

PLOUGHSHARE

**JUNE JULY
2024
VOLUME 31
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**10 QUESTIONS WITH
THOMS BLOKES UPDATE**

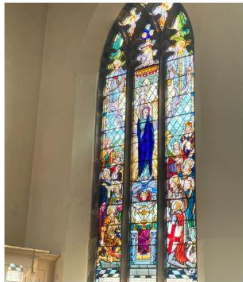
**HYPERLINKS IN
SCRIPTURE**

**MISSION UPDATE
WITH GATES ART
GROUP**



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CONTACTS



ST THOMAS CHURCH

Comments and opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect the views of the Editors, the PCC or the clergy of St Thomas.



UPCOMING EDITIONS

Please could any articles for the May - June edition be sent to: Cassie Wainwright via email to ploughsharesttoms@outlook.com before Friday 15th June 2024

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**CHURCH PHOTO PROVIDED BY MARIE
WITHAM**

Hyperlinks in scripture

Rachel Wright

A hyperlink is a computerised connector which allows you to move quickly from one place to another, either in the same document or another document, often with a single click.

Obviously, this is a digital definition of something which existed way before the internet and computers. I guess the analogue equivalent would be a cross reference. Go find your bible...I'll give you a minute...open it up to any page and you will probably see a little collection of notes at the bottom which are separate from the text. If you have a study bible there may be a whole column of notes. These are little nuggets of further information with alternative translations or verses which link to that passage or conversions from biblical measurements to more modern ones. These little references are amazing and if you care to follow some of them a whole extra level of depth to scripture will be opened up to you! Go ahead...try it!!



The Bible project is an organisation who exist to help make the biblical story accessible to everyone everywhere, all their resources are free and easily accessed. They often use the language of hyperlinks within the bible. They would encourage us to think of the bible as one unified story that leads to Jesus. They are amazing at bringing to the front the literary art of scripture and tracing biblical themes from page one all the way through.

Easter is full of these hyperlinks...I thought I'd share a few with you:

Palm Sunday took place 7 days before Resurrection Sunday. In the Jewish calendar the significance of these dates would have been common knowledge...today they aren't. The lamb selected for the Passover sacrifice would have been selected on what is now known as Palm Sunday, note this isn't the lamb they would have eaten at the

Passover meal. This lamb would have been killed at 3pm on Friday afternoon after being tied to the alter at 12 noon. For 4 days before the sacrifice, the lamb would have been under intense inspection and scrutiny. So, on the Sunday before Passover, lambs would have been brought into Jerusalem en mass, each family would have selected theirs and bro0m ,llkught it into the family home, the family would have cared for it and made sure it was blemish free and perfect. After these 4 days of scrutiny it would have been sacrificed for the family representing freedom for them, this would be a lamb they knew personally. Jesus entered Jerusalem on lamb selection day, was under watchful eyes and scrutinised for 4 days before being tried on Thursday evening, then tied/nailed to the cross on Friday. At noon the sky went dark and at 3 he cried it is finished!

After the Israelites escaped Egypt at the Passover they travelled through the desert and came to the foot of Mt Sinai. They set up camp and Moses went up the mountain to talk with God. God set out the law, a collection of commandments which would help the Israelites live within the covenantal relationship that God was setting up with them as his chosen people. Whilst Moses was up the mountain the Israelites got bored and looked around, trying to fulfil their innate need to worship, they created a golden calf which they began to bow down to. As Moses came down the mountain, he was so distraught at the sight of what was happening, that he broke the stone tablet on which God had inscribed the commandments. God was also pretty angry! This would have been about 50 days after the Israelites escape from Egypt...was their memory so short? Moses called all those who were on the LORD's side to himself and commanded them to rid the camp of those who had given way to worshipping the idol. 3000 people died that day (Exodus 32:25-29).

