

## ***Keeping in Touch..... Number 23***

***Thank you as always to those who have sent in contributions this week. Please note there will be no KIT next week as instead you will be receiving the special 40th anniversary Inspire! So the next edition will have a deadline of noon on Wednesday 30th September . Please send to c.a.curtis@ntlworld.***

***If you are lucky enough to get away do send us a “postcard” —three or four photos and where they are from.***

### ***A letter from our Church Secretary, David.***

As you read this, it will be 6 months since our last Church Meeting when I took on the role of Church Secretary. Looking back at the minutes of that meeting, none of the “forthcoming events” listed there actually happened!

However, the Free Church is still very much alive even though the building has been closed. Thanks to the efforts of many people, some activities should soon be able to start their gentle return. Tookeys and Just Sharing will be open to the public from Monday 28<sup>th</sup> September, initially on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays plus Saturday for Just Sharing. All this is of course dependent on government regulations at the time. Tookeys will be open for a pre-opening trial day on Friday 25<sup>th</sup> September – see Pat’s article in this edition.

While our minister Catherine Ball is on sabbatical, if you or someone you know needs pastoral support, please do contact your elder, Helen, Barbara or myself. We are also very grateful to have Rev Rick Mearkle available to support us in an emergency, so we can contact him if required.

We are extremely grateful to all our preachers who lead our worship virtually or (occasionally) in person. Last Sunday, Nicola Grieves from URC Eastern Synod led us in worship, using a combination of readings, prayers, meditations, live music (Brian on the piano) and videos - including hymns to which we were invited to hum if we couldn’t resist the temptation to join in! It was good to see some church members and friends returning to worship in the building for the first time in 6 months. So, if you missed it, do look at the service material on <https://www.stivesfreechurch.org/worship/testing/latest-devotionreflection/> .

In this “new normal”, there are some activities to which we can return and enjoy even with new restrictions. Personally I’ve really missed playing any sport since lockdown , so last Friday was a real treat when I was able to share a game of badminton with three friends who I hadn’t seen since March. We shared experiences in their families – a partner working under pressure in hospital, a teenage son unable to take his GCSE’s, a singing group wondering when they would sing in person again, a student son having to quarantine after an overseas trip, etc. However, we also shared some of the positives – enforced time home schooling leading to more value placed on family life, time to experience and enjoy nature more, and perhaps a better work/life balance. (My friends are younger than me and still working).

Looking ahead, our next Sunday service in the building is on Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> October, when our visiting preacher will be Penny Flynn. As always, let Gail in the office know if you wish to attend. That day is also the deadline for returning your elders’ nominations to Alan or the Church Office, so please consider this prayerfully in the next few weeks. I am personally extremely grateful for all the hard work and support of elders in the past 6 months. We don’t know what the next 6 months and beyond will bring, and we need a range of people with different outlooks and experiences to help us move forward.

With best wishes to you all and your families.

*David*

## TIME TO THINK

Time wasting's not an option  
Every minute flashes by,  
When you're little you don't realize  
On clocks you don't rely.

Then school bell bids you welcome  
And it rings out a goodbye,  
Before you know it you're off to work  
Time-keeping watch you buy.

Teenage years and twenties  
There are years ahead you think  
Thirty is an age away,  
Oh no! it's just a blink!

Forty! oh, that's ancient!  
But the years go ticking by,  
Your work, your home, your family  
Takes all your time, no lie!

Fifties, sixties racing,  
Time quickens, doesn't slow,  
If you knew then what you know  
now,  
It would have helped you so.

Seventies or eighties  
Or older if we're lucky,  
We've been there, done that, seen it,  
Got the tee shirt  
My old ducky!

The Pandemic has been frightening,  
But it will pass one day,  
Us oldies are a gutsy folk,  
Major Tom has lead the way!

**CC Irene Carter**

## TOOKEY'S IS TAKING OFF AGAIN

Hello everyone

After months and months and  
what was certainly a different  
world, Tookeys is set to reopen.

I think this is both exciting and  
scary in equal measure!

The Tookeys team have been  
working hard to make sure that  
we have safety measures in  
place, so all our future customers

feel as safe and confident in us, as possible. A big thank you  
needs to go to Mick, he has been a great help with getting  
everything ready.

**On Monday 28<sup>th</sup> September at 10.30am, Tookeys re  
opens to the public.**

**We are planning to have a pre-opening  
day on Friday 25<sup>th</sup> September, to which  
you are invited**

Tookeys will be opening to invited guests( that's you!), from  
10.30am for the usual Tookeys fayre. Although our menu has  
downsized, we feel sure you will enjoy it just as much.

Please come along and support Tookeys and the church in its  
reopening to the public.

Looking forward to seeing you all again.

