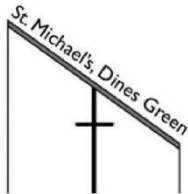




The Parish Magazine

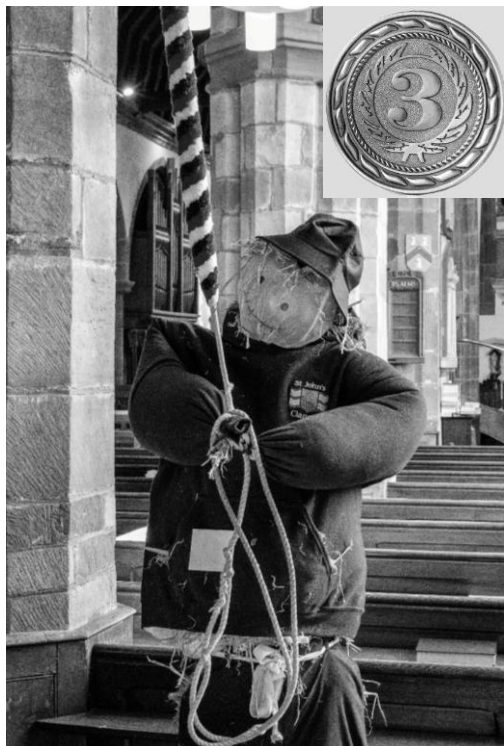
St John-in-Bedwardine

St Michael's



November 2025

50p



Information

WORCESTER CITY WEST TEAM CLERGY (clergy@wcw.church)

Phil Bradford (Team Rector) (01905 423794)

Day off: Friday

Sarah Cottrill (Team Vicar) (01905 426257)

Saturday

Gilly Maxim (Assistant Curate) (gilly.maxim@wcw.church)

Monday

Stephen Buckley (Pastoral Minister) (07746 206905)

TEAM OFFICE

The office is open Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday 9am-12noon.	
1a Bromyard Road St John's, WR2 5BS	Tel: (01905) 420490 e-mail: office@wcw.church

ON THE WEB

St John's	Parish Website: www.stjohninbedwardine.co.uk A church near you: www.achurchnearyou.com/church/18634 Facebook: www.facebook.com/stjohninbedwardine
St Michael's	Parish Website and A church near you: } www.achurchnearyou.com/church/19689 Facebook: www.facebook.com/stmichaelsdinesgreen

SERVICES

Please check our websites and Facebook pages, or the notices published on the church noticeboards and printed in the magazine and weekly pew sheets.

SAFEGUARDING

If you have any concerns about possible abuse of a child or vulnerable adult, contact one of the Safeguarding Officers, Fiona Templeton, Elizabeth Forman in person or via safeguarding@wcw.church, or any member of the clergy.

Churchwardens: stjohns.churchwardens@wcw.church Gordon Templeton (749025), Joy Job (423051).	St John's
Pastoral care: The church's Pastoral Care Group offers support if you are lonely, bereaved, or unable to attend church. Please contact one of the clergy (as above or email clergy@wcw.church) or Stephen Buckley (tel 07746 206905/email stephenbuckley554@gmail.com).	
Churchwardens: Mike Dowling (dowlingm28@sky.com / 424539) Val Mason (val.mason@yahoo.com /428948). On Site Safeguarding Officer: Mike Dowling (details above).	St Michael's

Worcester St John-in-Bedwardine and St Michael's Joint Council is a charity with the Registered Charity Number 1205354.

A word from the editors

Welcome to our November 2025 edition. In October we held our scarecrow festival for the first time; throughout the magazine you can see the fruits of that venture.

The scarecrows at St John's showed skill and care to achieve attractive results. Real scarecrows are very rarely perfect or attractive (especially to crows!); just like real people! Phil, in his letter, asks us to be inspired by the saints - not as clichéd cardboard cutouts, but.... we'll let you read the letter for the rest!

We have been fortunate recently to have had reports from far-flung places, and we've got more this time, from Peru, Cardiff and the Lake District. We'll let you find them all.

In the theme collect we ask that we may be sustained by the example and fellowship of the (imperfect) saints; so we leave you with these words from psalm 91:

*Because they have set their love upon me,
therefore will I deliver them;
I will lift them up, because they know my name.
They will call upon me and I will answer them;
I am with them in trouble,
I will deliver them and bring them to honour.*

Graham and Sue Evans

Important information

Email address: parishmagazine@wcv.church

Next edition (November): Deadline is Sunday 9th November. Distribution – towards the end of November.

Subscription form: Page 54.

Cover picture: Top scarecrows in the public vote at the St John's scarecrow festival. Pictures by Colin Nash.

Pictures in this magazine: Thanks to those who have provided pictures for this magazine, including Phil Bradford, Beth Broadway, Sarah Cottrill, Graham Evans, Sue Fairman, Rob Little, Colin Nash, Amy Rees and Pat Richardson.

The magazine

We publish a Parish Magazine each month, except August.

Articles on all aspects of Christian and parish life, letters, jokes and anecdotes are welcome - do contribute if you can. If you have a story to tell, please make contact. Do include your name as anonymous contributions will not be considered. If you can, please use e-mail (address below left). The editors will always acknowledge items sent by email; please try again if you do not receive a response. Please send all written correspondence for the magazine to the Parish Office.

The magazine costs 50p to purchase and can be obtained from the back of church. Subscriptions are available at the discounted price of £5 per year; by subscribing you make things easier for our printing team as we know more closely how many copies to print.

You can subscribe by filling in the form near the back of the magazine or by taking a subscription form from the rack (where the magazines are) at the back of the church. Please return the form and your payment to the parish office.

Opinions!

Opinions expressed in this magazine are personal opinions of the authors concerned and may not represent the views of the editors, our Joint Council or The Church of England. Such material is offered as a source of debate or reflection.

To advertise

Please see page 14.

From Phil Bradford

Prompted by a friend, I have recently begun reading the novels of Catherine Fox. Set in the fictional Diocese of Lindchester, somewhere in the North Midlands/North West, the books are something of a modern reinterpretation of Anthony Trollope's Barchester Towers. They have some obvious and intentional echoes of Barchester, not least the focus on the scheming and foibles in a single cathedral.



Like Trollope, Fox opts for a strong and often intrusive narrative voice. However, there is no chance that these novels would ever have made it to press in the prudish Victorian era; with their strong language and frank discussion of issues such as sex and drugs, they should not be read by those who are sensitive or easily offended. Those with an elevated view of Anglican churchgoers, especially clergy, would probably be deeply shocked. Those with cause to be angry at the hypocrisy and judgementalism of the Church of England would probably feel vindicated. The many beyond the arcane Anglican universe would probably be deeply confused. The books will never be global bestsellers.

Yet from within that arcane Anglican universe, I have devoured them. In these mischievous works are superb lines which lay bare some of the eccentricities, pomposities and outright ludicrousness of the Church of England; the acerbic description of the tortuous process of choosing a new bishop will resonate with those of us in Worcester who have just experienced it. There is no flinching from the fact that the Church of England is bizarre, outdated, generally irrelevant and often ridiculous.

But these are novels written out of a deep love for that Church in spite of everything, a Church which in its own shadowy, intensely imperfect way reveals something of the grace of God in a complex and terrifying world. It is a love which comes across above all in the characters. All are flawed, often deeply so, doing battle with inner and outer demons, frequently in conflict with one another. Yet underpinning all of this is a genuine sense of love for God, is prayer, is compassion, is a striving to improve in navigating the difficulties of being human in the service of God, is redemption for those who see themselves as irredeemable. These are real people struggling to be people of God amidst the temptations and fears of life, falling short and yet sustained by an elusive and undefinable grace.

This struck me most profoundly in reading the collect chosen for this month's theme, the prayer that as God has 'kindled the flame of love in the hearts of the saints', so 'as we rejoice in their triumphs, we may be sustained by their example and fellowship'. Very often, we see those triumphs in coldly unemotional terms, the saints as cardboard cutouts representing tired clichés and unrealistic expectations. The highly selective life stories you will find in books of saints too often make the saints seem perfect, ignoring the more problematic or frankly repulsive elements of their lives. Yet if we see the full picture, then the example becomes much more instructive and relevant; as one obscure, failed nineteenth-century prime minister put it, humanity is 'helped almost as much by the study of imperfection as by the contemplation of perfection'. Look at the New Testament and you will see that the apostles and disciples in the early church were anything but perfect with their rows and jealousies and rages. The towering anger of Paul in writing Galatians is far from the ideal of a placid saint. These were real people mired in the complexity of life, and the example they give us is that to follow God can be a struggle and we frequently fail and have to try again.

