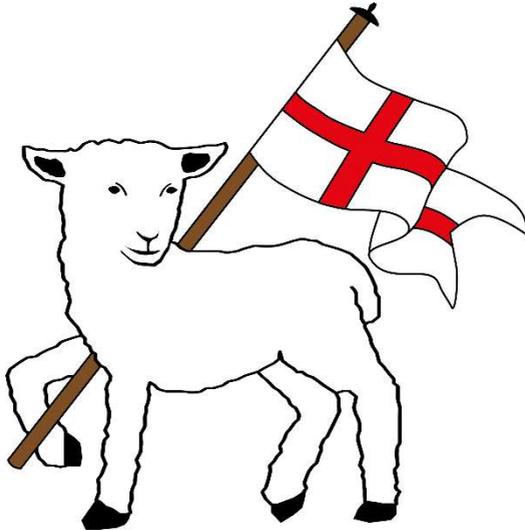


APRIL 2026

**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

CONTACTING THE PARISH, CLERGY AND CHURCH OFFICERS

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Mrs Jo Winch	Telephone Email	0118 972 1383 rks.benefice@gmail.com
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Revd James Stickings	Telephone Email	07522 042735 revjstickings@gmail.com
James normally takes Mondays off		
Associate Priest		
Revd Sarah van der Watt	Telephone Email	07508 898515 revsvdwatt@gmail.com
Sarah is available to contact on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Sundays		
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Frances Brewitt-Taylor	Telephone Email	0118 948 2743 francesbt@hotmail.com

The parish website can be found on <https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/166>

FROM THE RECTORY

Dear Friends

Just a brief greeting from me this month to say: Happy Easter!

I shall borrow the words of the Paschal Homily of St John Chrysostom, which is read aloud every Easter in Orthodox churches:

O death, where is your sting?

O hell, where is your victory?

Christ is risen, and you are cast down!

Christ is risen, and the demons are fallen!

Christ is risen, and the angels rejoice!

Christ is risen, and life is set free!

Christ is risen, and the tomb is emptied of its dead.

*For Christ, having risen from the dead,
is become the first-fruits of those who have fallen asleep.*

To Christ be glory and power forever and ever. Amen!

May God bless you richly this Easter season and may the months to come be a time of renewal in the Holy Spirit for our churches and our communities.

God bless

James

MA IN CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALITY

On Saturday 14 March, a glorious spring day, I graduated from Sarum College with an MA in Christian Spirituality from the University of Winchester.



This was the culmination of three years of part-time study. Mostly this was done at home, but in the first two years there were various ‘Study Weeks’: time spent at Sarum College from Monday to Thursday. Each Study Week involved a particular aspect of Christian Spirituality.

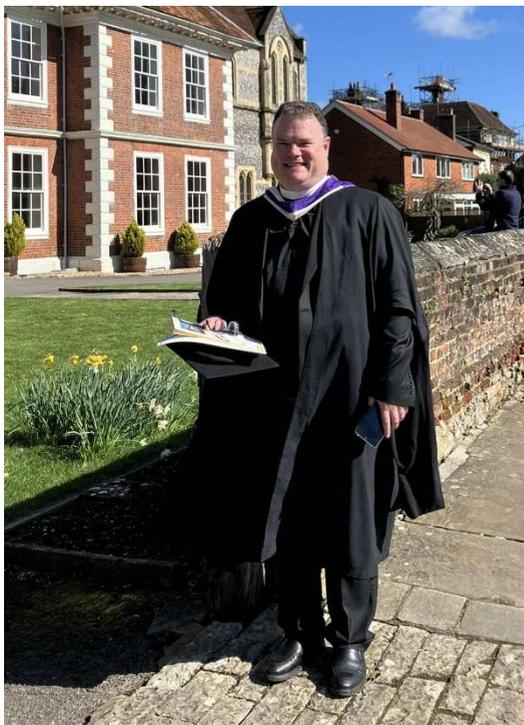
In my MA I focused mainly on what is called ‘mysticism,’ namely the idea that the presence of God can be experienced directly and personally by the Christian believer. I studied some early Christian mystics, including Evagrius of Pontus (fourth century), as well as the great medieval English work *The Cloud of Unknowing*, which contains the wise words that God cannot be known through reason, but that God *can* be known through love. Fast-forward to modern times, and I was inspired by two twentieth-century mystics: Howard Thurman (1899-1981), a prolific American writer, preacher, and teacher who was (among other things) an important mentor for many in the US Civil Rights Movement; and Dag Hammarskjöld (1905-1961), the second Secretary General of the UN, and author of the remarkable mystical text, *Markings*.

My third year was spent researching and writing an 18,000-word dissertation. I devised the question, ‘How did the spiritual currents of the 1960’s and 1970’s shape Centering Prayer?’ Centering Prayer is a wonderfully simple and profound form of meditation

which was devised in the 1970s and which drew on the neglected tradition of Christian contemplation: silent, wordless, imageless dwelling in the loving presence of God. In my dissertation I examined how the founders of Centering Prayer were responding to the needs of their own time - which is maybe not so different from 2026?

I found the experience of doing this MA transformative. As Sarum College is in the cathedral close at Salisbury, I was able to bask in the beauty of the Cathedral at Evensong during the Study Weeks. It was wonderful being part of a collegiate community; there was a real sense of togetherness, not least because many of the people doing the MA were clergy trying to fit their study into a busy ‘day job.’ I for one have found that studying has given me energy and inspiration in all areas of my life and ministry, and I’m even hoping to run an introductory session on Centering Prayer soon (watch this space!).

James



THE GOSPEL APPOINTED FOR EASTER DAY – JOHN 20. 1 – 18

The Resurrection of Jesus

1 Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. 2 So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, “They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.” 3 Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went toward the tomb. 4 The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. 5 He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. 6 Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, 7 and the cloth that had been on Jesus’s head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. 8 Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed, 9 for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. 10 Then the disciples returned to their homes.

