

ASPIRATION

IN SOUTH HEREFORD

The Magazine
of The South Wye
Hereford Parishes
July 2024
Price 50p



Hello and Welcome

Hello and welcome to the July edition of Aspiration. I hope that you are all keeping safe and well. This is a busy time for lots of us and there are lots of meetings, partly because we are all expecting that no-one will be around in August, so we'd better do it now. PCCs and APCMs and governors meetings and all sorts of 'getting ready for the holidays' things going on. At least I'm not having to move into a new house and learn a new job at the same time as governing the country, so perhaps I should be grateful for small mercies!

A real risk for those of us in ministry is to mistake busyness for practising my faith. I may pray for and during PCC meetings, but attending meetings is not the same as making time for prayer. The other side of that coin is a sort of scepticism that says that people would rather look busy than get busy practicing their faith. When this sceptical view starts to creep in, I find St Thomas (whose feast day falls on the 3rd July) a really valuable example to think about.

Thomas, one of Jesus' 12 apostles, was an impulsive, confused, honest sceptic. Jesus could understand and work with such a man. Thomas' impulsiveness was evident when Jesus prepared to visit Lazarus in Bethany. It was a dangerous trip to make, because of the Jews, but Thomas urged his fellow disciples: "Let us also go, that we may die with Him." Instead, Jesus brought Lazarus back to life. Thomas' confusion is shown in later talks with Jesus. He was not really sure where Jesus was going long-term. But Jesus accepted this confused commitment, and began to untangle it, patiently explaining: "I am going to my Father", and "No one comes unto the Father but by me." Finally, Thomas' honest scepticism is revealed after the Resurrection, which he flatly refused to believe - unless he could touch the wounds of the risen Jesus. Sure enough, Jesus appears - but instead of scolding him, shows him the wounds. Thomas responds: "My Lord and my God"

Thomas' honest doubts, turned to honest faith, have become a reassurance for thousands of men and women across the centuries, who also want to follow Jesus, but who require some proof of this amazing event - the Resurrection. I hope that however busy we may all be this month, we are able to find time to listen quietly for God with confidence and faith.

With every blessing, Anne



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Copy for **ASPIRATION** should be sent to the Team Office to:

aspiration@stmartinshereford.org.uk

All contributions are welcomed - if submitting photos, please check that appropriate permissions have been given



Regular Services and Events, South Wye Hereford

Sung Communion at St Martin's, Sunday mornings at 9:30am. Everyone is welcome to this service which is followed by refreshments in church.

Sunday Worship at 11:15am at St Peter's Bullinghope On the first and third Sundays of each month we celebrate Holy Communion. On the second and fourth Sundays we have Morning Prayer - sometimes there is a baptism on the second Sunday. When there is a fifth Sunday in the month we usually have a service at 4pm - which may be Evensong or an informal praise service.

Chill'n'Church

a group for people from 11-16, Thursday evenings in term time from 7pm - 8:30pm. Contact Rev'd Lauren or the office for a registration form.

Young at Heart - a group for older people. We meet twice a month - on the first Thursday each month for a pub lunch and on the third Thursday for an afternoon meeting which might involve a talk, quizzes, games or Bingo. If you'd like to join, just drop in to a session or check with the office for dates.

Coffee in the Narthex - Tuesdays at 2pm we get together at St Martin's to share our news and stories over a cuppa - everyone is really welcome to join us. Some of us stay around after 3:30 when the toastie maker comes out for anyone who needs a snack before they head home.

Messy Church

At the Scout Hut at 3:30pm Friday afternoons monthly in term time.

Join us as we learn, worship, make and eat together.

You are welcome to join us for **Holy Communion at Belmont Community Centre** at 12:30pm on the second and fourth Fridays of each month, straight after Foodshare. When the weather is fine, we worship outside.

Holy Communion at St

Martin's at 10am on Thursdays - everyone welcome

Bible Study

Our South Wye Tuesday bible study group meets at 1pm in the Narthex at St Martin's. We are thinking at the moment about the way that we read the bible. You are very welcome to join the group on site, but if that is difficult, please contact the office and ask for one of the study books to use at home. We invite a donation of up to £5 towards the cost of the book, but this is entirely optional.



St Peter's Bullinghope and St Martin's Ross Road



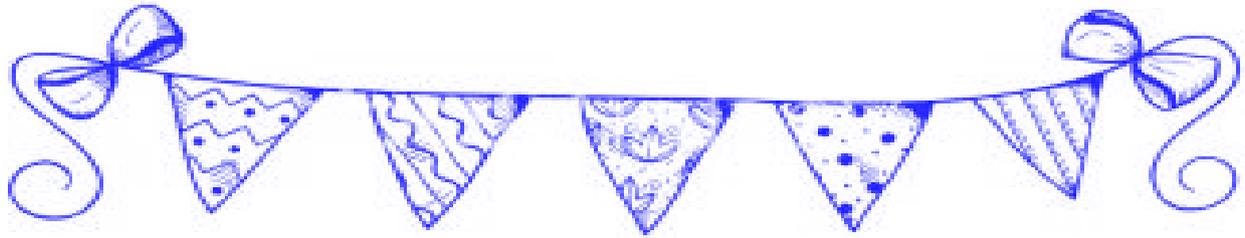
In order to maintain the churchyard at St Peter's, especially the areas with more recent graves and the area in front of the church - we would be very grateful for any help that anyone is able to give.

Could you 'adopt' a section of the churchyard or a group of graves? Do you have time to mow the front lawn once or twice a year in between the scheduled cuts? Please let the clergy or wardens know if you are able to help in any way.

