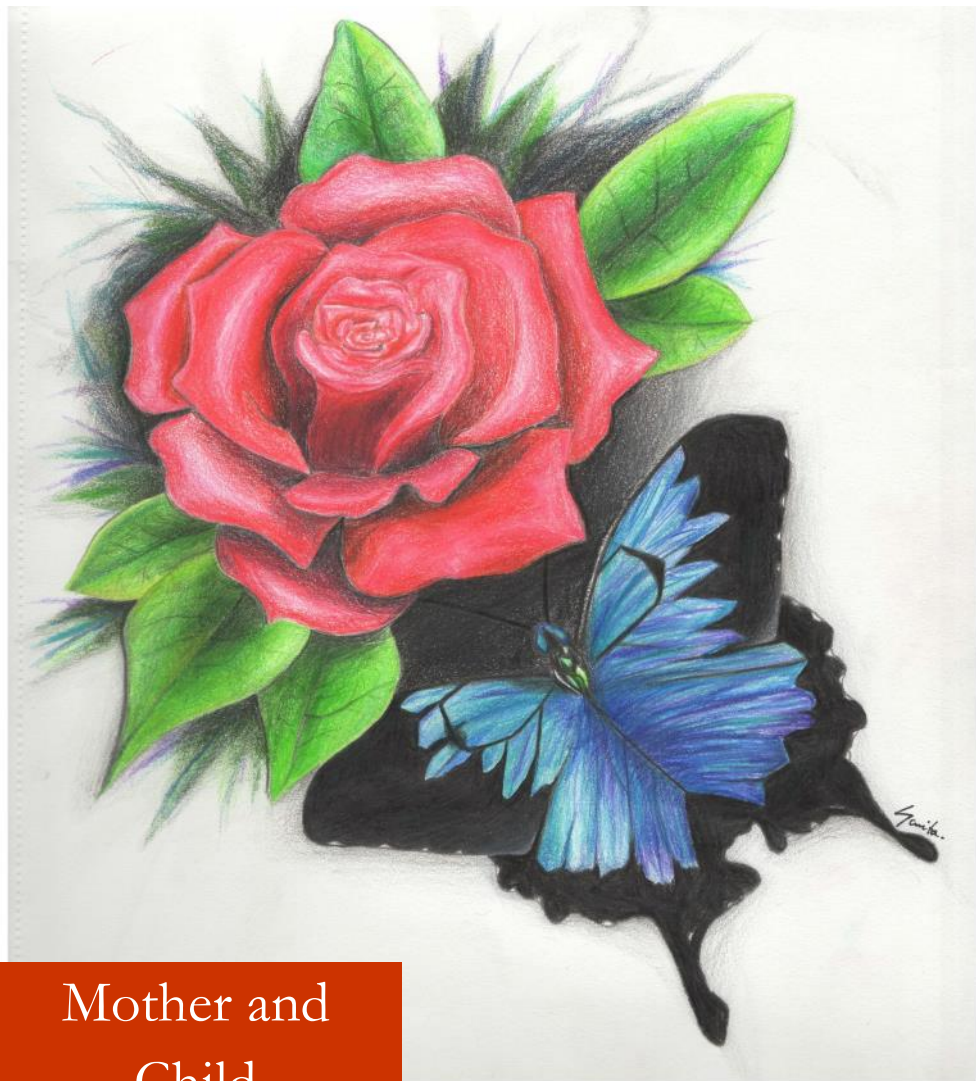

TOWER^{AND}TOWN



Mother and
Child

AUGUST 2016 50P

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TOWER AND TOWN

THE MAGAZINE OF MARLBOROUGH'S COMMUNITY AND CHURCHES

NUMBER 662 AUGUST 2016



Mother and Child

When my daughter had a baby last August, I instantly became a besotted grandparent as other grandparents had warned me I would! It also made me think about the shift in generations: my child was now a parent of her own child and, watching my daughter as a mother, made me think about parenting and the influence it has.

I thought it would be interesting to look at aspects of the mother - and father - and child relationship as experienced in Marlborough: from Father Blacker's beautiful reflection on the central importance of Mary, the mother, and Jesus, her child, in the Christian message through to Marlborough Brownies' direct insights, which go to the heart of the matter as children so often do. My thanks to everyone for contributing so willingly and entertainingly.

I hope you will also enjoy reading Joshua Bumphrey's response to a trip abroad and Molly Hall's dark, but ultimately hopeful, short story which she wrote in response to her grandfather's death. Thank you also to Rachel Rosedale for the balm of her encouraging thoughts following the referendum.

Sarah Bumphrey, Editor

Front Cover: *Rose and Butterfly* by Sunita Sisodiya (St John's)

Mother Mary and Jesus, her Child

by Father John Blacker

When I was asked to submit an article to Tower and Town on the subject of Mother and Child I knew from the outset that an item about my mother and me or my brother or sisters was not being asked for! But to write in the context of the Christian Faith about Mary and her child, Jesus Christ, the Son of Mary and Son of God.

