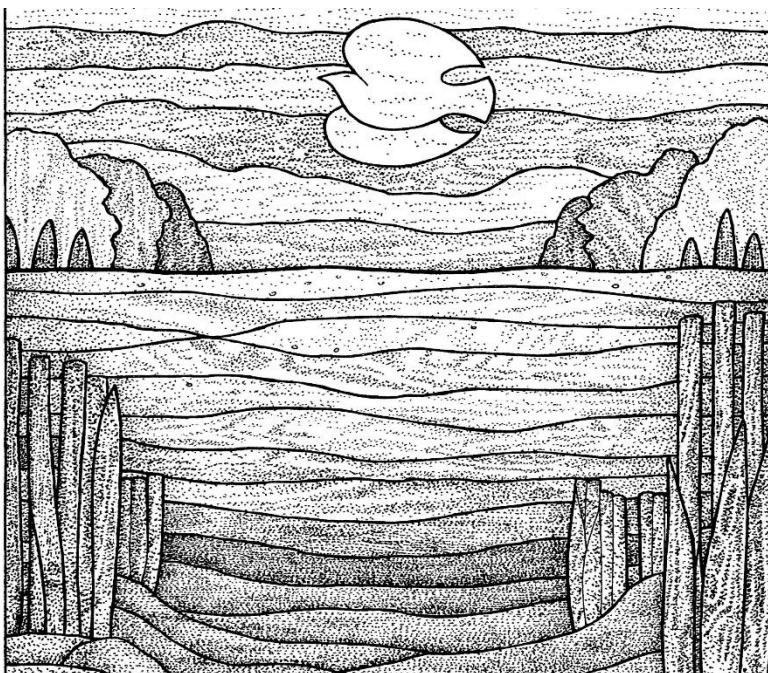


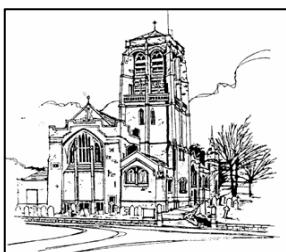
# NEW LEAVES

## PARISH MAGAZINE

### St David's Church Exeter



FEBRUARY 2026



SUGGESTED  
VOLUNTARY  
CONTRIBUTION

**50p**

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For services and events at St Michael's and All Angels CD, please see:  
[www.stmichaelsmountdinhams.org.uk](http://www.stmichaelsmountdinhams.org.uk)



# WELCOME

**The editorial team invites you to submit appropriate articles that reflect church, parish or community interest.**

**Please send contributions as Word documents (if possible in A5 format, maximum 1000 words) to:  
[newleaves@stdavidschurchexeter.org.uk](mailto:newleaves@stdavidschurchexeter.org.uk)**

All articles will be printed with the author's name.

The views expressed are those of the individual contributors and do not necessarily represent the views of the editors or the Church.

We hope you enjoy this month's read.

**Although this magazine is free of charge, voluntary contributions would be gratefully received. This can be done via the wall safes found close to the exit of the west and north doors. Alternatively, you can give them to a member of the editorial team. Many thanks.**

**We welcome critical comments on the magazine.**

**Editorial Team: Sarah, Susan and Alice**



## Regular Services and Events

### Sundays:

**9.30 -10.30 am** Parish Communion from St David's Church; also streamed on Facebook

**6pm** Evening Prayer at St David's Church

### Weekdays:

**Tuesdays at 9.00am** Morning Prayer on Zoom

**Tuesdays 10.30am – noon** Friendship Café at St David's Church

**Thursdays at 10.30am** Holy Communion at St David's Church

**Thursdays at 7pm** Student group

If you don't already receive our regular weekly notice sheet by email and would like to, please contact Rev Mike Clark at [notices@stdavidschurhexeter.org.uk](mailto:notices@stdavidschurhexeter.org.uk)

## CLERGY GREETINGS

Lent is fast approaching: Ash Wednesday is on February 18<sup>th</sup>, and we will be having morning and evening communion services with ashing.

I wonder if our first thought about this season is something like 'what, if anything, shall I give up for Lent this year'? Lent has long been associated with fasting as a way to help us reflect better on the reality of our lives and the God who loves us. This year's Lent resources from the Church of England are called '*Draw near: Life giving habits for Lent*.' We are encouraged this Lent to start something new - habits to help us deepen our faith and our understanding of who we are in the light of who God is.

From the church's website:

*'This year's resources have at their heart the theme of a 'rhythm of life' – habits and patterns which help us grow as disciples of Christ day by day, especially as we prepare to celebrate the great mystery of God's saving love at Easter. During Lent, reflections are centred around a [summary of the Christian Way](#) from Common Worship, which identifies six activities essential to our calling as disciples. Each week a different contributor explores a different aspect of Christian discipleship – **worshipping together, praying, exploring the Bible, sharing communion, offering service and sharing the good news** with others.'*

The free *Everyday Faith* app will have the daily reflections through the season. Booklets of the same reflections are also available. We will have some in church for you to buy (cost £2.50) or you can buy them yourself here: <https://www.chpublishing.co.uk/drawnear>

Following the same theme, we will be holding a Lent group on Thursdays at 2pm starting on 19<sup>th</sup> February. Hosting of the group this year will be shared between Suki and Howard and Helen. Please let me know if you are interested in joining. More details will follow nearer the time

Every blessing

**Mike**

## **READERS AND LEADERS IN PRAYER: FEBRUARY 2026**

### **Sunday 1 February: Fourth Sunday of Epiphany**

1st reading	Malachi 3.1-5 or Hebrews 2.14-end
Gospel Reading	Luke 2.22-40
Preacher	Sarah Cumming
Bible Reader	Keith Postlethwaite
Leader in Prayer	Charlotte Townsend

### **Sunday 8 February: Second Sunday before Lent**

1st reading	Genesis 1.1 - 2.3 or Romans 8.18-25
Gospel Reading	Matthew 6.25-34
Preacher	Ian Cartwright
Bible Reader	Philip Dale
Leader in Prayer	Chris Gill

### **Sunday 15 February: Sunday next before Lent**

1st reading	Exodus 24.12-18 or 2 Peter 1.16-21
Gospel Reading	Matthew 17.1-9
Preacher	Mike Clark
Bible Reader	Sarah Rimmington
Leader in Prayer	Robert Mitchell

### **Sunday 22 February: 1st Sunday of Lent**

1st reading	Genesis 2.15-17; 3.1-7 or Romans 5.12-19
Gospel Reading	Matthew 4.1-11
Preacher	TBC
Bible Reader	David Blundell
Leader in Prayer	Ian Cartwright

### **Sunday 1 March: 2nd Sunday of Lent**

1st reading	Genesis 12.1-4a or Romans 4.1-5, 13-17
Gospel Reading	John 3.1-17
Preacher	TBC
Bible Reader	Jean Thomas
Leader in Prayer	Richard Johnson

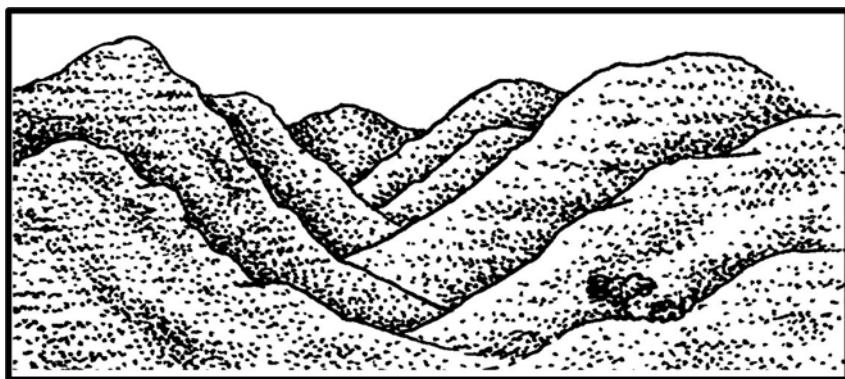
# ST DAVID'S PARISH CYCLE OF PRAYER

## February

- 1st YMCA and The Thirsty Group (monthly faith discussion)
- 8th The Dales and Barton Place Nursing Homes
- 15<sup>th</sup> Esther community (supporting young homeless people)
- 22<sup>nd</sup> Lent groups, Bible study groups

## March

- 1st St David's Patronal Festival, Women's World Day of Prayer (6 March), Women's breakfasts



## **INTRODUCING DAME SARAH MULLALLY, THE 106<sup>TH</sup> ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY**

The Rt Revd and Rt Hon Dame Sarah Mullally DBE officially became Archbishop of Canterbury on 28<sup>th</sup> January 2026, when she was legally confirmed at St Paul's Cathedral.

