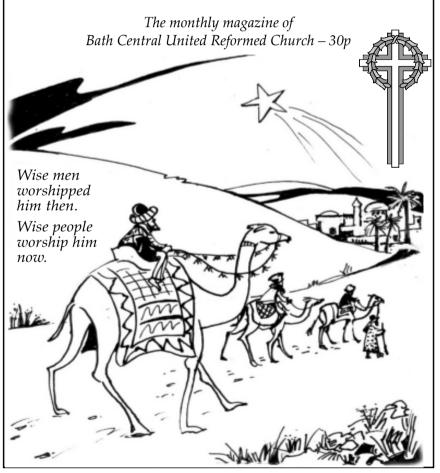


CONTACT



Index All in the Month of January 6 Midweek Communion 7 *Argyle Players* 5 Poems 3, 12 Faith Leaders and the Foodbank 11 Spring Study Series 4 St James the Least of All 15 Sudoku 14 Holocaust Sunday Gathering 9



The date for contributions for the next CONTACT is **20**th **January.** It will be published on the **1**st **February.**

Lectionary Readings

- **January 4 Christmas 2:** *Jeremiah 31:7-14; Psalm 147:12-20; Ephesians 1:3-14; John 1:(1-9), 10-18*
- **January 6 Epiphany of the Lord:** *Isaiah 60:1-6; Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14; Ephesians 3:1-12; Matthew 2:1-12*
- **January 11 Epiphany 1:** *Genesis 1:1-5; Psalm 29; Acts 19:1-7; Mark 1:4-11*
- **January 18 Epiphany 2:** *Samuel 3:1-10 (11-20); Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18; 1 Corinthians 6:12-20; John 1:43-51*
- **January 25 Epiphany 3:** *Jonah 3:1-5, 10; Psalm 62:5-12; 1 Corinthians 7:29-31; Mark 1:14-20*

Minister's Letter



Dear Friends,

I have never been a fan of Dr Who. His time travel exploits hold no appeal [apologies to his many fans]. In recent weeks I have, however, done a little time travel in Bath.

A Monday off gave the opportunity to travel back in time and visit 1 Royal Crescent, to see it decked out for a Georgian Christmas. Two things struck me on this journey back in time. The greenery used in decoration was still growing in the manse garden. Also, there was a very elaborate model of a Twelfth Night cake. Now, I had never heard of this cake before and have since learnt it went out of fashion with Queen Victoria, who didn't like the general Twelfth Night behaviour. Pity really about the cake not the behaviour.

Cake I did have though, as no outing is complete without refreshments. We time travelled to Mrs B's Vintage Tearoom. It is decorated in 1930/40 style: china tea sets, embroidered tablecloths, bevelled mirrors, and ceiling lampshades just like gran had. It served 'real tea' and wonderful cake. Alongside the tea strainer there was a little timer of sand to mark its brewing.

That timer got me thinking. To sit and knowingly watch time pass. Can that ever be guilt free in our 24/7 world of activity? If time is running out shouldn't we be fulfilling our bucket wish list? Is silent retreat a good use of time?

The readers group at Central had an interesting book choice in November – Longitude by Dava Sobel. I determinedly finished the book and kept this quote...

"Time is to clock as mind is to brain. The clock or watch somehow contains time. And yet time refuses to be bottled up like a genie stuffed

 \Box

⇒ in a lamp. Whether it flows as sand or turns on wheels within wheels, time escapes irretrievably, while we watch. Even when the bulbs of the hourglass shatter, when darkness withholds the shadow from the sundial, when the mainspring winds down so far that the clock hands hold still as death, time itself keeps on. The most we can hope a watch to do is mark that progress. And since time sets its own tempo, like a heartbeat or an ebb tide, timepieces don't really keep time. They just keep up with it, if they're able."

Let time set its own tempo. An interesting motto for 2015, another year of time travel. One in which I resolve to let time set its own tempo, stopping just to watch the hourglass, to be still, to allow for more people time as opposed to programme time. May the words of the 23rd Psalm as translated from the Japanese be my rhythm – *The Lord is my pacesetter*.

