

St. George's Montezbury

Magazine 50p



November 2025

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Contributions for **St. George's Magazine** should be sent to the Editor by the **15th** of the **previous month**. It may not be possible to include until the following month contributions which are received after this date.
 Send e-mail & attachments to stgsmagazine@googlemail.com

Items for inclusion in the **Deanery News** should be sent by the **10th** of the **previous month** to Ann Jones
annmorganjones456@gmail.com

QUOTE: If you worry, you didn't pray.
 If you pray, don't worry. - Anon



LIFTING UP OUR EYES

With Rev Richard Lonsdale

In these days of readily pre-packaged, pre-processed food, of cellophaned cuts of meat, of cold technical terms such as “the growth cycle” or “monoculture vs polyculture” it is easy to forget the complexity, (*nay miracle!*) of growing crops to harvest. If we forget the time and care involved in the growth of a plant, from seed through early vigour to reaching maturity and then to harvest and simply view things as commodities then we can actually miss so much of the complexity and beauty that actually goes into making the harvest.

Consider the vine; years of early enthusiastic growth and care before reaching maturity some 25 to 30 years later; the constant manipulation of the vine with work on the annual shoots as well as pruning, fertilising the soil – all throughout the wet and cold of winter and the heat of summer before it is considered mature enough and the grapes ready to be transformed into that richest of drinks. Consider the “terroir” that beautiful term the French call the mystical, indefinable contribution of soil, air, weather, human practice and so on that all contributes to how the wine develops and ultimately tastes. Once the grapes are harvested then the work doesn’t stop; consider the pressing of the grapes and then the fermentation in barrels through further long slow months and years – as the wind whistles through cracks in the barn walls, the drip, drip of rain drops outside and the slow build up heat in the summer months, as lifetimes of mice bustle in the shadows watched by owls in the loft, the wine itself lies alive but still; dark and fermenting in its barrels.

The time it takes to make a good wine is long; it requires hard work, care, love, attention but overall, it takes time.

Yet at the wedding in Cana our Lord transforms water into wine in a matter of minutes, and good wine at that, creating some 40 litres of strong, rich, heady wine. The next day in Cana must have been an exceptionally quiet one!

There is no sense here of a short cut; of the fast-food mindset that we have in society today whereby so much of what is offered has the appearance of something healthy and satisfying but in fact is low in nutrients, low in taste and low in any meaningful value other than an immediate, short-term satisfaction. No, in performing this miracle then Jesus somehow compresses all the list of factors

that we went through earlier into one “moment” and in doing so gives us a picture of what God’s Kingdom will be like – rich, heady, laughter-filled and most of all, alive! Jesus takes the careful craft of the vineyard and in compressing it actually also brings it to immediacy.

Life is full of pictures if we choose to look for them

So, it is right that we give thanks to God for this harvest, of life’s cycle; that we give thanks to God for the hard, patient work of men and women that bring it to us for our use and enjoyment and as we celebrate today and let us take time to enjoy and meditate upon the pictures of life and death that harvest time brings and use them as an aid to bring our delights, our pleasures, our fears and our worries before our Lord who is the true provider of good things.

With my prayers and best wishes.

Rev. Richard Lonsdale



Prayer for November 2025

Heavenly Father,

Here we are in November – the month of short, dark days. A dreary, difficult month, unless you have a birthday! Lord, it seems as if the world is permanently in November at the moment. So much is so difficult for so many people, through no fault of their own. And it seems to go on and on.


Lord, would You bring your healing light into the world’s darkness. Bring transformation, compassion and a softening into the hearts of those with responsibility for the conflict and the suffering, that they might work for peace for all people. We know that nothing is impossible for you, Lord, so we pray in faith – and in the name of Jesus.

Amen.

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.

Date	Service	Readings
2 nd November All Saints Sunday 4 th Sunday before Advent	Holy Communion 10.30am All Souls Service 4pm	Psalms 149 Ephesians 1, 11-end Luke 6 20-31
4 th November	Tea Service 2.30pm	
6 th November	Messy Church 3.30pm	
9 th November 3 rd Sunday before Advent Remembrance Sunday	Remembrance Service 10.15am	2 Thessalonians 2.1-5, 13-end Luke 20.27-38
16 th November 2 nd Sunday before Advent	Holy Communion and Children's Church 10.30am	Psalms 98 2 Thessalonians 3. 6-13 Luke 21. 5-19
23 rd November Christ The King Sunday next before Advent	All Age family Worship 10.30am	Jeremiah 23. 1-6 Colossians 1. 11-20 Luke 23.33-43
30 th November 1st Sunday of Advent 	Holy Communion 10.30am Group Service Shelve	Isaiah 2. 1-5 Romans 13. 11-end Matthew 24. 36-44

Our church COMMUNITY

COME AND SING FOR CHRISTMAS!

