

The Messenger

November 2025

The Parish Of Dursley



60p each or £6 annually

The Ewelme Benefice

**The parish of Dursley
and**

the parish of Uley with Owlpen and Nympsfield

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NOVEMBER 2025



A Message from the Editors

Dear Readers

Welcome to our November edition.

November is a month of Remembering. With the darker evenings and Christmas just around the corner, don't miss the Christmas Market to get ahead with your shopping.

If you have anything to say please let us know, we are always open to new ideas, we also like photos of events in the town.

From Valerie and Judith (editors)

Front Cover: theme for 2025

'In and around St James' –
Poppy Cross in St James'.

Photo by Clare White

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**DEADLINE FOR DECEMBER 2025 ISSUE
IS SUNDAY 16th NOVEMBER 2025**

Revd Ian writes...



Dear Friends,

The poem *To Autumn* by John Keats begins, "*Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness, Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun; Time is marching'* and how many people have said to you already, "it's only (....?) days to Christmas... where has the time gone!?"

Sometimes of course we can be in such a hurry that we miss the things around us that matter. Keats makes the point beautifully in his poem, as we ponder the bounty that autumn can bring. The colours this year are spectacular and the amount of fruit on the trees amazing. Our freezers at home are crammed with apples and damsons. Sheila has plans for jams and pies!

We are approaching the end of the year and there will be time to reflect on what 2025 has brought us. I imagine we will be thinking about... Is there going to be peace at last in the Middle East? What of the war in Ukraine? Conflict..is it inevitable? Where are the peacemakers?

Apart from bonfire night, fireworks and Guy Fawkes, November is the time when collectively much of the world remembers those lost in conflicts, particularly in the 20th century. On November 11th and Remembrance Sunday we will pause, reflect and remember those who died in the major wars and other conflicts. We will speak the names of lost generations and wonder what might have been. We will look at young men and women's faces. Family portraits, of such innocence and promise and wonder what might they have achieved.

My Uncle Ron, Ronald Gordon, is one such portrait. November 20th 1944 is the day we as family remember him. Piloting a Lancaster he, along with 6 of his crew, died over Homberg, Germany and is now buried on the Dutch/German Border at Reichswald Forest War Cemetery. He smiles out from the portrait on the wall. In his uniform, handsome and proud, he was just 21 years of age. What would he have done with his life? My enduring sadness is that I never got to meet him.

I have spoken of colour and the beauty of autumn. The promise that even in the process of dying and shutting down, as winter approaches, there will be new life. New shoots will appear and the cycle will once again begin, the cycle of life. This is the beautiful and eternal resurrection we are privileged to experience.

The one evocative colour of this season is red. The poppy will be seen everywhere. Worn by many in remembrance The first verse of the poem written by John McRae has the last word:

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.

Yours in Christ

Ian

Encouraging as the news is from the Middle East as I write, my hope is
that it will be long lasting,
enduring and bring freedom and hope for the future.



PASTORAL CARE

If people are in need, unwell,
at home or in hospital
Please contact the Revd Dr Juliet Jensen.
Tel: 01453 350810 or 07776 910890



SAFEGUARDING

Heather Arnold is the Safeguarding Officer
for the Parish of Dursley
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Email: arnoldheather@icloud.com





Evewme Benefice
+
Service of Remembering
Sunday 2nd November 2025
4pm
at St James, Dursley.
A service to remember loved ones.
All are welcome.

Lest We Forget
+
**Remembrance
Day Service**
**Sunday 9th
November 3pm**
St James the Great, Dursley
All Welcome

**CHRISTMAS MARKET AT
ST JAMES, DURSLEY
FRIDAY 28TH NOVEMBER 2025
4-7PM**



**Tombola, Water into
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Wine etc.**



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locally with unique gifts.**



In conjunction with Dursley's Christmas lights switch on.

November Thoughts from the Office..... by Clare White

Since my last instalment I've travelled many thousand miles to an incredible country. Australia was more than I could have ever wished for. Everything we visited was so interesting and beautiful.

The sound scape of the different birds that you constantly hear was just the start.

We saw Cockatoos, Parrots, Rosellas, Parakeets, Kookaburras, Fairy Wrens, Lyre Birds, Fruit Bats, Possum; all in the wild.

And the pièce de resistance was watching Hump Back Whales migrating.

They performed for us in the bay as they taught their babies how to leap from the water to clean themselves and knock the barnacles off. It was spectacular, I feel so lucky to have witnessed the performances.

I feel very privileged to have been able to go so far I never imagined it would be somewhere I would ever see.

The beauty of some of the places we visited reminds me about the reflective worship service that was enjoyed in St James on Sunday 19th October, the service was entitled "*Living Faithfully in the time of creation*".

The three biblical insights Revd David gave us were –

Creation is a source of wonder; Creation worships the maker and Humanity is charged with responsibility.

Matthew reminds us to - *Look at the birds of the sky... consider the lilies in the field... (Matthew 6. 26-28)*

Australia offers vast areas of wonder, from it's animals, to it's flora and fauna. The Blue mountains are the size of Switzerland – that's really difficult to perceive.

Creation worships the maker and thanking our Lord for the beautiful creation. Even if we now recognise that science had quite a hand in the making of our world, God's hand in developing everything may have taken more than 7 days, but he reminds us that it was all given to us. Poignantly this passage from Psalm 148 encompasses all that we experienced.



A Koala

Praise the Lord from the earth, you sea monsters and ocean depths...all mountains and hills, all the fruit trees and cedars, wild animals and all cattle, creeping things and winged birds (Psalm 148.7-10)

Humanity is most definitely charged with the responsibility of caring for our universe. For too long humans have abused the world around us, mostly due to greed and making money from the natural world. It is a delicate path we take when we use too much of nature's goodness and forget how easy it is to lose such beauty.

Australia is constantly reminding it's visitors about bio diversity, but it does still remove so much of it's natural minerals from the ground. The economy still plays too big a part in control of the earth.

