St. George's Pontesbury

Magazine 50p



November 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
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QUOTE:

Money is like muck. no good unless it is spread.
– Francis Bacon

Deanery of Pontesbury

Rural Dean: **The Revd Greg Smith**

Lifting up our eyes
With Rev Greg Smith

November is the season of Remembrance, when at All Souls we remember the faithful departed and on Remembrance Sunday those who lost their lives in armed combat.



The spirit of such occasions is a mixture of gratitude and sadness. Their lives meant something to us personally and to the world more widely; and yet we wish that they had not been taken from us. However, I want to suggest that remembering ought to be a more vigorous activity than just lighting a candle or observing two minutes silence.

When our loved ones are taken from us, the example of their lives should be an inspiration to us and a model of how we should live – the husband who faithfully worked for the same employer for fifty years; the mother who sacrificed her own ambitions for her family; the beloved grandmother whose baking treats were savoured by her grandchildren; the brother who would respond to the simplest or most complex DIY request immediately without ever complaining. As we thank God for them, so we must also strive to be like them in all the ways that they were like Jesus.

Meanwhile, surely the most eloquent way to honour those who died in war is to strive with every fibre of our being for peace. This remains profoundly challenging in a world where the majority will seek to justify the dropping of bombs and the making of IEDs provided it's our side that is doing the bombing on the grounds that the lives of our enemies somehow don't count in quite the same way that our side's lives matter. I am reminded of the old joke of the lifelong staunch Protestant who on his death bed tells his friend that he has converted to Catholicism; and when asked why responds by saying "it's better that one of their side dies than ours"!

Working for Peace is a matter of prayer, a matter of taking Scripture seri-

ously “Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. ”(Colossians 3.15); a matter of challenging those who use Christ’s name to justify hatred and animosity; it is a matter for action; it is a matter of really remembering.

Greg Smith

Remembrance

In November we come to remember
How war tore our country apart.
From village and town and all around
Men and boys left home and hearth.

Mothers and wives and sisters all
Saw their brave young men go away.
For some it meant the ultimate price
As they gave their tomorrows for our today.

Another Man left His home above
To rescue this world from sin.
It cost Him His life which He freely gave
So new life could enter in.

In this world there will always be war.
But the time will surely be
When the earth shall be filled with the glory of God
As the waters cover the sea.

By Megan Carter



Readings and Services for this MONTH

Here are the Sunday Service details for this month.
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
1st November All Saints Day	Holy Communion 10.30am 4pm All Souls Service	Revelations 7. 9-end (1 John 3. 1-3) Matthew 5. 1-12
3rd November	Tea Service 2.30pm	
5th November	Messy Church 3.30pm	
8th November 3rd Sunday before Advent	**Remembrance Service** **10.15am** 	1 Thessalonians 4. 13-end Matthew 25. 1-13
15th November 2nd Sunday before Advent	Holy Communion and Children`s Church 10.30am	(Zephaniah 1. 7, 12-end) 1 Thessalonians 5. 1-11 Matthew 25. 14-30
22nd November Christ The King Sunday next before Advent	All Age Family Worship 10.30am	(Ezekiel 34. 11-16, 20-24) Ephesians 1. 15-end Matthew 25. 31-end
29th November 1st Sunday of Advent (Today common worship year B begins).	Holy Communion 10.30am Group Service **at St. George's**	Isaiah 64. 1-9 (1 Corinthians 1. 3-9) Mark 13. 24-end

Looking at GOD

All Saints: unsung heros *by the Revd Roy Shaw, a retired but active priest in the diocese of York.*

At the beginning of this month, we celebrate 'All Saints' (1st November), when we remember all those heroes of the faith who have in one way or another been a witness to Christ in what they said and what they did. But sometimes the saints of old- those portrayed in Renaissance pictures or in craggy, oversized sculptures- can matter less to us than the saints we have personally known.

For instance, one minister tells of a good friend of his, Stan, a farmer on the Yorkshire Wolds, who died earlier this year. Stan was the sort of man you'd meet at the mart, or stop to have a chat with in the village. He always had time for you. You'd go away thinking 'salt of the earth', and you would be right.

