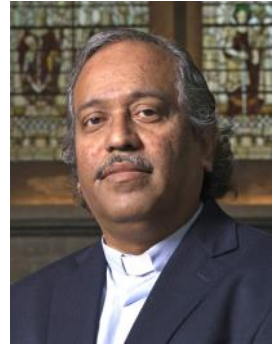


June 2025 Edition 112

Blessed are those who trust in the Lord. (Jeremiah 17:7)

The Journey of Trust: From a Rosebud to a Life in Ministry

Last year, I bought a rose plant from a respected garden centre, drawn by the promise of a delicate rose-hued bloom. When it finally flowered, the petals were stark white. I felt momentarily disappointed—I had trusted the label, the nursery, and the hope it represented. But then something remarkable happened. Within days, the white shifted to a soft yellow, and gradually, like the unfolding of a sunrise, the flower transformed into the very rose colour I had imagined.



That small moment spoke deeply to me: trust doesn't always reveal its beauty immediately. In today's world—fast-paced, transactional, and often sceptical—trust can seem like an endangered value, particularly in relationships and leadership.

Yet, trust has been the cornerstone of my life: trust in God, and trust in others, even in uncertain moments. I've leaned on trust when the path ahead was unclear and when decisions carried weighty consequences. Psalm 9:10 comes to mind: *"And those who know your name put their trust in you, for you, O Lord, have not forsaken those who seek you."*

One turning point came during my university years when I lost two close friends. Their untimely deaths stirred in me a profound sense of purpose. I committed my life to inspiring and equipping young people to embrace the fullness of life God entrusted to them—even in the face of hardship and injustice.

After completing postgraduate studies in Physics and Theology, my father gently encouraged me to consider ordination, following the legacy of my grandfather and great-grandfather who both served as clergy in

the ecumenical Church of South India. Trusting his counsel, I turned down other career opportunities and responded to the call of ministry.

My diocese appointed me as a full-time lay minister among tea and rubber plantation workers in the Western Ghats. Each Sunday, I walked 12 miles to serve, relying entirely on the hospitality of those I ministered to. I still recall the mission house I stayed in—shared for a month with a cobra, until it was safely guided back to the wild.

In 1995, I married Rachel—without meeting her before our engagement. Our families arranged the match, and we entrusted our futures to them and to God. That same year, I was ordained and later invited to pursue doctoral research at the University of Edinburgh. Welcomed by a Scottish Episcopal church as a curate, strangers quickly became lifelong friends. After completing my studies, I returned to India to train ordinands in practical theology.

Between 2000 and 2006, while teaching in India, I remained engaged with the Church of England and the wider Anglican Communion, participating in grassroots interfaith work and social justice initiatives. I advocated for inclusive practices, particularly for families affected by HIV and young people with disabilities.

Later, I was invited to the Queen's Foundation in Birmingham to train international church leaders. From 2006 to 2012, I served as Postgraduate Lead Tutor and lectured at the University of Birmingham. Encouraged by my students to experience parish ministry in England firsthand, I stepped out of academia to serve as Vicar of the "Three in One" parish in the Diocese of Birmingham. There, I ministered to churches of varying traditions, promoting inclusive community engagement—from dementia-friendly outreach to youth choirs.

After six years in parish ministry, I returned to leadership training, working with a centre focused on public life in partnership with Stellenbosch University, South Africa. I was later called to lead the International Bible Advocacy Centre at the Bible Society, mentoring Christian professionals through a blend of biblical insight and innovative practice. Most recently, I served as Priest-in-Charge at All Saints and St Barnabas in Swindon, and as Associate Priest in the Wellspring Benefice of Salisbury Diocese from 2018 to 2021.



Throughout these transitions, my family journeyed with me in unwavering trust. Our elder daughter Angeline is now married to Cameron and lives in London. Jessica, our younger daughter, is studying Economics in the city. Rachel, my wife, has walked faithfully beside me for 30 years, embracing each new chapter with grace and resilience.

I am grateful to God for the trust and encouragement of Bishop Paul, Archdeacon Martin, and the Wardens, Dan and Peter, as I now serve the congregation of St Mary's, Cuddington.

Time and again, I've turned down opportunities, choosing instead to walk closely with people in ministry. That decision, grounded in trust in God, has brought lasting peace and deep joy to me and my family—even amid life's uncertainties. I am reminded of Proverbs 3:5–6 "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight."

In a world quick to question and slow to believe, my story—like that rose—reminds me that trust takes time to reveal its colours. But when it does, it blossoms into something far more beautiful than we could have planned: a life rooted in 'trusting God', flourishing in service, and ever unfolding in hope.

Revd Joshva R John

June Services and Events

Sunday 1	08.00	Holy Communion (BCP)
	09.30	Sung Communion
Monday 2	19.30	Knit & Natter Group in the Leverton Room
Wednesday 4	10.30	Knit & Natter Group in the Leverton Room
Saturday 7	09.00	Men's Breakfast at Horton Golf Park
	11.30	Summer Songs Lunch in Cuddington Hall
Sunday 8	09.30	Sung Communion & Children's Groups
Saturday 14	12.30	Big Day Out in Shadbolt Park
Sunday 15	09.30	Sung Communion
Wednesday 18	20.00	PCC meeting in the Cuddington Hall
Thursday 19	14.30	Afternoon Club in the Cuddington Hall
Saturday 21	10.00	Women's Group in the Cuddington Hall
Sunday 22	09.30	Sung Communion & Children's Groups
Sunday 29	09.30	Sung Communion
	10.45	Homemade Sunday Market
Weds 2 July	10.30	Knit & Natter Group in the Leverton Room
Saturday 5 July	09.00	Men's Breakfast at Horton Golf Park
Sunday 6 July	08.00	Holy Communion (BCP)
	09.30	Sung Communion
Monday 7 July	19.30	Knit & Natter Group in the Leverton Room
Weds 9 July	19.30	Licensing of Revd Joshva R John

Morning Prayer is said in church every weekday morning at 9am

Everyone is very welcome