

The LINK digital

August 2022



**The Parish Church of
St Michael Braintree
www.stmichaelsbtrees.co.uk**

KESWICK CONVENTION

Dear Friends,

Jo and I had a most enjoyable week away, in the Lake District, in mid-July. We were attending a large Christian event called the Keswick Convention. The Convention started almost 150 years ago, in a marquee on a Vicarage lawn, and from the beginning its aim was to help those wanting to know God better and to live godly Christian lives.

The Keswick Convention now attracts many thousands of people, across three separate weeks.

This was the first year that the Convention was almost all held on the site of the old Pencil Factory, which has been renovated to provide a number of large meeting rooms.



The recently renovated Pencil Factory
(a panoramic view – it is straight!)

The main tent accommodates almost 3,000 people, for the main meetings. We appreciated uplifting worship, led by Emu Music, and excellent Bible teaching – Alistair Begg gave some insightful Bible readings



on Paul's second letter to Timothy.	
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The theme of this year's Convention was "Grateful". Despite all we have been through over the past few years, we still have much to be grateful for. We were reminded of how Paul encouraged the church to "***give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.***" (1 Thessalonians 5:18)

There were a number of helpful morning seminars. I went to a series of talks by Clare Heath-Whyte titled, "Lessons for today from the lives of Keswick Missionaries of the past." (Expect some highlights in forthcoming sermons!).

Jo found the seminars by Professor Glynn Harrison, most helpful, as he tackled issues such as "How cultivating gratitude is good for body and soul".

The Convention deliberately leaves the afternoons free, so you can go and discover the beauty of the Lake District.



A view from the Pencil
Factory roof



Keswick is very near to
Derwent Water

If you've never been to the Keswick Convention, we would highly recommend a visit. There are activities for children and young

people, as well as adults. You do need to arrange your own accommodation, but we don't think you will be disappointed!

Details of the Convention can be found on their website - <https://keswickministries.org/about-keswick-convention/>.

Wishing you every blessing,

Nigel



GROWING OLD GRACEFULLY

'Look at your hairstyle! Didn't they call that 'Bouffant'?
'You could have kept bees in there!'
'What about your suit? Your lapels were so wide, you could have taken off in strong wind!'

Looking at old family photographs stirs memories and brings smiles to our faces. Younger members of our family find it hard to hold back grins at the fashions of another age. Flared trousers and hairstyles belong to another world. Now we have moved on and laugh to think that people actually dressed that way.

HAPPY MEMORIES

Can you remember the holidays you had? Did you go to the same place every summer because you knew the good and safe beaches to visit? Perhaps you were more adventurous and flew from Stansted to a place where the sun was sure to shine. Happy memories!

NOT SO HAPPY MEMORIES

Maybe in the wee-small hours you lie awake remembering those words from your lips which caused hurt to someone ruined a relationship. Or was it something you did that made that rift between you and another. Some people can forget these things and say, 'Don't bother. It is all in the past, and you can't change what's done. Forget it'.

THEY KEEP COMING BACK

For other people (not all) growing old means living with not so happy memories. On those sleepless nights memory may help them to re-live those broken relationships. What can be done?

SEE IF THIS HELPS

There is a book called 'Our Rebel Emotions' and it is written by Bernard Mobbs. He writes that the Christian teaching about justification by faith in Christ alone can help here.

If we remember the past, then God does so much more clearly. And he has passed a verdict on all that we have done. That verdict is not good. It means losing him forever. But God does not want that. Nor does the Lord Jesus Christ. Together they have agreed a solution. It meant that the Lord Jesus should become one of us and carrying the penalty of all the wrong we are and have done.

In turning to Him and asking for His forgiveness, we are acquitted of all these wrongs and welcomed home by our heavenly Father.

GROWING OLD GRACEFULLY....

