Southam & Bishop's Itchington Congregational Church



# The Messenger

( Pur 2025



#### SOUTHAM AND BISHOPS ITCHINGTON CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH WOOD STREET, SOUTHAM

**This Church is:** A family of Christians meeting together to worship God and to find fellowship with one another in prayer and learning. We aim to spread the Good News and to encourage others to discover His love and His purpose for their lives.

Minister: Revd Neil Chappell Tel No. 01926 258685

Church Secretary: Mr David Hudson Tel. No. 01926 812695

#### **WORSHIP - SUNDAY SERVICES IN CHURCH**

10:30am - Family Worship

Preachers and arrangements during the coming weeks

Sunday 7th September - Rev Neil Chappell

Sunday 14th September - Songs of Praise

Sunday 21st September - Philip Clarke

Sunday 28th September - Cassandra Ryner

Sunday 5th October - Rev Neil Chappell - Harvest Festival

Sunday 12th October - Rev Gillian Roberts

Sunday 19th October - Rev Neil Chappell

Sunday 26th October - Rev Neil Chappell

Sunday 2nd November - Debbie Wilson

Sunday 9th November - Remembrance Sunday - Rev Neil Chappell

Sunday 16th November - Rev Neil Chappell

Sunday 23rd November - Verity Almond

Sunday 30th November - Rev Neil Chappell

Children's Church is held on the 1st Sunday of the month - with Junior Church and creche.

Communion services are usually held on the 3rd Sunday in the month.

#### -- PASTORAL LETTER --

Dear Friends,

Ian Drury once sang:

Take your mum to Paris
Lighting up the chalice
Wee Willy Harris
Bantu Stephen Biko, listening to Rico
Harpo, Groucho, Chico
Cheddar cheese and pickle, the Vincent motorsickle ...
... Reasons to be cheerful

Last time I wrote for these pages I remarked about the experience of turning 60 years old. I still haven't recovered! Since then, the celebrations have taken place and life has returned to 'normal'. I'm not sure if I'm a Senior Citizen yet, but I do get free prescriptions now.

In the weeks after my celebrations many people said thank you to me for an invite to my party. I felt very humbled by their kind words, but I actually thought that it was me that should have been saying thank you. It was so good to be surrounded by friends and family, it made me think that we perhaps don't quite realise how many blessings we have in life. We are perhaps weighted down by so many cares we don't have the opportunity to lift our heads and see the blue skies.

The last couple of months have been a busy time for the church – despite being in the 'quiet' of the summer months. We had a great weekend showcasing the tremendous talent and skill of local artists (including those from our own fellowship) during the Southam Art Trail. We then organised a sumptuous Afternoon Tea which 40 thankful people enjoyed, with the accompaniment of the wonderful and delightful singing of Florrie Forgan. That raised an incredible amount for our carpet fund – which was fitted the next day! We have much to be thankful for.

Gratitude is a thread that quietly stitches together the tapestry of our lives, often strongest where it is least obvious. We should make ourselves aware of the many reasons we have to be thankful - not only for the visible gifts, but also for the countless unseen ways God moves within our lives.



We often give thanks for the clear and concrete blessings: the company of friends around a table, the laughter that brightens a room, the blessings that

allows us to gather and celebrate. These are prized, and it is right to treasure them. Yet, if we listen closely, we may sense that much of what shapes our lives and supports our hearts happens quietly, in the background, orchestrated by a loving divine hand we cannot always see.

There are the unexpected moments of peace that settle in the heart after a difficult conversation, or the resolve to try again after disappointment, there are gifts that arrive unannounced, yet at precisely the right moment. There is the gentle comfort that comes in the midnight hours of worry, and the subtle guidance in decisions we later realise were wise beyond our own understanding. Each of these, I believe, is a grace, a nudge, a whisper from God working for our good in ways too complex to trace.

I am reminded that every day is layered with these unrecognised kindnesses. Perhaps we will only truly see their scope when we look back — when the tapestry is complete, and the pattern emerges from the threads of both joy and sadness. Until then, I want to foster a grateful heart, trained to notice both the obvious and the overlooked, to give thanks not only for the gifts in my hands, but also for those hidden in the unfolding of each day.

