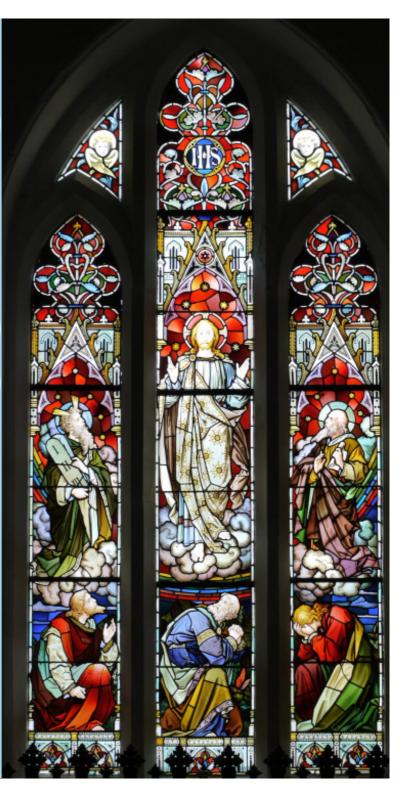
JUNE - JULY 2023

GROOMSPORT PARISH CHURCH

GROOMSPORTPARISHCHURCH.ORG



From the Pulpit



Dear everyone,

I'm really looking forward to meeting you all when we come in August! In the meanwhile, I would love to begin to get to

know names, faces and a few things about you so I can get off to a flying start!

Please could you e-mail me on elliotgroomsport@gmail.com and send me the following eight things about you.

- 1. Your name.
- 2. A picture of you! (Most important so I can connect names to faces!)
- 3. About how long have you been coming to Groomsport Parish Church?
- 4. If you could describe what is most important to this church in one sentence, what would you say?

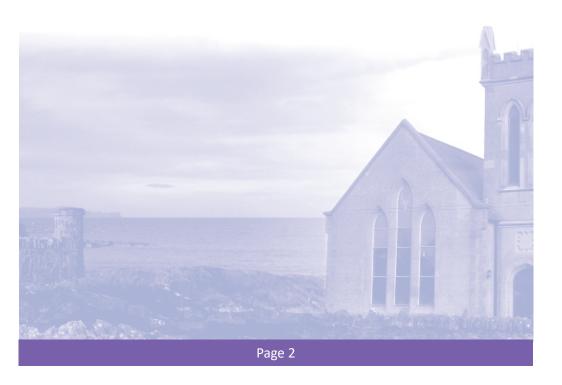
- 5. What is your biggest dream that you would like to pray for God to do in this church and community right now? (Don't be afraid to dream big!)
- 6. I love this window with the words, "To this you belong". What would you say belonging means to you?



- 7. What is your favourite Bible verse and why?
- 8. How could I be praying for you even before I come?

Thanks so much for doing this, as it will help me get to know names even before I come! Feel free to do this individually or as a couple/family - whatever suits you best. I would love answers from all ages, including children and young people - so please do ask them! Feel free to add more detail about yourself if you would like to, the more the merrier! I also am really looking forward to praying for you all, and to hearing the stories of God working in your lives! I love to see what God's already doing and pray that I can join in with it!

With so many blessings, *Ellint*





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office@groomsportparishchurch.org 028 91271311



