

St George The Martyr Shirley

Christ in the Community

George Herbert February 27 1633
Easter Wings

Lord, who createdst man in wealth and store,
Though foolishly he lost the same,
Decaying more and more,
Till he became
Most poore:
With thee O let me rise
As larks, harmoniously,
And sing this day thy victories:
Then shall the fall further the flight in me.
My tender age in sorrow did beginne
And still with sicknesses and shame.
Thou didst so punish sinne,
That I became Most thinne.
With thee Let me combine,
And feel thy victorie:
For, if I imp my wing on thine,
Affliction shall advance the flight in me.



A Member of Churches Together in Shirley

February 2024

50p

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Exploring your faith

The Book Reading Group offers a monthly opportunity to look at faith-based writing and swap your thoughts with others. See Book Reading Group section of church website and page 10.

Little Dragons Toddler Group
St George's: Monday mornings in term time
All under 5's with their parents/ carers welcome

Contact: Regina 07825 428465

Climate Crisis What can I do?

- Learn the facts YES
- Speak up for change YES
- Work with others YES
- Reduce my own carbon footprint YES
- Resign myself to the worst NO

Slimming World Shirley

**St George's Church Hall:
Mondays at 7 p.m.**

Contact: Andrea
07956 157275

Services at St. George's Church

Sundays 10 a.m. Sung Eucharist. Most Wednesdays 11 30 a.m. Said Eucharist. The Sunday Eucharist will also be available via live-streaming. See website or newsletter for access to the on-line option. There are shared worship opportunities throughout the week. Please see centre pages. for details. We aim to avoid any changes, but illness, etc, may change things..

While we are without a Vicar, enquiries should be made to
0 2 0 8 7 7 6 0 1 8 5: Parish Administrator,
 and the Church Wardens will contact the appropriate person.

Vicar: Vacancy

Hon. Curate: The Reverend Hilary Fife 19 Greenview Avenue, Shirley, Croydon
 CR0 7QW 07931 761320

Reader: Mr Ray Wheeler 88 Palace View, Shirley, Croydon CR0 8QN
 020 8777 5271

Reader: Mrs Liz Bebington 79 Shirley Way, Shirley, Croydon CR0 8PL
 020 8777 4840



News from the Palace

By the time you receive this edition of the church magazine Lent will be almost upon us. This year Easter will be celebrated early on 31st March so consequently Lent is early too beginning on Ash Wednesday, 14th February, also St Valentine's Day!

As we read in the Gospels Lent is the time when we remember Jesus' temptations in the wilderness. Jesus had to come to terms with what sort of Messiah he was to be. The Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke reminds us of the temptations Jesus experienced. If Jesus was really the Son of God, so the devil reminds him, turn the stones into bread. Ah! What about jumping off the highest part of the Jerusalem Temple. God will send a legion of angels to save you! As we know Jesus resisted these temptations. I hope you won't be tempted to try to prove God in these ways! Lent is the time when we either give something up eg smoking, vaping, drinking alcohol, chocolate, or, perhaps more constructively, taking something up for example reading your Bible more, doing some form of exercise to build up your fitness Joining in one of the activities that are being planned this Lent. Please see Revd Hilary's article in this edition (page 27).

One Lenten discipline you may consider is to go on a pilgrimage. You don't have to travel a long way or necessary walk miles and miles. Why not go on pilgrimage to one of Britain's Cathedrals. Take the train to Canterbury Cathedral. Catch a train from Bromley South station direct to Canterbury. Visit St Alban's perhaps, or Winchester, both cities within reach from Croydon.

A good suggestion is to join in the Diocesan Lent pilgrimages for the climate to remind us of the need to care for our environment. These are being led by Bishop Martin, Bishop of Kingston, the Lead Bishop for the Environment in the Diocese. These are taking place over 6 days (17th & 24th Feb; 1st, 8th, 20th & 28th March) from various corners of the Diocese. The walks will be over 5 to 7 miles long. You will be able to register for the walks very soon.

Whatever you decide to take up or let go this Lent I hope you will be richly blessed in your exercises. May you all have a Good Lent.

Ray Wheeler (Reader) writing from 88 Palace View

Peat – free Gardening



The January RHS “The Garden” is strong on ECO issues, and ECO opinions. One of the readers’ letters features the lazy approach to being ECO-friendly at the domestic level. The writer announces proudly that (s)he has given up weeding. I’m sorry to disappoint those who think they now have a socially responsible reason for not doing any gardening; but frankly if you JUST give up weeding, you will have a mess, not an ECO garden. You need managed wildness, and managing means working, not abandoning.

Positive RHS ECO suggestions include: finding space for an appropriate bush or tree. Check

out soil and situation, and likely height/spread; and don’t just stick in and forget. It’s like having children and then just leaving them to get on with growing up. The results can be very disappointing. Then there are two separate articles commending the colourful, sweetly scented, winter-flowering, Hamamelis/ Witch Hazel. This is a really good addition to the garden.

The main RHS ECO emphasis is on peat-free compost. Peat-free is good because leaving peat where it is avoids destroying one of the world’s most valuable carbon sinks. Older people can remember a gardening time Before Peat. However peat has been a gardening staple for severe decades; and the peat alternatives (with varying components of fertiliser, composted bark, garden waste, coir, anaerobic digestate, wood fibre, etc) need to be used with thought, not just substituted for peat. Whether you are making your own or buying compost, check out what you are getting, and think about how you use it and what you might need to add – e.g. sand, grit, soil, and, of course, water. If you are buying, at the very least read the bag- and preferably talk through what you want it for.

Other peat-free composts are available!!

Nature Observed

Nigel Kennedy was interviewed in “This Cultural Life” on New Year’s Day. His living example, and core plea to listeners, was to be open to new realities and new possibilities; and not have your hearing, seeing and doing dictated by others. He described young people who *just* hear, see and do what they are told as “*behaving just like a 75 year old ambassador of Lichtenstein*”. (No disrespect intended to either Lichtenstein or people over 70.)

When you do really look at what is happening in your garden, and don’t take it for granted, it is fascinating. Peanuts put in squirrel-proof container attract Blue Tits, Great Tits, Cole Tits, Parakeets, House Sparrows - Parakeets to eat, and all the others to take away and eat; plus (usually) frustrated squirrels. Peanuts put in a fully accessible feeding station tray attract Woodpigeons (which gobble down the peanuts with pauses for breath and digestion until the point of finding it difficult to take off), Magpies and Squirrels (both of which eat some nuts and go off to bury many more nuts for future reference), Pigeons (which would prefer seed but make do), and the smaller birds if they can get in (which take away, but to eat not bury). The Great Spotted Woodpecker may experiment, but prefers seed.

