

**Donations**

**July 2025**

**GREETINGS FROM  
LUDLOW  
METHODIST  
CHURCH**



## Mary Magdalene

Six Marys are mentioned in the New Testament, including Mary Magdalene, who is remembered this month in the church's calendar (22<sup>nd</sup> July). What can we learn from Mary's story?

### ***We don't have to be defined by our past:***

When Jesus encountered Mary, He cast seven demons out of her (Luke 8:2). As a result, her life was transformed, and she became a follower of Jesus. Her life as a disciple was no longer defined by the person she had been before. Like Mary, we don't have to let our past without Christ dictate how we see ourselves today.

### ***Make Jesus the centre of our world:***

Along with some of the women who had been cured of evil spirits and diseases (Luke 8:1-3), Mary followed Jesus and His disciples and supported them in ministry. She was there at the cross (Matthew 27:55-56) and one of the first to the tomb on the Sunday (Matthew 28:1; Mark 16:1 and John 20:1-18). Like Mary, we are called to serve Jesus as dedicated disciples.

### ***Jesus uses the weakest people for His purposes:***

Mary is a great example of Paul's words: *'But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong.'* (1 Corinthians 1:27). At a time when women were regarded as second-class citizens with no real autonomy, Jesus had a special compassion and care for women. Alongside Mary, the women's witness to the resurrection was taken seriously. We shouldn't be quick to dismiss the things that don't agree with our expectations, as Jesus doesn't always do what we expect! He delights in working out His plans through unlikely people and in surprising ways. He did this through Mary, and if we allow Him, He can do it through us!

## Why you should drink tea

There is a popular greeting card which says: 'All things are possible with a cup of tea'. And for many of us, that is almost always true.

Tea comes from the *Camellia sinensis* plant, which is often blended with other plants for different flavours, such as Earl Grey or chai. Tea is the UK's favourite hot beverage, which besides from cheering us up, has cancer-fighting properties and can improve our heart and gut health.

So here's what's good about tea:

Tea is rich in polyphenols, which have antioxidant effects on the body, and can reduce inflammation. Milk does not hurt their absorption, so add milk if you like!

Tea has flavanols, which helps your blood to flow and lowers your blood pressure. One study at Harvard found that drinking three to four cups a day means you are less likely to have a heart attack.

Tea is prebiotic, which means it promotes healthier kinds of bacteria in your gut, which helps with your digestion, your respiratory system, and your immune system.

Tea lowers blood sugar, and even the risk of Type 2 diabetes, due to the polyphenols.

Tea may reduce your risk of cancer. Again, the polyphenols are your friends here, as they may be slowing the development of certain types of cancer.

Tea helps you concentrate. Coffee may speed you up, but it can also give you the jitters. Tea contains around 40-50 mg of caffeine, which is only half the amount found in coffee. But tea also has an amino acid called 'L-theanine', which helps produce a feeling of 'calm concentration', by lowering stress and improving mental focus.

Tea improves sleep – due to the polyphenols, L-theanine, theaflavins, thearubigins, and gamma-aminobutyric acid (GABA), which help lower stress and create calm.

Finally, black tea or green tea? Without going into some complicated science, it seems that they are equally healthy to drink. Black tea has more caffeine, which may help if you need more energy!

## Dates in July

### 3<sup>rd</sup> July St Thomas the Apostle – confused and doubting

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." (John 11:16) 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 (John 14:5). 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"(John 20.26ff).

Thus Doubting 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. In Doubting Thomas' complete affirmation of faith, after meeting the risen, crucified Christ, they can find support for their own faith.

Ancient legends tell how Thomas went on to India as a missionary. There are rumours that Thomas even built a palace for a king's daughter in India, and thus he is the patron saint of architects. It is believed that he was martyred by a spear on 3<sup>rd</sup> July, 72 AD in Mylapore, near Madras. 46 ancient churches in England were dedicated to him.

