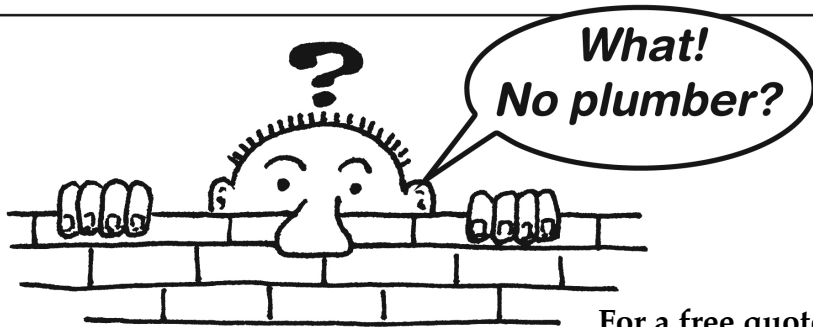


*Church News*  
for the Parishes of  
Bromham, Oakley and Stagsden



**February 2025**



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**Welcome to  
Church News in  
Bromham, Oakley and Stagsden**

**Find us at:** [www.bromhambenefice.org](http://www.bromhambenefice.org)

 **facebook** Benefice of Bromham, Oakley & Stagsden

**Clergy:**

Vicar: Revd Catherine Wilson 825665  
vicar@bromhambenefice.org  
Assistant Priest: Revd Di Harpham 918691  
Curate: Revd Petra Yates - curate@bromhambenefice.org 07504 118405

***Benefice Administration***

Website &.....} Administrator 07494 069540  
Wedding.....} (Mon & Thurs 9.30 -12.00: Tues, 9.30am -1.00pm  
organisation..}  
Fees Accounts...} administrator@bromhambenefice.org  
Safeguarding Officer - Judith Denyer 07981 928522

***Parish News***

Editor Mr Edward Jones stowensnews@btinternet.com 826551  
Distribution Mrs B Cryer 825463  
07767 272584

***Pew Leaflet Sarah Smale, as Administrator***

**Who's Who in Bromham**

***Church Officers***

Churchwardens Ms T Woodcock 340089  
Mrs F Bulmer 602718  
PCC Secretary Mrs Vivien Butler 407351  
PCC Treasurer Mrs Sarah Smale 07957 126145

**Organist & Choirmaster Mr David P Williams**

**Messy Church for pre-school children (birth - 4yrs) & their carers**

Mrs F Bulmer 602718  
Altar Guild Mrs M Parrott 824402

## Who's Who in Bromham cont....

Children & Young	} Carol Jones	823307
People's work	} Rene Farquhar	307996
Electoral Roll	Mrs Rene Farquhar	307996
Ringers	Mr Robert Jones	881741
Thursday Prayer Gp	Mrs C Wisson	306833
Friends of St Owen's	www.friendsof stowens.org	
Secretary:	Mr David Butler	407351
	 <b>facebook</b> Friends of St Owens	

## Who's Who in Oakley

### *Church Officers*

Churchwardens	Mr G Palmer	07710 462535
	Mrs H Worley	262166
PCC Secretary	Mrs C Ord	823477
PCC Treasurer	Mrs S Ball	ls.ball@btinternet.com
Organist & Choirmaster - contact	Jenny Sudworth	822859
Messy Church for pre-school children (birth - 4yrs) & their carers	Revd Catherine Wilson	825665
Flowers	Mrs A Rolph	824849
St Mary's Ringers	Mr Bill Sellars	823473

## Who's Who in Stagsden

### *Church Officers*

Churchwarden	} Post holders names not published	
PCC Treasurer	} please contact thru Revd Di Harpham	918691
PCC Secretary	Caroline Heaton	
Ringers	Mr Richard Brown	823289
Flowers Team	please contact thru Revd Di Harpham	918691

If you know of further details for this page, or have information or articles to publish please send all material to the Editor by post or (preferably) by email - see details on page 3.

The Editor thanks Contributors and Advertisers for their material with acknowledgements to the "Parish Pump" website. Nevertheless, views expressed, and goods and services advertised are not endorsed by the PCC. **Please send material for publication to the Editor by the 22nd of the month.**



### Principal Services in the Benefice

<u>2nd February</u>	<u>Candlemas</u>
9.00am	Holy Communion (Oakley)
10.30am	Holy Communion (Bromham)
<u>9th February</u>	<u>4th Sunday before Lent</u>
9.00am	Holy Communion (Bromham)
10.30am	LEP Service* (Oakley)
3.30pm	Evensong (Bromham)
<u>16th February</u>	<u>3rd Sunday before Lent</u>
9.00am	Holy Communion (Bromham)
10.30am	Holy Communion (Bromham)
<u>23rd February</u>	<u>2nd Sunday before Lent</u>
9.00am	Holy Communion (Bromham)
10.30am	Holy Communion (Oakley)

\*Partnership service with Oakley Methodists

*Our 9am services are said while our 1030 services include music and hymns.*

### Weekday Services

Mondays

11.30am Messy Church (Bromham)

Tuesdays (1st and 3rd of the month)

11.30am Holy Communion (Bromham Fellowship Room)

Thursdays

10.00am Messy Church (Oakley)

NB 10.30 church services are streamed via Zoom for those who find it difficult to attend in person (details on website [www.bromhambenefice.org](http://www.bromhambenefice.org))

## *From the Vicarage*



On February 2<sup>nd</sup>, forty days after Christmas Day, the church celebrates and remembers the feast of Candlemas, traditionally the day when all the church's candles for the year were blessed. It is also the mid-point between the shortest day and the spring equinox, when perhaps we can really see that the days are getting longer and that Spring is on the way.