Mary, Mother of God, was one of the first titles ever given to Mary in the earliest years of Christianity. *Theotokos* (God-bearing) - this title was conferred on Mary, Mother of Jesus, at the Council of Ephesus in AD 431. We meet a woman caught up perfectly in love for God. Her response at the Annunciation (Luke 1:38) flows from that love. Like every loving response it is free and at the same time, a foregone conclusion. A true love is compelling. At times, like all mothers, she is bewildered and unsure; at times, and to the end, she shares deeply in every emotion. But her bond with her son is unshaken. Her life is dominated by her love for Him and His love for her. She takes her place by His Cross, for she has heard the word of God and believed it - her fidelity in love is triumphant.

At all levels the gospel tradition shows us that Mary is first and foremost "The Mother of Jesus", her child. The gospels call her by this simple title (Matthew 3:31; Luke 2:48; John 2:1-12; 19:25). It defines her calling. Her maternity is voluntary (Luke 1:26-38). When Mary gave birth to Jesus, her work, like that of all mothers, was just beginning. She had to rear Jesus (Luke 2:48). Mary remained mother when Jesus arrived at adulthood, for she was found near her Son at the time of painful separations (Mark 3:21&31; John 19:25). At Calvary we see the fulfilment of her maternity, as her dying Son, calls her to be the Mother of the people of God - our Mother in the person of John the evangelist to look after Mary, and Mary to look after John.

Mary (Mother) and Jesus (her child) are a great cause of joy, not just at Advent and Christmas time, but all the time. May we, like Mary, say "yes" to God's plan for our lives and say "yes", like her child, to Our Father's plan - "Thy Will be done" as we pray the Lord's Prayer that He gave us.

Life as a Working Mum by Juliette Long

My son Rory was born in April last year. I was quite well prepared for motherhood compared to most people because when I was young my mother was a child-minder but I have become completely obsessed. I miss him when he's asleep! It's all-consuming and I didn't expect it. I really like it when he curls up on me. I like the fact that he copies me and has a little personality. He's cheeky!

I was not at all happy about going back to work. I had that back-to-school, Sunday night feeling. In fact I went back early because a new job came up. If I'd known it would be OK I wouldn't have wasted all that worrying! It was stressful, though. It came at the wrong time. We got the keys to our new place on Friday, I went back to work on Monday and on Wednesday (my second day at work) my gran died. I was very stressed. I was lucky to have Rory to take my mind off it but it was fine once I did it.

My mum looks after Rory while I'm at work. I can take him to her then walk to work. If I had to leave him at nursery, financially there would be no point. If he's poorly I can still send him to mum. At nursery you're torn between work relying on you and getting the phone call to come and get him when he's sick. He'll go to nursery when he's older.

I enjoy my work. The hours fit in well with Rory. It's not at all stressful, everybody's easy-going. It's nice to be with people who have older children or haven't had them yet. They give good child-care tips and they are not competitive as other young mothers can be! Working also gives you financial independence. You're on a more equal footing with your partner; it's not 'take, take, take', you give something back.

I do find it hard to return to work after Bank Holidays. But I don't have time to think about missing Rory. Working as a dental nurse, you've got to get your job right and sterilise properly! I think I've got the right balance. I wouldn't go back to full time; part time's perfect.



Life as a mother of three grown up sons in a 'smart' world by 'Anna'

When my three boys were toddlers I couldn't begin to imagine what life would be like for us as parents and how our relationship with our children would develop when they grew into adults; it seemed so far into the future that I didn't really dwell on it that much! Looking back I suppose we probably thought our relationship would be similar to the ones we had with our parents, and mostly it is, except there is one big difference...technology, instant communication, social media! It's amazing to think that my sons are the last generation who remember a time when most young people didn't own a mobile device with the world via the internet at their fingertips. It's a bit like their great-grandparents remembering a time before electricity!

I know it sometimes seems as if we are in danger of losing the art of conversation because of our reliance on these devices but I have to say I love the fact that I am in almost constant touch with my sons (two of whom no longer live at home). We have a WhatsApp group for the whole family, including wives and girlfriends, and are forever sending daft messages or asking each other for advice: instantly sharing the excitement and pleasure through photos and videos of holidays; gigs; walks in the bluebell woods; new curtains; my daughter-in-law sending me photo updates of how the garden I helped her plant is growing; the dog lying in a funny position in her basket after a long walk. And how amazing (and reassuring) it is to be able to talk to each other via Skype from almost anywhere in the world.

Even though they are all gradually making their own way in the world they share so much of what they are doing with us that it feels as though we are almost more included and involved in their lives than we were when they were little - and it's wonderful!!

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My Mother by Anil Sud

Would you like to write about your mother...? Out of the blue I received a kindly worded letter through my postbox from an old school teacher and friend and after several days thinking it over I decided to take up the offer. Honoured, scared, excited, daunted and privileged were just a few of the emotional responses I experienced when thinking about how to tackle this task.

The great irony of trying to write this piece and do my mother justice by it is that she is the person that I would have counted on to help me write, check, highlight the good and bad parts but most of all encourage me to do it to the best of my ability!

