

Rev'd Amanda would appreciate it if anyone knowing of illness or any other trouble in the Parish would notify her as soon as possible on 020 3940 1897 so that she, or a member of the Church, can call without delay.

If you have any enquiry about baptism, marriage or another service, or if there is something else you would like to discuss with a member of the team, please make an appointment, through the Church Office (020 8462 1373) or by emailing:

info@stmaryshayeskent.co.uk

EASTER TO PENTECOST – THY KINGDOM COME

Alleluia, Alleluia. Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! By the time we come into May we have celebrated Easter Day and it was a joy to see so many in church, especially the children and families that visited. Easter is a time of rejoicing. Christians can be seen as quite a serious lot but we are a forgiven people, a resurrection people, an Easter people! There is a lot indeed to be joyous about, indeed happy. And as we continue through the Easter season we can move towards the next joyous occasion in the church calendar, Pentecost, where the disciples receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, with Ascension Day along the way, where Christ ascends to heaven and His heavenly Father.

This is a time of renewal, fresh starts, knowing that we are loved so much that God sent his only son, to die on the cross for the forgiveness of all our sins and put an end to death, for us. For us! That is how much we are loved by God. As we see Spring continuing to burst into life and even the sun, (sometimes) beginning to warm the earth, we have the opportunity to see God's love in action in our world and in our lives.

We are also to celebrate the King Charles' coronation on Saturday May the 6th. It can be a time of fellowship and service and we hope that we as a community will have the opportunity to come together at this time.

In fact, this is what the archbishops are asking us to do:

“The Church of England has the great privilege of a role at the heart of our national, local and community events. That also means we get to work in partnership with those around us – so do consider reaching out to other communities, traditions and groups and doing something together. Or perhaps endorsing and supporting a community-led event or initiative, if that works best for you in your context.”

However you choose to mark the Coronation weekend, we hope this will be a time celebrating God's love and generosity, and making that love known in our communities and national life.

Finally, our prayer is for the fruitful ministry of Jesus Christ through each of us in these next weeks. As we come together to celebrate this historic occasion in our national life, we pray that we would all know the empowering of the Holy Spirit in each of us, personally and in those with whom we minister. May this be a wonderful time of serving others, reaching out to our neighbours, and celebrating our unity in diversity."

So, I commend to you this May, Eastertide season and may we be blessed with the opportunity to come together in worship, during fellowship, whether spending time together in community, with our neighbours at a street party, or volunteering. 'This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it' (Psalm 118.24).

Rev'd Amanda



CHRISTIAN AID WEEK
14th – 20th May 2023



Gift Aid envelopes will be available in Church on Sunday 14th May, the start of Christian Aid Week this year. Please use them for your donation as this will add 25p to every £1 you donate.

David Rowedder

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING ANNUAL MEETING OF PARISHIONERS

The Annual Parish Meeting will be held on **Wednesday 3 May** at 7.30pm in the Church.

We will be electing a new Churchwarden and new PCC members: Yvonne Pickford, Carolyn Tooley, Peter Wickert, Sarah Willis and Mark Willoughby will be retiring. We are extremely grateful to them for their service and input into our deliberations. We will also be electing three members of the PCC who will represent St Mary's on the Deanery Synod: David James and Mary Whytock have served their statutory term.

If you would like to stand for election please sign your name on the list in the church porch, or do have a word with either Rev'd Amanda or the Churchwardens. Proposers and Seconders are needed. Please consider standing for PCC.

It is important that you make every effort to attend the APCM, to listen to what has been done by many on your behalf. This is your chance to show your support and an opportunity to voice your opinion.

It is intended to have copies of the Agenda and Minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting available to members of the Church by Sunday 16 April. They will be at the back of the church or a copy will be sent if required (telephone Mary Whytock 020 8289 9217 – 07973 483557 mary.whytock@ntlworld.com). **Remember it is only members of our Electoral Roll who can vote at this meeting.** Copies of the 2022 Accounts will also be available at the back of the Church.

Mary Whytock
Secretary to the Parochial Church Council

FIVE FACTS ABOUT KING CHARLES III

1. He has been heir-apparent to the throne since he was 3 years old.
2. He is the first monarch in British history to have a university degree.
3. He can speak Welsh. He spent two months learning the language in 1969 as he prepared to become Prince of Wales and still speaks it today.
4. He is a qualified pilot and diver. While serving in the military in the 1970s, he trained as a jet and helicopter pilot and became a confident diver.
5. Aged 73, King Charles III is the oldest monarch ever to be crowned in British history.

