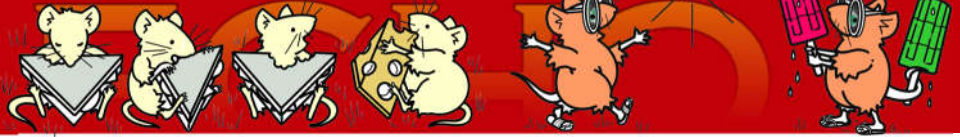




ECHO



THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE
ECUMENICAL CHURCH OF OCCITANIE
www.ourchurch.fr

A "DASTARDLY" CRIME FOILED BY UK CHURCHWARDEN



A churchwarden in the United Kingdom has been given a bravery award after pursuing a gang of thieves who had just stolen lead from the roof of his church. The warden had spotted the thieves fleeing the area in a car filled with lead and jumped in his own car and pursued them across Lincolnshire, staying in touch with the police on his mobile phone (hands-free of course) until officers could intercept them.

The theft actually occurred in 2016, but has only just come to court after two of those arrested fled the UK while on bail, and were only extradited back from Romania and Austria several years later.

In an investigation titled "Operation Dastardly", (named after the principal villain in the cartoon series "Wacky Races", Dick Dastardly) police forces across the UK then established that the gang had, in a period of 7 months, stolen lead from no less than 47 churches, causing more than €1.5m worth of damage.



In a high-tech investigation, the police proved that the thieves' mobile phones had 'pinged' off cell towers near churches at the times that the thefts were carried out, and then used DNA testing to identify one of the thieves from a cigarette butt discarded in the churchyard of a church where lead was stolen.



The ringleader of the gang was sent to prison for 6 years, while his accomplice received a sentence of 58 months. The judge gave the warden a £350 reward.

Across Europe, the theft of metal from churches is a major problem. In the Tarn in 2015, thieves stole a bronze bell from tower of the church in the village of Mailhoc weighing 150kg, lowering it to the ground without being detected but causing considerable damage to the building.

Reporting on this story, Law & Religion UK have suggested that the cash award to the churchwarden was potentially of greater value than the medal awarded to Dastardly's sidekick Muttley (pictured above) in one episode of the cartoon series.



OWING TO A TECHNICAL PROBLEM WITH THE SPELLING AUTO-CORRECT FEATURE ON HIS MOBILE PHONE, WHEN SOLOMON SENT FOR A CONCUBINE, HE DIDN'T QUITE RECEIVE WHAT HE EXPECTED...

LOT House Group - Janet Varty



New members are settling in and bringing additional perspectives.

We focused particularly on matters of the Spirit today as a part of the Thy Kingdom Come initiative and welcomed the contribution from our newest member who gave us insights from the Pentecostal Church.

We love being so ecumenical. The Iona service of Justice and Peace was followed by Bible study, prayers and discussion. All in all, we enjoyed a very rewarding spring afternoon of fellowship.

Our next meeting will be held on Thursday 22nd June at the new summer time of 3pm.
For more information, please contact
lot.group@ourchurch.fr



ZOOMONDAY

A NEW ZOOM ONLINE SERVICE....

Starting on **Monday 26th June**, ECO will be offering a new service of Evening Worship once a month at **8pm** on Zoom which we have called **ZOOMONDAY**

Our service will follow a liturgy of the Iona evening worship like the one we use on Tuesday evenings.

We will e-mail a link to the service to anyone who has requested it on Monday afternoon. You will not be expected to do anything in the service (unless you would like to!) The service will not be recorded or re-broadcast but it would be lovely to see you there. The service may contain music as well as readings and prayers but will vary from month to month.