Last weekend we went to buy apples in Newent, the area used to be covered in orchards, but we saw that so many of the fields are now covered in solar farms. It is right to find ecological ways to power our country, but it uses so much of our land to achieve this. It forces us as a nation to import food, buy foreign apples and eat foods that shouldn't be eaten out of season. Flavour and goodness is lost, eating seasonally is so much better for all of us. But we are now spoiled and expect strawberries on Christmas day, even if they have flown half way across the world and taste of water.

In Jeremiah we read - *Your wrongdoing has upset nature's order, and your sins have kept away her bounty. (Jeremiah 5.25)*

Let us all try to remember that if we lose species by our abuse of the earth that they are gone forever, no one will get to see a whale with its front fins flapping together as it breaches the sea, or taste how delicious a freshly picked cox's apple is. A sanitised world would be boring and unhealthy and not what our Lord ever wished for us.



I wax very lyrically about Australia because it did fill me with awe and wonder, but Britain IS a wonderful island too, it's just on a much smaller scale and there are no cute koalas.

I thank God for the opportunities he has given me and hope that we will go again one day – I had better start saving!

A Rainbow Lorikeet



The Waratah, State
flower of NSW



Sydney Opera
House at Sunset



Bronte Beach





ST JAMES FREE BOOK STALL *by Clive Orchard*

Thank you, everyone, for continuing to support us in so many ways. "The Books" would never have been so successful without the input from you all.

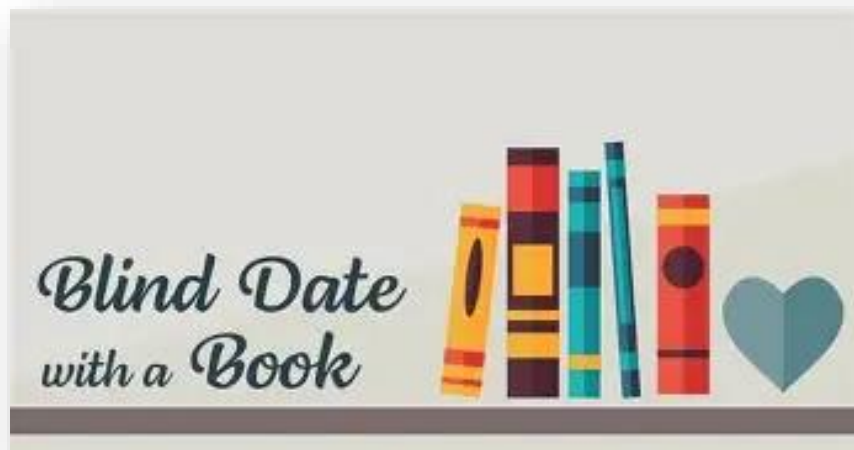


To show our thanks, and to celebrate success, we are throwing a party in the Parish Centre on the 8th November after we clear the books away at 12.00pm. If you have helped in any way, if you are thinking of joining us, or if you just want to meet us then please feel free to come along. You would be most welcome.

This month, on 8th November, we shall be supporting the local charity Dursley Good Neighbours. Last month we were able to send £200 to the Cotswold Vale Talking Newspaper. Thank you.

It's never too late to branch out and have a new experience. Have you ever experienced the thrill of a blind date? We invite you to come along to the Christmas Market on 28th November and have a blind

date. You never know where it will lead you and you may even end up in a long lasting relationship. We have a Christmas Table at the market with Christmassy books, books ideal for presents and the "blind date" - a book wrapped in



glossy paper (not 'plain brown' as it's festive) hiding the title and author with just a short descriptive sentence on the wrapper. Come along and treat yourself to this "blind date". You can always come and thank us for the pleasure, or grumble at us for the waste, next month!

See you on the 8th and 28th



MUSIC NEWS FOR NOVEMBER

An unprecedented thing happened on Friday 19th September; the choir rehearsal was cancelled! No, it wasn't because lack of interest; the parish centre was too cold, or that the choirmaster decided he was too tired to turn up, it was quite simply that the Gesualdo Six were giving a concert at St Mary's Church, Thornbury and so many members of St James' choir wanted to attend that a useful rehearsal was just not possible! As it turned out, St Mary's was full to capacity (with heat and excellent lighting!) and the singers (featuring our own Guy James) were on excellent form with a programme "The English in Europe" which featured music from the 14th and 15th centuries. The "Six" have certainly made a name for themselves, as they are truly "international" with a tour of America, followed by concerts in Germany, Finland and Luxembourg all before Christmas!

On the 20th September I was asked to accompany a talented young soloist as part of a concert given by the Risca Male Voice Choir at Christ the King church in Thornbury. It was an excellent example of how first impressions can be wrong! The choir were elderly with a few walking sticks and a frame or two and quite a few hearing aids. But when they began to sing, the years fell away and the sound was absolutely wonderful! The conductor (decades younger than most of the choristers) had such amazing control, it was wonderful to watch. I later learned that the choir had won the 1st prize at the Welsh National Eisteddfod beating all the prestigious choirs like the Treorchy, Pendyrus, Pontarddulais etc.

A rather different repertoire to the Gesualdo Six, but in their own way every bit as good!

The following Saturday, 27th September, was the Coffee, Cake and Music organ recital and I was so pleased that so many friends and family responded to the invitation to share the recital (which coincided with my birthday) and the buffet lunch. It was one of those occasions where it is impossible to manage to speak to everyone, but from what I gathered, it was all well received. Even my non musical friends managed to sit still through 33 minutes of playing! It was a really memorable occasion, and a huge thanks to Barbie; who actually hijacked what I suggested – a glass of wine and a few nibbles after the recital..... Thanks to everyone who made the day such a success – especially those who cleared up and had the church ready for Sunday in record time. What a team!

