

St George the Martyr Shirley



Christ in the Community

Remembrance Sunday November 9th



November 2025

50p

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Climate Crisis

What can I do?

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

Slimming World

Shirley

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

Cheryl
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**WE WOULD LIKE TO INCLUDE IN THE DECEMBER MAGA-
ZINE SEASONAL GREETINGS IN ALL THE LANGUAGES
KNOWN TO ST GEORGE'S PEOPLE. PLEASE LET THE
EDITORS HAVE YOUR CONTRIBUTION NOW—INCLUDING
WHAT THE LANGUAGE IS. THANK YOU IN ADVANCE.**

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..

Priest in Charge: The Reverend Jennifer Walpole 2 The Grove,
West Wickham BR4 9JS 07947 585 326
020 8654 8747 rev.jennywalpole@gmail.com (Her main day off is Friday.)

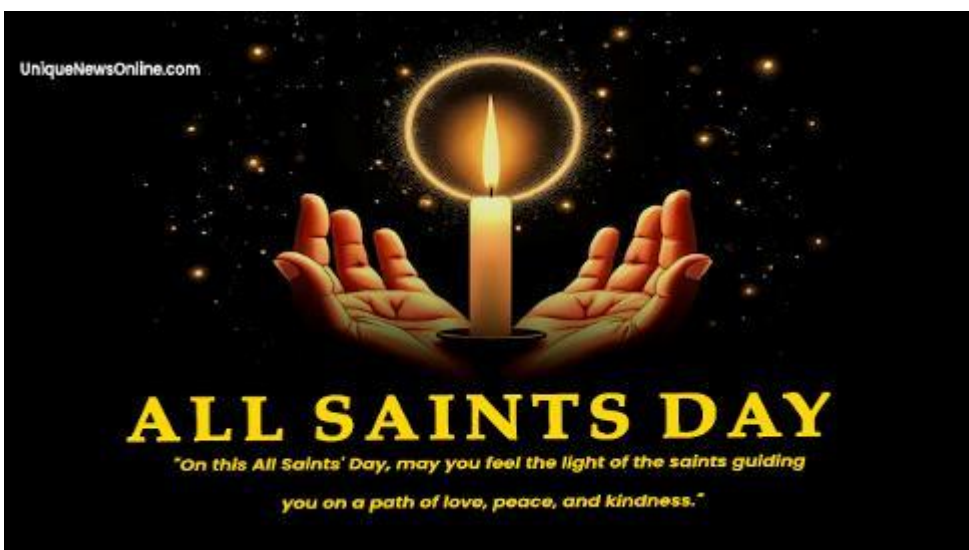
Hon. Curate: The Reverend Hilary Fife 19 Greenview Avenue, Shirley, Croydon
CR0 7QW 07931 761320

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

Website: www.stgeorgeschurch.co.uk

Parish Office: parish.office@hotmail.co.uk All called to be saints



View from the Palace: Ray Wheeler

On 9th November, we will gather for our Remembrance Sunday Eucharist, a significant occasion in our church calendar. This is the day we come together as a community to honour and remember, in a special way, the members of our Armed Forces not only here in the United Kingdom, but throughout the world, who have lost their lives in conflicts, both past and present. It is a moment for reflection, gratitude, and solemnity, as we pay tribute to their service and sacrifice. Our thoughts and prayers are with every individual and family who has suffered loss due to conflict – no matter where or when. In particular, our hearts are heavy for all those who have lost their lives in the ongoing conflict between Ukraine and Russia, as well as those affected by the Israeli-Palestinian war, where the devastation has touched men, women, and children alike. At the time of writing, we continue to pray earnestly before God that the peace process will endure, bringing hope and relief to those living amidst violence and uncertainty.

When visiting the First World War cemeteries in Flanders and northern France, one is struck by the presence of both red poppies and blue cornflowers. The red poppy, well known in the UK as a symbol of sacrifice and remembrance, is joined by the blue cornflower – known in France as the *bleuet*. The *bleuet* holds a similar significance in France, serving as a symbol of remembrance for veterans and victims of war. Its selection as an emblem is poignant, as the cornflower thrived in the bleak, muddy landscapes of the First World War battlefields, growing alongside the poppy and reminding us of resilience and hope.

Within these French Army war cemeteries, a powerful visual testament to unity can be found on the gravestones of soldiers lying side by side: the Christian cross, the Islamic crescent, and the Jewish Star of David. This is a moving reminder that people of different faiths, nationalities, races languages and social backgrounds worked together in adversity, lived together side by side and made the ultimate sacrifice in the pursuit of justice and peace.

In this time of apparent polarisation of attitudes and division within our society, we would do well to reflect on the silent story of commitment and unity told by these French Army war cemeteries. And, as Christians, to remember Jesus' own example of love on the cross and his ultimate sacrifice. May our prayers to God this Remembrance Day be that the love of Jesus Christ will transcend the current atmosphere of hate and division in this country; His death on the cross and his outpouring of love triumph over all division.



