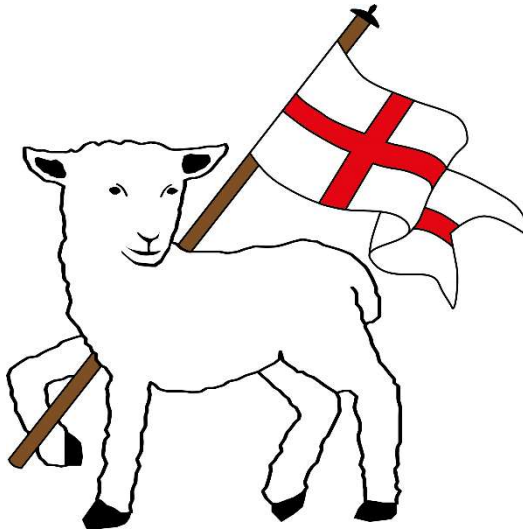


NOVEMBER 2026

**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 THE RECTORY

Dear Friends

As ever, November is an eventful month in the life of the Benefice. We celebrate two patronal festivals: All Saints' Day on 1 November and the Feast of Christ the King on 22 November. There is also the annual 'All Soulstide' service, also on 1 November, and continuing the remembrance theme we have our Remembrance Sunday services on the 8th. Do look out for the special arrangements on all these important dates.

This year Advent begins at the end of November: Sunday 29, to be exact. Although this is a fifth Sunday (which normally would have just a single Benefice service in one of the churches), we've opted instead for a full pattern of services in all three. This speaks to the importance of Advent as a season of the Church. How easy it is to allow the Christmas celebrations to start in early December (or, indeed, even earlier), and if I resist that tendency please be assured this is not because of any Scrooge-like feelings, but rather because I do believe strongly that the depth and meaningfulness of our Christmas joy will be enhanced to the extent that we observe a 'proper' Advent.

For Advent allows us to enter into, and fully 'own', a sense of expectancy. This is hinted at in our use of Advent calendars, but the seasonal invitation goes beyond this. In the darkness before the dawn, we can acknowledge the uncertainty and the hope that are both true markers of the spiritual life: the reality of our lives as we see them illuminated by a sun which is the no-less-real promise of Love.

There is much more to say about Advent – but as we move through the busy calendar of events this November, let's pray that our hearts and minds will be made ready to embrace the season when it comes, so that, in turn, the joy of Christmas may fill us to the brim.

God bless

James

PARISH SHARE - AND DEANERY HEADCOUNT

I feel one of my responsibilities as parish Treasurer is to attend the twice-yearly Diocesan Financial Consultations. These meetings are open to all parish Treasurers and offer an interesting insight into the Diocesan view of life. Curiously, only one third of parish Treasurers typically take up the invitation to go to these events, but I think it is important to have as much two-way interaction as possible with the centre. Apart from the prescriptive slide presentations, there are some good questions raised across the floor by attendees. Predictably, parish share is usually high up the list of parish concerns.

The Diocese is thriving, but their budget is in deficit. Treasurers (especially any new ones) are frequently startled to realise that Oxford Diocese - itself an independent charity - and along with all other dioceses - is completely separate from the national church. At the meeting earlier in the month, an attendee asked 'What does the national church do for me? (i.e. parishes), and the answer came back - 'very little'. It does indeed seem bizarre that we are all supposed to be one Christian family, but the objectives of the national organisation have little outside the workings of the Synodical system that give the impression that we are all acting in concert. With the Church Commissioners having their own financial agenda, dioceses must raise their own funds to pay for their activities, and these of course have grown in recent years. We may well remonstrate about the headcount at Church House Oxford, but in doing so, also bear in mind the explosion of regulation and compliance that charities have had hoisted upon them, all of which needs to be administered. For example, a resource-heavy demand is Safeguarding, and you know where that has come from if you have followed the news in recent years.

Each parish is a charity, whether affiliated to the Charity Commission (as we are), or not. It is surprising that some who join PCCs have no idea that they are then formally Charity Trustees. This is not the case here: PCC Members are made aware of their status at the outset. But being a Trustee does carry some hefty responsibility for ensuring that the charity complies with Commission guidance and is run in a fit and proper manner. Nowhere more so than in its financial affairs.

Paying parish share - which comes down to paying for the clergy - is a collective responsibility of the PCC. Parishes are given share allocation by the Deanery, based on the cost recovery expected by the Diocese. There are those (very few) parishes who ideologically 'won't pay' - but there is now little tolerance for those parishes who simply 'won't pay'. Then there are those parishes who for a host of reasons

struggle to pay - falling into the 'can't pay (full Share)' cohort. The parish of Kidmore End and Sonning Common is squarely in this camp, as readers will know we have had successive years when we have not paid share in full. But time is running out for the 'can't payers' too, because ultimately 'chickens come home to roost.' This is why there is such a focus within the Henley Deanery on financial recovery, and why those few parishes within the Area - us included - are experiencing uncomfortable times right now.

Since Harvest, this parish has been involved in a Giving and Grace campaign which amounts to a soft approach to asking parishioners to confront their attitude to Giving. Our clergy have distinctly ramped up their focus on this topic and have used the book of Ruth to illustrate and contextualise the issue in their weekly sermons. All this has been helpful ... and we wait to see if it materialises in greater resources.

At present we have a predicted £23,000 shortfall on paying share this year (against a 2026 target of £41,741). This is a huge difference, and one that is at odds with the overall Diocesan share recovery which hovers around the 94% mark. Within the next two months we must drive to close the gap. Our Parish Giving Scheme has 18 members (of an Electoral Roll that consists of 55 people). Of course, congregants contribute in other ways, but parishes with a strong record of Planned Giving Scheme subscribers statistically have better financial outcomes, which is why the church pushes Planned Giving so earnestly.

