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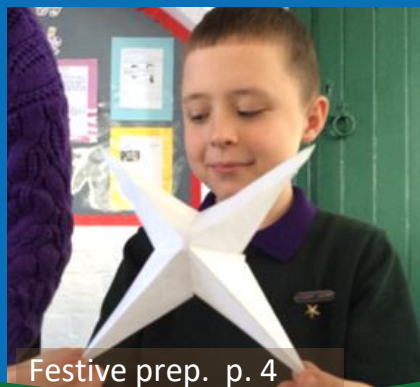
schools community faith



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Getting Creative ...

CHRISTMAS 2024

St John & St Stephen's Community Magazine
stjohnandststephen.org.uk



The gift of ... CREATIVITY

Welcome to NEWT 46

Creative You

Whenever I'm feeling creative and maybe I get the paints out, or I go for a winter walk with my iPhone camera to the ready, or I just sit down at the piano, I know I'm in a good place. There's something about creativity that makes us feel alive - and when we're caught up in the creative task, our minds are clear and we feel totally focussed. Getting creative is known to have positive mental health benefits.

God is known in most religions as Creator – in the book of Genesis, in the Bible, God created the heavens and earth and everything that makes up the natural world, including us. 'The earth is the Lord's and everything in it'. When we create something ourselves, we are in this very creative flow.

Is it true that *all* people are creative? I think so. You might be imaginative in the kitchen, in the garden, in building things with your hands; most people find something for their creative outlets.

Although the church of St John and St Stephen is not an old building packed with centuries of stained glass and historical monuments, we have been creative with the interior, and we have plans to beautify the outside too, by planting trees and

softening the red brick of the church building.

To be creative is to join in with the creative flow that comes from God; creating something is an act of generosity and gives birth to something separate from us that we love and care about – even if it's only a small collection of home-made cakes or greetings cards.

Even when the creative juices are really absent, we can still enjoy the fruits of someone else's creativity – and looking at a child's sketch, or a window box, a newly painted shop front or a well-designed area of park can lift the spirits and even help us to feel more motivated to be good citizens.

May your Christmas season be filled with the knowledge that God is making all things new, including you!

Claire.



Copy date for NEWT's Easter edition will be 14th March 2025

Please send contributions to the Parish Office office@stjohnandststephen.org.uk or directly to the editor at chris@meunier.org.uk



Getting *Craftier* at St John's COMMUNITY *Café*



New faces have been arriving this term at our Community Café, attracted by the warm welcome, the free tea and coffee and the activities on offer daily.

It opens at 9am each weekday morning in term time and, after the initial social gathering, there's always something to do from 10:30am to 12 noon.

For the latest, and especially to see what's happening on Fridays, look on the Café noticeboard or the church website stjohnandststephen.org.uk/church-activities/café

Or look out for updates on local Facebook groups and in your school weekly newsletters.

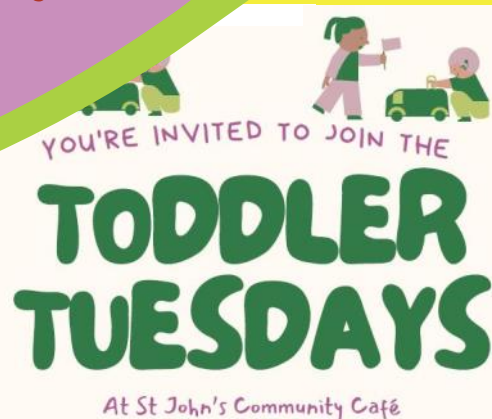
"Making Mondays" at St John's

This term: **learn to crochet**
10.30 - 12 Mondays in term time
St John's Community Café
121-147 Orts Road



All materials supplied. No charge.
Come and join us for relaxed and friendly crafting sessions in a warm space. Free tea and coffee.
Everyone welcome!

Café Communion / *Lectio Divina* – Thursdays 10:30am.
Informal Communion service or Scripture meditation.
Children welcome.



***Fireside* – Wednesdays 10:30am.**

Spirituality for the not-so-certain.
A relaxed and informal discussion about life, the universe and everything for those who don't attend on Sunday mornings.

***Oasis* – Wednesdays 1.30pm.**

Women only fellowship and Bible study group.

Friday pot luck! ... check notices ...

Recently we've had a focus on ***Christmas craft***.

It's so much easier and more enjoyable to get creative in good company and with someone showing you how! Just look at the proud and happy faces and the beautiful things they've made.