What you also notice is the courtesies of feeding. The various Tits happily take turns in a continuous rapid flow, irrespective of size or species. They appear as partnership birds. The Parakeets are quite good at queuing, though with a time limit; and some of them are happy to feed side by side. The Squirrels do look to see whether there is something already feeding; but then usually charge in and displace the feeder. The Starlings are not afraid to take on much bigger birds, including the Parakeets. The Woodpigeons do not use their bulk to advantage: slow on the up-take when other birds fly away, but easily displaced by any more aggressive bird, and so slow to fill a vacancy that they commonly lose out. The Magpies can be aggressive, but they are nervy birds.

And do the peanut buriers find what they have buried? Well, yes they sometimes do, but I suspect by searching rather than remembering. The Squirrels seem to search unsuccessfully more often than they search successfully; but their speed and constant activity mean that they do quite well from stored food - probably more often with peanuts than with seeds.

Faith and the environment

“Religious” environmentalists do tend, whatever their religion, to be a bit uppity: “We and God are looking after God’s Creation!” But sometimes there is a sad similarity between the scientific humanist “Creation’s resources are there to be exploited for the advancement of the human species, and there are scientific answers to any problems that arise”; and the religious “God gave us Creation’s resources for our benefit, and God will sort out any problems that arise”. It is quite easy to read the Jewish/Christian resource book, the Bible, as saying:

- Mankind is top species, and everything else was created for the benefit of that top species. No visible benefit for us, then no independent value.
- There are other beings out there, they are called angels, and even the angels take second place to humans.
- Humans, as God’s special creation, worshiping God can usefully involve the mass slaughter of other creatures.
- Life beyond this life is in a heavenly CITY, where there might be a river to admire and carefully planted trees to sit under.... But no other living creatures, except maybe the angels.
- God will sort out any human messing up of God’s creation.
- In specific terms, God gave us coal and oil, and the rather less plentiful minerals we need to ease up on use of coal and oil.

You can see why “religious” folk, including Christians, have had a lot to learn from “pagan” people such as the indigenous groups with a much more mutually dependent approach to us and the rest of creation. A better way of Bible reading is the narrative which starts from the reality that GOD VALUES EVERYTHING HE HAS MADE. The sparrow and the lily of the field have their own inherent, God-given, value - irrespective of whether any human values them or even notices them. Learn from the child who rushes with open arms to greet granny, and to greet the (rather startled) butterfly. The child who looks with wonder on daddy doing woodwork, and on the beetle doing woodwork.

OK, you can over-do respect. Feeling guilty about swallowing a fly (as well as uncomfortable as a result of swallowing a fly) is maybe overdoing it. Or hesitating to remove a flea.... However, if God values, we ought to be cautious about denying value.

A Parish Prayer

Lord,
 Take our lips and speak through them,
 Take our ears and listen through them,
 Take our feet and walk through them,
 Take our hands and work through them.
 Take our lives and live through them.
 Amen.

Churches Together in Shirley

St George's
 St John's
 Our Lady's
 All Saints
 Shirley Methodist
 West Wickham
 and Shirley Baptist



Church of God
 Apostolic
 Shrublands Christian Fellowship
 Longheath Baptist Church

Monthly Prayer Meetings: Live and/or on Zoom: 7 30 p.m.

Prayer notes will be Emailed to member Churches when available. Ask dunaigh2@btinternet.com if you would like a copy. Contact the same Email for link details. You can of course use the notes for private or family prayer whenever, and as often, as you want to.

Thursday February 1st on Zoom

Tuesday March 5th 7 30 p.m. Prayers, 8 p.m. AGM at St George's

We are hoping to agree at the March AGM on monthly live prayer meetings, spread across member churches, with a Zoom option: to give maximum church involvement and maximum opportunity for participation. Let's see what is possible.

Poetry Page

I guess that anyone who has had to read Shakespeare at school remembers something of what he or she has read. Old age experience is often that poetry is remembered even when more immediately useful/ practical things are forgotten. It would be interesting to hear from readers what "remembered when other things are forgotten" Shakespeare they treasure....please. This is one of mine:

'Our revels now are ended'

*Our revels now are ended. These our actors,
As I foretold you, were all spirits and
Are melted into air, into thin air:
And, like the baseless fabric of this vision,
The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff
As dreams are made on, and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep.*

*William Shakespeare
From The Tempest, Act 4 Scene 1*

Prospero saying goodbye has sometimes been understood as Shakespeare's farewell: the magician prince, very much in charge of things, representing the poet playwright prince, very much at the top of his profession, saying goodbye to all that celebrity. It is quite a depressing note to leave ringing in the ears of the audience. But while it is healthy to leave the theatre remembering that it is all make-believe, and quite healthy to get human achievement in perspective, it does no harm to hang on to the reality that Shakespeare is still remembered and studied and acted and valued... And, in all probability, always will be.

Some notes for you to note

- ♥ **Deadline for the March Magazine: Sunday February 19th .**
- ♥ **The Bible Reading Group** From 12 February, we switch from Psalms to **Ecclesiasticus**. **Please note that this is NOT the same as Ecclesiastes, which is also a Bible book. Your Bible may not include Ecclesiasticus.** I'm guessing that very few of you will be able to complain "I have read this book already!" If you want the relevant paperwork and/or the link to join us on Zoom on Monday evenings for 40 minutes, contact Brian McGinnis. Why not give it a go?
- ♥ **The Book Reading Group** The February choice is Jean-Dominique Bauby's "**The Diving Bell and The Butterfly**". This was described in "The Financial Times" as "One of the great books of the century". This is a short book, but incredibly powerful. It was "written" by a former editor-in-chief who, in December 1995, suffered a stroke which reduced his communication resources to some movement of his left eyelid. Whether or not you decide to read the book and share your thoughts with the other readers (Email to dunaigh2@btinternet.com or in writing to Brian McGinnis), do take time to think about what is involved in dictating even a page, let alone a whole book, by moving one eyelid.
- ♥ **Bread and Wine at Communion, or not:** Practice varies between those Churches which act out part of the Last Supper Jesus shared with some of His disciples. But, although the words spoken echo very early records of the words of Jesus, what we eat and drink would not be immediately recognisable to those disciples. Our wafers are not ordinary bread (except on Maundy Thursday) and are specially made for Communion. Our wine tends to be special Communion wine, and is mixed with water. Some Churches offer non-alcoholic wine. St George's uses wine with alcohol in it, and, for that or other reasons, some of us never take the wine. Communion "in one kind" counts as full Communion. For those who are gluten-intolerant, there is the option of a gluten-free wafer. If the journey up the aisle is difficult, your Communion choice will be brought to you. This flexibility shows the Church at its best. After all, Christianity is all about Jesus coming to us, to meet our individual and collective needs.