Come and join the Benefice Choir at St George's
on Fridays 6.15pm in the WER
in preparation for the
Carol Service on 21st December.
Just turn up or contact Barbara on 07813 682485



TIME OUT

A new support group, sponsored by the local churches,
for those struggling with the stresses and strains of life,
has begun at St George's Church, Pontesbury,
on the second and fourth Thursday afternoons of the month.

We are deliberately a small, friendly group aimed at people who
find large gatherings too daunting. You will be made very welcome,
and there's always a listening ear, tea, coffee and biscuits.

Feel free to bring a friend.

Ever wondered what
life is all about?



Alpha is a safe space to talk about faith
and life's big questions.

No judgement, no pressure

November 4th, 11th 12.30 to 2pm

Holy Trinity Church Minsterley—

A free lunch is included, but we're sorry we're not able to provide childcare.

For more info contact Greg 07902 794653 or Fran 07982 324760



The Rea Valley Transport Scheme is now fully operational, enabling residents of the area to access medical appointments including Pontesbury & Worthen surgeries, and Shrewsbury, Telford and Oswestry hospitals. The scheme also undertakes whenever we can to get people to opticians, dental and other wellbeing appointments.

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 by calling **07468 115939**. If possible, please give us a minimum of a week's notice of when and where your appointment is.



The BIG Clean

Come and join the fun—Saturday 8th November.

10am at St.G's.

**Fun, Fellowship, and Feather dusters –
to create a Fresh-looking Church.**

**Thanks in advance,
from Lynda Munton**



Bible knowledge

A minister was approached by his small son who told him proudly, "I finally figured out what the Bible means!" The minister thought of his extensive theological library and smiled indulgently. He asked his young son what he thought the Bible meant.

"It's easy, Daddy," the boy replied.

"It means: 'Basic Information Before Leaving Earth.'"



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



St George's Church
Pontesbury

Christmas Theme

Saturday
November 8th
West End Room.
7.00pm

**QUIZ
TIME!**

And a raffle

Tickets £5 to include mince pie and coffee



Bring your own
choice of drinks

Numbers limited
so please book
tickets

Contact Marianne McCall 07944 333830
Or Marion Elliott 07833 325755 for tickets



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

Unbelievably, it is one year since Rea Valley Foodbank became independent from Foodbank Plus and began running the service entirely on our own. The occasion

was marked by a small celebration with Councillor Heather Kidd, Leader of Shropshire Council, Liberal Democrat member for Worthen and Chirbury. Mike Kirk, Secretary, welcomed her and introduced fellow committee members and volunteers. We were able to tell her that we have had referrals for over 100 service users, nearly half of which are households with one or more child. As the Foodbank was open at the time it was also an opportunity for her to see how it all works. Cllr. Kidd was keen to hear about the problems people using our Foodbank face, invited us to follow up with her, and to discuss how Shropshire Council's services could help across our rural area.

Harvest Festivals:

The Foodbank has greatly benefitted from generous donations from Harvest Festivals. All items go to local people in need and donations reduce our costs.

Thank you—to all our local communities

Our Schools:

Hanwood Primary
Long Mountain School
Minsterley Primary
Pontesbury Primary

Our Churches:

Minsterley & Pontesbury Congregational Churches
Minsterley & Pontesbury Methodist Churches
St George's Pontesbury
St Mary's Habberley
Hope/Shelve Churches

Thank you also to local residents who have given such lovely fresh fruit and vegetables. Please do drop off when the Foodbank is open or contact us if you can help.

To use the Foodbank, or find out more:

Call for a chat with Rev. Greg Smith 07902 794653 or Rev. Richard Lonsdale 07922 830488 email reavalleyfoodbank@gmail.com or your local clergy. You can also be referred by a GP, school, nursery, social/health worker, housing provider or other support agency. See our website: <https://reavalleyfoodbank.co.uk/> or Facebook.