It is that message which Fox captures so superbly in contemporary form in Lindchester. For amidst the humour and moments of despair is something indefinable, a sense of God at work in the brokenness of the world, doing that work through those imperfect, broken, often infuriating characters who yet somehow reflect the love of the saints. For those who may read the novels, I venture that you will find far more of love and God's grace, triumphs by which to be sustained, in the likes of these characters than in those who simply judge others by abstract standards, devoid of the compassion without which no one can truly show God's love.

Phil

The Collect for the fourth Sunday before Advent

Almighty and eternal God,
you have kindled the flame of love in the hearts of the saints:
grant to us the same faith and power of love,
that, as we rejoice in their triumphs,
we may be sustained by their example and fellowship;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

In Memoriam

Robert Telfer Dedicott	2 November 1984
Rowland Taylor	4 November 1996
Andrew FI Jenkinson	4 November 2007
Rose Hodgetts	5 November 1985
Reginald James Rogers	6 November 1995
Margaret Dance	14 November 1996
Herbert Willian (Bill) Bosley	17 November 1998
Harold Ricketts	19 November 1996
Jeremy Edward Glyn Cole	22 November 2020

Additions to In Memoriam are not automatic but must be specifically requested via the clergy.

Inclusion only needs to be requested once; entries are then included until the fortieth anniversary.

An extension may be requested by family or friends of those named.

From the Registers, September 2025

St John's

BAPTISMS/THANKSGIVINGS: *We welcome you into the Lord's family*

7th September 2025 Otis William Tiffany Gillgan

FUNERALS/MEMORIAL SERVICES: *Rest eternal grant unto them O Lord*

d. 16th August 2025 Kenneth Snipe

SERVICES: Communicants 224. Total attendance at all services 634 including 211 at a school service.

St Michael's

SERVICES: Communicants 52. Total attendance at all services 60.

Sundays and Principal Feasts in November

Saturday 1st November: All Saints' Day (Transferred to 2nd November)

Sunday 2nd November: The fourth Sunday before Advent

Sunday 9th November: The third Sunday before Advent (Remembrance Sunday)

Sunday 16th November: The second Sunday before Advent

Sunday 23rd November: Christ the King (The Sunday next before Advent)

Sunday 30th November: The first Sunday of Advent

Monday 1st December: Andrew the Apostle (transferred from 30th November)

ST JOHN-IN-BEDWARDINE

ALL SOULS' SERVICE



**SUNDAY
2ND NOVEMBER
AT 5.30PM**

If you would like to have a loved one remembered, by having their name read out at the service, please fill in the sheet at the back of church no later than **Wednesday 29th October.**

Evening Prayer with Bible Study ***The exploration continues***

The theme for Sunday Evening Prayer with Bible Study on 9th November will be Thomas - Disciple of Doubt, John 14:1-7; 20:19-31.

These services are on the second Sunday of each month at 5.30pm at St. John's Church with hot drinks and sweet treats (cakes or cookies) available. During the cooler months the sessions will be held in the Burroughs' Room, otherwise they will continue in the font chapel. Wherever it is being held, please gather in the church beforehand.

The theme on 14th December will be: Simon - Bargaining with God, Acts 8:9-25.

Philip Evans

Weekday services

The following mid-week Eucharists are scheduled in November:

Tuesday	St John's 10am (Eucharist - Book of Common Prayer)
Thursday	St Michael's 10.30am (Eucharist - Common Worship) **

** On the second Thursday of each month (13th November) this is a Eucharist for Wholeness and Healing.

Daily offices take place in St John's Church from Monday to Thursday. Morning Prayer is at 8.30am. Evening Prayer is at 4pm during GMT (**i.e. in 2025 from 27th October**), and at 5pm during British Summer Time. Occasionally other commitments will prevent a service happening; the schedule for each week will be published in the pew sheet.



FAMILY QUIZ NIGHT

**SATURDAY 15TH NOVEMBER
6.30PM**

**£5 PER PERSON - CHILDREN FREE
No Booking required- tickets sold on the door**

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www.stjohninbedwardine.co.uk**

Dates for your diary

<i>Location key</i>	(J) St John's Church	(M) St Michael's Church
	(V) The Vicarage, 7 Manor Road	

(J) Mondays in term time, 10am: Little Lambs, see pages 10 and 25.

--- 000 ---

(J) Saturday 1st November, 4pm: Messy Church, see pages 10 and 28.

Doors open and drinks available from 3:30pm.

--- 000 ---

(J) Saturday 8th November, 9am: Women's Breakfast, see page 10.

--- 000 ---

(J) Tuesday 11th November, 10.55am: Act of Remembrance at the war memorial.

--- 000 ---

(J) Thursday 13th November, 1pm: The Good Old Days present

Discover History, "Tudor Banqueting", see page 10.

--- 000 ---

(J) Saturday 15th November, 9am: Tidy up/Autumn cleaning day 9am-noon,
see page 11.

--- 000 ---

(J) Saturday 15th November, 6.30pm: Family Quiz, see page 8.

--- 000 ---

(M) Monday 17th November, 2.30pm: Mothers' Union.

--- 000 ---

(J) Wednesday 19th November, 2.45pm: Tea/Coffee & Cake, see page 11.

--- 000 ---

(M) Thursday 20th November, 2pm - 4pm: West Worcester Friendship Group.

--- 000 ---

(V) Thursday 27th November, 7.30pm: Mothers' Union.

--- 000 ---

(V) Friday 28th November: Fourth Friday Friendship Group. Look out for
sign-up sheets in church or contact Sarah Cottrill for details.

--- 000 ---

(J) Saturday 22nd November, 10.45am: Café @ 10.45. See page 11.

--- 000 ---

(J) Saturday 29th November: Community Breakfast, see page 11.

Installation of Bishop Hugh

Hugh's installation as the new bishop of Worcester will be at 2pm on Saturday 17th January 2026 in the cathedral. This is open to all.

Events at St John's



**Mondays in Term Time at
St John's Church
10:00am to 11.30am**

FREE!

Toys and Games, Art & Craft, Messy Play,
Snacks and Stories, Singing

Birth to 4 years old and carers

For more details contact the Team Office
Details on the inside front cover

More volunteers needed!



Saturday 1st November, 4pm.
(doors open 3.30pm with
drinks and biscuits).

"Light"

Please do come along – you'll be sure
of a warm welcome!



**Women's Breakfast Meetings
for Friendship and
Christian Fellowship**

Why not join us?
Everyone is welcome!
Our next meeting is on

**Saturday 8th November
9.00am until 11.00am**

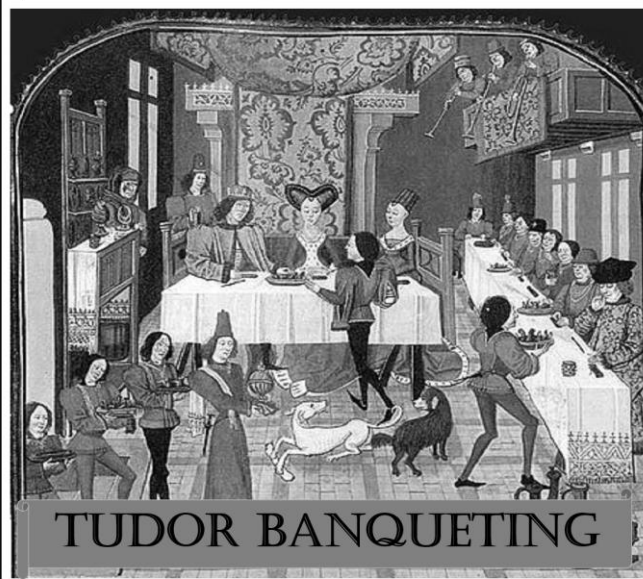
St John-in-Bedwardine
in The Blakefield Room

Contact Margaret Rutter (425396)



**THE GOOD OLD DAYS
PRESENTS**

DISCOVER HISTORY



TUDOR BANQUETING

**THURSDAY 13TH NOVEMBER
1.00PM**

ADMISSION £4

INCLUDES REFRESHMENTS

Events at St John's

 Join Us

Saturday,
November
15th,
9am-12pm

Help us clean together!

St. John-in-Bedwardine Church

Autumn Clean

Join us for a morning of
cleaning our church.

