

Epiphany News

The magazine of Holy Epiphany Church

August/September 2019



Everyone is welcome -
there's lots happening
at Holy Epiphany
this summer

See inside for details



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**There is a loop system available in church.
Please adjust your hearing aid to the relevant setting**





Letter from David Thompson

I guess that this may be the last 'Vicar's letter' I write for the magazine. As it stands at the moment (in July) my last official service as priest-in-charge will be on the 22 September, though you may see me back to help out for the odd service after that date. It is appropriate, therefore, to reflect on the last three years of my ministry at Holy Epiphany.

Firstly, it is important to say that the last three years are only a part of my time spent in this parish. I initially began work here in 2004 as a 'non-stipendiary' priest working alongside Revd Ken Batt. Since then we have seen many changes at Holy Epiphany and there is much to celebrate and give thanks for.

Secondly, I need to put on record my personal thanks for you all for your hard work and acceptance of change, especially over the past three years. The team at the church is small in number but big in faith and commitment and nothing that we now celebrate would have happened merely because I became priest in charge in 2016. Everyone at Holy Epiphany has had a part to play and this will continue to be true as you move into a new future.

The most significant spiritual progress has been a change in focus from maintenance of the church building and meeting the costs of ministry to being a congregation that looks increasingly outward in mission. There is more happening each week and the Church itself is now used seven days per week.

Many more people now are engaged with life at Holy Epiphany through worship and other activities. This means that the Church is making a real difference to the lives of those who live locally, whether or not they come on a Sunday morning.

Practically, we have begun the move towards resourcing a Church that meets modern needs, with disabled access and upgraded facilities in the Church and the Hall. These improvements have been grant-funded and I acknowledge Tesco Bags for Life, Garfield Weston, National Churches Trust and Talbot Village Trust for their generous support. We have achieved much together but there is still a lot further to go.

As my temporary contract with the diocese comes to its conclusion, I know that for Holy Epiphany September marks not the end of anything, but just a new beginning. I write at a time when the detail of what will follow me is uncertain in terms of ordained leadership, but Holy Epiphany now has a strong lay team of ministers so my departure should cause little concern. Life, ministry, prayer, worship and service to the community must and will continue. Holy Epiphany is now stronger in so many ways and I am confident that growth spiritually and practically will continue.

May God bless you all, and your future endeavours in His name.

From the Editors

We wish David, together with Fiona, a long and happy retirement. Details of the special service to mark David's last day with us are in the centre spread.

This magazine is free; a donation of at least £1.20 a copy helps to offset the costs of printing. Contributions by 15 September please, for the next edition, to be published on 29 September.

Disclaimer: Views expressed in Epiphany News are those of contributors, not the editors or the ministry team. Editors reserve the right to edit or shorten articles or hold them for a later edition. Mary Hogg and Julie Renton



FaithTime by Jan Farrow

I have recently been trying to teach Mopsy the dog some tricks. She now has a little repertoire that we

can build on and as long as there is a treat at the end of it Mopsy seems quite happy to cooperate.

I suppose it began in an effort to relieve boredom, hers not mine!! There's only so much you can do as a dog when it's raining and Mopsy absolutely hates getting wet. The trouble is, so often the fruit of boredom is mischief.



Pets are a very important part of many people's lives. It seems to be that you are either a cat or a dog person. I have owned, loved and been loved by both but would probably now describe myself as more of a dog person. A pet is often the only companion in a person's life, especially in later years.

I think it's fair to say that pets can teach us a few things about ourselves and our faith. I must include wild birds in this, as I know many of you feed them day by day

How overjoyed is Mopsy when we return home, even after a comparatively short time; she rushes out to greet us like long lost friends. I am reminded of Jesus' parable of the prodigal son being welcomed home by his Father. **'So, he got up and went to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.'** (Luke 15 verse 20).

Open arms, open heart and not, 'Where have you been and what have you been doing?' Just the sheer joy of the Father that his son, who was lost, has been found. God our Father is always waiting for us with open arms. In Jesus' story the Father even leaves the head of the table, the party table, to go and find his other son who is so resentful of his younger brother. God the Father's affection is limitless and he only ever wants to draw us back into His love.