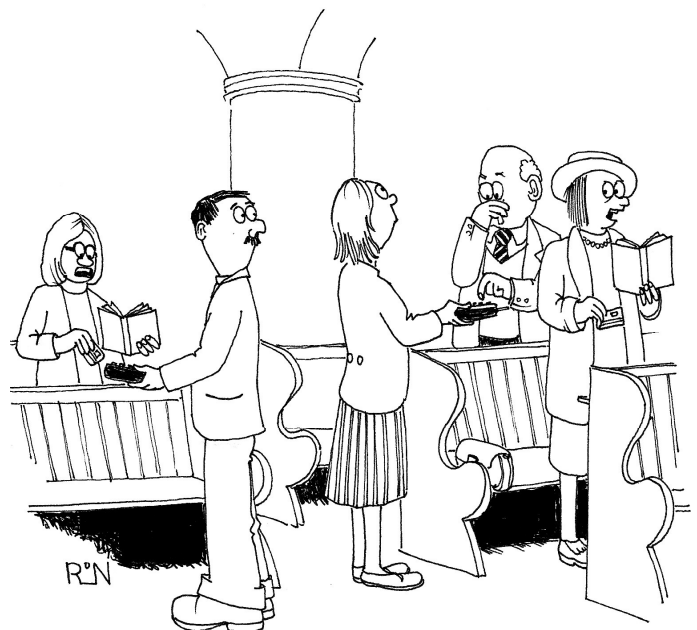
We hope you might join us if you are able. We plan that the service will last no more than about 30 minutes, after which we will stay online for an open discussion about topics relating to faith and the scriptures.

If you would like to join us in this service, please e-mail zoomonday@ourchurch.fr and we will send you the Zoom co-ordinates on the morning of Monday 26th. We will include a reminder in our weekly notices on 22nd June.



SOME RECENT PARISH MAGAZINE BLOOPERS

- ◇ The Revd John Adams spoke briefly, much to the delight of his audience.
- ◇ The students will present Shakespeare's 'Hamlet' in the church on Friday at 7pm. The congregation is invited to attend this tragedy.
- ◇ A new loudspeaker system has been installed in the church. It was given by one of our members in memory of his wife.
- ◇ The outreach committee has enlisted 25 visitors to make calls on people who are not afflicted with any church.
- ◇ The Rector would appreciate it if the ladies of the congregation would lend him their electric girdles for the pancake breakfast next Sunday morning.
- ◇ The audience is asked to remain seated until the end of the recession.



It had seemed such a good idea to the Church Council when they introduced a credit card machine to use when taking collections during services. Unfortunately they had not planned for Mr Tomkins never being able to remember his PIN....

SAFEGUARDING CRISIS DEEPENS IN THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

In the May edition of ECHO, we reported on the conflicts within the Church of England over the appointment of a new Chair of its Independent Safeguarding Board (ISB).

During May, fresh scandals have erupted following the publication of a report into the abuse of a young man in Bradford by a Church of England priest in which it was revealed that no action was taken by either the Bishop of Oxford or the then Archbishop of York, John Sentamu.

When questioned about this by the Press, Lord Sentamu commented "Canon Law trumps safeguarding", which has led to his being suspended from conducting worship by the newly-appointed Bishop of Newcastle while the matter is investigated.

At the same time, the Bishop of Oxford is resisting demands from within the safeguarding community that he step down pending further investigations.

A further outcry has arisen after a spokesperson for the Diocese of Oxford attempted to publicly cite a confidential safeguarding complaint made against the young man involved in the case as a defence for the failure to take action over his being abused. This complaint had been dismissed years ago as being without any foundation since it involved a situation where the young man - who had himself become a priest - had been working in co-operation with the local police force.

Hard on the heels of this have come allegations of widespread 'inappropriate conduct' within the Soul Survivor Festival which attracted around 30,000 teenagers from around the world each year. The leader of the organisation, Rev Canon Mike Pilavachi, 'stepped back' from ministry pending an investigation and has now been suspended.

Given, however, that many senior Church leaders have been closely involved with Soul Survivor - Archbishop Justin Welby gave Canon Pilavachi an award in 2020 and the founder of Holy Trinity Brompton (the home of the Alpha Course), Rev Nicky Gumbel repeatedly praised Canon Pilavachi on social media, there have been numerous demands that this matter be independently investigated from outside the Church of England, and not internally as currently proposed.

