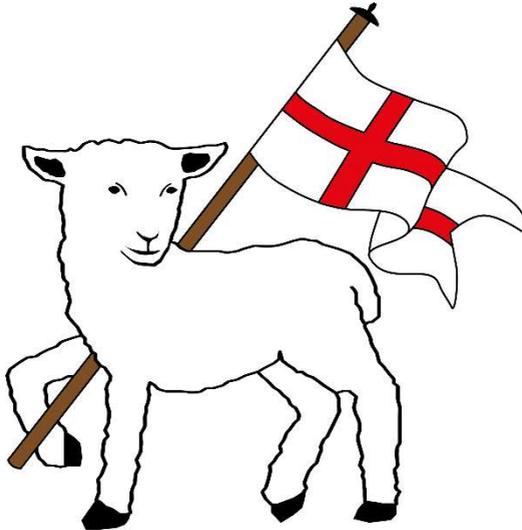


MARCH 2026

**The Parish of Kidmore End
& Sonning Common**

The Lamb and Flag



The parish magazine of

**St John the Baptist Church, Kidmore End
and
Christ the King Church, Sonning Common**

90p

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FROM THE RECTORY

Dear Friends

One of the great things about Lent is the music. As we draw closer to Holy Week, J.S. Bach's setting of the passion narratives from St Matthew, and from St John, really come into their own – though, of course, we can listen to them all throughout the year! Lent hymns, though, are a different matter, as we only hear and sing them during the season.

Some of my favourites: 'Forty days and forty nights' (Hymn 121 in our hymn book). Without fail, this hymn enters my consciousness as we approach Lent. It has a directness that really speaks to us about temptation, and about the fact that Easter is coming. What's more, we are not spectators, but rather participants in the story. *Keep, O keep us Saviour dear,/ ever constant by thy side;/ that with thee we may appear/ at the eternal Eastertide.*

And what list of favourite hymns would be complete without one by Charles Wesley? 'Jesu, lover of my soul' (Hymn 128) abounds in powerful imagery, not least that of water: water first as symbol of turmoil and threat (*Jesu, lover of my soul,/ let me to thy bosom fly,/ while the nearer waters roll,/ while the tempest still is high*); and then, more importantly, water as the symbol of salvation (*let the healing streams abound... Thou of life the fountain art*).

Finally, one by William Cowper (Hymn 131), in which words and music combine to bring a sense of peace and rest: *O for a closer walk with God,/ a calm and heavenly frame;/ a light to shine upon the road/ that leads me to the Lamb!* The road we are on takes us forty days through the wilderness, but because God is by our side, we need fear nothing.

I hope you continue to have a good Lent and may the music of this season strengthen our resolve to follow Jesus, the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

God bless

James

WHERE TO JOIN A SERVICE IN MARCH

Date	CTK	SJB	All Saints
1 March	09.30 Eucharist		09.00 Holy Communion BCP said
			18.30 Evensong
6 March	18.30 World Day of Prayer Service		
8 March	09.30 Eucharist		10.30 Sung Eucharist
	17.00 Second Sundays		
15 March	09.30 Eucharist		10.30 Peppard Praise Communion Service
22 February	09.30 Eucharist		10.30 Family Communion
29 March			10.30 Benefice Eucharist following a Palm Sunday procession

Please check the weekly bulletins in case any of the planned arrangements are changed. St John's Church will be closed until the completion of Phase 1 Project work later in the Spring.

WHAT'S COMING UP IN THE LECTIONARY IN APRIL?

With Palm Sunday on 29 March, the first days of April bring, Maundy Thursday on 2 April, Good Friday on 3 April, Easter Eve on 4 April, and Easter Day on 5 April. Mark the Evangelist, is celebrated on 25 April. There are not many lesser feasts and commemorations. However, among those that are set are, Anselm, Abbot of Le Bec, Archbishop of Canterbury, Teacher, 1109 on 21 April, George, Martyr,

Patron of England c. 304 on 23 April, Christina Rossetti, Poet, 1894 on 27 April, and Catherine of Sienna, Teacher, 1380, on 29 April.

THE RT REVD SARAH MULLALLY DBE WAS LEGALLY CONFIRMED AS THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY ON 28 JANUARY



Photo - Brendan Foster/Church of England

In a service at St Paul's Cathedral on 28 January, Sarah Mullally was confirmed as the 106th Archbishop of Canterbury. The confirmation of election is a legal ceremony and the Archbishop was able to take up her Primatial Cross and give the blessing at the service. The installation now takes place at Canterbury Cathedral on 25 March and during this service Archbishop Sarah will preach her first sermon as Archbishop. Between now and then Archbishop Sarah will pay homage to the King and meet with the leaders of Christian denominations and other faiths. She also gave the Presidential Address at the February General Synod. Her public ministry and public engagements will follow her installation.

Ahead of the confirmation of election, Bishop Sarah said, "It is an extraordinary and humbling privilege to have been called to be the 106th Archbishop of Canterbury. In this country and around the world, Anglican churches bring healing

and hope to their communities. With God’s help, I will seek to guide Christ’s flock with calmness, consistency and compassion. These are times of division and uncertainty for our fractured world. I pray that we will offer space to break bread together and discover what we have in common – and I pledge myself to this ministry of hospitality. I want us to be a Church that always listens to the voices of those who have been ignored or overlooked, among them victims and survivors of church abuse who have often been let down. I am committed to equipping the Church to be a kind and safe place that cares for everyone, especially those who are vulnerable, as we rise to the challenge of God’s call to justice, equity, peace and the care of creation”.

The Rt Revd Anthony Poggio, Secretary General of the Anglican Communion, said: “I give thanks for Bishop Sarah and the confirmation of her election as the Archbishop of Canterbury. As she prepares for her installation and public ministry this March, I assure her of our prayers and support. May God grant the Archbishop understanding and discernment as she works to serve the Member Churches of the Anglican Communion, foster bonds of friendship, and encourage them in sharing the Good News of the Christian faith around the world.”

THE ARCHBISHOP MADE AN OATH TO THE KING ON 4 FEBRUARY



Photo Aaron Chown/PA Media

Archbishop Sarah Mullally made an oath to acknowledge His Majesty to be Supreme Governor of the Church of England. The homage is undertaken by all diocesan bishops, in a tradition dating back to the reign of Queen Elizabeth I.

By custom, the Archbishop was accompanied by the Lord Chancellor, the Rt Hon David Lammy MP, and the Clerk of the Closet, the Rt Revd Richard Jackson.

