Sydenham Life



November 2026

In and around the parish of St Bartholomew

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Pet Service



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We recently had our annual Pet Service; an occasion when we celebrate all God's creatures, give thanks for our animal friends and companions and ask God to bless our pets. It was a lovely service with a congregation that included dogs, cats and a rat, which could have been chaos, but in fact all were very well behaved!

While all those present seemed to really enjoy the service I am aware of some who wonder why we do such things; who think it's too trivial or gimmicky and not a good use of our time and efforts. I do of course disagree. One of the readings at the service came from the prophet Isaiah who foresaw God's kingdom as being a place filled with animals, all living at peace with each other, with humans and with all of creation. A vision of a perfect future when conflict is gone, divisions have ceased, there is no more cruelty or needless destruction. The second reading came from one of St Paul's letters and reminded us that all of creation exists through and for and in Christ. Together these readings remind us that all of us who regard ourselves as Christian are called to a view of the world that embraces all of creation; that the way we relate to and treat the animals we share the earth and our lives with should reflect the same respect and nurturing care that God has for them and for us. Far from being trivial or a gimmick, our Pet Service is a reminder of the expansive, all-embracing nature of our faith.

Christianity, and therefore the life of the Church, embraces all of life, our whole existence. It's why it's fantastic that St Paul's Cathedral has a partnership with Fabric nightclub, and why our own Southwark Cathedral has wide ranging programme of arts, classic and contemporary, music, academic and general interest talks, events supporting London's homeless and family fun occasions. Because faith and the life of the Church should be about all of life in all it's variety. In our own small way here at St Bart's that means hosting children's dance clubs and older peoples exercise classes, holding jumble sales and memorial services, concerts and polling stations, Halloween storytelling and definitely Pet Services.

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From the Editor

I think the recent episode of hundreds of supermarkets in France, losing tonnes of food when their refrigerators were hacked, is a salutary lesson for us all. One person or group of persons was able to cause such waste, in a time when the cost of living is going up and food is expensive enough as it is.

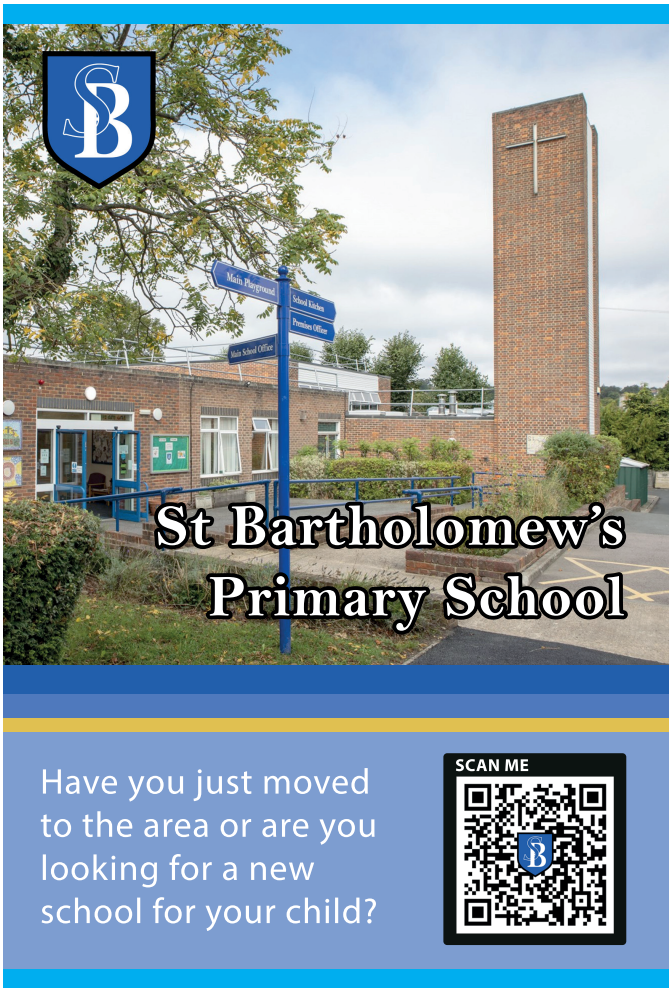
If they can do it in supermarkets, what else cannot be hacked? I remember in The Italian Job, the film starring Michael Caine and other 'A' stars, where they manipulated the traffic lights to rob a bank in Turin. And that was when things were analogue and required pliers and wires. Could you imagine the chaos that could be caused if someone just sat at a computer control doing whatever they wanted to affect traffic lights or driverless cars? Mayor Mandani in New York has had the good sense to halt driverless cars in New York as far as I understand it.