This has further embroiled the ISB, whose two independent members, Jasvinder Sanghera CBE, who is an expert on child abuse and also on forced marriage, and Steve Reeves who headed the UK Save The Children charity's work on safeguarding have now lodged a formal dispute with the Church of England over its failure to follow procedures in appointing a new Chair. At the same time, 50 victims of abuse who have

cases pending with the Church of England have served formal notice that they do not consent to their personal data being shared with the new interim chair Meg Munn, because of concerns about her close connections with the Church of England's management.

This had led to cartoonist Dave Walker publishing the cartoon shown on the back page of this edition of ECHO.

Another independent investigation into abuse, this time by a barrister John Smyth, which spanned many years and several countries, but which originated within the Church of England, has been further delayed from reporting on its findings owing for the need for the lead investigator to refer various matters he has discovered to the Police for further consideration. The Smyth Review is said to be highly critical of the Church of England, and of several currently-serving senior figures in the Church for failing to act properly to prevent Smyth's criminal activity and possibly to have acted to actually cover it up.

The General Synod of the Church of England is due to gather again in York during July and it is expected that a large number of questions will be being asked about these matters. In addition, an emergency debate will be requested about the refusal of the Church's Archbishops Council to place the investigation of the allegations in the Soul Survivor in independent hands. As all gatherings of the General Synod are broadcast on YouTube, it will be possible to watch this live.

At the same time, the UK Charity Commission has announced that it is deciding whether to intervene after a report was published during May 2023 which states that the Methodist Church was not seen as a 'safe place' by some female members.

An internal review conducted by the Methodist Church into allegations of misogyny, bullying and 'inappropriate touching' of female members of the Church reported that that the church was "not seen as a safe place" by many female members because of a "misogynistic and toxic" attitude towards women.

The report was not intended to be made public, but was leaked to The Times newspaper (25 May 2023) owing to concerns by the leaker that the findings would not be properly acted upon unless they were made public.

Finally, in France the Roman Catholic church has provided all its priests with identity cards containing a QR computer code to enable it to be checked to establish whether they are currently 'in good standing' with the Church, and indeed if they are actually priests at all. It is hoped that this will prevent priests who have been expelled from the Church, as well as impostors, from being able to cause harm by pretending to have been ordained.



‘He gave us eyes to see them’: Christ at the Sea of Galilee

Revd Canon Michael Burgess reflects on a painting which is attributed to Dutch painter Lambert Sustris or to Jacopo Tintoretto, in whose Venetian studio Sustris worked.

In 1833 Mendelssohn composed two overtures inspired by the sea. ‘Fingal’s Cave’ portrays the gentle roll of the waves and the call of the wind on the waters around Staffa. ‘Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage’ paints a sea journey when the fog lifts, the sky clears, the safety of land beckons and the boat arrives in the harbour.

This month’s painting shows us a very different picture of the sea. It is ‘Christ at the Sea of Galilee’ by Tintoretto. He was an Italian painter of the Renaissance period who worked in Venice until his death in 1594. All his paintings are marked by intensity and drama, whether it is the Last Supper, the Conversion of St Paul, or this canvas.

Tintoretto worked so quickly and so single-mindedly that he was nicknamed ‘Il Furioso.’ And it is the fury of the sea that is captured here. Not the lazy waters of Venice or the calm seas of Mendelssohn’s music. Now the sea and the sky above are in torment and revolt, and the world is dominated by the violence of this storm.

The Sea of Galilee is like that. One moment, the sky is clear and windless, the next, a gust can whip up the waters into anger. In Scripture the sea is always an element to fear. For the psalmist the sea contains creeping things innumerable and even monsters. For John in the book of Revelation, the sea ceases to exist when the new heaven and the new earth appear. The threat of that element is pervasive in this painting. The sail of the

boat bends with the raging of the wind, and the vessel is tossed up and down – so near the shore, and yet so far. Above, the clouds frown.

But enfolding the scene are two signs of hope and life. To one side we see a tall tree in leaf and growing. At the other side is the tall figure of Jesus: a sign of safety and hope to the disciples, floundering in the boat. His feet are just vague outlines in the water, but His hand is firm as He beckons to His followers. Peter, brave and headstrong as ever, begins to climb out of the boat with no immediate sense of danger.