After Jesus died during the Passover festival the disciples felt a bit lost. They were scared, confused and unsure what to do. Jesus had told them about this new covenant but they didn't understand it. They spent a lot of time behind locked doors for fear of their lives. 50 days

after Jesus rose from the dead the disciples were gathered together. Their innate need for worship was being turned to God not idols, so God sent the Holy Spirit. This 'helper' was to guide them as they navigate this new covenant that was based on forgiveness and personal relationship rather than sacrifice and commandments. The Holy Spirit came in power and Peter preached to the crowds. Each heard in their own language and 3000 repented, believed, were baptised and added to their number that day.

I don't know about you but that make me pull this face... 🤔

So to summaries:

Passover = freedom from physical slavery and earthly death in Egypt.
Easter = spiritual freedom and deliverance from spiritual death to eternal life.

Sinai = God giving the Israelites guidelines for how to live, a blueprint of how this covenantal relationship will work.

Pentecost = God dwelling with each believer by his Holy Spirit, not just guidelines but an actual guide. New covenantal relationship based on personal connection not sacrificial laws.

Golden Calf = hearts turned away from God and 3000 died.

Church beginning/growth = hearts turned towards God and 3000 people were added to the new chosen people

If you weren't already I bet your pulling this face now... 🤔

So, there are some of the hyperlinks between Easter/Pentecost and Passover/escape from Egypt.

Why not go find some of your own? If you need some help look out for cross references in your bible, ask a friend to do it with you, I'd happily help, I'm sure the staff team would too! Or, if you can access the

internet, visit www.bibleproject.com. They have an app you can download if you want!

I'm excited for you as you go and explore scripture...be careful though it might be life changing!!

A Visit from the Archbishop **Sally-Anne Beecham**

Archbishop Justin Welby came to the Diocese on Saturday 13 April as part of his commitment to pray for his province. He began in Chesterfield, and visited Saints Augustine Church, followed by Gussie's Kitchen Food bank, and Hope House, as examples of social justice projects in the Diocese. Whilst at St Augustine's he lead a prayer time, focusing his prayers around the Diocesan vision (you'll find on the Diocesan website). When he visited Hope House he heard the guy's stories and one of them prayed for the Archbishop, which was very moving. He was on site for about 50 mins and was warm and encouraging - it was a huge boost for our area and a blessing to see his interest in what we do.



Photo provided by Sally-Anne Beecham

An Easter Reflection

Josie Chaming



The stories we tell ourselves about who we are matter, they shape our lives, our inclinations, our desires, and expectations about how our lives will turn out.

What is your story? How would you describe your story to someone that didn't know you? What experiences, qualities, aspects of your identity or family history would you define yourself by?

Easter is the defining story of the Christian faith. Even more than Christmas, where we celebrate Jesus being born. At Easter we remember that Jesus died and rose again to defeat evil in the world. The Easter story has its roots in the oldest parts of the history of the Jewish people, and particularly the Exodus.

The story of the Exodus is about God winning freedom for his chosen people. It was and continues to be an incredibly important part of the worshipping life of the Jewish people. It was the story through which all other stories were to be interpreted.

During Holy Week, the week running up to Easter Sunday, we remember Jesus' last week before his death. On Maundy Thursday we think back to Jesus celebrating the Passover with his friends. As they eat and drink together Jesus does something radical. He takes the symbols and rituals of the Passover and reinterprets them in light of his impending death.

At the point in the meal where Jesus and the disciples are about to share bread and wine, it was usual for the father of the family to take the bread and pass it out piece by piece to the family in silence. By doing this the father is reminding the family of the suffering of the Israelites in Egypt, who baked unleavened bread because they had to

leave their homes in haste. Each time Jewish families ate this meal they were reminded of the suffering of their people in captivity and the freedom that was won for them by Moses.

It is at this point that Jesus chooses to break custom – instead of giving out the bread in silence he gives the act new meaning, reinterpreting, and reassigning what they are doing when they break bread together in this way.

