

## Creation, creator and creativity.



**WE** are all familiar with the story of creation, as told in the book of Genesis. The simple truth of the biblical creation story is that God is the author of creation.

GOD was very pleased with his creation. Six times during the process of creating, God stopped, observed his handiwork, and saw that it was good. On final inspection of all that he had made, God regarded it as 'very good'.

Back in March, I paid a visit to Bath Abbey to look at an exhibition called 'Threads through Creation' that is currently on tour and being exhibited at cathedrals throughout the country. As someone who is interested in all things creative, I was keen to see how the biblical story of creation could be depicted in the medium of embroidery, as an alternative interpretation of the written word.

'Threads through Creation' is a spectacular sequence of twelve huge textile panels, created by Jacqui Parkinson. Jacqui's Christian faith underpins her work.

This is the second set of panels she has created, and a third set is underway.

'Threads through Creation' took a total of three years work, miles of thread and unbelievable sewing on a huge scale: expressing God's love with around eight million stitches!

Interestingly, each panel starts with an old bedsheet, usually French linen. Jacqui says she 'likes the rougher textured ones, the 'slubby' ones, the ones that are patched and darned'. She likes the thought that:

*'these sheets have seen all kinds of human emotions, holding memories of generations, from birth to death, and that the sorrows and joys are then part of her work'.* She likes the idea of 'taking the ordinary and making it special and spectacular'. And my goodness, she certainly achieves that!

To this humble base she adds layers of silk and threads to create her works of art. It's an exuberant, colourful retelling of the creation story from the book of Genesis, a retelling which many of those who look at it, find both moving and breath-taking, myself included.

Viewers are treated to a wonderful variety of colours, shapes, patterns – and of course lots of creatures!

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### Mission Partners with St Stephens:

Beloved  
Bristol City Centre Soup Run  
Bristol Schools Connection  
Bristol/Uganda Link  
Christian Aid  
Community of the Sisters of the Church  
Emmaus  
Harvest for The Hungry  
One25 Project

### St Stephens

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[www.saintstephensoundwell.org](http://www.saintstephensoundwell.org)

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CHARITY NUMBER  
1131503



**St Stephens**  
SOUNDWELL

# Readings & Collects

## SUNDAY 01 OCTOBER

### 17th Sunday after Trinity

Ezekiel 18:1–4, 25–32; Psalm 25:1–8  
Philippians 2:1–13; Matthew 21:23–32

GRACIOUS GOD, you call us to fullness of life: deliver us from unbelief and banish our anxieties with the liberating love of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## SUNDAY 08 OCTOBER

### 18th Sunday after Trinity

Isaiah 5:1–7; Psalm 80:9–17  
Philippians 3:4b–14; Matt 21:33–46

GOD, our judge and saviour, teach us to be open to your truth and to trust in your love, that we may live each day with confidence in the salvation which is given through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## SUNDAY 15 OCTOBER

### 19th Sunday after Trinity

Isaiah 25:1–9; Psalm 23  
Philippians 4:1–9; Matt 22:1–14

FAITHFUL LORD whose steadfast love never ceases and whose mercies never come to an end: grant us the grace to trust you and to receive the gifts of your love, new every morning, in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## SUNDAY 22 OCTOBER

### 20th Sunday after Trinity

Isaiah 45:1–7; Psalm 96:1–13  
1 Thess 1:1–10; Matt 22:15–22  
GOD, our light and our salvation: illuminate our lives, that we may see your goodness in the land of the living, and looking on your beauty may be changed into the likeness of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## SUNDAY 29 OCTOBER

### Last Sunday of Trinity

Leviticus 19:1–2, 15–18; Psalm 1  
Colossians 3:12–17; Matt 24:30–35  
MERCIFUL GOD, teach us to be faithful in change and uncertainty, that trusting in your word and obeying your will we may enter the unfailing joy of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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If you are interested in finding out more about this extraordinary piece of work visit her website:

[www.jacqui-textile.com](http://www.jacqui-textile.com).

