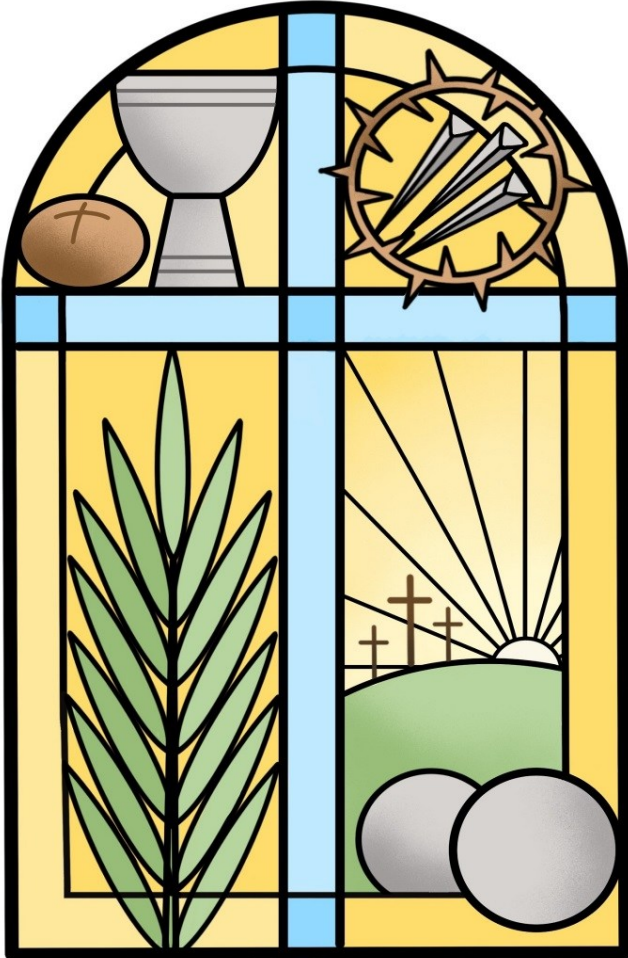


InTouch

Spring 2025

The head that once was crowned with thorns



Is crowned with glory now



The magazine of
Fleet United Reformed Church



FLEET UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

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WEEKLY WORSHIP

Sundays, 10 am: Family Worship

Holy Communion usually on first Sunday of month

An afternoon service is held at 2 pm on the last Tuesday of the month

REGULAR ACTIVITIES

<i>'Footsteps' Young People's Group:</i>	Sundays, 10 am (<i>term time only</i>)
<i>Pilates</i>	Mondays, 12.15-1.15 pm
<i>Coffee Morning:</i>	Wednesdays, 10–11.30 am
<i>Toddlers Group:</i>	Fridays, 10 am
<i>Bible Study:</i>	Please contact the Church Secretary for details of current meetings.

Under the umbrella of the United Reformed Church, *Guide*, *Brownie* and *Rainbow Units* meet each week during school term.

Up to date details of all the above activities are available from the Church Office, from the Church Secretary, or on our website.

A MESSAGE FROM OUR MINISTER



Dear Friends,

The days are getting longer and signs of spring are beginning to appear. In the Church we begin to journey together towards Easter. This year Easter is relatively late, on Sunday 20th April, so I hope that we will celebrate together as spring really gets going and we can easily see new growth, reminding us that our world experiences re-birth every year in many different ways. The accounts of Jesus rising

from death can be read alongside the new growth bursting out in our trees, grass and flowers.

The Revd Andrew Mann-Ray, one of the present chaplains to the Moderator of URC General Assembly, challenged those of us at Assembly Executive in February to remember that we believe in Resurrection—not just resuscitation of the old, but completely new life, challenging us to new life in Jesus, not once, but throughout our lives.

This year Christians Together are holding Lent Bible studies, when people from different churches in Fleet and Church Crookham are journeying together with the Beatitudes. I hope to bring some of the insight to the whole of our church during Lent. Our study guide says, 'the challenge for the Church is twofold—to equip its members to live their faith, and to demonstrate to those outside the church that a knowledge of God makes sense of the whole of life. The Beatitudes (Matthew 5: vv 3-10) call us to live the Kingdom of God now, and to encounter God's blessing as we do.

