

Church News

for the Parishes of
Bromham, Oakley and Stagsden



October 2026



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**Welcome to
Church News in
Bromham, Oakley and Stagsden**

Find us at: www.bromhambenefice.org



facebook Benefice of Bromham, Oakley & Stagsden

Clergy:

Vicar:	Revd Catherine Wilson	825665
		vicar@bromhambenefice.org
Assistant Priest:	Revd Di Harpham	07973 953744

Benefice Administration

Website &.....}	Administrator	07494 069540
Wedding.....}	(Mon & Thurs 9.30 -12.00: Tues, 9.30am -1.00pm	
organisation..}		
Fees Accounts...}	administrator@bromhambenefice.org	
Safeguarding Officer -	Judith Denyer	07981 928522

Parish News

Editor	Mr Edward Jones	stowensnews@btinternet.com	826551
Distribution	Mrs B Cryer		825463
			07767 272584

Pew Leaflet Sarah Smale, as Administrator

Who's Who in Bromham

Church Officers

Churchwarden	Ms T Woodcock	07766 118258
PCC Secretary	Mrs Vivien Butler	407351
PCC Treasurer	Mrs Sarah Smale	07957 126145

Organist & Choirmaster Mr David P Williams

Messy Church for pre-school children (birth - 4yrs) & their carers

	Mrs R Farquhar	307996
Altar Guild	Mrs M Parrott	824402

Who's Who in Bromham cont....

Children & Young	}Emma Harrison	07752 186808
People's work	}Rene Farquhar	307996
Electoral Roll	Mrs Rene Farquhar	307996
Ringers	Mr Robert Jones	881741
Thursday Prayer Gp	Mrs C Wisson	306833
Friends of St Owen's:		
Secretary:	Mr David Butler	407351
website:	www.bromhambenefice.org / friends-of-st-owens	

Who's Who in Oakley

Church Officers

Churchwardens	Mr G Palmer	07710 462535
	Mrs H Worley	262166
PCC Secretary	Katrina Hyden	07908 987959
	oakleypccsecretary@bromhambenefice.org	
PCC Treasurer	Debbie Armstrong	07932 456335
	armstrong.debbi@gmail.com	
Organist & Choirmaster - contact Jenny Sudworth		822859
Messy Church for pre-school children (birth - 4yrs) & their carers		
	Revd Catherine Wilson	825665
St Mary's Ringers	Mr Bill Sellars	823473

Who's Who in Stagsden

Church Officers

Churchwarden	} Post holders names not published	
PCC Treasurer	} please contact through Revd Di Harpham	07973 953744
PCC Secretary	Caroline Heaton	
Ringers	Mr Richard Brown	823289
Flowers Team	please contact through Revd Di Harpham	07973 953744

If you know of further details for this page, or have information or articles to publish please send all material to the Editor by post or (preferably) by email - see details on page 3.

The Editor thanks Contributors and Advertisers for their material with acknowledgements to the "Parish Pump" website. Nevertheless, views expressed, and goods and services advertised are not endorsed by the PCC. **Please send material for publication to the Editor by the 22nd of the month.**



Principal Services in the Benefice

4th October

9.00am

10.30am

18th Sunday after Trinity

Holy Communion (Oakley)

Family Harvest Service (Bromham)

11th October

9.00am

10.30am

19th Sunday after Trinity

Holy Communion (Stagsden)

Local Ecumenical Service (Oakley

Methodist Church)

3.00pm

Service of Remembering (Oakley)

6.00pm

Evensong (Bromham)

18th October

9.00am

10.30am

St Luke's Day

Holy Communion (Stagsden)

Holy Communion (Bromham)

25th October

9.00am

10.30am

3.00pm

Last Sunday of Trinity

Holy Communion (Bromham)

Holy Communion (Oakley)

Service of Remembering (Bromham)

Weekday Services

Mondays

11.30am

Messy Church (Bromham)

Tuesdays (1st and 3rd of the month)

11.30am

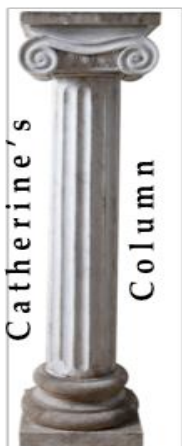
Holy Communion (Bromham FR)