Please sign-up inside so we can provide refreshments.

ST JOHN-IN-BEDWARDINE

Open for Tea/Coffee and Cakes

Suggested donation £2.00



Wednesday 19th November
at 2.45pm in the Church

ALL WELCOME

St John in Bedwardine



Join us for Fresh Coffee and Danish
'Friendship and Thoughts'

**10.45am on
Saturday
22nd November**

**Guest Speaker
Thomas Pound**

ALL WELCOME

FREE Community Breakfast



All are welcome
to come and
share a full
English
breakfast with
unlimited
supplies of tea,
coffee and toast

Saturday 29th November

8.30am to 11am

St John's Church



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Events Team News

A massive thank you to everyone who supported our Scarecrow Festival! We were delighted to receive 17 submissions from a mixture of businesses, schools, community groups and individuals. Alongside these, the steady stream of visitors across the weekend looking at the scarecrows and voting for their favourites was wonderful to see. The scarecrows were very impressive, and there were some wonderful ideas. It was clear that a lot of time and effort had gone into creating them and every scarecrow received votes. The weekend culminated in a Harvest Songs of Praise, which included the one reading from the Bible which mentions scarecrows and the announcement from the 'returning officer', aka Phil, of the winning scarecrow.

Congratulations to the winners, Bankside College, the runner-up, Ann Ricketts, and the bronze medallists, St John's Clangers (bell-ringers). Pictures of those three scarecrows can be found on the cover of this magazine, and there's a picture of every scarecrow somewhere in the magazine. Can you find them all?

The next event is the return of our Family Quiz, on Saturday 15th November at 6.30pm in St John's Church. Bring the whole family along for an evening of fun and trivia. See the poster on page 8 for more information. There are questions for all ages, with last year's including capital cities, musicals and TV themes (including Bluey and the original Thomas the Tank Engine). Mike and Kate are busy working on this year's rounds and we can't wait to see what they come up with. So please do come along, tickets are £5 for adults, children free and you can bring your own drinks and picnic.

We're also busy planning ahead for 2026 – keep an eye out for the announcement of our next ceilidh!



Beth Broadway

Would you like to advertise in this magazine?

An advert can be full-page, half-page or quarter-page in size.

The booking can be from one month to one year.

The Parish Magazine is published A5 in size, in black and white.

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St David's News

On 1st October we had our monthly Coffee Morning which was as usual very busy. We were pleased to welcome three ladies who had come for the first time and enjoyed themselves so will come again. Our next Coffee Morning will be on Wednesday 5th November at 10.30am until 12noon.

Friday 3rd October saw us have our Harvest Supper with St. Clement's. Nearly 40 people sat down to supper and afterwards we were entertained by Peter and Marie Yates who had kindly printed out the words to the songs they were going to play so everyone was able to join in. Thank you to all who supported this event and a special thank you to all those who helped.



Date for your diary: On Saturday 8th November, 1pm - 3pm we are having a Christmas Fayre with a Raffle, a Tombola (with a prize every time), and a Christmas Gift Table. There will be light refreshments available, so do come along and support us.

Carole Stone
Deputy Church Warden

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Children's Church Update – November 2025

Suddenly we're halfway through the Autumn term which can only mean one thing... it's time to talk about Christmas! This year Children's Church will again be hosting a Community Nativity. It will be held on Saturday 20th December and we are inviting any children who would like to join us to take part. There will be a practice on Saturday 13th December at 2.30pm at St John's Church. You do not need to book in advance, simply turn up on the day. There are speaking parts available for anyone who wants one. We look forward to seeing you there.

Our regular Children's Church sessions run on the 1st, 3rd and 4th Sunday of every month at St John's Church. We have two groups:

Scramblers – is for pre-school and Key Stage 1 children. We share a simple Bible story and join in with familiar songs and crafts. There are always toys and games available for the very young.

Explorers – is for Key Stage 2 aged children. We look at a Bible story in a little more detail and complete a craft or related activity. As children get older we begin to make more links to what is happening in the main Sunday service.

Each week children have the opportunity to share what they've done with the adults in church, if they would like to.

If you're considering attending a session and would like any further information, please speak to either of us at a Sunday service.

Fiona Templeton and Amy Rees

Hear our Borneo reporter

Cafe Church is on Saturday 22nd November at 10.45 am. Thomas Pound will share his experiences of nature conservation in Borneo. Thomas visited Borneo this summer, as part of a team from RGS. I am sure he will have some really interesting things to share with us. Coffee and Danish will be served and all are welcome.

Margaret Rutter and Jenny English

Community Breakfast

On Saturday 29th November we are having our Community Breakfast. Breakfast is served from 8.30am until 11am. A full English breakfast all cooked by our chefs, plus unlimited supplies of tea and coffee and toast.

It is a free event but donations are most welcome. Everyone is welcome so please come and bring your family and friends and have a treat on a Saturday morning.

Jenny English and the team

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Poppy Curtain

Finished at last 8000 poppies over 2500 hours sewing!



Wendy placing the last poppy. Finished.

Thanks to a dedicated team at 'Crochet and Chat' at St Johns library and many other volunteers. It has taken more than 6 months of sewing and preparation but the result is impressive.



The curtain will be raised into place behind the war memorial ready for the poppy appeal launch on 23rd October.

Thank you to all who contributed in any way from far and wide.

Pat Richardson and team

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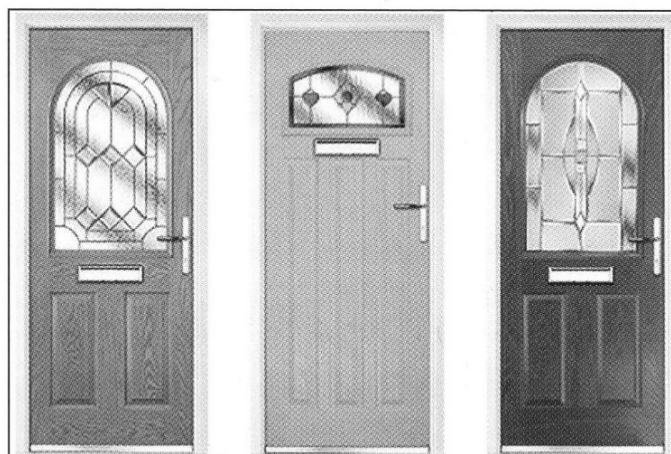
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Christmas Flowers at St John's Church

The Flower Team will decorate the church on Monday 22nd December between 9am and 1pm. If you have any holly/variegated greenery it would be most welcome.

This is a time when we particularly remember family and friends and you may care to make a donation towards the Christmas flowers in their memory. Their name(s) will be included on the Memorial List which will be placed on the Welcome Table, just inside church, on Christmas Eve. Cash donations can be passed to the Churchwardens, Dorothy Little or Sue Hussell. Please place these in an envelope with the name(s) of those you wish to be remembered.

Donations can also be made by using the card reader at the back of church or via <https://givealittle.co/c/Flowers2025> In order to include the name(s) of your loved ones by either of these methods, please either complete the list (on the table) at the back of the church, or email suehussell4@gmail.com

The Flower Team wishes you a very happy and blessed Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year. Thank you for your support.

Sue Hussell

St Clement's Café Church

The second session of St Clement's Café Church took place on October 7th, with attendance more than double that of our first meeting in September! In preparation for Prisons Week (October 12th - 18th) we took crime and punishment as our theme. The suggestion that people "Go to prison as punishment, not for punishment" gave rise to lively discussions on the nature and purpose of prison, views on the death penalty and life imprisonment, and how easy - or difficult - we find it to forgive. All of this after enjoying tea and cake!

Cafe Church is back at 11am on Tuesday, November 4th when we will be discussing the ethics of international conflict and whether there is such a thing as a "just war." Everyone is welcome.

