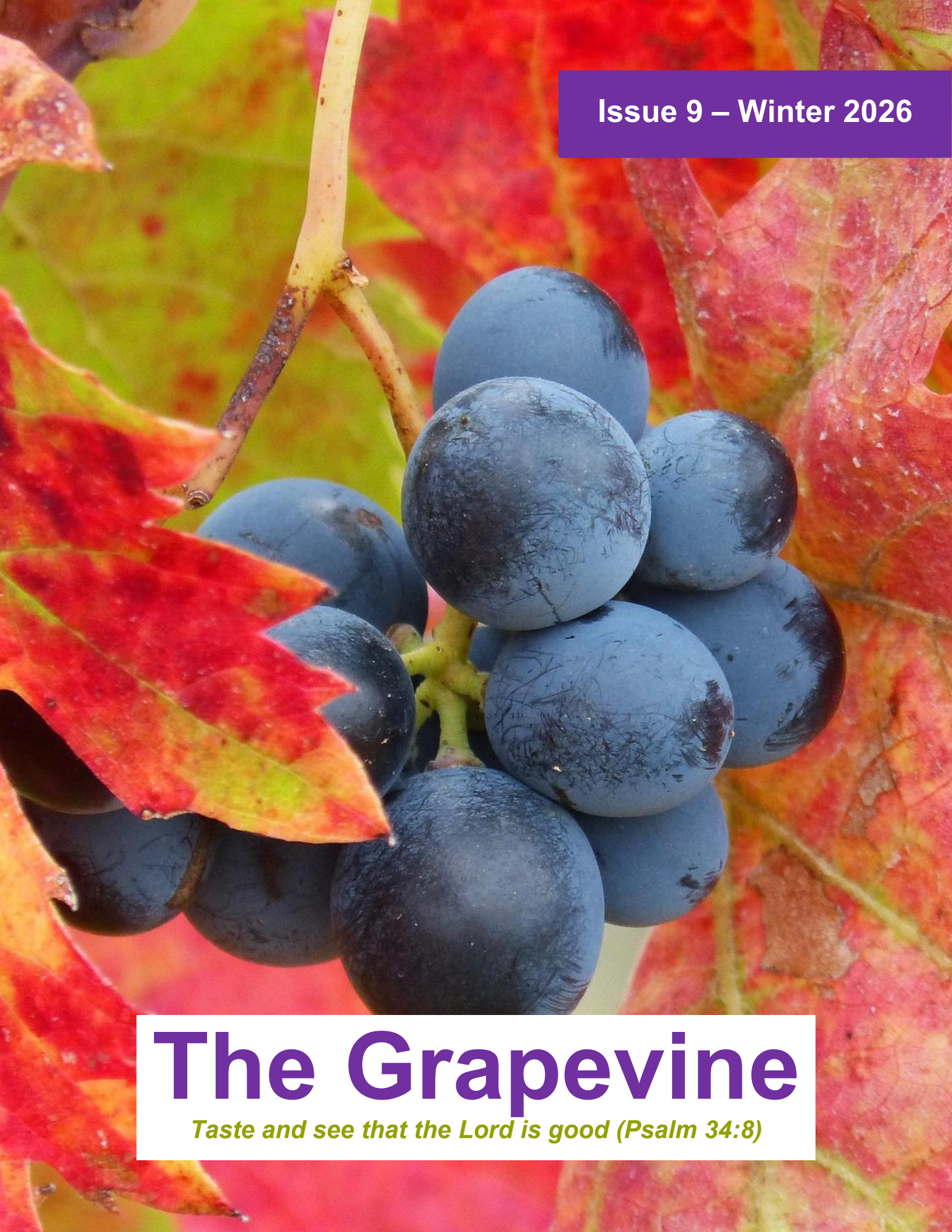


Issue 9 – Winter 2026

The Grapevine

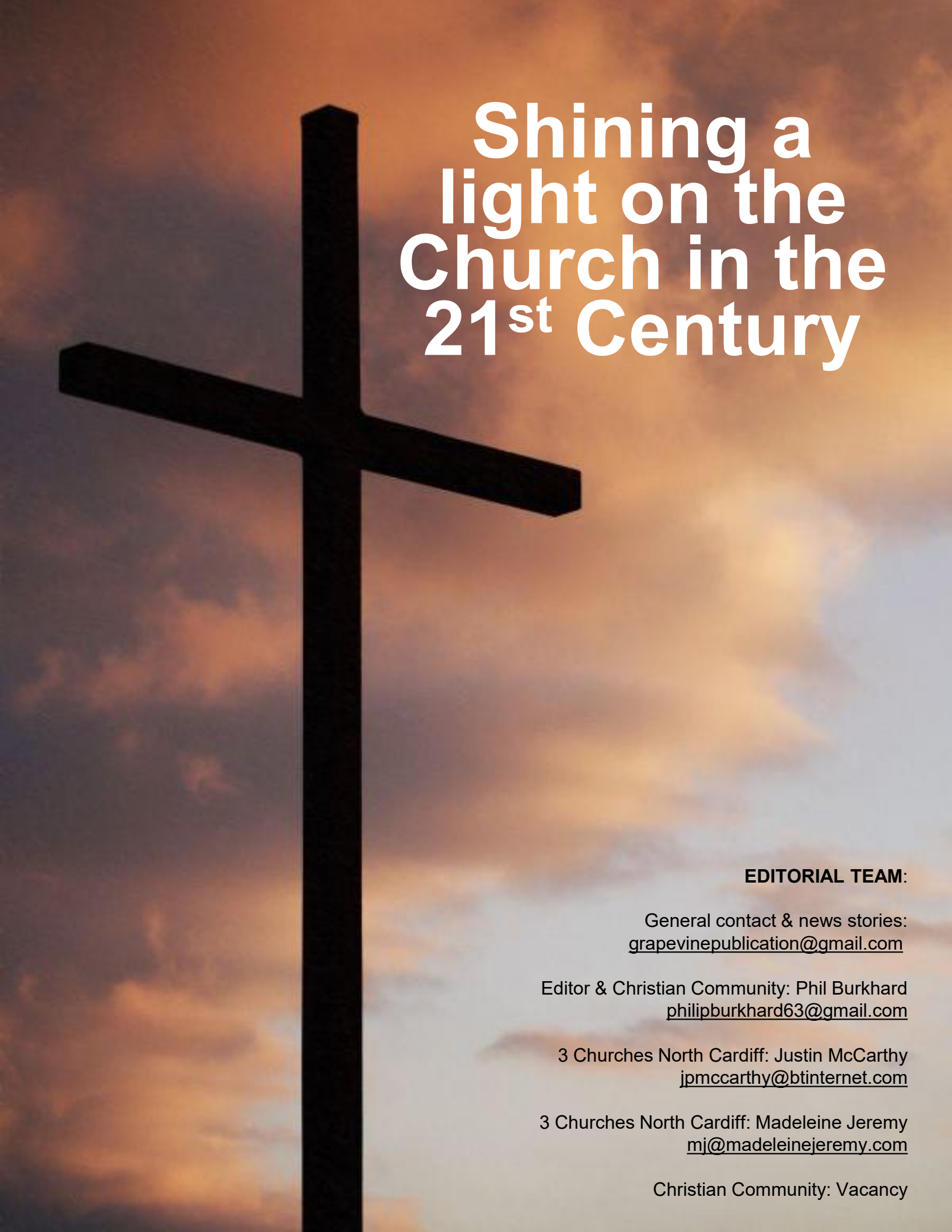
Taste and see that the Lord is good (Psalm 34:8)

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Faith
Hope
&
Love

"I am the vine; you are the branches"
(John 15:5)



Shining a light on the Church in the 21st Century

EDITORIAL TEAM:

General contact & news stories:
grapevinepublication@gmail.com

Editor & Christian Community: Phil Burkhard
philipburkhard63@gmail.com

3 Churches North Cardiff: Justin McCarthy
jpmccarthy@btinternet.com

3 Churches North Cardiff: Madeleine Jeremy
mj@madeleinejeremy.com

Christian Community: Vacancy

Welcome Everyone

Welcome to the 9th issue of The Grapevine! This is produced by the 3 Churches in North Cardiff with contributors and an audience from the wider Christian community – both near and far.

The content reflects 'faith, hope and love', in the 21st century. Church is more than a building; it's a community & it's people. **One body in Christ**.

This issue has a **global theme**: from the Logos Ship and Mercy Ships to our first US contributor, a Polish priest, faith in Cyprus, the Middle East, caves in Italy, Sri Lankan help & relief in Nepal.