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If anyone wants a 5' grand piano, we have one to spare! The Choir Room now has a "new" piano, kindly donated to the church by Jo Downing's family in her memory. It has a heavier touch and makes a more brassy sound than its predecessor, so will be good for "note bashing"! The old piano, renowned for its ivories leaping off the keys during rehearsals, is stored in the back room of the parish centre, and with a little tlc and a good glue on the key ivories will make a useful piano for someone. Any takers?

We are pleased to welcome Sarah Nelson to sing Soprano. Sarah is an experienced singer who, like several of our choir, is a member of the Tyndale Choral Society. However, there is still plenty of room in the choir stalls for more singers.....

2025 is National Play the Organ Year. Sponsored by the Royal College of Organists and the Royal School of Church Music, we are being encouraged to have an open console to allow anyone ("regardless of musical ability"... really?). So on Saturday November 22nd the organ will be available to play from 1.30pm -3.30pm. At 2.00pm I will join in a country-wide performance of Handel's Largo. If you know anyone who might be interested, please spread the word.

Music for November

2nd am Be Still for the Presence – arr How
Mass of the Creator – Sanders

9th am Thou Knowest Lord – Purcell
Hereford Mass – Shephard

(Remembrance)

pm Greater Love – Ireland

16th am Informal Worship

23rd am Let their Celestial Concerts all Unite – Handel
Stanford in C

30th am Matins Responsory - Palestrina
Missa Aeterna Christi – Palestrina

(Advent)

pm Advent Carols

ST JAMES-THE-GREAT



DURSLEY

COME AND PLAY OUR SPLENDID ORGAN

Saturday 22nd November 2025

from 1.30pm to 3.30pm

Join us to hear - and play - our remarkable pipe organ, aka 'the King of Instruments'. There will be a short demonstration followed by the opportunity to play this remarkable instrument – open to all, regardless of musical experience or ability!

Part of the Royal College of Organists "Play the Organ Year"



Julius and Dora Children's Centre, North West Kenya.

Christine
Morgan, being
a Trustee of
the above
orphanage

was raising
much
needed
funds
with a

fun Quiz. The

Winners were the Bell Ringers,
Second, a mixed Team, which
included the photographer

Lyn James. Thanks to the generosity
of so many who attended or
donated, it raised an incredible
£750! Many thanks to all of you.
The next quiz will be at 7 pm on
Sat 17th January 2026 in the
Parish Centre. Please let Chris
Morgan know if you would like to
attend.



Chris Pengelly

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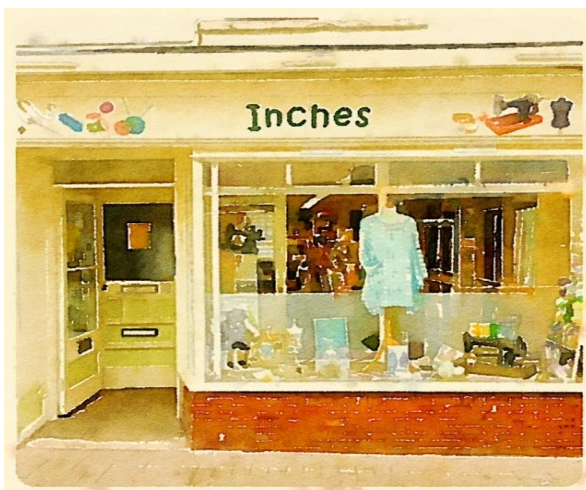
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Love and Loss



The journey from Ireland had been plainly uneventful in the physical consideration of events passing, but was greatly turbulent in the matter of the terrain of emotional recollection. As sea-ward views opened and the port receded, he felt drawn towards his obligation's purpose, but equally, in the same moment, drawn back to homeward ties and obligations. It was a journey into past choices in which the main elements could not be established as independent of family, station and obligation. Therefore, they had had hardly a slender hope of a shared destiny and the years had proved they were not more than acquaintances.

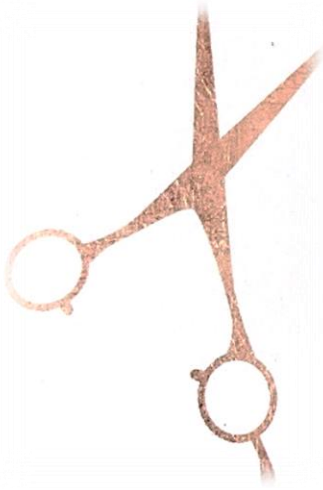
When the recent news had arrived, he put aside papers pertaining to the current court case over which he was presiding, and asked his assistant to make the arrangements. Now, as his gaze ventured towards England, he reflected that time and tide had moved them to opposite sides. He had matrimony - more than one in time - which had greatly engaged him. Whilst in his profession, he had risen to the highest office in the land. Whilst she was engaged at her scripture, he had had the world at his feet and could travel with it, as he would now do for her and her family.

As the English shore came into view, he reflected that it is a truth universally unacknowledged, that of the different kinds of love available to persuade the heart, there is not the means to predict which kind would befall any particular person, and certainly neither he nor her had been excluded from that condition of uncertainty.

Elizabeth Oakley

A Dursley Writer

Jane Austen never married. When she was twenty she met Mr. Thomas Lefroy, afterwards Chief Justice of Ireland. He came into Hampshire one Christmas on a visit to his aunt. Jane's letters show that she was very taken with him. It is suggested by historians that their stations in life were too unequal and the match could not progress. Upon learning of Jane Austen's death (18 July 1817), Lefroy travelled from Ireland to England to pay his respects to the British author.