Sarah Cottrill



Anne

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Noticeboards in St John's

We have been looking at our noticeboards and prayer boards. While what we have decided for now may not be as ambitious as some of our ideas, it has the advantage of not requiring us to spend money as it works with what we have. In summary, the idea is, moving round the church:

1. The noticeboard inside the main door (in the church itself, not the porch) will be used for the key legal documents - safeguarding information and the electoral roll. We have replaced the cork backing, as it was looking very tatty.
2. The welcome table nearby will be turned round and decluttered. A board with welcome information, including photos of clergy and wardens and other key things, will be put up at the back of the South Aisle.
3. In the Lady Chapel, we will remove the old prayer board from the wall and ensure we update the board which sits on the table, with a full review of literature. There is now a prayer box there and I will write a note to explain its use. Both the Roll of Honour file and the book of remembrance have been placed on a new table next to this, in front of the Meco Memorial, so people can access them more easily.
4. We will keep the events board at the back outside the Muniment Room, but this will be moved back with the table to create more space for things like choir processions and the Christmas tree. It will be rebaked in more sober colours. The other board will be repurposed for (6) below.
5. Other than the Messy Church sign, which sits at the very top, no drawing pins should be used on any of the boards in the children's corner. (In general, Charlotte will be moving to use Velcro attachments, while Messy Church and Guides use staples.)
6. The other board from beside the Muniment Room will move to the chapel area by the font, where it will be the new World Church/Mission Partner/Monthly Peace and Justice theme board. This will allow the altar to be used as such, rather than a board stand.
7. A board, where the posters sit behind a Perspex screen, has been installed in the Blakefield Room with core information (fire, health and safety, safeguarding, and emergency contacts).

Hopefully this will make things look tidier, while helping us with our aims of welcome, making the church more information friendly, and encouraging the use of the building for prayer.

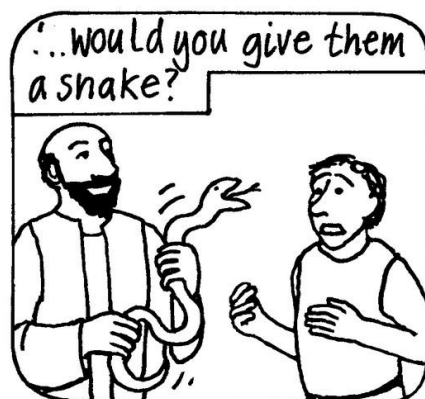
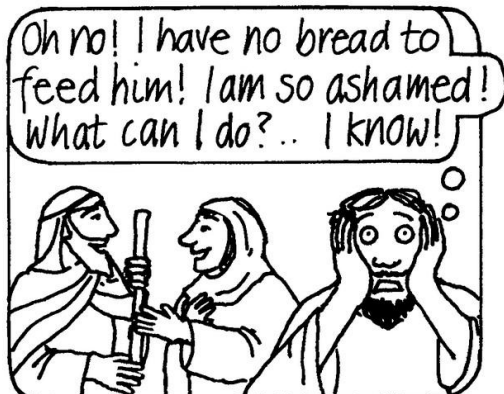
Phil Bradford

Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in
Matthew 7:7-11, Luke 11:5-13

To teach about praying, and God's good gifts, Jesus told this story - 'If you have a visitor arrive in the middle of the night..'



Little Lambs scare the crows



The children at Little Lambs really enjoyed making the Little Lambs scarecrow as well as their own little scarecrows. There really are some fantastic little artists who attend!

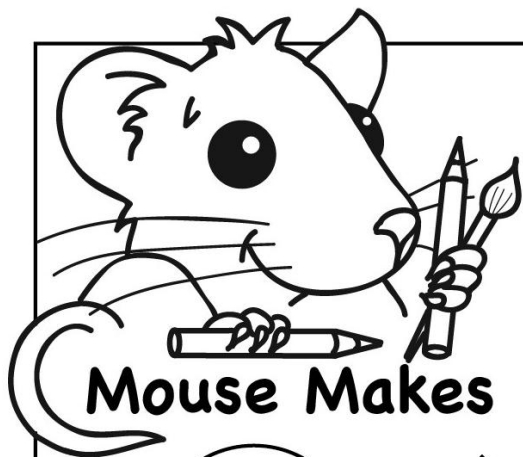
I am looking forward to coming and helping out while Sue is on holiday and have a lovely firework activity planned.



I can't believe it's been 10 years since we started Little Lambs with a tiny Abi who is now big enough to help. I've included a photo of Abi (on the right) making a friend at the very first Little Lambs in September 2015. It's great that the group has served the community for so long. Sue is now hoping to set up a parent rota to keep it going, but I'm sure any extra volunteers would be welcome!



Amy Rees

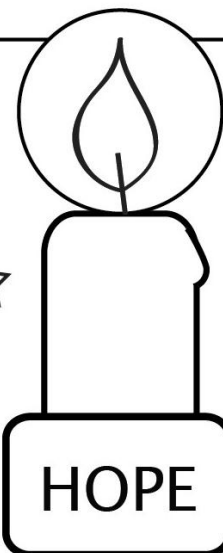


LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS

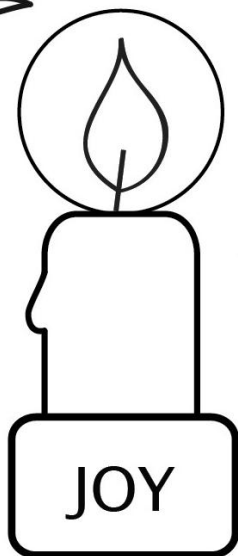
Advent Sunday this year falls on 30th November.

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

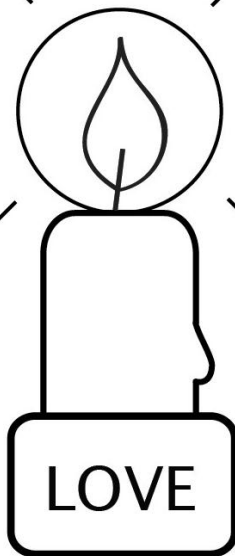
We look forward with HOPE, we give thanks for God's LOVE and the PEACE and JOY we have in Jesus.



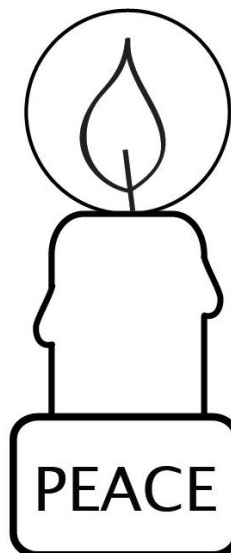
Read:
Isaiah 40:5
What shall be revealed?



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



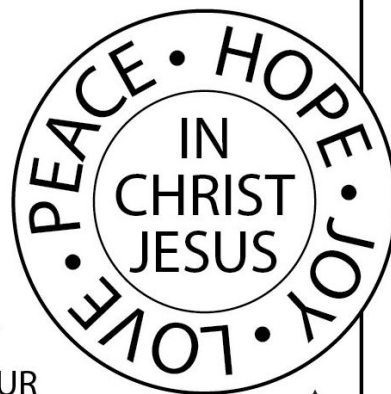
Read:
John 3:16
How did God show He loves us?



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

L G L O R Y E M P R O M I S E
S O K J Y A A R R I V A L W F
A D V E N T G O O D N E W S O
V P L S V L I R P S V P C A R
I E I U I O F C H R I S T H T
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MESSAGE • PROMISE • PROPHECY • FORETOLD • JESUS • SAVIOUR
CHRIST • GIFT • GOOD NEWS • RETURN • CANDLE • LIGHT



Harvest Festival

Our Harvest Festival service was a joyful occasion. All the donations of goods at the St John's Harvest Festival were to be given to Maggs.

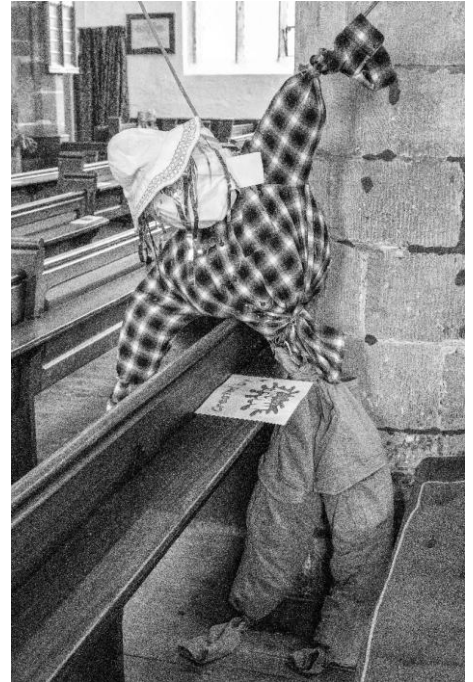




Feeding the 5000

October's Messy Church combined both the story of feeding the 5000 and the theme of Harvest.

Alongside these, the Messy Church congregation also made a scarecrow to add to the Scarecrow Festival. We know it had at least a couple of votes, so thank you to those who voted for it!