Mothers' UNION

Christian care for families

It is so refreshing to be able to report that at the beginning of our last meeting we were able to enjoy the fellowship of our Mothers' Union branch with Holy Communion, taken by Rev'd Amanda, in the Lady Chapel. Afterwards Amanda gave us a lovely talk giving us a greater insight into her life and her calling. Thank you for giving us the opportunity to get to know you better.



Our next meeting will be **11.00am on Tuesday, May 2nd** at The New Inn with lunch afterwards at 12.30pm (so that the members who go to Bible Study can join us.) Several members wanted this to continue as a social event. As May is so full with celebrations for the Coronation, we will be having our next MU meeting on Monday, 12th June at 10.30am in the Meetings Room, when we will have a guest speaker.

The Spring 2023 edition of *Connected* will have landed on your doorstep in April. This edition is packed full of stories demonstrating the spirit of giving within Mothers' Union around the world, together with resources and reflection. It features an interview with Caroline Welby, and acknowledges the importance of taking time for ourselves. It is hoped that members will be challenged, inspired and encouraged. We continue to look to the future and are excited about our journey of re-imagining Mothers' Union, finding ways to sustain our movement and transform communities worldwide.

Several members will be attending the AGM and Members' meeting on Saturday, 22nd April at St. Paulinus in Crayford. This meeting is for **all** and it is most important that our branch is represented.

I couldn't let this month's MU letter go without expressing our heartfelt congratulations to our King Charles III on his forthcoming coronation. King Charles has grown up with a working knowledge of Mothers' Union and everything it stands for. His mother, the late Queen Elizabeth II, was a patron of our organisation and recently, Charles presented 'Maundy Money' to Joyce Bond, a Mothers' Union member and her husband. Our Mothers' Union headquarters have asked all of us to pray for the reign of King Charles III. We remember God's call on us all, wherever we live, to pray for those in authority over us and to recognise that we are also subjects of the Kingdom of God, whose King will reign for ever. And so, we pray

Almighty God

On this joyous occasion

We, the members of Mothers' Union, offer prayers for the reign of King Charles III.

May the wisdom of God, the love of Christ, and the power of the Spirit guide him to govern with righteousness, that all may live in peace and harmony. We pray your blessing on the King, the Queen and the Royal Family as they share in the privilege and responsibilities of service.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

If you are interested in joining Mothers' Union, please contact Avril Ashford **0208-468 7785**.

Thank you.

Avril Ashford

SUNBEAMS AT EASTER



On Palm Sunday I had a lovely group of seven Sunbeams plus two Sunbeamlets (as I call the under threes), and two older children. We began in church and during the first hymn marched around the church with our palm crosses. We set off and as I looked back to make sure they were following I noticed that most of the congregation had joined the march. I felt like the Pied Piper! We then marched off into the Meeting Room for our session where we heard the Easter story before making palm leaves and colouring an Easter picture. The two Sunbeamlets found it all rather overwhelming and were returned to their Mums in church one by one. At the end of the service we returned for another march round the church during the final hymn, this time with the palm branches we had made, as well as bells and shakers.

On Easter Saturday a few of the Sunbeams came into church to help me make an Easter Garden. As we made it I explained what had happened to Jesus and they enjoyed looking at the three little crosses on the hill and the empty tomb which contained a piece of white cotton material to represent the wrappings which Jesus had left behind, and the big stone which had been in front of the entrance. While we were doing that the ladies were arranging the flowers for Easter and then we all had a cup of tea together. It was a lovely atmosphere and the children had time to play with the toys and also helped to make a flower arrangement.

On Easter Day there was a completely joyous Family Communion Service with a large congregation and lots of children. There were Easter activities on tables at the back of church for the Sunbeams and other visiting children and I managed to keep them all busy and they seemed happy. They accompanied the first and last hymns with musical instruments at the chancel and during Amanda's talk they sat at the foot of the chancel steps and she kept them involved with visual aids including sticking plaster, plastic eggs, water, wooden figures and probably other things I have missed. They all received a blessing at

the altar while the adults received Communion so they were busy moving around the church in between making Easter cards, Jesus on a donkey, colouring Easter pictures, and making sticker scenes so no time to be bored – I certainly wasn't! It was altogether wonderful and a real time of praise and worship.

