

St. George's Montezbury

Magazine 50p



September 2025



LIFTING UP OUR EYES With Rev. Greg Smith

Nature versus nurture is a debate that has raged through the years. Evolutionary biologists on one side of the argument lining up against sociologists on the other.

For my own part, I remain perplexed as to how my three sons could have turned out so differently! I grew up with a love of dogs. My mum bred miniature dachshunds (we would have as many as 13 in the family at any given time) and I have always assumed that my childhood experience of dogs was responsible for my affection for our four-legged friends. These dogs would treat any visitor to the house as a mortal enemy, barking incessantly until they retreated, but would be ecstatic with joy if I came downstairs from having visited the toilet for five minutes so pleased were they to see me again. They made a wonderful illustration of the unconditional love of God!

By the same token, we had dogs (only one at a time) through most of my children's childhood, and yet their attitude to our canine friends varies enormously. The eldest has a cocker spaniel whom he dislikes with a vengeance. I used to think he was exaggerating his antipathy, but have come to realize, it's absolutely genuine. My middle son is largely indifferent, and doesn't have a pet, while my youngest son so dotes on his chocolate labrador that if he was forced to make a choice between him and his wife and daughter, I am not confident the humans would win.

How have I so spectacularly imbued my love of dogs into one child and failed so miserably with others? I have done even worse with football, with not one of them showing an interest in the beautiful game.

A parent's most sacred task is to pass on the faith. Psalm 78 proclaims: "they will tell their children the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord, so the next generation will know them, and they in turn will tell their children." The clue, I would suggest, is the word 'telling'. We cannot be responsible for how our children will receive what we attempt to pass onto them. That is the work of the Holy Spirit. Our task is to be witnesses – to **tell** how much God has done for us.

It's worth bearing mind that the Israelites of the Old Testament period had more of an African approach to child rearing. (It takes a village to raise a child). In other words, don't think that if you have no children that this precludes the possibility of your passing on the good news to the next generation.

Surely, they must be desperate for some good news?

Every blessing
Greg

Next to you and lonely

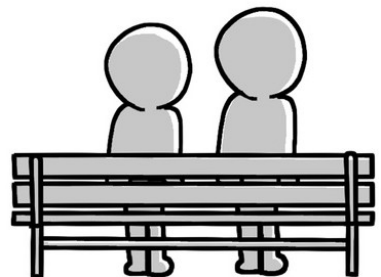
(Matthew 25:40)

Cups of tea and people,
People who do and who know.
People with purposeful expressions,
Their eyes searching beyond her, through her,
The invisible one.
She's next to you and she's lonely.

Smiles and one-way conversations,
With thoughts and eyes elsewhere,
Never noticing the masks of brightness
Hiding hurting children,
The tired ones,
Who are next to you and lonely.

And the makers of the cups of tea,
The knowers and the doers,
Those who smile and seem to have so much.
They too wear masks that hide their crying,
The *together* ones
Sit next to you and are lonely.

By Daphne Kitching



Readings and Services for this MONTH

Here are the Sunday Service details, and the readings which you may enjoy at home if you are unable to join a church service this month.

Services and Readings for September 2025		
Date	Service	Readings
2 nd September	Tea Service 2.30pm	
4 th September	Messy Church 3.30pm	
7 th September 12 th Sunday after Trinity	Holy Communion 10.30am	Psalm 1 Philemon 1-21 Luke 14. 25-33
14 th September 13 th Sunday after Trinity	Morning Worship without Communion 10.30am	Psalm 51. 1-11 1Timothy 1. 12-17 Luke 15. 1-10
21 st September 14 th Sunday after Trinity	Holy Communion &Children`s Church 10.30am	Amos 8. 4-7 1Timothy 2. 1-7 Luke 16. 1-13
28 th September 15 th Sunday after Trinity	Holy Communion 10.30am Group Service at Holy Trinity Hope Deanery Choral Evensong 5pm St.G's Pontesbury	Amos 6. 1a, 4-7 1 Timothy 6. 6-19 Luke 16. 19-end

Our church COMMUNITY

Welcome to The Tea Break



Wednesdays 2pm - 4pm

**St George's Church
Pontesbury**

OASIS *FREE lunch & companionship* for anyone living in Pontesbury, Minsterley and surrounding villages, who has been recently bereaved ...

... on the 2nd & 4th Tuesdays every month, 12pm - 1.30pm
Minsterley Methodist Chapel, Horsebridge Rd, Minsterley.

Transport is Available—Friends & Family are Welcome too.

Contact Heather Ryder for more information, at
ryder928@btinternet.com or 01743 790359

St. George's Prayer Chain, a small group of people who believe that prayer can make a difference, is being revived under Mary Worrall's leadership. Each person within the group offers daily prayer for anyone who asks for prayer—**would you like to join this group?**

Please contact Mary Worrall
maryew15mp@gmail.com or on 01743 791069

All information given is given in confidence.



Monthly Tea Service

(not August)

1st Tuesday afternoon

2.30pm to 4pm

St George's Church,
Pontesbury.

A moment of prayer,
A short Holy Communion followed by tea and cake



This year's **Ride & Stride** event is taking place on **Saturday 13th September**. The plan is to walk from Meole Brace (meet at Holy Trinity church 10am) into Shrewsbury, to visit ten of the historic churches in the town there, some which you may never have stepped into, or indeed never realised were there.

