

March 2026

Issue 301

FOCUS

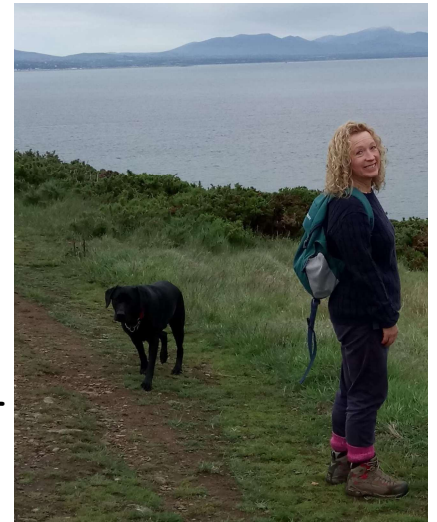


Parish Magazine of St Stephen's, Hightown



Editor's Note

This month, we celebrate the lives of two great saints: St David of Wales on March 1st and St Patrick of Ireland on 17th March. I would like to wish a very happy feast day to all of you who bear either of the names. Many of us born, in this corner of England, will carry the DNA of at least one, if not both nationalities. I certainly do: one set of great grandparents came from Towyn, North Wales, and one grandmother came from Cork in Ireland.



We are fortunate, in Hightown, to live fairly close to the border of Wales and can enjoy the wonderful Welsh coast and mountains with relative ease. On a clear day, it is possible to see Snowdon and other mountains from the beach here. I still get excited to see them covered in snow!

As a child, we were taken on numerous holidays and days out to North Wales. The journey seemed unending - slow cars, (prone to being unreliable) and even slower roads in those days! The memory can play tricks, and I understand how we tend to see the past through rose coloured spectacles, but I definitely remember long hot summer holidays on the beach in Anglesey. The only clothes required were a swimming costume, a pair of shorts, a T- shirt, a sweater for cooler evenings and a pair of plimsoles. Only equipment required: a bucket and spade, a fishing net and a bat and ball. Simple times!

Some of you may recognise the front cover as being Morfa Nefyn and the photograph, on the right hand side of this page, as the Llyn coastal path, opposite St Tudwal's Island, now owned by Bear Grylls. Here's hoping for some lovely spring-like weather for March!

Colette

Entries for future issues of Focus to be sent to

Focus.Mag.2023@StStephensHightown.org.uk

Please submit before last day of month

Dear friends,

We are now well into the season of Lent.... how's it going? If you gave something up have you managed to still resist temptation? What about if you took something up: how are the motivation levels currently?

Last month, I suggested that we see Lent as an invitation to slow down, to pause, to listen and to let God shape us more into the likeness of Christ. Lent is a good time to reflect on the health or otherwise of our faith. We recall the temptations of Jesus in the wilderness, and we are invited to consider our own response to temptation in turn.

Lent reminds us of Jesus' steadfast commitment to the way of the cross and asks us if we are willing to resist the temptations of this world and to bear the cost of discipleship.

What sustained Jesus during those forty days and forty nights of testing? It was prayer and devotion.

We live such busy lives, and sometimes it feels like we are running on 'auto-pilot' and so we forget that we have given up chocolate, alcohol or whatever. Or, we climb into bed at the end of yet another busy and full day and only then recall, 'Oh! I haven't done that thing I was supposed to be doing during Lent... Oh well it's too late now!!'

It's just as well that we have a loving God that sees us in our weakness and in our struggling and wrestling with the demands and temptations of life today. Still God urges us, just like Jesus did, to make time and space for prayer and devotion in our own lives.

At the end of the month, we will celebrate Palm Sunday and journey on into Holy Week. There are services every day during Holy Week, an opportunity for us to hit the pause button, take time out, and make time for prayer and devotion. Do come and join us any or every day! You will be most welcome.

