

February and  
March 2026



# GRIDIRON

The Magazine of the Parish Church of  
Saint Laurence Upminster

£1



... that your fasting may not be seen by others but by your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

*Matthew 6:18 ESV*

## Service Times

*The service schedule may change at short notice. Please refer to Porchtalk or contact the Parish Office for up-to-date information.*

Sundays	Weekdays
Holy Communion 08.00	Wednesday Morning Prayer 08.45
Sung Parish Mass 09.30	Mass 11.00
Sunday Schools 09.30	Evening Prayer 16.15
Evensong 18.30 <i>(see Parish Diary for details)</i>	

### Footsteps

This Service for pre-school children and grown-ups normally takes place monthly on a Monday at 09.30 in the Lady Chapel. The next services are on **23rd February and 23rd March**.



***Additional services on Saints' Days are shown in the Diary in the back pages.***

<b>Baptisms and Wedding Banns</b>	These are administered during public services. Please contact the Parish Office to make arrangements.
<b>Confessions</b>	By appointment with the clergy.

**Please inform the Parish Office or Revd Susannah of anyone who is ill or in need of a pastoral visit.**

***See back pages for useful telephone contact numbers***

**[www.upminsterparish.co.uk](http://www.upminsterparish.co.uk)**

**Parish Office 01708 220696**

**[parish.office@upminsterparish.co.uk](mailto:parish.office@upminsterparish.co.uk)**

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## From the Editors

It is a strange feeling to be compiling the February and March magazine at the start of January and including all that happened in December. So *much* happens during Advent and then we arrive at Christmas Day and it all seems to just stop. It feels like such an extensive build up, where everyone is running around in a state of harried busyness all leading up to this amazing, life-changing event, and, then we all go home and there is... well... nothing...?

Surely though, that's not it? Surely there is more? Surely we should be filled with joy and wonder and feel enlivened and sustained?

That, for me at least, is the challenge. I find myself bemoaning and resisting our modern-day Christmassy preparations - shopping, decorations, films, concerts, etc. - and wanting nothing more than for it all to just go away. Yet, when I wake on Christmas morning I *do* feel that comforting peace. I *do* feel that protection which came down to earth at Jesus' nativity. And, no matter how you spent your Christmas Day, I hope you felt it, too, and will continue to feel it well into the year.

*Joanne Chapman, Editor*

## From the Parish Registers

### BAPTISM

*We welcome into the family of the church and pray for:*

30th Nov            Matilda and Louis Goodhall



### FUNERAL

*We offer our deepest sympathy to the family and friends of:*

24th Nov            Barbara Kathleen Izzard

19th Dec            Nigel John Fergusson

## April and May Magazine Deadline

Items for inclusion in the April and May edition of *Gridiron* should reach the editorial team by **Friday 6th March**. We would prefer to receive items by e-mail at [gridiron@upminsterparish.co.uk](mailto:gridiron@upminsterparish.co.uk). Paper copy is acceptable but should be submitted to us as early as possible. The April and May Magazine will be on sale from **Sunday 29th March**.



## From the Rector

As you read this we will, once again, be approaching Lent. Each year, I find I have to remind myself of the breadth of what Lent encompasses, and of what lies at its heart. Many of us have grown up with the prevailing image of Lent being about 'giving up', about denying ourselves things we like, about seriousness and self-discipline. Of course that is all valid, on one level; Lent is a season for self-examination, for being attentive to habits and behaviours that may need to be addressed, for giving up of one kind or another in order to focus our minds upon God.

But the popular generalisation that Lent is about 'giving things up' is only half the story; the disciplines or practices mentioned above are ultimately not an end in themselves, but are about turning us back towards God. So as well as being a season of denial, of discipline and of seriousness, Lent is also where we rediscover the essence of our relationship with God – and thus where we can also rediscover joy, beauty, peace and profound meaning. It is a season which asks us to return to what is most fundamental, and in doing so to know ourselves loved, forgiven, and given new impetus to live well in communion with God and with our neighbours.

There are aspects of turning back to God which can be searching or painful, certainly, but it can also be a deeply comforting experience. I recently discovered a poem by D.H. Lawrence which expresses this wonderfully clearly – and which will resonate particularly with the cat-lovers among you:

*Pax – D.H. Lawrence*

*All that matters is to be at one with the living God  
to be a creature in the house of the God of Life.*

*Like a cat asleep on a chair  
at peace, in peace  
and at one with the master of the house, with the mistress,  
at home, at home in the house of the living,  
sleeping on the hearth, and yawning before the fire.*

*Sleeping on the hearth of the living world  
yawning at home before the fire of life*

*feeling the presence of the living God  
like a great reassurance  
a deep calm in the heart  
a presence  
as of the master sitting at the board  
in his own and greater being,  
in the house of life.*

I look forward to our Lenten journey together and hope that this peace can be found at its heart. Details of our Lent course, services in Lent and our Holy Week and Easter services will all be available in *Porchtalk*.

With my prayers and best wishes  
Susannah

## We Welcome All Ages

*by David Pickup*

Come and see what God has done,  
His awesome deeds for everyone!

*Psalm 66: 5*

Someone quite unexpected came to one of our church's services recently. It was so exciting to see a newcomer.