**Love Pat**



## ***Musing from a very occasional fill-in Musician!***

*The Centrum can become very hot!!! One day it was about 90  
degrees and my hands were quite "damp" what was to be  
done to keep my hands sufficiently cool to play and not just  
slide around!*

*Solution—a bag which looked as if it contained music but ac-  
tually contained two frozen flexible wine coolers into which I  
could plunge my hands between hymns!!*

CAC

## Repair, repurpose to 'upcycle'

St Ives (and nearby villages) Eco-action includes members of local church eco-groups. Activities include attracting funding to make cycling and walking routes safer and more pleasant, litter picking in teams for fun and coordinated using social media, wildflower and tree planting, and repair workshops.

Repairing, repurposing and upcycling is a fashionable topic, but hindered by a shortage of basic skills. Older people learned woodwork or needlecrafts in schools or from their parents. Repairing was essential for household goods that cost a month's wage, rather than two days' wages as now. Action for climate change means reducing the amount produced, transported and sent to landfill. Valuing items we have bought, and making them last as long as possible, reduces our carbon footprint.

Britons buy twice the amount of clothes compared to the rest of Europe, much of it fast-fashion. Estimates ranging from 400,000 to 1.5 million tonnes of clothes are buried in landfill or burned in incinerators for energy every year.

The number of household gadgets, washing machines, dryers, dishwashers and ovens, that had to be replaced due to a fault in their first five years rose from 3.5% in 2004 to 8.3 % in 2013 in a study by the University of Bonn and the Oeko Institute in Germany.

Washing machines were taken for recycling earlier, after 13.7 years in 2013 instead of 16 years in 2004. The German Federal Environment Agency, which commissioned the report, called for a minimum shelf-life to state how long a gadget should last, and said gadgets should be easier to repair.



Plant stand from former pallets

Crafts and technical skills have lost their importance in the school curriculum. Parents are busy working and are often too exhausted to spend time mending and fixing. Children do not always live close to grandparents who lovingly and painstakingly teach them lifelong skills. My brother learned carpentry skills from his grandfathers, whilst I learnt to sew and knit, making my own clothes. My own daughters spent a lot of time with their grandfather and father, whilst I worked, so they, too, can handle any tool in the shed. Everyone needs basic skills more so now than ever before. The gap could be filled in part by flourishing of repair workshop cafes. Watch this space...

**Sally Runham**

## A "postcard" from Norfolk from Char.....A tour of two Norfolk Pories.

Two "old relics " at the bar ,the alter at Binham Priory.



**BINHAM**



**CASTLE ACRE BELOW AND LEFT**



Can anyone name this flower for Char?

## ***Our pulpit fall image***

Every time we listen to a sermon given from our pulpit in the Centrum, it is almost impossible for our eyes not to focus at some point on the image woven into the pulpit fall draped over the lectern. How did this image come to be chosen as the 'logo' of the Free Church Centre in 1980? It has always been referred to as the 'quatrefoil' and was used on all the stationery and publicity material whilst the title 'Free Church Centre' was used.

Many of you will recognise a strong connection to the interweaving patterns found in many Celtic knots and crosses - a never-ending strand weaving under and over itself to produce beautiful and intricate designs - and often containing a religious message or telling a story. The illuminated manuscripts of Lindisfarne in the seventh century and the later Book of Kells, are full of these colourful images all painstakingly crafted by monks.

Many may not realise that the external shape / circumference of our own quatrefoil can be seen in different places all around the Centrum. In the apse for example, you will see a horizontal band of simple 'quatrefoils' running around the top of the brickwork. This same motif is used where the roof beams meet the external brick walls between the large side windows. And if you glance up at the tracery within the roof structure, you will see numerous quatrefoil shapes have been 'cut out' within the roof trusses - and it was this simple shape that became the basis of the first Free Church Centre logo.

So - when you look at the logo on the pulpit fall, does it speak to you in some way. How do you interpret the never ending strand weaving in and out of the central circle? Why not share your thoughts on this with others and send them in to 'Keeping in Touch'.

**Stewart D**

### ***Invocation—by Kate McIlhagga***

*Come and let our hearts be glad*

*And our spirits rejoice,*

*for God has shown as the path of life*

*and leads us in the way for peace.*

*May the seeds of hopefulness*

*Be planted in our hearts today*

*And the fruits of hopefulness*

*Blossom and grown within our community*



*Kate's bench on Iona, behind the Abbey and overlooking Mull.—Taken in 2010. AKC.*

### **A near disaster with the Pulpit Fall**

On one Sunday, worship was to be led by a ministerial student who was spending his internship year with us – that service was to be his 'assessed service', with people from Westminster College and others assessing the quality of the service as part of his overall assessment.

In those days, we used to remove the pulpit fall following the Sunday service and replace it just before the service the following Sunday. That day it was my duty to put the fall into position, which I did by standing just in front of the pulpit and sliding the cloth backing over the metal plate. What I didn't realise was that the student had already placed his sermon on the plate and so I inadvertently almost covered it!

Imagine the student's horror when he moved to the pulpit to deliver his sermon, only to be unable to see it! Fortunately, there was still a sliver of white showing below this backing cloth and so he was reunited with the sermon which he delivered faultlessly!

With subsequent students, we have threatened to introduce this as part of their assessment!!

**Alan C**