Broadly, we spend what we bring to run the parish, covering liabilities, just like any household. But parish share is a bit different, since it is not a legal obligation. Parish share is discretionary – but with caveats! Your support with additional donations and attendance at our fundraising events make a huge contribution to paying for ministry in Kidmore End and Sonning Common. So looked at holistically, we do not cover our costs – which is of great concern. Whatever you feel about paying for James and Sarah (and Karen's training), it is an obligation imposed on the PCC and I, as Treasurer must draw your attention to the matter. Not only for now, but for the future too. Our parish needs to get on a sustainable footing.

A change to Deanery allocation is not expected, so we need to be content that we can 'up our game.' Raising money for share each year is a formidable task. Not to mention improving our day-to-day reserves, which are currently below par. Without paying share and having healthy reserves, we will be in a very weak position when the Deanery reviews stipendiary ministry in the Henley area. Although it seems

incomprehensible because of the size of our parish and the traditions of having a complement of clergy, if James left, the parishes' ability to pay share is absolutely considered.

Without at least a stipendiary priest and/or a House for Duty (so, James and Sarah), the shape of church life here - indeed the impact on the Benefice - could be very different.

Nick Room - Treasurer and Churchwarden

If you wish to comment to me, please do: kesctreasurer2019@gmail.com. All feedback is welcome.

WHAT'S IN THE LECTIONARY IN DECEMBER?

Christmas Eve falls on Thursday 24 December and Christmas Day follows on Friday. Thereafter, the feast of St Stephen, Deacon and First Martyr, is celebrated on Saturday 26 December. On Sunday 27 December the feast of John, Apostle and Evangelist can be celebrated or transferred to Tuesday 29 December. If the feast is transferred 27 December can be celebrated as the First Sunday of Christmas. The feast of the Holy Innocents is on Monday 28 December. Other lesser feasts and commemorations include Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, Teacher, 397, on 7 December, the Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary on 8 December, Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury, Martyr 1170 on 29 December and John Wyclif, Reformer, 1384 on 31 December. The feast of Thomas Becket may be celebrated on 7 July. As 6 December is the Second Sunday of Advent, the feast of Nicholas, Bishop of Myra c. 326 is not celebrated. In the Book of Common Prayer Lectionary, Thomas the Apostle, is celebrated on 21 December.

WHERE DID THE HYMN CROWN HIM WITH MANY CROWNS COME FROM?

As you may know, there is a comprehensive set of indices in *Ancient and Modern: hymns and songs for refreshing worship* one of which is a table of suggested hymns for Sundays and festivals. Sunday 22 November brings us to the Feast of Christ the King, which is the last Sunday before Advent. The hymnal suggests Crown him with many crowns as the opening hymn at the principal Sunday service.

The lyrics were written by Matthew Bridges (1800 – 1894). He was born in Maldon, Essex in a Church of England worshipping family. A brother took holy orders. Bridges remained in the Church of England until 1848 when he was influenced by

the Oxford Movement and he joined the Roman Catholic Church. He spent many years in Quebec, Canada among practicing Roman Catholics. However, he returned to England to live out his final years in Sidmouth, Devon.

His hymn, *Crown him with many crowns*, is probably his best-known hymn. It appeared in his collection of hymns, *Hymns of the Heart* in 1851. What brought it wide popularity was its inclusion in the 1868 Appendix to the first (1861) *Hymns Ancient and Modern*. It was set to a lively, popular tune, *Diademata* composed by Sir George Job Elvey (1816 – 1893) whose musical career included organist at St George's Chapel, Windsor for 47 years. Not long after the inclusion in the *Hymns Ancient and Modern* 1868 Appendix there was criticism of Bridges' texts for the Blessed Virgin Mary ("the mystic Rose") and Christ as "Fruit of the mystic Rose." As a result, a Church of England priest, Godfrey Thring (1823 – 1903) produced an amended version of Bridges' texts. But *Hymns Ancient and Modern* continued with Bridges' texts.

The English Hymnal 1906 included the hymn but with a strange 'pick your choice' selection of tunes; *Milites* from the 1742 Foundery Collection, *Corona* by C Hylton Stewart (1884 – 1932), *Ich halte treulich still* (attributed to J S Bach (1685 – 1750 and *Oliva Speciosa* (an 18th century Italian melody.) And Richard Runciman Terry (1865 – 1938) composed his tune *Corona*, possibly to appeal to Roman Catholic worshippers. The good news is that the *Revised English Hymnal* 2023 includes the hymn with – yes, you guessed – *Diademata* - and no alternatives!

Allen Harris

THINGS THAT HAPPENED ON THE OTHER SIDE OF "THE POND"

On Sunday 27 September I was able to watch some live stream worship in the USA. At St Thomas Church New York City the Archbishop of Canterbury was the guest preacher at their Festal Evensong and Benediction Service. And when I had a view of the Choral Evensong Service at Washington National Cathedral (WNC) the choir from Christ Church Cathedral Oxford under the direction of Peter Holder, Organist and Director of Music, joined the WNC choir. The event was the WNC's 119th anniversary of laying the foundation stone – "Cathedral Day." The Christ Church Cathedral choir is celebrating its 500th anniversary and toured parts of the USA between 25 September to 4 October. The choir was firstly established by Thomas Wolsey in 1526. The Dean, the Very Reverend Professor Sarah Foot was with the choir during their visit.

During the Choral Evensong the choirs sang the Preces (Thomas Tomkins (1572 – 1656), Phos Hilaron (Charles Wood 1866 – 1926), Psalm 46 – chant attributed to Martin Luther (1483 – 1526), Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis (Mt St Alban Evening Service – David Hogan (1949 – 1996), the Lesser Litany and Suffrages (Thomas Tomkins 1572 – 1656), Anthem Jubilate Deo (William Walton (1902 – 1983) and a processional Psalm 150 George S Talbot (1875 – 1918). Hymns sung by congregation and choir were O praise ye the Lord (Laudate Dominum) and Come, we that love the Lord (Vineyard Haven). Both services can be viewed on catch up via You Tube streaming. The Archbishop was making her first visit as Archbishop to the Episcopal Church in the USA between 25 – 28 September.

