# Christ Church Ramsbottom





## Pentecost -Acts 2 Newsletter MAY 2024

## **Church Services Sundays 10.30am**

5th May	Cafe Worship	Rev. Stephen Crook
12th May		Rev. Stephen Crook
19th May	<b>Communion Service</b>	Rev. Stephen Crook
26th May		Catherine Davidge
2nd June	Cafe Worship	Susan Applegate

<b>Regular Activities at Church</b>					
Tuesdays	Prayer Meeting (usually on Zoom)	7pm			
Wednesdays	Little Stars	9.30 - 11.30am			
Thursdays	Drop-In Cafe	10am - 12pm			

Dates	<b>&amp;</b>	Events
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4th May 9.30am-12.30pm	Community Cafe - Christian Aid	@ Church
14th May 7.30pm	Church Officers	@ Church
19th May 12.30pm	Church Meeting (After service and lunch)	@ Church





## From our Minister Stephen Crook

Happy May everyone! I've never been 'soft' but neither am I a fighter.

The very famous story of Elijah and the prophets of Baal is as dramatic as it is terrible - and it is terrible - just read it for yourself in 1 Kings 18 - **NO**, revise that - it's horrific.

You all know the story (even if you've read it just now) so I'll not make any comment on it. **BUT WHAT HAPPENED AFTERWARDS?** I HEAR YOU SHOUT.

Well anyway - as we read on in chapter 19 we find a d different Elija to the one whose just about had the greatest 'one sided victory' in the whole of the Bible!

**In contrast** we find a broken, demoralised, frightened man who just wants to lay down and die - Vs 4.

As you read on you see a man that is physically exhausted, emotionally defeated and spiritually empty - he doesn't half feel sorry for himself vs 10 "I am the only prophet left? and now they are trying to kill me, too."- Have you ever been in a similar position?

As we read on, and over a period of time God refreshes and rebuilds Elijah in every way.

**He feeds him** in Vs 5-8 till he is physically strong again.

He reassures him that he isn't alone in verse 18 - and there are other believers too.

#### God gives him help - Vs 20.

After Elisha (Elijah's apprentice) took over the role that Elijah had been doing (Vs 19), <u>God gave Elijah an office job and he lived</u> <u>happily ever after!!!</u> **O NO HE DIDN'T!!**  **Sadly for Elijah** - and as a lesson to us all, even when we've been through hardship and hard times, we're often expected to 'carry on as before' - no desk job for him / or you / or me.

BUT!!! God had refreshed, refilled, replenished and reinvigorated him and he wants to do the same for you too if you'll let him.

With what's going on around the world there are a great many frightened and fearful people at the moment and it's difficult to meet all their needs YET people, many from within our own church family, are supporting those who are emotionally drained, need medical assistance - and provide food to the most vulnerable and needy.

Only God though, working through His people can restore the spirit - clearly as great a need for society as it's ever been and you can help by praying, performing an 'Act Of Kindness' in God's name or simply, should you have the opportunity - introduce someone to the 'still small voice' of God The Father.

In Every way, Psalm 23 (written by a broken and flawed man) encapsulates the above.

I pray that whoever you are, that you will turn to God to be refreshed and that you'll allow Him to do so, despite these testing and uncertain times.

#### Get your refreshment here:-

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xXPPzuCJMCs

God bless all that you do as you turn to Him. Rev Stephen

### What's the Big Idea? An Introduction to the Books of the Bible: Judges

By Canon Paul Hardingham

Following Joshua's death, a generation grew up who didn't know God (Judges 2:11) and 'every man did what was right in his own eyes' (17:6, 21:25). The book of Judges is a study in God's response to a permissive society.

The book takes its name from the deliverers that God raised up during this time. God empowered both men and women with His Spirit to rule and deliver the people. They included Ehud, Deborah, Gideon and his son Abimelech, Jephthah and Samson. The judges operated in the 350 years (from 1050 BC) between Joshua's death and the monarchy.

We see a recurring cycle of apostasy, oppression, penitence and deliverance played out. When the people fell into sin, God sent an enemy nation to oppress them. As a result, they cried to God for help, and He responded by raising up a deliverer to free them.

The saddest words in Judges are those applied to Samson, 'He did not know that the LORD had left him' (16:20). Rejecting God in our lives can begin with tolerating those things that are not in harmony with His will for our lives. The people's toleration of the beliefs of their pagan neighbours led to a conformity in life and worship with them. Yet God waited for His people to return to Him, when He responded with grace to deliver them.

