



Community connect

ISSUE 34

MAR / APR 2024

Helping to connect Church and Community Groups together for the wellbeing of all

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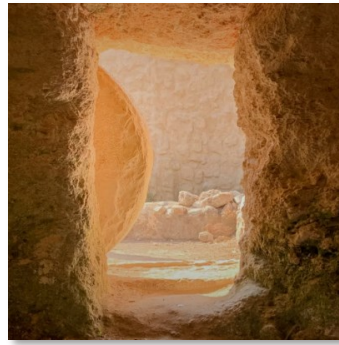


Rev'd Mandy writes

Easter is above all about hope. On Good Friday we were reminded of the cruel death of Jesus on a Roman cross, the grief of his family and friends, the confusion, the apparent waste of a young man's life, who had brought healing, forgiveness, hope and love to so many.



And on that Friday his lifeless body was sealed in a stone tomb, a cold dark burial place for a man who gave life and light to so many. But.... And there is a 'but', death was not the end, for on the Sunday morning, the grave was empty and Jesus appeared not once or twice but many times to hundreds of people. He had risen from the dead.



He had died in our place and paid the price for our wrongdoing. But now he had risen and had made the way for everyone to have eternal life if they believe in Him.

Whenever I officiate at a funeral I wear a white stole, a reminder of the good news of Jesus resurrection. Above all, the message I proclaim as a Christian minister is 'Death is not the end' There is hope if we dare to believe in the man from Galilee. The following is a true account of one woman's hope in the man Jesus.....

'As Vice President, George Bush represented the U.S. at the funeral of former Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev. Bush was deeply moved

by a silent protest carried out by Brezhnev's widow. She stood motionless by the coffin until seconds before it was closed. Then, just as the soldiers touched the lid, Brezhnev's wife performed an act of great courage and hope, a gesture that must surely rank as one of the most profound acts of civil disobedience ever committed: She reached down and made the sign of the cross on her husband's chest.

There in the citadel of secular, atheistic power, the wife of the man who had run it all hoped that her husband was wrong. She hoped that there was another life, and that that life was best represented by Jesus who died on the cross, and that the same Jesus might yet have mercy on her husband.'

So remember :

Light has met darkness and the darkness has not put it out.

Love has met sin and the sin has been forgiven.

Life has met death and death has met its end. Alleluia!

May the joy of Easter be yours.
God Bless

Mandy.

ST ANDREW'S METHODIST CHURCH HARLESTONE ROAD DUSTON

EASTER SERVICES

Thursday 28th March 7pm Maundy Service led by the Rev. Dr. Samantha Gillard

Good Friday service at 11am

Easter Sunday 10.30am. Rev. Dr. Samantha Gillard. This service will include Dressing the Cross and Holy Communion.



Service Rota for Mar / Apr

Sun 3rd Mar	8.30am St Lukes's 10am St Luke's	Sun 31st Mar	10am St Luke's <i>(Easter Day)</i>
Tue 5th Mar	10am St Francis	Tue 2nd Apr	10am St Francis
Sun 10th Mar	10am St Francis <i>(Mothering Sunday)</i>	Sun 7th Apr	8.30am St Luke's 10am St Francis
Thu 14th Mar	10am St Luke's	Thu 11th Apr	10am St Luke's
Sun 17th Mar	10am St Luke's	Sun 14th Apr	10am St Luke's
Tue 19th Mar	10am St Francis	Tue 16th Apr	10am St Francis
Sun 24th Mar	10am St Francis <i>(Palm Sunday)</i>	Sun 21st Apr	10am St Francis APCM
Thu 28th Mar	10am St Luke's 7pm St Francis <i>(Maundy Thursday)</i>	Thu 25th Apr	10am St Luke's
Fri 29th Mar	2pm St Luke's <i>(Good Friday)</i>	Sun 28th Apr	10am St Luke's
		Tue 30th Apr	10am St Francis

Wool Wanted!

**If anyone has any spare wool they don't need, please could I have it?
It doesn't matter what ply it is or how much as I make blankets and
twiddle muffs for people with dementia.**

Please bring it to either St Francis or St Luke's church.