Allen Harris

THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY'S SERMON AT ST THOMAS CHURCH, FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK CITY

May I begin by saying how grateful I am for this opportunity to join with you in worship here at Saint Thomas Church. Thank you, Father Carl, for your kind invitation. It is a joy to celebrate with you as you mark your patronal festival; to share with members of your congregation and community, as well as with colleagues from the Cathedral and neighbouring parishes. I have enjoyed previous visits with you during my time as the Bishop of London, but it is a particular joy to be here with you as Archbishop of Canterbury, and to mark this festival with you. May I speak in the name of God who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

'Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?' (John 14.5)

Before my installation as Archbishop of Canterbury in March, I walked 140 kilometres from St Paul's Cathedral in London to Canterbury Cathedral. As I set foot on the steps of St Paul's Cathedral and down the hill towards the river Thames, I knew my destination was Canterbury, I knew the pilgrimage paths that we were walking, I knew I was preparing for my installation - but I didn't know the exact route we would follow. As someone who has walked a lot – and with a husband who walks around 30km a day and is at present taking a break from walking from Canterbury to Jerusalem – I must admit not knowing the exact route was a little disconcerting. There was, of course, a whole team of people who had planned the route; mapped out the stops; coordinated visits with churches and schools; organised accommodation; and so, in a sense they took this worry from me. It enabled me to focus on walking, on praying, on preparing for my installation.

It became an unexpected lesson in trust – trusting that the route and the places to stop would work out as planned; trusting that the person with the map knew the best path to take; trusting that the ancient paths we were following would lead us to our destination. As I walked, it struck me - as it often does on pilgrimage - that the way, the journey itself, as much as the destination, is where the spiritual work happens. It is while we are on the way that we encounter God, both in our own spiritual searching, and in our relationships with others. What took me by surprise was how my walk captured the imagination of people not just in the UK, but across the world. In some way, my ordinary actions gave people access to the Church and to God – I am still reflecting on what this means for my ministry and the ministry of the Church.

I wonder if, just as St James is associated with the great Camino de Santiago, we might also think of Thomas as a ‘saint of pilgrimage’: ‘Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?’ (John 14.5) Thomas has a good habit of asking probing questions. He’s often known as ‘doubting Thomas’, but I like to think of him as someone who is curious, inquisitive – as the one who is bold enough to ask the questions that many were just thinking. In this Gospel encounter, Thomas asks Jesus this question about ‘the way’ – and about where it leads and how we can know it? Where does Thomas’ question come from? Why is he so concerned to ask? In the previous chapter, Jesus has washed his disciples’ feet; he has dipped the morsel of bread in the dish and spoken of betrayal; he has predicted Peter’s denial; he has told the disciples to ‘love one another as I have loved you’; and now he has spoken of his departure, of ‘going ahead to prepare a place for them’.

I imagine all the disciples were wondering what Jesus meant by his words, by these foreboding actions: Where was Jesus going? Would they be able to go too? What did this mean for their life together? Thomas is the one who asks the question out loud. And Thomas’s question leads into the most profound self-revelation of Jesus: ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life’.

I think Thomas asks the question that many of us find ourselves asking in our own lives. How do we know the way we should go? How do we discern the right path in our life? How do we follow Jesus when we’re not sure where it will lead? These kinds of questions can arise from doubt or confusion; from anxiety or fear; from deep curiosity or a simple desire for change. And often, like Thomas, there is both a desire to know the destination and wanting to know how we’re going to get there.

Knowing the way isn't simply a revelation from on high, or a voice calling to us in the night, it is sometimes finding our way together, seeking wisdom in our journeying together. In this Gospel account, the way is both the journey and the destination. When Jesus says he is 'the way', it is more than just self-revelation - Jesus is saying who he is, but also what he does. Jesus is himself 'the way', and he is the one – the only one – who makes a way to the Father.

As followers of Jesus, we can't make it alone in our journey to the Father – we do it in relationship with Jesus, and with each other. Jesus invites us to abide in him, he assures us that he will abide in us, and he commands us to love one another just as he has loved us: this is 'the way' of Jesus, the way of indwelling love, of walking with God and into God, and with each other.

What we do know about the way is that it is not always straightforward. Even if we have our eyes on our destination – the journey can be challenging, we can make mistakes, take the wrong turns, we can feel overwhelmed by what lies before us. As followers of Jesus, we might at times feel lost or confused and it is in these times that we need one another. Just as I learned on my pilgrimage, I had to rely on others to manage the details, to keep an eye on the map, to support one another as we walked together.

I recall one lovely moment when two young school children were walking along beside me – one had lots of energy and the other had not much at all – so they were holding each other's hands, they told me – one to give energy to the other; one to help the other calm down! We need one another as we walk the path of faith. That, for me, is the joy of the Anglican Communion – the joy of our life together in Christ. Jesus recognises the anxiety the disciples feel, and he speaks directly to it: 'Do not let your hearts be troubled, believe in God and believe also in me'. These words frame the whole encounter with Jesus. Jesus recognises their fear, and encourages them to believe, to trust, not only in God in whom they put their trust; but also in him, who is the way to that promised hope.

Building on the words of the prophet Isaiah, Jesus assures His disciples that He is their hope, He is their saviour, He is the one in whom they can trust: Jesus is Lord, besides him there is no Saviour. And, at the same time as knowing this, we also know that walking the way of Jesus doesn't promise to be easy – our life-long pilgrimage will bring joy, confidence and boldness in faith; but it will bring doubts, confusion, questions and fears.

When Jesus says, 'I am the way', we know – and Thomas will discover as the story unfurls – that the 'way' of Jesus is the way of the cross. It is a way that shoulders the burdens of the world; it is a way that bears the wounds of sin in the resurrected body of Jesus. To walk the way of Jesus, is then, to walk the way of the cross, and the way of the resurrection in the glorious wounds of Christ.

As a church here in the heart of New York City, you know something of what it is to walk this way of the wounded body of Jesus. It is especially moving to be here by the memorial dedicated by one of my predecessors as Archbishop of Canterbury, and to see engraved the words of our beloved late Queen Elizabeth II: 'Grief is the price we pay for love'. Those words carved into stone are the indelible sign of the bonds of history, love and affection that exist between our two nations – and our two churches.