As Jesus breaks the bread he speaks of it as his body. His body is about to be broken for each one of them, and he wants them to remember this: that when they participate in this meal, they participate in Jesus' death in order to be brought to new life.

Life in Christ is only found through death.

Jesus goes on to take the cup of wine, which symbolised blessing in the Passover meal. As Jesus passes the cup around, he tells his disciples that his blood is about to be poured out for them, making a new kind of covenant between God and his people. Just as blood was painted over the door frames of the Israelites in Egypt as a sign of God's promise of protection and blessing, so now Jesus' blood makes a new promise of redemption for all who would follow him.

Jesus' death is the fulfilment of the promises God made to the Jewish people and he instructs those that follow him, that claim the promises of God for their own, to participate in this meal.

When we take bread, we are reminded of this moment when Jesus invited his friends to participate in the breaking of his body, in the suffering he was about to endure. When we drink wine, we are reminded that God has fulfilled his promise to us and we participate in the redemption he has won.

But we do not do one without the other. We cannot have redemption

without participating in his suffering and we never suffer without the promise of redemption.

This is our story.

The Easter story has so many amazing layers to it, and I find myself drawn to different things each year. This year I feel deeply reminded that this story is both about suffering and freedom, in equal amounts. Nothing about the Easter story, or the Christian faith requires us to ignore the parts of our lives that are hard. Rather God came, and died and rose again, so that we would never suffer on our own. God is with us in this Easter season.



Congratulations to the team in the St Thomas Centre for scoring a perfect Food Hygiene rating of 5 for the Scores on the Doors following an Environmental Health Officer visit.

Watoto African children's choir

Clare Weston



I'm guessing that many of you will have heard me talk about my new job by now! I'm now the UK sponsorship coordinator for Watoto African Children's Choir. Some of you might have heard of the choir or might even have heard them perform in years gone by as I know they've been to Chesterfield before but I'd love to tell you a little more about them.

Watoto is a church in Uganda that has a desire to serve the vulnerable women and children of Uganda and South Sudan. They believe that a child needs more than a house, a child needs a home and a family. In Watoto villages, children find mothers to love them, education to inspire them, healthcare to strengthen them, and their value and identity in Christ. In short, they have everything they need to grow up happy, healthy and full of purpose. That's how Watoto is raising Africa's future leaders. In order to share the Gospel message of how these lives have been changed and to raise sponsorship they send choirs to tour the world with music, dance and messages of hope.

Gary and I have been sponsoring children for over 15 years and have been over to visit the homes on the village in Kampala. Meeting Carolyn and Moses was such a privilege, to see the home where they are cared for, the church and school that they go to and to know now that Carolyn has graduated from university and is working for Watoto. Once Carolyn graduated we transferred our sponsorship to Joey who just happened to have been on the last choir tour that came to the UK. Please put the date in your diary for the choir concert in June and be prepared to have your heart challenged by these wonderful, talented, joyful children and adults as they share their dancing, singing and stories.



Watoto

CHILDREN'S CHOIR



Tuesday 11th June
at 7pm

St Thomas Church,
Chatsworth Road. S40 3AW

Scan the QR code to book your tickets
or visit stthomasbrampton.com



www.stthomasbrampton.com

Ten Questions With... Hazel Meakin

Who are you and what is your role? What do you do as part of your role?

Hi, I am Hazel Meakin aka mum and gran. I am a member of St. Mark's PCC, along with my husband Bob run Time for Tea.



Are you a morning person or a night owl?

I am more of a night owl. Mornings seem to disagree with me.

What is your favourite worship song and why?

My favourite worship song is All things Bright and Beautiful. It reminds me of the beautiful world God has blessed us with.

What keeps you motivated in your role?

I love seeing the people enjoying themselves.

If you could learn a new skill what would it be?

I would really love to learn to tap dancing but I don't think my knees are up to it any more.