Most people know she was Bishop of London for several years, and that she is the first woman to ever become Archbishop of Canterbury. But what else do you know about her?

- She was born in Woking in 1962, and is one of four children, with two sisters and one brother.
- She attended Winston Churchill Comprehensive School and Woking Sixth Form College. She went on to study at South Bank Polytechnic and Heythrop College, University of London.
- She worked as a nurse in the National Health Service, which she has described as "an opportunity to reflect the love of God". She specialised as a cancer nurse and became a ward sister at Westminster Hospital, before being made Director of Nursing at Chelsea and Westminster Hospital.
- In 1999, at the age of 37, she became the Government's Chief Nursing Officer for England, the youngest person ever to be appointed to the post. Bishop Sarah was made a Dame Commander of the British Empire in 2005 in recognition of her outstanding contribution to nursing.
- She had become a Christian at the age of 16. While Chief Nursing Officer for England, she discerned a call to ordination and entered training ministry at the South East Institute for Theological Education.
- She was ordained in 2001 and served her curacy in St Saviour's Battersea Fields, initially as a self-supporting minister. She left her government post in 2004, which she described at the time as "the biggest decision I have ever made".
- In 2012 she was installed as Canon Treasurer at Salisbury Cathedral. Three years later, she took on the role of Suffragan Bishop of Crediton in the Diocese of Exeter. She was the fourth woman to become a Bishop in the Church of England.

- On 12<sup>th</sup> May 2018, Bishop Sarah was installed as the 133rd Bishop of London at St Paul's Cathedral, the first woman to hold that post.
- Bishop Sarah sits in the House of Lords as one of the Lords Spiritual, having been introduced on 24<sup>th</sup> May 2018. Her maiden speech paid tribute to the NHS on its 70th anniversary, telling the Lords, "I am the Bishop I am today because of that first vocation to nursing, and compassion and healing are constants at the heart of who I am."
- She was sworn in as a member of the Privy Council in March 2018 and became Dean of Her Majesty's Chapels Royal in July 2019.
- As Bishop of London, she led the Church of England's Living in Love and Faith process from 2020 to 2023. This included the formative stages of discernment and decision-making that saw the introduction of the Prayers of Love and Faith for same-sex couples.
- She has served on the Church's National Safeguarding Steering Group and is also Lead Bishop for Health and Social Care issues.
- As a Lord Spiritual, she has drawn on both her pastoral experience and her nursing/healthcare background and has played a key role in the ongoing debates on assisted dying.
- This year, she chaired the Triennium Funding Working Group that developed the Church of England's three-year spending plan and led to significant investment in local churches and parish clergy.
- Archbishop Sarah is married to Eamonn, an Irish-born IT and Enterprise Architect who enjoys beekeeping and volunteers as a London tourist guide.
- The couple have two grown-up children, Liam and Grace.
- Archbishop Sarah has continued her interest in the health service as a non-executive director at the Royal Marsden NHS Foundation Trust, then at Salisbury NHS Foundation Hospital.
- She is Chair of Christian Aid.
- She has spoken openly about her dyslexia, describing her difficulties with writing and reading.
- In her spare time, she likes cooking, walking and pottery.

## PARTS OF A CATHEDRAL 4: THE CHAPTER HOUSE

Although many people assume that the Bishop is in charge of a Cathedral, he or she is responsible for the administration of the Diocese and it is the Dean and Chapter who run the religious and secular affairs of a Cathedral.

Many of our cathedrals were originally monastic foundations, and a good number were of the Benedictine order, and the monks would meet each day to read a 'chapter' of the Rule of St. Benedict, (Regula Sancti Benedicti), and to discuss the business of the community.

St. Benedict laid down that in all important matters pertaining to the running of the monastery the whole community should be assembled. Therefore, Chapter Houses were designed to be a shape and size that would enable every member's voice to be heard. Most Chapter Houses in English cathedrals are thus either circular or polygonal.

When Cathedrals moved away from being run by a monastery, they began to be run by the Dean and a body of canons, known as a Chapter.



The earliest known Chapter House in an English cathedral is at Worcester Cathedral. It dates from about 1100 and is believed to be the first round one in the world.

In Bristol Cathedral the Chapter House was also built in the 12<sup>th</sup> century and has been described as "a superb piece of Romanesque

architecture". It is covered from floor to ceiling in elaborately patterned arcades and interlocking forms. Beneath the rows of niches are seats for the members of the abbey's community or chapter.

At Wells Cathedral the Chapter House, which was completed in 1306 when Wells was restored to cathedral status, is unusually at first floor level. It is approached via a narrow door in the North Transept to a wide, curving and double-branched 'sea of steps'. At the top, on taking a turn to the right, one enters the Chapter House. Alec Clifton-Taylor

describes it as "architecturally the most beautiful in England". It is octagonal in shape and the roof has 32 ribs supported by a central pillar so that it resembles a fountain rising from the floor. Around the walls are the Chapter stalls, each with the name of the canon whose vicar (deputy) sat on the lower row of seats at his feet.

The Chapter house in Lichfield Cathedral in the Midlands was the place where, in medieval



times, the two Chapters of Coventry and Lichfield met to elect a bishop for their joint diocese.

In York Minster the stunning octagonal Chapter House was built between 1280 and 1296. It contains a mason's Latin inscription "Ut rosa flos florum, sic est domus ista domorum", which means "As the rose is the flower of flowers, so this is the house of houses" It is a tribute to the building itself, equating it to the highest degree of beauty and importance.



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At Exeter Cathedral one of the consequences of Henry III creating the position of Dean in 1225, to which Archdeacon Serlo was elected, was the need for a Chapter House. The then Bishop gave a parcel of his garden so that a Chapter House could be built for the Dean and Chapter to meet and manage the affairs of the cathedral. Unlike the structures in other cathedrals across the country, the Chapter House in Exeter Cathedral is rectangular. It contains deep moulded arches on capitals with stiff-leaf sculpture representing regeneration. Having had many uses over the centuries, the Chapter House in Exeter Cathedral is today used as the Cathedral Café.



This series of articles has dealt with the various parts of a cathedral and, just as the architectural features of a cathedral are some of its most important parts, so too are the people who run the cathedral: the Dean and Chapter. So this seems as good a place as any to consider what the Dean and Chapter are responsible for and actually do on a day to day basis.

**The Dean:** As Head of the Cathedral, the Dean is like a Chief Executive who presides over the Chapter, which is a corporate body of canons responsible for cathedral governance and for promoting its worship and mission. Together, the Dean and Chapter manage the daily life of the cathedral, including liturgical services, administration and finances. The Chapter also assists the Bishop with the governance of the Diocese and serves as a link between the Bishop, the clergy and the parishes. The Dean normally sits in a stall immediately on the right on entering the Quire from the Nave.

**The Canon Precentor:** Second in seniority to the Dean and responsible for arranging and regulating the musical portion of services, the Canon Precentor normally sits in a stall immediately on the left on entering the Quire from the Nave.

**The Canon Chancellor:** The third officer of the Chapter, with responsibility for schools and for giving theology lectures.

**The Canon Treasurer:** The Canon Treasurer is the guardian of the fabric, furniture and ornaments of the Cathedral. They are also responsible for providing the bread and the wine for Eucharist and for the provision of candles and incense.

Most cathedrals also have a number of honorary canons and lay canons appointed by the Bishop to assist with cathedral life and decision-making. There have been female priests in the Church of England since 1994 and female bishops since 2015. There are now 12 female Deans in the 42 English cathedrals.