**Thank you in advance,
Dorothy Johnson.**

'I SOMETIMES THINK MY HEAD IS SO BIG, BECAUSE IT IS
SO FULL OF DREAMS.'



THE ELEPHANT MAN

A PLAY
BY BERNARD POMERACE

20 - 23 MARCH 2024

**DUSTON
PLAYERS**

TICKETS FROM
WWW.TICKETSOURCE.CO.UK/DUSTON-PLAYERS
07916 011375

THE ELEPHANT MAN

A PLAY

BY BERNARD POMERACE

His head was enormous, his spine twisted like a corkscrew.
Most importantly, he had a big heart.

From sideshow horror to Victorian celebrity, John Merrick was always in the public eye. Under the care of celebrated physician Frederick Treves, and famous actress Madge Kendall, Merrick learned to flourish in a society that wasn't ready.

Join us for a moving drama, exploring questions of identity, power structures, love, ableism, and friendship.



The Lewis Foundation

Charity No. 1166405

16+ YRS RECOMMENDED

DUSTON COMMUNITY CENTRE

WWW.DUSTONPLAYERS.ORG.UK

WED 20 – SAT 23 MARCH 7:30PM

BOX OFFICE: 07916 011375

WWW.TICKETSOURCE.CO.UK/DUSTON-PLAYERS

THIS AMATEUR PRODUCTION IS BY SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT WITH CONCORD THEATRICALS LTD



Dr Audrey Tang is a chartered psychologist, she hosts *The Wellbeing Lounge* on NLive Radio, Tuesdays 9pm packed with practical tips and tools for good mental health, her books *The Leader's Guide to Mindfulness* and *The Leader's Guide to Resilience* are available on Amazon, and catch her "1 minute tips" each morning on Twitter, TikTok or Instagram Reels.

@draudreyt



NLive Radio

The station that loves Northampton

The Benefits of Reading for Wellbeing

I love a good book.

I might be biased because I write books, but there's something about a great story that can take you to a completely different world, that can teach you, that can connect with you - that can even give you hope when you had little.

Reading has intellectual and emotional benefits – you **practice concentration** (something greatly undervalued in a swipe left/answer push notifications world), you **broaden vocabulary**, and it can be a wonderful form of escapism.

Through reading you can **lose yourself** in someone else's world where their

experiences may resonate and help you feel less alone.

...and if it's a popular book, you can always **use story-lines to help you talk about some topics** which you might otherwise avoid...instead of "Asking for a friend", you can say "So what are your thoughts on Christian Grey's dating behaviours?".

Reading also promotes empathy

– You learn how others think, and gain an understanding of perspectives other than our own. This in turn can help us relate to people better. BUT sadly recent research by the National Literacy Trust in 2022 found that fewer than 3 in 10 children read.

However, through my own experience as a teacher this could be down to a couple of things – in some cases I have had parents say to me "My child doesn't read" – when their child reads non-fiction avidly, even creating mini projects on topics they were inspired by. ... similarly, reading magazines or comics is still reading. But also, sometimes when I have asked other adults – what are you reading? They say "nothing", or maybe "Cosmo in the waiting room" *...if we as adults are not modelling reading, how can we expect younger people to recognise it as a wonderful activity?*

The Metro published a reflection on the popularity of True Crime

<https://metro.co.uk/2021/11/13/why-are-we-so-obsessed-with-true-crime-15576951/>

stating even in the 16th century, people were reading about capital crimes. However, our interest can be deeper than escapism:

Entertainment:

The brain derives pleasure out of being amused. For example, when reading about con artists, especially when our brain knows that it is in a safe environment, it can experience the "reward" of a positive resolution, after the "mild peril" of the story itself, and it can know that it is at least one step removed from involvement.

Education:

While we read them we can sometimes comfort ourselves with the notion “Oh wow – but it’ll never happen to me”...or if we have ourselves been conned or scammed in the past may think “At least it’s not just me”, or of course “If I read about their tricks, I can learn so I will be more mindful next time.” (Or secret option 4...so THAT’s the play book on scams...!)