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November 2025



(Joining Zoom details on Ewelme Benefice website)

Sunday 2nd November – All Saints Sunday

10am Parish Holy Communion at St James
4pm All Souls Service at St James

Wednesday 5th November

6pm Evening Prayer via Zoom

Thursday 6th November

9am Morning Prayer in St James
10am Holy Communion at St James

Saturday 8th November

9.30am Bellringing

Sunday 9th November – Remembrance Sunday

10am Parish Holy Communion at St James
3pm Remembrance Parade and Service at St James

Tuesday 11th November

7.30pm PCC Dursley at St James

Wednesday 12th November

6pm Evening Prayer via Zoom

Thursday 13th November

9am Morning Prayer in St James
10am Holy Communion at St James
11.15am Communion at Henlow Court

Saturday 15th November

9-12noon Bring and Take Event
7.30pm Tyndale Choral Society - Handel's Messiah - at St James

Sunday 16th November – Remembrance Sunday

8am Said Holy Communion at St James
10am Service of The Word
10am "Shine" family worship at Dursley Academy CE School

Wednesday 19th November

6pm Evening Prayer via Zoom

Thursday 20th November

9am Morning Prayer in St James
10am Holy Communion at St James

Saturday 22nd November

9-12 Kim Ward's pupils practice at St James

Sunday 23rd November – Christ the King

10am Benefice Holy Communion at **St James, Dursley**
Safeguarding Sunday service.

Wednesday 26th November

6pm Evening Prayer via Zoom

Thursday 27th November

9am Morning Prayer in St James

10am Holy Communion at St James

Friday 28th November

4-7pm St James Christmas Market

Saturday 29th November

9-12noon Kim ward's pupils practice at St James

7pm Dursley Rock and Pop Choir Concert at St James

Sunday 30th November – Advent Sunday

10am Parish Holy Communion

6.30pm Advent Carol Service at St James

T4U

Shoe Box Appeal 2025

The shoeboxes will be heading to Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia, Bosnia and Romania.

T4U work with in country partners like the Red Cross to help us find children that are most in need.

Suggested items for boxes -

For boys or girls: Toothbrush & toothpaste, hair accessories/brush, soap & face cloth, stationery & paper, gloves, hat & scarf, new socks/underwear, a soft toy, game, puzzle, small musical instruments, toy vehicles, small ball, sweets (use by date from June), a photo and message from yourself.

The Home box: Candles, cooking utensils, plastic containers, t-towels, washing up cloths, hairbrush, small toiletries, bowls & cups, small decoration, soap, clothes pegs, headscarves, new socks and underwear, jewellery, new makeup.

The boxes need to be returned by 16th November.

The cost of the delivery is £3.50, please put in the envelope provided. Caroline Marrow has leaflets or you can download your own - link - <https://teams4u.com/shoebox-resources/>

There are some ready wrapped empty boxes in the Parish Centre.



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DIGNITY
FUNERAL DIRECTORS

David Vonberg writes.....



"After over five years - some 63 contributions - the time has come to bring to an end the series "Culture and Me". Started at the height of Covid as a way of getting to know people better at a time of isolation, it has continued as a source of interest and support. First of all I want to thank all those who over the years have willingly shared their hopes and aspirations and inspirations so generously for the "Messenger." I have found every article of interest in all sorts of ways and I hope that you the readership have also benefitted from them too."

Many thanks from Valerie and Judith for all your contributions, we most certainly have found them interesting. (Not sure about the last one!!)

LET GO AND LET GOD.....by Jennifer Kendrick



Nobody said life would be a walk in the park! I should have known from past experiences that there is a time to Stop! Look! Listen! as opposed to blundering on oblivious to the Lord's petitions. So, the last little while has been a huge wake-up call!

Surrender is a word that has been sloshing round in my head, like flotsam on a choppy sea! Hard to identify without taking time and care to look more closely and listen more acutely!

I have always been a "busy body" which in my book meant....doing unto others according to my agenda and their perceived needs!.....! I was unable, ready or willing to consider any other way! I thought I was invincible and being 88, no worry!

To relinquish that role has not been easy. Then I remember that to survive the perils of a rip tide, it is necessary to stop, do absolutely nothing but go with the flow and the current will eventually and gently take you to calm waters, albeit away from the safety of the shore! Counter-intuitive and uncomfortable but reality!

How I wish I could turn the clock back, not to be young again, but to understand the privilege of growing old! I am now spending quiet time to remember the past, taking extra care of every new day in anticipation of embracing each new tomorrow!



Churches
Together

I am writing to give you an update on the proceedings of our recent AGM. As with most things in life, there's good news and not-so-good news.

Rev'd David Vonberg has very kindly agreed to act as Convenor for the coming year.

Sadly, we have yet to find a Deputy or Convenor Elect. If you would like to join the committee with a view to filling this role (or none), we would very much like to hear from you. It is good to have continuity, Please see below and attached for the list of committee members for the coming year, along with a list of church representatives for CTCDD. I would be most grateful if you could let me know of any necessary updates or corrections.

The AGM was followed by an excellent presentation by Rev'd Simon Helme telling of his experience earlier this year walking the Camino across Northern Spain to Santiago de Compostela. He illustrated his talk with many photographs depicting the sometimes rugged scenery, the varied accommodation available for pilgrims, the long trail crossing wide open spaces or beside a main road, the trail-side shrines and the majestic architecture of the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela. Those present showed their appreciation with a warm round of applause.

It is hoped to arrange Carol Singing (+ beer) below the Market Hall at 7 pm on Sunday 14th December; it was a joyous occasion last year, and I am sure will be this coming December if the weather allows!

Christian Unity week is 18th - 25th January and all being well there will be a joint service either on the 18th or 25th.

I will confirm these arrangements next month after an Enabling Committee meeting,

The sting is in the tail! **Subscriptions of £25 become due at the AGM.** I would be most grateful if you could make your treasurers aware. Bank details for payment are below.

Officers and Committee

Convenor; Rev David Vonberg.

Deputy-convenor; vacant

Immediate Past Convenor; Rev Graham Stacey

Treasurer; Prue Vernon.

Secretary; Richard Gwyer.

Website/Publicity Secretary; Sally Hall.

Christian Aid representative; Lin Blakeway.

Walk of Witness; Emma Irvine.

Friends at Christmas; Nicky Yudin.

Enabling Committee members; Christine Wetton, Rev Richard Morgan.

