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Gill Bentley, for details and costings!

ISSUE 230



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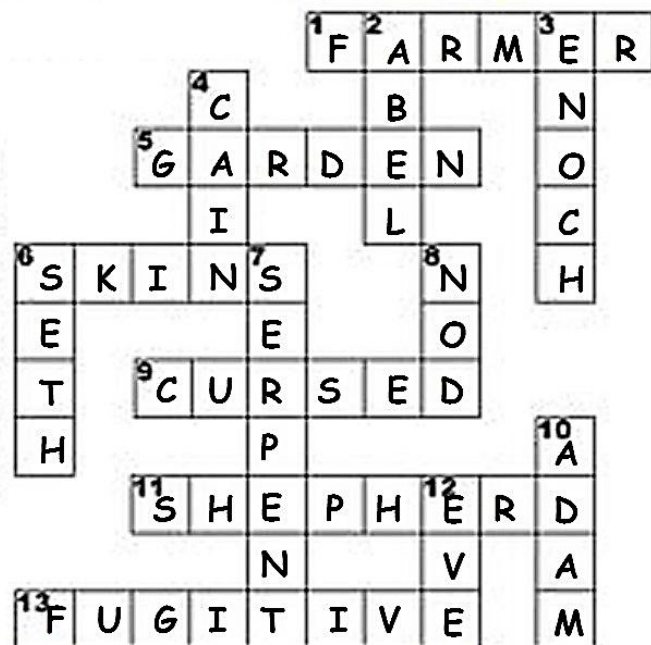
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Bible Crossword - Answers



A Simple Poem

In a world so vast and wide,
A little hope does reside.
With every dawn, the sun does rise,
Filling hearts with fresh surprise.

Simple joys like a blooming flower,
Hold within, a mighty power.
To lift the spirits, light the way,
And turn the night to brightest day.

So, take a step, and then another,
With open heart, discover.
The beauty in the simplest things,
And the joy that each day brings.

Submitted by Terry

Dear Friends,

At this time of year, it can feel like it's "back to school" time, what with special offers on lunchboxes in the supermarket and with the start of a new Connexional year. In many ways the Connexional year, starts and ends at the Conference at the end of June, which this year was held in Telford. This year, Rev. Manoa, one of our circuit ministers was received into Full Connexion of the Methodist Church in Britain and where the new President and Vice President took up their year in office.

I had the privilege of being at the opening of Conference Worship this year and heard our new President the Revd Richard Andrew's address to Conference. He asked a key question, "What story do we wish to tell, what song do we want to sing about ourselves?" as individuals and as a church.

He spoke about how we do not tell stories as they are; we tell stories as we are. Going on to say, that for many people their experience of Church is one of decline over many decades, an ageing demographic, with not enough volunteers to fill roles and in some places people who feel tired, disillusioned and anxious about the future. He said, something which really resonated with me, "the things which used to carry us, we now seem to be carrying."

I see this in the life of St. Thomas's; it made me think of the various bequest funds and trust's which the Church Council are trustees of. Gifts which have been left/given to support the life of the church by dedicated members but which now we carry the weight and responsibility for managing, appropriately using and accounting for.

At the start of Conference each year we sing, "And are we yet alive?" A hymn written at a time when Methodism was scorned by the established Church and chased out of communities like Wednesbury by stone throwing and pitch forked rioters! It was against this backdrop that Charles Wesley wrote "And are we yet alive?"

A hymn which reminds us that God's protecting, preserving and providential grace has been with us as we have journeyed through whatever the year has brought and will bring. And are we yet alive? is a hymn of trust and confidence in God's enduring faithfulness especially through the darkest times. As the poet, Pádraig Ó Tuama puts it, "hope is a song sung when everything else says you shouldn't be singing."

So, what is your song of hope? What is our song of hope that we can sing as we journey together through the next year following Jesus together?

One of the first songs I remember learning at school was, "This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine" and perhaps that is our hope, that the light of Christ is with us however challenging times may be, and we are called to shine what light we do have together, to the glory of God.

Yours in Christ,

Rev. Rachel

+ + + + + + +.

A Prayer for New Beginnings

Gracious God, we pray for strength and courage as we face the challenges of this new beginning. Grant us the wisdom to discern your will and the courage to follow your path.

Help us to trust in your provision and to believe that you are with us every step of the way.