Thought—Our eyes are placed in front
because it is more important to look ahead
than to look back. -Anon



Looking at GOD

by Canon Paul Hardingham

St Andrew and football

by Canon Paul Hardingham

'Some people think football is a matter of life and death. I don't like that attitude. I can assure them it is much more serious than that' (Bill Shankley).

When you replace the word 'football' with 'mission', this quote still has something to say! The apostle Andrew (we remember him on 30th November) demonstrates what the mission of the Church is all about (cf John 1:35-42). It's not unlike following your favourite football team!

When we support a football team, we make sure that we know all about them! When Andrew and his friend heard about Jesus, they wanted to find out more: *'Look, the Lamb of God.'* (John the Baptist, v35). The first stage of mission is finding out more about Jesus, the One who enables us to be friends of God through His death and resurrection.



Secondly, when supporting a football team, we will spend time watching their games. Andrew asked, *'where are you staying?'* and Jesus replied, *'Come and you will see'* (v39). Andrew spent the rest of the day talking and listening to Jesus. As a result of this time, he had something to share. How much time do we spend with Jesus, reading His word and praying?



When our team wins, we want to share the good news! After meeting Jesus, Andrew's first action was to tell his brother Peter: *'We have found the Messiah'* (that is, the Christ) (v41). Are we willing to tell others about Him too? Sharing with family and close friends can sometimes be harder than talking with strangers. However, we don't need to follow a football team to engage in mission. It's all about being excited to share Jesus with those we meet day by day.

'Mission is seeing what God is doing and joining in' (Rowan Williams).





Canon Paul Hardingham continues looking at the books of the Bible:

What's the Big Idea? - An Introduction to the Books of the New Testament: Ephesians

Paul wrote the letter of Ephesians around AD 60, while in prison at Rome. It was probably a circular letter to be read in the house churches of Ephesus and the local area. Paul founded the church over a period of three years (Acts 19:1-20:1) between 52-55 AD. Ephesus was the leading city and commercial centre in the region, famous for its temple to the goddess Artemis (Diana).

Paul's aim in writing his letter was to help his readers understand the dimensions of God's purpose and grace for them and His eternal plan for the church. The believers needed to understand their status *'in Christ'* and the call to live a life worthy of Christ. Ephesians is divided into two halves: chapters 1-3 concern theological issues, while chapters 4-6 deal with the practical outworking of faith.

Having shown God's purpose for the church, Paul shows how God has reconciled individuals to Himself by grace (2:1-10). He has reconciled people to each other by breaking down the barriers through Christ's death (2:11-22). This is the *'mystery'* revealed by Paul (3:1-13) and he shows how Christ's gifts promote unity and maturity (4:1-16). The believer's new life stands in contrast to the old way of life without Christ (4:17-6:20).

The great overarching theme of the letter is that we are rescued by God not just for our personal benefit, but to bring praise and glory to Him in our lives: *'He made known to us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Christ, to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfilment – to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ.'* (1:9,10).

THOUGHT: For every minute you are angry with someone,
you lose 60 seconds of happiness that you can
never get back.

This month the Revd Dr Jo White considers how little we read the Bible

Reflecting Faith: Do we hear God's Word today?

For the last few months, we've been looking at the way that church services are put together. After the Gloria each week, this we hear 'God's Word' as written in the Bible. This is usually three passages: one from the Old Testament, one from the epistles, and one from the gospels.

But *how much* do we hear of God's Word? Though we say we want to 'hear God's word', actually the amount we hear week on week is quite minimal.

In bygone days, when the 1662 Book of Common Prayer was universally used in churches, it brought with it a two year lectionary: (unlike today's three year lectionary: lectionary being the recommended or obligatory Bible readings for each day). This gave congregations, if they came to daily services both morning and evening (which in those times they most likely did) during the course of a year, an opportunity to hear read *the whole Old Testament once, the New Testament twice and all the Psalms twelve times*.

What a contrast to today! In most UK churches, attendance is now at only one service each week, mostly on Sunday. During that service, perhaps 15 or 20 Bible verses might be read.

Now, there are around 31,100 verses in the Bible, which means that at a generous 30 verses a week the congregation will hear around 1,560 verses in a year – that's around 5% each year. So even on a three-year cycle, with a few extra readings for good measure, we hear no more than 20% of the Bible.