In Flanders Fields by Colonel John McCrae (May 1915)

Born in Guelph, Ontario, Canadian poet, soldier, and physician John McCrae earned his undergraduate and medical degrees at the University of Toronto, where he received the Gold Medal. As a physician, he worked at Toronto General Hospital, Johns Hopkins Hospital, McGill University...

*In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.*

*We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie,
In Flanders fields.*

*Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.*

Red poppies growing among war graves inspired this poem; but poppies and war go back to the tradition that slaughter in earlier wars turned the white poppies of Central Asia red. "Peace poppies" are white. They have been used since 1933.



Healing and Disability: from A BRF Reflection by Tanya Marlow

I am an occasional lecturer in pastoral theology. Whenever I meet a new group of trainee ministers, I ask them how they would preach one of the healing miracles, for example, the healing of the paralysed man or blind Bartimaeus. They outline their sermon with ease. Then I ask the crucial question, 'What if there's a wheelchair user or blind person in your congregation?' and I watch carefully as they squirm, realising that there are significant pastoral implications for the supposedly straightforward spiritual message.

I have myalgic encephalomyelitis (ME), a devastating multi-system illness that has left me almost entirely bedbound for the last 15 years, though I can leave the house for a few hours in a wheelchair once a week or so. . As we study the gospels, let's remember the pastoral and evangelistic importance of fine-tuning our understanding of disability and healing. [Most] disabled Christians have heard two things from the church at some point: first, that their condition is caused by their sin; second, that it is caused by their lack of faith. A careful reading of the story of the paralysed man in Mark 2 debunks both assumptions.

I am that lame man in John 5, and I feel the criticisms of him personally. He had been living in desperate limbo for 38 years; for me, it's been almost 15 years of being mainly bedbound. Society is less sympathetic as the suffering continues. Eventually, people are blamed for their misfortune. My sickness has also been blamed on my sin and my personality.

The man, with no hope of medical cure, is desperate for alternative medicine, but his disability prevents him from accessing the 'magic' cure of the disturbed waters. When Jesus asks if he wants to be well, it is not a test but a compassionate offer of help. Though the man can't see beyond the pool as the mechanism of his healing, Jesus swiftly heals him with a command, with no appeal to confession or declaration of forgiveness. Jesus' words about sinning in verse 14 should be read in the context of John 9:1-2, where Jesus resists associating sickness with sin, and Luke 13, where Jesus explains that the victims of the Tower of Siloam falling were not worse sinners, but 'unless you repent, you will all perish' (Luke 13:5). The 'something worse' of Jesus' warning to the man is therefore eschatological and a warning for us all. *Disability does not imply sin.*

Reminder: Shirley Neighbourhood Care Recruitment Coffee Morning Friday 7th November 10 30 a.m. to 12 noon at Shirley Methodist Church

Cross or crucifix? And why??: Andy Bebington

The Christian message might be summed up as "Christ died on the cross and was resurrected into new life" - if his "old" self can die and be reborn, so you, too, can shrug off the old you who was fixated by (chocolate [at age 10] or drugs [at age 20] or the other's spouse [at age 30]) and be reborn as a "right-living person". Sounds a bit pompous, but it's about recognising, and dropping, the "bad" things in your life to make room for the better ones.

This is symbolised by the crucifix and the cross. The former, clearly is the one with a human figure on it, frequently highly stylised and almost always anatomically wrong. Few figures of Jesus on the cross reflect the horrible nature of the death penalty the Romans (and others) imposed. As a trivial example, the discovery of a skeleton from roughly the time of Jesus, with a nail through the *outside* of the heel, indicates that the nails through the feet as shown in nearly all crucifixes, may be wrong. Similarly, the position of the body is generally wrong. The crucifix is the symbol of the dying of Jesus on the cross.

This was followed by his resurrection from the dead, symbolised by the *empty* cross. He has risen, the cross stands alone. The old life has departed, a new one can now begin - and the cross won't be needed again. Interestingly, although there are many variations on "the cross shape", such as the Maltese Cross or the Hungarian cross, I've never seen a saltire (St Andrew's cross) or any of the others with a figure on it. "The figure" is only ever of Jesus - "He's the one to follow". {Amen to that! } Our own crosses are unlikely to be like His, though they may not be easy to carry.

Only the crucified know the full cost of forgiveness



Churches Together in Shirley

St John's with All Saints
St George's

West Wickham and Shirley Baptist

Shirley Methodist



Our Lady's

Church of God Apostolic

Shrublands Christian Fellowship

Churches Together in Shirley

CTIS is offering an Advent Quiet Day on Saturday November 29th at St John's. Contact Brian McGinnis to book a (free) place.

