

October and
November 2026



GRIDIRON

The Magazine of the Parish Church of
Saint Laurence Upminster
£1



Remembrance Sunday - Sunday 9th November

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

Holy Communion	08.00
Sung Parish Mass	09.30
Sunday Schools	09.30
Evensong	18.30
<i>(see Parish Diary for details)</i>	

Weekdays

Wednesday	Morning Prayer	08.45
	Mass	11.00
	Evening Prayer	16.15

Footsteps

This Service for pre-school children and grown-ups normally takes place monthly on a Monday at 09.30 in the Lady Chapel. Next services on **19 October and 23 November**.



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

Baptisms and Wedding Banns

These are administered during public services.
Please contact the Parish Office to make arrangements.

Confessions

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

Parish Office ☎01708 220696

parish.office@upminsterparish.co.uk

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From the Rector

By the time that you read this article in October, our new curate, the Revd Fiona Macaulay, will have been ordained Deacon and will have begun her ministry with us fully. Some of you will be very familiar with how ordination works in the Church of England (which stems from the process found in the Catholic Church), but others may have less experience of what happens. All clergy begin by being ordained Deacon.

For some, that may remain their sole vocation – such people are often known as ‘distinctive’ Deacons. They used to be called ‘permanent’ Deacons but that title is actually misleading as all clergy remain called to diaconal ministry even if subsequently they are also ordained as Priests, or, eventually, as Bishops. For many people, they remain solely a Deacon for the first year of curacy and then are ordained as Priests. But it is important to Fiona, and all of us as her supporting church community, that we do not regard this first year merely as preparation for being a Priest or for leading her own church. Diaconal ministry is a ministry in its own right.

So who are Deacons called to be, and what do they do, in the Church of England today? The Ordinal (the liturgy used in ordinations) says the following:

Deacons are called to work with the Bishop and the priests with whom they serve as heralds of Christ's kingdom. They are to proclaim the gospel in word and deed, as agents of God's purposes of love. They are to serve the community in which they are set, bringing to the Church the needs and hopes of all the people. They are to work with their fellow members in searching out the poor and weak, the sick and lonely and those who are oppressed and powerless, reaching into the forgotten corners of the world, that the love of God may be made visible. Deacons share in the pastoral ministry of the Church and in leading God's people in worship. They preach the word and bring the needs of the world before the Church in intercession. They accompany those searching for faith and bring them to baptism. They assist in administering the sacraments; they distribute communion and minister to the sick and housebound. Deacons are to seek nourishment from the Scriptures; they are to study them with God's people, that the whole Church may be equipped to live out the gospel in the world. They are to be faithful in prayer, expectant and watchful for the signs of God's presence, as he reveals his kingdom among us.

Thus the shape of Fiona's diaconal year will be focused around pastoral ministry, connection with the wider community, prayer, preaching, baptising, further study and helping those exploring their beliefs. She will also have a particular liturgical role as the Deacon at the Parish Mass, assisting at the altar, leading certain parts of the service and sometimes reading the Gospel. Fiona's parish duties will largely be focused around Sundays and Wednesdays, and sometimes other evenings, as she continues with her paid work beyond the Church.

Please pray for Fiona, as she seeks to fulfil her new vocation, and seeks in her ministry to help others to grow in their Christian calling. For whilst ordination is a distinct vocation, it is vital to remember that everyone has a vocation from God, and following God's call in the large and in the small matters of life is something we do for both for ourselves and for others – recognising that we are distinct individuals who together make up the body of Christ.

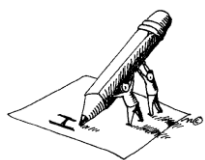
With my prayers and good wishes

Susannah

Congratulations Sylvia

Sylvia Wilson celebrated her 100th birthday on the 5th September with a family party. On the 7th September Revd Susannah and Colin & Margaret Jarvis visited and Sylvia received the blessed sacrament of Holy Communion.





From the Editors

Many things have happened over the summer at St Laurence Church. With joy we have welcomed Revd Fiona Macaulay as an Ordained Deacon and Revd Susannah has explained this ministry in her article. Sadly, we have bid farewell to Alan Butcher, and Chris Mowat has provided his eulogy. Chris also tells us about this year's RSCM Residentiary Choir in Edinburgh. We have held a BBQ and a Cream Tea. Olivia Boachie tells us about her time volunteering in Ghana and there is a synopsis of the PCC meeting held in July. So, whatever you've been up to this summer, I hope you have been gladdened and strengthened by the joy and presence of Christ along the way.

Joanne Chapman, Editor

From the Parish Registers

BAPTISM

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

2 August Thomas Barkwith

THANKSGIVING FOR THE GIFT OF A CHILD

26 July George Kelly

FUNERAL

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

30 June Lois Maude

6 August Alan Butcher

13 August Marina Moy

INTERMENT OF ASHES

29 June Joan Hale

4 August Elizabeth Kippin



December and January Magazine Deadline

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

**You can advertise in Gridiron from as little as
£11 per issue. Please contact the editors at
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Alan Butcher's Funeral Tribute given at his funeral on 6th August 2026

by Chris Mowat



It is an honour and a privilege to speak on behalf of all of you today on this occasion when we are here to remember and celebrate Alan's life. You will all have so many memories and countless stories of Alan whether as friends, clergy, his involvement here at St Laurence as a server and Parochial Church Council member, in the Scouts, Havering Probus Club, fellow gardener and Broads sailor, – the list is not exhaustive.

I am grateful for the information provided by a number of you, including Alan himself from his archives, which I have found.

As you sit here I would ask you to hold in your minds those numerous occasions when he has touched your lives.

