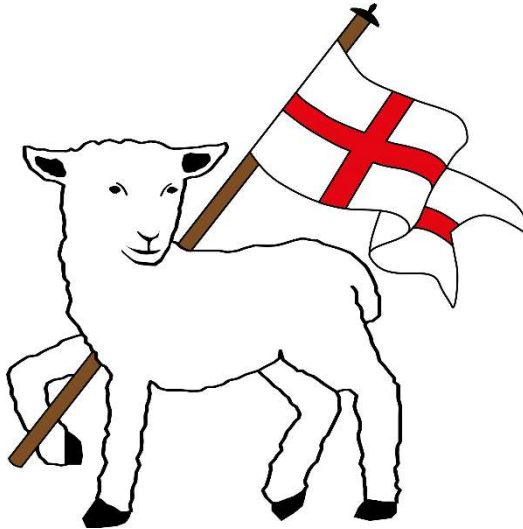


**MAY 2026**

**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<br>Email | 0118 972 1383<br>rks.benefice@gmail.com     |
| <b>Rector</b>  |                    |   |
| Revd James Stickings   | Telephone<br>Email | 07522 042735<br>revjstickings@mailbox.org   |
| James normally takes Mondays off                                 |                    |   |
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| Revd Sarah van der Watt  | Telephone<br>Email | 07508 898515<br>revsvdwatt@gmail.com        |
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The parish website can be found on <https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/166>

# FROM THE RECTORY

Dear Friends

May is an exciting month for the three churches in our Benefice. At All Saints, we are now using the newly refurbished Parish Room, which is absolutely fantastic. At St John's, the first service back is a Benefice Eucharist, planned for the 31 May: do come along and see the results of the renovation, which will include new lighting and redecoration (hopefully we won't need to try out the new heating just yet!). And, of course, we continue to enjoy the refreshed worship and meeting space at Christ the King.

These projects do not happen without the hard work and dedication of many people. In particular, I want to single out Ian Heriot, who project-managed the Parish Room project at All Saints', and Nick Room, who did the same for Christ the King and St John's. Without their leadership, these projects would not have happened. Thank you!

Indeed, the running of our churches depends on the generous gifts of time and money from so many people. As St Paul writes to the Christians in Corinth, the church is the body of Christ, and we are all called to contribute according to the call of God. One of the questions we can ask ourselves is this: 'What is God calling me to be, and to do in service to Christ's body and his Good News for all people?'

Earlier this year we had a training session for those interested in reading and leading the intercessions in church. Might God be calling you to this important role? From June we are planning to introduce a short, additional reading to come before the Gospel, so that we will have an Old Testament reading, one from the New Testament, and finally the Gospel. As a result, we need more readers! In tandem with this we are introducing a new layout and a revised Bible version to make reading in church more accessible and, hopefully, less daunting for those who don't have a lot of experience in this ministry. Have a look here: <https://ssra.uk/>. If you feel you could join the list of readers in our churches, please speak with one of the ministry team or churchwardens. Additional training can be provided!

God bless

**James**

# POPE LEO XIV AND ARCHBISHOP SARAH EXCHANGE LETTERS

*The following is the text of the Message sent by the Holy Father Leo XIV on the occasion of the Installation of the Archbishop of Canterbury, which took place on 25 March 2026 in Canterbury Cathedral:*

## Message

To The Most Reverend and Right Honourable  
Dame Sarah Mullally  
Archbishop of Canterbury

*“Grace, mercy, and peace will be with us, from God the Father and from Jesus Christ, the Father’s Son, in truth and love.” (2 Jn 1:3)*

With this assurance of God’s abiding presence, I send prayerful greetings to Your Grace on the occasion of your Installation as Archbishop of Canterbury.

I know that the office for which you have been chosen is a weighty one, with responsibilities not only in the Diocese of Canterbury, but throughout the Church of England as well as the Anglican Communion as a whole. Moreover, you are commencing these duties at a challenging moment in the history of the Anglican family. In asking the Lord to strengthen you with the gift of wisdom, I pray that you may be guided by the Holy Spirit in serving your communities, and draw inspiration from the example of Mary, the Mother of God.

Sixty years ago, during their historic encounter in Rome, our predecessors of happy memory, Saint Paul VI and Archbishop Michael Ramsey, committed Catholics and Anglicans to “a new stage in the development of fraternal relations, based upon Christian charity” (Joint Declaration, 24 March 1966). That fresh chapter of respectful openness has borne much fruit over the past six decades and continues to this day.

On that same occasion, Pope Paul and Archbishop Ramsey also agreed to initiate a theological dialogue. Indeed, the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC) has contributed enormously to a growth in mutual understanding since its creation. The rewards of this valuable work have set us free to witness together more effectively (cf. International Anglican-Roman Catholic

Commission for Unity and Mission, Growing Together in Unity and Mission, 93). This is especially vital given the manifold challenges facing our human family today. I am grateful, therefore, that this important dialogue continues.

At the same time, we also know that the ecumenical journey has not always been smooth. Despite much progress, our immediate predecessors, Pope Francis and Archbishop Justin Welby, acknowledged frankly that “new circumstances have presented new disagreements among us.” Nevertheless, we have continued to walk together, because differences “cannot prevent us from recognizing one another as brothers and sisters in Christ by reason of our common baptism” (Joint Declaration, 5 October 2016). For my part, I firmly believe that we need to continue to dialogue in truth and love, for it is only in truth and love that we come to know together the grace, mercy and peace of God (cf. 2 Jn1:3), and thus can offer these precious gifts to the world.

What is more, the unity which Christians seek is never an end in itself, but is directed towards the proclamation of Christ, in order that, as the Lord Jesus himself prayed, “the world may believe” (Jn17:21). In addressing the Primates of the Anglican Communion in 2024, Pope Francis declared that “it would be a scandal if, due to our divisions, we did not fulfil our common vocation to make Christ known” (Address to Primates of the Anglican Communion, 2 May 2024). Dear sister, I willingly make these words my own, for it is through the witness of a reconciled, fraternal and united Christian community that the proclamation of the Gospel will resound most clearly (cf. Message for the 2026 World Mission Day, 2).