At the beginning of Messy Church, we listened to the miracle of how Jesus, having been given five loaves and two fishes by a young boy, turned this into enough food to feed the large crowds that had gathered earlier that day. Encouraged to think about the story further, we used paper and windowed envelopes to make a storyteller for the miracle. Food activities are always popular, so there was much enthusiasm for making food baskets – hollowing out rolls and then filling them with 5 pretzels and 2 fish sweets. We also made picnic seats out of sandwich bags and bubble wrap, decorating them with pictures from food magazines. Thank you to everyone who made donations for this activity.



Having rummaged through cupboards to source packaging from a variety of countries, our Around the World activity involved finding the locations on a world map. We were encouraged to think about how amazing it is that nowadays we can eat and drink produce from so far away.

Making butter reminded us of the processes and people behind our food. Thank you for those who loaned and donated jars for this activity. Double cream was poured into the jars and then a lot of shaking took place to turn it into butter. This was definitely a team activity with mixed levels of enthusiasm! Eventually butter was achieved though, which we were then able to take home.



Our worship focused on the activities and thinking about the story and meanings behind them. Phil capitulated in our last planning meeting and accepted that he was going to be subjected to Millennials singing Cauliflowers Fluffy at him. It seems, despite being the same age, he never sang this in his primary school and was thoroughly bemused by our enthusiasm for it!



For our meal, it was lovely to follow up our hot dogs with the apple crumble made at the start of church. It was made with apples picked locally. The congregation peeled and chopped the apples, with younger members mixing the flower, sugar and butter for the topping. It was delicious and everyone enjoyed eating and sharing something that they'd all helped to make.

The next Messy Church is on Saturday 1st November, where we will be exploring the theme of light and holding a light party. We start at 4pm, with doors opening at 3.30pm. Everyone is welcome, and we look forward to seeing you there.

Beth Broadway

Hope for Everyone: “We will not give up, we will keep going”

On Sunday 21st September, we welcomed trustees and staff from Maggs to our morning service at St John’s Church. Maggs has received regular donations and support from St John’s Church for over 20 years, which have been much appreciated. With the charity marking its 40th anniversary, this was seen as a wonderful opportunity to learn about the work Maggs does and how our donations help.

In place of the sermon, we were treated to a Question and Answer session about the charity, between Melissa, fundraiser for Maggs, and John Prangnell, congregation member and our Maggs liaison.

Melissa explained that Maggs supports people experiencing homelessness, and now provides outreach in Worcester, Redditch and Bromsgrove. Their day centres offer breakfast, hot meals, showers, laundry facilities and clothing, with help teams available to offer practical outreach and emotional support to their clients.

They have continued to develop over their 40 years as new challenges appear. Within the current climate, they are now working on the prevention of rough sleeping, as well as supporting those who are already homeless. They are working to strengthen partnerships, such as those with councils and churches, and have expanded their services to include accommodation and clothing projects. It was at this point that Melissa stressed that despite all the challenges they face, “we will not give up, we will keep going”.

When asked how our donations help, Melissa highlighted that Maggs receives no statutory funding. As a result, all financial donations go straight to maintaining their core services mentioned above. £5 will provide hot meals, £10 provides a sleeping bag and regular donations gives them stability as they look to the future. Material donations, such as food, toiletries and clothing, are given directly to their clients. Melissa highlighted Maggs’ desperate need for a new freezer at their Day Centre and, as a consequence, our Charity Committee have been able to respond by providing half the cost (*see the next article*).

Moving the focus to those helped by Maggs, John asked Melissa if she could share just a couple of their clients’ stories. We heard how in Melissa’s first week on the job, she helped a lady who was fleeing domestic violence. Having found the courage to leave, Maggs helped provide her with clothing and support as she faced her new life. Another client who Maggs supported became homeless through unfortunate circumstance. Injured through an accident at his job, he was no longer able to work, resulting in him being unable to pay his bills and rent.

Looking to the future, Maggs continues to work on developing its services. Over the next 2-3 years, they are consolidating what they do, looking to develop county-wide. They want to strengthen relationships with similar charities and organisations, looking for opportunities to collaborate and further help their clients. Continued support such as ours will allow them to work towards these goals.

After hearing from Melissa and John, Phil aptly drew out the importance of Maggs' message about providing hope for everyone and how this follows Jesus' work, as we had heard in the Gospel story of Matthew, the tax collector. Phil emphasised strongly that in Jesus' teaching and example, everyone counts, even the despised tax collector.

We were also able to chat further with Melissa and Maggs' trustees one to one over coffee after the service, providing further insight into the charity. It was wonderful to hear about the fantastic work that Maggs does and understand how our regular support allows them to continue and develop. If you would like to also support Maggs, you can make a financial donation online, or there is a box at church for material donations. There are flyers in church highlighting particular items that they need.

Beth Broadway

New freezer for Maggs



Claire from Maggs responded to our donation of 50% of the cost of a new freezer (another donor gave the other 50%):

“Thank you so much to everyone at St John’s for your generosity in helping us purchase the new fridge freezer. It’s already proving to be such a valuable addition at our Worcester Day Centre - making it much easier for our volunteers to store and access food, and ensuring nothing goes to waste. The timing has been especially apt, as we’ve recently had a big sort out at the Centre to maximise our space. This upgrade has freed up even more room, helping us create a more welcoming environment for our service users while making the most of every donation we receive. We’re so grateful for your support.”

Crows - look away!





The Children's Church scarecrow was said to be modelled on a member of the clergy. Can you decide which one?



Cardiff Coach Trip

Another full coach, of over 50 people set off for Cardiff on the morning of 27th of September. The weather forecast was not brilliant for the afternoon, but we have had that before. Luckily, as I kept checking on the forecast during the day the arrival of the expected rain kept moving to the right and we all ended up with a very pleasant day. We arrived in Cardiff just before 11am and were dropped right beside the castle, where quite a few people headed as it had a café and toilets! Being Wales, we were greeted by a large red Welsh Dragon in the castle.



Sandra and I had planned to tour the Castle, seen above with the Cardiff skyline behind it, with Gordon and Catherine, as they had recently been to Mount Stewart on the Isle of Bute. Both places had been built by the same family, the Bute family and the 3rd Marquis of Bute was responsible for creating both structures as they can now be seen, and they were both designed by the same person, William Burges. So, after refreshments we went on the tour of the castle. The tour took us round various rooms in the castle, which were all incredibly decorated.

The banqueting hall has fantastic murals all over the walls and is available to hire for weddings and events, only £750/hour for a minimum of 4 hours! All of the decoration, ceiling and floors are in fact a Victorian re-imagining of a noble hall from the Middle Ages and took nearly 15 years to complete.



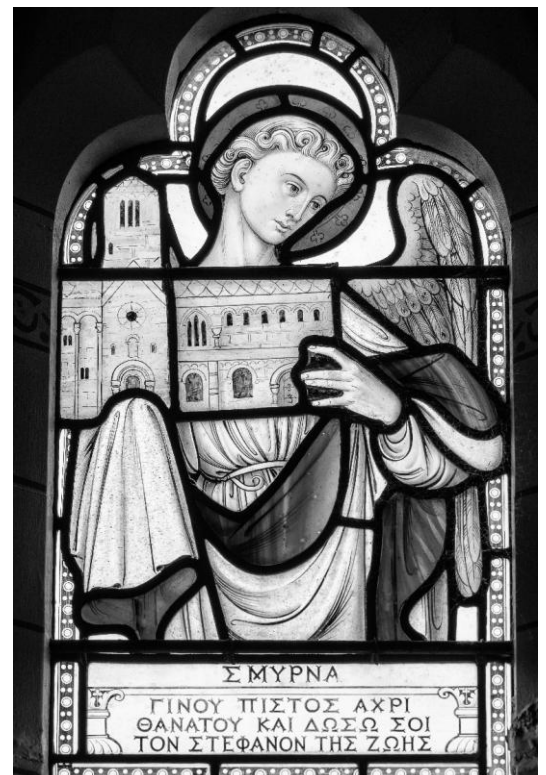
The nursery has many nursery rhymes around the room for the children's enjoyment. However, some, such as Jack and the Beanstalk, below left, are a little gruesome, but that is the Victorians for you! Also below is Beauty and the Beast.



Lord Bute's bedroom included a very small and rickety iron bedstead and has a biblical theme. Based upon the Book of Revelation, each of the seven stained glass windows, such as the one seen here, includes an angel protecting one of the seven Churches of Asia.

