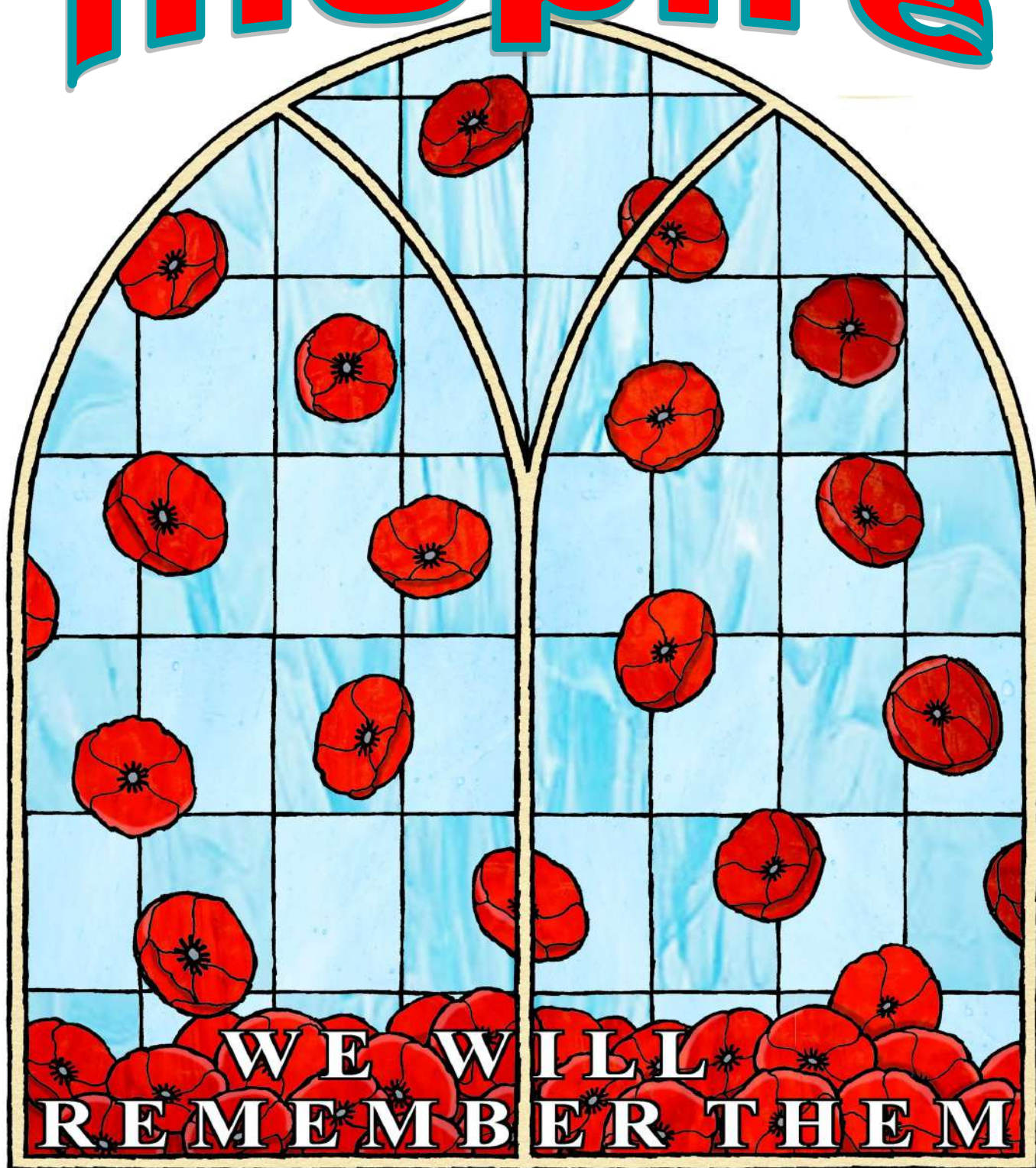




InSpire magazine Issue 97 November 2025

InSpire



The monthly publication for the Parish of Capel & Ockley

Free of charge - donations welcome in honesty box in wall



Capel Church Garden of Remembrance

We are pleased to say that the new Garden of Remembrance has now been created in the grounds of Capel Church for the burial of ashes. Do go and see it when you have an opportunity!



Many people are now choosing cremation over burial. The burying of ashes within the church graveyard is preferably within a designated Garden of Remembrance. In addition, the adjacent civil cemetery is nearing full capacity. This new space will provide a solution to these issues.

The new garden is in the southwest corner of the graveyard, just past the old mortuary. The proposal is to provide a grassed area where ashes will be buried in the ground, not in urns. The burials will be recorded in a Book of Remembrance retained in the church. There will also be a memorial wall within the Garden on which a small plaque may be fixed with the person's name. Residents of Capel and the immediate surrounding area will be able to make use of this facility.

The grass areas incorporate paths which will be suitable for wheelchair access. This will be a quiet area of reflection and remembrance. It has been planted out and in time there will be benches included in the garden, giving a comfortable place to sit and reflect.

We are very grateful that most of the funding for this has been made possible by private legacies, the John Ede Fund, the Capel Parish Council and the Friends of Capel Church. However, we are seeking further contributions for benching, planting, the book of remembrance, ongoing maintenance, etc.

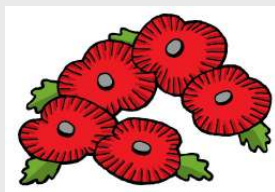
Should you have any questions or wish to contribute to this community asset please contact Liz Richardson or David Silliman.

Donations to:-
Capel & Ockley PCC
89053287
09-01-53



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*"They shall grow not old,
as we that are left grow old.
Age shall not weary them, nor
the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun
and in the morning.
We will remember them"*

Would you prefer to receive InSpire online?

You can register to receive **InSpire** via email each month OR download individual issues!

www.capelandockleychurch.org.uk/inspire-magazine

This issue is sponsored by

Liz & Tim Wombwell

In memory of Pat Wombwell

We remember our friend Pat
who worshipped with us at Capel.

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safeguarding@cofeguildford.org.uk

* See our **Safeguarding Notice** in 'News from the Pews' each month *

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CHURCH SERVICES AND EVENTS - NOVEMBER 2025

at St John the Baptist, Capel & St Margaret's, Ockley

NOVEMBER

Sunday	2nd 9.30am 10.30am 3.00pm	All Saints and All Souls Matins - Ockley Family Communion - Capel All Souls Service of Comfort for the Bereaved at Capel Church followed by teas for all at 4.00pm.
Sunday	9th 10.45am 3.00pm	Remembrance Day Service of Remembrance - Ockley Service of Remembrance - Capel
Sunday	16th 10.30 am	Trinity 22 Parish Family Communion - Capel
Sunday	23rd 9.30am 10.30am	Christ the King Holy Communion BCP - Ockley Morning Worship at Capel
Sunday	30th 9.30am 3-5pm	Advent Sunday Parish Communion CW - Ockley Capel Church Teas



December

Saturday	6th 9.00am 5.00pm	Christmas Trees and Carols Community groups dress their trees Grand switching on of lights and carol singing
Sunday	7th 9.30am 10.30am 4.00pm	Advent 2 Matins - Ockley Family Communion - Capel Choral Society Concert



IMPORTANT INFORMATION AVAILABLE ON OUR CHURCH WEBSITE

Don't forget you can logon to our church website to see the Weekly notes that are published each week, together with our monthly magazine InSpire, OR you can subscribe online to receive any or all of the publications:-
<https://www.capelandockleychurch.org.uk/subscribe/>

Revd Liz writes

November's letter

Dear friends,

We have had a lot going on this last month in the parish of Capel and Ockley. Our last fundraising event of the year - the Murder Mystery play and supper was performed to great acclaim at Ockley Village Hall and Capel Memorial Hall. For the first time ever tickets were nearly sold out for Capel shortly after the booking line opened - a bit like Oasis!! Thank you to all who bought tickets, helped behind the scenes, prepared wonderful food and puddings, provided raffle prizes and of course the cast of Murder in the Library directed by our own Sylvie Beckett. A wonderful time was had by all! Harvest Festival in Capel was also a great occasion which we shared with our Scott Broadwood School. Much was gathered in the way of foodstuff for Dorking Foodbank who are so grateful and depend on our Harvest thanksgivings. Wonderful to have the church full of all ages too!

It has been a beautiful Autumn on the whole and I have loved those wonderful paintbrush colours of red and gold as I have travelled around our local area. It has gone far too quickly though and I so wish the beauty of Autumn could last longer but November is already here and with it a full diary for this month church wise. Four out of the five Sundays in November mark rather special occasions. We begin with All Saints and All Souls, Remembrance Day, Christ the King and finally Advent Sunday!

Our annual parish service of Comfort for the Bereaved will be held on the afternoon of 2nd November at Capel Church and this is always a very gentle time together to remember those we have loved and see no more. A candle is lit for every name given to us and we generally light about 100 tea lights. We leave them to glow softly in the darkness of the Chancel as we enjoy refreshments afterwards. The following Sunday is Remembrance Sunday and we look forward to welcoming many in our communities to our Remembrance services that day. Ockley have their service at 10.45 so we can join in live with the 2 minute silence at 11am. Capel's service will be at 3pm in St John's church and finishing with the laying of wreaths at the war memorial. We are also looking forward to the Scout's presentation of their recent trip to Belgium on a journey of remembrance. It sounds very interesting indeed and will form part of our remembrance day service.