Very many thanks

**Help Required
St Martin's Summer Fete
20th July**

**If you are able to help -
beforehand with preparation
or publicity or on the day
with setting up, running a
stall or packing up - please
let the office know.
And don't forget your draw
tickets!
Many thanks!**



St Martin's Summer Fete

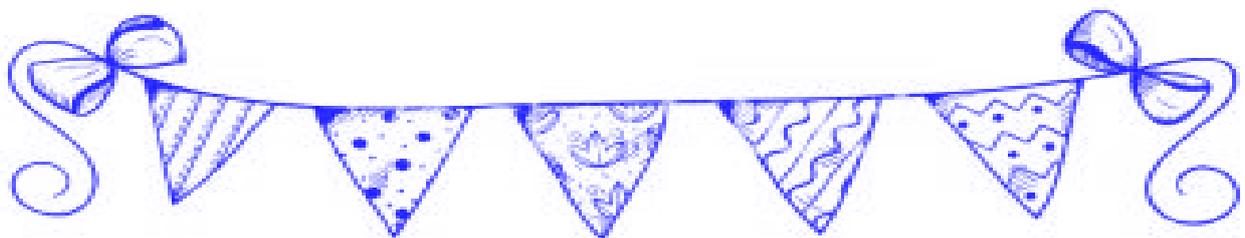
Saturday 20th July

11am—2pm

Grand Draw, Stalls,

Refreshments

Games





Fundraising for St Martin's

OUR QUILTY PLEASURE

*An Exhibition of Family Quilts by
Sue Cockcroft, Jackie Nevill and Sylvia Rolland*

at St Martin's September 7th-8th

*Volunteers please to help...baking cakes,
helping with refreshments on the days.*

Please speak to Jackie and Sue

**City of Hereford Deanery Synod.
July 10th at St Mary's Grandstand Road.**

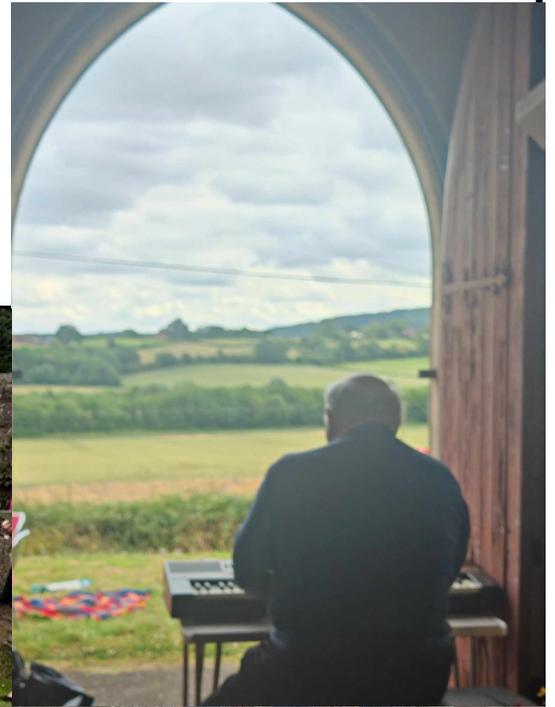
How can we best serve our city?
Open discussion around
Foodshare Chaplaincy Businesses
Weddings, Baptisms and Funerals

Fish and chips and fellowship 6.30pm
(Let us know if you would like us to order you some).

Formal start at 7pm

Petertide at St Peter's

It was lovely to gather at St Peter's for our Petertide picnic and outdoor service. Thank you to everyone who came along, helped with refreshments or offered lifts, to Matthew for acting as crucifer, and to Peter for welcoming us to the gardens of the Old Vicarage to start our procession from the old Church.



What am I reading next Sunday?

<i>Date</i>	<i>7th July</i>	<i>14th July</i>
'Sunday'	Trinity 6	Trinity 7
Colour	Green	Green
First Reading	Ezekial 2:1-5	Amos 7: 7-15
Psalm	123	85:8-13
New Testament	2 Corinthians 12:2-10	Ephesians 1: 3-14
Gospel	Mark 6: 1-13	Mark 6:14-29

<i>Date</i>	<i>21st July</i>	<i>28th July</i>
'Sunday'	Trinity 8	Trinity 9
Colour	Green	Green
First Reading	Jeremiah 23: 1-6	2 Kings 4: 42-44
Psalm	23	145: 10-18
New Testament	Ephesians 2:11-22	Ephesians 3:14-21
Gospel	Mark 6:30-34, 53-56	John 6:1-21

<i>Date</i>	<i>4th Aug</i>
'Sunday'	Trinity 10
Colour	Green
First Reading	Exodus 16:2-4, 9-15
Psalm	Psalm 78:23-29
New Testament	Ephesians 4:1-16
Gospel	John 6:24-35

If you would like to join the rota to read at St Martin's, please sign up on the rota in the Narthex. Just ask if you would like to practise with the microphone beforehand.

Sunday Readings: As usual, it is important to check with the person leading your service that they are expecting you to read the lessons given here, especially if it is a special service or an evening service.

South Wye July Diary

Mon 1st	11:00am	FoodShare at the Scout Hut
	12:00noon	FoodShare at St Martin's
Tues 2nd	1:00pm	Bible Study in the Narthex at St Martin's
	2:00pm	Coffee in the Narthex
Thu 4th	10:00am	Holy Communion at St Martin's
	12:30pm	Young at Heart Lunch at the Wye Inn (call office to book)
	7:00pm	Chill'n'Church at St Martin's
Fri 5th	12:00noon	FoodShare at Belmont Community Centre
	3:00pm	Messy Church at the Scout Hut
Sat 6th	3:00pm	Baptism at St Martin's
Sun 7th	9:30am	Holy Communion at St Martins (livestreamed on FB)
<i>Trinity 6</i>	11:15am	Holy Communion at St Peter's Bullinghope
Mon 8th	11:00am	FoodShare at the Scout Hut
	12:00noon	FoodShare at St Martin's
Tues 9th	1:00pm	Bible Study in the Narthex at St Martin's
	2:00pm	Coffee in the Narthex
	3:30pm	Toastie in the Narthex
	7:15pm	St Martin's PCC
Weds 10th	7:00pm	City of Hereford Deanery Synod
Thu 11th	10:00am	Holy Communion at St Martin's
	7:00pm	Chill'n'Church at St Martin's
Fri 12th	12:00noon	FoodShare at Belmont Community Centre
	12:30pm	Holy Communion at Belmont Community Centre
Sun 14th	9:30am	Holy Communion at St Martins (livestreamed on FB)
<i>Trinity 7</i>	11:15am	Morning Prayer at St Peter's Bullinghope
	2:00pm	Baptism at St Martin's
Mon 15th	11:00am	FoodShare at the Scout Hut
	12:00noon	FoodShare at St Martin's
Tues 16th	1:00pm	Bible Study in the Narthex at St Martin's
	2:00pm	Coffee in the Narthex
	3:30pm	Toastie in the Narthex