When thinking about the qualities my mother possessed there is one word in particular that jumps out at me - compassion. The time that she dedicated to helping those that needed it far exceeded any professional requirements and the true personal connection that she made with many of her students and colleagues was always evident when she received frequent and random life updates! I certainly didn't understand or appreciate this at the time but the levels of trust others put in her and the empathy that she had was truly astounding and humbling.

Her dignity, sense of duty and honesty was the most wonderful example to be given and I hope that when faced with even a fraction of the difficult life circumstances she faced my sister Anika and I can respond as she would have done.

Her ability as a mother to unlock our problems, fears and make them more manageable was akin to something of a sixth sense. A word of encouragement (stern or relaxed if needed!) was never far away and with this I feel that it always created a wonderfully safe and thriving environment for us to grow in.

In such a short article it is impossible to encapsulate someone who means so much to me but I guess this also feeds in to one of her most important life lessons that she gave me- that trying is the most important part! And just between you and me despite various youthful protestations it turns out that she was right about pretty much everything!



My Mum by First Marlborough Brownies

My mum is called Jess. My mum is very kind. My mummy and I like to cook together. We normally cook pasta and Bolognese. On Mothers' Day I made her a card and I bought her a handbag. She is also my Brownie leader. Brownies is really fun. Children who want to go to First Marlborough Brownies, go for it!

Martha C

My mum loves to wear scarves. She makes me giggle when I'm sad. Also she likes gardening and chatting. She likes sunsets and Amazon. She has lots of secrets and she likes to paint with me so much. She has meetings and likes to cook. She likes to read and eats curry and likes to sleep. Her favourite thing is us!

Jemma E

My mum is caring and loving. She never lets me down and the best thing about her is she makes me laugh. We have happy moments and sad moments. She plays with me and does a lot for me and I really respect everything she does for me. I like her helping me and doing my nails.

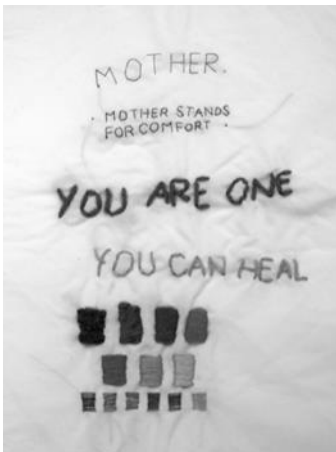
Daisy P

My mum is great. If I want to do something, most of the time she will say yes. I love going shopping with my mum because she always knows what girls of my age like. She is always looking out for me and I can always go to her if I have a problem. Me and my mum like to go swimming. From the minute I get up till the minute I go to bed she will be there. The best thing about my mum is that she lets me in on secrets that no one else knows. I love my mum

Ruby P

My mum is really kind and caring and really smart. She helps me with my homework, get dressed and helps me with getting my teddies. My mummy makes me happy letting me go to Brownies and it is fun. When I fall over she helps me up. The best way to make my mummy happy is being kind. We like to do cooking, riding bikes and reading. I love my mummy.

Scarlett R-L



Mother Stands for Comfort by Freya Pigott (St. John's)

My Work as a Teaching Assistant

by Mary Brown

I have worked as a teaching assistant at St Mary's Infant School for 25 years. I fell into it! I came as a mum helper and was asked to apply; you could do that in those days. It suited me as the school holidays fitted in with family life and I had always worked with children. My experience as a mother of my own children has helped: knowing all children are different and are unhappy for different reasons and especially how to sort out battles. Sometimes they need someone motherly: they want a hug when they graze their knees.

When I started I was called a welfare assistant helping the children with cooking, sewing and gardening, going on walks tied in with a topic, hearing readers, playing maths games and word games. Now I support the teacher to support the curriculum. We do numeracy, literacy and phonics and that's the morning gone! The individuality has gone; all the children have to do the same. On the other hand, in the past when things went wrong every comment was negative but now the comments are more positive and aim to build self esteem.

I hear readers who need a reading boost. These days all mums work. Reading at home is on the back burner - they don't have as much time. I think I'm really lucky to be able to go to work and spend all morning reading. I also do phonics. Teaching of phonics for every child has been a real success and has worked really well in improving children's reading. The one-to-one reading sessions are TLC as much as anything; they make a huge difference to give children confidence and help them to keep up. I remember one child who said to me in the beginning "I like reading with you, Mrs Brown," then eventually "I like reading."

There have been a few changes over the years. Lots of children come to school by car or on scooters and so have lack of practice of walking. They find the walk to the swimming pool for swimming lessons very tiring to start with but they get used to it after a couple of weeks. Also speaking and listening is not as clear as it used to be. Computer games, mobile phones and television seem to influence this. But there are good years and bad years. I've loved working with all these children and I love the things they say. It's a pleasure and a privilege working with children. They teach you as much as you teach them.

Adoption by ‘Father William’

The author Tony Hillerman is best known for his unusual detective novels set amongst the Navajo and Hopi Indians of the Four Corners country; Four Corners because the boundaries of Colorado, Utah, Arizona and New Mexico all meet together at right-angles. But he also wrote an autobiography, *Seldom Disappointed*, where amongst other things, he describes his experience of adoption.