If you are visiting a cathedral at a busy time, with lots of visitors taking photographs or admiring its architectural and historic artefacts, the Chapter House can often provide a peaceful area where you can sit and reflect on the rich architectural and religious heritage our cathedrals provide.

**Robin Thomas**  
December 2025

## THE CHURCH IN BRITAIN TODAY

What should our response be to recent reports that church attendance is increasing in this country? I find that my feelings are mixed. I welcome a greater willingness to enter church buildings and explore the Christian faith. But my lifetime regret remains that “the Church” is so visibly divided.

The divisions are less deep than in the past, of course. As I was growing up in Bideford in the 1950s and 1960s, Councils of Churches were being formed there and all over the country, later becoming “Churches Together”. The recent publication of *Justice Song: the Story of Christian Aid* by Michael Taylor is a reminder of the large part played by Christian Aid in promoting practical co-operation between church members in this country. Faced with the organisation of effective house-to-house collections across the country, differences in worship and tradition seem less important.

The other important influence in my church background is St Francis Hall, the ecumenical chapel established at Birmingham University where I was a student at the end of the 1960s. This was a building provided by the Cadbury family as part of the Student Union. The two chaplains based there were employed by the Union and not by the University. One was always Anglican and the other “Free Church”, and our Sunday morning communion services alternated between Anglican and Free Church liturgies. So some years before ecumenical Communion services became the norm, this was our weekly experience at Birmingham.

The “visible disunity” I have referred to is not what worries me in relation to church organisation. I am more concerned with the obstacle it puts in the way of people exploring Christian faith. During the Millennium year, signboards appeared outside many church buildings, showing that all were part of a wider movement. I wish that could be reproduced today. If all the churches in Exeter that were part of Christians Together across Exeter displayed a sign to that effect, it would demonstrate that we all welcome enquirers.

In practice, it seems that Christians in this country are much more willing to switch denominations or attend services in more than one tradition than they used to be. But we could go further. We could

publicise and celebrate the variety of traditions and patterns of worship in this country. Meanwhile, we see and hear reports of increasing church attendance, with little denominational breakdown. If the secular world pays no attention to denominational differences, is there any reason for us to do so?

**David Cannon**  
January 2026



## DO WE NEED TO CELEBRATE THE NEW YEAR ON 1<sup>st</sup> JANUARY?

I am sure we were all horrified by the tragic deaths of 40 young people and the life-changing injuries sustained by so many others at the Le Constellation nightclub in Crans-Montana in Switzerland on 1<sup>st</sup> January.

We normally consider Switzerland to be such a well-organised and safe country. Many years ago, Jean accompanied a group of schoolchildren to Crans-Montana and she considered the resort to be safe and ideal for a children's ski trip.

I once spent Christmas and New Year in Zermatt, another ski resort in the Swiss Alps. I remember that when we came off the slopes in the late afternoon of New Year's Eve, we were surprised to see a number of lorries in this normally traffic-free resort. They were carrying tons of snow and men were busy spreading snow on the pavements for everyone to have fresh snow to walk on to celebrate the New Year. Later in the evening, however, I was somewhat alarmed to see young lads letting off rockets from empty champagne bottles that they were holding in their hands. One rocket set fire to a window box on the first floor of a chalet and the lads just climbed on each other's shoulders and put the fire out by spraying champagne over it.

On New Year's Day we also learnt of the tragic deaths of three people swimming in freezing conditions off the East Yorkshire coast at Withernsea.

I wonder what we are celebrating on New Year's Eve and New Year's Day. Normally we celebrate an event, as with the birth of Jesus at Christmas. At New Year's Eve the following year is ahead of us and we do not know what it will bring.

The winter in this country is invariably cold, often very cold, and sometimes accompanied by snow and ice. Swimming in the sea with temperatures at their lowest might seem fun for some people, but it can be dangerous for others. It also puts unnecessary pressure on our valiant blue light responders and hospitals when they are already struggling with high patient numbers from Influenza and other mid-

winter ailments.

The New Year Sales follow immediately after Christmas, encouraging people to spend even more money and add to their credit card bills which need to be paid off by the end of January.

'Dry January' starts just as the Christmas decorations are coming down and with short days and bad weather this is just the time for a 'cheering' drink to help us get through what is often the gloomiest month of the year.

We are encouraged to make New Year resolutions but, according to research, 23% of resolutions are given up within the first week and up to 80% have been abandoned by the beginning of February.

When I first started work with a firm of Chartered Surveyors in Exeter on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1972, it was not then a bank holiday; the date only became a public holiday in 1974.

New Year's Day is not a religious holiday and 1<sup>st</sup> January was first established as the start of the year by Julius Caesar in 45 BCE, honouring the Roman God Janus. Janus is depicted with two faces looking in opposite directions (past and future). This date has only been officially recognised as the first day of the year since 1752, when Great Britain switched to the Gregorian calendar.

Of course in the Christian calendar, Candlemas is still celebrated on 2<sup>nd</sup>

February each year. To some, unlike Epiphany on 6<sup>th</sup> January, it marks the end of Christmas and is the date on which some people take down their Christmas decorations.



Perhaps we should revert to celebrating 'Imbolc', a Celtic festival which took place around 1<sup>st</sup> February, marking the midpoint between the Winter Solstice and the Spring Equinox, and signalling the first stirrings of spring, the return of light, and the potential for new life. This pagan festival later became a Christian festival, marked by St. Brigid's Day on 1<sup>st</sup>



February, which is still marked with a public holiday in Ireland. This welcomes the beginning of spring and an end to the darkness of winter, ushering in a new season of hope and growth on the land and the birth of animals on our farms and in the wild.

So food for thought. I take this opportunity to wish all my fellow St. David's parishioners a happy St. Brigid's Day and a year of hope and fulfilment for all of us in 2026.

**Robin Thomas**  
January 2026



## NIGEL'S LAST STAND

*Here's the speech given by Nigel Walsh at the carol service and his farewell celebration.*

What a privilege it has been to serve this church as Music Director through all these years! Thank you so much for all your love, support and encouragement. And for your most generous gift – with that garden token, I should be able to buy up a whole garden centre! Not to mention take the first steps towards planting my own olive grove.

I think the choir at St David's now is the largest we've had in my time. It's been suggested that I ought to step down from this post more often...

My relationship with Saint David's goes back to about 1990 when John Henton was Vicar and I used to do periodic visits leading music. And when Tom Honey asked me to come permanently in 2012, he rescued me from a certain wilderness because, although I was doing all sorts of different things after I'd retired from the RD&E Hospital, I just didn't feel I particularly belonged anywhere.

St David's has really given me a root, which is wonderful. Do you remember the wonderful TV series "Rev"? I always thought of Tom as Rev - I was his Colin and used to call him "Vicarage". When I was invited to take up the post, I was a bit nervous, to put it mildly. And when I spoke to various members of the choir about it, not least the two Sarahs, I said, "OK, I'd love to come, but from now on it's no more Mr Nice Guy." And they retorted, "How are we going to tell the difference?"

Then came Nigel Guthrie – always "the Guv'nor" to me - a treat to work with, as were the others. Among other things, we worked our way through the series of COVID lockdowns and related restrictions. And now our current team, who are an absolute joy to work with. Thanks to everyone who has supported and encouraged me in this role. All our vicars, curates, readers - all of you. And of course, our instrumental players who play once a month. And our organists – Robert, Ian, Larissa and Lorna.

There's one other person I absolutely must mention. It's said that behind every successful man - and it's for you to judge how successful

or otherwise I've been - is a good woman. And they don't come any better than my dear wife, Imogen.

I'm actually not leaving St David's - I'm merely stepping down from this role, although I don't think I shall be around quite as often as I have been. But how could I turn my back on the community that's nurtured and encouraged me for so many years?

I heard a retired military chief on the radio the other day, who said, rather surprisingly I thought, that unless he was able to love the people he led, it didn't work. Well, choir, I hope you've all felt loved, because I have loved you, although it might not always have felt like that.