This month of June ends with his feast day when we celebrate a saint who was so much like us. Wanting to follow Jesus, but finding himself weak; eager to serve, but unable to back words up with deeds. And yet, through all that, God’s grace triumphed in Peter’s life. We know that he will be saved here as he steps onto the wild water to reach Jesus.

This raging element is a parable of life with its storms and challenges for Peter and for all of us. Just as the sea threatens to swallow the boat and the disciples in it, so we know how the world threatens to swallow us up. Each of us, in our discipleship, faces concerns and challenges, anxieties about the present, even despair about the future. Tintoretto is saying to us from this canvas, Reach out and take hold of the sure hand of our Lord. That will be an anchor for you when the sea of life is calm and when the storm rages. ‘Will your anchor hold?’ asks the hymn, and we can reply

‘We have an anchor that keeps the soul,
Steadfast and sure while the billows roll;
Fastened to the rock which cannot move,
Grounded firm and deep in the Saviour’s love.’

19 June is the Birthday of Blaise Pascal



Four hundred years ago, on 19th June 1623, Blaise Pascal was born in central France. This brilliant mathematician, physicist, theologian and philosopher invented one of the first mechanical calculators – among many other things.

Pascal, whose mother died when he was three and who was brought up by his father, was prominent from a young age in different scientific fields – he laid the foundation for the modern theory of probabilities, created Pascal’s principle of pressure, invented the hydraulic press and the syringe, and devised a primitive roulette wheel while searching for a perpetual motion machine.

He created his calculator – the Pascaline – to assist his father, then the local administrator at Rouen, in his tax assessments. It operated by counting integers and thus was in a sense the first digital calculator.

At the age of 31 he had a mystical experience that he called a “night of fire”, which changed his life.

After that he became involved closely with the Catholic Church (as was his similarly brilliant sister, Jacqueline) and wrote extensively on theological matters, insisting that men must be brought to God through Christ alone.

His scientific training lent his Christian writing a strength of argument, and he produced many memorable quotes, such as the words he put in Jesus’ mouth: “Be comforted; you would not be looking for me if you had not found me.”

Pascal was never a well man, possibly suffering from coeliac disease, and died in great pain in 1662, probably from a combination of stomach and brain cancer.

One of his last major achievements was introducing the first bus service to Paris, using a carriage with many seats on a fixed route at a fixed price.

Whereas most buses are late, this service was before its time and closed in 1675.



DO YOU BELIEVE THIS ?

We have published this photograph because we don’t think that you will believe what you are seeing.

This very rare (thank heavens !) toy set was manufactured by a company bearing the curious name “Forked Tongue Toys” in the 1990’s. This photograph was taken by a disbelieving tourist in the Phillipines.

We assume that the soldiers and tanks, along with their US Flag are intended to side with Jesus against Godzilla, but with something as strange as this, nothing is certain.

Now Dear Reader, if you think you are already deeply with Alice in Wonderland, read on.

Those of you with very sharp eyes may notice that the packaging is marked **Jesus™**, indicating that the name Jesus is a registered trademark.

Unbelievably in this utterly bizarre article, this is actually TRUE. In 2007, the US Patent and Trademark Office granted a trademark for the word “Jesus” to an Italian clothing company, BasicNet, granting them the exclusive rights to use Our Lord’s name when selling clothing. So you can buy “Jesus Jeans”.....

Not to be outdone, the US Morell International Inc company have trademarked “God” for the sale of computer software.

Applications to extend these trademarks into Europe as well as the Middle and Far East have all been unsuccessful, although the Benelux Office for Intellectual Property in Amsterdam have registered trademarks for both of the Hindu gods Shiva and Ganesh. So let us end our adventure with Alice here.....