Before electric light, phone torches or gas lamps, candles were the best option to bring light into the home. And when other means of light fail, they are still a reliable back-up plan – as long as you remember where the matches are! When we lived in a village in Shropshire near the River Severn during Tim's curacy, power cuts were frequent occurrences especially if we had snow, and we always had candles in the house. Torchets were the first thing we reached for to reassure the children, but the candles provided some general light for the whole room.

These days power cuts are fewer, and candles generally have a more decorative purpose. We received some scented ones at Christmas which gave our living room a pleasant cinnamon and apple fragrance, and in church we have extra candles at Christmas for carol services, and when we make Christingles, to remind us of the light Jesus brings to the world.

The name Candlemas is really a nickname however, for the day when we remember that Jesus' parents brought him to Jerusalem when he was forty days old, to present him before

God – known as ‘The Presentation of Christ in the Temple’. This was a ritual laid down in Jewish Law, and every family would do it for their first-born son, a very normal and accepted part of Jewish life.

As we read in Luke chapter 2, the baby Jesus was welcomed and greeted by two old people, Simeon and Anna, who knew that this was no ordinary baby but one sent from God, and we have the wonderful account of Simeon’s words in which he describes Jesus as both glory for the Jewish people and light for the Gentiles – those not Jews. Jesus came to be the light for the whole world – Jews and Gentiles – and Candlemas reminds us once again that God’s love and light extends to all.

Nativity scenes and extra candles in churches, and sometimes in homes too, may be left out until Candlemas, and their taking down on that day signifies the end of the Christmas celebrations. But the Light of the World can’t be put away – he shines on in the darkness, and we are challenged to take his light with us into the coming year. St Paul wrote that ‘God has shone in our hearts to give the light of the... glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ’ (2Cor 4.6).

We have seen and received that Light – Candlemas encourages us to think how we should live so that it will illuminate our villages in 2025.

*Catherine Wilson*

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**Save the date!** - highly recommended

‘Walk Through the Bible’ New Testament day

Sat 22<sup>nd</sup> March 10am – 4.30pm

Clapham Church Fellowship Centre.

Fun, interactive, interesting, memorable – see the ‘big picture’ of the Bible. Book at [www.Bible.org.uk](http://www.Bible.org.uk) . Tickets £14.



Next meeting - **Thursday 13th February**

2.30pm - 4.30pm

for a session on Making Bird Feeders

.....

For further details

contact Tessa Woodcock

01234 340089



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## Sewing Group

1st and 3rd Wednesday afternoons  
2pm - 4pm in the Fellowship Room  
at St Owen's Church.

Further information from Frances  
on 07470 032296

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## First Friday Coffee Mornings

Next coffee morning on Fri 7th February

11am- 1pm

in St Owen's Fellowship Room, Bromham.

Please contact Frances for more information  
(602718 or francesbulmer@btinternet.com)





**Friends of St Owen's AGM**

Thursday 13th Feb at 7.30pm  
in St Owen's Fellowship Room

**Open Saturday at St Owen's**

15<sup>th</sup> Feb 10am- 12 noon.  
Contact Frances for information

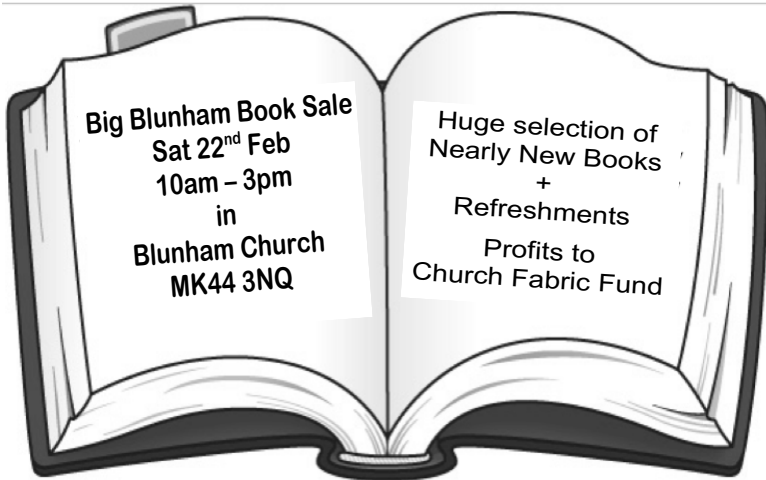
**Bishop of St Albans Open Garden**

15<sup>th</sup> /16<sup>th</sup> Feb and 22<sup>nd</sup> /23<sup>rd</sup> Feb  
Display of snowdrops.  
£5 per person (children free),  
Abbey Gate House, Abbey Mill Lane, St Albans AL3 4HD.

**Messy Church Plus**

Mon 17<sup>th</sup> Feb 11.30am in St Owen's.  
Join us for family fun and activities in half term.  
All children welcome; must bring an adult.