CTIS Prayers (hopefully with a Zoom option) at 7 30 p.m.
at Shirley Methodist Church on Wednesday January 7th 2026
at West Wickham And Shirley Baptist Church on Thursday March 12th followed by CTIS AGM

A CTIS prayer leaflet will be circulated for those months when we do not meet physically. If you would like to meet on Zoom to use the prayer leaflet together, let Brian McGinnis know before the end of the previous month.

dunaigh2@btinternet.com

For further CTIS information, see the Churches Together in Shirley website

***A Grace before Dinner
O thou who kindly dost provide
For every creature's want:
We bless thee, God of Nature wide,
For all thy goodness lent;
And if it please thee, Heavenly Guide,
May never worse be sent;
But, whether granted or denied,
Lord, bless us with content. Amen.***



Christian Aid: 80 Years: The unstoppable power of hope

In 1945, the churches of Britain and Ireland united to support Second World War refugees. Celebrations of 80 years have been held this year in many places - including Buckingham Palace and Westminster Abbey...and, more modestly but perhaps more impressively, by an 80 year old supporter cycling 80 miles! CA began as Christian Reconstruction in Europe, became Inter-Church Aid and Refugee Service; and became Christian Aid in 1964. It had a hand in creating the Disasters Emergency Committee, Voluntary Service Overseas and the Fairtrade Foundation. It coined the powerful slogan *"Do you believe in life before death?"*

CA is still very much involved in Europe: e.g. Supporting over 800,000 affected by the war in [on] Ukraine' and, back in the 1950's, the aftermath of the Hungarian uprising. Although we tend to think of Turkey-Syria earthquake, Pakistan earthquake, drought in the Sahel, war in Afghanistan or the Sudan, Cambodia, Vietnam, famine in Ethiopia, and South American disasters. Then there are the ongoing campaigning issues such as debt relief, fair trade, HIV and Aids, persecuted minorities, and climate change. Believing is great; doing, because you believe in the love of God and the value of ALL people, is greater still.

Some notes for you to note

- ♥ **Deadline for the December magazine, Sunday November 23rd**
- ♥ **The Bible Reading Group: Monday evenings 7 30 p.m. To 8 10 p.m. On Zoom.** See notes on the parish website. We are reading the Book of Revelation.. Tom Wright's "Revelation for Everyone" commentary available for everyone who would like to join us. Regular and occasional new members both welcome.
- **Book Reading Group:** The current reading list is: Divine Windows by David Gregory, Reflected in Nature by Claire Gregory, Donkey Roads and Camel Treks by Gemma Simmonds, Attentive to God by Tony Horsfall, and Dreaming of a Green Christmas by Olivia Warburton. Why not join us in exploring this rich variety of books?

Scots Toast

*May the best you've ever seen
Be the worst you'll ever see;
May the mouse ne'er leave your girnal*
Wi' a tear drap* in its e'e*;
May your lum* keep blithely reekin**
Till ye'er* auld* enough to dee*;
May you aye* be just as happy
As I wish you now to be!*

Girnal* = store house/ store place. Drap* = drop. E'e* = eye. Lum* = chimney. Reekin* = smoking. Ye'er* = you are. Auld* = old. Dee* = die. Aye*—always. Apologies if you know all these meanings already: I ken fine ye'er nae all daft.

A Chinese saying that makes at least some sense: ***If you are despairing, you are living in the past. If you are fearful, you are living in the future. If you are at peace, you are living in the present.*** A bit like the Latin motto *carpe diem*—seize the day. Doesn't stop you building on the past and building for the future.



Feed the hungry....or not?

I can't claim that when Bible folk said "Feed the Hungry!" they definitely meant humans **and others**. If you wanted to be finicky, you could argue that the Bible tends to say that God feeds the other creatures. Even "Feed my sheep", in so far as it is about food for the stomach, is mainly about human sheep, not four-legged sheep. However, (1) if humans don't work with nature, humans themselves suffer; (2) non-human creatures do starve; (3) some of that starvation of other creatures is down to human activity depriving other creatures of food. (For example, a concrete garden does not provide the food for other creatures that an earth and growing things garden provides)

So, people of faith do need, according to their circumstances and resources, to accept some responsibility for feeding other creatures. "*Feed the birds!*" is quite popular, as good advice as well as a good song. But there are disputed areas. "*Feed the robins*" is not going to attract much opposition; but feeding the pigeons is often a disputed activity: so many, so perpetually hungry, so messy? I feed foxes, and am quite good friends with "my" foxes, and I know others who do; but others are very much against feeding foxes. We have an obligation to feed our own pets. What about feeding other people's pets, without consulting the other people?

Your resources and your circumstances count for a lot. I would offer these thoughts:-



If you want to help "nature" but don't want mess, haven't got much spare time, and can't afford to keep spending lots of money, maybe focus on growing plants that are insect-friendly. You benefit, the insects benefit, and the birds that eat the insects benefit. (b) The cold months of the year are the most difficult for those creatures that are out and about (even if only occasionally), so growing berry bushes, leaving seed heads, and putting out food (and water) **regularly** in

those months, could be a priority. (c) What visitors you get depends in part on what you offer visitors, but maybe start with feeding the visitors you already get. (d) If you have cats or get cat visitors, try to place bird feeders where cats are least likely to feed on the birds, (e) Don't give other people's pets food without consulting the owners.

