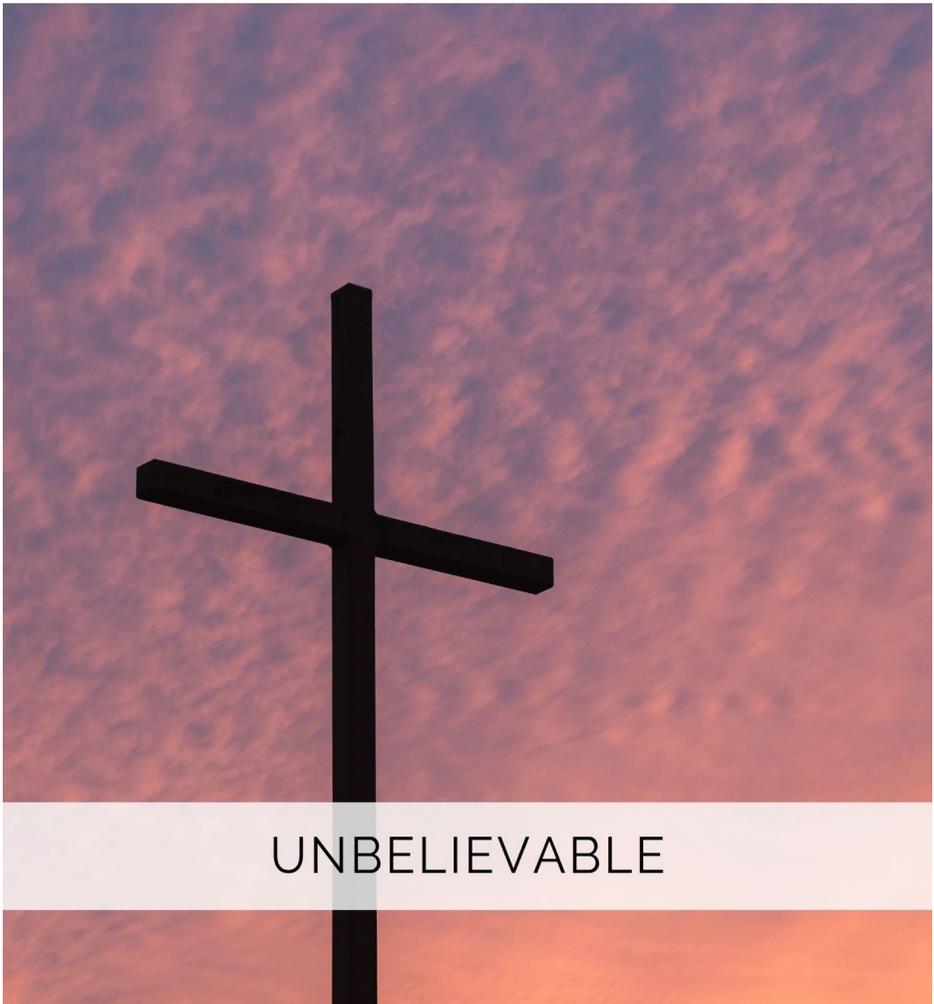


NETWORK

APRIL 2022



UNBELIEVABLE



What's the Resurrection all about?

I find Easter difficult! Now that's some statement for your Rector to make, but let me explain.

Maybe it's the preacher in me, but Christmas I get. God becoming one of us and so knowing what it is like to be human, is amazing, but I get it. Good Friday and Jesus dying on the cross as a sacrifice, taking the punishment that should have been mine is mind blowing. But small acts of sacrifice, of course nothing like what Jesus did on the cross, happen in daily life, so I get it. Even Pentecost when God by his Spirit transforms a group of frightened disciples is utterly remarkable. But having the Holy Spirit in me as a guide, comforter, teacher, and companion who is slowly transforming me is part of my experience.

But resurrection? As yet, I have never seen anyone raised from the dead. It's not my experience and it will not happen until I die. So, what are we to do about Easter Sunday? Is it something we celebrate and hope that we won't experience for a long time? Is it why we have introduced Easter bunnies, Easter bonnets and Easter Eggs as symbols of celebration? I mean, what have rabbits got to do with Easter?