He and his wife had one child of their own, but were advised not to have any more. So after much thought they decided to adopt. Over a period of years they added five extra children to their family. Here's what they have to say about adoption:

“The universal question about adoption concerns parental love for kids you haven't produced yourselves. The answer is, don't worry about it. As veterans of raising both kinds, we can testify that all of them provoke affection, irritation, worry, joy, dismay, care, pride, anger, and, most of all, love. Each and every one of them is our child. Don't try to tell us they had another set of parents. Nor need you worry about adding adoptees into an existing family. Each of our five was greeted with excitement and enthusiasm and had to tolerate being mothered and big-brothered by the siblings they joined”

My own experience of adopting absolutely reinforces that of Tony Hillerman. My first marriage was a package deal: wife and child together. It took me a couple of years to summon up the courage to propose, but once married, I began the legal process of adopting my wife's son (totally bewildering to the local solicitors – You mean only ONE of you is adopting? Yes, the other one is already his mother and doesn't need to adopt. Humph!). A year or two later, together we brought a daughter into the world. By that time my adopted son was, I felt, simply my son, and since then I have never detected any difference between the gut-wrenching lurches of emotion with which the two of them have filled my life. It's taught me that every child that comes my way needs the same loving parenting, regardless of biological origin, and my answer to that other common remark “I could never bring up another man's child” is: of course you can!

Tacloban by Joshua Bumphrey

Joshua recently travelled to The Philippines with his friend Will Hewitt to help him make a film about a Beatles tribute band (!) who had survived a typhoon and gone from strength to strength. He found the experiences of the people he met and their resilience very striking and wrote this article in response.

On the 8th of November 2013 the city of Tacloban in the Philippines prepared itself for yet another tropical storm. This was typhoon season after all. Via the Internet, national news channels and local government officials, the news had spread that this typhoon was to be a particularly bad one. Residents of the more vulnerable, low-lying areas of the city were told to make for higher ground and wait for the typhoon to pass. Some people did. Many did not, believing that because they had survived many storms before, they would survive this one just the same. Little did they know that this would turn out to be one of the largest tropical storms ever recorded.

The typhoon was given the name Yolanda. A rather sweet name for such a disastrous event.

Yolanda was thousands of miles wide, with winds reaching up to 195 mph. Yolanda battered Tacloban for hours ripping apart houses, schools, supermarkets and hospitals. More destructive than the wind was the water. Yolanda lifted a great wall of water and forced it on to the land. Caught in the wave were 5 cargo ships. Like colossal torpedoes the ships tore through the already battered buildings along the coast.

Tacloban woke to 6000 dead and thousands more homeless, no power, no idea of where to find food and great swathes of the city still up to 13 feet underwater.

Today Tacloban shows very few obvious scars from Yolanda. Thanks largely to a significant global relief effort, including a ship from South Korea full of pickled cabbage, the city turned quickly to relative normality

There are some reminders. The prow of one of those fateful cargo ships remains some 150 m inland as a monument to those lost during Yolanda.

The memories of that time remain firmly in the minds of the people. Each person has his or her own story of that night. Fear remains, fear of finding bodies in the ocean or washed up on the beach and the quiet fear that come the next typhoon season it could happen again.

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Sunday	28 August	11:00 14:30 17:00
Monday	29 August	11:00 14:30 17:00
Tuesday	30 August	18:00
Thursday	1 Sept	15:00 18:00
Friday	2 Sept	15:00 18:00
Saturday	3 Sept	11:00 14:30 19:30
Sunday	4 Sept	11:00 14:30 17:00
Monday	5 Sept	13:00



Building Bridges after the Referendum

A Quaker View

From Quaker Life- June 2016:

The outcome of the EU referendum and the campaigning that led up to it have shown up and sometimes exacerbated divisions within and between our communities. There is now a great need for bridge-building, for reaching out to one another in love, trusting that below the political differences lie a shared humanity and a wish for flourishing communities.

Inequalities run deep in society and some are exposed by the vote. Quakers in England, Scotland and Wales are committed to working together and with others – including Quakers across Europe - for a peaceful and just world. In the coming year our Quaker Yearly Meeting will focus on building movements with others locally and globally. We refuse to prejudge who is or is not an ally.

Turbulent times can be frightening, but the Spirit is a source of strength for all, guiding us in who we are and what we do. We take heart from the knowledge that with change comes opportunity. We will look for creative ways to find common cause, to listen, to influence and to persuade. As the status quo is shaken we and our neighbours must look to one another for support, wisdom and above all ways of healing divisions.

The above expresses my feelings as I write this, three days after the referendum result. We hear such a mixture of views but must show solidarity and welcome especially our friends and relations from other countries who we need and from whom we gain so much. Many have expressed deep feelings of fear and insecurity.

For me I am not sure that outward circumstances are directly affected by prayer but indirectly by the working of mind upon mind, when great changes may come about. We live and move and have our being in a world where forces greater than our individual minds are at work and through prayer can allow these to work bringing our lives into a deeper sense of unity.

In our local Quaker Healing Group, which meets once a month, we don't expect God to make things physically better but to enable us to think of how best to ease the pain of ourselves and others. This is often by just being present and listening.