(The Greek reads: "Myrhh. Be faithful unto death and I will give you the crown of life")

The ceiling was mirrored. It was said by the guide that this was so he could reflect on what he had done wrong and therefore why he could not share the main bedroom with his wife.



The final room we went into was the roof garden, which is at the top of the Bute Tower, up a large number of steps. The garden was inspired by the ancient villas of Rome. The walls are tiled and illustrate stories from the life of the prophet Elijah, seen below. Beneath, Hebrew text tells the story. The floor is of Roman style mosaic.



Following lunch, and as the weather had significantly improved, we decided to take one of the open top bus round trips of Cardiff city and the Bay area. The guide was very informative and humorous. As we went past one of the streets known for bars and clubs, we saw a hen party group, wearing pink cowboy hats. The guide remarked that we would see more pink cowboy hats in Cardiff than in any other city!

It was very interesting seeing how Cardiff had been improved over the years and how things had changed. Whereas it used to be a big iron producing city, the factories now left took in scrap iron and produced new products from the scrap. We saw great lines of large rolled up iron wire.

The Bay area was clean and modern with some good eating areas as can be seen in the following images.





Colin Nash

***The solution
is on the
inside back
cover.***

37

Comedores in Lima

Earlier this year, we sent the money raised by the Lent Lunches at St John's to the community kitchens supported by Penny and Juan Carlos Marcés, our mission partners in Lima. At the start of September, during our visit to Peru for the consecration of the new bishop (*see the October magazine*) Margaret and I were taken by Penny to visit three of these projects, where we saw what was happening as they prepared for lunch, and talked and prayed with the workers.

Near to the church for which Penny is responsible as a lay minister, Jesús El Nazareno in the Pamplona Alta area of Lima's San Juan de Miraflores district, there is quite a number of these community kitchens. (They are known in Spanish as comedores, literally dining areas, but there is no recognised English translation for the word when used in this context.) While not a shanty town,



the area is still one of the large, poor areas of Lima, with no running water, and steep, uneven dirt roads strewn with rocks and rubbish, with stray dogs roaming menacingly. Much of the town consists of depressing, unfinished brick buildings



clinging precariously to the hillside and accessed by punishingly steep staircases, although there are plenty of shacks and less permanent dwellings dotted around. Most of the nicer buildings are actually owned by absentee landlords who rent out each room individually. There are very few jobs in the area; most people have to take combis (terrifyingly decrepit minibuses running bus routes) or even walk into central Lima, where they work in service industries or sell things on the streets. Peru has no social security system, so those who are unable to work, plus the elderly and young, have to be

supported by families from meagre resources. There is thus a real need to provide nutritious meals for those who struggle to feed themselves properly.

The local authority in San Juan de Miraflores does provide some funding for these projects, based on the number of people served, and accounts have to be presented to the municipality. People also pay on a sliding scale according to ability, generally between S/. 2 and S/. 4, with some people being given free meals. This combined income does not necessarily cover costs, especially with volatile food prices, which is why Penny supports some of those which do not have access to additional funds. All operate at lunchtime from Monday to Friday, providing a soup and a main course, usually a meat dish and rice, the typical Peruvian meal (traditionally eaten at lunchtime).

Our first stop, Comedor Popular Corazón de Jesús (Sacred Heart of Jesus) operates from a tiny premises around halfway up a hill, near the foot of one of the towering, ladder-like staircases to the summit. It has been operating in its current form since the early days of



Covid. It feeds around 105 daily, for which it receives S/. 490 per month from the municipality. However, filling the water tank, so there is water to cook and clean things, costs S/25 and it has to be filled twice a week, so almost half of that income disappears on water payments. It was both impressive and humbling to see how a meal was being produced in vast pots in such a limited space and on such limited resources.



The second place, Comedor Señor de los Milagros (Lord of Miracles) is run in a converted one-storey house, so has more space. Three years old, this feeds 90 per day and is given S/. 385 monthly by the municipality. There is an impressive storeroom with a large chest freezer, and in this room the friendly lady in charge stockpiles things she is able to acquire cheap or persuade shops to donate.





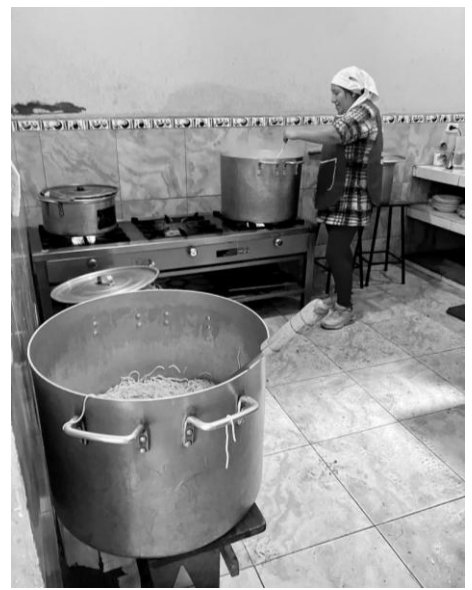
This influences the menu, and Penny and I were encouraged to try a dish made from two donated ingredients that we would not have imagined went together or would be much use in a community kitchen. It turned out to be rather palatable, although I shall keep its composition



secret for now and see if anyone can guess from the photo!



Finally, at the bottom of the hill we visited Comedor El Nazareno (the Nazarene), which occupied the largest premises as the area was also used for adult education classes. It has been operating for almost 40 years and caters to 70 per day, receiving S/. 385.



Food donations here tend to be more basic, so more use is made of pasta, less traditionally Peruvian but generally cheaper.

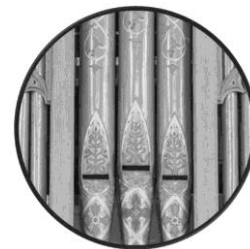
Even though I have been visiting and doing work in San Juan de Miraflores for sixteen years, this was the first time I had visited the community kitchens. It was heartening to see what an important role they play in local communities where people do struggle with adequate nutrition, and gratifying that our Lent Lunches money went to support such a worthy cause. I would like to thank all those who supported the lunches, as well as Margaret for organising them, and hopefully this gives an insight into how the money has been used in a positive and worthwhile way.

Phil Bradford

Note on currency: all figures above are in Peruvian new soles (PEN, abbreviated S/.), and at the time of writing there are approximately S/. 4.7 to £1.

Breathing new life into the organ

Updated total....



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How can I help?

We need £32,000 to replace the organ's 70-year-old wind bellows. **Update, as of early October, we've passed £5,000.** Please help us keep the total rising. Every donation, however small, will help to ensure the organ sounds for another 70 years!

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- You can donate **by cheque** by sending it to the Team Office (1a Bromyard Road, St John's, Worcester, WR2 5BS)
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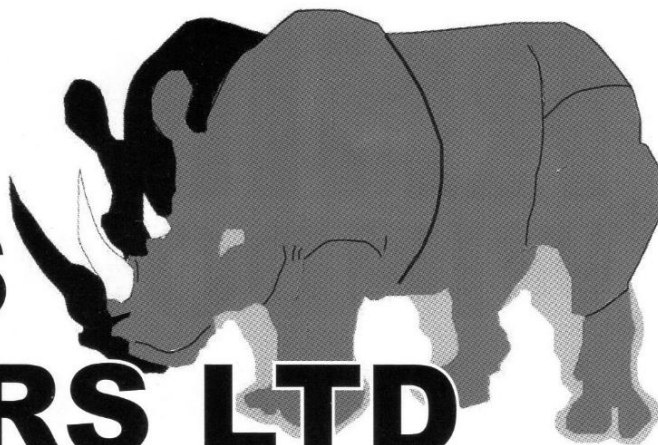
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With your help, we hope to start the work at the beginning of 2026, and have the organ back, in full working order, for Easter 2026.

PS Please tell everyone you can about the organ appeal!

