

# St Paul's Church Langleybury

Parish Magazine

Dec 2025  
+ Jan 2026  
£2





**Welcome to our bumper December 2025 and January 2026 magazine. We hope to provide something that is thought provoking and at the same time informational.**

**For future additions would you please forward any notices or articles to [fatherdavid@stpaulslanglebury](mailto:fatherdavid@stpaulslanglebury) and [editor@stpaulslanglebury.co.uk](mailto:editor@stpaulslanglebury.co.uk) by the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month.**

**Please give Fr. David and Debbie Ashby your feedback: [fatherdavid@stpaulslanglebury.com](mailto:fatherdavid@stpaulslanglebury.com) and [editor@stpaulslanglebury.co.uk](mailto:editor@stpaulslanglebury.co.uk)**

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**Details regarding our Parish Giving Scheme can be found on the back cover.**

# St Paul's Church, Langleybury



## Advent Services

**Monday 1<sup>st</sup> December 2025**

3.30pm for 4pm. Christingle Service,  
with unveiling of Lychgate Nativity afterwards

**Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> December 2025**

6.30pm. Nine Lessons and Carols by Candlelight

**Wed 24<sup>th</sup> December 2025**

11.30pm. First Service of Christmas

**Thur 25<sup>th</sup> December 2025**

8am. Holy Communion Service

10am. Family Holy Communion Service

**Langleybury Ln, Hunton Bridge, Kings Langley WD4 8QQ**



# December

Our regular services are held in church



<b>Monday 1st</b>	<b>3:30pm</b>	<b>Christingle Service with unveiling of Lychgate Nativity afterwards</b>
<b>Sunday 7th</b>	<b>8am</b>	<b>Holy Communion</b>
	<b>10am</b>	<b>Holy Communion</b>
<b>Tuesday 9th</b>	<b>11am</b>	<b>Holy Communion</b>
<b>Sunday 14th</b>	<b>8am</b>	<b>Holy Communion</b>
	<b>10am</b>	<b>Holy Communion</b>
<b>Tuesday 16th</b>	<b>11am</b>	<b>Holy Communion</b>
<b>Sunday 21st</b>	<b>8am</b>	<b>Holy Communion</b>
	<b>10am</b>	<b>Holy Communion</b>
	<b>6:30pm</b>	<b>Nine Lessons and Carols by Candlelight</b>
<b>Tuesday 23rd</b>	<b>11am</b>	<b>Holy Communion</b>
<b>Wednesday 24th</b>	<b>11:30pm</b>	<b>First Service of Christmas</b>
<b>Thursday 25th</b>	<b>8am</b>	<b>Holy Communion</b>
	<b>10am</b>	<b>Family Holy Communion</b>
<b>Sunday 28th</b>	<b>8am</b>	<b>No Service</b>
	<b>10am</b>	<b>Holy Communion</b>
<b>Tuesday 30th</b>	<b>11am</b>	<b>Holy Communion</b>



**Our regular services are held in church**

<b>Sunday 4th</b>	<b>8am</b>	<b>Holy Communion</b>
	<b>10am</b>	<b>Holy Communion</b>
<b>Tuesday 6th</b>	<b>11am</b>	<b>Holy Communion</b>
<b>Sunday 11th</b>	<b>8am</b>	<b>Holy Communion</b>
	<b>10am</b>	<b>Holy Communion</b>
<b>Tuesday 13th</b>	<b>11am</b>	<b>Holy Communion</b>
<b>Sunday 18th</b>	<b>8am</b>	<b>Holy Communion</b>
	<b>10am</b>	<b>Holy Communion</b>
<b>Tuesday 20th</b>	<b>11am</b>	<b>Holy Communion</b>
<b>Sunday 25th</b>	<b>8am</b>	<b>Holy Communion</b>
	<b>10am</b>	<b>Holy Communion</b>
<b>Tuesday 27th</b>	<b>11am</b>	<b>Holy Communion</b>

# *Hello from* FR. DAVID

By the time you are reading this I will have been 'in post' six months. It seems that so much has happened in that time, not least of which was our (Juliet and my eldest daughter Verity) move to the Vicarage. For much of my life I have had a 60-minute commute to and from my workplace. Now it is 60 seconds, or perhaps 70 seconds on the way home, if I have had a busy day!

It would be easy to get lost in a list of all the things that have happened over the last few months. We are always tempted to 'big up' our achievements and sense of worth, whatever job we are in, and this was certainly a necessity in many of the leadership positions I had in the public sector. But not in this role. Being your Vicar has been totally about 'us' rather than 'me' and totally about people rather than process or projects. Those aspects of church work are absolutely necessary but without a focus on people we will fail to do the one thing we are all called to do as Christians: focus on the love of Jesus in order to share God's love of His world to others.

The greatest gift I think we can give is to give and nourish the love that we have for Jesus, and for each other and for all those out in our parish community and beyond. We do this by giving to our wonderful church in whatever capacity we can. We do this in our work with our elderly, with our families and with our school children.

If I had to choose one thing that I have done over the past six months (and it is with the support of Alison, Angela and many others) it would be opening up the church for four days a week. Not because this is especially worthy in itself but because in opening our church door we potentially open people's hearts and minds to the love of Jesus. Through our church and our individual relationships we bring people a sense of peace, comfort and strength that they may never have experienced before.

Above all, Juliet and I thank you for all your love, support and prayers since we have been at St. Paul's. We are not planning to go anywhere any time soon, other than to continue to walk on the path towards Jesus, alongside all of you in our fellowship.

**Fr. David**



# Fr. David's Delve into the past:

## ST. PAULS CHURCH AND ITS LOCAL CONTEXT

Over the next few issues of our Church Magazine I thought it would be good to explore the history of the church, in relation to the local area and then the church building itself, exploring it's interesting internal and external design features.

If St. Paul's Church is associated with Langleybury, its Parish, then it is undoubtedly also linked to its closest village: Huntonbridge.

