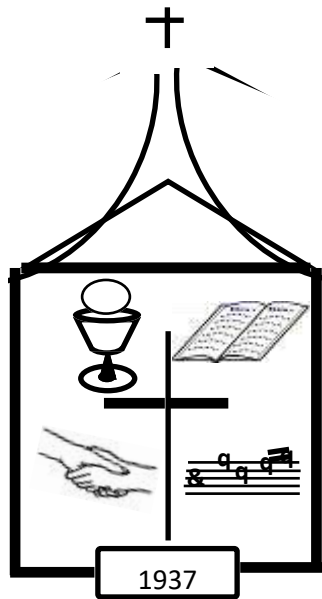




St George the Martyr Shirley



Christ in the Community

Transfiguration: August 6th



A Member of Churches Together in Shirley

August 2026

50p

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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.

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All under 5's with their parents/
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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

Use the holiday month to steal

something: You are going to see
something in another green space that
might look good in your own green
space. Steal **the idea**; and buy and
plant. Check that your growing condi-
tions are suitable.

Need a helping hand or is the garden getting too much? **Farthing Garden Ser-
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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



Maximilian Maria Kolbe was a Polish Franciscan friar, priest, missionary to India and Japan, remembered for volunteering to die in Auschwitz in place of prisoner Franciszek Gajowniczek. Arrested by the Nazis for sheltering refugees, including Jews, he was executed on 14 August 1941 and canonised in 1982 as a "martyr of charity."

A View from the South Side: Liz Bebington

I hope you have all enjoyed at least some of the recent sports events which have dominated the media and TV schedules during June and July. Whether you follow football, cricket, tennis or road cycling, there has been plenty to choose from – and as we are all different people, we don't all choose the same. I wonder which competitors you identified with? And supported? Does it matter to you where they come from? In tennis and cycling it's not always easy to know the nationality of any individual; but you'd assume for football and cricket each player is solely from the team named. But apparently not so! Football and cricket managers are not necessarily managing their own national team (Thomas Tuchel is German and Brendon McCullum from New Zealand) and some players from British League football clubs played in the World Cup, not for England, but for another country where they had roots, notably of course Erling Haaland of Manchester City for Norway, but also several for African countries and other nations – and in the other direction the England football star Harry Kane who normally plays for Bayern Munich.

So it seemed to me very fair to call this footfall festival a **World Cup**, even though some countries like China, Russia and India did not take part, as from so many places on the planet someone was involved – and as sport is visual, language didn't prove too much of a barrier in appreciating what went well.

On a similar theme, one of our favourite TV programmes over the years has been Who do you think you are? We enjoy the surprises it has brought various celebrities about the make up of their family background and ancestors, the extent of international mixing in the past, the variety that lies in the history of most families.

Nationality, passports, border control, immigration rules, faith, language etc all seem to be used by some politicians and media campaigners today to try to divide us up into different identity boxes. But perhaps sport and such TV programmes are part of God's plan to remind us all of our shared origins in his world-wide family, of the fact that we have more in common than that which divides us, that, like the waters of the oceans, the air, the clouds and the migratory birds we share this one planet with each other, all under God's love. Just as a meadow, rich in different wild flowers of all colours and shapes, is much more beautiful and interesting in my eyes than a patch of plain grass or just one type of flower; just as a salad with lots of different vegetables in it is tastier than a plateful of one sole item; so is a community made up of people from different backgrounds and heritages worth enjoying and celebrating. Let us rejoice in and give thanks to God for all the world's variety, both here at St George's, in Shirley and beyond.

The Seven Deadly Sins

Pride Excessive belief in one's own abilities or superiority; often considered the root of all other sins.

Greed Intense desire for material wealth beyond what is necessary.

Lust Strong or uncontrolled desire, particularly for sexual gratification.

Envy Jealousy or resentment toward others' success, possessions, or qualities.

Gluttony Overindulgence in food, drink, or other pleasures.

Wrath Extreme anger or hatred that can lead to violence or revenge.

Sloth Laziness or avoidance of work, duty, or spiritual responsibilities.

The concept of the seven deadly sins was formalized in the 6th century by **Pope Gregory I** and elaborated by **St. Thomas Aquinas** in the 13th century. The sins were not explicitly listed in the Bible but were derived from early Christian theological tradition, drawing on various biblical passages. They are often contrasted with the **seven heavenly virtues**.

The Seven Heavenly Virtues

Chastity Represents moral purity and self-control, particularly in sexual conduct but also in personal integrity and ethical behaviour.

Temperance The practice of self-restraint and moderation in all aspects of life.

Charity (Love) – Selfless, unconditional love for others, reflecting God's love.

Diligence Steadfastness, effort, and perseverance in doing good.