Gideon stands out as somebody who was unwilling to compromise with the surrounding culture. Despite his weaknesses, God used him to deliver Israel from the Midianite invaders. We read: 'the Spirit of the LORD came upon Gideon', lit: 'the Spirit clothed Himself with Gideon' (6:34). God's grace and faithfulness is at work in those who are prepared to trust Him.

#### **Newsletter by email**

You may have noticed that the Newsletter is no longer being automatically emailed out each month, therefore, if you wish to keep receiving the Newsletter by email please let Valerie know, either in person or by sending a quick email to newsletter@christchurch-ramsbottom.co.uk.

Alternatively, the Newsletter is available on the website at <u>https://www.christchurch-ramsbottom.co.uk/news/</u>

	BIR HDAY
7th May	Louise
13th May	Christine C
15th May	Steve
23rd May	Susan
26th May	Edith
	To join the birthday scheme please contact Mary

Quiz on the Book of Judges	A trumpet, a pitcher and a torch
Answers on page 8	Slings and stones
1. Which tribe was the first to fight the	7. How many sons did Gideon have?
Canaanites?	10
Judah	24
Zebulun	70
Dan	8. What was the name of Samson's father?
2. How old was Joshua when he died?	Manoah
80	Phileas
100	Amon
110	9. What surprised Samson on his way to Timnah
3. Who sang a song celebrating the downfall of	with his parents?
Sisera?	A thunderstorm
Hannah	A young lion
Deborah & Barak	An attack by his enemies
Shamgar & Ehud	10. What animal did Samson send through the
4. What offering did Gideon present to the	Philistine fields?
angel of the Lord?	Cattle
Two turtle doves	Foxes
A bullock and a grain offering	Sheep
A kid and some unleavened cakes	11. Which of these was the source of Samson's
5. How many volunteer soldiers did Gideon	strength?
have initially?	New ropes
5000	Uncut hair
10000	Woven hair
32000	12. Where was Samson when he died?
6. What equipment did Gideon issue to his	Philistine temple
soldiers?	Delilah's house
A sword, a shield and a helmet	Jerusalem

## A poetic prayer for Pentecost

Happy Birthday to all Christians, This is where it all began; Out from here went the apostles, Taking Christ to everyone. Able now to speak to nations, With the good news to proclaim; Crucified for our salvation, Hear His message, learn His name. Out they went to every corner,

Fearless as they spread the word; Bringing light to those in darkness, Giving hope to all that heard. So must we with every blessing, Follow in the steps they trod; Showing love and help and kindness, All come from the breath of God.

By Alan Millichip

### God in Music: 'Glorious the song when God's the theme': the Stabat Mater

The Rev Michael Burgess continues a year-long series looking at great works of Christian music.

May is traditionally the month of Mary, the mother of Jesus. When we read of Mary in the Gospels, we sense the heartache and trial of much of her life: a teenage mother giving birth in a stable, fleeing with her new-born baby and Joseph to Egypt, losing the child Jesus while on pilgrimage to Jerusalem, following her son on His ministry but always in the background, and there at the foot of the cross as her son is crucified. It is then Mary must have thought back to that occasion in the temple when Simeon took her child and told her that a sword would pierce her own soul.

That sense of heartache and the sorrow it brings is poignantly expressed in a beautiful poem of the Middle Ages called *Stabat Mater*, which pictures Mary at Calvary and that sword of desolation and sadness that pierces her soul. We are not sure who wrote this poem. It is ascribed to Jacopone da Todi, who became a Franciscan friar on the death of his wife in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. The contemplation of Mary's sorrows in the *Stabat Mater* has inspired many composers, and there are wonderful settings by Palestrina, Rossini, Dvorak, Verdi and Poulenc.

This month let's focus on a very simple setting, but one that captures those searing pangs of sorrow at the heart of the poem. It is by Antonio Vivaldi, who was born in Venice in 1678. In 1703 he was ordained a priest, but by then he had made his name as a skilled violinist and composer. He continued to compose throughout his life: a vast amount that includes some 40 operas (though only 18 survive), 400 concertos, and over 100 choral works. In 1730 Charles de Brosses described him as 'an old man with a prodigious fury for composition.' For much of his life Vivaldi was music director of the Ospidale della Pieta, a music school for girls. Then in 1740 he left Venice hoping for preferment in Vienna. That was not to be, and his final days were marked by poverty and neglect, and in 1741 burial in a pauper's grave.