Hilary Burtonshaw

BOB DYLAN'S *BLOWIN' IN THE WIND*

Sixty years ago, on 27th May 1963, the folk/blues album *The Freewheelin' Bob Dylan* was released. It included the hit song *Blowin' in the Wind* and marked the start of an amazing singing-songwriting career.

It was in fact Bob Dylan's second album, but the first to contain all his own songs. He came to prominence in the protest movement of the 60s, latching on to the prevailing atmosphere with a catalogue of songs that were not only perceptive but revealed an entirely different kind of talent, from the manner of his delivery to the poetic invention of his lyrics.

Dylan's birth name was Robert Allen Zimmerman, and he was born in Minnesota, descended from Jewish immigrants from the area of Ukraine and Lithuania. He started using guitar and harmonica in folk fashion, but he soon 'went electric', to the consternation of the purists but to the delight of everyone who enjoyed his originality, range and sense of humour.

His career stalled for a short while when he was involved in a motorcycle accident in the mid-60s, but he came back strongly and unexpectedly with the wonderful country-tinged album, *John Wesley Harding*. In the late 1970s he became a Christian and issued several overtly Christian albums, starting with *Slow Train Coming*, but he eventually reverted to a more open style, though he never renounced his faith: it seems evident in his recordings up to the present day.

In 2016 He was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature.

Although now in his 80s, he has never stopped performing or writing, usually to the highest standards. His more recent albums, such as *Time out of Mind* and *Rough and Rowdy Ways* (his 39th studio album, issued in 2020), show just as much invention and creativity as ever.

Tim Lenton

ST. MARY'S CHURCH DIARY MAY 2023

Morning Prayers take place daily at 9.15am Monday to Wednesday on Zoom* and Tuesdays to Saturdays in Church throughout the year (except Bank Holidays).

Tuesday 2nd	11.00am-12.15pm	Bible Study**
Wednesday 3rd	10.30am-12.00noon	Coffee Morning for the bereaved and those living on their own**
	12.30-3.30pm	Warm Space**
	2.45pm	Hayes Men's Fellowship In OCS
	7.30pm	Annual Parochial Church Meeting

5TH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Sunday 7th	8.00am	Holy Communion BCP
	10.30am	Morning Praise
Wednesday 10th	12.30-3.30pm	Warm Space**

6TH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Sunday 14th	8.00am	Holy Communion BCP
	10.30am	Parish Communion CW
Tuesday 16th	11.00am-12.15pm	Bible Study**
Wednesday 17th	12.30-3.30pm	Warm Space**
Thursday 18th	tbc	Ascension Day Service

7TH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Sunday 21st	8.00am	Holy Communion BCP
	9.15am	Fresh Start
	10.30am	Morning Praise
Wednesday 24th	10.15am-12.00noon	Community Coffee Morning**

12.30-3.30pm

Warm Space**

PENTECOST

Sunday 28th	8.00am	Holy Communion BCP
	10.30am	Parish Communion CW
	5.00-6.00pm	Illuminate**
Wednesday 31st	12.30-3.30pm	Warm Space**

* for Zoom link please contact the Church office

** denotes Meetings Room

The church is also open for private prayer on Tuesdays, Fridays and Saturdays from 10.00am to 12.00noon unless there is a wedding or funeral taking place. Details of these will be given in the weekly pew sheets.