**God Bless,
Keith**



	<p>Coffee Morning Saturday March 7th 10:00 till noon St Stephen's Hall Come and enjoy a bacon or sausage barm and a cup of tea or coffee</p>	
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Church Services at St Stephen's

March and Holy Week

Sunday 1 st Lent 2	10:30	All-Age Eucharist
	18:00	Evensong
Wednesday 4 th	10:30	Eucharist
Friday 6 th	09:30	Morning Prayer
Sunday 8 th Lent 3	10:30	Eucharist
	16:00	Toddler Church
	18:00	Evensong
Wednesday 11 th	10:30	Eucharist
	19:00	Sanctuary @ Seven
Friday 13 th	09:30	Morning Prayer
Sunday 15 th Lent 4	10:30	Eucharist for Mothering Sunday
	18:00	Evensong
Wednesday 18 th	10:30	Eucharist
Friday 20 th	09:30	Morning Prayer
Sunday 22 nd Lent 5 Passiontide	10:30	Eucharist
	18:00	BCP Holy Communion
Wednesday 25 th	10:30	Eucharist
Friday 27 th	09:30	Morning Prayer
Sunday 29 th Palm Sunday	10:30	Palm Procession & Eucharist
	18:00	Evensong
Monday 30 th	19:00	Evening Prayer in Holy Week
Tuesday 31 st	19:00	Eucharist in Holy Week
Wednesday 1 st April	10:30	Eucharist
	19:00	The Stations of the Cross
Maundy Thursday 2 nd April	19:00	Eucharist, Stripping of the Altar & Watch
Good Friday 3 rd April	09:30	Morning Prayer
	11:00	Passion Play- Formby Pool
	14:00	Last Words of Love
Holy Saturday 4 th April	19:00	Easter Fire & Vigil
Easter Day 5 th April	10:30	All-Age Eucharist for Easter
	18:00	BCP Holy Communion

Prayer Prompts for March

Taken from Words of Mother Teresa

Week 1. Holiness consists of doing the will of God with a smile.

Week 2. Be kind and merciful. Let no one ever come to you without leaving better and happier. Be a living expression of God's kindness.

Week 3. The care of the poor and needy is not only the responsibility of the State. It is the responsibility of everyone. Every person must be concerned with his brothers' and sisters' needs.

Week 4. Silence is the root of our union with God and with one another. In silence we are filled with the energy of God Himself that makes us do all things in joy. The more we receive in silent prayer, the more we can give in our active life.

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...are you late with your 'Vicar's Letter' again, dear?

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Slaps at the rocks the sun has dried

Too lazy , almost, to sink and lift
Round low peninsulas pink with thrift.

The water enlarging shells and sand,
Grows greener emerald out from land

And brown over shadowy shelves below
The waving forests of seaweed show.

Sunday Coffee Rota

1st.... Jane Copeland

8thDi Aldis

15th.... Jayne Cudby

22nd.... Margaret Bird

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March

Hazel Roberts

April

Colette Hudson and

Jayne Cudby



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Who's Who at St Stephen's

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Associate Priest	Revd John Reed
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Warden	Jane Copeland Jane.Churchwarden@StStephensHightown.org.uk
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PCC Treasurer	Keith Aldis
Gift Aid Secretary	Brian Taylor
Safeguarding	Cath Marshall cathmarshall47@yahoo.co.uk
Electoral Roll	Beth Cresswell
Sacristan Team	Hazel Roberts
Health and Safety	<i>TBA</i>
Flower Rota	Sue Taylor
CMS Secretary	Berenice Gibson
St Stephen's Youth Club	Jane Croxton
Church Hall Bookings	Sally Fraser
Focus Editor	Colette Hudson: Focus.Mag.2023@StStephensHightown.org.uk
Focus Adverts	Colette Hudson Adverts@StStephensHightown.org.uk
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Malamute + Pointer = Mute Point: Oh well....it didn't matter anyway!