Most of us know Vivaldi through the brilliance and colour of 'The Four Seasons' and his setting of the Gloria. The tone is more restrained in his setting of the Stabat Mater. There is a very fine CD recording entitled 'Vespers of Sorrow' where the work is linked to a sonata, a psalm setting and the Magnificat for an imagined celebration of our Lady's feast.

The Stabat Mater is a long poem and Vivaldi restricted himself to setting eight verses for contralto and strings: the solo voice standing for Mary as she sings of the despair and agony as the mother of Jesus. The opening verse, 'At the cross her station keeping' captures the intensity of emotion with the throbbing rhythms of the accompaniment - that mood recurs throughout the work. And then with the verse, 'Eja Mater, fons amoris' (O thou Mother! Fount of love!) the violins and viola accompany without any bass instruments. It is a pivotal point in the work as the solo voice cries out 'Mater' across the heights and depths of the music, leading into the prayer that the love of Mary will touch all human hearts. The final verse set by Vivaldi begins 'Make me feel as thou hast felt,' and so Mary stands for all mothers who have lost loved ones: perhaps sons killed in Afghanistan, perhaps daughters dying through disease.

Mary's love for Jesus, her son, touches the hearts of them and of all parents. Hers was a protective, sacrificial love that led her to the foot of the cross, where Jesus gave His mother and John, the beloved disciple, into the care of each other. The sacrificial love of a mother mirrored in the sacrificial offering of her son in death. Julian of Norwich meditated on this motherly love in her Revelations. In chapter 60 she wrote, 'A mother's caring is the closest, nearest and surest for it is the truest...As we know, our own mother bore us only into pain and dying. But our true mother Jesus, who is all love, bears us into joy and endless living. Blessed may he be!' So the protective care of mother Mary cries out to us in Vivaldi's setting of the Stabat Mater. The closing lines of that poem look to Christ's maternal love like Mother Julian:

> 'Christ when Thee shall call me hence, Be my mother, my defence, Be thy Cross of victory.'



### God in the Sciences: Finding Expression - and God's Response - in Lament

by Dr Ruth M. Bancewicz, Church Engagement Director at The Faraday Institute for Science and Religion in Cambridge. See www.faraday.cam.ac.uk/churches and <u>http://www.cis.org.uk</u>

The question of suffering comes up regularly in discussions about science and faith. I once visited a school to speak to some of the older teenagers. One of the pupils had sadly passed away from cancer a few weeks before and his classmates asked, "How could God let this happen?" Of course, these young people's questions about where God was in this situation were important. But the chaplain also gently reminded the class that their friend's family were Christians, and that they were finding that their experience of loss had brought them even closer to God than before.

One way that grief can bring us near to God is when we share it with Him, telling Him exactly how we feel. The biblical writers had no scruples about expressing themselves to God, giving vent to emotions we often hold back in a church context. As my colleague Roger Abbott has written in his book on *'Unanswered' Prayer*, *"*Let us not confuse reverence with spiritual prudishness. Perhaps honesty, the way it feels, is precisely what God is waiting to hear from us."

About one third of the Psalms express some form of grief. The book of Job is a series of responses to one man's suffering as he loses his children, property and health in quick succession. Lamentations is also one long outpouring of sadness at what happened to Israel under the Babylonians. Some of the prophets, especially Jeremiah, also express their pain at these sort of events - which reflect something of God's own feelings at the suffering of His people.

Most of these biblical authors would have had access to Scriptures that encouraged them to turn to God whatever the circumstances. Emboldened by their knowledge of His character and promises, these divinely inspired writers even express their anger to God about the things He lets happen, or complain that He seems to act unfairly or ignore them in their plight. Not only do these people let out all their feelings without fear of reprisal, but they also clearly expect a helpful answer. Some record a resolution to their troubles - often simply because God speaks to and comforts them, enabling them to keep going.

The biblical writers demonstrated that God can handle pretty much anything – anger, blame, bitterness – if we are actively looking to Him for help. As Pete Greig of the 24-7 prayer movement has written, "pain that is not expressed can never be transformed".

### Prayer for Schools Fortnight 6<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> May

Our local schools are busy places, and draw in many people, especially students, teachers, governors, parents, caterers, and school grounds support services. These people need our prayer, as they face many daily challenges.