Archbishop Sarah said: “It was a privilege to pay homage to His Majesty the King at Buckingham Palace. I give thanks for His Majesty’s deep Christian faith, demonstrated in his life of service to our nation and the Commonwealth. I was conscious today of having paid homage to the King’s late mother, Queen Elizabeth II, when I became Bishop of London. I am grateful for his support of the Church of England as I now begin this new ministry as the Archbishop of Canterbury.”

THE RT REVD SOPHIE JELLEY MADE HER MAIDEN SPEECH IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS ON 26 JANUARY

Bishop Sophie warned of rising divisions and urged national leadership on Holocaust remembrance and community cohesion.



The Rt Revd Sophie Jelley, Bishop of Coventry

The Bishop of Coventry, the Rt Revd Sophie Jelley, delivered her maiden speech in the House of Lords on 26 January, choosing the eve of Holocaust Memorial Day to reflect on the enduring importance of religious education, interfaith understanding, and the work of peacebuilding.

Bishop Sophie, who is of Jewish heritage, opened by expressing gratitude for the warm welcome she had received on joining the House of Lords and for the support of staff across Parliament. She spoke of growing up profoundly aware of the Holocaust, a reality never hidden in her own family, and one that shaped her lifelong commitment to building a more humane world.

Reflecting on her early education, Bishop Sophie highlighted the formative impact of studying for one of the first GCSE Religious Studies qualifications, guided by an

inspirational teacher who introduced Judaism, Christianity and Islam “without prejudice or favour”. This foundation led her to study Judaism at university, with a particular focus on literature emerging from the Holocaust.

Having been installed in Coventry Cathedral in June 2025, she spoke about the city’s long history of welcoming refugees and people fleeing persecution. She paid tribute to Coventry’s Jewish community, originally established by immigrant watchmaking families who “produced the best watches in the world” yet still endured antisemitism, including against its German-born Jewish mayor Siegfried Bettmann during the First World War.

The Bishop warned that antisemitism continues to affect Jewish families across the UK: “It is a source of sorrow to my soul that the antisemitism that caused such fear in our family continues, such that communities are having to be on constant alert, afraid for their children and for themselves. This cannot be right.”

She also drew attention to the challenges facing Holocaust education, noting that some schools have stepped back from marking Holocaust Memorial Day in recent years, praising a local church, All Saints, Bedworth, which on 26 January hosted its first local Holocaust Memorial Day event for the community and for children from three local schools.

The Bishop rooted her speech in Coventry Cathedral’s global peace and reconciliation ministry, founded immediately after the bombing of the cathedral in 1940. She described the continued work of the Cross of Nails community and recalled a recent visit by Frank-Walter Steinmeier, the President of Germany, who laid a wreath for peace in the ruins of the old cathedral.

Quoting from the Coventry Litany of Reconciliation, prayed daily at the cathedral, Bishop Sophie emphasised its call to confront the hatred “within us all”, not just in others. She urged peers and government to be vigilant about the power of language: “Words are our currency in this House, as they are in the wider world. Our words matter, and we can use words towards hostility or towards peace.” Concluding with a hopeful vision for the nation, she said: “May our children and the generations that follow be educated to live in peace, and may this nation find its honour and greatness in the work of peacebuilding and reconciliation today and for all our days to come.”

MOTHERS AND CHILDREN – A REFLECTION FOR MOTHERING SUNDAY – 15 MARCH

Whatever our childhood was like, it was formational. We learned from our earthly parents, good things ideally, although not everyone's childhood is great.

In the Bible, St Paul refers to the importance of up-bringing and of spiritual heritage. When he greets Timothy in his second letter to him, he calls him his 'Dear Son', praises his 'genuine faith' and then goes on: "You share the faith that first filled your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice. And I know that same faith continues strong in you."

Timothy's childhood had been rooted in the Old Testament scriptures that he had been taught by his mother and grandmother. Their example had set him on the right path, until he was old enough to choose for himself to follow Jesus. Physically, when we are young, we need nurturing by mothers and fathers. Spiritually it is the same. When we come to faith, we need spiritual mothers and father to help us grow into maturity as God's adopted children.

We also need spiritual sustenance: regularly reading the Bible, spending time in God's presence in prayer, and worshipping with the family of the Church. God – our heavenly parent provides our personal nurturing through prayer and the Bible, but He also gives us each other, to encourage and share our experiences of His faithfulness.

However imperfect our earthly upbringing was, God is a *good*, good Father, a perfect parent who will only teach us good things. And gradually, as the fruit of the Holy Spirit ripens in us, we will become more like Jesus. We will gain more of the family likeness!

Is there someone in your life who has helped you to grow spiritually? This Mothering Sunday, thank God for them. Is there someone your life whom you have 'mothered' or 'fathered' along the way? This Mothering Sunday, pray for them.

Parish Pump magazine resource

LADY DAY OR THE FEAST OF THE ANNUNCIATION – 25 MARCH

This beautiful event (Luke 1:26-38) took place in Nazareth, when Mary is already betrothed to Joseph. The Archangel Gabriel comes to Mary, greets her as highly

favoured, tells her not to be afraid, that she will bear a son Jesus, and that her elderly cousin Elizabeth is already pregnant (with John the Baptist).

The church calendar is never quite as neat as some would like it. To celebrate the Annunciation on 25 March does indeed place the conception of Jesus exactly nine months from His birth on 25 December, but the latter part of March almost inevitably falls during Lent. But the birth and death of Jesus are intrinsically linked – He was born to die and thus fulfil God’s purposes.

The Annunciation is a significant date in the Christian calendar – it is one of the most frequent depicted in Christian art. Gabriel’s gracious strength and Mary’s humble dignity have inspired many artists. Certainly, Mary’s response to the angel has for centuries been an example of good faith in practice – humility, enquiry of God, and trusting acceptance in His will for her life.

PEACEFUL MIND IN LENT

Lent is a time of prayer and inward reflection, when we take stock of where we are with God...with this in mind, the following may be helpful.

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.” *Matthew 11: 28-30.*

“I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.” *John 16:33*

“Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love Him.” *James 1:12.*

THE ARCHBISHOP OF YORK PROVIDES HIS REFLECTION ON ASH WEDNESDAY ON BBC RADIO 4

When we hear the latest story on the news of some ghastly human indignity or violence, it is all too easy to say to ourselves, ‘How can people behave like that?’

There is a danger here.

In saying this we might also start imagining that we are somehow better than others, more in control of ourselves, morally superior.

But isn't this the problem?

