

# THE MAGAZINE

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TINSHILL FREE CHURCH

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## Pastoral Letter — August 2015

# You have searched me and known me

We live in an age when it is easier than ever to communicate with each other, because of technology and the ability to move about freely. Many people share their lives with the world through social media; posting everything online: from their deepest thoughts and struggles to a picture of the dinner they are eating. Indeed, I expect to see many pictures of my friends and family on their summer holidays being shared over the coming weeks: sometimes live from the beach itself!

Yet, in the midst of all this discussion and communication it is easy to stay hidden. It is possible to speak to people constantly, day-by-day, to have thousands of interactions with others, and yet still no-one gets past the person that we want the world to see. People ask how we are, and once more we just say “I’m okay”. We can be so busy keeping up appearances that no-one actually knows the “real you”: who you are inside.

Well, almost no-one. As there is someone who knows all that there is to know about you, of course. Someone who hears the unsaid comments, and sees the unseen acts: as we are reminded in Psalm 139. David begins this famous psalm by saying “*O Lord, You have searched me and known me. You know my sitting down and my rising up; You understand my thought afar off.*” (v1-2). He is sure that there is nothing about him that escapes God’s attention; nothing that is beneath His notice. “*For there is not a word on my tongue, but behold, O Lord, You know it altogether.*” (v4).

Not only does God know all that there is to know about us, but David also dwells upon the fact that there is nowhere he can go to flee from God’s presence. Anywhere he goes, God is there, and even the darkness is like daylight to God and His wonderful knowledge.

But far from this omniscience and omnipresence of God being oppressive, to David — as a child of God — it is a cause for praise. All of this knowledge means that God is close to those who trust in Him, caring for them, surrounding them, protecting them and intimately interested in their lives.

Perhaps most beautifully and touchingly this is expressed in David's description of God's work in creating him. From verses 13 to 16 in this psalm he describes how God carefully and skilfully "knitted him together" in his mother's womb. He says:

*"For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvellous are Your works, and that my soul knows very well. My frame was not hidden from You, when I was made in secret, and skilfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book they all were written, the days fashioned for me, when as yet there were none of them."*

God certainly is the knowledgeable Creator who sees all and is interested in all. Even the tiny foetus in his mother's womb is not hidden from His sight, or His care. Indeed, on a personal note, Veronica and I have the great joy to announce that we now are expecting our third child. In the last few days we have just had our 12-week ultrasound scan at the hospital, and it never ceases to amaze me when I see the delicate features of even such a small baby. To see the tiny heart beating as it is displayed on the screen in front of you: a heart that has been beating away for 6 weeks already! To see the head, spine and little arms and legs: all so well-designed and even bumping around when our little one had hiccups during the scan! We saw all this in a slightly grainy grey, even with such wonderful technology; but we know that God sees every cell and atom, though "made in secret", putting each in its proper place: since the darkness is as daylight to Him. We also know that the Lord has written in His book all the days fashioned for this young one, and entrust this child to His care.



Considering such things is deeply humbling. We barely know our own mind, often, and can be unwilling to lower our barriers and let others in.

Yet we are known, intimately, by God. David cannot help but be in awe of God at the thought of this knowledge and care for His people. He says:

*“How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God! How great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they would be more in number than the sand; when I awake, I am still with You.”* (v17-18).

This contemplation of God’s knowledge of His people, His love and care for them, and His presence with them should lead us to praise God from the bottom of our hearts. He has formed each one of us as a special and unique work: truly *“fearfully and wonderfully made”*. But we should not be happy to leave it at that, just as David is not. He concludes the psalm by calling upon God to continue searching and knowing his heart, drawing him closer, that He might be led by God. Will you too let your guard down, realising that God does indeed know the “real you”: intimately? And in the light of this, can you echo that heartfelt prayer of the believer:

*“Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my anxieties; and see if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.”* (v23-24).

*Joseph Cresswell*

## Edith Cavell

Edith Cavell was a British nurse who is celebrated for saving the lives of soldiers from both the German and Allied sides and in helping some 200 Allied soldiers escape from German-occupied Belgium during The First World War, for which she was arrested. She was subsequently court-marshalled, found guilty of treason and sentenced to death. Despite international pressure for mercy she was shot by a German firing squad on 12th October 1915.