.....often has the sense of the best grandmother in the world growing more loving and kind as the years roll on - um! But what about this way of looking at the expression... 'Growing old gracefully'? It could mean relying more and more, on God's way of forgiveness (better known as his justification of us in Jesus Christ). And of course 'grace' means the undeserved kindness at the heart of God himself. Relying on his undeserved kindness is not a bad way of living for those of pensionable age.

Stephen Bailey

FARMING SEASON

On the 22nd of July we started our wheat harvest which is a good fortnight before we would normally start and this is down to the exceptionally dry and hot weather we have had causing the plants to 'burnt off' quickly. Getting on earlier in dry conditions makes our job of harvesting a lot easier but there is a down side in that the crop has not reached its full potential so yields are perhaps lower than we might have hoped. Despite this we are pleased with the results so far and although there has been less rainfall than ideal the sunshine has helped boost the plants.

The ground is exceptionally dry and hard so there is no prospect of doing any cultivations at this stage. Shrinkage cracks have appeared in our fields some of which are about 2cms. This is because of the lack of rainfall and the crop itself sucking out all available moisture. These cracks are welcome because they are effectively helping in cultivating the ground by breaking up compacted areas of soil. If we try to plough the ground when it is so hard it would be very slow going and very costly in wearing metal and scrubbing out the tractor tyres, not to mention the stress on the machines.

In a year such as this the soil's ability to hold moisture becomes a vital part of the success of the crop and although we cannot change our soil we can improve its structure and water retention ability with good management and organic matter. I am often asked if we irrigate our fields, but for crops like wheat and barley it would not be financially viable to do so.



On the 16th of July St Michaels took a group of twenty to see Franklin Graham (Billy Graham's son) at Excel in London, where we were thoroughly entertained with some fantastic music and an interesting and thought provoking talk. London was the final venue of the 'God Loves You' tour where we joined around 8000 people to enjoy this event and got the t-shirt!

The evening began with music from Dennis Agajanian, who travels the world with Franklin Graham, and who's style reminded me a lot of Johnny Cash. His was followed by gospel artist and 12-time Grammy award winner CeCe Winans who not surprisingly had an incredible voice. Finally author and singer Michael W. Smith performed his well known songs such as 'Open the Eyes of My Heart' and 'Above All', which delighted Rachel because she has been a big fan since her university days.

Franklin Graham then spoke from Daniel 5 on a piece which we have recently covered in Church about Belshazzar and the hand which writes a mysterious message on the wall that Daniel is asked to interpret. Franklin's take on this was very clear and easy to understand in that we are all sinners and our time is running out but unlike Belshazzar we can turn to the living God and because of Jesus our sins can be erased so we can be forgiven and have an eternal future in heaven with Him. During his talk Franklin cleverly touched on some topical and controversial topics such as abortion and same sex relationships.

For me the most poignant part of the message was towards the end when he said that although he claimed not to understand everything in the Bible he did believe everything written within it to be true and warned anyone going to a church which did not accept this to run away as fast as possible to find a church that did! The point being that in the world although attitudes and fashions change God never changes and His Word always remains true.



At the end Franklin invited people who wanted to turn to God to come up to declare that they would put their trust and faith in Jesus. With this invitation hundreds of people made their way to the front where they greeted by many helpers from local churches who spoke to them and gave out reading material. Then finally we all prayed together. On leaving I felt positive not just about the evening but also for the incredible diversity of people and enthusiasm for Christ in the Capital.

Adam Grove Smith

ON TARGET?!

“Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?’ (Matthew 25:37-39)

A friend sent us this story about a young lady named Sally and her experience in a recent seminary class, given by her teacher, Dr. Smith. Dr. Smith was known for his elaborate object lessons. On this particular day, Sally walked into the class and knew they were in for a fun day.

On the wall was a big target and on a nearby table were many darts. Dr. Smith told the students to draw a picture of someone that they disliked or someone who had made them angry, and he would allow them to throw darts at the person's picture.