Thursdays

10.00am

Messy Church (Oakley)

NB 10.30 church services are streamed via Zoom for those who find it difficult to attend in person (details on website www.bromhambenefice.org)



From the Vicarage

A chance conversation after a morning service recently led to the discovery that quite a number of members of the church have 'big' birthdays this year. It shouldn't be a surprise really; after all, as a birthday of that significance needs to end with a 5 or a 0, statistically 2 out of 10 (or 20%) of any group would be celebrating one of these milestones in any given year. In a group of much younger people of course, the significant birthdays are 18 and 21, because achieving those ages opens doors to new things – and my mathematically-minded son thinks a prime number birthday is the most interesting, not least because there are far fewer of them.

However old we are though, we do mark each year and watch as the number gets larger with predictable regularity. Shops sell birthday cards with numbers on to help us greet others appropriately; numbered candles and balloons are available to reinforce the point! We count other yearly anniversaries too – last year was 80 years from the end of World War 2, and 2026 marks 500 years since the first English translation of the New Testament was published by William Tyndale. (*See also page 30*).

Sometimes another year passing is a cause for particular sadness, as we remember the extending time without a loved one. In October we hold our annual Remembering Services,

(see page 5) when the recently bereaved – and those who have grieved for much longer – can come to church to remember and give thanks for the person they have lost. At other times we may look back and see all that has happened over the years and celebrate the journey – a wedding anniversary perhaps or at the end of a long-term job.

I heard about someone the other day who was approaching a milestone in life – ‘they are counting the days!’ I was told. The Psalmist writes ‘So teach us to count our days that we may gain a wise heart’ (Psalm 90 v12). Naturally we look forward with expectation to happy events, but we need to hold them in the bigger picture – not taking time for granted but valuing and appreciating each day, and being aware that our lives are short. ‘Every day is a gift from God – how are we using that gift?’ wrote Christian author Rick Warren.

Jesus told a well-known and much-loved parable about two builders (Matthew 7 vv24-27). The ‘wise’ builder who built on rock, and whose house withstood the storms, is compared to anyone who hears Jesus’ words and puts them into practice. If we follow Jesus’ teachings, and put our faith in him, then we will gain the wisdom to use each day well.

And a very Happy Birthday to all those with the ‘big’ numbers this year!

Catherine Wilson

The gospel is good news. But Jesus never said it was easy news. - *Charles Colson 1931-2012. A career as a US political ‘fixer’ ended in imprisonment which led to his founding of the Prison Fellowship now the largest Christian non-profit organisation serving prisoners and their families in the USA.*



Next meeting - **Thurs 22nd October**

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For further info contact Tessa Woodcock
07766 118258



Sewing Group

1st and 3rd Wednesday
afternoons 2pm - 4pm in
St Owen's Church
Fellowship Room.
Contact Margaret 824402

St Owen's Altar Guild

Decorating St Owens Church for Harvest will take place on Saturday 3rd October from 10am. Anyone who would like to help will be most welcome. Donations for the purchase of flowers will be gratefully received.



Margaret Parrott

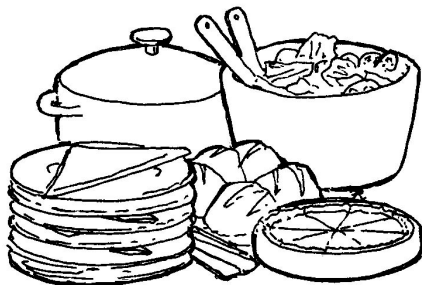
First Friday Coffee Morning

Next coffee morning on **Fri 2nd Oct**
10.30am- 12.30pm

in St Owen's Fellowship Room, Bromham.

See also page 12





Harvest Lunch

at St Owen's

on

Sunday 4th October
at 1230

NB Lunch is provided at £8 per head

Sign up now in church

Proceeds in support of **Water Aid**

ADVANCE NOTICE

COFFEE MORNING EXTRAVAGANZA

FRIDAY 4TH DECEMBER 2026

Suggestions, Stall and Raffle
donations to Elaine or Flora



'Messy Church for All'

at Oakley Methodist Church

on 3rd Tuesday in the month

3.30 till 5.30pm

Contact 824504 or
mcarr49@hotmail.com



Rt Revd Andrew Rumsey
Bishop of St Albans

St Albans Cathedral was filled with over 1,500 people on Saturday 19 September to mark the formal installation of the Rt Revd Dr Andrew Rumsey as the 11th Bishop of St Albans. A further 4,000 people tuned in online from across the region and around the world to watch the service streamed live.