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*Rt Revd Dr Alan Smith  
Bishop of St Albans*

This year, the Diocese of St Albans warmly invites you to join a transformative Year of Spiritual Renewal and Wellbeing. As we reflect on the challenges of recent years, including the lasting impact of Covid, this initiative seeks to help us reconnect with our faith and embrace the renewing presence of the Holy Spirit.

This year-long journey is designed to help us lift our hearts and minds and centres on three key themes:

- Lifting our eyes to God
- Enhancing spiritual and personal wellbeing
- Enabling spiritual growth to foster numerical growth.

This year draws inspiration from the Emmaus story in Luke's Gospel, where the risen Christ walks alongside two disciples, listens to their concerns, and renews them in hope and love. Just as they rediscovered joy in their journey with Christ, we are invited to open our hearts to God, embrace the Holy Spirit's renewing power, and find joy in journeying with him.

### **Opportunities**

There's a wide selection of retreats, courses, and other events available for booking through the [website](#). The site also

*Continued on next page*

features recommendations for venues suited to church away days and retreats, alongside valuable resources for individual reflection and group sessions. New suggestions will be added throughout the year. If there are resources or activities you feel would help you or your church, please do [let us know](#).

## **Wellbeing**

God invites us to embrace healthy rhythms of prayer, work, and rest – essential foundations for our wellbeing. Flourishing in body, mind, and spirit enables us to live out our ministries and daily lives, reflecting Jesus’ promise of abundant life.

Each month, we will be featuring a new short film, gaining insights into how a variety of people maintain and invest time in their wellbeing. The first film in our series features Archdeacon Dave, reflecting on wellbeing as he walks through his local park in Luton.

## **Prayers**

God of life and love,  
pour out your blessing on our diocese  
as we journey to your kingdom on the Emmaus Road:  
where there is uncertainty, build us up in faith;  
where there is fear, establish us in love;  
where there is discord, bring reconciliation and healing;  
that together we may be renewed in hope by your Spirit  
and be ambassadors of your risen Son, Jesus Christ our  
Lord. Amen

**Access** any of these resources at

[year.stalbansdiocese.org](http://year.stalbansdiocese.org)

*Editor: Canon Paul Hardingham continues his series on the books of the Bible.*

## **What's the Big Idea? An Introduction to the Books of the Old Testament: Job**

'Why does God allow suffering?' This is a frequently asked question of Christians, because we believe in a God who is both good and powerful and it is explored in the book of Job. This book is part of the wisdom literature, along with Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon.

Job was both wealthy and righteous, yet he experienced catastrophic suffering, losing all his wealth, children and health. This is portrayed as a result of Satan's challenge to God, testing whether Job's devotion to God was dependent on his circumstances or not.

The main body of the book (3:1-42:6) consists of dialogues between Job, his friends (Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar) and God. Job and his friends assume that God is almighty and just, and that no human being is wholly innocent. In the three cycles of speeches, they wrestle with the reasons for Job's suffering, remembering his morally upright character.

Finally, all are silenced by God, as He speaks Himself (chs 38-42). He points out that Job knows very little about the universe when he reflects on God's power. Job confesses his lack of understanding and weakness, but then goes on to confess his confidence and trust in God. This puts suffering in a right perspective. Job is not condemned, and the book ends with the restoration of his family and possessions.

The importance of this book is that it realistically addresses the painful questions of life, without offering simplistic answers. It focuses on *how* we should respond to suffering, rather than on *why* God allows suffering: '*Naked I came from my*

*mother's womb, and naked I shall depart. The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away; may the name of the LORD be praised.'* (1:21)

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### **Should the Churches agree on a common date for Easter?**

That is the question for the leaders of the Roman Catholic and the Eastern Orthodox Churches, as this year (2025) marks the 1700<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the First Ecumenical Council of Nicaea.

Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople believes that 2025 is a 'golden opportunity' for Catholic and Orthodox believers to finally agree on a joint date for Easter, because this year also brings a 'fortunate alignment' of the Easter dates of both churches.

"It is indeed regrettable that 1700 years later, we are still debating this issue," he says.

Any agreement would only pertain to the date of Easter's celebration. It would not involve any joint liturgical practices. Those would require ecclesial communion between the churches, something which does not yet exist.

In 2016 the Archbishop of Canterbury held talks with Coptic Pope Tawadros II in Cairo, when he hoped that a unified date for Easter might be achieved within ten years. He commented that, for the C of E, either the second or third Sunday in April would be acceptable.

*Parish Pump website*

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When you routinely build little kindnesses into your marriage, they build the bond of trust and love between you. And your marriage partner is not a mind reader! So, whenever you think something nice about them, tell them. - Anon

*Editor: The Revd Dr Jo White considers the visual impact of church buildings.*

## **Reflecting Faith: Church Buildings**

Most of us have visited many church buildings, either to worship or as a tourist: to enjoy the splendour, the colours, the style and the architecture, with or without necessarily a time of prayer or worship.

There are some amazingly staggering designs around the world – one only has to think of the complex and intricate stone carving of Gaudi’s catholic basilica in Barcelona, Spain (due to be completed next year!) and then compare that to the sleekness of the Lutheran (Church of Iceland) parish church in Reykjavík, Iceland.