Church representatives 2025-26

Cam Methodists; TBA.

Dursley Methodists; Christine Wetton; Pauline Chidlaw.

St Dominic's RC Church, Dursley; Colin Archer.

St James the Great; Rev Richard Morgan.

St Giles, St Bartholomew's and Holy Cross; Prue Vernon.

St George's, Cam and St Cyr's, Stinchcombe; Nicky Yudin, Carrie Thould.

Dursley Tabernacle; Jane Bilous, Ronnie Harding.

Quarry Chapel; Lin Blakeway.

St Bartholomew's; Lower Cam; Barbara Davis.

St Bartholomew's; Coaley; Barbara Davis.

3Cs Upper Cam; vacant.

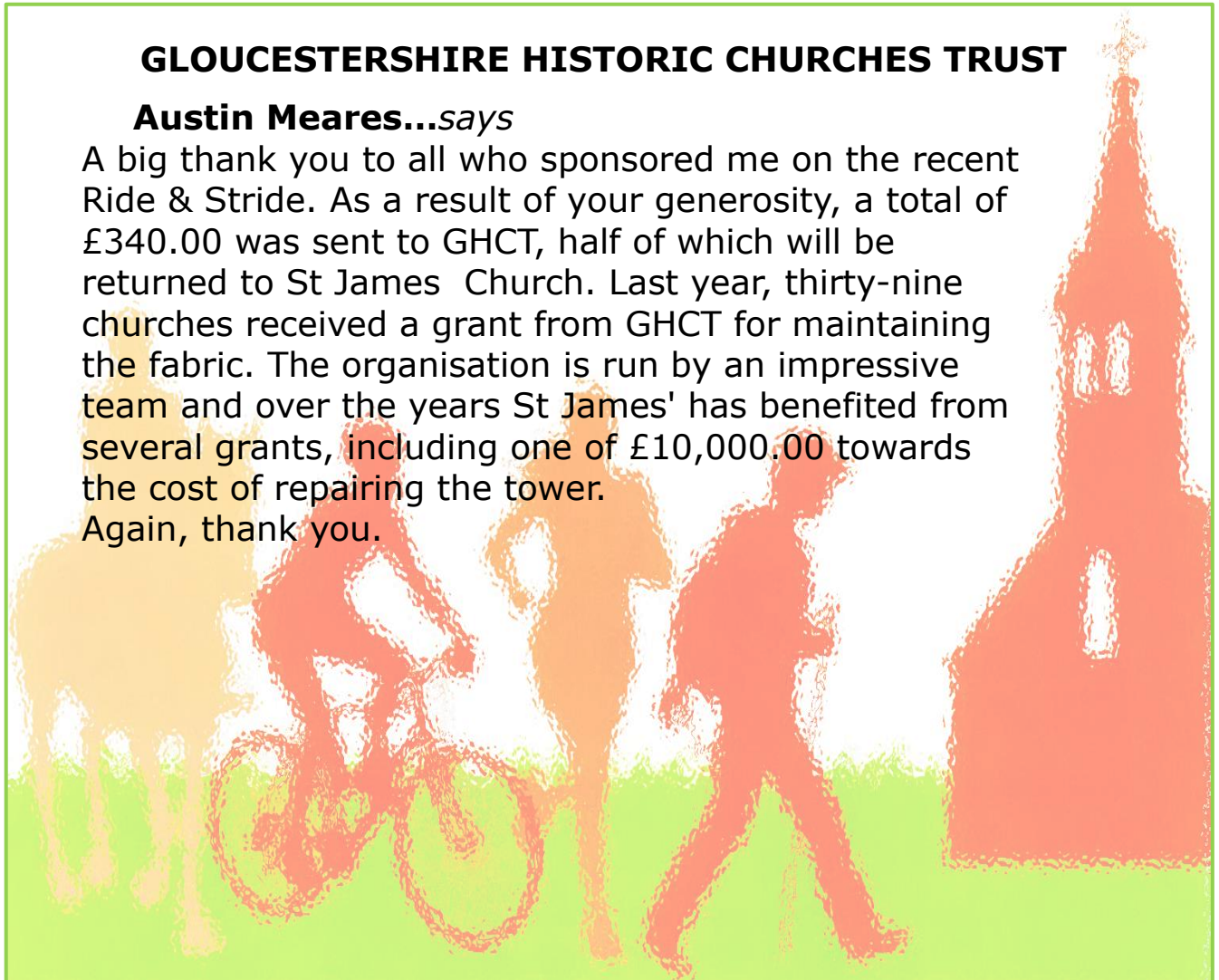
St Joseph's, Nympsfield; Richard Gwyer.

GLOUCESTERSHIRE HISTORIC CHURCHES TRUST

Austin Meares...says

A big thank you to all who sponsored me on the recent Ride & Stride. As a result of your generosity, a total of £340.00 was sent to GHCT, half of which will be returned to St James Church. Last year, thirty-nine churches received a grant from GHCT for maintaining the fabric. The organisation is run by an impressive team and over the years St James' has benefited from several grants, including one of £10,000.00 towards the cost of repairing the tower.

Again, thank you.



Green money?

We all know that we can put some of our money to good use by donating to charitable causes, but what if we could also make a positive impact by how we do banking and where we keep our savings?



October 6th to 12th was Good Money Week, promoted by the UK Sustainable Investment and Finance Association (UKSIF) in order to highlight the sustainable and ethical options available for banking, pensions, savings and investments that are good for people, the planet and our pockets.

I joined two online webinars organised by JustMoney Movement, which provides ethical finance resources for individuals and churches (justmoney.org.uk) to find out more.