What I mean is he was not only someone new, but he was also quite young. By young, he was a lot younger than me (though that is not difficult). He came to the service which is 'meant' for older people, and even so, he seemed to enjoy it. I was able to tweak the sermon and explain each part of the service. He has been back to church a few times since then. It is good to see new faces.

We are fortunate to have a good range of different types of service. Some are traditional prayerbook ones and others are more modern. I am not sure why they are often tied into various age groups. Sometimes we get children at evensong and mature folk at family services. I do not really like the phrase 'All Age Services', as these often turn out to be for one age group only.

All people are very welcome to all our services, and we encourage them to try out different styles of worship and see what works for them. Each service should be 'all age'.

*(NB: The church mentioned above is not St Laurence. Article sourced from Parish Pump.)*

# Summary of PCC Meeting held on 10th November 2025



It was decided that the monetary donations from the Crib Services should go half to church funds and half to First Step. The tree presents would go to the usual three charities. Charity of the Month suggestions were discussed. A list for 2026 was drawn up with the exception of August, September and October which would be decided later. The Lent Charity would be Meningitis Now.

Dates for PCC and CM&FG meetings in 2026/2027 were agreed. The APCM would be held on 19th April in 2026 and on 18th April in 2027.

Following clarification from the Diocese on the question of employing an Associate Priest, it was decided to seek a house-for-duty priest. It was hoped to advertise the post in the New Year.

Ben Clayton's appointment as Independent Examiner was agreed.

The Quinquennial Inspection has been carried out. The report is awaited but no major concerns are expected.

Alan Butcher has decided to stand down as sacristan. There will be an opportunity to thank him for his many years of service on 23rd November. Michael Masterson has kindly agreed to take on this role.

Reports were given on finances, communications, safeguarding and all matters affecting the life of the church. Items which received attention included:

- Home Office funding for security for places of worship
- Allocation of legacy funds
- Salaries
- Church fees
- Lone working security
- Minor Hall flooring
- Latest position on Scout/Guide storage huts
- Replacement battery pack for defibrillator
- Gutter clearance
- Replacing damaged covering on noticeboards

# A Year as Master of the Ancient Society of College Youths

by Tony Bloomfield

Some of you may know that I have been a bell-ringer for many years, having learned at Dagenham Parish Church as a teenager, taught by my dad. I met Julie in the ringing room at St Andrew's, Hornchurch and this is still a hobby we share every week. Although we do not yet have bells hung for full circle at St Laurence, you will often see me down at the back of the church chiming our historic bells for service.

Back in November 2023 I was elected a Junior Steward of the Ancient Society of College Youths (ASCY), the start of a 3-year spell of being an officer, finally being elected Master in November 2025 until November 2026. But who are the ASCY, and what do I do?

## So what is the ASCY?

Until the 16th century, church bells were crudely swung to make the necessary chiming noises to bring people to worship at the appropriate time. Many churches had no more than three or four bells hung this way, including St Laurence here in Upminster. However, some probably bored and competitive bright young men in London started to figure out that by using a full wheel you can control a bell to the balance point to enable greater control, and from that ring ever more interesting, complex and musical patterns. So, change ringing, turning a bell full-circle on a wheel, came about, probably around about 1600 and in 1637 an early club was formed: it was called the Ancient Society of College Youths (for reasons lost in history), and it is one of the first official bell-ringing societies ever formed.



*Photo: Me with my badge and the ASCY's silver mace!*

Most ringers join their local ringing association when they learn and start to develop – e.g. the Essex Association of Change Ringers. However, there are two ‘non-territorial’ societies designed to operate at a more elite level, of which ASCY is the oldest. To become a member you need to have displayed either an excellence in ringing or made

a contribution to ringing over and above the ordinary – so it is an honour to be elected a member. The other elite society is the Society of Royal Cumberland Youths, founded in the 18th century. There is competitive but gentle rivalry between the two societies even today, as you cannot be a member of both! You have to choose which you want to join! There was a key difference between them as ASCY did not allow women until 1999, albeit since then we have had four women Masters (indeed my predecessor is a woman).

The ASCY is based in the City of London but we have a nationwide and international membership probably of over 1,000 members, as far afield as New Zealand, Australia and the USA with the largest gathering at our Annual Dinner each year where more than 300 attend. Our website is [ascy.org.uk](http://ascy.org.uk).

### **So, what do I do?**

Our main feature is our weekly Tuesday night practice at 6.30pm where we rotate each week across our City towers – St Paul's Cathedral, St Mary-le-Bow, St Michael Cornhill, St Giles Cripplegate, Holy Sepulchre without Newgate, St Magnus the Martyr, London Bridge and St Lawrence Jewry. These all have twelve bells, (except for St Lawrence Jewry which has eight), which is still regarded as the maximum number to ring together (there are a couple of sixteens and fourteens but these haven't caught on so much). We even occasionally venture as far as Southwark Cathedral, and we also have one 'out-of-town' practice and this year we are going to Canterbury Cathedral. I am in charge of the practice, placing bands and selecting what we are going to ring and ensuring the highest standard of ringing possible. We normally get 25-30 members each week at these practices. Once a month we have a business meeting as well where we have 2 practices to cater for often 50 or more members who come, and again I arrange this and chair the business meeting. Our meetings take place in the Williamson's Tavern, off Bow Lane, where you will find us on Tuesday nights after 8pm! I get to wear our Master's badge (as seen in the picture) which is a great honour, plus I have the rather nice joy of being addressed as 'Master' for the year!