Jesus Appears to Mary Magdalene

11 But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb, 12 and she saw two angels in white sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. 13 They said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping?” She said to them, “They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him.” 14 When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. 15 Jesus said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?” Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, “Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.” 16 Jesus said to her, “Mary!” She turned and said to him in Hebrew, “Rabbouni!” (which means Teacher). 17 Jesus said to her, “Do not touch me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’” 18 Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, “I have seen the Lord,” and she told them that he had said these things to her.

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WHERE TO JOIN A SERVICE IN APRIL

Date	CTK	SJB	All Saints
2 April	19.00 Eucharist with feet washing		
3 April	10.00 Walk of Witness		14.00 Good Friday Service
4 April	21.00 Easter Vigil & First Eucharist of Easter		
5 April	09.30 Eucharist		09.00 Holy Communion (BCP)
			10.30 Sung Eucharist
12 April	09.30 Eucharist		10.30 Sung Eucharist
			18/30 Evensong
19 April	09.30 Eucharist		10.30 Peppard Praise Communion
26 April	09.30 Eucharist		10.30 Family Communion

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 MAY?

Ascension Day falls on 14 May and Pentecost is on 24 May. Trinity Sunday is 31 May. Some other feasts get transferred. St Matthias the Apostle is celebrated on 15 May and the Visit of the Blessed Virgin Mary to Elizabeth moves to 1 June.

Philip and James, Apostles are marked on 1 May, Julian of Norwich, Spiritual Writer c 1417 is commemorated on 8 May. Other commemorations include,

Dunstan, Archbishop of Canterbury, Restorer of Monastic Life, 988, on 19 May, Alcuin of York, Deacon, Abbot of Tours, 804 on 20 May, the Venerable Bede, Monk at Jarrow, Scholar, Historian, 735, on 25 May, Augustine, first Archbishop of Canterbury, 605, on 26 May, and Josephine Butler, Social Reformer, 1906, on 30 May.

In the Book of Common Prayer, Rogation Sunday is celebrated on 10 May, and if you are ready for a walk that day you can indulge in the ancient ceremony of 'beating the bounds.'

WHAT'S GOING ON INSIDE ST JOHN'S?

As you know this first Phase covers rewiring, heating, lighting, redecoration and repairs to stained-glass windows. Our contractor, Beards, have been instructed to make good the cracks above the sanctuary windows and then replaster and redecorate these areas. The other cracks in various places have been filled, and a base coat of paint can now be applied. Work was due to start on this matter in the last few days of March. The electricians have begun their work to remove old trunking, cables and sockets from locations around the building. PCC approved a new covering material for the server's seat in the sanctuary, and it is hoped the curtain behind the altar and the curtain separating the organist from the congregation can be done in the same material to give a pleasing aspect to the whole area from the choir stalls up to the reredos. Overall, the project is on schedule despite several setbacks, and we anticipate re-occupation in May. A concert and flower festival is planned around the time of the Patronal Festival. Please look out for further details. As costs are more than what was budgeted (particularly as the Government has closed the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme early), donations towards the work will be very gratefully received to avoid the parish having to resort too extensively into meagre reserves. Please see the Treasurer if you can help!

Nick Room - Churchwarden and Treasurer

LEAD PLANTER

Michael and Felicity Cooper have very kindly arranged for Plumbers Livery Company members to fabricate a lead planter for the church. At present this item is in store at Christ the King, but once the SJB phase 1 project has been completed the planter will be relocated to a spot in the churchyard on the south side of the church. This has been possible due to Michael's connections with the Worshipful Company of Plumbers (one of the most ancient of the Livery Companies of the City of London) for which we are especially thankful.

PHASE 1 PROJECT WORK IN PROGRESS AT ST JOHN'S



Scaffolding in place at the west end of the Nave



Scaffolding at the Chancel steps and the Chancel looking towards the altar and east window.

IN LENT THE ARCHBISHOP OF YORK REFLECTS ON ST JOHN 3. 1 – 17

‘For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.’

Visiting the US a few years ago, travelling in civvies, and probably - after an early start and a long flight - looking somewhat dishevelled, I was questioned at immigration about the purpose of my visit and I explained that I was a Christian Minister coming to preach and teach in their country as a guest of the Episcopal Church. ‘Are you?’ said the immigration officer, rather suspiciously.’ So, tell me,’ he asked, ‘Can you recite, John 3.16.?’

Well, fortunately, I passed the test.

I know a few other verses of scripture by heart as well. But this one, John 3.16-17, is certainly one to have up your sleeve and on your heart. Because these few words from St John’s gospel are not only, probably, the most famous words in the whole of scripture, but in a single verse they seem to encapsulate the whole meaning of the Bible and the very heart of the Christian faith.

God so loved the world.

Please note, not the Church. Not even the human race. And certainly not just some chosen part of the human race, or only those whose behaviour measures up and passes muster. No, he has come to save sinners. And that means all of us. And his message is for every person and for the whole creation.

And all sorts of people come to him and in all kinds of need, and for all sorts of reasons. In John’s gospel, these words are spoken to Nicodemus, a Pharisee, who sees something in Jesus that he believes could be the fulfilment of Israel, but troubled by Jesus, and troubled about how his coming to Jesus will be viewed by others, he comes secretly at night. After all, if he is wrong, he has a lot to lose.