Wild birds teach us how important it is to look after others and that God cares about the vulnerable, the weak and powerless. I watch the birds come to our bird bath every day; how happy they are to take a bath (especially when I have remembered to put fresh water in) and then lie out in the sun. I am also reminded of a friend who feeds a little robin day by day; it has become her daily companion. The Bible says, **'Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father's care.'** (Matthew 19 verse 29).

Now what about the cat? Cats really know how to switch off and relax. Your cat knows just how to deal with life's troubling distractions: take a nap. We, or perhaps I should say I, can soon become distracted and worried by the general irritabilities and pressures that life throws at us. The Bible says, **'be still, and know that I am God'** (Psalm 46 verse 10). It means that the Lord is telling you to still your anxious thoughts, still your busyness, and rest in Him. Focus your mind on Him, step by step and He will open up the way before you.



We can say thank you to God for our pets and for the wild birds and for the pleasure they bring us day by day. At the same time remember the spiritual lessons they can teach us. Amen

Agape Outreach Ministry – work this church supports in Malawi



Sheila and Dennis Eaton have just come to the end of their time in Malawi this year, working with a local pastor, Syford and his wife Elizabeth. Here they tell us what has been happening following the destruction caused by severe floods earlier this year.

“We thank you so much for praying for us during this very busy and challenging period in Malawi. Eight days ago, Syford’s sister aged 37, died very suddenly from cerebral malaria - such a devastating shock. She leaves a husband, a son aged 7, and two daughters, aged 13 & 17. Syford’s mother has now lost 3 of her 5 children. Please pray for the family.

In recent weeks we have given more ‘relief aid packs’ to families in particular need and hardship, and also given money to many families to help them rebuild their fallen houses. The team are all learning good skills and working well together. We have many more house builds and house repairs lined up for them in the coming months.

It has been a joy to share the Gospel and Bible teaching with women’s groups, men’s groups, children, youth, Sunday services and with individuals. Audio Bibles are now scattered across a wide area of the bush. One man told us that he is unable to read well but by listening to the audio Bible, he is memorising verses. Please pray God brings many people into a saving relationship with Himself and strengthens the faith, love and commitment of those who already know Him.

Several years ago, Syford found a man called Wedson in a very remote area, reading a Bible which was half-eaten by rats. He longed to be taught about the things he was reading. Since that time, we have been doing Bible teaching in that area in a little grass church. In recent months, as the Sunday gathering has been growing, (60 now regularly attending), it was clear that a larger place was needed. So, this year we have built a brick church for them and the official opening was a couple of weeks ago. It was a wonderful occasion when more than 400 people came - which was extraordinary in that very remote area. Some had travelled for 4 hours to get there, one couple cycled for 6 hours - leaving at 3am!

Five village chiefs were there - including a Muslim Chief who was keen to take some Christian literature. Many listened with such eager attention we have rarely seen before. Please ask God to teach these people by His Spirit. So, from finding that one man, Wedson, who said, “Come and teach us”, it is now very wonderful to see how God is bringing so many people eager to learn about Christ!”

Children’s Society – a thank you from Janet Cook

A big thank you to all who, year after year, generously support the Children’s Society by annual donations or by collecting small change during each year in the special boxes provided. A total of **£377.37** has been forwarded for 2019 to the Children's Society.

The
Children’s
Society

No child
should feel
alone

The Children’s Society is allied to the Church of England. The Society works with children and young people in Great Britain by listening, supporting and acting - because no child should feel alone. You can find out more about the Children’s Society at www.childrensociety.org.uk

If anyone would like to make a donation, or keep a box at home for collecting small change, please speak to Janet Cook, or phone 01202 526482/07713 430 610.

Thank you.

What's happening at Epiphany in August and September?