### Chilling reading' – Bishop Sarah responds to assisted suicide impact assessments

The Bishop of London, Sarah Mullally, the Church of England's lead bishop for health and social care, has recently responded to the Government impact assessments on the bill to introduce assisted suicide in England and Wales.

The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), together with the Ministry of Justice, had published a main assessment and an equality impact assessment on the Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill.

Bishop Sarah said: "The impact assessment of the Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill makes for chilling reading as it highlights particular groups who would be put at risk by a change in the law, including those who are subject to health inequalities, and those vulnerable to domestic abuse.

"It also sets out the financial savings of introducing an assisted dying service, through reduction in care costs, palliative and end of life care costs and state-provided benefits.

"It is crude to see these cost savings set out in this way, and it is easy to see how numbers of this nature could contribute to someone feeling that they should pursue an assisted death rather than receive care.

"Each human life is immeasurably more valuable than the money that may be saved through their premature death.

"Every person is made in the image of God and holds an irreducible value that is worthy of care and support until the end of their life.

"We must oppose any change in the law that puts the vulnerable at risk rather than working to improve access to desperately needed palliative care services."

### 6<sup>th</sup> July Thomas More, Reformation martyr

These days, lawyers and politicians are held in the lowest esteem by the public, along with tabloid journalists and estate agents. St Thomas More was both a lawyer and politician, who is today much admired for holding steadfastly to his faith-based principles. He lived in dangerous times, when anyone, even queens, who displeased King Henry VIII could find themselves in a condemned cell in The Tower of London.

Sir Thomas More held the office of Lord High Chancellor and at one time was the king's most trusted adviser. But when King

Henry took personal control of the Church in England in order to divorce his first wife, More courageously opposed him.

Thomas More was a social philosopher and the author of 'Utopia'. This book described an imaginary republic governed by an educated elite who employed reason rather than self-interest for the general good of everyone. He was himself one of the pre-eminent scholars of his age. As a Christian theologian he supported orthodox doctrine, vigorously opposed heresy and argued strongly against the new Protestant ideas taking hold in Europe. Although holding the highest political and legal office he was far from being a pragmatic politician and opportunist lawyer. In every matter he was a man who held firmly to what he believed was right in God's eyes.

When Thomas More fell from favour with the king, as a result of his unflinching views, he was falsely accused of taking bribes. When this charge failed, his enemies accused him of supporting a celebrated seer of the times who was strongly critical of the king. This too failed. He was then required to swear to the Oath of Supremacy, acknowledging Henry's position as head of the Church of England. This he could not do in conscience. He was put on trial and condemned to be hung, drawn and quartered for his treason, a punishment later changed to beheading. He died in 1535 and on the scaffold his final words were 'I die the King's good servant, but God's first.' He has been officially declared a martyr saint by the Roman Catholic Church.

### **31<sup>st</sup> July St Joseph of Arimathea – the man who buried**

#### **Jesus**

Have you ever suffered from gossip? Ever discovered that people are saying some really wild things about you? If so, Joseph of Arimathea would understand – and sympathise with you. This decent, godly man of the gospels seems to have fired the imaginations of all sorts of odd people down the centuries.

Joseph was a rich, prominent member of the ruling Jewish council – the Sanhedrin. Mark's gospel describes him as having been 'waiting for the kingdom of God' for years, and even being a secret disciple of Jesus. He played no part in the trial or crucifixion.

When Jesus was pronounced dead, Joseph had the seniority needed to approach Pilate for the body – and get it. Near to where Jesus had been crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb, cut deep in the rock. Joseph himself already owned it – and it was still new and empty. So Joseph laid Jesus there, and wrapped him in a linen cloth, according to Jewish burial custom. Joseph did not bury Jesus alone - Nicodemus helped him, while some women who had followed Jesus trailed miserably behind.