He was born here in Upminster in 1939 and he was baptised at All Saints' Cranham as, it is believed, he lived in Pond Walk, Cranham, before he and his mother moved into his aunt's home at 34 Deyncourt Gardens, where he lived for the rest of his life. Little is known of his early years, other than he said in his CV when joining Havering Probus "...my sole contribution to the War effort was to assist in the hosing down of an army lorry which stood on the ground now occupied by the Masonic Centre in Deyncourt Gardens." He won a scholarship to Brentwood School where he stayed until the 3rd September 1956 but again, on his own admission, he didn't do very well at O-level apart from Latin and Maths. On the 3rd September 1956 he joined The Hoffmann Manufacturing Company in Chelmsford as a technical apprentice, and during the next 5 years he was trained in basic workshop practice: the machine shop, observing all aspects of ball bearing manufacture, research and development and data processing. It was the latter that sparked his interest in computing because, in his own words, "I was intrigued by all those machines manipulating punch-cards".

When interviewed at the end of the five years he mentioned his interest in computers. Within a very short time he was sent on a programming course which resulted in a career of 42 years with Hoffman's in computing, including becoming a systems analyst, data processing manager and, following

retirement, a period of 4 years as a part-time consultant based in Newark every week.

I can only guess that as he got older life was tough for Alan because his responsibilities to his aunt, who was wheelchair-bound, and to his mother increased as they both became more and more dependent on him. Having said that, as a young lad he had joined the 2nd Upminster Scouts and ultimately he became a Rover Scout alongside his lifelong friends and drinking companions Alan Twine, Tommy Thompson and George Barrable. All the scouts, including myself, knew him as “Butch” which stuck with him until later in life, when he was just known as Alan.

The ex-Scouting group led by George Barrable would go out for a regular lunch, invariably at the Queen’s Head in Boreham. Some 30 years ago the group met up with another group where they put the world to rights. These meetings became the foundation of a friendship with Brian Atkinson and Tony Giles who are here today. In their memories of Alan they have said he stood out from the crowd in his own way, being quite reserved and very private. He was a man of simple, genuine pleasures who loved his food, expressing his gratitude through action – never leaving a single crumb on his plate. We can all endorse that.

He enjoyed travels with Brian, Tony and George to France. On one occasion, when shown to the accommodation in a mediaeval abbey in the Loire Valley, he discovered that he and George were required to share a double bed, despite a twin-bedded room having been booked. One can imagine the look of horror on Alan’s face, but the problem was soon resolved with more amenable sleeping arrangements provided, much to the relief of Alan and no doubt George.

Until earlier this year Alan was a member of Havering Probus Club. It was thanks to the late Tony Mason, who was Secretary at the time, that Alan was encouraged to join as he was now on his own and retired. At the time it was not unusual for there to be a long waiting list to join, but Tony suggested to Alan that if he was prepared to become Luncheon Secretary, as no one else had stepped forward, then membership was there for the taking. Alan leapt at the chance because his passion for spreadsheets was re-ignited. He joined in January 2014 and for the next 12 years he carried out the role with efficiency and meticulous application, recording details of apologies, dietary requirements, liaising with caterers etc. Over the years the spreadsheets became more and more complex for the Committee to understand and,

unfortunately because of failing health, he had to eventually give up.

Apart from his first 5 years, Alan has always been involved with St Laurence. I have even found a certificate signed by Father Holden to mark his regular attendance every Sunday from Advent 1946 to Advent 1947. He was brought up by his mother and aunt to attend church and this he continued to do and became a server. Not always an easy job – he once set light to his quiff during a service. In those days the Sacristan, who is responsible for maintaining the stocks of candles, altar cloths, vestments and more, was a certain Arthur Birkett who trained one, George Greenland, whom many of you here will remember. George kept meticulous records as well as making the Easter Paschal Candle each year. Alan became his deputy and when George died there was a natural succession with Alan taking on the role and inheriting many of George's records and traditions. Indeed, we have found in Alan's house, numerous diagrams of where servers should stand, move and the like from decades ago. He never got round to making the Easter Paschal Candle but he was proud to be one of only three sacristans who served for some 70 years and who would take directions only from the Rector, whilst seeking to maintain tradition. When hearing about Alan's death, a former assistant priest wrote that "Alan was dedicated to his sacristan role and a delightful self-effacing gentleman, set in his ways of course and sometimes a little 'prickly'" when he would be disapproving of how the priest for a service was leading it. However, he was always considerate when dealing with long-standing members of the congregation. When having to organise servers for the funeral of Alf Todd, the long-serving secretary of the PCC, Alan chose those servers who had attended Brentwood School as had Alf in a mark of the School camaraderie.

Many of you will remember seeing Alan regularly on a Saturday afternoon, walking down Station Road, carrying his battered holdall of candles and other supplies to prepare for the Sunday services. The Sacristy was his domain and he would take his time, well into the evening, getting ready for the next day.

Unbeknown to him his routine was recorded one Saturday evening. Our Director of Music, Nigel, on occasions would also be in church practising the organ music or recording pieces of music for services on Lindisfarne. It so happened that one day Nigel came in whilst Alan was pottering about. He had recently purchased some new shoes which squeaked. Nigel recorded the music and later at a service on Lindisfarne attended by the Bishop of Berwick, the music was played, only for the Bishop to remark to Nigel later how much he

had enjoyed the music, even the somewhat ghostly sound of the shoes.

The past two and a half years were difficult for Alan as his health began to decline and he spent much time in and out of hospital and rehabilitation. He found his home space was invaded by carers, which did not sit comfortably with him, but he was determined to carry on in his own inimitable way. Ready meals became the order of the day, although when he was well enough he very much enjoyed his lunch trips out with Brian and Tony, the monthly Probus meetings and church socials.

I must record my thanks for all they have done in regular visiting, whether at home or in hospital, to Peter and Deborah for making sure his shopping orders were processed; to friends and neighbours for looking out for him and in the past few months to the staff at Upminster Nursing Home for their dedicated attention and care. It is good to see everyone here today.

