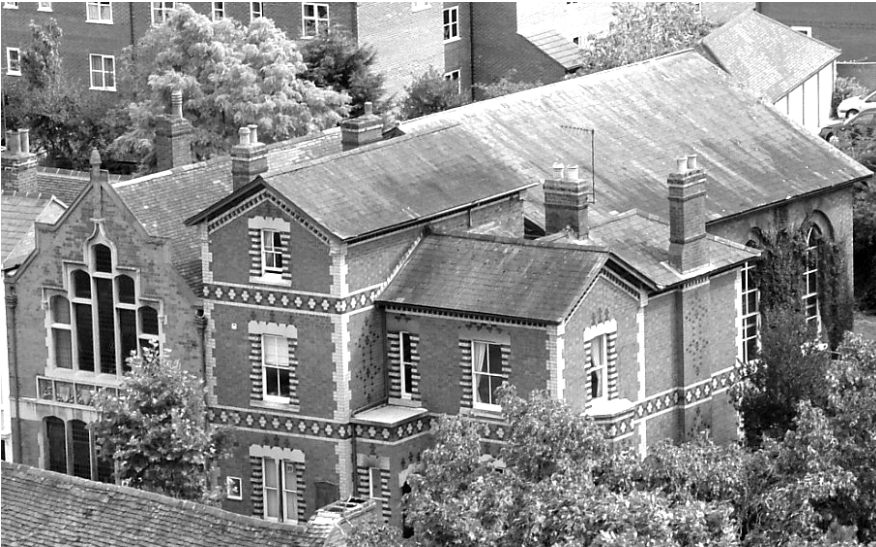


Pershore Baptist Church



Messenger

Broad Street, Pershore, Worcestershire

May 2007

www.pershorebaptist.org

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Superbowl 2007

The 2007 Superbowl made history. Just for the record, Indianapolis beat Chicago 29-17 to win Super Bowl XLI in a rain-hit Miami. There had never been an African-American winning coach in the Superbowl before. In 2007 both coaches were African-American.

What was more Tony Dungy (Indianapolis) and Lovie Smith (Chicago) are old friends, who coached together at Tampa Bay. But they are also bound together by something deeper and more profound than a love of football.

Before the game Dungy said, "Football is a profession that is judged by performance and results. However, those things come and go so quickly that, as a coach, I have to base my career on something more."

Tony Dungy is a follower of Jesus Christ and relies on his belief in God to strive for excellence. "I think it's great to be able to show the world not only that African-American coaches can do it, but Christian coaches can do it in a way that, you know, we can still win. I want to show people that being a Christian and being successful are not mutually exclusive.

"When people ask me, 'How do you stay so calm on the sideline?' I have to tell them it is Christian maturity and Christ working in me. It's not natural. It didn't happen

overnight. It was a process. I know how powerful God's spirit is. I know he can change people. And I know that he will do that if we allow him to. A personal relationship with Jesus Christ is the only way I've found true peace, joy and forgiveness."

The faith of the entire Dungy family would be put to the test in December 2005, when Tony's oldest son James was found dead in his apartment in Tampa. During this time his faith gave meaning to life even in his darkest hours. "I think God gives you tests to see if you're going to stay true to what you believe and stay faithful," Dungy says. "Sometimes when you have disappointments it makes the final destination that much sweeter."

Lovie Smith, the head coach of the Chicago Bears, was named after his great aunt Lavanna. His mother Mae worked at a local furniture factory, and instilled in her son a faith in God and a self-confidence which enabled him to reach high. "My mother and my father told me all of my life that I could be anything that I wanted to be. I was told that you are supposed to work hard and treat people right. Throughout my coaching career, that's kind of how it happened."

He sums up his life, "Everything that I am is based on my faith. It has been a big part of me." That faith can be seen in the way he does his job. He doesn't scream or

curse at his players or referees. Instead, he models his faith to his players by the way he carries himself on and off the field.

"Yelling and screaming, that's one of the most overrated coaching ideas out there," he says. "Maybe in the old days that's what you had to do. Nowadays, what I've found is that if you tell guys what to do ... they will do it. You don't have to belittle them, threaten them. I simply tell them what I want done. If they can't do it, there are other guys waiting for the chance to do it. I'm also not trying to be anybody's father, but I do accept the role as a father-figure."