Preparing for the **FESTIVE SEASON**

at New Town Primary School

New Town Primary School is a wonderful place where those of any faith and of no faith at all, centre their work around our core values.

The most important of these is love and kindness, and as we look ahead towards Christmas, we have been considering how our community and those in need might feel during this festive time: perhaps joyous, but we know for others this might be a difficult or lonely time.

Our School Choir has been busily learning their music to perform nearby to patients at the Royal Berkshire Hospital, the commuters at Reading train station and most excitingly, in a large concert at Reading Minster in December.

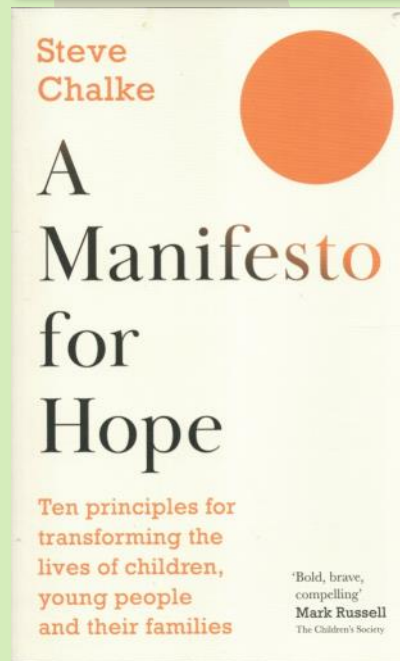




We are also making a number of donations of festive table centres to local community groups and care homes to bring some Christmas spirit to their dinner tables over the holidays.

Meanwhile, the school is a hum of activity, with rehearsals afoot, singing a plenty and crafts decorating every inch of spare space! Getting creative is a great way to bring people together, and also provides therapeutic benefits to everyone - New Town is well-equipped for this, using its amazing, dedicated Arts Loft space to get creative without boundaries.

Whether you celebrate Christmas or not, the whole NT school family wishes everyone in our local community a wonderful holiday, filled with love and hope for the new year ahead.



Book Review

Steve Chalke came to Reading in November to introduce his new book to a packed house in the upstairs of *Zero Degrees Bar*.

It was at one of the *Café Theologique* sessions that are organised there twice a term by the university's chaplaincy service.

Steve, who still worships and works from a base in London's Waterloo district, close to where he was born and grew up, has spent his life pioneering practical initiatives to transform the lives of young people

for the better. He started as a youth worker in a Baptist church and has ended up as the leader of *Oasis*, a Christian movement and charitable trust that provides safe housing for homeless youngsters, runs secondary school 'academies' in some of the most deprived parts of our cities, and most recently has pioneered *Oasis Restore* as a secure and therapeutic alternative to prison for youth offenders.

He sets the scene for his book by recalling how elderly civil servant William Beveridge's wartime report in 1942 laid the foundations for our welfare state and the NHS. But then Beveridge's warning in 1946 was ignored - that a civil-service-led delivery of that vision would bypass ordinary people, preventing them from contributing their time, energy and ideas, and even money, to the services being offered.

Steve is calling for a new partnership between government and the voluntary sector to build and fund an integrated holistic system of care for young people and their families.

And this witty, relaxed campaigner, who has been a regular on BBC radio and consulted by prime ministers and many other senior figures, then goes on to share with all of us the ten down-to-earth lessons he has learned in his years of commitment to helping young people thrive.

'Never have I read a book with so much love, wisdom and common sense in every chapter'