Combining ancient legal traditions with a warm community celebration, the historic service represented a first major public milestone for Bishop Andrew's ministry across Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire, Luton, and Barnet.

The day began outside the Cathedral's West End, where arriving worshippers and community members were greeted by a vibrant festival atmosphere. The pre-service celebrations featured live music from the Cameron Saint Trio and Emilio's, a local food stall.

Following the traditional ceremonial knocking on the West End doors by the incoming Bishop, the Archdeacon of Canterbury, representing the Archbishop of Canterbury, formally placed Bishop Andrew into his cathedra—the bishop's chair that gives the Cathedral its name. During the service, the Dean of St Albans, the Very Revd Jo Kelly-Moore, handed Bishop Andrew the diocesan crozier, the pastoral staff symbolising his role as shepherd to the Diocese.

Continued on next page

Speaking of the occasion, Dr Rumsey highlighted the personal significance of the day:

“This is a poignant and powerful day for me, marking both a return home and a new beginning. The faith, hope and love I found as a child in the Diocese of St Albans are very much alive today — and needed more than ever in our country and communities. Our cathedral marks the origins of the Christian story in England, and I am humbled to serve and lead you in its next chapter.”

Delivering his installation sermon, Bishop Andrew talked about some vivid childhood memories. He produced a small brown envelope containing a St Albans Easter Monday Pilgrimage badge from 1979, which he had recently uncovered in an old tin while packing up his home. Recalling his teenage years joining young people converging on the Cathedral from across the Diocese, he reflected on how those early pilgrimages planted “a Christianity that was alive.”

Addressing current societal pressures, Bishop Andrew described the present day as “stony and thin-soiled times,” pointing to the scorched earth of the recent dry summer as a parable for modern challenges. He called on the Diocese to “imagine your bit of the world differently” and to build a future grounded in both “fresh planting and tenacious old roots.”

“We don’t have to be any better or holier, any more or less religious than we are. But the hour is at hand in our land and in our lives, and we must get going.”

Holding up his 40-year-old pilgrim’s badge, which bears the motto “We’re on our way,” Bishop Andrew concluded by stating it was the honour of his life to join the Diocese on the journey ahead.

First Friday Coffee Morning – Friday 6th November

This Coffee morning will be in aid of Pancreatic Cancer, one of the worst cancers, and unless diagnosed early, there is very little chance of recovery. Daily there are 31 new cases and 28 people die!! Funding is very low.

I chose to support Pancreatic Cancer UK after my son, Peter, died at the age of 52. Although he was offered a Clinical Trial, unfortunately the cancer beat him and he was not well enough to have this treatment. After several weeks in hospital, he asked to come home for his final journey.

With the help of his sister and wonderful carers he was with us for one week! This was, and it may seem strange to say, a most happy and wonderful week filled with memories, tears and laughter which ended on 1st October 2019 when he passed peacefully away.

Many of his friends came to his funeral and we sent over £1,000 to Pancreatic Cancer UK in his memory and his Cricket Club played a charity match and raised another £1,000. Since then, I have been privileged to hold a Coffee Morning once a year and we have raised nearly £1,000 again! This goes to research into finding a quicker diagnostic solution for this horrid disease!

So, if you have a few minutes to spare on 6th November, please come to the Fellowship Room at St. Owen's Church, Bromham for a coffee/tea & some delicious cakes and a raffle! We would love to see you, so please save the date in your diary.

Thank you.

Anne

All Hallows Eve – or Holy Evening

Modern Halloween celebrations have their roots with the Celtic peoples of pre-Christian times.

In those long-ago days, on the last night of October, the Celts celebrated the Festival of Samhain, or 'Summer's End'. The priests, or Druids, performed ceremonies to thank and honour the sun. For there was a very dark side to all this: Samhain also signalled the onset of winter, a time when it was feared that unfriendly ghosts, nature-spirits, and witches roamed the earth, creating mischief. So the Druid priests lit great bonfires and performed magic rites to ward off or appease these dark supernatural powers.