Amen

Coffee Mornings – 1st Saturday each month 10-11.30am

Our coffee mornings in June and July were once again well attended and we thank our hosts on those occasions.

Please come along and enjoy a drink and choice of some delicious cakes. A warm welcome is guaranteed, and the following dates have been confirmed.

2nd August – Val, Cath, Mary & Jack Kelsey
6th September – Joan Jones and Gill Bentley

We also have a good selection of books for sale – 50p per book or 3 for £1. Please have a browse.

Volunteers to host are needed to fill the last few dates this year and if you can help in any way, please add your name to the list at the back of the church. Thank you.

Please note there will not be a coffee morning on 6th December. This will be replaced by a Carols & Cake event at 2pm on that day.

YMCA Food Bank

Many thanks to all who continue to support the ongoing collection for the YMCA Food Bank. Another delivery was made in recent weeks which was most welcome and gratefully received. Your generosity is very much appreciated. A reminder that suitable foods are tinned goods, dried goods such as cereals and pasta, washing powder and hygiene products. All food items should be 'in date' and can be left in the box at the rear of the church.

The next edition of Focus..

Anyone wishing to have an article included in the next edition of Focus should submit these to the editor by Sunday September 7th, 2025. Contact details 07989568979 or gillbentley@hotmail.co.uk. Thank you.

CIRCUIT NEWS

Please note that the Ministers’ mobile phone numbers have changed. The new numbers are as follows:

Rachel Wood : 07724 547445
Rachel Moss : 07724 547446
Manoa Ratubalavu : 07724 547452

From September it will be easier to get hold of a minister by calling their mobile. If they are unable to answer for any reason, please leave a message and they will respond as soon as possible.

Events in the Circuit :

Sunday 31st August 12noon start.

Churches Together at Maurice Lea Memorial Park for Picnic, Praise & Prayer.

Please come and join with your picnic lunch for live music, prayer, reflection and fun!

District /Other Events

A report for local churches about the business of the 2025 Methodist Conference is available to be read online and downloaded from **Methodist.org.uk/conference**

Full details of the regular weekly events around the Circuit can be accessed via the Circuit website **essdmethodistcircuit.org**.

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News from the Pews...

Here are some preliminary dates for your diary.....

20 September 12.30pm – Harvest Bring and Share Lunch

6 December 2025 2pm – Carols & Cake

Please note this will be in place of the usual coffee morning

More details on the above will be available in due course.

Did You Know?
More Congregate at Church

The number of people attending church in the UK has grown significantly, according to the *Bible Society*. The organisation’s new report, ***The Quiet Revival***, which is based on surveys by YouGov, reveals a particular rise among Generation Z and ethnic minorities. From 2018 to 2024, monthly church attendance rose from 8 per cent to 12 per cent of the adult population, with young adults aged from 18 to 24 years old showing the most dramatic increase.

The survey results also highlight how churchgoers reported higher levels of wellbeing and engaged with their community through volunteering and charity donations more than people who did not attend church.

The report’s co-author Dr Rhiannon McAleer said that there are more than two million additional people attending church than there were six years ago.

Paul Williams, chief executive of the Bible Society, commented that ‘far from being on a slippery slope to extinction, the Church is alive and growing and making a positive difference to individuals and society’.

The above report featured in the April edition of War Cry published by the Salvation Army.

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Quote

I’m special because God has loved me,
For He gave the best thing that He had to save me.
His own Son Jesus, crucified to take the blame,
For all the bad things I have done.