We also have a number of social and ringing events throughout the year. I am inviting ASCY members for a weekend down in this part of the world in May, with ringing across South Essex and a social evening in Old Leigh-on-Sea. We have a Country Weekend where 100 or so of us will gather and this year I am delighted that I have been invited to host this in Winchester where we will be ringing at the Cathedral as well as churches in the area, finished off by a dinner.

The main event, though, is our Anniversary Dinner (389<sup>th</sup> in November 2026) in a large hotel in the City where over 300 members will gather, along with the clergy at the churches where we ring and I will propose a toast to the church! Then after that I will become Immediate Past Master and be able to relax!

## Deanery Synod

*At this year's Annual Parochial Church Meeting (Sunday 19th April) we will need to elect new Deanery Synod Representatives. In this article, Clive Edwards, who has been a Deanery Synod Rep for over a decade, reflects on his experience of the role. If you think it may be something that you would be interested in doing, please speak to Clive or Susannah.*

The Church of England has a structure unlike any organisation you come across in business. Well, at local level, a Deanery Synod is a representative council in the Church of England that governs the local deanery, or group of parishes. The Havering Deanery Synod consists of clergy and laity and serves to consider church matters, foster community, and act as an intermediary between parishes and the Diocesan Synod. The lay members elect the deanery's representatives to the Diocesan Synod and to the General Synod's House of Laity.

Thus St Laurence is not on its own; it is part of a local network connected to other local networks within the diocese and ultimately across the country and world.

This all sounds rather official but in reality, as St Laurence's Deanery Synod representative, I found it the principal method where communication and awareness of what is happening within the deanery is shared. The candid discussions are a much better way than reading an article where you can't ask the writer questions and neither does the article writer know your view. This is best done with a hot beverage and fortified by biscuits, sometimes cake, and with the companionship of kindred spirits.

The meetings typically take place once a quarter at different churches (including St Edward's School) across the deanery in the evening (7:30 to 9pm). There is a short act of worship which is an interesting and engaging way of experiencing different practices and it breaks the ice. You really do become more aware of the activities of other local churches and learn how they are responding to the pressures of mission and they can learn about St Laurence. Talks from Bishops Guli and Lynne were always rewarding and those from

other organisations, initiatives, charities and the like were interesting, thought-provoking and often humbling.

There has been a tremor within deanery structure, some say an earthquake. The role is now time limited to 3 years and this will ensure fresh engagement is made. The size of St Laurence means that there is the ability to have 3 representatives and don't forget that our clergy (Susannah and any curate and/or associate priest) also attend yet are not time limited!

I found my time far more fulfilling than I expected and I hope that the new representatives have a similar experience. It is right to have these roles, like PCC members and church wardens, time limited and allow things to be mixed up a bit, which hinders any dominance within a parish by individuals who continuously hold on to positions of influence. That benefit comes with the necessity for more individuals to get involved and 'you don't want to look back on your life and realize that you successfully managed to stay out of it.'

## A Lenten Prayer

Disturb us, Lord,  
When we are too well pleased with  
ourselves,  
When our dreams have come true  
Because we have dreamed too little,  
When we arrived safely  
Because we sailed too close to the  
shore.

Disturb us, Lord,  
When with the abundance of things  
we possess  
We have lost our thirst  
For the waters of life;  
Having fallen in love with life,  
We have ceased to dream of  
eternity  
And in our efforts to build a new  
earth,  
We have allowed our vision  
Of the new Heaven to dim.

Disturb us, Lord, to dare more  
boldly,  
To venture on wider seas  
Where storms will show your  
mastery;  
Where losing sight of land,  
We shall find the stars.  
We ask You to push back  
The horizons of our hopes;  
And to push into the future  
In strength, courage, hope,  
and love.

*Attributed to Sir Francis Drake,  
16th Century*

## From the National Churches Trust

One of the issues that the National Churches Trust highlighted in their summary of 2025 has been the alterations and potential abolition of funding for churches from the Listed Places of Worship Grants Scheme (a vital VAT reclaim scheme originally set to expire in March 2025). The National Churches Trust has been in the forefront of campaigning efforts in putting the case forward to urge the UK Government to renew it.

In April 2025 the scheme was renewed for just one year and a devastating cap of £25,000 per church was imposed. This, of course, will have a significant impact on St Laurence Church and the proposed Building Improvement Project we are currently pursuing.

The National Churches Trust report that they will continue to raise the issue with MPs. Many have already spoken out in support of the scheme in Westminster Hall debates and in the media, and referenced its research on why the scheme and investing in churches are so important.

The Department of Culture, Media and Sport have been allocated their budget from central government and it is now up to the DCMS to decide whether or not to renew the scheme.

The Trust thanks everyone who has already written or emailed their MP but urges those who have not to do so now.

Rob Brabner adds: The restriction of the LPoWGS to just £25,000 a year and possible abolition from April will have severe consequences for St Laurence Church and the funding for the Building Improvement Project, so, for members of the congregation who have not yet contacted their MP, please write or email now. It is easy to do and a template letter is available on the National Churches Trust website. The letter can be adapted to mention the St Laurence Building Improvement Project.