 <p>Church Services</p>	<p>4 August and 1 September 9.00am Breakfast @ 9 – Especially for families with young children 10.00am Coffee followed by a short, informal Family Service</p> <p>11 August and 8 September 10.00am Holy Communion (said in August, sung in September) with Roots for Children and Crèche</p> <p>18 August and 15 September 9.00am Holy Communion (said) 9.45am Café 46 3.00pm Messy Church in the Church (September only)</p> <p>25 August and 22 September 10.00 Holy Communion (said in August, sung in September) with Roots for Children and Crèche NB The service on 22 September will be a celebration of David's time as priest-in-charge as he begins his retirement</p> <p>29 September 10.00am All Age</p>
	<p>Home Groups – friendly groups who meet fortnightly to share fellowship, study God's word and pray. No meetings in August. New members welcome to join when we restart in September. Please talk to a member of the ministry team for dates and venues.</p>
<p>PRAYER <i>changes things</i></p>	<p>Prayer Meetings in the Jubilee Room – all are welcome. Saturday evenings 6 – 7pm – Coffee and prayer on 3 August and 31 August Tuesday afternoons 2 – 3pm on 6 and 27 August; 10 and 24 September</p>
	<p>Epiphany Bright Stars – parent/carer and toddler group on Tuesday mornings in term-time at 9.30am in the church and Jubilee Room. Restarts 10 September. Contact Jodie Burge on 01202 776270</p>
	<p>Messy Church – family fun for parents and children followed by a shared meal. Lots of craft activities, biscuit or cake decorating, Bible stories and buffet tea. 3rd Sunday of the month. No meeting in August. Next meeting on 15 September 3.00 – 5.00pm in the church. Contact Andy on 07484 203076 or andy.renton56@gmail.com</p>
	<p>Men's Breakfast – next meeting is at Holdenhurst Village Hall on 21 September, when our speaker will be Sandra Tebbutt from the Bible Society. Full English breakfast served at 8.00 am. All men welcome. Contact Andy on 07484 203076 or andy.renton56@gmail.com.</p>
	<p>Muscliff Care Home: – Mondays at 2.45pm, monthly No service in August 9 September - Ruth</p>

	<p>Epiphany Pre school meets Monday - Friday in the church hall during term-time from 9.00am to 3.00pm. Closed during summer holidays. Please check dates with the pre-school staff. Phone 01202 612337 for more information</p>	
	<p>Tea Cosy – tea and coffee and time for a chat. Mondays in August from 10-11.30am except Bank Holiday. Open from 9.30am from 2 Sept.</p>	 <p>Choir practice - please contact Susan Bright for up to date information. See the 'Who's Who' page for contact details.</p>
	<p>Lunch Club – coffee at 10.30am followed by games and social time. Lunch is served at 1.00pm and is prepared by 'Crumbs'. A 2-course meal costs £4 and (pre-booked) menu choices are available. Please contact the church office on 01202 612337 to book. No Lunch Club in August. Restarts 4 September.</p>	
	<p>Pie and a Pint – an opportunity for men to chat and 'put the world to rights'. 7.00pm Wetherspoon's in Winton. Next meetings are on 28 August and 25 September. Contact Alan Hogg on 07963 706907. All men welcome, no need to book.</p>	
	<p>Hymns and Cake – come and join in with some favourite hymns, learn a little about them and afterwards enjoy tea and cake. Friday 30 August at 2.30pm in the Jubilee Room. A dementia friendly event. No meeting in September. Contact Joanne Davis for information on 07906355271.</p>	
	<p>Beavers Jacqui Elena jacqui.elena15@gmail.com Cubs Jan Kingsland 01202 517627 Scouts Simon Blake 07500 901 561</p>	 <p>Brownies Sam Pattermore 07930 581851 Guides and Rainbows Sandra Coomber 07712 129445</p>

Cream Tea
with
musical accompaniment

17 August

2.30 – 4.30pm

bring your family and friends
no charge

Who can you invite?




Book the date:
Harvest Festival
4 October
Coffee from 9.45am
Family service starts at 10.15

Your gifts of food for distribution to the local foodbank will be much appreciated

Foodbanks give emergency supplies of food to individuals and families in crisis. Individual or family-sized packs are preferred, please



Children, Youth and Families - by Andy Renton

Some of you will know that I have recently completed a Bishop's Commission for Mission (BCM) course in Children's, Youth and Family work. During the course we listened to a diverse and interesting selection of speakers ranging from diocesan employees, local church workers and representatives from charities working with children, young people and families.

Each week we discussed a different aspect of children's and families' work including, amongst others, how to help children and young people grow in faith, how to develop a vision and strategy for our work and how to put together effective teams for working with youth.