The panels will be on display at Wells Cathedral from 18th October until 27th November. If you are interested, and able to, I urge you to take a look at this incredible labour of love. Jacqui Parkinson's cathedral exhibitions are a leap of faith.

Creating and touring is very costly. And she receives no public funding. When she starts a new project, it is not fully funded; she simply trusts that sufficient money will come in to pay for making it and getting it out on tour for people to see.

Creation in the Bible means much more than bringing something into being. It also means sustaining and caring for that which has been created by our dependable Creator.

### Rhythms of life

SO many of us now live on the earth in towns and cities, where our wonder and awe of God's creation has dissipated. Vast numbers of us live in a world that is devoid of the natural rhythms of life: many people starting and ending the day with brightly lit 24/7 screens. Few of us are aware of the natural rhythm of creation; the planting and harvesting of crops – the returning of day followed by night – the turning of the tides. And maybe we don't even sense our own rhythms: our need for light and dark to help regulate our internal circadian clock – the beating of our heart – the taking in and the releasing of breath.

But if we engage with creation we can recover the rhythms that we need, to live well. To value 'now' – this moment – with a sense of reverence.

### The now

WE need to recognise and value the present moment – the only time we can be certain of. The space deliberately left: finishing a meal with room for more – completing work with time to dawdle home – finishing a task to have room for play. Ending the day with energy and time to thank God for 'time well spent'.

To move more slowly – to enjoy the beauty of the world.

To be in 'green pastures – beside quiet waters' (Psalm 23:2–3), as God desires for us.

In moments of rest, knowing our time really is in our Father's hands. That there's sufficient time to accomplish all that we need to, with time to rest.

Holidays and 'time off' give us 'time to waste', if you like, but it is also a time to rest, and appreciate our surroundings and take the opportunity to reflect and give thanks, to our Creator God, with a grateful heart.

We are privileged to have so many documentaries on plants and wildlife from all over the world on our screens, but the natural world around us doesn't happen on such a large scale or at the same pace.

### Using our senses

IT takes time to 'see'. To practise looking. To stop and notice the ants scurrying around at our feet, to **smell** the damp earth after rain, to **touch** the rose petal, to **hear** the bird song. To **savour** and relish each mouthful of food. To watch, listen, touch, breathe deeply and truly experience all that we should.

I love to hear the birds singing in my garden, and when I go out walking, and recognise quite a few of their 'songs'.

In May I was fortunate enough to have a holiday to Australia, where I had time to listen to, and watch, some very different birds to those I am used to!

I have to say that many of them weren't very tuneful – screeching cockatoos, large flocks of noisy chattering lorikeets and the laughing kookaburra, to name a few! But... I had 'time to waste', to look, listen, appreciate and soak up every new experience that came my way during my travels to the 'land down under'!

We also need to remind ourselves that we are part of God's creation. Even when we don't feel worthy of his pleasure, remember that God made us and is pleased with us and we are of great worth to him:

*'You are precious in my sight, and honoured, and I love you'* (Isaiah 43:4).