It was his wish that this service should follow that for his late mother's funeral. As a great hoarder, never wanting to throw anything away, it was easy for us to find several copies of his mother's funeral service. Indeed, his friends Brian and Tony are convinced that somewhere in the house is a giant spreadsheet meticulously cataloguing every item of "treasure" he has hoarded, simply because he could not decide to throw it away or keep it. To him, nothing was disposable. So far the "giant spreadsheet" has not been found!!

Reflecting on his life, he was a private person, loyal, dedicated to what he did, faithful to his God, a good trencherman and grateful for all the help given to him, sometimes near to tears when expressing his gratitude. We will all miss his quiet strength, his clean plates, his inability to make a decision and his scientific mind.

Even now he is standing with St Peter at the Gates of Heaven, entering names on a spreadsheet and directing where the angels should stand or move.

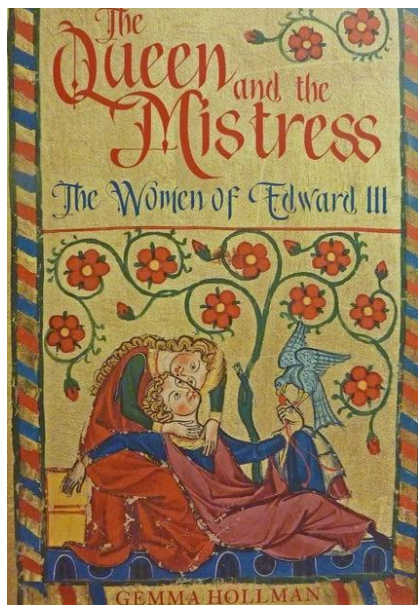
Alan, from all your friends, clergy, contacts and those for whom you served, may you rest in peace and rise in glory.



The Queen and the Mistress - The Women of Edward III

by Gemma Hollman

by Rob Brabner



Alice Perrers is 'The Mistress' of the title, and I've previously written about her in Gridiron's 'The Notorious Lady of St Laurence'. Alice was living at Gaynes Manor when she died in 1400/1 and was buried here at St Laurence. The precise spot is unknown, as subsequent alterations have been made to the church.

The first half of the book concentrates on the story of Queen Philippa of Hainault, Edward III's consort of 41 years, mother of 12 and lauded as 'a perfect medieval Queen, pious, unpolitical and fiercely loyal to her husband and her adopted country.'

Inevitably, when the Queen's health began to fail, and although the King still very much cherished his wife, he sought solace from a much younger woman, Alice Perrers. Alice was a young widow and Edward seems to have taken up with her in the early 1360s. As the mistress, she was not going to win the popularity of the King's subjects.

In her book, Gemma Hollman suggests that Alice's father, or possibly uncle, was from a family of goldsmiths and provided financial services for the King. Alice's maiden name was Salisbury. As a member of a family in the mercantile class she would have been better educated and more literate than most women of her time. Alice would be making a number of enemies by building up her portfolio of land, wealth and prestige, and then see it all collapse as the King declined and neared his own end.

In particular, Thomas Walsingham, chronicler of St Alban's Abbey, was unfailingly critical. Alice had a number of property disputes with St Alban's Abbey and Thomas Walsingham's written records were scathing, though it is debatable whether they are completely fair. Was this rather jealousy of an independent woman in an age when the ruling class were overwhelmingly men? Alice was a prominent woman in a man's world, so very vulnerable to criticism. Her acquisition of wealth and property, so unusual for a woman of her time, caused outrage. She did, however, have some support within the

Royal family (not just the King) as well as within the City of London elite, although this appears to be a minority.

Alice died about 23 years after Edward III's death and her Will requested '... she be buried in the parish church of Upminster, St Laurence, before the altar of the Virgin Mary.' We presume this would be somewhere in the present day Ante-Chapel. In her Will Alice awarded the church the gift of one of her 'best oxen', money to pay for wax candles to burn around her body, and another 10 marks to pay for ornaments in the church. She also gave the chaplain 10 marks, the priest 3 shillings and four-pence, and 40 shillings was left for someone to pray for her soul.

The Will also left 20 shillings to the poor of the parish as a whole....and 40 shillings to repair the town's roads. Yes, even in those days there were problems with pot holes!

The Lion Book of Five-Minute Parables by Charlotte Ryton

Review from Parish Pump

This book brings ten of the most beloved parables to life with warmth, faithfulness, and sincerity, all perfectly paced for just five minutes of reading. From lost coins to lavish feasts, these engaging retellings help children discover what it means to listen, forgive, and use their gifts wisely in ways they can truly understand.

Stories include: The Sower and the Seed, The Rich Fool, The Great Feast, The Lost Coin, The Prodigal Son, The Widow and the Judge, The Unforgiving Steward, The Workers in the Vineyard, The Foolish Bridesmaids and The Three Servants.

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The Royal School of Church Music Residentiary Choir crosses the border

by Chris Mowat

It is a year ago when I wrote about the RSCM Residentiary Choir singing in Chester Cathedral – and how the time has flown by.

A year on, the Choir has crossed the border and spent a week singing all the services in St Mary's Episcopal Cathedral in Edinburgh from Monday 27th July until Sunday 2nd August. Everyone was excited to be singing in a new venue but, we felt some trepidation, as this year we all had to face the tri-annual auditions in order to remain a member of the Choir.

Distance was a factor for all of us and some drove, some flew from afar or used the train, but it all worked in a fashion so most of us were all settled in Edinburgh Napier University by the evening of the 26th.