A New Year (Old Testament) Bible People Quiz: Answers

A herdsman of Tekoa: **Amos** . Really didn't want to go to Nineveh: **Jonah**
 Prompted to re-build Jerusalem: **Nehemiah** Hailed from Anathoth: **Jeremiah**
 Had visions spread across four reigns: **Isaiah** First saw things among the captives by the River of Chebar: **Ezekiel** Also known as Belteshazzar: **Daniel**
 Finished with pots and horse bells: **Zechariah** An Elkoshite: **Nahum** Addresses the old men first: **Joel** Naomi's best friend: **Ruth** Next after Vashti: **Esther**.

Some quotes to go with the names:

Amos: *Everywhere you look, blessings Blessings like wine pouring off the mountains and hills.*

Jonah: *I was as far down as a body can go, and the gates were slamming shut behind me for ever - Yet you pulled me up from that grave alive.*

Nehemiah: *You are a god of grace and compassion.*

Jeremiah: *Let your lives glow bright before God.*

Isaiah: *I know how to encourage tired people.*

Ezekiel: *They'll know, beyond doubting, that I, God, am their God, and that they are my people.*

Daniel: *Master, listen to us! Master, forgive us! Master, look at us and do something!*

Zechariah: *Treat one another justly. Love your neighbours. Be compassionate with each other.*

Nahum: *I'm cutting you free from the ropes of your bondage.*

Joel: *I will pour out my Spirit on every kind of people... Men and women both.*

Ruth: *Not even death itself is going to come between us.*

Esther: The Introduction says: God, the source of all goodness and blessing and joy, at times becomes the occasion for nearly unimaginable acts of cruelty, atrocity and evil.

Maybe a smile.....

Romance, love, marriage and all that stuff – the way children see it...

How do you decide who to marry?

You got to find somebody who likes the same stuff. Like, if you like sports, she should like it that you like sports, and she should keep the crisps and dip coming. - Alan, age 10

No person really decides before they grow up who they're going to marry. God decides it all way before, and you get to find out later who you're stuck with. - Kirsten, age 10

What is the right age to get married?

23 is the best age because you know the person FOREVER by then. - Camille, age 10

No age is good to get married at. You got to be a fool to get married. - Freddie, age 6

How can a stranger tell if two people are married?

You might have to guess, based on whether they seem to be yelling at the same kids.

- Derrick, age 8

What do you think your mum and dad have in common?

Both don't want any more kids. - Lori, age 8

What do most people do on a date?

Dates are for having fun, and people should use them to get to know each other. Even boys have something to say, if you listen long enough. - Lynnette, age 8

Do what we can to help...

Several women in the church prayer group were visiting an elderly friend who was ill. After a while, they rose to leave and told her: "We'll do what we can to help. We promise to keep you in our prayers."

"Thank you," she said. "But really, I can do my own praying. The thing I can't do is the dishes in the sink in the kitchen...."

God's army: Dewey was in front of me coming out of church one day, and the minister was standing at the door, as he always is, to shake hands. Suddenly he grabbed Dewey by the hand and pulled him aside. The minister said sternly, "Dewey, you need to join the Army of the Lord!" Dewey replied, "I'm already in the Army of the Lord, Pastor." The minister retorted: "Then how come I don't see you except at Christmas and Easter?" Dewey replied in a whisper: "Well, I'm in the secret service."

A Saints Quiz (Prizes on offer: answers by February 18th)

The Church is not united in agreeing on what a Saint is, on who is a Saint, or indeed on whether there are Saints. An Anglican or Salvation Army or Methodist or Baptist Christian might spend a life-time proclaiming and living their faith, and die heroically, but is most unlikely to be declared a Saint. Some of those declared to be Saints seem from a distance to be more "political appointments" than outstanding Christians. A few of the Saints seem to be more invention than reality; and the doings of some actual Saints seem to be a little exaggerated. In the New Testament, every Christian is potentially or actually a saint. Having said all that, we can learn from the lives of the Saints: what to do, and sometimes what not to do. Try to identify the following Saints - some of them need a place name attached to the personal name:

1. Headed up the French army, and thoroughly disliked by the English.
2. One of the greatest of Church reformers, who talked to the birds.
3. The (first) Missionary Saint.
4. Scottish Queen and mother of Kings.
5. A Roman deacon, said to have been roasted to death.
6. The female saint of Assisi.
7. Spanish poet and mystic, who spent some time in prison.
8. A woman who was, arguably, the first Apostle.
9. The Archbishop victim (one time friend) of Henry II
10. A lady associated with a festival of light and a popular Italian song.
11. Bishop of Chichester, and a model bishop for every century.
12. The female patron saint of musicians.
13. Probably more fiction than fact, but "adopted" by Venice, Genoa, Portugal, and Catalonia; and has a Channel named after him.
14. She, uniquely, has as many as three church calendar mentions.
15. Royal son of a Royal saint, and (temporarily) united Scotland and the North of England.
16. A lady connected (painfully) with fireworks.
17. Believed by some to influence the weather.
18. King; once England's patron saint; associated with Westminster Abbey

That odd business of praying: Number 150: How many languages does God speak?

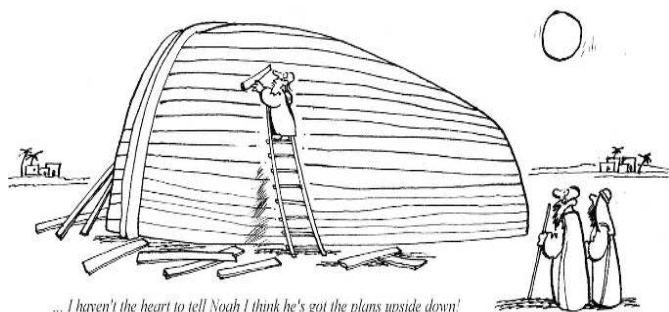
Not surprisingly, we are not sure how many languages are spoken in the world. About 8,000 is probably a fair broad-brush estimate. You can argue about the dividing line between dialect and language: if the dialect has enough non-standard words and a strong enough accent, it may be unintelligible to a standard language speaker from the same country. The number of languages with a full or partial Bible translation is a more modest about 3,500. (Bible translation is about pictures as well as words: as missionaries discovered when working with folk who had never seen a sheep.)

We maybe don't think about the language aspect of prayer until we see a St George's service sheet inviting us to say the Lord's Prayer "in your own language" - or perhaps you pray in English in church and in some other language at home? Mind you, if we can grasp the idea of God listening to 8.1 billion people praying, it isn't so difficult to grasp the idea of God listening to 8,000 languages. (The 8.1 billion figure of course includes all the non-Christians and non-believers as well as the roughly 2.4 billion identified Christians.) My introduction to multi-language skills at the human level was watching the host of the World Veteran's Federation walking round the room engaging with each of the national groups; and I don't suppose he used more than about 30 languages.