But Stan was much deeper than that. He was a devout Christian, with a simple but profound faith, used by God in many situations that never made the public eye. His farm had a Site of Special Scientific Interest in that it captured many of the unique features of the Wolds. He was a knowledgeable plantsman, although you would have to drag it out of him. In his day he had taken Bibles to Soviet-era Ukraine and Romania, and received the thanks of Christians there who were so encouraged that they were not alone, that someone cared, made the effort to bring them the Word of God.

So Stan, although a quiet family man living on a fairly remote farm, had had a profound influence for God and for good in many people's lives, both in the area – and in Ukraine and Romania.

And there have been multitudes like him. This month, are there folk in your life who have been an influence on you for God and for good?
What difference did they make to you?

All Saints-tide is the ideal opportunity to give thanks for them. They are life's unsung heroes, who help others steer a path closer to God by their wise words, or their support, their prayers. The impact of a good life on others can be enormous. For all of them, let's thank God.



In praise of oranges



Do you like oranges? Big? small? easy to peel? or a bit more difficult to get into? They are delicious!

Except – when they are not. All orange lovers will know that disappointing moment when they have begun to peel what looks like a perfect orange, only to find that inside it is rotten, marbled black and blemished.

It's a good picture of how we can live our lives. We can be seemingly perfect on the outside, but hiding, at least sometimes, some very dark parts, which we would not like our nearest and dearest to know about, let alone broadcast to the world at large. So it is good to know that we have a God who loves to lighten our darkness, to forgive our sin, and to set us on a right path, clean and whole.

But there's another side to oranges, too. Sometimes our patient peeling is rewarded by the most succulent sweetness; so much so we manage a long 'mmmmmmm' as the juice overflows at the side of our mouths. It's a reminder of the invitation in Psalm 34 to 'taste and see that the Lord is good'.

For the Christian faith is strong on food symbols to help explain how good God is. He is 'sweeter than honey in the honeycomb' says Psalm 19. He gave the Israelites a "land of milk and honey". And of course, the bread and wine we take for our comfort at a Holy Communion service comes most readily to mind. It's a foretaste of heaven, portrayed as a great feast.

A feast- it's such an attractive image, with universal appeal- to foodies, to the starving, to those who will no longer have to think about their figure, to the poor- and the invitation is to all. That's you, and me.

God's invitation is to let Him nourish us day by day. Is there a hunger in you to explore that simple invitation 'Taste and see that the Lord is good'? May God bless you as you feed on Him in your heart by faith, with thanksgiving.

Smile at those signs found outside churches: *

Come in and pray today. Beat the Christmas rush!

The Revd Dr Jo White considers various aspects of Christianity.

Reflecting Faith: Bread and wine

Last month we reflected on the time of bringing forward our 'collection' money. In many churches, at the same time the wine and bread are also brought forward by members of the congregation for use during the Eucharist celebration.

This bringing of the bread and wine during the Offertory Procession isn't just a practical matter as these are required, but is a symbolic act representing the people deliberately coming forward to the 'holiest' of places and offering their daily work and lives to God.

In the earliest days of the church, actual food and wine was brought from the peoples' homes for the service and to distribute to the poor afterwards.

In orthodox churches there are often two types of 'bread.' One that is consecrated and given to communicants and another kept within the main body of the church, alongside plastic bags, for folk to take a piece home to share with their family and friends; which mimics this earlier action.

In the Church of England, and in many other denominations, when the bread and wine have been consecrated, they are considered to be set aside explicitly for the purpose of human consumption and therefore all must be consumed, either during or immediately after the service. This is normally done by the priest but can happen by any communicant member that the priest has asked.

Because of this it's important that the priest knows how many communicants there are likely to be. Too much wine consecrated can have a detrimental effect if one has to drive to another church!

For myself, churches have communicated this to me in various ways: in a suburban church we had a board up high at the back of the nave with large numbers placed there by a Churchwarden who had counted folk as they entered. In a large village church the number was whispered to me by a person bringing up the elements, whilst nowadays in small local village churches you will often see me stop and count!