October Bible Quiz Answers (Women of the Bible)



1. Two books: Esther and Ruth
2. Eve
3. Mother of all the living
4. Sarah
5. Mother of nations/ Princess
6. Song of Songs
7. The Letter to the Hebrews
8. Deborah
9. Mary
10. Delilah
11. Mary Magdalene
12. Pilate's wife
13. Only Paul was unmarried
14. Priscilla, Aquilla, Lydia, Phoebe
15. Sheba
16. Samaritan
17. Four (the un-named wives of Noah and his three sons)
18. His sister
19. Three
20. Your choice!

RIP Ian Cordery

Ian died in St Christopher's Hospice in October, after a long period of illness - being cared for at home and in the hospice by Andrea supported by hospice staff. He and Andrea had been very much part of the St George's family, A number of us worked with Ian in his key role as Chairman of Trustees and Manager at the Longheath Community and Church Centre, where (after retirement from his paid job) he was almost permanently on duty—keeping the Centre viable and serving the Longheath Community. Our thoughts and prayers are with Andrea and Ryan.



*Poetry Page**Love by Edwin Morgan*

*Love rules. Love laughs. Love marches. Love
is the wolf that guards the gate.
Love is the food of music, art, poetry. It
fills us and fuels us and fires us to create.
Love is terror. Love is sweat. Love is bashed
pillow, crumpled sheet, unenviable fate.
Love is the honour that kills and saves and nothing
will ever let that high ambiguity abate.
Love is the crushed ice that tingles and shivers
and clinks fidgin-fain for the sugar-drenched
absinth to fall on it and alter its state.
With love you send a probe
So far from the globe
No one can name the shoals the voids the belts the
zones the drags the flares it signals all to
leave all and to navigate.*

It is sometimes said that love is blind.... and the Love changes/conquers everything song ("Aspects of love") makes love an excuse for blindness. I prefer the idea that Love sees everything. Loving someone or something does not mean you are blind to the faults or the short-comings. Indeed it makes you more anxious to rid what you see as essentially good from all that makes it less good than it could be. The good parent, the good friend, is very conscious of the imperfections in the person they love. He or she just doesn't let those imperfections impair the love. The enthusiast who loves a cause or a party (or Party) sees what needs improvement, not just what deserves praise. You can be a loving critic - the blind critic serves no useful purpose. Christian Love, and indeed any faith-based love, seeks to move what is already valued towards what is even more valuable.

That odd business of praying: Number 170: First things first

In a leading article on prayer in the BRF Ministries July Newsletter, Martin Payne (BRF's Volunteer Prayer Advocate) says: *"God already knows about our prayer lists, as well as the longing of our hearts for ourselves and others. What the story of the transfiguration [Matthew 17:1-8, Mark 9:2-13, Luke 9:28-36, 2 Peter 1: 16-18] tells us, first and foremost, is that, first and foremost, prayer is about intentionally being with God, so that we might be changed. Without this perspective at the heart of our praying, all are words are in danger of falling to the ground."* Martin points out that when the disciples watched Jesus praying on the mountain of the transfiguration, they didn't observe a list of prayer requests or intercessions. *"They watch as Jesus slowly changes into God's likeness, the longer he prays."*

I remember hearing it said of an old man that you could tell he had been spending time with God. So the transfiguration is not just a Jesus Thing that we can admire but not emulate. Christians are called to be Jesus People.



So, no requests, just listening? I don't think so. Jesus encourages us to ask. He did some asking himself—even asking for himself. He talks about asking **and** receiving as a result of asking. If prayer is conversation, God expects us to talk about what matters to us, even if God already knows. And there is the added dimension that talking to God about someone or something is a very good way of tuning us into what we might be doing about them or about those things.

And, to pick up an obvious point, Jesus was indeed God already: prayer did not change him into God. The transfiguration was the disciples seeing God more clearly in the human manifestation of God. We are not God, however we are made in God's image. Prayer can make that God image more evident: probably not so much in bright lights as in bright deeds: *by their fruits you shall know them*. In other words, prayer enables us to live Jesus.

ST. GEORGE'S 'MINCE PIES AND MISTLETOE'

CHRISTMAS FAIR

SATURDAY 22ND NOVEMBER: 11 A.M. – 2 P.M.