However, I can't help but notice that throughout the gospels, those with nothing to lose, the lonely, the heartbroken, the sick, and the outcast will come to him so much more openly. They instinctively seem to know that his message is one for everyone,

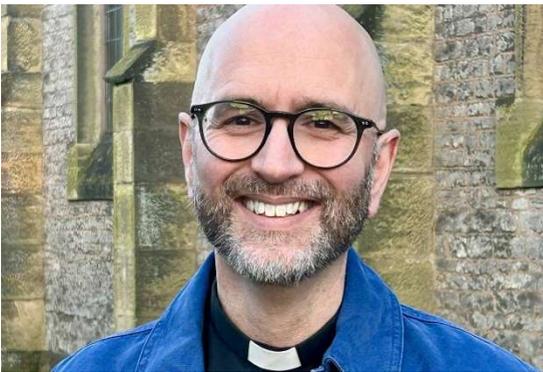
for them, and for the whole of life, that he hasn't come to condemn, like everyone else does, he has come to save.

Which also means in this season of Lent, wherever we are, whatever our need, we should come openly. We should try to be a little, no, a lot less, judgmental. We should come knowing our need of God. We should come with penitent hearts - sorry for our sins, but deeply trusting in the goodness, hopefulness and salvation of God that is made known to us in Christ.

I don't know whether you know any bit of scripture off by heart? A friend of mine has recently committed himself to learning great chunks. And since it is good to have some bits of the Bible inside us and at hand, and since we live in such a noisy, disturbing world where there are so many other ear worms, distractions and temptations vying for our attention, then this verse from St John's Gospel might be a good one to start with. 'For God so loved the world...' Please learn and fill in the rest yourself.

Amen

ST GERMANS, IN THE TRURO DIOCESE, HAS A NEW BISHOP AND ITS.....



The Reverend James Treasure.

James was ordained priest in 2017 and was previously a leader in a free church before his move back to the Church of England. From 2018, he served as Vicar and Resource Church Leader at St Thomas and St Luke's in Dudley. In 2023, James was also appointed Team Rector for the wider Dudley parish. In this role, he maintained responsibility for four additional churches while continuing his leadership at St Thomas and St Luke's.

James said: "I am absolutely delighted to be joining the Diocese of Truro, the land of the saints, at this exciting time and cannot wait to discover all that God is doing amongst you! I am especially looking forward to discovering more of the beauty of

the Church across our diocese - in its worship, its communities, and its faithful presence in every place.”

James will be consecrated at St Paul’s Cathedral, London on 1 May.

AND PENRITH IN THE CARLISLE DIOCESE HAS A NEW BISHOP TOO – THE REVD CANON DR MICHAEL LEYDEN

Michael has been the founding Dean of Emmanuel Theological College since 2021. He grew up on council estates on Merseyside before studying theology and philosophy at Oxford University and later gaining a PhD in theological ethics at the University of Chester. He has taught in universities and theological education institutions for 20 years, including alongside parochial ministry.



Following ordination, Michael served his curacy in the parish of Rainhill St Ann’s in the Diocese of Liverpool and then as vicar in the Benefice of Weston with Shavington in the Diocese of Chester. He has worked on national Church projects to develop more diverse training pathways and recently appeared in a Church of England film to support vocations

for those from working-class backgrounds.

Michael said: “It is such a joy to be nominated to become the next Bishop of Penrith, and I am really looking forward to getting to know the people of the Diocese and the county. I already know the Church is alive and well in Cumbria, and that so many of our new and inherited worshipping communities – led by faithful ministers – are motivated by Christ’s love for all people to be a positive, constructive, and creative presence in their neighbourhoods. I am excited to play my part in nurturing and supporting those and, under Bishop Rob’s leadership, working with colleagues from across the various traditions of the Church as we step toward the future together.”

“There is no doubt that God calls people from a wide range of social, economic, educational, and ethnic backgrounds into ministry. I’m excited to be working with priests and lay leaders to help God’s people identify and celebrate their gifts, and to offer training and support so they can use them effectively – especially those with

potential leadership gifts who might otherwise have discounted themselves. Jesus Christ can do all sorts of things with all sorts of people – and that’s my story too!”

Michael will be consecrated at York Minster on Thursday 30 April.

NEWS FROM KIDMORE END SCHOOL

Signs of Spring are all around and school has been a hive of energy, excitement and learning. There have been trips and visits, celebrations of music and books and sports events, all enriching and adding to our packed, engaging curriculum.

Writing has been a focus at Kidmore End CE Primary School for the past year, and it is wonderful to see the progress the children are making. Their writing is inspired by rich texts which pull out wonderful questioning and deeper thinking about a range of topics such as global warming, the history of Pompeii or dystopian societies. The writing on display around the school is impressive and inspiring and has caught the eye of the creators of our writing scheme – Literacy Tree, who have featured our writing in their social media.



Music has always had a very special place in our hearts at Kidmore End. In February we were lucky enough to join hundreds of other pupils singing at Wembley Arena in the World’s Largest Children’s Choir – Young Voices. We took 17 pupils from our school choir from years 3 - 6 and had the most wonderful time singing songs from Wicked, a Disco Medley and even a Medley of sea shanties. The pupils, and

their parents thoroughly enjoyed the experience and cannot wait for their next concert!

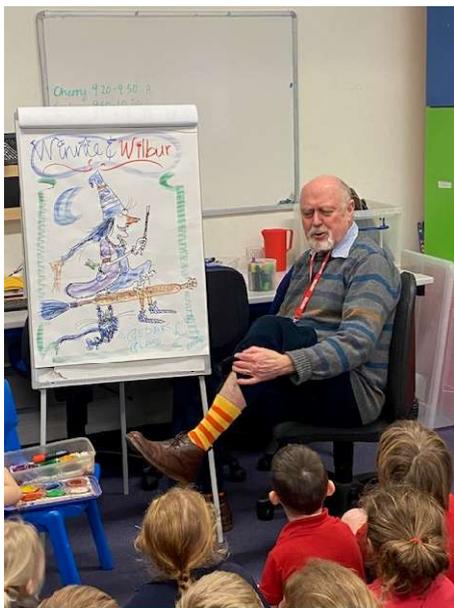


Sustainability has become a growing focus for us at school over the past year. We have worked closely with Let's Go Zero who are supporting us to review our carbon usage and raise awareness across the school community.