This month

Next time you attend a communion service have a look at how numbers are communicated and who brings forward the elements. What does the priest do when s/he receives them?

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

What's the Big Idea? - An Introduction to 1Timothy

This month we look again at the books of the New Testament. Paul wrote to Timothy, *'my true son in the faith'* (2),as leader of the church in Ephesus. Timothy had a Greek father and Jewish Christian mother (Acts 16:1). Paul led him to faith during his first visit to Lystra and on his second visit invited Timothy to join him on his travels. He circumcised Timothy so that his Greek ancestry would not be a liability to working with the Jews (Acts 16:3). Although somewhat timid and often unwell, Timothy was a faithful servant of the Lord and Paul.

Paul writes his letter to challenge false teaching and to give instruction on aspects of church life, including worship, the appointment of leaders, and their attitude to money.

Paul gave Timothy authorisation to challenge the false teachers in the church. They taught a strong emphasis on Jewish myths and genealogies and were legalistic about Jewish laws. They also taught that the resurrection had already come and Christians no longer needed to look to Christ's coming, judgment, and resurrection of the dead. They were so immersed in speculative controversies that they neglected the very core of the Christian faith. Not an unfamiliar situation today!

Therefore, like Timothy, we are called to enable the church to bring glory to God: *'But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness. Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses.'* (6:11,12)

Another Smile at those signs found outside churches:

Outside one church is a picture of two hands holding stone tablets on which the Ten Commandments are inscribed.

A headline reads: 'For fast relief, take two tablets.'

St. George's Church, Pontesbury





Christmas Tree Festival, December 4th - 6th

The Theme This Year is:

"Celebration"

Set up on Wed 2nd
9:00am - 6:00pm

Opening times

Friday 4th	10:00am - 8:30pm
Saturday 5th	10:00am - 6:00pm
Sunday 6th	12:30pm - 4:30pm

Entrance £3, children under 16 free

Also Stalls, Raffle, Refreshments, Toilets, Disabled Facilities

If you would like to enter a tree contact
Marianne McCall
Phone: 07944 333830
Email: mariannemccall.17@gmail.com

Special feature on Friday 4th, 6.30pm - 8.30pm
"Sing-Along Carols Among The Trees"
Severn Harmony Ladies Barbershop Chorus and St George's Choir.
£3 will include mince pie and mulled wine



Young Singers *is Of One Accord's children's choir for boys girls & aged 6+ - the choir is open to all children who love to sing.*

We rehearse on Thursdays 6pm to 7pm at Bicton C of E Primary School, Bicton Lane, Bicton, Shrewsbury SY3 8EH.

We sing a wide range of music and perform regularly in the local community. Information on how to join can be found on our website www.ofoneaccord.co.uk



We need some ... !

Have a word with Barbara, our Choir Director, 07813 682485

St Georges Church, Pontesbury

Big Church Cleaning Day
Can you help?
We need you!!!



Saturday Nov 7th
9.30 until Noon



(But you can come for all or part of the time)
Please bring a duster
and cleaning items which might help.
Although we do have some already.

Refreshments will be served!!

Please let Marianne or Mary know if you think you can come.
07944 333830 01743 791069

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 administrator, Emma, at reavalleytransportscheme.info@gmail.com or by calling **07468115939** Monday-Friday 10-2.30 or 3.30-5pm, if possible giving a week's notice of your appointment.

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.

Rea Valley Food Bank

THANK YOU for Harvest Festival Donations
Harvest Festival donations have made a real difference to our Food Bank. We really appreciate all the people involved in organising and donating to these events during the Autumn. Everything donated goes to local people who have been referred by professionals as being in need of our service.

NEW Getting to Advice project
Rea Valley Food Bank has been successful in our bid to Shropshire Council for Crisis Resilience Funding(CRF). The aim of the government's CRF money is to move from emergency food support to connected, long-term help, so the funds cannot be used to buy in food. Since we became independent from Foodbank Plus at Barnabas, we are aware that access to specialist advice services is needed for many of our users. Our project is about information and advice:

Energy Bills: come along to our event to find out how to save money, 2-3.30pm on Wed 4 November at Holy Trinity Church Minsterley, with Marches Energy Agency. **FREE EVENT, OPEN TO EVERYONE**. Do come along and tell others you know.