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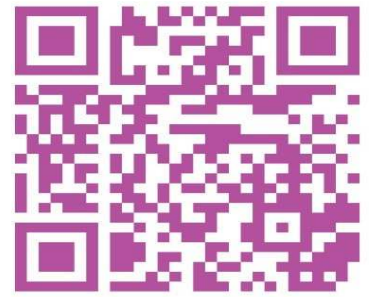


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Hightown Friendship Group 1st Wednesday at 8pm St Stephen's Hall	Marjorie Walker
Gardening Club 2nd Monday 8pm St Stephen's Hall	Hilary Munro
Bowling Club, Sandy Lane	Diana Killen
Hightown Club	Chris Scrine
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Yoga Classes, Hightown Club	Rose Billinge
Flower Show	Debbie Underhill underhillsathome@aol.com
Open Mic Poetry Group 3rd Thursday 7.30pm St Stephen's Church hall	Sally Anne tapiabowes@gmail.com Alex
Craft Group, Every Thursdays 1.30-3.30pm, St Stephen's Hall	Sue Taylor
Hightown Parish Council	Jenny Farrar clerk@hightownparishcouncil.uk www.hightownparishcouncil.uk
Community Library, Alt Centre, Lower Alt Rd. Mon 12-2, Weds 11.30-12.30, Fri 10-12	Linda Munro lindamunro@hotmail.com
Zumba Gold, Dance for all aged 55 plus, Mondays 9.45-10.30, St Stephen's Hall	Nicky Garsforth
Creo Dance Company Mon Tues Wed Thurs Sat Children 3 to 18 years	Georgia Cardwell

When I met my husband Peter, he used to tell me how much he loved Wales. His great grandfather, Moses Jones, was born on a small farm called Maes y Betws, meaning 'Chapel in the Field'. Moses was the 2nd youngest of 11 children and when he left the farm to look for work in the late 1800s, he could not speak a word of English. When he arrived in Liverpool he was fortunately taken in by a Welsh family.

My father in law, used to tell stories of how, as a boy, he was sent to the family farms between Tregaron and Llandewi Brefi in school holiday time, as his mother had died when he was very young and he needed looking after. He travelled by train to Llandovery and was then picked up by horse and cart. Every Sunday the whole family plus farm workers would follow a track over the mountain to a Calvinistic Methodist Chapel called Soar y Mynydd. The chapel was built in 1822 and is now known as the most remote chapel in Wales. The family and workers had to travel miles over rough country to get there. Naturally the family went on horse back, Welsh ponies, no doubt. Herds of them still roam wild there now. The farm workers had to walk in all weathers.

Peter and I went a few times to see the farms and leave flowers in the chapel in memory of the family. We also walked from 'Blandoethie', one of the family farms, along the track to Maes y Betws and over the top to Soar y Mynydd, the same route the family would have taken all those years ago. It felt like we were in the middle of nowhere.

A lot of the family farms, now, are under the Llyn Brienne reservoir which was built to supply Swansea with water. All that is left of the farms are plaques in parts of the surrounding woodland to mark the spot they once were.

It was wonderful to arrive at the chapel and just drink in the quiet beauty of the place. It was very austere compared to our churches and did not have any electricity. It was lit by oil lamps and candles and the organ had to be operated by someone operating it manually while someone played. At one time there had been a school in the rooms attached to the chapel. Imagine the children having to travel there in the winter over the hills!

A few years ago we met some of the family from the area and had a memorable evening meal with them in Tregaron. There must have been about fifty of us in the dining room of the local hotel. It was a wonderful evening. The day after, we all went to the service in the chapel, there were so many of us that we filled it. A cousin was playing the organ and the service was entirely in Welsh.

It was a privilege to spend time there. We felt truly blessed in being able to go and enjoy the beauty and peace of the mountains and the countryside.

