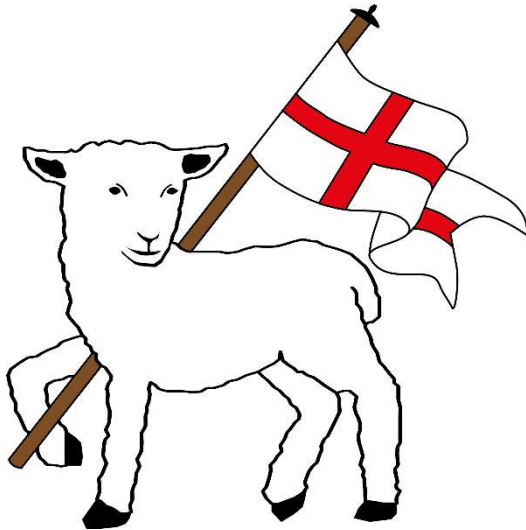


AUGUST 2026

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

The Lamb and Flag



The parish magazine of

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

90p

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FROM 2 PRIORY COPSE

I still remember the first time I saw a woman preside at the Eucharist, about 25 years ago. I was the youth pastor at a church in Johannesburg, South Africa. They had recently appointed a new assistant priest: a woman. When I went to the first service she took, I was sitting in a pew next to my mother. I don't think either of us was expecting anything momentous, but just being there - hearing a woman read the Gospel, seeing a woman preside at the altar - was breathtaking. It was like I had a hole in my heart and I never knew it. And seeing a woman in the sanctuary - presiding with grace and dignity - healed a wound I never knew I had.

Not long after that, I joined the Fellowship of Vocation in my Diocese (a monthly meeting to support and teach those testing a vocation to ordained ministry) and began studying Theology at University. A few years later, having finished my studies and experienced a year at seminary, I was ordained and began working in my training parish. For parishes later, it's hard to believe that next year is the twentieth anniversary of my ordination.

I'd felt the inklings of a calling before, but perhaps sitting in that church twenty-five years ago helped to nudge one of the puzzle pieces in my life into place.

I'm so thankful for those women who paved the way for us, who helped us to expand our perspective, and whose courage made it possible for us to have a female Archbishop of Canterbury in the Year of our Lord Two Thousand and Twenty-Six. Finally!

At a time when the ministry of women is still debated and – in some places – forbidden, it was deeply moving to see Sarah take her seat in the Chair of Saint Augustine at her installation service earlier this year. And to see her embrace her new role with courage and grace.

After the last years of heartbreaking safeguarding failures, the Church has a long way to go to earn people's trust and respect. I can't help feeling that having Sarah in charge is a big step in the right direction! And who knows how many women will be encouraged by the example of our new Archbishop to share the gifts God has given them too.

Sarah

A PASTORAL LETTER FROM THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY AND ARCHBISHOP HOSAM NAOUM



Towards the end of June, Archbishop Sarah made a five day pilgrimage to the Holy Land. She made the pastoral visit at the invitation of Archbishop Hosam, in order to be alongside Anglican clergy and congregations in Palestine and Israel, as well as meeting with other churches' leaders and communities in the region. During the visit, the Archbishop also met with civil society and interfaith groups working for human rights, coexistence and peace in Israel and Palestine. The letter is directed to the Episcopal (Anglican) Church in Jerusalem and the Middle East as well as Anglicans around the global Anglican Communion.

*Let us not love with words or speech, but with actions and in truth.
(1 John 3:18)*

Dear Friends,

Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

From 19-24 June 2026, we travelled as disciples of Christ on a pilgrimage through the Holy Land, praying and listening to God, listening to those we met, offering solidarity with those that are suffering, and allowing ourselves to be changed by all that we have seen and heard. To be a pilgrim is to undertake a journey through places, but it is also a journey of the heart and mind. Through this pilgrimage we

have found ourselves drawn more deeply into the realities of life experienced by Palestinian Christians and by many others who call this land their home.

During our pilgrimage we have witnessed how the Church remains a place of encounter, hospitality, and witness. Through its schools, hospitals, and ministries, the Church defends human dignity and works for life lived in all its fullness. Amidst many hardships, we have witnessed a resilient Christian steadfastness that chooses love over hate and refuses to let despair have the final word. However, despite their faithful resistance we fear for the long-term future of the indigenous Christian Palestinian presence in the Holy Land that stretches back to the time when our Lord walked this land. This existential challenge demands our focused attention and collective responsibility. The time to act is now.

Across Palestine and Israel, we met families that feel unmoored and traumatised by endless conflict. In Israel, the simultaneous fighting of many conflicts at one time, and the deep-seated aftermath of the horrifying atrocities of 7 October, have created a state of intense sensitivity to potential danger that has transformed society and politics. In the West Bank, unchecked settler violence, forced displacement, systemic discrimination, and expanding checkpoints have left the Palestinian population impoverished, desperate and powerless to enact change. Annexation is already taking place in all but name.

Meanwhile, the profound suffering in Gaza continues. The international community must not look away; it bears a moral responsibility to relieve this agony and help rebuild Gaza's society. We give thanks that, despite a health system in catastrophic collapse, the Anglican Al Ahli hospital in Gaza City—alongside Church clinics across the region—continues to serve those in need as an embodied sign of God's healing love.

We pray and call for an end to the enduring injustice in this land. Our pilgrimage was deeply enriched by our meetings with Palestinian and Israeli civil society, ecumenical, and interfaith groups working tirelessly to advance trust, justice, equality, and mutual understanding within and between communities. Their creativity and determination to secure self-determination for the Palestinian people, and a sustainable peace for all, must be amplified.

The conflicts across the Middle East are not merely local conflicts. They are symptomatic of a deeper political and spiritual crisis – an abandonment of

international law and an increasing recurrence of military force to resolve disputes. We hold that war is never the answer. War destroys human life and tears apart the human family. Disputes must be solved in accordance with international law through patient diplomacy, negotiation and a vigorous defence of the rules-based international system. International humanitarian law is not an optional constraint, but an unwavering commitment to protect the sanctity of human life and our God-given dignity.