The earliest references to this village were to Huonemulle ('Hunton Mill') in 1391, although by 1433, with the appearance of a bridge, the village came to be known as Hunton Bridge. In between those dates (1394 to be precise) Langleybury itself made an appearance alongside references to King's Langley and Abbot's Langley, although both were in existence before the arrival of William the Conqueror in 1066. The name 'Hunton' is thought to derive from an old Anglo-Saxon word meaning 'the town of the hunters. Langleybury, as a name, dates a little later, to the medieval period. The word 'bury' is linked to the word 'burh' indicating the presence of a manor or fort (as in Edinburgh).

The village would have served a largely rural area, with records showing several 'notable' buildings including a mill and two inns – The King's Head and The Maltsters. Both would have seen

trade from the villages' position close to the highway (and later the canal) between Hemel Hempstead and Watford.

Interestingly, there are two early references to places of worship – a non-conformist chapel is marked on maps dating from 1790 and a house of worship in 1820. At the time the Parish Church would have been St. Lawrences in Abbots Langley. In terms of land ownership the area is closely associated with three great estates holdings.

Firstly, much of the land around the village and to the east of the River Gade would have formed part of the larger Cassiobury Estate, associated from the 17<sup>th</sup> century with the Earl of Essex. Although the Manor House was demolished in the 1920's the history of the estate lives on through place and street names: Cassiobury Park and the Cassiobury Estate, Lady Capel Wharf, Devereux Drive (the Earl) and Essex Road.

The Second great estate was that of The Grove, which today is known locally and nationally as the location of the Grove Hotel. The hotel and part of the Estate falls within Langleybury Parish. I think a vicar should always have a 5 Star Spa in his or her Parish! The Grove has a long history as a manor house, serving as the family house of Thomas Villiers and later the country seat of the Earls of Clarendon (recognise any more street names?). This Country House was, I was reliably informed, the House that first made weekend retreats from London to the country popular in the eighteen century. In the last century it served as a Girls boarding school and then as the headquarters of London Midland and Scotland Railways. In the early 1990's Ralph Estates submitted the planning application to convert the house

and land to a hotel and spa with golf course and this redevelopment did much to restore the property and land to its former glory. I happened to be the lead planner for that application when working for Watford Council and can recall visiting the property when the conservationists were stripping back modern additions to reveal medieval brickwork and fireplaces. How the circle of life turns!

Finally, we come to Langleybury House, the manor house of Abbot's Langley. Originally owned by the Abbots of St Albans, the property and land passed to the monarch Henry VIII, following the Dissolution of the Monasteries in 1536, and then, (in 1544) onto Sir Richard Lees (hence 'Lees Wood'). The property had a succession of owners up until the mid-nineteenth century, including Sir Frances Bacon (in 1616, acting as a Trustee acting for the then Prince Charles) and much later (1838) one Mr Fearnley Whittingstall. I wonder if there is a connection to the chef of the same name?

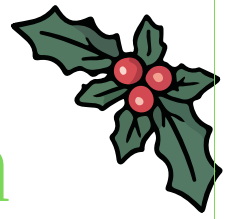
It was upon the demise of Mr F-W that the manor house and land entered a new phase and one more relevant to the history of St. Paul's Church. In 1856 William Jones Loyd became the new owner. I think we should be ever grateful to William, and his wife Caroline Gertrude, as the benefactor and artist responsible for the church and much of its interior design.

The Loyd connection is the subject of the next thrilling instalment of 'Fr. David's Delve into the past'.

(With reference to Rev. Martin's 'St. Paul's 'Langleybury, The First Hundred Years', published by St. Paul's PCC in 1964)

**Fr. David**

# Introduction to the Advent Season



Advent is a season of expectation and preparation, as the Church prepares to celebrate the coming of Christ in his incarnation, and also looks ahead to his final advent as judge at the end of time.

The Four Last Things – Death, Judgement, Heaven and Hell – have been traditional themes for Advent meditation. The characteristic note of Advent is therefore expectation, rather than penitence, although the character of the season is easily coloured by an analogy with Lent. The anticipation of Christmas under commercial pressure has also made it harder to sustain the appropriate sense of alert watchfulness, but the fundamental Advent prayer remains ‘Maranatha’ – ‘Our Lord, come’ (1 Corinthians 16.22). Church decorations are simple and spare, and purple is the traditional liturgical colour. In the northern hemisphere, the Advent season falls at the darkest time of the year, and the natural symbols of darkness and light are powerfully at work throughout Advent and Christmas. The lighting of candles on an Advent wreath was imported into Britain from northern Europe in the nineteenth century, and is now a common practice. The Moravian custom of the Christingle has similarly enjoyed great success in Britain since the latter part of the twentieth century, with the encouragement of the Children’s Society; Christingle services may take place before or after Christmas. The Third Sunday of Advent was observed in medieval times as a splash of colour in the restrained atmosphere of Advent (Gaudete or ‘Rose Sunday’), and the last days of Advent were marked by the sequence of Great ‘O’ Antiphons, which continue to inspire modern Advent hymns and meditations.



# *The 12 Days of Christmas Lyrics*

## MEANING AND HISTORY

The 12 days of Christmas in Christian tradition signifies the time between the birth of Christ and the arrival of the three wise men, also known as the Magi. It starts on December 25, which is celebrated as Christmas Day, and lasts until January 6, which is the Epiphany, also referred to as Three Kings' Day.

### **The 12 Days of Christmas in 2025**

The 12 days of Christmas traditionally begin on Christmas Day and last twelve consecutive days into the next calendar year. The Twelve Days of Christmas 2025 will begin on Thursday, December 25, and end on Monday, January 5, 2026.

### **What Is the Meaning of 'The 12 Days of Christmas'?**

The Twelve Days of Christmas, also known as Twelvetide, is a festive Christian season celebrating the Birth of Jesus. In 567, the Council of Tours "proclaimed the twelve days from Christmas to Epiphany as a sacred and festive season, and established the duty of Advent fasting in preparation for the feast." Christopher Hill and William J. Federer state that this was done to solve the "administrative problem for the Roman Empire as it tried to coordinate the solar Julian calendar with the lunar calendars of its provinces in the east."