The first webinar covered banking - I learned about the Big Bank Switch campaign, coordinated by JustMoney Movement, Operation Noah, Just Love and Laudatory Si' Movement, which is encouraging Christians to take action with their finances to care for God's creation by switching their current and savings accounts to a more ethical bank. The Bank.Green website has a tool for checking how green your bank is (spoiler - the biggest high street banks don't score very well!). I also heard about JustMoney's Greener, Fairer Banking Guide, produced for churches and charities, which compares four of the more ethical banks offering accounts suitable for them (CAF Bank, The Cooperative Bank, Reliance Bank and Unity Trust Bank, in case any church treasurers or PCC members are reading this...).

The second webinar discussed greener and more ethical ways to invest money, avoiding certain sectors, such as oil and gas production or arms manufacturing, which may not align with our values. There was a presentation by Ethex (www.ethex.org.uk), "a people-powered movement to make money do good", which helps individuals wanting to invest in ethical UK organisations, such as sustainable farms and clean energy projects. A second presentation featured the investment platform Energise Africa (www.energiseafrica.com), which was set up by Ethex in response to a request from the UK government. It offers opportunities to invest in local businesses bringing clean, affordable energy access to people living off-grid in sub-Saharan Africa. Reliable access to solar-powered electricity benefits the health, education and economic prosperity of rural communities by replacing polluting diesel generators, enabling children to do their homework

after dark and improving the efficiency of small businesses. There was also a contribution from Community Energy England (communityenergyengland.org), a not-for-profit dedicated to helping community energy organisations in this country create and implement new projects, such as putting solar panels on school roofs. Of course, investment through any of the above organisations, while very well regulated, is not without risk, and JustMoney stressed that they were not qualified to give financial advice. Anyone inspired to invest more ethically was strongly advised to speak to a professional financial advisor before taking any action.

Good Money Week certainly got me thinking seriously about the impact our money can have, for good or ill, and opened my eyes to new possibilities.



Investing in a Fairer, Greener World

Four small green plants with yellow flowers are growing out of stacks of coins. The stacks of coins increase in height from left to right.

ENERGISE AFRICA

THE BIG BANK SWITCH

An illustration of a church with several hands holding green banknotes in front of it, set against a circular background with a globe.

The UK's **big banks** are financing companies that are fuelling the **climate crisis** and **harming nature**.*

Join the movement of Christians switching to greener banks.

JUST LOVE

OPERATION NOAH



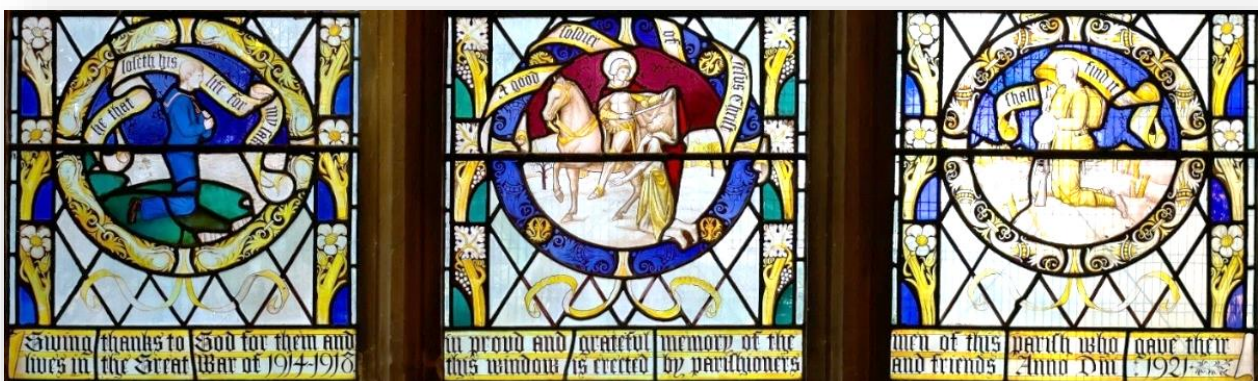
Canon Richard Morgan writes....

In our September edition of the Messenger, we used, for Michaelmas, the whole West window of the South side of the Church, with its picture of St. Michael trampling down the dragon, the devil. It was put up in 1921 as a war memorial for those who died in the First World War, as the inscription at the bottom says. It and its companion window in that corner of the church are fine reminders of angels, but I'm not sure it was a good war memorial. It could be taken as Michael representing us, and the dragon as representing our enemies. In a war, people naturally see themselves as good and the enemy as evil, and there must be some truth in this in a justifiable war. But to see ourselves as angels and the other side as devils is seldom if ever justified. In the Second World war, Hitler was indeed fairly diabolical, but our ally, Stalin, was very grim too. And we and our allies did some grim things. The bombing of Hamburg in revenge for the blitz aimed to drop bombs all round the whole city so that those in it would be destroyed by fire. And the nuclear bombs on Japan did not spare women and children. And the issues that caused World War One were more ambiguous. There were enormous evils on both sides, but, apart from the Turks, no one was attempting genocide. Austria Hungary pushed Serbia into war by making enormous and humiliating demands when a Serb terrorist had assassinated the heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne. The Serbs had been coveting Bosnia, and for generations afterwards we tended to think the Austrians were withholding it from a Serbia it wanted to join. But at the end of the 20th Century Bosnia fought for independence from Serbia! Russia felt it must back Serbia or lose its great power status. Germany, Austria Hungary's ally, had assumed Russia's ally, France, would join in against Germany, which had annexed Alsace Lorraine from France in 1870. So Germany's only war plan was to defeat France quickly before Russia could get its war underway, and the plan involved attacking neutral Belgium as the route to defeat France. We felt we ought to back France as we had treaty links, but short of an alliance. But we were treaty bound to protect Belgium, so we joined in. The war was as much about fears as ambition for the major countries, and its causes are ambiguous for both sides. Does this echo in both Israelis and Palestinians today? All wars are monstrous, and usually neither side is angelic! Nor is either side

usually just demonic. We might see Archangel Michael as defeating not one side or the other, but as overcoming war itself and its causes, and hatreds. Our war memorials can remind us to pray for peace in today's wars as we remember those who have died in past wars. We need to do what we can to work for peace and care for those who suffer from war's evils.