Money raised from this event will be divided between the Historic Churches Trust and St. George's church
For further information about the walk or to sponsor the event please contact Stephen Winwood 01743 791690
or email sandjwinwood@btinternet.com



Alpha is a safe space to talk about
faith and life's big questions.
No judgement, no pressure

October 2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd and November 4th, 11th
12.30 to 2pm

At Holy Trinity Church Minsterley— free lunch is included.
We're sorry we're not able to provide childcare.

For more info contact
Greg 07902 794653 or Fran 07982 324760

Big Breakfast

Saturday 20th September

St George's Church

Pontesbury

9.30 - 11.30

4 half hour time slots from 9.30 am



Cost £10 to include tea/coffee and toast

**Call Marianne McCall
to book a breakfast time slot
07944 333830**

Looking at GOD

New Beginnings — thoughts from Canon Paul Hardingham

September is the time of year when we get back to our routines after the summer break. As whole-life disciples (lit: *learners*) we are all called to learn from Jesus and live like Him. God wants us to make a difference in our workplaces and schools, and with family and friends. As Paul writes:

‘And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.’ (Colossians 3:17).

‘WHATEVER you do’: God is at work in every aspect of our lives. He can use whatever we do to make a difference to those around. Do we believe this? Our lives shouldn’t be like an orange, segmented into the sacred and secular, but more like an apple, in which all of our lives are available to Him.

‘Whatever YOU do’: God wants to use us to share God’s love as we serve others around us, wherever we spend time. We can trust Him for the resources we need hour by hour, day by day, year by year. What do we need from Him?

‘Whatever you DO’: We work for God alone, in responding to God’s love for us. How does this perspective make a difference when what we do is hard, unrewarding, or even unappreciated by others?

A man standing on a train platform was asked one day: *‘Who are you?’* He replied, *‘I am a Christian thinly disguised as an accountant.’* If we were asked the same question ourselves, how would we respond? As disciples of Jesus Christ, our identity is rooted in God and His call upon our lives. For each of us, September means learning from Jesus about how we might live for Him in the different places we find ourselves.



*It can be hard to pray sometimes, and most of us need all the help we can get!
Some further thoughts here written by the Revd Dr Herbert McGonigle,
formerly of the Nazarene Theological College, Manchester*

Praying with the prayers of the Bible:

Learning to Pray by Example

Luke 11:1: 'Lord, teach us to pray.'

Luke tells us that the disciples asked Jesus to teach them how to pray after He had just prayed. This is very important. In His preaching Jesus had spoken about prayer; (e.g. Matt. 6:5-8) He had also included prayer in His teaching; e.g. Luke 18:1. But it was neither His preaching or teaching on prayer that inspired this request from His disciples; it was His *example* in prayer. Also, Jesus had sent His disciples out to preach, yet their request was not, 'Lord, teach us to preach.' They had witnessed the mighty miracles that He performed and saw the astonishment of the crowds (Luke 9:43), but they did not ask Him, 'Lord, teach us to perform miracles.' No, they asked instead, 'Lord, teach us to pray.'

The disciples were beginning to learn that there was a direct link between the prayer life of Jesus and His Spirit-anointed ministry. We need go no further than what we find here in Luke's Gospel to see the consistent prayer life of Jesus. As news of His mighty ministry spread far and wide, 'great multitudes gathered to hear and be healed' (Lk. 5:15). This was 'high noon' in the ministry of our Lord and as the crowds gathered to hear Him, 'He withdrew to the wilderness and prayed' (v.16).

The next chapter tells us that Jesus made a habit of having whole nights of prayer. 'In those days He went out into the hills to pray, and He continued all night' (6:12). A little later the evangelist records that immediately following the feeding of the five thousand, the disciples were with Jesus – and He was praying (9:18). When Luke recounts the Transfiguration of Jesus, he says the Lord took Peter, John and James up the mountain 'to pray' (9:28).

Luke wants his readers to know about the prayer life of Jesus. At every step of His ministry we see Jesus praying. He prayed early in the morning before the day began; He prayed late in the evening after hours of demanding ministry; He prayed in secret; He prayed with His disciples, and He often prayed all night. He prayed in homes; He prayed by the roadside; He prayed on mountains; He prayed in boats; He prayed in the wilderness; He prayed in the synagogue; He prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane; He prayed on the Cross.

No wonder that Jesus' example in praying prompted His disciples to ask, 'Lord, teach us to pray.' As we read and study the life and ministry of our Lord, we will be likewise moved to ask Him, 'Lord, teach us to pray.'

Canon Paul Hardingham continues:



What's the Big Idea? An Introduction to the Books of the New Testament: 2 Corinthians

'For anyone operating under the naïve presumption that joining a Christian church is a good way to meet all the best people and cultivate smooth social relations, a reading of Paul's Corinthian correspondence is the prescribed cure' (Eugene Peterson).

Paul sent four letters to the Corinthian church: one mentioned in 1 Cor. 5:9; 1 Corinthians; a 'severe' letter mentioned in 2 Cor. 2:3-4; and 2 Corinthians sent around AD 55 around a year after 1 Corinthians.