Recently this progress has been recognised by Greener Henley who awarded the school the bronze ‘Green Futures Award.’ We are continuing to grow with sustainability featuring throughout our curriculum and our eco-council picking up on more initiatives across the school, from bird feeders to recycling.

World Book Day was a wonderful time to celebrate children’s literature. We started the week with a visit from the incredible illustrator, Korky Paul. Korky Paul’s most recognisable work can be found in the Winnie the Witch series of books, which he has illustrated since 1986. Korky led illustration workshops with the children and even gifted them their own personalised pictures.



We ended the week with our traditional dress up day. Children and staff came to school dressed as a whole range of characters from children’s literature, including: Miss Trunchbull from Roald Dahl’s Matilda, The Magic Faraway Tree, the hungry caterpillar and Paddington and many more!



We are currently advertising for a foundation governor to join our governing team here at Kidmore End. If you are interested in finding out more about this role please email the Chair of governors, Mrs Faye Blakes at cog@kidmore-end.co.uk, or Reverend James as revjstickings@gmail.com.

Claire Spankie – Headteacher

HOT CROSS BUNS! HOT CROSS BUNS! ONE HA'PENNY, TWO HA'PENNY HOT CROSS BUNS!

The origins of the hot cross bun may date back to Pre-Christian times when a fruited bread was baked in Springtime to honour the Saxon goddess Eostre.

Fruit buns with a cross cut into them were developed by Brother Thomas Roccliffe a 14th Century monk at St Alban's Abbey in Hertfordshire. These were distributed to the poor and needy on Good Friday.

The original recipe has been lost but may have contained Grains of Paradise, a spice obtained from the *Aframomum melegueta*. The plant is a relative of ginger, and the spice has a pungent black pepper flavour, with hints of citrus.

Aframomum melegueta is native to swampy habitats along the West African coast. It has trumpet shaped flowers which develop into seed bearing pods. The spice became a popular substitute for black pepper in Europe in the 14th and 15th Centuries. In the 18th Century, Parliament banned its use in alcoholic beverages as it was used illegally to mask stale flavours and make the liquor taste stronger.

I have adapted a hot cross bun recipe. Grains of Paradise are available, but cardamom makes a good substitute.

Felicity Cooper

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER - 2026 PREPARED BY THE CHRISTIAN WOMEN OF NIGERIA

“I will give you rest, come.” Matthew 11:28-30



We were blessed to welcome a great crowd of people to the World Day of Prayer service at Christ the King Church on Friday 6 March, despite a wet and dismal evening, weather-wise. Inside, the church was beautifully decorated with Nigerian artefacts which had kindly been loaned by various people and with art and craft to represent aspects of the service –

these had been made on 2 craft mornings organised by Elaine Govett and hosted by Frances Theobald.



Altar and artefacts

Each person attending the service was given a pebble with the verse written on one side and a cross on the other – these were to represent our burdens. During the service everyone was invited to bring their burdens (represented by the pebbles) and lay them at the foot of the altar.



A composite photo capturing the choir and readers.

The service was very moving with stories from 4 Nigerian women of differing ages and circumstances, telling how trusting in Jesus and sharing their burdens with Him had helped them.

We each carry our own burdens, but we are not alone – we can bring them to Jesus and He will give us rest. Everyone could take a pebble home to remind them of the service and this message. The service glorified God with many people participating in reading or singing in the choir as well as a congregation overflowing out of the church and hall. Afterwards there was bread and soup followed by cake - and a chance to renew old friendships and make new ones.

Thank You, Lord, for the inspiration of the Nigerian women, for the beautiful singing, for the heartfelt prayers. Thank You for all who came and all who helped -



Carrying a burden

may You bless each one to be a blessing by taking Your message and words to others, to fill them with the hope and the help that comes from a relationship with the Living God through Jesus Christ.

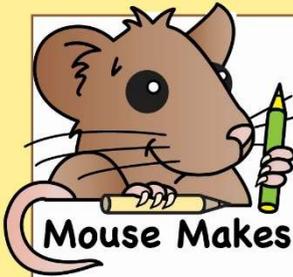
“I will give you rest, come.”

Sian Lovett



The WDP congregation in both photos enjoying fellowship after the service

CENTRE SPOT FOR YOUNGSTERS

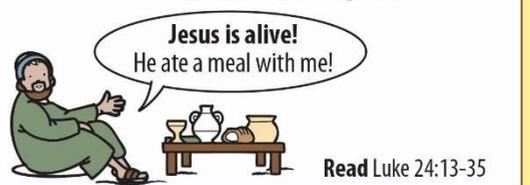
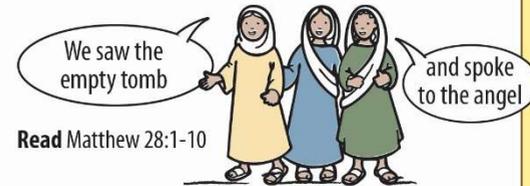
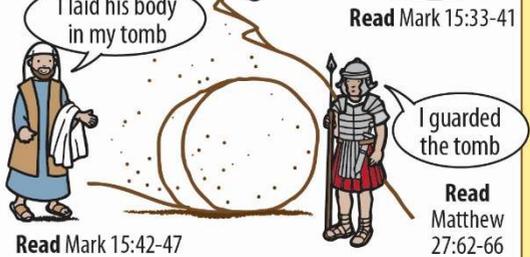
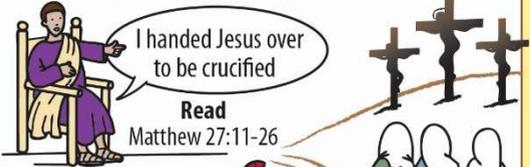
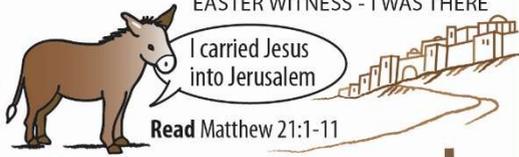