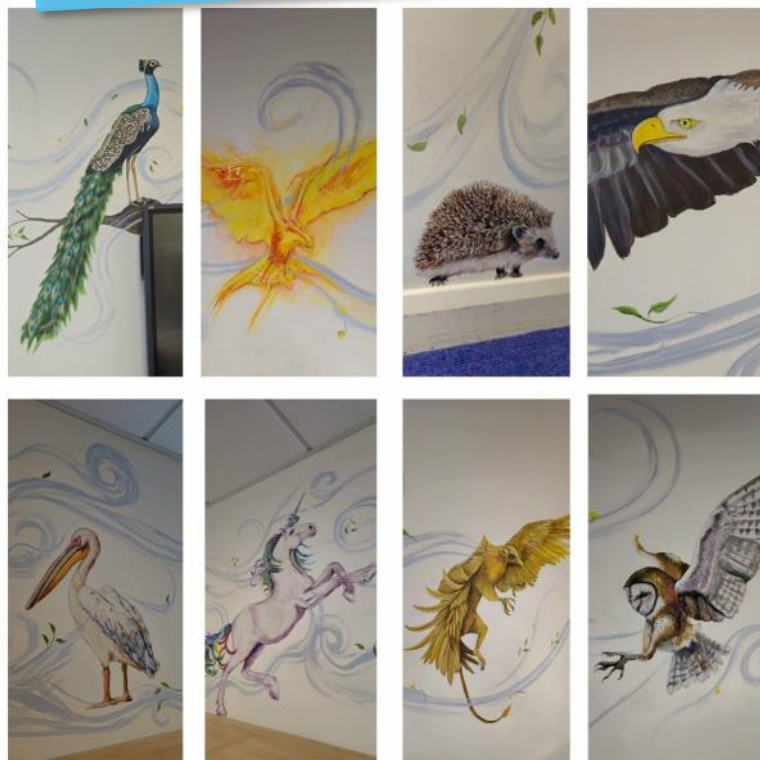
Julie Siddiqi MBE, former Executive Director of the Islamic Society of Great Britain

CHRISTMAS *creativity*



at St John's
CE School

After a hugely successful start to the year at St John's, we always look forward to getting creative at Christmas! With our Reception and Year 6 Nativity production, Christmas Craft Market Stalls, Carol Concerts and Choir performance at Reading Railway station to raise money for charity, there is so much creativity in the air! A real highlight of the time of year is the Reception and Year 6 Nativity production where they work beautifully together to put on a moving retelling of the Nativity story. We can't wait to share it with our school family soon!



The children have also been hard at work creating a plethora of Christmas crafts to raise money for the school. From tree decorations to personalised gift tags, the children have thoroughly enjoyed working together as a class to show off their creativity and artistic skills and were so excited to sell their creations at the Christmas Market!





Creative HOLIDAY activities for children

On the theme of creativity, following the opening of our new school library we invited a team of local artists to help create a beautiful collection of murals throughout the library and corridor. These murals depict all the creatures that our classes are named after. Watching the artists at work creating these stunning murals was such a huge inspiration to the children to see this creative process from start to finish and inspired many to paint their own! We couldn't be happier with our beautiful new library!

We'd lastly like to thank the St John's school community in helping us to achieve 1st Place and winning Reading's 'Beat the Street' initiative! Competing against the local schools was great fun and encouraged our children to get outside more and walk to and from school more often. We have been celebrating the hard work and determination of our children to get active in the local community, and along with the trophy we have over £225 of vouchers to put towards some new books for our newly decorated school library. A HUGE thank you to our big St John's family!



Museum Activity Cart

From Wednesday 18 December to Saturday 21 December

Visit us at Reading Museum and enjoy a range of seasonal themed crafts. Drop-in, FREE

Make & Take: Christmas Special

Create some traditional Christmas craft to take away and decorate your home! Families, half-hour sessions 10am – 12pm & 1pm – 4pm

Saturday 14 December at Reading Museum
Price: £2, pay on the day, drop in

Rhymetime:

Term-time activity for toddlers 0-5 years

Wednesdays at Reading Museum
Tuesdays and Thursdays at Palmer Park Library
10.30am – 11.30am. Drop-in, FREE
These sessions introduce babies and children to language, rhyme and taking part in a fun way. Seasonal stories included. For families.

Teddy Bear Story Time:

Saturday Mornings at Reading Rep Theatre
9:30 or 10:30 start - 30 November until 5 April

Children from ages 18 months – 5 years are invited to join Teddy for a session full of music, dance, and sensory play ... and exploring characters from children's books!
£3. Book online at readingrep.com

CAROLS by candlelight at the Minster



Reading Male Voice Choir and Occasions Singers combine to provide a concert of joy and hope for Christmas.

This family-friendly concert is packed full of festive melodies and sing-along carols. £7.50

Book online at whatsonreading.com
Raising funds for Reading Minster's Music Outreach Project



RefugeeART

I visited an exhibition of woven art by women refugees, writes Christine Bainbridge. It was part of Reading's Heritage Days and was in the *Turbine House* at Blakes Lock. The organiser and project leader, Or Williams, described how the women come from just about every conflict-ridden part of the world. In getting together for embroidery and appliqué, they exchange ideas, share skills, and gradually friendships are formed across cultures.



Above: Cast members for *The Snow Queen* : Mark Desebrock, Orla O'Sullivan, Niall Kiely and Charlotte Warner.



Engage is the theatre's outreach programme to schools, colleges and further education.