Contact us: grapevinepublication@gmail.com

Prior issues are on: www.3churches.org or enjoy reading and sharing via the QR code.

Eternal Wall Update

See previous issues or www.eternalwall.org.uk for an overview. A Heritage Researcher has uncovered 4000+ answered prayers and individuals continue to add their anonymised examples to the website – ***it only takes 5-10 minutes to add yours!*** The first of the 188 tile segments has been produced. Click on the video to hear about the engineering progress and plan.



Words that do not SHOUT

The modern world can be deafening. Fr. Andrzej Kuklinski, of **Our Lady of Margam Catholic Church**, writes:

“People ask the same questions more than once: in a hospital corridor, parish courtyard or at a kitchen table. Why does God seem quiet? How do I pray when I have no words left? What is Lourdes water actually for? What are those fifteen minutes of the Five First Saturdays that nobody mentions?

I began to notice that the answers I gave in those moments were not sermons. They were shorter, slower, and closer to ordinary life. Friends, parishioners and strangers started asking if I would write them down. So I did. **Silent Homilies** grew out of seventeen years of priestly life amidst laughter, tears, and the long patience of listening. It is a website that is not a news site, and it is not high theology. It offers quiet reflections, little-known Catholic treasures (for all Christians), and short books meant to be read slowly.

St Teresa of Calcutta has the line that sits at the top of the home page: **“God is the friend of silence.”** What you will find there does not shout. A few carefully chosen words, offered without urgency, for anyone who still knows how to listen. Recent pieces include a plain account of Lourdes water and what the doctors actually say, and a gentle look at the Five First Saturdays and the quarter of an hour that is so often skipped. I did not expect the site to travel. It has. Messages have come back from people I will never meet, someone sitting with a dying parent, someone returning to the sacraments after years away, someone who simply needed a few honest sentences on a difficult evening. More than once I have been told that a page helped. That is more than enough reason to keep writing…

If these words can sit beside someone for a while and make the presence of God feel a little nearer, they have done their work. You are welcome to come and read slowly - see www.silenthomilies.com ”.

Making Hope Visible

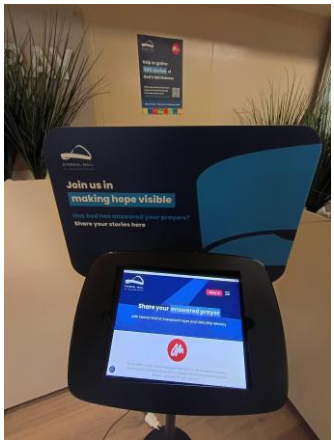
Some of you may have seen a large ship, during September, in Cardiff Bay. The ***Logos Hope*** was touring UK and Europe, in 2026, as part of **Operation Mobilisation** (OM) – a global Christian charity that has evolved since 1955.



It is estimated that there are three billion people in the world (1 in 3 people) who have limited access to the Bible or to someone who will share it with them.OM bridges this gap in a variety of ways. One of these is via the ***Logos Hope*** which has been visited by 11 million people since 2009. To find out more see: www.uk.om.org or the OM UK impact report at: https://bit.ly/3Uf7nc1. The ship includes volunteers and an amazing library all making hope visible.

'Making Hope Visible' is also the mantra of a global Christian project, based in the UK, called the **Eternal Wall of Answered Prayer** (EWOAP) – see www.eternalwall.org.uk. Regular Grapevine readers will have seen previous issues that explain this physical landmark (2.5 times the size of the Angel of the North) and which has a growing archive of more than 150,000 answered prayers, from organisations and individuals in 125+ countries. In 2028/29 anyone globally, and for generations, will be able to search this database by location or keyword, via a digital device, and be uplifted by God's deeds.





OM and EWOAP are partners and were on the Logos Hope. Surf both websites & see how you can come onboard, too!

Divine Mercy



Find your place **on board**

"If you want something that's enriching, pushes you, and grows you, then Mercy Ships is for you!"

- Becky Chaplin, volunteer Rehab Team Leader



With over 200 different volunteer roles available with Mercy Ships, you're bound to find a perfect fit.

For more than 45 years, Mercy Ships has operated the world's largest hospital ships bringing free, life-changing surgery and medical training across sub-Saharan Africa, where 9 out of 10 people can't access surgical care when they need it.