Patience The ability to endure hardship and delay without frustration.

Kindness Compassion and generosity toward others.

Humility Modesty and selflessness.

A practical footnote

We are often too ready to stick labels on other people, and sometimes too ready to stick labels on ourselves. Even when the labels highlight a good aspect of someone, they are a bit too simplistic: very few people are infinitely patient or infinitely kind - just as very few are always slothful or always angry. Look out for the occasional displays of virtue in others; and encourage them. Aim to build on the goods in yourself, and don't be disheartened by the occasional lapses. I like the teacher who said "Not a nice word to use, but you have spelt it properly!"

Trees: Nuisance or Asset?



The Summer 2026 Woodland Trust magazine "Broadleaf" says much about trees, as one would expect: loss of trees, planting of trees, very old trees, famous trees, tree-less areas. I think of three people I knew who wanted three different large old trees cut down - because the trees dropped leaves, and they had

to clear up the leaves. Given the time many of us spend clearing up after other people, I did wonder at the time of the complaints whether the three ladies would like other people removed too.

A centuries old tree succumbs in minutes to a chain saw. Tree planting takes a little more time and a lot more thought, and you can be dead before the tree you planted has reached maturity. The message is that trees unfortunately depend on us; while we, whether we recognise it or not, depend on trees: for air quality, soil quality, water quality. Big firms, in giving staff time off for voluntary action, and governing bodies, as well as scientists and voluntary bodies, are recognising the benefits of tree planting to try to recover something of what this country has lost by massive and unthinking tree destruction. But just sticking any tree in any place, while well-intentioned, is not really helpful...and often results in wasted money and a dead tree. Right tree in right place...and, where we are talking public policy for public space, rather than individual initiative in individual space, think forest with rich mixture rather than wild-life-excluding single species timber plantation.

Bare hills get taken for granted. Very often, they are not "naturally barren": they were barrenised by chopping down the trees. Trees can be reintroduced. Urban areas have a certain built-in barrenness, but a walk round London tells you that it is perfectly possible to incorporate trees in an urban environment - to everyone's benefit (unless you are peculiarly allergic to fallen leaves). The Northern Forest is showing that tree planting can stop flooding, create jobs, and improve

Christian Aid Week.....No, Year

Christian Aid is very much linked with one week in May. It was this year, and it will be next year. However, if you have read this year's Christian Aid literature, you will have noted that we are talking about long-term projects with the interests of children and grandchildren in mind....and about enabling future generations to survive the inevitable adverse effects of climate change running into future centuries. Yes, Christian Aid does emergency relief; but it is campaigning for and working for policies and practices that will enable vulnerable people across the globe to live something much closer to what we would regard as a normal life. A surprising number of families in this country have to worry about how they can pay all their bills for essentials. In countries where Christian Aid works, large numbers of families worry about how they can get any of their essentials

What I am leading up to is the suggestion that it would be good to be able to hold small events during the rest of the year in aid of Christian Aid, to supplement our C A Week efforts: table sales, coffee mornings, tea parties, concerts, sponsored events.....**I am toying with having another October Words and Music Concert for Christian Aid . Interested in being involved?????????**

Christian Aid meets local needs and builds local self-sufficiency in partnership with local organisations, not as outsiders coming in to address other people's problems from an outside perspective. It doesn't work only with Christian organisations, and it doesn't just help Christians. CA Week attracts contributions from folk who never go to church. But there is no denying that "Christian Aid" emphasises Christian responsibility.

Of course, "building resilience" suggests that Christian Aid ought to be working itself out of a job. If it gets the crippling debts of poor countries cancelled, and gets farming practices changed to suit Climate Change farming conditions, the problems Christian Aid is addressing are diminished. Agreed! Unfortunately, there is an awfully long way to go to win the on-going battle. At the moment, the debt burden is growing, and the adverse affects of climate change are increasing.

When the need for CA expenditure has ceased, there will be no more fund-raising. At the moment, people are suffering and dying because there isn't enough Christian Aid. **The final St George's CA Week total was about £1,477.**

Churches Together in Shirley

St John's with All Saints

St George's

West Wickham and Shirley Baptist Church



Our Lady's

Church of God Apostolic

Shrublands Christian Fellowship

Shirley Methodist

Churches Together in Shirley

We are aiming to meet monthly for half an hour of prayer together: 7 30 p.m. to 8 00 p.m., with a Zoom option where possible. A CTIS prayer leaflet will be circulated monthly for use, individually or collectively. Contact Brian McGinnis if you need details: dunaigh2@btinternet.com

August no meeting

Thursday September 3rd St George's Compline (NOT Complan or Complain!)

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



Summer Sunrise: always hope, even in the darkest times

How valuable is a human being?