I suspect there are two key reasons for this diminution of Bible verses being read. Firstly, church services have become shorter and take up far less time.

Secondly, congregations have become more literate, and so it is thought that they do not need it all read out to them.



It would be interesting to know how much of the read-aloud-Bible people heard and listened to and absorbed, in relation to how much do that today, with the shorter verses being read to them coupled with much shortened sermons.

This month

Next time you go to a Sunday church service listen to the Bible reading with keen ears. How much do you recall a few days later? How much of the Bible that you have not heard recently in church have you read for yourself?

Abc

Thoughts from Revd Dr Herbert McGonigle:



Praying With the Prayers of the Bible:
when your prayer is not answered

2 Cor. 12:8; 'Three times I asked the Lord about this ...*but...*'

Paul is talking about one of the most mysterious and one of the most baffling aspects of prayer – when God does not say yes.

On the face of it, Paul's prayer was very modest. For some time he had been troubled by 'a thorn in the flesh.' He doesn't tell us what the 'thorn' was and down the centuries theologians and commentators have made suggestions. Most of them have thought that the affliction was physical because Paul says it was 'in the flesh.' Some have suggested that he suffered from epileptic fits which caused him to fall down, while others have suggested that he was laid low by constant fevers or that he had very poor eyesight, the last based on his remarks in Galatians 6:11. But in spite of this great servant of the Lord praying earnestly three times that the thorn would be removed, God did not answer as Paul expected. A number of things in this passage (verses 7-10) are very helpful to all of us in the matter of prayer.

First, although God's answer was not what Paul asked for, God did answer him. God is never indifferent to the prayers we utter from the depth of our heart. Unlike the idol Baal in the Old Testament story about Elijah, (1 Kings 18) the God and Father of our Lord Jesus is not on a journey, nor is he busy elsewhere, nor is he sleeping. He hears our prayers and our cries when we come to Him in our need and pain and distress.

Second, although Paul did not get the answer he wanted, God made him a wonderful promise. He said, 'My grace is sufficient for you' (v.9). This was not what Paul asked for, yet what a promise it was! God said in effect. 'I will not take the thorn away – but my daily grace is all-sufficient.' In spite of the

thorn, Paul will triumph. When God gives us all-sufficient grace, it will take care of everything in our lives.

Thirdly, Paul learnt that God's wonderful grace meant that in his weakness 'the power of Christ' (v.9) would be with him, the power that would make him effective and fruitful in his ministry.

Fourthly, this experience taught Paul that he could be 'content with weaknesses and insults' (v.10) because it was for Christ's sake, and when he is weak in himself, he is strong in Christ (v.10).

So what about unanswered prayer? Unless our prayer was selfish and not for our good in the first place, God does answer our cry. When the answer is not what we expected, then it means that our loving Father has something for us even better and more important than what we asked for.

David Pickup, a solicitor, considers the concept of 'peace'.

When there is no peace

They dress the wound of My people as though it were not serious.

"Peace, peace," they say, when there is no peace. (Jeremiah 6:14)

I wonder what peace felt like in 1945, after 9th May or 16th August? These, of course, were the days after Victory in Europe Day and then Victory in Japan Day. Once the parties and hangovers were cleared up, life would go on as before, for many months to come with shortages, rationing, men overseas, houses bombed and people on the move. On the continent and in the Far East it was much worse.

What does it feel like now? Yes, we have had 'peace' of sorts in most of Europe between the major continental powers for decades, which is an achievement, but there is no peace in Ukraine, the Middle East or Sudan. If anything, the world is now looking to be a more dangerous place.

This verse from the prophet Jeremiah was the theme of a sermon recently. The preacher talked about peace making, peace keeping and a lasting peace, which are not the same and require different skills. In and after the Second World War *peace making* meant winning the war and defeating evil. *Peace keeping* was occupying the defeated lands until they could establish communities built on democracy and justice. (The preacher was born exactly nine

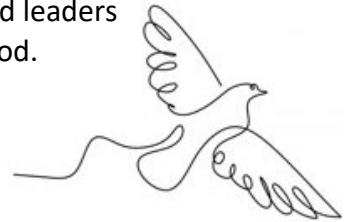
months after either VE or VJ Day, so he was a 'child of peace'!)
What about a *lasting peace*? Many world leaders say, "Peace, Peace" but they mean only *peace on their terms* and do not care about anything else.

