

St. George's Montezbury

Magazine 50p



September 2026

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Contributions for **St. George's Magazine** should be sent to the Editor by the **15th** of the **previous month**. It may not be possible to include until the following month contributions which are received after this date.
Send e-mail & attachments to stgsmagazine@googlemail.com

Items for inclusion in the **Deanery News** should be sent by the **10th** of the **previous month** to Ann Jones
annmorganjones456@gmail.com

QUOTE:

A friend is someone who reaches for your hand but touches your heart. - Anon



Deanery of Pontesbury

Rural Dean: **The Revd Greg Smith**

Lifting up our eyes With Rev Greg Smith

Last month, my wife and I visited Warwick Castle in part to celebrate her birthday and in part to spend time with our granddaughter of 2½ years. It is perhaps ironic that having lived no more than ten miles from Warwick for forty years that we waited until moving to Shropshire before paying a return visit. I say “return visit” having the dimmest recollection of having visited the castle thirty years ago when our children were young.

Much had changed in that time, with the castle itself having become almost secondary to the visitor experience. The first thing that struck me was the sheer size of the carpark, stretching over several acres and a twenty-minute walk from the entrance of the castle. Having endured the bag searches (of all the buildings a terrorist might want to blow up, castle ruins seem the least likely!) we entered the grounds. It was then that my suspicions were confirmed. This was unlike any castle that I had ever previously visited (and I’ve been to a fair few). This was a theme park. By the time we entered the castle building, we had witnessed a live re-enactment of a castle siege, complete with explosions, a children’s live action drama featuring Zog the Dragon and picnicked with drinks supplemented by one of the many food and drink franchises. We could easily have omitted the castle altogether if we had chosen to see a re-enactment of the War of the Roses or a falconry display.

The point I am making is that Warwick Castle, which was in receipt of ten or twenty times more visitors than back in the day is no longer primarily a castle, but a multi-faceted visitor experience. I kept wondering what all this might have to say to the Church? Is a building that plays host to a foodbank, tots’ groups and community cafes maximising its potential or losing sight of his primary purpose?

I suspect that one of the key differences between us and Warwick Castle is

that we still make the building central to everything we do, and encouraging people to come inside is one of the central purposes of our other ministries. This means that even if individuals are visiting for some other reason than worshipping God, they still cannot escape the fact of His presence. Our church buildings, lovingly built many years ago, testify to the glory of God by the sheer magnificence of their architecture, while at the same time radiating the prayers that have been offered by the Saints over the centuries. We want people to know there is much more to church than Sunday mornings but not to lose sight of the church's role in offering an invitation to meet with its master.

Greg

What God won't ask

- * God won't ask what kind of car you drove,
He'll ask how many people you drove who didn't have transportation.
- * God won't ask how big your house was,
He'll ask how many people you welcomed into your home.
- * God won't ask about the clothes you had in your closet,
He'll ask how many you helped to clothe.
- * God won't ask what your highest salary was,
He'll ask if you compromised your character to obtain it.
- * God won't ask what your job title was,
He'll ask if you performed your job to the best of your ability.
- * God won't ask how many friends you had,
He'll ask how many people to whom you were a friend.
- * God won't ask in what neighbourhood you lived,
He'll ask how you treated your neighbours.

Readings and Services for this MONTH

Here are the Sunday Service details for September 2026.
The readings are included: if you are unable to join the service
in church, you may like to use these at home.

Date	Service	Readings
1 st September, Tuesday	Tea Service 2.30pm	
3 rd September Thursday	Messy Church 3.30pm	
6 th September 14 th Sunday after Trinity	Morning Worship with Children`s Church but with- out Communion 10.30am	Ezekiel 33. 7-11 Romans 13. 8-end Matthew 18. 15-20
13 th September 15 th Sunday after Trinity	Holy Communion and Children`s Church 10.30am	Genesis 50. 15-21 Romans 14. 1-12 Matthew 18. 21-35
20 th September 16 th Sunday after Trinity	All Age Family Service 10.30am	Jonah 3. 10-4.end Philippians 1. 21-end Matthew 20.1-16
27 th September 17 th Sunday after Trinity	Holy Communion (Pet Service and Harvest) 10.30am Group Service Habberley	Psalms 25. 1-8 Philippians 2. 1-13 Matthew 21. 23-32



Looking at GOD

Saint Matthew – called just as he was

This month we remember Matthew's call to be an apostle of Jesus and ask what it means for us to follow Christ.

Jesus calls us where we are:

'Jesus saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax collector's booth. 'Follow me,' He told him, and Matthew got up and followed Him.' (Matthew 9:9).

It was just an ordinary day at Matthew's tax booth, when Jesus called him. He simply got up and followed! Despite Matthew's past, his occupation and what people thought of him, Jesus still called him. Are we ready to follow when Jesus calls us into a relationship with Himself?

Jesus comes to where we are:

'While Jesus was having dinner at Matthew's house, many tax collectors and sinners came and ate with Him and His disciples. When the Pharisees saw this, they asked His disciples, 'Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?' (10,11).