READING
REP
THEATRE

Right on our doorstep in Kings Road, *Reading Rep Theatre* is a local theatre with a national reputation. It was founded in 2012 by Reading born Artistic Director

Paul Stacey with just £500, but is now rapidly emerging as one of the leading producing venues in the UK. As a disabled practitioner, Paul says he created the company in order to break down barriers that prevent people from accessing world class theatre.

The old Salvation Army 'young-people's hall' on the corner of the Reading College site has been transformed into a state-of-the-art performance venue, from which the rep. company commissions



and produces bold and experimental work with many of the UK's leading creatives: reinventing the classics, championing new writing and reinterpreting adaptations. Many shows have transferred and toured to other UK venues.

In 2024, their production of *Jekyll and Hyde* by Gary McNair transferred to the Theatre Royal Lyceum in Edinburgh before starting a Scottish tour.

In their current season, they have already in October brought to Reading a critically acclaimed show, *Outpatient*, from it's sell-out run at the Edinburgh Fringe. And in November they brought *Shakespeare Up Close* productions of *Macbeth* and *Romeo & Juliet* from the Guildford Shakespeare Company - abridged versions of the two plays ideal for secondary school students .

Look out in the New Year for Jean Genet's classic *The Maids* (28th Jan - 8th Feb) which is a collaboration with

Below: Founding artistic director Paul Stacey at the theatre's launch event with royal patron HRH Prince Edward.



Jermyn Street Theatre in London's West End.

A classic children's tale called *Rainbow Rescue*, written by Sam Amestoy, will enlighten and engage families from 20th -22nd February

Then, in May (1st - 17th), a long-awaited collaboration with Newbury's award-winning Watermill Theatre will bring Camille Ucan's exceptional play *Three Hens in a Boat* to our local stage. It's a fascinating, hilarious and provoking adaptation of Jerome K. Jerome's beloved novel 'Three Men in a Boat'. 9



Written by Anna Wheatley based on a Hans Christian Anderson tale, this show has a cast of actors who all come from Reading. "A timeless classic that promises to enchant audiences of all ages ... *The Snow Queen* is a beloved intergenerational story that captures the imagination and reminds us of the importance of love, friendship, and the magic of the holidays."

Book now at www.readingrep.com

Location of the theatre on the FE college campus is good for both partners. *Reading Rep Theatre* runs a theatre training programme for 16 – 19 year olds in partnership with *Reading College*. This is a full time course that equips students with the skills, attributes and knowledge that future employers want, giving them a greater chance of success.



Know your Newts

meeting the people in our community

CATHY ROWAN

Newly retired, Cathy is not looking to put her feet up just yet. As ever, she is keen to enjoy exploring, serving others and expressing her inner life.

Are you a creative person, Cathy?

Cathy I think we are all creative, and every moment is creative. As for me, I particularly enjoy writing songs and playing with paint.

Can you explain?

My father was a chest consultant, and my mother was a nurse. I decided, because career choices were limited back then, that I too would train to be a nurse. So, after finishing my A levels and gap year at the *Lee Abbey* community, I spent 3 years training at King's College Hospital in London.

I always had in the back of my mind that I might work abroad (My parents had both worked overseas; my father had worked in India and my mother had a spell in Uganda). To do that, I also needed to have a midwifery qualification. I had felt lonely in London living in the nurses' home, and shiftwork often separated me from friends and church so, as I arrived in Bristol for the midwifery course, I said to God, "Please, I don't want to be living in a nurses' home." On the second day of the course, Sylvia, a fellow student said that her housemate was moving out and would I like to take her place?!

After our first year as qualified midwives, Sylvia decided she was going to Zambia with a Catholic mission and so I thought, "With no attachments, now is the time to work abroad if I am going to." Three months in India with another midwifery student had taught me that resources would be limited, that I might be lonely and that there were sometimes conflicts between co-workers.