These floating hospitals are run by volunteers - **ordinary people using their skills in extraordinary ways**. From leading life-changing operations to cooking meals to navigating the ships at sea, every one of the 200 roles plays a part in bringing hope and healing.

More than a medical mission: Doctors, nurses and surgeons are core to our mission, but so are teachers, cooks, engineers, electricians, administrators, IT professionals and many more. It takes hundreds of volunteers from across the world working together to keep a hospital ship afloat.

An adventure with purpose: Serve alongside people from around the world, live in a vibrant faith-filled community and see the impact of your skills firsthand. Whether you're looking to serve for a few weeks or a few years, there's a place for you on board.

Could God be calling you on board?

Find your place at
mercyships.org.uk/volunteer

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Do we miss the Bigger Picture?

Douglas Vandergraph is a Christian writer and Bible-study Creator and our first contributor from America! Douglas asks, in this article, whether or not we see the bigger picture…like seeing a single starling or a collection of them…

There is nothing wrong with reading Scripture one verse at a time. A single verse can encourage, convict, comfort, or redirect us. But when we read the Bible only in fragments, we can lose the larger message those verses belong to.



The Bible was not written as a collection of isolated quotations. The Gospels tell stories. Paul builds arguments. The prophets speak into real historical crises. The Psalms move through emotion, theology, memory, lament, and praise. Meaning often depends on what came before and what comes next.

Christians today encounter Scripture everywhere. A verse appears on a social post. A short clip quotes Jesus. A devotional pulls one sentence from Paul. A graphic gives us a promise to carry through the day.



Ephesians is a good example. Many Christians know Ephesians 2:8–9: salvation is by grace through faith, not by works. But Paul immediately continues into verse 10, where believers are described as God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works. Grace is not opposed to a changed life. Grace creates one.

The rest of the chapter goes further. Paul moves from individual salvation to reconciliation between divided people. Those who were far away are brought near. Christ becomes our peace. If we stop at a favourite verse, we may miss the full movement of the passage.

Do we miss the Bigger Picture?

The same thing happens with Ephesians 6 and the armour of God. Those verses are often treated as a stand-alone spiritual warfare checklist. But Paul has already spent the entire letter describing identity in Christ, unity in the church, holiness, forgiveness, love, wisdom, marriage, family, and daily faithfulness. The armour passage is not disconnected from those themes. It is the culmination of them.

A simple habit can help us read Scripture more faithfully. Before asking, “What does this verse mean to me?” ask three questions:

What has the author already said?
What is the author saying here?
What does this prepare the reader to hear next?

Those questions slow us down just enough to see the text as part of something larger.

This matters because context protects us from making the Bible say whatever we want it to say. It also helps us see connections we would otherwise miss.

Short-form media is not the enemy. It can introduce people to Scripture and send them deeper. The problem begins when the fragment becomes a substitute for the whole.

A verse can open the door.
But we should still walk into the room.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR (Ed.): Douglas is building a long-form New Testament research library for ordinary readers. His main Christian library and YouTube channel are: www.douglasvandergraph.com/douglas-vandergraph-master-index/ and www.youtube.com/@douglasvandergraph *Thanks from across the Pond!*

Shamed, Shaken and Stirred!

It was not the fact that the first 20 minutes, of the last James Bond movie, was filmed in Matera, that drew us to the Mezzogiorno (Southern Italy). It was another film and a bigger story…

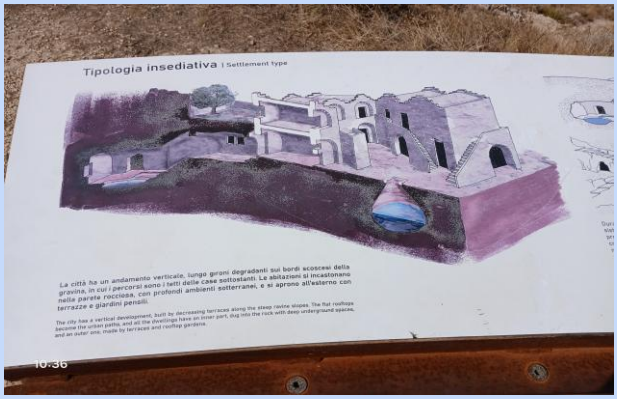


Matera is near to Puglia. At its heart are the **Sassi** or ancient cave dwellings carved into limestone cliffs. These caves have been continually inhabited (as caves and buildings) since 7000 BC, making it one of the three oldest ongoing settlements in the world, after Aleppo and Jericho.