Jesus went to Matthew's home and ate with tax collectors and sinners, demonstrating that He meets people where they are, despite their sin and shame. The Pharisees avoided sinners, because they believed only the perfect could have access to God. When God is at work in the lives of those we don't expect, allow Jesus to open our hearts to embrace what He is doing.

Jesus comforts us where we are:

'On hearing this, Jesus said, 'It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but those who are ill.' (12).

Jesus came to save sinners and to give hope to the hopeless. The Pharisees were so committed to keeping the law, that they had forgotten God's heart of compassion. However, Jesus reminded them that they were witnessing God's love in action. In what ways can we express compassion towards others, especially those outside the community of faith?

The Revd Paul Hardingham looks back on that terrible morning 25 years ago this month...

25th Anniversary of 9/11

Twenty-five years ago, on Tuesday 11th September 2001, terrorist attacks demolished the Twin Towers in New York. They killed 2,996 people and injured more than 6,000. Events like 9/11 raise the inevitable question: *Why does God allow such suffering to take place?*

There are no easy answers to this question! We cannot fully understand why such things happen, although we live in a fallen world, where people make real choices. Yet the Bible affirms that God identifies with our suffering, supremely when Jesus experienced suffering and death.

It is on the Cross that God knows what it is to lose a loved one in an unjust attack. *'I could never myself believe in God if it were not for the Cross. In the real world of pain, how could one worship a God who was immune to it?'* (John Stott). What does this mean? We cannot know why God allows evil and suffering to continue, but we do know that He does love and care for us: *'For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.'* (John 3:16). God loved us enough to fully engage with the mess of the world.

We also can view such events in the light of resurrection. Jesus said: *'I am the Resurrection and the Life. The one who believes in Me will live'* (John 11:25). Resurrection points to the restoration for us of the life we lost. New heavens and new earth point to a world and relationships restored and perfected! In *The Lord of the Rings*, Sam Gamgee exclaims: *'Gandalf! I thought you were dead! But then I thought I was dead! Is everything sad going to come untrue?'* The answer of the Bible is Yes!



QUOTE:

A man is as big as the things that
make him angry. - *Winston Churchill*

The Revd Dr Jo White considers various aspects of Christianity.

Reflecting Faith: The Peace

Last time we reflected on the time of 'Intercessions' within our service. This month, we consider what comes next.

In a Common Worship Communion service, the 'Peace' comes straight after the Intercessions. There is no such thing with a Book of Common Prayer (BCP) service.

A time of sharing 'The Peace' is not restricted to Communion services, but may take place in other services also. It does not have to follow the Intercessions, but instead could also be held towards the start or end of the service.

Where you place 'the Peace' is significant: having it at the beginning emphasises the community coming together, whilst towards the end of the service might be to emphasise the importance of being together that encourages and enables us to take God with us into our everyday lives.

But why have it at all? Haven't we all come together to this service to worship the same God? To be together with others who think and believe as we do? Hopefully yes, but sometimes we just need a visible sign of that very unity and a reminder that we are a part of this community where we are, as well as a part of the wider church across the world.

It is so easy to forget this. To just go on repeat and not be conscious of this enormous honour that we have to 'meet together in His presence'.

'Sharing the peace' - however we do that - with one another is a demonstrative act of community. Everyone is included.

The Peace of the Lord be always with you – And also with you.

This month:

Where is 'The Peace' placed within your service and what do you think is the reason for that? Does making a physical connection – however you do that – with those around you make a difference to your thinking about 'community'?





Canon Paul Hardingham continues his look at the books of the Bible:

What's the Big Idea? - An Introduction to the Books of the Bible: **Daniel**

This month we return to looking at Old Testament books. The book of Daniel describes his life in Babylon during the sixth century B.C., when he served both Babylonian and Persian rulers.

As a teenager, Daniel and his three friends were deported in 605 B.C. to Babylon, where he lived for over 70 years. They were trained as officials in King Nebuchadnezzar's court for three years. Their names and diets were changed to reflect Babylonian culture and take away their Jewish identity. However, Daniel and his friends showed the superiority of their Jewish diet and gained the favour of the king.

Chapters 1-6 are largely narrative, with Daniel and his friends (renamed Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego) demonstrating that God is in control. The three friends refused to worship the pagan Babylonian gods and were thrown into a fiery furnace. However, they emerged unharmed because of God's miraculous protection. He also delivered Daniel from a den of lions when he refused to worship the Persian king Darius. Daniel also interpreted several visions and dreams for King Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar. The second half of the book (chaps.7-12) consists of a series of visions, which show that God is in control of history.