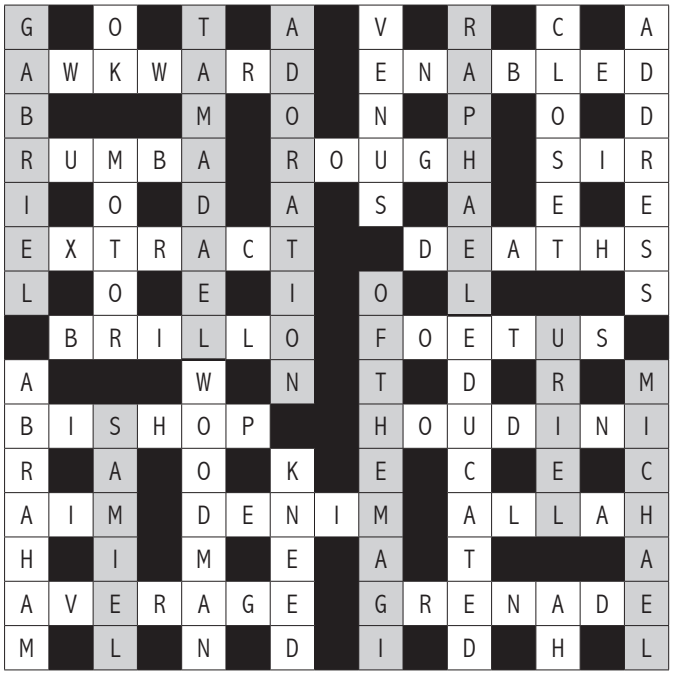
It is a question of balancing risks. Having a few large tech companies with driverless cars that might be hacked as opposed to many black cab drivers who have the 'knowledge' in their head or local minicab drivers who also have knowledge of the area. The more concentrated the knowledge, the higher the risk of hacking. There is also the social cost of putting individuals out of work.

In the case of the fridges, it does not appear that the alarm was raised early enough to prevent the large losses. Perhaps if there were humans on watch the alarm could have been raised earlier and something done to prevent such losses.

I wonder what would happen if a determined set of hackers, perhaps from a state that wanted to cause harm to the UK.

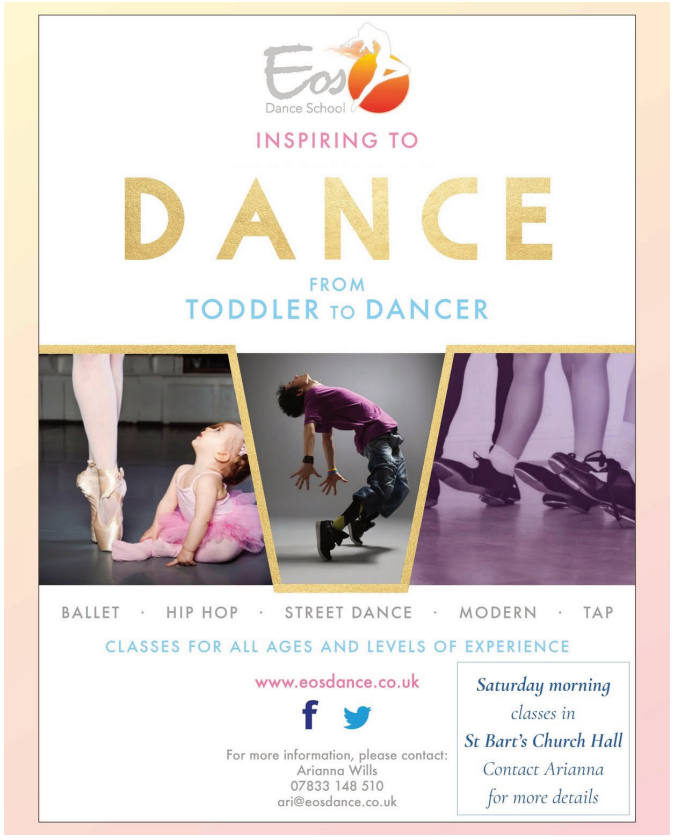
Geoffrey Cave, Sydenham Life Editor





Across: **9** WK in A WARD **10** EN A BLED **11** RUM BA **13** R O UGH **14** S(ale) I(s) R(ubbish) **15** EXTRA CT **16** (THE ADS)* **18** BRO(ther) around ILL **19** FOE T(rea) U(nited) S(tates) **25** BISH OP **27** "WHO" DIN I(s) **29** (AM I)* **30** MINED< 31 HALAL* **32** AGE around VERA **33** GREED* around NA

