

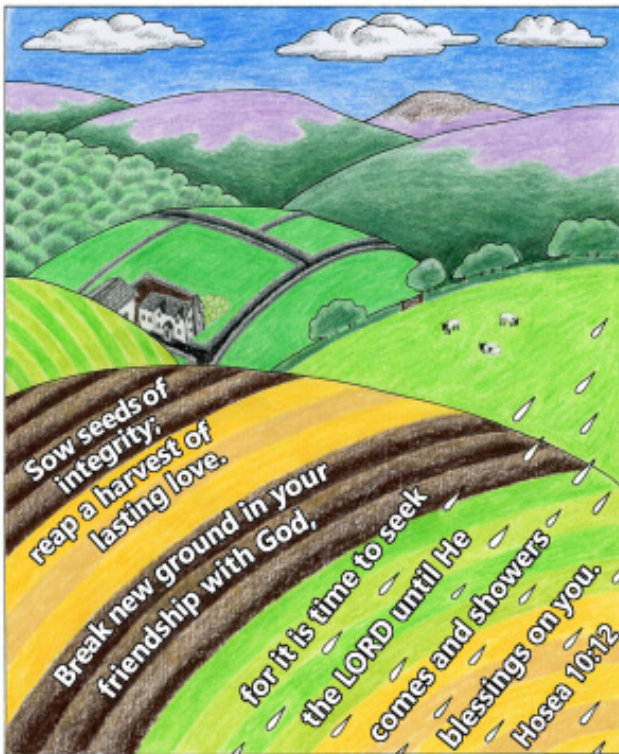
ST JAMES' CHURCH  
Brownhills



*Following Jesus*

# THE MUSTARD SEED

[www.stjameschurchbrownhills.co.uk](http://www.stjameschurchbrownhills.co.uk)



*Our mission is to worship God  
and to serve the community by sharing the love of Jesus*

*October 2021* **50P**



# Upstairs Downstairs

Cleaning Services

*Proprietor: Helen Downes*

Household Cleaning of the Highest Standard

Daytime: 07855 253562 – Evening: 01543 452501



## ***Grace, Truth & Life Groups***

There are now five GTL Groups which are now meeting on a regular basis. It would be good to think we could increase the number meeting, so if you would like to be involved, please speak to Revd Gayle in the first instance.

## ***Telephone Prayer***

If you would like any prayer ministry via the telephone, please contact Gayle on 07545 657 636, or Liz Corbett on 01543 370162.

## ***Magazine Articles***

If, in your reading, you find an article that you think bears repeating in the parish magazine, please let us know and we will try our best to include it in a future issue.

### **Do more, learn more and be more.**

Girls & boys aged 6 to 18.

Based at Group HQ, Barnetts Lane, WS8 6HZ

For info: [www.brownhills-scouts.org.uk](http://www.brownhills-scouts.org.uk)

Call: Sue 01543 276953 or Mary 01543 453293



# *Autumn & the Dynamic Power of God's Spirit*

In Ecclesiastes Solomon says, "There is a time for everything and a season for every activity under the Heavens." As followers of Jesus, we can be reminded by the changing seasons that we serve a God who is unchanging and yet also more vibrant and creative than we can ever get our heads around!

As a church family, we've just started our Bible Journey, through which I'm confident in God we'll each be able to further deepen our love for His Word and the affect it can have on our hearts and lives.

Looking at the changing trees and plants' leaves – going from green to brown, orange, red, gold – all of these beautiful colours can speak to us about the dynamic nature of our God. We realise through meditating on Autumn that there's a need for things in our walks with Jesus to become ripe and then reach maturity, and looking towards Winter, that there is also a need for some things to come to an end.

Please join with me in praying that all of our PCC members and staff team will keep on growing in wisdom and discernment that is God-given, that we'll realise what might need to be laid down so as to focus on going deeper with our worship, discipleship, ministry across the ages, evangelism and service of others alongside people of peace in Brownhills and Clayhanger's communities.



Picture a mighty tree – perhaps an Oak tree. God's Word begins with all kinds of beautiful trees, and also two very specific trees (Gen. 2:11). It ends with two healing trees of life flanking a river of living water (Rev. 22:1-2). Within the narrative of the Bible, both God's people and God himself are described as trees (Ps. 52:8, Hos. 14:8). Wisdom is a tree of life (Prov. 3:18). Isaiah tells trees to sing and clap their hands. Those who love, fear, and hope in the True and Living God – who is Yahweh – are as trees planted by a riverbank (Ps. 1, Jer. 17). Also, so wonderfully, those who love, trust, and follow Jesus are deeply rooted in him (Colossians. 2).