Christ the King is a relatively new festival in the life of the Church of England. It is the last Sunday in Ordinary Time before Advent begins and prepares us for that season of Advent as we acknowledge that Christ is King and is Lord of earth and heaven. A new Church year begins with the next Sunday - Advent Sunday - the beginning of the lead up to Christmas. Goodness, how I wish these wonderfully rich weeks before Christmas would slow down!!

Finally you may have noticed that there has been much work going on in our churchyard at Capel. The new Garden of Remembrance for the burial of ashes has now been completed. Do please come and have a look and if you would like to contribute in memory of someone do let us know. We are very pleased with the finished result and hope that you can see how it is designed in the shape of the Celtic Cross. We are working on providing benches for seating and it will provide we hope a peaceful sanctuary for all in our busy world.

So to finish, a prayer for November and All Saints, All Souls and Remembrance:

*Hear us, O merciful Father, as we remember in love those whom we have placed in your hands.
Acknowledge, we pray, the sheep of your own fold, lambs of your own flock, sinners of your own redeeming. Enfold them
in the arms of your mercy, in the blessed rest of everlasting peace,
and in the glorious company of the saints in light. Amen.*

With my love and prayers as ever,

Liz

Revd Liz

Vicar St John the Baptist, Capel and St Margaret's, Ockley

vicar@capelandockleychurch.org.uk

01306 711260

NEWS from the Pews

From the Registers



Holy Baptism

We welcome into the family of the Church
Isla Otilie Ronnie Thompson
on
Sunday 14th September 2025

Holy Matrimony

We celebrate the marriage of
**Amy Megan Roberts and
Aaron James Dixon**
at St John the Baptist Capel
On
Saturday 23rd August 2025

In Memoriam

We remember with love
William Arthur King
29th August 2025

We remember with love
Rosemary Lynette Relf
24th September 2025

and

Martha Bridget Liddell Ivory
3rd October 2025

May they rest in peace and rise in glory

PCC Members 2025

Vicar and Chair: Revd Liz Richardson (ex-officio)
Curate: Revd Gill Christie (ex-officio)

Churchwardens

Joy Harman (ex-officio) St John the Baptist
Stuart Cole (ex-officio) St John the Baptist
Andy Carr (ex-officio) Deputy Churchwarden, St John the Baptist
James Lee-Steere (ex-officio) St Margaret's

Deanery Synod:

Andy Carr (ex-officio) St John the Baptist
Shirley Dean Webster (ex-officio) St Margaret's

Elected members:

Helen Burt (Hon Treasurer)
Gordon Lee Steere
Wendy Goddard
Suzanne Cole
Sarah Pusey
David Silliman
Jessie Sutcliffe
Leigh Smith (Safeguarding Lead)

Hon Secretary:

Sir Richard Winter- Stanbridge,

Electoral Roll Officer:

Rosemary Relf

Parish Safeguarding Officer:

Leigh Smith

Parish Church Council (PCC) Meetings 2025

All in St John the Baptist, Capel

24th November

Annual Service of Comfort for the Bereaved

*will be held on Sunday 2nd November 2025 at 3pm
at St John the Baptist, Capel followed by refreshments.*

*There is a list in church to add the names of loved ones which will be read out
at the service.*



NEWS from the Pews

Used stamps for UK Air Ambulance Services

The UK's Air Ambulance Services are charities which receive no government funding and rely entirely on charitable donations to continue flying and responding to life threatening medical emergencies. All funds raised will be donated to the Association of Air Ambulances to be distributed equally to all UK Air Ambulance Services. All you need to do is cut or carefully tear the stamped corner from any envelope or packet that you receive in the post and start a collection.

Once you have a large bundle, would you please put them in a bag and take them into St John the Baptist, Capel to place in the marked box. Sue Partridge is going to post them when we have a good amount to send. Thank you to Sue.

Save the date - Net Zero Conference coming to Guildford

On Saturday 17 January, our diocese will host the annual Net Zero Conference. It will be an opportunity for parish leadership, Eco Links, church wardens and PCCs to come together to share practical ideas and gain inspiration about various ways to go greener.



The conference will be held at St John's Stoke, Guildford. The Church has recently installed solar panels as part of its plan to make all its buildings net zero. They recently invited all churches in the diocese to a talk and tour about the range of energy-efficient upgrades undertaken. We will be sharing more detail on the Net Zero Conference in the coming weeks, but you can [reserve your space from now](#).

If you wish to attend and book a place, please would you let Rev Liz know. It might be that we can then share cars to the venue. Thank you.

SAFEGUARDING NOTICE

This notice will appear each month in InSpire

'The care and protection of children, young people and adults involved in Church activities is the responsibility of everyone who participates in the life of the church. If you are concerned that someone you know is at risk of, or is being abused, or presents a risk to others, please seek advice from a Safeguarding Adviser or if necessary report the matter to the Local Authority Social Care Services or the Police without delay.'

If you have any concerns please contact our Safeguarding Officer: Leigh Smith 07732 825908 leighdesouza@yahoo.com or Revd Liz Richardson 01306 711260 liz@hostmyserver.co.uk

Diocesan contact number for reporting safeguarding concerns: safeguarding@cofeguildford.org.uk or call: 01483 790379 **and the contact details for our Safeguarding Officer and the Diocesan Safeguarding contact will be published in our weekly pew sheets as well as in the Church Contacts section in each issue of Inspire.**
(Updated August 2025)



Experience the Christmas story

Discover the true meaning of Christmas with an unforgettable event for all the family.
It's a Nativity like no other, placing you in the middle of an immersive theatre experience.

Stand with the shepherds, walk with Mary, Joseph and the donkey, journey with Roman soldiers
and enter the stable to watch the miracle unfold.

It's the perfect festive event for kids, parents and grandparents.

Holly Barn is a 10 minute steep walk from the car park.

If you will need assistance, please contact us on 01483 892 167 or email admin@wintershall.org.uk
and we can book parking for you next to the Barn Theatre.

This **MUST** be pre-booked in advance and those parking there will miss the
first scene of the play. **(Please note: 16th and 17th December are schools only days).**

"A refreshing antidote to the rampant glitz"

The Guardian

"An absorbing and delightful reminder of what Christmas is really all about"

Surrey Life

"A powerful, unreconstructed telling of the Christmas story"

The Times

<https://www.wintershall.org.uk/event/the-nativity-journey/>

Café Church— NOVEMBER 2025

ALL CHANGE!

Do you like change? Are you the sort of person who relishes a new challenge or who would rather have things stay the same as they are? I suppose, whether we like it or not, change is something that is going to happen regardless of our own personal preference. For example, the recent change with the clocks going back an hour brings a reminder of the change of seasons. Or maybe you've been noticing how the passage of time is bringing changes that you're not ready for? More wrinkles, more aches and pains, more grey hair.....or no hair at all! Some changes just affect us on a personal level; others have a more far-reaching impact.

Take, for example, the recent appointment of Dame Sarah Mullally as the new Archbishop of Canterbury. Once Justin Welby, the previous incumbent, had made the decision to resign, change was inevitable but selection of a woman to take over the role that has been exclusively male for over 1400 years was not widely predicted. And this change is already generating a mix of joyous celebration at the choice of a woman to head the world-wide Anglican church alongside a fierce resistance from many "traditionalists" who believe that a woman should never be in a position of leadership in the church. The fact that these divisions will play themselves out on the international stage in the full glare of the media will do little to help the image of the church and its members as being a loving, compassionate and inclusive.

Over the next few months (and years?) we're going to hear a lot of very clever people in the church quoting a lot of very well-known verses from the bible in support of their polar opposite positions. How can that be? Perhaps it's because they have forgotten that a text taken out of context becomes a pretext. Perhaps they've forgotten that the bible teaches us to love not only our enemies but also our neighbours. Perhaps they think that biblical teaching is black & white, either/or, when the truth is that it is subtle shades of both/and. Perhaps people are confusing being clever with being wise?

Of course, the church is not alone in facing problems caused by differences of opinion. I doubt that there is a family in Capel, Ockley or Beare Green that hasn't, at some point, faced the challenge of strongly held opposing views causing rifts, rows and a lot of heartache. How should we deal with situations like this when they arise? For the church, the starting point ought to be the bible and the knowledge that the church is God's church – not *our* church! Jeremiah 29:11 says, *"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future"*. Perhaps, above anything else, this reminds us that what we see as problems, God sees as opportunities for us to grow, learn and trust Him more.

And God's wisdom and words of healing are not only for those *inside* the church. They are freely available to everyone. So, if you find yourself in the middle of a difficult relationship with someone maybe these verses from Philippians 4 will help. *"The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."*

Bob Cranham



The Rt Revd and Rt Hon Dame Sarah Mullally to be 106th Archbishop of Canterbury



His Majesty The King has approved the nomination of the Bishop of London, the Rt Revd and Rt Hon Dame Sarah Mullally, as the next Archbishop of Canterbury, Downing Street has announced.

The 106th Archbishop of Canterbury since Saint Augustine arrived in Kent from Rome in 597, Bishop Sarah will be the first woman to hold the office.