How about the grandeur of St Peter’s in Rome, full of baroque gold and rich colours? Or what about St Basil’s Cathedral in Red Square, Moscow – now a museum but topped with amazingly coloured onion domes?

Just looking at the outside of a building tells you a lot about what it is likely to be like inside, the purpose of the building and the style of worship to expect there.

It’s not just about the condition of the fabric, or the tidiness of the grounds but rather the architecture itself.

When we see a contemporary modern building, we will expect the worship to match it: whether that is Protestant, Catholic or any other denomination.

### *Food for thought*

If you were designing a brand-new church building today, what would you put into it and therefore what would the exterior look like? What would you want on the outside, to express your faith?

## A Message of Gratitude to you and your congregation.



As we reflect on 2024, we want to extend our thanks to Bromham Benefice community for your support and generosity, especially over the Christmas period. Your kindness and commitment have made an incredible difference in the lives of those we support.

This year, SMART has been able to make several key strides in our mission to help those experiencing homelessness:

- **Expanding Our Reach:** We took on Charis House, a 10-bed accommodation service, providing a safe and stable environment for individuals transitioning from emergency beds to more permanent housing. This has been a critical step in offering a pathway to long-term stability.
- **New Vehicle:** Thanks to generous donations, we were able to secure a new vehicle, which will enable us to transport essential supplies, food, and outreach support more effectively across Bedford and the surrounding areas.

Over the Christmas season, we welcomed over 350 visits to Prebend Street. Christmas can be an especially difficult time for those without a home, and thanks to your donations, we were able to offer not just meals and warmth but also companionship and care.

On **New Year's Day**, we launched a "New Year, New Start" programme for our service users. With 30 attendees, we set up an affirmation tree where individuals could express their

*Continued on next page*

hopes and commitments for the year ahead. This activity brought a sense of purpose and positivity, with many service users making meaningful resolutions to improve their lives. For so many, this is a significant step forward, and we are proud to walk alongside them on their journeys.

However, **January is always a difficult time**, as we often see an increase in homelessness due to relationship breakdowns following the long holiday period. With **financial hardship biting at the heels of most**, we are braced to welcome even more people to our services in the coming weeks. Your ongoing support is vital in helping us meet this growing need.

Prebend Street Day Service has been a hub of homelessness support in our area for over 25 years, offering vital daytime care, meals, showers, clothing, and a listening ear. While much of the focus around homelessness is often on where people sleep, the **daytime support we provide is equally crucial** for emotional and physical wellbeing.

As you know, Prebend Street relies heavily on voluntary donations, and without your continued support, we simply could not provide this lifeline to so many. Your generosity over the Christmas period has allowed us to continue this essential work, ensuring that those in need can find hope, comfort, and practical support.

From all of us at SMART, and on behalf of the people we support, thank you for your compassion and commitment. Together, we are making a tangible difference in the lives of those who need it most. If you would like to visit our services at any time, do please get in touch, we would love to show you where your money is spent and the difference it makes.

Happy New Year!





**'Messy Church for All'**  
**at Oakley Methodist Church**  
**on 3rd Tuesday in the month**  
**3.30 till 5.30pm**  
Contact 824504 or  
mcarr49@hotmail.com

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As we have been asked to increase our giving to the church, I would like to help in a practical way by offering my sewing services. I would be happy to undertake alterations or mending for a small fee, which I will donate to St Mary's Oakley. For more information please call Maureen on 01234 356354.

### **From the Registers**

#### **Funerals:**

16th January            Brian Hunter (Oakley)

#### **Burials / Burial of Ashes:**

8th January            Sheila Burgess (Bromham)

13th January           Eunice Hood (Bromham)

## **Seiriol, saint of Puffin Island**

You can find traces of old saints in most corners of the British Isles, but Seiriol, who is remembered by the Church on February 1st, is one of the only two saints connected to Anglesey, and certainly the ONLY saint connected to Puffin Island.

It was back in the 6<sup>th</sup> century that this gentle abbot first settled in Penmon, and built a little church. His ruined beehive cell still survives there today, as does the well from which he drew water, both for his own use, and also for baptising local people.

Like many other Celtic saints, Seiriol would have travelled by sea. So he felt comfortable near the coast on Anglesey, on low-lying land. Although he lived as a simple hermit, Seiriol soon attracted followers, and eventually he decided to establish a small monastery. He chose to build it on nearby Ynys Seiriol, now called Puffin Island.

That little monastery on Puffin Island saw some scary action in 632, when Edwin of Northumbria was chasing the Welsh king, Cadwallon, and ended up besieging him on the island. Cadwallon was finally conquered, and history moved on, but the monastic ruins of Seiriol's little monastery are still there today.

Seiriol seems to have been a purely local saint who never attracted a very great number of followers. The only known dedications to him are at Penmon and Puffin Island. But Seiriol's life and work are still a testimony today. He is a gentle and encouraging reminder of what an impact even a simple local Christian can achieve, by simply being faithful to Jesus Christ in the place where he is.