A RECENT BAPTISM IN THE PARISH

Henry Taylor

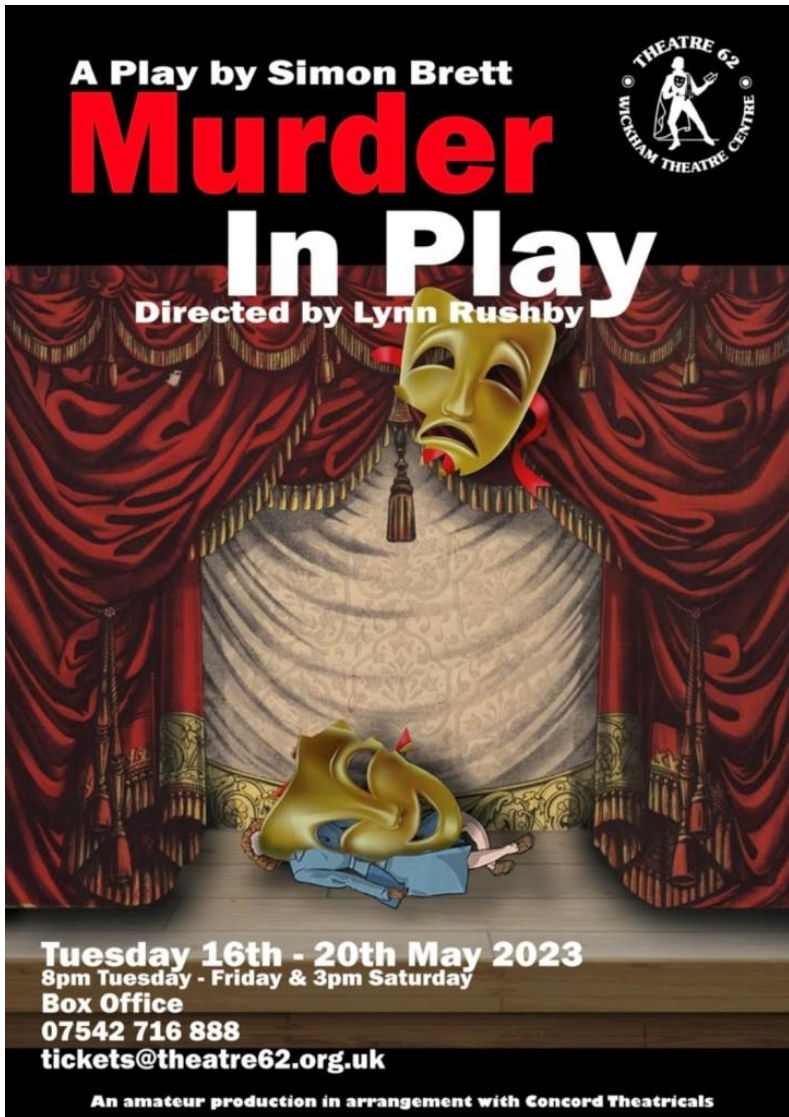


*Dear Lord
 Give us strength and courage to be bold in our faith by following
 your example.
 In Jesus' name, Amen.*

A Play by Simon Brett

Murder In Play

Directed by Lynn Rushby



Tuesday 16th - 20th May 2023
8pm Tuesday - Friday & 3pm Saturday
Box Office
07542 716 888
tickets@theatre62.org.uk

An amateur production in arrangement with Concord Theatricals

Tickets can be booked online using membership number 1113 at TicketSource <https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/theatre62>

Christabel Wickert

HAYES MEN'S FELLOWSHIP

As we enter May, the lighter days are continuing to lengthen especially in the evenings and we are taking advantage with longer distance outings. Our plans include visits to Exbury Gardens in Hampshire's New Forest, Bath in Somerset, Bressingham Steam Museum and Gardens on the Norfolk and Suffolk border, then a little nearer to home our Annual Boat Trip this year on the Thames.

They all happen on the third Wednesday of each month. Indeed, all our activities take place on Wednesdays as this has always seemed the most convenient arrangement and is generally well-supported by our growing membership, now in excess of 70.

We welcome retired and semi-retired men of any faith or none. Annual subscription is £20 which gives access to monthly meetings on the first Wednesday of the month with professional visiting speakers (no extra charge, tea and biscuits included), ten monthly coach outings on the third Wednesday (extra charge to cover actual cost), and monthly walks on the last Wednesday (no charge, lunch cost at your choice). Anyone interested in joining us is welcome to try us out at one of the meetings including a free welcome cup of tea and biscuits.

Please note we don't meet in August (except for the Boat Trip) and September to leave that time free for private holiday arrangements. You can always call ahead to the undersigned for a friendly introductory chat and our website (www.hayesmensfellowship.org) is regularly updated.

If we haven't whetted appetites already, this is what we have enjoyed in recent months as members.

March saw the continuation of our programme of outings for the 2023 session with an 08.30 start for a trip to Brighton. Our first stop was a welcome coffee break in Hassocks at the South Downs Garden Centre and Heritage Centre. As garden centres go, this one was on an epic scale with a lovely spacious café. It reminded some of us of the Old Barn near Horsham which we have visited several times on trips to West Sussex and Hampshire. We mentioned this to a member of staff – he was not surprised because the two properties are owned by the same group! The Heritage Centre included a museum of gardening (with plenty of tools etc), the Cube Art Gallery, the Sussex Food Hall and a courtyard garden.