November & December

Trinity Sunday

4th June

8:30 am Holy Communion 10:30 am Family Service 6:00 pm Evening Prayer

Second Sunday after Trinity

18th June

8:30 am Holy Communion 10:30 am Service of the Word 6:00 pm Evening Prayer

Fourth Sunday after Trinity

2nd July

8:30 am Holy Communion 10:30 am Family Service 6:00 pm Evening Prayer

Sixth Sunday after Trinity

16th July

8:30 am Holy Communion 10:30 am Service of the Word 6:00 pm Evening Prayer

Eighth Sunday after Trinity

30th July

8:30 am Holy Communion 10:30 am Morning Prayer 6:00 pm Holy Communion

First Sunday after Trinity

11th June

8:30 am Holy Communion 10:30 am Parish Communion 6:00 pm Compline

Third Sunday after Trinity

25th June

8:30 am Holy Communion 10:30 am Morning Prayer 6:00 pm Holy Communion

Fifth Sunday after Trinity

9th July

8:30 am Holy Communion 10:30 am Parish Communion 7:00 pm Compline

Seventh Sunday after Trinity

23rd July

8:30 am Holy Communion 10:30 am Parish Communion 6:00 pm Compline

Ninth Sunday after Trinity

6th August

8:30 am Holy Communion 10:30 am Family Service 6:00 pm Evening Prayer

No mid-week services during July and August.

10:30 am on the first Wednesday every month Holy Communion is celebrated in
the Chapel at Mount Stewart.



Page 4 Page 5

Vestry Minutes

The new lift for the Church Halls has been ordered from Pollock Lifts and will arrive in around 12-14 weeks.

Barry will meet with Ruth Fee, Chair of Discover Groomsport.

Work on our new minister's home in Cove Avenue is well underway. Scaffolding will go up in 2-3 weeks' time and discussions about internal décor have begun.

The toilet in the Vestry has been fixed. The lighting sensors outside the Canon Tyney Hall have been fixed and are now working. Arrangements will be made to replace a bulb in one of the Church chandeliers.

All Safeguarding Trust returns have been completed. Kate will arrange First Aid Training for organisations in the autumn.

Bert reported that Easter Services had been well supported and Pat Love was thanked for her decoration of the Church.

Research is to be done on blinds behind the organ in the Church, so that Maurice is not blinded by the sun.

Maureen reported all preparations have been made for Coronation Celebrations after Church on 7 May. She also asked for help delivering Christian Aid envelopes and for a Coffee Morning on 20 May.

Zandra, Carol and Faith were thanked for the Prayer Room set up before Easter.



From The Registers

Holy Rest

Johannes Nicolaas Louw 6 April 2023

Johannes Louw was born in Pretoria in November 1942. He lived for many years in Johannesburg where he was an industrial chemist before moving to Bangor with Hester, his wife, in November 2016, to be close to their daughter Camilla and family.

Evelyn Gaw 20 April 2023

Evelyn Gaw was a long time member of Groomsport Parish Church. She married Hugh in 1954. He predeceased her in 1982. Hugh was Church Warden in Groomsport for some years. Evelyn is survived by her children, Jim, Hilary and Gary.

May the souls of the departed, through the mercy of Christ, rest in peace and rise in glory.

Select Vestry 2023/2024

At the Annual Vestry Meeting the following appointmets were made:



Heather Pentland
Vestry Secretary



Bert Smith
Rector's Warden



Zandra Sloan *People's Warden*



Florence McAneney
Treasurer



Billy McAneney
Rector's Glebe



Tony Anderson *People's Glebe*



Gordon Boyd



Mae Burke



Barry Greenaway



Gary Keenan



Stephen McCullough



John McKee



Dorothy McKnight



Kate Murray



Helen Parkinson



Maureen Taggart

The Great Window

The window above our Holy Table portrays the Transfiguration of Christ with the Patriarchs. St. Matthew's Gospel describes it thus; "There his whole appearance changed before their eyes, his clothes as white as light. Then Moses and Elijah were seen talking to Jesus". Ch.17 v2.

It is a wonderful window and one which has moved and uplifted generations of our Parishioners down the years. But what do we know about it, who made it, when and why? Some early facts we already know. The window was installed in 1877, just thirty-five years after the Church itself was built. Erected in memory of John William Perceval -Maxwell, the window is inscribed as made by "Mayer of Munich". So what more can we know?

Joseph Gabriel Mayer founded his Institute for Christian Art in central Munich in 1847. He started off making ecclesiastical furnishings, but subsequent commissions from Cologne and Regensburg cathedrals prompted him to open a stained-glass workshop in 1860. Mayer's reputation grew. He opened branch offices in London in 1865 and New York in 1888. In 1882, Mayer was granted Royal status by Bavarian King Ludvik.