She was born in December 1865 in a village near Norwich where her father was vicar for 45 years



and became a devout Christian. After a period as a governess she trained as a nurse at the London Hospital and worked in various hospitals in England before becoming Matron of a newly established nursing school in Brussels in 1907. By 1911 Edith was a training nurse for 3 hospitals, 24 schools and 13 kindergartens in Belgium. When the First World War broke out Edith, who was visiting her widowed mother in Norfolk, returned to Brussels where her clinic and nursing school were taken over by the Red Cross. In November 1914, after the German occupation of Brussels, Edith began sheltering British soldiers and funnelling them out of occupied Belgium to the neutral Netherlands. Edith was eventually betrayed and then arrested on 3rd August 1915. She was held in prison for 10 weeks, the last two in solitary confinement. The night before her execution, she told the Anglican chaplain who had been allowed to see her and give her Communion, “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.”

These words are inscribed on her statue which stands in St. Martin’s Place, near Trafalgar Square in London, outside the National Portrait Gallery (see picture). Her final words to the German Lutheran prison chaplain were recorded as “Ask Father Gahan to tell my loved ones later on that my soul, as I believe, is safe, and that I am glad to die for my country.”

After the war Edith’s body was taken back to Britain for a memorial service at Westminster Abbey and then transferred to Norwich to be laid to rest on the east side of the cathedral.

Edith Cavell was recently featured on a UK commemorative £5 coin, part of a set issued in 2015 by the Royal Mint to mark the centenary of the war. It is good to remember the selfless acts of past believers who served God in the world during difficult times — Edith certainly fits that description and is part of that great cloud of witnesses described in Hebrews 12v1, and part of our heritage as Christian believers.

May we follow faithfully in their footsteps having a strong selfless testimony and serving others, pointing them to the place where they too can be safe.

*Martin Sellens*

## The Danger of Short Cuts

I am sure that like me you have used the phrase “working like billio” but few know how the expression originated. The story of the Rev E. Billio provides a graphic illustration of the wisdom in avoiding short cuts. This clergyman was a minister in the established church during that sombre period of British history when the shackles of a crippling tradition were hindering the march of progress. Unfortunately for his family Billio could not accept certain doctrines and practices of the church and he raised his voice against them. The ecclesiastical leaders were alarmed and threatened to deprive this renegade of his living. He was told to restrain his tongue or suffer the consequences.

This he could not do and the day came when Billio was defrocked and left without a means to sustain his large family. His friends wondered what he would do, but were not left in doubt for very long. Billio, with his own hands, set about erecting his own church, and his ceaseless labours amazed all who saw him. Many considered him to be foolish for had he curbed his tongue he may have influenced his parishioners to accept quietly the biblical truths he believed.

Billio refused to take short cuts and soon became known as the man who never ceased labouring. Soon his new church was opened and the power of his ministry reached far and wide over the countryside of Britain. Few people know that he bequeathed to the English language the saying “working like billio”.

*Submitted by John Lewin*

## The Postmaster's Dilemma

All officials of the Monmouthshire Post Office were puzzled as they read the address on a letter just arrived from Japan. “To the Man of God, Monmouthshire, England”. Who can that be? asked the one in charge of sorting it but his colleagues were unable to answer his question.

Then one man exclaimed “Well, it’s not the parson” and instantly they all agreed. The local clergyman did not fit the description. One by one, the names of all the ministers in the area were mentioned. Nice fellows, all of them, and most popular but they did not fit the description on the envelope.

The problem of delivering the letter was becoming acute when suddenly a member of staff said “I know. Yes, I know who it is. It’s old Mr ———. If any man in this town has earned the title it is him.” Someone was instructed to take the letter to him. The old Christian marvelled that the Post Office should think him worthy of such a compliment, but when he opened the letter he discovered their choice had been sound. It had been written by a Japanese student who had been studying in Wales, and had been kindly entertained by his generous host. He wanted to show his appreciation for what he had received and thought surely that the “Man of God” would find him. This believer’s human service had charmed a community.

What would happen if such a letter was addressed to us, what would the Royal Mail think of us?

Paul wrote in Philippians 1v21 “*For me, to live is Christ and to die is gain*”. He refers to Christ being magnified in his body v20 – brought into bold relief and seen more clearly. It is not possible to make Christ more wonderful. He is altogether lovely, the chiefest among ten thousand. We are living epistles known and read by all men. As we reflect the glory of the Lord Jesus others see Christ in us.

That dear Christian brother in Monmouthshire was indeed a magnifying glass. He so magnified his Lord that even in the Post Office they were able to see the Lord’s glory. They noted his everyday actions and recognised in them God’s presence.

*Submitted by John Lewin*

# Pictures from the Bible Exhibition 2015

It was great to be able to hold a Bible Exhibition for local schools again this year and have children from Holy Trinity, Holy Name and Cookridge attend over 3 days in the last week in June. Douglas Young was our guide through the “Amazing Acts” and the pictures capture something of what went on in that week as a happy team welcomed the children. Do pray for the continued impact of the exhibition and the books given as prizes to some of the children. We are already making plans for 2016!