And so it was that four years ago a network made up of Churches Together England, CARE, Youth for Christ, Scripture Union, New Generation, the Association of Christian Teachers, came together to launch the Prayer for Schools Fortnight.

It now exists to promote prayer for schools in partnership with prayer groups, churches and Christian organisations. The vision is to see all 30,000 schools in the UK being regularly prayed for.

The theme this year is Running the Race, based on Hebrews 12, and highlighting the perseverance and team mentality needed for schools to operate successfully.

Mike Simmonds, director and education consultant of Go Ministries which supports governors in schools, said: "Schools have almost always been at the heart of the Church's mission. Praying for teachers, other staff, governors, and children must surely underpin our hopes and vision that the next generation will flourish in every way possible.

"For most, school will be the only place they encounter God - that must be a prayer priority."

More details at: <u>https://www.eauk.org/church/</u> <u>pray-with-us/pray-for-schools.cfm</u>

## Christian Aid Week 12<sup>th</sup> - 18<sup>th</sup> May

Christian Aid is urging its supporters to "push back against poverty" this Christian Aid Week by bearing in mind the coming General Election.

The charity says that "people hoping to represent us" in the next UK Parliament will soon be on our doorsteps, "vying for our vote".

Christian Aid says that these would-be MPs will: "be in listening mode, keen to hear what makes the voters in their community tick." And so, urges the charity, Christians can use this opportunity to "show them that your church cares about poverty, and tell them that you expect them to act on poverty too, if they are elected."

This year the charity has launched the '70K Challenge for May', encouraging its supporters to do a sponsored "Move 70km during May. Walk, run, cycle, however you move is up to you." Details at: <u>https://fundraise.christianaid.org.uk</u>

> Quiz Answers Judah (Judges 1:2) 100 (Judges 2:8) A kid and some unleavened cakes (Judges 6:19) 32000 (Judges 7:3) 70 (Judges 8:30) 70 (Judges 7:3) 70 (Jud

#### **NORTH WEST ENGLAND METHODIST DISTRICT**

THE EQUIP SERIES

> TUE 12 MARCH WED 17 APRIL THU 16 MAY MON 10 JUNE TUE 16 JULY WED 14 AUGUST 2024



MONTHLY ONLINE EVENTS

HOSTED ON ZOOM

7.30 - 8.30PM

(ARRIVE FROM 7.20PM FOR A 7.30PM START)

Come along to these information evenings and be equipped as we move towards the launch of the North West England District. These evenings will include:

- Devotions
- An update from each sub group, to increase our knowledge and understanding of how the new district will look and feel
- Q and A session

These events will run on a monthly basis, and you are invited to attend any/all of these sessions. To Join: https://zoom.us/j/94658927054?

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(Meeting ID: 946 5892 7054 Passcode: 125750) To access via phone dial 0203 481 5237 or 0203 481 5240 and follow prompts.

#### IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS, PLEASE EMAIL NWEDCOMMUNICATION@OUTLOOK.COM.



This event is an opportunity to celebrate as five districts become one, to form the North West England District. Starting at 2.30pm, the event will include the welcome service for Rev. Dr. James Tebbutt, our District Chair (subject to Methodist Conference), and will also welcome the wider District Team. The President of Conference will be preaching, along with the Vice-President and Secretary of Conference in attendance.

## **May Prayer Diary**

Please take time each day to pray for the event or the person mentioned in the diary. If you are unsure what to pray or are unsure who the people are, then simply pray that God might bless them and keep them safe.



Wednesday	1	Slimming World as they use our building				
Thursday	2	For the work of Rammy Pantry				
Friday	3	Marjorie				
Saturday	4	For a successful Community Cafe for Christian Aid				
Sunday	5	Our Service today led by Rev. Stephen Crook				
Monday	6	For those attending Pilates within our building				
Tuesday	7	Karen				
Wednesday	8	Freda				
Thursday	9	For our Drop-In Cafe				
Friday	10	Lesley & Tom				
Saturday	11	Baby Ballet as they use our building				
Sunday	12	Our Service today led by Rev. Stephen Crook				
Monday	13	For Messy Play as they use our building				
Tuesday	14	For Church Officers meeting tonight				
Wednesday	15	Little Stars				