In 1892 the Pope named Mayer as a Pontifical Institute of Christian Art. By the close of the 19th century, the firm had 500 employees. However, throughout all of this, responsibility for the design and manufacture of their stained glass windows was, and to this day remains solely with the Munich workshop. Likewise, the firm is still owned and run by the Mayer family, now into their Fifth generation.



Mayer is recognized as one of the world's oldest and most renowned glass and mosaic workshops. Their work is in great demand, especially in the United States. Examples can be found across Europe and around the globe in cathedrals and local churches. One of Mayer's most stunning creations is the Holy Spirit Window above the altar in St. Peter's in Rome. There are many examples in Ireland, both Catholic and Protestant. St. Mark's, Dundela has Mayer windows, and so has Bangor Parish. So too in Dromore Cathedral, Ballyphilip Parish in Portaferry, Dublin and so on, great and small. Interestingly, the first stained glass window in Ireland was installed in 1689 in Galway by Sir John Kirwan, though admittedly not by Mayer!

In terms of artistic style, Mayer's windows from this period contain richly coloured, Romanticised scenes bordered by architectural frames of pilasters, columns



columns and architraves. They were greatly influenced by the early 19th-century revival of religious painting, in the tradition of the Italian Renaissance Masters, especially Raphael and Michelangelo. You will observe these same features in our own window! However, the creative artist behind it is unknown. It was left unsigned. He may have been Franz Borghias Mayer, the firm's principal artist at the time, or possibly Franz Xaver Zetter, a son-in-law of Joseph Mayer. We simply don't know.

Whoever the artist may have been, their creative work has enriched our Parish for the last 146 years, and long may we continue to treasure its beauty. But let's finish with a little known fact about the window. You may be surprised to know, but it began its life in a place, different to where it is now! To be exact, it was originally built into the wall behind our organ, above the then Holy Table, where the plain glass windows now are. However,

both the Window and Table had to be moved to the other end of the building in 1909, when the Chancel was erected! Fortunately for us, that difficult and delicate job was successfully completed.

Ian Sloan

Why Churches Have Stained Glass Windows

The use of stained glass for religious buildings can be documented back to the 7th century. During this time, people began to realize the benefits of stained glass and started building windows with coloured glass to add to chapels and monasteries. Later, as the movement grew and spread, stained glass gained an all-time popularity with architects in Europe during the Middle Ages.

Stained glass lets in natural light and it is an important symbol in many religions. It represents purity, the heavens, spirituality, and genesis.

Stained glass shares important messages. They were once used to educate people who could not read. By looking at the painted scenes in the glass, people could learn about the stories of the Bible and religious teachings. Today, stained glass continues to work in a similar manner as its imagery reminds worshipers of important values and lessons.

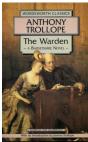


Page 8 Page 9

Book Stall

As I was preparing for our Book Fair, I looked at my records to discover that the bookshelves have been going since and after the first year we held our first Bookfair. Then it was a simple affair with one table in the entrance hall and two or three of us in attendance and offering tea and coffee to order as people arrived, with a biscuit as a bonus. How far we have come. I hope that you enjoyed the recent Book Fair, the formula is similar but with much more available to choose from, both in books and in nourishment! I have recently replenished all the shelves and you should find many new titles there now, with lots of new ones in the thriller/ detective fiction section.

The Warden Anthony Trollope



take a liberty including this again, I last reviewed it for the January Contact. Since then, I have worked my way through all six of the Barchester Chronicles and thoroughly enjoyed them all. They are not on the shelf as I read them electronically but I thought

that I would add this recommendation to my reviews. Each novel deals with a different set of families in the cathedral area but the final story gathers them all together in a very satisfying way. In this first book is a fascinating story of church politics in the nineteenth century. The eponymous warden is Septimus Harding, a well-respected and loved clergyman whose wardenship is of an alms house for aged and impoverished working men. His gentle ways and placid disposition are no match for a young and zealous new arrival in the neighbourhood whose determination to apply utter rectitude and correctness to all the doings of the

diocese is morally correct but utterly heartless. It is a perfect example of faith without charity. Written in 1855, it is slow moving but nevertheless a really good read and one I would recommend. I have followed the reading of this with three of the sequels, each dealing with a slightly different group of people in the diocese.