Living our faith more deeply, and showing those around us that we make sense of the whole of life as we journey with Jesus towards the challenge of the Cross and the joy of the Resurrection—I hope you can join us as we take this spring pilgrimage together.

Helen

CHILDREN'S SPACE IN THE CHURCH

In November we created a space for children in the church. It is near the back and has cushions, books and quiet toys to provide an area for families to sit, especially at times when there is no Footsteps group. Thank you for the many positive comments we have received. The space has been used quite a few times. The Footsteps leaders keep an eye on the materials and will change them periodically, so that the area always looks tidy and welcoming. Please continue to welcome families to this area and enable them to keep their young children amused.

HOLY WEEK & EASTER SERVICES

Sunday, 13th April—Palm Sunday

10 am Family Worship, led by Karen Smith

Thursday, 17th April—Maundy Thursday

7 pm Service with Holy Communion

Friday, 18th April—Good Friday

10 am Good Friday Worship

Sunday, 20th April—Easter Day

10 am Family Worship with Holy Communion

All services, except for Palm Sunday, will be led by our minister, Revd Helen Everard.



CHRISTIANS TOGETHER—JOINT SERVICE

There will be a joint service on **Pentecost Sunday, 8th June, at 6.30 pm at the Church on the Heath.**

The service will be a celebration and thanksgiving for 25 years since the Church on the Heath was founded. All are invited to attend. If you need transport, please speak to Helen.

We are also hoping to build on the success of our Lent groups by holding Prayer meetings every day between Ascension and Pentecost, at churches across Fleet and Church Crookham. So watch out for more publicity after Easter.

Helen

WORSHIP GROUP APPEAL

Are you interested in joining the Worship Group? Our numbers seem to have dwindled over the past year, so we are looking for new members. If you would be willing to read a prayer, play a part in a short play, read from the Bible, or anything else, please either speak to me, or email or call me. Thank you.

Carol Rayner

Tel: 07909 632511; email: carolv.rayner@outlook.com



CHRISTIAN AID WEEK 2025

Christian Aid will be holding their annual Cake and Plant Sale in the car park of St Philip & St James Church on **Saturday 17th May from 2 to 4 pm.**

Refreshments will be available. Donations of plants and cakes (with listed ingredients) would be appreciated. Thank you ~ *Linda Storey*



NOTICE BOARD



BIBLE STUDY DATES

We will begin our Bible Study Group again in May, on **Tuesdays 13th and 20th May at 2 pm**

Everyone welcome!

TUESDAY AFTERNOON SERVICES

Our next afternoon services are **at 2 pm** on:

**25th March, 29th April
and 27th May**

Please contact Helen or Moray Henderson if you would like more information.

Contributions for the Summer issue of *In Touch* (June—August 2025) should be with Christine Gibbons, by **11th May**. Thank you.

(christine.gibbons@beech-ride.co.uk)

FAMILY EASTER FUN MORNING

Friday, 11th April, 10—11.30 am

Children 0-11, accompanied by an adult, are invited to come along and have fun.

We will be telling the story of Jesus from Palm Sunday to Easter Sunday, with activities and craft.

(All offers of help are welcome: please let me know—*Helen*)



MORE DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

All events, except for Jonathan Veira, held at Fleet URC

SPRING CRAFT FAIR

in aid of Phyllis Tuckwell
Hospice

Saturday, 8th March

10.30 am—3 pm



£1 entrance fee
Refreshments available.
Bring Family and Friends

BEETLE DRIVE

Saturday, 5th April at 7 pm
Free Entry ~ Prizes

Groups of four,
or come on your own
and join in the fun

Coffee, Tea & Biscuits



CURRY EVENING

in aid of Palani Mission

Friday, 9th May
at 6.30 pm



Tickets £20 from
John Gibbons,
tel: 07900 908990

AFTERNOON A CAPPELLA

An entertaining afternoon of
popular songs from *Sound Mix*,
an award-winning chorus

Saturday, 22nd March at 3 pm



Tickets £5,
available on the door, or via
www.soundmixchorus.co.uk

Tea & Cake included!

*All profits donated to
Fleet URC charities*

JONATHAN VEIRA

at Fleet Methodist Church,
Reading Road South, Fleet

Saturday, 15th March at 7 pm

NOT DEAD YET!