Then the Romans arrived, and brought their Harvest Festival which honoured the Goddess Pomona with gifts of apples and nuts. The two festivals slowly merged.

When Christianity arrived still later, it began to replace the Roman and Druid religions. 1st November - All Saints' Day - was dedicated to all Christian Martyrs and Saints who had died. It was called 'All Hallows' Day'. The evening before became an evening of prayer and preparation and was called 'All Hallows' Eve', The Holy Evening, later shortened to 'Halloween'.

For many centuries, however, fear of the supernatural remained strong. During the Middle Ages, animal costumes and frightening masks were worn to ward off the evil spirits of darkness on Halloween. Magic words and charms were used to keep away bad luck, and everybody believed that witches ride about on broomsticks. Fortune telling was popular, and predicting the future by the use of nuts and apples was so popular that Halloween is still sometimes known as Nutcrack Night or Snap-Apple Night.

Continued on next page

Today, Christians have learned to turn to prayer instead of charms to overcome the powers of darkness. And the deeper, true meaning of All Hallows' Eve, should not be forgotten. As Christians, we all draw closer to Christ when we remember and give thanks for our loved ones and for others who have gone before us through the gates of death.

Parish Pump website

St Luke the Evangelist – linking the sacred and the profane

To St Luke, a Gentile, we owe the beautifully written Gospel of Luke, and the Book of Acts. The Church commemorates his life on 18th October. He was a Greek physician, a disciple of St Paul, a companion on some of his missionary journeys, and an inspired writer.

Luke is the patron saint of doctors, surgeons and artists due to his picturesque style of writing and because of a Christian tradition that he painted the first portrait of the Virgin Mary and the Christ Child.

Luke's gospel focuses on the compassion of Christ. His gospel contains some of the most moving parables, such as the Good Samaritan and Prodigal Son. This, with his emphasis on poverty, prayer and purity of heart, make up much of his appeal to the Gentiles, for whom he wrote.



Continued on next page

Women figure more prominently in Luke's gospel than any other: look out for the extended story of the Virgin Birth, and stories of Mary, Elizabeth, and the woman who was a sinner.

In Acts, Luke is remarkably good at linking sacred and profane history, as subsequent archaeology has shown. A principal theme of his Acts is how the early Christians moved away from Jerusalem into the pagan world, and especially on to Rome.

His symbol is an ox, sometimes explained by reference to the sacrifice in the Temple at the beginning of his Gospel. In England 28 ancient churches were dedicated to him.

Parish Pump website

Book Review

The Wisdom of Jesus – Meditations on the Gospels in Words and Paintings

By Tom Wright, Lion Books, £13.99

For 2000 years, people have returned to the words of Jesus for wisdom, comfort, challenge, and hope. His teachings continue to shape lives, cultures, and communities across the world.

Here the renowned theologian, Tom Wright, brings together some of Christ's most profound and memorable sayings, offering insightful commentary that reveals their enduring depth, beauty and relevance for modern life. From happiness and prayer to love, God, and the meaning of true wisdom, these teachings invite readers to see the world – and themselves – in a new light. *Another review on page 18*

Editor: This year the Church of England inaugurated a Season of Creation; the Revd Paul Hardingham considers our earth.

Season of Creation

In the church year the *Season of Creation* (September 1st - October 4th) is an opportunity for us to reflect on our responsibility to care for the planet. As the season draws to an end for this year, have you considered:

The world is not ours:

‘The earth is the Lord’s and everything in it’ (Psalm 24:1). The world is not ours, but God’s! This means we have a responsibility of caring for God’s world: ‘The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.’ (Genesis 2:15).



Clearly, we have not done the best job! The effects of global warming have been all too obvious this summer. And 2025 ranked as the third warmest year on record globally, 1.3°C to 1.44°C above pre-industrial levels. This follows the historic peak in 2024, driven by ongoing fossil fuel emissions and high ocean surface temperatures.