For Food Bank service users:

- Trying out, on a small scale, some cookery skills and nutrition sessions, linking with Pontesbury Community Gardeners, who already supply their produce to our Food Bank.
- Access to Advice Services: giving our service users the opportunity to take up specialist advice services such as Citizens Advice, Age UK, Marches Energy Agency and others, working with Rea Valley Transport service.

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: reavalleyfoodbank@gmail.com.
See our website www.reavalleyfoodbank.co.uk
Look at the Getting Help page.

Remembrance Sunday 2026

This year the national service for Remembrance will be held in London on 8th November, and include the annual march past involving up to 10,000 veterans and eligible participants. It will be followed by formal two-minute silence on Wednesday, 11th November.

This year Remembrance marks several significant milestones:

The **110th anniversary** of the 1916 Battles of the Somme and Jutland, as well as the introduction of wartime conscription.

The **70th anniversary** since the Suez Crisis of 1956.

The **25th anniversary** since UK armed forces first entered Afghanistan, following the 2001 deployments.

Sing-a-long-a scripture attracts one million song plays

This is listening to the Bible, but NOT as you've known it. For a new website which offers 38,048 individual recordings of chapters of the Bible being sung, in 16 different genres, has become a smash hit worldwide.

In only the first two weeks of its existence, it has seen one million song plays from its 3,600 hours of produced scripture music.

All in all, **TheSinging.Bible** offers the equivalent of five months of continuous listening, without repeating a chapter. It is free to use and does not need to be downloaded.

Listeners in 194 countries are enjoying the Bible in mix of musical styles, including country, hip-hop, hard rock, opera, sea shanty, barbershop quartet, Latin and reggae. The music has been described as "human-led and AI-assisted".

The scripture is in an edition of the Berean Standard Bible. While the music plays, the full text of each chapter is displayed on screen. Thus, you can hear Jonah chapter 1 in sea-shanty style, while St John's Gospel is given in a thundering hard-rock style.

Visit: thesinging.bible/home

By the Revd Peter Crumpler, a Church of England priest in St Albans, Herts, and a former communications director for the C of E.

Could a cemetery – or churchyard – surprise you?

A while back, I found a strange connection between the cemetery, opposite the church where I minister, and my hometown.

I discovered that a former head curator of the world-renowned Kew Gardens in west London was buried in the cemetery – and that one of his lasting achievements was to plant a line of trees along the gardens' Thames embankment.

Why? To hide unsightly views of industrial Brentford – where I was brought up – from visitors to the gardens.

Back then, Brentford was the site of one of London's largest gas production plants and its pungent smell drifted across the area. I was christened in a church that nestled among the gasworks.

Today, Brentford is a thriving west London suburb that even boasts a Premier League football team.

Cemeteries and churchyards can be places of encounter and surprise. Places too that speak of history, of community, of nature and of the spiritual.

My local municipal cemetery has graves dating from the 1880s, including more than 200 war graves and a memorial, built after the First World War. Walking among the numerous graves, you can see reminders of people who lived lives very different to our own.

Well-known people buried there include Samuel Ryder, who founded golf's Ryder Cup, and was a prominent local churchman. The cemetery, like all cemeteries, also speaks of the breadth of the local community, with people of different nationalities and faiths buried within its grounds.

Humour sometimes features on the inscriptions. One of my favourite gravestones reads, "I can only please one person a day – today is not your day. Tomorrow doesn't look good either!"

The cemetery is a green oasis in a busy urban suburb. Take just a few steps away from the busy road, and you are in a nature reserve, with many birds, trees and plants, plus squirrels and other animals.

And, of course, the cemetery is a spiritual place, where many people go to remember their loved ones, perhaps to pray and reflect. Early morning in the cemetery is always a special time for me, where I can feel close to God.

