!”* Peter quipped. *“Not with all that worshipping and casting of crowns before the throne!!”*

James Rollin

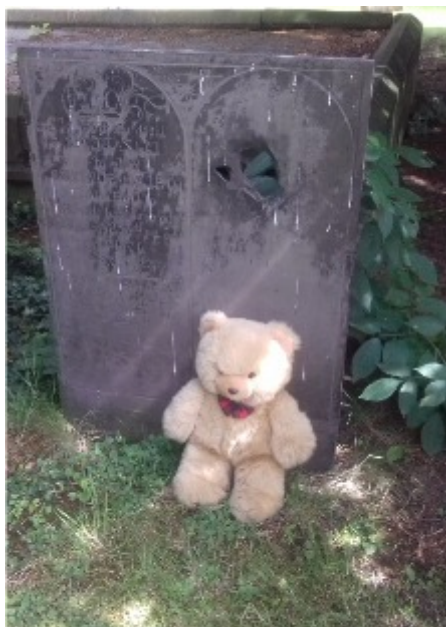


The music seminar/workshop event underway at Cornerstone Church in Nottingham.

Where's the Bear?



Well done to all of you who guessed where Alkmund the Bear was last month! He was eyeing up the sausages at Anthony Andrew's Butcher's shop on King Street. Mmmmm....



This month he's braved November's chilly weather to sit somewhere green and holey. I wonder if you can work out where he is?

Let us know your guesses on our Facebook page and find out the answer in next month's issue!

#wheresthebear at www.facebook.com/StAlksDuffield/

Youth and Children

Our weekly youth groups have been having some fun this month as they had their very own Bake-Off Party and Roman evenings!



Impact members (11–14 year olds) got creative with cakes and bakes and our judges were so impressed with their skills!

For the Signature round, they designed rosettes out of cupcake cases. The Technical challenge involved making chocolate chip cookies which were VERY tasty, and only just made it into the bags to be taken home to be shared. Finally, the Show Stopper challenge of cake decorating demonstrated some real artistic flair of our young people. A lovely evening was had all round as we enjoyed spending time together being creative.

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Ignition members (14 to 18 year-olds) had a Roman-themed evening of dressing up in togas and sporting their very own gladiator tournaments. We even got through several different reigns of Caesars as the evening progressed, and various uprisings ensued.

The battles were fierce as even siblings took on siblings in the arena! But, fortunately, due to our swords being made of foam, no young people were harmed in the making of this event.



Our regular youth groups take place in the church hall on week nights, and include games, friendship, a snack and time exploring the Bible.

Helen Hawley

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Anthonie Bradshaw's Little Monument

FOUR HUNDRED YEARS AGO, in about 1600, Anthonie Bradshaw erected in his parish church, St Alkmund's at Duffield, what with some modesty he described as a 'little monument'. It was in fact twelve feet tall, and commemorated not his ancestors but his living self, together with his two wives and his (then) twenty children.



Here was a family pride on literally a monumental scale, but it was a touching pride. Born of an old Derbyshire family, Anthonie became a successful London lawyer before returning to a countryside and a society which he clearly loved.

Bradshaw's long poem *A friend's due commendacion of Duffield Frith* described the beauties and the customs of that ancient royal forest. It was by then little hunted, but it still needed the meticulous administration which Bradshaw gave it—and recorded in a number

of manuscript books—as its Deputy Steward. He was a great man in the district, appointed to his post in 1593 by the Earl of Shrewsbury, who was Steward of the Frith to Queen Elizabeth I.

After his retirement from London he made his home at Daypark on the high ground between Duffield and Coxbench, and founded an almshouse down in Duffield which is now gone, apart from a remnant of endowment in the Duffield Charities; but it also had a commemorative stone, bearing an acrostic based on Bradshaw's name, and still preserved in a wall close to its original site now within the grounds of Duffield Hall.

The monument in St Alkmund's itself is of sandstone, with obelisks and rusticated pillars, and the whole inset with alabaster panels and described by Pevsner as '*remarkably original*'. The panels are packed with inscribed information, some in Latin, some in English, about Bradshaw, his career, his almshouse, his views on life, and above all his family.

There they all are, in incised half-figure representations identified by initials, with the



names given in full above: Griselda and Elizabeth his wives, and then the children—William, Francis, Exuperius, John, Jacincth, Antonie, Michael, Elizabeth, F0elix, Quyntin, Petronilla, Athanasia, Isidora, Mildrede, Brandona, Erasmus, Josephe,

Millicent, Cassandra and Vicesim. Three children were born after the monument was built, **the penultimate one named Penultima**. Anyone born a Bradshaw in Derbyshire, is almost certain to be a descendant of Anthonie of Daypark or one of his many relations. →



At the foot of the monument, for Bradshaw was ever the wordsmith, is another acrostic of his name. At the top of all, now cleaned and re-gilded, are his coat of arms and crest. **The shield**, in silvery-grey and black is described heraldically as *Argent*, two bendlets, between as many martlets, *Sable*. The martlet is the heraldic version of the swallow, and having abbreviated feet and unable to land, originally represented a landless younger son. **The crest** is a Hart, standing

under a vine bough, which seems odd, given that this is Derbyshire. Anthonie himself said that he would let the heralds have their say, but what he really intended was a Buck in his natural colour browsing, or rampant under a hawthorn tree!