*Ed: To find your local MP online visit: [members.parliament.uk/FindYourMP](https://members.parliament.uk/FindYourMP)  
Julia Lopez is MP for Upminster and her website address is: [julialopez.co.uk](http://julialopez.co.uk)  
You can post your letter to Julia at Constituency Office, The Coach House, 133 Hall Lane, Upminster, RM14 1AL.*



# The New Archbishop of Canterbury



Sarah Mullally (née Bowser) was born in Woking, Surrey on 26th March 1962, has two sisters and one brother. She was educated at Winston Churchill Comprehensive School, Woking Sixth Form College and South Bank Polytechnic and Heythrop College, University of London. She has been a Christian since the age of sixteen.

She chose to go into nursing rather than become a doctor as her Christian faith attracted her to the closer involvement with the day-to-day care of patients. She trained at St Thomas' Hospital, Lambeth and served in the cancer care unit there and in other London hospitals. In 1999 she became Chief Nursing Officer and Director of Patient Experience for the NHS. She became an ordained priest in 2002 whilst still working within the NHS.

In 2004 Sarah left the NHS to pursue her calling to the ordained ministry. In 2006 she was awarded the honour of Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire (DBE).

Her ministry began in various London churches then, in 2012, Sarah was appointed Canon Treasurer of Salisbury Cathedral. In 2015 she became a suffragan bishop of Crediton in the diocese of Exeter and her appointment as Bishop of London, the third-ranking bishop in the Church of England, followed in 2018 before she was appointed Archbishop of Canterbury in October 2025.

On her nomination to the See of Canterbury she is quoted as saying 'I intend to be a shepherd, who enables everyone's ministry and vocation to flow, whatever the tradition.'

Sarah Mullally is married to Eamonn, an Irish-born IT and Enterprise Architect who enjoys beekeeping and volunteering as a London tourist guide. They have two adult children: Liam and Grace.

Sarah has dyslexia, so has difficulties with writing and reading. Her hobbies include cooking, walking and pottery. At the age of 63 the appointment is a little surprising as Archbishops (and Bishops) are expected to retire at the age of 70 and, up to now, it was considered that the new appointee should have at least 10 years in the post.



## A Thank You

On Sunday 23rd November, Alan Butcher was presented with a gift in recognition of his more than 30 years service as Sacristan to this Church. His gift was a number of framed photographs of St Laurence Church and was given with sincere appreciation on behalf of the entire congregation.



## Congratulations

On Advent Sunday we celebrated two baptisms and four Admissions to Holy Communion. Please continue to pray for the children who have taken these important steps on their journeys of faith.

## A Happy Birthday

Happy Birthday wishes went to Maria Courtier on Sunday 14th December in celebration of her 70th birthday.



## Christingle

On Sunday 7th December the church filled with members of the uniformed groups and many others for our annual Christingle Service. As usual this was held in support of The Children's Society, for whom we raised £306.01. We sang carols, discussed what it means for Jesus to be the Light of the World, made our



Christingles (putting sweets on cocktail sticks is quite a skill!), offered prayers and took time to reflect on both the work of The Children's Society and our own calling to bring light to those who are enduring difficult times. Many thanks to everyone who helped to prepare supplies for the service, to those who helped run it, to everyone who attended and to everyone who gave donations.



## And A Second Happy Birthday

The Sunday following Maria's birthday we all wished a big 'Happy Birthday' to Carole Billings in celebration of 90th birthday.





## Christmas Eve Crib Services

The two afternoon Crib Services on Christmas Eve remained as busy as ever with around 570 people attending. The community in Upminster came together to celebrate the birth of Jesus, to pray for a kinder world and to bring gifts for children who are living in less fortunate circumstances than themselves. These services are joyful and uplifting with many of our favourite Christmas carols being sung and are visually beautiful from the hundreds of candles that are lit and presented at the crib scene at the main altar.



# The Wheatear

by Michael Blencowe for Sussex Wildlife Trust

It's been a long winter, but rest assured that our summer migrant birds will soon be with us.

As you read this, beating hearts and beating wings are powering tiny bodies through north African skies. Wheatears are our earliest returning African migrants. It's a fast 3,000-mile flight from sub-Saharan Sierra Leone to Sussex for a 1-ounce Wheatear, and they've been recorded migrating at 500 miles a day. The dashing males arrive first, their soft, sun-bleached shades of pink and buff topped with a dapper black bandit's mask.



At Sussex Wildlife Trust's Southerham nature reserve near Lewes, you'll see them scurrying over the grazed downland turf or perched along the valley's fence lines. When they fly, Wheatears flash the white rump which gives them their name. Because Wheatears have nothing to do with wheat or ears. Their original name - well, courtesy prevents me from writing their Old English name in such an upstanding publication - but let's just say they were named after their white behinds. Victorians and vicars birdwatching in mixed company blushed when they were called upon to identify one, so their name was subtly censored.

Wheatear is a more palatable name for a tragically palatable bird. In Sussex, Wheatears were considered a local delicacy and were served at the finest banquets in Lewes, Brighton and Eastbourne. Sussex shepherds would trap them to increase their income; in the late 19th Century the birds fetched 3/6d a dozen (£17.50 today). Shepherds could earn £14 per season (£1,260 today) trapping Wheatears - half their annual wage. Around the town, shepherds were eventually banned from trapping Wheatears as it distracted them from their sheep. Gluttonous gourmets were so desperate for fresh Wheatear that they would prowl the downs and take birds straight from unmanned traps, leaving a pile of coins for the shepherds.