With these fraternal sentiments, I invoke upon you the blessings of Almighty God as you take up your high responsibilities. May the Holy Spirit come down upon you and make you fruitful in the Lord’s service.

From the Vatican, 20 March 2026  
Memorial of Saint Cuthbert, Bishop

**LEO PP. XIV**

Responding to His Holiness’ letter, the Archbishop of Canterbury wrote to Pope Leo immediately after her installation:-

His Holiness Pope Leo XIV  
00120 Vatican City

Your Holiness,

*“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.”*(John 1:14)

I am deeply grateful for your gracious letter, and for the assurance of your prayers at the time of my installation as Archbishop of Canterbury. Your words of encouragement, and your invocation of the Holy Spirit’s guidance, are received with profound appreciation.

I give thanks for your generous recognition of the enduring fruits of our ecumenical path, not least through the work of ARCIC and IARCCUM. I share your conviction that our continued dialogue in truth and love is both a gift and a calling, so that together we may bear more faithful witness to the Gospel in a world in need of grace, mercy, and peace.

Thank you also for your prayers for me and for the ministry entrusted to my care. In your address, the day after your installation, to representatives of other Churches and ecclesial communities, as well as other religions (19 May 2025), you wrote: “As Bishop of Rome, I consider one of my priorities to be that of seeking the re-establishment of full and visible communion among all those who profess the same faith in God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.”

As Archbishop of Canterbury, I too am called to serve as an instrument of communion within the Anglican Communion, and to seek the full and visible unity to which our Lord has called us all (John 17:21). We Christians are called to pray and to strive together towards this end, step by step, mindful that it is, above all, the work of the Holy Spirit. I would therefore ask, in all humility, that you continue to pray for the Church of England and the wider Anglican Communion, that we may be guided by the Holy Spirit in faithfulness, unity, and charity.

Please be assured of my own prayers for Your Holiness, that the Lord may sustain and strengthen you in your apostolic ministry.

As you so beautifully recalled the example of Mary, the Mother of God, she remains ever before me – not only in her faithful obedience as the servant of the Lord, but

as a profound sign and image of the Church itself: the Body of Christ, called to receive the Word, to bear Him within, and to bring forth life for the sake of the world, as the life-giving Spirit forms Christ within us, so that the Word made flesh may be made present among us.

I very much look forward to meeting Your Holiness in the near future <sup>1</sup> and to continuing to strengthen the bonds of friendship and our shared commitment.

With the assurance of my prayers and with sentiments of deep esteem,

Yours sincerely in Christ,

+Sarah  
Archbishop of Canterbury

**ARCIC** – The Anglo-Roman Catholic International Commission

**IARCCUM** – International Anglo-Roman Catholic Commission for Unity and Mission (Anglo-Roman Catholic Dialogue (Online Resource Centre for Anglican-Roman Catholic Relations))

<sup>1</sup> *Archbishop Sarah will be in Rome from 25 April – 28 April during which time she will meet with Pope Leo XIV in the Vatican and worship with the Anglican churches.*

## **REFLECTION**

Archbishop Sarah chose her installation date to coincide with the Feast of the Annunciation of our Lord to the Blessed Virgin Mary. And it's interesting that Pope Leo prays that the Archbishop may draw inspiration from the example of Mary, the Mother of God. Archbishop Sarah says that Mary is ever before her not simply because of her faithful obedience to the Lord, but as a profound sign and image of the Church itself.

In 2005 ARCIC (referred above) produced a report, *Mary, Grace and Hope in Christ*. The motivation was to document mutual understanding between the Anglican Communion and the Roman Catholic Church on Mary, the Mother of God. (This report is an example of helping the Churches to acknowledge matters where there is a good level of commonality so that efforts towards unity can focus on significant disagreements)

Both traditions accept that Mary is the Mother of God, incarnate and an example for all Christians of holiness, obedience, and faith. The report also affirmed that God’s grace was active in Mary from the beginning and she is a singular example of God’s redeeming work. In relation to intercession, the report states that asking Mary and the Saints to pray for us is not communion-dividing. And with a view to future unity to the extent that there remain disagreements about Mary between the Anglican and Roman Catholic Churches the report said that these would not constitute a justification for continued separation between the Churches. As things are at present, Mary, the Mother of God, is not an impediment to unity between the Anglican Communion and the Roman Catholic Church!

**Allen Harris**

## **WHERE TO JOIN A SERVICE IN MAY**

| <b>Date</b> | <b>CTK</b>      | <b>SJB</b>               | <b>All Saints</b>              |
|-------------|-----------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 3 May       | 09.30 Eucharist |                          | 09.00 Holy Communion           |
|             |                 |                          | 18.30 Evensong                 |
| 10 May      | 09.30 Eucharist |                          | 10.30 Sung Eucharist           |
| 14 May      |                 |                          | 19.00 Benefice Eucharist       |
| 17 May      | 09.30 Eucharist |                          | 10.30 Peppard Praise Communion |
| 24 May      | 09.30 Eucharist |                          | 10.30 Family Communion         |
| 31 May      |                 | 11.15 Benefice Eucharist |                                |

Please check the weekly bulletins in case any of the planned arrangements are changed. St John’s Church has been closed to enable project work to be undertaken but it is hoped that the church will be re-opened for the 31 May service.

## **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.

### **Alban Buns**

2 medium eggs (beaten)  
275mls (1/2 pt) full -fat milk  
50g (2oz) unsalted butter (softened)  
2 tsp fast acting yeast  
½-1 tsp grains of paradise or cardamom  
½ tsp ground cinnamon  
½ tsp salt  
4 tbsp caster sugar  
500g/1lb strong white flour  
150g (5oz) currants  
Honey to glaze

This can be made in a mixer with a dough hook, or by hand.