So happy new year to all my fellow time travellers; may no 'daleks' cross your path.

Revd Helen



Quiz Evening

Get your New Year programme off to a good start by joining your friends for a Quiz Evening in the Argyle Hall on Friday, 9th January starting at 7.30pm. Organized by the Events Committee and The Argyle Players it promises to be a fun evening with, of course, HUGE prizes for winners and losers!!

Refreshments will be served at half-time, and some of the hirers of the halls will also be taking part. Make up a table of four, or just come along and join in with others on the night. For further details ring Jane Bowden on 01761 470863.

Page 2 1/2015



The New Year: 2015

He comes he goes, his times are set The New Year now has shown his face, For time is here and will not wait For dwellers all in time and space.

We sojourn here on this fair earth, Just for a time so quickly gone, Our lives just like a vapour spent As we await another dawn.

There is a day God has ordained When we will reach a distant shore, Eternity our new address Where time will cease and be no more.

By Megan Carter

Friday Luncheon Club

Each year I receive an invitation to join the Friday Luncheon Club for their annual Christmas Lunch. It is always a really special occasion and the 2014 Christmas lunch was no exception!

It was a real pleasure to join the 'regulars' to enjoy a full three course meal – topped off with coffee and After Eights. As always a restaurant standard meal was served.

Indeed the quality of the meals offered, week by week, are of restaurant standard. (But not at restaurant prices!!) This is a great tribute to the fine team of volunteers who run this club.

There is a further bit of good news - the club has a few 'vacancies' - you too could be enjoying this gastronomic highlight throughout 2015. If you are interested please contact the organisers either by speaking to Morfydd Jones or phoning the church office on 01225 310050.

Why not give it a try? I guarantee you will not regret it.

David Pattie

Once upon a time ...

The Central Spring Study Series is going to celebrate the life and work of the prolific Danish author **Hans Christian Andersen** (known in Denmark as - HC Andersen). **2015 is the 210**th **anniversary of Andersen's birth** and so it seems fitting to use some of his fictional works as the inspiration for our Biblical and philosophical discussions.

HC Andersen was a prolific writer. During his lifetime he produced plays, travelogues, novels, and poems. However Andersen is best remembered for his **Fairy Tales** and it is six of these we will be using to seek our inspiration.

"The Ugly Duckling?"

"It is the story of my own life. I was myself the despised swan ..."

HC Andersen

The Sessions ...

. . take place on the dates below in the John Williams Room at 10am for coffee. The session starts at 10:30am and usually lasts about an hour. The sessions are led by Revd David Pattie.



January 20th The Emperor's New Clothes February 3rd The Goblin at the Grocer's

17th The Ugly Duckling

March 3rd Dad's always right

17th The Top and the Ball – or – The Sweethearts

31st The Silver Coin

Page 4 1/2015

□ These stories are often believed to have been written for children. And this is true. However, these finely-crafted, classic tales present lessons of virtue and resilience in the face of adversity for mature readers too. Indeed most readers of Andersen today are adults. Some of the stories we will be using have inspired plays, ballets, and both live-action and animated films.

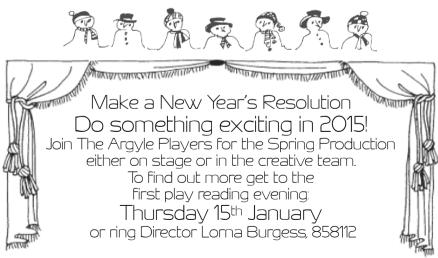
The Format – Each session will follow a similar format ...

- A **retelling** of the chosen 'Fairy Story'
- Some background information about the story
- Introduction of a relevant Bible passage or passages
- Discussion

The first session will also include some background information about HC Andersen.

You are welcome to read the chosen story in advance. When doing so please bear in mind that translators have sometimes made huge changes to the original texts. Consequently the moral-message of the original tale has sometimes been changed to suit modern tastes. The story told in the session will be as close to the original rendering as possible.

David



All in the Month of January

750 years ago on 20th Jan 1265 the first English parliament was convened in Westminster Hall by Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester. (It was dissolved by King Henry III on 15th Feb.)