My mother used to tell me not to give up just because something is difficult. So let's press into the difficulty of Easter a little further.

The resurrection of Jesus is proof of who God actually is. The resurrection of Jesus identifies that God is Lord and Sovereign over all of creation for all of time. The resurrection of Jesus means that God has gone to the darkest place and has triumphed. The resurrection of Jesus means that the final enemy, death, has been defeated. The resurrection of Jesus tells us of God's ultimate authority and supreme power. The resurrection of Jesus validates his incarnation and salvation. It gives me security in my identity, power to my prayers, confidence whatever my circumstances, and yes, a guarantee that my present and my future are covered.



Mark Pickett, Rector

The Register

Weddings:

Nick Shelley and Rachel Cross-Walker

Funerals:

Olwen Morton

John Rowe

Jack Welch



Unbelievable!

Over the last three years, I've learned much more about believing for the impossible than I have ever before. I've watched as finance has come in, as new families have come to our church, as the world came to a standstill and yet our services continued, as people came to faith through Alpha, as people developed friendships, growing in their understanding of Jesus and so much more.

This is one of the perks of being part of the staff team and the leadership team in our church. We look for the signs of growth, the signs of the Holy Spirit. There's often the sense, in talking to people, that growth – numerical or qualitative – is just around the corner. There's also the sense that we are 'ticking along fine', just as we are. Well, I think we need to challenge that.

Back in October, we handed out tiny spider plants at the end of one of our services. This was in response to a picture Della had during a Vision Team prayer time. We interpreted that picture as God indicating that we should look to create worshipping communities, in line with the Church of England's vision for resource churches.

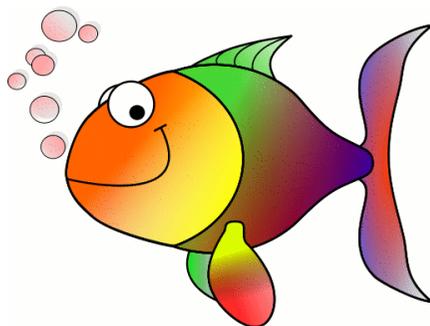
My spider plant started off tiny. I've kept it on my windowsill throughout the winter, and this week, I've repotted it. When I took it out of its pot, I discovered it had become very pot-bound – the roots literally couldn't grow any further and were starting to wrap around themselves. I also discovered that my plant which appeared to be one plant was actually two. They needed to be separated and untangled, and are now happy in their new, bigger containers.

The plants will grow, and will fill their pot. But I wonder what the analogy could say about our church? From where I'm standing, we're getting a bit pot-bound.



We're at the point where we're limited to what we can do because, most often, we simply haven't got enough people to serve on the various ministry teams. During Covid, every single ministry team lost people willing to serve, but they have not all returned. On the flip side, we now have several ministries that are so busy and so popular, that we could run them two or three times, but we can't.

Take Little Fishes for example. On Monday afternoons, we have up to 40 families with children under 5 who come. This is the highest number at any time in Little Fishes history. But Helen is having to lead it with a skeleton team of volunteers, and every week, it's a stretch – we only just make it work.



There are enough families to come to two or even three Little Fishes sessions. The parents speak incredibly highly of it, and it's really fulfilling a need for our local families. But we can't possibly consider running any more sessions because we simply don't have the team who are willing to commit. Those who do come are wonderful, faithful and absolutely lovely with both the toddlers and the families – but they are stretched to their maximum.

Friday night youth club is a similar story. 45 teenagers coming into church every week, hearing about Jesus! That's the kind of thing most churches only dream of. And yet, this is being run by a skeleton team of 5. We could run two sessions, or run on additional nights – if only we had the team to do so.

It's the same situation for small groups leaders, worship team, AV and camera teams, Alpha leaders, Kingdom Kids leaders and Welcome Team. Perhaps the term 'leader' puts you off, but the fact remains: our lack of capacity is stopping us growing. We're becoming pot-bound.