Our hope is found in Jesus:

Any hope for the future lies in Jesus Himself. He is the one who sustains creation and will bring everything to completion: *‘all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.’ (Colossians 1:16,17).* God’s plan is *‘to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ.’ (Ephesians 1:10).* We

Continued on next page

can look forward to the climax of history when God through Christ will restore our broken world and make everything new.

In the present, we are empowered by Christ to take our proper place as stewards of the earth. Simple everyday actions can help to sustain our planet, including recycling of waste, energy saving, choosing reusable options, careful diet and a commitment to simple living can help the planet.

However difficult the climate crisis gets, as Christians, we can engage it with faith and not fatalism!

Canon Paul Hardingham continues his series on the books of the Bible.

What's the Big Idea? - an Introduction to the Minor Prophets

The Minor Prophets are 'minor' not because they lack importance, but due to their length. The 12 prophets, Hosea through Malachi, make up the last books of the Old Testament, and were written from around 770 BC (Jonah) until 433 BC (Malachi).

The prophets fall into 3 time-periods:

Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah and Nahum = Assyrian period

Habakkuk and Zephaniah = Babylonian period

Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi = Post-exilic period.

Hosea and Amos spoke to Israel (Northern Kingdom), calling the people to acknowledge their sin and return to God. Joel and Micah addressed Judah (Southern Kingdom), including

Continued on next page

prophesies about the coming of the Messiah and the church. Habakkuk and Zephaniah spoke to Judah shortly before they were taken into exile into Babylon. Obadiah spoke God's judgment against the Edomites, while Jonah and Nahum both spoke against Assyria and their capital city of Ninevah. Following the people's return from exile, Haggai exhorted the people not to neglect rebuilding the Temple. Zechariah encouraged them with the promise of the future glory of Zion and of its shepherd king, while Malachi reminded them that if he is rejected, God would judge His people.

The minor prophets remind us that God cared not just for the Jews, but also for the Edomites, Assyrians, Egyptians and all of His creation. For Christians today the challenge remains to take the message of God's grace to all nations in the power of the Holy Spirit: *'I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days.'* (Joel 2:28, 29)

Book Review

The Lion Book of Five-Minute Parables

By Charlotte Ryton, Lion Cub Books, £9.99

This book brings 10 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 Three Servants. *Another review on page 20*

Tim Lenton considers a much-loved bear...

100 years of Winnie-the-Pooh

One hundred years ago, on 14th October 1926, the children's book *Winnie-the-Pooh*, by A A Milne, was published.

It was set in the Hundred Acre Wood, an innocent world described as "largely Edenic" but based on Ashdown Forest in East Sussex, which the Milne family often explored from their home in nearby Hartfield. It came about through the encouragement of E H Shepard, Milne's colleague on the humorous magazine *Punch*, who provided the beguiling illustrations.

Alan Alexander Milne was firstly a playwright and occasional mystery story writer who, again with Shepard, wrote the book of children's verse *When We Were Very Young*, which contained the seeds of *Winnie-the-Pooh* and its sequel, *The House on Pooh Corner*, all of which proved extremely popular.

It was apparently during a family visit to London Zoo, where Christopher Robin encountered a tame bear called Winnipeg, that the book was conceived. Winnie's literary friends, such as Piglet and Eeyore, were originally toys of the real Christopher Robin.



E H Shepard

Sadly, the book eventually had an adverse effect on the Milne family. The author said that he felt "amazement and disgust" at the fame his son had had thrust upon him: "I do not want

C R Milne to ever wish that his name was Charles Robert.” Nevertheless, the son did become estranged from his parents, especially following his marriage to his mother’s niece.

The effect of the book on others has been happier. A plaque at Ashdown Forest declares that Milne and Shepard “captured the magic of Ashdown Forest and gave it to the world”.

Despite creating a kind of Eden, Milne, who was a pacifist, said little about religion. But he did say on joining the Home Guard that “in fighting Hitler we are truly fighting the Devil, the Anti-Christ ... Hitler was a crusader against God.”

The four Winnie-the-Pooh books went on to sell more than 50 million copies worldwide. The first book became the first-ever foreign-language book on the *New York Times* bestseller list.

Book Review

**Money and the Gospel – giving money with grace,
handling money with integrity**

By Christopher Wright and John Stott, 10Publishing, £5.15

Generosity is part of the Christian life. And the money we give should be looked after with integrity. The Apostle Paul teaches on both these aspects of handling money.