*Martin Sellens*





## MAF News to Share—July 2015

### South Sudan on the brink of famine

June is an anxious month for the people of South Sudan. Some organisations estimate that 2 million people have been displaced as a result of fighting over the last 18 months between President Kiir's forces and those he accuses of plotting a coup.

In May, the mass displacement of 100,000 people from the Unity state region at the height of the crop-planting season ramped up food shortages. The risk of further shortages is expected to dramatically increase over the June rainy season when deliveries of food aid to many areas are made virtually impossible as the dusty land becomes muddy and waterlogged.

The recent expulsion of the UN's South Sudan humanitarian co-ordinator, Toby Lanzer, comes at an already tense time for aid organisations that are in the precarious position of deciding whether to evacuate their staff. In May, MAF was involved in evacuating aid workers including staff from Medair after violence broke out in Leer, a town in oil-rich Unity state.

In addition to the food shortages, the falling South Sudanese Pound is proving a catalyst for increased crime and instability. The MAF team in South Sudan are carefully monitoring the security situation on the ground. Meanwhile, the international community holds its breath.

#### **MAF's long history with Sudan**

MAF has a long history with Sudan, our personnel having served for over 50 years there before Sudan's southern population voted for independence — forming a new country in 2011. Since then, MAF has flown a range of groups within South Sudan including church leaders, peace and reconciliation workers and those working in the aid sector.

We care about South Sudan just as much as we cared about the people of Sudan when we first flew over their vast deserts and landed among some of their remotest communities in the 1950s. We long for the day when its people can live in peace again.

## Pray with MAF for South Sudan

In the anxious days following the evacuation of aid workers from South Sudan, a member of our operations team, Lesley Miller, wrote, ‘Please can I ask you to pray for the people of South Sudan, our team in Juba and also the many partners and customers we serve. Please pray for their ongoing safety and protection and for the necessary wisdom around the work they are doing in very difficult areas.

‘Praise the Lord for the work we are able to do to fly in supplies and personnel to remote communities to help bring relief to the many South Sudanese people suffering from this ongoing violence. Please pray that the fighting will come to an end soon, that leaders on both sides of the conflict will make wise decisions, and that peace will be restored.’

*Supplied by MAF*

## A hymn for Harvest

Hear us O Lord from heaven your dwelling place  
Like men of old, in vain we toil all night,  
Unless with us you go who are the light;  
Come then O Lord that we may see Your face.

Our wives and children we commend to Thee  
For them we plough the land and plough the deep  
For them by day the golden corn we reap,  
By night the silver harvest of the sea.

We thank Thee Lord for sunshine, dew and rain  
Broadcast from heaven by Thine Almighty hand.  
Source of all life, unnumbered as the sand  
Bird, beast and fish, herb, fruit and golden grain.

O Bread of Life, Thou in Thy Word hast said  
Who feeds in faith on me shall never die  
In mercy hear Thy hungry children’s cry  
Father this day give us our daily bread.

Sow in our hearts the seed of Thy great love  
 That we may reap contentment, joy and peace.  
 And when at last our earthly labours cease  
 Grant us to join Thy harvest home above.

*William Henry Gill 1839-1923*  
*(Submitted by John Lewin)*

## Harvest

Harvest events this year take place on the weekend of 26/27 September. As the display needs to be moveable, I should be obliged for the loan of trays. These to be left in the Church by the Saturday morning, with names on them so they can be returned to their rightful owners. Also, if anyone can donate the heavier duty plastic bags, of the “bag for life” variety, these come in useful for the distribution of the food gifts afterwards.

Thank you

*Angela Mathers*

## PREACHING PLAN

		<b>Morning</b>	<b>Evening</b>
August	2	Joe Cresswell	Martin Sellens
	9	Joe Cresswell	Joe Cresswell
	16	Joe Cresswell	Joe Cresswell
	23	Stephen Emmott	Stephen Emmott
	30	Joe Cresswell	Joe Cresswell
September	6	Roger Barden	Martin Sellens
	13	Joe Cresswell	To be announced
	20	Joe Cresswell	Joe Cresswell
	27	Alan Brearley	Joe Cresswell (Harvest)
October	4	Joe Cresswell	Joe Cresswell

# Outside Appointments

Do pray for our men as they minister outside the church as follows in the coming months:-

## Martin Sellens

Sunday 16th August pm Bethel, Armley  
Sunday 23rd August am Bethel, Ripon  
Sunday 4th October am Thorp Edge

## Paul Crossley

Sunday 30th August am Pentecost Baptist, Harehills  
pm Bethel, Armley  
Sunday 13th September am Christ Church, Crossgates  
pm Garforth  
Sunday 20th September am Pentecost Baptist  
Sunday 27th September am/pm Salem Baptist, Ramsey