Pray on.

Rachel Rosedale

What's on in August

Regular events

Every Monday

7.30pm: Christchurch. Marlborough Choral Society.

Every Tuesday

10-11.30am: Christchurch. Friendship Club.

2.45pm: The Parlour, Christchurch. Women's Fellowship.

Every Wednesday *(or some Wednesdays)*

10am: Jubilee Centre. Drop-in, Tea/Coffee. 12.30 Lunch.

1.30-3.30pm: Town Hall. Sunshine Club for the over 55s.

2-3pm: St. George's. Teddy Prayers & Picnic for under 5s and carers *(2nd & 4th Weds)*

7.30-9pm: St Peter's Church. Marlborough Community Choir.

Every Thursday *(or some Thursdays)*

10am: Jubilee Centre. Drop-in, Tea/Coffee. 12.30 Lunch.

10:30-12 noon: Kennet Valley Hall, Lockeridge. Singing for the Brain. Alzheimer's Support. 01225 776481. *(Every Thursday during term-time.)*

1.30-3.30pm: Wesley Hall, Christchurch. Macular Society *(last Thursday in the month)*

Every Friday

10-12 noon: Christchurch Crush Hall. Food bank and coffee morning.

Every 2nd Saturday

10-12 noon: Library. Marlborough & District Dyslexia Association. Drop-in advice. Help line: 07729 452143.

August calendar

1st *(Monday)*

5.15pm Ellis Theatre. Marlborough College Summer School. Lecture by Ronald Dukes: 'Charles Dickens: A Tale of Two Sisters'. £5 on door.

8pm Ellis Theatre. Marlborough College Summer School Recital: Philip Dukes (viola), Anna Tilbrook (piano). £5 on door.

2nd *(Tuesday)*

5.15pm Ellis Theatre. Marlborough College Summer School. Lecture by Brian Anderson: 'Images from the Edge: Part 2'. £5 on door.

8pm Memorial Hall, Marlborough College Summer School. Gala Performance: Bella Hardy, Folk Singer of the Year in 2014. £15.

3rd (Wednesday)

1.05pm Ellis Theatre. Marlborough College Summer School. Piano recital: Alice Michahelles. £5 on door.

5.15pm Ellis Theatre. Marlborough College Summer School. Lecture by Chris Rogers: 'Sir John Soane: Architect of a Lost London'. £5 on door.

4th (Thursday)

1.05 Chapel. Marlborough College Summer School. Organ recital: David Bednall. Free.

5.15pm Ellis Theatre. Marlborough College Summer School. Lecture by James Dickie: 'Suffragette: The Prequel'. £5 on door.

8pm Ellis Theatre. Marlborough College Summer School. Concert: Singing for Pleasure Celebration. Free.

5th (Friday)

8pm Memorial Hall. Marlborough College Summer School. Lee Jackson as Elvis. £20.

7th (Sunday)

2-5pm Science Dept, Marlborough College. Ark: Life of the River Day. 07780 381709.

10th (Wednesday)

12.30pm 40 St Martins. Widows' Friendship Group lunch. 514030.

7.45pm Wesley Hall, Christchurch. M. Gardening Assn. talk by Richard Paget: 'Apples'.

14th (Sunday)

10am-4.30pm St Peter's Church. Wiltshire Museum Exhibition: 'Crop Circles: The Unknown Facts'. Final day. See page 21.

15th (Monday)

7pm Kennet Valley Hall, Lockeridge. National Trust Association Summer Social.

21st (Sunday)

8am Marlborough Common. Car Boot Sale in aid of Wiltshire Air Ambulance Appeal. Cars £8, Vans £10.

25th (Thursday)

7pm The Merchant's House. Concert and Talk: Fiona Katie Roberts (harpist). £15 (£12 members) including light refreshments. Tickets from the shop or 511491. See page 19.

27th (Saturday)

2pm ARK Summer River Walk: Elcot Mill to Axford, with tea and cake. 511028.

28th (Sunday)

10am-6pm Salisbury Road Recreation Ground. Family Fun Day. In aid of Marlborough Community Youth Project.

What Tom Left Behind by Molly Hall (St. John's)

Pounding. Elaine's ears were pounding. An increasing noise was rattling around her head, choking her every thought. Ice churned in her veins; seizing her body in a cold, icy clasp. Curled up, Elaine whimpered as the sound increased. Her whole body shook, fighting against the pain. Surrounding her was the thick stench of smoke, but there was no fire to warm the ice. Darkness taunted Elaine from every direction, mocking her and her ever present agony. Slowly, tendrils of the darkness began to sweep over her, started pulling at her throat, choking her until she felt numb. Elaine felt herself start to slip as she took her last stand against the invading darkness. With a last, rattling breath, Elaine let go and allowed herself to fall freely.

Screaming, surrounded in a pool of sweat and terror, Elaine sat up. She could still feel where the darkness had clutched at her throat. Her ears still stinging from the receding beating that had pounded against her and the inside of her skull.