Across from the canyon, opposite Matera, is a regional park with 150 rock churches and frescoes dating from 7 AD. This landscape and Matera were the backdrop to filming ***The Passion*** and part of the 6th Season of ***The Chosen***.

The Sassi was, until the 1950's, home to 16,000 people living alongside livestock and with no electricity or running water. In 1945 Carlo Levi exposed the squalor in his book: ***Christ Stopped at Eboli*** (near Naples, to the north) i.e. Christianity and civilisation hadn't reached the South. The focus of the crisis was Matera - which was called 'The Shame of Italy'.



Subsequent State rehousing from 1952 and investment, however, transformed Matera to become a **UNESCO site** in 1993 & **European City of Culture** 2019.

Shamed, Shaken and Stirred!

The transformation of Matera has gone full circle. Some of the former buildings, hewn into the caves, have become luxury spas, Air BnBs and restaurants.

Visitors can not only enjoy Matera itself but either hike across the canyon or drive around to the other side of the ravine and walk in a prehistoric landscape that was the scene of the Crucifixion, in the film and series previously noted.

But was Matera just a fascinating place to visit on our travels? On reflection, there are many faith-based themes and questions its story raises. For instance:

- What do we write off?
- There is always hope
- What is the balance between the old and the new?
- Our faith can experience renewal and transformation
- What are the lessons for Church renewal and growth?

On a personal level, our stopover in Matera has made me think about two situations more deeply. Firstly, that whenever I make the Sign of the Cross, I will picture the streets of Matera, where Christ was depicted carrying the Cross, in ***The Passion***, and being in a barren landscape, across the canyon, where the Crucifixion scene was filmed. It has become even more real to me.



Secondly, that there is hope even in the direst circumstances. It is doubly fitting, therefore, that Mel Gibson returned to Matera (and nearby Puglia) to film ***The Resurrection*** and that the last James Bond film referred to earlier was ***No Time to Die.*** Matera is unique. Bond liked a Vodka Martini – shaken and not stirred. What does Matera stir in you?

Phil Burkhard (Editor, Grapevine).

Support is flooding into Nepal

Wales Revival Alliance is a Christian charity focused on equipping the Church to share the Gospel effectively – given the Great Commission to us all (Matthew 28:18-20) - both locally and abroad (www.walesrevival.org.uk). One of many missions is to Chitwan in Nepal, which will take place in November 2027. Paul Button, founder of WRA, notes that they established a connection with an amazing man-of-God in the region, Pastor Saloman Lama. He and other local churches, however, have been working together to help survivors of the catastrophic floods, with few resources.

As a result, WRA launched an appeal and raised £4500 (see opposite, how this was spent). The letter below was received from Pastor Saloman:

On behalf of the flash flood victims and affected families in Rasuwa and Nuwakot, Nepal, we would like to express our deepest and most sincere gratitude to Wales Revival Alliance and church families for your generous donation and compassionate support. We have received your loving donations. Your kindness has brought hope and encouragement to families who have suffered greatly because of the devastating flash floods. During this difficult time, your support reminds us that we are not alone and that people from around the world stand together in love, compassion, and unity. Your generous contribution will help bring much-needed relief and support to the affected families as they recover and rebuild their lives. Thank you, Wales Revival Alliance and church families for your loving heart, generosity, prayers and partnership in helping the people of Nepal. May God richly bless you and your ministry for your kindness and faithfulness. With heartfelt gratitude and blessings,

Pastor Saloman ***(On behalf of the Flash Flood Relief Support Team).***

Support is flooding into Nepal



Reaching the World



For 38 years, *Leading The Way,* with Dr Michael Youssef, has been passionately proclaiming the Truth of Jesus Christ. In the UK and around the world, they lead the way for people living in spiritual darkness to **discover the light of Christ through radio and television broadcasting across 6 continents in 28 languages.**

Born and raised in Egypt, Dr Youssef then stayed in Lebanon before his theological training in Australia, where he met his wife, Elizabeth. He has a truly cross-cultural background and uniquely brings alive the Bible from a middle eastern perspective.