The story behind the HYMN:

Lord, for the years

*Lord, for the years your love has kept and guided,
urged and inspired us, cheered us on our way,
sought us and saved us, pardoned and provided:
Lord for the years, we bring our thanks today.*

*Lord, for that word, the word of life which fires us,
speaks to our hearts and sets our souls ablaze,
teaches and trains, rebukes us and inspires us:
Lord of the word, receive your people's praise.*

By Timothy Dudley Smith OBE b.1926



This well-loved hymn was written in 1967 by the Revd Timothy Dudley Smith, who later became Bishop of Thetford.

He later confessed: "I wrote it on a train when I was very pressed for time. I'm thankful if something I write gets picked up, but I suspect anyone who does something in a rush later regrets that they didn't find time to apply the sandpaper a bit more!"

Dudley Smith had been asked to write a hymn for the centenary service of the Children's Special Service Mission, now Scripture Union, in St Paul's Cathedral. His commission was to write words that could be fitted to Jean Sibelius's Finlandia, as it was to be accompanied by an orchestra with this tune in their repertoire.

And so – 'Lord for the years' was written.

Dudley Smith need not have worried about lack of time – his lyrics were a 'hit' in the cathedral on the day, and went on to become so well-loved that George Carey chose the hymn to be sung at his consecration as Bishop of Bath and Wells, and then again later, in 1991, at his consecration as Archbishop in Canterbury Cathedral.

The hymn continued to be widely sung and loved, until in 2002 Timothy Dudley Smith was asked to write an extra verse for it so that it could even be sung around the time of the Queen's Golden Jubilee.

Many of the words in the hymn were true for the Queen herself. She did indeed thank God 'for the years your love has kept and guided, urged and inspired us, cheered us on our way'...

Dudley Smith's 'extra' verse, added for the Queen, can now become our prayer and hope for King Charles III.

*Lord for our hopes, the dreams of all our living,
Christ and his kingdom one united aim,
Rulers and peoples bound in high thanksgiving,
Lord of our hopes, our trust is in your Name.*

Bishop Dudley-Smith has been a prolific hymn-writer, having written more than 400 hymns, including many which we sing regularly in ECO Worship. His OBE was awarded for "services to hymnody".

Now in his 90's, Bishop Dudley-Smith has continued to compose more hymns, and two collections of his hymns were published in 2013 and 2019.

Amongst his compositions which may be instantly recognisable are:

Tell Out My Soul The Greatness Of The Lord , Name of All Majesty, and We Come As Guests Invited

Church Mice

Karl Zorowski



9th June is the Feast Day of St Columba of Iona

Because ECO mainly use prayers and liturgies created by the Iona Community for our services, it seems proper to commemorate its founder

In 563 AD St Columba sailed from Ireland to Iona – a tiny island off Mull, in the Western Highlands. He brought Christianity with him.

Columba (c. 521 -97) was born in Donegal of the royal Ui Neill clan, and he trained as a monk. He founded the monasteries of Derry (546), Durrow (c.556) and probably Kells. But in 565 Columba left Ireland with twelve companions for Iona, an island off southwest Scotland. Iona had been given to him for a monastery by the ruler of the Irish Dalriada.

Why would a monk in his mid-40s go into such voluntary exile? Various explanations include going into voluntary exile for Christ, an attempt to help overseas compatriots in their struggle for survival, or even as some sort of punishment for his part in a row over a psalter in Ireland. Whatever the reason, Columba went to Iona and spent the rest of his life in Scotland, returning to Ireland only for occasional visits.