Exploring such nuances of behaviour as you might see in books – especially non-fiction, but narrative led, gives us as students of mind and behaviour a greater insight into how we think. For example, if you recognise that one of the characters in a scam drama was “so desperate” at the time, we could then use this to educate ourselves and think twice especially at the times when we “really want” something, or feel down and need to be “picked up”...those are the times at which we are most vulnerable...but this sort of discussion often needs to be prompted as it can feel a little too “deep” for everyday chat... but as a trainer, I do find it helpful to use these sorts of stories as a starting point for discussion.

So - have you read a good book lately? How did it enhance you own life story?

Please donate if you can!



Duston Food Bank Needs You

Duston Foodbank at Duston URC is becoming increasingly busy, only to be expected in the current economic situation. We would be very grateful for any donations of the following foodstuffs or we are also very grateful for financial contributions. We are spending some £200, every other week and we know that we shall need to continue



to purchase food as well as receiving the very welcome donations of food. Donations can be brought to our church... opposite the bakery on Sat and Mon a.m. from 10:00

until 12:00. We are open for food distribution on Saturday mornings, 10:00 to 12:00. If you, or anyone you know needs a helping hand, PLEASE come and see us.

DONATIONS

URC—Sat & Mon
(10:00—12:00)

St Luke’s & St Francis’ churches (on days when there are services)

Items to Donate:

In addition to the usual items, we also need urgent donations of sanitary products and toiletries

PLEASE JOIN US for our next

Health *and* Wellbeing Talk

Thursday 21st March 2024 | 1.15 - 2.45 pm

Living with Diabetes

with Diabetes Specialists from NHS
Integrated Care Board

A Free, informative presentation
about living with Diabetes

Duston Community Centre
Pendle Road, NN5 6DT

1.15 pm Refreshments
1.30 pm Talk
2.15 pm Q&A Session

For more info & to book your FREE place, please
email events@duston-pc.gov.uk

Duston Parish Council working in partnership with St Luke's PPG



T: 01604 583626
E: events@duston-pc.gov.uk
www.duston-pc.gov.uk



PLEASE JOIN US for our next

Health *and* Wellbeing Talk

Thursday 18th April 2024 | 1.15 - 2.45 pm

Gut Health & IBS Recovery

with Dr Nicholas Peat & Vanessa Peat

From Uniquely Created U

A Free, informative presentation
to raise awareness about your Gut Health and
IBS recovery

Duston Community Centre
Pendle Road, NN5 6DT

1.15 pm Refreshments
1.30 pm Talk
2.15 pm Q&A Session

For more info & to book your FREE place, please
email events@duston-pc.gov.uk

Duston Parish Council working in partnership with St Luke's PPG



T: 01604 583626
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www.duston-pc.gov.uk



The Unpleasant Cross

The air was laden, odorous, pungent,
with the smell of decay,
reeking rubbish,
acid smoke,
rotting carcasses,
creating a noxious, unpleasant
feeling,
that turned the stomach
of even the most hardened soldiers.

Golgotha, place of the skull,
was the tip, garbage dump,
the recycling centre
on the edges of Jerusalem
where the waste of humanity
was to be found,
and the scene of crucifixion
for the transgressors of the law,
as a warning for others
who dared to defy the might of
an empire.

This is no hillside graveyard
of neat laid tombs
and outlandish memorials
of the long dead,
who pay for rental of their space,
or of the untouched tombs
where no one cares.
Soldiers, loud and raucous,
black humour and games
to occupy the time,
playing dice and casting lots
to see who wins what
in the lottery that is death,
where even worn garments of

the Christ
become tokens of success.
Their laughter echoed around
the hills
as this is the way the soldiers got
their thrills,
while grief-stricken mothers,
aunts and friends
wept buckets of tears
and experienced the pain of loss,
feeling broken, crushed and humiliated
at the injustice of it all
and scorned the religious folk
who manipulated the truth
and executed their claim
as God's chosen ones.
The beloved disciple
alone, abandoned, alienated,
wrapped in guilt,
doused with dejection,
suckered by sadness
pierced by pity,
given a family to love
and care for.