Leading The Way has its own Kingdom SAT Channel that broadcasts into 22 Arabic speaking countries, with a reach of 260 million households. Each month they receive around 2,000 enquiries, mainly Muslims seeking answers, especially after having a vision or dream and then tuning into the Kingdom SAT Channel, where they discover the truth of Jesus Christ. Volunteers on the ground follow up enquirers if possible and disciple new believers, often in dangerous and risky situations.

Each year thousands of *Leading The Way* solar-powered Navigator audio devices are distributed around the world to remote places, programmed with the New Testament and messages from Dr Youssef. These devices reach countries where Bibles and missionaries cannot go and especially rural villages where many have not heard the Gospel. Many people turn to Christ upon hearing the Word of God.

In the UK, Dr Youssef is broadcast on eight radio stations. He can mainly be heard Monday to Friday at 9am on Premier Christian Radio and actively posts on social media. Awake UK is a related prayer movement formed by Dr Youssef to intercede for our country. It was founded on one desire: to see God bring another Great Awakening.

Dr Youssef has written over 50 books and publications. His latest, ‘An Unholy Alliance’, warns believers of Islam advancing across the western world and how we should respond. Each month *Leading The Way* produces MY Journal, a free magazine filled with devotions, articles and testimonies that can be received by subscribing online at www.LTW.org

Andrew Hawkins **(UK / Europe Director, *Leading The Way*).**

Faith in Cyprus

Maggie Powell, who taught in faith schools in Cardiff and who recently moved to Cyprus, wrote this article whilst she pondered a few thoughts…

I often have people tell me how fortunate I am to live on the beautiful Island of Cyprus. I'm half Greek Cypriot and I often made visits to the Island once as a teenager and later regularly with my own children. But I would never have made the decision to uproot myself from my wonderful four daughters and my precious grandchildren without the leading of the Holy Spirit.

As a Christian, I haven't always heard the inner calling of God. **It took a very painful and difficult time in my life for me to stop and hear the Lord.** In my quiet times of prayer, Jesus came close to me and as if He held me in His hands. The Holy Spirit spoke into my life and revealed new exciting plans. Cyprus was to be my new home. I live in the south, Limassol - a thriving vibrant city. The sky-line is ever changing with new apartments and business centres. The wealthy, tourists, native Cypriots, Asian housekeepers and refugees' live side by side on an island half the size of Wales. One thing they all have in common is they need to hear the gospel message. On a summer's evening, out on the Molos or in the busy Anexartisias Street, there is plenty of opportunity to chat to people about Jesus. Cyprus can be hard ground for those in need. Refugees have little access to money. The world of sex trafficking is ripe. ***There is a such a need to bring hope.***

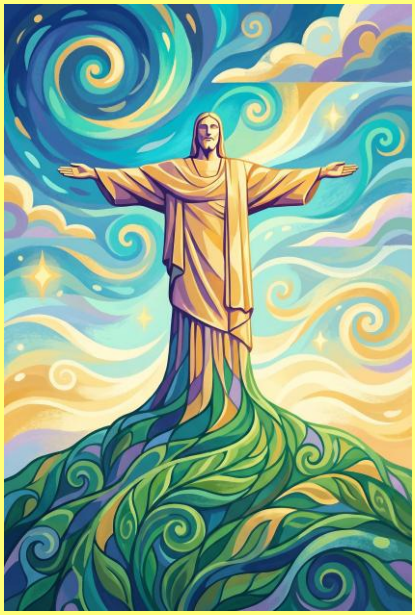
I work in an English-speaking Christian school, and my church's services are in English for a global congregation. Jesus intended us to preach the gospel to all the nations (*Great Commission*, Matthew 28:19-20). A few of us are producing a YouTube podcast called **A Rhema Moment** (Greek for 'a spoken word'), to be released in December**.** It is a journey to discover Cyprus and its relevance to the Gospel – from 2000 years ago to our current Church baptisms in the sea and outreach. **How is the Holy Spirit inviting you to journey in your faith?**

Will you recognise HIM?

I met James Powell in a Vineyard small group. James is founder of “Churches in Cardiff” (a free online directory: www.churchesincardiff.co.uk for Christian churches). I recently invited James to the Living Stones small group (a One Church gathering that meets in the Fynnon Wen pub, Cardiff) to discuss his article (Ed.)…

One of the biggest surprises in my search for truth was discovering how often God’s greatest moves are missed by the very people who should see them first. The story of the Magi at Jesus’ birth is one example - and it carries a direct warning for anyone expecting Christ’s return.