### **Why were these 12 days important?**

These dozen days were tied to more than just the teaching of the Catholic Church. A host of other denominations also celebrated the 12 days of Christmas. Some denominations celebrated Christmas in

January and began to count the 12 days then. But when they began, counting the days became an important facet of each holiday season. Even in the Dark Ages, in some Eastern European churches, the 12 days of Christmas meant attending daily church services. For Christians who lived during this extremely difficult age, the 12 days were a time of rededication and renewal. It was also a period when children were given small, simple, and usually symbolic gifts of faith. Thus, the twelve days were considered a holy period in both coded poems and public worship.

### **'12 Days of Christmas' - Carol History and Origin**

"The Twelve Days of Christmas" is an English Christmas carol that lists a group of increasingly superb gifts given on each of the 12 days of Christmas (the 12 days that make up the Christmas season, starting with Christmas Day). The song, published in England in 1780 without music as a chant or rhyme, is thought to be French in origin. The melodies of collected versions of the carol vary throughout history. The standard tune now associated with it is derived from a 1909 arrangement of a traditional folk melody by English composer Frederic Austin, who introduced the familiar prolongation of the verse "five gold rings" (now usually called "five golden rings").

Though a host of modern internet sites and some magazine articles have tried to reduce "The Twelve Days of Christmas" to a little more than a silly Christmas carol, most scholars of the Catholic Church deem it a very important surviving example of a time when that denomination used codes to disguise their teachings. Originally a poem written by Catholic clerics, this song was transformed into a carol at a time when celebrating the 12 days of Christmas was one of the most important holiday customs. By understanding the meaning of why the clerics chose the 12 days as wrapping for their poem, the full impact of the tradition of the 12 days of Christmas can be understood.

# **Meaning of Each Gift in the '12 Days of Christmas'**

Discover the meaning of the gift for each of the 12 days of Christmas that relate to the fundamentals of the Christian faith.

## **1. A Partridge in a Pear Tree**

The partridge in a pear tree represents Jesus, the Son of God, whose birthday we celebrate on the first day of Christmas. Christ is symbolically presented as a mother partridge, the only bird that will die to protect its young.

## **2. Two Turtledoves**

These twin birds represent the Old and New Testaments. So, in this gift, the singer finds the complete story of the Christian faith and God's plan for the world. The doves are the biblical roadmap that is available to everyone.

## **3. Three French Hens**

These birds represent faith, hope, and love. This gift hearkens back to 1 Corinthians 13, the love chapter written by the Apostle Paul. It also represents the Holy Trinity: The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

## **4. Four Calling Birds**

One of the easiest facets of the song's code to figure out these fowl are the four Gospels — Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

## **5. Five Gold Rings**

The gift of the rings represents the first five books of the Old Testament, known as the Torah or the Pentateuch.

1. Genesis
2. Exodus
3. Leviticus
4. Numbers
5. Deuteronomy

## **6. Six Geese a-Laying**

These lyrics can be traced back to the first story found in the Bible.

Each egg is a day in creation when God "hatched" or formed the world.

1. God created the heavens and the earth
2. God created the sky and seas
3. God created the land and plants
4. God created the sun, moon, and stars
5. God created fish and birds
6. God created land animals and man

## **7. Seven Swans a-Swimming**

It would take someone quite familiar with the Bible to identify this gift.

Hidden in the code are the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit:

1. Prophecy
2. Ministry
3. Teaching
4. Exhortation
5. Giving
6. Leading
7. Compassion

As swans are one of the most beautiful and graceful creatures on earth, they would seem to be a perfect symbol for spiritual gifts.

## **8. Eight Maids-a-Milking**

As Christ came to save even the lowest of the low, this gift represents the ones who would receive his word and accept his grace. Being a milkmaid was about the worst job one could have in England during this period; this code conveyed that Jesus cared as much about servants as he did those of royal blood. The Eight Maids represent the 8 Beatitudes, from Matthew 5:3-10:

Blessed are...

1. the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
2. Those who mourn: for they shall be comforted.

3. The meek: for they shall inherit the earth.
4. Those who hunger and thirst for righteousness: for they shall be filled.
5. The merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.
6. The pure in heart: for they shall see God.
7. The peacemakers: for they shall be called children of God.
8. They which are persecuted for righteousness sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

## **9. Nine Ladies Dancing**

These nine dancers were really the gifts known as the fruit of the Spirit.

The Fruits of the Spirit include:

1. Love
2. Joy
3. Peace
4. Patience
5. Kindness
6. Goodness
7. Faithfulness
8. Gentleness
9. Self-control

## **10. Ten Lords a-leaping**

This is probably the easiest gift to understand. As lords were judges and in charge of the law, this code for the Ten Commandments was fairly straightforward to Christians.

1. Thou shalt have no other gods before me
2. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image
3. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain
4. Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy
5. Honor thy father and mother
6. Thou shalt not kill
7. Thou shalt not commit adultery
8. Thou shalt not steal

9. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor
10. Thou shalt not covet

### **11. Eleven Pipers Piping**

This is almost a trick question, as most think of the disciples in terms of the dozen. But when Judas betrayed Jesus and committed suicide, only eleven men carried out the gospel message. Therefore, the Eleven Pipers Piping signify the 11 Faithful Disciples:

1. Simon (whom He named Peter)
2. Andrew
3. James
4. John
5. Philip
6. Bartholomew
7. Matthew
8. Thomas
9. James, son of Alphaeus
10. Simon, who was called the Zealot
11. Judas, son of James
12. Judas Iscariot was later replaced with faithful Matthias.

### **12. Twelve Drummers Drumming**

The final gift is tied directly to the Catholic Church. The drummers are the 12 points of doctrine in the Apostles' Creed.

1. I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.
2. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
3. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary.
4. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.
5. He descended into hell. On the third day, He rose again.
6. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.

7. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.
8. I believe in the Holy Spirit,
9. the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints,
10. the forgiveness of sins,
11. the resurrection of the body,
12. and the life everlasting.

### **Sources**

Christianity.com Editorial Staff

The Twelve Days of Christmas - True Meaning Behind the Lyrics | Crosswalk.com

Twelve Days of Christmas | Wikipedia.org

The Twelve Days of Christmas (song) | Wikipedia.org

Photo: ©GettyImages/RamilF

This article is part of our larger Christmas and Advent resource library centered around the events leading up to the birth of Jesus Christ. We hope these articles help you understand the meaning and story behind important Christian holidays and dates and encourage you as you take time to reflect on all that God has done for us through His Son, Jesus Christ!



# *The Advent Wreath*



The Advent Wreath has four red or blue candles in a ring around a white or gold candle. Alternatively, there may be three purple candles, reflecting the liturgical colour for Advent, with a pink candle for the Third Sunday, when rose-pink vestments are traditionally worn.

The first candle is lit on Advent Sunday; additional ones are lit, one on each Sunday, and the white or gold one on Christmas Day.

There are several traditions about the meaning or theme of each candle. The scheme that accords best with the Common Worship Principal Service Lectionary is:

Advent 1	The Patriarchs
Advent 2	The Prophets
Advent 3	John the Baptist
Advent 4	The Virgin Mary
Christmas Day	The Christ

Each of the four Sundays then reminds us of those who prepared for the coming of Christ.

‘The Patriarchs’ can naturally focus on Abraham, our father in faith, and David, the ancestor in whose city Jesus was born.

‘The Prophets’ gives an opportunity to reflect on the way the birth of the Messiah was ‘foretold’.

John, who proclaimed the Saviour.

Mary, who bore him in her womb, complete the picture.

The prayers used reflect these four themes. The second, third and fourth prayers in each case are written with children in mind, and the third is to be said by the congregation together.

# SERMON

## Preached by Fr. David

# Christ the King

Jeremiah 23.1–6

Psalms 46

Colossians 1.11–20

Luke 23.33–43



Today, we are at the end of the church year, a day in which we celebrate the feast of Christ the King. It is a fitting end to our discipleship this year – the recognition of the sovereignty of Jesus as the Son of God, and a timely reminder of this at the start of advent where the church year begins again in anticipation of our saviours' birth.

As an official feast day, it wasn't celebrated by the Church until 1925. It was instituted by Pope Pius 11<sup>th</sup> to counter social division, rising unrest, nationalism, and the rise of Fascism in Europe.

The Feast of Christ the King was adopted into the Church of England's Common Worship liturgical calendar much later, in 1997, and reminds us that we have a king in Jesus whose authority wasn't won through violence or abuse of power, that this is a King who leaves the trappings of power behind in order to come alongside his people in compassion and love, and that the call of any other political leader, inherited, self appointed, or even elected, is secondary to the ruler of all, Jesus.

Unlike other titles that we give Jesus, for example, the good shepherd or the Son of Man or the Messiah, Jesus never referred to himself as 'King'. Indeed when Pontius Pilate insisted on the inscription Jesus as King in John's account of the Passion, when a crown of thorns was placed on his head and when he was given a purple robe, all of these things were mocking gestures from those in authority.

When we think of kingship, what comes to mind? Perhaps, we think of King Charles. Whilst he has no real power or authority in a political sense, he can't make laws - but there is a power exercised through the requirement to stick to strict protocols and expectations. A monarch can demand certain things and they will be granted. At the Cenotaph on Remembrance Sunday we saw the armed forces, parliament, the Church of England and the Crown standing together - the Crown being the head of all those institutions.

But what does Jesus' kingship look like?

The imagery we find in Jeremiah is of lost sheep and a shepherd who will stop at nothing to find them and bring them home

In Isaiah he was at one and the same time both King of Kings, and Prince of Peace.

In the Nativity, Jesus becomes the infant King among us all, born not of high status but as a baby to an ordinary couple, in the dirt of a stable.

And in the Passion Story Jesus's kingship didn't keep him apart or separate from us; through his knowledge of suffering he was brought close, and his kingship and power became ours to share. Jesus gave away his power, even to the point of losing life itself – for us – and through this sacrificial act of love, he gave us life and hope even in the midst of darkness and chaos.

We can 'explain' many of the world's problems when we view them through the lens of someone's wish to hold on to and abuse power. Whether it be climate change, conflicts and hostilities, societal division, or the cost-of-living crisis, so often, at the root of such situations are people wanting power and wealth, putting their own wants or needs above those of others, often at the expense of others.

These are not the values of kingship displayed by Jesus.

As we reflect on the idea today of Christ as our King, let's think about where we hold on to power, and over whom we exercise power. How well do we use the power and authority we have? And we all have this power, whether it is by the role we have in work or our position as head of the family, by our age, or our presence in a church over a long period of time. The Feast of Christ the King is a day to consider how we can faithfully respond to the love of a king, who we have learned throughout our church year, gives all his power away and is born, lives, suffers and dies with us as one of us.

**Amen**





**Part of a stained glass window in the St.Nicolas church in Amsterdam showing the birth of Jesus Christ.  
Given to the church in 1886 by A.J. Naber and pastor J.H. van Born.**

# Monthly Prayers

For each day of the week, the Church of England suggest that we pray for

- for the day and its tasks
- for the world and its needs
- for the Church and her life

Additionally you may care to offer prayers for the following on each day of the week

## **Monday**

- The media and the arts
- Farming and fishing
- Commerce and industry
- Those whose work is unfulfilling, stressful or fraught with danger
- All who are unemployed

## **Tuesday**

- All who are sick in body, mind or spirit
- Those in the midst of famine or disaster
- Victims of abuse and violence, intolerance and prejudice
- Those who are bereaved
- All who work in the medical and healing professions

## **Wednesday**

- The social services
- All who work in the criminal justice system
- Victims and perpetrators of crime
- The work of aid agencies throughout the world
- Those living in poverty or under oppression