Lovie says that he relies on his faith, which was cultivated in him

during his childhood. "Everything that I am is based on my faith. It has been a big part of me," he says. "At a young age, I called on God to help me, and he was there as a comfort for me. That is something that I have leaned on ever since."

To make the point that there was more to life than American Football, the two coaches co-operated in a campaign which included newspaper adverts and a website on faith and sport <http://www.beyondtheultimate.org>.

There was of course only one winner in the Superbowl – but Lovie and Tony as both winners in the game of life.

Stuart Weir of Verite Sport

Statistic of the month

Most churchgoers in Liverpool

The city of Liverpool has many claims for importance, but Merseyside, the county in which the city resides, has one especially for Christian people – it has the highest percentage of its population in church every Sunday! At 8.7% it is more than Greater London at 8.3%, and well above the overall figure for England of 6.3%.

Merseyside, or Liverpool, hosts many Irish people, who have immigrated there ever since the days of the potato famines of the mid-19th century. As many Irish people are Catholics, Liverpool has an impressive number of Catholics who go to Mass every Sunday. Catholics form 60% of Liverpoolian churchgoers, the highest percentage in the country, the next nearest being 52% in Cleveland (another area of intense Irish immigration) and 45% in Lancashire.

The Channel Islands have many Catholics also, 51%, but not from Ireland.

Roman Catholics have much larger churches than Protestants, and this is no exception in Liverpool, where the average Catholic church has 433 people attending. This simply means that the other churches in Liverpool average only 90 each, still much higher than the 67 for all England, which includes many very small rural churches.

In the Wirral, on the west side of the River Mersey, where Birkenhead is situated, 10.9% of the population go to church, dropping just 11% in the seven years to 2005. Other parts of Merseyside have seen much greater drops in attendance – the 71,000 Catholics attending Mass in 2005 were over 220,000 in 1979!

Peter Brierley, Christian Research

News of the Family



Congratulations to **John and Florrie Newell** on their Golden Wedding Anniversary

Dear Friends

What about Baptism?

What exactly is Christian baptism? What is its significance for us today? According to the New Testament a Christian is someone who, by definition, has been baptised. As a result baptism is never raised as an issue. However there are passages which can give us important insights e.g. Romans 6. Here Paul offers 3 key truths about baptism.

Firstly, Paul describes baptism as into Christ (3). It speaks of the Christian's new identity arising from relationship with Christ. Like a wedding ring, it is the sign and seal of the relationship. Baptism is as much an affirmation of God's grace as a profession of faith, meaning that it is not inappropriate for infants to be baptised. Paul is also teaching us that baptism is a once-for-all event, closing the door on rebaptism. However, like marriage, there is the place for the re-affirmation of baptismal vows.

Secondly, Paul states that baptism is into Christ's death and resurrection (3-10). Baptism by immersion illustrates how a believer is united with Christ's death, burial and resurrection. As a result of being identified with the death of Christ, the Christian is described as dead to sin (2,11). We are freed from the consequences of sin, including its penalty and power, by the death of Jesus, who bore the penalty of our sin in himself on the cross. We can picture baptism like a door between our old and new life. It speaks of the death of what I once was (self-centred, unforgiving and alienated from God), and of the new life in Christ I am now learning to live.

Finally, Paul affirms that baptism is into the life of Christ (11-14). Baptism is not just a one-off event but a lifestyle. Just as a newly released prisoner has to learn to live with their new found freedom, so as Christians we have to live out our new life in Christ (11). This involves putting to death wrong patterns of behaviour from the old life (12), as well as offering ourselves in God's service (13). Baptism itself speaks of God's forgiveness and the gift of the Holy Spirit which are his resources to help us to do this on a daily basis.

As those who belong to God, Christians are called to live as baptised people – to what extent is this true of you and me today?

Mothering Sunday was another special day when the congregation of Pershore Baptist church showed their love for our Church family in a very distinctive way. Firstly, we were delighted by the Junior Church singing two choruses – with specially written words to honour their mothers – led by Elisabeth and Ema. Following this the children gave every lady in Church a little gift of some bulbs, instead of the usual flowers, for Mothers' Day.

After the service twenty two people sat down to enjoy a three course meal, specially prepared by our very own "Master Chef" (or should I say "Cheffess") Jean Gelaky ably supported by Anne Sadler and her family with Richard Tisdall and his family. Mothers eating free as a gift from the Church!

Thank you to all, who helped in any way whatsoever, who gave up their time so willingly to make Mothers' Day so special. You gave a lot of God's Blessings ie Love and Happiness, to all recipients on this special Mothers' Day.