Live nationwide tour

An uplifting, musical celebration—
full of life, love & laughter!

Tickets £12 in advance;
£15 on the night

*Available from Alan Goldring,
tel: 07814 481389*

FAMILY NEWS: CELEBRATIONS

Following three years of hard work, combining family commitments, nursing and studies, Mary Saju Kadekal was awarded a Bachelor of Nursing (1st Class Hons), from the University of West London. Congratulations, Mary—we are delighted that all your efforts have been rewarded.



Congratulations also to our Minister, Helen, who celebrated a special birthday recently. Following morning service we all enjoyed the celebration with her, as she shared a birthday cake made by Maureen Coney.

We wish you many happy returns of the day, Helen!



WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

This year's World Day of Prayer has been composed by the women from the Cook Islands. It will be held on **Friday, 7th March** at the following venues:

10 am: at All Saints Church, Church Road, Fleet, GU51 4NB (parking for a small fee at Sainsbury's car park).

7 pm: at Christ Church, Crookham, 14 Gally Hill Road, GU52 6LH (parking at car park opposite, or on the road).

There will be refreshments served after the services. Please come and enjoy the services that have been prepared, with the message, *'I made you Wonderful'*.

There will also be a Reflection Service relating to the World Day of Prayer at **Fleet Baptist Church on 6th March at 2 pm**. All are welcome, especially if you are unable to attend any of the other services.

Darrell Henderson

KNITTED ANGELS

We held a meeting this January to discuss the future of our knitted angels, and it was decided that we will continue this Christian outreach.

This year we will be focussing on a care home or two, so that the residents can have an angel to cherish, as they are unable to collect one for themselves. We will also angel bomb part of Fleet Road.

So, dear friends, can I ask if any of you are still willing to help me with this task, as we will need quite a few. Last year our church donated 289, which enabled me to give 50 to Bernard and Mavis Potter's care home, as she requested, with enough for Christine Gibbons, Moray and I to place in Fleet Road. So if you are willing to knit angels, can you please let me know—even if it is only one or two? If you need wool or a pattern, just let me know.

Thank you again for your support.

Darrell Henderson

PILATES WITH CAROL

Our Pilates classes opened on 9th January, 2023. Since then our numbers have grown, and we have welcomed both church members and friends who have heard about the classes and have come along to see how it all works.

The classes last for one hour, from 12.15 until 1.15 pm every Monday. The cost of the classes is £30 for six sessions, with a bonus of a free seventh one.



Pilates began in the 1920s with a man named Joseph Pilates. He was a sportsman and athlete, who originally designed the exercises for anyone suffering from injury, allowing them to stay fit and healthy whilst resting the injured limb. It has continued to develop into a great way to stay fit and healthy by combining lengthening and stretching and improving balance with breathing and posture.

In our classes participants are free either to use mats on the floor, or to do the exercises sitting on a chair. We like to think of it as hybrid Pilates—it suits everyone, no matter their limitations.

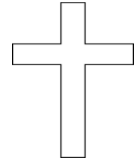
All the money made from these classes is donated to our church.

We are now setting off into our third year, and welcome new members. If you have a mat, bring it along, and wear something loose with comfortable footwear. Bring a bottle of water too, although don't worry if you forget because glasses of water are always available. Come along and join us for a fun class, with a fellowship of friends having fun exercising together.

Carol Woods

SUNDAYS!

Sundays are very special days for Christians, being the first day of the week. The tradition has always been for us to meet in Church for worship on that day whenever it is possible, and wherever we are in the world. But why every Sunday? Here are six good reasons, and you will think of more:



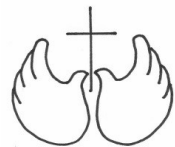
1. Being the first day of the week, the day of resurrection, we meet to celebrate the risen Jesus, alive and with us always. How could we not?
2. We meet to be chiselled and moulded by The Word, read, spoken and sung, because without it our faith wanes. And we all need that regular feeding.
3. It is central that we gather with our other church members and friends to support each other, care for each other, share our stories, keeping in touch.
4. Every week we come, keeping the glorious habit. Break the habit and, slowly but surely, our faith weakens. The Covid experience is ample proof of that.
5. We need to be at church so that we are available to seekers, wanderers or enquirers who pop in or walk by.
6. Our presence is needed as a witness to our family, friends, neighbours and community, as we make the journey, showing what is important for us: what they miss and what they need.