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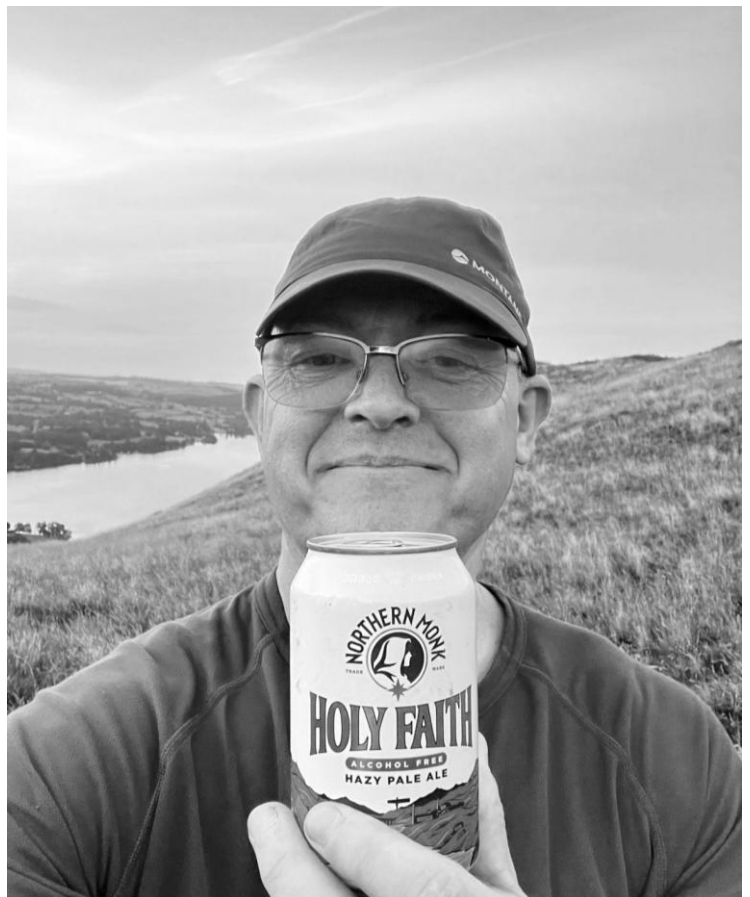
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From our northern correspondent

I was struck by something Phil wrote in the magazine recently. He said that it was easy for all that we had going on in our lives to crowd out prayer, but also that God hears before we think or speak. I realised that in the past, prayer was just below the surface, ready to bubble up in a spontaneous moment of thanks or intercession, but that recently, I had so much going on with the move and work that it wasn't just that I had let my more formal prayer practices slip, but that if God was trying to hear me before I thought or spoke, all he'd be getting was static! I'd wake up early, excited by the opportunities the day held and also slightly daunted by all the "stuff" I had to do. I'd then spend my day frantically doing those things before collapsing into bed and being fast asleep before my head hit the pillow. I'd been warned before about the danger of just "doing" and not taking the time just to "be". And so it was that I decided I needed 24 hours with no radio, television, no jobs to do and no one to talk to but myself and God and I set off on a walk.

Now I confess, this wasn't an entirely selfless act...I could have made this a pilgrimage to the various churches in our benefice and spent time in each, but instead I took myself into nature and with a heavy rucksack packed as if I still had two children to think about.

I set off over Askham fell, up Arthur's Pike, up Loadpot Hill and Wether Hill before setting up for the night on Steel Knotts, overlooking Ullswater. The weather was perfect and so still that I could hear the cows mooing and the dogs barking on the farms in the valley below. I could also see and hear all the wild campers on Hallin Fell opposite me and while I was enjoying the tranquillity and isolation, I did also start to wish I had someone with me to share it with...perhaps I am more of a people person than I thought!



*All the wild camping videos
I watch seem to feature someone
sampling a beer and this one
seemed quite apt!*

Continued on page 45



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Continued from page 43

Morning came with the most gorgeous views down to St Martin's Church in Martindale (in the picture below and, zoomed-in, to the right), and while it was hardly a transfiguration moment, I felt changed - reset and re-energised and committed to make the most of the gifts that God has given me.



St Martin's Church nestled in the Martindale valley. It dates back to the 13th century and the yew tree in the grounds is over 1300 years old!

We have decided that St Peter's in Askham will be our new church home. It's our closest and we feel that we have something to offer there. And so at the cafe church (over some very delicious bacon sandwiches) we arranged to meet the vicar and get to know each other. That meeting was great. Stephen is a former lawyer with a very dry sense of humour and after we'd got in touch with him earlier in the summer, he had popped into St John's during his holidays to Worcester! I've joined the reading rota and the next step for me is to start attending some ministry team meetings. Ellen is already fully immersed in church life and she has been roped into making a cake for bible study. The attendees will feel doubly blessed I am sure.

We have also been able to welcome lots of visitors and it was such a pleasure to meet up with Sarah recently and we have more St John-ers booked in soon!

All the best to everyone, you continue to be in our thoughts and prayers.

Rob Little

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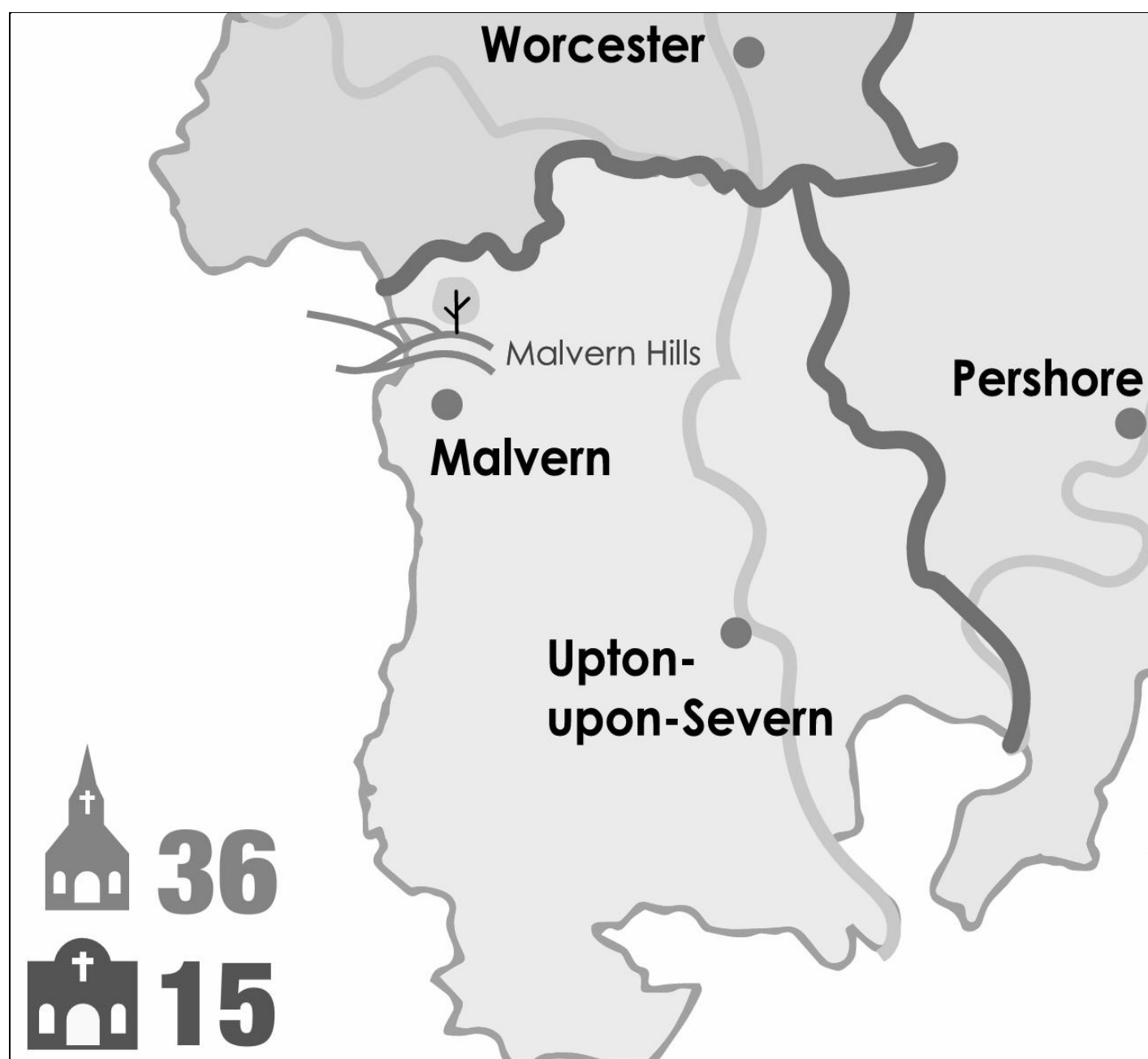
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Let's explore our diocese!

