



# The Edgehill Churches

## Parish Link

Loving  
God,  
Serving  
People,  
Growing  
Community

### Where is God?

October 2017

The news at the moment seems to be about one disaster after another.

Storms have been in the headlines with over 200 people killed in monsoon floods in India in August, another 200 are estimated to have been killed in hurricanes Harvey and Irma, and the full impact of hurricane Maria is yet to be understood. These figures are likely to rise into the 1000s as people feel the knock-on health effects in the coming weeks and years: from infections and toxic chemicals released by the floodwaters, from stress, and even as a result of working to rebuild shattered cities (*New Scientist*, 18<sup>th</sup> Sept 2017).

An earthquake in Mexico City (just 12 days after an earthquake off Mexico's southern coast) has caused widespread damage with 230 reported dead so far. This figure will rise in the short term as more casualties are discovered and in the longer-term due to similar problems with infections, disease, etc as mentioned above.

According to some analysts the economic cost of Hurricane Irma alone could rise as high as £227bn, it is a figure so large that it's hard to comprehend. Of even greater cost, but impossible to measure, is the grief and emotional scars that will be carried by those who survive. These people will have to rebuild shattered lives where homes, possessions and livelihoods have all been lost.

Over the years that I have been Vicar in this area I have had the privilege of walking with many people as they have struggled with personal grief, pain and loss. Whilst the suffering is on a much smaller scale, the pain is no less real and can be overwhelming for the people involved.

Faced with overwhelming global or personal suffering, it is no wonder that some people cry out, "Where is God in all this?" This is a valid question... surely a loving God would protect people and stop them coming to any harm?

Part of the challenge in exploring suffering is that people are trying to answer different questions. As an atheist, the question I used to ask was, 'With all this suffering how can there be a God?' On exploring the evidence more and coming to believe in God, then the question changed to 'I know there is a God, so how do I make sense of the suffering I see?' There are no easy answers to the suffering we face in the world, certainly not that I

can do justice to in this short article.

The Christian perspective is that God is not absent or indifferent to our plight. In the person of Jesus Christ he enters into our world, shares in our suffering, weeps with our pain and offers hope for the future.

As the philosopher Peter Kreeft points out:

*The Christian God came to earth to deliberately put himself on the hook of human suffering. In Jesus Christ, God experienced the greatest depths of pain. Therefore, though Christianity does not provide the reason for each experience of pain, it provides deep resources for actually facing suffering with hope and courage rather than bitterness and despair.*

Jesus said:

*In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world*

John 16:33

The message of Christianity is not about 'pie in the sky when you die'; it is not about escaping this evil world and going to heaven where everything will be

great. The message of Christianity is about God moving into our world and inviting us to work with him to help to bring light into the darkness of the pain, grief and suffering we see around us. Perhaps it is the echo of God's invitation that stirs our hearts when we see people reaching out to help others in need.

I am always encouraged by the many people in our communities that serve and care for others (locally or further afield) in so many different ways. Whatever our faith or belief, I pray that we would continue to respond to that tug on our hearts and do what we can to help others whenever we see the need.

Rev Barry Jackson

#### Churches' Contact Details:

Vicar: The Rev Barry Jackson  
Tel: 01926 640248

Email: [barry@edgehillchurches.org](mailto:barry@edgehillchurches.org)

#### Associate Ministers

The Rev Alexandra Williams (Curate)  
Tel: 01926 259743

Email: [alexwilliams66@gmail.com](mailto:alexwilliams66@gmail.com)

The Rev Dr Richard Cooke  
Tel: 07952 544820 (Warmingtton Rectory)

Email: [richard.cooke@covcofe.org](mailto:richard.cooke@covcofe.org)

Benefice Web Site [www.edgehillchurches.org](http://www.edgehillchurches.org)