People in Our Parish: Eve's Story

(Editor's note: I first met Eve whilst she was walking her dog, Ernie, over the railway bridge. We stopped for a dog chat)



Eve first discovered Hightown 15 years ago, when she worked for Merseyrail. She instantly fell in love with the village and knew that this was the place where she wanted to live. Over the years, she used to visit, with her partner, to walk along the beach with their two dogs, Olive and Frank. Three years ago, the perfect house, for them, came up for sale and, knowing how much their dogs loved the area, they bought it! Sadly, two weeks before they moved, Frank died and 4 months after moving to Hightown, so did Olive! They were heart-broken.



That's when their journey with 'Rescue Me Animal Sanctuary', in Melling, began. Eve was introduced to the centre through a friend and started to foster dogs whilst they were waiting for their 'forever' home. Their first was a memorable, but lovable character called Maggie. She was an XL Bullie, and whilst waiting for her 'forever' home in Ireland, lived with Eve, who described her as a wonderful advocate for the breed, being such a fun and loving dog.

Their second foster was Ernie, an English Bulldog, a very sad case of over-breeding by unscrupulous people. He had had a terrible life and was seriously emaciated. Eve and the sanctuary worked their magic and Eve, who had fallen in love with him, provided Ernie with his forever home.

They went on to foster a little black cockapoo called Boo, who was initially very sick and indeed had almost died. She had never lived in a house, walked on a lead or played with toys. After a lot of hard work, patience and love, Boo was ready for re-homing. Eve said that letting her go was a terrible wrench, and she (Eve) cried for days, but she had been adopted by a caring new owner. Their fourth foster was Molly, another sad case of over breeding. There is no magic wand, just a lot of patience and love required in every case. Molly, too, eventually found her very own family.



Eve says that 'Rescue Me' is a wonderful centre, not only finding loving homes for abandoned animals but also providing specialist care for disabled animals, hand rearing for abandoned puppies and kittens, palliative care for animals nearing the end of life, reduced rate neutering for cats and much more. She is proud to be associated with it.

Google them to find out more about what they do. You'll be impressed!

EASTER BISCUITS



These are simple to make and a good, 'plainish' antidote to all the chocolate that will be eaten on Easter Sunday.

Ingredients:

75 g butter or margarine

75g caster sugar

1 egg, beaten

175g self-raising flour

Pinch of salt

½ tsp mixed spice

50g currants

1-2 tablespoons milk

To finish:

1 egg white, lightly beaten

Caster sugar for sprinkling

Method:

Cream together the butter or margarine and sugar in a mixing bowl until light and fluffy, then beat in the egg. Sieve the flour, salt and mixed spice and fold into the creamed mixture with the currants. Beat well to mix, adding enough milk to make a soft pliable dough.

Knead lightly until the dough is smooth, then roll out on a floured board to 6mm thickness.

Stamp into rounds. Put the biscuits on greased baking sheets, allowing room for expansion.

Bake in the centre of a moderate oven (180 C, Gas Mark 4) for 10 minutes. Remove from the oven, brush with the egg white and sprinkle with caster sugar. Return to the oven for a further 10 minutes or until the biscuits are golden and crisp.

When cooked leave the biscuits to cool for a few minutes. Transfer to a wire rack to cool completely. Store in an airtight tin.

Makes 16-18

The
Tale of the
**TWO
BUILDERS**



**JESUS OFTEN TOLD
STORIES WITH
HIDDEN MEANINGS**



**ONE WAS ABOUT TWO MEN WHO
BUILT THEIR OWN HOUSES**

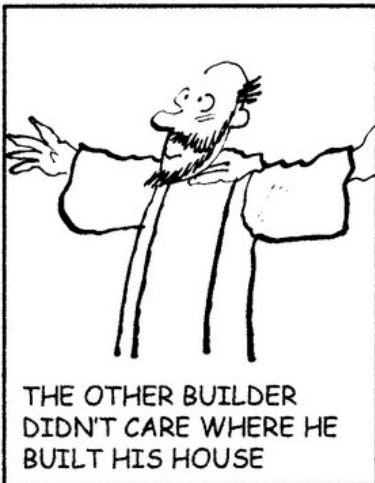


**THE FIRST BUILDER SEARCHED HIGH
AND LOW FOR A GOOD SOLID ROCK ON
WHICH TO BUILD HIS HIS HOME.**

**AT LONG, LONG LAST HE
FOUND THE IDEAL SPOT.**



SO HE BEGAN TO BUILD.