*Graham Kendrick
British songwriter, 1950-present*

The Harvest of Souls

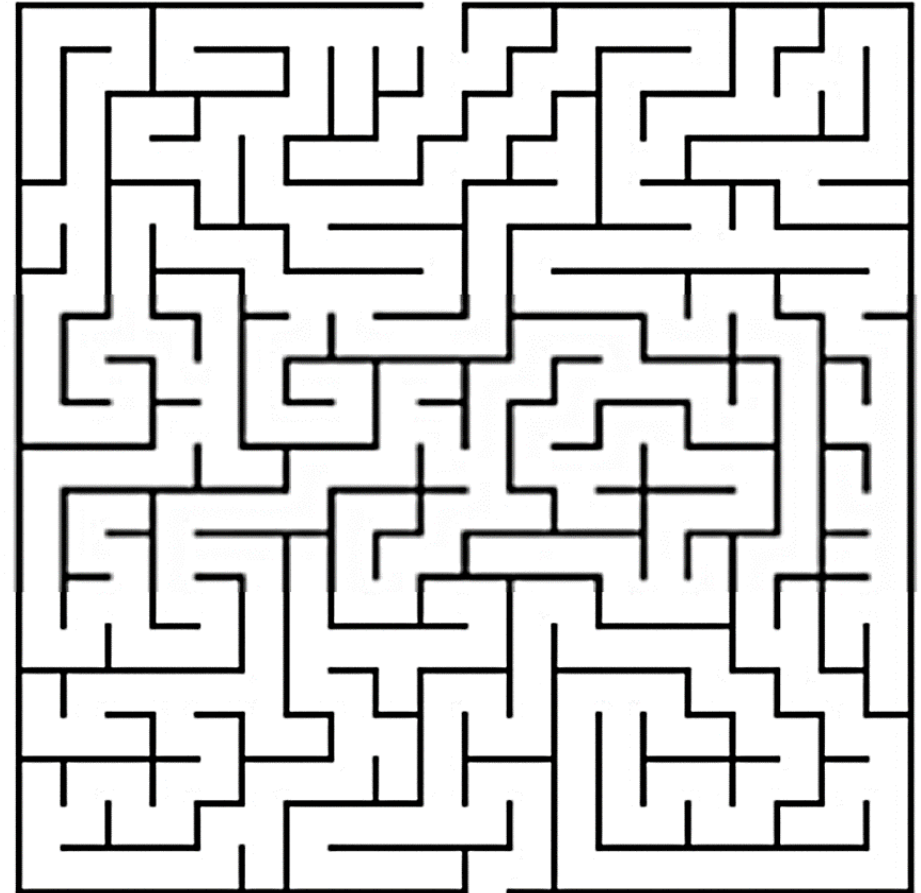
The harvest has always been a beautiful and important part of life on earth, the time when the year's work bears fruit, and the people are fed. It is symbolic of bounty, health and abundance. Israel celebrated the time of the harvest with a feast, appropriately called the Feast of Harvest, see Exodus 23:16.

Throughout the Bible, the harvest carries spiritual significance. It is used in parables like the parable of the Sower in Luke 8:4–8. This famous parable is known by several names, including "the parable of the Sower," "the parable of the seeds," and "the parable of the soils." Matthew and Mark also record it. The idea is simple: a farmer spreads seeds that land on the hard path, rocky soil, soil covered in weeds, and good soil. The resulting crop depends on what kind of soil the seeds land on. These three Gospel writers record the parable but in different contexts. Mark places the parable at the beginning of a series of others that illustrate how the kingdom of God will grow through God's power (Mark 4:1–34). Matthew uses it to introduce parables that show while God's kingdom grows (Matthew 13:31–33, 44–46) citizens and unbelievers will be intermixed (Matthew 13:18–30, 36–43, 47–50). Luke takes a different approach. He uses the parable to introduce the responsibility of people to listen to the message: to be the good soil. We can't just hear the gospel; we must respond to it by believing.

In this instance Jesus explains that the "Sower" is Himself and the "seed" is His teachings about the kingdom of God (Luke 8:11). The soils show how people respond to His teaching. Jesus spoke of a spiritual harvest waiting to be reaped. As Jesus travelled, "he saw the crowds, and he had compassion for them, because they were stressed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few; therefore, pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into his harvest'" (Matthew 9:36–38). Here, Jesus referred to the many souls needing to be brought to repentance and faith as a harvest waiting to be realized.