The midday sun,
burned into those who stood
in places where there was no
shelter,
and those whose hands and feet
were nailed upon a cross of
wood,
hung high to toast and roast,
until exhaustion played its part
and eyes were closed,
and heads hung loose.

"I am thirsty" the saviour cried,
and bitter wine on hyssop plant,
brought light relief from dehydration,
as the soldiers jostled and jibed,
and those hanging either side,
mocked and cursed the saviour
to please the crowd,
and one pleaded for a last chance
to enter paradise,
and Christ made his day,
welcoming him in.
It was over soon.
"It is finished"
were the last words spoken.
The story of hope and light
became plunged into despair and
darkness,
as death held sway,
and mothers wept,
aunties mourned,
friends lay broken in each other's
arms,
and disciples went into hiding,
fearful of what the future held.
Yet, God is not finished yet,
But it's enough for now,
To feel the grief,
And mourn the loss,
And console each other,
And recall stories of life,
That Jesus brought to all,
And let curtains tear,
And temples fall,
And listen for the Saviour's call.



New Bishop of Peterborough



The Right Reverend Debbie Sellin will be installed as the 39th Bishop of Peterborough at a service of welcome in Peterborough Cathedral on 3 March.

The service which will be attended by representatives from the 378 churches and 103 church schools of the Diocese, alongside Diocesan staff, civic leaders, representatives from other faiths and denominations and Bishop Debbie's friends and family marks the beginning of Bishop Debbie's public ministry in the Diocese.

Bishop John, who has been Acting Bishop in the Diocese during the vacancy said: 'I am very much looking forward to wel-

coming Bishop Debbie, it has been a good year with a lot of people working hard together to continue the ministry and mission of the Diocese, but we are looking forward to the new direction and energy that a new Diocesan Bishop will bring us. Having spent time with Bishop Debbie over these last few months I am delighted that it is she whom God has sent to serve us all in this Diocese'.

At the beginning of the service, in line with tradition, Bishop Debbie will knock on the door of the Cathedral with her Crozier and be admitted by children from some of our church schools. Beginning her public ministry surrounded by young people is especially relevant to Bishop Debbie, who made her own commitment to faith during her time at a Crusaders youth group, and who started full-time ministry as a Children and Families Worker.

Bishop Debbie said; 'This will be a wonderful occasion filled with joy and celebration as I take up my role as your Diocesan Bishop, I am delighted that so many of you will be able to join me and hope that others can share in the occasion online. I look forward to meeting as many of you as possible during the season of my arrival'.

The service will include formal oaths and declarations alongside personally chosen songs, hymns, anthems and readings. Bishop Debbie will symbolically take up the Diocesan Crozier, which was laid down by Bishop Donald at his farewell service last year, representing her taking on the spiritual oversight of the Diocese and the Cure of Souls, or the care of all people in the Diocese, of all faiths and none.

Music will be a key part of the day with specially selected pieces, both traditional and contemporary, performed by the City Praise worship band, the choir from All Saints School in Kingsthorpe, and the Cathedral Junior & Senior Choirs and organists. The Cathedral Bellringers will ring a quarter peal, which is done to mark special occasions.

The service will be by invitation only but to allow as many people as possible to be involved in the event, it will be live streamed on the [Cathedral Facebook](#) and [Diocesan YouTube](#) channels on 3 March. Further details of the service including an online order of service will be available on the Diocesan website in February.

***Bishop Debbie
to be installed at
a service of
welcome in
Peterborough
Cathedral***



Community Info *and* Wellness Fair

9th March 2024

FREE ENTRY

10am - 2pm

Visit our marketplace
of stalls offering info
& services to help
improve wellbeing

-&-

Find out which Duston
community groups you
can join

Plus

Meet your local PCSO

Local Councillor
Surgery

For more details,
please check out our
website

GJ On The Square will be open for refreshments

DUSTON COMMUNITY CENTRE, PENDLE ROAD, DUSTON, NN5 6DT



DUSTON PARISH COUNCIL

T: 01604 583626 | E: events@duston-pc.gov.uk

www.duston-pc.gov.uk/community-info-wellness-fair



Duston PC



@duston_pc



dustonpc

DUSTON FUN DAY!