Once we start dividing the world up into the morally good (people like us) and the morally reprehensible (all the rest of humanity who do these shameful things) we are actually taking the first terrible step towards doing and saying the very things we find so frightful. For surely it is the denial of a common humanity that is the moral problem. This is where prejudice and hatred and violence begin. This is why some people can be objectified, abandoned, abused and ill-treated. Not believing people are the same as us is the justification for prejudice and then the excuse for violence.

Ash Wednesday tells us something else about ourselves, something that is both sobering and cathartic. We have all fallen short. We have all failed. We are all sinners in need of God's grace. 'You are all dust,' says the priest as the sign of the cross is marked with ash upon our foreheads, 'And to dust you will return.'

This sober reckoning of ourselves isn't depressing or life denying. It is liberating. Now, we can be kind, generous and merciful to each other because we recognise how much we need kindness, generosity and mercy ourselves. And in order to be set free from the far too easy illusion of our own superiority, we need someone to show us how to be human in a way that is kind, generous and merciful. We need someone who knows how entrancingly seductive temptation can be and what it is like to be human, and, yet is without sin.

This is who Jesus is for us. It is him we follow as Lent begins, learning again how to be truly human, being realistic about our sinfulness and our need of God's grace.

Lent prepares us for Easter, and we get Good Friday and Easter wrong if we just think that Jesus was killed by wicked people. This wasn't what happened. It was good people, the religious leaders and politicians and people like us who put Jesus to death.

And it is so-called good people as well as so-called wicked people who cause problems today.

So, when people say to me the Church is full of hypocrites, I always reply, ‘Yes, and there’s room for one more. Come and join us; we don’t pretend to be anything other than sinners taking the cure.’

Christians are not good people whose lives are morally superior, but ordinary people, with the same muddled motives as everyone else, and the same capacity to get it wrong. The difference is this: we acknowledge our need and have found a place – or should I say a person – who forgives. A person who shows us how to live. This is the treasure in heaven that Jesus urges us to seek. It is what Ash Wednesday is about. Resetting the compass of our humanity. Following Jesus. Knowing that we need him.

GOD IN THE ARTS – ‘HE GAVE US EYES TO SEE THEM’ – RAILINGS AND KNEELERS



St Nicholas Church, Compton, Surrey

St Nicholas’ Church, Compton in Surrey is a very fine building with an unusual double sanctuary on two floors at the east end.

Visitors’ eyes look up to see a gallery and an altar, and then at ground level is another altar surrounded by a glorious Norman arch with Jacobean railings and kneelers. As people enter this church, they realise with T S Eliot in *Little Gidding* that they are here ‘to kneel where prayer has been valid.’

With the liturgical reform of the last century, it is customary in many churches to stand to receive Holy Communion. Sitting and standing seem the norms now for worship, despite all the beautifully embroidered kneelers that many churches boast.

But open *the Book of Common Prayer*, and there is a multitude of rubrics on kneeling, whenever people gather for services. It is a posture that takes us back to those vivid images of Jesus praying on His knees in St Luke’s Gospel, Peter

kneeling to pray in Lydda, and the people kneeling on the beach with Paul in Acts 21.

The Psalmist invites us to kneel before the Lord our Maker, and Paul wrote to the Philippians, ‘At the name of Jesus every knee should bend.’

As we kneel at the Jacobean railings of St Nicholas, Compton or in our own churches, we are heirs to that tradition.

Thomas Cranmer * in the Prayer Book said that kneeling was a sign of gratitude for benefits received. But it is more than that. Buildings like Compton church bring us to our knees quite naturally as we gaze and wonder at the beauty and majesty of the building. Kneeling is a sign of reverence and adoration of the God who inspired such architecture of old and who feeds us now in the sacraments.

The Revd Michael Burgess, Parish Pump

SOME DATES FOR YOUR DIARIES

Date	Event
4, 11,18 and 25 March	Lent Study group meetings at CTK
6 March	World Day of Prayer service at CTK at 18.30
29 March	Benefice Eucharist at All Saints’ Church at 10.30 following a Palm Sunday procession
2 April	Maundy Thursday Benefice Eucharist at CTK – 19.00
3 April	Walk of Witness 10.00 CTK, Good Friday service at All Saints’ 14.00
4 April	Easter Vigil and First Eucharist of Easter Day at CTK – 21.00
17 May	Annual Parochial Church Meeting at 11.00 at CTK
21 November	Wine and Song evening at Kidmore End School; time to be advised
22 December	Parish Carol Service at SJB

THE SJB WEDNESDAY GARDENING TEAM IS BACK AT WORK



Sue, Frances, Jill and Shirley – photo courtesy of Caroline McAslan



Sue, Nigel, Frances, Jill, Shirley and Brian – Photo courtesy of Caroline McAslan



St John's Churchyard - an oasis of peace, tranquillity and gardening endeavours (and absence of rain) - Photo courtesy of Caroline McAslan

ST JOHN'S CHURCH RENOVATION PROJECT - PHASE 1 : UPDATE 2

As many know, Phase 1 involves rewiring, new heat and lighting, redecoration and repairs to the windows.

I've called this item Update 'No 2' – there will be series of these in the *Lamb & Flag* whilst the works are underway, and this article follows on from the item published on page 26 of February's magazine.

I am reporting regularly in the Pew Sheet, but I appreciate not everyone might see the Pew Sheet, so please excuse me if you might have seen the content of this article before. You are not going silly! On the basis that you can never communicate too frequently....

Our contractor E W Beard adopted the site on 9 February and have erected fencing around St John's porch. Scaffolders moved in on Wednesday 11 February, and Beard's team have prepared the interior with protective sheeting for any items

remaining in the building and not already placed in the (small) priest's vestry. By permission of the Diocese, the redundant organ pipes have been removed, making more space in the choir vestry. The choir vestry will be used by Beard management as an operational hub for the duration of the project.

The New Inn kindly granted the contractors an area to use for their vans/cars; this is clearly very helpful, given the added congestion there has been during the school week (school-wise, things quietened down during half term week from 16 February). I want to thank them for the gesture.

Jill Pound and her beaver team of distributors got together to deliver 150 leaflets to residents which set out to explain the works – if you are reading this as a recipient of one of these leaflets, thank you for your time reading it. We hope the leaflet gave you some positive context and you appreciated the information contained therein.

Beards and we are very conscious of disruption to daytime activity in a small rural village, but if there are any comments or feedback, please direct them to me.