Deep roots, strong trunks, healthy branches, flourishing fruit, and sometimes beautiful flowers are concrete earthly realities that reflect profound spiritual truth. A tree – a living, organic, growing, fruitful, and universally understood image – offers a beautifully profound yet simple vision of discipleship. It's a vision akin to that of a tree that I pray can be our heart's desire at St James'.

May our churches' vision be completely God's vision. For this to be the case I pray that we can each be reminded by the image of a tree changing in the autumn that we're called to follow God's Spirit into times of change. This is the natural consequence of being open to the Spirit, and it is deeply exciting to know that we can all be part of a church that isn't a place where people go but instead a dynamic movement of people who have the Holy Spirit as our True Leader.

So let's look at the autumn trees, and as we do so, consider the lines of the song 'How He Loves us' by the David Crowder Band: 'Loves like a hurricane, I am a tree, bending beneath the weight of His wind and mercy'. Let's be open to the extravagant love of God whilst we continue with our Bible Journey, asking His Spirit to fill us that things that need to break in us will break, that we'll be remade, and that we'll become freer to follow Jesus into new Life.

With love and every blessing,

Gayle



# *How to read the Bible*

Reading the Bible is much easier if you follow some simple steps and get prepared. And, as you delve into it, you might find that you are more familiar with the Bible than you expected: it crops up in everything from Shakespeare to Hollywood movies; it's inspired musicians, historical figures down the centuries, and campaigners.

The Bible is complex. It's not one book but a collection of 66 books, split into two sections: the Old Testament and the New Testament. Each one of these books are divided into chapters and verses. People often find it easier to begin at the opening of the New Testament, which starts about three-quarters of the way through.

The New Testament begins with four accounts of the life of Jesus Christ, the founder of Christianity, known as the Son of God. These accounts are known as the gospels. They include eye-witness reports of what happened. Matthew and John were among Jesus' 12 closest followers. Here you can read about what Jesus did and said – His profound teaching, how He healed people of sickness and how He challenged the authorities. The Gospels also tell us about His death by crucifixion and how He came back to life and then returned to heaven.

The first Gospel, Matthew, opens with the story of Jesus' birth (the event which is celebrated at Christmas) and then jumps forward 30 years to when Jesus began travelling around what is now Israel and the Palestinian territories telling people about God. Starting with a Gospel introduces you to the person of Jesus and the basics of Christian belief.

## *Early Christian teaching*

A good next step is to read some of the teaching given to the early Christian Church. Much of the New Testament is a series of letters written by early Christian leaders such as Paul. He travelled around the lands of the eastern Mediterranean, telling people about Jesus. He then wrote to the various newly-established churches and individuals

*Continued on next page*

to encourage them in their beliefs. Letters such as Philippians or Colossians are short, bite-sized letters full of advice about how to live a Christian life.

Getting to grips with the whole Bible takes some time, but it is worth the effort. In his second letter to a young leader called Timothy, Paul says the Bible is “inspired by God and useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness”.

### *How reading notes can help*

Many people find it helpful to find a quiet and comfortable place to sit and read the Bible and make sure that they read it every day. Take time to digest what it says. You could say a quick prayer – asking God to help you understand what you are reading and its relevance to you.

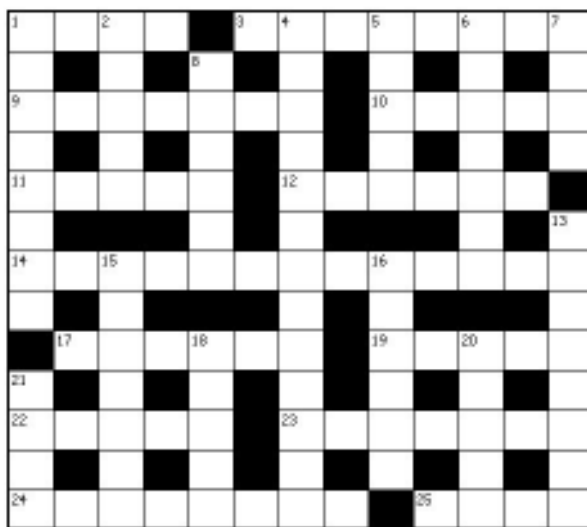
## *How should we read the Bible?*

There are three things to bear in mind when you pick up your Bible:

**First, approach it expectantly.** The Bible is not just another book – it is the Word of God, given to us by God to help us and instruct us. The Psalmist declared, ‘Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path’ (Psalm 119:105). Therefore, as you open your Bible, pray that the Holy Spirit (who inspired the writers of the Bible) will illumine its meaning to you. Read it carefully, not just hurrying through it as you would a novel.