175 years ago on 10th Jan 1840 the Penny Post was established throughout the UK.

Also 175 years ago on 22nd Jan and 25th Jan respectively the French and then the United States Exploring Expedition first sighted Antarctica.

100 years ago on 19th Jan 1915 the first German Zeppelin air raid on Britain took place when 24 bombs were dropped on Great Yarmouth, Sheringham, and King's Lynn, killing 4 people and injuring 16.

75 years ago on 8th Jan 1940 food rationing began in Britain (bacon, butter and sugar).

30 years ago on 1st Jan 1985 the first mobile phone call in the UK was made. It was made by comedian Ernie Wise who called Vodafone's head office in Newbury from St Katharine's Docks in London.

Also 30 years ago on 23rd Jan 1985 a debate from the House of Lords was televised for the first time.

25 years ago on 31st Jan 1990 the first McDonald's fast food restaurant opened in the Soviet Union, in Moscow. (30,000 customers the first day.)

20 years ago on 22nd Jan 1995 the British Army ended daytime patrols of Belfast.

10 years ago on 1st Jan 2005 the Freedom of Information Act came into effect.

Also 10 years ago on 14th Jan 2005 the European Space Agency's Huygens probe landed on Saturn's moon Titan and sent back the first detailed pictures of the surface.

From Parish Pump

Page 6 1/2015

December Midweek Communion

The December Midweek Communion service, led by David Pattie, was well supported, about 27 of us being present. Everyone enjoyed singing some favourite carols, "Once in Royal David's City", "Silent night" and the "First Nowell", and David had us all amused by his tale of an encounter with a cat in a rubbish bin, which had decided views on having bags of rubbish thrown on top of it! It certainly "didn't expect that", which was the theme of David's Christmas talk – the shepherds certainly did not expect an angel to appear to them, and perhaps we are sometimes surprised by the effect Christmas has on us. I don't think I was alone in feeling this particular service had a very special atmosphere.

Afterwards people enjoyed the usual cakes and chat. It is a wonderful opportunity to catch up with people who are no longer able to make our morning services, so do come and join us next year.

The dates for 2015 are:

March 25th; June 10th; September 23rd; December 9th; so put them in your diary now!

Sheena Carter

Old love

During a wedding reception the mother of the bride managed to keep from crying until she glanced at the grandparents. The grandmother had reached over to the grandfather's wheelchair and was gently touching his hand. That was all it took to start the mother's tears flowing. After the wedding, she went over to the grandmother and told her how that tender gesture triggered her outburst.

"Well, I'm sorry to ruin your moment," Grandmother replied, "but I was just checking to see if he was still awake."

Church Diary - January

	C	2 , ,		
Every Friday	10.30am	Friday Coffee in the Argyle Hall		
Sunday 4 th	10.30am	Communion Service: Revd Helen Pattie Foodbank		
Tuesday 6 th	-	Women's Guild members' afternoon Men's Fellowship: Susan Bell – ' Action for Children'		
Friday 9 th	7.30pm	Quiz Evening - Argyle Hall		
Sunday 11 th	10.30am	Family Worship: Revd David Pattie beginning a monthly service series 'Urban Myths' Traidcraft Stall		
Tuesday 13 th	7.30pm	Elders' Meeting		
Sunday 18th	10.30am	Family Worship: Revd Roger Nunn		
Tuesday 20 th		Spring Study: <i>The Emperor's New Clothes</i> Church Meeting		
Sunday 25 th	10.30am	Family Worship: Revd David will lead worship and our guest preacher will be Pastor Mike Holroyd [MCC]. This service will mark the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, whose theme is 'The Well is Deep'		
		February		
Sunday 1st	10.30am	Communion Service: Revd David Pattie Foodbank		
Tuesday 3 rd	2.30pm	Spring Study: The Goblin at the Grocer's Women's Guild Men's Fellowship		
Sunday 8 th	10.30am	Family Worship: Revd Helen Pattie: 'Laughter - the best Medicine' Traidcraft Stall		
Sunday 15 th	10.30am	Family Worship: Revd David Pattie 'Love thy Neighbour'. As part of our 'open doors' week Revd David will lead worship along with community guests. Why not invite your neighbour/ family/ friend to visit church with you that day?		