Pertinent points were: -

- It is essential that we, both leaders and congregations in general, understand the culture in which young people live today, including the importance of social media in their lives. In order to reach children and young adults we need to make children feel welcome in church and learn to embrace the use of different styles of learning within the church environment. Learning is different in an age of social media and ready access to electronic devices. We need to recognise this in the same way as schools have done.
- The average age by which most church people said they had considered themselves to be a Christian is 16 years old. This highlights the importance of being a strong Christian witness to the children who enter our church and it shows how vitally important children and families work is.
- It is important to recognise that some children have additional needs and need extra support in order to learn and to benefit from Christian teaching, in the same way as they need help to learn in school. Our evening on this topic was guided by an 'Urban Saints' leader and was spent discussing ways of supporting young people with additional needs. The general attitude of the church members was discussed, together with specific conditions including ADHD, Autism, blindness, epilepsy and self-harm. Although this topic was presented in the context of children and young people, it occurred to me that of course these young people grow up and their needs don't go away. There are many adults struggling with similar difficulties of varying degrees and their needs must be addressed also.

Parish Registers from late May, June and July 2019

Baptisms – We welcome into the church family:

29 June

Noah Snowden Thomas Anderson

Bobby Gaff Andrews

Naiya Felicianne Felicien-Malcolm

30 June

Natasha Louise Johnson

Neil William Johnson

Zoe Louise Johnson

Harry William Johnson



Weddings – We offer our congratulations to:

18 May

Rhiannon Marie Keet to Kevin Robert Brian Simmons



Café 46

Café Church is church with a difference. Seated around tables instead of sitting in rows, we drink coffee, eat cake and discuss faith. It's still a service, we sing a few songs, listen to a short talk and say some prayers but we're relaxed about it all. If your children don't want to sit still or want to help themselves to another cake that's fine. If you don't believe in God, or aren't sure what you believe, and want to come and see what's going on, that's fine too.



Why do we do Café Church?

Well, we want to try to make church a place that is relaxed and accessible. We know that lots of people want to talk about faith, even want to come to church, but find a traditional service hard to understand, or boring to sit through, or just plain confusing. So, we're developing Café 46 (as we're at 46 Castle Lane West) as a place where everyone is welcome. It's hopefully not too confusing or boring. We understand that weekends are precious times for families to be together so we wanted to create a fun, engaging space where all ages meet together and children and young people feel welcome too.

Why not give it a try? - Every 3rd Sunday.

Coffee and cake served from 9.45am and we gather for our informal service at 10.

Pray around the Psalms – Psalm 25



The Psalms in the Old Testament are songs and many are also prayers. We see how people in real-life situations, centuries ago, experienced God and had a relationship with Him. In the first few verses of Psalm 25, here's David, King of ancient Israel, in a mess, seeking God's guidance. We can see how to approach God when we are anxious and under pressure. Look at David's confidence in God's love, how he expects God to teach him, is sorry for the things he's done wrong and has his eyes fixed on Him.

"In you, Lord my God I put my trust. I trust in you; do not let me be put to shame, nor let my enemies triumph over me. No one who hopes in you will ever be put to shame, but shame will come on those who are treacherous without cause.

Show me your ways, Lord, teach me your paths. Guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Saviour, and my hope is in you all day long. Remember, Lord, your great mercy and love, for they are from of old. Do not remember the sins of my youth and my rebellious ways; according to your love remember me, for you, Lord, are good."

**You can pray by yourself or you might like to join us at one of the times when we pray together.
(For dates and times, please see the centre pages of the magazine)
Don't worry, you don't have to pray out loud if you don't want to.**



Resting in God - by Lynley Wilkes

If you were at the Café 46 service in July, you will remember that we thought about how important is it to rest - how we need to have a break from activities and spend time with God to enable us to enter closer into a relationship with Him.

The idea of God's rest goes even deeper than that. The Bible tells us that on the seventh day God rested from creating the order of the world we live in. His rest was not from his labour and hard work but from completing His creation. ***'Then God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done.'*** (Genesis 2 verses 2-3)

For the Jews, this seventh day, the Sabbath, was, and still is, about a special day with no physical work. In the Old Testament books of Exodus and Deuteronomy there is a great emphasis on keeping the Sabbath day holy for the Lord. This was the Law that God gave to Moses, ***'Observe the Sabbath day to keep it holy, as the LORD your God commanded you. Six days you shall labour and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of the LORD your God'*** (Deuteronomy 5 verse 12).

The Old Testament Israelites then wandered for 40 years in the wilderness. Because of their disobedience in turning away from God, who had brought them out of Egypt, He would not allow them to enter His rest, the Promised Land.