Now let me give my very best wishes to my successor, Richard Johnson. I'm sure we all wish him the very best. He had the opportunity to spread his wings because earlier in the year I fell off the top of a step ladder and was *hors de combat* for a while, having a hip replacement. Richard stepped into the breach and did a wonderful job.

Finally, please permit me a short homily – my text is from the prophets Isaiah and Amos:

*"I hate your songs and your festivals. They have become a burden to me. I will not listen to your singing or the sound of your instruments. You oppress the poor and exploit your workers. Learn to do good; seek justice; rescue the oppressed; defend the orphan; plead for the widow."*

Unless we heed these words, all our music making is so much vanity. So let's all be out there, being peace makers, looking out for the marginalised and voiceless. Making good relationships. Doing what is right and just. And, as far as we can, striving to make the world a better place.

Thank you.

**Nigel Walsh**  
December 2025

## WINNIE THE POOH AND LENT 2026

*This article was written by Revd Roy Shaw, a retired but active priest in the diocese of York, where he is a spiritual director.*

Remember the Winnie the Pooh stories? And Kanga's insistence on Baby Roo's taking his Strengthening Medicine? It's 'really quite a nice taste when you get used to it', she explained, although I'm not convinced Baby Roo always agreed.

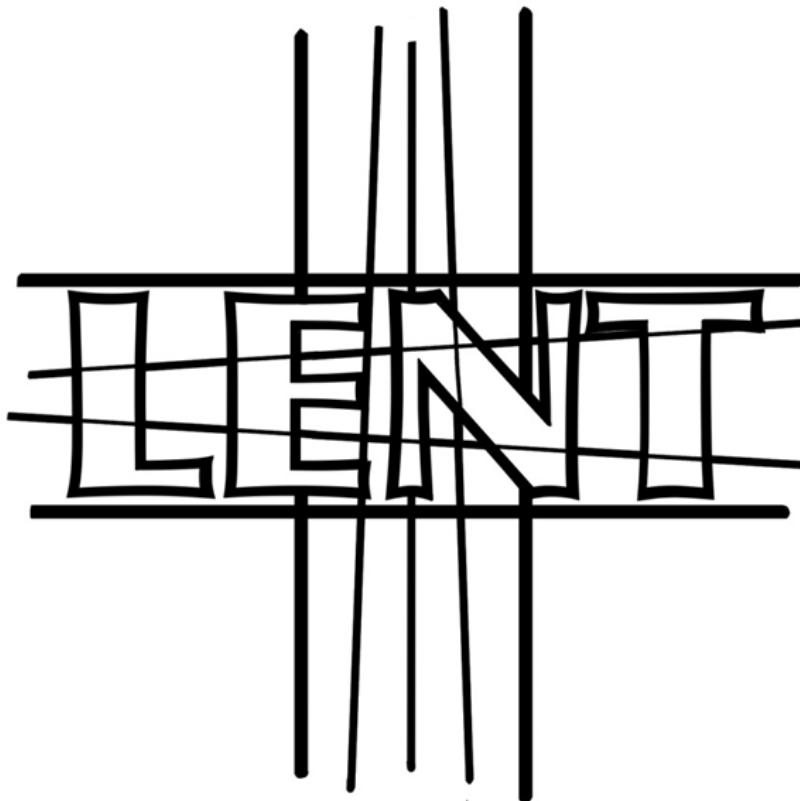
It can be helpful to think of Lent as a sort of medicine; an opportunity to strengthen us in the things that are good, rein in other facets of our personality, and reset the compass to the true North of following Jesus. A Spring-clean of the soul, if you like.

Baby Roo (and Piglet on the one occasion he was subject to it) found Strengthening Medicine not to their liking, and we may groan inwardly at the thought of 'giving up something for Lent'. Think of what lies behind this 'giving up'. It's so that we may be strengthened, our character refined, our prejudices examined, our junk thrown overboard, and we may come to Passiontide and Easter more fit to walk the way of the Cross, and rise in new life with Jesus at His Resurrection.

Nor is Lent just a case of giving up chocolate. One year I gave up Facebook for Lent, having spent far too much time scrolling through it each day. It freed me to do other, more constructive things. And instead of giving up, why not take up something you've been meaning to do but never got round to; something life-affirming, something good for God.

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, which this year falls on 18<sup>th</sup> February. Many Christians go public with their intention to keep a good Lent by being 'ashed' - the sign of the Cross made on the forehead in a mixture of ash and holy oil at a special service that day. The ash is usually the burnt remains of the palm crosses from last year. Having been ashed, the intention of the 40 days of Lent is to maintain a steady course closer to God, symbolised by the giving up of something - like chocolate - which has a hold on us. We walk with Jesus on the way to the Cross, mindful of the 'riches of God's kindness, forbearance and patience' as St Paul has it, and mindful too of Jesus' choice of the Cross as a way for us to enter those riches more fully.

And to face the immensity of that sacrifice, and the immensity of God's riches made available to us in Jesus, we need all the Strengthening Medicine we can get!



## WOMEN'S BREAKFAST GROUP

The Social Committee have set up a women's breakfast group, like the Men's group run by Alan Baker. There have been three outings so far, to the Imperial and the Sylvania Community Café, and they have proved great fun, with lots of convivial conversation.



The next outing is scheduled for Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> February, when we return to the Sylvania Community Café. If you would like to come but are not yet part of the WhatsApp group, speak to Maggie Draper.

## **BREAK THE DEBT BLUES**

### **A path out of debt to a fresh start this year**

As the post-Christmas bills continue to pile up, many of us feel under financial pressure. You don't have to face it alone.

Christians Against Poverty (CAP) have launched a new Five-Step Guide designed to help to get you from financial worry to a fresh start.

- Reach out to CAP for free, expert advice, tailored to your specific situation.
- Friendly Support: Their local team will provide face-to-face visits and a supportive hand to hold.
- An Expert Plan: CAP helps you build a realistic budget that prioritises your essentials, like food and housing.
- A Fresh Start: CAP can handle the process of creditor negotiations, so that you can focus on building long-term financial stability.

CAP assures people, “We believe that no one should have to stay awake at night worrying about money. Our local debt coaches are ready to listen, help you organise the paperwork, and walk with you every step of the way. Don’t let the “Debt Blues” define your year. Discover how simple it is to start your journey toward peace of mind.”

More info at: <https://capuk.org>

**Parish Pump**  
February 2026

# ST DAVID'S MUSIC GROUP AKA 'THE BAND'



**On the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month**, at St David's morning service, the choir and organist take a break. Instead, the music is led by our music group – a merry band of musicians which currently includes players on violin, flute, clarinet, guitar and keyboard.

## **The purpose of the music group is to:**

- make heavenly music as part of the morning service
- be inclusive of all who wish to play – whatever their age or standard – supported by experienced players
- offer an optional, occasional opportunity to play solo or duet during communion with/without keyboard accompaniment

In the past, we have had players on recorder, oboe, viola, cello, saxophone, trumpet, bass guitar and harp.

The age range, to date, is 7 – 80+.



## **We welcome new players.**

- University students have joined us for the duration of their course.
- Young children have joined us until they are grown up and leave home.
- Adult 'returners' have dusted off their instruments and rekindled a love of playing.

Come and try a Sunday if you like – play a hymn or two??

If you would like to find out more, speak to Robert or Susan at church or email:

[instrumentalgroup@stdavidschurchexeter.org.uk](mailto:instrumentalgroup@stdavidschurchexeter.org.uk)

## REGULAR EVENTS

Martial Arts	Monday 7pm - 9pm Medieval sword fighting irondoorcollective.co.uk Contact the group on <a href="mailto:idcexeter@gmail.com">idcexeter@gmail.com</a>
Friendship café	Tuesday 10.30am – 12pm
Bell Ringing	Wednesday 7.30 – 9pm
Student Group	Thursday 7pm, with food!  Please talk to one of the clergy if you would like to know more
Men's/Women's Breakfasts	Saturday 9am (check newsletter for dates and venues)



## UPCOMING CHURCH EVENTS

<b>Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> February</b>	Comms team meet after the service
<b>Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> February at 2pm</b> and Thursdays at 2pm thereafter	Lent course
<b>Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> February at 9am</b>	Women's Breakfast at Sylvania Community Café
<b>Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> March</b>	Brunch after the service

### Advance Notice!

<b>Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March</b>	Quiz Night
-------------------------------------	------------



## Try it out Tuesday at the Friendship Cafe

- Try something new!
- Build confidence and take some time for yourself
- Enjoy a creative activity with a cuppa and a cake



Scan QR code for details and to book.