## **Thursday**

- Local government, community leaders
- All who provide local services
- Those who work with young or elderly people
- Schools, colleges and universities
- Emergency and rescue organizations

## **Friday**

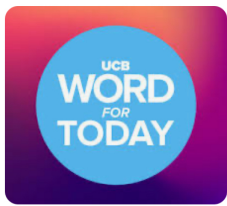
- The King, members of parliament and the armed forces
- Peace and justice in the world
- Those who work for reconciliation
- All whose lives are devastated by war and civil strife
- Prisoners, refugees and homeless people

## **Saturday**

- Our homes, families, friends and all whom we love
- Those whose time is spent caring for others
- Those who are close to death
- Those who have lost hope
- The worship of the Church

## **Sunday**

- The universal Church
- Bishops, synods and all who lead the Church
- The leaders of the nations
- The natural world and the resources of the earth
- All who are in any kind of need



*Taken from the UCB Word For Today, written by Bob and Debby Gass. Free copies are available in the UK from United Christian Broadcasters, UCB Operations Centre, Westport Road, Stoke-on-Trent, ST6 4JF or at [ucb.co.uk](http://ucb.co.uk). Used with permission.*

## THE ULTIMATE TEST OF DISCIPLESHIP

“By this, all will know that you are My disciples,  
if you have love for one another.’ John 13:35 NKJV

Designer clothes brands such as Tommy Hilfiger and Ralph Lauren are recognised by their designs and by their trademarks. These trademarks make them immensely visible and identifiable. Sometimes workers in certain industries are identified by their attire, such as a surgeon who wears scrubs, or a policeman who wears a uniform, or a judge who wears robes. And Jesus has given to us something as irrefutable evidence that we are close to God - a test whereby you can evaluate your own spiritual growth. In fact, so amazing is this trademark that He said it would be the foremost declaration of your faith. Jesus said it like this: 'A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another' (vv. 34-35 NKJV). Francis Schaeffer, the great Christian apologist, said, 'Love is the final apologetic. It is the defence for which there is no defence.' When a woman is pregnant with a child, there comes a point where we say that she is 'showing'. The life growing inside her begins to grow and show on the outside. Likewise, the Bible says, 'The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us' (Romans 5:5 KJV). And John writes, 'Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another' (1 John 4:11 NKJV). Love; it's the ultimate test of your discipleship.

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# Lectio Divina

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Lets try something new to go deeper with God's scripture.

Latin for "divine reading," Lectio Divina is a traditional monastic practice of prayerful scriptural reading. It involves a contemplative process of slow, attentive reading and meditation on a Bible passage to foster communion with God.

Read this months bible passage using the four steps below:

**Read** (Lectio): Slowly read a short passage, perhaps multiple times, to become familiar with the text. Pay attention to any words or phrases that stand out to you.

**Reflect** (Meditatio): Ponder the word or phrase that caught your attention. Allow it to sink into your mind and emotions, and consider how it might apply to your life.

**Respond** (Oratio): Engage in a loving conversation with God based on your reflection. This can involve praying back the scripture to God or expressing your own feelings and thoughts.

**Rest** (Contemplatio): Rest in God's presence, allowing the experience to be a time of quiet stillness. This is a time to simply be with God, without the need for words or thoughts. And more than anything else enjoy the meditation!

This month's scripture



## **Romans 13.11-14**

<sup>11</sup> Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; <sup>12</sup>the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armour of light; <sup>13</sup>let us live honourably as in the day, not in revelling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarrelling and jealousy. <sup>14</sup>Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.



*What is this passage saying?*

*How does it apply to me?*

*How will I act upon its message?*

*Prayer*



# A Visit from St. Nicholas

'Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the house

Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse;

The stockings were hung by the chimney with care,

In hopes that St. Nicholas soon would be there;

The children were nestled all snug in their beds;

While visions of sugar-plums danced in their heads;

And mamma in her 'kerchief, and I in my cap,

Had just settled our brains for a long winter's nap,

When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter,

I sprang from my bed to see what was the matter.

Away to the window I flew like a flash,

Tore open the shutters and threw up the sash.

The moon on the breast of the new-fallen snow,

Gave a lustre of midday to objects below,

When what to my wondering eyes did appear,

But a miniature sleigh and eight tiny rein-deer,

With a little old driver so lively and quick,

I knew in a moment he must be St. Nick.

More rapid than eagles his coursers they came,

And he whistled, and shouted, and called them by name:

"Now, *Dasher!* now, *Dancer!* now *Prancer* and *Vixen!*

On, *Comet!* on, *Cupid!* on, *Donder* and *Blitzen!*

To the top of the porch! to the top of the wall!

Now dash away! dash away! dash away all!"

As leaves that before the wild hurricane fly,

When they meet with an obstacle, mount to the sky;

So up to the housetop the coursers they flew



With the sleigh full of toys, and St. Nicholas too—  
And then, in a twinkling, I heard on the roof  
The prancing and pawing of each little hoof.  
As I drew in my head, and was turning around,  
Down the chimney St. Nicholas came with a bound.  
He was dressed all in fur, from his head to his foot,  
And his clothes were all tarnished with ashes and soot;  
A bundle of toys he had flung on his back,  
And he looked like a pedler just opening his pack.  
His eyes—how they twinkled! his dimples, how merry!  
His cheeks were like roses, his nose like a cherry!  
His droll little mouth was drawn up like a bow,  
And the beard on his chin was as white as the snow;  
The stump of a pipe he held tight in his teeth,  
And the smoke, it encircled his head like a wreath;  
He had a broad face and a little round belly  
That shook when he laughed, like a bowl full of jelly.  
He was chubby and plump, a right jolly old elf,  
And I laughed when I saw him, in spite of myself;  
A wink of his eye and a twist of his head  
Soon gave me to know I had nothing to dread;  
He spoke not a word, but went straight to his work,  
And filled all the stockings; then turned with a jerk,  
And laying his finger aside of his nose,  
And giving a nod, up the chimney he rose;  
He sprang to his sleigh, to his team gave a whistle,  
And away they all flew like the down of a thistle.  
But I heard him exclaim, ere he drove out of sight—  
*“Happy Christmas to all, and to all a good night!”*

**Clement Clarke Moore (1779 - 1863)**



# Candlelit Carol Service

If you would like to make some mince pies for refreshments following the above service would you please sign the list at the back of church. However, if you would prefer to give a donation towards the Mulled Wine please see Angela, Ray or Mavis in church.