It is salutary to remember that while, of course, God is familiar with the English language (as are about 1.5 billion people worldwide), he hears prayers in Arabic and Hebrew, Ukrainian and Russian. It is also worth remembering that God hears the prayers of those who can't speak.....in any language. No harm at all in asking for the prayers of those you believe are good with words, and/or who seem to be better tuned into God than you are; but God is OK with the silent thought. This "says" something about the use of time in church when there are no words on the service sheet to follow, and nobody is formally improvising out loud or using their own text.

I suspect that God is also tuning in to (perhaps specially tuning in to) what is said in church by somebody whose vocal contributions are a little out of step with others, because of young age, old age, deafness, particular issues..... God understands our language.

THINK about it!



... I haven't the heart to tell Noah I think he's got the plans upside down!

This is about undertaking tasks with enthusiasm tempered by common sense: not letting your convictions blind you to the reality. I shall never forget dealing with the consequences for that soldier and his family of his determination to

dive into a swimming pool not being modified by the reality that there was no water in the pool when he dived. Such a pity that not everything comes with a "Check it out, Mate!" label... Though in other respects we are quite good at e.g. labelling a packet of peanuts with "This product may contain nuts".

Just as it is our responsibility not to switch off the Think button, at any stage of the undertaking, so it is our responsibility to challenge (courteously, of course) others who are apparently about to get it wrong. My secretary reported going back to change when her teenage daughter suggested to her that her skirt was too short. I have heard girls value their brother's opinion in the same way - after the initial "Get lost!" reaction. Dads have found the same, unexpected, value in a son challenging the proposal to drive after consuming three beers.

I have quoted before the nurse being bold enough to challenge a doctor's prescription - delicately, by expressing mild surprise. (Professionally, she had to.) Occasionally, a pupil actually knows better than the teacher; and has to find a respectful way of putting the teacher right, or risk the rest of the class losing points for a wrong answer in an exam. Civil servants must not take precedence over Ministers in reaching a policy decision. However, they are in duty bound to make sure that the decision-taking Minister has the correct facts about what is, and the best forecasts of what would be if that decision is taken as proposed. (Be it whispered that the civil servant in the spending Department might feel duty bound to brief their opposite number in the Treasury.)

"Responsible Adult" implies someone who both listens to advice and gives it where required. And it isn't only adults who are accountable for being responsible, though it can be harder for younger people to get a hearing. "Daddy, shouldn't you be taking baby in the pram home as well as me?"

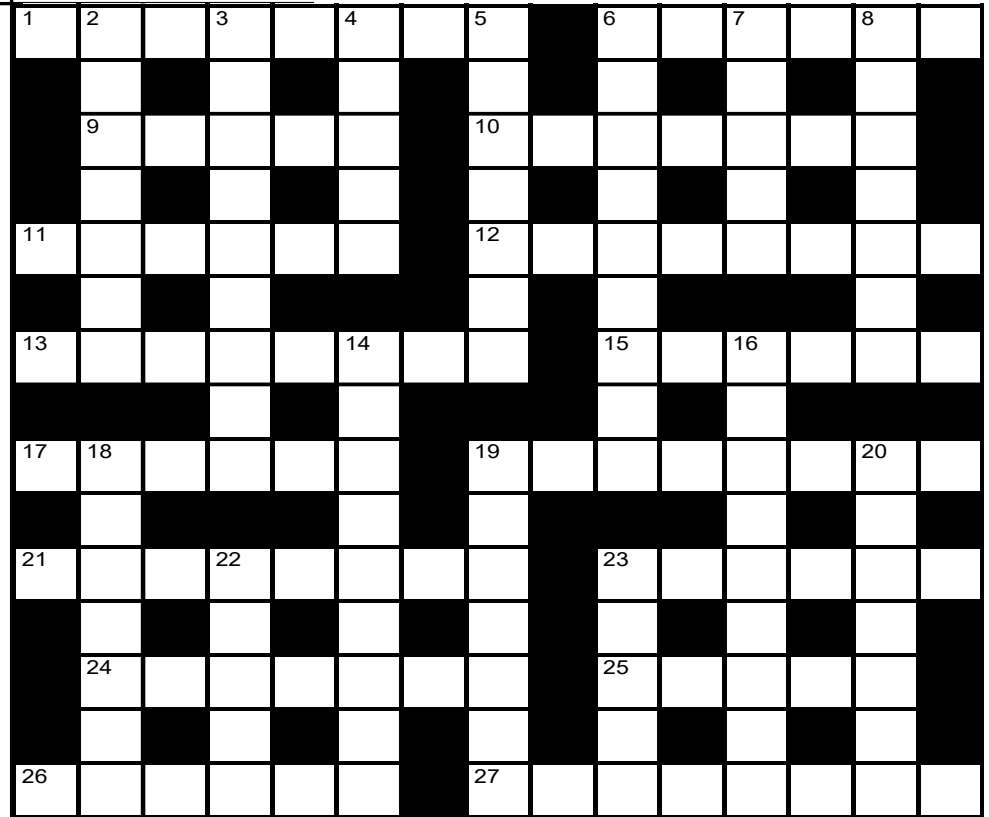
CHURCH DIARY FOR FEBRUARY 2024

Sun 4 Feb 2 BEFORE LENT	Mon 5 Feb	Tue 6 Feb	
10.00 Live Sung Eucharist lead by Rev. Nick Lang	9.30-11.30 Little Dragons 10.30am-12.00 Pop In 7.30pm Bible Reading Group		11.30 Chap 11 Ser day
Sun 11 Feb SUNDAY BEFORE LENT RACIAL JUSTICE SUNDAY	Mon 12 Feb	Tue 13 Feb SHROVE TUESDAY	
10.00 All-Age Live Sung Eucharist lead by Rev Barry Goodwin	10.30am-12.00 Pop In 7.30pm Bible Reading Group		11.30 Chap
Sun 18 Feb LENT 1	Mon 19 Feb	Tue 20 Feb	
10.00 Live Sung Eucharist lead by AD Greg Prior	9.30-11.30 Little Dragons 10.30am-12.00 Pop In 7.30pm Bible Reading Group		11.30 Chap
Sun 25 Feb LENT 2	Mon 26 Feb	Tue 27 Feb	
10.00 Live Sung Eucharist lead by Rev Hilary Fife	9.30-11.30 Little Dragons 10.30am-12.00 Pop In 7.30pm Bible Reading Group		11.30 Chap