Thursday	16	Recorded Music Society as they use our building
Friday	17	John & Louise
Saturday	18	For the Church Meeting tomorrow
Sunday	19	Our Service today led by Rev. Stephen Crook
Monday	20	lan & Joan
Tuesday	21	Jo Jingles as they use our building
Wednesday	22	Sara
Thursday	23	Rammy Pantry Clients
Friday	24	Norma
Saturday	25	For Street Pastors, Bury
Sunday	26	Our Service today led by Catherine Davidge
		Catherine Davidge
Monday	27	For those who live in the Great Eaves Area
Monday Tuesday	27 28	For those who live in the Great Eaves
		For those who live in the Great Eaves Area
Tuesday	28	For those who live in the Great Eaves Area Mary

# Christ Church Ramsbottom



Saturday Coffee Mornings for Charity 9.30am - 12.30pm

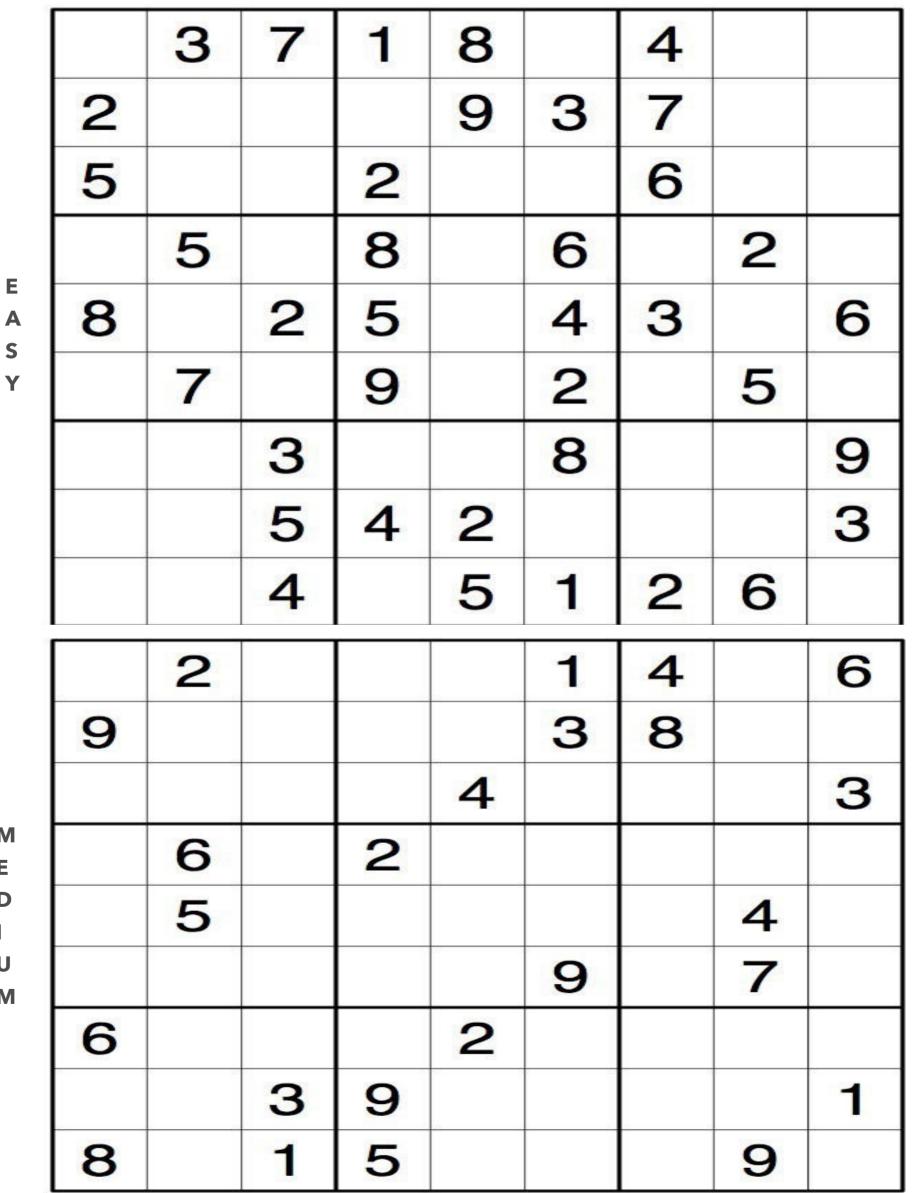
## February-May 2024

Date	Charity A	mt Raised
February 3rd	Boaz Trust	£160
March 2nd	<b>Red Nose Day</b>	£200
April 13th	Stubbins Primary Scho	ol £114
May 4th	Christian Aid	





Sudoku is a number puzzle based on a 9x9 grid. The object is to place the numbers 1-9 in the empty squares so that each row, column, and 3x3 box contains the same number only once.