Add the yeast, butter and sugar to the warm milk mix and allow to “bloom”.  
Add the flour, eggs, salt and spices. Knead until soft and pliable. The dough will be quite sticky.  
Add the currants and knead until combined.  
Transfer to an oiled bowl and leave to prove, until doubled in size.  
When the dough is well risen, tip onto a floured board and divide into 12 equal pieces.  
Shape and place on a baking tray, leaving space between them.  
Leave to rise for 30 minutes, until the buns are touching each other.  
Preheat the oven to 220°C/420°F/Gas 7  
Cut a cross on each bun.  
Bake for about 15 minutes until golden.  
Brush with honey while still warm.



**Felicity Cooper**

*Ed – in the April edition, the recipe, ingredients, and photo were omitted in error for which we apologise. Here is the complete article – (and don't the hot cross buns look very tempting?) Thank you Felicity.*

## **PALM SUNDAY 2026 CELEBRATED BY THE BENEFICE AT ALL SAINTS' CHURCH**

Palm Sunday evokes mixed emotions, recalling the joy of Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem moving through to the pain and sadness of Jesus' crucifixion a few days later. At the Benefice service at All Saints' on Palm Sunday, I felt that the members of the three churches who came together for this service reflected these feelings.

The service was led by all three ministers, Rev. James, Rev. Sarah and our LLM, Karen. St. John's choir members had joined with the choir of All Saints to form a body of 21 choristers, led by David Butler.

At 10.30, James asked us all to move outside the church to gather near the gate for the first part of the service, during which some prayers were said. We then processed into the church singing the traditional Palm Sunday hymn, "All glory laud and honour". During the service the choir sang "God So Loved the World" by John Stainer and Karen read the gospel account of Christ's trial and crucifixion.

Despite the Parish Room still being closed, coffee and biscuits were offered to the congregation after the service, providing a pleasant opportunity for conversation between all the parish members present.

**Shirley Horne**







## THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY'S ECUMENICAL EASTER LETTER

*“Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit” (John 12:24).*

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

At Easter, the Church proclaims the truth at the very heart of our faith: Christ has conquered death, and through him, new life has begun. The resurrection of Jesus is not only an event remembered; it is a living reality that shapes our hope, our witness, and our shared calling as Christians. It gives us confidence – deep, unshakeable confidence – in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

This hope is not abstract. We proclaim it in a world marked by deep suffering and conflict. We think of those living amid war and violence – across the Middle East, in Ukraine, in Sudan, and in so many other places of conflict – and of the churches of the Holy Land, bearing faithful witness under immense strain. We remember all who are displaced, oppressed, or forgotten, and we renew our calling as Christians to stand with the marginalised and to serve those most in need.

In such a world, the mystery of Easter speaks with particular depth. Writing from prison, Dietrich Bonhoeffer reflected that “only a suffering God can help.” These words give us pause. They remind us that in Jesus Christ, God does not stand distant from human pain, but enters into it, bears it, and transforms it. The cross stands firm while the world changes. Empires rise and fall, cultures shift, and societies transform, yet the love of God revealed in Christ crucified and risen remains constant.

The cross and the empty tomb together tell us that suffering and death do not have the final word. Suffering and pain are penultimate; ultimate is the loving embrace of God in glory. Easter proclaims that even in the darkest places, God is at work bringing life.

At Lambeth Palace, the signs of spring offer a quiet echo of this mystery. The gardens are beginning to blossom again – what seemed dormant is now filled with colour and promise. In the courtyard, the magnolia has put on a breathtaking display, its blossoms both radiant and fleeting, a reminder of beauty held in time. Even the magnolia I recently planted has begun to flourish, a small but hopeful sign

of life taking root. Yet the deeper truth to which all this points is found in the words of Jesus: “Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies... it bears much fruit.” The pattern of death and new life lies at the heart of the Gospel.

Easter invites each of us to entrust ourselves anew to this mystery. What in our lives, our churches, and our relationships must be surrendered so that God may bring renewal? The resurrection assures us that no act of faithful surrender is ever wasted. In the Christian East, the icon of the resurrection expresses this hope with profound beauty. Christ stands upon the broken gates of Hades, reaching down to raise Adam and Eve, and with them the whole human family. It is a vision not only of victory, but of joy: humanity lifted into the life of the triune God.

This is a hope we share across our churches. For those engaged in the work of Christian unity, the resurrection is our common foundation and calling. Our divisions, though real, do not define the final reality of the Church. The risen Christ continues to draw us to himself and to one another, and in him we find both the courage and the confidence to walk together.

Often, this work unfolds quietly – in prayer, in friendship, in hospitality, in shared witness. Yet these small and faithful acts are seeds of a greater harvest, signs of the deeper unity we already share in Christ.

Easter calls us to live from this hope: to trust in the victory of Christ, to stand alongside those who suffer, and to bear witness with renewed confidence to the Gospel. In a wounded world, we are called to be people of resurrection – people who live not in fear, but in hope; not in despair, but in the promise of new life.

As we celebrate this holy season, may the joy of Easter renew our faith, strengthen our fellowship, and deepen our commitment to one another in Christ. And may we walk together, with confidence and hope, toward that ultimate fulfilment, when all things are made new and all creation is gathered into the loving embrace of God.

Yours in the peace of the Risen Christ,

**The Most Reverend Dame Sarah Mullally**  
**Archbishop of Canterbury**

## THE BISHOP OF OXFORD'S SERMON AT CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL ON EASTER DAY

*Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted by him (Acts 10. 34 & 35)*

A few weeks ago, the Dean and I were both present in Canterbury Cathedral for the installation of our new Archbishop. It was a joy and privilege to be there on an historic occasion. Everyone present was moved by the sense that we are a global church, drawn from many different nations across the Anglican communion and from our sister churches. There was a wonderful African choir from Norfolk of all places who sang the Gospel Acclamation and danced through the aisles.



*African choir. Photo copyright Church of England*

The Gospel was read in Spanish by the new Archbishop of Mexico. Bishops had gathered from every continent. Each of us were encouraged to say the Lord's prayer in our own mother tongue. We were a remarkable global community that day of 2000 Christians representing this fragile, fractured world and bearing witness to the resurrection. Many more were watching across the world online.