Thu 18th	10:00am	Holy Communion at St Martin's
	2:00pm	Young at Heart in the Narthex at St Martin's
	7:00pm	Diocesan Synod on Zoom
Fri 19th	12:00noon	FoodShare at Belmont Community Centre
Sat 20th	11:00noon	St Martin's Fete
Sun 21st	9:30am	Holy Communion at St Martins (livestreamed on FB)
Trinity 8	11:15am	Holy Communion at St Peter's Bullinghope
	1:00pm	Baptism at St Martin's
	2:00pm	Baptism at St Martin's
Mon 22nd		End of Term
	11:00am	FoodShare at the Scout Hut
	12:00noon	FoodShare at St Martin's
Tues 23rd	1:00pm	Bible Study in the Narthex at St Martin's
	2:00pm	Coffee in the Narthex
	3:30pm	Toastie in the Narthex
Weds 24th	12:00	Wednesday Walk - gather at the Scout Hut
Thu 25th	10:00am	Holy Communion at St Martin's
	7:30pm	Chill'n'Church at St Martin's
Fri 26th	12:00noon	FoodShare at Belmont Community Centre
	12:30pm	Holy Communion at Belmont Community Centre
Sat 27th		Diocesan Synod on Zoom
Sun 28th	9:30am	Holy Communion at St Martins (livestreamed on FB)
Trinity 9	11:15am	Morning Prayer at St Peter's Bullinghope
Mon 29th	11:00am	FoodShare at the Scout Hut
	12:00noon	FoodShare at St Martin's
Tues 30th	1:00pm	Bible Study in the Narthex at St Martin's
	2:00pm	Coffee in the Narthex
	3:30pm	Toastie in the Narthex
Weds 31st	12:00	Wednesday Walk - gather at the Scout Hut

Faith and Family



Change and moving on

For some, the end of the summer term is a temporary halt; a time for holidays, perhaps, before it all starts again in the autumn. For others, leavers, it is a time of sending out, of new challenges – a new school, college or university, a gap year, or the start of a career, apprenticeship or job. And the ripples of this moving on spread out to touch families and communities – if one of these transitions is happening in your family, you might find these ways to look forward and back useful.

Memory twigs You will need: a small twig, coloured wool

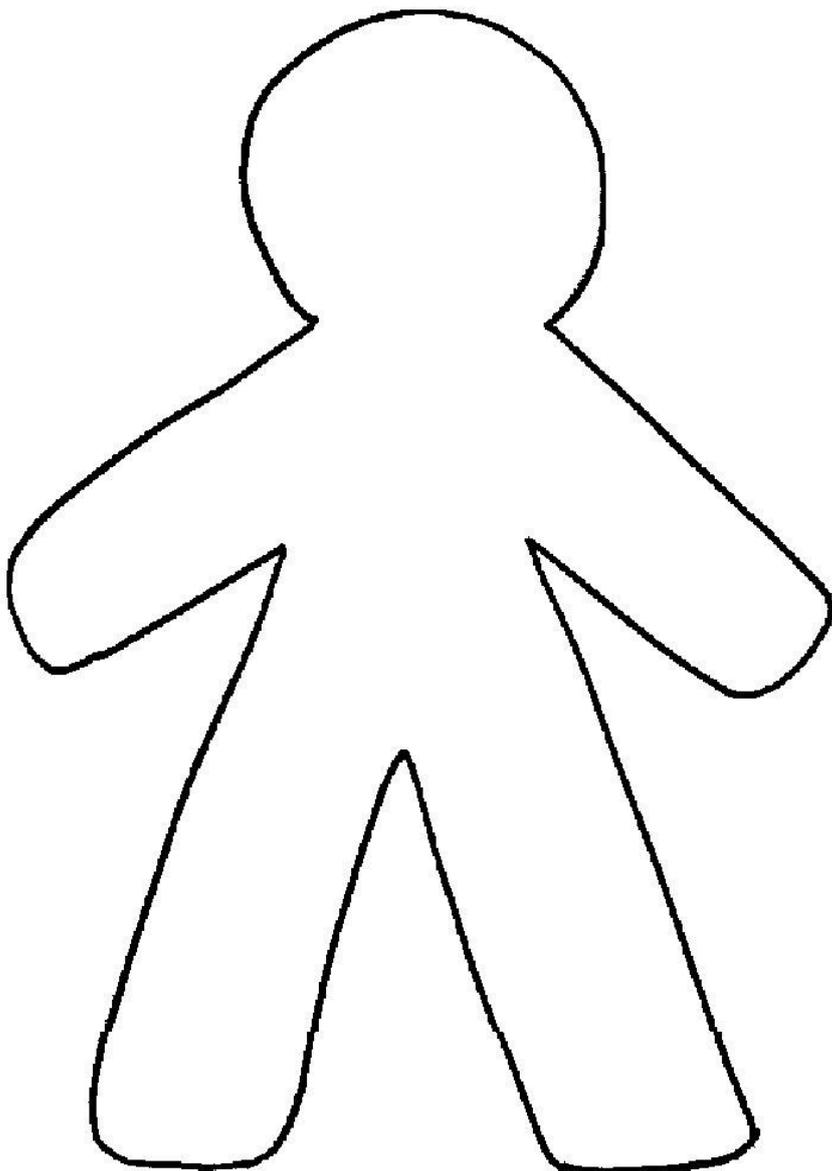
- Think about some of your memories from primary school such as: I am good at..., a happy memory is..., a challenge was..., my friends are..., my best subject is..., the best school trip was..., on my first day... (write down some ideas if it helps).
- As you think of each memory, choose a colour of wool to represent that memory.
- Starting with your first memory, wrap your colour wool around a section of your twig. Repeat, until all your memories are represented on the twig.
- Spend a moment being grateful for the memories you have been able to make at primary school.

Seasons Cut out some leaf shapes from coloured paper or colour them yourself. During the seasons of the year, trees look different. Their leaves are green and lush during spring and summer. In autumn, they turn all sorts of colours and eventually fall to the ground and leave the tree's branches empty for winter. Just like the trees 'let go' of their leaves every year, we have the opportunity to hold on to experiences and memories, or to let them go.

- Note down some experiences or memories you want to let go of (on the brown/orange leaves) and some which you'd like to hold on to (green leaves).
- Use the leaves to make a tree collage. Attach the green leaves onto the tree and place the brown/orange leaves around its base.