Light flickered on from outside her door and before she knew it, Elaine's parents had made their way to her side. Silently, they brushed her hair back in a repetitive, soothing motion, as if it could somehow lessen the pain. Finally, Elaine's voice died down to a choked whisper, the shrill of her scream fading. Dragging a hand across her eyes, Elaine realised her face was wet, yet she didn't feel like she had been crying. The taste of salt stung against her cracked lips.

Her parents started talking to her, calling for her attention but Elaine was trapped far away in a deep crevice of her mind. Subconsciously, she was aware of her mum and dad whispering in hushed voices beside her. But a crushing weight of guilt and sorrow was descending upon Elaine, dragging her back down into the ever present darkness.

It pulled at her throat...

"Tom." She whispered. It was all Elaine could do to prevent herself crying out, though she wanted to kick, scream, punch; fight her way to Tom. Where he had lain, fallen on the mud caked ground. His body twisted and broken. His eyes glassy and far away as he had called out for her.

"Elaine..."

Shivering at the memory, Elaine pulled herself back to where she now sat in the darkness on her own. Her only solace, the ticking of the small clock beside her bed and the small blue teddy, tatty and torn, which she clutched in her hand.

"Elaine..."

Now that the pounding had receded, Elaine could hear a voice behind it.

Faint, but there.

Elaine stood up and walked to the window. Pushing the curtains aside, she looked out to see the stars shining down; casting light upon her and her grieving heart. The still night looked serene, filled with a quiet beauty. Although the noise was louder here, Elaine still couldn't locate the source. Besides, she didn't want to see beauty. Not when the world was so ugly. Not when she carried a heart full of cracks.

Instead, Elaine turned to the mirror and gazed upon her reflection. The smooth pallor of her cheeks. The sharp, searching blue eyes. The hair cascading down her back. None of these features reflected how Elaine's heart felt. Didn't show the torment or the guilt that weighed upon her shoulders. Didn't show... her.

It was almost a reflex. Like a snake striking its prey. But the glass that now littered the floor suggested otherwise. Either way, the broken fragments collected on the floor, now held a sort of symbolic beauty. Because now, they seemed to truly reflect Elaine.

Broken.

"Elaine."

The voice called at her again. Soft and steady. This time when Elaine turned around, she saw the shadow of a boy in the doorway. Young and delicate. His features a resemblance of...

"Tom?" Elaine whimpered.

The boy stepped out of the dim hallway and into the light of Elaine's room, so Elaine could see him properly. Collecting her tattered thoughts together, Elaine sobered herself up. Now she saw the broad shoulders, the added height and his face. His face which looked like...hers.

It shouldn't have come as such a surprise really. Of course, Tom's brother would have felt the same but Elaine hoped that since Josh hadn't been there, he wouldn't have felt the overwhelming guilt she did. Of course her hope was naïve.

"Josh." Elaine's voice cracked. *Not Tom.* Her mind echoed. *Never Tom, not again.*

"Hello Elaine." Josh's voice was soft. Delicate. Kind of musical against the silence. Elaine had the urge to laugh. Instead she looked down at her hands. One spider webbed with drying blood, the other still clutching the small teddy.

Continued on next page

What Tom Left Behind, continued from page 15

“Why are you here?” Her voice trembled slightly, but when Elaine turned she held her head high. Trying to shake off the vulnerability she had exposed.

Biting his lip, Josh presented Elaine with a book. A bulky, blue scrapbook. *Tom’s.*

Stepping forward, Elaine caressed the blue, frayed cover.

“He wanted you to have it.” Josh turned to look down at Elaine. “Happy Birthday,” he whispered.

The thought was sickening. How could the worst day of Elaine’s life be filled with words as bittersweet as that? But Elaine ignored the comment and shakily took the familiar book into her hands. Heavy in weight and memories, the scrapbook was an anchor, pulling Elaine closer to the boy she lost.

Her eyes welled with tears, but her gaze held a sombre smile. “Thank you,” she whispered.

After Josh left, Elaine sat on the floor in the darkness, flicking through the map of her and Tom’s lives. Listening to the memories of their laughter and watching scenes of past times play repeatedly inside her head. When Elaine finally crawled back into bed and closed her eyes, she slept soundly. Her heart, which had previously felt shredded and cracked, started to slowly sew itself back together.

In her hand was a letter, covered in spiky, boyish writing. The last words protruding from the page.

“Happy birthday, Elaine. Love Tom.”

FROM THE REGISTERS

Baptism

17 July Grace Nolan and Roman Spooner at St George’s

Departed

4 July Rose Edwards (91) of The Bungalow, Cold Harbour Lane
St Mary’s and Marlborough Cemetery

5 July Joan Mavinia Bavister (91) of Highfield Residential Home
St George’s

8 July Paul Victor Smyth (79) of 10 Gales Ground, Marlborough
St Mary’s and Kingsdown Crematorium

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The Merchant's House Marlborough

25th August 2016, 7pm

Celebrate the Harp in the magical setting of The Merchant's House. Harpist and harp-maker Fiona Katie Roberts will be performing using a unique ancient technique and providing information about the history and construction of the instrument. Light refreshments will be provided.