**When:** First Tuesday of each month, 10:30am-12noon

**Where:** The Friendship Cafe, St David's Church, Queens Terrace, Exeter, EX4 4HR



## **OTHER UPCOMING EVENTS**

*at St David's unless otherwise indicated*

### **Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> February at 7pm**

Fever by Candlelight: *Queen vs. Abba*

### **Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> February at 9pm**

Fever by Candlelight: *Tribute to Coldplay and Ed Sheeran*

### **Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> February at 7.30pm**

Isca Ensemble: Mozart and Beethoven, including Beethoven's Violin Concerto

### **Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> March at 7.30pm**

Exeter Chamber Choir: *A Light in the Heavens* at St James' Church

### **Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> March at 7.30pm**

Exeter Philharmonic Choir: Handel's *Solomon* in the Cathedral



New Leaves is very happy to publicise local concerts, plays, talks etc. If you know of anything you think might be of interest to members of the congregation, do please let the editors know!



**ST. DAVIDS CHURCH, EXETER, EX4 4HR.  
SATURDAY 21 FEBRUARY 2026 at 7.30 p.m.**

## **ISCA ENSEMBLE SOUTHWEST**

**Roger Hendy MD    Antony Clements *leader***



**JOEL MUNDAY**

**Violin**

**Mozart - 'Marriage of Figaro' Overture K492**

**Beethoven - Violin Concerto Op61**

**Beethoven - Romance No. 2 Op50**

**Mozart - Symphony No. 40 K550**

Tickets £18 available in advance online at  
[www.ticketsource.co.uk](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk) or [www.iscaensemble.org.uk](http://www.iscaensemble.org.uk)

Tickets at the door from 7 p.m.



## Programme of Talks – February 2026

Exeter Forum's programme of weekly talks for February 2026 is shown below. Meetings take place in the Mint Methodist Church, Fore Street, Exeter, EX4 3AT on Wednesday mornings. The talks start at 10:45am, while coffee is available from 10:15am. Descriptions of talks and speakers also appear on the Exeter Forum website

[www.exeterforum.org](http://www.exeterforum.org), and in the weekly newsletter sent to Forum members and to interested visitors. Visitors are welcome subject to a small charge for each talk. Late programme changes will be shown on the Exeter Forum website.

<b>Wednesday 4 Feb 2026</b>	<b>David Westcott</b>	<b>Richard III and the Princes in the Tower</b> David's talk will investigate the reign of one of England's most controversial Kings, Richard III, who visited Exeter 2 years before he was killed in battle. He will look at the various stories surrounding the fate of the Princes in the Tower during Richard III's reign.
<b>Wednesday 11 Feb 2026</b>	<b>John Dean</b>	<b>Scars that Shine: The Madonnas of Pervyse, Mairi Chisholm and Elsie Knocker - WWI Women Heroes.</b> Exeter-born Elsie Knocker and her Scottish colleague Mairi Chisholm were called the Madonnas of Pervyse in recognition of their front line care of casualties and innovations in the Belgian trenches of WW1. They received national honours.

<b>Wednesday 18 Feb 2026</b>	<b>Caroline Stephens</b>	<b>General Health, Feel energised &amp; fabulous everyday!</b> Caroline's talk will describe what being healthy means and how we can both maintain our general health and improve our energy levels and feelings of wellbeing.
<b>Wednesday 25 February 2026</b>	<b>Dame Julia Slingo</b>	<b>My role at the Met Office.</b> Dame Julia Slingo served as Chief Scientist at the Met Office for nearly 8 years. She was made a Dame in the 2014 New Year Honours for her services to weather and climate science. Before joining the Met Office she was the Director of Climate Research at the University of Reading.



# ARE YOU INTERESTED IN BEING A STREET PASTOR?

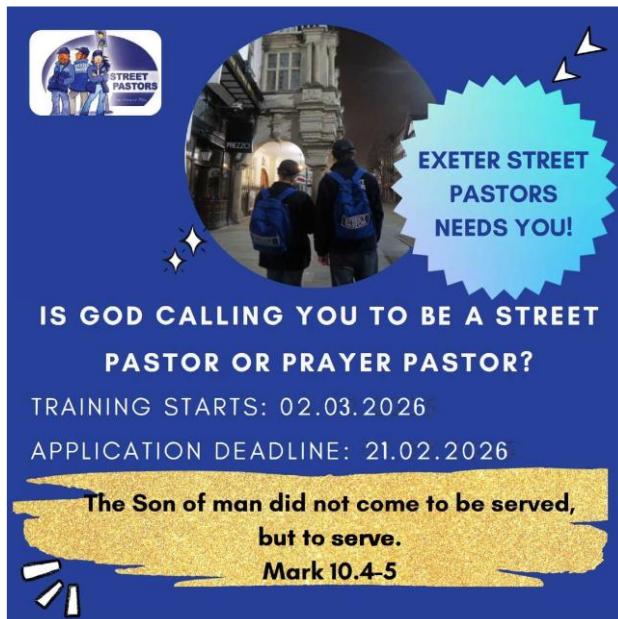
Are you interested in finding out more about Exeter Street Pastors? If you are, please have a chat with Pam Stanley.

You are welcome to join us one night to get a better idea of what we do.

We need street pastors & prayer pastors to join our teams.

If you don't want to go out on the streets, you could become a prayer pastor.

Prayer pastors underpin all the work we do & are a vital part of Exeter Street Pastors.



## PRAYER AND POETRY CORNER

### PRAYER OF THANKS for Candlemas and the Presentation at the Temple

Dear Lord....

This is the shortest month, the snowdrop month! February brings those beautiful, hopeful little flowers, also called Candlemas Bells. Thank You, Lord, for the beauty and the hope.

Thank you for the reminder of when Jesus was presented at the Temple as a baby. Thank you, for Simeon recognising in that vulnerable baby the promised Saviour of all the world. This world surely needs messages of peace and hope.

Open eyes to see you and to know you. Open ears to hear your message of hope and reconciliation. Open hearts to receive your love and to share it, for the sake of all those who suffer in this world.

Amen

Based on a prayer by Daphne Kitchin



*Many churches use candles as part of worship.  
Many people use them at home to provide a focus for meditation.*

### **Flame of a Candle**

See the candle flame a-burning  
See its flick'ring, dancing light;  
See how it, the darkness spurning  
Burns throughout the darkest night.

Light of faith, of God reminding  
As His Spirit, long ago  
Lit the first apostles, finding  
Faith within the Spirit's glow.

Light of life – God's life eternal  
Won through Christ's atoning death  
Sparing us from Hell, infernal  
Granting us His living breath!

Light of hope, in God victorious  
For we know that He will win  
When we'll see His flames of glorious  
Vict'ry o'er the pow'r of sin!

Light your candle, kneel and praise Him  
Kneel and praise the Lord of Hosts;  
Let your prayers and praises raise Him  
Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

*By Nigel Beeton*



*....and an inspirational prayer attributed to Sir Francis Drake...*

### **Disturb us, Lord**

Disturb us, Lord, when we are too well pleased with ourselves,  
When our dreams have come true  
Because we have dreamed too little,  
When we arrived safely  
Because we sailed too close to the shore.

Disturb us, Lord, when  
With the abundance of things we possess  
We have lost our thirst  
For the waters of life;  
Having fallen in love with life,  
We have ceased to dream of eternity  
And in our efforts to build a new earth,  
We have allowed our vision  
Of the new Heaven to dim.