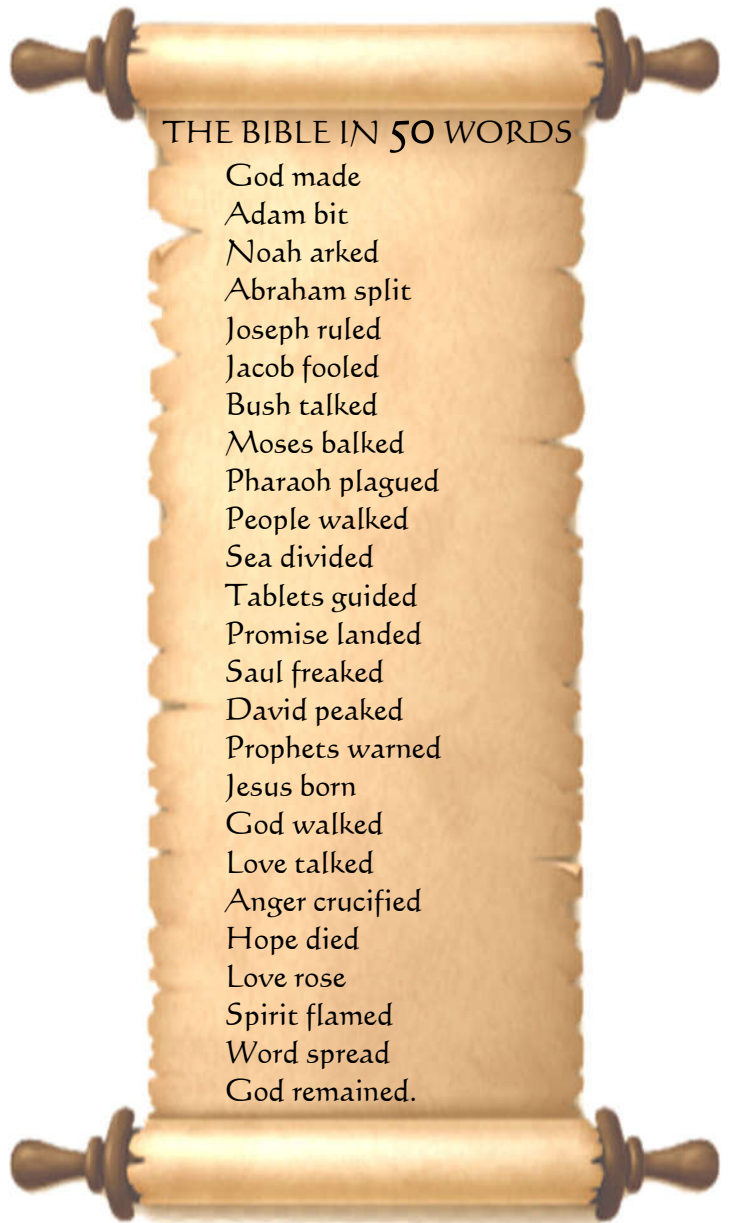
Columba's biographer, Adomnan, portrays him as a tall, striking figure of powerful build and impressive presence, who combined the skills of scholar, poet and ruler with a fearless commitment to God's cause. Able, ardent, and sometimes harsh, Columba seems to have mellowed with age.

As well as building his monastery on Iona, Columba also converted Brude, king of the Picts. Columba had great skill as a scribe, and an example of this can be seen in the Cathach of Columba, a late 6th century psalter in the Irish Academy, which is the oldest surviving example of Irish majuscule writing. In his later years Columba spent much time transcribing books.

Columba's death was apparently foreseen by his community, and even, it seems, sensed by his favourite horse. He died in the church just before Matins, and it is a tribute to this man that his traditions were upheld by his followers for about a century, not least in the Synod of Whitby and in Irish monasteries on the continent of Europe.

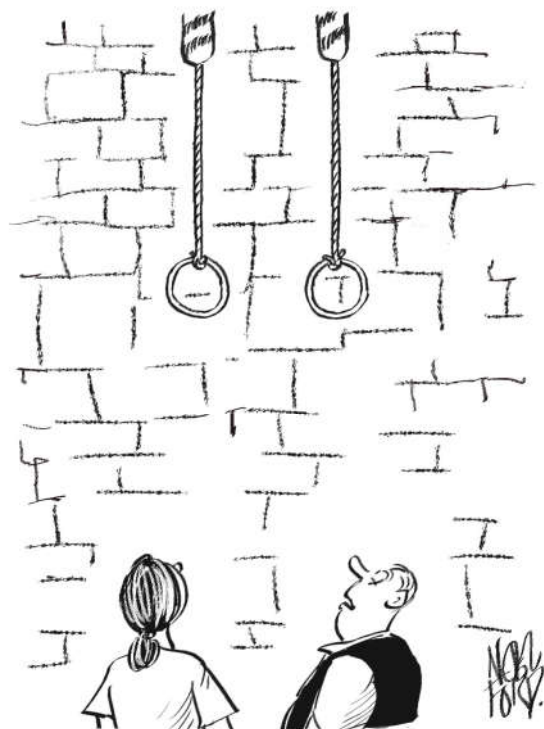
Here is a prayer of St Columba:

