WHAT’S IN A NAME

Recently, whilst browsing through a magazine, an article, highlighted in yellow, caught my eye, because it was entitled NUTTALL. Intrigued, l thought it might be telling of some illustrious relative who had achieved fame and fortune. No! I was disappointed to find that it was the name of a boggy piece of land in Derbyshire.

It seems that currently, tracing your family tree has become quite popular and also trying to identify some common trait that has been handed down generation to generation. Some former relative of mine must have had large ears and a bald head.

The Bible contains quite a few genealogies trying to prove that someone comes from good stock. But it seems to be that it is just pot luck which genes are inherited. So, in this respect it doesn’t matter what our name is. Each individual makes their own decision as to what their lifestyle is, and how for good or evil they will use the talents God has granted them. Often it is those from a poor background, who have had to struggle to escape it, that are the ones with determination and a goal to win a name for themselves.

Jesus was from a humble home. The Bible traces his ancestors through forty two generations to prove that Jesus was this Messiah who was spoken of by the prophets. Matthew’s Gospel lists all the names in the opening verses. If you happen to be the one chosen to read this particular lesson it would be wise to feign a sudden illness or urgent call to be elsewhere, unless you are particularly good at pronouncing names that are weird to us.

Today, there are some who only use the name of Jesus as an expletive. Fortunately there are others who call themselves Christians and use the name of Jesus to be the means of being able to come to God in prayer and also learn how to live a full and meaningful life. This was only possible because Jesus gave himself as ransom and enabled us to be forgiven for all that separates us from God. Jesus encourages us to ask God for help in bringing about change for the better in this world of conflict. Wherever we look, there is need: in Palestine, Israel and Syria the need for peace, in India the need for help to fight the virus. Here at home we see poverty and cruelty. Thank God that Jesus opened the gateway to his Kingdom where peace and truth can be found.

On a less serious note, if we want our name to mean something, avoid getting a soggy bottom or else Mary Berry will complain and our name will be Mud.

Donald

A PROBLEM WITH SQUIRRELS

The Presbyterian Church called a meeting to decide what to do about their squirrel infestation. After much prayer and consideration, they concluded that the squirrels were predestined to be there and they should not interfere with God’s divine will.

At the Baptist Church, the squirrels had taken an interest in the Baptistery. The deacons met and decided to put a water slide in the baptistery and hoped that the squirrels would drown. The squirrels loved the slide and, unfortunately, knew instinctively how to swim, so twice as many squirrels showed up the following week.

The Lutheran Church decided that they were not in a position to harm any of God’s creatures so they humanely trapped their squirrels and set them free near the Baptist church. Two weeks later they came back when the Baptists took down their water slide.

The Episcopalians tried a much more unique path by setting out pans of whisky around their church in an effort to kill the squirrels with alcohol poisoning. They sadly learned how much damage a band of drunken squirrels can do.

But the Catholic Church came up with a more creative strategy. They baptised all the squirrels and made them members of the church. Now they only see them at Christmas and Easter.

Not much was heard from the Jewish Synagogue. They took the first squirrel and circumcised him. They haven’t seen a squirrel since.

(Submitted by Judith Halstead)

July 2021 – hopefully this is the month our country gets back to some sort of normality. Hallfold opened its doors a few weeks back and we are now inviting all members and friends to return to us. So far we have had congregations of, on average, 20 people. However, we are aware that some people have still not felt the desire to return and in this letter we are letting you know we are missing you! Although restrictions are easing, we will still maintain our social distancing and sanitising of hands prior to entry. Masks will be optional. Last Sunday Hallfold Church celebrated its 323rd birthday. That’s not the birthday of a building; it is the celebration of three hundred years of people meeting together to praise God and support each other. Come back and be once again part of this wonderful church!