GOOD NEWS
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 DEATHQBV
 VNCOEUI
 UAHNAARO
 MIREVSU
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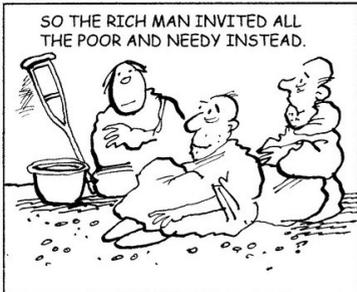
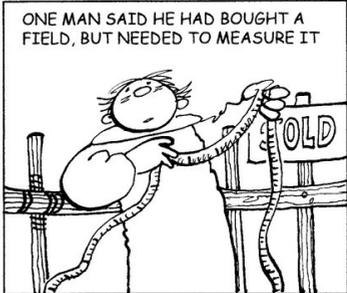
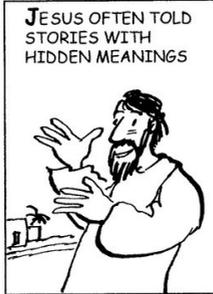
JESUS • DONKEY • PALMS
 HOSANNA • PILATE • THORNS
 CRUCIFY • NAIL • CROSS
 QUAKE • DEATH • BURY
 TOMB • STONE • EMPTY
 ANGEL • MARY • HEAVEN
 RISEN • ALIVE • GOD
 SAVIOUR • EASTER • JOY



EASTER WITNESS - I WAS THERE



The Big Bash!



PARISH SHARE AT 28 FEBRUARY 2026

Archdeaconry	Amount paid	Outstanding	% Paid
Berkshire	£ 896,818	£ 5,212,672	14.7
Buckingham	£ 839,916	£ 6,224,903	11.9
Dorchester	£ 871,936	£ 5,520,545	13.6
Oxford	£ 254,196	£ 1,623,155	13.5
Totals	£ 2,862,866	£18,581,275	13.4

The 2026 Parish Share contributions are underway. The table above shows how much each of the four archdeaconries have contributed as at 28 February 2026. At this point in 2025 the aggregate contributions were £2,695,172. Henley Deanery has contributed £67,989

WHERE DID THE HYMN, *THE DAY OF RESURRECTION* COME FROM?

This hymn sung in the Easter Season was originally written by St John of Damascus, born c 675. He achieved fame as a gifted eighth century poet. His best-known works are six canons for the major festivals of the Church. The lyrics for this hymn came from the Golden Canon for Easter Day.

John Mason Neale (1818 – 1866) translated the Greek lyrics and included his version of the hymn in his *Hymns of the Eastern Church* in 1862. Neale has done a very effective work with the translation conveying the reassuring image of the “Passover of gladness” celebrating the resurrection of Jesus Christ as a victory over sin and death.

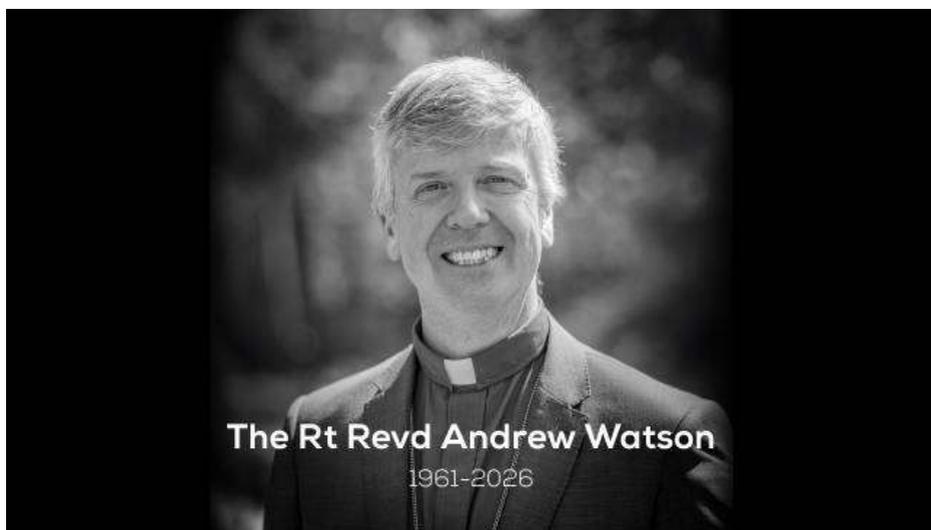
The hymn was included in the 1868 Appendix to *Hymns Ancient and Modern* and later it was included in the *English Hymnal* 1906. The tune now invariably associated with the hymn is *Ellacombe*. This tune originated in the Roman Catholic chapel of the Duke of Württemberg and was used in the *Hymns Ancient and Modern* 1868 Appendix but to a different hymn. The 1906 *English Hymnal* set the hymn to *Ellacombe*.

VACANCY IN SEE – WHAT’S HAPPENING?

The Vacancy in See Committee has been working through the information received during the consultation process and intended to settle the Statement of Needs on 24 March. Thereafter, the Appointment Secretaries to the Archbishops and the Prime

Minister take the lead with the Crown Nominations Committee (CNC). Six members from the Vacancy in See Committee participate in the CNC. Key dates now are 24 June when the CNC meets to confirm the Candidate Pack, 9 October when a shortlist is agreed and 9 – 10 December when shortlisted candidates are interviewed. (The Bishop of Oxford previously announced that he intends to retire in July.)