This is picked up in the New Testament. The writer to the Hebrews encourages Christians not to harden their hearts to God like the Israelites but to enter into His rest through Jesus. ***'For good news came to us just as to them, but the message they heard did not benefit them, because they were not united by faith with those who listened. For we who have believed enter that rest.'*** (Hebrews 4 verse 2). With Jesus there is completion and rest. If we trust Him, no longer do we live under the Law of Moses but in the light of the good news of Jesus.

When Jesus is rebuked by the Jewish leaders for helping a man on the Sabbath His response is, ***'The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath'*** (Mark 2 verse 2). Jesus is saying the Sabbath was made to be a blessing to mankind, as were all of the Ten Commandments. Jesus makes clear that man was made first and then the Sabbath was made afterwards for his wellbeing. It is to serve mankind, for our benefit.

Ultimately, if we are trusting Jesus, God can bring to us complete rest in relationship with Him. In John 17 verses 1-4 Jesus said, ***'Father, the time has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You. For you granted Him authority over all people that He might give eternal life to all those You have given Him. Now this is eternal life; that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.'***



I have brought You glory on earth by completing the work You gave Me to do'.

God is still at work through Jesus, His work has not stopped. Our true

rest from busyness, from loneliness and from all life's challenges is found in Jesus, ***'Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and YOU WILL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS.'*** (Matthew 11 verses 28-9).

The true rest of God is to give ourselves to Him, spend time with Him in prayer and dwell on His word, the Bible.

Mark Vincent - (interviewed by Jan Farrow)

Thank you for agreeing to share your faith journey with us all, Mark. Let's begin at the beginning; where did you grow up?

I am a Bournemouth boy and as a young child I attended Sunday school at an Elim Church. I even joined a church choir for six months but like many others I soon drifted away from church.

I know you have a lovely wife Carole who is a midwife, and that Jake and Suzie (Suzannah) were in the choir here at Epiphany. Lewis and Jake also attended the Youth Club.

Yes, my family are very supportive.

So how long have you been a Christian, Mark?

I was baptised in August 98. I had started attending a free church and had joined a Bible study group. It was whilst we were studying the parable of the sower that I suddenly realised I wanted to be baptised. It wasn't exactly a light bulb moment, but it was a milestone in my Christian journey. I was baptised by full immersion and all the family came and supported me. It has taken me rather longer to understand a relationship with God the Father but the connection has grown as I have walked with Jesus. I've made so many mistakes along the way.

You and me both, Mark. It is very much a journey.

Yes, I feel I am a new person in God; I have changed quite a lot. I am more honest with myself and God. When Christ is in your life you are not alone, you will still battle but God is there.



I used to be a very grumpy person to say the least. The Holy Spirit has given me compassion for other people and I now have so much peace in my life. I am also very aware that I need to allow God to show me the way and teach me to grow in my faith.

I understand you are now training to be a counsellor (both in Christian and secular therapies).

Yes, I began studying for a degree five years ago and am now at Farnham, a Christian counselling college; I still have two years to go. I also have a full-time job.

Mark, I know you also did the Bishop's Commission for Mission course last year.

Yes, I've recently felt that God is leading me down the path of working in men's ministry. I have attended 'The Gathering' for the last 3 years. This is a Christian Vision for Men event. You might recall we have an annual fun weekend, with lots of outdoor activities. There are honest testimonies of men coming to faith; we have great teaching and good worship. Vulnerability has been a big thing in my life. I have found that men in particular find it difficult to share. This weekend brings the barriers down and singing with 2,500 blokes is a wonderful experience.

You are still with Boscombe Angels Mark?

Yes, I have been with them for two years now. This is a 'Churches Together' project. The angels have teams of three or four people who go out together on a Friday evening in Boscombe, connecting with the vulnerable and needy. We are there simply as a calming presence. We will pray with people if asked to do so. We don't become involved in any conflict and we don't preach the gospel at them. The main scripture that we work to is the parable of the Good Samaritan. **You are very faithful to intercessory prayer, Mark. You often pray in church on Friday mornings and are always willing to have names of people who want to be prayed for.**

Prayer is so important in my life. Sometimes though, I feel I should be doing things but have found it wonderful to be able to just sit and be in God's presence.