It's a well-researched fact that church services stop growing when they reach 80% full: new people don't stay and established people start to leave. In fact, in societies that are used to more space, particularly after Covid, this figure may be more like 57%. That's a real challenge for us: our service numbers are close to where they were pre-Covid at the 10.30 service. So yes, perhaps it's unbelievable that we have so many families, teenagers and new adults coming into our church. But perhaps it's more unbelievable that we can't get the teams together to support this growth. So I'm now praying for more volunteers, more leaders, more people who are willing to say, 'Yes, I'll be here. I'll help.'

If you'd like to start serving on any of the teams mentioned in this article, speak to Helen for Children's Ministry, Lucy for Youth Ministry and Naomi for Church-wide ministry.

Look out for the 'Equipped and Gifted' course in the Summer term to discover where God can use your gifts. Also look out for various ministry training sessions over the next few months.

Naomi Lynas, Operations Manager

Reference

<https://alban.org/archive/the-80-percent-rule-fact-or-fiction/>

Your contribution goes here!



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We'd love to have contributions for *Network* from more than just the staff team. Do you have a story about a God-encounter, getting to know Jesus more, a way the Holy Spirit has guided you or comforted you, or anything that would encourage other people in St James' and beyond?

Do you value the future of *Network*?

We'd really appreciate either your contributions
or your comments on *Network*.

Please submit them to gchaldane@gmail.com.

The deadline for the June issue of *Network* is **Friday 27th May**.



Unbelievable!



The dictionary definition of unbelievable is...so great or extreme as to be difficult to believe; extraordinary, remarkable and astonishing.

I find it almost unbelievable, I find it astonishing and remarkable, how God chooses to use me for his purposes. Yet by faith I believe this truth. Time and time again I am amazed as God accepts my meagre offering and from it, creates a magnificent feast. The utterly amazing, almost unbelievable truths of how God chooses to use us, are scattered throughout the Bible:

- In Ephesians 2:10 it says, 'For we are God's masterpiece.'
Unbelievable, how can that be? But it's true.
- In 1 Corinthians 1:27-28 it says, 'Instead, God chose things the world considers foolish in order to shame those who think they are wise. And he chose things that are powerless to shame those who are powerful. God chose things despised by the world, things counted as nothing at all, and used them to bring to nothing what the world considers important.'
Remarkable, how can that be? But it's true.
- In Ephesians 3:20 it says, 'Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish immeasurably more than we might ask or think.'
Wow, how can that be? But it's true.
- In John 14:12 it says, 'I tell you the truth, anyone who believes in me will do the same works I have done, and even greater works, because I am going to be with the Father.'
Unbelievable, how can that be? But it's true.

As we celebrate Easter we are reminded of the amazing and astonishing good news of Jesus rising from the dead by God's mighty power, to give us remarkable new lives, empowered by the Holy Spirit. So that as the Bible verses say, we can be part of God doing immeasurably more, and we can see God doing great things through us. Wow!! **Unbelievable!!**

Sometimes I think I don't see this happen, partly because I expect to see and feel an earth shattering experience, but instead the immeasurable, the unbelievable happens in a quiet whisper.

As I stand back and look back I see God's hand quietly nudging and shaping, doing amazing things, doing more than I can imagine. Not in the way I would have thought or planned. When I think of how he has brought families into Baby Fishes and Little Fishes, how he has grown favour in the community for that ministry. **Wow!**

When I see how he has blessed the growth of family faith in Forest Church, how God is quietly working in families, how children are stepping up to share and pray. Children teaching adults and vice versa. God working, creating, nudging and shaping, and doing more than I can imagine. Yet I know there is more, so much more, immeasurably more. There is so much that we can do to share God with our community, that we can't do at the moment as our teams are too small.

How? By all of us joining the party; joining teams and ministries. By all of us stepping out to be missional, with our tea making, smiling, listening, caring, loving, story-sharing lives, becoming part of the **unbelievable**.