Sally's friend drew a picture of a girl who had stolen her boyfriend. Another guy drew a picture of his little brother. Sally drew a picture of a former friend. The class lined up and began throwing darts. Some of the students were throwing their darts with such force that their targets were ripping apart and everyone was laughing hysterically.

Finally, Dr. Smith asked all the students to be seated. He came to the front of the class with a less-than-amused look on his face. As he began removing the target from the wall, there appeared underneath a picture of Jesus. A hush fell over the room as each student viewed the mangled picture; holes and jagged marks covered Jesus' face, and His eyes were pierced.

Dr. Smith said only these words. "In as much as you have done it unto the least of these my brothers, you have done it unto Me."

Matthew 25:40.

What a powerful analogy. Phew. When we "throw darts" at our brothers and sisters, friends, and even strangers, we are actually piercing our Lord too. Let's get right with the Lord and others today.

Supplied by Peter Schaad from "The Worthy Brief"

OLOMOUC – THE HOME OF JIRKA AND KEIRA KRALOVI

‘Despite its considerable charms, Olomouc, has not been discovered by tourists in the same way as Prague and other cities of the Czech Republic’. So Wikipedia begins its introduction of the home town of JIRKA & KEIRA KRALOVI

SUNDAY 21ST AUGUST

Jirka and Keira are visiting us on SUNDAY 21st AUGUST. It will be good to hear what they are doing. One aspect of their work under the sponsorship of CROSSLINKS is to tell the 25,000 students in the city of Olomouc about the Jesus Christ.

Gathering a group of students together, they have been using a Czech version of “Discipleship Explored”. This happens on a Monday night. On Tuesdays they have been running a course they call ‘Introduction to the Bible’.

NEW CHURCH

Also they have been involved in starting a new church in Olomouc.

This summer, they are coming to the UK to meet again their supporters. This won’t be a holiday from their full work load in Olomouc, but a steady round of telling us, and other supporters about what they are doing.

FISH & CHIP LUNCH

Not only will we be able to meet Jirka & Keira at our 10am service on August 21st but we can meet them informally at a Fish & Chip lunch.

Please sign up for our fish & chip lunch on SUNDAY 21st AUGUST. If you recall the last time we ate fish & chips together we had a good time with each other. So it is anticipated that it will be good to share that time with Jirka and Keira and their family.

Stephen Bailey

BRAINTREE MALE VOICE CHOIR



After I retired from full time work, I read a piece in this magazine by the secretary of the choir inviting new members. I went along on a Wednesday evening to a rehearsal. I was made very welcome and have thoroughly enjoyed the experience. We would like to welcome some new members, especially younger ones.

There is no audition and you don't have to be able to read music. Parts are taught and practice tracks are usually provided so that you can polish up your performance at home. Some of you may have heard us in the Church House just before last Christmas. There is good evidence that singing is beneficial for both physical and mental health.

The choir sings a wide variety of songs from Classics such as *Nessun Dorma* and *Morte Christe* through *Bring Him Home*, *Sweet Caroline* and Ed Sheeran's *Perfect*.

Our most recent performance was on 3rd June in Halstead where we sang for the Platinum Jubilee celebrations, jointly with the Hedingham Singers and the Essex Police Band.

If you would like to join us, please just come along to the first rehearsal after our summer break at St Peter's Hall, Bocking at 7.30 pm on Wednesday 7th September.

If you would like to talk about it first, you can call me on 07986471927 or speak to the secretary, Ron Fosker, on 01376 512582.

Visit our website for more information:

https://sites.google.com/site/thebraintreemalevoicechoir/?fbclid=IwAR0qNpyBRQ_b_uilPj_7T-GyNyAK3eN0ul7o0veDLS8dLXSQt1Reslg2xwk

David Mahood

BELFRY BULLETIN

Things have been a little difficult in the Tower recently with holidays, the very hot temperature and Covid have meant we have had to miss some service ringing and some practice nights - we did our best!