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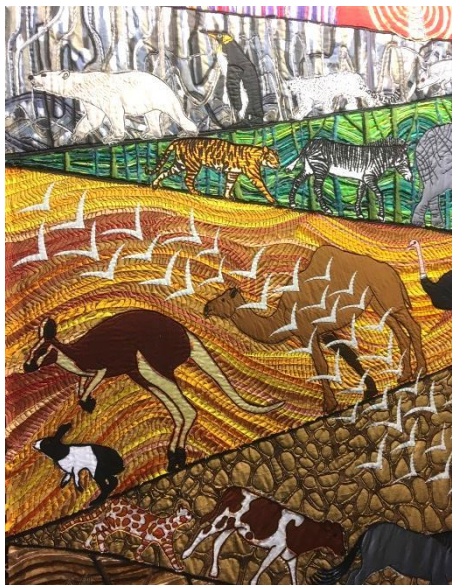
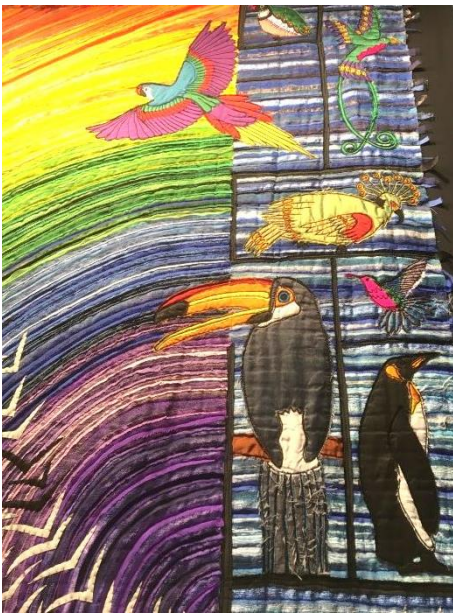
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We're created to be in a relationship with our Creator and that means to be full of thanks and full of worship. It can be our only response;

*'You made me so happy, God: I saw your work and I shouted for joy. How magnificent your work, God! How profound your thoughts!'*  
(Psalm 92: 4-5).

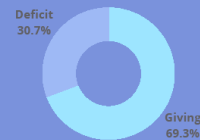
There are times we just need to express our gratitude, and remember that 'Our God is a great big God, and he holds us in his hands.'

**Julia Merrifield**



## OUR CHURCH FINANCIAL HEALTH

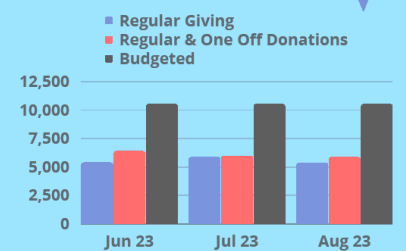
### GIVING FOR AUGUST



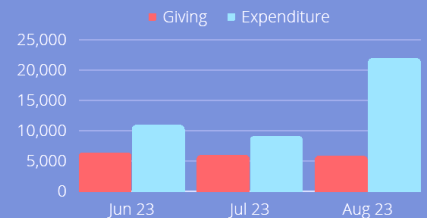
WHAT OUR GIVING NEEDS TO BE £10,500

GIVING RECEIVED £5838

### Giving Last 3 Months



### Giving v Church Expenses Last 3 Months



## Celebrate the New Year in Rome!

**29 DECEMBER–3 JANUARY** for 5 nights, staying at the Hotel Lancelot near the Colosseum.

The flight will depart from Bristol Airport, and costs will be in the region of £1000 per person which will include the Gala celebration on New Year's Eve.

If you might like to join in then do speak to me at church for further details or telephone 0773 036 9112 or else email me at: peter-robbins@outlook.com

**Peter Robbins**

## Being part of the team!

A small but fantastic group of people lead some of the first part of the main Sunday service alongside one of our priests. Mostly it is 'scripted' in that it is part of the liturgy. The only preparation involves introducing 2 hymns, and one of those can be introduced with some 'standard' wording if you prefer to use it. Might you like to be part of this team? Full training will be given so that you will feel confident in leading... and you won't be on your own, this team are always there to help. If you'd like to find out some more, without committing yourself, then please do be in touch with me. Thank you! **Lisa**

## Next Bishop of Swindon

Bishop Viv is delighted to announce a welcome service for Neil Warwick as the next Bishop of Swindon, on 3rd December 2023 at 6.30pm in Christ Church Swindon.

An additional service will take place in Bristol Cathedral on a later date as Neil takes up his new stall as Suffragan Bishop.

Bishop Neil will then visit many parishes over the course of 2024.

More details on the welcome service will follow but in the meantime, we pray for Neil as he prepares for his consecration which takes place on 30 November.