SAVE THE DATE

**SUNDAY
30 JUNE
2024**

**ST LUKE'S PLAYING FIELD,
MELBOURNE LANE, NN5 6HS**

**CONTACT US OR VISIT OUR WEBSITE
FOR MORE INFORMATION**



T: 01604 583626 | E: events@duston-pc.gov.uk

www.duston-pc.gov.uk/duston-fun-day

 Duston PC  @duston_pc

Did you know?



Many people think that St Francis Church is just used for a service on Sundays, in fact there is a lot more that goes on in support of the community.

Regular weekly events include: -

Tuesdays there are 2-hour, after school sessions run by Kumon, a Maths and English teaching group, for children

Wednesdays there is a Wellbeing Café in the afternoon attended by 30-40 people with various activities including Craft and various games, jigsaws or even just to "chat" for a while always with

accompanying refreshments including quite often home-made Cake...!!

Thursdays is a busy day, with A Craft sewing group meet in the morning, followed in the afternoon and evening by successive groups of Rainbows, Brownies and finally Guides.

Fridays there are 2-hour sessions run again organised by Kumon

Saturdays, a Ghanaian group meets for evening prayers

Sundays the Ghanaian group meet again for their afternoon weekly service

Additional to this a Drama group has been meeting from September to December for rehearsals for their annual

Pantomime, 3 monthly gatherings for Grace Church, and other events including the annual Macmillan event, concerts and various individual meetings as and when they are needed.

Oh yes, and we do actually have our own church services on Sunday and Tuesday plus those at Christian Festival times.

So, as you can see, there is quite a lot of things going on within the St Francis church complex.

If you are interested in joining any of the above events we would gladly pass on your details to any relevant group

Rob Tavener

St Francis Church



The cafe is open on Wednesday afternoons at St Francis Church, Eastfield Road, Duston, Northampton NN5 6TQ from 1pm until 4pm.

Please feel free to pop along.

In February we celebrated 5 years of our Wellbeing Café at St Francis Church.

Thank you to the fantastic team without whom the Café would be unable to run.

Through the Wellbeing Cafe, we are seeking to provide a safe, warm and welcoming space for people to improve emotional wellbeing, by providing a listening ear, a cup of tea or coffee and access to board games, jigsaws, craft activities and a space for reflection if needed.

Every Wednesday 1pm - 4pm
At St Francis Church



Burns' Supper

On Saturday 3rd February we held our annual Burns' Supper at St. Francis' Church. A great evening was enjoyed by all and £300 was raised for church funds. Our grateful thanks to all who organised, helped, attended and supported this event. Special thanks to Pipers Peter and Iain.



- Traditional Haggis
- Vegan Haggis
- Smoked Salmon
- Haddock Kedgeree
- Aberdeen Angus Sausages
- Caledonian Cheddar Cheese (vegetarian)
- Oatcakes (vegan)
- Mackerel Pate
- Rumbledethumps (vegetarian)
- Tatty Salad (vegan) & Coleslaw (vegan)
- Tomatoes, Cucumber & Salad Leaves
- Plain Tatty Crisps (vegan)

- Black Bun (vegetarian)
- Ecclefechan Tarts (vegetarian)
- Chocolate Whisky Brownies (vegan)
- Scottish Berry Meringues (vegetarian)
- Scottish Berries (vegan)
- Whisky Trifle
- Fruit Trifle

The Selkirk Grace
Some hae meat and canna eat,
And some wad eat that want it,
But we hae meat and we can eat,
Sae let the Lord be thankit.