She will be installed in a service at Canterbury Cathedral in March 2026. Sarah Mullally has been the Bishop of London since 2018, the first woman appointed to that role, and before that was Bishop of Crediton in the Diocese of Exeter. Prior to her ordination in 2001, she was the Government's Chief Nursing Officer for England – the youngest person ever

to be appointed to that role at the age of 37 – having previously specialised as a cancer nurse. Bishop Sarah has described nursing as "an opportunity to reflect the love of God".

The Crown Nominations Commission (CNC) for Canterbury nominated Bishop Sarah following a process of public consultation and prayerful discernment that began in February this year. The Canterbury CNC was made up of representatives from across the Church of England, global Anglican Communion and the Diocese of Canterbury.

The most senior bishop in the Church of England, the Archbishop of Canterbury's ministry combines many roles including serving as the Diocesan Bishop of the Diocese of Canterbury, Primate of All England and Metropolitan, as well as primus inter pares – or first among equals – of the Primates of the global Anglican Communion, which consists of around 85 million people, across 165 countries. In the House of Lords, the Archbishop of Canterbury is one of 26 bishops who comprise the Lords Spiritual.

Bishop Sarah said: "As I respond to the call of Christ to this new ministry, I do so in the same spirit of service to God and to others that has motivated me since I first came to faith as a teenager.

"At every stage of that journey, through my nursing career and Christian ministry, I have learned to listen deeply – to people and to God's gentle prompting – to seek to bring people together to find hope and healing.

"I want, very simply, to encourage the Church to continue to grow in confidence in the Gospel, to speak of the love that we find in Jesus Christ and for it to shape our actions.

"And I look forward to sharing this journey of faith with the millions of people serving God and their communities in parishes all over the country and across the global Anglican Communion.

"I know this is a huge responsibility but I approach it with a sense of peace and trust in God to carry me as He always has."

Lord Evans, Chair of the Crown Nominations Commission for Canterbury, said: "It has been a great privilege to have chaired the Crown Nominations Commission as it sought to discern who God is calling to lead the Church of England and Anglican Communion as Archbishop of Canterbury.

"That discernment began with the public consultation, which heard the voices of thousands of people as they expressed their hopes for this nomination, and continued all the way through to the Commission's final meeting.

"I would like to thank all those who took part in this process, particularly those who took time to share their views in the consultation and the members of the Commission who worked so diligently over several months, ably assisted by the Appointments Secretaries and by the Appointments and Vocations team at Lambeth Palace.

"I shall be praying for Bishop Sarah as she prepares to take up this new ministry in the coming months."

Bishop Anthony Poggio, Secretary General of the Anglican Communion, said: "I welcome and commend the nomination of Bishop Sarah as the next Archbishop of Canterbury and invite the churches of the global Anglican Communion to pray for her as she prepares to take up this important ministry."

"May God grant her wisdom and discernment, as she seeks to listen to Member churches, encourage mutual support, and foster unity."

"The Anglican Communion Office is fully committed to supporting her ministry as she works with other Provinces and the Instruments of the Anglican Communion."

"Let us pray that God will pour out His Spirit on the Anglican Communion to boldly share Christ's transformational love and the hope of the Gospel in today's world."

Background information:

Early this morning Bishop Sarah met with staff and volunteers at the community larder, and clergy and volunteers involved in the Ignite Christian Community at All Saints Church in Canterbury.

She will give an address in Canterbury Cathedral – ten years after she was consecrated there as Bishop of Crediton. Bishop Sarah will be addressing guests from across the Church of England, Anglican Communion and the Diocese of Canterbury.

She will be introduced by Alanis, a pupil from The Archbishop's School, a Church of England school in the Diocese of Canterbury, with a prayer delivered by Noah, following her address.

In the afternoon, Bishop Sarah will meet pupils and staff at The Archbishop's School before visiting the chaplain and staff at Pilgrims Hospice Canterbury, later attending Evensong in the Cathedral.

Currently known as the Archbishop of Canterbury-designate, Bishop Sarah will legally become the Archbishop of Canterbury at her Confirmation of Election at St Paul's Cathedral in January 2026, with a service of installation taking place at Canterbury Cathedral in March.

Biography:

Born in Woking in 1962, Bishop Sarah became a Christian at the age of 16. Before being ordained, Bishop Sarah worked as a nurse in the National Health Service, which she has described as "an opportunity to reflect the love of God".

She specialised as a cancer nurse and, at the age of 37, became the Government's Chief Nursing Officer for England, the youngest person ever to be appointed to the post. Bishop Sarah was made a Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire in recognition of her outstanding contribution to nursing. She was ordained in 2001 and served her curacy in the Diocese of Southwark, initially as a self-supporting minister, before leaving her government post in 2004.

In 2012, she was installed as Canon Treasurer at Salisbury Cathedral and three years later took the role as Suffragan Bishop of Crediton in the Diocese of Exeter. On 12 May 2018, Bishop Sarah was installed as the 133rd Bishop of London at St Paul's Cathedral, the first woman to hold the role. Bishop Sarah is married to Eamonn and they have two grown-up children, Liam and Grace.

Appointment process – key dates:

Following the announcement, the next stage of the appointment process is the Election by the College of Canons of Canterbury Cathedral, which will take place before Christmas.

On 28th January 2026, there will be a Confirmation of Election at St Paul's Cathedral in London, at which Bishop Sarah will legally become the Archbishop of Canterbury.

In March there will be an Installation (sometimes referred to as an 'enthronement') at Canterbury Cathedral, which denotes and marks the start of the new Archbishop of Canterbury's ministry.

Article published on: 3rd October 2025 Parish Brief from The Diocese of Guildford

<https://www.cofeguildford.org.uk/the-rt-revd-and-rt-hon-dame-sarah-mullally-to-be-106th-archbishop-of-canterbury.php>



NEWS FROM THE BELFRY



New Learners

We are now 'twinned' with Newdigate in that the Ockley band all ring there every week on Tuesdays for their practice nights, weddings and Sunday services. This has been the case informally for some years but became a necessity due to a shortage of ringers at Newdigate and the retirement of their tower captain.

The practice of clustering with neighbouring towers is always beneficial because it allows a greater spread of experience and learners can progress more easily at whatever level they are when spare ringers are available to stand behind and offer advice. It also makes the evening more enjoyable for everybody as practice nights are a social gathering as much as they are about bell ringing.

A number of towers in the area have been silent for some time, such as Burstow, Horley and Charlwood due to a decline in numbers such that the bands eventually become unviable. Service ringing can then only continue with the help of outside ringers called on as needed. The Surrey Association has successfully targeted these towers amongst others with a support group to recruit new ringers. They help with recruitment ideas and supply training for the new learners. A sudden influx of so many potential ringers creates a huge demand for trainers and so we have helped by visiting their towers as well as giving one to one training in our home towers.

Being recruited in a short space of time their new ringers have formed numerous friendships with Whatsapp groups pinging back and forth. Although they come from all walks of life they have a new hobby in common and plenty of experiences to share. It is lovely to see so much enthusiasm from the newbies and most learners are the same. There is a rush of adrenaline from trying to control something so much heavier than you and this can only be learnt in the tower so the amount of rope time available is crucial in the early stages. Once handling is established there is a lifelong learning experience for those who choose to enter the world of method ringing.

Bellringing is an enjoyable pastime, open to everyone and probably not what you expect. Come along and be surprised! Anyone interested in finding out more is welcome to come along and have a go, under supervision, or just to watch.

Practice nights are at St Peter's Newdigate on Tuesdays and St Margaret's Ockley on Wednesday evenings from 7.45pm to 9pm.

For more details call Sue on 01306 627168 or email ockleybellringers@btinternet.com

PRAYERS, PROSE & POEMS

A Prayer of Remembrance

Almighty and eternal God,
from whose love in Christ
we cannot be parted,
either by death or life:
hear our prayers and
thanksgivings for all whom we
remember this day;
fulfil in them the purpose of
your love; and bring us all,
with them, to your eternal joy;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Prayer for persecuted Christians

"Almighty God, we lift up our brothers and sisters who are facing persecution for their faith around the world. Lord, we pray for your strength to be with them, giving them courage and hope in the face of suffering, imprisonment, and threats.

Protect them from harm and provide for their needs. May they know your presence is with them, even in their isolation.

Grant them boldness to speak your word, and let your love and the gospel shine through them, even to their persecutors. We pray that those who harm them would be transformed, and that their hearts would be opened to the truth of Christ.

Lord, bring your wisdom to leaders of nations to work for peace and justice for all peoples. May your will be done, and may your church be strengthened to persevere with faith and love.

Amen

The International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church (IDOP) will be on Sunday 2nd November this year. Please see article on this Day on page ...

Remembrance

In November we come to remember
How war tore our country apart,
From village and town and all around
Men and boys left home and hearth.

Mothers and wives and sisters all
Saw their brave young men go away,
For some it meant the ultimate price
As they gave their tomorrows for our today.

Another Man left His home above
To rescue this world from sin,
It cost Him His life which He freely gave
So new life could enter in.

In this world there will always be war,
But the time will surely be
When the earth shall be filled with the glory of
God
As the waters cover the sea.