God Bless you all! *M. McKenzie*

The Sunday school teacher asked if the class knew who were the twin boys in the Bible.

"That's easy," said Charles. "First and Second Samuel."

Each time history repeats itself the price goes up.

A synonym is a word you use when you can't spell the first word you thought of. *Burt Bacharach*



...can you believe I've not yet seen one of those new £20 notes? But now's your chance to change all that!

A new pulpit had been installed in the Baptist church, and the young pastor and his elders were testing the acoustics. "We'll stand way at the back and see how you sound," said an elder. "What shall I say?" faltered the pastor.

"Say anything you like."

He blurted: "I've not had a pay rise in two years. How does that sound?"

Woman executive on the phone: "Of course I love you. Didn't my people tell you?"

It is unlikely there'll be a reduction in the wages of sin.

If you don't like the way you were born, try being born again.

Persevere...

To the end? Absolutely right. "To him that overcomes will I give to eat of the tree of life which is in the midst of the paradise of God," said the Lord to John on Patmos as he was in the Spirit on the Lord's day. John could have spent his time feeling bitter about his cruel exile. But he didn't. Quieted under the hand of God, he received the most fabulous revelation of Jesus Christ and his future that any man has ever received, and as a result, wrote the Spirit-breathed book of Revelation. It's no good giving up halfway.

Wilberforce didn't. He and his friends of the Clapham Group were born into a godless, repressive, cynical and violent world. Sound familiar? Annual consumption of gin in the mid-18th century averaged three gallons per person and stealing a handkerchief could send a child to the gallows. MPs purchased their seats. All arguments about slavery and child labour were utterly ignored. Through ceaseless prayer and unswerving dedication, William Wilberforce and his friends set about transforming society and changing the character of Britain, in Wilberforce's phrase, "made goodness fashionable". After 20 years and as many attempts, on

25th March, 1807, the Abolition of the Slave Trade Bill was passed, a depiction of which the must-see film 'Amazing Grace' gives a heart-stopping and graphic account. In 1833, the year of Wilberforce's death, the Bill to end Slavery itself was passed.

In 1886 a young man, aged 22, lost his job as a store clerk and the following year became a partner in a small store, which failed. The next year he fell in love and courted a girl for four years, after which she said no. Later another sweetheart died. Aged 37, on his third try he was elected to the state legislature. But two years later he lost the re-election. Aged 40, he was rejected for a political appointment and had a nervous breakdown. Aged 41, his four-year-old son died. At 45, he was defeated for the Senate and at 47, for Vice President. Aged 49, he was again defeated for the Senate. Aged 51, he was elected president of the United States. His name was Abraham Lincoln.

"Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith."

Olave Snelling – Parish Pump

At the church meeting on Sunday 15th April, David Dixson and Nick Price were elected as deacons. Andrew and Anne Sadler were elected to be joint treasurers. We thank God for their service to the church in this way.

Reading the Bible							
Date	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
6 May	Exo 13-16	2Sam 1-4	Psalms 48-50	Job 33-34	Jer 22-26	Mark 13-14	1Cor 13-14
13 May	Exo 17-20	2Sam 5-9	Psalms 51-53	Job 35-36	Jer 27-31	Mark 15-16	1Cor 15-16
20 May	Exo 21-24	2Sam 10-14	Psalms 54-56	Job 37-38	Jer 32-36	Luke 1-2	2Cor 1-3
27 Mar	Exo 25-28	2Sam 15-19	Psalms 57-59	Job 39-40	Jer 37-41	Luke 3-4	2Cor 4-5

Ascension

O God, we give you thanks that your Son Jesus Christ, who has shared our earthly life, has now ascended to prepare our heavenly life. Grant that, through coming to know him by faith on earth, we may come to know him by sight in heaven.

The fashion wears out more apparel than the man

Shakespeare

May 24 - David of Scotland

If you like Scotland, you'll appreciate St David of Scotland, who lived c.1085 – 1153.

David became king of Scotland in 1124, and devoted himself to improving his country. This included a feudal system of land tenure in place of the Celtic tribal one; an Anglo-Norman judicial system, and the development of towns such as Edinburgh, Berwick and Perth.

Above all, David re-organised the Church in Scotland. Contact with Rome was close, but he opposed Canterbury's primatial claims. David founded several bishoprics, including those of Dunblane and Aberdeen. David was loved for his justice in administration, his accessibility to all, and his intense interest in gardens and orchards and buildings.