**Secondly, read your Bible systematically.** Aim to read about three chapters a day: begin at Genesis and work through the Old Testament. Begin in Matthew and work through the New Testament; begin in Psalms and work through Psalms and Proverbs. Simply continue these three cycles, and it will ensure that your diet of Bible reading each day will be varied and include a bit of everything!

**Finally, read your Bible obediently.** Be ready to obey the truth that God has for you in its pages. God gave the Bible to us ‘for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness’ (2 Timothy 3:16), and the Bible can change our lives as we read it and obey its teachings every day.



## Across

- 1 'Those who were standing near Paul said, "You – to insult God's high priest?"' (Acts 23:4) (4)
- 3 They were assigned to guard the tree of life (Genesis 3:24) (8)
- 9 'Elkanah son of Jeroham, the son of Elihu, the – of – , the son of Zuph, an Ephraimite' (1 Samuel 1:1) (3,4)
- 10 Surrender (Joshua 24:23) (5)
- 11 Where American livestock can be reared (5)
- 12 Listen (anag.) (6)
- 14 Alternative name for Kiriath Jearim (2 Samuel 6:2) (6,2,5)
- 17 He founded Westminster Abbey, – the Confessor (6)
- 19 Hebrew word for the place of the dead (5)
- 22 Allies of Persia in the fifth century BC (Esther 1:3) (5)
- 23 Where John Wesley was forced to preach a lot (4,3)
- 24 Rebellion against God; abandonment of religious belief (8)
- 25 Note (anag.) (4)

## Down

- 1 Give an account of (Mark 4:30) (8)
- 2 'I – – the path of your commands, for you have set my heart free' (Psalm 119:32) (3,2)
- 4 'He took the ephod, the other – – and the carved image' (Judges 18:20) (9,4)
- 5 'You are a chosen people, a – priesthood' (1 Peter 2:9) (5)
- 6 The meek, the merciful and the mourners are all this (Matthew 5:45, 7) (7)
- 7 Musical Instrument Digital Interface (1,1,1,1)
- 8 He was the son of Nun (Deuteronomy 34:9) (6)
- 13 'Let the little – come to me' (Matthew 19:14) (8)
- 15 'About three thousand were – – their number that day' (Acts 2:41) (5,2)
- 16 In John's vision, the wall of the new Jerusalem was made of this (Revelation 21:18) (6)
- 18 'Our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly – a Saviour from there, the Lord Jesus Christ' (Philippians 3:20) (5)
- 20 'Glorify the Lord with me: let us – his name together' (Psalm 34:3) (5)
- 21 Young Men's Christian Association (1,1,1,1)

Historically, the Church of England has had its share of eccentric clergy. Even nowadays, hiding away in remote parishes, there are still some colourful clergy about. Clergy such as the elderly, Anglo-Catholic Uncle Eustace, who is incumbent in the small parish of St James-the-Least-of All, somewhere in Very Rural England. Eustace despairs of his nephew, Darren, who has become an Evangelical curate in a busy urban parish... and so he writes letters, to try and properly 'educate' Darren in parish life.

# When the film makers come to church

The Rectory  
St. James the Least

*My dear Nephew Darren*

*It has all been excitement and activity here this last week, with a period drama being filmed using our church. It was remarkable how many people felt the need to drop in to church to collect magazines, check the reading rota or arrange flowers, just happening to stumble over the film stars en route. If only they were filming every week, then our brasses would be permanently gleaming, woodwork smothered in beeswax and the notice board kept in a state of perpetual tidiness.*

*Our Ladies Guild was thrilled to be asked to take part in a crowd scene. I saw little point in the wardrobe department taking hours fitting them out with Victorian dresses, as the result was little different from normal. The only awkward moment came after filming, when Mrs Simms was told she could now remove her bustle. She told the girl she already had.*

*The producer thanked me for taking the trouble of going round church before they arrived, removing all those modern*



*conveniences that would not have been there in the nineteenth century. I hadn't the heart to tell him that nothing was any different from normal.*

*Lord Marchmount was thoroughly miffed that they were not also using his castle for filming, even though the producer explained with exemplary patience that they needed a nineteenth century setting, not one which looked as if the cast had just returned from the Crusades. His revenge, getting the farm staff to spread slurry in all the surrounding fields throughout filming, has apparently meant that film stars now have a clause in their contracts protecting them from rural life. The issue of whether the outbreak of salmonella poisoning in the cast had anything to do with the catering caravan being liberally coated is to be settled in the courts.*

