

HARPSDEN PARISH NEWS

SEPTEMBER 2025



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A reflection from Heather

Two wonderful spiritual adventures in one monthis inspiration in itself.

‘Rewinding the soul,’ and ‘Imaging the Word’. Whilst I share the former, Wendy will the recant the other!

The outcome being ..i f you too, would like to be inspired let us know and we can facilitate both our experiences within our benefice!

Rewinding the soul: Forest Church.

Building on the ancient Celtic tradition of Finding God in everything we meet in a tree lined space...open spaces were deemed a sacred space by the original Celts ... readily available and at no costly building expense! Sense that freedom of open-air worship With the heat of the sun...one was immediately drawn into worship of the Son. Informally, we sat on the ground, shared blankets or chairs. Our focus of worship: the elements of earth, water, fire and air ... just being in creation stimulating the awe of the majesty of God the silence embalming us in the divine having just celebrated the feast of the the Transfiguration .. I felt an overwhelming urge like Peter, James and John to stay in the moment... the divine words so apposite ...This is my beloved Son... listen to Him.

Reality beckoned as we shared grapes in reflection ... memories of the Eucharistic latent in our thoughts ..we shared the silence ...

Our affirmation creed: Heart to heart and spirit to spirit : leaf to leaf and root to root : we share in the divine image.

As our time drew to a close the sending out prayer echoing our experience :

O Holy Grandmother Spirit, holding all the elements in harmony in your circle of life. Go with us to our homes and unite your people in one voice, always declaring your embrace. Go with us on our journey and help us to give of ourselves.

So, so much more I could share ..my experience further enhanced by the haunting melody of a harpist, probably not available for our liturgy, but I have some Celtic melodies that could suffice.

Heather

Imaging the Word

Last week I joined Heather on an art retreat in Shepton Mallet. We booked a couple of hotels in Wells, both of which proved to be very old and quirky and very near to Wells Cathedral. We wanted to go to the evening service at the Cathedral, but found that the service had started earlier than we thought and arrived for the last hymn, but this was special in such a beautiful place.

Our course started the next day in Shepton. It was lead by a lovely lady called Gill, twelve others joined us. They were a great group and we all gelled well.

The course was called “Imaging the story” and was backed by a book of the same name that Gill had co-authored. We all received a copy.

Throughout the week we took sections from the book and backed it up in art projects. These were all thought provoking and some even quite emotional.

We were well catered for with locally made and delicious lunches and homemade cake. One night we were treated to a barbecue at Gill’s house cooked by her husband. We came home relaxed and stimulated with ideas that we could put into practice here, which I hope to do so.

I highly recommend the course and if she does it on an annual basis do think about going, you will not be disappointed.

Wendy

ANNA MINISTRY

The Church community lunch is relaunching on September 11th. By popular demand, the lunch will be at The White Horse on this occasion, but I need to pre book so please contact me by the 1st of September if you are interested in going. Everyone is welcome even if you haven’t joined our happy band of pilgrims before. Either ring or email, but be warned I hope to be staying in the Isle of Man and some phone providers consider it a foreign country!! So, email is best.

Revhwturner@gmail.com

Bonded in His love for all, Heather.

SERVICES IN SEPTEMBER

Wednesday 3 rd September	10.00 am	Holy Communion with Wholeness & Healing	Harpsden
Sunday 7 th September	9.30 am	Holy Communion and Sunday School	Harpsden
	11.00 am	Holy Communion	Shiplake
	11.00 am	Morning Praise	Dunsden
Wednesday 10 th September	10.00 am	Holy Communion	Harpsden
Sunday 14 th September	9.30 am	Sunday School	Harpsden
	11.00 am	Holy Communion	Shiplake
	11.00 am	Holy Communion	Dunsden
	4.00 pm	Choral Evensong	Harpsden
Wednesday 17 th September	10.00 am	Holy Communion	Harpsden
Sunday 21 st September	9.30 am	Holy Communion and Sunday School	Harpsden
	11.00 am	Holy Communion	Dunsden
	3.00 pm	3 rd Sunday at 3 PET SERVICE	Shiplake

Wednesday 24 th September	10.00 am	Holy Communion	Harpsden
Sunday 28 th September	9.30 am	Sunday School	Harpsden
	10.00 am	Benefice Holy Communion with Wholeness & Healing	Shiplake



Choral Evensong at St Margaret's, Harpsden

We look forward to welcoming you to St Margaret's Church, Harpsden on Sunday 14 September 2025 at 4.00pm for a traditional service of Choral Evensong using the Book of Common Prayer established in the 16th century by Archbishop Thomas Cranmer.