# DIARY

## August

Sun 2 8.15pm Afterchurch to discuss Bible Exhibition  
Thu 6 2pm Thursday at Two Speaker: John White  
Sun 9 2.30pm Cookridge Court Service  
Wed 12 7.45pm Deputation: Sajida Iqbal (NOOR Ministries Pakistan)  
Thu 20 2pm Thursday at Two Speaker: Rodney Steel

## September

Thu 3 2pm Thursday at Two Speaker: John Almond  
Tue 8 10.15am Second Tuesday Speaker: Glyn Williams  
Fri 11 6pm Good News Prayer time  
7.30pm FYN restarts after Summer break  
Sun 13 2.30pm Cookridge Court Service  
Mon 14 7.45pm Evangelism Group at 175 Tinshill Lane

- Tue 15 7.45pm Men's Fellowship
- Wed 16 1.30pm Restart of Tots Club after Summer break
- Thu 17 2pm Thursday at Two Speaker: Tim Mills
- Fri 18 6pm Good News Club restarts after Summer break  
7.45pm Missionary Prayer Group at 1 Tinshill Mount
- Tue 22 7.45pm Elders/Deacons meeting at 25 Holtdale Fold
- Sat 26 7pm Harvest Supper Speaker: Graham Peel
- Tue 29 7.30pm Making & Thinking for Ladies  
Taste it and make the book! (at church)

### October

- Thu 1 1pm Thursday at Two Harvest Special  
Speaker: Matthew Seymour

The church will be open for the receipt of Harvest gifts on Saturday morning 26th September between 10 and 12 noon.

The next magazine is due out (DV) on Sunday October 4th so all items for the October/November edition should be given to Martin Sellens by Wednesday 23rd September.

Do remember some of our young people in prayer as they attend Knock week 1 and YL Holidays Misterton in the first week of August.

Do pray for those who are unwell and those in hospital –  
Mark Pitten in St James's and Nancy Fairburn at The Mount.

## Thought for the Month

Only as we walk in Christ's light can we live in His love

# Rotas

## Week ending

August	1	Jenny Leng
	8	Ruth Holder
	15	Mavis Mathers
	22	Gill Almond
	29	Natalie Sellens
September	5	Jenny Leng
	12	Ruth Holder
	19	Mavis Mathers
	26	Gill Almond
October	3	Natalie Sellens

## Cleaning

Eva Ng	Anne Sellens
Rosemary Hilton	Carole Brearley
Angela Mathers	Christine Crossley
Colette Hickman	Ann Mountain
Kathryn Hibbard	Deborah Williams
Eva Ng	Anne Sellens
Rosemary Hilton	Carole Brearley
Angela Mathers	Christine Crossley
Colette Hickman	Ann Mountain
Kathryn Hibbard	Deborah Williams

## For Sunday

August	2	Eva Ng
	16	Angela Mathers
	30	Kathryn Hibbard
	13	Rosemary Hilton
	27	Ann Mountain

## Flowers

9	Carole Brearley
23	Colette Hickman
September 6	Anne Sellens
20	Christine Crossley
October 4	Deborah Williams

## Sunday

August	2	Mavis Mathers
	16	Rosemary Hilton
	30	Nigel Hibbard
	13	Mavis Mathers
	27	Rosemary Hilton

## Library rota

9	Paul Crossley
23	Christine Crossley
September 6	Angela Mathers
20	Christine Crossley
October 4	Paul Crossley

# Diary of Services and Activities

Sunday	Prayer Meeting	8.00am
	Morning Worship*	10.30am
	Key Club (Children aged 4-11)	10.30am
	Evening Worship	6.30pm
	Holy Communion follows the first morning and the third evening service each month	
	*A fully supervised crèche for young children is run in the church side room during the sermon.	
Tuesday	Second Tuesday (monthly)	10.15am
	Making and Thinking (for ladies — monthly) venue as announced	7.30pm
	Men's Fellowship (3rd Tuesday monthly)	7.45pm
Wednesday	Tots' Club (term-time)	1.30 - 3.00pm
	Prayer Meeting and Bible Study	7.45pm
Thursday	Thursday at Two (senior citizens — fortnightly)	2.00pm
	Followers' Prayer Group (as announced) at 68 Moseley Wood Walk	7.30pm
Friday	Good News Club (Children aged 5-11)	6.00pm
	Friday Youth Night (Ages 11-16)	7.30pm
	Missionary Prayer Group (monthly) at 1 Tinshill Mount	7.45pm

## TINSHILL FREE CHURCH

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Registered Charity No. 511933

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