What are you most thankful for?

I'm thankful for everything God has blessed me with. A wonderful loving family, lovely friends and such a beautiful world to live in. Every morning, I wake up thankful for another day.

How would you spend your ideal day?

Ideal day is a walk on the beach, especially Bamburgh beach, followed by fish and chips.

Do you like your cereal crunchy or mushy?

Definitely crunchy cereals

What song is guaranteed to always get your feet tapping?

Don't you want me Baby by The Human League

If you could live in a book, film or tv series what would it be?

Book- Inspector Ryan book by LJ Ross

Film- an Agatha Christie movie

TV series- The Sweeny

What is your favourite meal?

Favourite meal is a nice roast lamb dinner.




Join us for our

STEAK NIGHT

11th May 7:30pm

Enjoy a delicious 2-course meal



Booking required
£35 per person

Falling in Love with Jesus by Jerry Trousdale

A Book review by Janet Brown

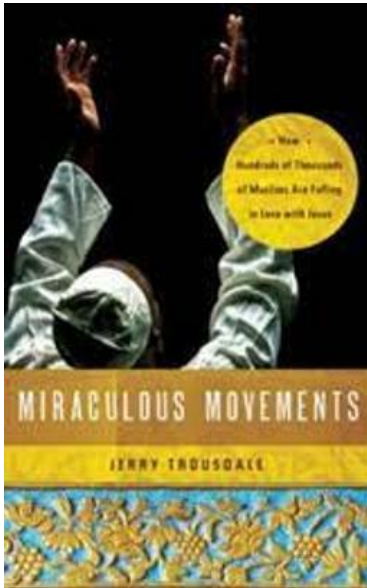
What is your reaction to Islam and Muslims?
Fear? Anger? Rejection? Can we see them “like sheep without a shepherd” and be moved with compassion like Jesus? Can we believe that they are part of God’s “plentiful harvest”, only lacking harvesters??

In this book, *Miraculous Movements*, we come face-to-face with God moving among Muslims, drawing hundreds of thousands to Himself. Story after story recounting how former Sheiks and Imams, men who bombed Christian churches and ordinary men and women, who have followed the teachings of Islam their entire life, are finding the truth of eternal life through Jesus.

If that isn’t enough to set your spine tingling with excitement, then perhaps reading about the *way* God is breaking into lives bound with fear, through dreams, visions and miracles will!

Looking around the UK today, and especially falling prey to what the media has to say, we can easily feel defeated, that somehow our Gospel isn’t enough, that Islam is on the march and we (or God) can’t stop it. Yet in this book we see that if we can begin to engage with Muslims beyond the headlines of burkas and bombs, we will discover hundreds of millions of disheartened and discouraged people. The question is, are we willing to engage, to show love and compassion, to introduce them to a God who loves them?

This book is not just a series of hard-to-believe stories of personal transformation, it is also the story of men and women, so convinced that the Christian message is Truth for all peoples everywhere, that they are willing to endure great suffering, loss and rejection for the sake of the Gospel.

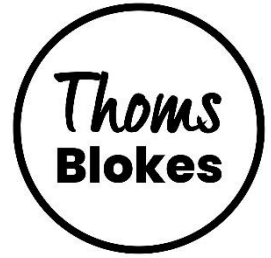


If you dare to read this book you will be encouraged and you will marvel at God's grace.....but you will also be challenged! Simple principles of making disciples who make disciples, leading to the exponential growth of the church. Trusting that God, by His word and by His Spirit, can grow churches rapidly, without theological institutions or traditional church structures.... Yes, it might feel “unsettling” and “scary”, but what if we were to join in with what God is doing around the world?

...Or even in Chesterfield?? Miraculous Movements can happen anywhere, among any people, if there are those willing to share the good news, helping others to discover what the Bible says and to obey its teaching..... just as Jesus commanded us to do!