My Last Duchess Daisy Goodwin



An unashamedly light read, but one which I confess to having thoroughly enjoyed. A story of the clash of cultures in nineteenthcentury England, when the wealthy American heiresses were encouraged to come to England to find an aristocratic match. Cora

Cash has an extremely ambitious mother who will stop at nothing to find such a match for her daughter. Inevitably things don't go according to plan from the start but for lovers of a romantic tale, this will delight I am sure. The challenges of dress, social behaviour and mores are covered in detail and are fascinating.

Major Pettigrew's Last Stand Helen Simonson

I cannot recommend this book too highly. It is very much a feel-good book, a truly life affirming story of village life. Major Pettigrew, a widower, is a contented soul, but when his brother dies, his life starts to change. He has befriended the village shopkeeper Mrs Ali who has also lost her partner. Their relationship deepens through their joint love of reading, which inevitably, in a village, causes gossip. The story is gentle and heart-warming, and frankly refreshing in a time when decency and good manners are no longer valued as they were.



Main Street, Groomsport

www.groomsportparishchurch.org

Come along to the Book Fair and hopefully, you will find some of your favourite authors to keep you reading over the summer. You can also enjoy a cup of cup of tea or coffee with a traybake while catching up with friends. See you there!

Journey Through Thailand

'Sawasadee kaa' said with a bow of the head, a smile and hands clasped as if in prayer: the universal greeting of the lovely Thai people we met on our travels.



Earlier this year, we were fortunate to be able to spend four weeks in Thailand with two friends who know the country well. We travelled from the tourist area of Phuket in the south with its lovely beaches, to Chiang Mai, full of temples and colourful night markets, and on to Chiang Rai, which is on the border with Laos and Myanmar, known as the Golden Triangle. We came back through amazing Bangkok, full of contradictions between the old and chaotic and the ultra-modern, set on the Chao Phaya River with boats offering a great alternative form of transport around the city. Finally, we relaxed in Hua Hin, said to be the oldest and most traditional resort in Thailand. In all of our travels. we found people who are industrious, progressive, friendly and welcoming and above all, proud of their traditions and their country.

Thailand is the second-largest economy in Southeast Asia and is continuing to grow. The government is obviously investing heavily, particularly in infrastructure with

major road and transport upgrades and in education with huge university campuses in all the main cities. In many ways, they are much more advanced than here. There were of course, wide disparities between the modern cities and the rural communities where life was very basic. The mountain communities with traditional dress selling their beautiful craft products and those working in the tea plantations we visited clearly did not enjoy the same standards of living but nevertheless, there was a serenity and calmness about them that was humbling to see.



Nearly 94% of the Thai people are Buddhist and their religion is evidently central to their outlook on life and to the way they live. All males are required to spend time, as little or much as they choose, as a monk.



As a people, they have strong codes of ethics and standards of morality based on Buddha's teachings. There are massive beautiful ornate temples in towns and in rural communities, where individuals come to pray and where visitors must show respect by having arms and legs covered and shoes off. In line with ancienttradition homes and businesses also have small spirit houses outside where they can bring daily offerings of fruits, flowers etc, to honour the guardians of the land and protect them from wayward spirits.



We visited many amazing temples, among them the Doi Suthep Temple in Chiang Mai, the White Temple that looks like lace and the Blue Temple, both in Chiang Rai. Buddhas, large and small, which can be seen everywhere, are a clear indication of the centrality of religion to the people of Thailand.