Edinburgh had no cathedral in the Middle Ages, but was governed by the Bishop of St Andrews. In 1633, Charles I created the Diocese of Edinburgh, with St Giles on the Royal Mile serving as its Cathedral. However, by 1700 Scotland's national church was Presbyterian, rejecting

the authority of the bishops and the Anglican Church, leaving the city's Episcopalian (i.e. Anglican) community with no cathedral to worship in. Thanks to the generosity of the Walker Sisters land was found on which to build a new cathedral and the architect, chosen by competition, was George Gilbert Scott who designed numerous neo-Gothic churches and other buildings, including Glasgow University and St Pancras Station Hotel. The foundation stone for St Mary's was laid in 1874 and the building was consecrated and began to be used in 1879. When I compare St Mary's to St Giles, which is right in the City centre, it is very much, in my view, the poor relation, as St Giles has the benefit of a never-ending stream of tourists flocking through its doors. However, that said, St Mary's was a wonderful building to sing in and it has a long musical tradition.

The RSCM Residentiary Choir is a well-established choir drawing its members from church choirs around the country and abroad. This year our members included singers from the USA, Canada and Japan.

Inevitably when we meet up there is little time before the first service and we had a Choral Evensong on the Monday afternoon. Rehearsal time was therefore tight but with good vocal warm-ups and expert leadership from our Director Martyn Rawles from Lichfield Cathedral, we went into the week with enthusiasm and great ensemble.

The music we sang throughout the week was challenging but very uplifting, and reflected where we were and the homelands of some of the choristers. A Japanese composer (Matsushita); a Scottish composer (James MacMillan); an English composer (Elgar) and a range of pieces spanning the centuries from Johnson to Moeran, Batten to Stanford and others, right up to McGlade and Lucy Walker, whose St Martin's Service was only composed in 2024, kept us all on our toes and very focussed.

We had a wonderful week. Friendships were renewed, new members welcomed but we said farewell to one of our sopranos from the US. We all departed on the Monday morning uplifted by the music, tired from a week of full-on rehearsals, and on tenterhooks as to how the auditions went. We knew it would be a few weeks before we were informed of the result of our individual audition but we still wished each other well saying, "see you in Salisbury in 2027 unless our paths cross in the meantime at various choral events/services".

In that regard, the RSCM will be celebrating its Centenary next year and it will be marked, amongst other events, by a "Come and Sing Service" at St Paul's Cathedral on the 15th May and a Celebration Weekend in Liverpool Cathedral with a Celebration Concert on Saturday 9th October and a Choral Evensong on Sunday 10th October, with massed choirs, including the RSCM Residentiary Choir.

I am very pleased to say that, having passed the audition, Salisbury here I come next August and possibly Liverpool in October.

"I will sing with the Spirit and with understanding also" is the motto of the RSCM and I am very proud to be part of one of its choirs, including here at St Laurence which was affiliated in 1932.

Music is a gift from God and long may it continue to inspire and uplift.

Jays - *by Michael Blencowe of the Sussex Wildlife Trust*



Each autumn a lot of my conversations go like this: "This morning I saw a weird pink and blue bird on my lawn". Me: "It's a Jay". "There's a parrot on my bird table!" Me: "It's a Jay". "I've just seen..." Me: "It's a Jay". Spotting such an exotic-looking bird in the back garden gets even my most wildlife-averse friends reaching for the Blencowe bird identification hotline. Yet despite looking like it has flown in direct from the jungles of Costa Rica, the Jay lives in the UK all year round. For most of the year it withdraws to the woodlands and leads an elusive life amongst the leaves. But in October it is time for the Jay to step out of the shadows.

Jays look fabulous. With extravagant pink plumage, a drooping black moustache and a snazzy electric blue flash through the wings, it's no surprise that the eminent Sussex naturalist, W H Hudson, called it the British Bird of Paradise. Surprisingly, it is a member of the crow family. But while the related ravens, rooks, crows and jackdaws all wear black funereal feathers, the Jay obviously didn't get the memo about the dress code! Gather the crows for a family portrait and the Jay stands out like Danny La Rue in full drag amongst a crowd of coal miners. But, when the Jay opens its beak, it reveals its family heritage. The song of the Jay is a rough, rasping, nails-down-the-blackboard shriek, which would make any crow proud.



The reason we see more Jays in the autumn is because they are busy. Jays are nuts about acorns and at this time of the year their favourite food is in plentiful supply. But the Jay is a clever bird. Aware that there are lean times ahead it starts making a long-term investment for surviving the winter. With up to nine acorns jammed in its beak and throat, the Jay flies far from the woodlands and hides these nuts in nooks and under dead leaves. With an impressive ability to remember these life-saving larders in the cold days of winter, one Jay can store up to 5000 acorns in a season. Not all are remembered and retrieved and from these lost acorns mighty oaks grow. I often wonder how many of the huge oaks we see in Sussex were originally planted by Jays. Through the centuries these birds have been architects of the English countryside: a landscape created by the forgetfulness of a pink crow.

BBQ – 18th July



A total of 90 People came along to our barbecue in July. We raised a magnificent £930 towards the St Laurence Building Improvement Project while enjoying good food and company – thank you all for your support. We are very

grateful to have had so many helping to organise and prepare in advance, cooking all the food, hosting the raffle and tombola stalls, and with setting up and clearing away afterwards. A good effort by all, thank you.

Patronal Cream Tea – 9th August



Volunteer Impact Story

My name is Olivia, and I am from Essex in the UK. During my time at university, I had been searching for meaningful ways to give back to others and make a tangible difference outside of my own bubble. When I discovered Warwick in Africa, I knew immediately



that it was the perfect fit for me. Not only did it align with my desire to help others through education, but it also held personal significance—being from Ghana myself, I felt this would be a unique opportunity to give back to the community that shaped so much of who I am.

I spent my placement teaching mathematics in Ghana, working primarily with a Basic 6 class. From the outset, the cultural adjustment was real. The pace of life in Ghana is more relaxed compared to the UK, and at first I found myself struggling with that difference. However, by immersing myself in the school community and taking time to listen and learn from the teachers, I gradually settled into this new rhythm. Those conversations helped me understand not only how the school functioned, but also the values underpinning the way students and staff interacted.