ELSTAN WAY, SHIRLEY CRO 7NW {367 BUS ROUTE}



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REFRESHMENTS

BOOKS AND MANY MORE



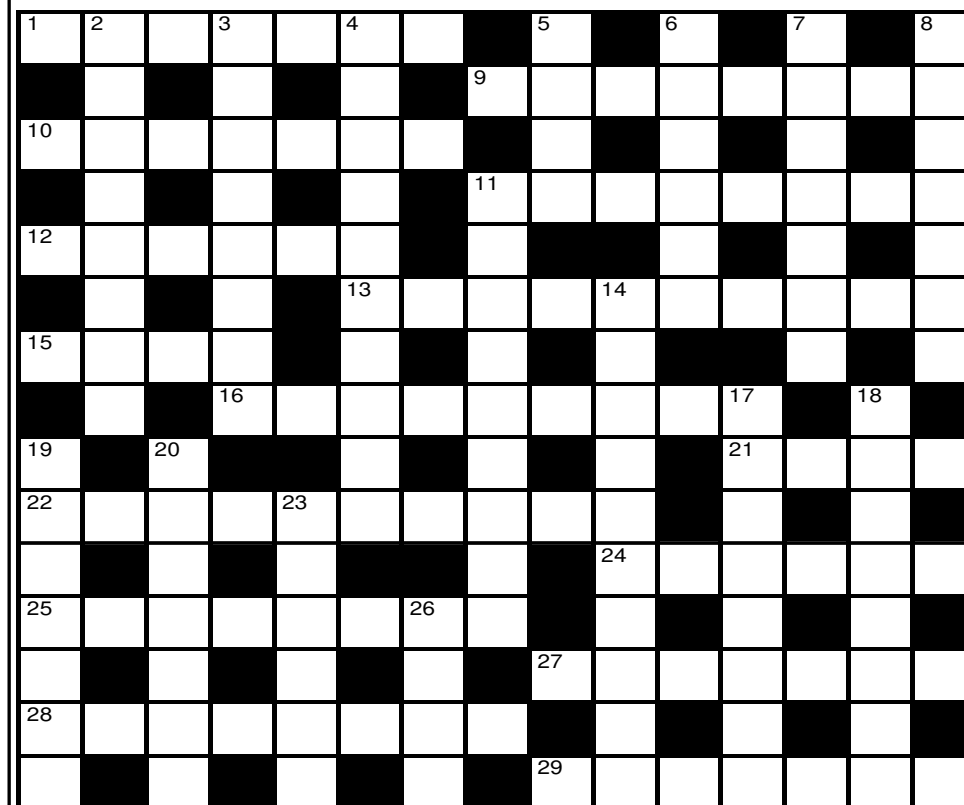
CHURCH DIARY FOR NOVEMBER 2025

► Morning Prayer:

Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri 9.00am Zoom only

Sun 2 Nov ALL SAINTS/ALL SOULS	► Mon 3 Nov	► Tue 4 Nov	►
10.00 Sung Eucharist 4.00pm All Souls Memorial Service	10.30am-12.00 Pop-In 9.30-11.30am Little Dragons 7.30pm Bible Reading Group		10.00am Cleaning 11.30am Lady Ch
Sun 9 Nov REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY	► Mon 10 Nov	► Tue 11 Nov	► V
10.00 All-Age Sung Eucharist and Church Parade	10.30am-12.00 Pop-In 9.30-11.30am Little Dragons 7.30pm Bible Reading Group		10.00am Cleaning 11.30am Lady Ch
Sun 16 Nov SAFEGUARDING SUNDAY	► Mon 17 Nov	► Tue 18 Nov	► V
10.00 Sung Eucharist	10.30am-12.00 Pop-In 9.30-11.30am Little Dragons 7.30pm Bible Reading Group		10.00am Cleaning 11.30am Lady Ch
Sun 23 Nov CHRIST THE KING	► Mon 24 Nov	► Tue 25 Nov	► V
10.00 Sung Eucharist	10.30am-12.00 Pop-In 9.30-11.30am Little Dragons 7.30pm Bible Reading Group		10.00am Cleaning 11.30am Lady Ch
Sun 30 Nov ADVENT SUNDAY			
10.00 Sung Eucharist			

or your Diary: 14 th December: Carol Service - 5.00pm 21 st December: Blue Christmas Service - 5.00pm Monday 24 th December: Crib Service -3.0pm Monday 24 th December: Midnight Mass - 11.00pm Monday 25 th December: Christmas Day All Age Family Service			Sat 1 Nov
			9.30-4.00 Shirley Singers Rehearsal (Church)
Wed 5 Nov	Thurs 6 Nov	Fri 7 Nov	Sat 8 Nov
Church			
Eucharist - Chapel			
Wed 12 Nov	Thurs 13 Nov	Fri 14 Nov	Sat 15 Nov
Church			
Eucharist - Chapel			
Wed 19 Nov	Thurs 20 Nov	Fri 21 Nov	Sat 22 Nov
Church			11-2 Christmas Fair
Eucharist - Chapel			
Wed 26 Nov	Thurs 27 Nov	Fri 28 Nov	Sat 29 Nov
Church		SNC Quiz (Church)	
Eucharist - Chapel		6.30 for 7 p.m. Tickets £10 or £72 for table of 8. 0208 662 9599 or sncs@shirleyneighbourhoodcare.org.uk	



Solon 190

Across

- 1 Classic label found in the Grape Tree (7)
 9 An orderly dessert (5,3)
 10 Can be read on stage without first book of the bible (7)
 11 Sell out again when old flame is inside news item (2-6)
 12 Talk a lot when holy man wears shirt (6)
 13 Not marvellous being arrogant without Virginia (10)
 15 Reportedly give up on favoured player (4)
 16 Fast runner may show evidence of damage (6,3)