The Royal Family, who also clearly revered, are equally important, with posters of them prominent throughout the country. Despite there having been a military coup in 2014, King Rama X remains the constitutional head of state and while his powers are limited, he is seen as a figurehead and symbol of the Thai Nation. Some of the highlights of our holiday included visits to a number of the royal palaces. The Grand Palace is a complex of a number of magnificent buildings in the heart of Bangkok and has been the official residence of the Kings since the 1700s. Its ornate structures, vivid colours, wonderful silks and ceramics are truly a sight to behold. The Bang Pa summer place in a beautiful, serene setting surrounded by amazing gardens and lakes offers more traditional Thai architecture and is every bit as impressive as The Grand Palace.

Page 12 Page 13



It is impossible to cover all of the highlights of our holiday but there are a number of others worth noting. The boat trip to Khao Phing Kan, also known as James Bond Island, where the Bond film The Man with the Golden Gun was filmed. You might remember it is where Scaramanga met his end.



Visits to a number of beautiful potteries, including the Celedon Pottery in Chiang Mai where we will admit to having made

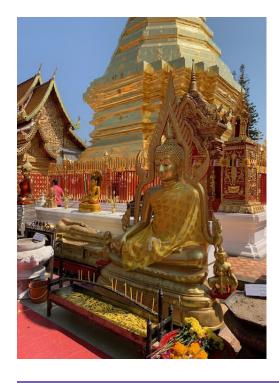


a few purchases; a cultural night out, savouring local Thai food while watching graceful Thai dancers perform in colourful traditional dress; a visit to Jim Thompsons House Museum, with its beautiful interiors. He was an American living in Thailand who helped revive the production of Thai silk and turned it into an international brand. His silks were used in the film 'The King and I'; a visit to the ancient capital of Thailand, Ayutthaya, still magnificent despite it being in ruins; afternoon tea in the splendour of the Mandarin Oriental; visits to a tiger and an elephant sanctuary where these magnificent animals are so well looked after and of course the shopping malls and the massive markets, one with 15,000 stalls, full of all sorts of tempting products.



Thailand was well worth a visit, particularly as we were lucky to have been able to travel outside the main tourist areas. Historically the three pillars of Thai life have been built on Nation, Religion and Royalty, and these certainly seem to provide a strong cultural identity for this nation.

Maureen & Noel Taggart







Service of Introduction

A Service of Introduction for our new minister, Elliot Swattridge, will be held at 7.30pm on Monday 21 August. The Service will be followed by Refreshments in the Canon Tyney Hall.

If you would like to attend this very special occasion in the history of our Parish, please return the reply slip, included with your magazine, to Zandra Sloan, People's Warden by Sunday 26th June so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

Walking for Softies

Our March walk took us to Antrim Castle Gardens. We had planned for wet weather, but as we started out, the rain dried up and we had a pleasant walk around the gardens. Our walk took us past the ancient Motte, built in the late 12th century. We also took in the pretty Long Canals, designed in the French style. The lower canal was constructed in the early 18th century while the upper canal dates from the 19th century. Finally, we walked along the Lime Avenue and back to the Garden Cafe for delicious scones and coffee.

Page 16

Quoile Pondage and Finnebrogue. In April we made a change to our usual habit of walking and then having coffee. We met at the car park at the riverside walk along the Quoile river, outside Downpatrick. It is a pretty walk, flat and beside the river. The craic was great and there was a lot of laughter. We watched swans and ducks (all hoping to be fed) and we marvelled at the bountiful birdsong. We walked as far as Steamboat Quay before turning back to the car park. From there, we went to Finnebrogue Woods, about a mile away. We had reserved a table in the cafe, which was actually a teepee, decorated with fairy lights and an open fire in the middle. We had lunch which was excellent, then walked along one of the trails beside the lake. Some people enjoyed lunch so much that they opted to go into the farm shop instead to purchase some of their delicious bacon. Others bought some little gifts from the gift shop.

Our final walk of the season will be to Montalto, near Ballynahinch, on the last Saturday in May. Anyone

wishing to join us please contact lan on 07968401387 or Zandra on 07968401386 for some more information.