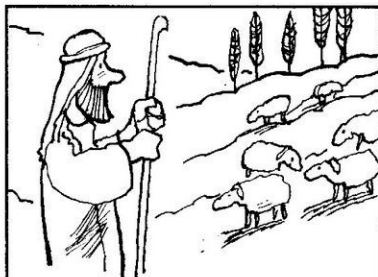
The book affirms that God is the sovereign ruler of the world and rewards His faithful servants, as expressed by Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego: *'If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to save us from it, and He will rescue us from your hand, O king. But even if He does not, we want you to know, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up.'* (Daniel 3: 17,18)



The tale of the Lost Sheep



JESUS OFTEN TOLD
STORIES WITH
HIDDEN MEANINGS

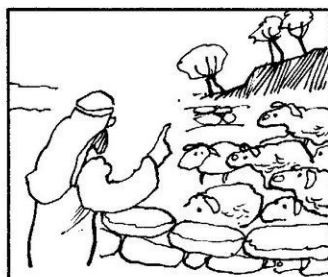


ONE STORY WAS ALL ABOUT
A GOOD SHEPHERD.



WHO TOOK GREAT CARE OF ALL
HIS SHEEP

THE SHEPHERD WOULD
ALWAYS MAKE SURE EACH
SHEEP WAS SAFE.



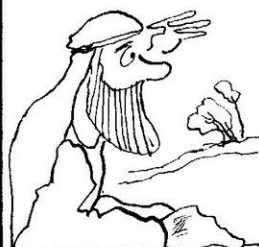
HE WOULD COUNT THEM AT
THE END OF EVERY DAY

BUT ONE NIGHT HE
REALIZED A SHEEP HAD
GONE MISSING

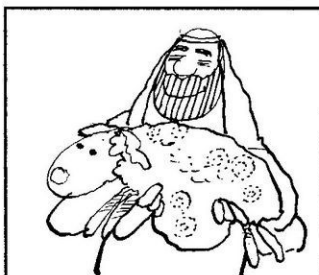


THE SHEPHERD SET OUT TO SEARCH FOR
THE LOST SHEEP

HE SEARCHED HIGH
AND LOW



AT LAST THE LOST SHEEP
WAS FOUND!



THE SHEPHERD COULD NOT
HAVE BEEN HAPPIER!



JESUS EXPLAINED THAT GOD
LOVES US IN THE SAME WAY
THAT THE GOOD SHEPHERD
LOVES HIS SHEEP.

Our Church and local COMMUNITY

MINSTERLEY PARISH HALL

7.00pm Saturday 26th September



Stuart Carter An Evening of Songs

An acoustic mix of folk, blues and r&b,
some old, some new, and some original songs too.

**Songs to make you smile, or wonder,
or sing along.**

Bring your own booze - light refreshments available

Tickets: £10.00 or £12.00 on the door (Cash or bank transfer*)

All proceeds in aid of Minsterley Parish Hall

Reg Charity No. 522551. *Account 41658557. Sort Code: 40-41-30 ref: "concert-sc"

Tickets available from: The Flower Shop (Minsterley) & Hignetts (Pontesbury)

Or contact **Stuart** (Email: scarter5867@hotmail.co.uk / Tel. 07985719005),



This year, as a benefice, we will be walking for
Ride & Stride on **Saturday September 19th**.

We have planned a walk of approximately 8 miles amongst the churches in and to the south-east of Shrewsbury.

If you would like to join in, for all or part of the walk, or would like to sponsor the walkers, please let Greg, Stephen Winwood or Sarah Edwards know.

Soiree Evening



ST GEORGE'S CHURCH

**Sat 26 September
6.30pm for
7.00pm start**

**£25 PER PERSON
3 COURSES + CHEESE AND BISCUITS
BRING YOUR OWN CHOICE OF DRINKS**

**PAYMENT AND MENU
CHOICE WHEN BOOKING.**

RSVP TO

**TICKET NUMBERS LIMITED
TO 20 PEOPLE**

**MARIANNE 07944 333830
MARION 07833 325755**



The Rea Valley Transport Scheme, which is entirely free, is designed to get patients to the doctors, dentists, hospital, opticians and other wellbeing services. To request transport, please contact our scheme administrator

Emma, at reavalleytransportscheme.info@gmail.com

or by calling **07468115939** Monday-Friday 10-2.30 and 3.30-5pm, if possible giving a week's notice of your appointment.



Harvest Service Sunday 11th October 10.30am.

**All welcome.
This will be followed by lunch.**

**(Places for lunch will need to be pre-booked)
Lunch 12.30pm - no charge.
(But donations welcome for Cuan Wildlife Rescue)**

**Contact Marianne McCall 07944 333830
Marion Elliott 07833 325755**

The hot sun is an element of the Parable of the Sower, found in Matthew, Mark, and Luke.

Most would agree that it represents a key message from Jesus, about how we should receive the message of salvation, and also to encourage us that not everyone will respond in the same way to that message. The sower sows the same seed, exposed to the same sun and the same rain, but with very different results:

The Sower by Nigel Beeton

He works beneath the morning sun
He scatters wide the seed:
Rests not before the work is done
That bread may fill our need.

Some landed on the rocky soil
Soon sprang their leaves of green -
To wilt beneath the sun's dread boil
As if they'd never been.

But some fell on the fertile loam
The rain fell from the sky
A hundredfold their seeds had grown
As they grew strong and high.

Some fell upon the hardened way
Where clay was hard as stone.
Birds ate the seeds right where they lay
And none was left alone.