If you are looking for somewhere to experience history, community, nature and the spiritual, then consider paying a visit to a cemetery or churchyard near you. It may just surprise you.

Burnham wants to approve bishops

The Prime Minister, Andy Burnham, wants to advise the King on the appointment of bishops and archbishops in the Church of England and Church of Scotland.

The practice of the King being involved dates way back to the Reformation, when the monarch was head of the Church, and so took responsibility for appointing clergy.

Burnham is currently barred because he is a professing Roman Catholic. But he has called the Roman Catholic Relief Act 1829 an "antiquated and archaic anomaly" and is determined to change it.

These days, of course, the Prime Minister's approval of such appointments is symbolic. The Church puts its candidate forward, who will be approved. In the meantime, there are nine current or upcoming vacancies for diocesan bishops.

General Synod opens – for the 11th time

There is a new General Synod beginning this month. Its term will run from 2026 to 2031. It is the 11th since the first General Synod began in **1970,** following the Synodical Government Measure of 1969.

The new General Synod has lots to debate and decide. Here are just some key issues:

Identity and relationships: Since the conclusion of the formal Living in Love and Faith (LLF) programme, new consultative groups will manage the work regarding same-sex relationship and marriage guidance.

Clergy care: There is a growing concern for the wellbeing of our clergy. It is felt they need stronger support packages, better pensions and improved care for themselves.

Safeguarding is still a top priority. The new General Synod will discuss and implement the strict new Clergy Conduct Measures (CCM) and responses to independent safeguarding recommendations.

Social & Environment: These problems are still growing, and so debates will address achieving net-zero carbon goals, protecting nature on church land, and reducing the polarisation in our society.

Looking at YOU

Those giant autumn house spiders

We've all been there – quietly relaxing at home, when suddenly a HUGE thing with LONG legs scuttles right by you. You can't help but jump, and if you are normal, scream.

What just scared you was a fully grown adult male *Eratigenaatrica*. They are among the largest spiders in Central and Northern Europe.

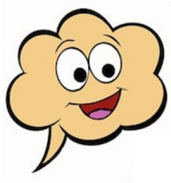
It has not just come in from the cold. It has been living warm and cosy, hidden in your house for weeks. Now it has left its dark hiding spot to race across your carpets and walls and bed with a definite purpose in mind: it is looking for love.

For autumn is mating time for the big spiders, and there are also females living in your house, safe and secure in cracks, lofts and behind furniture.

If you think giant house spiders are big, you are right. With a body length of 1.6cm, their leg span can commonly reach up to 7.5 cm. Just be glad that you aren't sharing your house with a cardinal spider (*Tegenaria parietina)* – their bodies are up to 2cm long, and their long hairy legs can span up to 12cm. If *that* thing runs down the couch towards you, you'll notice it! And giant house spiders are fast. They can hit speeds of up to half a metre per second.

The good news is that giant house spiders are as scared of you as you are of them. They are disease-free, and their bite is extremely rare and harmless. They even pay their rent by eating your flies, mosquitoes, and other small bugs.

So, try and be kind to them, and let them live with you – they don't like the cold outside very much. Just lift your feet as they gallop across the carpet…



Hello - how are you? Had a good day??

I'm FINE !



I'm FINE, we so often reply.

Fine, fine, everything's FINE.

What do we mean by the word FINE?

We say it so often—But are we really OK? Or well? Or are we really ?? as spotted in print recently— a storyteller and therapist tells us:

FINE is an acronym for

Fed-up, Insecure, Neurotic, Exhausted.

Smile !

With Advent beginning at the very end of this month:

Let earth and heaven combine.
Angels and men agree.
To praise in songs divine
The incarnate Deity.
Our God contracted to a span.
Incomprehensibly made man.

By Charles Wesley





A Big Thank You …

from **Carolyn Lewis**, who has been walking the footpaths and lanes around Pontesbury during October, wearing her large pink Tshirt and pink hat, and sometimes some garishly coloured leggings!!

The Challenge was to walk 100 miles for **Breast Cancer Now,** the charity which raises money to support research, but also to fund ongoing care and therapy for those living with the disease, so they can continue to live their best lives.