By Megan Carter

A prayer for peacemakers

History can inspire or trap.
Walls can protect or divide.
Words can encourage or inflame.
Power can free or destroy.
Touch can comfort or violate.
Peace can be shared or withheld.
Gracious God, on this day,
when we remember past and present
conflicts,
we pray for the divided peoples of the world,
that leaders, governments and each one of us
may use our resources,
our opportunities and our lives
in the service of reconciliation,
for the sake of future generations

Deacon's diary

Harvest – definitely one of the highlights of rural England's autumn for me.

The Virginia Creeper has been scarlet, the holly berries equally red already and as for the amount of fruit on the trees and brambles a true 'mast' year!

As I write this, Ockley has celebrated harvest in church and distributed donations to people in the village. Capel's service has yet to take place, but I am looking forward to this particularly, as we have been promised singing and reading contributions at the service by some of the children from Scott-Broadwood School.

Summer ended in Ockley with the cricket sevens and preparations for the winter have begun with the first flu/covid vaccination clinic being held at the Capel surgery.

It really is a privilege to be in a parish of two villages and an example of how well the two can work together may be seen in the Murder Mystery Play put on in both Capel and Ockley by people from all parts of the parish.

Being curate here has given me so many privileges; I have visited people in their homes, I have assisted at a couple of very happy baptisms, supported some families as they have laid loved ones to rest and led Sunday services among people some of whom I know well.

My monthly training days with the diocese have begun and are proving extremely insightful. Not only does the group of curates who meet for the Thursday all day session garner invaluable practical learning from the wisdom and teaching of experienced priests who are our tutors, but we have the chance to compare and contrast our learning experiences. Some of my cohort live on the other side of the diocese near Farnborough and Egham, some are closer in Dorking and the villages around while others are in the heart of Guildford. Everyone's context is different to a greater or lesser extent, but the work of a curate is the same – serving and helping people where they are.

In the meantime, world events occur:

The longed for, much prayed for, peace in Gaza still holds, as I write, with the release of the living hostages and now reconstruction must begin.

The Church of England has announced the identity of the next Archbishop of Canterbury, the first woman to hold the office. Another glass ceiling shattered.

Civil unrest continues in countries with both good infrastructure, such as France, and those with none, such as the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Disease continues to wreak havoc in places such as Nigeria and Sudan and conflict appears unending in places such as Ukraine.

All these call for prayers to God asking that His wisdom, compassion, peace and tolerance may have impact in our world.

And as for you?

Should any of you like a prayer to be said for you, anyone you know or a situation you care about, please do let me or Rev Liz know.



Rev Gill Christie

curate@capelandockleychurch.org.uk



Churches unite in prayer for peace in the Middle East

Church of England congregations across the country have come together with churches from other denominations to pray for the people of Gaza, the wider Holy Land and the Middle East.

A coalition of Christian charities and aid agencies, working in partnership with ecumenical church leaders, organised a dedicated Day of Prayer for Peace in late September. The initiative coincided with the UN International Day of Peace.

The Bishop of Southwark, Christopher Chessun, the Lead Bishop for the Holy Land said: "In the face of all that is happening in Gaza, I appeal for respect for the value and dignity of every human life. Christians cannot remain silent – we must speak out for the rights and freedoms of both Israelis and Palestinians and we must be diligent in prayer for the peoples of the Holy Land."

Supporting this effort, the Anglican Archbishop in Jerusalem, Dr Hosam Naoum, has written a prayer for an immediate end to the war, the release of all hostages, help for those suffering hunger and starvation in Gaza and beyond, and the resumption of negotiations for a just and lasting peace.

Prayer resources at: *Churches Together in England* and *Churches Together in Britain and Ireland*.

A Prayer for the Holy Land

Gracious Father, whose blessed Son Jesus Christ came down from heaven to be the true bread which gives life to the world: In your mercy, provide for all those in Gaza and beyond who suffer from hunger and starvation, that they may be given both physical bread to nourish their bodies and heavenly bread to sustain their souls.

By the power of your Spirit, bring a speedy end to this cruel war, the release of all captives, care for the sick and wounded, comfort for those who have lost loved-ones, and the opening of a pathway for a just and lasting peace here in the very homeland where your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, ministered during His earthly life; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

The Most Reverend Dr Hosam E. Naoum, Anglican Archbishop in Jerusalem

Do not 'co-opt' the cross to divide: Bishops join church leaders in message after rally

A group of Church of England bishops and senior clergy have joined leaders from across denominations in speaking out against any "co-opting or corrupting" of the Christian faith and symbols to exclude others.

The bishops of Winchester, Manchester, Southwark, Croydon, Bradford, Woolwich and Kingston were among the signatories to a joint letter from church leaders voicing concern at the use of Christian symbols, particularly the cross, at last week's 'Unite the Kingdom' rally.

They joined with senior leaders in the Methodist, Baptist and Pentecostal churches; the Church of Scotland; the Salvation Army; the Catholic social action network Caritas and leaders of major cross-denominational groups such as the Evangelical Alliance and Churches Together in England in the letter which appears in the media today. Other signatories include the former Archbishop of Canterbury Lord Williams, leaders of Christian charities such as the Bible Society, CARE and the Oasis trust, as well as prominent clergy and theologians.

The letter acknowledges that many of those involved in the rally felt a "deep sense of frustration at feeling unheard and forgotten in the democratic process" but that it also included "racist, anti-Muslim and far right elements".

"As Christians from different theological and political backgrounds, we stand together against the misuse of Christianity," they write.

"The cross is the ultimate sign of sacrifice for the other. Jesus calls us to love both our neighbours and our enemies and to welcome the stranger. Any co-opting or corrupting of the Christian faith to exclude others is unacceptable."

The Pavilion Café

**Every Wednesday at Ockley Cricket Club Pavilion
9 am until midday**

Come and enjoy a warm welcome and a delicious range of homemade cakes and savouries - including gluten/dairy free. Bacon butties every fourth Wednesday and freshly made teas and coffees.

The Pavilion Café was originally the idea of Kindred Spirits, the women's outreach group from Ockley, Okewood and Forest Green Parish, 11 years ago.

It is run by a team of volunteers in support of charities, local charitable causes and Ockley events.

If you would like to volunteer, please let Liz know on either 07951 710176 or lizthorne2053@hotmail.co.uk

Harvest Supper – The Murder Mystery Play



Well done to the cast and Director, Sylvie for putting on two wonderful evenings with this year's Murder Mystery. Both evenings were well attended and enjoyed by all.

Also, many thanks to David Silliman and Helen Burt for organising the catering for each evening and everyone who helped with the cooking or on the evening itself. As with all our fundraisers, this event raises much needed funds for our two churches, especially as our congregation numbers are reducing currently.

We look forward to hearing from our Treasurer, Helen, in due course how much was raised.

Well done to all involved!

Remembrance Sunday services

Sunday 9th November 2025

10.45—11.45 am St Margaret's, Ockley

3.00—4.00 pm St John the Baptist, Capel

All are welcome



Editor: The Revd Dr Jo White considers ...

Reflecting Faith: Do we hear God's Word today?

For the last few months, we've been looking at the way that church services are put together. After the Gloria each week, this we hear 'God's Word' as written in the Bible. This is usually three passages: one from the Old Testament, one from the epistles, and one from the gospels.

But *how much* do we hear of God's Word? Though we say we want to 'hear God's word', actually the amount we hear week on week is quite minimal.

In bygone days, when the 1662 Book of Common Prayer was universally used in churches, it brought with it a two year lectionary: (unlike today's three year lectionary: lectionary being the recommended or obligatory Bible readings for each day).

This gave congregations, if they came to daily services both morning and evening (which in those times they most likely did) during the course of a year, an opportunity to hear read *the whole Old Testament once, the New Testament twice and all the Psalms twelve times*.

What a contrast to today! In most UK churches, attendance is now at only one service each week, mostly on Sunday. During that service, perhaps 15 or 20 Bible verses might be read.

Now, there are around 31,100 verses in the Bible, which means that at a generous 30 verses a week the congregation will hear around 1,560 verses in a year – that's around 5% each year. So even on a three-year cycle, with a few extra readings for good measure, we hear no more than 20% of the Bible.

I suspect there are two key reasons for this diminution of Bible verses being read. Firstly, church services have got shorter and take up far less time. Secondly, congregations have become more literate, and so it is thought that they do not need it all read out to them.

It would be interesting to know how much of the read-aloud-Bible people heard and listened to and absorbed, in relation to how much do that today, with the shorter verses being read to them coupled with much shortened sermons.