Thank you.



# Merry Christmas

*Christmas Greetings to all our friends at St Paul's*

Elizabeth &  
Mike

The Bell  
Ringers

Cheryl, John  
& family

Peter  
Boyce

Jody, Jon,  
Benedict &  
Sebastian

Graham &  
Helen

Yvonne  
Adams

Angela &  
Ray

Maris, Ernie  
& family

Bob &  
Janet

The  
Gunnings

Joan  
Way

Richard,  
Debbie,  
Charlie &  
Lily

# And a Happy New Year



Lesley  
Grottick



Edna  
McKenzie



Barbel &  
family



Sue &  
Roger



Alison, Mark,  
Hannah & Daniel



Alison  
Forrester



Wendy & Jim  
Douglas



Denise, Georgie,  
Jo, Dave,



Barbara  
Beckwith



Brian  
Coles



Hugh, Katy &  
Christopher



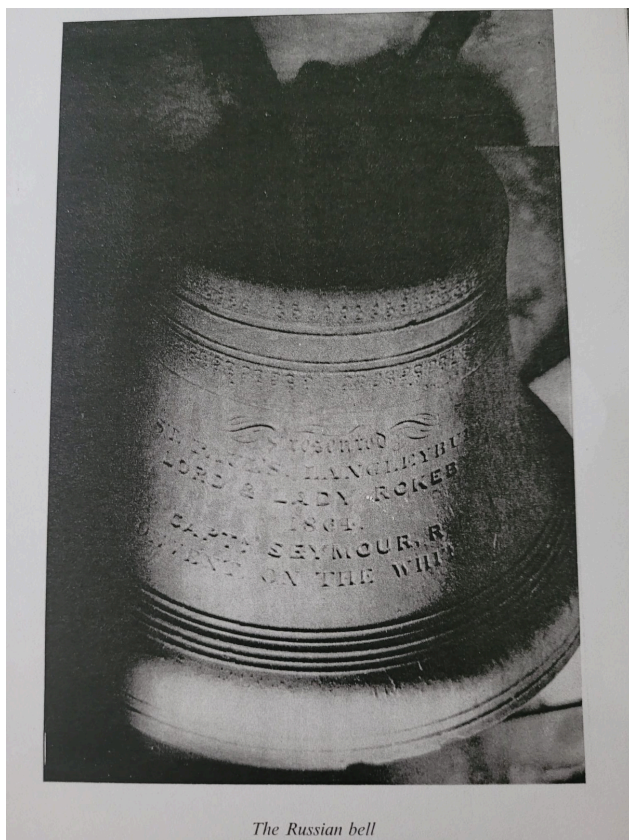
# *The Rokeby Bell*

At the back of the church, to the left of the west door, you may have noticed a rope hanging from the ceiling. This rope connects to the "priest's bell", a single bell separate from the six chiming bells at the top of the bell tower. It was used until recently for services at which the bell ringers were not present, such as the 8am Sunday Holy Communion. It has an interesting history.

Henry Robinson-Montagu was born in 1798, received his commission as an ensign in 1814 and in 1815 fought – as a 16 year old – at Waterloo. He purchased Hazelwood House (rebuilt after a fire in 1908 and now known as Hunton Park) from his cousin in 1839, and from then it became his country residence, where he lived with his wife and family. He rose through the ranks of the army and at the outbreak of the Crimean War he was promoted to Major General. By that time had also inherited the title of the 6th Baron Rokeby. During the conflict, Rokeby's friend, Commodore Frederick Beauchamp Paget Seymour, serving as commander of the "Brisk" in the White Sea, obtained (by what means it is not clear) a bell from a Russian convent. The bell has an inscription in Russian, "Glory to the King, Jesus Christ, Son of God", together with an orthodox cross and the letters K, T, M and B. He gave this bell to Rokeby who in turn presented it to St Paul's at the time of the church's consecration in 1864. This became the "priest's bell". It is inscribed with the words "Donated by Baron Rokeby and his wife to St Paul's Langleybury". Hazelwood House continued to be Rokeby's

country residence – with an estate of 74 acres it provided significant employment. He finally retired from the army as a full General in 1877, and died in 1885. He had been a subscriber to the boys' school for Abbots Langley and Hunton Bridge and, in his memory, his friends raised a fund of £475 to be invested by the Charity Commissioners to provide for the poor and sick of the two parishes.

Sue Gotts



*The Russian bell*

I am very grateful to Lesley and Tim Brooks for allowing me to draw extensively on an article which appeared in the Abbots Langley Local History Society journal in 2015

Do you find Christmas Hard?  
Would you like a Quieter Christmas Service?  
Then join us for the

# **BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE**

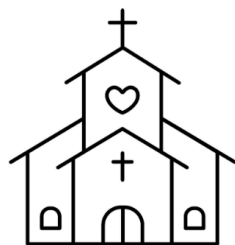
Blue Christmas is a quiet service for  
anyone who finds it hard to buy into the  
forced merriment of Christmas,  
for anyone who wants space,  
a quiet place of reflection and for  
anyone for whom this might be a  
difficult time of year.

**St. Paul's Church,  
Langleybury**

**Thursday 18th  
December  
11:00am**

**All Welcome**

# **NEWS FROM CTAL (CHURCHES TOGETHER IN ABBOTS LANGLEY)**



**Churches Together are singing carols in  
Abbots Langley High Street.**

**Saturday 13 December  
at 10:30am**

**Please come and join in if you can.**

**Following this there will be a lunch  
(soup, bread, cheese, fruit, mince pies  
– sorry, no turkey!)  
in the Methodist hall.**

**A collection will be taken at both events,  
in aid of Crisis.**

**Please bring some cash!**



# **A Tale for All Ages**

## *Martin Mole By Bryan Jukes*

### *The story so far*

Jed Mole is leading a group of moles to find somewhere else to live by taking over other moles' tunnels. Martin, Fred Frog and Harry Hedgehog have gone to visit Fred's Aunt Flo.