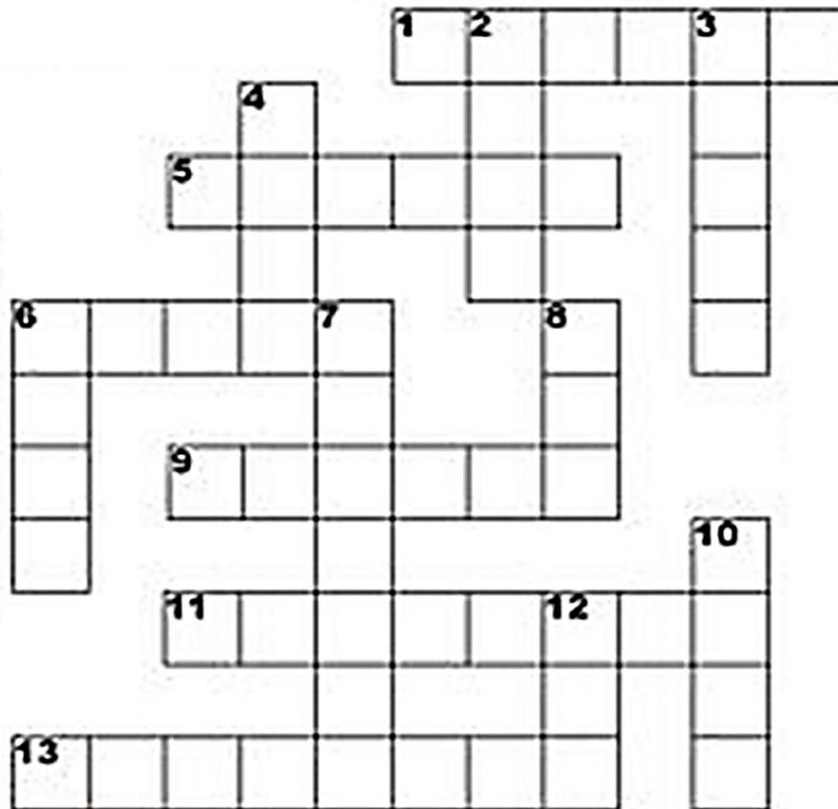
Farm Maze

Help the farmer find the way through the maze to the tractor.



Submitted by Terry

Bible Crossword - The Book of Genesis chapters 3 & 4



Down

- (2) Adam's second son
- (3) Cain's first son (Gen 4 17)
- (4) Adam's first son
- (6) Adam's third son
- (7) What creature tempted Eve
- (8) Cain lived in this land
- (10) First man
- (12) First woman

Across

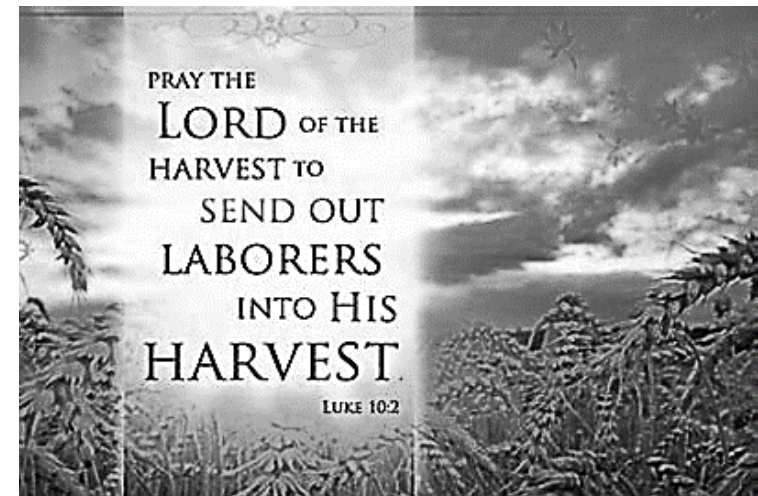
- (1) Cain's occupation (Gen 4;2)
- (5) The _____ of Eden
- (6) Adam and Eve's first clothes; (Gen 3; 21)
- (9) Because of sin the ground was _____ (Gen 3; 17)
- (11) Abel's occupation (Gen 4;2)
- (13) Cain became a _____

Submitted by Terry

The parable of the seed and the Sower shows that some people's hearts are good soil; when the Word of God is sown there, the person accepts it and continues to mature (Luke 8:9–15). Jesus used the same idea of a spiritual harvest in Samaria. After talking to the woman at the well, Jesus told His disciples, "Don't you have a saying, 'It's still four months until harvest'? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest" (John 4:35). Jesus saw the spiritual harvest of souls lying in wait in that village.

A spiritual harvest is the result of God's work in the heart of humankind, and just like the physical growth of a field, the spiritual growth of people is a natural, organic process, overseen by God Himself.