Thoms Blokes Newsletter-Issue No 32 April 2024
Bryn Garland



Thom's Blokes meets monthly, usually on the third Tuesday at St Thomas' Church Centre for talks, outings, fun and friendship.

Mark has handed me the baton to keep you informed on what we have done and what is in our future programme. My thanks also to Robin who has been the wordsmith for the last few years.

And Now for Something completely Different

Our first meeting of the year at the church centre certainly was just that. In February Keith Arrowsmith gave an illustrated talk on the History of Drawing and Painting. He began with the earliest art being wall painting in the caves of Lascaux and Creswell. (We have a Thom's Blokes trip organised there on June 18th, Creswell not Lascaux, the café is better at Creswell.)



Keith continued to show how art developed through the Ancient Egyptians and Greeks to the Renaissance. He then spoke of how art had to change, with the impact of photography. We had a lively discussion on the varying styles of Modern Art and what is Art? In answer to a question "Is the Steam Locomotive, Flying Scotsman a work of Art?" Keith replied in his opinion because the actual locomotive was a thing of purpose it was not a work of art, a drawing or painting of the Flying Scotsman would be. Is a photograph art? Perhaps only one that has been altered by the artist.

After our tea, Keith finished with an appreciation of his favourite art movement the Pre Raphaelites, who were a group of Victorian painters

who rebelled against conventions of the time to return to the style of painting of the early Renaissance with abundant detail, classical poses and intense colours. Keith had an entertaining style and we all enjoyed it and came away with some understanding on the History of Art.
Thom's Blokes 1 Philistines 0

Mind how you go

In March we travelled by bus and tram to the National Emergency Services Museum (NESM) in Sheffield. The museum is located on West Bar Green in the centre of the city. The museum was originally the



West Bar combined Police, Fire and Ambulance station. In those days all those services were under the Police Chief Constable. John Jackson the incumbent at the end of the Victorian age looked across to New York for ideas and inspiration for his new station.

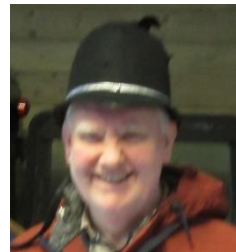
He sent his Architect and Chief Fire Officer to look at the latest trends with such combined emergency service facilities.

The building was completed and opened in 1900 and was divided into two main parts, Police and Fire, with the Fire Department incorporating some of the cutting-edge technology of the time, such as the iconic pole drop and the electric bell system for the faster response to fires. The firemen lived on site, the single men upstairs in single rooms, the married men in cottages behind the station and the superintendent in the house adjoining the station. Of course, in those days the fire engines were horse drawn so the station had to accommodate stabling for all three services. The Ambulance service was a part of the police force at the time and the ambulances have evolved over the years to become mini medical facilities from the simple transport to hospital for incapacitated or contagious patients.

The police station included four basic cold cells and an interview room where prisoners were charged, and mug shot with your crime board. Caps and moustaches where, it seem, compulsory.

Over the years the services have all moved out into more modern premises, however the fire department kept their old fire engines and created their first museum in Sheffield in 1931. This became the foundation of the collection at the NESM during the 1980s.

On our arrival we had a comprehensive guided tour of the building and the collections. Although national in the title, it is a small charitable enterprise, and the enthusiasm and commitment of the small staff came over as they cover everything from catering, curatorship and maintenance. The displays not only focus on the development of the equipment and methods of the police, fire and ambulance services but other rescue services. These include the coastguard, mountain rescue and lifeboat service. There is a full-size Lifeboat in the yard to inspect which is quite a surprise on walking out of the back door. They are planning to incorporate a Mines rescue display soon too. After the tour we had lunch in the café and then had another hour wandering around the displays before we headed back to our respective transport.