Some fell among the choking weeds
The tares took all the light:
Their growth then overwhelmed the seeds.
Which disappeared from sight.

Let not your heart be made of stone
Nor fail when troubles come:
By no foul sin be overgrown.
But thriving 'neath the sun!

Welcome to The Tea Break



Wednesdays 2pm - 4pm
St George's Church
Pontesbury

OASIS **FREE lunch & companionship** for anyone living in
Pontesbury, Minsterley and surrounding villages, who has been
recently bereaved ...

... on the 2nd & 4th Tuesdays every month, 12pm - 1.30pm
Minsterley Methodist Chapel, Horsebridge Rd, Minsterley.

Transport is Available—Friends & Family are Welcome too.

Contact Heather Ryder for more information, at
ryder928@btinternet.com or 01743 790359

ST. George's Prayer Chain, a small group of people who
believe that prayer can make a difference, is being revived under Mary
Worrall's leadership. Each person within the group offers daily prayer for
anyone who asks for prayer—**would you like to join this group?**

Please contact Mary Worrall
maryew15mp@gmail.com or on 01743 791069

All information given is given in confidence.



Monthly Tea Service,
first Tuesday afternoon
from 2.30 to 4pm
St. George's Church
Pontesbury.

Community appeal for support

Rea Valley Food Bank helps a wide range of people with needs across our communities. This includes

single pensioners on low, fixed incomes and families with young children. Whilst the numbers that use our service has stayed around the same the costs of buying in food, and other items, has increased with food inflation. We greatly appreciate all the donations of food that we receive from the community. Our volunteers very carefully manage our stock, and limit what users have, but do want to have some nutritional foods that tend to cost more.

A regular monthly donation of £10 can really make a difference to our costs, and everything goes to local people that have been referred by professionals to our service.

To help please see our Donating page on our website

<https://reavalleyfoodbank.co.uk/donating/> for details of our Bank Account and Gift Aid, which adds 25% to all donations.

One off donations are also welcome, as well as any community fundraising.

We do hope that you will be able to help us to continue with this much needed local community service. If so, please do ensure that we have your contact details so that we can thank you and update you on any news or changes.

Please contact our Treasurer, Jonathan Brown, email: reavalleyfood-bank@gmail.com mobile: 07497 142485.

Want to come to Rea Valley Food Bank?

Get referred by your local clergy, GP practice, housing provider or other support agency or call for a chat with Rev. Greg Smith 07902 794653, email: reavalleyfood-bank@gmail.com.

See our website www.reavalleyfoodbank.co.uk Getting Help page.

Lovely Things

By H M Sarson

Bread is a lovely thing to eat -

God bless the barley and the wheat!

A lovely thing to breathe is air -

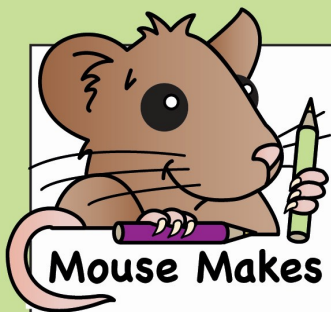
God bless the sunshine everywhere!

The earth's a lovely place to know -

God bless the folks that come and go!

A live's a lovely thing to be -

Giver of life - we say - bless Thee!



Mouse Makes



READ
John 15:1-17

THE TRUE VINE

Who is the vine?

John 15:1

What does Jesus
ask us to do?

"Go and bear

John 15:16

What happens
to the branches
that do not remain
in the vine?

Thrown into the

and

John 15:6

How many
times does Jesus
use the word
FRUIT?

What does
Jesus command?

To _____
one another.
John 15:12,17

How many
times does Jesus
command us
to LOVE
one another?

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

JESUS • I AM • TRUE • VINE • FATHER
GARDENER • FRUIT • FRUITFUL
BRANCH • PRUNES • CUT • WITHERS
CLEAN • THROWN AWAY • FIRE • BURNS
REMAIN • ABIDE • DISCIPLES • JOY

Looking at the CHURCH UK & Worldwide

Pilgrims step out to mark 800 years since death of St Francis of Assisi

A group of Anglican Franciscans are close to finishing a three-month, 800-mile pilgrimage across the UK, to mark the 800th anniversary of the death of St Francis of Assisi.

The 80-day journey began in July in Alnmouth, in Northumberland, and pilgrims have been heading to Hilfield Friary, in Dorset, by September. They will then go on to the convent of the Community of St Clare (OSC), in Oxfordshire, and on to London, to the final destination, the Friary in Plaistow, Newham.

They are due to arrive in time for the global commemorations marking the death of St Francis, on the 2nd and 4th October. The pilgrims will join a service at Christchurch, Blackfriars in Southwark.

They have stayed in churches, homes, and parish halls. They will be joined by day pilgrims, and others doing just a short section of the pilgrimage.

More details: pilgrimage800@franciscans.org.uk.

New pilgrimage route for Conwy Valley

A new 22-mile pilgrimage route linking five churches in the Bro Celynnin Ministry Area has opened, as interest in walking spiritual paths continues to grow.