In Kenya



Above: Cathy's reaction on hearing one of her recorded songs

Nevertheless, after six months at Missionary training college in Birmingham living with people from different cultures and preparing to work abroad, I left for 3 years in Kenya. As there was going to be no outside entertainment, I wondered, "What I can I

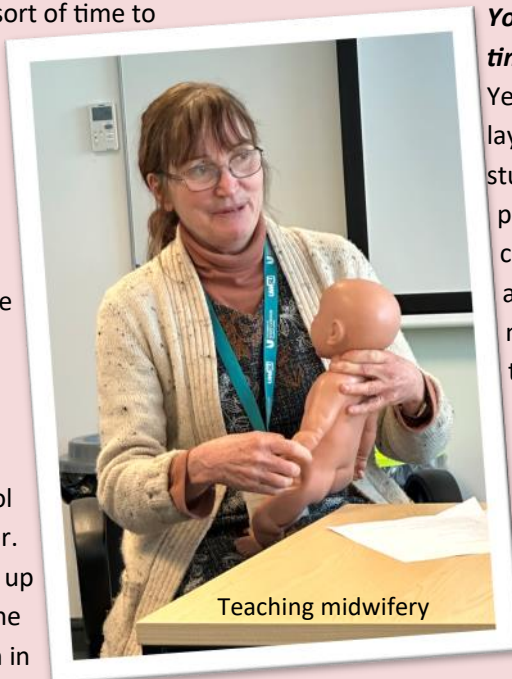
"So I bought a flute and set off for a rural hospital"

take with me that won't rust, bend, break or need spare parts?" So I bought a flute and set off for a rural hospital. The hospital was in a village accessed by one newly built road. After running two adult wards for over a year, the midwifery tutor left. The course for the training of local young people needed a midwife to run it, so I was thrown into a teaching role, but this felt much more fulfilling.

Living and working in another culture changed my perspective on life in the UK and once there I realised that three years was the right sort of time to begin to understand another culture.

So, you play the flute?

I enjoy music. My parents encouraged both me and my two younger brothers to learn the piano to Grade 3. After that we could decide if we wanted to continue. One brother, Chris, was gifted, got a music scholarship at school and is now a music teacher. The other, Mick, first took up the French horn but now he plays his electric mandolin in several bands.



Teaching midwifery

Though I started with the flute, I mostly now sing and play my guitar to accompany my song writing. For most of the last ten years I have joined each year a songwriting group that 's made up of people who do not necessarily have musician backgrounds. We write from the heart, sing, listen to each other's ideas, encourage and help each other with our songs and eventually record them in a studio under the leadership of a brilliant singer songwriter (Sarah Warwick).

And now you might even find me performing at *Tutu's Open Mic* (on Friday nights once a month in her cafe in Palmer Park).

What happened after Kenya?

After a spell working as a nurse at a hospital in Chertsey, which didn't work very well, I got a job as a midwifery sister at the *Royal Berks Hospital*. At interview I told the Head of Midwifery that I was interested in teaching. So, after 18 months on the wards, she sent me on a teaching course. That was how my thirty-four years of being a midwifery senior lecturer began. In the early years I studied part time because I needed a degree for the job. After studying for a Master's degree in Medical Ethics' I did a certificate course in Counselling, followed by a 4 year Diploma and another Masters degree as I loved the research aspect. This meant that, on top of my daytime teaching, I had to see clients and fulfil all the course requirements! Looking back, this was quite bonkers!

Phew! Didn't you get tired?

Yes, but I enjoyed learning and meeting people.

You talked earlier about asking God to help you in a time of loneliness. Have you always been a Christian?

Yes. As a family we went to church and my father was a lay reader (someone who isn't a priest but who has studied and is qualified to preach in a service). My parents had both visited the *Lee Abbey* Christian community when they were young. They told me about it and when I finished my A levels, they showed me an advert inviting young people to volunteer there so I worked on the house team, helped in the kitchens and was involved in the hosting the guests. I was very shy and this time, living in community and looking after visitors, brought me out of my shell. It gave me experience of Christian community and prepared me for life in Africa. The leader of the house team was a strict ward sister. In many ways the year also helped prepare me for nursing.

And when you came to Reading?

I came to *St John & St Stephen's* occasionally when I came to Reading, but my main community was *East Reading Fellowship* which met on a Sunday evening at a house in Eastern Avenue. It included Christians from a range of denominations and traditions. There was also a contemplative prayer evening on Mondays as well as family meals together. When that Fellowship closed, I based myself at the *Catholic*

"We write from the heart, sing, listen to each other's ideas ... and eventually record them in a studio"



Performing at Tutu's Open Mic

Chaplaincy at the University. It was only when that also came to an end that I got fully involved at *St John's* where I am now a member of a homegroup that meets to discuss, pray, learn from and support each other on Thursday evenings. And I sometimes lead a Scripture meditation service on Thursday mornings in the church Café.

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continued/

Know Your Newts

CATHY ROWAN

You retired in January.

What does retirement life look like?