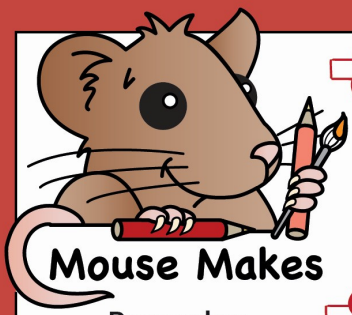
As of **15th October** I have completed **100 miles** in walks. (As opposed to counting daily steps which would have been much easier). The walks were logged using the Strava app on my phone, and added daily to a spreadsheet tally. By the end of the month, as a personal challenge, I hope to extend that distance to **200 miles**, but it will depend heavily on the weather and my knees!!.

I have discovered some real gems in locations and views, around Arscott, Plealey, Longden, Hinton and Pontesbury, with weekend excursions to Attingham park to tackle the walks there, and thank those with better knowledge than mine, for suggesting routes to take.

As of 15th October, I have managed to raise **over £800** thanks to the generosity of super friends, family, neighbours and acquaintances. I'm ever hopeful that this figure will increase before the end of the month. But a big thank you should go to everyone who has spurred me on in any way, but especially with tea, cake, and encouragement.



Best wishes
Carolyn Lewis.



Mouse Makes

Remember
the words Jesus said:
"It is more blessed to give than to receive."
Colossians 3:25

Remembrance Sunday is the day we remember the sacrifice of those who gave their lives so that we could live in peace, it mirrors what Christ did for us when he gave his life so that we could live in peace with God.

Jesus said:
"No one can have greater love than to give his life for his friends."
John 15:13

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

REMEMBRANCE • PROTECT • DEFEND • SACRIFICE • SELFLESS • SERVICE
BRAVERY • VALOUR • HONOUR • COURAGE • HEROISM • LOYAL • REGARD
RESPECT • THANKFUL • MEMORIAL • TRIBUTE • COMMEND • ARMISTICE • PEACE



Nov26© deborah noble • parishpump.co.uk



Dear Friends

As I write this, I have just returned from a visit to our link diocese in Tanzania. We visited the Diocese of Masasi in the south of the country which celebrated its 100th anniversary at the end of September. It was an experience both joyful and gruelling in equal measure.

I'm not sure the Church of England is quite yet ready for four-hour ordination services in 85-degree heat. The celebration service for the anniversary was an hour longer laced with local music, ululation, joyful singing and a nun playing the vuvuzela! She played it again when we went to the convent for dinner one evening as part of the nuns' dancing and singing welcome – you had to be there really.

Alongside the joy is grinding poverty and a huge disparity of wealth. Whilst Tanzania is one of the most stable democracies in Africa, there is still widespread corruption and a poorly maintained infrastructure. It took us 13 hours to drive the 600 km from Dar Es Salaam to our Masasi hostel. Periods of fast driving were interspersed with bouncing through potholes almost as bad as South Shropshire.

It is easy to look at the Church in Tanzania with its spectacular growth, driven by genuine conversions to Jesus rather than church hopping, and think if only we transferred their patterns here we could have a similar experience. A simple transfer of methodology is unlikely to be successful. Culturally, English people are not as expressive. Similarly, we have such busy lives that 3-4 hour services with preaching of 45 minutes may not gain much traction.

The Christian message has always had to adapt as it moved from one culture to another through its history. Even the early churches described in the New Testament were very different from one another. There was conformity of belief, but great diversity of practice. The same is actually true in Tanzania depending on which UK missionary agency first brought the gospel to each part of the country. Even in the church of England, there is now a huge variation in congregational worship, even in the same parish.

Perhaps the greatest lesson was not about a particular style, but the motivating question. In Tanzania it was 'how can we adapt our practice to make the message more accessible to those outside the Church so they can become followers of Jesus'? There don't seem to be many arguments about style of worship rooted in their personal preference. Mission comes first. Congregations are agents of community transformation. God is the one on whom they depend for everything, not a spiritual lifestyle accessory. I think all of us who visited found this profoundly challenging. I hope we all might also.