## OCTOBER CYCLE OF PRAYER BEGINNING SUNDAY OF EACH WEEK

01	Outburst Youth Group	Sandra Rosser Kerrie, Kevin, Kaiden & Kolby Rowland Lorraine and Paul Sanderson	Woodchester Woodland Avenue Woodland Way Yew Tree Drive
08	See & Know toddler's Group	Marianne Saunders, Anne Scott Jayne, Chris & Phoebe Selway Carolyn, Martin, Abbi & Jess Smith	Acacia Avenue Acacia Close Acacia Road
15	Pensioner's Group	Louise, David, Owen & Rhys Stanton Margaret Stawte, Lois Stokes Marlene Stone	Alexandra Close Alexandra Gardens Alexandra Place
22	Knit & Natter Group	Nick Stott, Debbie & family Greta Summerill, Pat and Martyn Talbot Roy Tanner	Anchor Road Baglyn Avenue Barrington Close
29	Men's Group & Ladies Group	Rita Thorne, Christine Tippet Vanessa and Nick Tippet Ken and Gill Tizzard	Barrington Court Beazer Close Birch Road

**SUNDAYS:** 8am BCP Holy Communion on 1st and 3rd Sundays.  
10am Community Worship Service

Prayer Ministry is offered after the 10am Service on the 1st and 3rd Sundays or at any other time by request, so do please ask as necessary.

**WEDNESDAYS:** 10am Service of Holy Communion

## OCTOBER DIARY

03 Tuesday(s)	1.30-3.30pm	Knit & Natter weekly in the Church Room
04 Wednesday	12noon	Coffee/Chat/Company Turnpike Pub
05 Thursday(s)	10-11.45am 2-4pm	See & Know in Church Hall Ladies Group in Church Hall then fortnightly
06 Friday	7-9pm	Outburst Youth Club in Church Hall
09 Monday	9.30am	Retreat Memory Café in Church Hall for Dementia sufferers and their carers (fortnightly)
12 Thursday	2-4pm	Men's Group in Church Room then fortnightly
13 Friday	2-4pm	Pensioner's Group in Church Hall then fortnightly
20 Friday	6.30pm	<b>FRIDAY NIGHT LIVE</b> in Church: informal song, prayer, discussions with refreshments after at 7.30pm in the Church Hall
28 Saturday	after midnight	BST ends, clocks 'go back'
29 Sunday	10am	Enjoy an extra lie-in but be sure to be on time!

## NOVEMBER DIARY

05 Sunday	6.30pm	Memorial Service in Church
12 Sunday	10am	<b>REMEMBRANCE SERVICE</b> in Church

JOIN US FOR  
**COFFEE/  
CHAT &  
COMPANY**

Every first Wednesday  
of the month at 12noon  
in the Turnpike  
on Soundwell Road.

A time to be, be known,  
and be together!

## FROM THE REGISTERS

SINCE AUGUST 2023

### Baptisms:

- SEPTEMBER 09: **Samantha O'Regan**. Please hold Sammie and her family in your prayers.
- SEPTEMBER 17: **Bonnie Beaux O'Regan**. Please hold Bonnie's parents, Samantha and Jordan, her Godparents and all the family and their friends in your prayers.

### Funerals:

- AUGUST 30: **Catherine 'Betty' Dundas-Ure** (85). The celebration of Betty's life was held at Westerleigh Crematorium. Please hold Betty's children; Sharon and Simon, their families, the wider family and all Betty's friends in your prayers.

## Dial-a-SERMON

Listen to this week's Sermon  
on your phone:

**0117 456 2090**

(Cost is the same as a local call)

OR

## Click-a-SERMON

Visit our website and use the  
audio link to listen on-line  
<http://saintstephensoundwell.org>

## SAINT STEPHENS SOUNDWELL



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● **Revd Regan Meares**  
Priest  
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● **Gill Mayo**  
Church Warden  
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0117 956 9796