Paul had a number of reasons for writing this letter:

- *To express the joy he felt at their response to his painful letter (1:3-4; 7:8-9, 12-13).
- *To share his troubles in Asia (1:8-11) and why he changed his travel plans (1:12-2:4).
- *To ask them to forgive those who had offended him (2:5-11).
- *To warn them not to be "*yoked together with unbelievers*" (6:14-7:1).
- *To explain the true nature of Christian ministry (2:14-7:4).
- *To encourage them in giving and completing the collection for the Jerusalem Christians (chapters. 8-9).
- *To deal with the opposition (chapters 10-13) and prepare for his coming visit (12:14; 13:1-3, 10).

In this very personal letter Paul defends his leadership against accusations of inconsistencies in motives and credentials. A major theme concerns the relationship between suffering and the power of the Spirit. His opponents argued that Paul *suffered too much* to be a Spirit-filled apostle.

Paul responds by saying that his sufferings embody Christ's death and his endurance reveals God's glory: *'He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me.'* (2 Cor 12:9).

How one man's bad dream awoke a whole civilisation...by Richard Bewes.

The most productive nightmare of all time?

1600 years ago, Europe's top scholar was an Italian called Jerome; he loved the works of Cicero. One night he dreamt that he had died, and reached the gates of heaven. The gate-keeper spoke to him: 'Who are you?'

"*Christianus sum.*" replied Jerome. "I'm a Christian."

"No." said the gatekeeper. "You're not a Christian. You're a Ciceronian!" He went on to explain: "You see, here in heaven we judge people by what they were *most*, when they lived on earth. And you dedicated everything to the classics and the works of Cicero. So, we judge you not to be a Christian, but a *Ciceronian*. You cannot enter."



Jerome woke with a start, and made his resolve. Not only did he begin truly to follow Christ, but he bent his academic ability into translating the Bible into the common language of Europe, Latin. It took him years. His translation became known as the *Vulgate* version.

That Bible served Europe for a thousand years. With the Bible's message becoming the foundation of European civilisation, its culture became united. Once we take Christianity and the Bible out of Europe - and all that we would be left with is a collection of squabbling, heathen tribes. It's time for Europe - like Jerome - to be woken up again.



The Revd Dr Jo White considers

Reflecting Faith: First Impressions

This series has recently been looking at the opening and closing words of most church services.

They usually go something like this:

(Going In) The Lord be with you. And also with you.

(Going Out) Go in the light and peace of Christ. Thanks be to God.

This month let's consider what's pretty much the very next thing we generally do / say at the start of the service.

We acknowledge how great God is: the recognition of His power and might, His goodness and mercy as well as His ability to give us never-ending love. This makes us realise how 'little' we are and how we have not been as loving and forgiving to others – and indeed to ourselves – as we could have been.

This is sometimes called the 'Prayer of Humble Access'.

In a way it mirrors the prodigal son when he returns to his father. The son had demanded his inheritance NOW and then rushes off to have a good time in all the 'usual' ways, followed by poverty and having to work in the lowliest of jobs just to keep alive. Eventually he realised that even the pigs in his father's house lived better than he did – so he decides he will humble himself and return home. He doesn't expect to go back to his previous standing, but rather to beg forgiveness and ask to be a servant.

It's the ending of this story that is so exciting. The prodigal's father is told of his wayward son's approach, and everyone is expecting him to turn away. Instead he rushes out to meet and greet him. Not waiting for an apology or a begging word, the father covers him in rich clothes, holding him (no doubt) smelly body close and just loving him.

And spiritually that is what God does to each of us, as we come deliberately and consciously into His presence and turn to Him. He holds us close and forgives us.

This month

Next time you go to a church service, take note of the words you are asked to say close to the beginning and the wording of 'forgiveness' said over you. Then having been forgiven, try not to stir whatever it was up again – God won't.

Looking at CHURCH, at home and worldwide

David Pickup, a solicitor, considers the problem of the lonely dog.

Not leaving your dog on its own – even for church

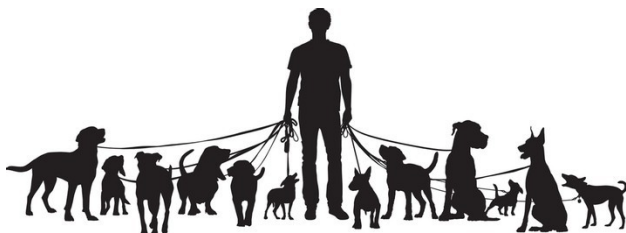
My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with Me that you also may be where I am.

John 14:2-3

There are some couples I see in church, but only rarely do they attend together. You may know them. The explanation is quite simple, and it is not that they do not like being seen together. Instead, they have a dog – or dogs – which do not like to be left alone. So, when there are two services available, one stays at home with the pet and the other goes to church. Then they swap round for the later service.

I have suggested they come together with the dog, but they say they are worried that he or she will be noisy and badly behaved. (The dog that is, not the partner, although you never know.) I suppose that in years gone by, churches were not only places for polite and well-behaved worshippers, but for anyone. I like my Orthodox brothers and sisters, who have very long services, but the congregation come and go as they feel. Another answer is to have more outdoor services, where the dogs could always come along, and the local birds would join in the singing, if they felt the standard was high enough.

It all reminds me that our pets hold a vital place in our lives, and in the homes which we share. Animals also have important roles in the Bible. Try to list some!



An iconic Christian convention is celebrating 150 years this year. From the humble beginnings of a vicar holding a meeting on his vicarage lawn back in 1875, the Keswick Convention now runs a year-round Christian teaching ministry and attracts 15,000 to its annual three-week summer convention.