All that is lacking to the memorial, rather sadly, for space was left for it, is the date of Anthonie's own death in 1614. This proud, quirky, family man, solemn but with a suggestion of humour, lawyer, administrator, poet, conscientious recorder of the life of Duffield Frith—this man, a true original, deserved rather better.

Starting with a small grant from the Heritage Lottery fund we were able to contact members of the Bradshaw family worldwide, who contributed, thence leading to large donations from The Council for the Care of Churches, The Radcliffe Trust, The Francis Coales Charitable Foundation, The Manifold Trust and the Garfield Weston Foundation. We also thank the local Duffield people and organisations, in particular the Parish Council and the Community Association. We raised about £10,000 and engaged the Skillington Workshop to carry out a thorough renovation of the Memorial which involved taking it down to ground level and inserting a damp course below and behind it. They then rebuilt it, cleaning and repicking out the texts and inscriptions on the alabaster panels. It is good to see that the sandstone pillars are no longer shedding sand to be swept up every church cleaning day!

The Acrostic of Anthonie Bradshaw's name

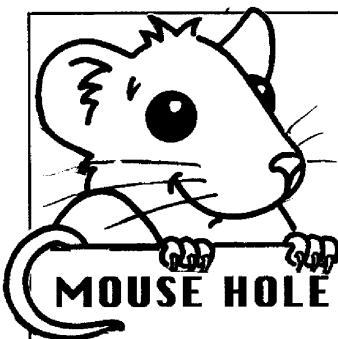
A s God dyd give this man
N o smale charge as yu see
T o trayne them he began
H ere ech in there degree
O ft wishing them such grace
N o future course to take
I nurious to there race
E is end of life to make
B less them o Lord with peace
R esist there adverse fates
A lways them well increase
D efynding them from bates
S uch lyvelode to them gyve
H ere whylest on earth they bee
A s they may love and lyve
W e praye O God qth he.

Fear God, Honour the King, and
walk with good things.... lean upon
God who rules and reigns.

*Anthonie Bradshaw did indeed honour
his King (James I). He might well have
regretted that a great-nephew, John
Bradshaw, presided over the regicide
trial in which James's son, Charles I,
was condemned to death.*

Acknowledgements are made to Mr T.L.
Tudor's *New Light on Duffield Church*, in
which these inscriptions are transcribed.

Keith Mantell Ed. MT



Pick-up Sticks

'Pick-up Sticks' is a game that's been played for hundreds of years.

You can make your own *Pick-up Sticks* from a packet of wooden skewers, or for a miniature set, use a box of wooden cocktail sticks.

Colour the sticks different colours, with felt pen or paint, to represent a different number of points.

e.g. green = 5 points
blue = 10 points
red = 15 points
yellow = 20 points.

To play the game:

With the sticks in your hand, let them drop into a pile on the table. Choose a stick from the pile and try to remove it without moving the others. If successful, keep it and have another go, if not, then let someone else play. The person with the most points wins!



The Man in the Tree

With Jesus passing through the town,
A crowd of people gathered round,
But as Zacchaeus couldn't see,
He ran ahead and climbed a tree.



Jesus stopped as he passed by,
And saw Zacchaeus there up high,
Said "Dear Zacchaeus, come with me,
I'm going to your house for tea".

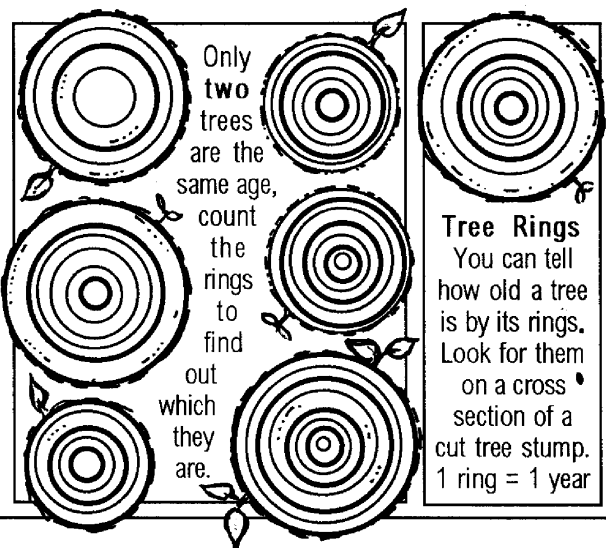
Zacchaeus climbed down to the floor,
And walked with Jesus to his door,
Amazed the Lord would want to be
With such a liar and cheat as he.