**Christ With Us
My dearest Lord,
Be Thou a bright flame before me,
Be Thou a guiding star above me,
Be Thou a smooth path beneath me,
Be Thou a kindly shepherd behind me,
Today and evermore.**



THE BIBLE IN 50 WORDS

God made
Adam bit
Noah arked
Abraham split
Joseph ruled
Jacob fooled
Bush talked
Moses balked
Pharaoh plagued
People walked
Sea divided
Tablets guided
Promise landed
Saul freaked
David peaked
Prophets warned
Jesus born
God walked
Love talked
Anger crucified
Hope died
Love rose
Spirit flamed
Word spread
God remained.



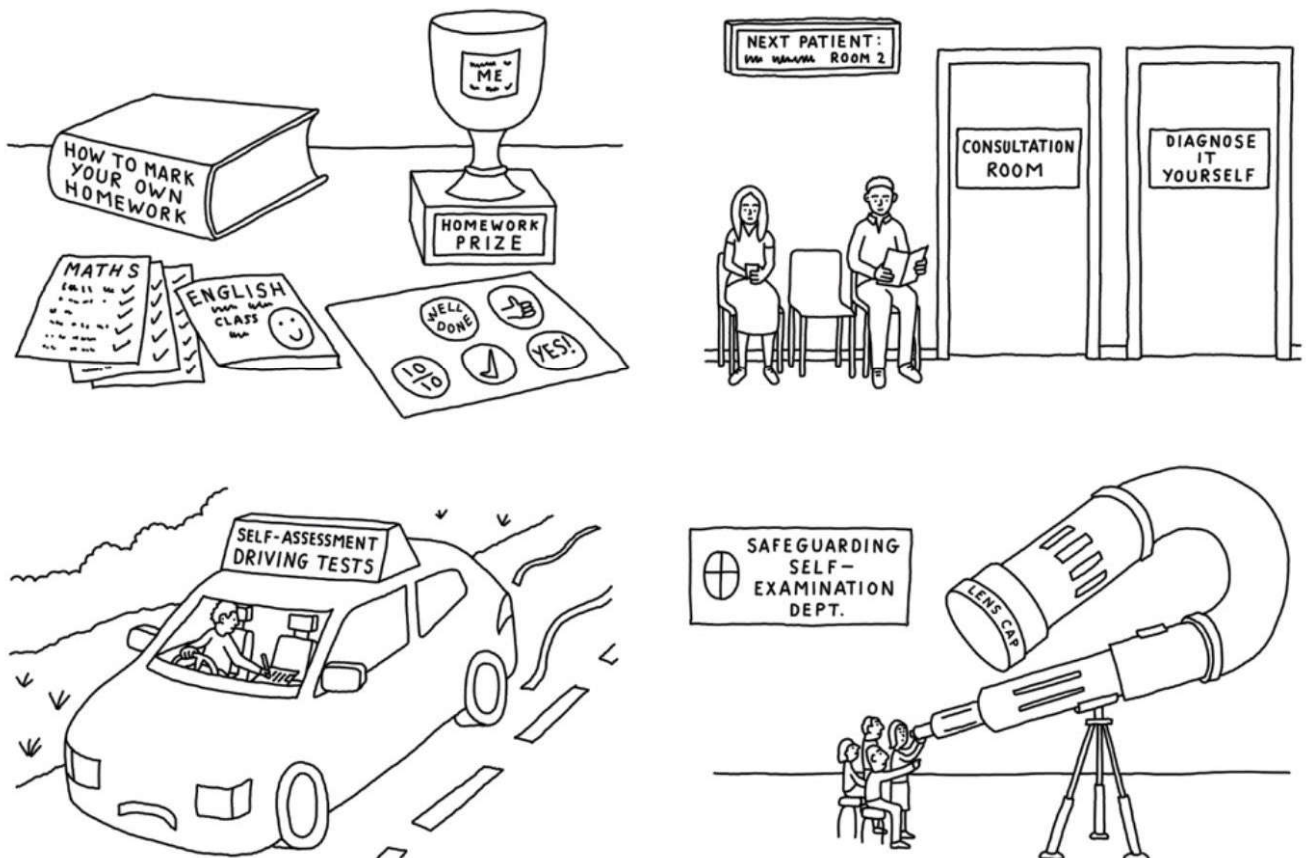
"Apparently, the new member of the bell-ringing team is a keen gymnast"