In the days of slave markets (see July magazine) slaves were thought of in terms of their market value. If they lost their market value, they became worthless...and were disposed off. There is still too much of that sort of thinking and behaviour, but generally today the arguments are more subtle. Employers need to think whether someone is "worth employing", and self-employed people about how much they can charge. Society needs to make decisions about education costs, benefit costs, care costs, treatment costs, etc. If a new treatment can keep a not very well person alive for another three months, a cost/benefit analysis is needed. Not least when the two child benefit cap is the issue, potential parents need to think about how many children they can afford - not just about how many children they would like to have. Maybe human beings are infinitely valuable. They can not also be infinitely costly.

I want to open (not settle!) a discussion on one particular aspect of human worth/value. It is about what "gives" people their value. I know a family with a father who is a skilled consultant and earns upwards of £1,000 a week, a "retired" mother who holds things together, and an adult son with multiple disabilities who costs upwards of £4,000 a week for "shared care". If you listen carefully to what people tend to say about human worth/value, the husband has substantial value, the mother has considerable value, and the son zero value. Using the same way of looking at things, the two parents might live long enough to lose most or all of their value, and become worthless.

Interestingly, the commentators who are most ready and explicit about writing off as worthless very severely disabled infants or not-yet-borns are more hesitant about writing off those whose value has been diminished by the ageing process. (Perhaps they are mindful of what they themselves might become!)

So????? While Society can not avoid some cost/benefit analysis regarding public expenditure; I think we have to go with the belief that all human beings - however "imperfect", "incomplete", "damaged" - have (unearned) infinite value/ God value. But also to recognise that the rest of God's creatures are valued by God and should be valued by us. And as to immortality: if your best friend in this life has been a dog, maybe.....

Some notes for you to note

- ♥ **Deadline for the September magazine, Sunday August 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 Acts of the Apostles: the story of the (Very) Early Church, and the sequel to Luke's Gospel. A commentary is available free for everyone who would like to join us. Regular and occasional new members both welcome.

August 2026 marks 89 years of St George's being open for worship. If nothing else, a prompt to think about what we might want to do in August 2027. 1937's good new was Disney's "Snow White". The bad news included various wars and disasters and killings around the world, and what were later recognised as the beginnings of the Second World War. We were launched with high hopes at a time of great uncertainty.

Mrs Chris Reynolds, wife of Andy Reynolds and mother of Callum, died unexpectedly in Hemsey (Norfolk) on June 26th. She had not enjoyed good health for much of the time since the family moved from St George's. We remember with gratitude the collective and individual roles of the Reynolds family during their St George's years; and pray for Chris's peace and the comfort of Andy and Callum.



Shirley in the days of Ham Farm

Do it yourself parables (5): A Family Story: Peta Ebdon

Sara Jane lived happily with her husband and 2 year old son. One day her world fell apart: her husband died suddenly and she discovered that he had left her in a lot of debt, including months of un-paid rent. She had no choice but to abandon her home and roam the streets. She met a street-wise older man named Bill who was a very kind man. The weather was extremely cold, and there was no food to be found - not even in bins. Then Sara Jane found a half-finished sandwich and half-empty beaker of tea, which she ate and drank whilst her son was ill and screaming for food and drink. Bill couldn't understand the mother's behaviour. When challenged, she answered angrily "God will provide!" Bill discovered another abandoned sandwich and beaker of tea, and gave them all to the crying child. He had nothing, and soon died.

Questions:

Do you blame Sara Jane?

Does God provide; and, if not, why not?

Did Bill choose the better part?

Why do we need Food Banks and Pantries?

How do you rate "relative poverty" against "absolute poverty"?

What do we mean when we pray "Give us this day our daily bread"?

Can any Government eliminate poverty?

If you were a "no food" person, how might you feel about Lenten and other religious voluntary fasting? Does such fasting educate us in hunger?

One in eleven people in the world go hungry each day—about 673 million people. World annual expenditure on weapons is somewhere around \$ 3 Trillion Any connection?

Did the Jerusalem Christians giving away all their assets help to explain the subsequent Jerusalem famine that Paul helped to relieve?



Vulpes vulpes: The Red Fox



The fox is one of the most adaptable of the wild creatures we interact with. It knows when and where it is welcome, and when and where it is not welcome. I am talking about urban foxes, which have never been hunted. The hunted rural fox had to adapt to the different challenge of folk in fancy dress on horseback accompanied by a pack of dogs, sometimes under the influence of drink, and making a great deal of noise. (yes, that is now illegal, but....) The fox that sits peacefully three feet away from me waiting for me to fetch it some food (sometimes sharing with a cat) knows nothing of fox hunting.