Please see pages 4 and 27 regarding other Lent options - activities. Make this a Lent to remember, and to learn from

	Fri 2 Feb		** Sat 3 Feb
			10.30-12 Church Open by arrangement
Wed 7 Feb	Thurs 8 Feb	Fri 9 Feb	Sat 10 Feb
10am Eucharist – Lady Chapel 9.30 a.m. Reflective service first Wednesday			10.30-12 Church Open by arrangement
Wed 14 Feb ASH WEDNESDAY	Thurs 14 Feb	Fri 16 Feb	Sat 17 Feb
10am Eucharist – Lady Chapel			10.30-12 Church Open by arrangement
Wed 21 Feb	Thurs 22 Feb	Fri 23 Feb	Sat 24 Feb
10am Eucharist – Lady Chapel			10.30-12 Church Open by arrangement
Wed 28 Feb	Thurs 29 Feb	Key Morning Prayer: Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri 9.00am Zoom only Saturday 3rd February: Litter Pick Long Lane Woods; 10 a.m.—12 noon. Meet Bywood Entrance. Please dress warmly with strong shoes and gardening gloves.	
10am Eucharist – Lady Chapel			

to support your own Lent
om.



Solon 169

Across

- 1 Little bird with disorderly ape maybe used to make dip (8)
- 6 Way I expect leaders to give band aid (6)
- 9 Peer is over 50 - that's funny (5)
- 10 Goes carefully over broken potties (7)
- 11 Stated the ends of Sarajevo heretic reacted (6)
- 12 Strong AI formulating player (8)
- 13 Extensively tangle with empty truth (2,6)
- 15 Check out mules over Sweden (6)
- 17 Influential when relaxed with upstart heading right (6)

19 Used to discover gold or a lie (8)

21 Together like Bertha in Bow? (3,2,3)

23 Jacket for banker (6)

24 Witch perhaps takes in remains with Tory leader for unidentified message header (7)

25 It's noble of a couple to welcome Charlie (5)

26 See empty tummy as inconsistent (6)

27 Rowdy OAPs not quiet on thresholds (8)

Down

- 2 Can't be seen here if not wearing leather (7)
- 3 Does craft around model produce notes? (9)
- 4 Stacked constant light (5)

- 5 Reach into chaos without hesitation in place of Paul's incident (7)
- 6 Pungent artist is disgusting (9)
- 7 A grain seen on tree (5)
- 8 Demands to be among first in ship (7)
- 14 Chivalry shown by everyone in support (9)
- 16 To bag wine with grazer is above criticism (6,3)
- 18 Song's trendy transport (7)
- 19 Powerful figure take back hound - I'm a newspaper boss (7)
- 20 What an extremely productive hen may do for a decoration (7)

Answers to January Puzzles:- Cross-word:

Across: 1 Charwoman, 6 Sum up, 9 End stop, 10 Googles, 11 Time sheet, 12 Nates, 13 Rondo, 15 Embarrass, 18 Stressful, 20 Lower, 22 Truss, 23 Indicator, 25 Atheism, 26 Zealous, 27 Tenon, 28 Irritated.

Down: 1 Creatures, 2 Abdomen, 3 Watts, 4 Maple-leaf, 5 Night, 6 Scoundrel, 7 Militia, 8 Posts, 14 Obsession, 16 Bulldozer, 17 Surprised, 19 Roughen, 21 Without, 22 Tract, 23 Iambi, 24 Craft.

Sudoku: 651273489/ 372948156/ 984615327/ 423791865/ 165824793/ 798536214/ 849362571/ 216457938/ 537189642

Thanks to Solon for puzzles
For questions or help, contact Solon at
Solon1across@gmail.com

			4		5	2		1
8				6				
		5				9	7	
			5	1		6		
	4							1
		6		3	2			
	5	1				3		
				7				9
6		8	1		3			

Kindness

Kind actions begin with kind thoughts

Some folk aren't content with the milk of human kindness - they want the cream.

Be kind to the unkind people - they need it the most.

Kindness has influenced more people than eloquence.

Be as kind as you can today: tomorrow, you may not be here.

Money will buy a fine dog, but only kindness will make him wag his tail.

Kindness is a language that the deaf can hear and the blind can see.

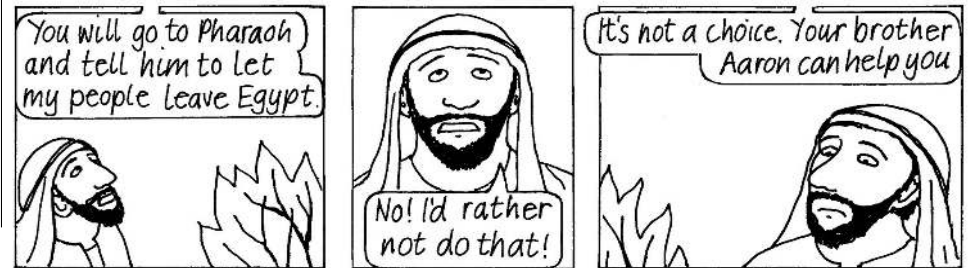
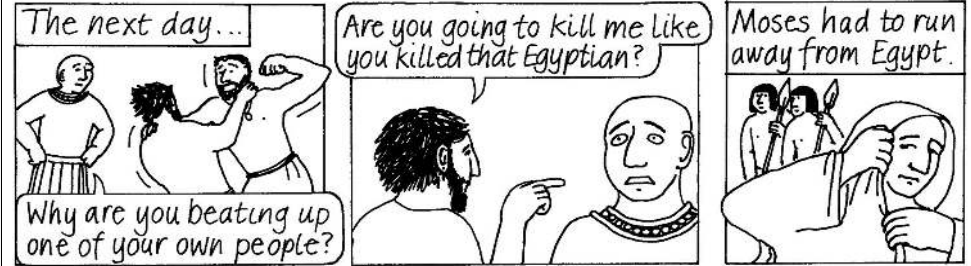
Kind words are short to speak, but their echoes are endless.

Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in Exodus 2:13-4:23, 4:27-5:2

Moses: a Hebrew adopted by an Egyptian princess. He killed an Egyptian who was beating a Hebrew slave, and hid the body.



No Thanks!

Visually, you will notice that hair-wise and clothes-wise the Jews are pictured as very much not adapting to Egyptian ways. In human terms, there are a number of very interesting aspects to this part of the Moses story. Most of the world's tales of heroes (very much including current tales about people that some group wants to turn into heroes and heroines) exaggerate the good points and play down or ignore the bad points. The Bible is, on the whole, very good at telling the story warts and all. Moses condemns violence, not realising that his fellow Jews are all gossiping about his own extreme violence. Rather than face up to what he has done, he scarpers; and starts a new life which is neither Egyptian nor Jewish. That new life is interrupted dramatically by God telling Moses that there is a big God job awaiting him. Moses immediately (and maybe understandably) starts finding good reasons for turning down the job offer - one of many Bible heroes disinclined to be heroic.