Matthew tells us that the last thing Joseph did for Jesus was to sadly roll a big stone across the entrance to the tomb, and then go away. With that, Joseph passes out of history - and into legend. For in the centuries that followed, Joseph was swept up into the Legend of the Holy Grail, the Legend of Glastonbury, and even bits of the Arthurian legends. It was said that the Holy Thorn, which flowers at Christmas, had sprung from his staff.

The mind boggles at what Joseph would have made of it all. One suspects he would have preferred to stick to the simple, but far better, true story: as having had the immense, unique privilege of laying the body of Jesus Christ in the tomb. Even if Jesus didn't stay very long!

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#### **With our world leaders in mind....**

1. Nearly all men can stand adversity, but if you want to test a man's character, give him power. – *Abraham Lincoln*
2. Self-praise is no recommendation. – *Anon*
3. Being a character and having a character are NOT the same thing. – *Anon*
4. Only those who do not desire power are fit to hold it. – *Plato*
5. Greatness lies not in being strong, but in the right use of strength. – *Anon*.

## The Raid on Zeebrugge

### Part 2: U-Boats

The Kaiser had, early in the war, instructed his fleet not to engage the enemy where they (the enemy) were clearly a superior force. The German High Seas Fleet rarely put to sea as a consequence. With the exception of the Battle of Jutland, there would be no large fleet engagements as would be seen in WW2.

So why was Britain so concerned about the German navy? The answer lay with the new craft that Germany had deployed beneath the waves - submarines, or U-Boats.

In typically British style, the Admiralty initially refused to believe that such an 'underhanded' weapon could best their surface fleet. However, by August 1914 the Royal Navy had 80 of these underwater boats in service. Due to their limited size and endurance they were limited to defending home shores only.

But, as with most conflicts, technology advanced at a much sharper pace than it would have done in peace time. Bigger, faster and better-armed submarines were added to the fleet. By the end of the war a further 150 boats had been built.

But it was Germany that saw, and used, the full potential of submarines. International law demanded that merchant and passenger ships should be warned, and the crew be allowed to take to the boats, before any action could be taken against them. Germany's introduction of unrestricted submarine warfare, where ships were sunk without any such warning, brought an end to this idyllic notion.

Comments by various British admirals more or less said that no nation would permit such warfare, their officers would be shot. However, this would be the way in which Britain would be nearly brought to its knees.

By the August of 1915, 900,000 tons of shipping had been lost to U-Boats. In comparison, 2,000,000 tons had been delivered in the same period, more than compensating for the losses. The sinking of the Lusitania on May 7, 1915, with the loss of 1,201 lives, many of them American, put a severe strain on American/German relations. But it was the sinking of the White Star Liner, the Arabic, on October 5, again claiming American lives, that caused the Kaiser to call an end to all forms submarine warfare

off the coast of Britain.

The campaign was renewed just a few months later, in March of the following year, with the sinking of a cross-Channel steamer carrying some American passengers. America threatened to end diplomatic relations with Germany and the Kaiser ordered his U-Boats to restrict their attacks to legitimate targets.

On February 1, 1917, unrestricted warfare was resumed, by the end of that April 1,250,000 tons of shipping had been lost. During the following four months a further 1,500,000 tons had been lost. The level of these losses were simply not sustainable.

Severe rationing was introduced, but despite that reserves of food for the country were reduced to just six weeks supply. Fleet exercises were cancelled due to the shortage of fuel. Many, including the First Sea Lord, believed that the country was on the verge of defeat. The most powerful navy in the world was simply unable to defeat the U-Boat threat.

As many as 60 U-Boats were based at Bruges, and were able to carry out offensive patrols in the Dover Straits and the South Western Approaches. Reached by twin canals, entering the sea at Ostend and Zeebrugge, and six miles inland, Bruges was safe from surface boat attack and concrete shelters protected her charge from an air attack. The 100lb bombs that aircraft of the day could carry, were simply ineffective.