During the tidying up of the church before works we found the yellow/gold server's seat (to the right as you face the altar in the sanctuary) had deteriorated badly and required replacement. We have a plan, and there will be a separate article on the progress to replace this piece of upholstered seating in April's magazine.

Oh, and in closing, just to mention the works at The Well have been formally notified to the District Council Planning authorities from whom the Parish Council requires consent to proceed with the repairs to that structure. I hope these might be progressed by the early summer.

Nick Room – Churchwarden

ARCHBISHOP SARAH MULLALLY'S FIRST PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS TO THE GENERAL SYNOD

Archbishop Sarah gave her Presidential address to the General Synod on 10 February. We are distributing this address with this month's magazine. You may be interested to read these early indications of her hopes for her ministry as Archbishop as well as the things which have nurtured her Christian faith as a nurse, priest, bishop and now archbishop.

CLERGY SUPPORT TRUST – 371ST FESTIVAL – ST PAUL’S CATHEDRAL – TUESDAY 12 MAY 2026

This long-running, colourful, and uplifting service takes place this year on 12 May at 17.00. It has been held continuously since 1655 with only two breaks, the blitz in 1940 and Covid lockdown in 2020. It includes a majestic procession of Bishops, Masters of the Livery Companies, representatives of the City of London, Stewards of the Festival and other dignitaries. This year’s visiting choirs, joining the choir of St Paul’s, will be from Blackburn Cathedral and St Albans’ Cathedral. Tickets are free and you can apply now via the Clergy Support Trust website.



Blackburn Cathedral junior choristers. Photo courtesy of Clergy Support Trust and Blackburn Cathedral.

Blackburn Cathedral Choir provides opportunity for membership from boys and girls from age 7. The Cathedral Choir thereby represents a unique free start to musical life for local children, most of whom have no musical experience when they begin their musical journey.

St Albans Cathedral Choir is regarded by many as one of the finest cathedral choirs in the country. In addition to the daily round of choral services, the choir takes part in concerts, tours, broadcasts and recordings. In recent years, the choir has visited the USA, the Netherlands, Italy, Denmark, Spain, Germany and Sweden. Their discography is extensive, with releases on the Naxos Records label of music by



St Albans Cathedral Choir. Photo courtesy of Clergy Support Trust and St Albans Cathedral

Mozart, Rutter, Poston, Michael Haydn, Mendelssohn and Mathias. Andrew Carwood, MBE, Director of Music at St Paul's, is delighted to lead the Festival service: "It is a rare and wonderful joy to work with such incredible choirs each year, and even more so when you are part of an almost unbroken line of choirs singing together, stretching back almost 400 years."

Clergy Support Trust is the largest and oldest charity focussed on the well-being of clergy and their families. The Trust, originally founded in 1655, provides confidential help for Anglican clergy and their families across the UK, Ireland, Isle of Man, and Diocese in Europe. The Trust is independent, inclusive, and impartial, and supports clergy from training through to retirement. In 2025, the Trust supported over 2,900 households with more than 7,000 grants.

GENERAL SYNOD BACKED SUSTAINABLE CHURCH FLOWERS MOTION

The General Synod backed a Diocesan Synod Motion from the Diocese of Worcester on 12 February encouraging churches and cathedrals to explore ways of arranging flowers that are both beautiful and environmentally responsible.

The Sustainable Church Flowers movement began as a grassroots initiative in the small rural parish of Harpley, Worcestershire, when volunteers started exploring how traditional flower-arranging methods could reflect the Church's commitment to caring for creation. It has since grown into a national and ecumenical network offering practical support to parishes, arrangers and clergy.

The motion does not introduce any rules or bans. Instead, it encourages churches, wherever possible, to consider using seasonal, locally sourced flowers and foliage, and to phase out single-use floral foam - a 1950s-era plastic product which cannot be recycled or composted, sheds micro-particles when handled, and contains the equivalent of up to ten carrier bags' worth of plastic per block. The Royal Horticultural Society has already prohibited floral foam at its shows, including Chelsea, since 2021.

The motion highlights long-established alternatives such as reusable vessels, twigs, moss, chicken wire, and metal "frogs", which for centuries enabled churches to create arrangements without single-use plastics. It also celebrates the creativity of volunteers and the opportunity to support local growers and community gardens.

Introducing the Synod Motion, the Rt Revd Martin Gorick, Bishop of Dudley said, "This motion comes from a village PCC wondering how they could make a difference, however small, in caring for God's creation.

"The Sustainable Church Flowers movement began around a kitchen table in the wild west of Worcestershire but is now a fast growing national and ecumenical movement for positive change, with florists, growers and above all wonderful church flower arrangers spreading the word and giving practical help and advice. Be part of it! This motion rejoices in flowers and foliage in church and encourages us to source them locally and seasonally wherever possible: remember Jesus on that hillside, rejoice in what's around you. Think simple, natural, beautiful."

The Sustainable Church Flowers provides online resources, tutorials and local ambassadors to help churches explore new techniques and celebrate the beauty of creation in worship.

LIVING IN LOVE AND FAITH – LLF

General Synod has given its backing to establishing working and consultative groups to continue work on same-sex relationships and marriage as the Church of England's Living in Love and Faith (LLF) process comes to a conclusion.

LLF was originally set up in 2017 to explore the Church's approach to identity, sexuality, relationships and marriage. It led to the introduction, following a key Synod vote in 2023, of public prayers of dedication, thanksgiving and asking for God's blessing for same-sex couples – known as the Prayers of Love and Faith (or PLF). The Prayers of Love and Faith are now in use as part of regular Church of England services but the House of Bishops confirmed last month that new special or 'bespoke' services for same-sex couples would need full formal authorisation under canon law.

On 12 February, Synod approved the Bishops' proposals to set up a Relationships, Sexuality and Gender Working Group which, among other things, will explore the approval process for bespoke services under canon law. The Working group will also explore what legislation would be needed to licence or ordain same-sex married clergy.

The group will have a remit to resource the House of Bishops on wider issues around Relationships, Sexuality and Gender, recognising the Church's ongoing call to share a Christian worldview of what it means to be human.

There will also be a Sexuality and Gender Pastoral Consultative Group to give pastoral advice to bishops and archdeacons on specific cases in the interim and facilitate consistent practice across the Church.

After an impassioned five-hour debate, Synod backed a motion recognising and affirming "the pain many have felt during the LLF process, especially LGBTQI+ people" and that the LLF programme will conclude by July, when Synod next meets.

The motion also “commends” the House of Bishops setting up the two new structures and thanks all those who took part in the LLF working groups for their “committed and costly work” in recent years.