PIPING IN THE HAGGIS

Auld Lang Syne
Should auld acquaintance be forgot, and never brought to mind?
Should auld acquaintance be forgot, and auld lang syne?
Chorus
For auld lang syne, my dear, for auld lang syne,
we'll tak' a cup o' kindness yet, for auld lang syne.
And surely ye'll be your pint-stoup! and surely I'll be mine!
And we'll tak' a cup o' kindness yet, for auld lang syne.
Chorus
We twa hae run about the braes, and pou'd the gowans fine;
But we've wander'd mony a weary fit, sin' auld lang syne.
Chorus
We twa hae paidl'd in the burn, frae morning sun till dine;
But seas between us braid hae roar'd sin' auld lang syne.
Chorus
And there's a hand, my trusty fere! and gie's a hand o' thine!
And we'll tak' a right gude-willie waught, for auld lang syne.
Chorus
Thank you all for coming.
We hope you've enjoyed tonight's shenanigans!
The proceeds from this evening will be shared between
our two churches - St. Luke's and St. Francis'.

Burns' Night

Date: Saturday 3rd February 2024
Time: 7.30pm
Venue: St. Francis' Church



The Night's Splore

Welcome.....Revd Mandy Marriott
The Selkirk Grace.....Revd Mandy Marriott
Piping in the Haggis.....Piper Iain Purves
Address tae the Haggis.....Piper Peter Purves
Toast tae the Haggis.....Piper Peter Purves

The Hamely Fare

The Nicht's Ongauns

The Immortal Memory.....Scott Leaman Esq
The Loyal Toast.....Scott Leaman Esq
Toast tae the Lassies.....Paul Enright-King Esq
Reply tae the Toast tae the Lassies.....Mistress Liz Leaman
Burns'/Scottish Quiz.....Mistress Liz Leaman
Poem.....Revd Mandy Marriott
Vote of Thanks.....Revd Mandy Marriott
Auld Lang Syne.....Aw The Gither

Hansome Nell

O, once I lov'd a bonie lass, ay, and I love her still
And whilst that virtue warms my breast, I'll love my handsome Nell.
As bonie lasses I have seen, and monie full as braw,
But for a modest gracefu' mien the like I never saw.
A bonie lass, I will confess, is pleasant to the e'e;
But without some better qualities she's no a lass for me.
But Nelly's looks are blythe and sweet, and, what is best of a',
Her reputation is complete and fair without a flaw.
She dresses ay sae clean and neat, both decent and genteel;
And then there's something in her gait gars onie dress look weel.
A gaudy dress and gentle air may slightly touch the heart;
But it's innocence and modesty that polishes the dart.
'Tis this in Nelly pleases me, 'tis this enchants my soul;
For absolutely in my breast she reigns without controul.

Who will Bell the Cat? - Aesop's Fable (Scots Verse)
Who will Bell the Cat is a fable also known under the titles **Belling the Cat**, **The Bell and the Cat** and **The Mice in Council**. The fable concerns a group of mice who debate plans to nullify the threat of a marauding cat. One of them proposes placing a bell around its neck, so that they are warned of its approach. The plan is applauded by the others, until one mouse asks who will volunteer to place the bell on the cat. All of them make excuses. The story is used to teach the wisdom of evaluating a plan on not only how desirable the outcome would be but also how it can be executed. It provides a moral lesson about the fundamental difference between ideas and their feasibility, and how this affects the value of a given plan.



Follow me on:



Running Through My Mind

The Hare and the Tortoise

Who doesn't love an Aesop fable?

The hare and the tortoise is a classic. But for anyone that hasn't heard it, it's the story of a brash self-centred hare boasting of his speed, while mocking the tortoise for being slow. The tortoise proposes a race, much to the hares amusement. How can he lose to such an inferior animal?

And so they race.

The hare streaks off ahead leaving the tortoise behind. Complacent and overconfident, he rests by a tree, where, content in the lead he has built up, he falls asleep.

The tortoise meanwhile keeps moving. Steady, consistent, putting one foot in front of the other, until he

passes the sleeping hare.

The hare awakes, sees the tortoise close to the finish line and in a panic, races to catch up but doesn't make it in time and the tortoise crosses the winning line first.