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## CROSSWORD

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#### Across

- 1 One who owes money, goods or services (Isaiah 24:2) (6)
- 4 'A good measure, pressed down, together and running over' (Luke 6:38) (6)
- 7 Continuous dull pain (Proverbs 14:13) (4)
- 8 This bread contains yeast (Amos 4:5) (8)
- 9 'But take heart! I have the world' (John 16:33) (8)
- 13 And the rest (abbrev.) (3)
- 16 What Paul was accused of by Tertullus, the high
- priest's lawyer, in his trial before Felix (Acts 24:5) (13)
- 17 Rap (anag.) (3)
- 19 Founder of the Jesuits in 1534 (8)
- 24 'For where your is, there your heart will be also' (Luke 12:34) (8)
- 25 The first word written on the wall during King Belshazzar's great banquet (Daniel 5:25) (4)
- 26 'We all, like sheep, have gone ' (Isaiah 53:6) (6)
- 27 One was given in honour of Jesus in Bethany (John 12:2) (6)

#### Down

- 1 'The blind receive sight, the lame walk, the hear, the dead are raised' (Luke 7:22) (4)
- 2 Conduct (Colossians 1:21) (9)

- 3 In the Catholic and Orthodox traditions, the body of a saint or his belongings, venerated as holy (5)
- 4 'Like a of locusts men pounce on it' (Isaiah 33:4)(5)
- 5 Very old (Genesis 44:20) (4)
- 6 In Calvinist theology, one who is predestined by God to receive salvation (5)
- 10 How Nicodemus addressed Jesus when he visited him one night (John 3:2) (5)
- 11 Sea (Psalm 148:7) (5)
- 12 'I will you, my God the King; I will praise your name for ever and ever' (Psalm 145:1) (5)
- 13 One of the groups of philosophers that Paul met in Athens, who disagreed with his teaching about the resurrection (Acts 17:18) (9)
- 14 Barred enclosure (Ezekiel 19:9) (4)
- 15 'Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in with the Spirit' (Galatians 5:25) (4)
- 18 Cares (anag.) (5)
- 20 Garish (Ezekiel 16:16) (5)
- 21 'So God said to Noah, "I am going to put – to all people"' (Genesis 6:13) (2,3)
- 22 Just (2 Corinthians 6:13) (4)
- 23 'The of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge' (Proverbs 1:7) (4)