Friendships You will need: cutout paper figure (you could draw your own or use the template)

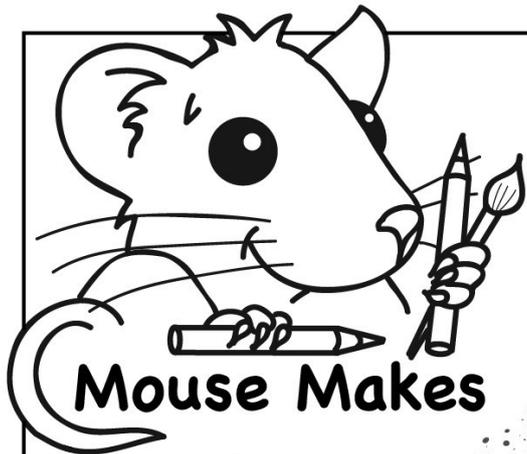
- Think about your friends: Who are your friends now? How long have you been friends? Do you see them in and outside of school? Think about why you like these friends and how they make you feel.
- On your person shape, write who your friends are now and why you like them.
- Now you are moving onto secondary school, you may leave these friends behind and make new friends, and this is okay.
- Think about how you are as a friend now. When you go to a new school, how would you like to be as a friend? Everyone in your school will be starting from new so will that help you to make friends?
- On the other side of your person shape, write some ideas about what sort of friend you want to be. Think of some words to describe a good friend.



Loving God, we thank you for all that it is has meant to us to be part of our school. We give thanks for our friends, our teachers and all that we have done together.

As our children prepare to start a new stage in their life's journey, we pray that they will settle happily into their new schools, make new friends, and learn new things from new teachers.

Above all, we ask that they will remember that they are still a precious part of your family, loved by you, wherever they go and whatever they do. Amen.



How many days did the Lord tell Joshua to march around the city of Jerico?

Joshua 6:3



What did the priests carry that were made from rams' horns?

What was carried along behind the priests?

The _____
Joshua 6:4

Joshua 6:4



On the seventh day how many times did they march around Jerico?

Joshua 6:6

Who was saved from Jerico along with her family?

Joshua 6:17



READ
the story
in *Joshua*
5:13-6:27

D	A	Y	S	A	W	A	L	K
A	J	O	S	H	U	A	R	K
S	E	V	E	N	I	O	F	L
Y	N	T	R	F	X	U	E	L
I	P	R	I	E	S	T	S	O
A	A	U	C	L	I	S	W	R
R	I	M	O	L	K	I	B	D
O	S	P	S	C	A	M	P	H
U	R	E	C	G	U	A	R	D
N	A	T	I	F	I	R	E	X
D	E	S	T	R	U	C	T	I
E	L	R	Y	R	A	H	A	B

JERICO • LORD • JOSHUA • ISRAEL • KING • PRIESTS • GUARD
CAMP • MARCH • AROUND • DAYS • WALK • ONCE • BLOW • HORN • SOUND
DAWN • SHOUT • CITY • WALL • FELL • FLAT • FIRE • BURN • DESTRUCTION

Find the question answers in the word search too!

Wednesday Walks

Through the Summer holidays we will have another series of family walks. Leaving the Scout Hut (Blackmarston Road) at 12 noon we will walk to the Bishop's meadow for a picnic and games.

Bring your favourite snacks and drinks and we will provide sandwiches.

Please let the office or David know if you are planning to come - especially if you have very specific dietary needs - so that we can plan the catering.

Everyone is welcome to walk or to join us at the meadows.

At Messy Church we wondered about Calling. What is God calling me to be?



Chill'n'Church thought about God's unconditional love for each of us. How can we ensure that we as a church reflect God's welcome and love? Several Chill'n'Church members have now left school and so this is their last term with the group. We will keep in touch and continue to pray for them as they take their next steps to college or to work.

For our Prayers

Those who are ill or in need of your prayers, including:

Bill James Joan Paul Sheila Ann W Brenda B
Sue Brooke Christina Betty Mandy Michael G

Those who have died and those who mourn their loss:

Anne.. Kath.. Christopher. Raymond. Terence. Brian. Derek

Those preparing for baptism, their families and Godparents

Jessica Jasmine Koa Cruz Buster

Those preparing for marriage

Harry and Georgia

As we remember Sea Sunday this month

Your first disciples, Lord, were men of the sea:

Hardy fishermen from the shores of Galilee.

They knew from experience the perils of the deep...

They also knew Your presence with them in their darkest hours.

We pray for those who face like hazards today...

Lord of the sea, be near to guard them in every danger...

And let them hear Your voice above the tempest,

'It is I, be not afraid'

So bring them to their haven in peace.

From a prayer by Frank Colquhoun

For nature

We thank you Lord of all creation, for the wonder of the world in which we live: for the earth and all that springs from it; and for the mystery of life and growth.

From a prayer by Basil Naylor

Spirit who aboundest, give me,
Father great, profoundest, give me,
Thou whose praise renowned is, give me,
Jesus Son, thy shield to guard.

From an ancient Celtic prayer

Charity Concert

In aid of SSAFA



In memory of Violette Szabo and D DAY.

August 2nd 2024, 2pm

St Martin's Church, Hereford, £10 on the door.

**Surrey Police Band,
Steve & Sue Mace (Dancers), and Vintage Class Singers.
Soprano: Lauren Elizabeth Williams**



ssafa

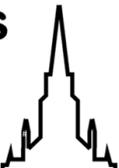
— the —
Armed Forces
charity

HEREFORDSHIRE

Poster: Giles Morgans / www.pixelshifters.com

Acts of Kindness

St Martin's

Food  **Share**

St Martin's FoodShare receives its food from local supermarkets (Asda, Aldi, Tesco, Coop, Waitrose & Booker) and also pays for a weekly delivery

from FareShare UK – a national charity that collects surplus food at a much larger scale. The money for the FareShare deliveries comes from grants received from Aldi, Lidl, Coop and Tesco. Thank you. Meals at St Martin's on a Monday lunchtime run alongside Monday's FoodShare session. Quite a few people stay for food, conversation and a warm place to sit.

Could you join the team? We are always on the look out for chatters and drivers, cooks and servers, sorters and tidiers. Many people come along for the companionship – so sitting down for a cup of tea and a chat is one of the most important jobs! If you can help please let David know on 07563 382872 or by email to david@stmartinshereford.org.uk

Making Room

Do you struggle with isolation, anxiety, depression, OCD or another form of mental health difficulties? We know how important mental well-being is to ourselves and others and we recognise the need for more support for those who may struggle with the above or care for someone else who does. We want you to know you don't have to wrestle with these issues on your own. *Making Room* is a new initiative based at St Martin's which, whilst it will not offer any formal professional mental health treatment, will offer a safe space to express any worries you may have.