It was only a short drive from there into Brighton where we stopped first at the large modern Brighton Marina built out under the white cliffs. It is the largest in the UK and growing further with a new block with restaurants and apartments still a "work in progress" at the time of

our visit. These will add to the range of existing facilities and large hotel. There were plenty of boats in the marina but, on a cool day, little activity. For this stop we had a few options: have lunch at the marina or go to the centre of Brighton for lunch. Then there were travel options to get to the centre too: wait for the coach; walk along the promenade to the centre; or go to the centre on a public bus (free with a Freedom Pass and a good option for wheelchair users as they offered ramp access that was easier than getting back into the coach). Most stayed at the marina for lunch – and most of those visited the Wetherspoon's pub with views over the marina! We enjoyed a stroll round the marina and a chance to look at the boats.



The coach left the marina at 2pm for the very short ride to the centre of Brighton where we had free time to enjoy the many facilities available. We had been given very detailed information including maps marking the various things we could do and, importantly, where to find the coach for the ride home! There was such a range with the Royal Pavilion, Brighton Pier, the Sea Life Centre, the BA i360 Tower or the Lanes for shopping. Brighton seemed busy, particularly with quite a few groups of foreign students. Most people spent some time on the pier and also took the opportunity for refreshments before the journey back. But none of our group were seen on the 30m high and 300m long zip wire on the promenade – I wonder why?

We all gathered promptly at 4.30pm at the small coach station behind the Old Steine. As it was beginning to rain, the return trip had been timed to perfection. It took us a while to get out of Brighton but then it was plain sailing all the way home to Hayes well before 6pm. What a good outing with something for everyone as well as plenty of opportunity to chat to members and guests. Another super day out.

Our walk in March was in London, starting at Kings Cross and then following the Regent's Canal as far as Paddington. This walk went well with plenty of sights on a route that were unknown to most of the walkers – three Royal Parks, the back of London Zoo and multimillion pound mansions to name but a few. The weather stayed mostly dry. Lunch at the Eagle Pub was good quality and reasonably priced. A few went home after lunch with the remainder walking on to Paddington Station via Little Venice. There were nine walkers and three extras joined them for lunch.

Our April 2023 meeting had a talk entitled “And another thing I meant to say” by our speaker Mel Rees. By comparison with our previous few meetings, he offered us something completely different – Mel claimed that there would be nothing “deep and meaningful”. And that was certainly the case with 45 minutes of witty anecdotes, some his own and some from friends, that he had gathered over a period of 30 years and which had gone on to make him a published author. Prior to lockdown, he was giving 220 talks a year and was a guide at his local brewery as well.

He brought with him copies of his paperback books and some audio books which formed a backdrop as he spoke to the 40 HMF members in attendance. Mel said that Victor Meldrew was his hero and you could tell from the tone of the observations of life that he made. And comments like “it is not about snobbery, it is about standards”.

He started life as the only child of a couple running a busy shop opposite Clapham Junction Station and working colossal hours seven days a week. Things there were basic, with an outside toilet and a bath that had to be brought out of the basement. He commented that youngsters these days are not able to compute situations like that. As the only child, Mel was offered the chance to take over the business but declined. He was amazed recently to find the shop on the market for £2.4 million – maybe he shouldn't have turned the opportunity down after all!

Later, after he had married and established a family, he was defrauded of a significant amount of money. This turned his life upside down and he went through 13 years of real austerity taking on small bits of work where he could. In the absence of other things to do he found it cathartic to write down funny anecdotes. Observations of life he had

made or been relayed to him by others. This led to him thinking that these anecdotes might be something worth publishing – but that was not an easy process and he eventually set up his own publishers. And the books sold well with one “Book of the month” at WH Smith.

From book signings grew the suggestion of talks using the anecdotes. His first was for a WI group and Mel explained the complex process of interviews that were needed before you could join their list of approved speakers. Decisions were not made at the interview but there had to be a panel debate afterwards. He had to go through the same process for each WI district, so had interviews for East Sussex, West Sussex, East Kent and West Kent too. From one of them he got one of those standard letters where you had to delete the text that was not applicable. He learnt that he “had/had not” been approved – no text deleted!