WORDSEARCH

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### **Rogation Sunday**

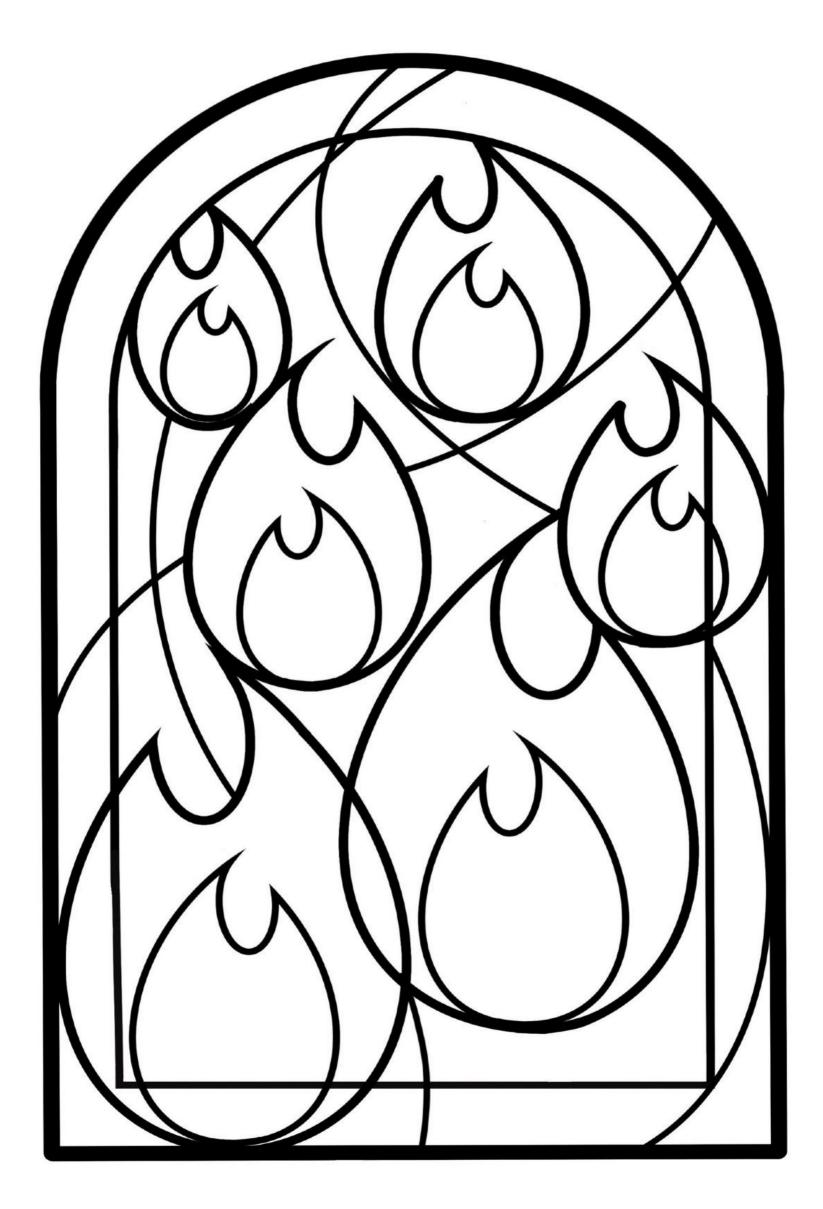
The first Sunday in May is Rogation Sunday. This is when many parishes still 'beat the bounds'. Rogation means an asking of God - for blessing on the seed and land. The practice began with the Romans, who processed around the cornfields each Spring, singing and dancing, sacrificing animals, in order to get rid of evil. About 465 AD the Western world was suffering from earthquake and storm. Mamertius, Bishop of Vienne, aware of the pagan custom, ordered that prayers should be said in the ruined or neglected fields. Thus 'beating the bounds' became a Christian ceremonial. It arrived in England early in the eighth century. Each Spring, led by the priest, a little party from the parish would set out with a Cross to trace the boundaries of the parish. They'd implore God to keep their corn and roots and boughs in good health, and bring them to harvest. In the days when maps were scarce, 'beating the bounds' helped remind everyone just where the boundaries were. Do you know yours today?

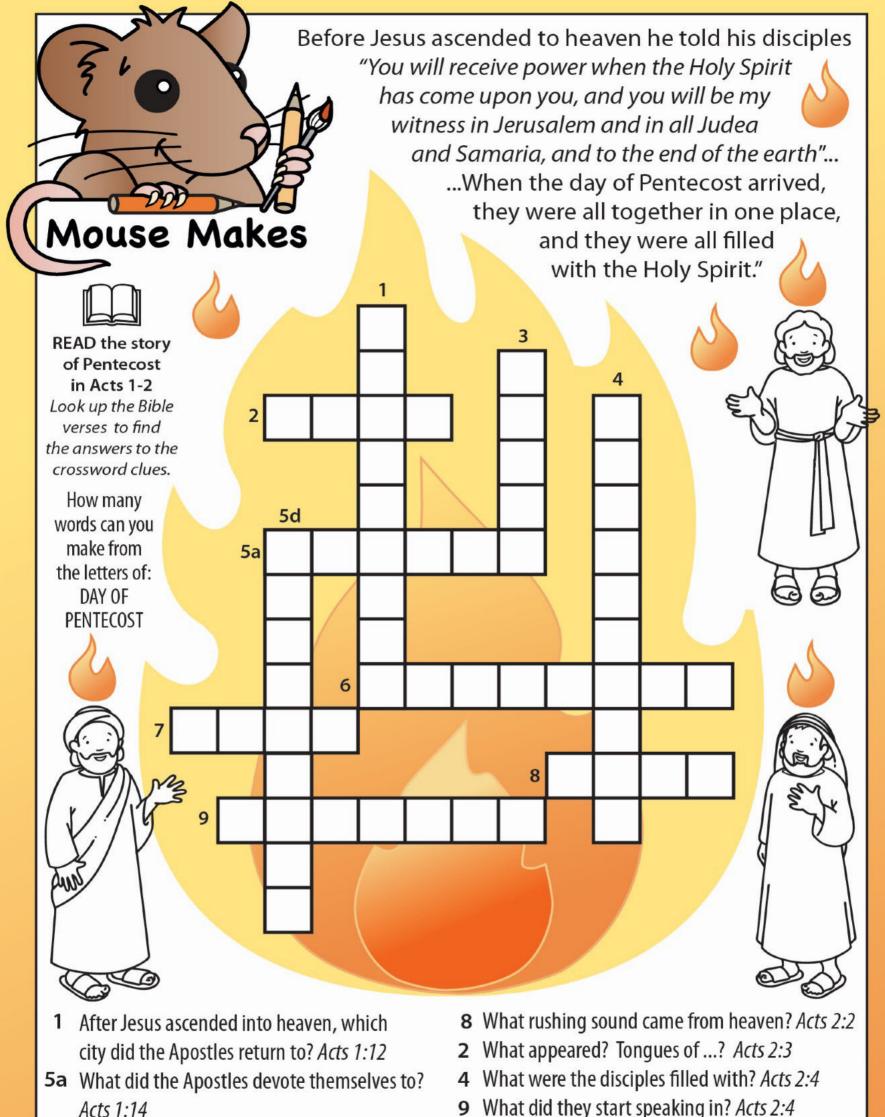
Sunday May Rogation Beat Bounds Asking Blessing Seed Land Romans Processed Cornfields Spring Earthquake Storm Prayer