The Bible indicates that the Sower, the tender and the reaper are likely to be different people at different times (John 4:35–38; 1 Corinthians 3:6–9), and we can be faithful to sow the seed, help the plants to grow, or reap the harvest. If we don't see anyone getting saved, it can be discouraging, but we need to remember that sowing is just as important as reaping. Some of us are sowers and may never see the result of our labour. That is why our focus should be on pleasing God who sent us into the field rather than on controlling the rate of growth or the amount we reap.



Submitted by Terry

Caravaning!

We had bought our first caravan! – a second hand one, nearing 20 years old! So, we, with our young barely teenaged children, duly packed our necessities (and also unnecessities!) and set off when 40mph was the limit that one was allowed to travel then with a caravan – just as well as the added weight of the ‘unnecessities’ made our vehicle all but crawl when we reached a hill – much to the annoyance of other drivers!

It was Springtime when we thought of trying out our first experience of caravaning. We looked forward, not only to seeing and being in beautiful scenery, emerging from its winter sleep, but Spring weather too. This particular Spring seemed to think it was still winter and produced some snow for our first venture of caravaning!

As first-timers, setting up became an interesting and rather slow progress. We had a large awning so our children with their tent each had plenty of space inside. Putting that up turned into one and a half hour’s work, particularly when we thought we had been successful and then part of it engulfed our son completely, as one corner collapsed! Of course, there was laughter, but our son, though not in any way hurt (except his feelings!) did not find it quite so funny.

Of course, in those days, caravan sites were very basic and so we had to be very self-sufficient. The lovely part was all of us sitting in the caravan and looking out of the windows and feeling very much part of nature as we viewed the scenery of mostly green all round us and the pleasure of seeing and hearing a nearby brook.

On waking, in the mornings, I drew back the curtain and found I was often eye to eye with a sheep. We left the door open – when it had warmed up! – and a curious duck decided to waddle in and look us over and to see if we had the kind of food that he/she liked!

Bird song sounded louder – not fully appreciated by myself, not being at all a ‘morning’ person. (In my view the day should start as late as possible!)

Sunday Services

August 2025

3rd 10.00am - Oliver Ball

10th 10.00am - Rev’d Rachel Moss
Sacrament of Holy Communion

17th 10.00am - Dr. Terry Root

24th 10.00am – Yvonne Luce LA

31st 10.00am - Jenny Kilgour

September 2025

7th 10.00am - TBA

14th 10.00am - TBA

21st 10.00am – Tom Parkinson
Harvest Festival

28th 10.00am - TBA



Method :

Preheat oven to 190°C/170°C fan/Gas 5

Grease a 22cm square cake tin and line with baking paper

- In a large mixing bowl, combine the flour, sugar, oats and coconut with a pinch of salt. Add the spread and rub into the dry ingredients with your fingertips until combined and the mixture resembles coarse crumbs.
- Press half the mixture into the prepared tin. Top with raspberries, pressing down gently with a spatula to release some of the juice. Scatter over the remaining oat mixture and smooth with a spatula. It doesn't matter if a few raspberries are peeking through.
- Bake for 30 minutes or until golden brown. Remove from the oven and allow to cool in the tin for 1 hour, then turn out on to a chopping board and remove the baking paper. Cut into 16 squares.

Gill Bentley

+ + + + + + +

“My Secret Ingredient”

There's a secret ingredient I use in my cooking,

I sneak it right in, when nobody's looking.

That turns all I make into something quite yummy.

My cakes, pies and dinners will fill any tummy.

But my special addition that I put in each bake,

Isn't something you buy or something you make.

You won't find it when shopping, or out on a farm.

You won't see it in boxes, or packets or jars.

It turns all that I cook into a welcoming hug.

If you must know, my secret ingredient is love!

One night an inquisitive rabbit came and hopped on to our caravan step savouring a 'new adventure' for himself/herself.

Stars appeared so much brighter and some nights one could almost feel that one could actually touch them, with no streetlights or nearby house lights to distract from their glow.

This was very apparent when in the Scottish Highlands, 100 miles further north along single track roads, from Inverness. After visiting friends one evening, we travelled the 17 miles back to our caravan on deserted roads, except for deer who had no road sense, so they would suddenly leap in front of our car!

However, we did have company – in the sky! This was a most vivid coloured rainbow that accompanied us all of the way back. When we arrived, it curved steeply over our caravan and dropped down into the sea below us. (We were perched on grassland near the foot of a mountain behind us and the Atlantic ocean in front of us – next stop America!)