Making Room is intended for people of working age, and is about making room to have safe discussions about our mental wellness, making room to support one another, making room for mindfulness and to start or share any hobbies and interests and making room to offer hope. If you are interested in joining us please contact us and we can discuss plans further. If you wish to volunteer equally please do get in touch.

Rev'd Lauren Bell
curate@stmartinshereford.org.uk
07429 862444

Acts of Kindness

WE ARE FARMING MINDS



We are Farming Minds registered charity has been set up by farmers for farmers to tackle mental health in the farming community within Herefordshire.

How can we help?

24 Hour Support Line:

We run a **FREE 24 hour Support Line 7 days a week** for farmers and their families within Herefordshire who are feeling distressed and need someone to talk to anonymously.

Counselling:

We provide **fully funded counselling to anyone in the Herefordshire farming community** who may be in emotional distress.

Training:

We offer **FREE mental health awareness training** to anyone living or working in or with the farming community in Herefordshire.

Social Events:

We run a series of **FREE social events throughout the year** to break the isolation often felt by the farming community in Herefordshire.

Befriending:

Befriending volunteers offer companionship and support to people who are isolated and lonely – they may visit you at home and/or phone for a regular chat. A befriender can offer conversation and a listening ear to those that need it.



'Taking the bull by the horns' to tackle Mental Health in the farming community

Call our Support Line:

0808 802 0070

Or text:

07786 203 130

General enquiries: wearefarmingminds@gmail.com

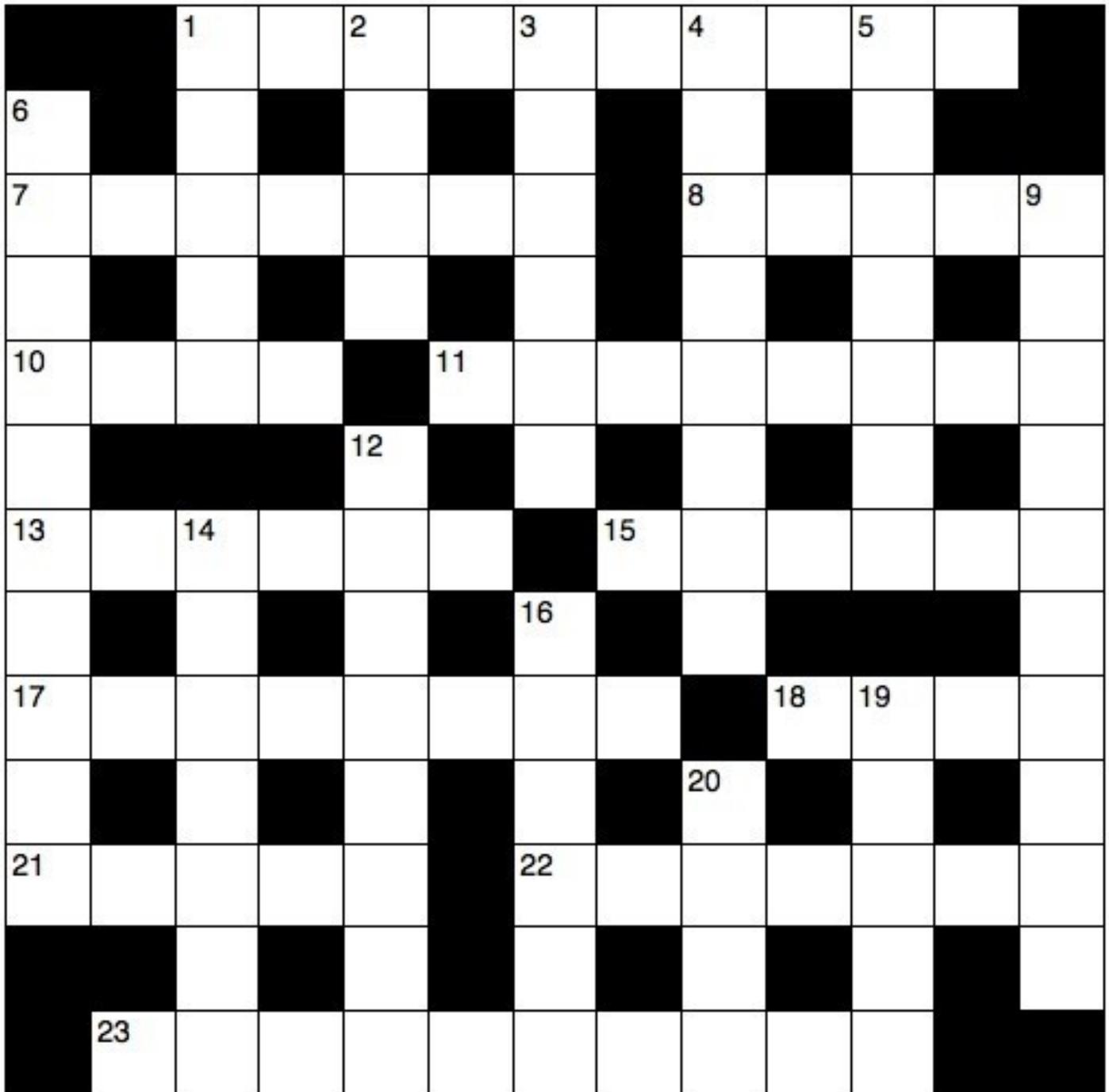
www.wearefarmingminds.co.uk

Registered charity number: 1191461



WeAreFarmingMinds

Coffee Time



Doodle Box

Across

- 1 Relating to the Jewish day of rest (10)
- 7 Point of view (Matthew 22:17) (7)
- 8 20th-century Brethren philanthropist whose construction company became one of the UK's biggest, Sir John — (5)
- 10 Girl's name (4)
- 11 Peter was accused of being one in the courtyard of the high priest's house (Luke 22:59) (8)
- 13 The fifth of the 'seven churches' (Revelation 3:1–6) (6)
- 15 'Now the famine was — in Samaria' (1 Kings 18:2) (6)
- 17 Banned by the seventh Commandment (Exodus 20:14) (8)
- 18 Insect most closely associated with itching (1 Samuel 24:14) (4)
- 21 Bantu tribe which gives its name to tiny landlocked country in southern Africa (5)
- 22 Familiar material in churches that use an overhead projector (7)
- 23 Last book of the Bible (10)