Why did God choose Moses? Obviously, there can be no confident answer to that question. Sure Moses knew about the Egyptian court, and no doubt knew the language; but he had run away from that Court, which his Egyptian hosts must at least have thought a bit ungrateful. As a potential Jewish leader, he had the distinct disadvantage of never having lived as a Jew or with Jews. Perhaps, as we may well need to reflect on in the context of our own calls to service, God knew Moses better than Moses knew Moses.

Another learning point is the partnership thing. The early relationship between Moses and his older brother and older sister can hardly have been close, and is a bit of an unknown. Nor did things always work out well in that relationship triangle; but Moses knew that he needed Aaron, and there is enough evidence to suggest that he needed Miriam. [I can never forget that I knew the Jewish Miriam who was killed in the London bus bombing that followed the London tube bombing.] When God calls us to service, He very often calls us into human partnership service - not to go it alone. Partnership with God is a huge privilege. Partnership with other people is a privilege too; though it can often be a challenge as well. One person (man/woman) priests never do as good a job as the partnership priest, even in those traditions where team leadership is not encouraged. Partnership in parenthood, where it is possible, is always desirable. Footnote: "I never change my mind" is not a good motto!

A warm welcome to church



"Next Sunday I think I'll do a new take on the Parable of the Virgins and the Oil."

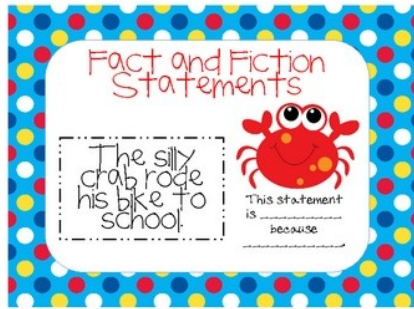
Interesting to see the combination of priests. A few decades ago, the cartoon would have shown Rev (male) with female (wife). Partly because many older churches are not heat-efficient, church heating cartoons are popular. At its worst, the issue is heating a large non-insulated building once or twice a week for a few hours, for a small elderly congregation - where there is a lot of window space and the door keeps opening and shutting, and the seats don't have cushions.

Not sure about the relevance of the Virgins and Oil parable, even if the church as oil heating. (The parable was about lamp oil lighting, not about oil heating; and the point of the parable was the false economy of the unwise virgin attendants for the wedding in not having enough oil to allow for the bridegroom being late.) However, congregations do need to think about all that having a warm church involves. That includes automatic timing, or someone getting to church an hour or more beforehand; heating for any rooms besides the main church which people will be using (including any toilets); maybe wearing more clothes than you would at home; perhaps not leaving the door open because someone else is coming; not standing talking in the doorway; whether or not to heat for any weekday uses such as flower-arranging; and rules about switching off where you switched on (if it isn't all automatic).

It is very easy to lapse into "Harry understands the heating" - with dire consequences if Harry is not there. Especially in respect of the risk with most systems of the heating sometimes being on when it ought to be off, and off when it ought to be on", a spread of knowledge is a good thing.... though you don't want everyone feeling they could sort the mysteries of the boiler room. Prayer is hugely valuable, but, despite the precedent of Elijah, it isn't usually the most reliable way of keeping a warm church. Prayer should not be impeded by cold; but, sadly, it is a bit hard to concentrate when you are shivering.

Younger Readers Page

Fact and Fiction...and is there anything else?



We are all more used than you might think to fact ("true") and fiction ("not true") being blurred. "Uncle John is coming on Monday to spend four days with us" (fact). Then a phone call. Uncle John's car has broken down. So the true statement has become untrue - fiction. "You will really enjoy this music" (fact). When you hear it, you don't enjoy it at all; fact has become fiction. "The time is 7 p.m." (fact) If you ring your aunt in Sydney, Australia, she will tell you it is 6 a.m....and she may not be pleased that you are ringing her at that time.

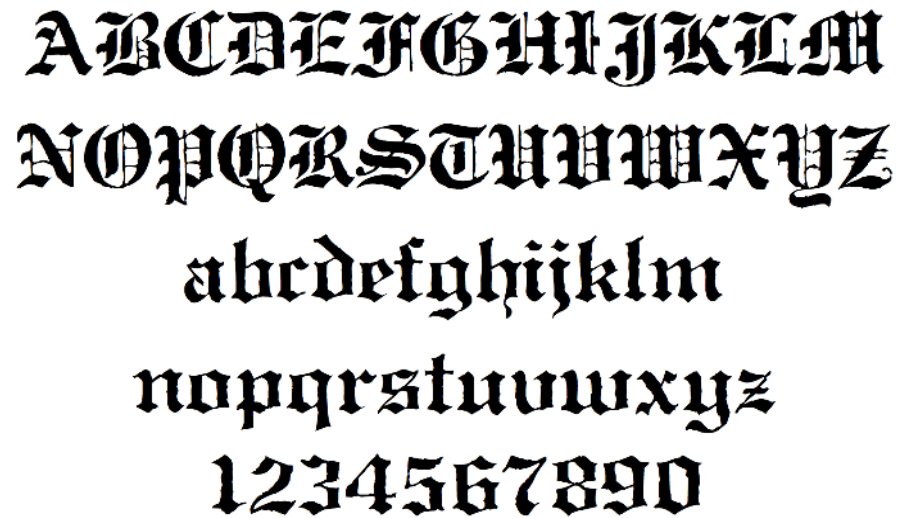
OK, the first two examples were expected fact, not actual fact. The third example is of two actual facts about different times in different places. Bible truth/fact is a bit more complicated. For example, Exodus 33 verse 11 says "The Lord spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend". Exodus 33 verses 20 and 23 say that anyone seeing God's face will die! Surely, these two very different statements can't both be true? Yes they can be. The Bible translators are using the word "face" in two very different ways. The first time, it means that Moses was able to snuggle up to God, close and personal - getting God's support and guidance when he needed it. The second time, it means that Moses was asking to see the full glory of the God of the universe, the Lord of infinity; and God was saying, "Sorry, mate, That would blow the human mind apart: I'm not going to do that to you!"

Two other things to remember about Bible fact and fiction. 1) God did not write the Bible, or dictate the Bible to those who did write it. God inspired men (and probably one or two women) to write down what they had learned from God and about God. The writers often struggled to hear, understand, and record. Jesus was blunt in saying that sometimes they didn't get it right. They weren't above sticking in some of their own back-up material because they thought it would help God's case. 2) When you are trying to stretch language to describe extraordinary things and deep truths, you are going to use picture language at times. Where the Bible invites us to be like "doves" or "sheep", use your common sense.