As early as November 1916, the Prime Minister had told the Chief of the Imperial General Staff of the importance of denying to the enemy the ports of Ostend and Zeebrugge.

Next month: Part 3 - The Plan

Source: Geoffrey Bennett *'Naval Battles of the First World War'*

Ron Gittings

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Humility, after the first shock, is a cheerful virtue. – C S Lewis

## A HONEY HEAVEN

This is Christian Aid's 80th year. We celebrate our eightieth birthdays. How much do the millions who look to Christian Aid for support as they try to go about their daily lives feel they have to celebrate, in the traditional sense, as they hit 80? Or any other age. This contrast highlights our Christian commitment to support and empower our global brothers and sisters to achieve self-sufficiency, even in seemingly small ways. In Honduras beekeeping has given people like Juanita, renewed hope and vision for a more fulfilled and sustainable future.



Juanita with her bees

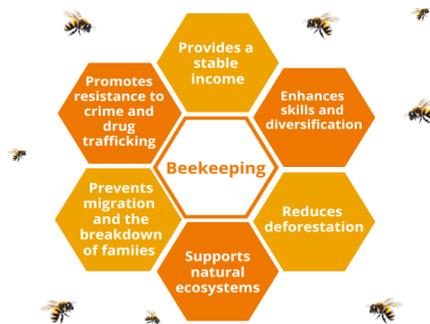
"For me bees mean life. Once I pass away, I wish the beekeeping legacy continues and that more people join the beekeeping movement. I can see God's marvels, because she (the bee) is so small but so hard working. They teach me how to work".

Farmers like Juanita live in the 'dry corridor' of western Honduras. In the face of many emergencies from climate crisis and food insecurity to economic

migration, life is tough. Through beekeeping, Juanita and her group can diversify their income as well as feed their children.

Our donations enable Christian Aid's local partners OCDIH (Christian Organisation for Integrated Development in Honduras) supports Juanita in her goal of becoming a commercial beekeeper as she supports her two children. The bees are an antidote to the injustice Juanita witnesses. The climate crisis makes it hard to harvest coffee, whilst violence against women has devastated many families. Juanita is also training OCDIH workers showing them how to support women who may need access to the justice system

There must be an endless number of Juanitas in Honduras - please think of them when you enjoy honey on your toast. And please remember in your prayers the work of Christian Aid and its partners throughout the world.



We believe in life before death

# Green Pages

A round-up of environmental and climate-change news

July 2025

Did you know that research has shown that 89% of the world's population (that's very nearly 9 out of 10 people worldwide) want their national governments to fight global warming? Sadly the figure for the UK is closer to 8 out of 10 people; but that's still a sizeable majority. You would never believe this, reading much of the popular press. You might blame long-standing, well-funded misinformation campaigns by the fossil fuel industry, or political posturing. So what can we do about it? We might be in the majority, but we appear to be a silent majority.

We are social creatures, and we are therefore hugely influenced by how we perceive others think. If we can challenge this self-fulfilling bubble of silence by making people aware that their pro-climate view is, by far, the majority view, we could unlock a social tipping point and push leaders into the climate action so urgently needed.

In church circles we are well used to being told that if we were more vocal about our faith, then more people would be influenced by the good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ. There is a parallel need to be more 'evangelical' about environmental issues as well. When we talk about these things as Christians we call it "Caring for God's Creation"; so it's an important part of our Christian witness.

Time pressures and early deadlines have prevented us from printing a full set of Green Pages this month – back to normal in August. So in the mean time, please talk about 'Green' issues as much as you can; and don't forget to do this as an expression of your Christian faith.

The Green Pages of the Ludlow Methodist Church monthly magazine are brought to you by the Care for Creation Group.

For more information please contact Elizabeth Wright.

**What bring you deep contentment, happiness: joy!** A person/relationship, a place, a memory, a book or poem, a painting, sculpture, garden, landscape view, creature, some part of the natural world?

What does **joy** mean to you?