In addition to reconnecting with old friends, and exploring different things, I still have a few clients for psychotherapy. And I also see some others for spiritual direction.

What is that?

It's accompanying someone, helping them to notice where God is and has been in their life experience and what His invitation might be as they look forward. Before starting, I did a two-year part-time course in Amsterdam called 'Spiritual Guidance from a Multi-Faith Perspective'. With people from different spiritual backgrounds, we explored themes such as prayer and practice, call and vocation, and the inner beloved. This involved drawing and storytelling and other creative things. I loved the exploration of themes from different traditions and the depth of the conversations. Later I followed a further course at the *London Centre for Spiritual Direction* to become a Christian spiritual director.

Do you have any spare time?

I have more now. As well as music, I love walking, messing about on boats and friendships. It's not always easy being a single person so it has been good to find a group of individuals at a similar time of life with whom I can share activities like walking and weekends or weeks away and be able to develop friendships. This is on top of my church fellowship and homegroup. But as much as I enjoy meeting people at depth, making music, and times with friends, I also value times of silence and open spaces. I am in the process of walking in stages along an ancient pilgrimage route, the *Camino de Santiago de Compostela*, across Northern Spain. I hope to complete it next Easter.



Thank you, Cathy. You've certainly made the most of your life thus far!



ECO Celebration EVENT

On 6 November at St John and St Stephen's Church we celebrated our recent Gold Eco Church Award. We are only the 50th church in the country to attain this standard and the first in Oxford Diocese. The Eco Church scheme is run by Christian environmental charity *A Rocha*. It's a way to measure and improve care for Creation in five areas of church life: worship and teaching, buildings, land, lifestyle, and community and global engagement.

In our Summer edition, we told you a bit about our journey of improvements. This celebration event was to share more of this ambition with our School and local community.

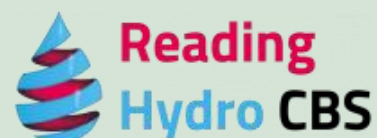


Our next target on this ongoing quest will be to replace our gas heating with electric heat pumps. Watch this space ...

We welcomed Associate Archdeacon of Berkshire, Revd Liz Jackson, to present the award plaque. As part of the celebrations, pupils from St John's School talked about the many actions they are taking in their school to look after the environment. After the presentations, there was a delicious cream tea (with vegan cream). Guests browsed information stalls from local groups including Reading Hydro and



Draughtbusters or shopped for fairly traded Christmas presents.



Climate & NATURE

An update from Dr Rosie Croft

Our World's Double Crisis - Is it all bad news?

There is no doubt that COP29 in Azerbaijan looking at climate change, and COP16 in Colombia talking about Nature's decline, were both disappointing and had potential to be so much better. But some good things are happening....

At the Climate summit:

- 160 Nations pledged to cut the emissions of the potent but short-lived greenhouse gas, methane. Cutting methane from waste, fossil fuel sites and farming will rapidly decrease global temperature rise.
- UK, New Zealand, and Colombia joined a coalition to phase out fossil fuel subsidies, worth billions every year.
- The French government has said that solar panels or green canopies must be put onto at least 50% of parking areas in cities including traffic lanes.
- The G20 final communique recognises that something has to be done to tax the super-rich. (The richest 1% produce more emissions than 66% of the world's poorest).
- The UK pledged £239 million to tackle deforestation in countries, including Colombia and Indonesia, recognising the critical role of forests in those countries as "carbon sinks"

At the biodiversity summit:

- COP16 recognised Indigenous Peoples and those of African descent as 'stewards of Nature's protection'

and protagonists in biodiversity conservation and they were given a seat at the table for the first time.

- A global fund will be created from profits from companies developing products using genetic codes obtained from organisms.
- England's farming subsidy reforms that aim to benefit nature, are considered "world leading" by other countries at the UN biodiversity summit.

But both COPs stumbled when it came to promising finance to halt and reverse biodiversity loss by 2030 and to help developing nations tackle climate change. There was no monitoring mechanism to measure countries' progress protecting biodiversity, and in COP 29 there was no plan to begin the reduction of fossil fuels (which are the biggest cause of climate change).

And nobody treats these crises as emergencies – this may be the last decade we have to turn things around.

Is there anything more **WE** can do?

The Climate and Nature (CAN) Bill aims to address both the climate and the biodiversity crisis, and it has extensive support from scientists and cross party parliamentarians. It proposes measures to limit climate heating and includes the carbon footprint of aviation and imports from overseas. It seeks to halt and reverse biodiversity by 2030. And it asks that a Climate & Nature assembly of citizens be formed to advise the government.