So, it is sobering this morning to return to the first Easter, to the garden, to Mary: the first witness and apostle. The Church does not arrive fully formed as the global community she is today. The Church begins with this single encounter as Mary comes looking to anoint the body of Jesus her friend. The Church begins with the evidence of the empty tomb, the linen wrappings folded and set aside, a woman's tears. The Church begins with the risen Jesus, bearing still the wounds of his crucifixion, speaking the name of a single disciple and calling her into life: Mary.

The Church begins with the power of resurrection: the power of death is broken for all people and for ever.

Mary runs to announce the resurrection to the tiny community of disciples. They in turn tell others. On the Day of Pentecost three thousand are baptised from every nation in the known world. New churches are planted across Europe, the Middle East, India and Africa. The early Church, guided by the Spirit, then comes to a profound awakening that the Christian faith is not for one nation only but for all the world: a universal faith. The Church is called to be one Body of Christ, a community drawn from every nation, and so it has become: frustrating, imperfect but global. Today from this one encounter in the Garden, a third of the world's population is Christian: 2.6 billion people and still growing. This global Church begins in the Garden on Easter Day as the risen Christ calls her name: Mary.

Mary tells Peter the good news. Then Peter the Apostle with the early Church travels a long and difficult road to unpack and understand all the consequences of the resurrection. Peter is formed deeply by his understanding of Judaism. He wants to reserve membership of the Church to those who keep the Jewish law. But the Holy Spirit demonstrates to him that people from every nation are called to be part of this new community through grace. The Spirit calls Peter to take the gospel to the household of Cornelius, a Roman Centurion.

In the household of Cornelius, it is Peter who is converted. The resurrection of Jesus leads Peter and leads us always to a wider, deeper, richer view of God and God's purposes. These are Peter's words in our first reading, words the world needs to hear in this moment. They are some of most important words in the New Testament. I truly understand that God shows no partiality. I truly understand that God has no favourites among the nations. God views every race and nation equally.

The world needs to hear Peter's words this Easter Day. Because our world is shaped and fractured at present by the very opposite view. All the kingdoms of the ancient world were rested on the notion that one race or another was superior: that God is partial. All the Empires of the nineteenth century and the all the terrible wars of the twentieth century flowed from the very notion that God does have favourites. The wars of the twenty first century are no different.

As a Diocese we have links to Nandyal in India, to Kimberley and Kuruman in South Africa and to Jamaica in the West Indies. We rejoice in those links. But the

deep structures of those nations are shaped still by sense of entitlement from the age of Empire; by apartheid; by the transatlantic slave trade – all resting on the notion that God has a favourite race or nation a notion at times, sadly, supported by the Church.

Closer to the present day, the Russian invasion of Ukraine rests on the idea that Ukraine's destiny is to be a subservient part of greater and superior Russia. The terrible conflicts in the Middle East rest on the deep-seated notion that one party or the other has God on their side: in other words that that God does show partiality. The United States is at risk of embracing a new imperialism, imposing its will by force on other nations without respect to international law and resting in part on the belief that God shows partiality and might is right.

Peter and Mary discovered and we discover, that belief in the resurrection of Jesus is not only a matter of personal faith, forgiveness and new life. The resurrection of Jesus is for the whole world. Belief in the resurrection has to change our entire view of the world, our entire view of history. God has no partiality. God has no favourites. God has formed one new people, the Church, the Body of Christ, from every nation across the earth.

The Church is called to challenge partiality and prejudice in all its forms, because of the resurrection of Jesus. The mission of the Church, our witness to the resurrection, is to call out evil and work for peace at home and across the world. We need to be vigilant that the Christian faith does not become the servant of any political ideology, especially one which promotes the superiority of a particular race or nation. We need to be clear that our Christian symbols support and build justice and peace and the community of nations. Because Christ is risen and calls all people to himself.

And how should we ourselves live in the light of this resurrection? How should we live in the 24 hour barrage of hard and difficult news? We are to draw strength from the resurrection. We are called be Easter people, confident in the hope and joy of resurrection. Willing to witness for our faith to all the world. Singing a different song.

St Paul writes:

“Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.”

Dear friends, whenever you are anxious, whenever you are afraid, whenever you are cast down by world events or global problems, remember that we are Easter people. Set your minds on things above; draw hope from the resurrection of Christ, from the joy that Christ is making all things new; that all manner of things shall be well.

Easter is a season not a single day. We have travelled with Christ in the wilderness for forty days. We now have fifty days to sing the song of resurrection; to return to each of the resurrection appearances; to allow the hope and joy of Easter to penetrate to the core of our being; to find strength and courage to witness in God's world. Christ is risen. God has no favourites. We are called to work for peace, for justice, for the unity of God's world and set our minds on things that are above this day and every day. Amen.

## **THE DIVERSE TASKS OF THE CHURCHYARD GARDENERS**

When I tell people that I am a member of the St. John's churchyard gardening team, I imagine that they picture us mowing, weeding and tending to the flowers. We do all these jobs, of course, but the range of tasks also includes more varied activities. This was brought home to us on 15 April when we looked at each member's work for this particular Wednesday morning:



Frances was clearing weeds from the gutters alongside the bottom of the church walls; Nigel was removing branches from the top of a large tree.

Brian was picking up branches and twigs fallen from the trees; Jill and I were weeding at the base of the outside wall on the road



And Sue was scrubbing the bins which had been covered with paint by the builders!

Although some of the tasks are quite arduous at times, we can never complain of not enjoying ourselves, as you can see from our expressions in the photographs attached.

**Shirley Horne**

*Photos courtesy of Shirley Horne*

## **CLERGY SUPPORT TRUST 371ST FESTIVAL – 12 MAY 2026**

Final reminder – the Clergy Support Trust, which does so much vital work to support clergy and their families when need arises, has its annual Festival Service at St Paul’s Cathedral. Entry is by free ticket by application online to the Clergy Support Trust website. The service is at 5pm. The visiting choirs joining the choir of St Pauls’ are from St Albans and Blackburn. The preacher will be the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Last year, the Clergy Support Trust provided a grant or service to over 2900 households, including 7,000 grants to clergy and their families throughout the UK, Ireland, Europe and the Isle of Man. Over £1.4m was provided in grants to cover essentials, like household appliances. Their work extends to retired clergy. In 2019 they received 30 applications. Last year, they supported over 200. They also provided just under £1m in health grants to support applicants with physical or mental health problems. And a further £538,000 was provided to help carers and clergy children and people with special educational needs.