Most of us grew up with the classic Christmas scene: three kings standing beside the manger with baby Jesus on the night he was born. It’s beautiful, but it’s not exactly what the Bible says.
Matthew 2 tells us they were Magi - Persian priestly astrologers, not kings. These were Gentile outsiders. Their practice of astrology was actually condemned and outlawed. by the people of Israel. Yet these “pagan” outsiders saw a new star, understood its meaning, left everything, and travelled hundreds of miles across deserts to find the child.



When they arrived in Jerusalem, they asked where the King of the Jews had been born. King Herod secretly called the Magi and found out from them exactly when the star had appeared. When the Magi did not return to him, Herod became furious and ordered the slaughter of all boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old and under, according to the time the Magi had told him. This suggests that Jesus was no longer a newborn when the Magi visited. They found him living in a house - the Greek word used is ‘paidion’ meaning a young child or toddler.

Will you recognise HIM?

We don't even know how many Magi there were - the number "three" is only guessed because of the three gifts. Meanwhile, Luke's account shows the shepherds visiting a newborn ('brephos') in a manger on the actual night of the birth. Two different events. Two different groups. **Here's the powerful irony:** The outsiders - these Magi whose background was rejected by Israel - followed the star, made the long journey, bowed down and worshiped Jesus, and offered extremely costly gifts. But the insiders - the chief priests and scribes in Jerusalem who had the Scriptures, who knew the prophecies, and who could quote Micah 5:2 saying the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem - didn't even bother to walk the five miles from Jerusalem to Bethlehem to check it out. They stayed comfortable in their traditions and temples.

This pattern repeated with the early church. The chosen Jewish people looked at the followers of Jesus and called them a dangerous "sect" (Acts 24:14). The insiders rejected the new move of God, while outsiders eventually embraced it.

Now think about today. Millions of sincere Christians deeply love Jesus and are praying for his Second Coming. The Bible asks sobering questions about Christ's return. Jesus himself said: "When the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?" (Luke 18:8). He warned that many would not be ready and reject him.

So why do many believe they couldn't possibly miss him or even reject him? The Magi teach us the attitude we need: humility, vigilance, and courage to investigate. Institutional belonging and long religious tradition do not guarantee spiritual sight. True discernment requires daily dependence on the Holy Spirit and relationship with God and not just going to Church or Bible knowledge.

So, here's another invitation: be like the Magi when you see a new "star" - a teaching, a person, or a movement that seems unfamiliar. Investigate it prayerfully. Will you follow the star or will you be comfortable & complacent?

Sipped, Painted & Supported

A recent 3 Churches in North Cardiff based charity initiative was carried out in partnership with Sumithrayo (which means “good friends”) - Sri Lanka, the Sri Lankan branch of the Samaritans. The charity aims to support the mental-well being of young people living in the rural communities. A parishioner’s father is a volunteer counsellor. As part of his work, he speaks with school children in rural areas who are struggling with emotional difficulties and suicidal thoughts…

To provide sustainable support, the charity trains student counsellors in rural schools. The long-term plan is for them to enter society as counsellors after completing their studies, ensuring the community benefits from well-qualified professionals. Alongside promoting mental health awareness, the charity supports these students by providing school bags and essential stationeries. These practical gifts help remove barriers to education while also reminding children that they are valued, supported and encouraged. Education, compassion and community support can make a lasting difference.

The 3 Churches in North Cardiff hosted a ‘Sip & Painting’ evening, last summer, to support the charity. Twenty-seven people attended and £675 was raised. Thank you to all - Meril & Melani Kadukara. For more information: www.sumithrayo.org.











Loving Your Neighbour

The 3Churches North Cardiff have supported the St.Brigid's Food Market for some years. Social outreach is also embracing spiritual outreach, in a variety of ways. As part of that ongoing support, can you help a Sri Lankan guest, Rajila? If you do not need her services please can you consider liking and sharing the flyer below via the Facebook link at: https://bit.ly/4AQRpVR. Thank you [Ed.]



"This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you"

(John 15:12)



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For enquiries:
grapevinepublication@gmail.com

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