Well, there's a start. How are we doing?

Stephen M Thornton

OUR PRAYER BOARD

There is a new prayer board in the entrance foyer. Everyone who uses the building is invited to post prayer requests on the board using the coloured paper and pencils available. Currently these are shaped like candles. Each Sunday we will include a general prayer in our service for all requests on the board. Please do use the board, either to request prayers or to pray for those on the board. We have asked people not to put personal information. God knows the names and circumstances, but it provides a lot of help and comfort to people to know that others are praying for them.



The board also reminds our local community that our church is a place of prayer, and that we pray as a congregation for everyone's needs, as part of our mission to show the love of God to all.

Helen

HOW EFFICIENT IS YOUR HOME?

In 2021, Hart Council declared a climate emergency. Already the effects of climate change are being seen around the world and threaten people, animals and habitats. The impacts already include intense droughts, water shortages, severe wildfires, rising sea levels, flooding, melting polar ice, catastrophic storms and declining biodiversity.

A few years ago people referred to global warming rather than climate change. Whilst the world **is** warming, the effects are much wider than a mere increase in temperature. What is happening is that the weather systems are becoming upset, disrupted and chaotic. They are not following age old patterns but are erratic and unpredictable.

As hart.gov.uk states, 'The changes caused by climate change in Hart are often hard to see, but are very real. Unless we take action, our district could suffer effects such as water shortages, hotter summers, more storm damage and loss of plants and wildlife.'

Saving Energy is one way that we can all do our bit, and Hart Council are here to help! We recently took part in a trial scheme run by Hart Council that uses thermal imaging to identify where heat may be escaping from properties. The outside image of our house shows in red and yellow the highest areas of heat loss. Two upstairs windows were open, but curtains and blinds were otherwise drawn. Conversely, blue and purple show the highest areas of heat loss from inside the house, as seen by our front door.



It was a fascinating process to be a part of and we have over 100 images which we will be able to use to identify changes we can make to improve our energy efficiency. The first one will be to make a draught excluder to put at the bottom of our front door! We hope that there will be a follow-up session with more advice too.

There are lots of easy ways to make changes to improve energy efficiency, even without the advantage of thermal imaging. As well as draught excluders,

here are some other ideas: apply a heat retaining window film; use draught-proof strips around seals, letterboxes and loft hatches; use heat reflectors behind radiators (good quality foil can be used); bleed radiators; and insert chimney draught excluders.

As always, the Energy Saving Trust (www.energysavingtrust.org.uk) and The Environment Centre, (www.environmentcentre.com) have plenty of free independent advice.

Why don't you look out for the chance to take part in this scheme in the future?

Grace Bagshaw



STAND BY ME

Thank you all very much for your generous support for the *Stand by Me* Shoes Appeal during Advent. As previously mentioned at Church Meeting, the final total of money collected came to £850, which meant that 70 pairs of shoes can be purchased, transforming 70 more children's lives, knowing someone cares.



We received Christmas greetings from all our sponsored children, and are looking forward to sending birthday greetings to Pau and Arsema during the rest of the spring term. If anyone wishes to contribute a letter, please let someone from Footsteps know; otherwise, thank you for your continuing support each month.



A message from Stand by Me HQ:

'This year we celebrate 30 incredible years of *Stand by Me*! We are so grateful for God's faithfulness and provision, and for everyone who has been part of this journey, standing by our kids and helping to transform thousands of lives. Throughout 2025 we will be sharing some of the extraordinary stories from those 30 years, of our projects, children and staff, and looking to the future with anticipation. We want to invite you to join us in celebrating a milestone 30 years for *Stand by Me*!' (To read these stories, go to <https://www.standby.me/>)

Stand by (!) for more details in future magazines.