One of the pleasures of life for people of all ages is letter art-work.
Two of the best options are Gothic and Old English



Gothic version top.
Old English version



below it. The Gothic is more flowing. The Old English more square cut. You can have a stab at either with a biro; but really need a calligraphy pen and an ink source. *The Editor has more calligraphy resources than he needs. Free supplies if you would like to experiment. Just get in touch.* Calligraphy is about doing your own thing more than about rigid copying.

Sunday Readings for February (Message Version): Please note that readings may change

Sunday 4 February: 2nd before Lent

Proverbs 8: 1, 22-31: Delighted with the world of things and creatures.

Psalms 104: 26-end: Let God enjoy His Creation.

Colossians 1: 15-20: We look at the Son, and see the God who can't be seen.

John 1: 1-14: Everything was created through Him.

Sunday 11 February: Next before Lent

2 Kings 2: 1-12: I'm not letting you out of my sight.

Psalms 50: 1-6: God is judge.

2 Corinthians 4: 3-6: They're stone-blind to the dayspring brightness of the Message

Mark 9: 2-9: Seeing nothing but Jesus, only Jesus.

Wednesday 14 February: Ash Wednesday

Joel 2: 1-3, 12-17: God's Judgement Day has come.

Psalms 51: 1-18: Put a fresh wind in my sails.

2 Corinthians 5: 20b-6.10: Don't squander one bit of this marvellous life God has given us.

Matthew 6: 1-6, 16-21: Your God conceived you in love.

Sunday 18 February: Lent I

Genesis 9: 8-17: I'm setting up my covenant with you.

Psalms 25: 1-9: I've thrown in my lot [with God].

1 Peter 3: 18-end: He went through it all to bring us to God.

Mark 1: 9-15: You are my Son, chosen and marked by my love.

Sunday 25 February: Lent II

Genesis 17: 1-7, 15-16: I'll make a covenant between us.

Psalms 22: 23-end: He has never let you down.

Romans 4: 13-end: Abraham is father of us all.

Mark 8: 31-end: What could you ever trade your soul for?

Please remember by name in your prayers the following people for whom prayers have been requested...

Dan Pretty	David Lawn		
Sonia	Sue Moore	Christina	
Pam Purkiss	Jean	Julie	
Margaret Ziolek	Brian	Keith Haslem	
Andy Hamilton	Christine Lutman	Mark Hare	
Ann Hobbs	Pauline Russell	Jean Wells	
Margaret Easton	Dave Boyland	Dave Ashdown	
Martin Easton	Terri Boyland	Yvonne Sussex	
Mike Wilkins	Livingston Dallas	Shirley Ashdown	
Yvonne Harris	Lindsay Morgan	Maureen Fenner	Hei-
di Alsop	Ellen Maden	Paul Oates	Bri-
an Jacobs	Bill Gibson	Heather Orton	
Garth Smith	Nahshon	Elizabeth Lovell	
Helen McMullan	Helen Aylward	Sheila Dennis	

We also give thanks for those who have experienced healing, or felt strengthened to cope with ill health or disability. Knowing that others care goes with knowing that God cares.

Please let the Staff Team know of any additions or deletions via vicarstgeorge@gmail.com or 020 8776 0185

If the person is able to consent, please get their consent before adding their name.



LENT

Lent, the period of 40 days recalling Jesus' time of fasting in the wilderness and leading up to Easter, has traditionally been a time of preparation. It offers an opportunity to reflect more deeply on our faith and discipleship, and upon how that is made visible in our everyday lives. Look out for our **Lent Leaflet**, available on-line and in church by 11th February, which will have ideas and signpost resources you might like to use this Lent.

For centuries Christians have fasted during Lent. So yes, you may give up chocolate but why not try the **carbon fast** suggested by our Eco-group? Originating with the Global Catholic Climate Movement it aims to help us cut down on our high emissions lifestyle and become more mindful of the impact we are having on the planet. A carbon fast calendar, with daily activities, will be available for you to download or collect from Church. And if you end up choosing to fast from chocolate or whatever other treat it is, consider donating the money saved to a charity as **works of love** have long been another key Lenten activity for Christians. Indeed you may want to make extra one off donations to charities or engage in a sponsored activity that will bless others. Bishop Martin, Bishop of Kingston, is organising a **Lent Pilgrimage** for the climate. Taking place over 6 days (17th & 24th Feb; 1st, 8th, 20th & 28th March) these walks of 5-7 miles will include prayers, reflections and a chance to connect with local and global stories. See the Southwark Diocesan website, or talk to one of our ministry team, for more details.

Lent has also been a time to take **prayer** more seriously and to try to talk to – and listen to – God a little more than we often do in our busy lives. That might bring to mind the thought that there is so much more for us to **learn** about God, and about our faith hence the traditional Lenten activities of reading a 'Lent Book' or joining a Lenten Discussion Group. There are lots of excellent Lent books around from previous years in addition to this year's Archbishop's Lent Book: 'Tarry Awhile' by Selina Stone. Perhaps we could have a bring and share table in Church during Lent where we can borrow each other's 'go to' Lent books?! We are also exploring having Lent groups in the parish – more details will be available soon. In the meantime please let us know by email or phone if you would be interested in attending a group. Whatever you choose, do something to grow in love and faith.

Organisations

St George's Table Tennis Club (in the Church Hall)

Tuesdays 8—10 p.m. Doubles Table Tennis. £3 per evening, including refreshments. New members welcome. Contact Ron 020 8656 9176, Ken 020 8654 3233.

Whist Drive (in the Church Hall)

Wednesdays 7.45p.m. *Inquire in Hall Wednesday 7 - 7.45 p.m.*

Medau (in the Church Hall)

Tuesdays 1.30-3.00p.m Mrs Gammon 01689 815646

Shirley Neighbourhood Care Scheme 020 8662 9599 info@shirleyneighbourhoodcare.co.uk

Your Local Councillors and Safer Neighbourhood Police Teams The dividing line between Shirley North and South Wards is roughly the Wickham Road, but some roads at the Croydon end on the south side of Wickham Road (St John's parish) are in Shirley North Ward

Shirley South Ward - Councillors: Jason Cummings (020 8651 2575) and Scott Roche (07783 152370) **Police Contact:** Phone 0208 721 2469 Email SNMailbox.ShirleySouthSNT@met.police.

Shirley North Ward - Councillors: Sue Bennett (0208 768 0561), Richard Chatterjee (07710 183564) and Mark Johnson (07716 092484). **Police Contact:** Email SNMailbox.ShirleyNorthSNT@met.police.uk Phone: 0208 721 2474.