*Parish Pump website but see also next page*

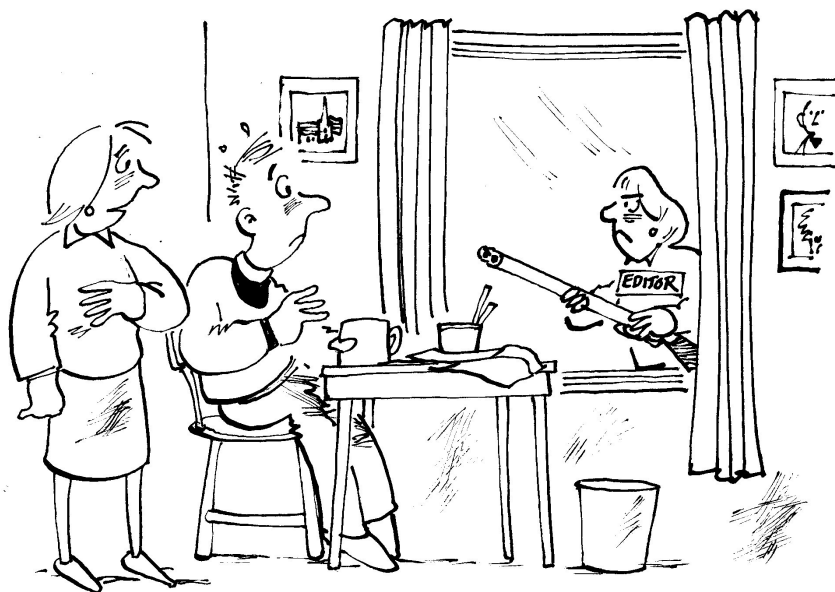
## Two saints of Anglesey

When I lived on Anglesey (I worked at RAF Valley) I was told that the other saint was St Cybi who lived on Holy Island at the west end of Anglesey. He and Seiriol would often meet in the middle of the island, each having set off early in the morning and returning home in the late afternoon.

This led to them being known locally as Seiriol the Pale and Cybi the Dark since the first would always have the sun at his back whilst the other faced the sun on each of his journeys.

*Edward Jones*

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*...are you late with your 'Vicar's Letter' again, dear?*

**Never in our Benefice!!! - Ed**

## God in the Arts

*Editor: The Revd Michael Burgess considers the sacred in Art.*

### **'My First Sermon' by John Everett Millais**

There is a story of two men talking about their new vicar. One says to the other, "This new one's not a patch on the old vicar. With the old one preaching I was asleep in five minutes. With the new one it takes all of ten." Some churches in times past employed 'sluggard-walkers' who had long rods and walked down the aisles, ready to wake up the faithful if they had nodded off during the sermon.

Sluggard-walkers are not needed for this month's painting, *My First Sermon* by John Everett Millais. It hangs in the Guildhall Art Gallery in London, which houses the art collection of our capital city. The Gallery is built on the site of an amphitheatre and was only completed in 1999, having replaced a building that was destroyed in the blitz of 1941. It has over 4000 works, many of them from the Victorian and Pre-Raphaelite period. Among them is this painting by Millais



*John Everett Millais,  
Public domain, via  
Wikimedia Commons*

which depicts Effie, his 5-year-old daughter sitting in Kingston Church. She is dressed properly and sensibly for the occasion with feathered hat, muff and a cloak of vivid red. Her mother's prayer book and gloves are by her side. Effie is listening with great concentration.

When the painting was exhibited in 1863, it was a great success. In the following year Millais produced *My Second Sermon* – a very different occasion, for Effie has now fallen asleep with her hat by her side. Millais was often criticised for his sentimental portraits of children as in *Cherry Ripe* and *Bubbles*. But in 1864 the Archbishop of Canterbury, Charles Longley, praised this second painting for reminding us of 'the evil of lengthy sermons and drowsy discourses.'

As we look at Effie alert one Sunday, asleep the next, we can smile. But we might also ask how we respond to the Word that comes to us through the medium of words in the weekly sermon. The preacher has the daunting task of using this everyday coinage of words to draw us into that mysterious, life-giving realm of the Word, Jesus. The words spoken must make a straight path for the Lord to reach each human heart.

The two paintings of Millais depict the reality and fragility of this endeavour. Sometimes our attention is engaged; at others, drowsiness closes our eyes and even our hearts to the good news of salvation. On occasions the sermon sows seeds, which can bear fruit. At other times, all kinds of factors mitigate against the sermon's success. Let us pray that as listener or as preacher, we may be aware of the dynamic power of the Word, which, as Karl Rahner wrote, calls us 'out of the little house of our homely, close-hugged truths into the strangeness of the mystery of God that is our real home.'