Page 8 1/2015

Holocaust Sunday Gathering 2015

On Sunday 1st February 2015 at **6.00pm Bath Central URC** will be joining with **Living Springs Metropolitan Community Church** to host a joint gathering to mark **Holocaust Sunday 2015**.

We will meet at 6.00pm in the Central Sanctuary to -

- Learn
- Ouestion
- Resolve
- Respond

There will be a guest speaker from the **Holocaust Educational Trust** who is herself a Holocaust survivor.

The gathering will commence with a short time of worship. Our guest will then bring a 50 minute presentation which will be followed by an opportunity to ask questions from the floor. The gathering will conclude with the opportunity being given for attendees to resolve and respond by using any of three 'stations' in the sanctuary. One of these stations will offer a simple Holy Communion.

Attendees are then invited when ready to move to the Argyle Hall for tea, coffee and conversation.

The gathering will be jointly led by Pastor Mike Holroyd and Revd David Pattie. For information please email:

Living Springs: livingspringsmcc@gmail.com
Bath Central URC: bcurc@btconnect.com

Preaching at Rush Hill and Larkhall					
	Rush Hill 10.30am	Larkhall 11.00am	Larkhall 6.30pm		
Jan 4	Mr Peter Rouse	Revd David Pattie	Mrs Ruth Holbrook		
Jan 11	Revd Helen Pattie	Mrs Pam Brain	Revd Helen Pattie		
Jan 18	Revd David Pattie	Revd Dr Hazel Starritt	Mrs Margaret White		
Jan 25	Revd Dr Hazel Starritt	Revd Helen Pattie & Mr David Pendle	Sister Peggy Boynes		

This is another in the occasional series in which we ask users of our halls to tell us a little about themselves.

Bath Good Afternoon Choir...

If you like a good sing and also a 'Good Afternoon' then the community choir called The Bath Good Afternoon Choir is for you. The choir started six years ago here at the church and they meet every Thursday



afternoon from 2pm until 4pm in Argyle Hall. There are no auditions and everyone is welcome. The repertoire is based on easy to sing and popular melodies and the choir is one of many led by Bath's own Grenville Jones. The accompanist is Will Ashworth. The choir starts back on January 8th 2015 and there is no charge for attending the first rehearsal - "Come along and find out if this is for you," says Grenville.

The choir's website is www.goodafternoonchoir.org



Still cleaning up after Typhoon Haiyan

Just over a year since Typhoon Haiyan hit the Philippines Christian Aid and its partner organisations continue to help affected communities. This includes vegetable growing, pig rearing, seaweed farming and giving psychosocial support for people who still struggle to come to terms with what happened.

Typhoon Haiyan – the strongest ever storm to make landfall – affected more than 14 million people and forced a further four million from their homes. An estimated 6,000 were killed.

In some areas, 95 per cent of coconut trees were demolished and the majority of boats were wrecked. It will take years for communities to fully recover.

From Parish Pump

Page 10 1/2015

Faith Leaders and the Ebola Crisis

Faith leaders across West Africa are using their unique positions of influence within their communities to warn of the dangers of the deadly Ebola virus. And they are being helped by CAFOD, Christian Aid, Tearfund and World Vision.

The agencies are working through established religious networks across Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone to teach communities about Ebola, offer support to people affected, and ensure survivors are not stigmatised when they return home.

Traditional funeral practices have been highlighted as one of the greatest causes of the continued spread of the disease. As a result, agencies are working with Christian and Muslim leaders to teach communities about the importance of safe but dignified burials.

Over £6 million has already been donated to the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) appeal to help people devastated by the Ebola crisis in West Africa. The DEC says it is "overwhelmed" by the generosity of the British public. If you would like to help, visit www.dec.org.uk, call the 24 hour hotline on 0370 60 60 900, or donate £5 by texting the word SUPPORT to 70000.