Thankfulness, then, becomes more than a response; it is a way of seeing. It is the quiet conviction that nothing is wasted and that all things, seen and unseen, are held together by a goodness far greater than our understanding. In that, and much more, I find deep peace and lasting joy, and a reason to be cheerful.

As autumn approaches may God guide our every moment and may we always be thankful.

Best wishes,

Neil



# CHILDREN'S CHURCH

SUNDAY 5TH OCTOBER - HARVEST SUNDAY 2ND NOVEMBER SUNDAY 7TH DECEMBER











## JACKPOT

THURSDAY 18TH SEPTEMBER
THURSDAY 16TH OCTOBER
THURSDAY 20TH NOVEMBER
THURSDAY 18TH DECEMBER

Children's Church takes place on the first Sunday on the month at 10.30am, during the morning service, with the children and young people going out to their own activities run by our leaders.

Jackpot meet on the third Thursday of every month from 6.30-8.00pm, for games, crafts, activities, fun, food and faith.



Mon 08 Sept - BLUE Mon 22 Sept - YELLOW Mon 6 Oct - BROWN Mon 20 Oct - ORANGE

Mon 3 Nov - BLACK Mon 17 Nov - BLUE Mon 1 Dec - GREEN Mon 15 Dec - FESTIVE!

Come and join our friendly, lively group for o-5's on Mondays at the Congregational Church, Wood St, Southam from 10.15-11.30am. Each session we have songs, stories, activities and snacks based on the colour of the week.

Contact: Sally Forgan - 07941 188063

# Southam & Bishop's Itchington Congregational Church

## Ceilidh Night

featuring



#### The Graham Adams Centre

(Bar available)

### Saturday 11th October

7.30PM - 10.30PM

#### Tickets Adult - £12

Under 16s - £8 (must be accompanied by an adult)

Tickets available from Debby Chappell 07884 931482 Caroline Johnson 07969 208504









#### Southam Book Festival 2025

Bookfest 2025 will take place on Sunday October 12th at the Grahams Adams Centre again. It will run from 11am to 4pm.

Entry is free to the main hall exhibition displays and to the talks.

**COFFEE POT** is open every **Tuesday morning** from **10.00am** until **12 noon** in **Church**. Everyone is very welcome to drop in for a cuppa and a chat. We're always looking for helpers too. Contact: Sue Hudson Tel: 812695



#### **TUESDAY CLUB**

meets in the Church Lounge on **Tuesdays** at **2.15pm**.

Details of meetings will be included in 'Storyboard' available in Church.

The Club is open to everyone -Visitors will receive a warm welcome.

Contact: David Hudson, Tel No 812695 The next

#### **Church Meeting**

will be on

Tuesday 16th September
Tuesday 18th November
both at 7.45pm

Please put these dates in your diary and make every effort to attend. Thank you.



#### **Cat Sitting**



We recently had a phone call from Lucy asking if we would like to look after her cat, while she and Rachel took the boys away on holiday. We thought that's a great idea. The house to ourselves and somewhere different to explore.

We travelled up to Hull on a Sunday and arrived just in time for lunch. We decided to go to the pub just up the road. They do a very good carvery. We settled down with our plates loaded and

had a good catch up. The boys were with Beckie so there were just the four of us. We just finished our lunch when the heavens opened. We hadn't bothered with coats or umbrellas so as it didn't seem to be stopping we walked back in the rain.

After getting dried off and a lovely cup of tea. Lucy suggested a game of darts. I must say it was a very competitive game of darts.

Lucy has made the lounge at the front of the house into a playroom. It looks more like a small youth club. There are two bookcases full of board games, jigsaws and books. A dart board in one corner, a comfy settee with a television that can be used for games, in the other corner a huge basketball machine, the type you would find in an arcade. In the centre of the room is a snooker table that can be used for table tennis or just doing jigsaws or drawing. Lucy wants the boys to bring their friends home.