With a peaceful wooded garden, foxes come to sleep as much as to feed. Other householders have the same experience. The squirrels have done quite a lot of unwanted digging, for reasons that seemed good and sufficient to them. The foxes much less so...though they do investigate interesting smells in the church garden and do damage. Foxes kill and eat squirrels: mixed feelings as I watch! They also kill and eat the rats that we are surrounded by, though maybe don't often see.

My argument is not for domesticating foxes, but for living at peace with them - and for giving them a bit of help as we remove more and more of the wild through which they could help themselves. They are fascinating, not least in their day and night routines...and in their respect for their friends.

Poetry Page: :**Emily Dickinson: Hope is the thing with feathers**

*"Hope" is the thing with feathers -
That perches in the soul -
And sings the tune without the words -
And never stops - at all -*

*And sweetest - in the Gale - is heard -
And sore must be the storm -
That could abash the little Bird
That kept so many warm -*

*I've heard it in the chilliest land -
And on the strangest Sea -
Yet - never - in Extremity,
It asked a crumb - of me.*



dreamstime.com

ID 178223241 © TheodorMeyers

Hoping the bus will come is good. But maybe checking the bus timetable first, and getting on the bus when it comes, would add to the experience.

That odd business of praying: Number 179: Transfiguration

This is the month when we read the Matthew 17, Mark 9, Luke 9, or 2 Peter, accounts of Jesus being transfigured or transformed. If you want a word closer to the Bible Greek, it is Metamorphosis: a word you are more likely to hear in the Orthodox Church. What we don't really know is whether Jesus actually changed in the sight of

His three disciples; or they saw Him differently—saw Him as He fundamentally was. (To avoid a familiar mistake, let me emphasise that the REAL JESUS means both the familiar Jesus AND the transfigured Jesus. The familiar Jesus was NOT a pretend Jesus!)

The message about becoming different/ seeing things differently is a helpful message about the *danger* of prayer. While we often pray to ask God to change things or people into things or people as we would prefer them to be, God is quite likely to respond by changing us and/or changing the way we see people and things. Robert Burns asked for the gift of being able to see ourselves as others see us. God looks for the more radical transformations/ transfigurations/ metamorphoses of seeing ourselves, other people, and situations as He sees them.....and then acting accordingly. In other words, prayer is a risky business!

Of course, most of us most of the time don't pray asking God to confirm our prejudices; and we are, at least some times, willing to add to our requests "But your will be done!" At our best, we are—when we pray for God's intervention—up for saying "Let me know if I can do something to help!". We need to be prepared to go further. Just as Moses had to be ready, as something of an outsider to both the Jewish and Egyptian communities (with a stammer and a criminal record), to change sufficiently to move from "Set my people free" to "I am going to lead my people free—over 40 years!" Your required change is not all that likely to be as radical as the Moses change or the David change or the Paul change. It could still be a big change. So pray and listen. Don't just pray and hope to get what you want.

A very special book**Kingdom: Every Family Has It's Pride: Will Millard****BBC Books: Penguin Co****(Accompanied the BBC Series narrated by David Attenborough)**

A magnificent book, with photographs to match. I received my copy as a present. It costs £28 to buy it. (Though you can find lower price options on line.) The setting is Zambia's South Luangwa National Park. The key figures are lions, leopards, hyenas and wild dogs. The central theme is individuals/families/groups. I suspect that one reason why Christianity and the other major faith groups mainly speak of the after life in terms of humans is



a belief that only humans have individual, family and group personalities. Some human writers find it hard to accept that all humans have such an identity: they speculate on a heaven which caters only for the right sort of humans: those who live up to demanding moral, mental and physical personality requirements.

If you keep a cat or dog, maybe you don't need persuading that some animals have a personal identity - though, of course, these are "civilised" animals. What the Kingdom book shows,,,, and note the way Christians use the term Kingdom!.....is that the four wild species it concentrates on do have strong personal, family and group identities. While survival of the species motivation might be put forward to help explain some animal (and human) behaviours, it is hard to avoid reading what goes on without thinking: self-sacrifice, putting others first, ignoring self-interest.