In 1900, outspoken and outraged Sussex conservationist W.H. Hudson wrote, 'It is not fair that Wheatears should be killed merely to enable London stockbrokers, sporting men, and other gorgeous persons who visit the coast, accompanied by ladies with yellow hair, to feed on them at the big Brighton hotels.'

But the damage was done. Trapping and the gradual loss of their sheep-grazed



downland habitat caused the birds to disappear from the Sussex downs. The Wheatears we now see around Lewes unsurprisingly don't hang around. Each spring they briefly return to their old downland haunts, flash their behinds at the people of Sussex and keep on moving.

From Lewes, they'll head onwards to breeding sites in northern England and northern Europe. But for some of these birds, their amazing migration continues for a further 2,000 miles across cold oceans to Greenland and Arctic Canada.

## **The Unbearable Lightness of Being**

*by Rebecca Pippert*

Milos Kundera, a Czech author, wrote a novel agreeing with Nietzsche that it makes no sense to claim moral meaning in a world without God. Without God, Kundera says, our condition is at best: 'The Unbearable Lightness of Being' the title of his brilliant novel.

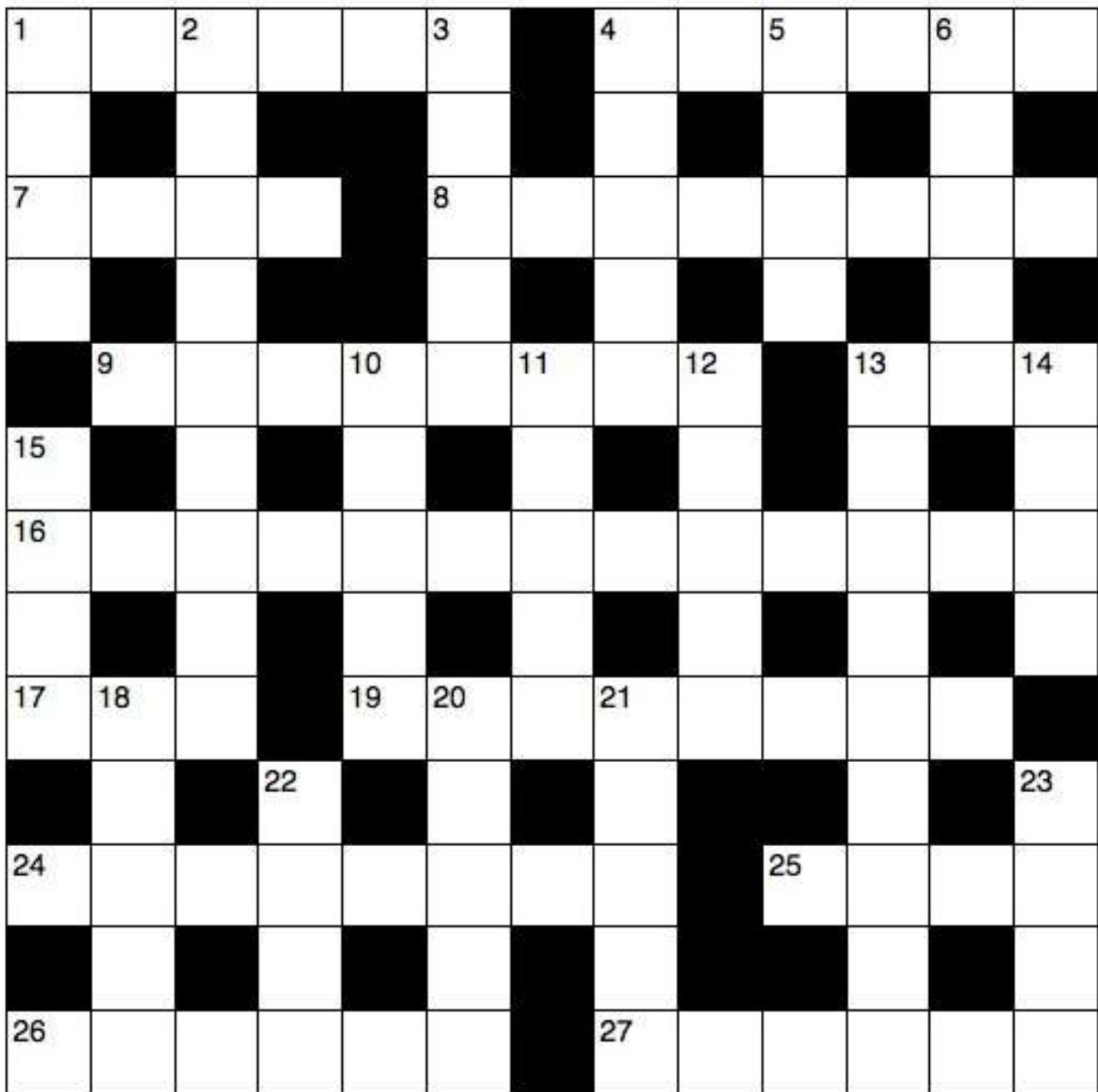
The writer of Psalm One agrees! Without God, he says, we are like the chaff over corn that is so light, it is weightless. But he adds, the person who knows God is like 'a tree planted by the streams of water which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither.' God's intention is to make us like trees that grow near the ocean. They are strong because they have endured gale force winds. Consequently their roots grow deep and their branches are sturdy.