As Christians we should:

Pray for the *peace makers*: the women and men in the forces

Pray for *peace keepers*: the experts helping to build new societies

Pray for *lasting peace*: the willingness of world leaders
and politicians to act for the greater good.



*Nigel Beeton writes: 2 Thessalonians 1:1-12
(the Lectionary reading for 2nd November)*

speaks about the afflictions being experienced by the Thessalonian Christians, rejoicing in their steadfastness and faith in the face of persecution. We may not

experience anything like the persecutions that we know the Roman authorities could dream up, but the promise that we will experience a greater gain if we are steadfast and faithful is as true for us as for the Thessalonians:

Afflictions

To follow Christ is not as easy

As strolling in a sunlit park;

The Christian walk is less than breezy

When evil hunts you like a shark!

The devil, Satan, will ensnare you

Tempting you with golden lies.

Do not let his demons scare you

Nor his temptings hypnotise.

When his servants sore afflict you

Burning you with bitter pain,

Persecutions may constrict you

But we see the greater gain!

They who do the devil's defaming

Suddenly will see their fate -

Jesus comes with angels flaming

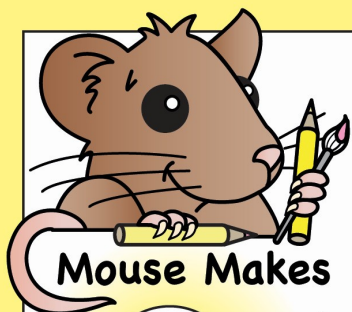
Satan's lies revealed - too late!

For the King will come in glory

Ev'ry knee to Him must bow!

All then see the *real* story -

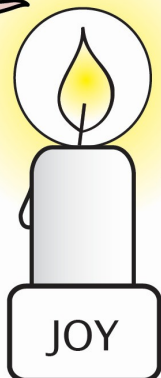
He who died the victor now!



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



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



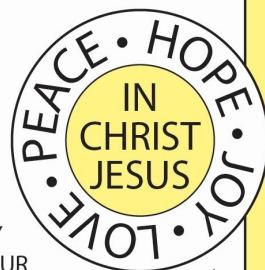
Read:
Isaiah 40:5
What shall be revealed?



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

ADVENT • ARRIVAL • HOPE • JOY • LOVE • PEACE • GOD • GLORY
MESSAGE • PROMISE • PROPHECY • FORETOLD • JESUS • SAVIOUR
CHRIST • GIFT • GOOD NEWS • RETURN • CANDLE • LIGHT



Looking at CHURCH, at home and worldwide

Gaza needs help. Tearfund is working there. Here are the details...

Tearfund's Middle East Humanitarian Appeal

The conflict in Gaza has caused devastating humanitarian need. Over 60,000 Palestinians have been killed in Gaza and over 146,000 have been injured.

There has been famine in Gaza. Almost one in five children are acutely malnourished, and malnutrition levels among children under five have quadrupled in two months.

Homes have been reduced to rubble by airstrikes. Classrooms and hospitals are a dusty wreckage. More than 417 humanitarian workers have been killed.

In Gaza, more than 1.9 million people have been forced to flee their homes, and many have been displaced repeatedly.

Tearfund is currently working with local churches and partners across the Middle East.

In Gaza, Tearfund's partners IHP and Anera can provide life-saving medicine and desperately needed supplies.

In the West Bank, Tearfund is providing emergency funding to local hospitals and schools, and is also distributing food and essential supplies to those affected by the violence.

In Lebanon, it is working through local churches to provide shelter and assistance to people forced from their homes by the fighting.

If you would like to support this work, please go to: <https://www.tearfund.org/campaigns/middle-east-emergency-appeal>.

The logo for Tearfund, featuring the word "tearfund" in white lowercase letters on a blue rectangular background.

If you enjoy **holidays in Wales**, this may be of interest...

Mid Wales church offers unique autumn stay for walkers

Walkers looking for a new way to explore the Welsh countryside this autumn can now book overnight stays at St Gwrhai's Church in Penstrowed, Powys — one of only two "champing" sites in Wales.