Its second reading is on January 24th 2025 and it needs 102 MPs to support it. Matt Rodda our MP here in Reading central, has not yet agreed to vote for it. Would you consider writing to him to say you are concerned about the Climate & Biodiversity Crisis? Find out more at www.zerohour.uk



Simon Batchelor OBE

Creative with People and Technology

Simon came to Reading for University in 1977 and started living in Newtown when he signed up for his PhD.

His many friends and colleagues were delighted when, in the Kings Honours in June, he was awarded an OBE (Officer of the Order of the British Empire) “for services to Technological Innovation in the Developing World.”

The longer official citation states that he “is recognised for his exceptional contribution to international development and innovation. Over 4 decades, Dr Batchelor’s imaginative, often out-of-the-box thinking, has driven the development of transformative new ways to tackle some of the key challenges facing poor people in developing countries.”

Throughout most of that time Simon has lived in Newtown and been a member of St John & St Stephen’s church. The work has of course included frequent trips to Africa and Asia, and there were two spells of 4 years each living in Kenya and Cambodia. Simon says he is now grateful that everyone learned during COVID how to do virtual meetings – that has cut down his travel a lot!

Simon has been Director of Gamos Ltd for most of those decades, and Gamos offices also reside in Newtown, on the Kings Road next to Wycliffe church.

The citation goes on to say “Through his research, policy influence and community action, Dr Batchelor has been the driving force behind multiple transformations that have changed the prospects of some of the most vulnerable people. This has included leading innovations to provide low-cost electric cooking, develop and use mobile money to drive economic growth, and the scale up of low-cost

renewable energy, ensuring clean energy access to many.”

He has often initiated ideas and followed them through for ten years at a time. His early work in renewable energy (windpumps, including his PhD) and handpumps, reached tens of thousands of people. He moved on to consider how to mobilise people to solve their own problems, using creative techniques from Edward De Bono, and that resulted in a whole District in Cambodia notably improving, and thousands of others across SE Asia applying his processes. From 2000 onwards he sowed the seeds of Mobile Money and helped the shoots grow – such that it is now a \$2b a day industry and has improved the gross domestic product of some African countries. And for the last ten years he has designed



Simon at Windsor Castle with Jo White

and led the Modern Energy Cooking Service programme funded by UK Aid, which has helped 4 million people, and at COP29 an announcement by the UK Minister extended that programme by £40m to 2030 to reach at least further 10 million.

Simon’s official response to the OBE was “I am grateful that this award

honours the small contributions that I have made, alongside various colleagues, to addressing the enduring problem of climate change and poverty injustice. I especially appreciate that it acknowledges the need for forward-thinking and creativity if we are to achieve a just energy transition to net zero.”

The above was his official response, but NEWT asked him how he genuinely felt about the OBE. In a typical rambling fashion, he told me “It is good to have your work recognised. I think it’s a little weird that I get a medal and inducted into the British Empire when so many of the problems I am trying to address were partly caused by the empire!

Poverty in this world is scandalous, and personally I see what I have done as a very small contribution when compared to the whole. It is like trying to build a sand castle when the tide is coming in.

As you know, while I have hope that humanity might yet turn the corner, I am fairly realistic that historical injustices keep half the world in poverty and that there really isn’t enough political will yet to address climate change. I have just been to COP29 (Azerbaijan) to speak and listen, but the general outcome was disappointing.

You may feel it’s a shame to end the article on a negative note – but one of the drivers for my “out-of-the-box” future think is being clear about the challenges of a complex world and seeking to do at least one part of the future differently.

If we want to end the article on a positive note then let me ask young people to pause, take a deep breath, think and look clearly at a problem and create a journey to an innovative solution – if we all do our part, and create at least one innovative solution, then maybe we might get a positive future. It takes time though – took me 40 years to basically do four things! – but youth of Newtown – you can do it.

Ukrainian Creativity

The Ukrainian community centre in Sidmouth Street welcomes English-speaking visitors

The team at the Centre is frequently very busy organising humanitarian relief deliveries to hospitals and orphanages in Ukraine. But Adam Bomok found time to tell NEWT about some of the other things they do there.

Our Library "Where Traditions Meet the Future"

We are a Ukrainian Library located in Reading Ukrainian Community Centre (a branch of AUGB).

Our mission is to provide a safe space, promote Ukrainian culture, and unite through literature.