The Keswick Convention was the brainchild of Canon Thomas Harford-Battersby, Vicar of St John's Keswick. He had attended a Christian conference in Oxford, and found it life changing. "Christ was revealed to me so powerfully and sweetly as the present Saviour in His all sufficiency." And later he added: "I found He was all I wanted: I shall never forget it... How it humbled me and what peace it brought."

Harford-Battersby wanted to share this joy in Christ with others. So, with the help of a friend, he erected a tent on his vicarage lawn that summer and simply invited local people to come along.

Even that first year, it was a success. Over the week, nearly 400 people attended. And in the following years, more people came. Hundreds, thousands of them, from many denominations, eager to learn more about the Bible. Within a few years of its starting, Christians all over the world were making an annual pilgrimage to the little Lake District town, to hear the best Bible teachers that were available.

Some highlights along the way:

- 1875 - first convention, in St John's vicarage garden in Keswick.
- 1901 - the first marquee was erected on the Skiddaw Street site.
- 1969 - the second week of convention was started, aimed more at families
- 1997 - the Rawnsley Hall in Keswick was bought, to extend youth ministry
- 2001 - the third week of the convention was launched
- 2015 - the Pencil Mill in Keswick was acquired, and it is now an integrated home for the Convention.

Many missionary societies and theological colleges owe their roots to the Keswick Convention: Hudson Taylor of China and Amy Carmichael of India had close ties with Keswick.

In recent times, speakers have included some of the best-known preachers

in the evangelical world: John Stott, Donald English, George Duncan, David Coffey, and Anne Graham Lotz.

Today many Keswick teaching events are held around the world: in Africa, Australia, New Zealand, North America, India, Jamaica and Japan. The Convention's motto remains – 'All One in Christ Jesus'.

More at: <https://keswickministries.org>

Premier Christian Radio – the first Christian broadcaster to Britain

Christian broadcasting was not always allowed in this country. As late as the mid-1980s, Christians were petitioning Parliament and the broadcast regulator to allow Christian broadcasting to begin in the UK.

Finally, it happened, and in 1990 the law was changed. Five years later, in the summer of 1995, Premier Christian Radio was launched. The Christian community rallied around the station, with thousands committing to provide regular monthly support, and to make it the success that it is today.

Highlights of the past 30 years include:

1999 - launch of Premier Online, streaming Premier to the world

2006 - launch of Premier.tv, providing Christian Internet TV on demand

2009 - broadcasting nationwide begins on DAB Digital radio

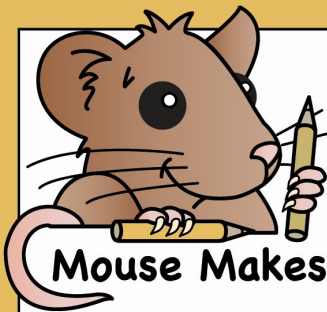
2010 - Premier Gospel begins

2016 - Premier Praise begins

Nowadays, with more than 1,100,000 listeners every week, Premier is the largest Christian Media organisation in the UK, reaching people via its print, digital and radio platforms.

Premier Christian Radio is available online and nationally on DAB and on smart speakers. The Premier Christian App is available to both iPhone and Android users, via their respective app stores.





Mouse Makes

"Let us fear and respect the Lord our God.
He gives **autumn** and **spring** rains
at the right time. He makes sure that we
have the harvest at just the right **time**."

- from Jeremiah 5:24

"God... gives you **rain** from
heaven and good harvests
at the right times. He gives
you plenty of **food** and
fills your hearts with **joy**."

- from Acts 14:16-17

"May the people **praise** you **God**...
The **land yields** its harvest, God,
our God **blesses** us."

- from Psalm 67:5-6

"**Honour** the
Lord with your
wealth and the
first part of
your **harvest**."

- Proverbs 3:9

"So the one who **plants** is not
important, and the one who **waters**
is not important. Only **GOD** is
important because He is the one
who makes things **grow**."

- 1 Corinthians 3:7

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

Find the words in **bold** type in the bible quotes in the
wordsearch then look for the words below too!

PLOUGH • FIELD • SOIL • SCATTER • SOW • SEEDS • SUN
REAP • PICK • CROPS • GRAIN • CORN • BARN • BREAD • THANKSGIVING

Gaza food system 'like Hunger Games' - Archbishop Hosam

The leader of the Anglican church in the Holy Land has urged Christians to “speak out in the face of injustices” – including the “horrificing” current arrangements for food aid in Gaza” – as he called for a permanent ceasefire to end the war.

The Most Revd Hosam Naoum, the Archbishop in Jerusalem, was addressing the General Synod in July. He said that at that time, hospitals were being bombed in Gaza, medical supplies were in short supply and that there was a ‘horrificing’ system of food distribution, comparable to the dystopian series *The Hunger Games*, with three sites open one hour a day for two million people.

Calling for a restoration of humanitarian supplies including food and medicine, under UN supervision, Archbishop Hosam said there should be no targeting of civilians, especially emergency workers and medical staff. He called for the release of all hostages and captives and a permanent ceasefire for the end of the war and rebuilding of Gaza – “not ethnic cleansing that is presently being discussed by the Israeli and US Government.”

The church is committed to peace building and reconciliation – a message that he has repeated “time and time again” – but these are “alien terms” that people across both sides of the divide refuse to talk about or even listen to, he said.