Champing, a blend of 'church' and 'camping', offers exclusive overnight access to historic churches no longer used for regular services. St Gwrhai's, built in the 1860s on a site with Christian heritage dating back to the 6th century, sits beside the River Severn and provides access to walking routes across Mid Wales.

The church accommodates up to four guests and includes a fully equipped kitchen in the adjacent hall, an indoor toilet, and secure space for bikes. Dogs are welcome. Most guests stay for one or two nights, with solo travellers, small groups, and families all booking during the first season.

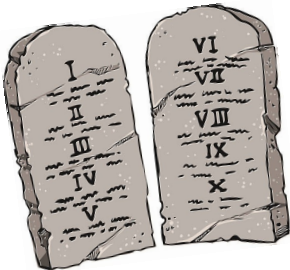
Located an hour from both Aberystwyth and Shrewsbury, the site is well placed for exploring the Cambrian Mountains, which lie 20 minutes away and include nine Dark Sky Discovery sites. The Severn Way — a 215-mile walking route to Bristol — begins nearby, and guided walking groups operate in the area.

The initiative is run by the Bro Arwystli Ministry Area. Guests have exclusive use of the church during their stay. For more info: champing.co.uk

Careful!

There was a very gracious lady who was mailing the old family Bible to her brother in another part of the country. "Is there anything breakable in here?" asked the postal clerk.

The lady thought for a moment.
"Only the Ten Commandments."



Looking at YOU

This is an issue which may affect all of us in the years to come ...

Assisted suicide law would make this a country that says 'some lives are not worth living' – Bishop of London

The Bishop of London has warned peers in the House of Lords that legalising assisted suicide in England and Wales will "change society" by endorsing the idea that "some lives are not worth living".

Bishop Sarah Mullally, the former Chief Nursing Officer for England, was concerned about those who could face internal and subtle pressures to end their lives if assisted suicide were introduced – particularly in the absence of adequate palliative or social care, or out of fear of becoming a burden on their families.

"I understand the fear of many that they may be offered free assisted death before they are offered the care and equipment that they may live," she said.

As the Church of England's lead bishop for health and social care, the Bishop of London was speaking as the House of Lords debated the Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill in late September.

The Private Member's Bill, brought by the MP Kim Leadbeater, completed its Third Reading in the Commons in June with a reduced majority of just 23 votes amid mounting concerns about its safety.

Bishop Sarah said it is right for peers now to scrutinise the Bill but argued that no amendments could ultimately make it entirely safe from the negative effects such as people being pressured to end their lives.

"I am deeply concerned that so many in this Parliament are not heeding the voices of professional and representative bodies that are raising the alarm."

She also rejected the central claim that the Bill would offer people choice at the end of their lives.

"A meaningful choice would see the measures in this Bill set alongside equally available, fully funded palliative and social care services," she said. "Without the choice offered this choice is an illusion."

She spoke about her personal experience, including as a nurse, priest, and bishop, of spending time with people as they died and said the introduction of assisted dying within the health system would fundamentally alter the role of health professionals.

“To change the law is to change society,” she added. “If passed, this Bill will signal that we are a society that believes that some lives are not worth living.

“This Bill would become our State-endorsed position, and our NHS would be active in its delivery.”

“I believe in a God who’s very being is life, and in that gift we can discover meaning, dignity and innate worth, even if we are dying.

Nevertheless, the assisted dying bill has passed its second reading in the House of Lords, moving it another step closer to becoming law. The Bill now goes to a select committee for further scrutiny, with a deadline of reporting back to the House of Lords by 7th November, before it can move to the next stage.

Remembrance by Megan Carter

In November we come to remember
How war tore our country apart,
From village and town and all around
Men and boys left home and hearth.

Mothers and wives and sisters all
Saw their brave young men go away,
For some it meant the ultimate price
As they gave their tomorrows for our today.

Another Man left His home above
To rescue this world from sin,
It cost Him His life which He freely gave
So new life could enter in.

In this world there will always be war,
But the time will surely be
When the earth shall be filled with the glory of God
As the waters cover the sea.



Leaf some green stuff in the garden

The clocks have gone back, and we are putting our gardens to sleep for the winter. But this autumn, when you tidy up, do not tidy away too much. Many insects and wild creatures will be relying on some ground cover or hideaway to call 'home' for the winter. Several piles of twigs or pruning, left around your garden in discreet places, will provide a great winter 'snugs' for toads, grass snakes and other small garden inhabitants. 'Spent' seed heads provide cover and food for birds over the winter. Above all, before you light any bonfires on 5th November, take care there are no hibernating hedgehogs inside!