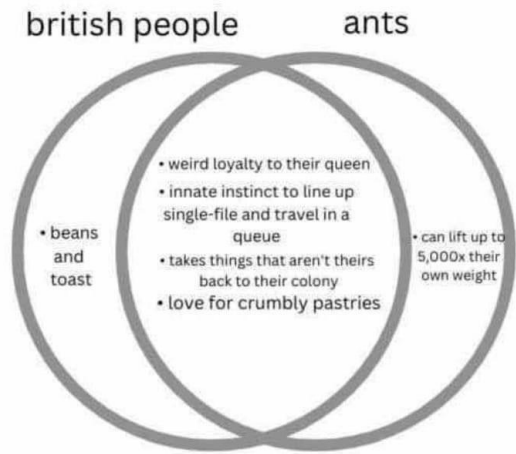
I would recommend a visit, especially with those with children as they are able to clamber onto some of the equipment and can dress up in various uniforms and wear some of the headgear. If you want further information including opening times visit the web site below <https://www.visitnesm.org.uk>

What makes us British?

My daughter in law celebrated 20 years of living in the U.K. She is from Baku on the edge of the Caspian Sea in Azerbaijan. A now independent country but formerly part of the Soviet Union, hence why she is fluent in Russian as well as Azeri. She shared this Venn diagram of how Brits

have much in common with Ants. It made me smile I hope it makes you do the same.

What do you think makes us British? Supporting the underdog, fair play, certain love of some foods. Let me know what you think.



Searching for the Stars

As we go to press, we have a meeting on April 16th on Astrophotography by Martin Bradley. This talk will be covered in the next edition. Following that on May 21st we have Tom Snowdon talking to us about his personal view of the Renewable Energy Industry where he has worked for some years.

Joke of the Month

Never Trust Atoms they make everything up.

Quote of the Month

David Frost: Television is an invention that permits you to be entertained in your living room by people you wouldn't have in your home.

If you want to comment on anything in the newsletter or send in an article or a joke, please send to me at bryn.garland@btinternet.com Alternativly, if you want to know anything about Thom's Blokes or anything else get in touch with Tony 01246206820 or via email at tonywitham6@gmail.com or Robin 01246 550445

Photos and images provided by Bryn Garland

Mission Update: Gates Art Group

Betty Frost and Sharon



I saw His eyes on me

At our last exhibition at St Augustine's church, one of our Art group members invited somebody she knew, who was isolated and struggling with mental health issues. That person was very tall, with long hair, earrings, and lots of tattoos, and stood out a bit as he walked into the church.

He seemed to really enjoy the exhibition, so much so that he stayed until closing time, and he later said to me: "When I walked in, I felt everyone looking at me, and I wanted to walk out straightaway...and then I turned round and saw His eyes on me, and I decided to stay." He was referring to the face of Jesus, drawn in pastel by the very person who had invited him to come (he didn't know that).

I was very moved by that, as it illustrated in one the power of art, how one image can reach into our hearts directly and touch us, by passing the need for words. This is especially true when art is at the service of faith, as our God is a Creative God. At the Gates Art group, this is a truth we rediscover continually and that never ceases to amaze us.

People may arrive "battered and bruised by life" in various ways, but our experience is that the power of community and creativity, especially when transcended by the power of faith, can bring about healing.

We have also come to realise that this healing is not limited to those in our groups, but extended to those with whom they share their art, as everything God gives has to overflow through His Grace.

Apart from our weekly service, our sessions often end up in a time of prayer for each other, where in spite of our differences the Holy Spirit

unites us around "the One who sees us" and helps us to see each other through His eyes. I believe this is what God does in any group founded around Him, and my prayer for us at St Thomas is that we as a church can always experience it.

"By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love each other." John 13v35

Sharon writes:

A couple of new members who have joined us recently are already experiencing God's love and healing in a powerful way.

Thank you for your continued support in prayer.