We wonder if surrendering our lives to God will make us boring and dull. But the Bible reveals that knowing God gives us lives bursting with vitality! Yes, life is difficult. But instead of blaming God for our difficulties, let's turn to God for help – for that will make all the difference. The real surprise in the biblical story, is God. The God who seeks us. The God who sent his son, Jesus. The God who loves us. The God who will not let us go.

When we read the biblical story of David, we see a man so utterly human. He danced, he cried, he made mistakes and he loved God with every fibre of his being. And what was God's verdict on David's passionate expression of humanity and faith? He said: 'Now there's a man after my own heart.'

Oh Lord, create in us a new heart and give us a heart like yours. Amen.

Rebecca Pippert is an author and international Christian speaker who lectures on spiritual renewal, evangelism and character formation for church conferences, school, colleges and pastoral training seminars. Article sourced from 'Prayer for The Day' broadcast on Radio 4 on 27th November 2015 - by arrangement with the BBC - by Watlins Media Ltd copyright 2016



### Across

- 1 'If you love those who love you, what — is that to you?' (Luke 6:32) (6)
- 4 'They threw the ship's — overboard' (Acts 27:19) (6)
- 7 The first murderer (Genesis 4:8) (4)
- 8 He was the head Levite in charge of the singing when the ark of God was brought back to Jerusalem (1 Chronicles 15:22) (8)
- 9 Samson was noted for this (Judges 16:6) (8)
- 13 Solicit money or food from passers-by (Acts 3:2) (3)
- 16 What William Booth's Christian Mission became in 1878 (9,4)
- 17 Alliance of Religions and Conservation (1,1,1)
- 19 'I will praise your name for ever and ever. — — I will praise you' (Psalm 145:1–2) (5,3)
- 24 Simon had (anag.) (8)

- 25 Desperate (Deuteronomy 28:48) (4)
- 26 Elisha witnessed the boy he was seeking to resuscitate do this seven times before opening his eyes (2 Kings 4:35) (6)
- 27 The belly and thighs of the statue in Nebuchadnezzar's dream were made of this (Daniel 2:32) (6)

## Down

- 1 'Before the — crows, you will disown me three times' (Matthew 26:75) (4)
- 2 Relating to the books of the Bible between Acts and Revelation (9)
- 3 'They have — the Lord out of the tomb, and we don't know where they have put him!' (John 20:2) (5)
- 4 Belief (5)
- 5 'Take the following fine spices: ... 250 shekels of fragrant — ' (Exodus 30:23) (4)
- 6 'Do not — Jerusalem, but wait for the gift' (Acts 1:4) (5)
- 10 A seer (anag.) (5)
- 11 'Even there your hand will — me' (Psalm 139:10) (5)
- 12 The wild variety was part of John the Baptist's diet (Mark 1:6) (5)
- 13 A non-Greek speaker who was looked down on by civilized people (Colossians 3:11) (9)
- 14 Famous 1950s musical whose characters included members of 16 Across, — and Dolls (4)
- 15 The province from which Paul wrote to the Corinthians (1 Corinthians 16:19) (4)
- 18 'He was standing in the gateway with a linen cord and a measuring — — his hand' (Ezekiel 40:3) (3,2)
- 20 'Today, if you hear his — , do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion' (Hebrews 3:15) (5)
- 21 The Jericho prostitute who hid two Israelite spies on the roof of her house (Hebrews 11:31) (5)
- 22 'And now these three remain: faith, — and love. But the greatest of these is love' (1 Corinthians 13:13) (4)
- 23 'God has numbered the days of your reign and brought it to an end' (Daniel 5:26) (4)

**DECEMBER & JANUARY ANSWERS: ACROSS:** 1 Tabernacle, 7 Absalom, 8 Incas, 10 Roes, 11 Captured, 13 Fright, 15 Cavell, 17 Cyclonic, 18 Herb, 21 Sonar, 22 Amazing, 23 Settlement, **DOWN:** 1 Taste, 2 Bold, 3 Ramiah, 4 Abiathar, 5 Lucerne, 6 Sacrifices, 9 Saddlebags, 12 Theocrat, 14 Incense, 16 Pilate, 19 Exist, 20 Save.

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# All Saints' Church, Norton Mandeville

by Rob Brabner

This is a small, attractive village church just eight miles west of Chelmsford, yet in a remote location and with just one road leading to the church and village. This is one of three churches comprising the parish of High Ongar, the two other being St Mary, High Ongar and St James, Marden Ash.



The name Mandeville originated from a village in Normandy. Geoffrey de Mandeville landed with William the Conqueror and Geoffrey's grandson was to become the first Earl of Essex.

All Saints is small church situated on the edge of busy farmland and has a simple design with nave, chancel, south porch and a weatherboarded bell turret at the west end.

The church is believed to have been built in the 12th century and the font also seems to date from that time. There is also much 14th-century work in the walls with a mixture of flint rubble and block freestone. The bell turret is late 14th or early 15th century and it holds one bell dated '1872 by John Warne and Son of London'. It replaced an earlier 18th-century bell.