“I realise that as a church we live and embody the Gospel and we are not politicians.

“However, we need to speak out in the face of injustices and be prophetic for the sake of our people and our calling as Christians.

“But where a church is wounded and constrained, we need the wider body of Christ to help us to be the church in brutal and damaging times.”

The Most Reverend Hosam Naoum is the 15th Anglican Bishop in Jerusalem, a role he has held since 2021. He was born in Haifa and grew up in Shefa’amr in Galilee.

The Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem is home to about 7,000 Anglicans worshipping within 28 different congregations. It is also responsible for more than 30 institutions, including hospitals, schools, clinics and rehabilitation centres. The Diocese is scattered across five separate countries or territories: Jordan, Palestine, Lebanon, Syria, and Israel.

Ancient Anglo-Saxon text sparks huge Instagram follower surge

“Hlyst nu!”

That’s Old English for “Listen up!”

And that’s exactly what’s happening, as a video with an unexpected subject has captured the attention of thousands of viewers around the world.

A video of Everyday Faith Editor Alexandra Zhirnova reading the Nicene Creed in Old English has exploded across the Church of England’s digital channels, and beyond, racking up nearly half a million impressions and sparking a global wave of engagement.

The video opens with a short introduction: “What you’re about to hear is the oldest English translation of the Nicene Creed, written in the year 992 by a monk called Ælfric. Ælfric lived a thousand years ago, but his world was not so different from ours. He believed that understanding the word of God would give people hope and guide them in their lives.”

Ælfric translated the Creed, along with parts of the Bible, from Latin into his native tongue; what we now call Old English. While much of the language is unfamiliar to modern ears, some words remain recognisable, and viewers are encouraged to listen closely and share any they spot.

The response to the video has been nothing short of extraordinary. Since its release, it has generated over 400,000 impressions across the Church of England’s social media channels, with over 37,000 engagements including likes, comments and shares.

On Instagram, the video has become the most saved piece of content the Church has ever posted, achieving the highest reach and the second-highest number of impressions of any video on the platform to date. Meanwhile, on TikTok, it has quickly climbed the ranks to become the second most viewed video, with the highest number of comments and shares ever recorded on the Church’s account.

Before joining the Church of England as Everyday Faith Editor, Alexandra completed a PhD in Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic at the University of Cambridge. Her academic work focused on Anglo-Saxon Christianity, with a particular interest in the role of women in the early Church - making her uniquely placed to bring this ancient text to life for a modern audience.

The video’s success has also translated into a dramatic surge in followers. In just seven days, the Church saw a 583 per cent increase in new followers compared to the previous week. Instagram alone has seen a staggering 5,200 per cent jump, while TikTok followers have grown by 1,600 per cent. Overall video views across all platforms have risen by 90 per cent in the same period.

And reception has been overwhelmingly positive with the video reaching an international audience, and German, Dutch, and Scandinavian language speakers responding to appreciate how similar Old English sounds to their native languages.

This viral moment comes as the Church marks the 1700th anniversary of the Nicene Creed, a cornerstone of Christian belief since AD 325. So, if you haven't already, why not have a listen and tell us how many words you recognise? *(You could search for the Nicene Creed on YouTube).*

Our local COMMUNITY



The churches of the Rea Valley have obtained National Lottery funding to operate a transport scheme to enable residents of the area to access medical appointments including Pontesbury & Worthen surgeries; and Shrewsbury, Telford and Oswestry hospitals. We also hope to get people to opticians and dental appointments where necessary.

Please note that the scheme is not set up to help with emergency appointments or to assist with other transport requests such as shopping.

Our drivers are all volunteers, but are insured, DBS checked and safely recruited. However, they are not medical professionals. Your driver will collect you from your home address and take you in good time for your appointment.

To request transport, please contact our scheme administrator, Emma, at reavalleytransportscheme.info@gmail.com or 07468115939. If possible, please give us a minimum of a week's notice of when and where your appointment is.

Dear Friends,

Despite the adverts in the shops suggesting that parents buy new school uniform in July, the new school year is just beginning.

Education has been part of my life and vocation from when I left school myself.

I spent eight years teaching in primary schools, then worked as a lay children's minister, with involvement in our local church school. Then I swapped sides of the teacher's desk as our children entered their school years, and I had the novel experience of receiving reports rather than writing them!



Ordination brought ongoing opportunities to support the spiritual growth of children and staff alike in the parishes where I served, and since becoming Archdeacon of Ludlow I have had the enormous privilege of chairing our Diocesan Board of Education which oversees the wonderful work of our 78 church schools and academies and supports the diocesan education team in all that they do.

Our church schools and academies are not just places of learning information and life skills, but of putting down roots and building foundations so that each child and young person in our care has a chance to explore the Christian faith and experience the life in all the fullness that Jesus Christ promises.

There are so many ways we can all support this life-giving and life-changing work. Some may be called to become Foundation Governors, supporting and upholding the Christian foundation of the school. This is a vital lay ministry role. Yes, it can be demanding, but it is also immensely rewarding. If you'd be willing to explore what that might mean for you in your context, do contact me or our Diocesan Director of Education, Gemma Martin.

Others may be willing and able to support collective worship in our schools, perhaps by joining an Open the Book team if there is one in your benefice, and helping a new generation to hear and understand the stories of our

faith. You could talk that through with your parish priest, who could let you know the safeguarding and training requirements.