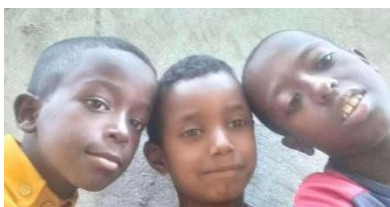
The Gates Art group

Saltergate Childrens Home Ethiopia Kevin Morley



The map is very clear - the girls and boys we care for are surrounded by Red. Some of them live inside the Red. Despite this they are doing fine, smiling through and having fun with the footballs kind folks have donated. 'But girls don't play football in Ethiopia.' -

well they do now don't they Marie! This little scrap is happy having a kick about and has the world at feet.



'Press that button and see what happens Habtom.' These three 'borrowed' Mahraig's mobile and learned how to do selfies - this is one of many. Mahraig won't be leaving his phone lying around again when

Habtom, Amanuel and Bereket are around.

Fasika lost her husband, her home and her leg but never lost hope. Begging on the street with a toddler they needed help. Many years have gone by and Fasika is now our trained sewing machinist and the toddler is 8 years old. Beselot is very proud of Mum – and so are we.

Last year Melat finished school and asked if we could support her on a beautician's course - 'Yes.' Course completed and diploma awarded, we got her stocked up with nail varnish, make-up and henna and with our help Melat's looking for customers. Begging days in the past.

And Yohannis ... you and your mum have been kicked from pillar to post all your life. Then, out of the blue, a kind supporter of our work thousands of miles away says 'I can help.' Then they say you can sleep in a bed tonight, you can have something to eat and you can learn to read and write. Then they send you a present of a new track suit - Yohannis' face says it all.



I met many homeless children in Addis Ababa. Too many. Mama Tadalú escaped the war with her children Absera and Besufkad and was sleeping under plastic bags at the roadside. We had a word with the elders ... 'We'll provide the materials if you can find volunteers to build Tadalú a home.' No sooner said than done and Tadalú and her children will sleep under a roof tonight. More importantly, they know they live in a community where there are folks they can turn to.



Photos and images provided by Kevin Morley

An evening of Women's Worship

Cassie Wainwright

On Monday 26th February around 45 women, and a beautiful baby, met in the St Thomas Centre to worship.

The evening began with a sharing of cakes and drinks. The opportunity to socialise and catch up was wonderful and the atmosphere in the hall was one of pure celebration.

With worship music lead by Sue Wheeler and Clare Weston, we began the session with prayer and worship, supported by Marie Witham on the digital desk.

Our session was then lead by Becky Botham. Becky delivered a sermon that was engaging, and in parts, humorous and relatable. Becky focused on the story of Mary, an unusual choice for post-Christmas, but a perfect choice non the less. Becky discussed how life as a woman is full of distractions and responsibilities that erode our relationship with God. She continued to talk about that when God called Mary to be the mother of Jesus, Mary reacted with multiple emotions. She moved from fear, to disbelief, to being completely prepared to serve the Lord, despite knowing that she would then be at risk of being a social outcast, potentially risking her life, all to serve her God.

With several breakout sessions to allow discussion and debate within groups, we considered our own relationships with God. What distractions get in the way of us worshipping? Are we too busy? Do we simply forget to worship? How can we build more time to worship into our lives?



The meeting concluded with worship and prayer. Not only does women's ministry provide an opportunity to delve deep into scripture and the roles of women in the bible, it also provides an opportunity to make connections with other women in the church family.





Women's Events

Women's Social:

Saturday 6th July

Women's Day:

Saturday 21st September

*"Finding relaxation in a non stop
world."*

With guest speaker Ems Hancock.
To find out more about Ems scan the
QR code.





Upcoming Events for Thom's Blokes

Tuesday 21st May - 'A Personal View of the
Renewable Energy Industry' talk

Tuesday 18th June- A visit to Cresswell Craggs.
Meeting in the St Thomas church car park for
9:30am

Tuesday 16th July- A talk about
volcanoes

Tuesday 17th September- A talk about
The Bentley Boys - the playboy racers