Helen Potts, Children & Families Minister

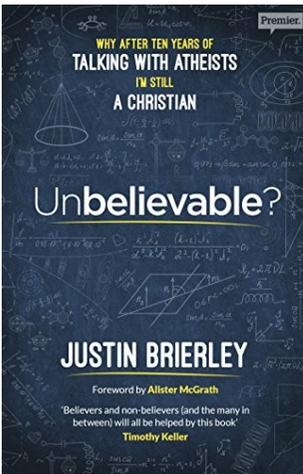
To keep our community activities for children viable and growing, we do need more helpers.

To join the Baby Fishes/Little Fishes team or the Rockin team, contact me at: helen@stjamesclitheroe.co.uk or catch me in the office or dashing around on a Sunday.





Book recommendation: 'Unbelievable?'



Have you ever listened to Justin Brierley's Premier Podcast *'Unbelievable?'*? Justin has published a book based on some of his conversations, subtitled *'Why after ten years of talking with atheists I'm still a Christian?'*

If you're having questions of your own, perhaps this would be a good book to read over Easter?

Believing the unbelievable!



*Everyone was amazed and gave praise to God. They were filled with **awe** and said, 'We have seen remarkable things today.'* (Luke 5:26)

*"If you can"?" said Jesus. 'Everything is possible for one who **believes**.'* (Mark 9:23)

*They said to the woman, 'We no longer **believe** just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Saviour of the world.'* (John 4:42)



*After he was raised from the dead, his disciples recalled what he had said. Then they **believed** the Scripture and the words that Jesus had spoken.* (John 2:22)

Very truly I tell you, whoever **believes** in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. (John 14:12)



When he was at the table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they recognised him, and he disappeared from their sight. They asked each other, **'Were not our hearts burning within us** while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?' (Luke 24:30-32)



But these are written that you may **believe** that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name. (John 20:31)

RESURRECTION!?



What do you think?

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Ever wondered what the Easter story is really all about? Why not 'unscramble' your thoughts on an Alpha course?

Alpha provides a weekly space to ask all your questions about faith in a friendly environment; with people who, like you, want to explore. There's a short talk, something good to eat, and plenty of time to chat.

You bring the questions, we'll provide the 'cracking' conversations. There's no charge, and no pressure - the eggs are totally in your basket.

Sorry not sorry about the puns.

Ask questions, your way.

#AskAtAlpha

Interested in joining an Alpha course?
Contact Naomi Lynas for further details.

5 Marks of
Mission
Creation Care

Reaching for Silver?



The St James Social Justice Group (SJSJ) was formed in 2021, and you can see a summary of our first year in the Annual Report for 2021. Our biggest achievement was probably achieving Bronze Eco Church status, and we're already working towards Silver.

For Eco Church awards, we get assessed across five different areas:

- Worship and teaching
- Buildings
- Land
- Community and global engagement
- Lifestyle.

Some of the ideas we have for helping to achieve the Silver Award include:

- Developing an Eco Church Policy
- Conducting a wildlife survey in the churchyard
- Getting more involved with local sustainability movements, such as the Ribble Valley Climate Action Network
- Promoting walking, cycling and car sharing
- Hosting a clothes swap event.

SJSJ dates for 2022

<i>Sun 27 Feb</i>	<i>Fairtrade Sunday</i>
<i>Sat 15-Sun 21 May</i>	<i>Christian Aid Week</i>
<i>Sun 12 June</i>	<i>Eco Church Workshop: Wildlife survey</i>
<i>Sun 25 Sept</i>	<i>Eco Church Workshop: Creationtide</i>
<i>Nov (tbc)</i>	<i>Tearfund Quiz Night</i>

Look out for details of other events, including 'Wonderwalks' and litter picks.

During 2021, we also registered for the **Creation Care** scheme. This parallels what the Eco Church scheme does for churches, in that it encourages households (whether singles, couples or families) to assess how much they are caring for and conscious of the environment, and God's concern for his created world. With the scheme, it's also possible to achieve Bronze, Silver and Gold awards.