Rooted in scripture and prayer, Evensong offers a time of stillness as the day closes, lifted by the beauty of choral music. Believing music is God's gift, given to inspire, uplift, and draw us all closer in worship of Him. You are warmly invited to share in this service of word and song.

Revd Heather, Roger the organist and choir.

READERS – SEPTEMBER

7th James Frost and Pippa George
14th Evensong – Paul Barrett and Brenda Wright
21st Nigel Smith and Sarah Fulton-Urry
28th Benefice Service at Shiplake –Vic Morgan to arrange

SIDESMEN’S ROTA FOR SEPTEMBER

7th Rob and Carol Lewis
14th (Evensong at 4.00 pm) Brenda Wright
21st Tony and Sue Wright
28th Service at Shiplake

INTERCESSIONS FOR SEPTEMBER

7th David Williams
14th (Evensong at 4.00 pm) May Mosawi
21st Jo Taylor
28th Service at Shiplake

COFFEE ROTA SEPTEMBER

7th Julie Griffin
21st Leonie Brown



Harpsden Harvest Lunch

This is a save the date notice for our Harvest Lunch to be held in Harpsden Village Hall on Saturday 27 September at 12.30.

We are planning on a bring and share finger buffet lunch and in the first instance would appreciate you letting me know, either by phone 07902545200 or email nicholsonvaleriea@gmail.com, if you wish to attend.

Once we have numbers we shall send out suggestions for food and allocate to avoid 300 sausage rolls!

There will be singing and a quiz - so lots of fun as last year.

Please let me know as soon as possible if you would like to attend. Please bring friends.

Valerie Nicholson

ON BEING AN ORGANIST

Have you ever wondered what it's like to be an Organist? You sit on a rather uncomfortable bench for the duration of the service, plus a few minutes before and after playing voluntaries. You can't nod off – the bench won't let you do that anyway – and must have all your music ready to play when announced, or sometimes when it isn't even announced, so you have to listen very carefully and be ready. You also have to have agreement with your spouse and family because commitment to Sunday mornings means that you can't go out for the day.

Priests and ministers usually spend three or four years in learning the job. Whether you want to be an organist to start with or are persuaded into it later, you have to start by learning the piano for several years when young. And your parents need to have a piano and pay a teacher and put up with the practice!

How you start on the organ.

Assuming that you go to church, ask the Organist if you can “have a go” afterwards and hope he agrees. If you come back later, expect the minister to turn up and tell you that the organ is a “church thing” and you're not allowed to touch it. Take no notice and carry on. Draw each of the stops and find out what it does. (Organists do not pull out all the stops, they draw them.) Find a good teacher who will help you with the pedals, organ repertoire and interpretation. With luck you might find that he gives lessons on a cathedral organ with four manuals and around 80 stops with names like Mixture and Sesquialtera.