On a brighter note we are making progress with our method capabilities with Lin getting to grips with Stedman Doubles with a Quarter Peal in the Variation next. Ellis is conducting various compositions of Plain Bob Minor and other Doubles and Minor methods. Rosie is progressing very well ringing rounds and call changes on up to 8 bells.

AWAY FROM THE TOWER

On 3rd July Peter rang at Black Notley for their Confirmation Service. 5th July Peter rang 2 Quarter Peals with the Golden Oldies.

The following weekend was Jodie's Graduation weekend at Bristol University and whilst there Debbie rang at St Mary the Virgin Redcliffe, a top ringing centre.

22nd July was Anthony and Charlotte Smith, Peter's Brother and Sister in Law, Golden wedding he joined them to ring a celebratory Peal of Cambridge Minor.

Debbie and Bradley together with Jim Green and Simon Ward have been practicing method hand bell ringing every week and are close to ringing a Quarter Peal.

To keep himself busy while he is unable to ring Bradley has been sailing, a lot.

Peter Smith

COFFEE CHAT WITH ROGER COOKE



Third Monday coffee and conversation

Group of us met again on the third Monday in July and had a good chat.

I shall be in Quandrants cafe on **15th August at 10.30am** so if you'd like to join me you'd be very welcome!

Looking forward to seeing you.

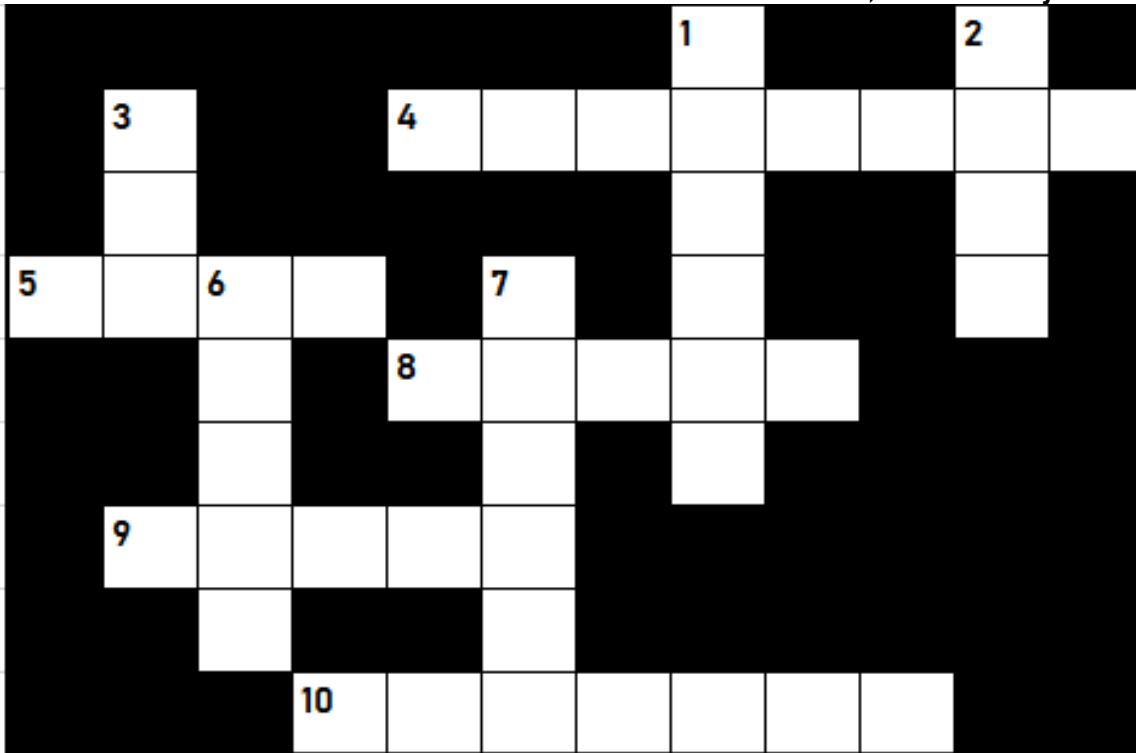
Roger Cooke



Hello and welcome to August's *QuizPage*! This month's instalment is inspired by another TV game show, **Crosswits**, and so I've prepared a small crossword with cryptic clues drawing on some general knowledge.