THE RT REVD ANDREW WATSON RIP



On 3 March 2026, the Bishop of Guildford died peacefully at home surrounded by his wife and family. Prior to his death, he had shared his prognosis (terminal pancreatic cancer) with the wider diocese, and had reassured them that he was “cheerfully persisting towards a good death”, and that his, “faith in the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting, had only grown stronger”. He also reflected that he had been blessed with a loving family and the opportunity to fulfil a series of ministries in his “beloved Church of England”.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Sarah Mullally, had visited Bishop Andrew in his home. On learning of his death, she said: “It is with great sorrow that I received news of Bishop Andrew’s death. Andrew was a man of deep Christian faith who lived his life in the service of Christ and others. In the face of death, he demonstrated a calm reassurance of God’s saving grace.

“Over four decades of ministry, Andrew made an enormous contribution to the life of the Church of England – and, through his concern for Anglicans and other Christians around the world, the global church. He was a gentle man and generous with those who held differing theological views. He will be greatly missed, not just by his family and friends, but by the whole church.

“At this time of grief and loss, I hold Beverly and their sons and daughters in my prayers, asking that God would comfort and strengthen them. I pray too for Andrew’s friends, colleagues and all those whose lives he touched. May Andrew rest in peace and rise in glory.”

A NEW BISHOP OF ST ALBANS



Photo credit Neil Turner, Diocese of Salisbury

The Rt Revd Andrew Rumsey is to be the next Bishop of St Albans.

Bishop Andrew Rumsey is currently the Suffragan Bishop of Ramsbury in the Diocese of Salisbury. Born and raised in the Diocese of St Albans, where his father served as a parish priest, he studied at the University of Reading and King’s College London before training for ministry at Ridley Hall, Cambridge.

Ordained deacon in 1997 and priest in 1998, Bishop Andrew began his ministry in the Diocese of London, serving at Trinity St Michael, Harrow. He later became Vicar of Christ Church, Gipsy Hill in the Diocese of Southwark in 2001, before being appointed Rector of the Oxted Team Ministry in 2011. He has served as the Bishop of Ramsbury since 2019 and is also the Church of England’s national lead bishop for church buildings.

Bishop Andrew said: “I am thrilled to be announced today as the next Bishop of St Albans. This is the diocese where I was born, baptised and grew up, and it is a

profound joy to return home. My prayer is that together we will come home to Christ, and that our churches, schools and chaplaincies will be places where people of every background can truly belong. I look forward to coming to know who you are now, and to serving alongside you in the years ahead.”

DATES FOR DIARIES

Date	Event	Where?
Sunday 17 May	APCM at 11.00	CTK
Wednesday 20 May	Charity lunch at 12.00	CTK
Saturday 27 June	Concert at 15.00	SJB
Sunday 28 June	Patronal Festival Evensong at 18.00	SJB
Sunday 1 November	Patronal Festival Benefice Eucharist at 10.30	All Saints'
Saturday 21 November	Wine and Song (tbc)	Kidmore End School
Sunday 22 November	Patronal Festival Benefice Eucharist at 09.30	CTK
Saturday 28 November	Benefice Quiet Morning 09.30 – 13.00	CTK
Tuesday 22 December	Parish Carol Service at 19.30	SJB

There may be another carol service at Christ the King during Advent.

CHRISM MASS AT CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL ON 2 APRIL 2026

It's that time of the year again. The Chrism Mass is the annual Service at which ministers from around the Diocese renew their vows and receive newly blessed holy oils. This service is at 11am and the preacher for the last time at this service will be the Bishop of Oxford, the Rt Revd Dr Steven Croft. If you've not been to this service before, please consider attending this year. Details will be published on the Christ Church Cathedral website nearer the date. It is likely that the service will be live streamed on 2 April 2026.

CLERGY SUPPORT TRUST 371ST FESTIVAL – 12 MAY 2026

A reminder that this always wonderful service takes place at St Paul's Cathedral at 5pm on Tuesday 12 May. Joining the choir of St Paul's will be choirs from

Blackburn Cathedral and St Alban's Cathedral. Tickets (free) can be obtained from the Clergy Support Trust's website. The preacher is expected to be announced this month.

THY KINGDOM COME 2026



This year, 'Thy Kingdom Come', takes place between 14 – 24 May. The theme is all about the presence of God through his spirit. The God who is with us in the everyday – in the joys and sorrows of life (and everything in between) and the One who, through His spirit, longs to reveal Himself to those who do not yet know Him.

From the story of Ruth to the story of Gideon, from the story of Elijah to the story of the early church who waited for the promised Holy Spirit to come - over the 11 days Thy Kingdom Come will

explore a different Bible story each day, which demonstrates God's transformative presence, power and love at work in the lives of people and places. The hope is that those people held in prayer will also experience the life-changing love of God and choose to follow Him. 'Thy Kingdom Come' is a global ecumenical prayer movement that invites Christians around the world to pray for more people to come to know Jesus. What started in 2016 as an invitation from the Archbishops of Canterbury and York to the Church of England has grown into an international and ecumenical call to prayer.

THE BEAUTY OF GOOD FRIDAY

This article is presented by Dr Ruth Banciewicz of the Faraday Institute for Science and Religion in Cambridge.

Some of the more beautiful things in the world have an ugly side. What about the emperor penguin chick, nestling in a feathery pouch above its parent's feet? There's a lovely moment when mum and dad greet each other over the gaping beak of their fuzz-ball offspring. Heads bent together, making a heart shape in the air, we can't help seeing a reflection of our own ideals of love in the pair.

But the reality of what those birds are going through is even more gruelling than human parenthood. Father penguin has spent all winter sheltering the egg from freezing hurricane-force winds, while mother penguin was feeding at sea. When the chick hatched its parents started an exhausting game of tag, taking it in turns to walk across the ice and risk being eaten by leopard seals or killer whales, in order to catch fish for their new offspring.