It is right to remember those killed in wars. As our window is from 1921, it pictures a soldier and sailor. Had it been from 1945, it would include an airman.

The central figure at the bottom of our window pictured here is St. Martin of Tours. He used to be a well known saint, and his day, November 11th, Martinmas, was well known. In past centuries, when farming was less developed, it was necessary to cull the animals before winter, as they could not be fed through it. So people spoke of Michaelmas beef when the cull was in September. With progress, the cull moved to November, and people had Martinmas beef. This isn't necessary now. And Martinmas was overshadowed and largely forgotten as 11th November became Armistice Day. In 1921 it was still remembered, so Martin was put in the window. But he is a very suitable saint for Remembrance tide, as he was a soldier in early life. The picture shows the famous story of Martin. Seeing a poor, naked beggar, he cut his cloak in half and gave it to the beggar. The window does not quite tell the story as it is in early sources. There, Martin had already given nearly everything away – the cloak was all he had to wear. And the beggar was presumably naked! But those producing our window were too prim to show that! In the story, Jesus appeared to Martin in a dream and told him that, in clothing the beggar, he had clothed Jesus. Read Matthew 25.31-46, which says, 'As you did it to the least of my brothers, you did it to me.' So Martin calls us to generosity instead of the hostility of wars. He went on to found a monastery and then to be bishop of the city of Tours, in what is now France.



Pictured by David Smith, outside St James church on Saturday 4 October. The 5 Churches Walk linking the 5 original Churches in the benefice was led by Adrian Mather.



November Acrostic Poems....by Sally Hayward

Night time falls that much earlier
Our evenings are
Very long; curtains are drawn across;
Everlasting
Memories are brought up
Enabling us to
Remember about the past Year of 2025.



November we remember
Our loved ones
Veterans who fought in the War
Each one is named
Making their way
Back home; with services and wishing it would
End
Reunited in God, Amen.



Awe, light and cheer at Festival of Wonder 2025

Anticipation is building for Stroud's annual Festival of Wonder, held in St Laurence Church: a celebration designed to help recapture a sense of awe and wonder of God's creation, bringing light, cheer and wonder to the darkness of winter.

Now in its fourth year, the festival will run from 21 to 23 November, bringing together both professional and amateur performances of music, drama, comedy, and circus. There will also be workshops, children's activities, a creche, a reflective space, the famous Wall of Wonder, food, warmth, and community.

Almost all the events are free and suitable for all ages.

Bryan Court, chair of the Festival of Wonder operations team, said:

"The festival is a gift to our community and the ethos behind it is to encourage a reimagining of what Church could be like, and certainly how the church building might be used to the benefit the whole community. Unfortunately, a lot of people consider church buildings as dark and unfriendly spaces – somewhere you go for funerals or weddings, and often where fundraising is a predominant feature. Our hope is the festival will challenge some of these misconceptions and may just spark in some people the beginning of a journey of faith."

One of the highlights is a trapeze performance inside the church. "It really does encourage people to view the church in a fresh way," Bryan said.

This year's storyline is based on the parable of the Pearl of Great Price, symbolising the pricelessness of the Kingdom of Heaven.

Inclusivity is a key aspect of the festival, with two free Relaxed Performances for people with additional needs.



"For these two shows, the circus performance is adjusted in a way that makes it accessible to those whose needs are special, whether it be a physical disability or a neurodiverse factor where sometimes just the sheer excitement of being in a crowded place can be overwhelming," Bryan said.

Throughout the weekend there will be chaplains and a quiet space for reflection so that people can make sense of all that they have seen and experienced.

The festival partners with the **Diocese of Gloucester**, receiving support through the LIFE Together Fund and other donors.

Kathryn Warner, Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Officer, said: "Festival of Wonder is very grateful for the funding they've received from the Diocesan LIFE Together Fund to both invest in delivering this year's event, and in developing opportunities to grow and develop over the coming years, in partnership with colleagues across the diocese. They have also received funding from Sylvanus Lysons towards this year's event."

Visit the Festival of Wonder website at <https://festivalofwonder.org>.

Historic chapel revived as 'The Shepherd's Hut' in Little Sodbury

An abandoned chapel in Little Sodbury has been restored and reopened as 'The Shepherd's Hut', offering traditional Book of Common Prayer (BCP) Holy Communion services and new outreach initiatives.

The once-derelict chapel has been transformed with comfortable seating, a kitchenette, and donated furnishings, including a locally painted image of *The Shepherd* symbolising its renewed purpose.

During restoration, the **Revd Thomas Powe** discovered 19th-century chapel minutes which expressed hope that the building would be used in future to "forward the Gospel of Christ." He said, "It's extraordinary that it became a church, ceased to be one, and has now returned to Christian ministry."

Led by father and son team, **David** and **Thomas Powe**, the project aims to help people explore faith through traditional worship. Regular **BCP services** will take place at 10am on Friday **14 November and 12 December**.

If you are interested in attending, email revthomaspowe@gmail.com.

The Missing Peace book launch

Bishop Rachel will join author Chris Whittington at Pip and Jim's, Cheltenham, on Thursday 20 November to celebrate his new book *The Missing Peace*. The evening (6.45pm to 9.15pm) features discussion, reflection, and a signing exploring how silent prayer can reveal inner peace and divine love. Admission is free for donors or £10–£20 suggested. Find out more:

<https://gloucester.anglican.org/2025/bishop-rachel-to-join-the-missing-peace-book-launch/>

Events and training

More details for all these events at [**gloucester.anglican.org/events**](https://gloucester.anglican.org/events)

Autumn fair, Quedgeley Community Centre, School Lane, Quedgeley, GL2 4PN, Saturday 8 November, 2pm to 4pm

A fair organised by St James' Quedgeley and Kingsway for the autumn season, with stalls, Christmas gifts, refreshments, raffle and a tombola.