We played our game of darts. None of us were very good at it but it was fun. Then I had to have a go at the basketball machine. We stopped for tea and cake then watched a bit of television. Then it was time for bed.

In the morning after breakfast Lucy went to pick up the boys then started loading the car. They were going to a Haven holiday park in Filey, which is only an hour away from Hull. We



decided to go and see them on Wednesday. After we had seen them off we walked to Tesco (which is a small corner shop) for some lunch.

Tuesday we went into Hull to explore. It's quite a long time since we've been. After a coffee we explored the shops. I bought some new sandals. Then we

made our way to the market and bought some cherries and plums. We made our way home and just took it easy.

Wednesday was Filey day. We eventually found our way out of Hull. They had closed the road the Sat Nav was taking us on so had to follow the diversion. We arrived in time for coffee. The site was huge. It had everything to keep children occupied. They had already been swimming. There was an indoor and an outdoor pool, a huge rope climbing obstacle course, one for older children and one for toddlers, a boating lake and a huge bouncy castle, plus other activities.

After the boys had been on the bouncy castle and Shayden had driven a car round a circuit. We decided it was time for fish and chips, so Col and Rachel were dispatched to the chippy. We caught up with the boys. Shayden is off to senior school in September. He had done well with his SATs and Lucy and Beckie were pleased with him. We all were. Frankie is a little sad that his big brother won't be at school with him next year this the first year they've been apart.

After lunch and a chat we decided to go to the large arcade and play roll the penny. We were winning then losing, then in the end we lost all of our two pence pieces. We thought we'd go for an ice cream but as we got to the door we noticed it was raining. Can't have ice cream in the rain - so Col and I decided to go back to Hull.

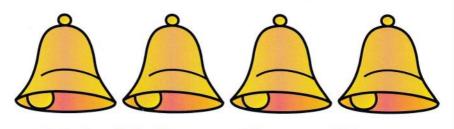
I wonder why Satnav's take you a different way back to the way it takes us? We approached Hull in a different direction, we seemed to get back a lot quicker.

Thursday we just chilled and found a Chinese restaurant for lunch. It was a buffet style so we had a choice of loads of different dishes. Friday arrived and we set off for home.

I bet you're wondering what happened to the cat. He looked after himself, he had a chip which opened his cat flap. We just put some food in his bowl and gave him the occasional treat. He was quite happy - like us - doing his own thing!



Val Giles



# Walking family treasure hunt

### Sunday 14th Sept St James Church , Southam.

Begins at St James church between 2 & 2:30pm, to be completed by 4pm.

Pushchair friendly!

£10 family entry (2 adults and preteen children)

£5 Individual adults and older children

#### Tea and Cakes available

Help preserve our beautiful church and win a Hamper!



#### SPONSORED BY SOUTHAM BELL RINGERS

Enquiries: Church Office - 01926 812413 southamstjames@gmailcom

#### Autumn crunchy crumble

Serves 4 | Easy-to-make | Prep: 20 mins | Cook: 30 mins

September is a wonderful time for ripe fruits - apples, pears or plums topped with crunchy crumble mix

#### Ingredients:

- 140g plain flour
- 100g margarine
- 4 tbsp rolled oats
- 2-3 tbsp demerara sugar
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 4 eating apples or pears or 6 plums (or a mixture)
- handful sultanas soaked in hot water for 10 mins
- 1-2 tbsp honey
- natural yogurt, custard, ice cream or crème fraîche, to serve

#### Method:

#### Step 1

Heat oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Sift the flour into a bowl and add the margarine.

#### Step 2

Using a fork or your hands, mash together the margarine and flour until it resembles breadcrumbs and there are no remaining lumps of margarine.

#### Step 3

Add the oats, sugar, and cinnamon to the flour and margarine mixture.

#### Step 4

Core the apple and/or pears, and stone the plums, if using. Chop all the fruit, keeping the skin on for added flavour, vitamins, and minerals, and put in an ovenproof dish in layers.

#### Step 5

Drain the sultanas and add to the fruit. Drizzle with the honey.