## OCTOBER SERVICES IN THE EDGEHILL PARISHES

	Kineton		Combroke	Radway	Ratley	Warmington	Shotteswell
1st	8.30am BCP Comm	10.00am Simply Celebrate Harvest		3.00pm Harvest	10.30am Communion	Church closed for building work and will be re-opening mid/late November	8:30am BCP Comm
8th		10.30am Communion	9.00am Communion		5:40pm Evensong		8.30am Communion
15th	8.30am BCP Comm	10.30am Morning Worship			6.30pm Communion		8.30am Communion
22nd		10.30am Communion		11.00am Sealed Knot at MoD Kineton	6.30pm Evensong	4.30pm Church in the Plough	8.30am Communion
29th		10.30am Morning Worship					10.30am Communion

### HARVEST SERVICES AND MEALS

Radway harvest service is at 3pm on 1st Oct followed by a supper at 7pm on Monday 2nd Oct in the village hall.



### MIDWEEK ECUMENICAL SERVICE

**Thursday 5th October at 11am**  
at St Peter's Church Kineton

A monthly ecumenical communion service



## Meet & Eat

**Tuesday 3rd October at 12 noon**  
in Kineton Methodist Hall

More info: Diana 07749 599211 or Chris 01926 640904

### CHURCH IN THE PUB

**The Rose & Crown, Ratley Sunday 8th Oct 6pm**

**PLUS ADDITIONAL NEW SERVICE...**

**at The Plough, Warmington 22nd Oct 4.30pm**

Each month we explore a theme from current news



## Edgehill Churches Alpha Course

Thursdays through October

First session on 5th October:

**Who is Jesus?**

7.30 - 9.30 pm, starting with supper

**Kineton Primary School, King John's Road,  
CV35 0HS**

Alpha is an opportunity to explore the Christian faith in a friendly, open and informal environment.

No question is out of bounds and you are free to discuss as much or as little as you wish.

For more details or register an interest please contact Eira on 07837 064081 or [eirahale@gmail.com](mailto:eirahale@gmail.com)

**LIFE  
IS WORTH  
EXPLORING**



### MEDITATION SERVICE

**Sunday 22nd October at 6pm**  
**St Peter's Kineton**

Exploring ways of knowing God through contemplative prayer



## THE BALFOUR DECLARATION, A HUNDRED YEARS ON Britain's 'self-inflicted catastrophe' in the Middle East Monday 30<sup>th</sup> October at 7:30pm at Kineton Primary School



This November marks the 100th anniversary of the Balfour Declaration. This promise by the then

British government to support a Jewish national home in Palestine paved the way for the creation of the state of Israel in 1948 and what Arab Palestinians remember as the Nakba, 'the disaster' in which Palestine as a country ceased to exist.

One hundred years on to the day on which the War Cabinet made its momentous decision, Christopher Lamb will be presenting a film 'Britain in Palestine, 1917-1948' and discussing the historical context and long-term legacy of the Declaration with Mark Levene, a historian of these events.

### BOOKING ESSENTIAL

Free tickets by calling 01926 640248 or from

[balfour-declaration-100-years-on.eventbrite.co.uk](http://balfour-declaration-100-years-on.eventbrite.co.uk)

### KINETON DOES STRICTLY

**Nov 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> at 7pm at  
Kineton High School**



Training is underway for Edgehill's first ever Ballroom Dancing Competition. The event will be raising money for the MS Society and Kineton High School.

Tickets £10 (£6 for concessions) from Flower Thyme,

by calling 01926 640248,

or online at [goo.gl/EuxDJW](http://goo.gl/EuxDJW)

(please note there is a charge for online orders)

### GLOBAL LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

**22<sup>nd</sup> -23<sup>rd</sup> Nov – a 2 Day Conference in Witney**



Whether you are a leader in church or at work, the Global Leadership Summit videocast is a world-class experience designed to help you grow and embrace your grander vision.

Speakers include the CEO of Facebook, a Senior Advisor from Google, the founder of the Equal Justice Initiative and more as well a church leaders and respected authors on leadership

We are taking a group to this conference and if you'd like to join us call Barry on 01926 640248

More details on [willowcreek.org.uk/events/gls/](http://willowcreek.org.uk/events/gls/)