He was generous in alms-giving, and a devout Christian. When dying, and ordered to rest by his doctors, he said: "Allow me rather to think about the things of God, so that my soul may be strengthened...when I stand before God's judgement seat, none of you shall answer for me...." David died on 24 May and centuries later his name was inserted in the calendar of the Prayer-book for Scotland. His historical importance is that he founded the Scotland which defied Edward I.

He that is good for making excuses, is seldom good for anything else.

Franklin

Churches denounce Trident vote

Leaders from the Baptist Union of Great Britain, the Methodist Church and the United Reformed Church have expressed deep concern over Parliament's call to replace the Trident Nuclear Weapons System.

Anthea Cox, Coordinating Secretary for Public Life and Social Justice for the Methodist Church said; "This seriously undermines the UK's commitment to nuclear non-proliferation and the extent of the backbench rebellion demonstrates that many feel passionately that the Government has got this decision wrong. The Government promised a full public debate but instead this early vote in the House of Commons has rushed the discussion while crucial questions remain unanswered."

Graham Sparkes, Head of Faith and Unity for the Baptist Union said; "The use of nuclear weapons is unthinkable. Rather than invest a vast amount of public money in a system that it can never be right to use, the Government ought to be

Pentecost

We beseech you, O Lord, to ignite our souls with love, faith and hope by the fire of your Holy Spirit. And may the wind of your Spirit so inspire our minds, that we may proclaim your gospel to others in words which they can understand.

The Youth Action Team, a group of 4 young people who have been working in Nepal, will be joining the Youth Service at Evesham Baptist Church on Sunday 6th May at 7:15pm to talk about the work they have been doing and join in the worship. It would be good if some of our youth group could support this event.

making clear commitments to peacemaking. Trident can never provide the UK with any real security."

Stuart Dew, Secretary for Church and Society, the United Reformed Church commented: "We are deeply disappointed at the call to renew Trident. The Government has ignored the global demand to rid the world of nuclear weapons, claiming that it is acceptable for some states to hold them while for others it is not. This is a commitment to injustice over peace."

The three Churches made a joint submission to the Defence Committee, arguing that the Government has not fully addressed the security risks associated with a renewal of Trident. They state that it is vital to control the proliferation of weapons technology and they raise concerns over the Government's claim that Trident might provide protection against state-sponsored nuclear terrorism.

Driving

Yesterday my son came home and said, "I have good news and bad news. The good news is I got 18 out of 20 on my driver's test."

I said, "Great! Now what's the bad news?"

He said, "They were pedestrians."

Statistics of the Messenger

11 The April Messenger was made with the following information.

It was revised 27 times and took 316 minutes on the computer, There were 8 pages, 34 paragraphs, 142 lines, 3004 words and 21031 characters (including spaces)

I assure that this is not the whole story by any means!

Editor

The Cell Phone v the Bible

What would happen if we treated our Bible like we treat our mobile phone?

What if we carried it around in our purses or pockets?

What if we flipped through it several times a day?

What if we turned back to go get it if we forgot it?

What if we used it to receive messages from the text?

What if we treated it like we couldn't live without it?

What if we gave it to our children as a gift?

What if we used it when we travelled?

What if we used it in case of emergency?

Unlike our mobile, we don't have to worry about our Bible being 'disconnected' because of an unpaid bill. Jesus already paid the bill. In full.

And just think - no dropped calls! God hears them all!

Author Unknown

If at first you don't succeed, skydiving is not for you.

Lost in Wonder finds fans worldwide

Over 5,000 people have taken a journey through an online prayer labyrinth since it was launched by The Methodist Church in October last year. Lost in Wonder offers a place for meditative prayer for anyone at their computer, and the response from visitors has been overwhelmingly positive.

The site has recently been revamped with background music and an online gallery where people can share the paintings they can create as part of their journey through the labyrinth. In response to public demand, a standalone version is being developed, so that people can use the labyrinth even when not connected to the Internet. Some of the comments received about the labyrinth include: "I can't believe the ... gentle peace that I am experiencing from going on the journey of your Labyrinth"; "What a wonderful discovery - the labyrinth is an excellent aid to spiritual experience on this Monday afternoon."; "It was a fairly swift journey today to explore what was being offered. I shall encourage others to use Lost in Wonder, and I will return to have a more reflective journey."