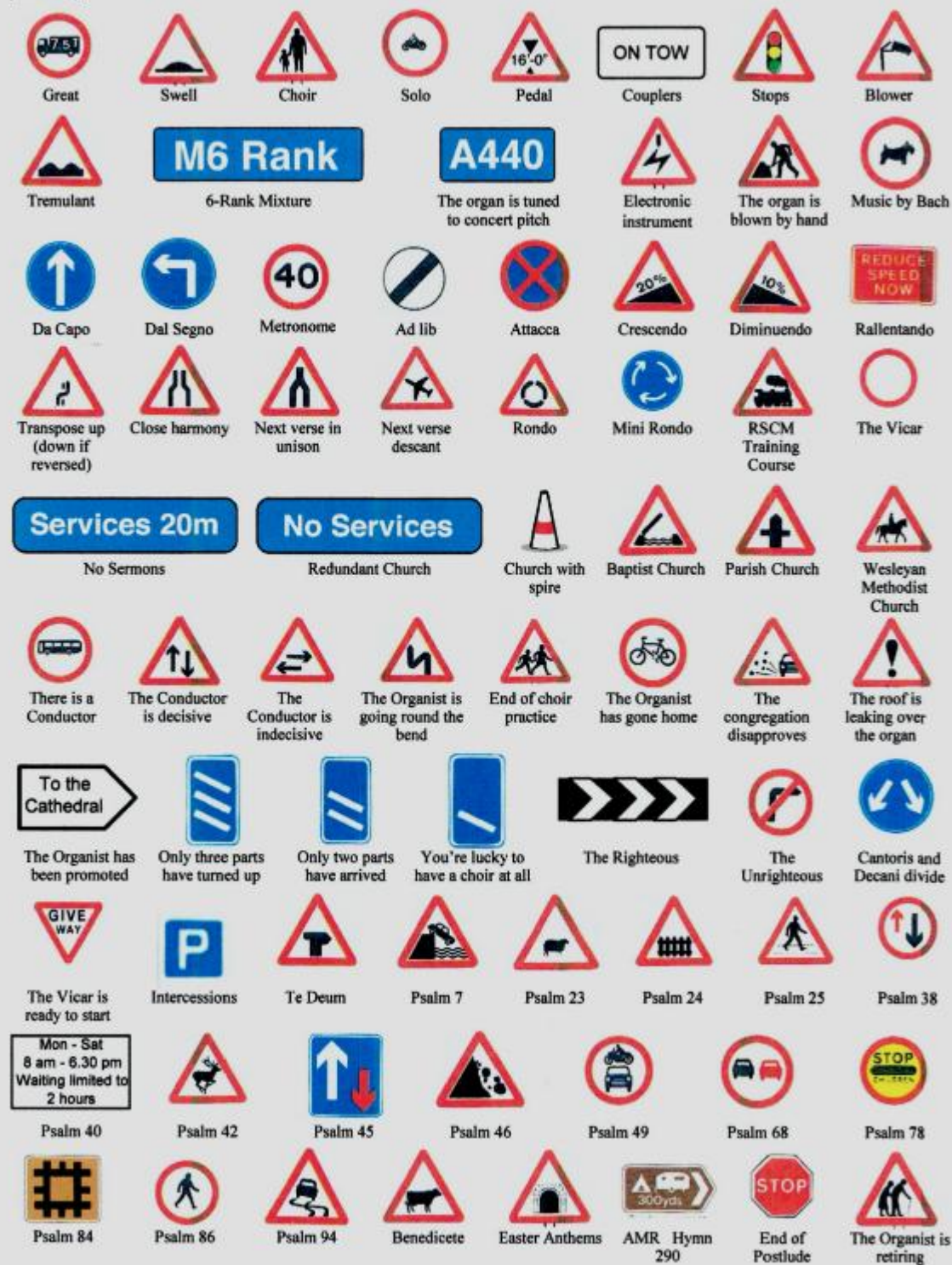
When you feel confident you can start looking for a church which needs an organist. There are lots of them around, so you have a good choice. Select the one which has the best organ, the best minister and the best pay, remembering that these are all usually mutually exclusive. On your first service expect to receive the appreciation and thanks of the congregation who have been used to recorded music played over the PA system. Possibly one day an old lady will point to the organ console and say to her grandchild “Look, it's just like a piano” which it isn't.

And finally, make sure that you are qualified to drive your organ by checking the Organist's Highway Code!

Philip Bowcock

The Organist's Highway Code

A failure on the part of an organist to observe a provision of this Code shall not of itself render that organist liable to criminal proceedings of any kind, but any such failure may in any proceedings (whether civil or criminal and including proceedings for an offence under the Mobile Diapasons Act 1992) be relied on by any party to the proceedings as tending to establish or negative any liability which is in question in those proceedings.



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NOTICES

Interregnum

Following the recent round of interviews, we regret that we were not able to make an appointment, and we will be advertising again in the next month or so. Meanwhile, please do continue to pray for God's provision and guidance for our next Priest in Charge.