From Parish Pump



Foodbank

Thank you for your Christmas donations to the monthly Foodbank collection. There was a good variety of items with lots of Christmas treats. With the contributions from the Brownies we collected some 205 gifts giving a yearly total of 1557 items. Once again thank you for your support.

Mildred McArthur

The Burning Bush

A herdsman, out upon a hill In Midian's verdant pasture ground Was keeping Jethro's sheep from ill Among the bushes spread around. A scene, familiar to his eyes And changing not from former days And yet – here was a small surprise! For one such bush was well ablaze!

Not only was it well alight
With burning flame and smoking fumes
And Moses thought, "that's an odd sight,
"For it is not with fire consumed."
He crossed to see the bush aflame
Within the bush – an awesome sound!
For God called out young Moses' name
"Your shoes! You're stood on holy ground!"

A burning bush – a simple shrub. Yet God was in this little tree Of wonders, this became the stub The plagues, the crossing of the sea. If God so used a simple tree Just think – the wonders He could do What mighty miracles you'd see With God's great spirit inside you!

By Nigel Beeton

Nigel Beeton writes: 'I have always loved the story of the burning bush, for to me it tells the story of how God can make the ordinary extraordinary. Similarly, ordinary bread and wine take on an extraordinary meaning in the communion service, and ordinary people such as you and I can become extraordinary, if we allow God's spirit to consume us.'

Page 12 1/2015

The following is the collective prayer for this month. We ask you to join us in prayer on the **third Wednesday** of the month – 21st January. We shall pray at 7.30am and/or 7.30pm: please join us.

A Prayer for January

Heavenly Father, we have celebrated the birth of Your Son, Jesus Christ, and we now look forward to new beginnings.

We Pray that in the coming year you will refresh us through Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit.

May we follow Your will and do what is right, leaving aside the things that are not right.

Guide us to towards looking after the less fortunate in our society and those who we know have particular needs.

Amen

Last Month's Crossword

Across: 1 Tabernacle 7 Absalom 8 Incas 10 Roes 11 Captured 13 Fright 15 Cavell 17 Cyclonic 18 Herb 21 Sonar 22 Amazing 23 Settlement

Down: 1 Taste 2 Bold 3 Ramiah 4 Abiathar 5 Lucerne 6 Sacrifices 9 Saddlebags 12 Theocrat 14 Incense 16 Pilate 19 Exist 20 Save

Prayers



Each week we pray for:

4th January.

The Women's Guild. From those who use our halls – Tim Robb & his orchestra.

11th January.

The Social Events committee.

From those who use our halls – U3A creative writing groups.

18th January.

Coordination of the prayer handbook and Bible reading notes – Martin Cawte. From Churches

Together in Bath – Bath Abbey.

25th January

The Catering group.
From those who use our halls – U3A play reading group.



Intercessory Prayer Chain

If any reader of CONTACT needs someone to pray for them, Central URC has a prayer chain in operation. Each matter for prayer will be treated in the strictest confidence. If you would like prayer please ask your elder or contact **Peter Rouse** ($\varpi 01225~332760$).

. . . I'm so sorry, Vicar - but with all the snow this week no-one has managed to get to church . . .

Sudoku Each row, column and 3x3 block should contain all numbers 1 to 9

		6					9	
1	5		9	8				
4 6			6	5				8
6	4	3				9		
		7				8	3	1
5				3	2			9
				4	9		5	6
	2					3		

St James the Least of All

On the importance of NOT keeping accurate minutes

The Rev Dr Gary Bowness continues his tongue-in-cheek letters from 'Uncle Eustace'.

My dear Nephew Darren

Since you were the one to ask this parishioner of yours to act as secretary, you have no reason to complain about the minutes of meetings she produces. You should never let anyone act as a secretary unless they either cannot speak English, or are deaf – preferably both. The more significant the committee and the more contentious the issues being debated, the more you should nobly put yourself forward both to chair the meeting and take the minutes. In the majority of cases, that will spare the other members that awkward moment when you ask for a volunteer and they all feel the need to stare at their feet.