LlwybrCelynnin is a figure-of-eight trail that follows existing footpaths between Conwy and Llangelynnin, where it joins the North Wales Pilgrim's Way.

Walkers can collect a stamp at each church in a specially designed pilgrim

passport, creating a record of their journey through the valley.

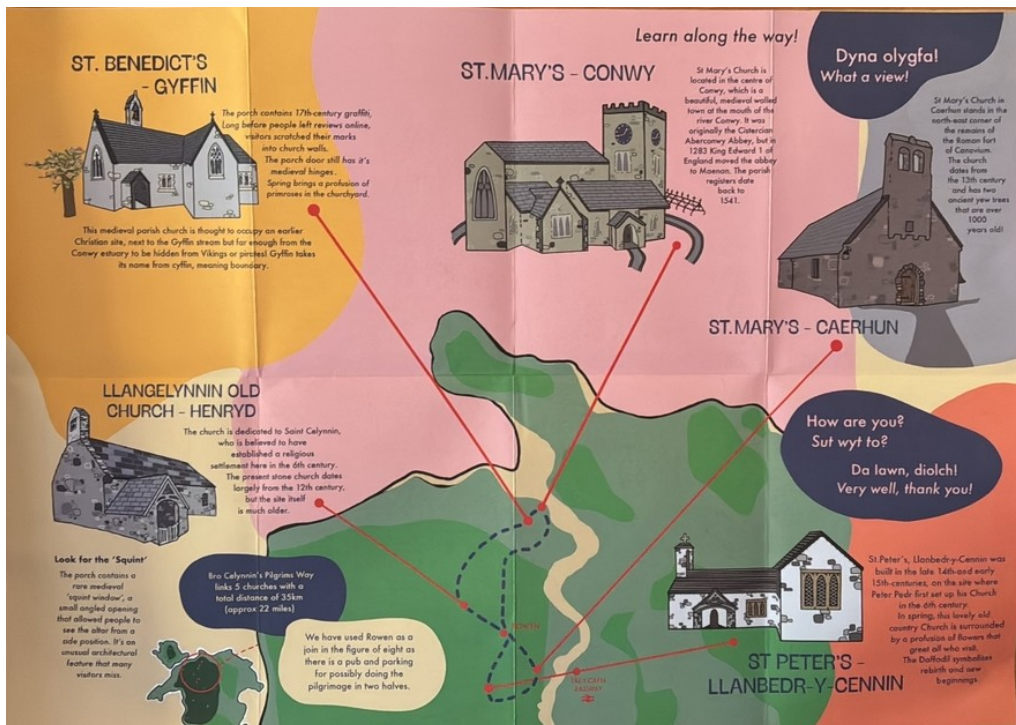
The route has been developed amid renewed interest in pilgrimage, including the BBC series Pilgrimage: The Road to Wild Wales, which followed seven celebrities along the North Wales Pilgrim's Way.

The route begins or ends at St Mary's Church in the centre of Conwy, which contains surviving parts of Aberconwy Abbey, a Cistercian monastery founded in the 12th Century.

It continues through the Conwy Valley to Llangelynnin Church, an ancient church overlooking the valley and already visited by walkers following the longer North Wales route.

Churches included in the route are St Mary's Conwy, St Mary's Caerhun, St Benedict's Gyffin, St Peter's Llanbedr-y-Cennin, and Llandelynnin Old Church above Henryd.

<https://bangor.eglwysyngnghymru.org.uk>



God in the Arts

The Revd Michael Burgess considers the significance of the church bells.

'He gave us eyes to see them' – the church bells

'Summoned by Bells' is the title of John Betjeman's poetic autobiography, where he describes how bells summoned him to school and to church. Bells announcing the joy of weddings and Sunday services; and also marking out times of sadness and the death of loved ones.

One of the strangest bell-towers is at St Augustine's Church, Brookland in Kent, north-east of Rye. It was originally built in the medieval period, and now stands as a triple coned, wooden, octagonal tower detached from the church, and clad with shingles in 1936.

The story is that the tower looked down at a beautiful bride about to marry an unpleasant groom: it was such a surprise that the tower jumped off the church in shock. The truth is that the church was built on marshy ground, and a stronger foundation was needed for the bells. And so the tower was built north of the church.



Like all belfries and steeples, it is an impressive witness to the place of bells in human life and work: as time-keepers, announcing both festive occasions and emergencies, and calling people away from more worldly pursuits to worship. That is why bells have always been blessed at their installation for their true function is to ring out the harmony of heaven.

The tenor bell at Warburton Church in Cheshire is inscribed with the words, 'I bid you to the house of prayer. St Werburgh's hallowed name I bear. Good folk draw near and humbly pray, as prayed that saint in olden day.' As a little boy, John Betjeman would listen to the bells with his teddy bear, Archibald. 'I heard the church bells hollowing out the sky, deep beyond deep, like never-ending stars.' For him, for the people of Brookland, and for all of us, the bells were like stars lighting up the sky with faith and joy and praise.