The wonder of God's creation very much came to mind, as it says in Psalm 8 : “When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You have ordained, what is man that You are mindful of him?”

Aileen Westwood

+ + + + + + +

I see skies of blue, and clouds of white.

The bright blessed day, the dark sacred night
And I think to myself.....what a wonderful world.....

Bob Thiele and George David Weiss

Recorded by Louis Armstrong (1968)

Church Chuckles Fun with Puns!

I didn't like my beard at first. Then it grew on me.

What does a clock do when it's hungry? It goes back four seconds.

I wondered why the baseball was getting bigger. Then it hit me!

Broken pencils are pointless.

I tried to catch some fog. I mist.

England has no kidney bank, but it does have a Liverpool.

I used to be a banker, but then I lost interest.

I dropped out of communism class because of lousy Marx.

I [took](#) a job at a bakery because I kneaded dough.

Haunted French pancakes give me the crepes.

Velcro - what a rip off!

Cartoonist found dead in home. Details are sketchy.

Venison for dinner? Oh deer!

I used to think I was indecisive, but now I'm not so sure.

The Grim Reaper came for me last night, and I beat him off with a vacuum cleaner. Talk about Dyson with death.

I start a new job in Seoul next week. I thought it was a good Korea move.

Statistically, 6 out of 7 dwarves are not Happy.

Did you hear about the cross-eyed teacher who lost her job because she couldn't control her pupils?

◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆

Submitted by Terry

2. Return the saucepan to medium heat. Add 2 tablespoons of the butter, swirl to melt, then add the cabbage and spring onions and cook, stirring, until tender, about 5 minutes. Season with a pinch of salt. Return the potatoes to the saucepan and mash until nearly smooth. Add the milk and remaining butter, stirring and mashing until creamy. Season with salt and pepper. Cover and set aside.

3. Preheat your oven to 190°C/fan170°C/375°F/Gas Mark 5 and set a shelf to the middle position. Now, make the filling: In a large skillet or frying pan, warm 1 tablespoon oil over medium-high heat. Add the beef or lamb and ½ teaspoon salt and cook, stirring and breaking up the meat, until no longer pink, 7 to 9 minutes. Transfer to a bowl with a slotted spoon.

4. Remove all but 1 tablespoon fat from the skillet or frying pan; return to medium heat. Add the remaining 2 tablespoons oil. Add the carrots, celery, onion, garlic, thyme, pepper, and remaining 1 teaspoon salt. Cook, stirring occasionally, until vegetables are softened and a bit browned, 6 to 8 minutes. Add the tomato purée and Worcestershire sauce and stir until the vegetables are coated. Return the meat and any juices to the skillet or frying pan. Sprinkle the flour all over and cook, stirring, for 1 to 2 minutes. Add the stock (or stout) slowly, stirring as you go. Simmer until the mixture has thickened slightly, 1 to 2 minutes. Remove from heat.

5. Spoon the topping in dollops over the filling. Use the back of a spoon to gently spread it evenly over the top. Bake until golden brown in places and bubbling along the edges, 30 to 35 minutes. Let sit for 10 minutes before serving.

Terry Butler

Raspberry & Coconut Slices

Ingredients:

130g baking spread

200g plain flour

60g caster sugar

50g porridge oats

40g desiccated coconut

250g raspberries

Pinch of Salt

RECIPE CORNER

Colcannon Shepherd's Pie

Colcannon also makes a fine topping for a simple shepherd's pie. Serves 6 to 8, but measurements can be adapted accordingly.

Preparation time: 25 mins: Cooking Time: 75 mins: Serves: 6 to 8

Ingredients:

For the Topping

Salt, to taste, plus more for the cooking water
680gms Potatoes (peeled, cut into 1-inch chunks)
4 tbsp Salted Butter
250gms Savoy Cabbage (shredded)
3 Spring Onions (thinly sliced)
155–235ml Milk (warmed)
Freshly ground Black Pepper

For the Filling

3 tbsp Oil (Olive, Sunflower or Vegetable)
680gms Minced Beef or Lamb
1½ tsp Salt
2 Carrots (diced)
2 Sticks of Celery (diced)
1 Medium Onion (diced)
3 Garlic Cloves (minced)
1 tsp Dried Thyme
1 tsp freshly ground Black Pepper
3 tbsp Tomato Purée
1 tbsp Worcestershire Sauce
3 tbsp Plain Flour
120ml Beef or Chicken Stock, (or Stout to keep the Irish connection)

Instructions:

1. First, make the topping: Put the potatoes in a medium saucepan with enough salted water to cover them well. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat to medium and simmer until tender, 12 to 15 minutes. Using a strainer, remove the potatoes to a bowl and set aside. Discard the water.