In the light of the International Court of Justice's Advisory Opinion of 2024, we urge you to advocate with political representatives to take all necessary measures to establish a credible path towards ending the occupation. This must lead to a viable two-state solution enabling Israelis and Palestinians to live in peace, dignity and security. Jerusalem's status should be determined through negotiation as a shared capital, fully respecting the religious rights of all faiths and preserving both the historic Status Quo and the Hashemite custodianship of the holy sites in Jerusalem as ratified in Article 9 of the 1994 peace treaty between Israel and Jordan.

We are grateful to the Anglican Alliance and other Church partners around the world for their exceptionally generous support to the Diocese of Jerusalem over the past two and a half years. We ask that you continue to generously support these works so that they can continue their life-giving ministries. Maintaining this ministry will become more difficult in the years ahead given the increased financial and regulatory pressures Church institutions face. This ministry is essential to help support the Christian presence in this land.

Our prayer is that by God's grace, we might bear witness to the hope of the Gospel, and that we might offer to this land, its people and to the wider world a foretaste of God's peace and love.

The Most Revd Dame Sarah Mullally
The Archbishop of Canterbury

The Most Revd Hosam E. Naoum
The Anglican Archbishop in Jerusalem

WHERE TO JOIN A SERVICE IN AUGUST

Date	CTK	SJB	All Saints
2 August			10.30 Benefice Sung Eucharist 13.00 Baptism
9 August	09.30 Benefice Eucharist		
16 August			10.30 Benefice Sung Eucharist
23 August		11.15 Benefice Sung Eucharist	
30 August	09.30 Benefice Eucharist		

Please check the weekly bulletins in case any of the planned arrangements are changed.

LIVING IN LOVE AND FAITH

Following the closure of the formal Living in Love and Faith programme, leaders of two working groups have been announced. It follows a vote taken by General Synod at its last meeting in February on a motion to commend the establishment of the two new groups.

The Bishop of the Isle of Man and Sodor, Tricia Hillas, will chair a new Relationships, Sexuality and Gender Working Group. Among other things, this group will explore legal and legislative questions around special services involving Prayers of Love and Faith. The Bishop of Winchester, Philip Mounstephen, will chair a Relationships, Sexuality and Gender Pastoral Consultative Group supporting bishops and archdeacons by offering pastoral advice and guidance on individual cases and promoting consistent practice across the Church. Membership of these groups will be announced in due course. The Relationships, Sexuality, and

Gender Working Group will report back to the General Synod within the first two years of the new Synod, which is being elected in the autumn.



The Bishops of Winchester and the Isle of Man and Sodor

CHURCH OF ENGLAND WELCOMES GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM

The Church of England has welcomed an announcement from the Government on 3 July that they will consult in the Autumn on the potential of RE for the first time becoming part of the National Curriculum with protections for church schools. This is part of the implementation of the Curriculum and Assessment Review as outlined in the ‘Schools White Paper – Every Child Achieving and Thriving.’

Tony Wilson, Chief Executive Officer and Director of Education, Oxford Diocesan Board of Education, and member of the Expert Advisory Group said: “The need for the inclusion of Religious Education within the National Curriculum has never been more acute. The provision of high quality RE for all pupils is paramount in promoting and embedding societal cohesion. It has been an honour and privilege for me as an education system leader within the Church of England to be a member of a broad and diverse group that has worked collegiately and collaboratively over many months to produce a report that takes us a long way along this journey. It is my prayer and hope that our shared vision will become actualised to ensure and enrich the experience of current and future generations of children and young people within the subject.”

The Rt Revd Jonathan Frost, Bishop of Portsmouth said: “As Chair of the National Society for Education, I fully welcome this government consultation on RE moving into the National Curriculum. This both elevates the importance of the subject as integral to the flourishing of every child in our nation and preserves long-standing arrangements for church schools which make up a third of the state sector.

WHERE DID THE HYMN *TO THEE, O LORD, OUR HEARTS WE RAISE* COME FROM?

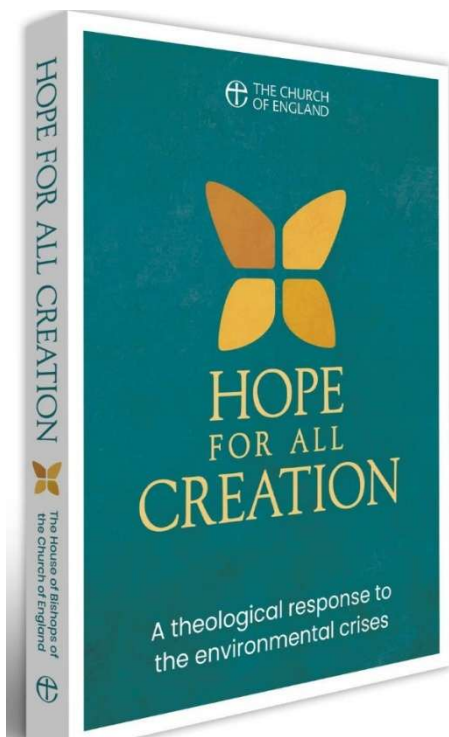
When I was working in London in the 1970’s I remember a young typist - not a churchgoer - saying how much she loved harvest hymns. And I suppose that might have been because harvest is a particularly joyful season and harvest hymns are generally cheerful with memorable tunes. This hymn was written by William Chatterton Dix (1837 – 1898). It first appeared in 1864 in *Hymns for the Service of the Church*, a collection for a church in Bristol, and *The People’s Hymnal* in 1867. William Dix, the son of a surgeon, was born and educated in Bristol. His career was in business including an insurance company in Glasgow. It was therefore somewhat surprising that he wrote hymns and perhaps his most popular one is the Epiphany hymn, *As with gladness, men of old* set to the tune *Dix* (a tune which William Dix apparently didn’t like!)