Note: Photo courtesy of 'Ad Meskens, Wikimedia Commons'

Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in
Matthew 12:1-14, Luke 6:1-11

The Pharisees watched Jesus to see if he broke any of God's laws, or the rules they had made up to stop the laws being broken.

Jesus' disciples were hungry so they picked some wheat from a field as they walked.



The Pharisees said to Jesus



But King David broke the rules when he ate the bread that was only for the priests*



And priests are allowed to work in the temple on the Sabbath*



Don't you understand when God says 'Keeping rules doesn't make up for not having kindness'?*

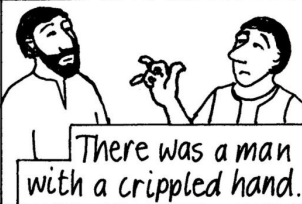
*Hos 6:6



If you understood, you would know my disciples did nothing wrong.



The Pharisees followed Jesus to the meeting place



The Pharisees wanted to accuse Jesus of breaking rules, so they asked him a trick question.



If your sheep fell into a ditch on the Sabbath you would lift it out.



People are worth far more than sheep, so it is right to do good on the Sabbath



Hold out your hand.



The Pharisees left and made plans.



i	s	v	p	g	z	k	u	s	c	j	q	g
l	d	p	w	a	c	l	r	q	c	e	a	h
m	p	i	o	h	r	z	u	u	s	s	l	a
c	l	c	r	i	p	p	l	e	d	u	l	r
v	a	k	t	p	r	i	e	s	t	s	o	v
s	n	e	h	m	a	s	s	t	a	w	w	e
x	s	d	q	d	i	s	c	i	p	l	e	s
h	h	s	b	r	e	a	k	o	m	p	d	t
t	e	w	a	n	b	b	y	n	n	e	a	i
r	e	h	d	i	r	b	u	h	l	o	v	n
i	p	n	w	h	e	a	t	a	a	p	i	g
c	i	f	m	k	a	t	e	n	w	l	d	o
k	x	o	o	b	d	h	b	d	s	e	t	q

allowed
 healed
 harvesting
 sheep
 kindness
 plans
 question
 wheat

disciples
 Sabbath
 break
 people
 rules
 trick
 Jesus
 priests

crippled
 bread
 Pharisees
 David
 picked
 hand
 worth
 laws

QUOTES:

*Let God's Word fill your mind, rule your heart and guide your tongue. - Anon

*Anxiety never strengthens you for tomorrow; it only weakens you for today. -
Anon

The world-wide COMMUNITY

Organ Donation Week – 21st to 27th September

More than 8,000 people in the UK are hoping for a life-saving organ transplant.

The primary organs that can be donated for transplant include the **kidneys, liver, heart, lungs, pancreas, and small bowel (intestines).**

This month's annual Organ Donation Week will once again raise awareness of the need for transplants, and buildings and landmarks across the UK will light up pink in support. The hope is to inspire people to sign-up on the NHS Organ Donor Register, and to encourage families to talk about their donation choices.

The NHS says that "Everyone has a choice as to whether or not they want to become an organ donor after they die. And if you choose to donate, you can choose to donate either some or all of your organs.

"By registering to become an organ donor you have the option to donate organs such as your heart, lungs, liver, kidneys, pancreas and small bowel. All of these forms of donation can greatly enhance or even save the life of someone in need." **The NHS stresses that** families are always consulted, making clear wishes vital despite opt-out laws.

Each year in the UK nearly 4,000 organ transplants are performed, using organs from around 2,300 actual organ donors (including both deceased and living donors.)

For more info, or to register your own decision, visit the NHS Organ Donation website at: <https://www.organdonation.nhs.uk>

Duke of Edinburgh's Award celebrates 70 years: 1956 - 2026

It was back in February of 1956 that Buckingham Palace released a press announcement outlining plans for a trial period of 'The Duke of Edinburgh's Award'.

It was the post-war era, and His Royal Highness wanted to help boys bridge the gap

between leaving formal education at 15 and starting National Service at 18. He also wanted them to build self-confidence and a sense of purpose to support them into their future. A youth programme, he believed, would improve their skills and equip them to make valuable contributions to their communities and society.

In 1956, The Duke of Edinburgh's Award pilot was launched to national voluntary youth organisations. It soon expanded to include Local Education Authorities, the Armed Forces and some schools across the UK.



After the first year, 7,000 boys had started a programme and 1,000 Awards had been achieved. Girls were allowed to join the programme in 1958. Since that first year, millions have joined the DofE Award programme.

The DofE continued to evolve, and programmes took on their current format of Volunteering, Physical, Skills, Expedition, and Residential at Gold level in 1980.

In 2020, DofE participants stepped up in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. The volunteering efforts of 330,000 young people equated to an investment of almost £8.5 million in a time of need.

The DofE says: "It hasn't been the easiest few years for young people. From the ongoing aftermath of the pandemic to the anxieties of the cost-of-living crisis, the future doesn't always feel certain.

"But, in seven decades of The Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE), we've learnt one thing: never doubt what young people can do. Time and time again, we've seen that when young people are given the chance to prove to themselves what they're capable of, there's no limit to what they can achieve.