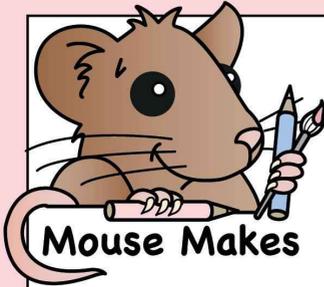
Opening the debate the Archbishop of York, Stephen Cottrell, said: “This is not where I want us to be, nor where I hoped we would be three years ago. And I want to acknowledge that wherever you stand on the LLF debate, I know that many of you are feeling angry and disappointed. There is a lot of pain and that pain cuts across so called ‘party lines’ or theological convictions held.”

Recognising that the Church remains “deeply divided” on questions of sexuality and marriage, he added: “The Bible tells us that when one of us is hurting, we all hurt. Therefore, let us continue to reach out to one another; to recognise the face of Christ in each other; to avoid scapegoating, belittling or rubbishing one another’s conscientiously held views. Let us continue to pray that the Holy Spirit will lead us into all truth.

“I give thanks that LLF has enabled us to commend prayers that are being used to bless faithful Christian people in same-sex relationships or civil marriage. I have met and spoken to some of them and rejoice that it has helped them feel more included in our Church. But I also recognise that we are not yet at a place where other developments can be made. We do now know what questions must be asked theologically, liturgically, synodically and legally to map a way forward, and we need to bring LLF to a close to create the space where this work can breathe.”

During the session, members also debated eight possible amendments to the motion which were all ultimately rejected and, all bar one of them, in all three Houses of Synod (Bishops, Clergy and Laity). The voting numbers on the motion were:-
Bishops – for 34, against 0, abstentions 2;
Clergy - for 109, against 62, abstentions 10; and
Laity – for 109, against 70, abstentions 9.

CENTRE SPOT FOR YOUNGSTERS



The Bible has many stories of mothers who had great faith in God. With their love, care, encouragement and prayers their children grew up to be great people of God.



Who saved her baby by putting him in a basket in the river?
Exodus 2:1-3 and 6:20

Who was 90 years old when she had her son Isaac?
Genesis 17:19



Whose prayers for a child were answered by God?
1 Samuel 1:20

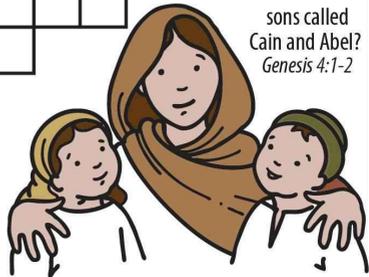
Who had two sons called Cain and Abel?
Genesis 4:1-2

Across

- 3. **Obed's** mother
Matthew 1:5
- 4. **John's** mother
Luke 1:57-60
- 7. **Reuben's** mother
Genesis 29:32
- 8. **Joseph's** mother
Genesis 30:22-24
- 9. **Jesus' mother**
Acts 1:14

Down

- 1. **Boaz's** mother
Matthew 1:5
- 2. **Solomon's** mother
1 Kings 1:11
- 4. **Timothy's** mother
2 Timothy 1:5
- 5. **Ishmael's** mother
Genesis 16:15
- 6. **Jacob and Esau's** mother
Genesis 25:21-26



Answer the questions then put them into the crossword

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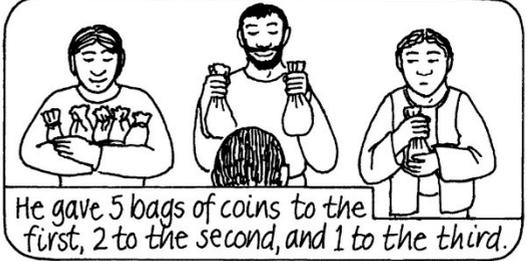
Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in
Matthew 25: 14-30

Jesus told a story to help his disciples to be ready for the end of time. 'A rich man was about to go on a journey...'

He gave his servants money to look after, depending on what they could do.

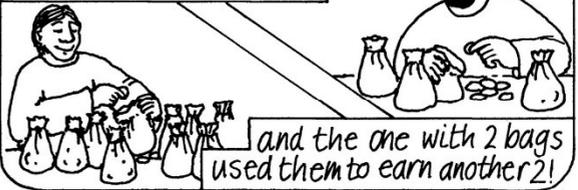


He gave 5 bags of coins to the first, 2 to the second, and 1 to the third.

As soon as he had gone, the first two servants started to work.



The one with 5 bags of coins used them to earn 5 more,



and the one with 2 bags used them to earn another 2!

The third servant dug a hole and buried his bag.



When the master came back, he called his servants to him...



The first two showed him they had doubled his money, and he was very happy with them.



You are a hard man who expects us to work. I was afraid so I just hid it.

If you knew what I expected, why didn't you do it?



Get out of here!



WORLD DAY OF PRAYER SERVICE AT CTK ON FRIDAY 6 MARCH AT 18.30

A final call for the World Day of Prayer service at Christ the King, Church. As previously mentioned, the Service has been prepared by the Christian women of Nigeria. These services are invariably uplifting experiences and, if you haven't been to this annual service before, you will be most welcome to join the cross-denominational congregation this year.



"I will give you rest: come." Image produced by a Nigerian university student, Gift Amarachi Ottah.

Nigeria continues to experience several problems including terrorism in the north-east of the country. The Foreign Office warns of a high risk of terrorism from two groups, Boko Haram, and ISWA, (Islamic State West Africa). Some of the attacks are directed toward Muslims who resist becoming involved with extremist ideology. But anyone can be a target including British Nationals. Aside from terrorism, there is a relatively high incidence of street and vehicle crime. Economic difficulties include over dependence on oil revenues, inflation, fiscal deficits and unemployment.