Disturb us, Lord, to dare more boldly,  
To venture on wider seas  
Where storms will show your mastery;  
Where losing sight of land,  
We shall find the stars.  
We ask You to push back  
The horizons of our hopes;  
And to push into the future  
In strength, courage, hope, and love.

*Attributed to Sir Francis Drake, 16th Century*

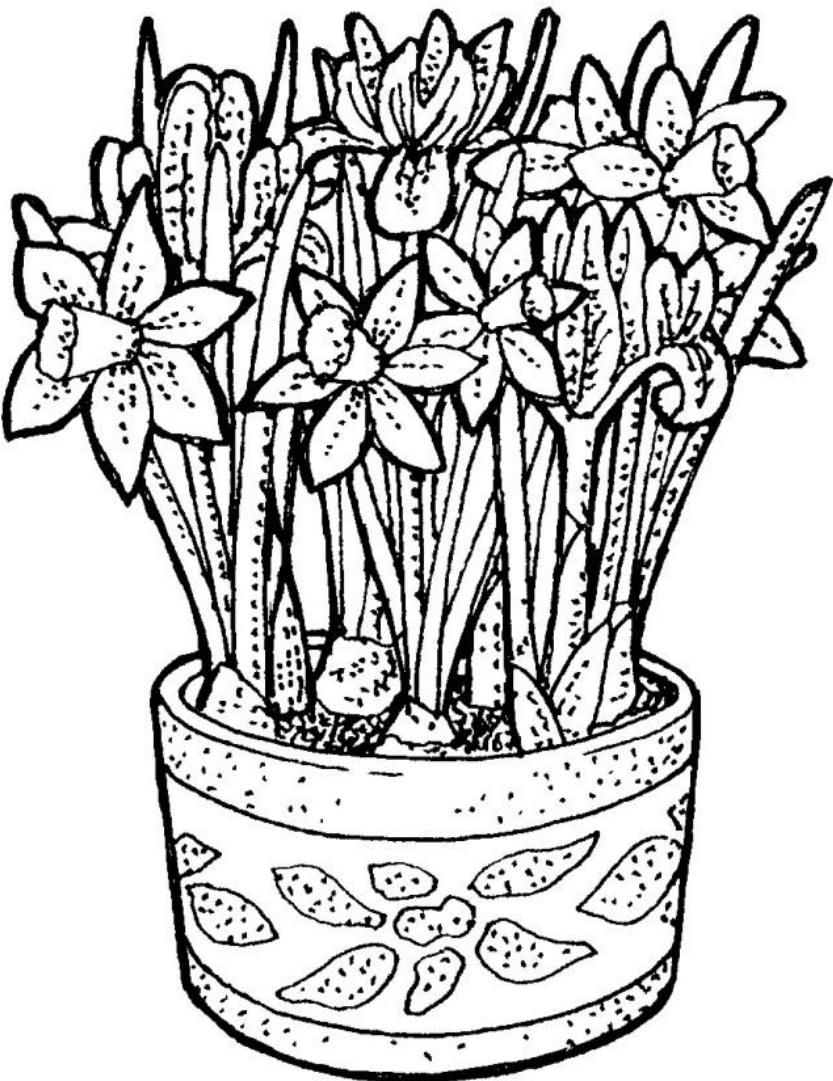


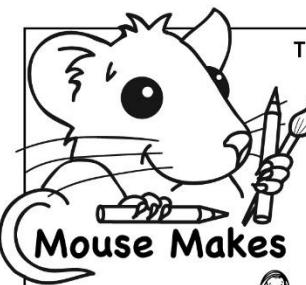
## CREATIVE & MINDFUL MOMENT

**Let your creative juices flow, add colour or pattern**

Bring your finished artworks to church

and share them with everyone!





## Mouse Makes

Read the story in  
Luke 4:1-13



### THE TEMPTATION OF JESUS

After Jesus was baptised in the River Jordan where did the Holy Spirit lead him to? v1

How many days was Jesus being tempted by the devil? v2

What did Jesus eat? v2

What did the devil tempt Jesus to turn a stone into?

What did Jesus say? v3-4

What did the devil offer Jesus if He worshipped him?

What did Jesus say? v7-8

### SECOND TEMPTATION THE DEVIL SAID:

"I will give you power and wealth if you worship me."

JESUS REPLIED:  
"Worship the Lord your God and serve only Him."

Read Deuteronomy 6:13

WE LEARN:  
Put God first  
Worship only Him.

1

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

JESUS • BAPTISED • RIVER • JORDAN • HOLY SPIRIT • LED  
WILDERNESS • DESERT • FORTY DAYS • HUNGRY • DEVIL  
TEMPTATION • STONE • BREAD • WRITTEN • SON • WORLD  
KINGDOMS • GLORY • WORSHIP • SERVE • GOD • HIGH  
JERUSALEM • TEMPLE • SON • JUMP • DOWN • LIFT • FOOT • LORD • TEST • LENT

### FIRST TEMPTATION THE DEVIL SAID:

"If you are God's Son order this stone to turn into bread."

JESUS REPLIED:  
"Man shall not live on bread alone."

Read Deuteronomy 8:3

WE LEARN:

Read the Bible  
Learn God's word.



What did the devil ask Jesus to do?  
What did Jesus say? v9

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



### THIRD TEMPTATION THE DEVIL SAID:

"If you are God's Son throw yourself down, the scriptures say God will take care of you."

JESUS REPLIED:  
"Do not put the Lord your God to the test."

Read Deuteronomy 6:16

WE LEARN:

God cares, trust  
Him do not test Him.



## WORD SEARCH

### The Presentation of Christ in the Temple/ Candlemas

Candlemas, 2<sup>nd</sup> February, comes exactly 40 days after Christmas. In New Testament times, Mary, like all good Jewish mothers, took Jesus to the Temple when he was 40 days old - when all baby boys made their first 'public appearance' - to present him to the Lord.



Candlemas	New	Boy	Jewish
Forty	Testament	First	Temple
Days	Important	Public	festival
After	Age	Appearance	presentation
Christmas	Baby	Mary	described
Light	world	candles	lighting

# The Big Bash!



JESUS OFTEN TOLD STORIES WITH HIDDEN MEANINGS



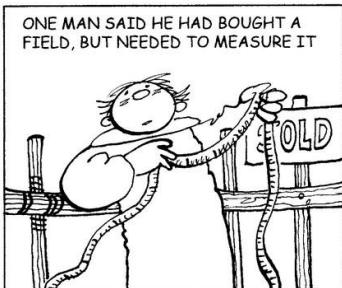
ONE STORY WAS ABOUT A RICH MAN WHO DECIDED TO HAVE A PARTY



HE SENT OUT LOTS OF INVITATIONS



BUT PEOPLE STARTED MAKING EXCUSES



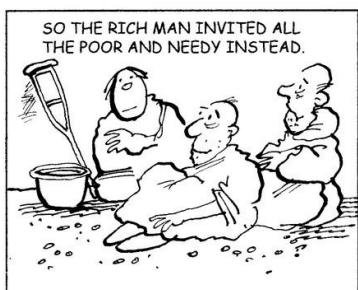
ONE MAN SAID HE HAD BOUGHT A FIELD, BUT NEEDED TO MEASURE IT



ANOTHER MAN SAID HE NEEDED TO TEST DRIVE THE OXEN HE HAS JUST PAID FOR



ANOTHER MAN SAID HE HAD JUST GOT MARRIED - AND HIS WIFE WOULDN'T LET HIM OUT!