You have walked the way of faith in response to the atrocities of 9/11, 25 years ago. You have walked the way of Jesus carrying with you the pain and suffering of our world; you have walked the way of hope, offering the healing and salvation promised in the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

As with so many people, I can never forget the images from that horrific day, especially of people fleeing the disaster, and those running towards danger to help people who were trapped. You of all people have asked the question: 'Lord, we do not know where you are going, show us the way'.

You asked that question on that day, as did the world, and I'm sure you have asked that question every day since. We are still asking that question today. Perhaps you have received less an answer than an assurance that we need one another on the journey. No one person can undertake that journey alone. Even Moses, even Isaiah, even Jesus himself calling disciples, knew that human beings need one another on the pilgrimage through the world, that at times is a walk through 'a barren land'.

In the immediate aftermath of the attacks on the World Trade Centre, the Episcopal Church responded by opening your doors, providing comfort and shelter, offering spaces for first responders – and, still to this day, 25 years on – you are walking with those who lost loved ones - offering hope, healing and comfort to those who still carry the wounds of that day in their hearts.

In Jesus we know the Father; in Jesus we see God - the love of God, not distanced from the brokenness of the world, but choosing emptiness, humility and the cross as the way of salvation. And so, we give thanks for Thomas, who shows us what it means to walk towards difficult questions, the doubts and the fears we face. We give thanks for Thomas, who, when the other disciples were hiding in fear, asked the Lord to show him his wounds. Praise God for Thomas, who walks towards the wounded body of Christ and reaching out his hand to touch the brokenness, finds words of faith: 'My Lord and My God'.

As we journey with Thomas, may we follow the one who is the way. When the route isn't clear or the journey feels uncertain, may we trust in the one whose way is truth; when we feel anxious or afraid, may we hear the promise of the one whose way is life. Let us then together, walk in this way.
Amen.

QUIET MORNING - ADVENT

Have you ever been on retreat or attended a quiet day? Such occasions offer an opportunity to step away from the usual demands of life and spend time in peace and stillness. They provide space for reflection, silence and quiet prayer. Advent is approaching, so why not take some time to pause, reflect and prepare for the coming of Christmas?

On Saturday 28 November, I will be hosting a Benefice Quiet Morning at Christ the King, from 9.30am – 1pm. The theme for the morning will be 'Advent'. Together, we will explore this season through quiet reflection and a variety of gentle activities. There will be opportunities to pray and reflect together, as well as time and space for personal prayer and for deepening your relationship with God. The morning will conclude with a simple soup lunch, which will be provided.

This event is free of charge, but numbers are limited to twelve participants. To reserve a place, please contact me at karenbroadbent@hotmail.com. I look forward to sharing this time with you.

Karen

CELEBRATIONS ON 27 SEPTEMBER

Caroline McAslan, now living in Henley, returned to the parish to join others at Christ the King to celebrate James' 50th birthday and a 10th year anniversary of his incumbency in the Benefice. We are grateful to Caroline for photos which we can enjoy. Thank you, Caroline.





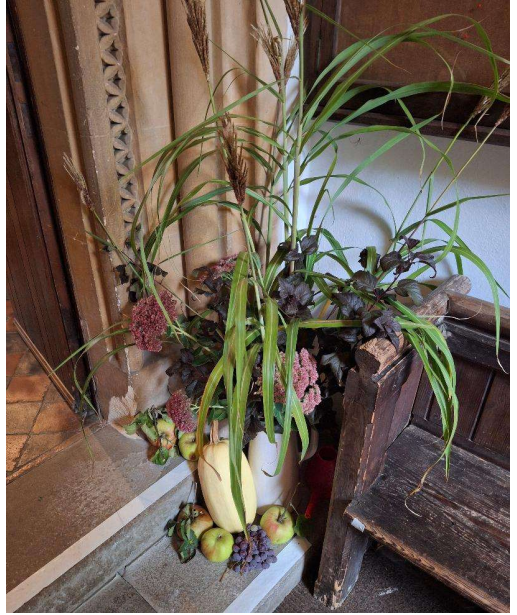
THE FESTIVAL OF CHRIST THE KING

With a church in the Benefice dedicated to Christ the King, it might be appropriate to remind ourselves how the Festival of Christ the King originated. New festivals only come about rarely. Christ the King was established as a festival in 1925 by Pope Pius XI in his encyclical *Quas Primas*. In the first two decades of the 20th century support for Christianity was in decline as consumerism and movements such as communism and fascism fuelled social tensions. Against this background Pope Pius XI wanted Roman Catholics to recognise that Christ is a King and ruler of peace and justice in the entire Universe, not ruling through political borders or physical armies, but reigning through hearts, minds and wills of humanity. Initially the festival was set to be marked on the last Sunday in October. In 1969, liturgical revision included a change in the date to the last Sunday before Advent. This made good sense in the Lectionary as the Festival provided a cumulation of the lessons heard throughout the year. Other denominations which have lectionaries which follow the Revised Common Lectionary included the Festival of Christ the King globally in Protestant and Anglican churches thus following the Roman Catholic Church. The Church of England officially adopted the Festival of Christ the King in the Common Worship Lectionary in 1997. The liturgical colour is white or red.

Allen Harris

HARVEST THANKSGIVING FLORAL DISPLAYS

This year, Camilla Skinner and the floral team developed some lovely displays for St John's to enhance the harvest thanksgiving service on 28 September. Thank you to Camilla and her team. And thank you to Peter Blake for providing some photographs.