Seven St James' households have now achieved at least a Bronze award. A further seven households completed the assessment, but didn't achieve an award at the first go. We each face different challenges in becoming more 'green', especially when those challenges can come in seven different areas:

- Worship and prayer
- Home
- Garden
- Travel
- Food
- Possessions
- Community and global engagement.

During our Eco Church Workshops, we're going to be sharing ideas on how you could take further steps in each of these areas. Watch out for more details, and don't forget to retake the assessment when you've made some changes.

You can register with Creation Care at:

<https://creationcare.org.uk/>

Please select 'St James' Clitheroe' as your church when registering.

If you'd like to be involved in the Social Justice group or to help with setting up any of the above projects/events, do please contact Graham Haldane or Naomi Lynas.



Christian Aid Week

Sat 15th to Sun 21st May 2022



This year Christian Aid is focussing on the impact of climate change in Zimbabwe which is causing aching hunger for families like Jessica's. The combined effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, conflict, and drought have robbed her of the power to provide for her children. And 7000 miles away, the war in Ukraine will drive up food prices in Zimbabwe and around the globe. Without the fertiliser and food – like wheat and cooking oil – that Ukraine and Russia produce, vulnerable families will be pushed even deeper into hunger.

But hope does not disappoint. Hope lives in you.

Your gifts this Christian Aid Week could help Jessica set up water taps on her farm, learn to grow food, and provide seeds that thrive in drought – giving her all she needs to turn her dry, dusty land into a garden of hope. Join us this Christian Aid Week and help turn hunger into hope.

With every gift, every action, every prayer, we celebrate and share hope with our sisters and brothers facing crisis around the world, from Ukraine to Zimbabwe.

There are many ways you can support Christian Aid this year.

There will be envelopes on the welcome table in order to make cash or cheque donations which can be handed in to the office.

You can give on line via the Ribble Valley E-Envelope: <https://envelope.christianaid.org.uk/envelope/ribble-valley-ca-group>

*Adrian Garley
Christian Aid representative*

Training fund enables qualification

Cleophas (Chirchir) Kipleting, headteacher of Kings Highway School, was given a chance through a donation from St James to study for a Diploma course in Early Childhood. Initially he held a certificate in Early Childhood. 100,000.00 KS (£663) was allocated for the course. This money was managed from Kings Highway Church. Beginning in April 2020, the course took one and a half years and he has finally finished the course with a credit pass.

Cleophas's gratitude note

I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude for the fee support from St James. With it I have been able to pursue and upgrade myself from Certificate to Diploma in Early Childhood. The results were out last week and I was so happy and thankful to God for enabling me to pass with credit. Indeed, I lack the right words to express my joy.



Thank you, and may God replenish the pockets of all who gave towards my education.



King's Highway Church

A place of Equipping and Connection



Mark and Julia Dyer will be visiting our twinned church and school in Eldoret from 30th March to 10th April.

Due to Covid we are going on our own this time without a team. The programme is already looking very full for two people and we will so miss having a team of wonderful people with us. Some of the things we will be doing include: joining in Kings Highway Church outreach to the Boda-boda drivers on Saturday mornings; preaching at the Sunday services; hosting our joint monthly prayer meeting from Kings Highway Church on Sunday 3 April (join us live—see below); visiting the school; trying to visit as many small groups as is possible; leading an away day for the teenagers; leading a youth devotional breakfast; a fun games afternoon with lunch for the whole church family; spending a day on prayer mountain; and much more!

We would love your prayers as we prepare and whilst we are in Kenya. News will get posted on social media as well as in the weekly email while we are away.



Join our live UK-Kenya prayer meeting

We don't need to travel 6000 miles to join with them! On **Sunday 3rd April** there will a live link up with Mark and Julia in Eldoret and an opportunity for St James' Church and King's Highway Church to join together in prayer.

Julia and Mark will be hosting the prayer meeting in Eldoret and we will join via Zoom. So come and pray with us at **12:15** Sunday 3rd April upstairs in the Youth Room. All welcome. *See St James' weekly email for Zoom details.*



The above photo if from the very first twinning visit in 2016.