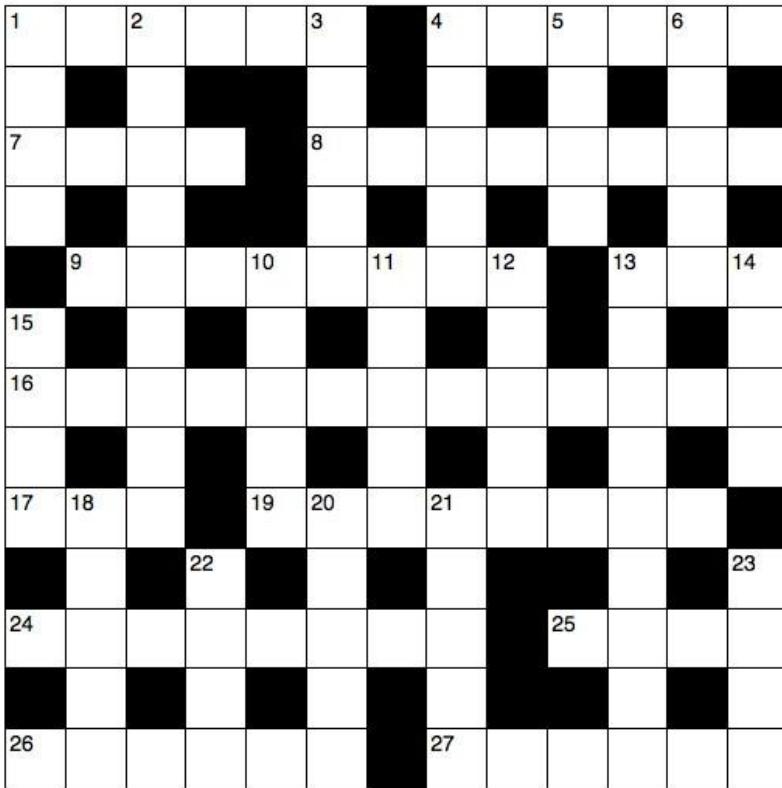
SO THE RICH MAN INVITED ALL THE POOR AND NEEDY INSTEAD.



YES - I CAN COME TO YOUR PARTY

THE PARABLE MEANS WE SHOULDN'T MAKE EXCUSES FOR NOT FOLLOWING JESUS.

## CROSSWORD



### Across

- 1 'If you love those who love you, what — is that to you?' (Luke 6:32) (6)
- 4 'They threw the ship's — overboard' (Acts 27:19) (6)
- 7 The first murderer (Genesis 4:8) (4)
- 8 He was the head Levite in charge of the singing when the ark of God was brought back to Jerusalem (1 Chronicles 15:22) (8)
- 9 Samson was noted for this (Judges 16:6) (8)
- 13 Solicit money or food from passers by (Acts 3:2) (3)
- 16 What William Booth's Christian Mission became in 1878 (9,4)
- 17 Alliance of Religions and Conservation (1,1,1)
- 19 'I will praise your name for ever and ever. — — I will praise you' (Psalm 145:1–2) (5,3)

- 24 Simon had (anag.) (8)
- 25 Desperate (Deuteronomy 28:48) (4)
- 26 Elisha witnessed the boy he was seeking to resuscitate do this seven times before opening his eyes (2 Kings 4:35) (6)
- 27 The belly and thighs of the statue in Nebuchadnezzar's dream were made of this (Daniel 2:32) (6)

## Down

- 1 'Before the — crows, you will disown me three times' (Matthew 26:75) (4)
- 2 Relating to the books of the Bible between Acts and Revelation (9)
- 3 'They have — the Lord out of the tomb, and we don't know where they have put him!' (John 20:2) (5)
- 4 Belief (5)
- 5 'Take the following fine spices: ... 250 shekels of fragrant — ' (Exodus 30:23) (4)
- 6 'Do not — Jerusalem, but wait for the gift' (Acts 1:4) (5)
- 10 A seer (anag.) (5)
- 11 'Even there your hand will — me' (Psalm 139:10) (5)
- 12 The wild variety was part of John the Baptist's diet (Mark 1:6) (5)
- 13 A non-Greek speaker who was looked down on by civilized people (Colossians 3:11) (9)
- 14 Famous 1950s musical whose characters included members of
- 16 Across, — and Dolls (4)
- 15 The province from which Paul wrote to the Corinthians (1 Corinthians 16:19) (4)
- 18 'He was standing in the gateway with a linen cord and a measuring — — his hand' (Ezekiel 40:3) (3,2)
- 20 'Today, if you hear his — , do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion' (Hebrews 3:15) (5)
- 21 The Jericho prostitute who hid two Israelite spies on the roof of her house (Hebrews 11:31) (5)
- 22 'And now these three remain: faith, — and love. But the greatest of these is love' (1 Corinthians 13:13) (4)
- 23 'God has numbered the days of your reign and brought it to an end' (Daniel 5:26) (4)

# SUDOKU (Medium)

Solution on Solutions Page

							7	2
					9	5		3
6	7			3	2	9		
9				1				
4	1	6				7	9	5
				6			1	
		3	1	8			4	6
2		7	4					
8	4							

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# Bible Bite

It can be read in the Bible in  
1 Samuel 2:11-17, 22-25, 3:1-21

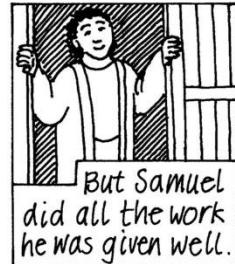
A short story from the Bible

As soon as he was old enough to leave his parents, Samuel went to live at God's temple in Shiloh, with the priest, Eli...

Eli's sons were also priests, but they helped themselves to what people had brought to give to God.



Eli talked to them about it. They ignored him.



But Samuel did all the work he was given well.

One night, after everyone had gone to bed, Samuel heard someone calling him.



He thought it was Eli, so he ran to him.



It happened again.

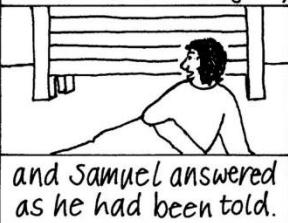


I didn't call. Go back to bed.

The third time, Eli knew it must be God calling Samuel.



God called Samuel again,



I told Eli his sons had done bad things, but he has not stopped them. Now, even being sorry will not make up for what has happened.

The next morning, Eli demanded to be told what God had said.



Samuel was afraid, but he told him.

He is God. He will deal with us as is right.

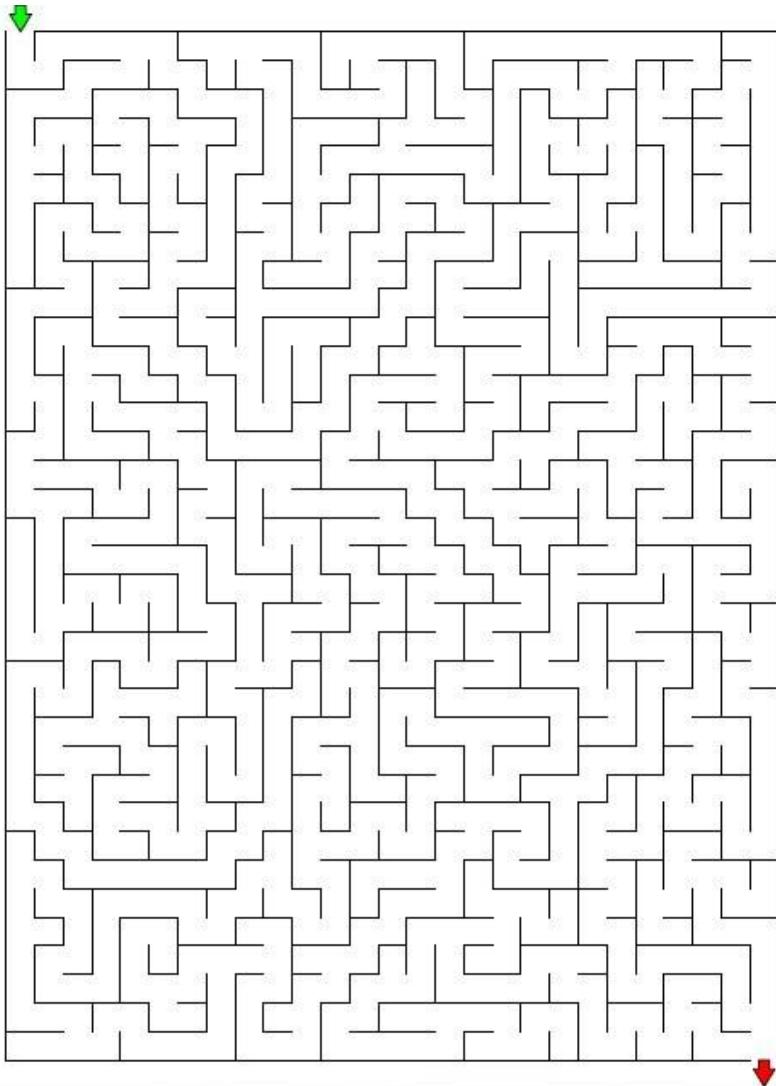


God continued to talk to Samuel. He became known throughout Israel.