Page 17

The Tax Collector

I had a pretty good life by most people's standards. A senior tax collector with plenty of opportunity for a bit extra if you get my gist. Nice house, good food, access to all the good things of life, but I didn't have many friends. No one in Israel likes tax collectors, why would they? We take money off the local population on behalf of the hated Roman occupiers. I live in Jericho, which is a pretty wealthy town in its own right. We are the centre of the balsam industry and export from here all over the place. So I get to be pretty important and influential.

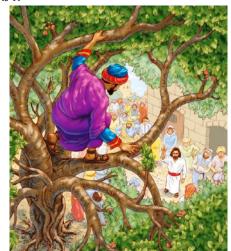
I had heard about the man Jesus, everyone was talking about him and I wanted to know more about him, there was something that intrigued me from what I had heard. So when I heard he was passing through Jericho I determined to see him. I knew I had a problem; I am small and no-one who knows me is going to make way for me - a tax collector. When I reached the road I knew that he would have to travel on, I found a handy tree, a sycamore, well, a sycamore-fig tree, which was easy for me to climb. As people gathered and word got about and the crowd grew but I had a ringside view.

I could hear cheering in the distance, which gradually got closer. Then I could see him! Even at a distance, there was something about him which drew you. Gradually he came close to where I was and suddenly, he looked up at me in the tree and spoke - to me! "Zacchaeus" he said, "Come down, I want to eat with you at your

house today". Well, I nearly fell out of the tree. Me, a hated tax collector, a sinner and him a Jewish prophet and teacher, you could tell the crowd was scandalised, but I had to do as he said. I couldn't have helped myself even if I had wanted.

Well, it happened and now everyone in Jericho knows the story. I was immediately aware of the wrongdoings I had committed over the years and compelled to put them right as soon as I could. I promised to give half of all I had to the poor and pay back all those I have cheated four times over. My life has changed beyond recognition and Jesus confirmed that for me. He said I too was a son of Abraham and that He had come to find and save people like me who were lost. He certainly found me. He called me by my name when He had never met me, nor, as far as I can tell, had never heard of me. I am not lost any more and am no longer hated.

arol





Thoughts of a Blow In ...



Perhaps it's just me, but the winter chill has seemed to linger well into spring this year. Thankfully, this hasn't seemed to affect the progression of the seasons in the natural world. I've been enjoying the displays of bluebells and wild garlic emerging everywhere locally.

Throughout April and into May, it's been extra layers and woolly jumpers in this household. I haven't risked going outdoors without a padded jacket, plus a hat and gloves! But, in the past week or so, now we're well into May, we seem to be easing into spring proper. And yes, I'm saying that with my fingers tightly crossed! I've even ventured outdoors to sit reading a book for the odd half hour when the sun deigns to appear. Knowing our weather is nothing if unpredictable, we can appreciate this current spell of a slight increase in temperature - while it lasts!

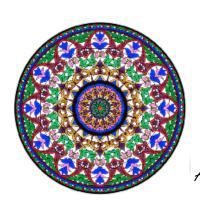
It must be spring proper since the children next door now have their football goalpost as a fixture on the front lawn. It's

such fun hearing the odd yell of success at a clean shot at goal. More often than not, any celebrations are forestalled by groans of despair at a miss or a heated debate on the fairness of tactics.

Like everyone else, I'm relishing that long-awaited stretch in the evenings that comes with late spring. Rather than shutting the curtains to keep out the dark and chill, it's lovely to enjoy the long, slow fade of light and even a sunset if we're lucky. The month of May holds so much promise for the summer (whether that's fulfilled or not). Now winter is over and we can get out and about more easily, it's such fun to hear everyone's travel and activity plans for the coming months.

These humorous lines from Robert Frost seemed to describe the hopes and frustrations of spring perfectly. Although, I don't think I'll ditch my raincoat or padded jacket quite yet!