The living world is truly wonderful in so many ways, but the darker side of the picture is never far away. Creation is groaning (Romans 8:22) and just waiting to be rescued. Enter Jesus, through whom all of Creation was made. The king of the universe came to live with us, bringing His great love and wisdom to the human population of first-century Israel. The Creator was relating to His creation in a very personal way, and this could have been a totally beautiful picture.

But there is a horrifically ugly side of Jesus' story that threatens to obscure the beauty of what He did on Good Friday. It was a brutal and terrifying day when human sinfulness resulted in the Son of God being executed by His enemies, but thankfully there was much more to it than that. The death and resurrection of Jesus Christ set off a seismic wave of spiritual events whose effects are still rippling out across the world.

So that ugly day over 2,000 years ago is called 'good' because of what it achieved. Those who follow Jesus find their lives are changed for the better, even if their day-to-day existence may still be incredibly tough. When people come to understand what Creation is for and who it belongs to, they can begin to serve and preserve the earth as they should. These things are only whispers of what is to come, but they give me hope for the future redemption of all Creation. I can choose to dwell on the beauty of Jesus' death because it was not the end of the story – the future beckons.

This article is extracted (with permission) from *New Life: Reflections for Lent*, edited by Amy Robinson and Wendy H Jones (£7.99).

WITH EASTER IN MIND - CHOCOLATE

Chocolate. Just a mention of the word can trigger off all kinds of emotions: craving, greed, passion. Few foods have the ability to get such a hold on people. As you buy your Easter eggs and bunnies and whatever else this month, here are some of the facts of chocolate:

Where does chocolate come from? Chocolate is made from the seeds of the tropical cacao tree, *Theobroma cacao*. The Greek word 'theobroma' means literally 'food of the gods'. The Cacao Tree is found in Latin America.

Who first discovered it? The Aztecs. The cacao beans were used to prepare a hot, frothy beverage with stimulant and restorative properties, something like hot chocolate.

Who was (probably) the first chocoholic? The Emperor Montezuma. He drank 50 goblets a day of the frothy drink.

Who used chocolate as currency? The Aztecs. 100 cacao beans would buy a slave; 12 cacao beans bought the services of a courtesan, etc.

When did chocolate as we know it today begin? Surprisingly, not until 1879. That year Rodolphe Lindt had the inspired idea of triglyceride cocoa butter. The cocoa butter in chocolate contains saturated fat, but a normal level of consumption doesn't have any bad effects.

At what point does a chocolate lover become a chocoholic? It is generally considered to be when a person feels impelled to consume 12 or more 60 gram bars of chocolate per week. Chocolate contains its own cannabinoid (a chemical that prolongs pleasurable sensations) and when you eat chocolate, there is an increased blood flow in areas of the brain which are also activated by addictive drugs such as cocaine. But scientists agree that occasional over-indulging will cause no long-term problems... except perhaps around your waistline!

How to get the best from your chocolate:

Keep your chocolate cool (16 – 18 degrees Centigrade) and in a dry, airtight place. Never put your chocolate in the fridge (if you already have, let it warm to room temperature for a couple of hours before you eat it).

Bring out the full flavour of chocolate by drinking water with it.

If you are drinking tea or coffee, don't bother with expensive chocolates – you won't be able to appreciate them properly!

TIME TICKING BY IN APRIL

400 years ago, on 9 April 1626 that Francis Bacon, philosopher and politician, died. He served as Attorney General of England and Wales (1613-17) and then Lord High Chancellor of England (1617-21). Known as the 'Father of Empiricism', as his works influenced the scientific revolution in Europe.

125 years ago, on 3 April 1901 that Richard D'Oyly Carte, theatrical impresario, died. He built the Savoy Theatre and the Palace Theatre in London, managed some of the most important theatrical stars of the era, and founded a touring opera company.

Also 125 years ago, on 15 April 1901 that Joe Davis, snooker and billiards player was born. He co-founded the World Snooker Championship in 1927 and won the first 15 championships.

100 years ago, on 6 April 1926 that the Revd Ian Paisley, Baron Bannside, Northern Irish politician and Protestant evangelical minister was born. Leader of the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) from 1971-2008, and then First Minister of Northern Ireland in 2007-08.

Also 100 years ago, on 21 April 1926 that Queen Elizabeth II was born.

90 years ago, on 23 April 1936 that Roy Orbison, American singer, songwriter and musician was born. Best known for Oh, Pretty Woman, Crying, Only the Lonely, and many more.

80 years ago, on 2 April 1946 that Sue Townsend, writer and humourist, was born. Best known for her Adrian Mole series of novels.

Also 80 years ago, on 21 April 1946 that John Maynard Keynes was born. The most influential economist of the 20th century, his ideas formed the basis of the Keynesian economics.

75 years ago, on 2 April 1951 that General Dwight D Eisenhower (later US President) became NATO's first Supreme Allied Commander. He assumed command of all Allied forces in the Western Mediterranean and Europe.

Also 75 years ago, on 17 April 1951 that the Peak District National Park was established. It was Britain's first National Park.

70 years ago, on 18 April 1956 that American film actress Grace Kelly married Prince Rainier III of Monaco and became Princess Grace of Monaco.

65 years ago, on 10 April 1961 that South African golfer Gary Player became the first non-American to win the Masters Tournament in Augusta, Georgia.

Also 65 years ago, on 12 April 1961 that Soviet cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin became the first person in space and the first person to orbit the Earth.

50 years ago, on 3 April 1976 that the UK won the 1976 Eurovision Song Contest with Save Your Kisses for Me by Brotherhood of Man.

Also 50 years ago, on 7 April 1976 that politician John Stonehouse, who infamously had tried to fake his own death in 1974, resigned from the Labour Party, leaving the government in a minority. After his death in 1988 it was revealed that he had been a Czech spy since 1962.