The churchyard has had a lot of work carried out in recent years to encourage wildlife and provides a most attractive setting for the church. Those that look after this church and churchyard should be commended for all the work that has provided an excellent setting.



All Saints has always been a small living. In 1769 the curate received £6 for the entire year and held a service once a month for a congregation of six or seven. By 1810 the curate's income had risen to £94 and in 1853 the congregation was estimated at around fifty. Today the monthly service has attendances of between twenty-five to thirty people.

# The Teacher's Report

By Mark Coffey

As a teacher I seem to be on a treadmill report writing. Glowing reports cluttered with compliments are the easy ones to polish off. It's finding the words to give a tactful kick up the backside that takes the time. Yet help is at hand in the published reports of the great and the good of the past. Philosopher A. J. Ayer's form master from Eton wrote on his reports: 'A bumptious, aggressive, difficult boy too pleased with his own cleverness.' Paddy Ashdown's games teacher remarked that he was 'a good fellow, if a bit excessively Irish at times.'

One report written in the school I presently teach at - The Manchester Grammar School - dates back to 1946. 'Though he seems to view his schoolmasters with amused and Olympian contempt,' wrote the boy's form master, 'the present illusion of a superior mind is usually shattered by a display of abominable ignorance. He is a lazy observer and lazy in acquiring the solid factual foundation of knowledge.' The pupil was a certain John Polanyi. He went on to be a Nobel Prize-winning chemist.

When I began as a teacher, they had a phrase: 'Catch them being good.' It meant, don't write any student off. Don't blame and anticipate failure. Expect and encourage achievement. It can become a self-fulfilling prophecy. And you never know, it might become their surgical scalpel I fall under, or their political whims that govern the country in my retirement. So, it's important to praise loudly - and blame softly.

*Gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love, thank You that You treat us with compassion and not as our sins deserve. Help us this day to be eager to encourage and slow to point the finger of blame. Amen.*

Article sourced from 'Prayer for the Day Volume II' published by Watkins Media Ltd in 2016 for the BBC and first broadcast on Radio 4 on January 14th 2008.

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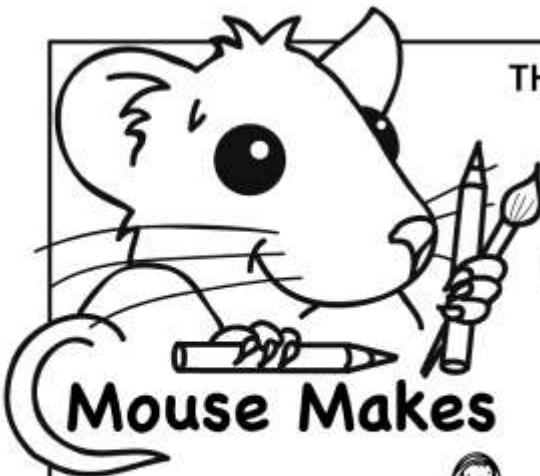
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Read the story in  
Luke 4:1-13



## SECOND TEMPTATION

THE  
DEVIL SAID:

"I will give you power  
and wealth if you worship me."

JESUS REPLIED:  
"Worship the Lord your God  
and serve only Him."

Read Deuteronomy 6:13

WE LEARN:  
Put God first  
Worship only Him.

①

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

JESUS • BAPTISED • RIVER • JORDAN • HOLY SPIRIT • LED  
WILDERNESS • DESERT • FORTY DAYS • HUNGRY • DEVIL  
TEMPTATION • STONE • BREAD • WRITTEN • SON • WORLD  
KINGDOMS • GLORY • WORSHIP • SERVE • GOD • HIGH  
JERUSALEM • TEMPLE • SON • JUMP • DOWN • LIFT • FOOT • LORD • TEST • LENT

## THE TEMPTATION OF JESUS

After Jesus was baptised in the River Jordan where did the Holy Spirit lead him to? v1

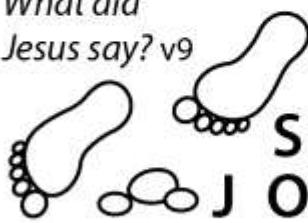
How many days was Jesus being tempted by the devil? v2

What did Jesus eat? v2

What did the devil tempt Jesus to turn a stone into?  
What did Jesus say? v3-4

What did the devil offer Jesus if He worshipped him?  
What did Jesus say? v7-8

What did the devil ask Jesus to do?  
What did Jesus say? v9



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



## THIRD TEMPTATION

THE  
DEVIL SAID:

"If you are God's Son throw yourself down, the scriptures say God will take care of you."

JESUS REPLIED:  
"Do not put the Lord your God to the test."

Read Deuteronomy 6:16

WE LEARN:  
God cares, trust  
Him do not test Him.



## February and March (Lent) Charity of the Month - Meningitis Now

Meningitis is the inflammation of the membranes that surround and protect the brain and spinal cord. Some bacteria that cause meningitis can also cause septicaemia (blood poisoning).