Put together a Memory Book

Do you have grandchildren? Then this winter, during those long dark days, why not spend some time putting together a sort of scrapbook of memories to pass on to them?

Things you might like include could be: where you lived when you were a child; what your school was like, what games you most enjoyed, who your best buddies were, what pets you had, what your first job was, and how you met your partner. What was your first car, and where was your first home as an adult? Add a selection of photographs that you have from the past.



*Do you remember Yade, a member and friend of our church for many, many years? Yade shared many recipes with us, which we made and used with enjoyment. Here's one **Krispie Cheese Biscuits***

8oz butter
8oz mature cheddar cheese, grated
8oz plain flour 2oz Rice Krispies
2-3 teas mustard
1/4 teas cayenne pepper

1. Cream butter and cheese. Add flour, flavourings and Krispies. Knead well.
2. Form into walnut sized balls, flatten.
3. Bake at 180 , fan 170, for 12 mins.
4. Cool briefly on the tray, then remove, cool and store in a tin.

Words and Actions

JESUS HAD MANY FRIENDS - AND HE OFTEN WENT WALKING WITH THEM.



ONCE, ON A JOURNEY, JESUS CALLED AT THE HOME OF MARTHA AND MARY



MARTHA WAS VERY PLEASED TO MEET WITH JESUS, AND SHE MADE HIM WELCOME



MARY WAS VERY EXCITED TOO AND WANTED TO LISTEN TO EVERYTHING JESUS HAD TO SAY



BUT MARTHA, WAS NOT VERY IMPRESSED WITH MARY! SHE THOUGHT HER SISTER SHOULD BE HARD AT WORK. NOT SITTING AROUND - JUST LISTENING



LORD, DON'T YOU CARE THAT MARY HAS LEFT ME TO DO ALL THE WORK BY MYSELF?!



MARTHA, YOU ARE WORRIED AND TROUBLED OVER SO MANY THINGS



JESUS TOLD MARTHA THAT THERE ARE FAR MORE IMPORTANT THINGS IN LIFE THAN JUST FUSSING OVER A CLEAN HOUSE!



PERHAPS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING WE CAN LEARN, LIKE MARTHA, IS TO MAKE TIME TO LISTEN TO JESUS.



See Luke 10.38-42



From Richard, Bishop of Hereford

The parish where I served as vicar in Sussex had a population of around 3000. In the first world war there were about 800 and 33 names were recorded on the roll of honour. It is hard to imagine now that level of loss. The vicar lost his son and nearly every family in the village was affected. Every year, helped by an exhibition of their lives

by a wonderful Church Warden, the number at Remembrance Day service grew. His research at one point called into question whether one of the names remembered on the WWII board had actually died! A brief panic was relieved when he discovered the person living in Canada was the same name but a different person. Few had any connection now with those we remembered, even from WWII when another twenty lost their lives. For many people it was the only service of the year they attended. It never failed to be a moving occasion.

In part, attendance was an opportunity to pay respects to those who paid the ultimate sacrifice. But there was a deeper action as well. Those we remembered died because they believed a particular set of values were worth fighting for. They fought against tyranny, the treating of one group of people as inferior to others, and the idea that might makes right. The Nazi regime was the antithesis of the love that Jesus urges as our root value from which all else flows. These Christian values are not intuitive to human beings. As the historian Tom Holland has conclusively argued in his book, *Dominion*, a society wouldn't have these values but for Christian faith. Even the nihilist philosopher Nietzsche recognised this when he said, "When one gives up the Christian faith, one pulls the right to Christian morality out from under one's feet. Christianity is a system, a whole view of things thought out together. By breaking one main concept out of it, the faith in God, one breaks the whole: nothing necessary remains in one's hands." He did this ending up with a philosophical system where power was the ultimate goal and looking out for the weak was despised.

In the confusing mixture of motivations that drove people to attend the 'Unite the Kingdom' march in London a few weeks ago were calls to

reclaim the Christian heritage of the nation. In some way this is commendable, but the wielding of crosses in that context felt anything but the sacrificial love that the cross represents. Symbols are powerful things and need to be wielded with care. Crosses can be symbols of love and sacrifice or burnt by men in white robes on the way to a lynching. As Christians we assert the former as the only true representation of our nation's values.