While reviewing future, past and present tenses with an English class, a teacher posed the question "I am beautiful' is what tense?"

One student raised her hand. "Past tense."

Reader's Digest

Weekly Church Events

Sundays	
10.30am	Family service with Sunday School Communion 3rd Sundays
6.00pm (5.00pm in winter)	Evening Worship Communion 1st Sundays
Mondays	
1.30pm	Little Fishes playgroup
7.30pm	House Group Middle Lane, Cropthorne
7.45pm	Prayer meeting at Church
Wednesdays	
2.30pm	Women's Own – Lower Room
7.45pm	Prayer and Bible Study 21Ganderton Court
8.00pm	Bible Study 48 Maple Drive
Thursdays	
10.15am	House Group 20 Abbeycroft
7.45pm	Deacon's Meeting 1st and 3rd Thursdays

There is a **Monthly Communion service** on a Wednesday at 2.30pm

Impact- A generation Youth Event on 4th Sunday at 7.00pm

The **Thursday Club** meets in the Lower Room at 7.30pm on the 4th Thursday of each month.

The **Multiple Sclerosis Group** meet on Monday mornings in the Worship area.

The **St John's Ambulance** use the Upper and Lower Rooms on Tuesday evening.

U3A Choir uses the Upper Room on alternate Wednesdays at 2.15pm.

Newcomer to neighbourhood: Are they very strict at that church?

Local: Are they? Why, when a man dies during the service, they prop him up in the seat until the end of the sermon.

Thursday Club

At the meeting on May 24th, Joe Walter will give a talk entitled

Constabulary Capers.

The meeting will start at 7.30pm in the lower schoolroom. All are welcome

Woman's Own

9th Beetle drive

Tuesday Spring Rally

15th Red Hill BC, Worcester

23rd Communion Service

What stops would-be ministers?

What puts men off from becoming ministers? New research carried out by Generation Next and the Affinity church network sought to answer this question by surveying 400 Christian men, most of whom were aged between 21 and 40. The survey was aimed at people who had recently become ministers or were currently considering it. The key issues included: the way ministers were treated by their churches, a lack of good role models, confusion about the nature of the 'call' that they should expect to feel, finance, especially to fund training, the availability of preaching opportunities, the lack of clear training and development paths, and the feminisation of the church. Equally, there were other disadvantages of life as a minister which did not prove to be a barrier such as loneliness and the excessive workload.

Are you neglecting your Mum? (even just a little bit?)

Mothers do not see enough of family and friends and hence feel unsupported, according to new research on 2,000 mums. The online parents' forum 'netmums' found that almost two thirds of mothers (61%) feel that they do not see enough of their extended families.

A similar number of mothers, (60%) feel unsupported because they do not have enough friends.

What stresses mothers out? In everyday life, almost three quarters (74%) said 'lack of time for me'. Over half of all mothers (52%) said 'family finances' cause them stress, and nearly half (47%) worry about their 'children's behaviour'.

She: I'm afraid your dinner is a little burned tonight, darling.

He: What's the matter? Did they have a fire at the delicatessen?



WEIGH OVER?

It took me ages to remember that a metre is a yard and a little bit because I learned the old way at school. We still have both metric and imperial measurements but it was even harder.

The measurement of silver used as money in the Old Testament is the shekel. But there were two different types of shekel; one, the royal or sanctuary shekel, was heavier than the other one. The light one was used in everyday life, the heavy one contained 2 grams more silver and was used for making Temple offerings. So when you offered the sanctuary shekel you were giving that bit extra to God.



It often seems that people forget to offer their best to God. We offer him our excuses for not doing the things we should, instead of giving him our best. If we have to have two standards in the way we do things, shouldn't we always give the best, to our heavenly Father who loves us so much?

W - QUIZ

All the answers in this Bible quiz begin with the letter W - can you find them all?

1. What Jesus asked the Samaritan woman for? (John, chapter 4)
2. Adam and Eve heard God doing this in the Garden of Eden? (Genesis 3)
3. Ezekiel saw these shining like precious stones? (Ezekiel 1)
4. The colour angels wear? (Acts 1)
5. Joshua brought them down with trumpets? (Joshua 6)
6. Jesus told the servants to fill these? (John 2)
7. It grows with the weeds until the harvest? (Matthew 13)
8. How Elijah went into heaven? (2 Kings 2)



How do you get rid of a white elephant?
Put it in a jumbo sale.