Doors open 6.30pm. £15 (£12 to Friends); call 511491 or visit the shop at 132 High Street, Marlborough.

Family News compiled by Audrey Peck

Julie and Brian Presley's son, **Aaron**, married **Emily Skinner** at Preshute Church on June 11th. They were taken by Fire Engine from the church to the reception at Wick Bottom Barn. Aaron's brother, Wayne, was best man. The bridesmaids were Leanne Presley, Claire and Lou Avis and Lauren Yorke. Their 9 month old son, Mason, was one of the stars of a wonderful day. They honeymooned in Majorca.

Rose Edwards died, aged 91, in her bungalow in Coldharbour Lane which was built by her late husband, Happy Edwards, 60 years ago. She worked in her father's cafe in Hackney during the blitz, moving to Wilton, Pewsey to be a land girl. After marrying Happy she worked in his building firm's office and later in the Gas Showroom opposite Bridge Garage. She was a family woman and lived for her children, Lynne, Chrissie and Barry, her eight grandchildren and ten great grandchildren. She always had cats and dogs and completed a crossword every day until her last illness when she said she was ready to go and was cared for by her daughters.

Residents of Rogers Meadow will remember **Ann Gillett**, nee Hitchman, who died recently, having moved to Devon with her daughter. She attended the Grammar School here in the late 1940's and came back to Marlborough for some years when she retired. Her funeral at East Grafton Church was attended by her three daughters and their families and friends, including six of her old school friends.

Vera Hamblin's granddaughter, Frances Hamblin, has achieved a 1st class degree in Biology from Oxford University. She lives in Easton Royal and attended St John's School. Congratulations to Frances. She is the second of Vera's grandchildren with a 1st from Oxbridge.

Bethana Branston, who lives in Cherry Orchard, is going to receive an award from the Royal Humane Society for taking action to save the life of a man who collapsed at Swindon bus station. She performed CPR and the patient recovered at Great Western Hospital What amazing presence of mind .Well deserved, Bethana.

Alf, our former Town Crier, is keeping busy visiting Coombe End Court where his wife, Ann, was cared for before she died. He told me he enjoys meeting other shoppers when he is in town on his scooter and he said, with the usual twinkle in the eye, he knows he is still alive because I haven't mentioned him in the family news!

Ann Yates has just completed her Land's End to John O'Groats cycle ride. With her friend Jennifer, she took six weeks to cover a scenic route of 1,107 miles. She says, "It was a great experience riding through beautiful countryside, but what really stands out is the kindness of so many of the people we met on the way." Ann is raising money for Alabaré Christian Care and Support, a Salisbury-based charity, founded to help vulnerable and disadvantaged people in our communities. If you would like to donate to Alabaré (reg. charity no. 1006504) go to: www.give.net and find fundraiser Ann Yates, or contact her on 514827.

(Audrey would like to remind you that she is pleased to receive emails, letters or phone calls with family news at any time.)

St Peter's Church

Crop Circles - The Unknown Facts

Tuesday 19th July to Sunday 14th August daily 10-4.30.

St Peter's Church Marlborough.

Back for a second year after rave reviews last year, this exhibition which launched in 2014 at the Wiltshire Museum in Devizes returns with its display of amazing photographs and fascinating facts and theories. Discard your scepticism and prepare to be enlightened!

Advance notice:

Charlie's Charity Concert

Saturday 3rd September evening (time tbc)

St Peter's Church Marlborough

Great music in a great cause - get the date in your diary now - details to follow.

The Mayor's Charity Concert

Friday 23rd September evening (time tbc)

St Peter's Church Marlborough

In aid of Wiltshire Air Ambulance and Swift Medics. Members of Marlborough Concert Orchestra performing ensemble music including Mozart Clarinet Quintet and Schubert Trout Quintet.

Marlborough Churches Together

Please check pages 25, 26 and 27 for special services and events.

Usual Sunday Service times

Christchurch, New Road (Methodist - URC)

9.00am Worship

10.30am Morning Service with Junior Church and crèche

Society of Friends, Friends' Meeting House, The Parade

10.30am Meeting for Worship

St George's, Preshute (C of E)

8.00am Holy Communion (1st and 3rd Sunday)

10.00am All Age Service (1st Sunday)

Parish Communion (other Sundays)

St John the Baptist, Minal (C of E)

8.00am Holy Communion BCP (2nd Sunday)

9.30am Parish Communion (1st and 3rd Sunday)

St Mary's, behind the Town Hall (C of E)

8.00am Holy Communion (BCP on 4th Sunday)

10.00am All Age Worship (1st Sunday); Parish Communion and Junior Church and crèche on all other Sundays

(5.30pm Informal service except on 1st Sunday. **But** not in August)

St Thomas More, George Lane (Roman Catholic)

11.00am Sung Mass (See also below)

Marlborough College Services are shown at the College Chapel

Weekday Services

St Mary's

Informal Prayer: 8.00am Wednesday

Holy Communion: 10.30am Wednesday

St Thomas More Mass: 10.00am Mon, Tues, Wed and Sat

Holy Days: 10.00am

St George's

Informal Prayer: 8.00 am Wednesday

Teddy Prayers & Picnic: 2nd & 4th Wednesdays, 2-3pm

Tea Time followed by Evening Prayer: 4.30pm Weds.