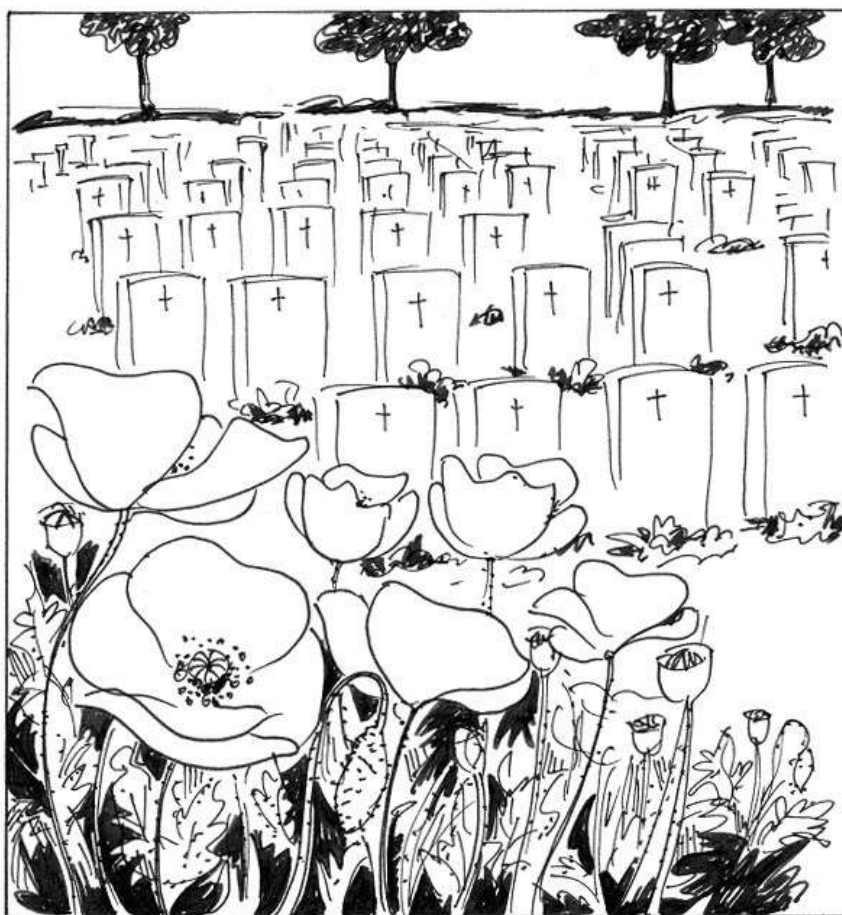
This month

Next time you go to a Sunday church service listen to the Bible reading with keen ears. How much do you recall a few days later? How much of the Bible that you have not heard recently in church have you read for yourself?



Beautiful harvest flowers by Helen Berry in St John the Baptist. Our thanks to Helen for her flower arranging every week and her dedication to the regular Church teas. Thank you Helen for all you do!

The Editor



The Royal British Legion Appeal 2025

Last year a total of £1,506.33 was raised in our community. Thank you to everyone for their generosity and to the volunteers who go out collecting door to door in aid of The Royal British Legion. This year's appeal began on Saturday 25th October 2025 and runs until 9th November.

If you have not had anyone call on you and you would like to donate to this year's Poppy Appeal, please speak to me on 01306 711449. Alternatively, you can donate directly to the RBL via this QR code. (it will take you to the Capel village link of the Legion's MyGiving hub).

Thank you for your continued support.

Stuart Cole

Poppy Appeal Organiser, Capel Village

**SCAN HERE
TO DONATE**



SEC04



Time to remember the Persecuted Church – 2nd November 2025

Have you ever felt frightened to go to church? Afraid that someone might see you and report you to the authorities?

380 million Christians around the world have that anxiety, because one in seven Christians worldwide live in countries with high levels of persecution. That includes one in five in Africa and one in seven in Asia. These Christians make up the Persecuted Church, and live with the threat of discrimination, violence, imprisonment, and even death.

To support these suffering Christians, The International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church (IDOP) is held each year in November. It is a good month to choose, because November is the month of remembrance – not only of our armed forces on Remembrance Sunday, but also of all Christian saints and martyrs who have given their lives for Christ, on All Saints Day and All Souls Day.

And so, on 2nd November thousands of Christians in churches across the UK will pray for the Persecuted Church worldwide. They will also send practical help through supporting well-established UK organisations such as Open Doors, Release International and Christian Solidarity Worldwide. These work to advocate for persecuted Christians in the UN and to advocate with national governments. They also distribute humanitarian aid to the affected communities around the world.

If you would like to join in this year, Open Doors, Release International, Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW), and International Christian Concern offer you digital resource packs containing prayer guides, information about specific regions of persecution, and materials for church services, home groups, and children's activities.

Meanwhile, here are some things to consider (figures from Open Doors):

Worldwide, at least 4,476 Christians were killed last year for their faith. Nigeria alone accounted for 3,100 of them. Other countries in sub-Saharan Africa have seen rising numbers of Christian deaths.

Worldwide, at least 4,744 Christians were detained. They were arrested and detained without trial. Some were then sentenced and imprisoned for following Jesus. In India alone, 1,629 Christians were detained without trial and another 547 were sentenced to prison. Believers were incarcerated for their faith in Eritrea, Bangladesh, Iran amongst others.

Worldwide, at least 210,000 Christians were driven from their homes last year and forced into hiding. Again, almost half of these were in Nigeria, where militant Islamism is on the rise.

As for individual countries, in Algeria alone last year, *all* the Protestant churches were ordered to close, or were forced to stop regular services. In Mexico, where organised crime is rampant, any Christians who protest at the violence become themselves a target for abduction and murder. In Kyrgyzstan, violence against Christians is also on the rise, as the authoritarian government further represses religious freedom.

See prayer on page 13 for Persecuted Christians around the world.



Praying with the Prayers Of The Bible - when your prayer is not answered

2 Cor. 12:8; 'Three times I asked the Lord about this ...but...'

Paul is talking about one of the most mysterious and one of the most baffling aspects of prayer – when God does not say yes.

On the face of it, Paul's prayer was very modest. For some time he had been troubled by 'a thorn in the flesh.' He doesn't tell us what the 'thorn' was and down the centuries theologians and commentators have made suggestions. Most of them have thought that the affliction was physical because Paul says it was 'in the flesh.' Some have suggested that he suffered from epileptic fits which caused him to fall down, while others have suggested that he was laid low by constant fevers or that he had very poor eyesight, the last based on his remarks in Galatians 6:11. But in spite of this great servant of the Lord praying earnestly three times that the thorn would be removed, God did not answer as Paul expected. A number of things in this passage (verses 7-10) are very helpful to all of us in the matter of prayer.

First, although God's answer was not what Paul asked for, God did answer him. God is never indifferent to the prayers we utter from the depth of our heart. Unlike the idol Baal in the Old Testament story about Elijah, (1 Kings 18) the God and Father of our Lord Jesus is not on a journey, nor is he busy elsewhere, nor is he sleeping. He hears our prayers and our cries when we come to Him in our need and pain and distress.

Second, although Paul did not get the answer he wanted, God made him a wonderful promise. He said, 'My grace is sufficient for you' (v.9). This was not what Paul asked for, yet what a promise it was! God said in effect. 'I will not take the thorn away – but my daily grace is all-sufficient.' In spite of the thorn, Paul will triumph. When God gives us all-sufficient grace, it will take care of everything in our lives.

Thirdly, Paul learnt that God's wonderful grace meant that in his weakness 'the power of Christ' (v.9) would be with him, the power that would make him effective and fruitful in his ministry.

Fourthly, this experience taught Paul that he could be 'content with weaknesses and insults' (v.10) because it was for Christ's sake, and when he is weak in himself, he is strong in Christ (v.10).

So what about unanswered prayer? Unless our prayer was selfish and not for our good in the first place, God does answer our cry. When the answer is not what we expected, then it means that our loving Father has something for us even better and more important than what we asked for.



Dr Herbert McGonigle, now retired, was Senior Lecturer in Historical Theology & Church History, Nazarene Theological College, Manchester

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Dear friends,

Welcome to the November 2025 issue. We are getting close to the 100th issue of InSpire! Once again I thank our sponsors for their continued support each year, enabling us to keep the magazine free of charge for our readers. ***If you would like to sponsor an issue in 2026, please do get in touch with either myself or Helen Burt our Treasurer.***

November is always a time of national Remembrance on the Sunday nearest to Armistice Day and there are prayers on page 13 to mark it, together with information on our village Poppy appeal on page 18. Also, do read Stuart's article on the Kohima epitaph with its very famous words "When you go home, Tell them of us and say, For your tomorrow we gave our today". Such powerful words that quieten us and move us when we gather around the village war memorial in the churchyard. Stuart and I have returned recently from a truly memorable trip to the USA. We explored Boston, New York and Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Maine. We saw so many wonderful sights and learned so much about our shared history. But we were moved with each cemetery we came across on our travels to see that any veterans in America have a flag flying by their resting place. We were very touched by these outward markers of their pride in those who had served, no matter how long ago, or in which conflict.

The Garden of Remembrance is now installed and thanks should go to David Silliman who has overseen this project, together with Norman Ede who helped with the initial ideas and planning. It is a beautiful space which will lend itself to quiet contemplation and remembrance of loved ones who we no longer see. I think it is a wonderful addition to our churchyard and I love its design, carefully replicating a Celtic cross on the ground. (See article and photos on inside of front cover).

As well as our own **Annual Service of Comfort for the Bereaved on Sunday 2nd November at 3pm**, it is worth noting that Sunday is also **'The International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church (IDOP)'**. This day (IDOP) is held each year in November. It is a good month to choose, because November is the month of remembrance – not only of our armed forces on Remembrance Sunday, but also of all Christian saints and martyrs who have given their lives for Christ, on All Saints Day and All Souls Day. There is also a Prayer for Persecuted Christians on page 13.

We have the most wonderful local attraction at **Wintershall** where they recreate the Nativity each year. I went many years ago with children from the Weald school and it was absolutely magical seeing Joseph and Mary appear on a donkey under a night sky! Do see details of how to visit on page 8.