The Editors: Within the Diocese of Worcester 'Statement of Needs 2024' (compiled for the process for appointing Worcester's new bishop) is a page about each of the six deaneries in our diocese. We have been using this information to explore our diocese. We started with Worcester Deanery, and then worked around the diocese, through Kidderminster and Stourport, Greater Dudley, Redditch and Bromsgrove, Pershore and Evesham. The final deanery is Malvern and Upton.

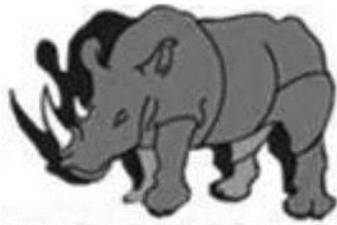
Malvern and Upton Deanery

Malvern and Upton Deanery is contained by two great rivers, the Severn and the Teme, and by the M5/M50/A38 tarmac triangle and the majestic Malvern Hills.



The symbols show that the deanery has 36 churches and 15 church schools.

Continued on page 49



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Continued from page 47

As well as two tourist towns, Great Malvern and Upton upon Severn, the deanery is an eclectic mix of expanding new housing and quaint rural villages, farms and agri-economy, places for concerts and places for festivals, walking trails, traveller sites and a few stately homes. It includes some of the poorest areas in the county and some of the most exclusive. There is a myriad of schools (state and independent), and many care homes.

It feels like we have churches everywhere: some at capacity on Sundays and busy during the week: others locked after Sunday worship. We have a vibrant, ecumenical Churches Together in Malvern, and there is great potential for better ecumenical links in Upton.

We recognise that future success is not just about the parish, it's about the wider church. With the presence of a couple of large, gathered churches in our midst, alongside churches that are struggling or fragile, the emerging expertise of some churches in delivering particular types of ministry is being galvanised and we are currently exploring the development of oversight and group ministry approaches to make better use of scarce resources in high demand.

We are developing a new strategic direction with an overarching aim to encourage extensive collaborative working, across the town and country aspects of parish and benefice boundaries. This represents a significant cultural change in how we “do church” locally; moving away from each church/benefice operating in a silo and shifting the emphasis away from location and size of church determining the ministry/mission response – to a greater focus on the contextual missional needs and how they can best be met. In so many ways, we must move our thinking away from parochial towards people wherever they are.

We aim to work together as a Team of Teams. Across Deanery Synod and Chapter, we provide a safe place for this level of engagement to happen, and for appropriate responses to the challenges ahead to be developed, through prayer, collective research and conversations. We are very mindful of the need to tread carefully but we need to embark on this journey of discovery together, whilst being very aware of Ken Dodd's advice: ‘if you want to make God laugh, tell Him your plans’.

We have been drawn to the missional zeal of Ruth. “Where you will go, I will go” seems to sum up our direction of travel as we strive to link our towns with our rural places – we risk our churches atrophying if we are too narrow sighted in our thinking.

Last deanery done: The End!

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ST JOHN'S LIBRARY

Library opening hours

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Monday - Saturday: 8am - 8 pm

Core (staffed) opening times:

- Monday: 2pm - 5pm
- Tuesday: 10am - 5pm
- Wednesday: 10am - 1pm
- Thursday: 2pm - 5pm
- Friday: 10am - 5pm
- Saturday: 10am - 1pm

Events at St John's Library

Special event:

- Saturday 1 November, 2:00pm to 3:00pm - Spooky Lego!

Weekly events:

- LEGO Club, weekly every Saturday, 11:00am to 12:00pm.
- Creative Tales, weekly every Monday, 3:30pm to 4:15pm
- Bounce and Rhyme, weekly every Tuesday, 11:00am to 11:30am.
- Chess Club and Scrabble Club, weekly every Tuesday, 2:00pm to 4:00pm.
- Crochet and Chat, weekly every Wednesday, 10:00am to 12:00pm.
- Storytime and Song, weekly every Friday, 11:00am to 11:30am.

Other regular events:

- Classic Film Club, Fortnightly on Thursdays (13 and 27 November) 2:00pm to 3:30pm.
- Crime Readers' Group: First Friday of each month (7 November), 12:00pm to 1:00pm.
- Photography Group: Third Friday of each month (21 November). 2:00pm to 3:00pm.
- Councillors' Surgery: Saturday 1 November, 10:00am to 12:00pm.
- Meet your local policing team: Thursday 11 November, 10:30am to 11:15am.

Explore the past events at The Hive

For events marked (BR) booking is required. To book (or for more details of any event) go to: <https://www.explorethepast.co.uk/events/>

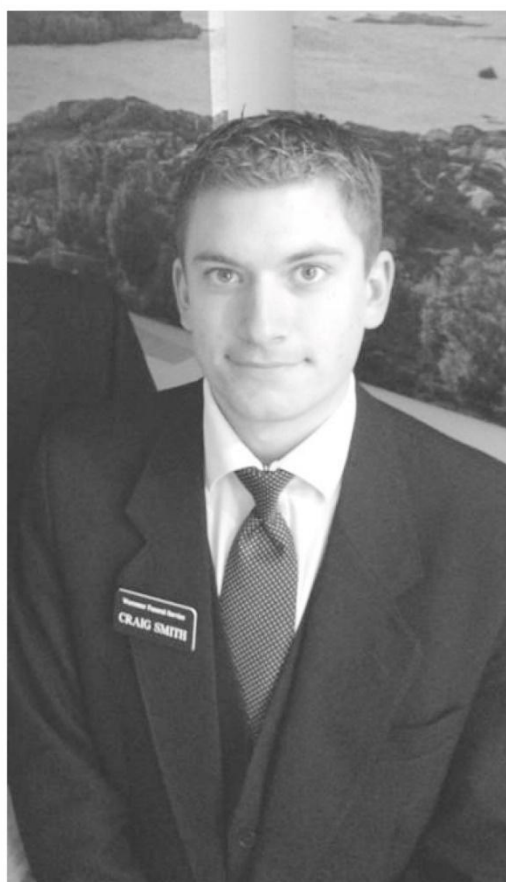
- Behind The Scenes Tours (£6) Saturday 1 November, 2pm-3pm (BR)
- Worcester Archaeology Day of events (various prices) Saturday 22 November, 10.00am to 4.30pm (BR).



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From the magazine archive, November 1930

Congregational Singing Practices.

(1) I have recently published a Congregational Communion Service of a simple kind. It will be sung for the first time in our Church at 11 a.m. on Sunday morning, November 16th, and will be used at the morning service each third Sunday of the month till we are well acquainted with it. I hope you will all like it. Our choir has taken very kindly to it. But I do want members of the congregation to join in as well as they are able. In order to help you to do so, I invite you to come to the Boys' School at 8 p.m., on Tuesday, November 4th, and again at 8 p.m. on Tuesday, November 11th, when you and I together can try to learn to sing it. Please turn up in large numbers.

(2) In view of the special hymns to be sung at our Day School Festival, I propose to have short congregational singing practices after Evensong on Sundays, November 9th and 16th.

Day School Festival.

Our sixth annual festival takes place on Sunday, November 23rd (the fourth Sunday in November). The arrangements will follow the usual course, but our musical efforts will be of a rather more ambitious character than last year. In the morning the younger girls will sing "God make my life a little light," and the elder girls will sing Kingsley's "A Farewell (Be good, sweet maid)." In the evening the elder boys and girls will combine in rendering the two-part anthem, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace," specially composed for school and college festivals. The subject of the morning sermon is "Sister Dora of Walsall," and of the evening sermon "Faint, yet pursuing."

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Puzzle solution

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

And finally....



*“Goodness!
Is it time for
Christmas Fair
organising, carol
service planning and
nativity play
rehearsals already?!”*

Sunday Services – November 2025

	St John's	St Michael's	St David's
2nd November	10.30am Eucharist 5.30pm All Souls' Service	10.30am Eucharist	4pm Eucharist
9th November	10 am Remembrance Service 5.30pm Evening Prayer with Bible study	10.30am Eucharist	4pm Evening Prayer
16th November	10.30am Eucharist	10.30am Eucharist	4pm Eucharist
23rd November	10.30am Eucharist 5.30pm Evening Prayer (focus on El Salvador)	10.30am Morning Prayer	4pm Evening Prayer
30th November	10.30am Eucharist 5.30pm Advent Carol Service	10.30am Eucharist	
7th December	10.30am Eucharist 5.30pm Evensong	10.30am Eucharist	4pm Eucharist
The information above is provided by the clergy and the Joint Council Ministry Team and is correct at the time of going to press. Please watch the weekly church newsletters and websites for the latest information.			