+Richard

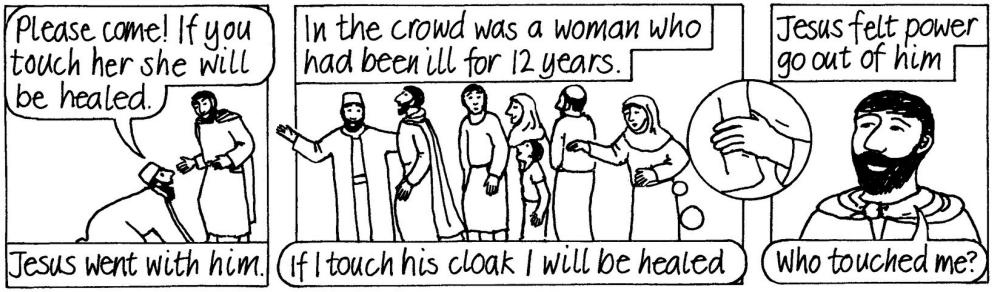


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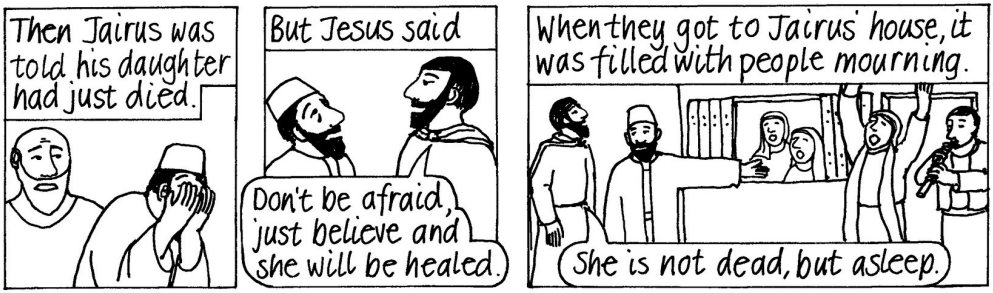
A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in Lk 8:40-56, Mt 9:18-26, Mk 5:21-43

Jairus, a town leader, had a 12 year old daughter who was ill and about to die. He came to Jesus and knelt at his feet...









Bible Bite Word search -

words from the story are Hidden in the GRID

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Come
Feet
Cloak
Jairus
Power
Something
Mourning
daughter
Girl
Knelt
Twelve
Leader
Faith
Waited
Believe
Laughed
laughed
Woman
Stood
Afraid
house
Healed
Jesus
Touched
parents



News

Nearly 2,000 affordable homes could be built on church sites.

Nearly 2,000 affordable new homes on land earmarked from church sites could be created with support from the Church of England, it has been revealed, in work under way five years on from a landmark Church report on the housing crisis.

The Archbishops' Council Housing Project was set up in 2024 with an aim of helping churches in the first stages of exploring the potential of sites to create housing – such as pockets of surplus land or land freed up through redevelopment of a church hall or other building.

The Project team, with an architect, a community housing specialist, a town planner and a Church buildings officer, has provided advice and support to around 85 parishes so far.

Most of its budget is distributed through a grants programme, with more than £1.2 million awarded to 54 projects in the first year of operation, paying for expert advice and early-stage feasibility and viability work, up to the 'pre-app' stage – the point at which a project will seek advice from a planning authority ahead of submitting a formal application.

The Church Development Agency functions as the Church's specialist property development and delivery arm, supplying the technical expertise that most dioceses and parishes lack. Currently there are 42 church sites in 10 dioceses, receiving support from the Agency, 15 of which were given initial grants by the Housing Project.

If given the green light, the projects currently with the Agency could create more than 1,000 new affordable homes. This figure almost doubles to 1,952 when taking into account proposals being given support by other Church housing organisations and dioceses, including the Housing Project and the Church Housing Association.

The work currently under way is helping to implement the recommendations of *Coming Home,* the 2021 report of the Archbishops' Commission on Housing, Church and Community on tackling the housing crisis.