To thee, O Lord, our hearts we raise was selected by Arthur Sullivan (1842 – 1900) who composed the tune, *Golden Sheaves*, in 1874 as a setting in a small hymnal for which Sullivan was the music editor. The hymn, with Sullivan’s tune, was then included in the 1875 version of *Hymns Ancient and Modern*. The hymn continued to grow in popularity, and it was included in the *English Hymnal* 1906, albeit with a tune, *St Gall*, which dates from 1863 in the Swiss hymn book, *Katholisches Gesanbuch*. However, the hymn also appeared in an appendix to the *English Hymnal* with the tune *Golden Sheaves*. There is little doubt that the bright melody of *Golden Sheaves* has elevated support for the hymn which is now widely used in many hymnals. Something for you to joyfully hum during the Harvest season.

Allen Harris

GENERAL SYNOD – JULY SESSIONS

General Synod met at York between 10 – 14 July. For some this was their last Synod as new representatives will be appointed for the next Sessions in 2027. On Sunday 12 July General Synod dealt with matters relating to climate and nature crises. Synod welcomed the publication of a new resource, *Hope For All Creation – a theological response to the environmental crises*.



This is a teaching resource authored by the Faith and Order Commission and adopted by the House of Bishops. The document sets out a Christian understanding of the environmental crises facing the world, rooting care for creation in the biblical story of creation, redemption and renewal, structured around the themes See, Reflect, Respond.

The document argues that care for creation is not an optional concern but a core part of Christian discipleship and mission. It presents environmental action as an expression of hope rooted in God's purposes for creation, highlighting the Church's role in responding to ecological crises alongside people of good will across society and around the world.

Alongside the publication of Hope for All Creation, Synod gave final approval to a new annual Festival of Creation in Christ, to be celebrated in Church of England churches on the first Sunday in September.

The new Festival is one of the fruits of a growing ecumenical movement across churches worldwide and offers an opportunity for Christians to give thanks for God's creation and redemption of the world, reflect on humanity's responsibility to care for the natural world and pray for its renewal.

The title "Creation in Christ" emphasises that creation is understood through the person and work of Jesus Christ: created through him, sustained in him and destined for renewal in him. The new liturgical resources include prayers, readings and other material centred on creation, stewardship and hope, drawing Christians through worship and prayer toward playing their part in the Church's mission to "safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth".

Synod also received a progress report on the Church of England's Net Zero Carbon Programme. Since the Church committed in 2020 to achieving net zero carbon emissions, £30 million has been invested in the first phase of the programme, supporting dioceses, churches, cathedrals, schools and clergy housing. Every diocese has now received funding to build net zero capacity, more than 6,000 churches are engaged with Eco Church, and over 1000 churches have been supported with decarbonisation projects. The programme has also leveraged more than £31 million in additional funding from parishes, communities, trusts and government schemes.

The report noted that significant challenges remain, and that achieving long-term emissions reductions will require sustained commitment, investment and local action across the Church. Additional funding has been allocated through to 2034, with the Church reaffirming its commitment to work towards its net zero ambitions while creating warmer, more energy-efficient buildings that support worship, mission and community life.

Speaking at Synod about the Festival of Creation, the Bishop of Lichfield, the Rt Revd Michael Ipgrave said, "The Festival of Creation in Christ comes before Synod after extensive ecumenical conversations involving churches across the world, including the Anglican Communion, the World Council of Churches, the Roman Catholic Church and Orthodox partners.

"The new title recognises the placing of Christ's role in creation at the very centre: creation made through Christ, held together in Christ and destined for renewal in Christ.

"This Festival is an opportunity to give thanks for God's gift of creation and to recognise our responsibility to cherish it. Together with the teaching document Hope for All Creation, it reminds us that our response to climate and environmental crises must be drawn from the faith, life and worship of the Church."

Ps. Hope For All Creation

Publisher: Church House Publishing

ISBN: 9781781405642

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Price £12.99

ARCHBISHOP SARAH'S SERMON AT YORK MINSTER ON 11 JULY

'So shall my word that goes out from my mouth, it shall not return to me empty'
(Isaiah 55. 11)

Any farmer or gardener will tell you that good sowing begins long before you plant the seed. Preparing the soil isn't just a means to an end, it's a vital part of the whole ecosystem of tending the land. Finding good soil, adding nutrients, water, oxygen; adding support where needed; and only then planting the seed. Tending the soil is a good image for us to think about as a church.

The prophet Isaiah looks to the hope and restoration of his people in exile and offers this beautiful image of God tending the soil. Before the seed is planted, God tends the soil. Just as rain and snow come from heaven and do not return to the heavens until they've watered the earth ... 'so shall my word be'. Note that this beloved image is not about the seed or its growth, but about the preparation of the soil for the seed. It is as if Isaiah gives us the 'story before the story' of the Parable of the Sower.

In the parable Jesus tells, we have the Sower spreading seed extravagantly across the whole landscape, good and bad soil, thorns and paths. Here when we often focus on the seed, or indeed the Sower, Jesus pays most attention to the soil itself. These scriptures invite us then to consider: What kind of soil do we need for things to grow well? What kind of soil do we need to tend for God's word to take root and grow in our hearts, in the parishes and communities we serve, across the world – in the whole created order? How do we tend that soil?

Last week, at the Anglican Consultative Council meeting in Belfast, a gathering of representatives from across the Anglican Communion, reflecting the diverse Anglican Church, I spoke about 'tending the soil of trust in which hope can grow'. That was a particular message for our conversations together as the Anglican Communion, but it also resonates well with our life together as a Church, and in our time here in at General Synod. How do we tend the soil of trust in which hope can grow?