Lastly, as a church we are hoping to support **Bethlehem Baubles** (see advert on the back cover). Rev Liz, Stuart and I saw the founder at the Christian Resources Exhibition recently. They have been operating for 10 years and are keen to stress they are non-political but aiming to support artisans in the Holy Lands. Leaflets will soon be in church with full details but for every item purchased with our unique code, £3.50 will go directly to our churches.

About the Bethlehem Baubles project:

Bethlehem baubles and Peace lights are handblown using recycled glass by Muslim artisans in Hebron, hand-painted by Christians in Bethlehem before being shipped by Israel.

Bethlehem Baubles founded by Ros Pollock over ten years ago, was created to bring together communities of different faiths through shared craftsmanship, and it continues to provide vital income for families today.

By working with Bethlehem Fair Trade, we help ensure artisans receive a fair living wage - something that is vital today. Each design is unique to its year, and every bauble comes with a dated ribbon.

With my very best wishes,

Suzanne

inspire@capelandockleychurch.org.uk

Kohima Epitaph

by Stuart Cole

On Remembrance Sunday we will once again hear familiar words at the beginning and end of the two minute silence. The beginning is signalled by a reading of the first verse of the poem "For the Fallen" by Laurence Binyon, and the end by a reading of the Kohima Epitaph.



I had never thought where this came from except Kohima. But the story is more complicated. Kohima is a hill town on the India-Myanmar (Burma) border that in the first half of 1944 saw some of the fiercest fighting of the Far East campaign. British, Indian and Gurkha units fought and finally defeated a Japanese attack intended to stop the planned Commonwealth advance into Burma and enable the Japanese to advance into India. Throughout the four months of fighting they were sustained by RAF air drops. It is the 2nd Division's war memorial in the Commonwealth War Graves Commission cemetery at Kohima that has the epitaph.

The words and the sentiment probably date back to the Battle of Thermopylae of the Greco – Persian wars in 480 BC. Simonides of Ceos wrote a contemporary account of the battle and attributes to King Leonidas of the Spartans (allied to the Greeks) who in his last stand dismissed the majority of his troops to save them but remained with 300 Spartans to fight to the last man. It was seen as a courageous act of defiance and sacrifice. The following are supposed to be his dying words and are recorded on the monument to the battle:

*Go tell the Spartans, thou that passest by,
That faithful to their precepts here we lie*

The modern rendition can be traced back to John Edmonds who was born in Stroud in 1875. He was initially a schoolmaster before returning to Cambridge as a lecturer in classics in 1908. His only break from Cambridge was in 1918/19 when he worked for the forerunner of GCHQ as a codebreaker in M.I.1(b). In 1918 The Times published four epitaphs written by Edmonds, including one "On Some who died early in the Day of Battle" which was used as the title of a film.

*Went the day well? We died and never knew;
But well or ill, England, we died for you*

By August 1919 Edmonds had composed a dozen epitaphs. Nine of which appeared in "Inscriptions Suggested for War Memorials" published by the Victoria and Albert Museum in December 1919, including one that he intended for a British graveyard in France.

*When you go home, tell them of us, and say
"For your to-morrows these gave their to-day".*

In 1920 all twelve were published by a small London press as Twelve War Epitaphs. This changed the original 'to-morrows' to 'tomorrow' and more recently 'these' in the second line has become 'we'. He maintained that he had not translated Simonides original but rather had been influenced by the style and brevity of classical Greek epitaphs.

The idea that the words should be used on the Kohima memorial are normally attributed to Major John Etty-Leal a staff officer in the 2nd Division who was a classical scholar. It is said that he imperfectly remembered Edmonds words. The Kohima memorial on which it is written was designed by another classical scholar Revd Francis JL MacLauchlan who was the Padre of the Cameron Highlanders. He described the scene when the fighting stopped to Captain Alastair Ferrie of the Royal Engineers as being reminiscent of the Battle of Thermopylae. So it is possible that he was also the inspiration of the epitaph.

What's the Big Idea? Ephesians

Paul wrote the letter of Ephesians around AD 60, while in prison at Rome. It was probably a circular letter to be read in the house churches of Ephesus and the local area. Paul founded the church over a period of three years (Acts 19:1-20:1) between 52-55 AD. Ephesus was the leading city and commercial centre in the region, famous for its temple to the goddess Artemis (Diana).

Paul's aim in writing his letter was to help his readers understand the dimensions of God's purpose and grace for them and His eternal plan for the church. The believers needed to understand their status *'in Christ'* and the call to live a life worthy of Christ. Ephesians is divided into two halves: chapters 1-3 concern theological issues, while chapters 4-6 deal with the practical outworking of faith.

Having shown God's purpose for the church, Paul shows how God has reconciled individuals to Himself by grace (2:1-10). He has reconciled people to each other by breaking down the barriers through Christ's death (2:11-22). This is the *'mystery'* revealed by Paul (3:1-13) and he shows how Christ's gifts promote unity and maturity (4:1-16). The believer's new life stands in contrast to the old way of life without Christ (4:17-6:20).

The great overarching theme of the letter is that we are rescued by God not just for our personal benefit, but to bring praise and glory to Him in our lives: *'He made known to us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Christ, to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfilment – to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ.'* (1:9,10).

With many thanks to everyone for the continued support of the Dorking Foodbank. Thanks to Sylvie who volunteers at the Foodbank, we always have an up to date list of items they need at this point.

This month:

Tinned potatoes
Coffee
Tinned fruit
Custard
Washing tablets
Chocolate bars



Do you have any plastic carrier bags you can spare? Please do continue to donate non-perishable food, personal hygiene including shampoo, body wash and disposable razors, together with sanitary items, amongst other things. **ALL items are gratefully received.**

'DONATE TEN'

Could you donate ten items to the Foodbank,
or maybe make a direct debit for £10 each month or arrange
a one-off donation?

If you would like to hear more regarding this project
please contact: Revd Liz Richardson - 01306 711260
or Pastoral Assistant Sylvie Beckett on 07711 849338

Editor: Our series on the Nicene Creed concludes this month, as Canon Paul Hardingham considers a bedrock of our Christian belief: that the Church has an eternal future.

The Nicene Creed: The Church and the Future

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

'We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church': The Creed affirms the four marks of the church, defining a truly orthodox Christian community:

one: despite the many different churches and traditions, there is only one Church to which we all belong. *'There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.'* (Galatians 3:28).

holy: the church is a holy community set apart for God (*ekklesia*, lit *'called out'*), whose mission is to reflect God's holiness in worship and live out His love in the world.

catholic: this doesn't refer to the Roman Catholic church, as the word means *'universal'*, reminding us of the unity of the church across the whole world and all denominations.

The church aims to apply the same gospel in whatever situation, context or culture it finds itself.

Apostolic: The apostolic ministry of the church (*'apostolos'*) is one of being sent to communicate the good news of the gospel: *'Therefore go and make disciples of all nations.'* (Matt 28.19).

'We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins': As baptism is a sign of belonging to the church, it can only happen once. The issue addressed in the Creed is that of Christians who left during persecution, but wanted to be accepted back by rebaptism. It affirms the principle *'one Lord, one faith, one baptism'* (Ephesians 4:5). Today, those baptised as children, theologically can't be re-baptised to demonstrate an adult commitment. However, they can be confirmed or reaffirm their baptism vows.

'We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come': The Creed ends with a statement of hope, that we will share in Jesus' resurrection life after death.

It is not simply about the immortality of our soul, but the resurrection of our bodies. They will be transformed to fit us for life of heaven for eternity: *'The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable...it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body.'* (1 Corinthians 15:42-44).

Capel Church Teas 2025

At St John the Baptist, Capel

From 3:00 to 5:00 pm

Sunday 2nd November - All Soul's Day

Service at 3pm * **Teas start at 4pm**

Sunday 30th November

First Sunday of Advent

in aid of The Friends of St John the Baptist, Capel

Book Reviews

The Art of Scripture

Featuring Words of the King James Bible & 100 Paintings from National Gallery Collection
By The National Gallery, Lion Books, £19.99

A beautifully presented anthology of famous scenes and timeless wisdom from the King James Bible, featuring 100 masterpieces from the National Gallery, London

From the majesty of Genesis to the mystery of Revelation, the Bible contains some of the world's most powerful stories and sublime wisdom. It is also the inspiration for some of the greatest pictures ever painted.

Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, Moses and the exodus from Egypt, Samson betrayed by Delilah, David slaying Goliath, the beauty of Bathsheba, the wisdom of Solomon: these are among the dramatic scenes and memorable characters in the Old Testament, portrayed here by artists such as Poussin, Rembrandt and Rubens.

In the New Testament, the figure of Jesus takes centre stage, with his compelling parables and miracles depicted by artists such as Caravaggio, Duccio, El Greco, Raphael, Titian and Velazquez.

Together, these words and paintings convey a profound sense of the sacred. Both may go back many hundreds of years, and yet they still have the power to move and inspire us today.

A Season of Silence - Deep Listening in a Noisy World

By Joshua Rey, Canterbury Press. £12.99

In the midst of our noisy, fast-paced world, finding moments of stillness can seem impossible, and the idea of staying silent, perhaps even a little daunting. Yet, these moments are where true peace and spiritual depth reside.