### **LATEST ON THE PHASE 1 PROJECT AT SJB**

Our contractor Beards are still on target to finish in May. Cables are being boxed in, and there was another visit from our window repairer whose off-site work is proceeding on time. The architects are content with progress.

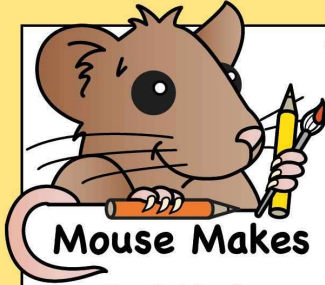
As Phase 1 moves towards completion, we are looking towards the next stage which involves re-ordering of the rear of the nave and knocking through the northwest wall to create the extension we need for the WC. We are very keen to ensure that the faculty from the Diocese is forthcoming for this phase of the project, and, at present, this is our primary priority.

### **CIRDIC**

On page 30 you’ll find information about the CIRDIC Charity lunch at CTK on 20 May. Please keep in mind the need to gather various clothing, toiletries, and food items so that CIRDIC can carry out their vital day by day work with homeless people.

A box for donations is in Christ the King and there is also a waterproof box on the bench on the south side outside St John’s.

# CENTRE SPOT FOR YOUNGSTERS



WHO IS THE HOLY SPIRIT?

The Spirit of

\_\_\_\_\_ Genesis 1:2

The

\_\_\_\_\_ of the Father.

Acts 1:4

The Spirit of

A \_\_\_\_\_ Romans 8:15

H \_\_\_\_\_ John 14:26

The Spirit of

\_\_\_\_\_ John 16:13

The Spirit of

\_\_\_\_\_ Acts 16:7

The Fruit of the Spirit  
Galatians 5:22-23

\_\_\_ O \_\_\_

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What happened when the Holy Spirit came at Pentecost?

read Acts 2:1-41

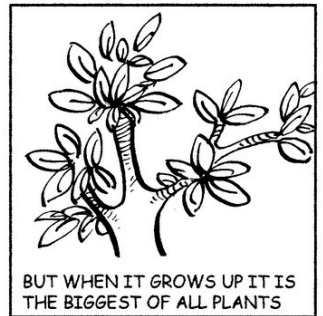
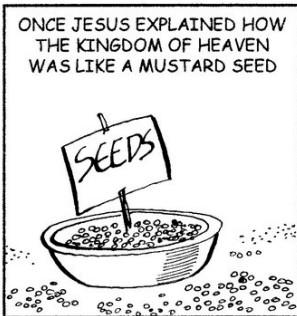
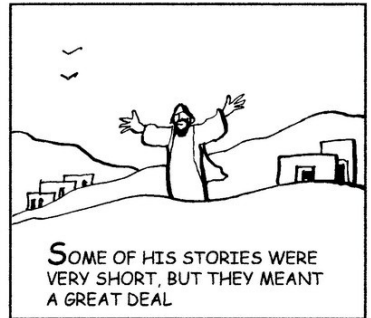
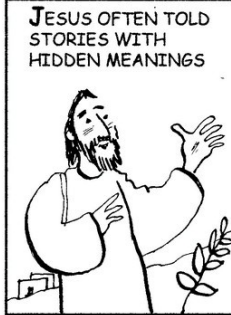
How many believers were baptised that day?

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

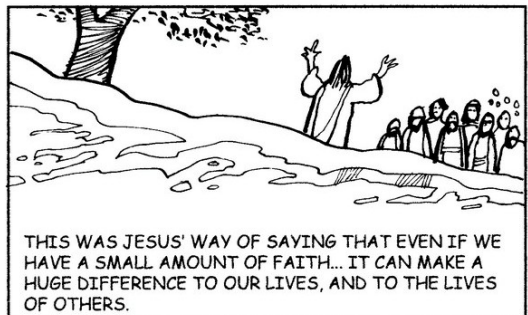
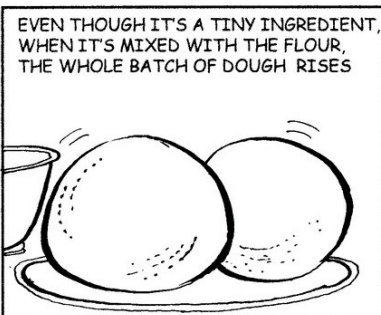
Look up the Bible verses and fill in the missing words. Look for them in the word search then look for these words below.

HOLY • SPIRIT • COUNSELLOR • COMFORTER  
ADVOCATE • TEACHER • LORD • PROMISE  
GLORY • GRACE • FAITH • DOVE • FIRE • WIND

The tale of  
the  
Mustard  
Seed  
& the tale of the  
Yeast



JESUS ALSO EXPLAINED THAT THE  
KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS LIKE YEAST.



## **WHEN IS WAR A JUST WAR?**

Readers may be aware that President Trump has criticised Pope Leo XIV in part because the Pope, without direct reference to the USA, has referred to the ills of wars and urged everyone to work for peace. Vice President J D Vance and the Speaker of Congress, Mike Johnson, have joined in the criticism of the Pope; both have suggested that before the Pope talks about conflict he should be mindful of the concept of a ‘just war.’

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) has issued a press release that seeks to articulate correctly informed understanding of the ‘just war theory.’

**WASHINGTON** – In light of recent public comments regarding the Catholic Church’s teaching on war and peace, Bishop James Massa, chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Committee on Doctrine, issued the following statement:

“For over a thousand years, the Catholic Church has taught just war theory, and it is that long tradition the Holy Father carefully references in his comments on war. A constant tenet of that thousand-year tradition is a nation can only legitimately take up the sword ‘in self-defence, once all peace efforts have failed’ (Catechism of the Catholic Church, no. 2308). That is, to be a just war it must be a defence against another who actively wages war, which is what the Holy Father *actually said*: ‘He does not listen to the prayers of those who wage war.’