Inside and outside General Synod, some will say we're fragmented as a church; others will see signs of hope; some will be seeking a church that prioritizes putting itself in order; others will be seeking a church that confronts the injustice and disorder of our world with a bold and hopeful voice but always built on the

foundation of Christ. If we are to accomplish any of these things—let alone all of them—tending the soil that is our lives is key. It is impossible to grow trust and hope without such good soil. It is impossible for the word of God to flourish without good soil. Tending the soil of our lives is about spending time studying the scriptures, in prayer and worship and in careful listening. Tending the soil of our lives is about the decision and actions we take in which we hope, and expect, that God will be at work, even (and especially) when it is easier to think God will not show up and things will not get better. Tending the soil is a small action founded on hope. It is also a radical act of resistance against despair and lack of faith in God. I am reminded of the small, but radical action of planting a tree.

When I arrived at Lambeth Palace one of the first things I did was plant two magnolia trees with our head gardener. For me, this was a small action founded on my hope, and expectation, that God would do a new thing; that God would be at work in the growth and in the harvest; that God would be faithful to his promise that ‘nothing will be impossible with God’. Tending the soil is the work of each of us. I have seen soil tended in parishes, churches and communities around the country.

In the Diocesan visits I’ve shared over the past few months, it has been such a joy to celebrate the life of the church. Faithful people, tending the soil, tilling the ground, making space for hearts to be transformed by the seed of God’s word; young people offered places of safety, care and nurture, where they can grow in the faith; hospital and ambulance chaplains offering hope in times of crisis and suffering. None of these are grand acts. They are the simple, daily acts of love and care that every member of every church in England can do to reflect God’s love to another. These acts start with hope that God can and will use them—and, in that way, they prepare the soil in which God’s words of forgiveness, of restoration, of love, of flourishing can take root.

In our life as a Church there is great need for hope and trust to be tended. And I use that word carefully, thinking of the tenderness with which we need to treat one another; the gentleness with which we need to tend to one another; the generosity of spirit we need to inhabit especially where we hold different views.

In the report on Trust and Trustworthiness which we will consider as a Synod, Professor Veronica Hope Hailey and Professor David Ford have helped us to discern how trust and trustworthiness might be restored within the life of the church.

Relationships of trust are the soil from which hope springs. If hope is the fruit, trust is the root. And roots grow slowly, with patience, listening, and the steady work of walking together. Across our Church there is no shortage of passion, conviction, or commitment. Indeed, Prof Hope Hailey expresses her amazement in the report at how deeply committed you and your fellow church members are to the Church. Yet many of us would recognise that commitment is not trust, and the trust we do see is fragile. Many in the Church have been wounded. We cannot simply vote trust into existence, as if those wounds will heal with the raising of a few hands. Neither can we create hope through anxiety, fear or urgency.

Christian hope is the confidence that God is still at work, tending the soil, tilling the earth, sending the rain and the snow, planting the seed. These are all acts of hope, built on trust that God is at work even when we don't see the results just yet. God's word will not return empty. God is faithful - we need not act from fear; we need not act from anxiety; and we need not imagine that the future of the Church rests solely in our hands.

Isaiah's vision of restoration shows us what's possible when we allow God to tend the soil of our hearts: 'For you shall go out in joy and be led back in peace; the mountains and the hills before you shall burst into song, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.'

Perhaps God has planted a seed in your heart today. Perhaps you feel inspired to serve God in a new way—as a volunteer, a youth worker, a churchwarden or a chaplain, perhaps as a deacon or a priest. You never know when and where God might nudge someone towards ordination. Whatever the case, don't go from here without making a commitment to do a thing God is asking you to do - to tend the soil of your life. Make yourself available to God. Open your heart and mind listening to God. Be ready to respond with a small act of love and care - an act of resistance against despair and hopelessness. Let us tend the soil of our lives; let us tend the soil of trust in our church in which hope can grow – that we might witness the remarkable harvest God will yield.

And May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

GENERAL SYNOD VOTED TO 'TAKE NOTE' OF A LANDMARK REPORT ON TRUST AND TRUSTWORTHINESS IN THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

The product of almost five years' work and more than 70 in-depth face-to-face interviews with people across the Church, the report analyses possible causes of breakdown of trust and how they might be healed.



Veronica Hope Hailey - photo Sam Atkins, Church of England

Synod heard from the authors Professor Veronica Hope Hailey - a senior academic who has carried out organisational reviews across bodies ranging from the United Nations to companies, charities and voluntary organisations - who carried out the analysis, and the renowned theologian Prof David Ford, who authored an accompanying theological commentary. Prof Ford told Synod Prof Hope Hailey's work

amounted to "an unprecedented in-depth listening exercise".

Setting out her findings, Prof Hope Hailey told Synod that the interviews revealed a picture of complex organisation with a long history facing the challenge of renewing its structures, cultures and systems in the 21st Century faced with a number of crises.

She divided challenges the Church faces into those which are "usual" in large, complex organisations - and "unusual" issues particular to the Church's structures, culture, and recent events.

The interviewees highlighted a particular "blame culture" and "tribalism" within the Church as well as challenges such as the Church's unusual governance structure and "ambiguous leadership roles", she said.

But they also pointed to much that was unusual but positive including "extraordinarily high" levels of commitment from clergy. Most private sector or public sector organisations would be envious of this," she said.

Summing up she said: “This institution was formed from dispute; I am an historian originally. It’s a broad-based church, which by its declared aims and purposes, must serve a diverse nation, and a nation that changes. And that means you must continually renew structures, leadership, systems, and cultures, like everybody else does, in the ever-changing world.”

She continued: “Personally, I felt deeply inspired by almost everyone I’ve interviewed in the course of this work. Like my maiden name, I am full of hope. And I agree with the Archbishop of Canterbury in her address yesterday (11 July), when she said, ‘if hope is the fruit, trust is the root’. Good luck to all of you.”

Prof Ford said: “As you can read in the Report, the interviewees agonised over one example after another of disunity and distrust in our Church after another.

“A question I asked myself again and again: in the face of the situation in our Church and in this country, can we in the Church of England find a renewed and deepened passion for unity, with Jesus and his Father first of all, then among ourselves, and with other Christians, for the sake of our mission to this country and beyond?

“Our Church has always wanted to be a blessing to this country, I see this report opening a way to be that more and more fully.