And all of us can pray for our church schools and academies, for children, young people, staff, parents, governors, and Multi-Academy Trust teams. 24/7 Prayer has a downloadable PDF guide to praying for schools, available at <https://www.24-7prayer.com/resource/pray-for-students-and-teachers/>

However you may be able to support the life of our church schools and academies, I pray that it may be a blessing and encouragement to you as you bless and encourage others. Happy New (School) Year!

The Ven Dr Fiona Gibson (Archdeacon of Ludlow)

Nigel Beeton writes: September is the 200th anniversary of the first ever passenger-carrying railway, between Stockton and Darlington. Not much of a ride - the passengers all standing in wagons - but it was a start. 200 years later passengers are still standing on trains - maybe in slightly better wagons, but still standing!



1825

The engine, all clanky and smoky
The passengers standing in trucks
A journey both shaky and choky
But a new age of travel was struck.

The railways spread out like spiders
Till covering all of our Isles
In general delighting their riders
Who normally got there with smiles.

So many long years of reaching
Our goals with whistles and toots
Till along came a daft man called 'Beeching'
Who cut it all back to its roots.

Today it's the roads that are choking
Car drivers are hooting - in vain.
Doc Beeching might think I am joking
But they're building new railways

Deanery of Pontesbury

DEANERY NEWS

Rural Dean: **The Revd Greg Smith**

telephone: 07902 794653

• email: rectorpontstip@gmail.com

Thought for the Month from Rev Tracy Jones from Hanwood

September has a unique feel about it. The air starts to carry that gentle crispness, leaves begin to hint at their autumn colours, and the long, unhurried days of summer, give way to a more purposeful rhythm.

For many families, this month marks an important milestone. Children in freshly pressed uniforms and slightly too big blazers and new shoes head through school gates for the first time or return to familiar classrooms with new teachers, new subjects, and new challenges.

There's a mixture of excitement and nervousness in these moments, both for the children and the parents watching them take another step forward. It's a reminder that life is full of seasons, and each season brings with it fresh beginnings. In the Christian life, this rhythm of ending and beginning is woven deeply into our story.

Scripture is full of people stepping into new chapters. Abraham leaves his home to journey to an unknown land. Ruth begins a new life in Bethlehem. The disciples dropped their nets to follow Jesus into an entirely different way of living. Each time there's a blend of uncertainty and hope of letting go and trusting in God's leading.

For children starting school, there is so much that is unfamiliar. New faces, routines, and expectations. For parents and carers, there is the bittersweet letting go, entrusting our precious ones to the care of others. As Christians, we can take comfort that God is present in every "first day". Psalm 139 tells us that God has gone before us, that he knows our comings and goings our sitting down and our rising up. This means that before a child walks into the classroom, God is already there preparing the way.

New beginnings are also moments of spiritual renewal. Just as children learn their ABC's and numbers, we're continually called to grow in our knowledge and love of God. September can be a time for all of us, whether we're in

school or far beyond our school days, to consider what might God be inviting us to learn. This season, where is he calling us to step out in faith?

The apostle Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 5:17, "if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come, the old has gone, the new is here"! Every day is an opportunity for us to live more fully as that "new creation". We do not need to wait for January to make resolutions. September offers a quiet invitation to begin again, with God's help, whether that's in our prayer life, our service to others, or our relationships.

So, as we wave goodbye to summer and step into a new term, Let's pray for our children, teachers, and families. Let's also open our own hearts to the fresh things God may want to do in our homes, in our parishes, and in our lives.



<https://reavalleyfoodbank.co.uk/>

Harvest Time

Thank you to Pontesbury Community Garden, and other individuals in our community, who have donated fresh fruit and vegetables. It is very appreciated. Please do keep donating as we approach Harvest Festival, and drop off when the Foodbank is open, or contact us if you can help.

Donating in-date tinned and packaged food, toiletries and cleaning products on an ongoing basis really saves us money. Thank you to everyone that does do this, it is vital to us being able to continue on a weekly basis at our two locations.

Autumn & Winter Voucher scheme

Shropshire Council have received funding from central Government's Household Support Fund, which is to help people: "to meet immediate needs and help those who are struggling to afford household essentials". Along with other foodbanks, Rea Valley Foodbank will be receiving money from this Fund for vouchers, for use in specific local shops, and to meet some of our costs of buying in items.

The definition of food poverty is: "the inability of individuals and households to obtain an adequate and nutritious diet because they cannot afford healthy food". Our Foodbank cannot store fresh food and so the vouchers will give our users an opportunity to get a wider range of food, over the autumn and winter months.

To use the Foodbank, or find out more:

Call Rev. Greg Smith 07902 794653 or Rev. Richard Lonsdale 07922 830488 or your local clergy.

Quiz Night

In aid of
Train a Priest, Tanzania

SEPTEMBER 20

7 PM

**Venue: St Mary's
Church Westbury
SY5 9QL**

Join us for a fun evening!

Everyone is welcome

Suggested donation £5

Refreshments provided

Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in
Judges 6:1-7, 11-16, 25-35

Once the Israelites had moved into their
promised land, they obeyed God, but not for
long, so God let other countries invade.

The Midianites invaded every
year, and stole all the food
the Israelites had grown.



The Israelites had to
hide in the hills.



After 7 years,
the Israelites called
out to God for help.

Gideon was secretly
threshing wheat when
an angel arrived.