Here John Stott looks at the Apostle Paul’s teaching on Christian giving. How do we decide what to give? Is it ever right for our giving to go down, if circumstances change? And what about the money that the church is given for general use, or for a giving appeal or building project? Chris Wright considers the Apostle’s teaching on how to handle money with integrity and transparency.

This is a helpful guidebook for any Christian who gives, and above all, for anyone dealing with church funds.



An Evening Of Live Music With

Ray Cordell & Rick Westoby

Saturday 10th October

St Mary's Church, Oakley, 7pm

**Tickets £12 (in advance from Graham or Dorothy Palmer)
or on the door**

interval refreshments

further info email, gpalmer@talk21.com or call 07710 462535

FRIENDS OF ST OWEN'S 100 CLUB PRIZE WINNERS - 2026

SEPTEMBER

1st prize	John Franklin
2nd prize	Sally Lewinsky
3rd prize	Frances Bulmer
4th prize	Heather Fawcett
5th prize	John Franklin

Sudoku -
Medium

Solution on
page 33

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

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Some observations on our Christian faith

Our needs will never exhaust God's supply. - *Anon*

Never say never when it comes to what God can do. - *Anon*

A church which starves itself and its members in the contemplative life deserves whatever spiritual leanness it may experience. - *Michael Ramsey, Archbishop of Canterbury*

How else but through a broken heart,
May Lord Christ enter in?

Oscar Wilde

From the Registers

Baptisms:

27th Sept Arthur Peter George Holdsworth (Oakley)

Weddings:

12th Sept Yolanda Yang & Clifford Robinson (Bromham)

19th Sept Jessica Knee-Robinson & Jules Harvey
(Bromham)

25th Sept Tracy Hewitt & David Russell (Oakley)

Funerals:

4th Sept Kevin Honeybourne (Bromham)

8th Sept Peter Almond (Bromham)

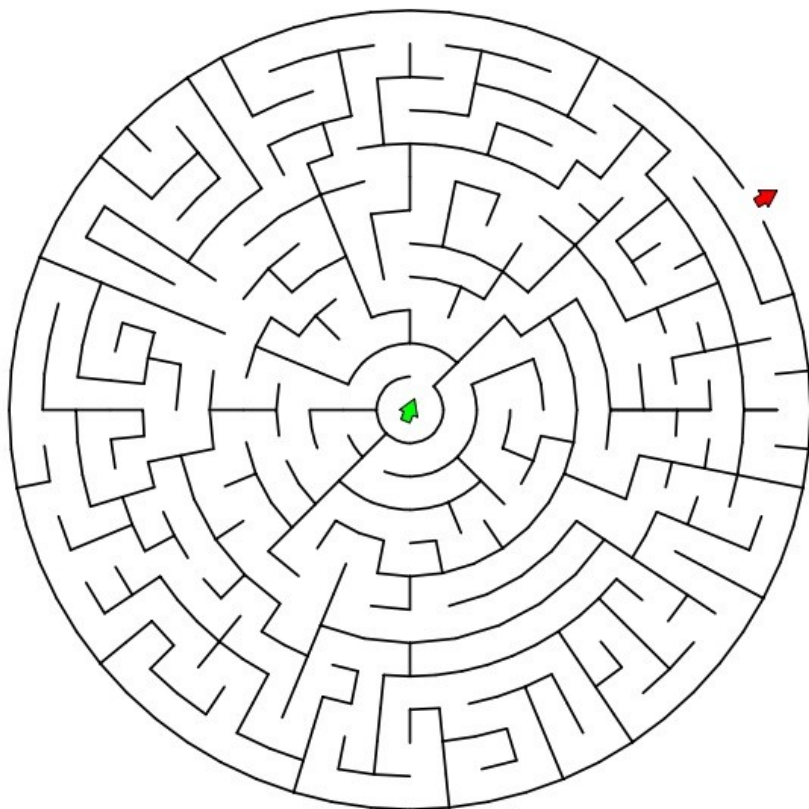
23rd Sept Adrian Robinson (Bromham)

24th Sept Susan Potter (Bromham)

Burial of Ashes:

4th Sept William & Jean Thrush (Bromham)

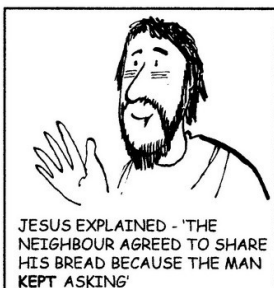
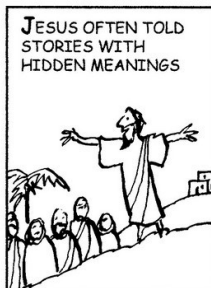
Can you find your way out from the middle?