The Luangwa wild dogs are physically bottom of the four predator pecking order; but are quite capable of taking on their much bigger compatriots.... And not only when numbers are on their side, and very effective female leadership gives them a marked advantage. The three-legged dog (leg lost in a human trap when the pack strayed outside the protected area) stays with the dog mother to help protect the puppies while the other dogs go foraging. Come the much bigger and more numerous enemy, he stands alone

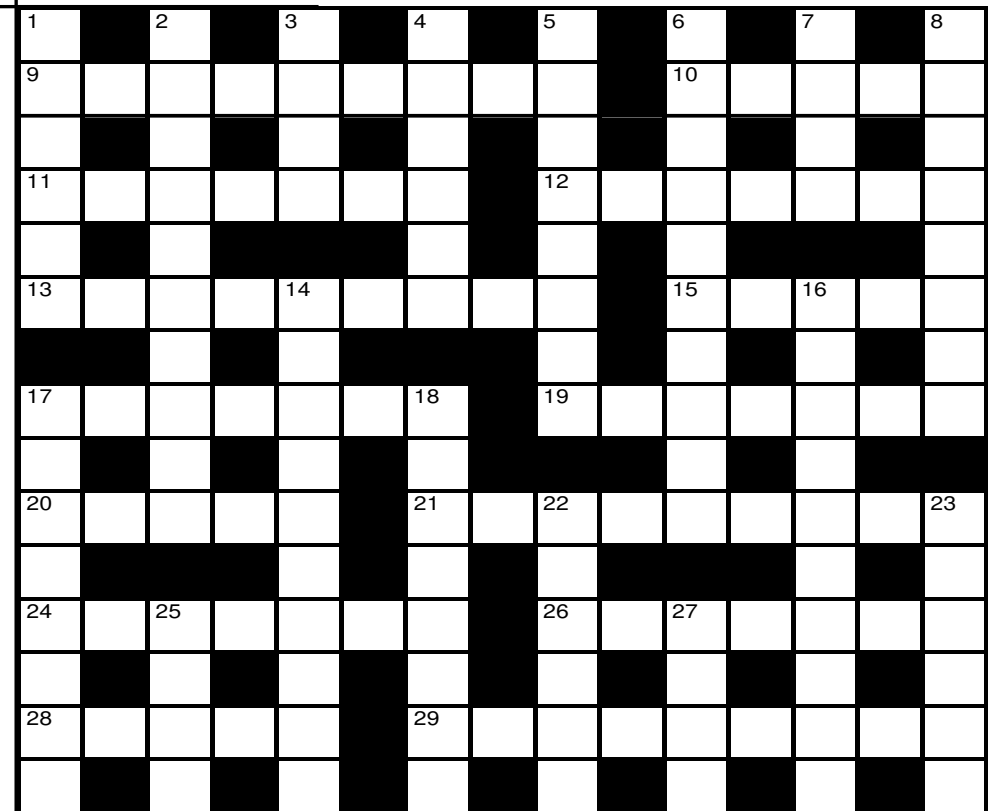
CHURCH DIARY FOR AUGUST 2026**☛ Morning Prayer:****Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri 9.00am Zoom only**

			Dates
			Ch tem
Sun 2 Aug TRINITY 9	☛ Mon 3 Aug	☛ Tue 4 Aug	
10.00 Sung Eucharist	10.30am-12.00 Pop-In 7.30pm Bible Reading Group		10.00a 11.30am Chapel
Sun 9 Aug TRINITY 10	☛ Mon 10 Aug	☛ Tue 11 Aug	☛
10.00 All-Age Sung Eucharist with Church Parade	10.30am-12.00 Pop-In 7.30pm Bible Reading Group		10.00a 11.30am Chapel
Sun 16 Aug TRINITY 11	☛ Mon 17 Aug	☛ Tue 18 Aug	☛
10.00 Sung Eucharist	10.30am-12.00 Pop-In 7.30pm Bible Reading Group		10.00a 11.30am Chapel
Sun 23 Aug TRINITY 12	☛ Mon 24 Aug	☛ Tue 25 Aug	☛
10.00 Sung Eucharist	10.30am-12.00 Pop-In 7.30pm Bible Reading Group		10.00a 11.30am Chapel
Sun 30Aug TRINITY 13	☛ Mon 31 Aug		
10.00 Sung Eucharist	LATE SUMMER BANK HOLIDAY		

s for you Diary: Murder Mystery Evening - Saturday 26th September

Churches Together in Shirley September Prayer Meeting: Thursday September 3rd 7 30 p.m. St George's Lady Chapel: Compline. All welcome.

			Sat 1 Aug
Wed 5 Aug	Thurs 6 Aug	Fri 7 Aug	Sat 8 Aug
m Church Cleaning m Eucharist - Lady			
Wed 12 Aug	Thurs 13 Aug	Fri 14 Aug	Sat 15 Aug
m Church Cleaning m Eucharist - Lady			
Wed 19 Aug	Thurs 20 Aug	Fri 21 Aug	Sat 22 Aug
m Church Cleaning m Eucharist - Lady			
Wed 26 Aug	Thurs 27 Aug	Fri 28 Aug	Sat 29 Aug
m Church Cleaning m Eucharist - Lady			