“When Pope Leo XIV speaks as supreme pastor of the universal Church, he is not merely offering opinions on theology, he is preaching the Gospel and exercising his ministry as the Vicar of Christ. The consistent teaching of the Church is insistent that all people of good will must pray and work toward lasting peace while avoiding the evils and injustices that accompany all wars.”

## **CONCERT: LIGHT AND LIFE!**

A concert will take place in St John’s church, Kidmore End at 3pm on Saturday 27 June, with us welcoming lots of people from the community and celebrating the re-opening of the church after a period of interior redevelopment and refurbishment.

Plans involve choirs and instrumental musicians from both the church and from Kidmore End School and will include songs from around the world: America, Brazil, Canada, Italy and South Africa. These are fun: both light-hearted and deeply emotional. A brass group and soloists will also treat us to a variety of exhilarating music – this is an afternoon not to be missed! We hope this will be a really exciting community engagement.

Admission is free but donations will be welcomed towards Phase 2 of the improvements to St John's Church. Refreshments will be served after the concert; visitors will be able to enjoy the floral decorations on the graves in the churchyard outside if weather permits. Please save the date!

## **PATRONAL FESTIVAL**

St John's Patronal Festival will be celebrated on Sunday 28 June with a service of Evensong at 6pm. The regular choir will be augmented with singers from Goring Chamber Choir, enabling us to offer music to a high standard for this special occasion, when we celebrate the re-opening of the church for regular worship. All are welcome.

## **MORE BISHOPS APPOINTED - STARTING WITH STEPNEY IN THE DIOCESE OF LONDON.....**



The Venerable Rod Green will be the next Bishop of Stepney, Rod is currently the Archdeacon of Llandaff in the Church in Wales. Rod was educated at the University of Reading and the London School of Theology, and trained for ministry at Wycliffe Hall, Oxford. He served his title at Christ Church, Spitalfields, in the Stepney Area of the Diocese of London and was ordained priest in 2008.

In 2011 he took up the role of Associate Rector at St Paul's, Shadwell, also in the Stepney Area of the Diocese of London. In 2014 he was appointed Vicar at St. Peter's, West Harrow, in the Willesden Area of the Diocese of London.

He has served in his current role as Archdeacon of Llandaff, in the Diocese of Llandaff, in the Church in Wales, since 2021.

Rod said: “I am absolutely thrilled to be returning to the Stepney Area. God is doing some extraordinary things in Stepney, and I am looking forward to joining in with what God is already doing. I have deep biological roots in the area. My dad grew up in Stepney. His first job was at the old post office in Islington. My children were born here. My wife already works in Canary Wharf. I have deep spiritual roots here too. Stepney is where I first discerned my vocation and where I was formed as a priest. I am really looking forward to catching up with old friends, making new ones, and working together to help every church and chaplaincy flourish as safe, healthy and loving Gospel communities.

## **.....AND CONTINUING WITH WARRINGTON IN THE DIOCESE OF LIVERPOOL**

The Dean on Truro, the Very Rev Simon Robinson, is to be the Bishop of Warrington. A former headteacher, Simon worked in education for 24 years and was ordained 2012. He served his curacy in three village churches near Bath, Somerset, and ministered as vicar of Minehead before moving to Truro.



“I am excited and daunted by what God has drawn me to next,” he said. “I really do look forward to listening to and learning from the very many people of Warrington and the Diocese of Liverpool as we live and tell the story of Jesus Christ together.”

The Interim Bishop of Liverpool, Ruth Worsley, said: “I am so looking forward to having Simon as my brother bishop in the diocese of Liverpool. “He brings a wealth of experience, holy listening and honest insight. I know he will be a gift to us here within the diocese and the Merseyside region as we seek God’s best for our future life together in mission and ministry.”

The Archbishop of York, Stephen Cottrell, said: “Simon comes with many gifts to serve the people and parishes of the Diocese of Liverpool, and to bear witness to God in every place.”

## PARISH SHARE AT 31 MARCH 2026

| Archdeaconry  | Amount paid        | Outstanding        | % Paid      |
|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|-------------|
| Berkshire     | £ 1,436,704        | £ 4,672,786        | 23.5        |
| Buckingham    | £ 1,457,029        | £ 5,607,790        | 20.6        |
| Dorchester    | £ 1,448,187        | £ 4,944,294        | 22.7        |
| Oxford        | £ 380,168          | £ 1,497,183        | 20.3        |
| <b>Totals</b> | <b>£ 4,722,088</b> | <b>£16,722,053</b> | <b>22.0</b> |

The 2026 Parish Share contributions are underway. The table above shows how much each of the four archdeaconries have contributed as at 31 March 2026. At this point in 2025 the aggregate contributions were £4,687,222. Henley Deanery has contributed £121,601 which is 17.5% of the allocation. In 2025, at this point, the percentage contribution was 16.3%

### **WHERE DID THE HYMN, AND CAN IT BE? COME FROM?**

You'll find this hymn in the parish hymnal as 588. The lyrics were written by Charles Wesley (1707 – 1788) in 1738. It was around this time that Charles' brother, John returned from the USA. On his outward voyage he was influenced by the hymn-singing of his fellow passengers. When he returned he joined with Charles preaching up and down the country, and both he and Charles started to assemble hymn collections. John was influenced by German hymns whilst Charles (who remained in the Church of England) started to write what turned out to be an astonishing number of hymns throughout his life. As we know Charles had an extraordinary talent for using appropriate words and phrases to express the wonders and breadth of Christian faith. This hymn, *And can it be*, might well have been Charles' way of expressing his own wonder and amazement of God's willingness to confer grace on him and other believers. The hymn was published with a heading of 'free grace.' It became strongly favoured by Methodists.

The hymn uses memorable phrases – 'amazing love,' 'T'is mystery all!' 'My chains fell off, my heart was free, I rose, went forth and followed thee.'

The hymn is set to the tune *Sagina* which was composed by Thomas Campbell in 1825. *Sagina* is a botanical name and the tune was one of a small collection by Thomas Campbell named 'Bouquet'. The tunes in this collection all had botanical names. Not much is known about Thomas Campbell. He was born in Sheffield in 1800 and died in 1876.