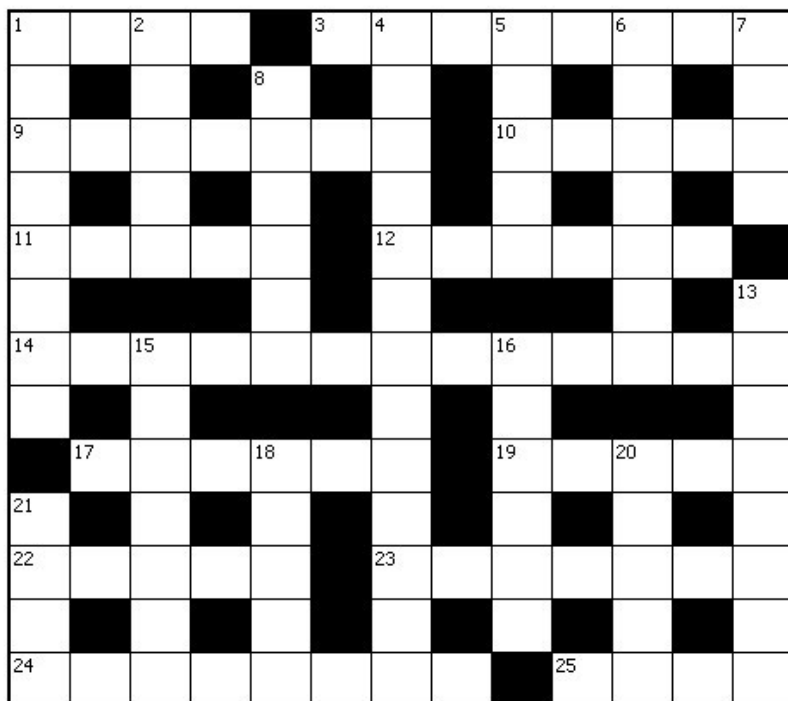


The cow and the Bible

A religious farmer lost his Bible out in the field. A few days later he went to answer a noise at his door. Standing there was a cow, with his Bible in its mouth. The farmer raised his eyes to heaven and thanked the Lord for this miracle. "It's not really," said the cow. "Your name was written inside."

For younger readers.....





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)

Solution on page 33

St. Francis - and the Life of Simplicity

Just about the only thing most people know about Francis of Assisi is that he talked to the birds. Church-goers also know the popular hymn based on his famous prayer, 'Make me a channel of your Peace', which was sung at the funeral of Princess Diana.

However, Italy's patron saint, whose feast day is this month (the 4th) was a more complex, and some would say controversial character. His life spanned the end of the twelfth and beginning of the thirteenth centuries. He was born into a very wealthy family, but after what he called his 'conversion' standing before a crucifix. He renounced all his possessions. In fact, he stripped himself of his of his wealthy garments in a public square in his home-town, Assisi.

For the rest of his life he and his followers, including his feminine counterpart. St Claire longed, prayed and worked for a life of simplicity – a lifestyle without luxury or privileges. For the Franciscan brothers and the Poor Claires. This meant no private possessions at all. Francis saw that many poor people without these things, actually seemed to live happier and more fulfilling lives than the ambitious rich. He spoke of a simple life not shaped by money or power but by love and mutual concern. As his hymn says, 'it is in giving of ourselves that we receive'.