Solon 199

Across

- 9 Dogmatic politician found aboard dense vessel (9)
- 10 Foreign friend is a fighter with nothing on (5)
- 11 Almost upright deputy (5-2)
- 12 Possibly book van for an author (7)
- 13 Check power to make stronger (9)
- 15 Peacekeepers able to be unhealthy (5)
- 17 At first glass lenses installed may make eyes red when there is some light (7)
- 19 Emile Herzog without glee could produce plant structure (7)
- 20 I'll admit ends of dotty poem (5)

21 Toy breeds may produce seafood source (6,3)

- 24 Doonican joins a new church surround (7)
- 26 Irritable if given protection on the stand (7)
- 28 Weapon removed when a Parisian meets a marine (5)
- 29 Speaking about carpeting (7,2)

Down

- 1 On who pursues the drink (6)
- 2 Artistic inspiration could be about activity (10)
- 3 Worn by Charlie boy (4)
- 4 Private accepting article is becoming sillier (6)

- 5 Relative was sorry about luxuriousness (8)
 6 Could minotaur be playing an instrument? (10)
 7 Porter got this thrill that out of you (4)
 8 Overstretch out of hours redesigned warship (8)
 14 Relative title? (6,4)
 16 Measure span and get over it! (10)
 17 Bodily harm could be serious (8)
 18 Australian native with force, note the chamber (8)
 22 Pay the rest (6)
 23 Tory spin doctor develops decay (3-3)
 25 Get a mortgage to furnish Oslo annexe (4)
 27 Nips back and does a turn (4)

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

Answers to July puzzles:- Crossword:

Across: 1 Cherubim, 6 Impugn,
 9 Trivia, 10 Asbestos, 11 Partakers,
 13 Filed, 15 Regret, 17 In situ,
 18 Celery, 19 Big top, 21 Aloft,
 22 Castigate, 25 Runner-up, phew,
 29 Dateline. **Down:** 2 Her, 3 Rivet,
 4 Blackberry, 5 Meagre, 6 ICBM,
 7 Pessimist, 8 Glove puppet,
 12 Agriculture, 14 Indistinct,
 16 Goldfinch, 20 Napped,
 23 Gavel, 24 Draw, 27 Jan.

Sudoku: 543987216/
 786231549/ 129645387/
 914758623/ 265319874/
 378462951/ 451893762/
 837126 495/ 692574138

Sleep

The trouble with alarm clocks is that they always go off when you are asleep.

It's hard to raise a family—especially in the morning.

In 1897, the "Slave Bible" was published for enslaved plantation workers in the British West Indies. It left out all passages that might make the reader think God was not in favour of slavery.

People who say they sleep like a baby haven't got one.
 Sleep is something that always seems more important the morning after than the night before.

Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in
 Luke 7: 1-10, Matthew 8: 5-13

When the Romans invaded Israel, they used soldiers to keep order. For the centurion in Capernaum it was more than just a job...

The centurion had a young servant who was in great pain and dying.



When he heard that Jesus was near, he asked the town leaders to ask Jesus for help.



The leaders told Jesus... This man deserves your help. He loves our people.

He has even built us a meeting place!



This could have been a tricky situation, for Jews never went into the houses of non-Jews.



I will go and heal the boy.



But the centurion knew that, as a Jew, Jesus could not go into the houses of non-Jews so as Jesus got near, he sent some friends to him.



He says he isn't worthy enough for you to come to his house.

But he says he understands authority and knows you have it. You only have to say so and his servant will be healed.



Jesus was amazed!



I have never met anyone in Israel with as much faith.

He said to the friends...



You may go now. What he has believed has happened.

When the friends got to the house they found the servant completely healed!



Keeping the rules and breaking the rules

This story from Luke and Matthew is a simple one, but carries a lot of meaning. Someone is very ill. Someone else gets word to Jesus. Jesus makes the very ill person completely better. The healing tradition was that the healer and the person to be healed had to have contact. In praying in church for sick people who can't get to church, we side with the Centurion: God is doing the healing, and God can act from a distance. This Roman officer cares about his slave and the slave's illness. One aspect of Roman tradition was that if a slave had ceased to be useful, you got rid of that slave and bought another one who could function as required. The Romans were fairly tolerant of different belief systems - after all, they had a wide selection of gods themselves - always provided Roman rules were followed. Believe what you like: Do what we tell you. But this local Roman authority had gone beyond tolerance to provide encouragement and support; and the local Jews were showing appreciation, which was not the norm either.

The Roman authority convention was to give orders. The centurion could have expected to order the coming and healing, and certainly not to respect any niceties about the Jews being clean and those who were not Jews unclean. Romans tended to be quite fussy about washing, and quite angry about the local savages daring to call the civilised Romans dirty.