After all that I have to ask you Mark, what do you do in your free time?

I began to run last year and now run 5K and am working towards 10K (6.2 miles). I rarely watch television. I read and enjoy a walk especially down by the river.

Do you have a favourite Bible passage, Mark?

Yes, I do, it's 2 Corinthians 12: 9
'My power works best in Your weakness.'

Mark, thank you. We all wish you well in your continuing studies and faith journey. May God bless you and your family.

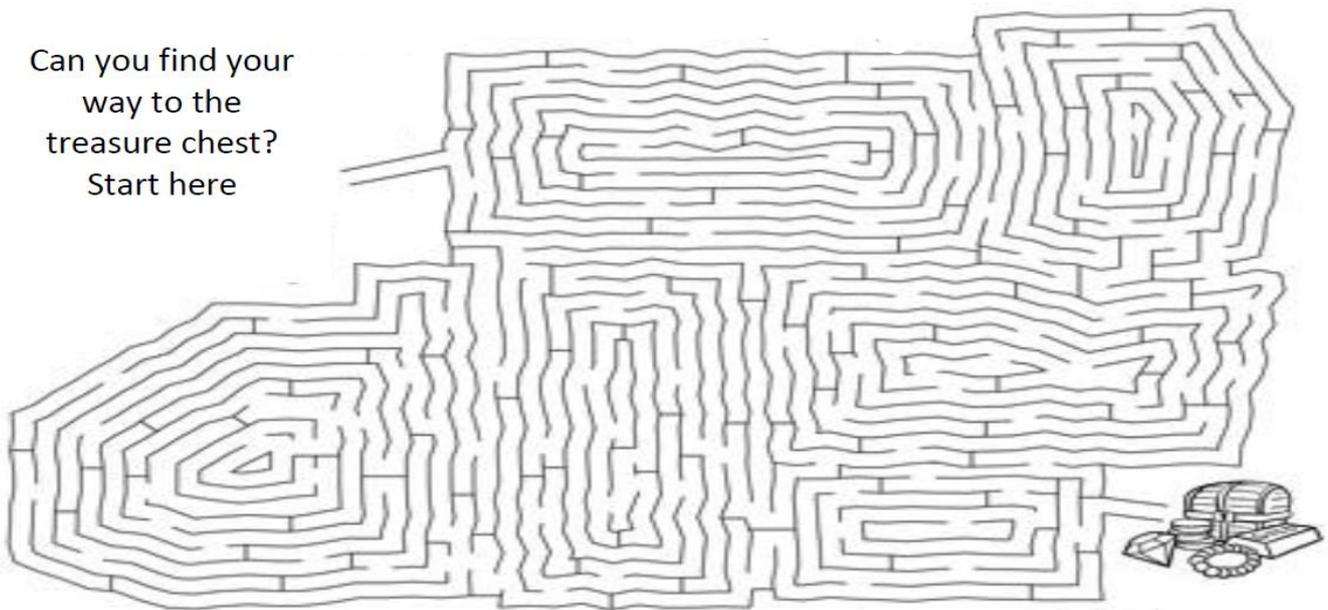


Multi-generational fun at our Father's Day Messy Church cream tea - a special treat for Dads (and Mums)



The next Messy Church is on Sunday, September 15 in the church from 3-5pm

Can you find your way to the treasure chest?
Start here



Would you be excited if you found some buried treasure? In Matthew's Gospel, Jesus once told a story about a man finding buried treasure.

The man in the story somehow stumbled across some treasure when he was working in a field. He didn't own the field where he found it so maybe he was doing work for someone. Perhaps he was planting crops or building something, we don't know for sure. Whatever he was doing, it must have been a wonderful surprise to find some treasure. The treasure might have been a chest full of money like in the picture. People sometimes hid their money this way to keep it safe from thieves. If the person forgot where the money was buried then who would ever know? This might have been the kind of treasure that the man in the story found. There was no doubt in the mind of this man that the treasure he found was worth everything he owned. He sold everything he had so he could buy the field so that he could also own the treasure.

We call stories like this 'parables' and they have hidden meanings. Finding the meaning is like finding buried treasure.

Here's a clue –

Jesus is the buried treasure. For lots of people, Jesus seems hidden but Christians believe that when we find Jesus, we realise that knowing Him is much better than all the treasure in the whole world!