The classroom experience itself came with its own set of challenges. Teaching a class of around 50 students was daunting—much larger than anything I had encountered before. At times it felt overwhelming trying to engage everyone, but I soon realised the key was building rapport. By connecting with students both as a group and individually, I found they were far more responsive and willing to learn. Starting each lesson with a short game to grab their attention, for instance, became a simple yet effective strategy that helped maintain focus and energy in the room.

One of the most memorable parts of my experience was my relationship with a student named Francisca. She quickly became like a little sister to me. Not only did she help me practise and learn more Twi, but she also showed incredible dedication to her studies, often coming to me before lessons for extra maths

help or staying after class if she was struggling. Watching her grow in confidence and ability over the course of the placement was one of my proudest moments. It reminded me that small, consistent support can make a world of difference in a student's journey.



On a personal level, I discovered a lot about myself. I realised how much time and patience I have for others, and how much I truly enjoy listening to people's stories. Some of the conversations with students were incredibly humbling, and at times heartbreaking. It struck me deeply how much geography—the simple fact of where we are born—can dictate the

opportunities available to us. The children I taught were bright, funny, and endlessly curious, but their lives looked so different to mine. That awareness has stayed with me, shaping not only how I see education, but also how I view privilege and responsibility in the wider world.

This experience also strengthened my belief in the power of education to transform lives. Despite limited resources, the eagerness of the students to learn was infectious. It pushed me to be more creative in my teaching, but also to value qualities like resilience and resourcefulness, which the children modelled every day.

None of this would have been possible without the support of the Emirates Airline Foundation and the generosity of donors. The free flights provided meant that I could take part in a programme that has truly changed the way I think and the way I hope to live going forward. For me, it was not just about teaching maths—it was about building relationships, learning humility, and contributing to a shared experience of growth. For the students, I believe it was about showing them that their education matters and that people beyond their immediate environment are invested in their future.

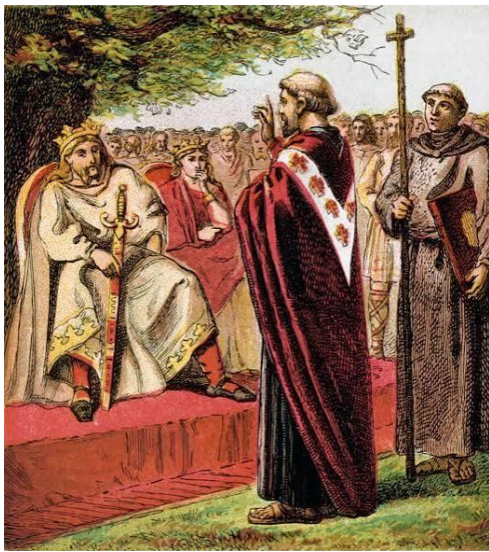
I am incredibly grateful to the Emirates Airline Foundation for making this journey possible. Their generosity didn't just allow me to travel; it opened the door to an experience that has shaped me in lasting ways. Thank you for investing in us as volunteers, and more importantly, in the students whose potential is limitless when given the chance to thrive.

St Augustine of Canterbury (Apostle to the English)

by Rob Brabner

The following is a short extract from 'Remember, Remember (The Fifth of November): The History of Britain in bite-sized chunks' by Judy Parkinson. This was a Sunday Times bestseller, first published in 2008 by Michael O'Mara Books Ltd

The Roman Pope Gregory I (later Saint Gregory) was eager to expand the Church's influence and to eliminate paganism, particularly in England where such beliefs were still dominant. He sent forty monks, led by Augustine, as missionaries to England and they landed in 597 at Thanet in Kent.



The monks brought gifts for King Ethelbert of Kent, who greeted them cordially, though the pagan king is said to have insisted on outdoor negotiations in case they cast spells on him. Despite this initial distrust, the King granted Augustine land at Canterbury on which he built a monastery. Augustine became the first Archbishop of Canterbury, although it was decades before British bishops recognised the office and even longer before Canterbury's primacy over the English Church was secured.

Ethelbert's wife, Bertha, was a Christian and she and Augustine together persuaded Ethelbert to convert. He was the first English king to do so, and inspired thousands of his subjects to follow. The king helped to spread Christianity among the Saxons and was later canonised. Augustine and Ethelbert set up bishoprics in Rochester and London (the first being St Paul's).

Many British Christians continued to maintain some Celtic traditions and refused to convert fully to the Roman Catholic Church. Eventually, at the Synod of Whitby in 664, they accepted Roman control and abandoned Celtic practices.

Note: The Celtic-style cross of St Augustine erected in 1884 at Ebbsfleet is said to mark the place where Augustine first met and preached to King Ethelbert in 597. We celebrate the feast days of St Augustine of Canterbury on 27th May, Pope Gregory the Great on 3rd September and King Ethelbert on 25th February.

Summary of PCC Meeting, 15th July 2026



The meeting was attended by Akosua Boachie, Parish Safeguarding Officer, as there were various safeguarding matters which needed to be advised to the PCC and agreed where necessary. These included listing non-church activities, compliance with the code of safer working practice and a discussion on how to promote a healthy and safe culture.

The faculty in respect of the Building Improvements Project has been submitted. This has been acknowledged by the DAC Secretary and now enters a 40-day consultation period.