+Richard

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DEANERY NEWS

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Thought for the Month from Rev. Freddie Strong
Asst. Curate at Great Hanwood, Longden and Annscroft with Pulverbatch
Times & Seasons

Autumn is one of my favourite seasons. I love the riot of colours we see all around us. Yes, summer might seem like a distant memory and we may not be looking forward to the nights drawing in. But it reminds me of Ecclesiastes 3:1, "There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens." And seasons are important. Seasons are God ordained. Not just the four seasons of nature that remind us of God's creative order, but also the seasons in our human lives.

As we reflect on our own lives, we will notice times and experiences that have brought great joy and sorrow. Perhaps you're in one of those seasons now. I don't know about you but when things are going well it is much easier to be cheerful, optimistic, full of hope and joy, be excited about the future. But when things are not going so well life doesn't seem to be fun. If anything, whatever the challenge or difficulty, it seems to sap the life out of us; we feel robbed of joy.

At times like this it can be easy to forget that the same God who sends the rain to water the earth also sends the sunshine. It's so easy to feel abandoned by God; to think that he's left us on our own and we can't see the

way out. Let me just say that there is nothing wrong when we feel this way. There are many individuals in the bible and others who we may have read about or known who have felt this way. Job is one such biblical character you can read about in the bible (book by the same name...roughly in the middle of the bible before you get to the Psalms).

But the good news is that God has not abandoned us. God promises never to leave us or forsake. Everything that comes into our lives, comes through his permissive will. It does not mean it's easy or all good. But what it does mean is that in God's providence and through his gracious love, he is able to work it all for our good and his glory (Romans 8:28).

The challenge is to trust God with all our life; whatever season we might find ourselves in. Just as he turns the seasons in nature from one to the next, so too he works and wills to accomplish his good purposes in our lives. For our part, we are called to trust wholeheartedly in his promises.

A good way to do this is to memorise bible verses and use them to praise God in the good times and trust him in the tough times. King David reflects on a difficult time in his life in Psalm 31 and in verse 15 he says, "My times are in your hands". That's a good promise to hold on to. Or why not read or listen to Psalm 139.

Let me conclude by encouraging you to enjoy the beautiful colours of autumn. If you're fit and able, go out for a walk or pull up in a layby some place where you can enjoy the beauty that surrounds us, or you might be able to look out of your window. And as you wonder at the beauty of the leaves - reds, yellow, orange, brown and green, consider the God of the bible who made it so and let it remind you that he cares for you. He is faithful, loving, full of grace and mercy. He is for you, not against you. Trust him to bring beauty and colour whatever season you're in.



QUOTE: When a train goes through a tunnel and it gets dark, you don't throw away your ticket and jump off. You sit still and trust the engineer.

- Corrie ten Boom

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..'

Oh no! I have no bread to feed him! I am so ashamed! What can I do?... I know!



'You would go round to a friend's house.'



I really, really need some bread for a visitor.



I need that bread!



He's not going to go away, is he?



Jesus concluded...

So keep on asking and it will be given, seeking and you will find, knocking and it will be opened... And parents, if your hungry child asks for bread,

'..would you give them a stone?'



'And if they asked for a fish...'



'..would you give them a snake?'



'Or if they asked for an egg...'



'you'd give a scorpion?'



If you, who aren't perfect parents, give good gifts to your children, then don't you think that gifts from your perfect Father, God, will be even better?

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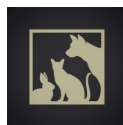
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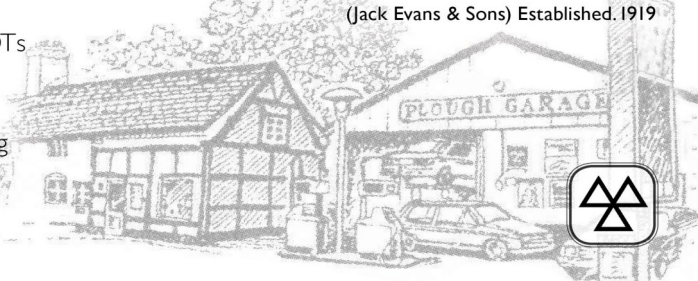


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