URGENT 999 (Other crime reports 101)

Neighbours

You can shut your eyes to your own faults, but the neighbours sometimes refuse to co-operate.

It's easier to love humanity as a whole than to love one's neighbour.

The best neighbour is one who has everything you're out of.

Organisations

St George's Church Hall Bookings -

Mrs Jan Payne 020 8776 0185

Overseas Missions Committee

Mr Brian McGinnis, Ms Pauline Russell 020 8654 6190

Georgettes

Contact Mrs Jan Payne 020 8776 0185

Beavers (Scout Hut) Boys and Girls age 6 to 8 approx.

Wednesdays 5-6.15p.m Rachel Dominguez 07956 155909

Cubs (Scout Hut) Boys and Girls age 8 to 10.5 approx.

Wednesdays 6.30-8.00p.m Mr Trevor Thairs 07843 752895

Scouts (Scout Hut) Boys and Girls age 10.5 to 14.5 approx.

Thursdays 6 30 - 8 p.m. Mr Darren Hawken 07903 399185

Rainbows (Church Hall) Girls age 5 to 7

Tuesdays 5 - 6p.m Mrs Ruth Clery 020 8651 4116
07702 870030

Brownies (Church Hall) Girls age 7 to 10

Tuesdays 6.15-7.30p.m Miss Sheila Fenner 020 8655 0023
fenner240@btinternet.com

Guides (in the Church Hall) Girls age 10 to 16

Fridays 6.00 -7 30p.m Mrs Ruth Clery 020 651 4116
07702 870030

Pop In (in the Church Hall)

Mondays 10.30-12noon Mr Ron Bright 07972 607823

Little Dragons (in the Church) Toddlers 0-4

Mondays 9 30a.m. -11 30a.m. Regina 07825 428465

Neighbours

If you have an unpleasant neighbour, the odds are that he does too.

Fast transportation has made us all neighbours - but, unfortunately, not all brothers and sisters.

St. George's Church Directory

Churchwardens: Mrs Jan Payne 020 8776 0185
Mrs Heather Barker 020 8777 9280

Members of the PCC

Mr Stephen Barker, Mr Evan Russell, Mrs Marjorie Russell, Mr Alexander Baldwin-Smith, Mrs Jan Turner, Mrs Susan Wheeler, Mrs A-I Clayton, Mrs Katie Francis, Dr Toyin Magbagbeola

Hon. Secretary PCC.

Mr Eric Baldwin-Smith

Treasurer

Mr Alan Chitty

Synod Representatives (also on PCC): Mr Ray Wheeler (Diocesan Synod), Mrs Helen Aylward, Mrs A-L Clayton, Mrs Liz Bebington (Deanery Synod)

Stewardship Covenant Secretary

Miss Sheila Fenner 020 8655 0023

Electoral Roll Officer

Mr. Owen Whalley 020 8655 1349

Organist and Choir Mistress

Miss Sophie Clayton 07703554159

Safeguarding Representatives

Mrs. Susan Wheeler. 020 8777 5271

Dr Toyin Magbagbeola

Church Flowers

Mrs. Marion Sheehan 020 8777 7308

Server Rota

Mr Ray Wheeler 020 8777 5271

Baptisms

020 8654 8747

Environment (ECO) Group

Mrs Jan Turner 020 8654 6552

The Parish Magazine

Editor:

Mr. Brian McGinnis 31 Woodmere Avenue, Shirley CR0 7PG 020 8654 6190

Accounts

Mrs. Janet Fitt 020 87777823

Adverts

Janet Fitt or Brian McGinnis

ADVERTISING DIRECTORY

Making friends with your Bible

The Monday Evening Bible Reading Group offers you Zoom joining in, or notes to support your own personal Bible reading. See Bible Reading Group section of church website and page 10.

Shirley Neighbourhood Care

St George's Church

Elstan Way

The Glade

CR0 7PR

020 8662 9599

info@dhirleyneighbourhood-care.co.uk

Weekday mornings 10 a.m.—12 30

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Gifts to share?

if you feel that St George's is not doing something it should be doing, or that you have a gift to offer/ share that is not being used by St George's, please do not keep your mouth shut!

Prayers on weekdays

Tuning into God doesn't require a minimum number of people: one to One is fine.! But if you want prayer Company, there are Zoom prayers at 9 a.m. Monday to Friday. All are welcome.

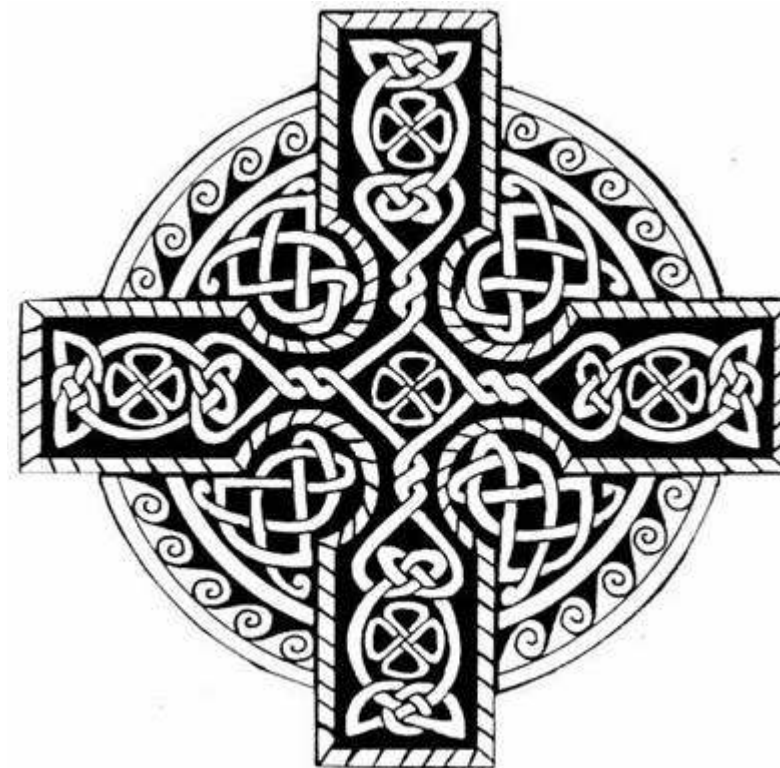
TV Repairs

Need a Repair, Installation or User Training, Then phone Peter your local TV Engineer on Telephone: 078855 09319

Look

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St.

George the Martyr

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parish.office@hotmail.co.uk

www.stgeorgeschurch.co.uk

(Charity Number: 1134140)