“This country needs institutions that show how trust can be repaired, renewed and sustained—we need these lively signs of trust and trustworthiness. At present, in most people’s eyes, we are not that. If we humbly seek to follow through practically on this Report, that could change - we could change.”

THE FELLOWSHIP OF ST BIRINUS

The Rector has nominated Nick Room for membership of the Fellowship in recognition of his outstanding contribution to church life, not least his project management of the renovation of Christ the King, and phase 1 of the improvements at St John’s.

The Fellowship of St Birinus is an honorary award originally established by the Rt Revd Colin Fletcher, Bishop of Dorchester, and continued by his successor, Bishop Gavin Collins, to recognize individuals who have provided exceptional, long-term service to their local church and community. Inductees into the Fellowship receive

a commemorative certificate and a lapel pin featuring the symbol of St Birinus, the seventh-century "Apostle to Wessex".

There is an annual service at Dorchester Abbey where inductees receive their award in September.

RIDE AND STRIDE: SATURDAY 12 SEPTEMBER 2026



The annual 'Ride and Stride for Churches' fundraising event is taking place on Saturday 12 September. The event is organised by the Oxfordshire Historical Churches Trust (OHCT) to raise funds to support historical churches throughout Oxfordshire. Both St John's and Christ the King have benefitted significantly from OHCT grants in the past which has enabled us to carry out essential repair and building work. With plans to extend and improve the facilities at St John's in the (hopefully!) near future, it is as important as ever to support the OHCT.

OHCT is an entirely volunteer-led organisation which aims to provide funding to help local communities repair, maintain and improve Oxfordshire's historic churches. Money raised through sponsors is paid to OHCT; they will rebate up to half of the total raised to a nominated church. OHCT reclaims Gift Aid and uses this to cover its administrative costs. OHCT awarded over £560,000 in grants in 2024-2025, this included £5000 to All Saints, Rotherfield Peppard, towards replacement of the Copeman Hart electronic organ.

Last year, our parish raised over £1000 thanks to those who visited churches across the county either on foot, by bicycle or mobility scooter. Remember, it's not necessarily a physical event, you can also be sponsored to act as a welcomer to visitors to our own churches which will be open on the day. Half of any money raised is donated to St John's or Christ the King, whichever church you chose to nominate on your sponsorship form.

If you would like to get involved, either as a rider or strider or as a church welcomer, please ask me for a sponsorship form, or you can access the OHCT website and register online at <https://ohct.org.uk/ride-and-stride/take-part>. On the website you will find a list of participating churches so that you can plan your route. Some of those who have taken part in the past have managed to visit a number of churches in a short amount of time, for example by going to Wallingford or Oxford where several churches are located within reasonable walking or cycling distance

Karen Broadbent

NEWS FROM YOUR LICENSED LAY MINISTER

I thought it was probably time for an update on my activities since my licensing last November. Despite being a fully-fledged LLM, the training still goes on. Since November I have attended training days focusing on the New and Old Testaments, Christian ethics, ministry with schools, leadership, funeral ministry, working with volunteers, and rural ministry, as well as two full-day preaching workshops at Church House, Oxford. In addition, I spent an entire February weekend training with my fellow LLMs and LLMs-in-training (second years) at Ripon College, Cuddesdon. I am in the process of putting together a portfolio of theological reflections on each of these areas of study, which must then be submitted to the Diocese. Ultimately, this portfolio of work, together with practical experience, will determine whether my license will be renewed next year.

I have also put some of my newly acquired knowledge into practice, taking my first funeral in April, and visiting Sonning Common Primary School with Jill Pound in December for a Christingle event involving very enthusiastic children and some interesting questions! And, of course, I continue with weekly ‘church duties,’ including sermon-writing and preaching, something which is becoming slightly less nerve-wracking as time goes on! I am also becoming accustomed to leading Evensong at both St John’s and All Saints’, and to assisting with worship at each of the three Benefice churches. It has been a joy getting to know people from each congregation.

Away from church, I work at The Henley College as Senior Librarian, a post I have held for 27 years. At the beginning of this year, I elected to reduce my hours and work term-time only, which means a bit more leisure during the school holidays, although increasing grandma duties takes up a fair amount of time! I continue to enjoy music, singing under the direction of Frances Brewitt-Taylor with the Parish

choir at St John's and with Goring Chamber Choir, playing the recorder and threatening to dust off my trombone and get back to brass band music!

The past few years have been a true journey of discovery and discernment. Along the way, I've had the privilege of crossing paths with wonderfully inspiring people, allowing me to deepen my spiritual and theological understanding. If anyone reading this feels a sense of calling, do listen to where God may be leading you. I'm always happy to chat about my own experience, just get in touch!

Karen Broadbent. Karenbroadbent@hotmail.com

WHAT'S IN THE LECTIONARY IN SEPTEMBER?

On 8 September, the accession of King Charles III may be celebrated. Also, the birth of the Blessed Virgin Mary may be celebrated unless it was celebrated on 15 August. Holy Cross Day* may be celebrated on 14 September. Matthew, Apostle and Martyr falls on 21 September and Michael and All Angels falls on 29 September.

Other lesser feasts and commemorations include, Gregory the Great, Bishop of Rome, Teacher 604 on 3 September, Birinus, Bishop of Dorchester (Oxon), Apostle of Wessex c. 650, on 4 September, Ninian, Bishop of Galloway, Apostle of the Picts, c 432 on 16 September, Hildegard, Abbess of Bingen, Visionary 1179 on 17 September and Lancelot Andrewes, Bishop of Winchester, Spiritual writer, on 25 September 1626. In the Book of Common Prayer Lectionary Lambert, Bishop of Maastricht, Martyr, 709 on 17 September. (Those who know Shakespeare's *Richard II* will know that Richard commanded Henry Bolingbroke (later Henry IV) and Thomas Mowbray to undergo trial by combat at Coventry on St Lambert's Day)

***HOLY CROSS DAY**

As noted above, Holy Cross Day is celebrated on 14 September. It originates from the 4th century. Tradition has it that Saint Helena, mother of the Roman Emperor Constantine, travelled to Jerusalem and oversaw the excavation of the site of Christ's tomb. During the dig, those doing the work found the remains of three crosses one of which was declared as the 'True Cross' of Christ. A church was established over the site, and it was dedicated as the Church of the Holy Sepulchre on 13 September 335. Holy Cross Day is also referred to as the Exaltation of the Holy Cross and it may be contrasted with Good Friday. Holy Cross Day celebrates the symbol of the cross as Christ's triumphant victory over sin.