"We're here to celebrate and champion every young person. To provide a safe environment of support and challenge that grows as they do.

"Whatever their ability, interest or background, DofE offers young people the chance to strive for achievement, overcome obstacles, and set their minds to a personal challenge. Because when you prove to yourself that you're ready for anything, nothing can hold you back. Our Founder HRH Prince Philip once said: 'There is more in you than you might think.' And, here at the DofE, we help you realise that."

Prince Philip passed away in April 2021, but his legacy thrives thanks to the tireless support of the new Duke of Edinburgh, Prince Edward.

More info at: <https://www.dofe.org>

John Wisden and his famous 'Cricketers' Almanack'



- Two hundred years ago, on 5th September 1826, British cricketer John Wisden was born. He was the founder of *Wisden's Cricketers' Almanack*. Launched with 112 pages in 1864, it now runs to 1500 pages and is the bible of cricket.

Wisden was a builder's son, born in Brighton. He moved to London after his father died, and lived with the outstanding Sussex wicketkeeper, Tom Box. Wisden was only 5ft 4in and weighed seven stone when he made his first-class debut for Sussex against MCC in 1845, taking nine wickets. He became known as Little Wonder.

He averaged 225 wickets a season for twelve years, took 455 wickets in 1851, and clean bowled all ten wickets in the second innings for North v South in 1850. He bowled fast, round-arm (before overarm was permitted) and was said to have had an extraordinary off-break. He was also a strong batsman.

Away from the game, Wisden began a cricket equipment business in Leamington Spa in 1850, and five years later opened a "cricket and cigar" shop in central London, initially in partnership with fellow-cricketer Fred Lillywhite. Wisden was also cricket coach at Harrow School and in 1867 bought The Cricketers, a public house at Duncton in Sussex.

In 1859 Wisden – by now bowling slow – was involved in the first tour by an English team to Canada and the United States, where he achieved a double hat-trick, taking six wickets in six balls.



Because of rheumatism, Wisden retired from cricket in 1863 at the early age of 37 and started publishing his annual *Cricketers' Almanack* the following year. Described now as the most famous sports book in the world, the iconic yellow-bound volume contains comprehensive match records, chapter and verse, prophecy, history and the occasional sermon. It is known simply as *Wisden*.

QUOTE:

We trust not because 'a god' exists.
but because THIS God exists. -C S Lewis

Hornby trains and Dinky toys

It was 90 years ago, on 21st September 1936, that Frank Hornby, the British inventor, died. He is remembered for the immensely popular Meccano, Hornby Model Railways and Dinky Toys.

Hornby was born into a Liverpool working-class family and was said to have been inspired by the industry in the city. He was brought up as a Methodist and was interested in music, having a strong tenor voice. He met his future wife, Clara, when they were members of the Liverpool Philharmonic Society choir: they married in 1887 and had three children.

To amuse his two sons he constructed a model crane using perforated strips of metal held together with nuts and bolts. It could be dismantled and the parts used to build other things: this formed the basis of Meccano, which when refined proved hugely popular.

After the first world war he turned his attention to the construction of toy trains, powered by clockwork. At first these were made from kits, but it was not long before they were sold as ready-made train sets – a perfect children’s toy. Dinky toys started as an accessory but soon developed into big-sellers in their own right.



Later Hornby, who was described as polite and a “keen observer of morality”, became a Conservative MP for Everton. In his youth he joined the anti-alcohol Band of Hope and set up a number of groups and clubs dedicated to the improvement of society. He was a great believer in determination and the ability to overcome setbacks.

This enabled him to become not only a visionary but a practical creator in toy development and production. His persistence in adapting his original ideas and making them workable brought him deserved success in producing three of the most popular lines of toys in the 20th century.



Looking at YOU

Hard Times

by David Pickup, a solicitor

There is the sea, vast and spacious, teeming with creatures beyond number, living things both large and small. Psalm 104:25



Do you remember rock? I do not mean the music, but the confectionary sticks sold at seaside resorts. They were pink cylinders about a foot long and an inch wide with a white centre and had the name of the place in letters. They were covered in film and had a small label with a picture of the place on. It is sometimes referred to now as Rock Candy which does not seem right. They were hard as, well, hard as rock and very difficult to break up to eat. Real teeth breakers.

One source says it started at fairgrounds in the 19th Century, when sugar was plentiful and inexpensive. It was not brightly coloured or lettered in those days, but it was of similar shape and size as it is today.

Ben Bullock was an ex-miner from Burnley, who conceived the idea whilst holidaying in Blackpool. He began producing sticks of brightly coloured lettered candy at his Yorkshire-based sweet factory in 1887. He sent his first batch of lettered rock to retailers in Blackpool, where it was well received. Other sources say a Victorian character by the name of Dynamite Dick, who came from either Morecombe or Blackpool.

It takes a lot of skill to make it. I think it is still available on sale to eat or keep as a souvenir.

Those new Royal Mail solar-powered digital post-boxes

Royal Mail has converted about 3,500 of the old trusty red post-boxes into digital affairs, out of the 115,000 post-boxes in the country.