The clues will guide you to the answers, and then there is a keyword which somehow connects them. Everyone can have a go at this! Aim for a full house if you can, but you won't necessarily need all of the answers to guess the keyword.

You don't have to print this off but, if you're using a notebook or some scrap paper, it may help to identify where letters overlap. One point for every letter in a correct answer, plus some bonus points for the keyword. Have a go, then turn to page **24** for the answers and to count up your marks.



1. Bell, banana and pimento, among other varieties (6).
2. Show determination that it won't freeze over (4).
3. Anger (3).
4. Works well with thyme, just like in the TV detective series (8).
5. They might ask if you've got this meat, if they're cheesed off (4).
6. Lester Piggott won the Derby here, a record nine times (5).
7. Renowned for a battle in 991 AD, the Essex hometown of this year's UK entry in Eurovision (6).
8. Dihydrogen oxide (5).
9. Up would be irritated, down would be relaxed (5).

10. Translates as sour wine, but it's always a good season (7).
11. For ten bonus points, what's the keyword which links 1-10? (max score 63).

**What's the
LONGEST
word from
these letters?**

S T M I C H A E L

**Remember, remember
the 5th of November
as Countdown comes to
the hall in Church House.**

**Join Jeff for a live, interactive game show
experience with big screen graphics.**

**Find the best words, pick the numbers,
solve those crucial conundrums and
work your way up our leader board!**

www.focalcountdown.co.uk/braintree-2022

Organised and hosted by Jeff Clayton on Saturday 5th November 2022. Doors open at 10:30; the draw for Round 1 is at 11:15. Everyone plays six games from start to finish, concluding by 18:00, with breaks in between.

Free refreshments will be available – tea, coffee, squash, fruit, biscuits. All ages are welcome, but under-18s must be accompanied by a participating adult. Full details of the event are posted on the above web page, including an indicative timetable and how to sign up. Registration is in advance, please (confirmed upon receipt of payment). The longest word in the selection is ALCHEMIST.

Jeff Clayton

AUGUST DIARY
www.stmichaelsbtreet.co.uk

Our YouTube services can be accessed through the “St Michael’s – Worship on the Web” YouTube channel and are generally updated during the week after the Sunday service

1 Monday

7:30pm Bell Ringing

7 Sunday

10:00am Family Service: *Who needs a doctor?* (Mark 2:13-17)

8 Monday

7:30pm Bell Ringing

14 Sunday

10:00am Family Service: *Seeing is believing* (John 20:24-29)

15 Monday

10.30am Coffee Chat with Roger Cooke @Quadrant

7:30pm Bell Ringing

21 Sunday

10:00am Family Service followed by a Fish & Chip lunch with Jirka & Keira Kralovi and family in Church House:

Telling others (John 1:35-42)