Down

- 1 The young David's favourite weapon (1 Samuel 17:40) (5)
- 2 'Your vats will — over with new wine' (Proverbs 3:10) (4)
- 3 Once yearly (Exodus 30:10) (6)
- 4 Milled it (anag.) (3-5)
- 5 Region north of Damascus of which Lysanias was tetrarch (Luke 3:1) (7)
- 6 Comes between Philippians and 1 Thessalonians (10)
- 9 Lake where the first disciples were called (Luke 5:1–11) (10)
- 12 Abusive outburst (8)
- 14 Are loud (anag.) (7)
- 16 Printing errors (6)
- 19 'Take my yoke upon you and — from me' (Matthew 11:29) (5)
- 20 Jacob's third son (Gen 29:34) (4)

Last Month's Solution

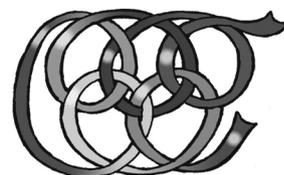
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S	E	L	C	A	R	O		T	R	E	V	A
A		A				H		S				F
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E				T		S				T		H
R	O	D	N	E		L	E	D	A	T	I	C
T		E		P		A		E		E		A
S	E	N	I	M	A	F		D	E	R	I	T
U		W		O				I		I		T
L	O	O	H	C	S		H	S	U	B	M	A

Herefordshire Council's summer children's activities programme is open for bookings from today (Wednesday 26 June). Parents of children (from reception to year 11) who are eligible for benefits-related free school meals can now book up to 20 sessions (approximately 64 hours) of free activities for their child from Saturday 20 July to Sunday 18 August. Children will be able to try out new and exciting activities, from trampolining to horse riding, cheerleading, circus school and parkour, with lots more to choose from. The project encourages children to have fun while making new friends, and every child that attends will be offered a free healthy meal. Eligible families can book their places through the holiday activities page on the [Talk Community Directory website](#).



The Olympic Games

This month sees the start of the Olympic Games in Paris. In describing the Christian life as a marathon race, the writer of Hebrews (12:1-2) challenges us to finish well.



'throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles'

As in a normal race, we have to get rid of any burdens that weigh us down (eg possessions, worries, what others think of us) and besetting sins (wrong habits or attitudes). We can cast our burdens on the Lord (Ps 55:22) and be assured of His forgiveness (1 John 1:9).

'run with perseverance the race marked out for us'

The Christian life is like a marathon not a sprint race, which calls for endurance. The course is *marked out* for us, as we all have a unique race to run, with its opportunities and difficulties. God knows our path and will provide all that we need to complete the race.

'fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith'

The runner keeps their focus on the finishing line and avoids all distractions. Our focus is on Jesus, who has run the race before us (*'author'*), but is the one who can show us how to finish well (*'perfecter'*).

We are also surrounded by a ***'great cloud of witnesses'***.

These are God's people, both past and present, who are cheering us on! During the 1992 Barcelona Olympics, the British athlete Derek Redmond was running in the 400 metres semi-finals. About 250 metres from the finish his hamstring tore, and he fell to the ground in pain. However, his father ran on to the track to support him in completing the race. Let's not forget that whatever we face, God is there beside to enable us to finish the race!

Committee for Minority Ethnic Anglican Concerns publishes report on racial justice

A new report detailing 'action on the ground' to promote racial justice in the dioceses is published today, three years on from a landmark call for change in the culture of the Church of England on race. *Progress on Racial Justice across the Church of England Dioceses* was commissioned to examine progress by the dioceses in implementing the recommendations of the report *From Lament to Action* (FLTA), by the Archbishops' Anti-Racism Taskforce. The FLTA report, published in 2021, called for change in the Church of England after 'decades of inaction' on racial justice, setting out 47 specific actions for different arms of the Church of England to implement across five priority areas: participation, governance, training, education and young people.

The new report from the Committee for Minority Ethnic Concerns (CMEAC), gives an account of how all 42 dioceses have responded to the FLTA recommendations along with examples of good practice and case studies. The review covers the work of the dioceses in promoting diversity and inclusion from support for UKME/GMH vocations, to racial justice charters, and work in partnership with local racial justice groups.

CMEAC Chair the Very Rev Rogers Govender said: "There is still much to be accomplished but I am encouraged by the examples of prayer, faith and action detailed in this report. Each diocese is unique and all are on a journey towards justice, inclusion and equality for all people. The large majority began work on this issue after the publication of FLTA, but this report also shows that some have been working to promote diversity for some time. CMEAC, together with the Racial Justice Commission and the Racial Justice Unit will continue to provide support and encouragement to the dioceses to continue this journey."

Rev Dr Sharon Prentis, Deputy Racial Justice Director for the Church of England said: "Much remains to be done but there are also many examples of work by the dioceses showing that they have taken the findings of FLTA very seriously. We are deeply grateful to them for this and their help in compiling this report. We cannot afford to neglect this work - we are a Church of the whole nation and this must include people from all parts of society including UK minoritised ethnic and Global Majority Heritage (UKME & GMH) communities. Our commitment to racial justice is rooted in our Christian faith and every neighbour, regardless of colour, class, o₂creed, is an image-bearer of God."

Christian Aid in Burundi

In Christian Aid week in May we heard about Aline Nibogora from Burundi which is one of the poorest countries in the world. But the message we received was full of hope – for instance Christian Aid has enabled Aline to grow peanuts and avocados, and so make some money for herself and her family.

So let's now pray for another person in Burundi – Jolis Bigirimana, who is an avocado farmer and the founder & president of Farmers' Pride Burundi.

Jolis says: *"In Burundi climate change is a huge problem, especially for avocado growers. We're experiencing hot temperatures, heavy rain and erosion which is having a terrible impact on farmers' productivity and their income."*

Here's a prayer for Jolis and Farmers' Pride, Burundi

Creator God,

You created a world of community, richness and love.

But human greed has brought separation, destruction and injustice.

We pray for Christian Aid's work in Burundi.

May they find ways to overcome the immense problems which climate change brings in its wake.

We pray for wisdom, love and justice for the people of Burundi, that they and their land may flourish.