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NEWS from the Churches

Women's Fellowship:

There are no meetings until September 6th with Revd Heather Cooper.

Christian Aid Week Update

The total raised in Marlborough during Christian Aid Week was £5,042.68; thank you for your generous donations.

Christian Aid write: 'Your commitment and generosity during Christian Aid Week is truly transforming the lives of our global neighbours in need.' Just £250 will provide flood proof homes, seeds, fruit trees, a wormery and a goat to provide sustainable sources of food and income for families whose lives are affected annually by Bangladesh's floods.

Marlborough Area Poverty Action Group (MAPAG)

With Marlborough Churches Together we have now raised over £1400 to enable children in need who are living in the Marlborough area to participate in Camp Activate at Marlborough Leisure Centre during the summer holidays. A huge thank you to all who have contributed to make this possible. Any additional funds will be carried over to autumn half term and or Christmas holidays.

MAPAG next meet on Monday 5th September at 7.30pm in Friends' Meeting House in the Parade, all are welcome.

Filling Station

is having a break over the summer and will meet again in September. Details from Helen Stokes hcstokes@gmail.com



Sunday Lunch Club

at Christchurch will be on August 7th at noon, and all are welcome. Please reserve a place via Eric Gilbert on 512829 by Friday 5th.

5.30pm Informal Worship at St Mary's Church

does not meet during the summer holidays; we look forward to welcoming you back on Sunday 11th September with refreshments from 5.15pm.

NEWS from the Churches, continued

St John the Baptist, Minal

The Refurbishment Exhibition celebrating the bicentenary of the Church Restoration in 1816 is still available daily until the end of August. If you can't get to the church, visit www.minal.org.uk/St.J.B.Refurbishment_Mobile.htm.

Christchurch Bicentenary service

On 28th August Christchurch is celebrating its 200th birthday. The site on which the church stands was purchased in 1816 and the chapel which then stood on it was consecrated for worship in the Methodist tradition. So we are commemorating that event with a party. At 4pm on that afternoon 28th August there will be a short service of thanksgiving, followed by a birthday tea party.



We hope that as many folk from the town and our sister churches will be able to join us for this occasion - all will be most welcome.

Historic Churches Ride and Stride

10th September 10am to 6pm. Walk, cycle or ride round Wiltshire visiting as many churches as you can to help raise funds for the Wiltshire Historic Churches Trust. More information and the important sponsor forms from:

St Mary's Keith Galpin, 516005, audrey-keith@talktalk.net.

St John the Baptist, Minal and Christchurch

David Fishlock, 512007, theoldforge@waitrose.com.

St George's Preshute: Charles Graham, 514301, ctg100@hotmail.com.

Mustard Seed Book Group



meets on Thursday 25th August at 7.30pm at Mustard Seed when we will be discussing Edith Cavell. It's the biography of a pioneering British nurse in the First World War who saved lives of soldiers from both sides of the conflict. When she helped 200 Allied soldiers escape from German-occupied Belgium, she was found guilty of treason and executed. On the night before her execution she told her chaplain, "Standing as I do in view of God and eternity, I realise that patriotism is not enough. I must have no hatred or bitterness towards anyone." An interesting statement to discuss.

The Alpha Course

Do you have questions about the meaning of life? Are you interested in exploring issues of faith? The Alpha course offers a unique opportunity to discuss some of life's difficult questions in an easy going, relaxed and welcoming atmosphere. Each talk looks at a different question around faith and is designed to create open and honest conversation.



Do come and join the course being run in Marlborough, which starts in the autumn with the Alpha Supper at 7.00pm on 14th September. At the Alpha Supper there will also be a short talk outlining what the course is about.

After the Alpha Supper we will meet for ten further weeks at St Mary's Church Hall for a delicious meal followed by a short talk (DVD) and then the opportunity to chat and ask questions in small groups over coffee and cake!

For more information on Marlborough Alpha: Contact: Simon Mills 861632
Website: marlb.anglicanteam@tiscali.co.uk or Facebook: Marlborough Alpha.

We would encourage people to pray for Alpha, for its role in bringing people to a deeper relationship with God. If you would like to receive prayer up-dates to help you focus your praying, please let Alison Selby have your e-mail address. (alison@crossmead.net).

Marlborough Churches Together (MCT)

The AGM was held on 6th July. Janneke, the retiring chair, commended all the activities in which the different denominational churches participate in together.



We welcome Fr John Blacker as chair of Marlborough Churches Together this year, and thank Rev Dr Janneke Blokland for all her work and input last year.

MCT are looking for a new Secretary

from this September, as Alison Selby has retired. If you would like to know more about the role of the secretary, please speak to Alison on 511128. If you would like to be considered for the post please speak to one of the clergy.

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Contributions and comments from readers are welcome. Please send articles and letters to the Monthly Editor or the Editorial Coordinator, other notices or announcements to the compiler. All items for the February issue by 12 January please.

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