Many other matters were discussed or reported on including the following:

- Minor Hall flooring
- Martyn's Law regarding terrorist incidents
- Grant for Hive heating controls
- Junior choir
- Pastoral visiting and home communion
- Associate Priest advertising
- Financial report
- Update on bells project
- Damaged chairs in Main Hall
- Halls cleaning contract
- Communications
- Churches Together
- Deanery Synod
- Scouts
- Staff appraisals

• **Walking alongside one another**

from Parish Pump

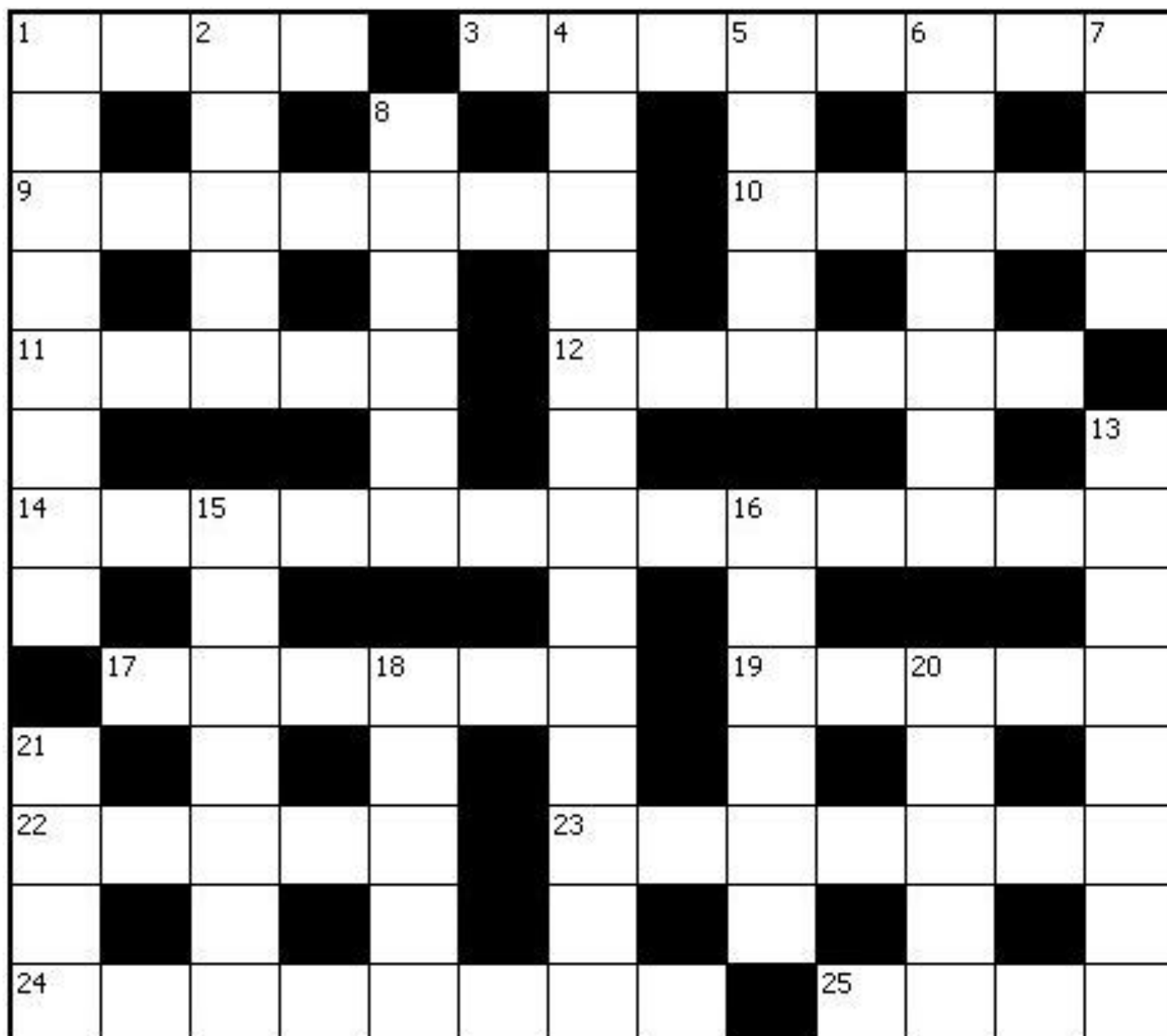
Many of us can look back and recognise people who have helped us in our faith: a parent, a friend, a church leader, or perhaps someone who was simply willing to listen, pray and encourage us at the right moment.

The Christian life has never been a path we are expected to travel alone. Throughout the gospels, we see how Jesus spent time with a small group of people, his disciples, and helped them grow. The early Church continued this pattern, learning together what it meant to follow Christ in everyday life.

Yet many of us wonder whether we have anything to offer others. Life is busy, and we may feel we don't know enough or have enough time to make a difference.

What if discipleship is simpler than we imagine? Often it begins with a conversation over coffee, offering to pray for someone, opening the Bible together, or taking the time to listen well.

Article continues after crossword clues



Across

- 1 'Those who were standing near Paul said, "You ___ to insult God's high priest?"' (Acts 23:4) (4)
- 3 They were assigned to guard the tree of life (Genesis 3:24) (8)
- 9 'Elkanah son of Jeroham, the son of Elihu, the ___ of ___, the son of Zuph, an Ephraimite' (1 Samuel 1:1) (3,4)
- 10 Surrender (Joshua 24:23) (5)
- 11 Where American livestock can be reared (5)
- 12 Listen (anag.) (6)
- 14 Alternative name for Kiriath Jearim (2 Samuel 6:2) (6,2,5)
- 17 He founded Westminster Abbey, ___ the Confessor (6)
- 19 Hebrew word for the place of the dead (5)
- 22 Allies of Persia in the fifth century BC (Esther 1:3) (5)
- 23 Where John Wesley was forced to preach a lot (4,3)
- 24 Rebellion against God; abandonment of religious belief (8)
- 25 Note (anag.) (4)