Down: **1** GAL around BRIE **2** dd **3** LEAD A MAT **4 & 17** ADO OF THE MAGI(cian) around RATION **5** V(i) E(w) SUN< **6** HARP* A(n)(g)EL **7** C(o)L(d) O(r) S(w)E(a)T(y) **8** A "DRESS" **12** M(achine) O(n) T(ruck) O(r) R(oad) **17** (see 4dn) **20** UCA(s) after ED TED **21** "YURI" EL **22** A BRA HAM **23** "WOULD" MAN **24** MI C LEAH< **26** LE IM A S< **28** "NEED" **34** A(bout) H(alf)



Remember Our Sacrifice

Every year leading up to 11 November we are encouraged to support the British Legion and other Armed Forces charities by purchasing an artificial flower – a poppy. The significance of this particular flower is not always known or considered. However, the adoption of the red 4 petal flower speaks of resilience after the devastation and carnage imposed on the land through a deadly world war in France and Belgium – an area referred to as the Western Front.

How the poppy became the symbolic gesture of remembrance is as a result of two incredible stories.

In May 1915, Canadian doctor John McCrae, grieving the death of his friend during the Second Battle of Ypres, was inspired by poppies growing among soldiers' graves to write the poem "In Flanders Fields." It was published later that year in the London magazine *Punch*, it was for those mourning war losses. Sadly, McCrae died of pneumonia 10 months before the end of the war.

The same year, Moina Michael, an American was inspired by the poem and concerned about the plight of wounded US soldiers returning home from the battlefields. She bought red silk poppies and sold them to help raise funds for their care. The campaign inspired others namely, a French woman Anna Guérin who met with Earl Haig August 1921 and persuaded him to buy her silk poppies made by French widows in time for Remembrance Day that November. The British Legion ordered 9 million silk poppies – (see picture above). They would be given out in return for a voluntary donation. The poppies sold out and £106,000 was raised – £4.623m in today's money. Unsurprisingly, the poppy became an enduring symbol of remembrance. But Earl Haig wanted to find a British supplier of silk poppies. It would be The Disabled Society set up by Major George Howson, a recipient of the Military Cross who had campaigned for access to jobs for men who had been wounded and disabled during the war. The Disabled Society Poppy Factory went into mass production in 1922, moving to larger premises in Richmond in 1925. Now rebranded as the Poppy Factory they still produce the poppies and wreaths in a purpose-built factory in the locale. The donations from the selling of poppies continue to go towards the support of veterans and their families. The Poppy Factory through tradition continues to make Remembrance wreaths for The Royal British Legion and the Royal Family. They also maintain the poppies that surround the resting place of the Unknown Warrior that is within Westminster Abbey since 11 November 1920.



The First British Poppy Appeal 1921



Tomb of the Unknown Warrior, Westminster Abbey

But it is not only the red poppy that is worn in November. There is the white poppy, the black poppy and in recent years a purple poppy.