6.30pm Holy Communion

22 Monday

7:30pm Bell Ringing

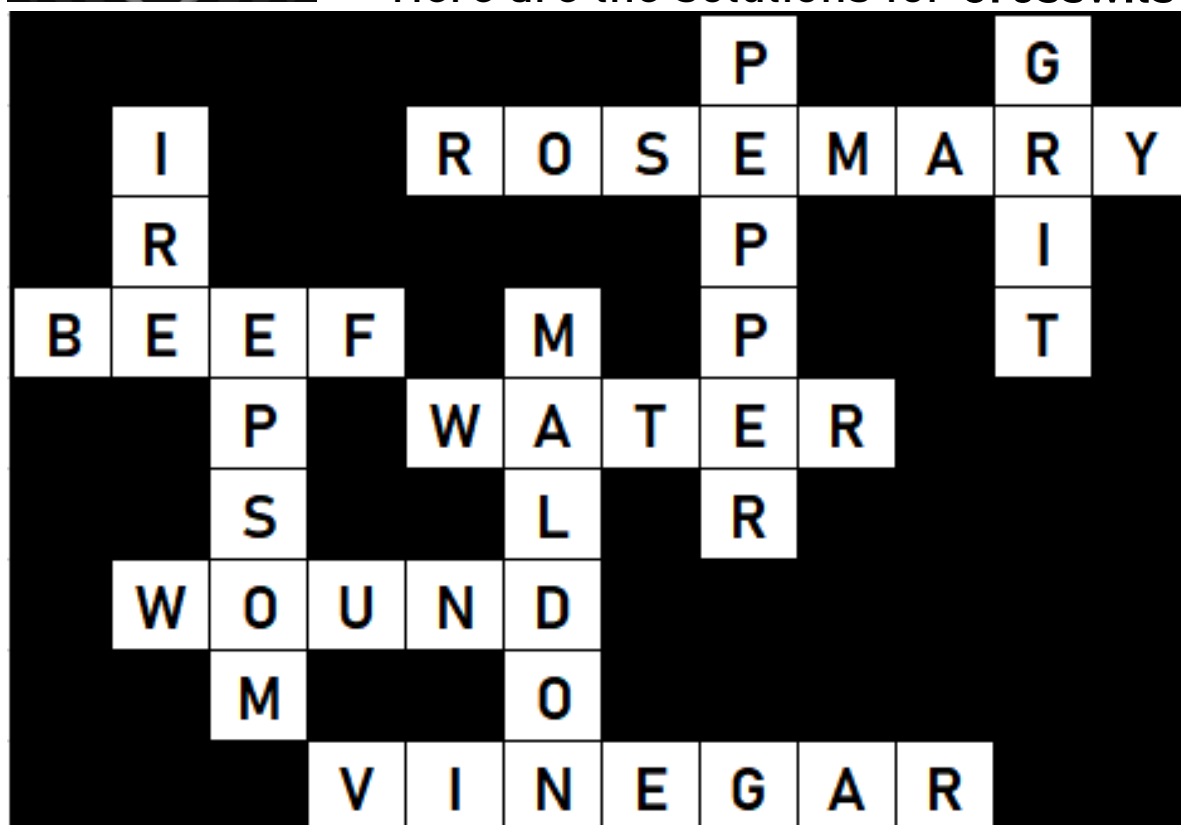
28 Sunday

8.00am Holy Communion

10:00am Family Service: *True greatness* (Mark 8:35-45)

29 Monday (LINK SUBMISSION DUE)

7:30pm Bell Ringing



1. Bell, banana and pimento are varieties of **PEPPER**.
2. To show determination that it won't freeze over requires **GRIT**.
3. A three-letter word for anger is **IRE**.
4. **ROSEMARY** works well with thyme, just like in the TV detective series.
5. They might ask if you've got **BEEF**, if they're cheesed off.
6. Lester Piggott was a nine-time winner of the **EPSOM** Derby.
7. The Battle of **MALDON** took place in 991 AD; the Eurovision entry was Sam Ryder.
8. Dihydrogen oxide is the chemical name for **WATER**.
9. **WOUND** up would be irritated, wound down would be relaxed.
10. **VINEGAR** translates as sour wine ("vin aigre"), but it's always good for seasoning.
11. For ten bonus points, the keyword which links 1-10 is **SALT**
Salt & pepper; grit is a type of salt; the saltire is the name for the cross on the flag of St. Andrew (Scotland); rosemary salt; salt beef; Epsom salts; Maldon salt; saltwater; "rub salt into the wound"; salt & vinegar.

Thanks for playing, and please join us for another *QuizPage* in the next edition

Jeff Clayton