Down

- 1 Give an account of (Mark 4:30) (8)
- 2 'I ___ the path of your commands, for you have set my heart free' (Psalm 119:32) (3,2)
- 4 'He took the ephod, the other ___ and the carved image' (Judges 18:20) (9,4)
- 5 'You are a chosen people, a ___ priesthood' (1 Peter 2:9) (5)
- 6 The meek, the merciful and the mourners are all this (Matthew 5:4–5, 7) (7)
- 7 Musical Instrument Digital Interface (1,1,1,1)
- 8 He was the son of Nun (Deuteronomy 34:9) (6)
- 13 'Let the little ___ come to me' (Matthew 19:14) (8)
- 15 'About three thousand were ___ their number that day' (Acts 2:41) (5,2)
- 16 In John's vision, the wall of the new Jerusalem was made of this (Revelation 21:18) (6)
- 18 'Our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly ___ a Saviour from there, the Lord Jesus Christ' (Philippians 3:20) (5)
- 20 'Glorify the Lord with me: let us ___ his name together' (Psalm 34:3) (5)
- 21 Young Men's Christian Association (1,1,1,1)

AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER ANSWERS: ACROSS: 8 Prince of Peace, 9 INF, 10 Unmarried, 11 Gulag, 13 Treason, 16 In aid of, 19 Arena, 22 Calvinist, 24 Pad, 25 Moses and Aaron. **DOWN:** 1 Spring, 2 Sinful, 3 Scourged, 4 Commit, 5 Spur, 6 Matins, 7 Feed on, 12 Urn, 14 Erastian, 15 Own, 16 Income, 17 At last, 18 Friend, 20 Empire, 21 Adding, 23 Inst.

Continuation of article 'Walking alongside one another'

The Alongsider Course has recently been launched by the Navigators: a free seven-session video course that explores what it means to walk alongside others and together take steps towards Jesus. Drawing on many years of experience helping people grow in faith, the course encourages ordinary Christians to be intentional about the relationships God has already given them, in their families, friendships, workplaces and churches.

In a world where many people feel isolated, there is something quietly powerful about walking alongside someone and seeing what God can do. Who might God be inviting you to walk alongside?

Further info: www.alongsidercourse.com

Charity of the Month

October - The Toybox Charity

Toybox has a vision of a just world with no street children. They are committed to ending the global injustice of children living and working on the streets.



In the beginning a couple were prompted by their Christian faith and now, they are working alongside street children in Latin America, Asia and Africa. Their purpose is to help children marginalised and abused by those who should be protecting them.

Record levels of inequality, violence, migration, war and natural disasters mean children are forced to live or work on the streets. Some escape abusive homes or end up on the streets after being displaced or trafficked. The UN estimates there are hundreds of millions of street children but exact, official figures are virtually non-existent.

These children are invisible to the world, living without rights or protection. All are at risk of abuse and exploitation. They are exposed to stigmatisation, physical, sexual and psychological violence. Their future is bleak and their life expectancy terrifyingly low.

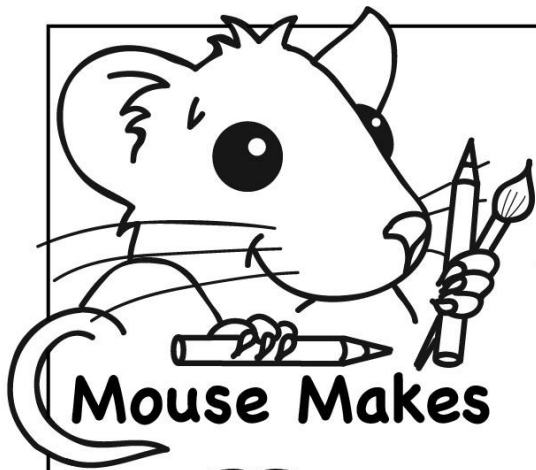
November - The Children's Society

**The
Children's
Society**

Across the country, young people's needs are being ignored. Trapped in poverty, facing poor mental health and abuse both on and offline, too many only receive help once they reach crisis point. The Children's Society is working to change that.

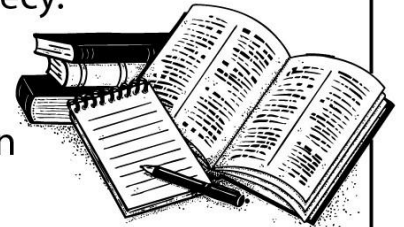
When young people want to tell their story, The Society listens. These young people still believe in a better tomorrow. They know they can break free from those who hurt them, have a happy home life and feel better over time. Often their stories aren't easy to tell, but they tell them because they know that sharing their story will help them and others like them.

Young people come to The Children's Society when they have low self-esteem, when they're living in families who can't afford the next meal or school uniform or when there's no one else to hear them. The Society does not turn them away.



The **Bible** is a collection of books, written by many different people who were helped and inspired by God. The **Bible** includes books of history, law, poetry and songs, wisdom, testimony, letters and prophecy.

The **Bible** encourages us, corrects us and teaches us about God and how we can be friends with Him.