The library is open Wednesday and Saturday 14:00 - 16:00 and is open to all.



We have over 700 books. They were all printed and published in Ukraine during the war, most of them in the city close to the front lines, Kharkiv.

Mal'va Café offers traditional Ukrainian food and specialises in delicious deserts.

Both Take-Away or Eat-In

Open Tuesday - Saturday

Opening times 12:00 - 17:00



@MALVA_FOOD

The library mostly has fiction books (Ukrainian and world literature). You can find anything from romantic novels, crime stories to sci-fi and fantasy books. 102 adults and 64 children are registered readers.

There's a variety of books for children of all ages. We also have some books written in English on Ukraine's history and culture.

Christmas Mass Різдвяна Служба

21.12.2024

Confession from 11.00
Mass starts at 12.00

The service is held by the
Ukrainian Catholic Church.

Сповідь починається о 11.00
Служба Починається в 12.00

Служба проводиться
українською католицькою
церквою

Reading School Chapel
Erleigh Road
Reading, RG1 5ZW

You are warmly invited to the Ukrainian Christmas Mass on Saturday 21st December, and also to our fun Christmas cultural event on Sunday 15th December.

Should you be wanting to make a donation to our humanitarian appeal, please visit our [gofundme](https://www.gofundme.com/f/medical-humanitarian-aid-for-ukraine) page

www.gofundme.com/f/medical-humanitarian-aid-for-ukraine

Medical & Humanitarian Aid for Ukraine

CONTINUE TO
STAND
WITH
UKRAINE

Working Ukrainian Community Club at 147-150 High Street, Reading, RG1 1AA

Christmas
AT THE UKRAINIAN CENTRE
SUNDAY
DECEMBER 15 12.00 - 15.00
21 SIDMOUTH ST, RG1 4QZ

MUSICAL COMEDY BY THE UKRAINIAN YOUTH THEATRE OF RICHMOND
"THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS"

CHILDREN'S AUTHOR
OLGA PINCHUK, PSYCHOLOGIST-CONSULTANT
AND CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGIST, PRESENTING HER
BOOK "THE MUG OF JOY"
+ MASTERCLASS FOR CHILDREN

CAROLS BY THE CHOIR "KRYLA"

BUFFET FEATURING TRADITIONAL CHRISTMAS DISHES

MAL'VA

15



Follow The Star

CALM and BRIGHT



Carol Singing in the Community, Thursday 19 December

6pm at Huntley Wharf (gather by the fountains in the courtyard area)

7pm-8pm at The Fisherman's Cottage

Meet 5:45pm outside St John and St Stephen's Church if you'd like to walk to Huntley Wharf with others

Christmas Eve. 24 December

Carol singing outside, opposite the Lyndhurst Arms by Wesley church,

5.30pm, followed by refreshments.

With Wycliffe Baptist Church

Sunday 15 December

10:45am Nativity service

Thursday 19 2pm Carol service

Sunday 22 December.

9am & 6pm Carol service

10:45 Christingle service

Christmas Eve 11pm

Candlelit service

Christmas Day. 10:45am

All age service



With St John & St Stephen's Parish Church

Sunday 22 December.

10.30 am Holy Communion

6pm Carols by Candlelight

Christmas Eve 11pm Midnight Mass

Christmas Day. 25th December

10.30am Christmas morning service

Celebrating Christmas

in Newtown

With Wesley

Methodist Church

Friday 20 December.

Candlelight Supper. Tickets available soon.

Sunday 22 December. 10.30am morning worship: Junior Church nativity plus carols.

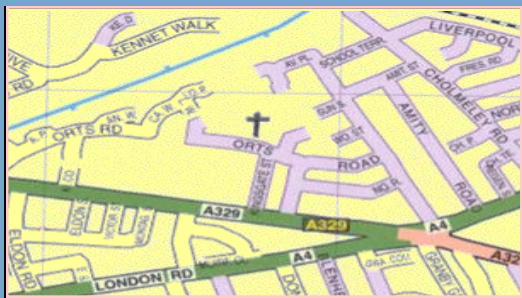
Christmas Day. 10.30am family service



Church Contacts



Vicar
Rev Claire
Alcock



Sunday worship 10:30 am
- everyone welcome



Parish Centre
Administrator
Jo Laynesmith



Churchwardens
Ian Maynard
& Sue Bruce



Assoc. Priest
Christine
Bainbridge

please phone the Parish Office 0118 926 3633
or email: office@stjohnandststephen.org.uk

School Contacts



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