A Season of Silence invites you to embark on a transformative journey through the practice of silent, listening prayer. Over 40 days, this book offers daily steps that will gradually and gently guide you into a richer and deeper experience of contemplative silence.

Each day offers a short reflection, a thought-provoking quotation from the Bible and other wisdom sources, and practical exercises to help you as you begin to cultivate a lifelong habit of contemplative silence. This isn't just about quieting external noise - it's about fostering an inner stillness that continues to resonate throughout your daily activities, bringing clarity, peace, and a profound sense of presence.

A Year to Slow Down - a Christian guide to embracing handmade & homegrown **By Rachel Bearn, Form, £14.99**

Rachel Bearn shares her own experience of how reducing her pace helped her begin to heal from severe chronic illness and connect deeper with her faith. Over 12 months she shares the benefits of living slowly, quietly and in the present moment, dependent on God and God alone - as He always intended for us.

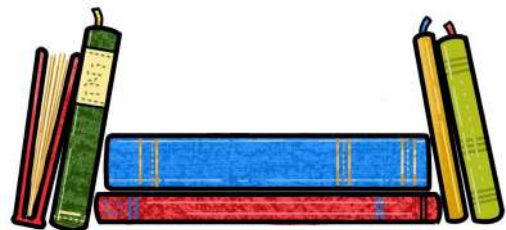
This is a practical guidebook that takes readers through the four seasons of the year, incorporating the festivals and celebrations that have punctuated the Christian calendar for generations and encouraging you to live seasonally and in the moment.

All Is Not Loss - the Spirituality of Grief **By Duncan Maclaren, Canterbury Press, £12.99**

Grief is not a rare visitor - it is a quiet companion, woven into the fabric of everyday life. From birth to death, loss shadows us, often just beneath the surface. In this deeply compassionate book, Duncan MacLaren explores the many faces of grief - not only bereavement, but also the quieter sorrows of parting, regret, failure, nostalgia, and shame.

With insight and sensitivity, he invites us to reconsider grief not as a sign of a broken world, but as a doorway to deeper connection, understanding, and spiritual growth. Ten chapters examine aspects of loss that are widely recognised: parting, regret, nostalgia, failure, bereavement, shame, ageing, dependence, mortality, and disenchantment.

Far from offering easy answers, *All is Not Loss* draws on the lived experiences of those who have been profoundly marked by loss - and yet have found their lives unexpectedly expanded. MacLaren offers a hopeful vision: that even in our pain, we may discover that all is not lost.



New Westminster Declaration on Christianity in public life

A declaration that “Christian truth and values” belong at the heart of public life in the UK has been recently launched, in the hope that it will attract 100,000 signatures and trigger a debate in Parliament.

The 2025 Westminster Declaration argues for the importance of heterosexual marriage and the “complementarity of men and women”. It also offers warnings about “cancel culture” and artificial intelligence (AI) unchecked by moral reflection.

“By ignoring Britain’s Christian heritage we have endangered human life, weakened society, and created a fragmented nation uncoupled from its formative traditions, and without a unifying vision for its future,” the declaration says.

The declaration also upholds freedom to express religious beliefs, and condemns abortion and assisted dying as “contrary to Christian belief, and alien to a civilised society”.

Supporters have been invited to sign the 2025 Westminster Declaration online. Among speakers at the launch were the theologian and Anglican priest Lord Biggar; and the former MP and Prime Minister’s Special Envoy for Freedom of Religion or Belief Fiona Bruce.

More info at: <https://www.2025westminsterdeclaration.org/declaration>

Tim Lenton looks back on an internationally loved composer of light opera.

Arthur Sullivan – of Gilbert and Sullivan

Some 125 years ago, on 22nd November 1900, Arthur Sullivan, the British composer, died. Best known for his collaborations with the dramatist W S Gilbert on light operas including *HMS Pinafore* and *The Pirates of Penzance*, he also wrote the music to the hymn *Onward, Christian Soldiers*.

Sullivan was born in 1832 in Lambeth. His Irish-born father Thomas was a military bandmaster, clarinettist and music teacher who, from 1845 to 1857 was based at the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, where his son became proficient on many of the band’s instruments and composed an anthem, *By the Waters of Babylon*, when he was eight.

Arthur was drawn to classical and spiritual music of various kinds, and his huge success with Gilbert was awkward for him, as he often felt – encouraged by certain reviewers and others – that he was “capable of higher art”. He was knighted by Queen Victoria in 1883, and the musical establishment felt this should end his involvement with comic opera.

Sullivan was inclined to agree, but he was also aware of the quality - and popularity - of his work with Gilbert. He had told an American reporter in 1879: “His ideas are as suggestive for music as they are quaint and laughable. His numbers ... always give me musical ideas.”

By 1885 the duo had completed *The Mikado*, their most successful work, which ran for 672 performances.

Sullivan never married, though he had close relationships with a number of women, including the American socialite and singer Fanny Ronalds. He was devoted to his mother and also to his nephews and nieces after his brother Fred died at an early age.

Persistent kidney disease often meant that Sullivan had to conduct sitting down. He died of heart failure following bronchitis. His *Te Deum Laudamus* was performed posthumously.





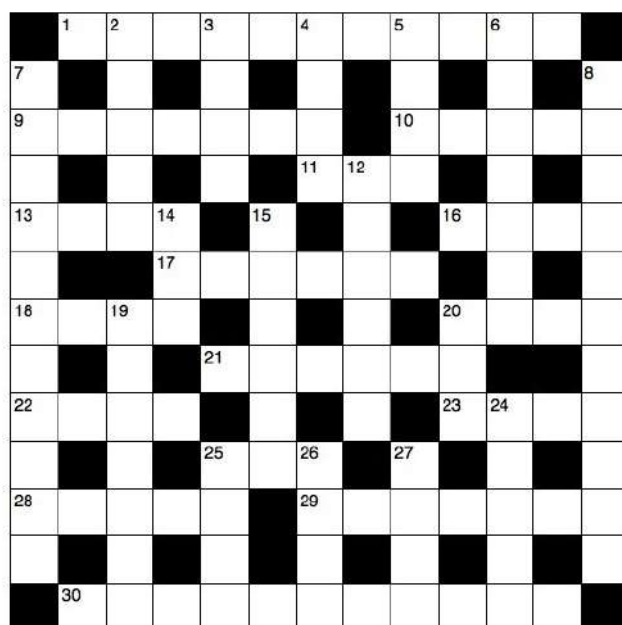
CROSSWORD

Across

- 1 The sixth disciple (Matthew 10:3) (11)
9 'And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the — — ' (Matthew 6:13) (4,3)
10 Love intensely (Song of Songs 1:4) (5)
11 From Mt Carmel to Jezreel, Elijah — all the way (1 Kings 18:46) (3)
13 One of the Midianite leaders who was captured and killed after Gideon's victory in the valley near Moreh (Judges 7:25) (4)
16 Metallic element (4)
17 At line (anag.) (6)
18 'Cursed is everyone who is — on a tree' (Galatians 3:13) (4)
20 Where Samson killed a thousand Philistines with a donkey's jawbone (Judges 15:14) (4)
21 He succeeded Moses (Deuteronomy 34:9) (6)
22 'When he saw him, he took — on him' (Luke 10:33) (4)
23 'For — is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction' (Matthew 7:13) (4)
25 'The god of this — has blinded the minds of unbelievers' (2 Corinthians 4:4) (3)
28 Fear or terror (Psalm 31:22) (5)
29 'We, who are many, are one body, for we all — of the one loaf' (1 Corinthians 10:17) (7)
30 Assyrian ruler assassinated by his sons while worshipping his god Nisroch (2 Kings 19:37) (11)

Down

- 2 'For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made — ' (1 Corinthians 15:22) (5)
3 'After supper he — the cup' (1 Corinthians 11:25) (4)
4 The request of a man of Macedonia in Paul's vision: 'Come — to Macedonia and help us' (Acts 16:9) (4)
5 He disobeyed his father Judah by refusing to impregnate his dead brother's wife (Genesis 38:9) (4)
6 I veto me (anag.) (7)
7 Fourth king of Judah (1 Kings 15:24) (11)
8 Priest of God Most High, who blessed Abram (Genesis 14:18) (11)
12 'I have made you — — for the Gentiles' (Acts 13:47) (1,5)
14 Implore (1 Samuel 15:25) (3)
15 'Out of the eater, something to eat; out of the — , something sweet' (Judges 14:14) (6)
19 'I am the most ignorant of men; I do — — a man's understanding' (Proverbs 30:2) (3,4)
20 'Sin shall not be your master, because you are not under — , but under grace' (Romans 6:14) (3)
24 Native of, say, Baghdad (5)
25 The last word in the Bible (Revelation 22:21) (4)
26 Heroic tale (4)
27 'Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you — ' (John 8:32) (4)



Puzzle solutions on page 30

Advent Reading Ideas

Listening to the Music of the Soul - The Archbishop of York's Advent Book 2025 By Guli Francis-Dehqani, SPCK, £10.99

When it comes to inhabiting life fully, Mary is surely one of our greatest role models. 'My soul magnifies the Lord,' she sings in the Magnificat. Her spirited response to the Angel Gabriel's announcement that she is to bear the Son of God is rich in nuance, contradiction and paradox.

These very characteristics inspire Bishop Guli to make connections between the themes of Advent and her own experiences - and to invite us to do the same.