What puts white lines on the sea?

An ocean liner.



ANSWERS: 1.water 2.walking 3.wheels 4.white 5.walls of Jericho 6.waterpots or jars 7.wheat 8.whirlwind

The Abolition of Slavery

A bi-centenary Remembrance

Many people were involved in the political campaign against the Slave Trade in the British Empire in the 18th and 19th centuries. Leading this battle was William Wilberforce (1759-1833), without question the most influential and dominant of the anti-slavery activists.

Born at Hull in Yorkshire, he entered St John's College, Cambridge, in 1776. At the age of twenty-one he became Member of Parliament for Hull and four years later won the much larger parliamentary seat of Yorkshire. In 1785 he had a deeply-personal experience of conversion to Christ and for the rest of his life, his evangelical faith and convictions motivated everything he did.

The Rev John Newton (1725-1807), former slave-ship captain and the evangelical vicar of St Mary, Woolnoth, London, became Wilberforce's spiritual guide and counsellor.

In 1787, with the support of his evangelical friends and Prime Minister William Pitt, Wilberforce launched his crusade to persuade the British Parliament to pass an Act that would abolish the slave trade. In Britain's colonies in the West Indies the very profitable cane sugar plantations were worked by slaves forcibly brought from Africa.

On 12 May 1789 Wilberforce delivered his first anti-slavery speech in the House of Commons

in London. His attack on slavery engaged him for the next thirty-six years. Encouraged by a letter he received from the dying John Wesley in February 1791, Wilberforce delivered a stirring four-hour speech in parliament on April 18. His attempt to bring in an Abolition Bill was defeated by 163 votes to 88, and in the next six years he suffered six more defeats in the same cause. Wilberforce, however, was undaunted and after ten more years of collecting evidence, lobbying friends in parliament, and delivering speeches, his Abolition Bill was finally successful in February 1807. It became law on 25 March.

This Abolition Bill, however, did not mean an end of slavery in the British Empire. It prohibited British ships from transporting slaves on the high seas but the thousands of slaves on the plantations were not set free. In 1825 Wilberforce retired from parliament but carried on the campaign to abolish slavery entirely. On 26 July 1833, forty-four years after Wilberforce delivered his first anti-slavery speech, the Emancipation Bill was passed. Slavery was outlawed in all British territories. Three days later William Wilberforce, evangelical Christian, friend of the oppressed and tireless campaigner in a host of good causes, died. His name will always be linked with the final defeat of what John Wesley called 'the scandal of England and of human nature' – slavery.

Prayer Calendar for May 2007

- | | | |
|-----------|--|---------------------------|
| 1 | Peter & Rosemary Read & family | |
| 2 | Andrew & Anne Sadler & family | |
| 3 | Hasnah Sheriff | |
| 4 | Andy Smith | |
| 5 | Gerald & Alvina Smith | |
| 6 | They (all) sang a new song | Revelation |
| | 5:9 | |
| 7 | Simon & Julie Smith & family | |
| 8 | Phyllis Smith | |
| 9 | Alan & Mary Taylor | |
| 10 | Mike & Brenda Taylor | |
| 11 | Pete & Ann Taylor | |
| 12 | Elisabeth Taylor-Gowdy | |
| 13 | May you experience the love of Christ | Ephesians |
| | 3:19 | |
| 14 | Margaret Thomson | |
| 15 | Richard & Alison Tisdall & family | |
| 16 | Marina Townend & family | |
| 17 | Simon Townend | |
| 18 | Megan Turver | |
| 19 | Becky Valender | |
| 20 | Stay close to anything that makes you want to do right...2 Timothy 2:22 | |
| 21 | Peter & Penny Wagner & family | |
| 22 | Deidre Wellon | |
| 23 | Margaret West | |
| 24 | Rob & Tracy Wheeler & family | |
| 25 | Adrian & Ann White | |
| 26 | Peggy Whitem | |
| 27 | We are... the fragrance of Christ | 2 Corinthians 2:15 |
| 28 | Vi Wilcox | |
| 29 | Paddy & Margaret Wilson | |
| 30 | Ivy Winkett | |
| 31 | Mike & Rosemary Wood | |

Editorial

1. Messenger material for the June edition to be in by **noon on Sunday 20th May**. Please observe this deadline.
2. If there are any serious errors/oversights, please tell me!
3. If you would prefer a larger print version of the Messenger, have a word with me.

Thanks

Mike Taylor