Cynthia



The sun was warm but the wind was chill,
You know how it is with an April day,
When the sun is out and the wind is still,
You're one month on in the middle of May,
But if you so much as dare to speak,
a cloud come over the sunlit arch,
And wind comes off a frozen peak,
And you're two months back in the middle of March.

Page 18 Page 19

Our Prayer Room, Holy Week 2023

Our Prayer Room first began in 2014. We held it every year until 2020, when we had to postpone events because of Covid.

This year is special, as we were once again able to open our Prayer Room. Some people were still understandably a little bit anxious about taking part, so we opted for Dawn till Dusk hours instead of 24/7 as had happened in the past.

Everyone, who took part, appreciated the opportunity of spending an hour or two in the peace and serenity of the Prayer Room. Some people took part in craft activities, some read Faith books, and some listened to music. Some sat and reflected. Materials were provided for artwork for those who wished to draw instead of writing a prayer. Prayers were written for the prayer tree and in books provided.

It is hoped to set up the Prayer Room again next year and also that more people will feel at ease enough to include it in their Holy Week activities. Faith, Carol and Zandra







Mothers' North Christian care for families

Three of our members were privileged to go to Seagoe Parish for the 100th birthday of their mothers' union branch. It was a lovely service at which Revd Duncan Pollock preached. Duncan is, of course, the MU Diocesan Chaplain. This was followed by a soup and pudding lunch.

On Monday May 15th, 24 of us had a meal together at The Stables instead of an outing.

Mothers' Union is now on a break until Monday, September 18th.

We hope you all have a restful, healthy and joyful summer.

Mary Sumner's Prayer

All this day, O Lord, let me touch as many lives as possible for thee;

and every life I touch, do thou by thy Spirit quicken, whether through

the word I speak, the prayer I breathe, or the life I live. AMEN



Coronation Tea

After watching the wonderful coronation of King Charles 111 on Saturday 6 May we had our own celebration tea after church the following day. The hall was suitably decorated for the event with a poster of the King and bunting. A central table was covered with food, savoury and sweet which all enjoyed. Thank you to everyone who helped in any way, not least Pauline who made the scones and sausage rolls and Heather who made her famous lemon posset. It was lovely to be able to get together to mark such an historic event.



Maureen

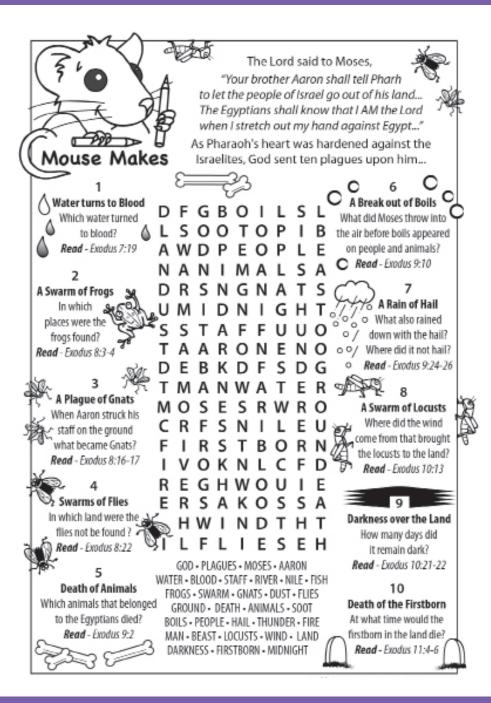
Page 20 Page 21



This year we are holding our family fun day in the church halls rather than the Meadows. We hope you will join us and bring family, friends and neighbours. We are particularly keen to see young people come along and enjoy the many activities planned, so help us spread the news of the event, which will include a BBQ, a kids' craft room, face painting, glitter tattoos, games, a cake sale and live music. If you can bake for the cake sale, please let Pauline know. If you can volunteer, please contact Maureen.

Tickets cost £8 for adults and £4 for children and can be obtained from William 07812 042833 or Gordon 07710 106363.

Just for Fun



Page 22