PARISH SHARE ASSIGNED IN THE HENLEY DEANERY BY BENEFICE WITH 2025 COMPARABLES

Benefice	2026	2025	% allocation
Goring and Streatley and South Stoke	£112,412	£110,517	18.18
Henley Holy Trinity	£ 50,046	£ 40,000	8.10
Henley St Mary and Remenham	£ 77,407	£ 75,002	12.52
Langtree Benefice	£138,525	£136,174	22.41
Nettlebed and Greys	£ 60,716	£ 58,639	9.82
Rotherfield Peppard and Kidmore End & Sonning Common	£ 85,186	£ 82,379	13.78
Shiplake w Dunsden and Harpsden	£ 93,888	£ 90,839	15.19
Deanery underallocation	£ 76,405	£ 89,295	
Totals	£694,585	£682,845	100.00

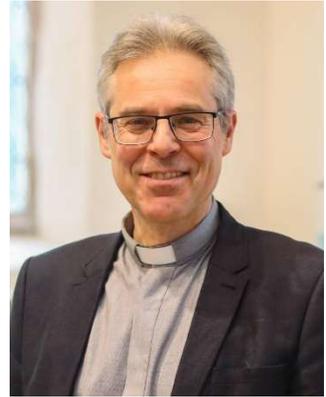
This table shows how the Henley Deanery has allocated the 2026 parish share amounts to each of the seven benefices. As with 2025, there is an underallocation of the amount assigned by the Diocese to assist the Henley Deanery to move towards meeting the full amount over an agreed period.

THE COLLECT FOR PALM SUNDAY

Almighty and everlasting God,
 who in your tender love towards the human race
 sent your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ
 to take upon him our flesh
 and to suffer death upon the cross:
 grant that we may follow the example of his patience and humility,
 and also be made partakers of his resurrection;
 through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
 who is alive and reigns with you,
 in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
 one God, now and for ever.

DURHAM HAS A NEW BISHOP AND ITS.....

The Venerable Rick Simpson. Rick has served as the Archdeacon of Auckland in the Diocese of Durham since February 2018. Ordained priest in 1994, he began ministry in the Diocese of Newcastle, serving his curacy at St Gabriel's Church, Heaton. He later became Vicar of Holy Trinity, Jesmond, where he led the church through a decade of significant growth in both numbers and discipleship.



The Ven Rick Simpson

Rick moved to the Diocese of Durham in 2006 to become Priest-in-Charge of St Brandon's, Brancepeth, helping the church flourish and strengthen its mission. He also served as Initial Ministerial Education Officer for both Newcastle and Durham dioceses, supporting curates and training incumbents. In addition, he was a member of the Wilkinson-Jay Response Group, contributing to the development of safeguarding practice within the Church of England.

He said: "I am humbled and delighted to have been called to be the Bishop of this diocese, which I love. My deepest hope is to be able to walk alongside and encourage our local Christian communities as they seek to both show God's love in action and help people to come to life-changing faith in Christ – and through this see our churches grow."

AND THE RT REVD SARAH CLARK IS TO BE THE NEXT BISHOP OF ELY



The Rt Revd Sarah Clark

Bishop Sarah is currently Acting Bishop of Durham and Suffragan Bishop of Jarrow in the Diocese of Durham. Educated at Loughborough University, she began her career as a civil servant in the Department of Employment before training for ministry at St John's College, Nottingham.

Ordained priest in 1999, she began her ministry in the Diocese of Southwell and Nottingham, serving her curacy at St James

Porchester before becoming Rector of the United Benefice of Carlton-in-Lindrick and Langold with Oldcotes. Bishop Sarah later served as Team Rector of the Clifton Team Ministry and was appointed both Dean of Women's Ministry and Honorary Canon of Southwell Minster. She was Archdeacon of Nottingham from 2014, before being consecrated Bishop of Jarrow in 2019 and subsequently taking on the responsibilities of Acting Bishop of Durham in early 2024.

Bishop Sarah says of her appointment: "I feel such a sense of joy, vocation and thankfulness to God about coming to the Diocese of Ely. I am deeply honoured by this opportunity to serve as your Bishop and I am so looking forward to joining you, getting out and about throughout the whole diocese, hearing your stories and learning from them and about the communities you love and serve.

KIDMORE END SCHOOL - A FOUNDATION GOVERNOR VACANCY

Kidmore End CE Primary School is looking to appoint a new Foundation Governor. A Foundation Governor is responsible for preserving the school's religious character, ensuring it operates according to its trust deed, and carrying out core strategic governance.

Kidmore End is a flourishing primary school which is guided by its vision: "Be courageous; Be strong; Do everything in love." (1 Corinthians 16: 13-14). We have a strong governing body which we are looking to strengthen further with this appointment. For further information please have a look at our website www.kidmore-end.co.uk or to find out more about this role, please email cog@kidmore-end.co.uk or revjstickings@gmail.com to arrange a meeting and a tour around the school.

WHERE DID THE HYMN, *RIDE ON, RIDE ON IN MAJESTY* COME FROM?

The scriptural reference for this Palm Sunday hymn is Matthew 21. 1 – 17, and as we are following Matthew's gospel this year in the 3-year Lectionary cycle, it's perhaps rather appropriate that we should reflect on this hymn.

The lyrics were written by Henry Hart Milman (1791 – 1868). He was born in St James, Westminster, London and his education at Eton College provided the foundation for an outstanding period of study at Brasenose College, Oxford. He was

awarded a BA in classics in 1813, and an MA in 1816. He rapidly gained a deserved reputation as a poet, and dramatist and went on to be regarded by many as one of the best ecclesiastical historians of his age. He took holy orders and following his ordination as a priest became vicar of St Mary's Reading in 1818. Shortly after this he wrote several hymns for Reginald Heber, rector of Hodnet, but later Bishop of Calcutta, to be included in Heber's hymnal, *Hymns Written and Adapted to the Weekly Church Services of the Year* published in 1827 after Heber's tragic death in India in 1826. Heber and Milman were friends and Heber was greatly impressed with Milman's hymns. Milman's ministry progressed to his appointment as dean of St Paul's Cathedral in 1849, a position he held until his death in 1868,

Ride on, ride on in majesty has drawn very favourable comment for Milman's ability to assemble words which link the tragedy of Holy Week with the triumph of Easter Day. The hymn is widely sung on Palm Sunday. It was one of the original hymns included in *Hymns Ancient and Modern* 1861. The musical editor, William Henry Monk selected the tune, *Winchester New* which supports the stirring, majestic tone of the hymn, The hymn tune is believed to have been brought to England from Germany by John Wesley and it has been significantly adapted from its original 1690 setting. Monk harmonised the tune for *Hymns Ancient and Modern* and the editors of the *English Hymnal* 1906 provided further changes to the harmonies. *Winchester New* is another one of those tunes that you can surely hum as you'll know that it is also the music setting for *On Jordan's bank, the baptists cry*.

It remains to add that there is an alternative music setting to the hymn with John Bacchus Dykes's tune *St Drostane*, composed in 1862. And if St Drostane (aka as St Drostan, or St Drustan) is not one of the saints you know much about, he was one of 12 companions who sailed to Scotland from Ireland with St Columba around 563AD. He is considered to have been one of the earliest apostles to Scotland and a significant missionary spreading Christianity among the Picts.