In a report of a HMF Meeting, it is hard to do justice to the quick-fire wit and energetic delivery by our speaker. His family were the subject of many of his comments. He said that he had a big house, not to boast, but to explain that he only saw his wife there every three weeks and that the dog passed messages. When he gets home he goes into the front room and sits on the settee – his wife would say lounge and sofa but he is not a snob! He claimed that he had learnt a lot from Victor Meldrew.

His first son was deliberately given names that resulted in being GWR as in Great Western Railway – a number of Mel’s family had worked for railways. His love of railways was also shown in his purchase of an 1871 first class railway carriage which had been used as a home. It may have seemed a bit of a bargain when he bought it for £100 some years ago, but it cost him seven times that amount to relocate it to his back garden. It now sits at a sort of station platform – yes, in his garden – complete with old fashioned milk churns.

Mel continued in this vein for a full 45 minutes until it was time for a well-earned cup of tea. His humour certainly struck a chord with the members present as evidenced by the sea of smiling faces in the audience.

By way of background on our speaker, this typically humorous introduction was found on his website – *“Mel Rees was born in 1947 and lived in Battersea, South London, until he was 21 years of age. He married and moved to Ash Vale, Surrey, where he continues to live. He is the father of three children, managed to get rid of two, any suggestions for disposal of the third greatly appreciated!! Having written his first semi-autobiographical book in 1989 (written under the pseudonym Anthony Mann) he was unable to find a publisher. Taking the bull by the horns he decided to create "TROUSER PRESS". In addition to being a writer Mel*

is also available for talks and is a regular speaker to women's groups, clubs, etc. within the south-east."

As this article was being prepared ahead of printing deadlines the April outing to Battle Abbey and Hastings was about to depart. You will have to wait for more on that when you join us again in these pages next month.

Allan Evison, HMF Chairman **Graham Marsden**, HMF Secretary

Contacts: Graham Marsden
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phone: 07764 153383

WHY PRAY?

In our 'Churches Together' Lent course throughout March, many of us found new and helpful insight as we viewed those last days and hours of Jesus's life and passion through the eyes of various women who were there, witnesses of what happened in those final crucial events.

In mid-April, in our first church Bible Study after Lent, we turned again to our study of Luke's gospel, which itself (as he says at the beginning of his narrative), is based on the personal eyewitness testimony of many of those who encountered Jesus during His life and ministry.

The gospel in some ways has the feel of a travelogue or even a pilgrimage, particularly from chapter nine where Luke records that Jesus 'set His face to go to Jerusalem'. The ten or so chapters that follow record the journey through the various villages and towns on the way and how Jesus increasingly focuses on using that journey to teach His disciples and prepare them for what would happen after His death.

We began our new session, looking at chapter 11 and Jesus' teaching to His disciples on what for many of us, is one of the most challenging parts of our Christian lives: prayer. What happens when we pray either together or individually? How do we know God is listening? How do we deal with those times when, honestly, we find prayer a struggle? And how do we deal with (what appears to us to be) those prayers that are not answered?

Perhaps, one of the key things that this passage teaches us is that prayer can only be truly prayer when it is based on a relationship, the relationship we have as Christians to our Heavenly Father. In that

sense the Lord's prayer (which Jesus teaches His disciples at the beginning of the chapter) is a prayer for Christians; it is a unique privilege.

When we say the Lord's Prayer it is easy to rush past the opening line ('our Father in Heaven') but it is so important to grasp the significance of Jesus' words. Jesus is praying to His Father, and He invites His disciples – and now us as fellow disciples – to join Him. The only reason we can pray expectantly is because through the cross we are also now children of God, but adopted and, as Paul later explains, who have received the spirit of sonship and so can cry 'Father' (Romans 8:15).

For those who want a very readable and easily accessible guide to the gospel of Luke I would thoroughly recommend the new commentary by Dale Ralph Davis (published in 2021). For those who would like a quick browse, there is a copy in the church library at the back of the church.



David James

The Old Church Schools, Hayes, has 3 halls – two large and one medium, and a committee room available for hire.

For further information please contact Julie Clark on 07538 254508 or email ocs.hayes@hotmail.com

Items for the June issue by 16th May please. Copy to the Editor. June magazines will be ready for distribution on 28th May.

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