Helen Bailey, on behalf of 'Footsteps'



PHYLLIS TUCKWELL HOSPICE CARE

The Fleet & District Support Group for the Phyllis Tuckwell Hospice are celebrating over 35 years of FUNdraising for our amazing local hospice. We organise a variety of events locally, supported directly by the Community Fundraising Team at Phyllis Tuckwell. This year we are planning a Band Concert, Spring Craft Fair, Quiz Night, Choir Concert and a Dinner Date Night. If you would like to find out more about us, and maybe join the group, please get in touch.*



Phyllis
Tuckwell
Hospice



Last year the Hospice launched the *Your New Hospice Appeal*, with the ambitious task of raising £6m required to build a new state-of-the-art Hospice on the existing site in Farnham. In September, Phyllis Tuckwell were thrilled to announce that they had reached a major fundraising milestone of £5m, meaning that there is £1m left to raise before the end of this year. Raising this amount of

money, in addition to the £25,000 they need to raise every day to fund ongoing care, really is a true testament to the generosity of our wonderful supporters, to whom we are incredibly grateful.

The new Hospice will provide a much-needed facility that will replace the old Hospice in Farnham. With its wellbeing and therapy suites, consulting rooms, and specialist 18-bed in-patient unit, the new Hospice will be a hub for specialist staff and volunteers, providing care and supporting families, both in-house and at home.

Marianne Hascher, Fleet and District Support Team

[*Bee Griffiths, Darrell Henderson, Carol Rayner and Carol Woods are our representatives on the Fleet Support Committee.]

2025 OPEN GARDENS—CALL FOR GARDENS

Do you love your garden?

Why not open your garden to friends and family or join our public Open Gardens campaign, and help raise money for the Phyllis Tuckwell Hospice? Gardens of all size and design can take part, or you could even get together with your neighbours and do a group opening.



To find out more and to arrange a garden visit, please call 01252 729446, or email fundraising@pth.org.uk.



COMMITMENT FOR LIFE (C4L)

I have been this church's Commitment for Life representative for more than two years now and have found the stories from Zimbabwe interesting and the way they are trying to move forward inspiring. It also makes me think how very lucky I am.

Thank you all for your donations regarding the little bits and bobs you purchase. Unfortunately the best seller, the 'to do' lists are not being printed any more, which is a shame. I have asked them to reconsider, so watch this space!

I informed our C4L contact, Suzanne Pearson, that we were holding a C4L service in January, but unfortunately she and her team were unable to join us. They would, however, like to attend any future services, so Helen and I have put one in the diary for 15th March 2026.

Although we have supported Zimbabwe for several years now, I asked Church Meeting if people wanted to change to one of the other countries, ie Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory, or Bangladesh. Whichever we support, our contributions are divided between the three regions. The reason each church can select a country is to learn about the issues in that country and pray for the people.

With that in mind we held a vote at our Church Meeting in January, and it was decided that our church will now support Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory. The breakdown of the vote is on the C4L noticeboard.

Finally, for your information and hopefully interest, I thought you might like to know how the donated money is distributed, and in what percentages:

- 75% to Christian Aid, where it is divided equally among the partner countries;
- 20% to Commitment for Life, to cover administration, education and resources;
- 5% to Global Justice Now.

Thank you all for your support.

Darrell Henderson



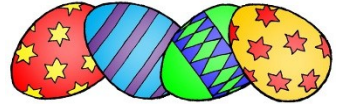


CARITAS—TOILET ROLL AND EASTER EGG APPEAL

First of all, may I thank you from the bottom of my heart for each and every toilet roll that you donate to our families throughout the year. A continual supply of toilet rolls when needed is actually really hard to achieve, as people often tend not to believe or realise the extent of the problem.

I could not bear the thought of anyone I know having to skimp on toilet rolls, especially the younger mums who have children in the house. I can assure you that all our families are very grateful for our contributions.

As much as the toilet rolls are a priority for me, should anyone like the fun of buying Easter eggs to donate, I do have an annual collection for these too. Easter egg donations have expanded and, depending on the numbers donated, they go first to our own Caritas families, and then to:



- The Manager who looks after social housing in his block of flats in Rooksdown. (He was over the moon to see the joy he brought to the children the first time he did this!)
- The Camrose Centre (<https://thecamrosecentre.org/>) who support the homeless in Basingstoke. Last year they could not believe that we had even considered them!
- The Community Furniture Project (<https://www.n-c-r-c.org/community-furniture-project/>) who support family-based charities, Children's Services, and local families in difficulties.