ARCHBISHOP OF YORK'S SERMON ON THE ISLE OF MAN DURING HIS RECENT PILGRIMAGE



Photo credit - Office of the Archbishop of York

“By what authority are you doing these things?” Matthew 21. 23

At first sight the question the chief priests and elders ask Jesus is perfectly reasonable: “Who gave you permission to do these things? Who appointed you? What are your credentials? It’s the kind of question we ask all the time, sometimes without even noticing. We want to know who’s in charge and by what authority they are speaking and acting. But Jesus doesn’t give them a straight answer. Instead, he asks them a question. “Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?” And suddenly

they are trapped. Because they are not really interested in the answer. They are interested in protecting their position. They are interested in being right. And Jesus is a challenge to this. And he knows it. So, he tells them a story. A father asks his two sons to go and work in the vineyard. The first says, “No.” But later he changes his mind and goes. The second says, “Yes,” but doesn’t go. “Which of the two did the will of his father?” asks Jesus. The answer is obvious. The one who went.

And this is the simple - but enormously hard to live out - heart of today’s gospel reading. Knowing the way to go, knowing what’s right is one thing. Doing it, quite another. But God is interested in what we do, not just what we say. And the Christian life isn’t just about saying Yes to God, it is about putting that yes into action and walking God’s way; following Jesus and going where he sends us and doing what he asks and expects us to do. And this isn’t easy. But this is the source of Jesus’ authority. He does the will of God. And it is the reason that tax collectors and sinners are leading the way into the kingdom of God.

But where are we? Are we those who say yes with our lips, but not with our lives? Or could it be that we said no, but didn’t realise we could change our minds? Pilgrimage can help us here. Pilgrimage is about journey. It is about setting out. It is about deciding to go a certain way. As someone once put it - You can spend a very long time talking about the journey. You can read the guidebooks and

download the app. You can get yourself an expensive pair of walking boots. You can set the compass and study the map. You can talk and dream endlessly about the journey you plan to make, but eventually there has to be a moment when you put the rucksack on your back and walk out of the door. And just as there is a difference between knowing about the journey and actually making the journey, there is also a difference between knowing about Jesus and actually following him. One son says yes, but then doesn't go. The other says no, but then changes his mind. Or put it another way: He repents. Which means literally turn around. Change direction. Seek a new path. This too happens on pilgrimage. Both the decision to set off. And the wrong turnings, re-orientations and corrections which take place on the journey.

So, we are faced with a question. Has our faith - our following Jesus - become theoretical. Or worse, judgemental. Is it just words and ideas or are we seeking to live out our faith, to actually walk in the way of Jesus. Going on pilgrimage, as Bishop Tricia and others of us have done this weekend, reminds us that we must embody and live out our faith in what we do. And this is what today's scriptures teach us as well. Though pilgrimage also teaches us about the constant changes and day by day repentance that is also needed if we walk closely with Jesus. One son said yes. But never followed through on that yes. And as with us, there may be all sorts of reasons - good and bad - why this happened. But the other son, even though he initially said no, was able to do what his father asked him.

This holds out the hope to us that we do not need to be defined by the wrong decisions we have made in the past or a lack of commitment to follow Jesus today, because with him there is always the chance to start again. And whether we are those who have said yes and never followed through, or those who have said no and would like to change our mind, God comes to us in the journeys of our lives, as he did to Cleopas and his companion on the first Easter day, and walks at our side, shows us the true meaning of scripture and is known to us again and again - and here this morning in this lovely cathedral - in the breaking of bread. We can, in the words of our reading from Paul's letter to the Philippians, 'know the mind of Christ,' receiving from him who though he was in the form of God, emptied himself and was found in human likeness. And can be found again today. This morning. Here.

This is the amazing and beautiful thing about the Christian faith. Jesus doesn't just show us the way, doesn't just ask us to follow. He is always alongside us. Always explaining. Always comforting. Always forgiving. And always providing. There is a banquet prepared at the journey's end and there are the iron rations of scripture

and sacrament to keep us going on the way. If you have regrets. If you know you have made mistakes. If there is sadness in your life. If you are frightened or concerned about the way the world is going. If you feel lost. Then turn to Jesus who turns to you and invites you to live your life his way. Dear friends, this is very good news indeed!

LAMB AND FLAG SUBSCRIPTIONS

Thank you to everyone who subscribes to the parish magazine. To ensure you continue to receive your magazine each month, please make your annual subscription payment, which remains at £9.50 for 12 copies, next month. A loose-leaf payment slip will be included in the December magazine. Your distributor will be happy to collect your subscription when delivering the magazine to you, or please make payment by your preferred method.

We are also most grateful to our advertisers whose contributions help to defray the magazine production costs.

SAVE THE DATE! - CHRISTMAS FAIR 2026

The Parish Christmas Fair will be held at Christ the King on Saturday 5 December, 12pm – 2pm.

This year, we will once again be opening up the Christmas Cafe, and we invite you, your family and friends to stay to enjoy a selection of delicious homemade refreshments, including soup and rolls, mince pies, cake and sausage rolls, tea and coffee. It will be a wonderful opportunity to catch up with friends and neighbours in a relaxed and festive atmosphere. There will also be a Grand Raffle, featuring a festive hamper as first prize, together with many other exciting prizes.

Please come along and help us to raise funds for both our Parish and the next phase of the St John's building project. Look out for updates in both churches over the coming weeks, including requests for donations for the festive hamper and cafe, and offers of help on the day. Most importantly, make a note of the date in your diary now and join us for an afternoon of festive fun and fellowship.

Karen Broadbent - Karenbroadbent@hotmail.com

PARISH SHARE AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2026

Archdeaconry	Amount paid	Outstanding	% Paid
Berkshire	£ 4,323,225	£ 1,786,265	70.8
Buckingham	£ 4,668,356	£ 2,396,463	66.1
Dorchester	£ 4,554,088	£ 1,838,393	71.2
Oxford	£ 1,199,972	£ 677,379	63.9
Totals	£14,745,641	£ 6,698,500	68.8

The 2026 Parish Share contributions continue to accumulate. The table above shows how much each of the four archdeaconries have contributed as at 30 September 2026. At this point in 2025 the aggregate contributions were £14,314,309. Henley Deanery has contributed £420,407 which is 60.5% of the allocation. In 2025, at this point, the percentage contribution was 65.0%.