#### Step 6

Sprinkle over the crumble mixture. Bake for 20-30 mins until the crumble topping is golden and the fruit is bubbling. Serve with a large spoonful of natural yogurt, ice cream or crème fraîche.







#### Why Cash Giving Is Not Necessarily the Best Option for Our Church

For many years, cash donations have been a traditional way of supporting churches and charitable organisations. However, in today's financial landscape, cash giving is becoming increasingly costly and inefficient. At Southam Congregational Church, we want to make every donation go as far as possible in supporting our mission, and the method of giving plays a key role in that.



#### The Hidden Costs of Cash Donations



On the surface, donating cash might seem simple and direct. However, when we deposit cash into our church's bank account, we face fees that reduce the overall amount available for ministry and community outreach.

- Cash Deposits: Lloyds Bank charges 75p per £100 deposited. While
  this may seem minor for small amounts, it quickly adds up with larger
  donations.
- **Cheque Deposits:** Each cheque paid in costs **42p**, which also takes a toll over time.

These banking fees mean that a percentage of every pound donated in cash or cheque does not reach the church's mission.

#### Standing Orders – The Most Cost-Effective Way to Give

**Standing orders** are the most cost-effective way to give. Lloyds Bank does not charge the church for electronic payments or receipts, meaning that **100% of every standing order donation goes directly to supporting our mission**. Regular giving by standing order also ensures a steady and predictable flow of income, allowing us to plan our activities and outreach more effectively without incurring transaction costs.

#### A More Efficient Giving Method: Card Donations



With the rise of digital payments, card donations provide a more streamlined alternative to cash giving. Our **Give A Little** card donation account does charge **1.69**% per transaction, but compared to cash deposits, card donations

#### offer several benefits:

- Less work for the Treasurer No need for manual counting, safeguarding, and physically taking the cash to the bank.
- Instant & Secure Transactions Funds are transferred directly, reducing the risk of loss or theft.



- 3. **Encourages Consistent Giving** Recurring card donations allow donors to support the church regularly without remembering to bring physical money.
- 4. **Easier Gift Aid Processing** Digital payments simplify Gift Aid record keeping, increasing overall contributions.

#### The Future of Giving

As banking practices evolve, fewer people carry cash, and digital transactions are becoming the preferred method of payment. By shifting towards standing orders and digital giving we can maximise the impact of every contribution, ensuring that more of each donation goes directly towards worship, community outreach, and supporting those in need.

Let's embrace a smarter way to give — one that helps us grow together in faith while making every penny count!

Debbie Wilson



Sitting across from the offering box, Jesus was observing how the crowd tossed money in for the collection. Many of the rich were making large contributions. One poor widow came up and put in two small coins — a measly two coins. Jesus called his disciples over and said, "The truth is that this poor widow gave more to the collection than all the others put together. All the others gave what they'll never miss; she gave extravagantly what she couldn't afford — she gave her all."

Mark 12:41-44

#### Yesteryear memories

At an enjoyable birthday lunch, I recited a grace I used to say as a small child. To my delight other voices joined in.

Later, thinking about it, I wondered how many other childhood prayers were also being said by children all over the country? This was in the early 1940s.

#### Grace

Thank you for the world so sweet, thank you for the food we eat, thank you for the birds that sing, thank you, God, for everything. Amen.

#### Child's Prayer

Gentle Jesus meek and mild, look upon a little child. Pity my simplicity, suffer me to come to Thee. Fain I would to Thee be brought, Gracious Lord, forbid it not in the Kingdom of Thy grace, give a little child her place. Amen.

#### **Family Prayer**

God bless Mommy and Daddy
Grandma and Granddad
Uncles and Aunties
all little cousins
Monica and Michael
and make Margaret a good girl. Amen







Maggie Rowlatt

#### Childhood hymns that shaped our faith

Just like Maggie, a couple of weeks ago I was swept up by a nostalgic memory of singing "Jesus Loves Me" as a child. Instantly I was transported to a world of wooden pews, musty Sunday school classrooms and the warm embrace of childhood faith. Simple songs, learned when our voices were high and our hearts were open, continue to echo through our lives with profound meaning.