What attracts younger readers in this passage is often not that Jesus healed, but that Jesus was surprised by the centurion's faith. He had encountered many Jews who really needed something physical and visible. This stranger was happy to accept a distant healing miracle; and the stranger acknowledged the AUTHORITY of the Jewish itinerant preacher. Those who led the Jewish power structure of that time were constantly questioning the authority of Jesus, because Jesus was not part of their power structure. (Just as later on they objected to the members of the Early Church exercising authority that the power structure had never given them.) Jesus being surprised (as he was surprised by the faith of a foreign mother who persisted in asking for his help) tells us that God Incarnate was learning.

When we face the challenge of learning new things, may we remember that.

St George's Trees.....well, some of them...their leaves



Sycamore

not in flower beds

please

Ash



Ginkgo



Hawthorn



Fig



Eleagnus



*...and once you've done the flower arrangements, polished the pews, scrubbed the floor, shined the silver and taken a look at the problem with the boiler we wondered, well, you have to laugh, but all six bell-ringers are on holiday at the same time and..."

Multi-tasking

I remember attending a small rural church, in Scotland I think. The man who opened the church to let me in put on the lights, rang the bell, gave out the service books, played the organ, read the lessons, conducted the service, preached the sermon, took the collection, administered Communion, talked to me as I left, and, no doubt put out the lights and locked the church. I think there were six of us present, including the minister. I hoped he had a partner, and did not have to go home to an empty vicarage/manse.

No doubt there have been occasions when the person in charge went to the church to multi-task, and there was no congregation. Doing "all that" is more rewarding if there are others there to appreciate it, even if there are no others to share the tasks. And someone is going to point out that there are a lot of people who multi-task outside the church context: one parent families, people with multiple caring responsibilities, those who have to do a number of paid jobs to make a living, creative people who can't earn by their creating and have a job and family responsibilities.... Some people have an incredible number of voluntary jobs, because various committees know they can be relied on. "Ask a busy person....."

It would be impertinent to advise multi-tasking people; but there are some general principles that can help:-

1. Take more time to rejoice in what you can do, than time to regret what you can't do.
2. The word NO needs to have some place in your vocabulary.
3. There are often people who would be happy to be encouraged to help, even if they wouldn't be up for taking over. Offer training.

Maybe a Smile

Whispers: A young curate lost his voice at the local football match one Saturday and, being due to preach the next morning, he thought he should call in and consult his vicar. So he rang the vicarage bell, and the door was answered by a very attractive teenage daughter. "Is your dad here?" the curate managed to whisper. "No," she whispered back, thinking she had got the message. "Come on in!"

Won't go far: The curate went to the building society about his investments, adding: "We want to know how far afield we can go for our holiday."

Handing him his statement the cashier enquired very gently: "Have you got a field at the back of your garden, sir?"

Nearly omnipotent: The curate was giving his young daughter a cuddle before she went to bed. As he picked her up and hugged her tight, she said: "Daddy, you're so strong! I really think you'll be God one day!"

Slow: A curate consistently arrived late for work until his long-suffering vicar asked him what was wrong. "My problem," explained the curate, "is that I sleep very slowly."

Where are we? When Columbus started out, he didn't know where he was going. When he got there, he didn't know where he was. When he got back, he didn't know where he had been. And he did it all on other people's money. Can't help thinking that Columbus reminds me of some teenagers who go on family holidays...

Sky at night: The scientific theory that I like best is that the rings of Saturn are composed entirely of lost airline luggage.

Sky fright: An airliner flew into a violent thunderstorm and was soon bumping around in the sky. One very nervous lady happened to be sitting next to a clergyman and turned to him for comfort. "Can't you do something?" she demanded. "I'm sorry ma'am," said the reverend gently. "I'm in sales, not management."

Staying power: Hospital patient's comment about a neighbour: "He can stay longer in an hour than most people do in a week."

CHILDREN: – I'm sorry I can't leave more money in the plate, but my father didn't give me a raise in my allowance. Could you have a sermon about a raise in my allowance? – Patty, age 10.

– My mother is very religious. She goes to play bingo at church every week, even if she has a cold. – Annette, age 9.

– I would like to go to heaven someday, because I know my brother won't be there. –Stephen, age 8.

Sunday Readings for August (Message Version)

Sunday 2 August: Trinity IX

Genesis 32: 22-31: I saw God face-to-face, and lived to tell the story.

Psalms 17: 1-16: You'll find I'm just what I say am.

Romans 9: 1-5: I carry with me at all times a huge sorrow.

Matthew 14: 13-21: About 5,000 were fed.

Sunday 9 August: Trinity X

Genesis 37: 1-4, 12-28: Israel loved Joseph more than any of his other sons.

Psalms 105: 1-6, 16-22, 45: Translate His wonders into music.

Romans 10: 5-15: The Word that saves is right here.