KHC Youth Training Fund: Update from Tina

Tina Gough is within sight of her goal to walk/cycle virtually from Land's End to John O'Groats. The money she's raised will pay for at least one Kenyan student to attend college for a year.

I want to thank you all for your encouragement and sponsoring me. I've been completely humbled by the experience and you've all spurred me on.

I was a little behind for finishing on the 31st. Life started getting in the way, but I'm still committed to seeing it through. I guess what is important is what's achieved. The Lord was with me from the start and will be with me at the end. I'm thinking of the verse in Hebrews 12 about finishing the race marked out for you... . We all have our own race and with the Holy Spirit we will see it through.

You can still sponsor Tina here:

<https://www.stewardship.org.uk/pages/tinaswalk>



WELCOME

What's on each week?

Sunday 9.00am	9am Service In person only; St James Church
Sunday 10.30am	St James Live St James Church and YouTube
Wednesday 10.30am	Wednesday Communion St James Church
Kids and Families	Baby Fishes: Monday 10.30-12 Babies 0-12 months Little Fishes: Monday 1.30-3pm Under 5s Rockin: Tuesday 6pm-7.30pm Years 2-6 Kingdom Kids: Sundays 10.30am 0-11 years Forest Church: 22nd May and 26th June
Youth	Youth 412: Wednesday 7.30-9pm Youth Club: Friday 6.30-8pm All Years 7-13

Small Groups take place throughout the week. Please contact Naomi Lynas if you would like to join a small group. Many of our childrens and youth activities are paused or changed for Easter - please check the Weekly Mail for more details.

Who's Who?

Rector	Mark Pickett	markwlpickett@gmail.com 07872 550 230
Operations Manager	Naomi Lynas	naomilynas@stjamesclitheroe.co.uk 07563 584 658
Admin Assistant	Sue Clark	sueclark@stjamesclitheroe.co.uk
CAP Centre Manager & Social Justice Coordinator	Graham Haldane	grahamhaldane@capuk.org 07860 617992
Children and Families Minister	Helen Potts	helenpotts@stjamesclitheroe.co.uk
Youth Minister	Lucy Skelton	lucyskelton@stjamesclitheroe.co.uk
Church Wardens	Mary Howarth Andrew Stevens	01200 427313 (Mary) 07922-610300 (Andrew)
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Discipleship Coordinator	Ruth Haldane	ruthhaldane@gmail.com 07454 022950
Pastoral Coordinator	Peter Williams	homeofhobart@btinternet.com 07792 481373
Small Groups Co-ordinator	Ali Groves	grovesali@ymail.com 07935 273334
Worship Co-ordinator	Jonathan Berry	jonathan.s.berry@gmail.com
PCC	Naomi Allen	Mary Howarth
Jonathan Frank (Treasurer)	Sue Clark	Helen Potts
Naomi Lynas (Secretary)	Mark Dowd	Nick Shelley
Mark Pickett (Chair)	Ali Groves	Lucy Skelton
	Ruth Haldane	Janet White
	Debi Hardie	Ellie Wood

Future issues of Network

If you would like to submit an item to be included in a future issue, please submit it direct by e-mail to

gchaldane@gmail.com

as a Word attachment (.doc), or a plain text (.txt) file. Don't worry about formatting, as we will have to adjust items to fit the page.

THANK YOU



We love our **small groups** in St James Church. They are a great for discipleship, fellowship and prayer.

Please contact Ali Groves if you would like to be linked with a small group.

Helen and Lucy are continuing to support and encourage our **children** and **youth**. Please contact them to see what meetings and other activities are available.

Prayers Opportunities

Have you looked at the Virtual Prayer Spaces on our website yet? Try these as a way of communicating with God and praying for others.

<https://www.stjamesclitheroe.co.uk/virtualprayerspace>



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for weekly email: admin@stjamesclitheroe.co.uk

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to know Jesus and to make Jesus known