**THE OTHER BUILDER
DIDN'T CARE WHERE HE
BUILT HIS HOUSE**

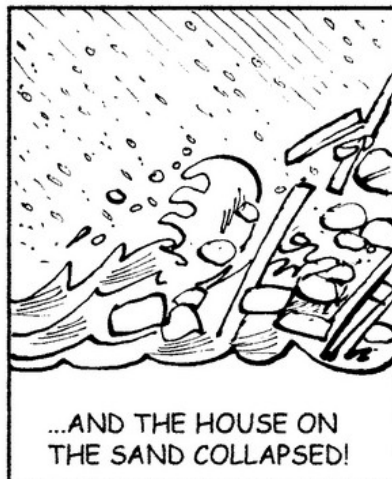
**HE THOUGHT SOME NICE FLAT SAND
WOULD BE AN EASY PLACE TO BUILD.**



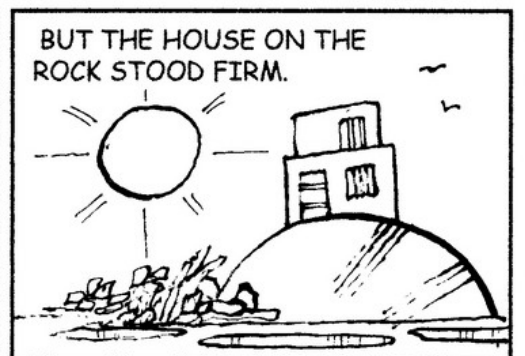
**BUT ONE DAY THE
STORM CAME...**



**...AND THE WIND BLEW...AND
THE RAIN FELL...**

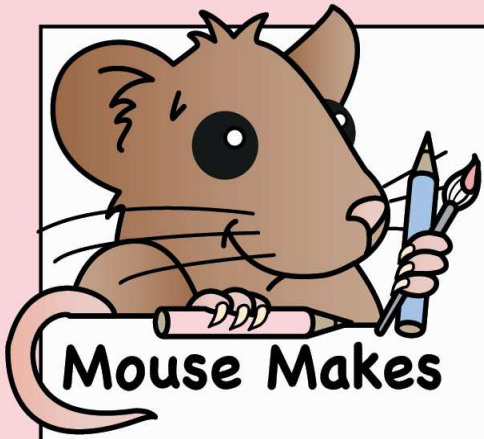


**...AND THE HOUSE ON
THE SAND COLLAPSED!**



**BUT THE HOUSE ON THE
ROCK STOOD FIRM.**

**JESUS EXPLAINED -
IT'S IMPORTANT OUR LIVES HAVE
A FIRM FOUNDATION.**

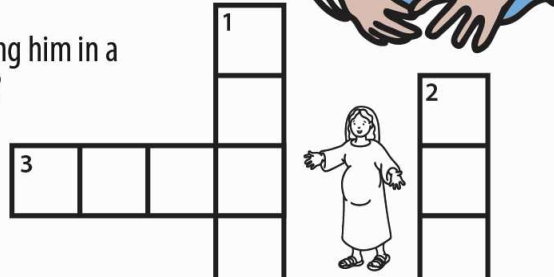


The Bible has many stories of mothers who had great faith in God. With their love, care, encouragement and prayers their children grew up to be great people of God.

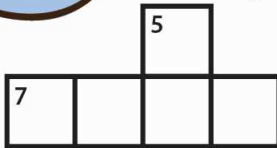


Who saved her baby by putting him in a basket in the river?