The tune is well known for its lively, compelling rhythm and its catchy refrain; and it may be the tune which has elevated the popularity of the hymn. Interestingly, Professor J R Watson (b. 1934) (*An Annotated Anthology of Hymns* – 2002 and later) commented, “The tune. . . has often been seen as unsuitable for words of such devotional intensity. . .” In other hymnals attempts have been made to use other tunes, but *Sagina* remains the tune of widespread choice for this hymn. Do take a moment to revisit the lyrics during the Easter Season and imagine the personal joy and enthusiasm that compelled Charles Wesley to assemble these words.

Allen Harris

## THY KINGDOM COME 2026 – 14 MAY – 24 MAY



Another final reminder - ‘Thy Kingdom Come’ takes place between 14 and 24 May. It 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.

This year, 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.

Where the event is not taken up by churches, anyone can involve themselves by simply praying for more people to come to know Jesus. Do have a look at the event website.

## THE PARISH MEETINGS – 17 MAY

A final reminder that the Parish meetings take place at CTK on Sunday 17 May. The Meeting of Parishioners is the (short) meeting at which the churchwardens are elected. Then follows the Annual Parochial Church Meeting during which reports are presented on the work of the parish and the Henley Deanery Synod. Members

are able to ask questions or make comments on matters of parochial or wider church relevance. Please make a point of attending the meetings.

## **DATES FOR DIARIES**

| <b>Date</b>          | <b>Event</b>                                  | <b>Where?</b>      |
|----------------------|---|--------------------|
| 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 Benefice 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.

## **OXFORD DIOCESE – VACANCY IN SEE**

On 26 March, the Vacancy in See Committee published the Statement of Needs. You'll be able to access and read this document on the Diocesan website. It is a colourfully illustrated booklet that runs to over 70 pages. The section, 'Who we are looking for,' tables several essential or desirable skill-sets:

- A lover of the Gospel
- A person of considerable resilience
- Someone secure in their identity in Christ
- A visible and courageous leader
- A strong collaborator
- A tender and attentive pastor
- Blessed with wisdom and curiosity
- A talented communicator
- Servant-hearted
- A skilled reconciler

- An inspirational evangelist, teacher and preacher
- Committed to embedding an holistic safeguarding culture around the Diocese
- Passionate about those on the margins of society and championing inclusion of those under-represented in church structures.

## **SMALL PLATES MAY BE BETTER**

How large are your dinner plates? If you replace 12-inch plates with 10-inch plates you could end up eating between 16 and 22 per cent less food. That could mean a loss of two stone over a year. The study at Cambridge University concluded: “Helping people to avoid ‘over-serving’ themselves or others with larger portions of food or drink is likely to ...help reduce their risk of over-eating.”

## **DON'T DRIVE IF YOU ARE SAD OR ANGRY**

You'll see signs on motorways warning drivers not to drive if tired. But now it seems you are far more likely to experience a vehicle accident if you drive when you are sad, or when you are angry, or when you are agitated.

A study at Virginia Tech, USA, has found that a healthy emotional state is hugely important for your safety at the wheel; being sad, ‘mad’ or upset can increase your likelihood of a crash by nearly ten-fold. By contrast the same study revealed that talking with passengers, travelling with children in the back, or listening to music has little risk.

*Ed – using a mobile phone increases the risk of accident at least four-fold.*

## **TIME TICKS BY IN MAY 2026**

300 years ago, on 25 May 1726 that the world's first Circulating Library (lending library) was launched by Scottish poet and bookseller Allan Ramsay at his bookshop in Edinburgh.

250 years ago, on 4 May 1776 that Rhode Island became the first of the Thirteen Colonies to renounce allegiance to the British Crown and instead, to declare independence.

200 years ago, on 29 May 1826 that Ebenezer Butterick, American tailor was born. He and his wife invented tissue paper dress patterns in multiple sizes, and thereby revolutionised home dressmaking.

175 years ago, from 1 May to 15 October 1851 that the Great Exhibition was held in The Crystal Palace, Hyde Park. More than 10,000 exhibitors attended what is regarded as the first World's Fair.

100 years ago, on 4 to 12 May 1926 that the UK's General Strike was held. The Trade Union Congress (TUC) called a General Strike in support of 1.2 million coal miners. The strike lasted nine days and had little effect.

90 years ago, on 7 May 1936 that British aviator Amy Johnson made the fastest-ever (at that time) solo flight from England to Cape Town.

Also 90 years ago, on 27 May 1936 that the RMS Queen Mary began her maiden voyage, sailing from Southampton to New York.

80 years ago, on 11 May 1946 that the first CARE packages for Europe arrived in Le Havre to help people who were starving after WWII.

75 years ago, on 3 May 1951 that the Festival of Britain and the Royal Festival Hall in London were opened.

Also 75 years ago, on 9 May 1951 that the Lake District National Park was established as Britain's second national park.

Also 75 years ago, on 25 May 1951 that British spies Guy Burgess and Donald Maclean fled to Moscow. They were members of the infamous Cambridge spy ring.

70 years ago, on 24 May 1956 that the first Eurovision Song Contest was held in Lugano, Switzerland. It was won by Switzerland.

65 years ago, on 31 May 1961 that Michael Ramsay became Archbishop of Canterbury (until 1974).

60 years ago, on 30 May 1966 that British racing driver Graham Hill won the 1966 Indianapolis 500. He was the only driver in history to win the 'triple crown of motor racing': the Formula One World Championship, the 24 Hours of Le Mans, and the Indianapolis 500.

40 years ago, on 9 May 1986 that Tenzing Norgay (Sherpa Tenzing), died. This Tibetan/Nepalese mountaineer had been with Sir Edmund Hillary of New Zealand when in 1953 they became the first people to reach the summit of Mount Everest.

30 years ago, on 30 May 1996 that the Duke and Duchess of York (the then Prince Andrew and Sarah Ferguson) were divorced after ten years of marriage.