21 Terrible five appear in back story (4)

22 Cain washed badly when felled (10)

24 Queen posed with unknown substitute (6)

25 The limit when tied to a railway (8)

27 Dry initially when husband replaced fellow (7)

28 Re-evaluate about female idiots? (8)

29 Creep is nimble in outskirts of Silchester (7)

Down

2 Perhaps ladies organisation create melt down (3,5)

3 Retirement plots for Gemini's? (4,4)

4 Single out a viscous mess (10)

5 Primate swallows shilling in part of church (4)

- 6 Restorative got Felix irritated (6)
 7 Relevant treatment of poor sap (7)
 8 Examiner of canines (7)
 11 Tories on holiday instantly (5,4)
 14 Ant and Dec in a twist to the west (10)
 17 Expansion indicator of labour movement (3,5)
 18 Horror states I'd made (8)
 19 One church composer found at sea (7)
 20 Common sort of gas (7)
 23 Uncovered practice (6)
 26 Hope there's no time for corrosion (4)

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

Answers to October puzzles:

Crossword: Across: 1 Aircrews, 6 Resign, 9 Aplomb, 10 At random, 11 Fossil fuel, 12 Sack, 13 Assure, 15 Anatomy, 17 Artiste, 19 Jeered, 21 Calm, 22 Graduation, 24 Editions, 25 Napkin, 26 Animal, 27 Dedicate. **Down:** 2 Impious, 3 Cross, 4 Emboldens, 5 Spatula, 6 Rural, 7 Sandstone, 8 Grouchy, 14 Ultimatum, 16 Adjourned, 17 Abandon, 18 Elapsed, 20 Egotist, 22 Growl, 23 Topic.

Sudoku: 217958463/
 938462571/ 564371298/
 825137946/ 196845327/
 473629815/ 351794682/
 689213754/ 742586139

Malcolm Guite

*Oh lift my given load that I,
 forgiven.*

*Might give away forgiveness,
 free as heaven*

Some lines from Malcolm Guite's 7 Sonnets on the Lord's Prayer

*You make this prayer my rising and my
 rest
 That I might bless the name by which I'm
 blessed*

*A wrenching loss and then a sud-
 den freedom*

*In given glories and a hidden
 kingdom*

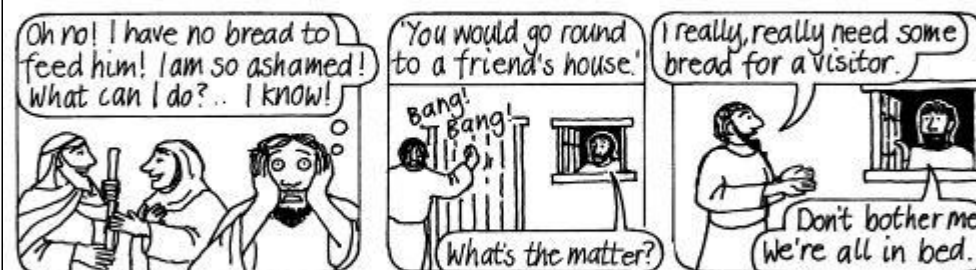
And we who have been first, will be the last

Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in
 Matthew 7:7-11, Luke 11:5-13

To teach about praying, and God's good
 gifts, Jesus told this story - 'If you have a
 visitor arrive in the middle of the night..'



Bible Bites: And so.....?

This is not the only Jesus story which seems to say, "Nag and you get, because the person you are asking gets fed up and wants to get rid of you." The other story is of a judge giving a widow justice, not because he believes in justice or has compassion on the widow but because he wants the wretched woman to shut up (Luke 28: 1-8). The apparent implication is that the totally undeserving are likely to get what they want because they keep demanding it, while those who really need/deserve but just say please and then shut up go away empty handed. But the useful underlying message is don't give up because you don't get what you want immediately.

As for the scorpion, etc, well, no: most dads are not going to kill their hungry child rather than feeding it....or hold the death creature in their bare hand! Jesus does use hyperbole to encourage thought. Underlying message: God loves you.

Just to deviate for a moment: In some parts of the world at some times, parents (having starved themselves to feed their children) have killed their children rather than see them starve to death...and many more have sold a child into slavery - so that the other children could eat and live; and the sold child could survive, albeit as a slave. Sad old world. Let's try to help build a better world.

But back to the point(s) of the Bible stories. Maybe first, Jesus doesn't suggest that the unexpected guest should be fed by praying to God. God relies on us to be good neighbours in being good disciples...or common human decency if you prefer....or even just the mutual self-interest of helping him because one day I might need his help on another day. Second, and this would probably have been more obvious to the original listeners than it is to us (because hospitality was a big thing at that time): if you can, have a little bit in hand in case there is an unexpected visitor. Grandparents whose families are within travelling distance know all about this.

Third, and as the cartoon says, it may not always seem like it, but God wishes you well; and, in that sense, God is on your side. He's not Santa Claus; but "the funny old Lord" is a Loving Lord. We should be loving too.

Old Nun's Prayer

Lord, you know better than I know myself
that I am growing older and one day will be old.
Keep me from the fatal habit of thinking I must
say something on every subject
and on every occasion.

Release me from craving to
straighten out everybody's affairs.
Make me thoughtful but not moody;
helpful but not bossy.

With my vast store of wisdom
it seems a pity not to use it all;
but you know, Lord, that I want a few friends at the end.
Keep my mind free from the recital of endless details,
give me wings to get to the point.