## AMAZING MAZE

Start top left and exit bottom right



# DOES YOUR PARTNER...

OR A FAMILY MEMBER LIVING WITH YOU...

...cut you off from family & friends?

...make you feel ugly, undesirable or useless?

...threaten you to get their own way?

...blame you for their behaviour?

...never admit that they are wrong?

...force you to do things you aren't comfortable with?

...misuse the Bible to excuse their behaviour towards  
you?

1 in 4 people experience domestic  
abuse - do not suffer in silence

If you believe you or  
someone you know  
is at immediate risk  
of harm, dial **999**

If you are concerned about someone  
you know, but unsure what to do,  
contact the Diocesan Safeguarding  
Team: 01392 345909/ 345910/ 294969

If you believe you are experiencing domestic abuse and want to  
talk to someone, call the National Domestic Violence Helpline:  
0808 2000 247 or contact the Devon Domestic Abuse Support  
Service: 0345 155 1074



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## SOLUTIONS PAGE



3	5	9	6	4	1	8	7	2
1	2	4	8	7	9	5	6	3
6	7	8	5	3	2	9	1	4
9	3	5	7	1	4	6	2	8
4	1	6	3	2	8	7	9	5
7	8	2	9	6	5	4	3	1
5	9	3	1	8	7	2	4	6
2	6	7	4	5	3	1	8	9
8	4	1	2	9	6	3	5	7

## GOD IN THE ARTS

*This article, by Revd Michael Burgess, considers how the church building might provide a series of visual aids to spiritual meditation.*

### **'He gave us eyes to see them' - The Church Font**

Last month we stood at the doorway of a church in West Yorkshire. Open the door of that church or any church and the first thing to greet our eyes is the font. It marks the beginning of Christian life in the church. Many fonts have fine carvings of the seven sacraments that nourish the Christian. Others are octagonal in shape: a reminder of Noah and his seven family members saved in the ark from the Flood.

This month's font is a symbol of the ship sailing the seas of life. It is in St George's Church, Anstey, in Hertfordshire. Around the font are carved mermen - mythical, pagan creatures that belong to a pre-Christian age which the newly baptised is called on to renounce. When it was carved in the 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> centuries, baptism occurred within eight days of birth. Babies would be immersed three times into the waters of the font: dying to the old life symbolised by the mermen, and rising to new life, to be clothed in a white robe and given a lighted candle as a guide through life. They would then grow up in the church, moving from that west end through the upturned boat of the nave to the altar at the east end.



*'The famous mermen font at St George's Church, Anstey, by Michael Garlick, via Wikimedia Commons'*

That movement is a sign of the pilgrimage we are all called to make. Like a journey on the seas of this world, we may sail through tranquil

waters and peaceful days. There may be times when the skies are cloudy and the waters stormy. Martin Luther, when he was faced by struggles like that in his life, would say the words 'I am baptised' to strengthen and reassure himself. 'I am baptised' we can say as we travel in faith, knowing that there is always a light to guide and a goal that is sure and eternal.

*And here are 2 faces of the font at St David's Exeter (Photos SM)*



## QUOTES

Christianity is the total commitment of all I know of me to all I know of Jesus Christ. - *William Temple*

Great eagles fly alone; great lions hunt alone; great souls walk alone – alone with God. - *Leonard Ravenhill*

No man ever said, at the end of his days, 'I have read my Bible too much, I have thought of God too much, I have prayed too much, I have been too careful with my soul.' - *J C Ryle*

Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that. - *Martin Luther King Jnr*

Live as if you die tomorrow. Learn as if you live forever. - *Gandhi*

Happy moments, praise God.  
Difficult moments, seek God.  
Quiet moments, worship God.  
Painful moments, trust God.  
Every moment, thank God. - *Anon*

***And with Valentine's Day coming....***

Life has taught us that love does not consist in gazing at each other but in looking outward together in the same direction.  
- *Antoine De Saint-Exupery*

Oh, if it be to choose and call thee mine,  
Love, thou art every day my Valentine!  
- *Thomas Hood*



## SMILE LINES

### Hymns for Professionals

Dentist - Crown Him with many crowns  
Builders - The Church's one foundation  
Golfers - There is a green hill far away  
Librarians - Let all mortal flesh keep silent

### Church notices that did not come out quite right...

We apologise for the following typo in last Sunday's bulletin: 'Lunch will be gin at 12:15.' Please correct it to read '12 noon.' "

The Seniors group will have a picnic on Saturday. Each person is asked to bring either a friend, a vegetable, or a dessert in a covered dish.

Church Jumble Sale: All welcome. We can offer a gent's three-speed bicycle, and two ladies for sale, in good running order."



## DAYS OF NOTE FOR FEBRUARY

### **1<sup>st</sup> February - Brigid of Ireland, showing compassion and love**

Historical facts about this first abbess of Kildare (d.c. 525) may be scarce, but her 'Lives', written from the 7th century, tell many anecdotes and of miracles that over the centuries have become deeply rooted in Irish folklore.

Brigid came from a village near Kildare, of parents of humble origin, and is said to have been baptised by St Patrick. She became a nun at an early age. She is credited with founding the monastery of Kildare, a powerful influence for Christianity in Ireland.

The miracles attributed to Brigid show her to have been a woman of great compassion and generosity. There are stories of how she could multiply food, especially butter, for the poor.

Brigid's cult grew rapidly in Ireland, where it became second only to that of Patrick. In England, there were at least 19 ancient church dedications in her honour (the most famous is St Bride's Fleet Street). There is also St Bride's Bay, Dyfed, which underlines the strong connection between Irish and Welsh Christianity. St Brigid is patron saint of poets, blacksmiths, and healers. She is usually depicted with a cow lying at her feet, recalling her time as a nun-cowgirl.

### **8<sup>th</sup> February - Kew and the wild boar**

St Kew has nothing to do with gardens or the 'Q' of James Bond fame. This Kew lived in Cornwall in the 5<sup>th</sup> century. Her older brother was a hermit who felt his younger sister was not worthy even to visit his cell. But big brothers often underestimate their younger sisters. One day Kew's brother saw a wild boar charge out of the woods towards his sister; but Kew spoke to it in tones of such purity and sweetness that it immediately slowed down to a peaceful walk. Her brother was so shaken by this that he repented of his superior attitude. When he then spent time talking with his sister, he found her to be of "rare virtue and holiness". Other people thought so too, and after her death they decided Kew had been a saint, and should have the parish church named after her.

## **18<sup>th</sup> February – Ash Wednesday**

Have you ever done something that haunts you? That makes you feel restless and defensive every time you think of it? Why not put it behind you this month? Whatever your mistake has been, consider what the Bible has to say:

‘I have not come to call the virtuous, but sinners to repentance’ (said Jesus). (Luke 5.32)

‘Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon. (Isaiah 55.7)

‘Yet even now, says the Lord, return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; rend your hearts and not your clothing. Return to the Lord, your God, for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love.’ (Joel 2:12-13)

God is inviting you to come to Him this Ash Wednesday. Make the most of it and remember how the prodigal son was welcomed back by his compassionate father.

**The deadline for inclusion of  
articles for the next issue of  
New Leaves (March) is:**

**Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> February 2026**

Please send any information, articles or images you'd like to submit for inclusion in future issues to the editorial team at:

**[newleaves@stdavidschurchexeter.org.uk](mailto:newleaves@stdavidschurchexeter.org.uk)**

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Thank you to Graham Lerwill for organising the printing of this magazine – we very much appreciate his hard work.