*When all was finished, I thought it only right to invite the film crew and actors to the vicarage for sherry. When the producer left, I was delighted to be told he had just discovered the perfect home for filming his next project – which is about Elizabethan poverty.*

*Your loving uncle,*

*Eustace*

***Always remember . . .***

There are no strangers in our church –  
just friends you haven't met

# ***Readings for October***

*The readings are the ones we will use in church and online.*

**3rd October 2021** – Morning Service -

Genesis 8 v 1–22 & Genesis 9 v 1–17

**3rd October 2021** – Evening Service -

Psalms 124 & Luke 12 v 1–12

**10th October 2021** – Morning Service -

Genesis 22 v 1–19 & Genesis 37 v 1–36

**10th October 2021** – Evening Service -

Isaiah 43 v 1–7 & 2 Corinthians 1 v 3–7

**17th October 2021** – Morning Service -

Exodus 1 v 1–22 & Exodus 2 v 1–10

**17th October 2021** – Evening Service -

Psalms 137 & Luke 13 v 31–end

**24th October 2021** – Morning Service -

Exodus 2 v 11–25 & Exodus 3 v 1–15

**24th October 2021** – Evening Service -

Isaiah 45 v 22–end & Luke 14 v 1–14

**31st October 2021** – Morning Service -

Exodus 12 v 1–30 & Exodus 21 v 31–50

**31st October 2021** – Evening Service -

Psalms 23 & Romans 8 v 31–38

ACROSS  
1 dare; 3 cherubim; 9 sonTohu; 10 yield; 11 ranch; 12 enlist; 14 Baalah of Judah; 17 Edward; 19  
Sheol; 22 media; 23 open air; 24 apostasy; 25 Eton  
DOWN  
1 describe; 2 run in; 4 household gods; 5 royal; 6 blessed; 7 MIDL; 8 Joshua; 13 children; 15 added  
to; 16 Jasper; 18 await; 20 exalt; 21 YMCA

# *From our Treasurer*

Just to let you know, that from 21st November, our bank, HSBC, is going to charge us every time we pay cash or cheques into the bank or post office.

On top of this, they are changing the accounts to a type that attracts no interest, and will charge us £5 each month administration fee for those accounts.

This means that we are going to lose money we can ill afford in the present circumstances.

There are one or two options open to us. One is to change banks, but it is almost certain that all the other banks will quickly follow HSBC and start charging.

The best option (as far as St James is concerned) is for those who use envelopes for cash/cheques, to swap to a standing order on their bank account, if they are able to do this – we know not everyone would be comfortable with this. HSBC does not charge for this, neither does it cost you anything and it guarantees that you never forget your envelope.

Of course, if you a tax payer and able to Gift Aid your giving, even better for us, as the government will give us another 25% on top at no cost to you. If you do not already Gift Aid or are not sure, see Pauline Mason to check.

Please prayerfully consider your giving and the ways of doing so.

We will also be asking our funeral directors and others to consider using bank transfer instead of cheques to pay their invoices from us.

If you wish to ask me anything at all about donations or church money, please feel free to do so.

Joy Powell – Treasurer

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*Courage is fear that has said its prayers. - Anon*

# Prayers & Poems

## Autumn Prayer

Dear Loving, Father God,

As the season changes and we enjoy the beautiful colours of autumn, there are other changes which we don't enjoy. Changes we cannot control; changes and suffering in the world, beyond our comprehension; changes to our work routines, or health, or circumstances; changes which cause us anxiety and uncertainty.

When everything seems to be falling around us like the autumn leaves, help us, Lord, to remember that you stand firm. You are our rock. You never change. You are always faithful, always with us, as we move into each new day and each new season.

Thank you for loving us so much that you gave us Jesus, so that by putting our trust in Him, we can know the security of your love, for ever!

In His name, we thank you, Sovereign Lord.

Amen.

*By Daphne Kitching*

## To the Son

Most gracious Son, may your teaching dispel the darkness of ignorance in our mind, and may your commands be beacons of light showing us the path to peace. And as we walk on that path, may we find your footprints on the ground, that we may place our own feet where you have trodden. We believe that you will strengthen our limbs when they grow weary, and raise our spirits when they become heavy, because nothing gives you greater pleasure than watching us follow the way of salvation. We pray that you will always be our friend and our guide, and so bring us to your Father's heavenly kingdom.