**FRIENDS OF ST OWEN'S 100 CLUB  
PRIZE WINNERS**

**JANUARY 2025**

First Prize: Sally Michelle Davies

Second Prize: Edward Jones

Third Prize: Julie Watson

Fourth Prize: Edward Jones

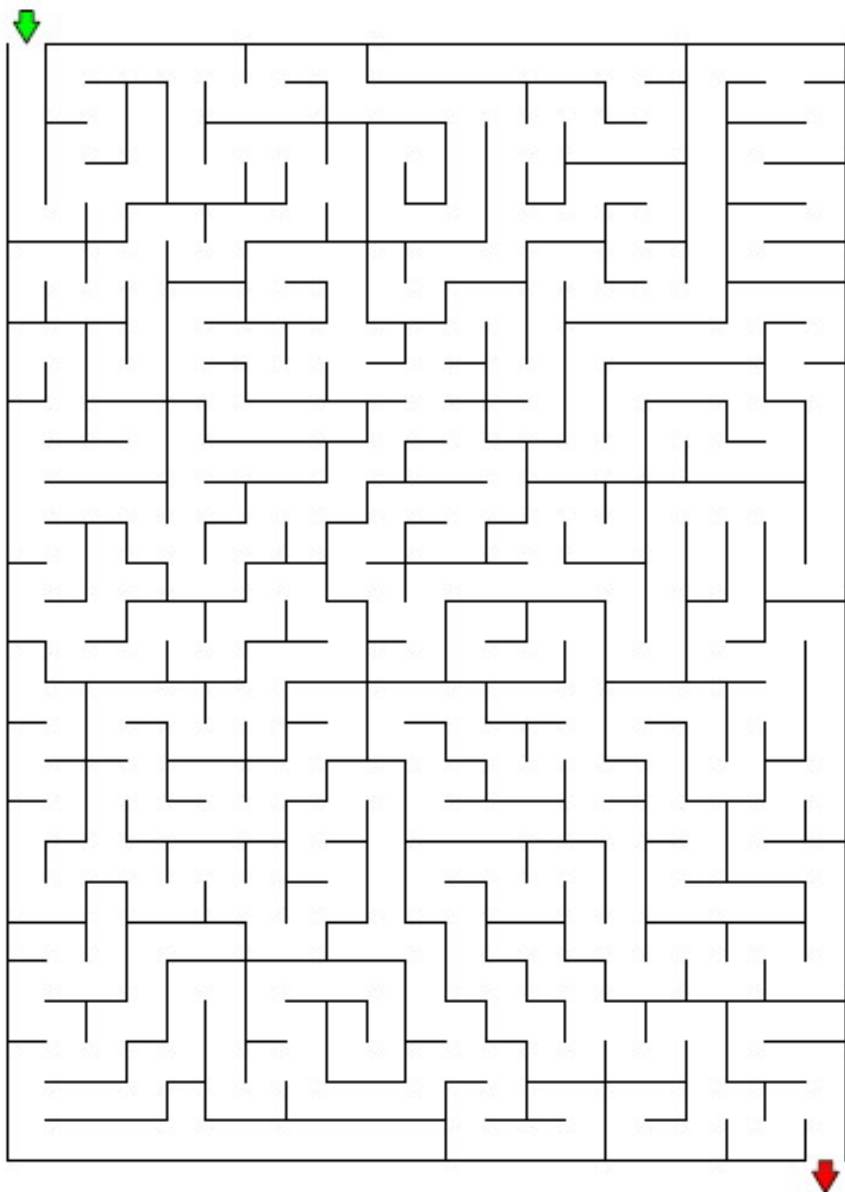
**Sudoku -Medium**

Solution on page 33

		1		6			8	
8			5				7	2
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		3	7	1	5	2		
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Can you find your way out from top to bottom?



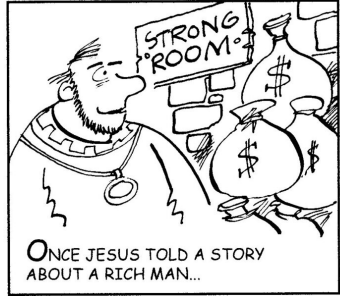


For younger readers.....

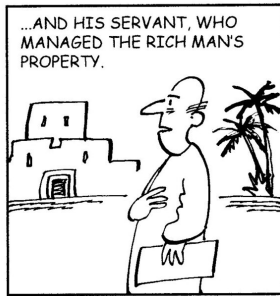
The parable  
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Manager



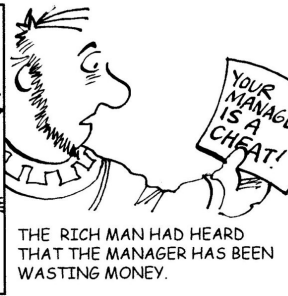
JESUS OFTEN TOLD STORIES WITH HIDDEN MEANINGS



ONCE JESUS TOLD A STORY ABOUT A RICH MAN...



...AND HIS SERVANT, WHO MANAGED THE RICH MAN'S PROPERTY.



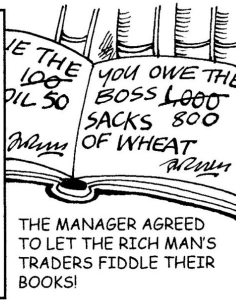
THE RICH MAN HAD HEARD THAT THE MANAGER HAS BEEN WASTING MONEY.



SO HE CALLED THE MANGER TO ACCOUNT FOR HIMSELF!



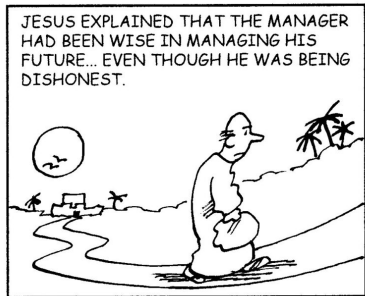
OH NO! I AM GOING TO GET THE SACK!!