SHROVE TUESDAY – ' PANCAKES R US'

Shrove Tuesday was appropriately marked with pancakes offered at Christ the King this year by the ministry team of James, Sarah and Karen. Those attending were invited to indulge in bring and share toppings. And it was an enjoyable event before the start of Lent on Ash Wednesday when there was a benediction Eucharist with 'ashing at All Saints'.

SERVICES IN HOLY WEEK AND EASTER DAY

Date	CTK	SJB	All Saints
29 March			10.30 Sung Eucharist
2 April	19.00 Benefice Eucharist with feet washing		
3 April	10.00 Walk of witness		14.00 Good Friday service
4 April	21.00 Easter Vigil and First Eucharist of Easter		
5 April	09.30 Eucharist		09.00 Holy Communion (BCP)
			10.30 Sung Eucharist

DOG WALKERS NOW FACE UNLIMITED FINES IF THEIR PETS CHASE LIVESTOCK

As of the 18 March 2026, The Dogs (Protection of Livestock) (Amendment) Act 2025 will become law for England and Wales. This means that police officers can seize dogs which pose a risk of repeated attacks on farm animals. It also means that dog walkers now face unlimited fines if their pets chase livestock. Up until now, the maximum fine for worrying sheep, cattle and poultry was £1,000. But the fine is now unlimited, and the Act now protects llamas and alpacas.

Rachel Hallos, National Farmers' Union (NFU) vice-president, hailed the rule changes as "a huge step forward. This legislation will act as a real deterrent and will make a real difference to farmers and their livestock." Farm animals worth an estimated £2.4 million were severely injured or killed by dogs in 2023, up nearly 30 per cent from the previous year, according to figures from the insurer NFU Mutual.

AND A POLITE REMINDER TO DOG WALKERS COMING THROUGH THE CHURCHYARD

Please comply with the guidelines on page 40 of this magazine.

WHERE DID 'AFTERNOON TEA' COME FROM?

Do you take afternoon tea? Ever wondered where it started? The custom seems to date back to the mid-19th century, and the seventh Duchess of Bedford, Anna Russell. The Duchess got hungry at about 4pm each day, calling it “that sinking feeling”. As it was still four hours until dinner (at 8pm), she began to have sandwiches or a small cake with some tea. Her friends thought this was marvellous, and the idea spread quickly through (hungry) upper class circles.

Soon, it seems, everyone in England was looking forward to Afternoon Tea, and a great British tradition was born. Though, during the last century, the sandwiches and cake gave way to biscuits, still we reached for the teapot each afternoon. Not so much anymore, it seems. In the last five years, sales of tea and biscuits have dropped. Perhaps we are drinking coffee? The research was done by retail analysts Mintel.

Ed – in my early years (1974 -) of commuting from Reading to London and back I often caught the afternoon 16.48 train from Paddington to Cheltenham Spa. On leaving Paddington, the restaurant carriage steward used to make his way along the corridors pausing at each compartment saying, “seats for tea?” A different age methinks.

ROYAL SCHOOL OF CHURCH MUSIC LAUNCHES THE CHOIR PROJECT IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

The RSCM is delighted to be working with the Church of England on an initiative to help up to 200 parish churches across England establish or renew choirs for children and young people. Interest in sacred choral music is growing, with renewed enthusiasm for choral evensong and a campaign to recognise English sacred choral music as UNESCO Living Heritage. Cathedral choirs are thriving – reaching a record 207 in 2024 – yet many parish churches struggle to engage younger generations. In fact, half of Church of England choirs currently include no children.

The Choir Project aims to reverse this trend by placing music at the heart of mission and discipleship, offering young people meaningful participation, community and leadership through singing. Funded by the Church of England’s Strategic Mission and Ministry Investment Board, the programme will be delivered by RSCM, the Church of England’s official music agency.

Over three years, The Choir Project will:

- support up to 200 churches in diverse settings;
- engage around 2,400 young people;
- train 300 new choir leaders;
- mobilise 500 volunteers.

The programme draws on research showing that young people are more likely to remain active in church when they are given responsibility, intergenerational relationships and visible roles.

Its impact is already evident in places such as Loftus Parish near Saltburn, where starting a children's choir increased weekly participation from two children to up to eighteen, and led to a new choir in the local primary school.

Hugh Morris, RSCM Director, said: "Church choirs have long been one of the most natural and joyful ways for young people to encounter faith and develop confidence and belonging. This investment enables churches to renew that tradition and ensure a strong future for music ministry across all communities."

TIME TICKING BY IN MARCH 2026

300 years ago, Sir John Vanbrugh, architect and playwright died on 26 March 1726. He is best known for designing Blenheim Palace and Castle Howard.

250 years ago on 24 March 1776, John Harrison clockmaker and carpenter died. He invented the first marine chronometer which enabled sailors to calculate longitude at sea.

150 years ago on 10 March 1876 Alexander Graham Bell made the world's first telephone call. He spoke to his assistant Thomas Watson summoning him for help after spilling acid in his laboratory. His message was, "Mr Watson, come here, I want you."

100 years ago on 30 March 1926, the Swedish businessman, Ingvar Kamprad was born. He founded IKEA at the age of just 17. He died in 2018.

80 years ago on 25 March 1946 London Airport opened; it's now known as Heathrow Airport. It now covers 4.74 square miles and served over 84 million passengers between March 2024 and February 2025.

75 years ago on 15 March 1951, Dennis the Menace first appeared in the children's comic, the *Beano*.

70 years ago on 23 March 1956, Pakistan became the world's first Islamic state.
40 years ago Queen Elizabeth II signed the Australia Act on 3 March 1986 which severed Australia's legal ties with Britain and conferred full independence.
30 years ago on 13 March 1996, the Dunblane School massacre took place claiming the lives of 16 children and 2 teachers. As a result private ownership of handguns was banned in the UK.
20 years ago on 1 March 2006, the Senedd – the National Assembly for Wales debating chamber was officially opened by Queen Elizabeth II in Cardiff.
20 years ago on 21 March 2006 the online social networking/micro-blogging service Twitter was developed. Its website went live in July that year. Since then Elon Musk acquired the service and it's been renamed X.