2. Which book of the Bible has the shortest title?

1. How many books are there in the New Testament?

3. The Word of God is sharper than a two edged

Hebrews 4:12



B I B L E S U N D A Y

4. He was an Old Testament prophet that has a book named after him.

5. The first book of the Bible.

6. God's word is like?

A _____ and a _____
Psalm 119:105

8. The last book in the Bible.

9. The Old Testament book of poetry and songs.

11. The last book in the Old Testament.

10. Who wrote the third book of the New Testament?

7. What are the first four books of the New Testament known as?

12. Which book tells the story of the spread of Christianity?

13. The Bible is also known as the

14. A book of the Bible named after a woman

of God.
Hebrews 4:12



Parish Diary for October

See inside front cover for regular Sunday service times

Thurs	1st	<i>Remigius, bishop, 533, Anthony Ashley Cooper (earl of Shaftesbury), social reformer, 1885, 8pm Choir Practice</i>
Fri	2nd	10.30am Coffee Morning
Sat	3rd	<i>George Bell, bishop, ecumenist, peacemaker, 1958</i>
Sun	4th	Dedication Festival, 9.30am Commissioning to Preparation for First Communion, 11am Junior Choir Practice, 12pm Baptism, 6.30pm Evensong on Zoom
Tues	6th	<i>William Tyndale, translator, martyr, 1536</i>
Thurs	8th	8pm Choir Practice
Fri	9th	<i>Denys, bishop, and companions, martyrs, c250, Robert Grosseteste, bishop, philosopher, scientist, 1253, 10.30am Coffee Morning</i>
Sat	10th	<i>Paulinus, bishop, missionary, 644, Thomas Traherne, poet, spiritual writer, 1674</i>
Sun	11th	19th Sunday after Trinity, 9.30am Mass with Baptism Welcome, 6.30pm Evensong on Zoom
Mon	12th	<i>Wilfrid, bishop, missionary, 709, Elizabeth Fry, prison reformer, 1845, Edith Cavell, nurse, 1915</i>
Tues	13th	<i>Edward the Confessor, king, 1066</i>
Thurs	15th	<i>Tores of Avila, teacher of the faith, 1582, 8pm Choir Practice</i>
Fri	16th	<i>Nicholas Ridley and Hugh Latimer, bishops, martyrs, 1555, 10.30am Coffee Morning</i>
Sat	17th	<i>Ignatius, bishop, martyr, c107</i>
Sun	18th	St Luke the Evangelist, 11am Junior Choir Practice, 3pm First Communion Preparation, Parish Office, 6.30pm Evensong on Zoom
Mon	19th	<i>Luke the Evangelist</i> 9.30am Footsteps, 8pm CM&FG Meeting, Parish Office
Thurs	22nd	8pm Choir Practice
Fri	23rd	10.30am Coffee Morning
Sun	25th	Bible Sunday, 6.30pm Evensong on Zoom
Mon	26th	<i>Alfred, king, scholar, 899, Cedd, abbot, bishop, 664</i>
Wed	28th	<i>Simon and Jude, Apostles</i>
Thurs	29th	<i>James Hannington, bishop, martyr, 1885, (No Choir Practice)</i>
Fri	30th	10.30am Coffee Morning
Sat	31st	<i>Martin Luther, reformer, 1546</i>

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 November

See inside front cover for regular Sunday service times

Sun	1st	All Saints' Day, 6.30pm All Souls' Service
Mon	2nd	<i>Commemoration of the Faithful Departed (All Souls' Day)</i>
Tues	3rd	<i>Richard Hooker, priest, teacher of the faith, 1600, Martin of Porres, friar, 16369</i>
Thurs	5th	8pm Choir Practice
Fri	6th	<i>Leonard, hermit, 6th cent, William Temple, archbishop, teacher of the faith, 1944, 10.30am Coffee Morning</i>
Sat	7th	<i>Willibrord, bishop, 739</i>
Sun	8th	Remembrance Sunday, 10.50am Act of Remembrance at War Memorial, (No Evensong)
Mon	9th	<i>Margery Kempe, mystic, c1440, 7.30pm PCC Meeting, Parish Office</i>
Tues	10th	<i>Leo the Great, bishop, teacher of the faith, 461</i>
Wed	11th	<i>Martin, bishop, c397</i>
Thurs	12th	8pm Choir Practice
Fri	13th	<i>Charles Simeon, priest, evangelical divine, 1836, 10.30am Coffee Morning</i>
Sat	14th	<i>Samuel Seabury, bishop, 1796</i>
Sun	15th	2nd Sunday before Advent, 3pm First Communion Preparation, Parish Office, 6.30pm Evensong on Zoom
Mon	16th	<i>Margaret, queen, philanthropist, 1093, Edmund Rich, archbishop, 1240</i>
Tues	17th	<i>Hugh, bishop, 1200</i>
Wed	18th	<i>Elizabeth, princess, philanthropist, 1231</i>
Thurs	19th	<i>Hilda, abbess, 680, Mechtild, béguine, mystic, 1280, 8pm Choir Practice</i>
Fri	20th	<i>Edmund, king, martyr, 870, Priscilla Lydia Sellon, a restorer of the religious life in the Church of England, 1876, 10.30am Coffee Morning</i>
Sun	22nd	Christ the King, 3pm First Communion Preparation, Parish Office, 6.30pm Evensong on Zoom
Mon	23rd	<i>Clement, bishop, martyr, c100</i> 9.30am Footsteps, 2.30pm Group visit to church
Wed	25th	<i>Catherine, martyr, 4th cent, Isaac watts, hymn writer, 1748</i>
Thurs	26th	8pm Choir Practice
Fri	27th	10.30am Coffee Morning
Sun	29th	1st Sunday of Advent, 9.30am Mass with Admission to First Communion, 6.30pm Advent Carol Service

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Get in touch with

St Laurence Church Corbets Tey Road, Upminster, RM14 2BB

Rector	The Reverend Susannah Brasier susannah.brasier@upminsterparish.co.uk	01708 220174
Licensed Lay Worker (Asst. Curate designate)	Reverend Fiona Macaulay fiona.macaulay@upminsterparish.co.uk	
Pastoral Assistant	Deborah Masterson deborah.masterson@upminsterparish.co.uk	01708 609816
Safeguarding Officer	Akosua Boachie safeguarding@upminsterparish.co.uk	07760 791032
Parish Office	Verity Helby parish.office@upminsterparish.co.uk	01708 220696
Churchwardens	Chris Mowat and Nancy Mowat parish.office@upminsterparish.co.uk	01708 220696
Hon Secretary PCC	Beryl Speed beryl.speed25@virginmedia.com	
Hon Treasurer	Tony Bloomfield treasurer@upminsterparish.co.uk	
Planned Giving	treasurer@upminsterparish.co.uk	
Electoral Roll Officer	Keith Stewart keithdebbie@btinternet.com	01708 220696
Director of Music	Nigel Lockwood nigel.lockwood@upminsterparish.co.uk	07899 876247
Church Halls Hire	Becky Perchard halls.bookings@upminsterparish.co.uk	07341 434798
Gridiron Editors and Advertising	Arlette Wiggins and Joanne Chapman gridiron@upminsterparish.co.uk	
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