Bishop Gavin

Home visiting, Home Communion

If you are not able to get to church for whatever reason, the Anna team are happy to come to you whether for a visit or to enable you receive the sacrament of the consecrated bread and wine within your home.

Contrary to some people's understanding this doesn't mean you are about to be called heavenwards, it's just impractical for you to try to get to church.

Please do ring Revd Heather: 07946352026 in the first instance.

Come and See 2026: The Eucharist : News from the Diocese

We're so excited to be offering Come and See again for Lent 2026, this time looking at the Eucharist – the profound meal at the heart of our faith.

If you might like to run Come and See in your parish, join Bishop Steven and the Come and See team on [Monday 22 September from 7pm on Zoom](#).

Hear from:

The Bishop of Oxford on this year's theme

The Discipleship team on how Come and See works for leaders and groups

The Children, Young People and Young Adults team on Come and See for all ages

The Comms team on how it all works and what resources you'll get when

And there'll be an opportunity to ask any questions you may have.

Please note: Joining this webinar is not a commitment to running Come and See in 2026 – it's just a chance to hear more and explore how this might benefit you and your parish.

We hope you'll join us for the journey. Look out for more details later this year!

Some memories from Valerie

I was eighteen. Living with parents and sisters in a lovely home, surrounded by wonderful friends from school, church and Young Conservatives! I had a good job in London but.....

I needed to spread my wings. I didn't really know how or why, I just knew. I told my parents that I intended to go and live in London. Well, that went down like a lead balloon! I remember their words to this day - "No daughter of ours is going to live in London." It was, of course, the Swinging Sixties" and what would happen to their precious daughter?

So, I took myself off to Canada House and applied for emigration to Canada! My mother had two sisters living in British Columbia, having gone out after the war, so my parents knew I would be in safe hands!

The following year, a week or so after my nineteenth birthday I arrived in Vancouver, met by an Aunt, and taken to her home in a town called Kamloops, in the interior of British Columbia.

At that time, Kamloops was a small town, straddling the Trans-Canada Highway (a single lane each-way road running the breadth of that vast country). It was a huge cultural shock, having worked in London but I loved living with my cousins and adjusting to a different way of life. I got a job, working for the Director of Nursing at the local hospital - everyone loved my English accent! But, oh how different life was. I had been used to socialising with friends, often in the local pub walking home from church on a Sunday, where we all joined together for a drink or two.

Here in Canada the legal drinking age was 21. The pubs, or beer parlours, had two entrances - one for men and the other for "ladies and escorts", complete with sawdust on the floor! The alternative was a Cocktail Lounge! In the beer parlours you had to sit, no standing at the bar unless (for some strange reason) you placed one foot on a rail attached to the base of the bar! A waiter brought a tray of glasses of beer, took the appropriate amount of money you had left on the table, and only came back when the glasses were empty and there was still money on the table! Not a word spoken by the staff!

You could only purchase alcohol in a Liquor Store where you filled in a form with your order, paid the person behind the counter (no discussion allowed) and your purchases magically appeared down a chute. You had to drive straight home, not allowed to open a bottle or can until you got there. Even more extreme - you could not drink in your front garden or on your porch if it was on a roadside, ie in a public space.

I hope this doesn't all sound as if my life depended on a drink - merely to illustrate how different things were.

The most interesting aspect of living in this small town in BC was the proximity of the Indian population (now called quite rightly First Nations people). I discovered that these people, who actually owned, and still do, vast tracts of land were not integrated into mainstream society. They lived on reservations, with their own schools, shops and medical services.

To this day, these people are being forced into long and costly court battles to defend their traditions and ways of life. Perhaps something we are not aware of in our democratic society.

Finally, being English in the BC interior in the mid-sixties I was asked about my life at home - had I met the Beatles, could English people afford to eat chicken and did we have electricity? I answered "No" to each!

What a wonderful experience.

Valerie Nicholson

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Harpsden Parish News is written for and by the people of this parish, and contributions are always welcome. However, the views expressed therein are those of the writers and are not necessarily shared by the Rector, the Editor and Churchwardens.

Benefice Website:

<https://www.achurchnearyou.com/benefice/27-442AP/>