The Lord is helping you,
mighty warrior.



I don't
mean to be rude, but it
doesn't look like he is.

God said

I will give you the
power.



But my clan
is the weakest in our tribe and
I'm the weakest in my family.

I'll be helping you. Start by pulling
down the altar built for Baal and
build one for Me.



Gideon did as he was told (but he
waited and did it at night).



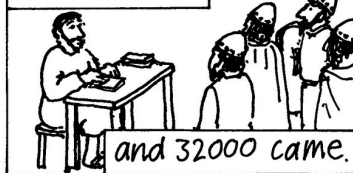
In the morning, people
came to complain to
Gideon's father



If Baal is upset, he
can take his own
revenge, can't he?



Gideon sent out messages
to call men to fight the
Midianites..



and 32000 came.

Bible Bite Wordsearch

Can you find in the grid all the words from the story which are listed below?

f	o	o	d	g	o	d	e	c	f	s	h
t	y	h	e	l	p	i	n	g	e	m	e
c	n	i	g	h	t	i	r	t	s	s	g
l	m	i	d	i	a	n	i	t	e	s	r
a	n	g	e	l	d	l	s	g	c	t	o
n	g	d	p	t	e	e	a	v	r	o	w
q	u	m	e	a	k	s	o	o	e	l	n
r	o	s	r	a	s	t	i	n	t	e	a
c	p	s	e	e	h	r	n	a	l	h	l
u	i	w	m	g	r	i	d	a	y	i	t
k	r	a	i	a	g	b	a	a	l	d	a
l	t	f	w	p	p	e	p	o	w	e	r

weakest

helping

stole

Baal

tribe

Midianites

fight

rude

Israelites

altar

complain

night

food

power

God

clan

hide

grown

angel

upset

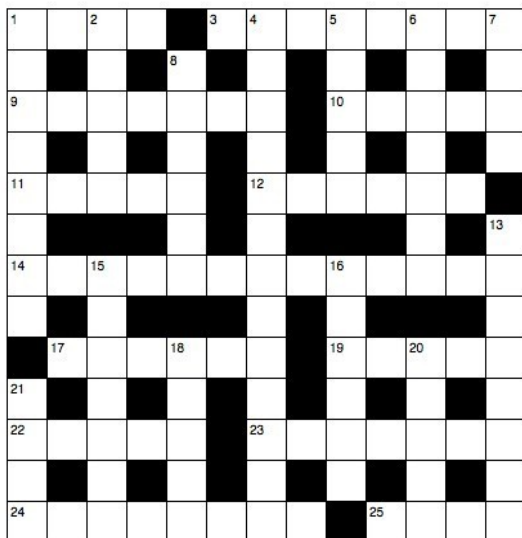
secretly

warrior

Gideon

messages

This month's CROSSWORD PUZZLE ...



Across

1 'A little later someone else saw Peter and said, "You — are one of them"' (Luke 22:58) (4)

3 Giving (1 Peter 2:5) (8)

9 They came to Jerusalem seeking an infant king (Matthew 2:7) (3,4)

10 'An athlete... does not receive the victor's crown unless he competes according to the — ' (2 Timothy 2:5) (5)

11 Pacifist, temperance advocate, open-air preacher, leading 20th-century Methodist, Donald — (5)

12 'Come quickly to — — , O Lord my Saviour' (Psalm 38:22) (4,2)

14 'The God of Abraham, — — — , the God of our fathers, has glorified his servant Jesus' (Acts 3:13) (5,3,5)

17 Sear by intense heat (Revelation 16:8) (6)

19 'It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to trust — — ' (Psalm 118:8) (2,3)

22 Goods (Nehemiah 13:15) (5)

23 i.e. train (anag.) (7)

24 Surrounding area (Luke 24:50) (8)

25 'Righteousness will be his — and faithfulness the sash round his waist' (Isaiah 11:5) (4)

Down

1 Elegant and creative (Exodus 31:4) (8)

2 'Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all — , but we will all be changed' (1 Corinthians 15:51) (5)

4 'I... delight to see how orderly you are and how firm your — — — is' (Colossians 2:5) (5,2,6)

5 Enlist (2 Samuel 24:2) (5)

6 Of the Muslim faith (7)

7 Sharp intake of breath (Job 11:20) (4)

8 Woven cloth (Ezekiel 16:13) (6)

13 Plentiful (Romans 5:17) (8)

15 CIA char (anag.) (7)

16 Paul and Silas stopped him committing suicide after an earthquake in Philippi (Acts 16:27–28) (6)

18 One of the ingredients in the making of incense for the Lord (Exodus 30:34) (5)

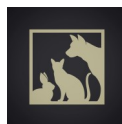
20 Episcopal headwear (5)

21 Inhabitant of, say, Russia, Ukraine, Poland, Slovakia or Bulgaria (4)

PHIL GRIFFITHS
Local Plumber

Tap Replacement
and Plumbing Repairs Undertaken.
New Taps Supplied and Fitted
Full Range available
Established 35 years

Tel: 01743 790046
Mobile: 07970 010148



**MALTHOUSE
VETERINARY GROUP**

'An independent practice located in a beautiful,
renovated Malthouse, focusing on personal
high-quality care.'

If you want to join the Malthouse family we can
be reached via the contact routes below,
or even better pop in and meet us!