Lord in your mercy,

Hear our prayer

Dafydd Jones

First Diocesan Environment Conference a success

The diocese held its first Environment Conference last month, with a focus on helping churches and schools make progress on their environmental goals. Revd Steve Hollinghurst, Mission Enabler for Environment, who organised the event along with the hosts Hereford Cathedral, said, "This was a fantastic day, led by eminent speakers who gave us a lot of great insights. For churches and schools looking to understand our environmental crisis and the place of Christian faith in aiming for Net Zero 2030 and other environmental targets and opportunities, it was an enjoyable way to explore these themes and be inspired to take action, all in one day. We're looking forward to the next event on 28th September in Church Stretton."

Here Be Dragons!

Churchyards and cemeteries may seem strange places to look for animals which live in streams and ponds but actually they can be very good. Frogs, toads and newts all spend much of their lives out of the water and whilst dragonflies are aquatic during their larval stage it is the adult, flying insect that we see throughout the spring and summer. Whilst dragonflies will be returning to water to lay eggs, they can be seen cruising quite far away.



Dragonfly larvae may live for several years within water but for only a few weeks as a flying adult. It's not clear why they are called dragonflies, but other old names include Devil's Riding Horse and Devil's Darning Needle! They are an ancient type of insect with giant dragonflies found in the fossil record, dating from the Carboniferous era. Some fossilized dragonfly species would have had a wingspan of about 70cm.

Adult dragonflies eat smaller insects such as midges and mosquitoes. They can fly fast – reaching 25 to 30 mph with a loud buzzing sound and have excellent eyesight, using their compound eyes to find and catch prey as well as spot potential mates. You may see them basking on a churchyard wall or monument in order to warm up, wait for good weather or finish digesting. Flying takes a lot of energy so they spend much of their time sitting still. If you are both patient and lucky, you may also see predators of dragonflies or the smaller damselflies such as flycatchers and frogs.

One reason that burial grounds are good for dragonflies is that they can be havens for their food – small flying insects. Those managing churchyards, chapel yards and cemeteries rarely if ever use pesticides and there are often areas where these insects can breed, such as long tussocky grass, deadwood and woodland soils with old leaves, bark and humus.

Why not spend some time checking on monuments and see if you can spot any dragonflies. Take a photo of any you see to upload onto the iNaturalist app which will both help you identify them and also make a record so others can see what you've found.

All the best, Harriet Carty

Diocesan Churchyard Environmental Advisor

www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk - individuals and groups in the diocese receive 20% members discount on all CfGA materials. Use the discount code **diomem22**

St Martin's Churchyard

It is a time of change in the Churchyard at St Martin's. After so many years of careful and dedicated work, Bill Evans has retired as our gardener. We are enormously grateful to Bill for his hard work, his kindness and gentleness with visitors and the bereaved and his help with so many tasks beyond his role.

We are also very grateful to the many volunteers who have helped to manage the churchyard over the last couple of months. These volunteers include Scott Richardson and pleased that Scott will be joining us from this month as Sexton. This is a historic name for "an officer of a church charged with the maintenance of its buildings and/or an associated graveyard" and it seemed very appropriate as a job title for Scott as he starts work maintaining the churchyard. The name derives from the same source as "sacristan" - from the Medieval Latin word *sacristanus* meaning "custodian of sacred objects".

A group of volunteer gardeners is making a huge difference in the flower beds around the office and hall and behind the church - thank you Do, Sue, Bev and Pauline. Thank you too to the Cubs and Scouts who have helped and planted some of the plants that they grew for their gardening badge.

The Eco-church team have been busy too. New homes to encourage wildlife have been installed and an initial survey of the plants and animals that live in the churchyard has been undertaken. The 'Meadow' managed part of the churchyard looked absolutely beautiful in the early Summer, full of Ox-eye Daisies and other wildflowers.



July General Synod - papers published

Outline proposals on the wider use of prayers asking for God's blessing for same-sex couples are published today ahead of the annual summer meeting of the Church of England's General Synod in York in July.

Possible arrangements for the use of the Prayers of Love and Faith in standalone services alongside delegating episcopal ministry and a foundational work to provide a timetable towards a decision on clergy in same-sex civil marriages are also set out as part of broad package in outline proposals designed to help hold the Church together amid deep disagreements over questions of sexuality.

Prayers of Love and Faith are already in use as part of regular services in some churches such as a Sunday eucharist or evensong. But Synod will consider whether and how they might also be used as special services in their own right for a trial period as well as related questions. The proposals are set out in papers detailing business for the upcoming meeting of Synod from July 5 to 9 at the University of York.

Legislation to be discussed includes first consideration of a measure to overhaul the Church of England's national governance structures. Synod will also have the opportunity to debate proposed models for greater independence in Church safeguarding. These follow independent reports by Prof Alexis Jay, the former chair of the Independent Inquiry on Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA) and the barrister Sarah Wilkinson. And members will scrutinise legislation to create a national redress scheme for victims and survivors of Church-related abuse.

There is also a private member's motion calling for an inquiry into allegations of abuse and cover-up within the Soul Survivor network.

Synod will debate a motion brought by the Diocese of Liverpool on the human dignity of disabled children. The motion challenges the assumption that "bringing a disabled child into the world is a tragedy to be avoided" and calls for more support and advice for families during pregnancy and after birth.

Reflecting Faith: Commissioner Churches

When you look carefully at churches in towns, you may notice there are many similarities in their designs.

That's because Parliament in 1818 and later in 1824 brought about an Act to enable new churches to be built particularly in towns where the population had grown exponentially due to the industrial revolution and general movement away from the countryside and into town-based work and homes.

These are known as Commissioners, Waterloo or even Million Act churches. The body overseeing the work was the Church Building Commission; the Act followed the end of the Battle of Waterloo and guess how much money was voted to be used by the first Act? The second amount in 1824 was only half a million. All the money was to be used for the Church of England as the 'established' church in Great Britain.

In some cases the Commissioners provided the full cost of the new church; in other cases they provided a partial grant and the balance was raised locally. In total 612 new churches were provided.

One can imagine the significance in those days for country folk to find a local church when they moved away from everything they had known. Not only would it have been spiritually uplifting but they would have been social hubs where connections and friendships were made as well as points of support and practical help; especially for those away from their extended families.