WHERE TO JOIN A SERVICE IN NOVEMBER

Date	CTK	SJB	All Saints
1 November			09.00 Holy Communion said
		18.00 Evensong for Allsoulstide	10.30 Benefice Eucharist
8 November	09.30 Eucharist	10.45 Remembrance Service	10.45 Remembrance Sunday
15 November	09.30 Eucharist	11.15 Sung Eucharist	10.30 Peppard Praise Communion
22 November	09.30 Benefice Eucharist		18.30 Evensong
29 November	09.30 Eucharist	11.15 Sung Eucharist	10.30 Family Communion
			18.30 Candlelit Advent Service

DATES FOR DIARIES

Date	Event	Where?
Sunday 1 November	Patronal Festival Benefice Eucharist at 10.30	All Saints'
	Allsoulstide service at 16.30	SJB
Saturday 21 November	Wine and Song at 18.00	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
Saturday 5 December	Parish Christmas Fair – 12pm – 2pm	CTK
Sunday 13 December	Community carols tbc	CTK
Tuesday 22 December	Parish Carol Service at 19.30	SJB

THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY CALLS THE NEXT PRIMATES MEETING IN JOHANNESBURG IN 2027

The Archbishop of Canterbury has called the next Primates' Meeting, to be held from 28 February – 5 March in Johannesburg, hosted by the Anglican Church of Southern Africa. Formal notification of dates has been sent to the Primates from Lambeth Palace. Archbishop Sarah met many of the Anglican Primates at her Installation in March 2026, but this will be the first formal Primates' meeting of her ministry. The last Primates' Meeting took place in Rome, in 2024. The Primates' Meeting is an 'Instrument of Communion' that seeks to foster unity and collaboration between Anglican churches around the world. The meeting provides space for prayer, fellowship and consultation on shared priorities in church and world affairs.

The agenda, which will explore mission, service and advocacy, will be developed in consultation with the regional primates in the months ahead. A range of topics is expected to feature, including peace and reconciliation, migration and refugee crises, the environment and safeguarding. Resolutions and outcomes from ACC-19 (the 2026 meeting of the Anglican Consultative Council) will also be discussed,

including the church planting initiative Vision36 and the next steps in conversations about The *Nairobi-Cairo Proposals*.

HILDA – ABBESS OF WHITBY – COMMEMORATED 19 NOVEMBER

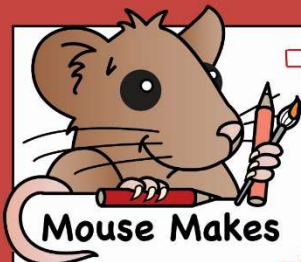
Hilda played a key role in the early English Christian church, and she may even have been the first to encourage the writing of Christian poetry.

She was born a princess, into the Deiran (Northumbrian) dynasty, and her sister became Queen of the East Angles, with whom the Deiran had connections. In those days East Anglia had close ties with the Gallic Church, and because of her sister, Hilda came under that influence. She was actually on her way to take her monastic vows near Paris when the Bishop of Lindisfarne, Aidan, called her back to Northumbria. Back home, she went into seclusion for a time, before being sent to be abbess of a religious house in Hartlepool in 649. Eight years later, Hilda felt moved to establish a religious community at Streasnaeshalch (later renamed Whitby). Her community was a royal establishment, a double monastery (both men and women) and became famous for its learning, with even five bishops trained there.

Whitby was also, of course, the venue for the famous Synod of Whitby in 664. With Hilda acting as hostess, the Synod met to decide upon the date of Easter. The issue at stake was greater than that, though, for the decision would sway the Church in Britain to adapt either the Celtic or Roman traditions. Although Hilda defended the Celtic church customs, she accepted with grace the decision of the Synod to accept the Roman date for Easter, and she then worked to unite the Church throughout the land.

Ed – what a remarkable lady!

CENTRE SPOT FOR YOUNGSTERS



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



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



The gardener and the Vine



JESUS OFTEN TOLD
STORIES WITH
HIDDEN MEANINGS



ONCE HE TOLD HIS FRIENDS ALL
ABOUT A GARDENER.

THE GARDENER'S JOB WAS
TO CARE FOR THE VINES



HE WOULD LOOK AT EACH
BRANCH CAREFULLY..

... AND IF IT WAS PRODUCING
GOOD FRUIT, HE WOULD CARE
FOR IT AND NOURISH IT.



IF IT WAS PRODUCING BAD
FRUIT...

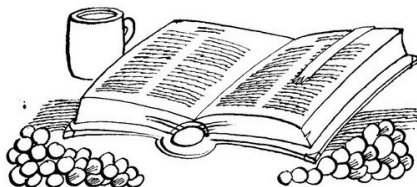


...OR NO FRUIT AT
ALL...



...THEN THE GARDENER WOULD
CHOP IT OFF, AND BURN IT IN
THE FIRE!!

JESUS WANTED HIS FRIENDS TO SHARE
THE GOOD NEWS - THAT'S LIKE THE
VINE BEARING GOOD FRUIT.



YOU CAN READ THIS SPECIAL PARABLE IN JOHN'S
GOSPEL, CHAPTER 15.

CHURCH OF ENGLAND – WOMEN IN THE EPISCOPATE

Although General Synod passed the Bishops and Priests (Consecration and Ordination of Women) Measure in July 2014, paving the way for women to be appointed as bishops, the first steps took place in General Synod in July 2006 – now twenty years ago. To map progress here are two tables, one showing diocesan bishops, and a second showing suffragan bishops. Assembling this information involved surfing around to gather the information. Hopefully no-one has been omitted!