Post-Race Analysis

Aside from the running analogy, I love the themes underpinning this story. The race is long and the tortoise didn't win it by tearing off at the speed of light and burning out. He won by remaining focused, consistent and not giving in.

The hare, meanwhile, will hopefully have learned a valuable lesson. Who knows whether he changed or not, but I like to think that his race against the tortoise may have tempered his pride, and helped him grow.

We've all seen modern day

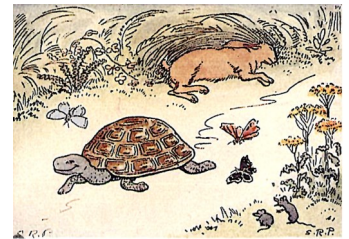
examples of the hare. People boasting on social media.

But when comparison makes you doubt yourself, remain focused on your own journey. Draw inspiration from the tortoise – keep moving forwards at your own pace. Stay consistent and disciplined, and don't be disheartened by the achievements of others. Remember the old adage: it's a marathon not a sprint.

You do "you".

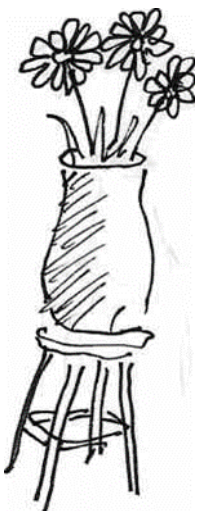
Until next time—take care of yourselves.

Tim.



Interested in drawing or painting?

Would you like to join a friendly, local art group that includes people of all abilities? **Harpole Art Group** usually meets at the Methodist Chapel in Harpole but, because of serious flooding arising from a burst water tank in the roof there, we are currently meeting at **St Francis Church** on **Tuesday mornings from 9.45 until 12.15**. It is expected that we will be at St Francis until the end of March.



The group does not have a tutor, but members are always supportive of beginners, so, if this interests you, come along, have a cuppa and a chat.

SEE YOU SOON .





PARISH TEAS AND SALE AT ST. LUKE'S CHURCH.



Please join us for delicious homemade cake and a cuppa



Books, jigsaws , games , crafts , cards and quality bric-a-brac.



Seasonal jams/marmalade, produce and plants.



A warm welcome awaits you!



March 3rd - 1.30-4.30pm.
April 7th - 2.00-4.30pm.
May 19th - 1.30-4.30pm.



Plant Sale and Garden Themed Raffle.



June 9th - 2.00-4.30pm.
July 21st - 2.00-4.30pm.



Jigsaw Raffle.



August 11th - 2.00-4.30pm.
September 8th - 1.30-4.30pm. Heritage Weekend.
October 13th - 1.30-4.30pm.
November 17th - 1.30-4.30pm.



Christmas Raffle and Tombolas.



(March, October and November - please note: earlier start time as soup will also be served.)
(May and September - please note: earlier start time for Plant Sale and Heritage Weekend.)

Thank you,
Liz and Suzi.

De-cluttering

Every year Killy and I think about de-cluttering. Last year we tackled our kitchen, bedrooms, garage and my study. It was a revelation. These are some of the things that we found:



- A huge quantity of business cards from people, many of whom I had no recollection of meeting.
- Several boxes of mysterious adapters & cables that fitted no known phones or computers.
- Lots of empty boxes. Why did we store empty boxes for years?
- A pile of cassette tapes! Not very useful for a household that no longer has the means to play cassettes.
- A huge pile of books that we are never likely to read.
- A handful of coins from several countries, some of which I have never visited.
- A box full of keys – keys to what? I asked myself.

In the garage we found numerous half-burned candles, several tins of paint, each with enough paint to cover a postage stamp, and a good number of chipped and broken vases – why did we keep them?

As for the wardrobes: there were jumpers, jackets and suits I wore in the 1980s and which I hadn't worn for several decades. I still tried them on – although quite why, I don't know!

And in the kitchen – why keep an inherited old tea set last used in our previous home twenty-seven years ago? We couldn't stand it then and certainly would never use it now.