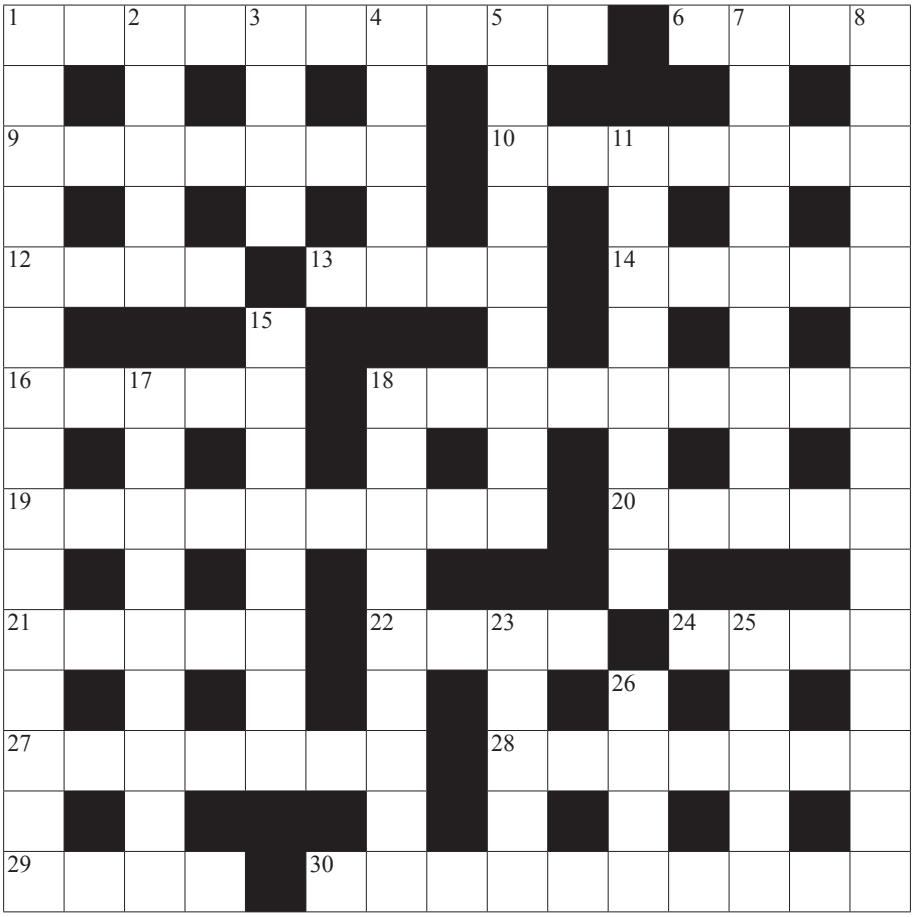


The colour white during war time is associated with surrender or cowardice. In this instance, white poppies are worn as a symbol of remembrance for all victims of war, promoting peace and challenging militarism, and have been part of Remembrance Day observances since 1933. White poppies were first produced by members of the Co-operative Women's Guild, who sought to remember all victims of war, including civilians and military personnel from all nationalities. Many of these women had lost family and friends in the First World War. They wanted to hold on to the key message of Remembrance Day, *'never again'*. A new organisation Peace Pledge Union was formed to carry on the campaign for peace and to get those in power to have the courage to resist war. One of its supporters was the late writer and poet Benjamin Zephaniah – *"I love wearing my white poppy... We have to remember all victims of war, not just the select few. And we have to work towards a world where there is no war.* "

The *BlackPoppyRose* was created by Selena Carty, a military historian with a global perspective. It was launched in September 2010 with the intention that the *BlackPoppyRose* would be a symbol that represents the contributions made by the African/West Indian/ Caribbean/Pacific Islands, indigenous communities and BlackBritish to various wars/revolutions/rebellions since the 16th century. It is a symbol that signifies pride, honour and glory, with the hope that future generations will be inspired by these largely untold historical legacies.



The last poppy is in fact purple. The purple poppy is a symbol of remembrance in the United Kingdom for



November crossword — Mthr Bea

Across

1 Fan has desire and beginnings of craving to interrupt Sabrina's practice (10)
6 Force victim to welcome guests (4)
9 Congratulate Dua Lipa on returning quietly to number one spot (7)
10 Swingers' bar? (7)
12 Journalist's cough (4)
13 French bear cycles to get tart (4)
14 Cleric not ultimately right (5)
16 Strip and dance, Hamburg, dance! (5)
18 Birth after 54 head of elk found on a farm (9)
19 Horse and cart made awful ensemble (9)
20 Joe divided partially rewound footage (5)
21 We hear of a former island native removed from their country (5)
22 Hit clothing item (4)
24 First two letters to the Spanish son of Adam (4)
27 Director has mother in the part of proper rookie (7)
28 Oddly-positioned elm wears a glade of green (7)
29 Those folk found between Trafalgar S and Buckingham P (4)
30 Has my spite ruined pity? (10)

Down

1 Tolerate an apparent system of segregation after something a golfer says: "Pressure is rising across the region, so we may see change" for example (15)
2 A subject to select out of a thousand (5)
3 Switching tap labels to gently persuade someone of something that never happened (4)
4 Farad Ionization conceals some electromagnetic waves (5)
5 Fancy London neighbourhood tailor fixed up Ivor in an unknown number (9)
7 O, audience, squeeze too much in (9)
8 The First Lady took from me and stripped street of what cabbies need (15)
11 Mthr Bea's after an undergarment not entirely so scratchy (8)
15 Yankee giddy about German (a natural looker) (8)
17 Contents of stomach in a terrible manoeuvre (9)
18 Errantly sue, partly for something Mthr Bea says a lot (9)
23 Native americans quietly, secretly advance (5)
25 Scruffy hijab seen in Indian restaurant (5)
26 Last letter to east of France gives joie de vivre (4)

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animals that served during wartime. The symbol was created in 2006 by the charity *Animal Aid* as a way to commemorate animals which served during conflicts as the charity viewed that they had been the forgotten victims of war. Approximately eight million horses and donkeys died during the First World War. It was created to be worn alongside red or white poppies.