SPRINGTIME, CURIOSITY AND THE THEOLOGY OF SCIENCE

By Dr Ruth M. Bancewicz – Church Engagement Director at the Faraday Institute of Science and Religion, Cambridge

When I was nearly three, I knocked a bucket of tadpoles all over the patio. Those unfortunate creatures must have been collected to educate my brother and me on where frogs came from, but a toddler can't just stand by and watch. Can I see up close? Or maybe I was 'helpfully' moving it to another place. I just remember doing



Tadpole by Miika Silfverberg, Vantaa, Finland – Wikimedia Commons

something I shouldn't have done, and tadpoles on the ground. I was sad that I wouldn't get to see those creatures grow up.

I might have been great at destroying things when I was a child (my family would probably say I still am), but I absolutely love watching living things up close. The more I learn, the more my sense of wonder grows. For a tadpole to become a frog, large sections of its gut, salivary glands and muscles must die, as well as the gills. The cells in those tissues are programmed to curl up and disintegrate and are then swallowed up by a specialised kind of white blood cell. Legs grow from small sacs of cells on the tadpole's body, and one of my textbooks

says that ‘The nervous system is also remodelled’ – which I suspect is a bit of an understatement.

This knowledge removes a little of the mystery of how a tadpole turns into a frog, but there is plenty more to discover. These few details also reveal the cleverness of the process. Metamorphosis is surprisingly common in the animal kingdom. How is that an efficient way to grow up, or is efficiency not the most important thing for an animal?

Scientists are essentially grown-ups who are still very much in touch with their inner two-year-old. They refuse to stop asking questions, even when finding an answer becomes decidedly more awkward than opening a textbook.

Many scientists are people of faith, and this also drives their questioning. They believe that God created a world that was very good, that the purpose of all Creation is to praise Him, that we are made in God’s image, and that we are tasked with looking after Creation. So, Christians, of all people, should be enjoying and investigating our surroundings. These are the bones of a theology of science which serves some of us very well and keeps us looking into things like buckets of frogs – that is, until a two-year-old comes and knocks them over.

CIRDIC – CHURCHES IN READING DROP IN CENTRE

Please continue to support the vital work of CIRDIC with donations; there is a box at Christ the King, and a waterproof box outside the South side of St John’s. CIRDIC is now interested in bedding (sheets and pillow cases) as well as sleeping bags.

Clothing is also helpful, principally medium size for men, including underwear and socks; for ladies the preferred sizes are 8,10 and 12 and including underwear and socks. Toiletries should include, shower gel, deodorant, body cream, razors, shaving cream, toothpaste and toothbrushes. And towels.

With food items, tinned items: meat, fish, vegetables, fruit, rice pudding, custard. Jars of peanut butter, chocolate spread, marmite. And tomato ketchup, brown sauce, mustard, salad cream are welcome. Also instant coffee, sugar, biscuits and marmalade are very welcome.

A. B. WALKER

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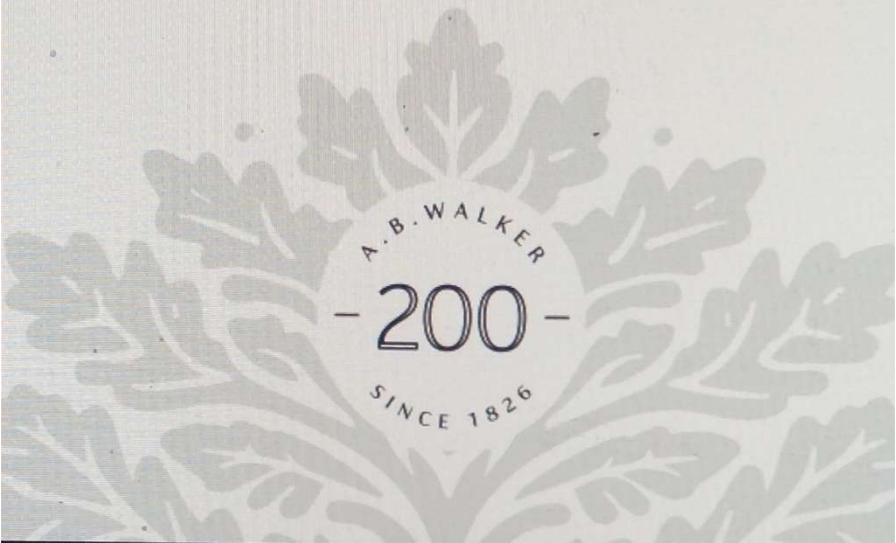
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Nick Room – 07973 513883

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Magazine articles	Please send to Allen Harris - the deadline is 22nd monthly or a little before if the magazine is full.	AHa3588066@aol.com
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WALKING YOUR DOG IN THE CHURCHYARD

We ask you politely to:

PLEASE keep your dog on the lead or under control

AND clear up any mess it makes.

Children walk through the Churchyard to and from School;
and a working party tends the Churchyard every Wednesday.

PARISH DIRECTORY

The Parish Directory is omitted from this online accessible version of the magazine. This is to comply with General Data Protection Regulations.

Kidmore End & Sonning Common Parochial Church Council is a registered charity. The Charity Commission registration number is 1209778.

SERVICES AND PRINCIPAL SERVICE LECTIONARY

Date	St John's	Lessons	Christ the King
1 March – Second Sunday of Lent		Genesis 12. 1 – 4a John 3. 1 - 17	09.30 Eucharist
6 March		Special lessons	18.30 World Day of Prayer Service
8 March – Third Sunday of Lent		Exodus 17. 1 – 7 John 4. 5 - 42	09.30 Eucharist
		Special lessons	17.00 Second Sundays
15 March – Mothering Sunday – Fourth Sunday of Lent		Exodus 2. 1 – 10 Luke 2. 33 - 35	09.30 Eucharist
22 March – Fifth Sunday of Lent (Passion Sunday)		Ezekiel 37. 1 – 14 John 11. 1 - 45	09.30 Eucharist
29 March – Palm Sunday (Benefice Eucharist at All Saints' at 10.30)		Isaiah 50. 4 – 9a Matthew 27. 11 - 54	

St John's Church is undergoing project works and as a result, the church building will remain closed until the work is completed in the Spring.

The lessons are those recommended in the Common Worship Lectionary for the Sunday principal service, and in the case of the Evensong service, the lessons are those recommended in Common Worship Second service (Evening Prayer). Lessons may be varied for special services, or at the discretion of the Minister.

Services at All Saints'

1 March – 09.00 Holy Communion (BCP said), 18.30 Evensong

8 March – 10.30 Sung Eucharist

15 March – 10.30 Peppard Praise Communion Service

22 March – 10.30 Family Communion

29 March – 10.30 Benefice Eucharist preceded by a Palm Sunday procession