'LIGHT AND LIFE' SUMMER COMMUNITY CONCERT

St John the Baptist Church, having been closed since early January, provided a joyful concert on Saturday 27 June to mark and celebrate the re-wiring, new lighting, heating and re-decoration which has been put in place. The church looked wonderful, and the concert was so well attended that we needed extra seating in the aisle!

This was a real community event, and we were very pleased to be joined by children from the Kidmore End Primary School choir, and their headmistress, Mrs Claire Spankie. The many talents of the parish choir were also on display, with cameos from Linda and Janet's vocals with the ukulele, to the acting and singing talents of the Three Little Maids from School from the Mikado, as presented by Felicity, Janet and Linda. The jazz trio, Nostalgia Brass, played traditional pieces which reminded me a little of a favourite of mine from the past, The Temperance Seven.

The backbone of the programme was provided by some excellent singing throughout by our Parish Choir, supplemented by members of the Goring Chamber Choir, and very ably supported on the piano by our accompanist on the day, Paul Manley. They sang a wide selection of music from around the world ranging from The Teddy Bears' Picnic to the South African National Anthem - Nkosi Sikelel Africa.

We are very fortunate indeed to be able to call on the exceptional musical and organisational talents of Frances Brewitt-Taylor, the Director of Music at St John's, who prepared and provided both the programme, and the presenting contributors.

This was a very happy event enjoyed by us all; it also raised £750 towards Phase 2 of our improvement programme at St John's, which will be led once again by our churchwarden Nick Room.

To round off the event, we all moved outside into the fresh air where Bev and Yvonne provided us with tea, coffee, biscuits and homemade cake.

Peter Blake

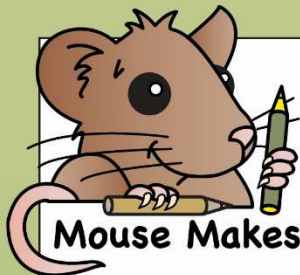
ANGLO-CATHOLICS IN THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

We're over 10 years on from the House of Bishops Declaration of 2014 which guaranteed the sacramental and pastoral care of traditionalists via the 'five guiding principles' ensuring, among other things, access to male only priests, specific parish arrangements and Provincial Episcopal Visitors (earlier termed 'flying bishops'). One of the principles often mentioned is 'mutual flourishing' which commits the Church of England to accommodate both those who support and those who oppose the ministry of women and for everyone to thrive alongside one another. So how are things going?

There are four 'flying bishops', the Rt Revd Jonathan Baker, Bishop of Fulham, the Rt Revd Stephen Race, Bishop of Beverley, the Rt Revd Luke Irvine-Capel, Bishop of Richborough, and the Rt Revd Paul Thomas, Bishop of Oswestry. Jonathan Baker provides episcopal oversight to over 60 Anglo-Catholic parishes, churches and congregations in the Dioceses of London and Southwark. Stephen Race provides oversight in parishes in 11 northern dioceses which includes Sodor and Man. Luke Irvine-Capel provides oversight to 14 principally 'eastern' dioceses, and Paul Thomas provides oversight to 13 dioceses in the principally western dioceses in the Province of Canterbury. Additionally, there are other Anglo-Catholic Bishops, the Rt Revd Philip North, Bishop of Blackburn, and the Rt Revd Will Hazlewood, Suffragan Bishop of Lewes. The recently retired Bishop of Chichester, the Rt Revd Martin Warner, was also an Anglo-Catholic bishop. Collectively, they act as a Council of Bishops for the Society under the patronage of St Wilfrid and St Hilda.

The 'flying bishops' spend considerable time travelling around their respective areas of episcopal oversight. Paul Thomas – Oswestry – clocks up over 32,000 miles annually by road! There are two churches in Reading for which Paul Thomas is responsible, St Giles in Reading, and Holy Trinity, Oxford Road. The websites for Fulham, Beverley, Richborough and Oswestry provide details of the parishes and churches for which the Provincial Episcopal Visitors provide oversight. As an aside, at Holy Trinity, Oxford Road, Reading, on 20 December 2025, Father Martyn Griffiths, formerly rector of Henley St Mary with Remenham celebrated the golden jubilee of his ordination. Belated congratulations to Fr Martyn. It seems that 'mutual flourishing' continues purposefully; parishes, parishioners, priests, and bishops can follow their Anglo-Catholic traditions; and these fellow Christians remain within a broad Church of England. Archbishop Sarah has demonstrated her respect and support for the Anglo-Catholics.

CENTRE SPOT FOR YOUNGSTERS



Mouse Makes

4 across

After Paul was stoned, where did he travel to with Barnabas?
Acts 14:19-20

4 down

Where was Saul travelling to when Jesus appeared to him?
Acts 9:3



7 across

Where did the Church in Jerusalem send Barnabas?
Acts 11:22

11 down

Where did Noah's ark come to rest after its journey?
Genesis 8:4

9. To which city did Philip travel to proclaim Christ?
Acts 8:5

10. To which river did people travel out to to be baptised?
Mark 1:5



1. To which city did God send Jonah?

Jonah 1:1-2



3. Which sea did Jesus walk beside before he went up on the mountain?
Matthew 15:29



B I B L E

2. Where did Paul travel to after seeing a vision?

Acts 16:9-10



5. Which town did Naomi and Ruth travel to after leaving Moab?

Ruth 1:22



6. Where did Paul and Barnabas go after being persecuted in Antioch?
Acts 13:51



J O U R N E Y S



8. To where did Mary and Joseph flee to get away from Herod?

Matthew 2:13



11. After a five day journey where did Paul arrive?
Acts 20:6

12. Which sea did Moses walk through to get away from the Egyptians?
Exodus 15:4



13. Where did Paul travel to after he left Athens?
Acts 18:1

Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in
Luke 7:1-10, Matthew 8:5-13

When the Romans invaded Israel, they used soldiers to keep order. For the centurion in Capernaum it was more than just a job...