The new solar-powered digital post-boxes feature a solar panel roof, a built-

in barcode scanner, and an extra-large drawer that accepts parcels up to shoebox size.

The idea is that the solar panels on top capture sunlight to power the digital scanner and automated drawer mechanism. So, then all you have to do is to scan the 2D barcode on your pre-paid parcel label, using the box's scanner to automatically open the large drawer.

The traditional letter slot remains, for regular stamped mail.

As for proof of posting? You use the Royal Mail app on your phone to track and request confirmation when you drop off an item.

If you don't want to download an app or use a printer, the good news is that you can still send your parcels as before, at a post office counter.

Back to School - facing that first Day

No matter how old we are, we can probably remember our first day at school – being left at the door, meeting children we did not know, separated from the adults we did know and had trusted since the day we were born. But on the other hand, there was the excitement: a big step along the road of life, new friends to make, another adult to become important in our lives. Yes, quite a lot to handle when you're rising five!

And that's what hundreds of thousands of children are going to experience this month. Parents may have prepared them for it, and they may in a slightly apprehensive way be looking forward to it, but it must feel to the five-year-old like a massive step into the unknown.

Not much less is the anxiety of mum, who leaves her precious child, proudly resplendent in their new school uniform, in the Receptionclass-room. Will he or she suddenly panic, and cry for that familiar parental cuddle? Will they feel abandoned in an alien setting? Will they like the teacher?

Of course we'll be praying for them, and we know that like millions of others before them they will very probably eventually decide that their schooldays were among the best of their lives. But end of class can't come soon enough for mum on that first day! How wonderful when they come running out, laughing and excited, clutching a piece of paper with some obscure crayon marks on it – written evidence of their first day's education.

Why wearing slippers isn't always so cosy

Many of us love the comfort of wearing our slippers around the house. They are warm and cosy and keep the carpets clean.

But – if you wear them for many hours a day, beware: slippers can be dangerous when they show signs of wear and tear. Soles with holes, flaps, worn down backs, or frayed uppers are the reasons for thousands of painful falls each year.

How sturdy are your slippers? If you can fold them in half, they are not supporting your feet. So walking on the hard floors in your home will mean that the impact from each step goes straight to your knees, hips and lower back.

And what about arch support? Anyone with arthritis, sciatica, knee and back pain or plantar fasciitis will really struggle without it.

Instead, slippers need to have a rubbery cushioned thick sole, which provides some shock absorption. And they need to have a heel cup indentation, so it is easy to keep the slipper on. Otherwise, you will be clawing your foot to hang on to them, which will put strain on the tendons below. Some people find that croc-style clogs are a good option.

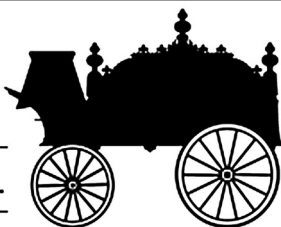


At the end of the day, it pays to be good to your feet. They are a complicated and wonderful mix of 26 bones, 33 small joints, 29 muscles, and dozens of tendons, ligaments, nerves and blood vessels. In the words of the Psalmist, your foot is 'fearfully and wonderfully made' and deserves your protection and support.

QUOTE:

Very often, when people first turn towards God and realise that God loves them and that everything about them matters to Him, a wave of joyful emotion overwhelms them. But actual faith is mostly the realisation that, even though we don't in the least deserve it, God believes in us and finds us lovable. This is astonishing. – *Philip Pare*

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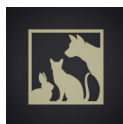
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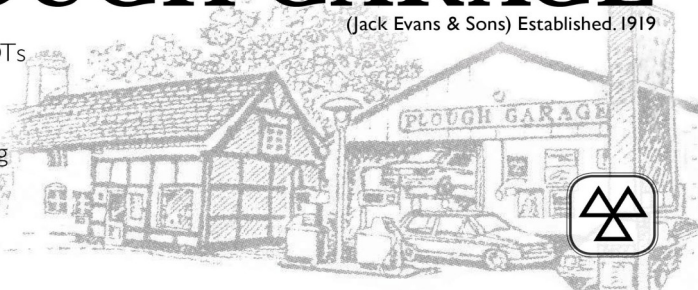
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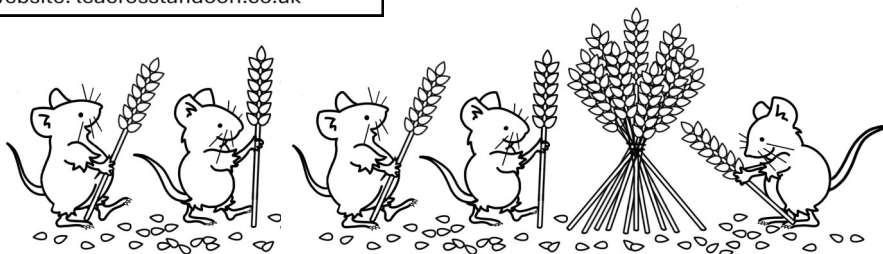
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