If you act as secretary, then you can be certain that accounts of what took place will only be what you had wanted to happen and that the decisions taken will be what you had already decided before discussions started. Any inconvenient observations from other committee members can be omitted entirely.

Admittedly, the more observant may notice that your accounts of the meeting may not wholly agree with their recollections, but the skill of being a secretary is not to produce the minutes of the previous meeting until the day before the next one. This will mean that the

great majority will have long forgotten what actually did happen two months previously and that many will not have had the time to read them anyway and will avoid having to admit that fact by passing them.

Only the deeply committed will want to pursue apparent discrepancies. In that case, confess to the meeting that your hand-written notes were accidentally left on a bus and so you can no longer check the accuracy of what you have written. As a way of appearing helpful, you could even give the person challenging you the bus route number and time of day you travelled – but make sure that that route has subsequently been discontinued. Further challenges will rally the rest of the committee to your side and someone will oil the wheels by suggesting you proceed to the next item on the agenda. Since you are also the chairman, you naturally bow to their request.

Just in the way that church rotas bear no resemblance to the people who actually turn up to do the jobs, minutes of meetings need not bear too much resemblance to what actually happened especially if what did happen is inconvenient.

Democracy is all very well - provided a benign dictator is in overall control.

Your loving uncle,

Eustace

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 17 18 19 20 21 21 22 23

Crossword From Parish Pump

Across

- 1 'Again Peter denied it, and at that moment a – began to crow' (John 18:27) (4)
- 3 Fetters (Job 33:11) (8)
- 8 Perform on a musical instrument (1 Samuel 16:23) (4)
- 9 Paul describes it as 'the third heaven' (2 Corinthians 12:2-4) (8)
- 11 Loyally (Deuteronomy 11:13) (10)
- 14 Hens? Me? (anag.) (6)
- 15 Not visible (Matthew 6:6) (6)
- 17 Predicted site of the final great battle (Revelation 16:16) (10)
- 20 Jacob's youngest son (Genesis 35:18) (8)
- 21 One of Zophar's eleven sons (1 Chronicles 7:36) (4)
- 22 For example, London, Paris, Rome (8)
- 23 United Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (1,1,1,1)

Down

- 1 Favourite church activity: Fellowship round a ---(3,2,3)
- 2 Divinely bestowed powers or talents (8)
- 4 Pile together (1 Thessalonians 2:16) (4,2)
- 5 Commanded to justify (John 8:13) (10)
- 6 Timothy's grandmother (2 Timothy 1:5) (4)
- 7 Killed (Psalm 78:34) (4)
- 10 One of Graham Kendrick's best-known songs, King (3,7)
- 12 Indecency (Mark 7:22) (8)
- 13 Unceasing (Jeremiah 15:18) (8)
- 16 He prophesied 'the abomination that causes desolation' (Matthew 24:15) (6)
- 18 British Board of Film Classification (1,1,1,1)
- 19 Pans (anag.) (4)

Page 16 1/2015

Activities

Sunday Worship: 10.30am Family Worship for all ages.

Church Meeting: Third Tuesday of alternate months at 7.30pm (*Jan on*)

Elders' Meeting: Second Tuesday of the month at 7.30pm

Women's Guild: Secretary: Mrs Gillian Swift

First Tuesday each month at 2.30pm

Men's Fellowship: Programme Secretary: Mr John Osborne

First Tuesday each month, 7.30pm

Allsorts Group:Contact: Mr Paul SwiftThird Saturday each monthArgyle Players:Secretary: Mrs Helen BrettellThursdays at 7.30pm

Argyle String Orchestra: Church Contact: Martin Cawte

Thursdays at 7.30pm

Committees

Buildings: Convener; Mr MHH Burgess: Secretary; Mr RM Short

House:Convener; Mrs Sheena Carter Secretary; Mrs Angela Campbell

Finance: ...Convener; Mr RB Turner:Secretary; Mr WE Richardson

Social Events Committee: Convener; Jane Bowden;

Minute Secretary; Angela Campbell .. Treasurer; Bill Richardson

Halls Management: Convener; Mr WE Richardson

Copy in most formats is acceptable, from manuscript to email (martin.cawte@btinternet.com).

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