**Do you experience joy in believing?** Having a loved and loving relationship with God, **joy** in Jesus, **joy** from the presence of the Spirit in your life, worship and fellowship, prayer, reading the Bible, serving God?

Some thoughts-

Surprised by **joy** William Wordsworth

A thing of beauty is a **joy** for ever; It's loveliness increases; it will never Pass into nothingness. *John Keats*

Labour without **joy** is base. *John Ruskin*

A thing that is lent may be taken away, a thing that is given is not taken away. **Joy** is given; sorrow is lent. *Amy Carmichael*

Your presence fills me with **joy** and brings me pleasure for ever. *Psalm 16*

Those who wept as they went out carrying the seed will come back singing for **joy** as they bring in the harvest. *Psalm 126*

Your words fill me with my heart with **joy** and happiness. *Jeremiah chapter 15 verse 16.*

The angel said to the shepherds, "Don't be afraid! I am here with good news for you which will bring great **joy** to all the people." *Luke chapter 2 verse 10*

There will be more **joy** in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine respectable people who do not need to repent. *Luke chapter 14 verse 7.*

(The jailer) and his family were **filled with joy**, because they now believed in God. *Acts chapter 16 verse 34.*

God's kingdom is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of the righteousness, peace, and **joy** which the Holy Spirit gives. *Romans chapter 14 verse 17.*

May God, the source of hope, fill you with all **joy** and peace by means of your faith in him, so that your hope will continue to grow by the power of the Holy Spirit. *Romans chapter 15 verse 13.*

It catches me out.  
A dreary day,  
Cloaked in grey,  
with little sun,  
and then,  
for no reason I can find,  
a glimpse of something  
or a gentle sound  
opens up the world again and I am found.  
There is joy in heaven, says Jesus,  
over one sinner that repents.  
But there is joy here on earth too,  
as I let go of my sorrow  
and my shame  
and you clasp my hand  
and lift my face and give me peace.  
Catch me again,  
God of all grace,  
and bring me home .

*Susan Durber.*

*Stephen Dalton*

Faithful God,  
if we are honest, life does not always feel joyful.  
Times can be hard and challenging.  
Family, finances, and health can all affect our joy.  
True joy, however, is not based on how we feel;  
True joy is a gift from you.  
Help us to know that true joy You give,  
even when our feelings make us believe it is not there.  
May it flood our very beings, our minds and souls,  
that your true joy may overflow out from us  
and into the world around us.

*Dave Cumbers*

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### **The danger of electric cars**

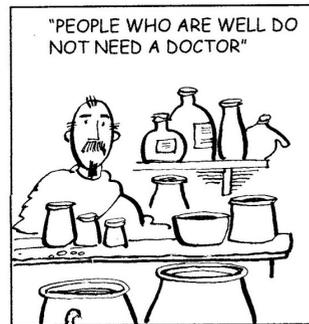
Electric cars may be the 'future' of British motoring, but meanwhile, more of them are catching fire. From 131 blazes three years ago, there were 232 blazes needing a fire brigade last year – a 77 per cent increase in just two years.

Electric car fires are more dangerous than petrol or diesel car fires, because they are extremely hard to put out. This is because water, foam or fireproof blanket have little to no effect: lithium-ion battery fires are self-sustaining and continue to burn until the entire battery is consumed.

Electric car fires are normally the result of 'thermal runaway', where batteries have got damaged or overheated, and then begin to irreversibly overheat.

There is to be a total ban on new petrol and diesel cars by 2030.

# The doctor and the ill person



## Rise in older shoplifters

More and more pensioners have turned to shoplifting. They aren't in criminal gangs, they are hungry.

So says a security firm which works with hundreds of stores across the country. Kingdom Security reports that food retailers have seen a "massive" increase in pensioner shoplifters over the past year, involving "people who just can't afford to buy food."

John Nussbaum, director of service for retail at Kingdom Security, said that the cost of living is "pushing people to something they've never done before".