Website:
www.malthouseveterinarygroup.co.uk
Email:
reception@malthousevets.co.uk
Telephone: **01743 791246**

The Complete Building Service

Steve Bishop
General Builder



All types of building work from:

General repairs Extensions Roofing
Renovations & Alterations
Patos Fencing & Decking
Garden Maintenance and more

Fully insured, no job too small, call for a free
estimate & no obligation:

01743 792028 / 07773 868040

Clean, tidy, reliable
& professional.



Join us today at Pontesbury Pharmacy !

Your local Community Pharmacy
**"ASK YOUR PHARMACIST WE'RE HERE
TO HELP"**
01743 790273

Find us on msnlunts.co.uk and Follow us on

[f](#) FACEBOOK [t](#) TWITTER [@](#) INSTAGRAM



Cliffdale
CARE HOME

Shrewsbury Road, Pontesbury, SY5 0QD

☎ 01743 790 261

Email: info@cliffdalecarehome.co.uk

We are able to offer Day Care, Respite Care and Residential Care.
Please call Cliffdale for a quote.



"Delivery for whoever ordered the trendy alternative to a basket of groceries..."



Open 5.30pm to 9.30pm
Sunday Banquet £16.95 per person

Buffet Night Tuesdays £16.95 per person
We are closed Mondays except Bank holidays

Vegan Menu now available,
Private parties can be catered for,
please ring 07763839775

Lea Cross Tandoori,
Lea Cross, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY5 8HR
Tel: 01743 860229
Mobile: 07763939775

Website: leacrosstandoori.co.uk

SUZANNE CLASSIC HAIR

Main Road, Pontesbury

Tel: 01743 791186

HIGNETTS OF PONTESBURY LTD.

Established 1919

Butchers * Bakers
Greengrocers * Flowers * Fish
tel: 01743 790228



Call our free confidential helpline

0300 123 2825

Or text **SRS** to **85258**

shropshireruralsupport.org.uk

The Silver Line

helpline for older people

0800 4 70 80 90

ChildLine

0800 111



TALK TO US

If things are getting to you

116 123 FREE

This number is FREE to call round the clock.

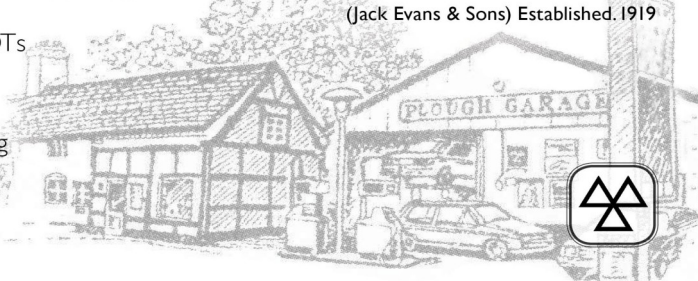
SAMARITANS

PLOUGH GARAGE

(Jack Evans & Sons) Established. 1919

Servicing & MOTs
Diagnostics
Repairs - Tyres
Air Conditioning

Pontesbury, SY5 0RJ
01743 790270
ploughgarage.co.uk



**Collingwood
Richardson & Co. Ltd**

CHARTERED INSURANCE BROKERS

We specialise in: • Liability Insurance
• Motor Fleet • Property Owners
• Commercial Combined

T: 01743 790 790
www.collrich.co.uk



Collingwood House, Pontesbury, SY5 0RF
Authorised & Regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority

theWI
INSPIRING WOMEN

1915 FOR 100 YEARS 2015

**Pontesbury
Women's
Institute**

meets on the
second Monday

of each month (except August)
at 2.00pm
in Pontesbury Public Hall.

*Friendly group, interesting talks,
numerous visits.*

Why not join us?

New members always welcome.
Phone Irene Windows
on 01743 791903

**Or just come along
to a meeting.**

PC & LAPTOP REPAIRS COMPUTER PROBLEMS SOLVED

- ✓ Internet, email, web browser, WiFi repairs
- ✓ Virus & problem software removal
- ✓ Slow computers made faster
- ✓ New computers set-up
- ✓ Training & tuition
- ✓ Local Friendly Technician



Free collection & return for devices not reparable on site.
Free no obligation quotations provided. You only pay when we repair!

for a local, reliable & friendly service - direct to your door

Call local - 01743 294555

Computer Repair Man. Local Technicians You Can Trust!

To **place an advertisement** in this magazine, please email:
stgsmagazine @googlemail.com
or phone: Marion Elliott 01743 792256
Disclaimer: each advert in this magazine has been devised by the advertiser in question. St. George's church accepts no responsibility for the standard or quality of goods and services provided. St. George's church accepts no liability for any loss or damage arising from acceptance of any advertised trading.

FUNERAL



DIRECTORS

W·R·R Pugh & Son

— established 1890 —

133 Longden Coleham Shrewsbury SY3 7DN | 87 Whitchurch Road Shrewsbury SY1 4EE

01743 344646

info@pughsfuneraldirectors.com

Dedicated professional service throughout Shropshire offering help and guidance in every aspect of arranging a funeral service.

- No obligation written estimates available upon request
- Private service chapel
- Personalised funeral stationery and orders of service
- Forget Me Not Florist
- Private parking & disabled access
- Environmentally friendly options
- We can recommend professional stone masons for all your memorial needs.



NAFD
Resolve

FUNERAL PLANS FROM
Golden Charter
Smart Planning for Later Life