Clutter seems to be a disease of our time and culture. It used to be that when the kids left home you could consider 'downsizing' but instead it seems that clutter expands to fill the space made available. Although it is tempting to speculate about why we all accumulate so much, the issue with clutter is how we deal with it. Because successful de-cluttering is hard; we really need to have the right attitude and recognise that clutter is a real problem.

The word 'clutter' is apparently related to 'clot'. And as clots block up arteries and impede blood flow with disastrous results, so clutter does the same to our lives. Think about how it leads to wasted time, for example. Consider a no-doubt all-too-familiar scenario: you are working on a project and you realise that you need item A (a document, tool or kitchen utensil), but because there is so much clutter you have to search for

it. Now note what invariably happens. In the process of trying to find A, you successively uncover items B, C and D, each of which is far more interesting and each of which engages your attention. The result is that when you finally do discover item A, you have either run out of time to use it or you cannot remember what you wanted it for in the first place.

So we must de-clutter. But the practicalities of dealing with clutter are far from easy. We have to engage in a process of filtering. So, in my study, I end up asking about everything: should I give it away, keep it, give it to a charity shop or simply consign it to the bin? If you are like me, your clutter is probably virtually worthless in financial terms, but you do need to remember that money is not the only measure of worth. The past has value, and memories of events – and particularly of individuals –

should matter to us. It is worth remembering how, in the Old Testament, Samuel put up a large memorial stone and 'named it Ebenezer (which means "the stone of help"), for he said, "Up to this point the Lord has helped us!"' (1 Samuel 7:12, NLT). There are some things you may wish to keep as 'Ebenezers' – honoured reminders of long-ago friends, mementos of times rich in blessing and testimonies of difficulties overcome.

Yet although we may save some precious reminders, the reality is that much must be disposed of, so how do we decide what must go? As I leaf through old files, letters and books I find myself repeatedly thinking of words such as 'essential' and 'priority'. Anyone who has ever tried de-cluttering a study or garage will be aware of the danger that, after a few hours' labour, you will actually manage to justify keeping almost every-

thing. We need to ask some very hard questions. Do I need this? Am I ever going to need it?;

One of the reasons I think many people today find it hard to deal with clutter is they prefer to think that they will be here for ever. They imagine that sooner or later they really are going to read those unread books, do that unopened jigsaw or experiment with those recipes. Here, as in so many other areas, I am helped by knowing that the Christian life is like a journey. As I look at all I have before me, I repeatedly ask myself a simple question: 'Is it needed on the voyage?' If you are looking forward to the next world, there's a lot to be said for travelling light through this one.

J. John
Reverend Canon
www.canonjohn.com

Indoor Car Boot Sale

Duston Community Centre,
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April 20th, 09:00-12:00
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THE GROW TOGETHER ALLOTMENT

Duston Parish Council's award winning Community Allotment is situated on the Berrywood Road site.

We invite all residents to help grow our plot; whatever your age or gardening ability. Come and join our volunteer sessions as we plant, weed and harvest, learn new skills and improve wellbeing in our community.

Monthly sessions on the first Tuesday 10-2pm

MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER
5	2	7	4	2	6	3	1

Join us for a full or part session; email tgta@duston-pc.gov.uk or call us to book your place.



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✉ tgta@duston-pc.gov.uk ☎ 01604 583626

f Duston PC i dustonpc X @duston_pc

Email: aj.marriott123@gmail.com

The Rectory
3 Main Road
Duston
NN5 6JB



Helping to connect Church and Community groups together for the wellbeing of all

We aim to get **Community Connect** out by the first week of every other month, so articles for the following issue need to be submitted by the beginning of the last week of alternate months. They can be emailed to Rev'd Mandy Marriott at aj.marriott123@gmail.com or put through the Rectory door:

**3 Main Road Duston
NN5 6JB.**

This is your community newsletter, so keep your articles coming in. We love to hear from you.

We currently don't charge for Community Connect but if you would like to make a donation towards printing costs then we would be very grateful. Donations can be made by cheque to Duston and Upton PCC or by BACS transfer to Duston and Upton PCC

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