The centurion had a young servant who was in great pain and dying.



When he heard that Jesus was near, he asked the town leaders to ask Jesus for help.

The Leaders told Jesus..



This man deserves your help. He loves our people.

He has even built us a meeting place!



This could have been a tricky situation, for Jews never went into the houses of non-Jews.



But Jesus said..

I will go and heal the boy.



But the centurion knew that, as a Jew, Jesus could not go into the houses of non-Jews so as Jesus got near, he sent some friends to him.



He says he isn't worthy enough for you to come to his house.

But he says he understands authority and knows you have it. You only have to say so and his servant will be healed

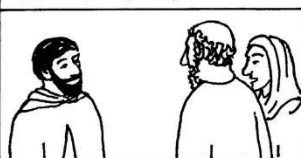


Jesus was amazed!



I have never met anyone in Israel with as much faith.

He said to the friends...



You may go now. What he has believed has happened.

When the friends got to the house they found the servant completely healed!



PARISH SHARE AT 30 JUNE 2026

Archdeaconry	Amount paid	Outstanding	% Paid
Berkshire	£ 2,981,315	£ 3,128,175	48.9
Buckingham	£ 3,159,965	£ 3,904,854	44.7
Dorchester	£ 3,172,818	£ 3,219,663	49.6
Oxford	£ 800,394	£ 1,076,957	42.6
Totals	£10,114,492	£11,329,649	47.2

The 2026 Parish Share contributions continue to accumulate. The table above shows how much each of the four archdeaconries have contributed as at 30 June 2026. At this point in 2025 the aggregate contributions were £9,794,025. Henley Deanery has contributed £260,497 which is 37.5% of the allocation. In 2025, at this point, the percentage contribution was 36.7%.

DATES FOR DIARIES

Date	Event	Where?
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.

MISSING BREAKFASTS?

Surveys have found that, probably because of the popularity of intermittent fasting, these days 13% of adults never eat breakfast.

For some of us, missing breakfast is not a problem. But be aware that no food means low blood sugars, which can lead to lower energy levels and even impaired cognitive function, or brain fog. That is because the brain depends on a constant source of carbohydrates to function at its best.

Skipping breakfast may help you lose a bit of weight, but it can also disrupt your metabolism and gut microbiome. And you can be tempted to snack on bad stuff later on in the day.

So, what is a good breakfast? Steer clear of fatty, sugary foods. Wholegrain foods, nuts, seeds, and low-fat live yoghurt are easy on stomachs – and ensure a supply of energy over several hours.

THE STRENGTH OF A SEED

By Dr Ruth M Bancewicz, who is Church Engagement Director at The Faraday Institute for Science and Religion in Cambridge. Ruth writes on the positive relationship between Science and Christian faith.

At this time of year, we enjoy the fruits of our gardens, fields and hedgerows: vegetables ripen, crops are harvested, and berries begin to show bright among the leaves. Much of this growth started with a few seeds in spring: the miracle of life coming from small dead-looking things. There is a league table of long-lived seeds. The winners so far are from the narrow-leaved campion, buried by squirrels in the Siberian permafrost over 30,000 years ago. When those seeds finally germinated, they became healthy plants that flowered and produced seeds of their own.

The Bible contains many links between seeds and spiritual growth, and the parable of the sower is the most famous (in Matthew 13). A person may hear or experience something of God which has the potential to germinate into a life of following Him, resulting in the fruit of others coming to know God too. But things can happen that snatch that seed away, killing it before it has finished germinating, or choking its growth.

What about the knowledge of God that gets trampled, churned too deep in the mire of life to receive the warmth and light it needs to develop into faith? Buried seeds don't always die, but they can lie dormant, remaining alive but inactive until the earth is turned over. The possibility of that moment of connecting with something divine, scrap of knowledge, or snatch of conversation resulting in a changed life may seem infinitesimally small, but it's not zero. The seed may be incredibly tough, just waiting for a chance to grow.

The Gospel narrative plays on the fact that it took a long time for the disciples to understand the full implications of Jesus' teaching: a germination process that took

many of them three or more years. They could have been discouraged, but Jesus was not. I don't think it's too much of a stretch to draw out of the parable of the sower to include the observation that it can take a long time, sometimes decades, for people to work their way through the various barriers, sticking points, and phases of forgetfulness that may keep them from following through on their spiritual experience. When we finally receive – or are open to – the encouragement, challenge, or experience that helps our faith in Christ grow, we can experience the rich fruit of a transformed life.

CARDINAL JOHN HENRY NEWMAN – 1801 - 1890

The Common Worship Lectionary commemorates Cardinal Newman on 11 August, the date on which he died in 1890. Pope Leo proclaimed Cardinal Newman as the 38th Doctor of the Church on 1 November 2025 at St Peter's Basilica, Rome. John Henry Newman was a highly influential 19th-century theologian, scholar and poet.

He was born in London, the son of a banker, Newman had an evangelical conversion when he was just 15. He went on to Oxford in 1817, and in time became Fellow and then a tutor at Oriel College. Here he began the shift from evangelical Anglicanism to a High Church understanding of the Christian faith. In 1826 he was ordained and became Vicar of St Mary's Oxford.

In the years that followed, Newman became a key leader in the Oxford Movement, whose aim was to renew the C of E by reviving ancient Catholic beliefs and traditions. He pioneered *Tracts of the Times*, writing three of the first four himself. He came to exalt the Church Fathers as on the same level as Scripture, believing that the Anglican Church was mistaken to insist on Scripture as the sole authority. Church and tradition, he felt, played an equal part. Whereas other leaders of the Oxford Movement always remained Anglicans, by the time that Tract Ninety was published, Newman was losing faith in the C of E. In 1842 he retired from Oxford, and left St Mary's in 1843.