Zacchaeus, sorry for all he'd done,
Said "Lord I'll pay back everyone,
Half I own I give to the poor,
Those I've cheated get four times more."

Jesus said "Today you are saved!"
Zacchaeus replied "May God be praised!"



Read the full story of Zacchaeus in
Luke 19:1-10



Only two trees are the same age, count the rings to find out which they are.

Tree Rings
You can tell how old a tree is by its rings. Look for them on a cross section of a cut tree stump. 1 ring = 1 year



LADIES' CHRISTMAS CRAFTS EVENING

FRIDAY 29TH NOVEMBER | 7.30 - 9.30PM

TICKETS £10 IN ADVANCE ONLY

ST ALKMUND'S CHURCH HALL



Picture: Ivan Robinson

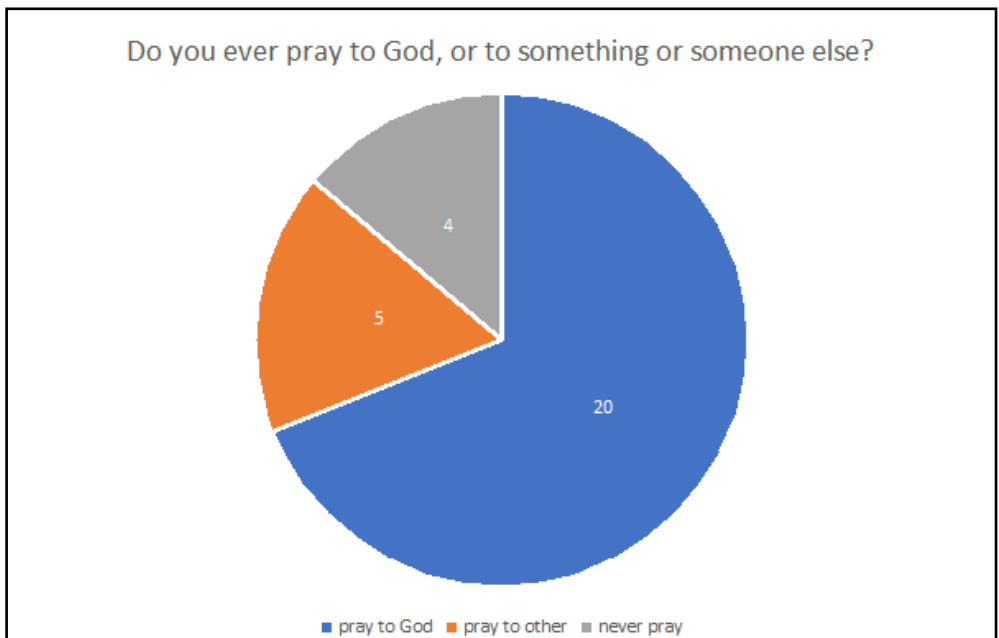
A successful **“Come & See, Songs and Stories”** (Mini-Mission Event) took place on Wednesday 18th September in St Alkmund's Church. The musicians performing were (l to r) James Rollin, Michael Severn, and Emma Rollin.

More from the Carnival Questionnaire...

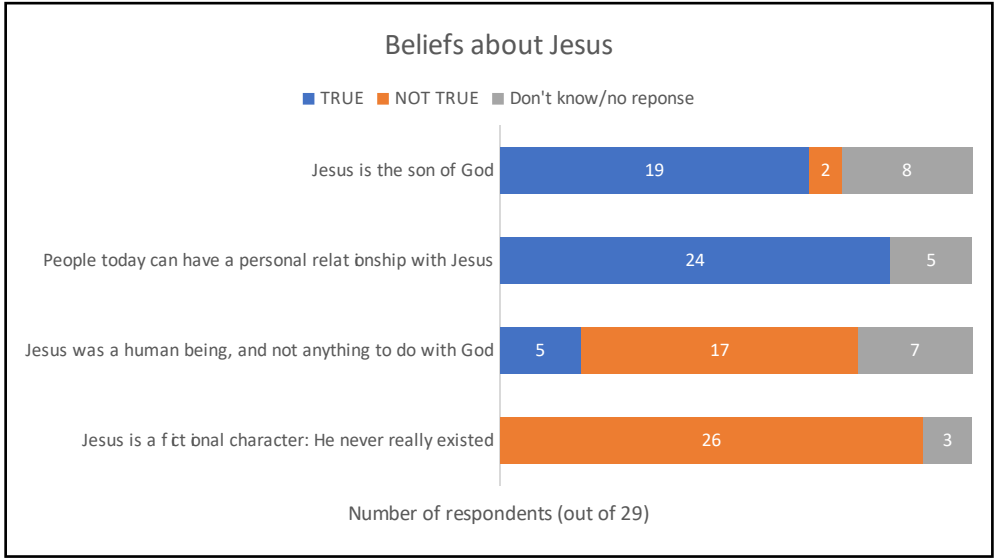
As you may remember, last month we reported on some of the findings from the questionnaire we carried out at the Duffield Carnival. An intrepid band of interviewers braved the heat and chatted with 29 different people, asking them a variety of questions about what they knew and thought about St Alkmund's, and about the Christian faith.