Seal my lips on my aches and pains,
they are increasing and love of rehearsing them
is becoming sweeter as the years go by.

I dare not ask for grace enough
to enjoy the tales of others pains,
but help me to endure them with patience.

I dare not ask for improved memory,
but for growing humility and a lessening cocksureness
when my memory seems to clash with the memories of others.

Teach me the glorious lesson that occasionally
I may be mistaken.

Keep me reasonably sweet;
I do not want to be a saint, some of them are so hard to live with,
but a sour old person is one of the
crowning works of the devil.

Give me the ability to see good things in unexpected places
and talent in unexpected people,
and give me O Lord the grace to tell them so. AMEN.

Training and Ministry



Time was when clergy and lay readers had training, but most of the rest of the work done in a parish was done by people who felt called to that work, gave time to that work, brought life experience to that work...but had no specific training for that work. Often they learned by observing what those already engaged in the work were doing. Sometimes there was an informal apprenticeship before formal responsibility was assumed. Safeguarding in a formal sense was not the norm, although common sense often dictated certain ground rules where vulnerable people

were involved (whether as intended beneficiary or as volunteer).

Times have changed. We couldn't survive without a lot of continuing informality; but formality has come to the fore - not least because of things going wrong, sometimes badly wrong. There is now a heavy emphasis on both training, and where relevant, on safeguarding. Would-be flower arrangers can get training, and don't just have to watch a colleague who is good at flower arranging. Having been a kid yourself and liking kids are less likely to be the only requirements for a youth worker.....though they remain important!

Much of this emphasis on training in ministry is healthy and indeed necessary. Just one caveat. As with the first disciples, male and female, the starting point is calling and responding, and the on-going relationship with God and the other children of God. What training must not do is stifle individuality. Rather, it must under-pin individuality with professionalism: doing your own thing in the best way. For example, the inspiring and imaginative youth leader will be a better leader if he or she adds some training in neuro-diversity to a natural inclination to treat young people as individuals. Training is to help people be their best selves, not to turn out automatons programmed on a text book. Many (perhaps most) ministry vocations are so individual that they have no title, no training course, and no text book. Having someone to talk to helps!!! (Google **Anam Cara**.)

If Christianity became illegal, would there be enough evidence to convict you? (Andy Bebington)

*Editor's note: I had a Christian friend at school who made himself unpopular by refusing to play cricket on Sunday; and a Christian friend at college who risked his degree by refusing to do course work on Sunday. Some Christians won't drink alcohol or won't fight. But [most] Christians manage to "fit in"; and **in this country**, there are no laws against being a Christian. Andy invites us to consider a very different situation. Imagine living in a country where being an active Christian is not odd but illegal.*

Imagine you are living in a country where They have declared Christianity illegal. Churches have been commandeered and closed - some are used as arsenals and military training bases, others are simply locked and are quietly mouldering. Christian schools have been renamed, colleges with Christian names such as Jesus or Christ's similarly "secularised". Anyone known to be an active Christian is likely to be arrested and imprisoned. *Would they catch you?*

Homes are visited and bookcases examined, along with ornaments and pictures on walls. You'll have had all signs of Christianity removed, of course, before They came ... but that cross on the silver chain round your neck? The one Mother gave you? Is that now buried in the garden, for safety? Have you checked all the bookmarks in the remaining books on your shelves?

Lunch clubs and food banks are all now secularised, and you can volunteer there - but there cannot be morning prayers before you open the doors, as had been the case before. If someone sneezes, saying "bless you" is dangerous ("gesundheit" is OK). Worst of all, you don't know which of your fellow volunteers is an informer for Them. Informer? Why not, when they have been advised that becoming an informer may mean an easier time in prison for their Mother, whose arrest came after she was overheard telling a bereaved person "I'll say a little prayer for you".

When They examine your life, and the reports on the charities you work with, is there enough to justify arresting you? Enough to convict you? If you are ever tempted to keep quiet to avoid being laughed at, think of all those elsewhere in the world who are tempted to keep quiet to avoid being persecuted.

A prayer from Karen Campbell

Does it really matter? They say that you are an unchanging God; does that mean we should be unchanging, too? What would happen if we sat in a different spot in church, stayed seated for the hymns or prayed with our eyes open? If we called you Mother God, or Allah, would the earth quake or the ceiling fall? Would you turn away from our heartfelt prayers?

If the words we spoke made sense to a child, if the rap of a youth was the prayer we shared, would you pick up your blessings and walk out the door? If we shifted our gathering to a different time or different day, to another space or another place would our worship become unacceptable to you?

If we risk making changes and being changed, would we displease you, our unchanging God? And if we do none of these things, but stay the same, what then dear God, what then?

Eternal God, ever constant, ever new, teach us what really matters to you ...