Key facts about meningitis:

- Meningitis can affect anyone of any age
- Meningitis can kill
- Meningitis can cause long-term after-effects
- Viral and bacterial are the most common causes of meningitis
- No vaccine provides 100% protection against meningitis
- Early signs and symptoms can appear similar to 'flu' or a stomach bug

Meningitis Now is the first meningitis patient group in the world, founders of the meningitis movement and the only charity dedicated to fighting meningitis in the UK. Over their 30 year history they have invested over £12.7m in early stage research that has played a critical part in the introduction of five life-saving vaccines.

Priorities for your donation money are:

- Supporting research that finds new and enhances existing vaccines to save lives and prevent disability.
- Specialist support to help rebuild lives and ensure no-one has to face meningitis alone.
- Lives are saved through awareness and education, giving people the knowledge and confidence to say 'I suspect meningitis' - fast action saves lives.
- Campaigning for the introduction of licensed vaccines as soon as they are available in the UK, because time lost is lives lost.

To be here for everyone affected by meningitis, to spread lifesaving awareness about the disease and fund research into it, they need over £3 million every year. Without any central Government funding they rely on people like you to help them raise it.

# Parish Diary for February

See inside front cover for regular Sunday service times

Sun	1st	<b>4th Sunday of Epiphany, Presentation of Christ in the Temple, 6.30pm Choral Evensong and Benediction</b>
Tues	3rd	<i>Anskar, archbishop, missionary, 865</i>
Wed	4th	<i>Gilbert, founder of the Gilbertine Order, 1189.</i> 7.30pm PCC Meeting, Parish Office
Thurs	5th	8pm Choir Practice
Fri	6th	<i>Martyrs of Japan, 1597, 10.30am Coffee Morning</i>
Sun	8th	<b>2nd Sunday before Lent, 6.30pm Evensong on Zoom</b>
Tues	10th	<i>Scholastica, abbess, c543</i>
Thurs	12th	8pm Choir Practice
Fri	13th	10.30am Coffee Morning
Sat	14th	<i>Cyril and Methodius, missionaries, 869 and 885,</i> <i>Valentine, martyr at Rome, c269</i>
Sun	15th	<b>Sunday next before Lent, 6.30pm Evensong on Zoom</b> Quinquagesima Lunch (see PorchTalk to book)
Tues	17th	<i>Janani Luwum, archbishop, martyr, 1977</i>
Wed	18th	<b>Ash Wednesday, 11am Said Mass, 8pm Sung Mass</b>
Thurs	19th	8pm Choir Practice
Fri	20th	10.30am Coffee Morning, 7.30pm Stations of the Cross, St Laurence
Sun	22nd	<b>1st Sunday of Lent, 6.30pm Compline on Zoom</b>
Mon	23rd	<i>Polycarp, bishop, martyr, c155</i>
Thurs	26th	8pm Choir Practice
Fri	27th	<i>George Herbert, priest, poet, 1633,</i> 10.30am Coffee Morning, 7.30pm Stations of the Cross, St Joseph's

Details of dates, times and venues of all meetings and events need to be recorded in the Parish Diary (Parish Office 01708 220696)

# Parish Diary for March

**See inside front cover for regular Sunday service times**

Sun	1st	<b>2nd Sunday of Lent, 6.30pm Compline on Zoom</b>
Mon	2nd	<i>Chad, bishop, missionary, 672</i>
Thurs	5th	8pm Choir Practice
Fri	6th	10.30am Coffee Morning, 7.30pm Stations of the Cross, St Laurence
Sat	7th	<i>Perpetua, Felicity and companions, martyrs, 203</i>
Sun	8th	<b>3rd Sunday of Lent, 9.30am Parade Service Mass, 6.30pm Compline on Zoom</b>
Thurs	12th	8pm Choir Practice
Fri	13th	10.30am Coffee Morning, 7.30pm Stations of the Cross, St Joseph's
Sun	15th	<b>4th Sunday of Lent, 6.30pm Compline on Zoom</b>
Tues	17th	<i>Patrick, bishop, missionary, patron of Ireland, c460</i>
Wed	18th	Cyril, bishop, teacher of the faith, 386
Thurs	19th	<i>Joseph of Nazareth, 8pm Choir Practice</i>
Fri	20th	<i>Cuthbert, bishop, missionary, 687, 10.30am Coffee Morning, 7.30pm Stations of the Cross, St Laurence</i>
Sat	21st	<i>Thomas Cranmer, archbishop, Reformation martyr, 1556</i>
Sun	22nd	<b>5th Sunday of Lent, 6.30pm Compline on Zoom</b>
Tues	24th	<i>Walter Hilton, mystic, 1396, Paul Couturier, priest, ecumenist, 1953, Oscar Romero, archbishop, martyr, 1980</i>
Wed	25th	<i>Annunciation of Our Lord to the Blessed Virgin Mary</i>
Thurs	26th	<i>Harriet Monsell, founder of the Community of St John the Baptist, 1883, 8pm Choir Practice</i>
Fri	27th	10.30am Coffee Morning, 7.30pm Stations of the Cross, St Joseph's
Sun	29th	<b>Palm Sunday, 6.30pm Compline on Zoom</b> 11am PCC Accounts Meeting
Mon	30th	4.15pm Evening Prayer for Holy Week
Tues	31st	4.15pm Evening Prayer for Holy Week

**Details of dates, times and venues of all meetings and events need to be recorded in the Parish Diary (Parish Office 01708 220696)**



## Get in touch with ....

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