In 1845 he was received into the Roman Catholic Church, and in Rome he was ordained priest and entered the Congregation of the Oratory. Returning to England, he established an Oratory near Birmingham and lived there most of the remainder of his life. In 1854 he founded the Catholic University of Ireland (University College Dublin) and in 1877 Pope Leo XIII made him a cardinal.

In addition to all this theological work, John Henry Newman loved poetry. He wrote many hymns, the most famous of which include: ‘Firmly I Believe and Truly’, ‘Lead, Kindly Light’ and ‘Praise to the Holiest in the Height’. He also authored dozens of books.

TIME TICKING BY IN AUGUST

250 years ago, on 2 August 1776 that the formal signing of the US Declaration of Independence took place.

175 years ago, on 12 August 1851 that the American inventor Isaac Singer was granted a US Patent for his sewing machine. Since then, well over 100 million various models of Singer sewing machines have been sold worldwide.

Also 175 years ago, on 22 August 1851 that the first America’s Cup yacht race was held. That first event was a race around the Isle of Wight, won by the American schooner *America*. The trophy was then named in honour of the first year’s winner. The race is the oldest still-operating international sporting competition in any event.

150 years ago, on 7 August 1876 that Mata Hari, Dutch exotic dancer and courtesan was born. She was convicted of spying for Germany during WW1 and executed by the French in 1917.

Also 150 years ago, from 13 to 17 August 1876 that the German composer Richard Wagner’s complete Ring cycle (*Der Ring des Nibelungen*) was performed for the first time, over four nights, at the Bayreuth Festspielhaus.

Also 150 years ago, on 19 August 1876 that the British Assyriologist George Smith died. Known for discovering and translating the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, one of the oldest known works of literature, written in about 2100 BC in ancient Mesopotamia.

125 years ago, on 4 August 1901 that Louis Armstrong, American jazz trumpeter and singer, was born.

100 years ago, on 17 August 1926 that George Melly, British jazz/blues singer, critic and writer on art history, especially Pop Art and Surrealism, was born.

90 years ago, on 1 August 1936 that Yves Saint-Laurent, Algerian-born French fashion designer, was born. (Died 2008)

80 years ago, on 13 August 1946 that H G Wells, British science fiction novelist (*War of the Worlds*, *The Time Machine*, etc) died.

70 years ago, on 11 August 1956 that Jackson Pollock, American abstract expressionist artist, died. Known for his drip paintings. (Car crash, aged 44)

Also 70 years ago, on 27 August 1956 that Britain’s first nuclear power station, Calder Hall in Cumbria, began operating. It was the first nuclear power station in the world to generate power on an industrial scale and formed part of the Sellafield complex. Closed in 2003.

65 years ago, on 13 August 1961 that East Germany sealed the border between East and West Berlin with barbed wire to prevent an exodus of refugees to the West. Construction on the Berlin Wall began on 15 August. The border reopened in 1989. 60 years ago, on 1 August 1966 that the Cultural Revolution began in China. Intended to preserve China's Maoist Communist ideology, millions of people were persecuted or displaced. It ended after Mao Zedong's death in 1976.

Also 60 years ago, on 4 and 5 August 1966 that US newspapers and radio stations quoted John Lennon as saying his Beatles band was "more popular than Jesus." He provoked widespread protests, and many radio stations refused to play Beatles' records. Lennon apologised on 12 August, at the start of the Beatles final tour of the USA.

50 years ago, on 7 August 1976 that NASA's Viking 2 spacecraft went into orbit around Mars. In two years it orbited Mars about 700 times and sent back 16,000 images.

40 years ago, on 9 August 1986 that the rock band Queen performed its final live concert at Knebworth Park before the death of singer Freddie Mercury. (Pneumonia, late 1991.)

40 years ago, on 31 August 1986 that Henry Moore, British sculptor, died. His monumental, semi-abstract bronze sculptures are displayed in public spaces around the world.

30 years ago, on 23 August 1996 that Saudi Arabian-born terrorist Osama bin Laden issued a fatwa entitled *A Declaration of War Against the Americans Occupying the Land of the Two Holy Places*. Few people knew who he was, and his declaration received little attention.

Also 30 years ago, on 28 August 1996 that Prince Charles and Princess Diana were divorced after 15 years of marriage.

20 years ago, on 20 August 2006 that Joe Rosenthal, American photographer died. Best known for his iconic WW2 photograph *Raising the Flag on Iwo Jima*.

15 years ago, on 21 August 2011 that Hurricane Irene hit the Caribbean and then North Carolina. 49 people were killed and more than \$14 billion worth of damage was done.

Also 15 years ago, on 24 August 2011 that Steve Jobs resigned as CEO of Apple Inc because of ill health. (Pancreatic tumour, died 5 October.)

10 years ago, on 29 August 2016 that Gene Wilder, American film actor, died. (Films include *Willy Wonka* and the *Chocolate Factory* and *Blazing Saddle*.)

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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
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 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 August – Ninth Sunday after Trinity		Benefice Eucharist at All Saints' Romans 9. 1 - 5 Matthew 14. 13 - 21	
9 August – Tenth Sunday after Trinity		Romans 10. 5 – 15 Matthew 14. 22 - 33	09.30 Benefice Eucharist
16 August – Eleventh Sunday after Trinity		Benefice Eucharist at All Saints' Romans 12. 1 – 8 Matthew 16. 13 - 20	
23 August – Twelfth Sunday after Trinity	11.15 Benefice Eucharist	Romans 11. 1 – 2a & 29 – 32 Matthew 15. (10 – 20), 21 - 28	
30 August – Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity		Romans 12. 9 – end Matthew 16. 21 - end	09.30 Benefice Eucharist

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.