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4th October 2024

Dear all,

This week I have been speaking to several people about why we are here - the ultimate philosophical question! Many of us avoid thinking about it very deeply and yet subconsciously we can find we shape our lives around an answer we have never actively embraced. The conversation with individuals usually begins when that individual becomes incapacitated to some degree – perhaps through disability temporary or permanent – perhaps through age and infirmity – perhaps through grief. But some major life event has thrust them into a position of not being able to “do” anything. And here we find that subconscious, societal understanding which many of us, if not the majority of us, have bought into without even knowing it. Purpose in life = productivity. The view that we are only of value and use in this world if we can offer measurable produce. And although there is something admirable in a desire to contribute practically to society, the trouble with this philosophy is that when we find ourselves unable to contribute in that way – for whatever reason – we begin to believe we have no value and are of no use.

Interestingly I realised as I spent time talking with these individuals this week - we don't put these expectations and pressures of productivity on pets! If you asked any animal lover what the purpose of their pet is they would begin to tell you all about their companionship, unconditional love, faithfulness, the way they can silently sooth an anxious mind. Pets are not required to “do” anything – they are just enjoyed for simply “being” – being calming, being loyal, being cuddly! If only we could be as accepting of ourselves and each other as we are of animals.

I firmly believe that God loves us and delights in us – not for any purpose but simply because we *are*. Our personalities, our quirks, our characteristics, our hearts and our minds. That intangible, indefinable quality that makes us who we uniquely are. Most of my deepest friendships don't stem from what that person can do for me or give to me – it is because of who they are and how they make me feel. If only we could believe that that is the reason God likes us too! Perhaps if we understood our value in this way we might begin to recognise the gift each of us is to this world and to each other and that simply by being a part of someone's life you are blessing them. Simply being in relationship with them – however “light” that connection – we are reflecting something of God who is the ultimate dynamic relationship of *being*. The great “I am” who is three and one. Then perhaps we might be able to have confidence that simply by *being* we can be of immense value to our world.

Exciting Announcement

I am delighted to announce that next summer we will be welcoming a Curate into the St Philip's family! Christian Osborne, who is currently an Ordinand in training, will be ordained on Sunday 29th June 2025 and will then complete her curacy training with us as a Pioneer Curate. Christian is not new to Romsey, currently working for Romsey Mill whilst she trains. She and her husband Mark and their 3 children, all have previous connections to St Philip's School where Christian once taught and where all the children attended. More information to follow but it is such an exciting prospect for 2025 and our discernment of what God is doing amongst us and with us and I hope you will join me in welcoming Christian and her family when they arrive.

News and Upcoming Events

Saturday 5th October – 10am-1pm – Quiet Morning at St John's Church, Hills Road Organised by members of the Cambridge Month of Accompanied Prayer Team this will be a time to listen to God and be in God's presence. Please email cambsprayer@gmail.com to book a place or find more information.

Thursday 10th October – 6-8pm - CitizensUK Weaving Trust Event at St Paul's Church, Hills Road CitizensUK are a Community Organising group who help build community, across organisational, religious and cultural divides and

Weaving Trust events are opportunities to recover and practice the lost art of relating to others across difference - an important skill for a flourishing democracy. During the event attendees have multiple short conversations with others on a series of themes with no other aim than opening dialogue and beginning to weave relationships. If you'd like to know more speak to Ruth.

Monday 14th October – 7.30pm – The Round Church, Cambridge – Cambridge Apologetics lecture “Wrestling wisely with the Old Testament”. Speakers will be Ellidh Cook and Matt Lillicrap. There will be another event coming up on **11th November** exploring Tolkien, his world view and his creation of Middle-earth.

Wednesday 16th October – 7.30pm – at church - In person prayer meeting This month we will be focussing our prayers on the environment.

Introduction to Theology Course – If anyone has been inspired over our sermon series of James to explore a little deeper what this faith thing is all about especially in terms of building up our church communities, then the Diocesan 10 week course is something worth thinking about. It is aimed at people thinking of LLM training, ALM preacher training or anyone who wants to think about more Theology for Ministry. Starting on **Thursday 4th November, 6.45 - 9pm Online, via Zoom** Booking: [Diocese of Ely Intro to Theology Course](#)

Eco-Bite – our new green “nugget” each week:

As the temperature drops this week and those winter winds pick up now is the time we notice the drafts! Taking time to seal drafts around our homes, such as around windows, doors, and loft hatches can reduce our energy consumption through lowering our heating demands. Focussing on increasing the insulation in our homes is the best way to tackle our carbon footprint.

Last Week's sermon

Last week's sermon: [sermon 29.9.24.mp3](#)

If you missed any previous sermons, or would like a second listen you can find them here:

The link to our sermon archive: [St Philip's sermon archive](#)

Prayers

If any of you have specific prayers you would like us to include in this newsletter do please get in touch.

Molly Clark & Jack Stott – Please pray for Martin & Bekki's daughter Molly and future son-in-law Jack as they get married this Saturday – May God who is love fill their wedding day and whole marriage!

Kim, Kavalli and Kristian – Please pray for this whole family as they come to this important step on their faith journey. May God's Spirit rest on them and inspire them!

Please pray for our Mission Partner this month:



GenR8 – GenR8 is a Cambridge-based Christian charity working with primary schools and churches in the Cambridgeshire and North Hertfordshire region. They support learning about the Christian faith in schools through a variety of different programmes including presenting assemblies and prayer spaces. And also support churches in their work with children and work in partnership with them and their local schools.

Services this week 6th – 12th October

Sunday:

8.30am – Reflective Holy Communion

10.30am – All Age Worship (with Baptism) – this week we welcome 3 people to be baptised and we will be thinking together about what it means “to become like children” Mark 10:13-16

If you can't attend church in person you can always use this Zoom link:

meeting ID: 976 3739 9129 and Passcode: 330714

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/97637399129?pwd=TGhKWwXOcWF1S242aVhrWDIjUkxZz09>

Wednesday:

12noon - Reflective Holy Communion A quiet time to help find space and peace in the middle of the week.

Regular Weekly Prayers to join:

Monday & Friday 8.30pm – Compline on zoom

Meeting ID: 836 5965 9953

Passcode: 749968

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83659659953?pwd=btP5AjGMu1s-dE_2W9T0MMFqnnPKSS.1

Wednesdays 7.00-7.30pm - Weekly Prayers on zoom: - (Monthly in person – next in person prayer **16th October**)

Meeting ID: 852 1105 2733 Password: 397987

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85211052733?pwd=OE52bm9NS1RtQVQ0ZytTc0xBZnVsUT09>

Regular Weekly small groups:

Thursdays 7.30pm – Bible study group at church

Saturdays 8.15am - Morning Bible Discussion and Prayer on zoom:

Meeting ID: 143 338 655 Password: 824271

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/143338655?pwd=L1JJTFZJNU9EaFZjaUFjQzVlaPmZz09>

With love and prayers

Ruth

Need to unsubscribe? Email Bekki: bekki@theclarks.biz