Wayne Weasel couldn't go with them because he, too, was visiting relatives. While at Aunt Flo's they are attacked by one of Jed's gang but Aunt Flo surprises everyone by beating off the attacker with a few well aimed cakes. Martin, Fred and Harry leave aunt Flo's but not before they are seen by Jed who prepares to follow.

### *Part 4*

As they took the path home Martin, Harry and Fred talked excitedly about how Aunt Flo had seen off the large mole. "Did you ever see anyone look so amazed?" said Harry. "And when one of Aunt Flo's cakes hit him in the face....." . The three friends held their sides, they were laughing so much. After they had recovered themselves Martin said, "But I think we should be careful. What did the big mole want?" "I didn't like the look of him",said Harry. "And I didn't like the smell of him", said Fred, remembering the rancid odour that the mole had given off. "I think we should get home as quickly as possible", said Martin. The others agreed and they hurried off quickly.

Meanwhile, Jed Mole and his troop began to make their way towards the path Martin and his friends had taken. They, too, were hurrying because if they were to find out where Martin lived they had to keep the three friends in sight.

It was Fred who heard the sound of running feet behind them first. He looked round but, seeing nothing, he thought he must be mistaken. Then Martin heard something and exclaimed, "I think we're being followed". They began to run but as they did so Jed's gang, who were now losing all caution, began to shout and whoop. Jed was furious, this was not his way of doing things but it was too late for him to stop his companions from making even more noise.

Martin, Fred and Harry ran as hard as they could but they knew that Jed's gang were catching up. As they went round a bend the pathway became very narrow and ran between high banks. It also sloped uphill away from them and their hearts sank. As they puffed and wheezed their way towards the top of the slope Harry had an idea. "You carry on" he gasped, "I can slow them down a bit." Without waiting for any response, Harry rolled himself into a ball and began, gently at first, to roll back down the slope. As Jed's gang rounded the bend they were presented with the sight of a very spiky ball rolling towards them. Poking one leg out of the ball, Harry pushed and sped towards the leading moles. The first two managed to leap out of the way but the third mole wasn't so quick and Harry was gratified to feel his spines sink into the mole's nose. With a deft shake, Harry was free and looking for his next target. The moles seemed to have stopped, some of them tending to the mole whose nose Harry had run into, while others seemed to be wondering what they should do next. "Ignore him" yelled Jed

who was trying to establish command again. But the moles continued to mill around while Harry bounced off them causing damage and pain wherever he went. He knew that so long as he remained in a ball the moles could not get to him and stop him.

Martin and Fred continued their escape and were aware of shouts and screams behind them which were getting further away. The breath was rasping in Martin's throat and he was feeling that he couldn't continue much longer at this pace when he remembered the King. He offered up a silent prayer. "Oh, please King, help us." It was all he could manage in his exhausted state and he hoped the King was listening. He also hoped that Harry would be alright, and he felt anxious that he and Fred had left Harry as they had. Running on, Martin and Fred came to the outskirts of their village. Once again they could hear running feet behind them but they would soon be safe. As they drew near to the centre of the village Martin stopped and began to shout "Get inside your homes and barricade your doors. We're under attack." The noise of Jed's gang running towards the village, together with all the yelling and whooping they were making decided people that Martin was telling the truth and they scurried inside. By now, Martin was at the doorway of his home but, before he could close the door behind him, he was spotted by Jed Mole. Jed immediately relaxed and loudly called his gang together. Pointing towards Martin's home he said "That's where we're going. There's no hurry now, so let's decide how we should go about the job we've come to do".

Inside his home Martin told his Mother and Father what had happened and offered up another prayer to the King.

Just for fun

# ANGELS

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

**ANGEL**

**HEAVENLY**

**MIRACLES**

**BLESSING**

**JOY**

**PRAISE**

**ENCAMPMENT**

**LIGHT**

**PROTECTION**

**FAITHFUL**

**LORD**

**SERVICE**

**GABRIEL**

**MESSENGERS**

**WATCHERS**

**GLORY**

**MICHAEL**

**WINGS**

**GUARDIANS**

**MINISTRY**

# THE CHARACTER OF JESUS WORD SEARCH

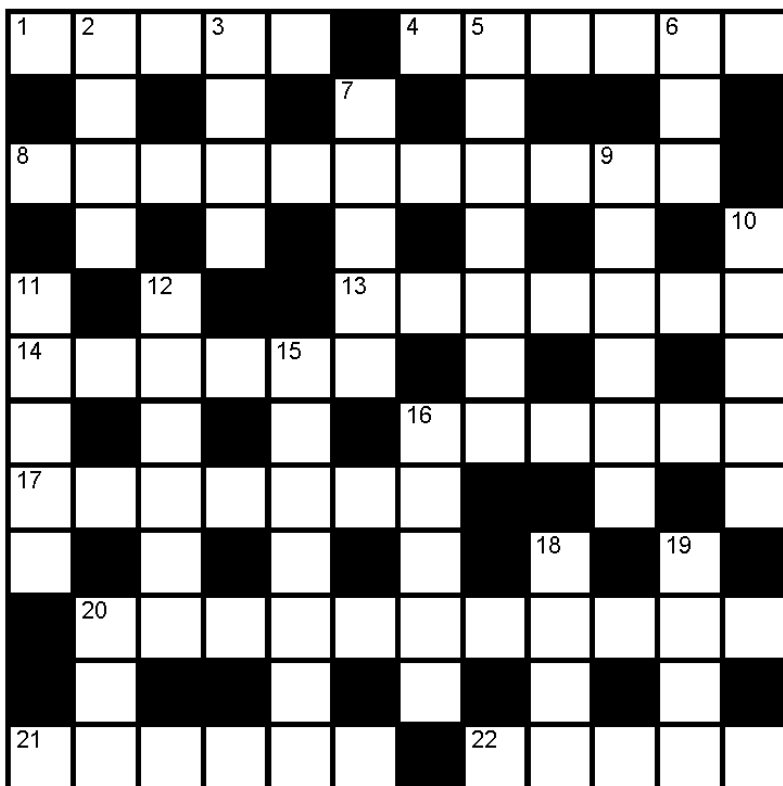
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O G I G V U T S F D D M X W W Q F E G  
P S F K J L P Z B V G E N E R O U S T  
E N O N J U D G M E N T A L Y O D B R