Cross Boundaries Crops Harvest

maps

## Mindfulness Colouring for all ages





- 6 Who was chosen to replace Judas? Acts 1:26
- 5d Which special day was it? Acts 2:1
- **9** What did they start speaking in? *Acts 2:4*
- **3** Who spoke to the crowd? Acts 2:14
- 7 Who had prophesied this? Acts 2:16

#### Puzzle Answers Ρ S S

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Sudoku Easy

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

## May Rotas

Sundays							
2024	Chairs	Opening up	Door	Closing	Vestry	Refreshments	Communion
5th May	Valerie & Norman	Valerie & Norman	Bill	Valerie & Norman	Joan H.	Julie & Judith	
12th May	Joan & Bill	Joan & Bill	Julie	Joan & Bill	Louise	Joan & Bill	
19th May	Diana & Steve	Diana & Steve	Steve	Diana & Steve	Bill	Diana & Steve	Joan H. & Julie
26th May	lan & Joan	Susan	Julie	Susan	Joan R.	Susan & Joan H.	

			Thursda	ay Drop	in Café				
2024	9am	9am	Baker 1	Baker 2	11.45-12.30p m				
	Set up 1	Set up 2	3 x cakes	1 x cakes	Help with washing up	Help to close 1	Help to close 2		
2nd May	Susan	Julie	Judith				Susan		
9th May	Susan	Julie	Marjorie	Marjorie			Susan		
16th May	Susan	Julie	Joan H	Louise			Susan		
23rd May	Susan	Julie	Joan R	Marjorie			Susan		
30th May	Susan	Julie	Marjorie	Marjorie			Susan		
		·	Li	ittle Sta	rs				
Date		Lead H		elper 1	Helper	· 2 k	Kitchen		
1st May	, I	Louise		Judith	Caro	l	Lesley		
8th May	/ .	Judith		Louise Caro		I Joan & Bill			
15th Ma	y I	Louise		Carol Susar		ר 🛚 🔊	Marjorie		
22nd Ma	y .	Judith		Louise Caro		l J	Joan H.		
29th Ma	у	Half-Term							

Junior Church				
12th May	Diana	Joan H.		
19th May	Louise	Judith C.		
26th May	Diana	Julie		

CHURCHES

Saturday 18th May 2024

Clarence Park, 1 - 4pmRoyal Avenue, We invite you to join BL9 6LL with the churches of Bury as we come together to worship God and to pray for our town. our council. our communities. our schools our businesses our care providers our Christian community Interactive Prayer Trail Worship, Prayer & Testimony **Refreshments from The Green Cafe** 

Christ Church Contact Details				
Pastor:	Stephen Crook	minister@christchurch-ramsbottom.co.uk		
		Tel: 07795432996		
Church Secretary:	Susan Applegate	<u>secretary@christchurch-ramsbottom.co.uk</u>		
		Tel: 07814173027		
Church Treasurer:	John Leyland	treasurer@christchurch-ramsbottom.co.uk		
		Tel: 01706 827253		
Church Telephone:		01706 821803		
Newsletter:		newsletter@christchurch-ramsbottom.co.uk		

Prayer

in the

Park