The beauty of childhood hymns lies not in their complexity, but in their

simplicity. "Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so" – these eight words contain doctrine that has sustained believers through life's greatest challenges. When doubt creeps in during our adult years, when circumstances shake our confidence, we often find ourselves returning to these foundational truths we first sang with innocent trust.

"This Little Light of Mine" taught us about our calling before we fully understood what it meant to be salt and light in the world. Children singing "I'm gonna let it shine" were unknowingly preparing for a lifetime of witness, learning that faith isn't meant to be hidden but shared.

Many of us remember the comfort found in "He's Got the Whole World in His Hands." During times of childhood fears – the dark bedroom, the first day of school, family troubles we barely understood – this hymn reminded us of God's sovereign care. The image of being held in divine hands offered security that went beyond our parents' ability to protect and provide.

"Amazing Grace" might have been learned in simplified versions, but its message of deliverance grows richer with each passing year. What began as a pretty melody becomes a lifeline, a reminder that no matter how far we wander, grace pursues us. The children who once sang about being "lost but now found" eventually understand the profound personal reality of those words.

These hymns served as our first religious textbooks, teaching doctrines through melodies that made them memorable. They planted seeds of faith that would bloom in seasons we couldn't yet imagine. They gave us a vocabulary for praise, sorrow, hope, and trust that would serve us through every stage of life.

Today, as we sing these familiar songs in worship, we're not just reciting words – we're reconnecting with the foundation of our faith. We're honouring the Sunday school teachers and leaders who first taught us these melodies. We're acknowledging that sometimes the most profound truths are found in the simplest songs.

The next time you hear a childhood hymn, pause to listen not just with your ears, but with your memory and your heart. Let it remind you of the unchanging love that first captured your imagination as a child, and continues to sustain you today. After all, some of life's greatest truths are best learned through a song.

Neil Chappell



Garden of Peace

Each year from September 1 to October 4, the Christian family unites for this worldwide celebration of prayer and action to protect our common home. It is a special season where we celebrate God as Creator and acknowledge Creation as the divine continuing act that summons us as collaborators to love and care for the gift of all that is created. As followers of Christ



from around the globe, we share a common call to care for Creation. We are co-creatures and part of all that God has made. Our well-being is interwoven with the well-being of the Earth.

We rejoice in this opportunity to safeguard our common home and all beings who share it. This year, the theme for the season is "Peace with Creation", inspired by Isaiah 32:14-18:

"For the palace will be forsaken, the populous city deserted; the hill and the watchtower will become dens forever, the joy of wild asses, a pasture for flocks. Until a spirit from on high is poured out on us, and the wilderness becomes a fruitful field, and the fruitful field is deemed a forest. Then justice will dwell in the wilderness and righteousness abide in the fruitful field. The effect of righteousness will be peace, and the result of righteousness, quietness, and trust forever. My people will abide in a peaceful habitation, in secure dwellings, and in quiet resting places." (NRVUE)

The prophet Isaiah portrays a desolate Creation, devoid of peace due to injustice and the broken relationship between God and humankind. Devastated cities and wastelands reflect the destructive impact that human activities can have on Earth. Animals readily move in and claim parts of

what was once an exclusively human habitat, as if human settlement had deprived them of sufficient space. While the joy of a pasture for animals (Isaiah 32:14) is undoubtedly a good thing in itself, it comes at the cost of human displacement due to conflict.



Though God's plan for Creation is rooted in justice and peace, human sin disrupts this, leaving Creation in ruin—from wealthy palaces to poor farmlands, forests, and oceans. Isaiah vividly describes the results of human estrangement from Creation. Moreover, the abandoned and ruined watchtower and palace (or citadel, in some translations) suggest that warfare is ultimately frustrated by God.

Peace is more than just the absence of war. In the Hebrew Bible, shalom represents a far deeper concept — one that extends beyond the absence of conflict to the full restoration of broken relationships, as illustrated in Isaiah's vision. This restoration encompasses our relationship with God, ourselves, the human family, and the rest of Creation.