**BRAVE**  
**COMPASSIONATE**  
**EMPATHETIC**  
**FAITHFUL**  
**FORGIVING**  
**GENEROUS**  
**GRACEFUL**  
**HEALER**  
**HOLY**

**HONEST**  
**HUMBLE**  
**KIND**  
**LEADER**  
**LOVING**  
**MERCIFUL**  
**MIRACLE-WORKER**  
**NONJUDGMENTAL**

**PATIENT**  
**PEACEFUL**  
**RIGHTEOUS**  
**SELFLESS**  
**SERVANT**  
**SINCERE**  
**TEACHER**  
**WISE**

# CROSSWORD



by Philologus

© BiblePuzzles.com

## Across

- 1 Candle sight (5)
- 4 Product of farming (6)
- 8 Lois for example (11)
- 13 Serpent for example (7)
- 14 Nephilim, Rephaim etc. (6)
- 16 Land of milk and honey (6)
- 17 Considers (7)

- 20 Sect in Revelation (11)
- 21 Shrub (6)
- 22 Talks to God (5)

## Down

- 2 Ancient harp (4)
- 3 Herb (4)
- 5 One of the Herods (7)
- 6 Malchus lost his (3)

- 7 Hebrew measures (5)
- 9 Miracle worker (6)
- 10 Water holes (5)
- 11 Greek gathering place (5)
- 12 Old prophet (6)
- 15 Commotion (7)
- 16 A promised son and heir (5)
- 18 Heavenly body (4)
- 19 It's a sin (4)
- 20 Negative (3)

# HELPLINES

**Do you need help? There is someone who will listen**

**Women's Aid. 0808 2000 247 / [www.womensaid.org.uk](http://www.womensaid.org.uk)**

Provides services for women and children who have been affected by the experience of domestic violence, rape and sexual abuse.

**Refuge. 0808 2000 247 / [www.refuge.org.uk](http://www.refuge.org.uk)**

Refuge is the national charity which provides a wide range of specialist domestic violence services to women and children experiencing domestic violence.

**Rape Crisis. 0808 802 9999 / [www.rapecrisis.org.uk](http://www.rapecrisis.org.uk)**

Rape Crisis Centres offer a range of services for women and girls who have been raped or experienced another form of sexual violence.

**National Domestic Violence Helpline. 0808 2000 247**

The Freephone 24 Hour National Domestic Violence Helpline run in partnership between Women's Aid and Refuge

**National Centre for Domestic Violence.**

**24 hour helpline: 0800 970 2070 / [www.ncdv.org.uk](http://www.ncdv.org.uk)**

The National Centre for Domestic Violence (NCDV) provides a free, fast emergency injunction service to survivors of domestic violence.

**NSPCC ChildLine. 0800 1111 / [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)**

Free, confidential service for young people up to the age of 19. Get help and advice about a wide range of issues, talk to a counsellor online, send ChildLine an email or post on the message boards.

**NSPCC Helpline. 0808 800 5000 / [www.nspcc.org.uk/what-you-can-do/report-abuse/](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-you-can-do/report-abuse/) 53**

Free helpline service for anyone with concerns about a child's safety and wellbeing, even one in their own home. You can speak to a NSPCC counsellor 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Advice and support is provided parents and carers and consultations with professionals are offered. We will listen to your concerns, offer advice and support and can take action on your behalf if a child is in danger.

**Galop. 0800 999 5428 / London LGBT Casework Service: 0207 704 2040 / [www.galop.org.uk/](http://www.galop.org.uk/)**

Galop gives advice and support to LGBT people who have experienced hate crime, sexual violence and domestic abuse. LGBT domestic violence helpline:

**Respect. 0808 802 4040 / [www.respectphoneline.org.uk /](http://www.respectphoneline.org.uk/) [www.respect.uk.net](http://www.respect.uk.net)**

The Respect phone line is a confidential helpline offering advice, information and support to help you stop being violent and abusive to your partner.

**Samaritans. 116 123 / [www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)**

A 24-hour helpline for any person in emotional distress

**SafeLives (formerly Co-ordinated Action against Domestic Abuse (CAADA)). 0117 403 3220 / <http://www.safelives.org.uk>**

SafeLives is a national charity supporting a strong multi-agency response to domestic abuse. It provides practical help to support professionals and organisations working with domestic abuse victims, with the aim of protecting the highest risk victims and their children – those at risk of murder or serious harm. Unfortunately SafeLives does not provide direct support or advice to victims of domestic violence. However, if you are experiencing domestic abuse or are supporting someone who is in that situation, immediate help is available via the National Domestic Violence Helpline.

# CONTACT INFORMATION

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IN THREE SIMPLE WAYS

  
PARISH GIVING SCHEME



**1 GIVE ONLINE**  
A few quick and easy steps to set-up regular giving on our website:  
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**2 GIVE BY TELEPHONE**  
Between Monday and Friday,  
9am - 5pm, you can give to your local parish by calling the PGS team on:  
**0333 002 1271**





**3 GIVE BY A GIFT FORM**  
You can pick up a gift form from your PGS parish representative. Simply fill in the details and we'll do the rest.

**St Paul's nine digit code: 320632230**



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Email: [info@parishgiving.org.uk](mailto:info@parishgiving.org.uk) | Tel: 0333 002 1260