To update you a little, we at Caritas still run a weekly group at St Joseph's Church, South Ham, where we enjoy a drink and nibble with some of our parents. It is such a joy to see how some parents have developed in their various individual ways, or even simply to be there when things are negative and hard. I think I am speaking on behalf of all our volunteers when I say that it is a privilege to share this journey with our families and to touch even a few lives. Our parents are mostly pretty incredible people: always thinking of others, supporting each other, very giving, and very grateful for the smallest thing given to them—even when it is simply a listening ear.

God bless you for helping me on this journey.

Brita Coleman

[There is a box in our church foyer where you can leave donated Easter eggs. Please use this box for your donations of toilet rolls too—Thank you!]

PURPLE CROCUSES AND THE FIGHT TO END POLIO



One hundred crocus corms have been planted in front of our church, in the patch below the wayside pulpit. This planting was part of an initiative by the Rotary Club of Hart, who last autumn distributed **four thousand** crocus corms in our local area. They were shared between local schools, parks, and public and private spaces—look out for them this spring.

And why purple crocuses?

In 1979, when polio was rife worldwide, Rotary International, with support and funding from many sides, began its fight against the disease with a multi-year project to immunise six million children in the Philippines. In 1988 Rotary International and the World Health Organisation launched the Global Polio Eradication Initiative. There were an estimated 350,000 cases of polio in 125 countries at that time.

Looking at the huge number of children and the number of different countries they live in, there had to be a simple method of identifying those who had not received their dose of vaccine. Staining a finger on the hand of each recipient with a purple-coloured dye proved most effective. A show of hands would easily identify who still needed to receive their vaccine.



All the funding, work and dedication by a multitude of volunteers towards this Rotary worldwide project has been greatly enhanced by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. For every \$1 raised by Rotary, the Foundation has added \$2 more.

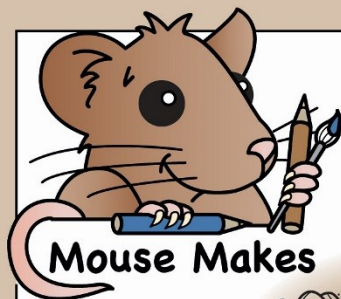
The project is also a great message and practical demonstration of the effectiveness of immunisation against virus related illness. Its importance to individual, local and world health is such that, even in Gaza the warring factions had a cease fire to let volunteers in to vaccinate those unfortunate children trapped in the conflict.

You can learn more about this life-saving project, or donate to it, by following this link: <https://endpolio.org/>. A lifesaving oral polio vaccine costs just 20p.

John Johnstone

[Image by Hans Linde from Pixabay]





THE TEMPTATION OF JESUS

After Jesus was baptised who led him into the wilderness?

Luke 4:1



For how many days was Jesus tempted by the devil?

Luke 4:2

What did the devil tempt Jesus to turn a stone into?

Luke 4:3

Who did Jesus say you should ONLY worship and serve?

Luke 4:8



READ
the story in
Luke 4:1-13



Jesus said not to put the Lord your God to the...

Luke 4:12



What happened after the temptation of Jesus? see Luke 4:14-15

JESUS • LED
WILDERNESS
DESERT
TEMPTATIONS
DAYS • DEVIL
HUNGRY • SON
STONE • ROCK
KINGDOMS
WORLD • GLORY
WRITTEN
SCRIPTURE
WORSHIP • ONLY
SERVE • LORD
JERUSALEM
HIGH • TEMPLE
THROW • DOWN
JUMP • ANGELS
HANDS • HOLD
LIFT • FOOT

R	W	O	R	S	H	I	P	H	A	N	D	S	D
L	I	F	T	W	P	A	H	D	J	U	M	P	A
E	L	O	R	D	K	I	O	E	D	O	S	E	Y
D	D	O	A	N	G	E	L	S	E	K	T	M	S
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R	N	S	S	C	R	I	P	T	U	R	E	U	H
T	E	M	P	T	A	T	I	O	N	S	G	T	S
Y	S	T	D	S	J	E	R	U	S	A	L	E	M
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R	F	R	W	R	I	T	T	E	N	E	R	P	O
E	O	O	N	V	G	G	O	C	E	V	Y	L	N
A	O	W	V	E	H	O	L	D	K	I	W	E	
D	T	E	S	T	V	D	W	O	R	L	D		



Find the words from the questions too!