The purple poppy was not endorsed by The Royal British Legion, which sells the official red remembrance poppies. However, they state: "We see no conflict in wearing the red poppy next to the purple or white poppy.

At the going down of the sun and in the morning,
We will remember them.
(Laurence Binyon)

Angela Morgan
(London Blue Badge Tourist Guide).
Instagram: angelamorgan365



Wreath of purple poppies at The Cenotaph, Whitehall in London on the centenary of the end of World War I in 2018

Autumn is upon us



Pexels / Cup of Honey Lemon

My favourite season of the year is autumn. If you are in America it is generally referred to as fall. Whichever name it goes by I love it! I love the colours of the season. Leaves turning from green to hues of reds, oranges, yellows and browns. The seeds falling from the trees and nestled all around on the ground. It all looks so warm and inviting. The days, while gradually shortening, still provide one with several hours of sunshine. Mother Nature seems to grant us a reprieve from the rain allowing for long slumbering walks in the cool(er) air. All allowing us to enjoy the last of nature before the winter sets in and relegates us to the warmth of our abodes.

With the change in season comes many changes in our daily lives. I spend more time cooking and baking. I am also more inclined to spend time on my sofa or in a cozy chair reading a good book. The change in season also brings about the ritualistic change in clothing. Packing away one's shorts and T-shirts and pulling out jumpers and heavy coats, hats, scarves and gloves.

There is one aspect to this change in clothing that baffles me. It is this predisposition to wear black or dark clothing. This overwhelming amount of black clothing reminds me of a Darth Vader scenario. And I don't understand it.

As we now experience more time in the dark, our visual acuity is diminished. Adjusting to low or no light environments can be challenging. I find this ultimately makes it so much more difficult to see dark shapes and figures. When people dressed in black just walk or dart across a street in the middle of a block or at a non-crossing area at night do they not realize how difficult it is to see them? Especially when there is virtually no lighting available. I am always surprised that one would risk their own life; and more so that people do it with small children. My husband was once about to cross on a red light as he was wheeling our granddaughter in her buggy when the stranger next to him said, "Is it worth it?" Those four words stopped him dead in his tracks!

How is it that people expect a vehicle to see them at night? Dark on dark. More and more I am refraining from driving at night. I have been driving for over a half century now; I know how to drive but I am increasingly uncomfortable that not only will someone step out in front of me without even looking before so doing, and I won't have time to stop.

Even cyclists riding at night. I'm amazed how many ride at night without a light, much less a helmet or light coloured clothing. Do they have no regard for their safety?

I have lights on both the front and back of my bicycle, and have a helmet with a neon reflection. Ironically, I'm a coward to ride my bicycle at night.

Don't get me wrong, I am not trying to preach to the masses. I realize one cannot control others; one can only determine their own behaviour. That being said, I decided I needed to do something about this for myself. I needed to keep myself safe. So I made a change in my attire. I donated my dark purple raincoat and purchased a light beige one instead. I also packed my dark brown winter coat away and purchased a new off-white coat. I did the same with some jackets – out with the dark coloured and in with the light coloured. I even bought light coloured accessories – hats and scarves. Interestingly, I now feel much safer when I am out at night.

Geri Falconer-Ferneau

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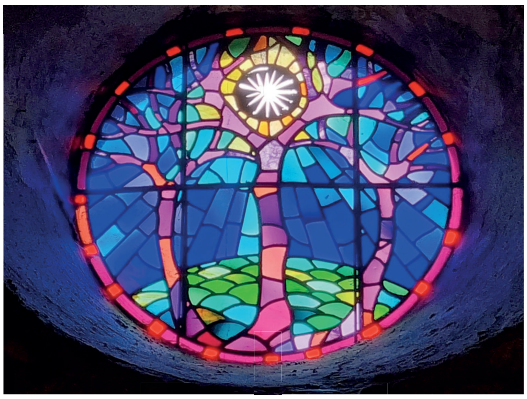


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Sunday – 8am Holy Communion, 10am Parish Eucharist
Wednesday – 6pm Holy Communion.

Open church for prayer, quiet and reflection Monday 10:00–12:00, Tuesday & Wednesday 17:00–18:00, Thursday 11.30–13.00, Saturday 10.00–11.30. Rev Jim is usually available during open church to discuss Christenings, Weddings, to pray or simply to chat.

Vicar – The Reverend Jim Perry
Email: revjimperry@mailfence.com
Tel: 020 3422 5343

Assistant Curate –
Mother Bethany Middleton
Email: contact@motherbea.com
Tel: 07549 003895

The church is open every Saturday morning between 10 am and 12 noon for anyone to drop in. A member of staff is always available.



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