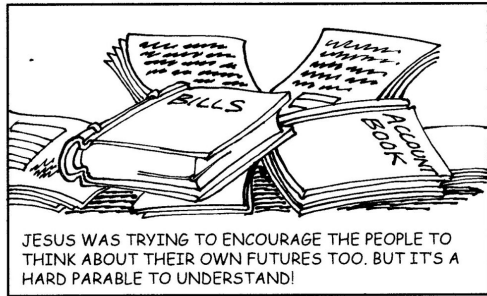
THE MANAGER AGREED TO LET THE RICH MAN'S TRADERS FIDDLE THEIR BOOKS!



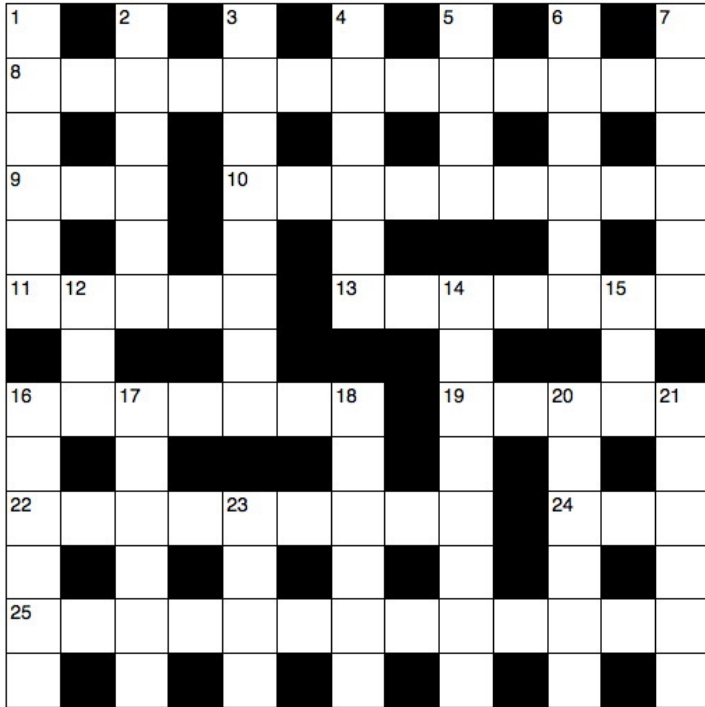
SO THEY ALTERED THEIR DEBTS - AND STAYED FRIENDS WITH THE MANAGER.



JESUS EXPLAINED THAT THE MANAGER HAD BEEN WISE IN MANAGING HIS FUTURE... EVEN THOUGH HE WAS BEING DISHONEST.



JESUS WAS TRYING TO ENCOURAGE THE PEOPLE TO THINK ABOUT THEIR OWN FUTURES TOO. BUT IT'S A HARD PARABLE TO UNDERSTAND!



**Across**

8 Interrogated (Acts 12:19) (5-8)

9 'Burn it in a wood fire on the — heap' (Leviticus 4:12) (3)

10 Tobit, Judith, Baruch and the books of Esdras and the Maccabees are part of it (9)

11 Science fiction (abbrev.) (3-2)

13 Clay pit (anag.) (7)

16 Went to (John 4:46) (7)

19 'Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to — your bodies as living sacrifices' (Romans 12:1) (5)

22 David's plea to God concerning those referred to in 14

Down: 'On — — let them escape' (Psalm 56:7) (2,7)

24 Royal Automobile Club (1,1,1)

25 How the book of Ezekiel refers to God more than 200 times (Ezekiel 2:4) (9,4)

### **Down**

1 Seas (Proverbs 8:24) (6)

2 One of the sons of Eli the priest, killed in battle by the Philistines (1 Samuel 4:11) (6)

3 Specialist in the study of the Muslim religion (8)

4 'Do not rebuke an older man harshly, but — him as if he were your father' (1 Timothy 5:1) (6)

5 One of Esau's grandsons (Genesis 36:11) (4)

6 Taking a chance (colloq.) (2,4)

7 God's instructions to the Israelites concerning grain offerings: ' — salt to — your offerings' (Leviticus 2:13) (3,3)

12 Confederation of British Industry (1,1,1)

14 'All day long they twist my words; they are always — to harm me' (Psalm 56:5) (8)

15 The crowd's reaction to Jesus bringing back to life a widow's son in Nain (Luke 7:16) (3)

16 Disappear (Psalm 104:35) (6)

17 How Jeremiah was likely to die if he wasn't rescued from the cistern where he was imprisoned (Jeremiah 38:9) (6)

18 What the prophets do to a wall, with whitewash (Ezekiel 13:10, RSV) (4,2)

20 Made by a plough (Job 39:10) (6)

21 Noah was relieved when the flood waters continued to — (Genesis 8:5) (6)

23 Jesus gave the Twelve the power and authority to do this to diseases (Luke 9:1) (4)

*Solution on page 33*

*Editor: Tim Lenton looks back on an exceptionally bitter winter.*

## **That Big Freeze of 1955**

Seventy years ago, from early February 1955 and well into March, a Big Freeze took place in Britain. Deep snow and freezing temperatures caused havoc, with many places cut off. The RAF dropped food and medical supplies to affected areas, while thousands of sheep died from exposure.

Although the winters of 1947 and 1963 have attracted more publicity, 1955 saw severe weather in most parts of Britain, as well as in other parts of Europe and North America.