Bishop Guli's forced exile from her homeland has echoes of the flight into Egypt; the murder of her brother Bahram during the Iranian Revolution of the slaughter of the innocents. She writes intriguingly of how angels continue speaking to us today; how fear can prevent us from living well in the present; how pain and loss can be transformed by the power of beauty.

Deepening its resonance, each chapter is linked to a piece of music, prompting us to consider: what are the enduring melodies that sustain us as the vibrant stories of our lives unfold.

The Jesus Storybook Bible Advent Activity Book - 24 Guided Crafts, plus Games, Songs, Recipes, and More

By Sally Lloyd-Jones, Zondervan, £9.34

This is your guide to a complete and creative celebration of the holiday season, filled with crafts, games, recipes, songs, and activities for every day of Advent. *The Jesus Storybook Bible Advent Activity Book* highlights the significance of the Nativity and meaning of God's most precious gift.

The book is a journey through the Bible stories in both the Old and New Testaments that lead to Christmas. It includes:

24 days of crafts along with songs, recipes, and activities to celebrate Advent, with easy-to-follow step-by-step instructions and colour photos

Variations on the activities to make them appropriate and accessible for all ages and families

A perforated insert with punch-out Jesse Tree ornaments that correspond with the stories of Advent

All supplies needed are commonly found around the house or easy to obtain.

This Christmas, start new holiday traditions with your family with *The Jesus Storybook Bible Advent Activity Book*, based on the bestselling *The Jesus Storybook Bible*, with over six million copies sold.

Easy Sudoku

5	2			4			7
	3	9		8			
4	8	7	6				
7			2	6		4	1
9		1			3		2
8	4		3	1			
				2	7	1	8
				1	4	9	
6			9			3	5

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Medium Sudoku

2		5				8		
			6	5	3			
9							6	
			4		6			1
3								4
7			2		9			
	2							9
			5	7	4			
		4				6		5

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Grave certainties

As a bagpiper, I play many gigs. Recently I was asked by a funeral director to play at a graveside service for a homeless man with no family or friends. The service was to be at a cemetery some distance away. As I was not familiar with the area, I got lost and finally arrived an hour late. The funeral director and hearse were long gone. There were only the diggers left and they were eating lunch. I went to the side of the grave and looked down. The lid was partially covered with soil. The diggers stared at me over their sandwiches, and I sensed their reproach that I had deserted this dead man in his final hour of need. I didn't know what else to do, so I started to play.

The diggers looked quite startled at this, and put down their lunches. But they stood quietly enough while I played out my heart and soul for this man with no family and friends. And as I played 'Amazing Grace,' the workers began to weep. They wept, I wept, we all wept together.

When I finished, I packed up my bagpipes and started for my car. Though my head hung low, my heart was full. As I opened the door to my car, I heard one of the workers say, "I never seen nothin' like that before, and I've been putting in septic tanks for twenty years."

Apparently, I'm still lost....

Hear, hear

A very deaf elderly man was finally fitted out with a hearing aid that really worked. A month later his doctor called him in for a check-up. "Your family must be really pleased that you can hear again."

The gentleman replied, "Oh, I haven't told my family yet. I just sit around and listen to the conversations. I've changed my will three times!"



Tickets on sale in November

'Queen Elizabeth II: Her Life in Style' will be at The King's Gallery, Buckingham Palace, from spring to autumn 2026. Exhibition of Queen Elizabeth II's wedding dress and fashion to celebrate centenary of her birth.

Next year, the largest-ever exhibition of Queen Elizabeth II's clothes will be staged at Buckingham Palace, in honour of the centenary of her birth. ***Queen Elizabeth II: Her Life in Style***, will include some 200 items – around half of which is to be displayed for the first time.

As well as clothing, jewellery, hats, shoes, and accessories, there will also be design sketches, fabric samples and handwritten notes that give a glimpse of the process involved in dressing the late Queen for her many public appearances. Caroline de Guitaut, the exhibition curator and surveyor of the King's Works of Art, said: "Her distinctive style became instantly recognisable around the world, bolstering the British fashion industry and influencing generations of designers and couturiers."

The exhibition will include her wedding dress from 1947, her Coronation dress from 1953, and a number of the formal evening dresses she wore for banquets and visiting Heads of State. But there will also be the riding jackets, tartan skirts and silk headscarves that made up her well-known practical everyday style.

Puzzle Solutions

Sudoku Easy Solution

5	2	6	1	3	4	9	8	7
1	3	9	7	8	5	6	2	4
4	8	7	6	2	9	1	5	3
7	5	3	2	9	6	8	4	1
9	6	1	4	5	8	3	7	2
8	4	2	3	7	1	5	6	9
3	9	4	5	6	2	7	1	8
2	7	5	8	1	3	4	9	6
6	1	8	9	4	7	2	3	5

Sudoku Medium solution

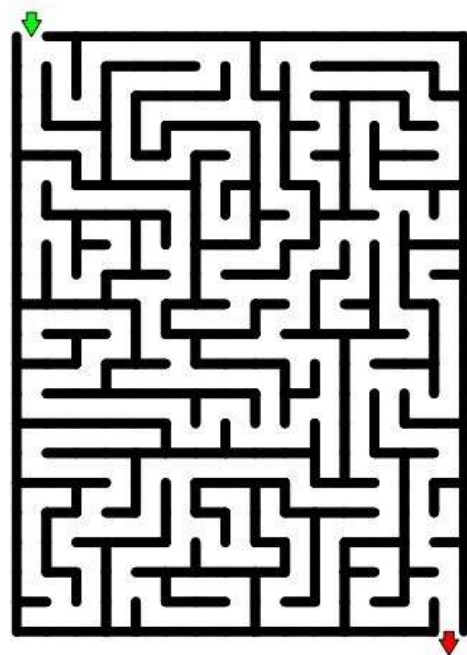
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4	8	7	6	5	3	9	1	2
9	1	3	8	4	2	5	6	7
8	5	2	4	3	6	7	9	1
3	9	6	7	1	5	2	8	4
7	4	1	2	8	9	3	5	6
5	2	8	3	6	1	4	7	9
6	3	9	5	7	4	1	2	8
1	7	4	9	2	8	6	3	5

Crossword Solution

ACROSS: 1. Bartholomew. 9, Evil one. 10, Adore. 11, Ran. 13, Oreb. 16, Zinc. 17, Entail. 18, Hung. 20, Lehi. 21, Joshua. 22, Pity. 23, Wide. 25, Age. 28, Alarm. 29, Partake. 30, Sennacherib.

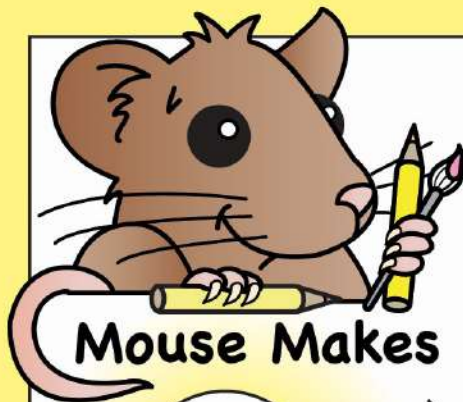
DOWN: 2, Alive. 3, Took. 4, Over. 5, Onan. 6, Emotive. 7, Jehoshaphat. 8, Melchizedek. 12, A light. 14, Beg. 15, Strong. 19, Not have. 20, Law. 24, Iraqi. 25, Amen. 26, Epic. 27, Free.

Can you find your way out of the maze?



The boiler only worked if the
Verger switched it on

Junior InSpire

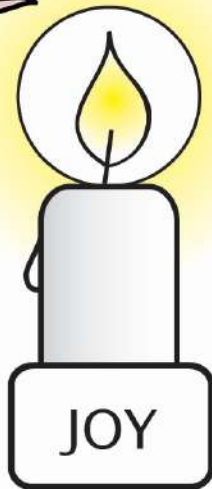


LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS

Advent Sunday this year falls on 30th November.

ADVENT is a time to celebrate the ARRIVAL of Jesus, God's Son, our Saviour.

We look forward with HOPE, we give thanks for God's LOVE and the PEACE and JOY we have in Jesus.



Read:
LUKE 2:10-11
Who is 'God's news of great joy' for?



Read:
John 3:16
How did God show He loves us?



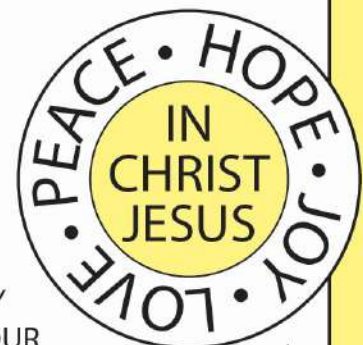
Read:
Isaiah 40:5
What shall be revealed?



Read:
Romans 5:1-2
Through who do we have peace with God?

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

ADVENT • ARRIVAL • HOPE • JOY • LOVE • PEACE • GOD • GLORY
MESSAGE • PROMISE • PROPHECY • FORETOLD • JESUS • SAVIOUR
CHRIST • GIFT • GOOD NEWS • RETURN • CANDLE • LIGHT



There is some more information on Bethlehem Baubles on page 21 in the Editor's Letter. Leaflets will be in both churches soon.

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