40 years ago, on 11 April 1986 that Halley's Comet made its closest approach to Earth during its most recent visit. It will return to Earth's vicinity in 2061 and 2134.

Also 40 years ago, on 17 April 1986 that TV journalist John McCarthy was kidnapped in Beirut, Lebanon by the militant group Islamic Jihad. Released 1991.

Also 40 years ago, on 24 April 1986 that Wallis Simpson, Duchess of Windsor and American wife of Prince Edward, formerly King Edward VIII, died.

Also 40 years ago, on 26 April 1986 that the Chernobyl disaster took place in Ukraine, then within the Soviet Union. It was the world's worst nuclear power plant accident, killing 31 people outright, and leaking radiation across the western Soviet Union and Europe.

30 years ago, on 1 April 1996 that during the BSE ('mad cow disease') outbreak, the government announced that it would begin slaughtering all cattle over the age of 30 months to eradicate the disease. In the end, 80,000 cattle were slaughtered

25 years ago, on 7 April 2001 that NASA launched its Mars Odyssey spacecraft to search for evidence of water and volcanic activity on Mars. It found water and ice below the surface.

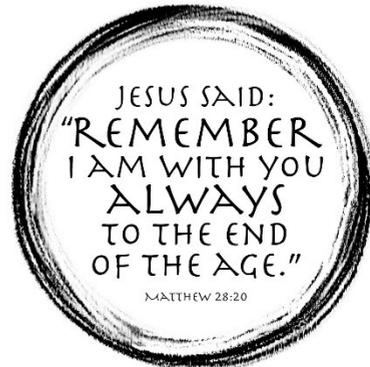
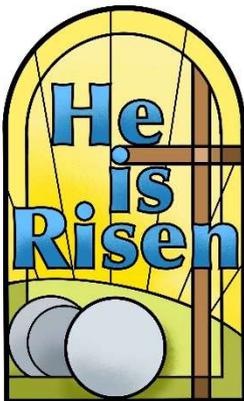
20 years ago, on 6 April 2006 that the first case of H6N1 avian flu (bird flu) in the UK was confirmed, following tests on a dead swan found in Fife.

15 years ago, on 29 April 2011 that Prince William and Catherine (Kate) Middleton were married at Westminster Abbey in London. They were given the titles Duke and Duchess of Cambridge.

10 years ago, on 20 April 2016 that Victoria Wood, comedian, actress, singer and songwriter died. Remembered for Victoria Wood as seen on TV.

Also 10 years ago, on 22 April 2016 that the Paris Agreement on Climate Change was signed. It came into effect on 4 November 2016.

EASTER JOY



A B WALKER'S ANNUAL MEMORIAL SERVICE ON 12 APRIL

Annual Memorial Service

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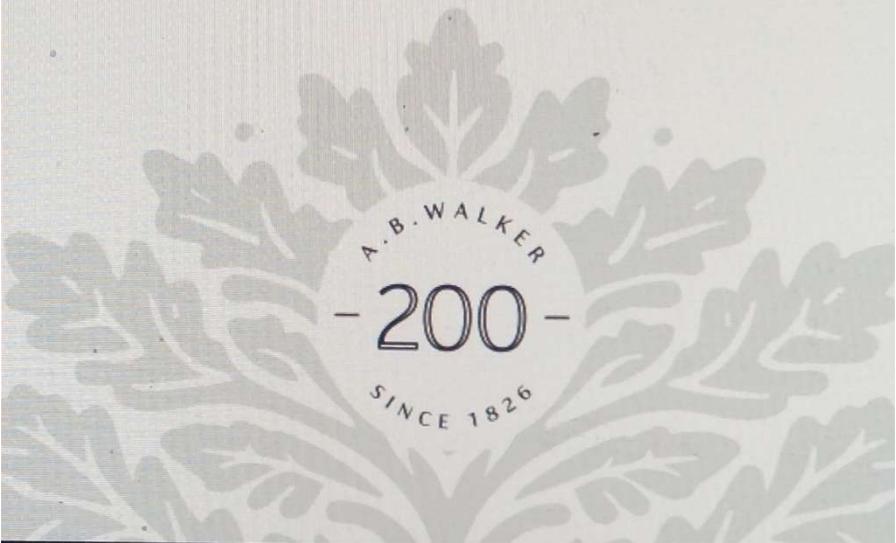
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Your money will be used **ONLY** for the preservation of the buildings.
Contact the Churchwarden and PCC Treasurer

Nick Room – 07973 513883

PARISH GUIDE

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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 Directory is omitted from this online accessible version of the parish 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
2 April – Maundy Thursday		1 Corinthians 11. 23 – 36 John 13. 1 -17 & 31b - 35	19.00 Eucharist with feet washing
3 April – Good Friday			10.00 Walk of Witness
4 April – Easter Eve		1 Romans 6. 3 – 11 2 Matthew 28. 1 - 10	21.00 Easter Vigil and First Eucharist of Easter
5 April – Easter Day		Acts 10. 34 – 43 John 20. 1 - 18	09.30 Eucharist
12 April – Second Sunday of Easter		Acts 2. 14a, 22 - 32 John 20. 19 - end	09.30 Eucharist
19 April – Third Sunday of Easter		Acts 2. 14a. 36 - 41 Luke 24. 13 - 35	09.30 Eucharist
26 April – Fourth Sunday of Easter		Acts 2. 42 – end John 10. 1 - 10	09.30 Eucharist

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'

3 April – 14.00 Good Friday Service

5 April – 09.00 Holy Communion (BCP), 10.30 Sung Eucharist

12 April – 10.30 Sung Eucharist, 18.30 Evensong

19 April – 10.30 Peppard Praise Communion Service

26 April – 10.30 Family Communion