*A Prayer of Erasmus, 1469/1536 - most renowned scholar of his age.*

# *Sorry, Lord, I just couldn't make it*

The bells ring out on Sunday morn,  
O did you hear their call?  
They call the faithful ones to prayer  
To Church they summon all.

But Lord, I cannot come today,  
I live a busy life,  
Still, when there's something special on  
I'll try and send the wife.

It poured with rain last Sunday  
An inch or two, I bet.  
You surely can't expect me then  
I'd get my new suit wet.

Today the sky is blue and clear,  
but the car's as black as ink.  
And if I do not clean it soon,  
What will the neighbours think?

You know I do my bit, dear Lord  
I have a golden rule,  
I sometimes send my kids along  
To be at Sunday school.

But I really couldn't come as well,  
There's grass to mow, and beds to weed  
Shelves to fix, a dog to walk, and  
Sunday newspapers to read.

And now this day has ended, Lord  
How fast the weekends go!  
I ask for faith and strength this week  
For I feel (spiritually) quite low.

Inflame, O Lord, my feeble faith  
My lamp burns rather dim,  
For God depends on me, of course,  
And I depend on Him.

*Author unknown*

*We hope and pray  
that no-one identifies  
with this!*

## ***Good reasons to have a church magazine***

After a year of lockdown, should we still bother with church magazines now that church life is picking up again? **Yes!**

***It is read by lots of people.*** If each issue is read on average by two people, then more people see it than ever go to church. So, it is a very good way of putting Christian values and ideas into people's hands, whether they come to church or not.

***It is a service to the community.*** Communities need local networks to thrive. Magazines are a great way of binding the people who live in one place together. Just delivering the church magazine is a way to get to know the area and the people.

***It helps build bridges with other Christian churches in the area.*** We can share some details of their meetings and events.

***It can make money.*** Well, enough to cover the costs of production! Let's aim for a revenue balanced on paid subscriptions and advertising.

***It is seen by those outside the church family.*** Think of the people just moving into our area, or those who live here already and want to get married or to baptise their child. Our magazine can help them see the sort of community we are, and that we would welcome them to join us.

***It is read by people who do not go to church, but who know someone who does.*** This is a major way of how groups, including churches, grow. Not many people walk into a church off their own bat. Most people are invited, or already have a connection.

***It supports local businesses.*** Local businesses who advertise locally, can thrive.

***It helps people develop skills.*** The editorial team will learn about design, marketing, GDPR, editing, copyright, writing, selling, artwork - and apolo-gising.

***It can help inform our community about itself*** – especially if we include a local history or local natural history section!

So, don't believe it if someone tells you that print is dead. It is not. Many people still prefer to read something they can hold in their hands. The future is not EITHER print OR digital, but BOTH AND. People will flick through a magazine that arrives through the door, even though they may never dream of visiting their local church's website.

# *John Short & Son*

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*Amid the confusion of bereavement we  
provide calmness, order and a sense of  
dignity – so that life, as it must, can go on  
with hope for the future as well as  
respect for the past.*

At times of bereavement we have served the local communities in and around this area since 1866. We personally know many of the families we have assisted. Whatever the time of day or night, we have given them the sympathy, advice and help they have needed.

Only an independent family firm, we believe, with its roots in the community, can offer this service with understanding and commitment.

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Email:

[johnshortandson@outlook.com](mailto:johnshortandson@outlook.com)



# THE PARISH OF BROWNHILLS WITH OGLEY HAY

Our mission is to worship God and to serve the community  
by sharing the love of Jesus

## ***Vicar:***

Revd Gayle Greenway 07545 657636

## ***Lay Ministers:***

Pete Biggs 01922 692163

Liz Corbett 01543 370162

Graham Sutherland (Reader with Permission to Officiate) 01543 671020

## ***Community & Children's Worker:***

Mel Pearce 07710 811893

## **OFFICERS**

### ***Wardens:***

Margaret Powell 01543 371396

Roger Corbett 01543 370162

### ***Lay Chair:***

Dennis Powell 01543 820513

### ***Secretary:***

Brenda Stanford 01543 373063

### ***Treasurer:***

Joy Powell 01543 820513

### ***Deanery Synod Representatives:***

Roger Corbett 01543 370162

Joy Powell 01543 820513

Dennis Powell 01543 820513

### ***Organist and Worship Leader:***

Pete Biggs, BEd(Hons), AMusCAM 01922 692163

### ***Memorials Application Administrator:***

Roger Corbett 01543 370162

### ***Church Hall Bookings Co-ordinator:***

Margaret Powell 01543 371396