Snow fell in many areas of the UK from 11<sup>th</sup> February onwards, with night frosts gradually worsening and blizzards developing over the north of Scotland, where the RAF scrambled to do several rescues: in Caithness the response by emergency services was known as Operation Snowdrop. An exhausting search for a postman from Thurso, who went missing in the deep snow, eventually led to his being found at a remote farm where he had sought refuge.

Several snowploughs were stranded, and the heavy snow spread gradually south, reaching as far as the Scillies and the Channel Islands. In North Norfolk there were 10ft drifts on the coast road, and Lancashire had its worst storm for 14 years. Devon, Cornwall and the Peak District had similar experiences.

More than 70 roads in Britain were blocked by snow, according to the Automobile Association, and hundreds of vehicles were abandoned in snowdrifts. Many parts of the country were cut off from essential supplies, and rail travel was disrupted. Church attendance was also hit, of course.

## In praise of the humble egg

We love eggs. On average, we eat at least two of them each week, which makes eggs one of Britain's most popular foods. Eggs are very good for you – high in protein, containing all the essential amino acids, rich in the B vitamins, vitamin D and A, and choline, and a source of healthy fats. Eggs are also filling, and with 7.5g of protein in less than 80 calories per egg, there are few other foods that can match them for so much protein per gram. They are also inexpensive and easy to cook. Experts recommend eating one or two eggs a day, and choosing a low-fat way of cooking them, by boiling or poaching. Cooking them in butter is a bit lower in fat than frying them in olive oil. Free-range eggs generally contain more vitamin D.

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*An actual comment left on US Forest Service registration comment cards by backpackers:*

"The coyotes made too much noise last night and kept me awake. Please eradicate these annoying animals."

Editor: Not being able to park is no fun, but neither is getting a fine.

### **No place to park**

It is often hard to find a parking space. So, a lot of us are taking chances – and getting caught. As a nation we were handed six million penalty charge notices in 2023 alone, according to recent research by Confused.com, the insurance comparison website. With 42.3 million driving licences on issue, according to the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA), this suggests that one in seven drivers received a fine for parking offences in 2023.

Rhydian Jones, a spokesman for Confused.com, said: “If you’re unsure whether you can park in a space or not, don’t take the risk, even if it’s only for a few minutes.”

Parking charge notices handed out by local councils can cost up to £100 for parking infringements, although according to Confused.com the average parking fine is £47.

*Parish Pump website*

### **And then.....**

....there was the good Catholic gentleman driving round and round in his local town desperately trying to find a parking place.

“Good Lord”, he cried, “if only you could find me a parking place, I’d say ten Hail Mary’s a day for a month!”

He decided to try one last tour of the market square when, lo and behold, he came upon a free space. Joyfully he called out “It’s OK Lord, you can stop looking for I have found one!”

## All in the month of February

It was:

125 years ago, on 27<sup>th</sup> Feb 1900 that the Labour Party was founded in the UK.

90 years ago, on 22<sup>nd</sup> Feb 1935 that US President Franklin D Roosevelt banned aircraft from flying over the White House – because the noise kept him awake at night. The ban remains in place today, but mainly now for security reasons.

80 years ago, on 21<sup>st</sup> Feb 1945 that Eric Liddell, Scottish athlete, died. An Olympic gold medallist in 1924 (400 m), he had withdrawn from the 100m heat because it was held on a Sunday and entered the 400m instead. The story is featured in the film *Chariots of Fire*. (Liddell died in a WWII internment camp in China, aged 43.)

75 years ago, on 8<sup>th</sup> Feb 1950 that the world's first payment by credit card took place. The founders of Diners Club (now Diners Club International) used it to pay their restaurant bill at Majero's Cabin Grill in New York City.

65 years ago, on 8<sup>th</sup> Feb 1960 that Queen Elizabeth II issued an Order-in-Council stating that she and her family would be known as the House of Windsor, and that her descendants would use the surname Mountbatten-Windsor.

50 years ago, on 11<sup>th</sup> Feb 1975 that Margaret Thatcher became the first female leader of the Conservative Party. She became Britain's first female Prime Minister in 1979.

30 years ago, on 2<sup>nd</sup> Feb 1995 that the leaders of Egypt, Jordan, Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation held an emergency summit in Cairo, where they reaffirmed their commitment to the Middle East peace process.

*Continued on page 33*



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Continued from page 31

Also 30 years ago, on 23<sup>rd</sup> Feb 1995 that James Herriot, veterinary surgeon and best-selling author, died. Best known for his autobiographical book *All Creature Great and Small*, which was adapted into a popular TV series.

20 years ago, on 7<sup>th</sup> Feb 2005 that yachtswoman Ellen MacArthur broke the record for the fastest solo circumnavigation of the globe, gaining international renown.

Also 20 years ago, on 16<sup>th</sup> Feb 2005 that the Kyoto Protocol came into effect. The international treaty obliges industrialised nations to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions.

*Parish Pump website*

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Notice in a Laundromat:

Automatic Washing Machines.

Please remove all your clothes when the light goes out.

---

Solution to puzzle on  
page 22

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

Solution to puzzle  
on page 26

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

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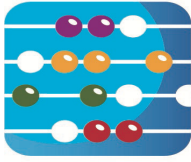
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