Exodus 2:1-3
and 6:20



Who was 90 years old when she had her son Isaac?
Genesis 17:19



Across

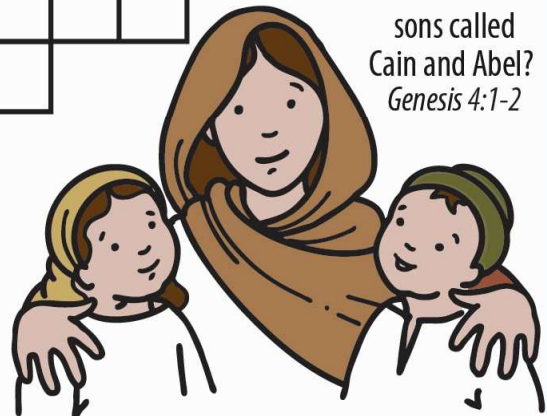
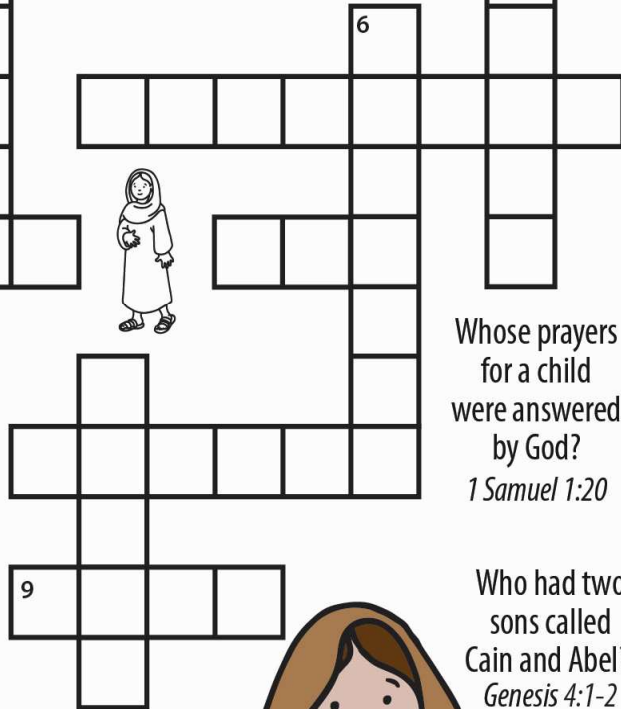
- 3. **Obed's** mother
Matthew 1:5
- 4. **John's** mother
Luke 1:57-60
- 7. **Reuben's** mother
Genesis 29:32
- 8. **Joseph's** mother
Genesis 30:22-24
- 9. **Jesus' mother**
Acts 1:14

Down

- 1. **Boaz's** mother
Matthew 1:5
- 2. **Solomon's** mother
1 Kings 1:11
- 4. **Timothy's** mother
2 Timothy 1:5
- 5. **Ishmael's** mother
Genesis 16:15
- 6. **Jacob and Esau's** mother
Genesis 25:21-26

Whose prayers for a child were answered by God?
1 Samuel 1:20

Who had two sons called Cain and Abel?
Genesis 4:1-2



Answer the questions then put them into the crossword

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Toddler Time

A new fun group for Toddlers 0-4yr and their carers!

St. Stephen's Church Hall

Fridays 10:00am-11:30am term time

Play- Craft- Snack- Story- Songs- Fun!

ALL WELCOME!

Toddler Church

St Stephen's Church

2nd Sunday of each month 4:00pm

A service for pre-schoolers and their families

Fun songs, a bible story, craft and refreshments

We look forward to meeting you!

Youth Club

From age 7

Friday Evening Term Time

6:00pm until 7:15pm

£2.50 includes snacks and drinks

Contact: Jane Bessant 07776 305 660


**Please note that there will be no youth club
during school holidays**



ST STEPHEN'S CHURCH SUNDAY SCHOOL



EVERY 3RD SUNDAY @ 10:30AM



Magazine part-sponsored by John Gibson - notary services