As well as questions about their perceptions of St Alkmund's church and what they thought a church like St Alkmund's should be doing in a place like Duffield (see last month's magazine!), we also asked about what people knew or thought about some key Christian beliefs.

We asked if people believed that there is a God and almost three quarters (21) said that they did, with only 3 (of 29) saying they did not. Then we asked if they ever *prayed*, either to God or something or someone else. The chart below shows that most (21) had prayed to God and some (5) to someone or something else.



As Christians, we were most interested in what people knew or thought about Jesus and who He is. Respondents tended to agree that Jesus is the Son of God and that people today can have a personal relationship with Him. They also mainly disagreed that He was a human being and not anything to do with God, and that He is a fictional character and never really existed.



Thanks again to our Duffield-based data collection and analysis experts: Andrea, Martin and Kirsty from Novametrics (www.novametrics.org), to the team of willing volunteers who carried out the interviews, and to the people who gave up their time to be interviewed.

We have had a good response so far to the online version of this questionnaire and will update you on the results from the larger sample next time. Don't forget—if you would like to have an input, there is still the opportunity to fill in the survey online at <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/StAlkmunds> .

2 Minute New Testament—2 Corinthians



As we come to 2 Corinthians you might be asking—Who are these Corinthians that they deserve two letters? They must be an impressive bunch to merit two whole books of the New Testament? Not quite.

Last month we were looking at 1 Corinthians, and we saw that Paul needed to set the Corinthians right on a few things, to help them to live together as followers of Christ. And here we are again in 2 Corinthians.

But this time the stakes have been raised. Now, it seems, Paul himself is under attack. As we see from the last few chapters of the letter (10–13), the Corinthians prefer impressive speakers who make bold claims about their spiritual experiences to Paul, who has suffering hardships. It is to these people, people doubting his ministry, that Paul writes 2 Corinthians.

And Paul writes a letter which reveals a lot about who he is, and what living as a follower of Jesus is really about. Chapter 1 begins with praise to the God of all comfort for the comfort he brings in Jesus Christ—and Paul needs that comfort because of the situation he has been in. He has had to change his travel plans—not because he feared to go to Corinth, but because he knew relationships were strained, and so he wanted the Corinthians to deal with some of their problems first (chapter 2).



And then towards the end of chapter 2, Paul begins to talk about what true Christian discipleship is about. It is about speaking God's word to others, trusting in God's power. It is about being transformed by Christ (chapter 3), as we preach Christ, recognising our own weaknesses, yet trusting in Christ and fixing our eyes upon the future (chapter 4). It is about preaching the gospel of reconciliation, which Paul summarises at the end of chapter 5:

We implore you on Christ's behalf: be reconciled to God. God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. (Chapter 5 verses 20 to 21)

Chapter 6 then deals with some specific problems, before Paul turns in chapter 7 to encouraging the Corinthians, because they have listened to at least some of what Paul has said in previous letters.

Then, in chapters 8 and 9 Paul talks about money. He wants the Corinthians to contribute to a collection he is organising for Christians in Jerusalem who are suffering. Now given what Paul has already said to the Corinthians, you'd think he had little chance of getting money out of them—but Paul reminds them that they promised to give to the collection, and that generosity comes from the heart. God loves a cheerful giver—because a cheerful giver has recognised that all good things come from God, and that giving to others is a way of thanking God for all he has done for us.

Finally, Paul defends himself against some of the attacks of the Corinthians and the 'super apostles' who were teaching them (chapters 10–13). Paul is under attack, but his focus is not on himself, but on the message he has to preach: be reconciled to God. Even in the midst of difficulties, that message comes through loud and clear, to the Corinthians and to us, from this book.

James Hughes

ROCKIN' AROUND the CHRISTMAS TREE

Christmas reminiscence in poem, story and song
from the 50s, 60s, 70s



Presented by

Mike Severn & Strings Attached

Saturday 30th November 2019

Commencing 7.30pm

St Alkmund's Church, Duffield

Church Drive, Duffield DE56 4BA

Tickets £7.00 (Including refreshments)

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