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

Andrea Cordery	Eric Baldwin-Smith	Jay & Louise Tuggey
Mike & Chris Wareham	David Lawn	Sonia
Jean	Sue Moore	Pam Purkiss
Chris Reynolds	Poppy	Yvette Oburu
Gloria & Livingston Dallas	Alan Williams	Pat Barrett
Margaret Ziolek	Brian	Alison Stiff
Andy Hamilton	Christine Lutman	Stephen Dhonau
Ann Hobbs	Pauline Russell	Jean Wells
Dave & Shirley Ashdown	Verity Johnson	Joyce & Edgar Arthur
Yvonne Sussex	Jill Hollamby	Mike Wilkins
ic Webb	Lindsey Morgan	Er- Ellen Maden
Brian Jacobs	Bill Gibson	Heather Orton
Doreen Offergelt	Paul & Mark	Garth Smith
Elizabeth Lovell	Sheila Dennis	Shirley
Louise Maurer	Debbie Bell	Steve Barrett

October 5th Blessing of Gold ECO Award by Bishop of Southwark



Fun Guys....or rather Fungi - for and against



To the left, edible mushrooms. To the right, Honey Fungus. Both come in varieties, because they are families not one single thing. The October RHS "Garden" features fungi, and makes some very important points. The main point is that most fungi are not just harmless, but useful and indeed essential to the natural processes in our gardens and natural spaces. That doesn't mean they are good for eating. So the extremes of "pick them all and cook them" and "destroy them all immediately" are equally bad advice. On the whole, the best advice is "leave them alone to do their thing". The pictures represent the extremes of the fungus world: edible and nutritious (mushrooms), and highly destructive (honey fungus).

If you see an elderly lady sitting on your wall to rest and enjoy the view, and maybe leave a few biscuit crumbs, you do not rush out to remove her. If you see an aggressive youth smashing bottles on your wall, you probably do take appropriate action to secure removal. But even honey fungus probably doesn't justify use of fungicides, though getting rid of infected roots is good practice. One honey fungus in the USA is thought to be **millennia old**, so getting rid of honey fungus is not easily achieved; and fungicides are very likely to interfere with the natural processes on which all nature depends: a process we can't see but now know much more about.

The underlying message is that fungi mean a healthy garden, not an unhealthy one. Destroying fungi, if we were capable of that, would be a bit like cutting out oxygen because we think there is too much draft: fatal!

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). Surgeries 3rd Saturday of every month except December 10-11 a.m. 49A Longheath Gardens

Police Contact: Email SNMailbox.ShirleyNorthSNT@met.police.uk Phone: 0208 721 2474. **URGENT 999** (Other crime reports 101)

Friends

People who can hold their tongues rarely have trouble holding their friends.

It is best to test new ideas on old friends.

A loyal friend is someone who sticks up for you even when you are not there.

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 Boys and Girls age 6 to 8 approx. Mr Darren Hawken 07903 399185

Wednesdays 5-6.15 p.m. 31stcroydonscoutgroup@gmail.com

Cubs Boys and Girls age 8 to 10.5 approx. Mr Darren Hawken 07903 399185

Wednesdays 6.30-8.00 p.m. 31stcroydonscoutgroup@gmail.com

Scouts Boys and Girls age 10.5 to 14.5 approx. Mr Darren Hawken 07903 399185

Thursdays 6.30 - 8 p.m. 31stcroydonscoutgroup@gmail.com

Beavers, Cubs and Scouts are currently meeting at Pinewood Scout Activity Centre

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 0-5

Mondays 9 30a.m. -11 30a.m. Mrs Mary Brown marylbrown250@gmail.com
07704311523

Friends

Animals are such agreeable friends: they ask no questions; they make no criticisms,

Why not make friends before you need them?

St. George's Church Directory

Churchwarden: Mrs Jan Turner 020 8654 6552

Members of the PCC

Mr Alexander Baldwin-Smith, Mrs Jan Payne, Mrs Susan Wheeler, Mrs Katie Francis, Mr Steve Westray, Mrs Elizabeth Birchenough, Mr Owen Whalley, and those office holders who are PCC members.

Hon. Secretary PCC.

Mr Eric Baldwin-Smith

Treasurer

Deanery Synod Representatives (also on PCC): Mr Ray Wheeler Mrs Helen Aylward, Mrs Fay Westray

Electoral Roll Officer

Mr. Owen Whalley 020 8655 1349

Organist and Choir Mistress

Mrs Sophie Clayton-Wareham 07703554159

Safeguarding Representatives

Mrs. Susan Wheeler. 020 8777 5271

Dr Toyin Magbagbeola

Church Flowers

Mrs. Marion Sheehan 020 8777 7308

Environment (ECO) Group

Mrs Jan Turner 020 8654 6552

Magazine Editors

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

Mrs A L Clayton

Accounts

Mrs. Janet Fitt 020 8777 7823

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@shirleyneighbourhoodcare.co.uk

Weekday mornings 10 a.m.—12 30

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Favourite Hymns

We don't know what are your favourite hymns unless you tell us what are your favourite hymns.

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

Do you want to know a secret? Join Croydon All Year Bowls For FREE Taster call 020 8688 0659

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+ Welcoming All +



St George the Martyr

Elstan Way, Shirley, Croydon. (off the Glade)

parish.office@hotmail.co.uk

www.stgeorgeschurch.co.uk

(Charity Number: 1134140)