Throughout history, many human activities have contributed to the destruction of Creation. Yet today, more than ever, some human activities take the form of a war against Creation. Our impact has expanded from local to global, manifesting in unsustainable lifestyles, excessive consumption, lasting pollution, and a throwaway culture.

Some hold greater responsibility for this crisis — elite consumption, exploitative business models, and economic theories prioritising profit over sustainability. Pollution, health crises, deforestation, and mining in conflict zones worsen the situation.

Last year's UN Biodiversity Conference (COP16) in Cali, Colombia, aptly themed "Peace with Nature," highlighted the urgency of these issues.

Saint Francis of Assisi's Canticle of the Creatures calls the Earth our sister and mother. How can Mother Earth nurture us if we fail to contemplate, learn from, and love her? Ignoring our interconnectedness undermines this vital relationship.

May the Spirit be poured upon us so we can work together for peace with Creation.

#### Books of the Old Testament Wordsearch

MIACOOABRLPSALMSUZGR XSVGQMEZOFOPISAIAHUJ PROVERBSERXLVKSTUE LSGNIKNEHEMIAHHJAR OEULTDGIAGGAHAEZEE ZNHGOVFWPZZKYIHCALAM LFOJOAYQYWPIELNYN ZGLAMENTAT IONSIVSAJA UTERONOMYNRE THVH KLHANOJZINAPOQINAUZH SLHNHUXEHAWTH Ι KLO EDOSDARGSJULSRNFL I LSNME UIOFAOAAAYEUHLH UNGNI LHRHOISHOVKA R KUOQVSCPASFPHIDI  $\mathbf E$ JUU LMFJOBJIEHEKTUDE XUMK EBSNHDMLNZCIBAASODAK EOATACBDOCEBTW T D GSA NRNHAC CZUUROZLSHU EWB ASGUECEISMRHCEZ ESSOA DOSMNEVTMKOLCHYRRSZH

GENESIS KINGS SONG OF SONGS OBADIAH EXODUS CHRONICLES ISAIAH JONAH LEVITICUS EZEA **JEREMIAH** MICAH NUMBERS NEHEMIAH LAMENTATIONS NAHUM DEUTERONOMY ESTHER EZEKIEL HABAKKUK JOSHUA JOB DANIEL ZEPHANIAH JUDGES PSALMS HOSEA HAGGAI RUTH PROVERBS JOEL ZECHARIAH SAMUEL ECCLESIASTIES AMOS MALACHI

**Anagram answers:** Numbers, Zechariah, Judges, Leviticus, Malachi, Ruth, Jeremiah, Song of Solomon, Deuteronomy, Chronicles, Genesis, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Lamentations, Exodus

**Ans-a-gram answers:** 1. Miriam, 2. Answer, 3. Nails 4. Invisible, 5. Silent, 6. Alone 7. Return, 8. Abraham, 9. Thousand - Solution: SAMARITAN

#### **CHURCH OFFICERS and CONTACTS**

Tel. No.

Minister Revd Neil Chappell 07956 960603

#### Officers of the church

Treasurer Debbie Wilson 07825 270131  Deacons David Hudson 812695 Philip Clarke 811113 Chris King 812926 Caroline Johnson 817776	Admin	Debby Chappell	07884 931482
Philip Clarke 811113 Chris King 812926	Treasurer	Debbie Wilson	07825 270131
Chris King 812926	Deacons	David Hudson	812695
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Caroline Johnson 817776		Chris King	812926
		Caroline Johnson	817776

Booking of rooms Debby Chappell 07884 931482

#### **Group Contacts**

Coffee Pot	Sue Hudson	812695
<b>Graham Adams Centre</b>	Centre Office	811519
Junior Church & Crèche	Cathryn Clarke	811113
Missions Group	Philip Clarke	811113
One Accord	Alison Biddle	812767
Paintpot	Sally Forgan	07941188063
Traidcraft	Philip Clarke	811113
Tuesday Club	David Hudson	812695

#### **Transport**

If you would like a lift to Sunday services or any meetings during the week, please contact one of the Deacons or the Contact person for the Group in which you are interested.