Diocese	Bishop	Installed
Canterbury	Sarah Mullally	March 2026
Chelmsford	Guli Francis-Dehqani	April 2021
Derby	Libby Lane (Jackie Searle acting during Libby Lane's sick leave)	May 2019
Ely	Sarah Clarke	June 2026
Newcastle	Helen-Ann Hartley	April 2023
Gloucester	Rachel Treweek	September 2019
Liverpool	Ruth Worsley (interim) and Suffragan Bishop of Wigan	May 2025
Peterborough	Debbie Sellin	March 2024
St Edmundsbury and Ipswich	Joanne Grenfell	January 2026
Sodor and the Isle of Man	Tricia Hillas	November 2024

SUFFRAGAN FEMALE BISHOPS

Area	Name	Installed/Welcomed
Aston	Esther Prior	May 2025
Barking	Lynn Cullens	February 2022
Basingstoke	Kelly Anne Betteridge	November 2025
Birkenhead	Julie Conalty	July 2021
Crediton	Moirra Astin	July 2025
Croydon	Rosemarie Mallett	June 2022
Doncaster	Leah Vasey-Saunders	September 2025
Dover	Rose Hudson-Wilkin	November 2019
Grimsby	Jean Burgess	April 2026
Hertford	Jane Mainwaring	February 2023

Area	Bishop	Installed/Welcomed
Horsham	Ruth Bushyager	September 2020
Hull	Eleanor Sanderson	September 2022
Kensington	Emma Ineson	February 2023
Lancaster	Jill Duff	July 2018
Lichfield assistant	Jane McFarlane	July 2020
Lynn	Jane Steen	June 2021
Reading	Mary Gregory	March 2025
Ripon	Anna Eltringham	September 2023
Selby	Flora Winfield	November 2024
Sherborne	Karen Gorham	March 2016
Shrewsbury	Sarah Bullock	July 2019
Southampton	Rhiannon King	October 2024
Taunton	Fiona Gibson	February 2026

Allen Harris

THE GENTLE KING

Christ the King – His gentle grace
 Will not be found in halls of stone.
 But in the still and quiet place
 Where prayers are gathered, pleas made known.

His mighty hand holds sword nor spear,
 No weapons fly at His command;
 But earthly empires disappear
 Crushed by faithful, prayerful hands.

No crown of gold – His royal brow
 Bore only crown of braided thorn;
 Yet ev'ry knee to Him will bow
 Every person ever born.

We come before our Sovereign King
 We gaze upon His shining face.
 How loud our Alleluias ring!
 We're saved by His amazing grace!

Nigel Beeton – Parish Pump

THE GRAND REOPENING OF KIDMORE END WELL

On Saturday 10 October, a sunny but cool autumnal afternoon, people gathered by the Well Head of the Kidmore End Well at 3 p.m. for the official reopening ceremony following weeks of cordoned-off refurbishment of this charming structure.

For some months, the Grade II Listed Well had been fenced off for safety. Last year, the Well Head was found to be in a dangerous condition, due to damage to part of its base and to the roof. It has always been regarded as a treasured asset of the village, but its vulnerable position in the middle of the highway, the rotting beams, fragile roof and the constant traffic negotiating that tight bend had taken its toll. It has been repaired in the past, but never so comprehensively as now. Following a detailed survey, and requisite permissions to begin reparations, work started in July when Mr Andrew Jarvis of Chiltern Woodcraft, and his colleague, Jacob Littlefield, arrived to begin the necessary repairs. The renovation of the Well was finished this month at a cost of nearly £27,000.

For the reopening ceremony, Mr Andrew Jarvis was invited by the Chair of the Kidmore End Parish Council, which is responsible for the Well, to cut the ribbon and give a short talk on the work done. Mr. Jarvis explained that they tried to use the original materials as far as possible, they used traditional methods of workmanship and if new was required, they used sustainable materials. The roof threw up particular problems on account of its curved shape, but the resultant outcome is universally thought to be most attractive – much of it hand carved and shaped to retain authenticity. Andrew pointed out that the original square headed nails had been used on the roof to maintain heritage as far as possible.

Caroline Aldridge thanked Mr. Jarvis and Jason. The 70 people gathered together then proceeded into the church for refreshments. The ladies of Kidmore End had baked the most wonderful variety of cakes to be enjoyed with the tea. For the small charge of £5 for the tea and cakes, everyone was allowed to take home with them the special Kidmore End Well mugs in which their tea was served.

While everyone was enjoying the tea and cakes in the church, members of the St. John's and Christ the King Choir sang four popular songs. One song, to the tune of Castle in the Clouds, had words about the Well composed by the Musical Director of the choir, Frances Brewitt Taylor. These words are printed elsewhere in this magazine. (I can scan these).

The atmosphere in the church was both warm and friendly – warm due to the new heating system installed this year, and friendly on account of the openness and happiness of all those present. Whilst we begin to think about Phase 2 of the church plans, the intention and hope is to host many more community events in our newly refurbished church.

Shirley Horne

[Incidentally, when I went to photograph the finished Well recently, I came across an elderly man who was also observing the Well with interest. We fell into conversation and it transpired that he has lived in Kidmore End all his life and he remembers the Well through its many different appearances. He stressed that it did not always look as it does now. There was a time when it was surrounded with iron railings. He also remembered playing on the Well Head as a small boy with his friends!)



Andrew Jarvis cuts the ribbon.



Andrew happy with the newly opened well.



Andrew Jarvis and Caroline Aldridge admire the well.

THE WELL SONG

There is a well at Kidmore End,
Opened in eighteen sixty-eight,
Over two hundred and fifty feet deep,
Used until nineteen hundred and six.

Two buckets brought the water up,
Hung on a pair of chains of wire.
Each operation took five minutes;
Part of the village's heritage.

Now we no longer use the well
It serves a different character;
Its shapely form is bedecked with flowers
At times of local and national events.

Wood had decayed despite repairs.
Now it has been so well restored, the
Heart of the village beats again.
Thank you to donors of Kidmore End.



Andrew talks about the reopened well.



Choristers at St John's Church

Frances Brewitt-Taylor wrote the lyrics for the Well song; music setting Castle on a cloud from Les Miserables.