This month:

Have a look at your own church and consider what it stands for in your community. What is it that those attending most seek and appreciate? Perhaps ask someone who does not regularly attend church services what they think.

The Revd Dr Jo White

Doubts about the Christian faith? – take action now!

Do you have doubts about the Christian faith? July is the month for you to decide what to do about them. This month the Church remembers Doubting Thomas, and there IS action *you* can take, either way. You know the story: Thomas was the only apostle not present when Jesus appeared to the disciples on the evening of His resurrection. When the rejoicing disciples later told Thomas that Jesus was alive, he flatly refused to believe them. He had seen the crucifixion.

The gospel goes on to relate that a week later Jesus indeed appeared to Thomas, and invited him to put his hand into the holes in His hands and feet. Thomas was utterly overwhelmed. His response was ‘My Lord and My God!’ He saw, he believed. Then Jesus said something which is relevant to us today. “Blessed are those who have *not* seen and yet have believed.” (Jn 20:29) Jesus KNOWS it can be hard for you, who have never seen Him, to believe that He is indeed alive, and Lord of all.

Which is, of course, where we are today. Perhaps you really struggle with doubt. Well, there are two courses of action you can take.

1. Don't read the Bible. Begin to forget what Christianity teaches. Don't go to church. Don't ask God, or anyone else, for help. Your 'doubts' are perfectly honest questions, but stop looking for answers. Assume that because you have questions, there are no answers.

2. Look for some answers. Find out what the New Testament actually says about Jesus - by reading it! Do not be confused into thinking that you 'doubt' something which you may not even really 'know.' Pray – remember that Jesus said that those who believe without seeing are 'blessed'. So, ask God that, if He is there, please would He 'bless' you by opening your eyes to spiritual realities. Go to church. Yes, the Christian faith demands that we take God at His word, with no evidence other than His Word. But though we believe in Jesus without seeing Him, we do NOT believe without considering Him. Faith is not blind credulity and unthinking naiveté. We have faith in the historic person of Jesus Christ.

Peter writes some real encouragement in his first epistle, “Though you have not seen Him, you love Him; and even though you do not see Him now, you believe in Him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, for you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls” (1 Peter 1:8-9).

The Revd Dr Roger Roberts



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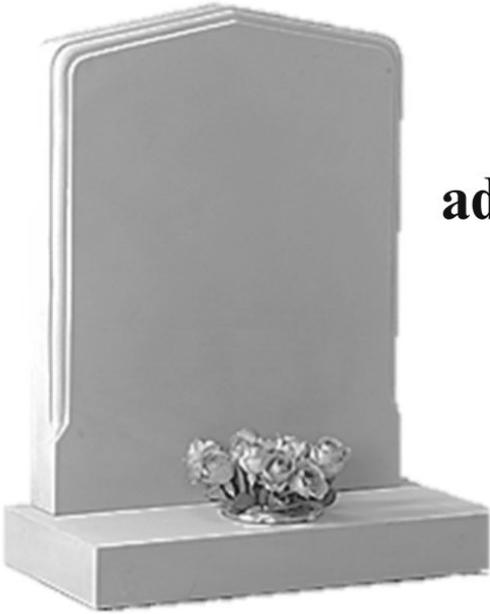
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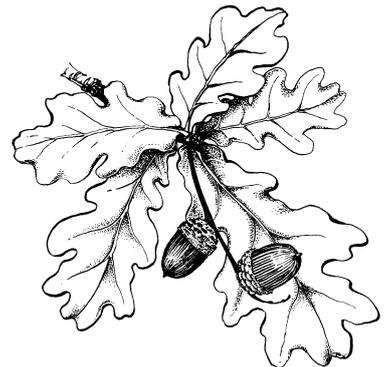
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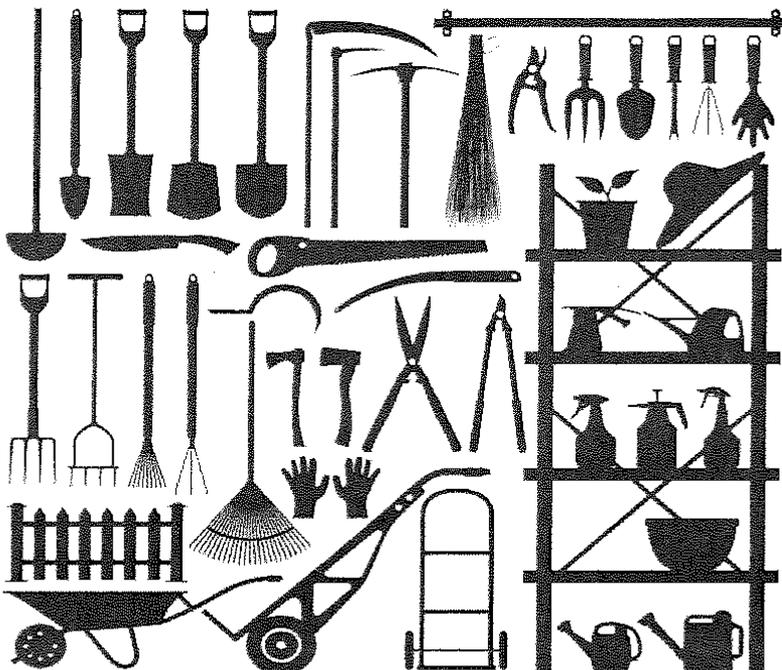
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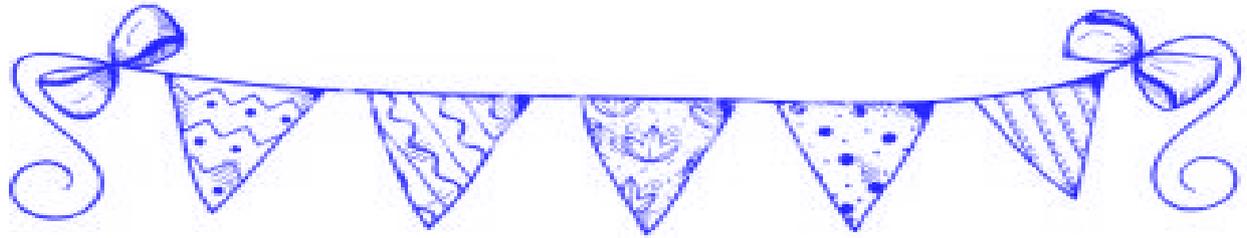
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