The Church of England's lead bishop for housing, Bishop Guli Francis-Dehqani said:

"Housing projects can have a catalytic effect on participating churches; not only do they provide much-needed homes, they also provide missional opportunities and strengthen the church's reputation in the community. We are starting to realise the huge potential for housing projects to sustain and even grow our local churches."



Kirk school matron who died in the Holocaust recognised at Auschwitz.



The name of a Scottish woman who died in the Holocaust after refusing to abandon Jewish children in her care has been added to a special memorial wall at Auschwitz.

Jane Haining, the matron of a Church boarding school, is recognised in a renewed section of the Auschwitz Birkenau Memorial and Museum's main exhibition, which is devoted to hundreds of prisoners for whom no registration photographs were taken.

Originally from Dunscore in Dumfries and Galloway, Miss Haining was the matron at the Scottish Mission School in Budapest, Hungary from 1932-1944.

It had around 400 day and boarder pupils aged from six to 16 years old, a mixture of Jewish and Christian girls.

Miss Haining helped keep the children safe for more than four years after the war broke out in 1939 until she was betrayed by the cook's son-in-law, whom she scolded for taking scarce food meant for the girls, some of whom were orphans or abandoned by their parents.

She was determined to stick to her post and had repeatedly ignored Church of Scotland requests to return home, saying: 'If these children need me in days of sunshine, how much more do they need me in days of darkness?'



Miss Haining was arrested by German officers in April 1944, and former pupil Agnes Rostas said her haunting last words to sobbing children were: "Don't worry, I'll be back by lunch." But the kind-hearted Scot never returned to the school. She

was transported along with Hungarian Jews to Auschwitz on 14 May 1944.

Miss Haining was 47 and it is widely accepted that she died in a gas chamber and her remains remain on the Auschwitz site.

Growing number of churches moving away from oil and gas amid rising energy prices

An increasing number of Church of England parishes, some of them in the most rural areas of the country, are moving away from oil and gas and improving their energy efficiency as they brace for rising energy bills this winter.

A match funding pilot scheme from the Church of England's Net Zero Carbon Programme for churches to pay for work such as under pew heating, LED lighting, insulation, electrical upgrades and small solar panel and battery storage schemes has been expanded after it exceeded its targets.

Give to Go Green will be expanded to all 42 of the Church of England's dioceses after £938,000 – exceeding targets– was raised by 127 churches to help pay for work to cut their carbon emissions and increase energy efficiency. The total was boosted by an additional £830,000 of match funding from the Church of England's Net Zero Carbon programme.

Julian Atkins, the Church of England's Net Zero Carbon Programme Director, said: "Across the country, parishes are taking action in ways that make sense for their own buildings and communities – raising money locally, making buildings more energy efficient and finding other practical solutions to reduce carbon emissions.
"We are deeply grateful to all our many committed volunteers who make this possible**.** Our role through the national Net Zero Carbon Programme is to create the conditions and provide the funding and expertise to help them do that.

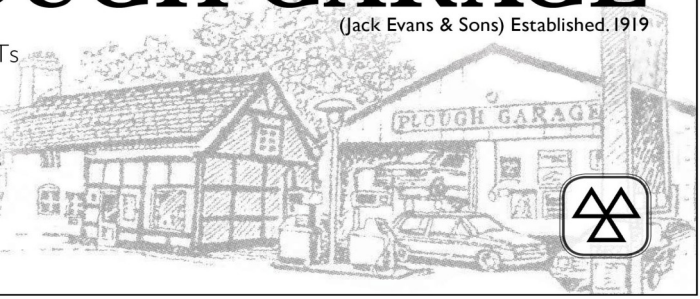
"For many churches, this is about much more than reducing carbon.It is about creating warmer, more welcoming buildings that can serve their communities well, while using resources wisely and, where possible, reducing energy costs so that more can be invested in mission and ministry."

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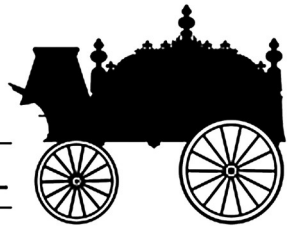
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