The Bacon Tree

Two Mexicans are stuck in the desert after crossing into the United States, wandering aimlessly and starving. They are about to just lie down and wait for death, when all of a sudden Luis says . . .

"Hey Pepe, do you smell what I smell. Ees bacon, I theenk."
"Si, Luis, eet sure smells like bacon."

With renewed hope they struggle up the next sand dune, and there, in the distance, is a tree loaded with bacon. There's raw bacon, there's fried bacon, back bacon, and double smoked bacon . . . every imaginable kind of cured pork.

"Pepe, Pepe, we ees saved. Ees a bacon tree."
"Luis, maybe ees a meerage? We ees in the desert don't forget."

"Pepe, since when deed you ever hear of a meerage that smell like bacon . . . ees no meerage, ees a bacon tree."

And with that, Luis staggers towards the tree. He gets to within five metres, Pepe crawling close behind, when suddenly a machine gun opens up, and Luis drops like a wet sock. Mortally wounded, he warns Pepe with his dying breath,

"Pepe . . . go back man, you was right, ees not a bacon tree!"
"Luis, Luis mees amigo . . . what ees it?"

"Pepe . . . ees not a bacon tree. Ees

Ees

Ees

Ees

Ees a ham bush . . ."

Submitted by Terry

Scenes of Summer

I wanted to go out for a ride
Somewhere in the countryside.
To see the hedgerows and the tree's
Gently wafting in the breeze.
All the world seemed very still
As we climbed another hill.
The scene below your breath will take
It's the quiet waters of the lake.
To see the fishermen all angling
With rods and reels and lines-a-dangling.
I think it is their dearest wish
To catch a really great big fish.
They seem to sit for hours and hours
In all weathers, sun and showers.
They've got away from all the rush
No-one there to shove and push.
They can lie back and take their ease
Content to watch the birds and bees.
I can see, clear as a bell
It's a lovely world in which to dwell.
For there is beauty to be found
If only we stand and look around.
The rose with drops of morning dew
And the mountains' scenic view.
A garden full of lovely flowers
And rainbows after April showers.
To watch the sunset over the sea
All of this is ours for free.
Mother nature made all this
For us to enjoy – Perfect Bliss!

Submitted by Jill Bateman

When unexpected company drove up the road, it was surprising how much furniture that old apron could dust in a matter of seconds.

When dinner was ready, Grandma walked out into the garden waved her apron, and Grandad knew it was time to come in to wash his hands for dinner.

It will be a long time before someone invents something that will replace that 'old-time apron' that served so many purposes.

Send this to those who would know (and love) the story about Grandma's aprons.

REMEMBER:

Grandma used to set her hot baked apple pies on the windowsill to cool. Her granddaughters set theirs on the windowsill to thaw.

They would go crazy now trying to figure out how many germs were on that apron.

I don't think I ever caught anything from an apron - but love....

...Terry

+ + + + +

☺ **Wisdom and Knowledge**

In life, it's important to know when to stop arguing with people and simply let them be wrong.

Don't trust everything you see. Even salt looks like sugar.

A smart person knows what to say. A wise person knows whether to say it or not.

No matter how educated, talented, rich or cool you believe you are, how you treat people ultimately tells all.

The History of 'APRONS'

I don't think our kids know what an apron is.

The principal use of Grandma's apron was to protect the dress underneath because she only had a few. It was also because it was easier to wash aprons than dresses and aprons used less material.

But along with that, it served as a potholder for removing hot pans from the oven.

It was wonderful for drying children's tears, and on occasion was even used for cleaning out dirty ears.

From the chicken coop, the apron was used for carrying eggs, fussy chicks, and sometimes half-hatched eggs to be finished in the warming oven.

When company came, those aprons were ideal hiding places for shy kids.

And when the weather was cold Grandma wrapped it around her arms.