Matthew 14: 22-33: You are God's Son for sure!

Sunday 16 August: Trinity XI

Genesis 45: 1-15: It wasn't you who sent me here, but God.

Psalms 133: How beautiful when brothers and sisters get along.

Romans 11: 1-2a, 29-32: The door held wide open for you.

Matthew 15: 10-28: It's what you vomit up that pollutes your life.

Sunday 23 August: Trinity XII

Exodus 1:8—2:10: I pulled him out of the water.

Psalms 124: God didn't go off and leave us.

Romans 12: 1-8: Take your ordinary everyday life, and place it before God.

Matthew 16: 13-20: You're the Christ, the Messiah, the Son of the Living God.

Sunday 30 August: Trinity XIII

Exodus 3: 1-15: You're standing on holy ground.

Psalms 115: He put us in charge of the earth.

Romans 12: 9-end: Love from the centre of who you are.

Matthew 16: 21-end: Don't be in such a hurry to go into business for yourself.



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

Camilla Harley

Paul Oates

Pat Barrett

Andy Stranack

Ninna

Pam Purkis

Ken

Mark & Paul Hare

Ruth & Tony

Christine Lutman

Sonia Birch

Heather Orton

Verity Johnson

Steve Barrett

Peter Collingham

Pauline Russell

Alan Williams

Please remember in your prayers the family and professional care givers known to you: informal carers for partners, parents, siblings or children, or for other relatives or neighbours; professional doctors, nurses, social workers, care staff. Please pray too for the diverse chaplaincy teams at Croydon University Hospital, Princess Royal, and Bethlem, *May those who care know that they are cared for, and appreciated—even if those they help are not able to say thank you.*



Croydon University Hospital

Having a failure does not mean that I am a failure

One person said: Answer to July quiz: Oscar Wilde
One person wrote the following - as tail-enders. Who?

*All this forgotten clutter, sorrowful and brown....
 I'll leave it for the kids when I'm six feet down.*

*I've done my best, it's all gone west, I've ruined all the grub,
 Too late. Here come the bastards now. Let's all go down the pub.*

*The most pathetic thing you've ever known,
 A conundrum to bewilder:
 Why I didn't wed a builder,
 I might as well have left the job alone.*

*Viewed the Colosseum and the place they made papyrus,
 Had Clostr'um difficile, E.coli, gyp and norovirus.*

*What it lacked in haddock,
 It made up for in tater.*

*I hate these squalid aircraft loos,
 And wish that I had worn my shoes.*

And we fed it to the worms, but they never said thanks.

*And in the firelight's homely glare,
 To sleep with four feet in the air.*

*The fire, police and ambulance, the lights, the sirens blare,
 We never want to see you'
 But we thank God you are there.*

*Find the car, drive home half-dead,
 Junk mail mountain. Fall on bed!*

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)

Time Wasting

Wasting time is ALWAYS a personal choice: if you can't yet do what you had planned to do, choose something else.

NOW is the only time you are guaranteed.

You may feel useless: You very seldom are useless.

Organisations

St George's Church Hall Bookings -

Mrs Jan Payne 07702 756913
hallmanager@ctgeorgeschurch.co.uk

Overseas Missions Committee

Mr Brian McGinnis, Ms Pauline Russell 020 8654 6190

Georgettes

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 (Church Hall) Girls age 10 to 16

Fridays 6.00 -7.30p.m. Mrs Ruth Clery 020 651 4116
07702 870030

Pop In (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

Time Wasting

If you can't be up and out and doing, how about thinking, writing, and praying?

Did Jesus feel useless on the cross?

St. George's Church Directory

Churchwarden: Mrs Jan Turner 020 8654 6552

Deputy Churchwardens : Mr Alexander Baldwin-Smith, Mrs A-L Clayton

Members of the PCC : Liz Bebington, Mrs Jan Payne, Mr Evan Russell, Mrs Helen Aylward, Mr Steve Westray, Mrs Elizabeth Birchenough, Mr Owen Whalley, and those office holders who are PCC members.

Secretary: Mrs Jan Payne 07702 756913

Treasurer

Mr Alan Britcliffe

Deanery Synod Representatives (also on PCC): Mr Ray Wheeler 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

Mrs Janet Fitt or Mr Brian McGinnis

People put initials after their name to show (something of) what they have achieved. Can you put RTBH after your name? [Ready To Be Helpful]

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

Shirley Community Library

Wickham Road

020 8662 9599

info@shirleyneighbourhoodcare.co.uk

Weekday mornings except

Wednesday 10 a.m.—12 30

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Have you ever thought of writing a piece for the magazine? If not, why not? Choose your topic - within reason!

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

+ Following Christ + Serving Community
+ 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)