15 years ago, on 2 May 2011 that Osama bin Laden, Saudi Arabian-born terrorist, was shot dead by US forces in Pakistan. He was the founder of Al-Qaeda and is thought to have masterminded the 9/11 attacks on the USA.

10 years ago, on 31 May 2016 that Carla Lane, TV screenwriter, died. Best remembered for creating, *The Liver Birds*, *Butterflies*, and *Bread*.

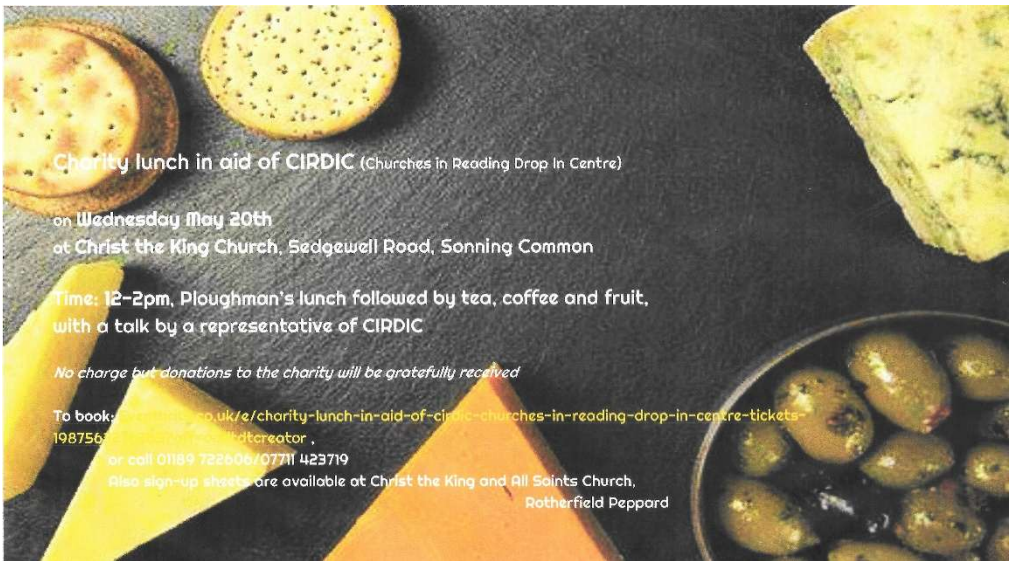
## **CIRDIC CHARITY LUNCH – 20 MAY 2026**

All are welcome to a talk about the excellent work of CIRDIC, on Wednesday 20 May, 12pm - 2pm at Christ the King Church, Sonning Common.

There will be a ploughman's lunch, followed by tea, coffee and fruit. Attendance is free, but donations to CIRDIC will be very much appreciated.

Look out for posters in the churches and around the villages for booking information.

Bookings can be made on Eventbrite, sign-up sheets in the churches and also by phone on 01189 72606 or 07711 423719.



**Charity lunch in aid of CIRDIC** (Churches In Reading Drop In Centre)

on **Wednesday May 20th**  
at **Christ the King Church, Sedgewell Road, Sonning Common**

**Time: 12-2pm**, Ploughman's lunch followed by tea, coffee and fruit,  
with a talk by a representative of CIRDIC

*No charge but donations to the charity will be gratefully received*

To book visit <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/charity-lunch-in-aid-of-cirdic-churches-in-reading-drop-in-centre-tickets-1987563423719> or contact the event creator,  
or call 01189 72606/07711 423719

Also sign-up sheets are available at Christ the King and All Saints Church,  
Rotherfield Peppard

## **ELECTORAL ROLL REVISION**

A routine revision of the Electoral Roll is on the go. You'll find a notice at Christ the King – the revision period ends on 5 May. If you are on the roll and intend to remain therein there is nothing to do. The revision is an opportunity for anyone who wishes to join the membership to do so. If you have any queries, please contact David Foster, the Electoral Roll Officer. Any change to the number of members on the roll will be reported at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting on 17 May.

**24 MAY - PENTECOST IN THREE WORDS**



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Want to see the church building preserved?  
Or just feeling generous?

-----

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Contact the Churchwarden and PCC Treasurer

Nick Room – 07973 513883

# PARISH GUIDE

|                              |  |  |
|------------------------------|--|--|
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| Church Fabric Funds          | Help preserve our churches for future generations  | Nick Room – 07973 513883                             |
| Hiring Christ the King Hall  | Lettings by arrangement – may be hired for moderate charges  | Benefice office – 0118 – 972 1383 – Jo Winch         |
| Magazine articles            | Please send to Allen Harris - the deadline is 22nd monthly or a little before if the magazine is full. | AHa3588066@aol.com                                   |
| Magazine delivery            | To arrange delivery of this magazine to your home  | Please contact Nick Room                             |

## 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 |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|--|-----------------|
| 3 May – Fifth Sunday of Easter    |                          | Acts 7. 55 – end<br>John 14. 1 - 14                | 09.30 Eucharist |
| 10 May – Sixth Sunday of Easter   |                          | Acts 17. 22 – 31<br>John 14. 15 - 21               | 09.30 Eucharist |
| 14 May – Ascension Day            |                          | Acts 1. 1 – 11<br>Luke 24. 44 - end                |                 |
| 17 May – Seventh Sunday of Easter |                          | Acts 1. 6 – 14<br>John 17. 1 - 11                  | 09.30 Eucharist |
| 24 May - Pentecost                |                          | Acts 2. 1 – 21<br>John 7. 37 - 39                  | 09.30 Eucharist |
| 31 May – Trinity Sunday           | 11.15 Benefice Eucharist | 2. Corinthians 13. 11 – end<br>Matthew 28. 16 - 20 |                 |

St John's Church has been undergoing planned project works and it is hoped that it will be accessible for ongoing worship services from Sunday 31 May, but please check the weekly bulletin.

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 May – 09.00 Holy Communion BCP said, 18.30 Evensong

10 May – 10.30 Sung Eucharist

14 May – 19.00 Benefice Eucharist for Ascension Day

17 May – 10.30 Peppard Praise Communion Service

24 May – 10.30 Family Communion

31 May – No Service