Mr Nussbaum estimates that five per cent of all those caught shoplifting by Kingdom staff on a weekly basis are aged over 50. "We've not seen this before, and I've been in security for 30 years. People can't afford to spend £10, £20 on food. It's desperation."

He added: "Retailers don't tend to involve the police when they're dealing with pensioners. Stores tend to want to handle it on their own. It's not good publicity for a supermarket, if it got out that a pensioner had been handed over to the police for shoplifting."

The number of shoplifting offences reported to police last year passed 500,000 for the first time.

## Orleton's Journey to becoming a Silver Eco Church

Back in January 2018, Orleton started its journey as an Eco church. We joined the A Rocha Eco Church scheme and assessed our fellowship against the criteria laid down in the five categories. These cover all aspects of church life and are

- Wordship & Teaching
- Buildings & Energy
- Land & Nature
- Community & Global Engagement
- Lifestyle

We were gratified to find that we were already doing a lot of the right things and by making some adjustments to our energy

usage and with encouragement in recycling and lifestyle we were able to improve our overall scoring. Finally, in October 2022 we achieved Bronze status.

We then started to look and see what was required to raise that to Silver. The A Rocha survey placed significant emphasis on the church's carbon footprint and energy saving. I suspect that we were like many small churches, worshiping in a late Victorian chapel, in that, whilst we had no difficulty scoring well on worship and were able to improve our standing in lifestyle, to improve the buildings category proved much harder. But then A Rocha revised their survey questions, reducing the emphasis on energy usage and changing focus far more onto lifestyle and engagement with others. We determined that, by committing to a carbon offset we could get a Silver marking. We settled on making a contribution to The Woodland Trust to achieve this.

We then reviewed our answers to the survey, testing each response and ensuring it could be justified. We submitted the finished questionnaire – suitably endorsed by Rev Arnold - and very quickly got a reply that we had been awarded Silver status.

Whilst our building may prevent us achieving Gold, that is no reason not to continue to seek improvement. We will be looking again at our survey responses – especially those categories where we are borderline, and looking to make a plan of action for future improvement.

*Paul Burnham*

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### **Life choice**

A small boy returned from Sunday School in tears. When questioned by his mother for the reason of his distress, he gulped: "Jesus wants me for a sunbeam, but I want to be an engine driver."

### **Vatican**

Once asked how many people worked in the Vatican, Pope John XXIII replied: "Oh, about half."

### **Geoff's Quiz:(Answers)**

1.Kazakhstan is the largest landlocked country. What is the second largest landlocked country?

**Mongolia**

2.What U.S. State is this SSSSSSSSSSE ?

**Tennessee**

3. Which very notable year in English history is represented by the seven Roman numerals listed in descending order?

**1666 (M=1000, D=500, C=100, L=50, X=10, V=5, I=1)**

4. The capital cities of which two EU countries start with the same two letters and end with the same three letters?

**Romania and Hungary (Bucharest & Budapest)**

5. With which item of furniture would you associate Peter, Susan, Edmund and Lucy?

**Wardrobe (they're the children in The Lion, the Witch & the Wardrobe)**

6. How many planets are represented by pieces of music in Gustav Holst's Planets suite?

**Seven (he did not write one for The Earth and Pluto had not yet been discovered)**

7. Which first name has been shared by two of the first six main hosts of Countdown?

**Des (O'connor & Lynam)**

8. If all of the countries in the world were listed alphabetically, which five would come last? (we're talking their normal English name, and as it happens they are all one-word names?)

**Zimbabwe, Zambia, Yemen, Vietnam, Venezuela**

9. Name three of the four acts who have had a UK Number 1 with 'Unchained Melody'?

**Jimmy Young, Righteous Brothers, Robson & Jerome, Gareth Gates**

10. In the United Kingdom what is the longest month of the year?

**October (October has 31 days like many other months, but since the clocks are put back in October, the month is one hour longer)**