Those big old aprons wiped many a perspiring brow, bent over the hot wood stove.

Chips and kindling wood were brought into the kitchen in that apron.

From the garden, it carried all sorts of vegetables...
After the peas had been shelled, it carried out the hulls.

In the autumn, the apron was used to bring in apples that had fallen from the trees.



Wednesday Group

On Wednesday 14th May, 19 of us enjoyed sharing a fish and chips lunch together. We met at 12.30pm and ordered our fish, chips and a choice of peas or curry sauce from The Calais Fish Bar on Calais Road. I had made arrangements with them beforehand and so when everyone had arrived, we telephoned through our order. The staff looked after us very well indeed and the lunch was delivered quickly, all freshly cooked and piping hot. For once the room went quiet as everyone tucked into their lunch and when we had finished, the conversation resumed!

The Calais Fish Bar advertise in our Focus magazine. It is a friendly, family run business. A big thank you to them for looking after us so well. We rounded the lunchtime off with tea/coffee and biscuits. It was a lovely occasion to look back on.

Our meeting on Wednesday 11th June started with a 'hitch'! I picked Dennis up as he was entertaining us that afternoon with a music quiz. There was a big problem. He had the tape but his machine to play it on had broken down! Fortunately, we were early so we went to Church and set up ready for the meeting. I then went back home to fetch our CD player that had a tape section that I hoped still worked. With fingers crossed we tried it, it worked, and we were back in business!

Wednesday Group enjoy the "Dennis Entertains" afternoon and some members bring friends along to join in the fun. Twenty of us were there ready to hear a selection of music chosen by him. There were eight apologies from members who could not join us that afternoon. My thanks go to my granddaughter, Holly Clark, who came long to help us.

We ran a raffle that afternoon to raise money for the church. A big thank you to Mary Stanley who organised it and to everyone who so generously donated prizes. We raised £56 on the raffle and another £10 donated for the church by members which made £66 in total. Thank you everyone for supporting it.

I opened the meeting with a poem entitled 'Thank God for Little Things', emphasising the importance of small acts of kindness in our lives. Then we settled down for the music quiz. I will give you a "taster" of the quiz.

We had to name the tune that was played during the interval in cinemas while ice-cream was sold. The answer was the theme from 'A Summer Place'.

We also listened to 'I Only Want To Be With You' sung by Dusty Springfield. Two points if you could name the song and singer!

We also heard 'No Matter What They Tell Me' by Boyzone. Oh, and the 'Rock and Roll Waltz' sung by Kay Starr took us back a bit – well a long way really! Then we were treated to Jo Stafford singing "You Belong to Me".

Do you know who the successful British folk and pop duo were who won "Opportunity Knocks" in 1973? They went on to sing a number 1 hit "Welcome Home". Well, it was Peters and Lee.

The last two tunes in the quiz had us singing along – 'He's Got The Whole World In His Hands' and 'In an English Country Garden'.

Thank you, Dennis, for putting the quiz together and thank you to Holly for helping him to play them (even though most of the tunes were before Holly was born!) Janet Brown won the quiz. After it we drew the raffle while we were enjoying our refreshments.

We all went home with the tunes still in our heads, taking us back to our younger days!

Margaret Clark

Dates for your diary

(meetings at 2pm unless stated otherwise)

Wednesday 13th August – AGM and cakes

Wednesday 10th September – Rodney Paul
'The Coldest Place on Earth'

Wednesday 8th October – Guess Who

Wednesday 12th November – Annual Lunch at The Beacon Hotel
12.30pm for 1pm

Wednesday 10th December – Christmas Celebration
'The Breakaway Singers'

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Bids Reach Biblical Proportions

Charity shop workers were left in 'complete shock' after a donated Bible fetched more than £56,000 at auction, reported the BBC News website.

According to the article, the text, which was 'the first Bible written in Chinese', was dropped off at an Oxfam bookshop in Chelmsford. Believing it to be valuable, volunteers put the text up for auction, expecting to receive around £800. The shop's manager said that the staff were 'absolutely speechless' when the Bible sold for £56,280.

Dating back to 1815, the Chinese Bible was 'plucked from a pile of donations' by volunteers two years ago and never placed on the shop floor.

An auction specialist from Bonhams, Dr Lorenza Gay, said that the Bible was 'exceptionally rare'.