ECO WORSHIP CALENDAR JUNE 2023

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1 19:00	2	3
				Online Service of Prayer for Healing		
4 10:30	5	6 19:00	7	8	9	10
Online Communion for Trinity Sunday		Online Service of Compline		<u>There will be no Service of Prayer for Healing this evening</u>		
11 10:30	12	13 19:00	14	15 19:00	16	17
Online Morning Prayer for Trinity 2 / Proper 5		Online Service of Compline		Online Service of Prayer for Healing		
18 10:30	19	20 19:00	21	22 15:00 Lot House Group 19:00	23	24
Online Communion for Trinity 3 / Proper 6		Online Service of Compline		Online Service of Prayer for Healing		
25 10:30	26 20:00 Zoomonday (See ECHO for details)	27 19:00	28	29 19:00	30	
Online Morning Prayer for Trinity 4 / Proper 7		Online Service of Compline		Online Service of Prayer for Healing		

As the row in the Church of England rages on about the lack of proper independent investigation of safeguarding matters, Dave Walker has offered his view on the subject....

THE INTERNAL INVESTIGATION



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AUDRAMA



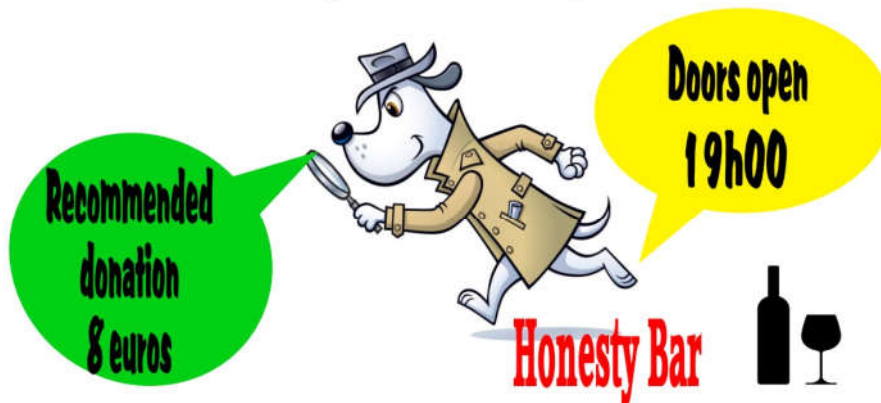
presents

The Real Inspector Hound a comedy murder mystery by Tom Stoppard

Directed by Bob Carr

LAUNCH PARTY

10th & 11th June 2023
Salle Polyvalente, Pomas



Entry by invitation only

To receive your personal invitation to the launch party email us at

info@audrama.fr





Léran Music Festival

22 - 25 June 2023

09600 - near Mirepoix, Ariège
celebrating its 10th anniversary

22nd June - Free concert
25th June - Street music all day - all free of charge

Easy parking - refreshments available every evening/all day




Whether you prefer classical music and opera, pop music from the 70's and 80's, Charles Aznavour's greatest hits or would like to hear Léran's Choir and School Pupils sing the story of the World's first travel agent, Thomas Cook, or may be try out some country dancing, you will find something at our festival.
For full details, visit our website

www.leranchante.com

which is displayed in both French and English (press Union Jack button for English) for ticket reservations and for more details of the programme.