Other songs performed by the choir were: *You raise me up, I'd like to teach the world to sing, and Bridge over troubled water.*

OUR 10TH WINE & SONG - SATURDAY 21 NOVEMBER, 6PM, KIDMORE END SCHOOL – REMINDER

A reminder that the 10th Wine and Song event is on 21 November at 6pm at Kidmore End School. As mentioned in last month's magazine the wines featured will come from the Spanish grape, Tempranillo, but not necessary from Spain, nor Spanish wines, and both red and white. Tickets at £25 each are available through David Classey. Spaces are limited and as we discovered last year, this event sells out quickly. To accompany the wines, David has arranged more local talent, and our own choir will be performing in one of the five musical interludes. Wine & Song 2026 will again be held in the primary school hall (bring a cushion if you find seating there uncomfortable).

- There will be a raffle.
- Please support this significant fundraising event.

- The ticket price does not include food, so do bring a nibble or two.
- We look forward to seeing you.

Nick Room and David Classey

CHURCHYARD NEWS

What has the churchyard tidy team been up to lately? Good question! Well, they are currently tidying up the hedge which runs along by the school as well as planting bulbs in the tubs ready for a Spring display. A fair-sized hazel tree had to be removed for health and safety reasons. The resulting debris was chopped into branches or log sized pieces and leafy branches and twigs were shredded to create mulch.



With our minds very much on the variety of wildlife which we know inhabit the churchyard the chopped branches have been used to create a safe and cosy hideaway and hibernaculum for the Autumn and Winter months. We also know that frogs and toads like to spend their winter in the gaps around the older graves.

Work will continue throughout the Autumn and Winter, just as it has done every year. The only exception is in very wet or extremely cold weather. Raking leaves will be an ongoing task as the trees have no manners and will drop their

leaves whenever they feel like it; especially immediately after the area has been cleared. Some leaves will be left in piles for creatures in which to shelter.

Jill Pound

CHARITY TEA FOR HENLEY AND SONNING COMMON DEBT CENTRE

“Poverty is so much more than going without. Poverty destroys lives. It tears families apart, isolates those most in need of support and leads many to believe there is no way out.”

On Saturday 17 October over twenty people gathered in the hall at Christ the King. There was a splendid selection of cakes, scones, jam and cream as well as tea and coffee. However, we were there for a reason other than enjoying one another’s company and a delicious tea; which is of course always a pleasure.



Terry Grouk, who is a trustee of the Henley and Sonning Common debt centre, and his team gave an inspirational talk, accompanied by a video, about their work in the local area. The debt centre was set up in 2022 in partnership with Christians against Poverty. They support local people with financial worries, work with them

on their route out of debt, providing emotional and practical support every step of the way. You don't have to be a Christian to get help.

We heard about the role of befrienders and job coaches in helping these people and heard testimonies from those who had been supported and are now debt free. There was interested and enthusiastic questioning after the talk before (of course!) more tea and cake. If you would like to know more, there is information on the church notice boards as well as in copies of the newsletter.



Thank you so much to Gillian, Felicity, Elaine, Paddy and Vivian for their hard work and moral support. Also, thanks to Nick Room for his enthusiastic support as clearer upper and technology maestro.

Jill Pound

ADVERTISING SECTION

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A.B.WALKER

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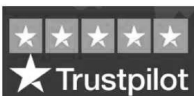
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CHURCH FABRIC FUNDS

CHRIST THE KING ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST

Are you making a will? Have you had a windfall?
Wish to show gratitude for a special event?
Want to see the church building preserved?
Or just feeling generous?

Then make a contribution to one or other of these Funds.
Your money will be used **ONLY** for the preservation of the buildings.
Contact the Churchwarden and PCC Treasurer

Nick Room – 07973 513883

WALKING YOUR DOG IN THE CHURCHYARD

We ask you politely

PLEASE keep your dog on the lead or under control

AND please 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 GUIDE

Advertising in this magazine	Contact for anyone interested in advertising in this magazine	Sian Lovett – 07902 045330 sianlovett60@gmail.com
Church Fabric Funds	Help preserve our churches for future generations	Nick Room – 07973 513883
Hiring Christ the King Hall	Lettings by arrangement – may be hired for moderate charges	Benefice office – 0118 – 972 1383 – Jo Winch
Magazine articles	Please send to Allen Harris - the deadline is 22nd monthly or a little before if the magazine is full.	AHa3588066@aol.com
Magazine delivery	To arrange delivery of this magazine to your home	Please contact Nick Room



PARISH DIRECTORY

The Parish Directory is omitted from this online accessible version of the magazine. This is to comply with General Data Protection Regulations.

Kidmore End & Sonning Common Parochial Church Council is a registered charity. The Charity Commission registration number is 1209778.

SERVICES AND PRINCIPAL SERVICE LECTIONARY

Date	St John's	Lessons	Christ the King
1 November – All Saints' Day		Revelation 7. 9 – end 1 John 3. 1 – 3 Matthew 5. 1 - 12	
Allsoulstide	18.00 Evensong	Lamentations 3. 17- 26 Romans 8. 31 - 39	
8 November – Remembrance Sunday – (Third Sunday before Advent)		Amos 5. 18 – 24 1 Thessalonians 5. 1 – 11 Matthew 25. 1 – 13	09.30 Eucharist
	10.45 Remembrance Service	Micah 4. 1 – 4 John 15. 12 - 17	
15 November – Second Sunday before Advent	11.15 Sung Eucharist with baptism	Zephaniah 1. 7 & 12 – end 1 Thessalonians 5. 1 – 11 Matthew 25. 14 - 30	09.30 Eucharist
22 November – Christ the King (Sunday next before Advent)		Ezekiah 34. 11 – 16 & 20 – 24 Ephesians 1. 15 – end Matthew 25. 31 - end	09.30 Benefice Patronal Festival
29 November – Advent Sunday	11.15 Sung Eucharist	Isaiah 64 1 – 9 1 Corinthians 1. 3 – 9 Mark 13. 24 - end	09.30 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.

Services at All Saints' are:

1 November – 09.00 Holy Communion BCP said, 10.30 Festal Sung Eucharist

8 November – Remembrance Service at 10.45am

15 November – Peppard Praise Communion at 10.30am

22 November – Evensong at 18.30

29 November – Family Communion at 10.30, Candlelit Advent Service at 18.30