Of course, poverty; in our modern western world is seldom a matter of blissful simplicity, as present-day Franciscans recognise. For too many it is a matter of poor diet, overcrowded rooms, rough sleeping and unemployment. The call of today's followers of Francis and Claire is that those who are better-off should 'live more simply, so that others can

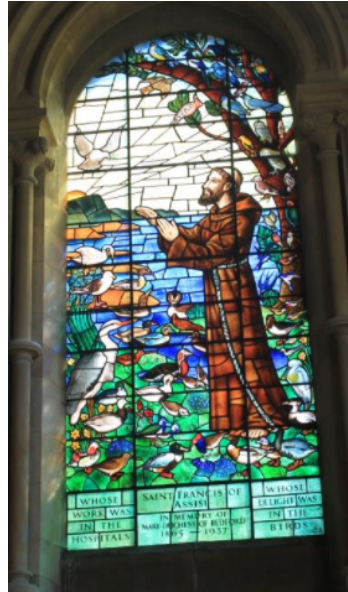
Continued on next page

simply live'. Christians follow a Master who said that he came with 'good news for the poor'. They believe that many of us today can be that good news.

Parish Pump website

Our picture shows the window in St Mary's, Woburn which depicts St Francis among the birds and flowers of Woburn Abbey estate.

With apologies to those viewing this in black and white; you will have to visit Woburn for yourselves! Ed



"Wait a moment, dear, this isn't a tourists'-attraction ratings guide, it's a Health and Safety warning!"

How Tyndale affects what you say - today

It is 500 years since William Tyndale printed the very first English translation of the New Testament.

And hundreds of millions of people today are still quoting him, though they don't know it. For in 1526 Tyndale invented what would become some of the most famous idioms in the English-speaking world.

For instance –

"The salt of the earth"; "Go the extra mile"; "The powers that be"; "Eat, drink and be merry"; "A city on a hill"; "The apple of his eye"; "In the twinkling of an eye"; "Signs of the times"; "My brother's keeper"; "Fight the good fight"; "Broken-hearted"; "Fallen flat on his face."

These phrases were all invented by Tyndale, during his translation from the original Greek of the New Testament.

As a young Catholic priest in England, Tyndale had been inspired by Martin Luther's groundbreaking translation of the Bible into German, and he went to work doing the same for English speakers. No wonder that the Bible Society describes Tyndale as a 'background radical' during Henry VIII's reign (he's mentioned in *Wolf Hall* but doesn't get involved in the action).

Tyndale invented words, too, when he couldn't find a direct English equivalent for a Greek or Hebrew concept. Here are just some:

Scapegoat: To describe the goat burdened with the sins of the people and sent into the wilderness.

Atonement: Literally "at-one-ment", created to describe being at one with God.

Continued on next page

Passover: Coined to describe the Jewish holiday where the angel of death passed over the homes of the Israelites.

Busybody: Invented to describe someone who meddles in other people's business.

Tyndale's work has survived multiple revisions of the Bible down the centuries. It is found in the Authorised Version of the Bible, the RSV, the ASV or the ESV, among others.

More at Bible Society's website:
<https://www.biblesociety.org.uk> Just type 'Tyndale' into its 'search' box.
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Broad

Middle age is when broadness of the mind and narrowness of the waist change places.



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Solution to puzzle
on page 22

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

Solution to puzzle
on page 26

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



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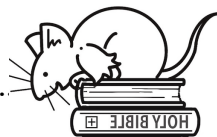
Anything one neighbour might do for another.

All volunteers are insured and have a DBS check.

Extracts from: Diary Of A Church Mouse –

Sir John Betjeman

Here among long-discarded cassocks,
Damp stools, and half-split open hassocks,
Here where the vicar never looks
I nibble through old service books.
Lean and alone I spend my days
Behind this Church of England baize.....



For me the only feast at all
Is Autumn's Harvest Festival,
When I can satisfy my want
With ears of corn around the font.
I climb the eagle's brazen head
To burrow through a loaf of bread.
I scramble up the pulpit stair
And gnaw the marrows hanging there.
It is enjoyable to taste
These items ere they go to waste.....

Within the human world I know
Such goings-on could not be so,
For human beings only do
What their religion tells them to.
They read the Bible every day
And always, night and morning, pray,
And just like me, the good church mouse,
Worship each week in God's own house,
But all the same it's strange to me
How very full the church can be
With people I don't see at all
Except at Harvest Festival.





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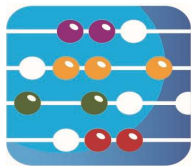
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