[**https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=1220499783451917&set=a.550903577078211**](https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=1220499783451917&set=a.550903577078211)

Civic remembrance service, Gloucester Cathedral, GL1 2LX, Sunday 9 November, 3pm

A service to honour those who gave their lives at this special county service in the Cathedral.

[**https://gloucestercathedral.org.uk/whats-on/county-service-of-remembrance-25**](https://gloucestercathedral.org.uk/whats-on/county-service-of-remembrance-25)

Gloucester lantern parade, Gloucester Cathedral, GL1 2LX, Saturday 15 November, 4pm

Gloucester's annual lantern parade begins at Gloucester Cathedral with a 4pm carol service, then winds through the city centre showcasing 'community in nature' lanterns created by local schools and community groups.

[**https://www.visitgloucester.co.uk/whats-on/gloucester-lantern-parade-p3818703**](https://www.visitgloucester.co.uk/whats-on/gloucester-lantern-parade-p3818703)

Gloucester City Mission's Christmas carol concert, Gloucester Cathedral, GL1 2LX, Friday 28 November, 7pm

Gloucester City Mission is performing Christmas carols at the Cathedral, featuring local choirs and a chance to learn about the charity's work with the homeless and vulnerable.

[**https://gloucestercathedral.org.uk/whats-on/gloucester-city-mission-s-christmas-concert-25**](https://gloucestercathedral.org.uk/whats-on/gloucester-city-mission-s-christmas-concert-25)



WORD OF THE MONTH COMPETITION

Each Month there will be a new word which we need you to fit into a sentence. The sentence, which best conveys the meaning of the word and will be judged by the editors and Benefice Administrator, will be the winner. There will be a small prize.

The word for November is

Histrionic

Send entries to the Office, Valerie or Judith
by 20th

We thought all the entries were very good but after much deliberation we have chosen a poem from Can Richard Morgan

Tarry

If fish and chips you need to carry,
It's not a good idea to tarry,
Because, if you should thus delay,
and on your journey make a stay,
The fish and chips you have been sold
Will, in your tarrying, get cold.

Valerie, Clare and Judith

The other entries for October.

They are all very good and it's difficult to choose, but please keep sending them in.

TARRY: the excitement, when I was a little girl, the aromatic smell, smoke and sound as the steam engine belched burning, black, shiny liquid to resurface the road right outside our house! The Tarry man dawdled and made my day!

The most famous use of tarry is King David's order in 2 Samuel 10.5 in the Authorised version:

'Tarry at Jericho until your beards be grown, and then return'. That's a long delay and stay.

'Tarry? Hang about, I think I know what that means!'

TARRY

Old Chinese Proverb

No tarry on tarry road
Keep feet clean.

TARRY

My Mum said
They're tarmacking so don't get all tarry and don't tarry on the way home – Don't Dilly Dally.

Years mind in November

6th	Cameron Hutchinson; June Hinder 2015
7th	Eric Neale 1992; Pat Hodge 2001; David Lloyd 2015
11th	Joseph Gabb 1998; William Lloyd ; Len Frost 2002; Harold Pate; Lilian West 2003; Nelly Banfield 2004; Ralph Pearson 2021
12th	Gwyn Lloyd 2015; Elsie Woolams 2017
13th	Lyn Cuthbert 2017; Pat Pullin 2017
15th	Glenis Ewer 2023
16th	James Robertson 2018
17th	Mary Pollard 2013; Rose Wareham 2017; Iris Bishop 2020
18th	Dora Adams; Tony Frost 2017
20th	Ronald Gordan; Doug Gray 2017
23rd	Malcolm Barnes 2018
24th	Colin Pepper 2019
25th	Royston Smith 2015; Jean Goodchild 2020; Ruth Drysdale 2021
26th	Lilian Mann 1974; Dorothy Smith 2015; Jane Williams 2022
27th	Brian Ireland 2009; Sara Taylor 2012
28th	Ralph Trott 1991; Joan Morgan 2013; Brian Fry 2016
29th	(William) John Hill 2017
30th	Lawry Hearle 2014

	
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TWO IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS.

Advance Notice.

The price of our magazine has remained the same for many years and elsewhere prices have risen significantly, and now we feel it is time for a modest increase in the price of The Messenger.

So from 1st January 2026 they will be 70p each or £7 annually.

We do feel that the magazine is good value for money and we hope you continue to enjoy it.

100 CLUB

Members of the 100 Club are advised that the 100 Club will be

DISCONTINUED

AT THE END OF 2025

The final draw will be the December draw this year.

Sincere thanks are expressed to Sarah Hodge who has administered the Club for the last 25 years and to David Wood (greatly helped by Philip Staddon) who has been responsible for recruitment of members.

Members of the 100 Club who still wish to support the church in a tangible way are advised that the 'Friends of St James' welcomes new members and Clive Orchard is always seeking help with his 'Free Books' on Fridays at 3.30pm and Saturdays at 8am and 12 noon.

Members of the 100 Club are sincerely thanked for their support over so many years.

FROM THE PARISH REGISTERS.



FUNERALS & INTERMENT SERVICES:

We share our thoughts and prayers with the families of those who mourn the loss of those they love.

Funeral of Sandra Cresswell 22nd October

Funeral of Diane Russell 30th October



FLOWER ROTA

2nd November

High Altar: Marion Paisey

Tanner Chapel: Ann Orchard

Lady Chapel: Glenys Muir.

9th, 16th, 23rd November

High Altar: Sarah Hodge

Tanner Chapel: Valerie Meares

Lady Chapel: Clare White



100 CLUB

Results for October is as follows:-

1st - 127 - Ann Ransome

2nd - 152 - Tom Arnold

3rd - 141 - Rob Marrow

Many thanks Sarah



Mrs Gregory – Principal

Dursley CofE Academy,
School Road,
Dursley,
GL11 4NZ

t: 01453 542304 e: admin@dursley.gloucs.sch.uk

e: www.dursleycofeprimaryschool.org.uk

Diocese of Gloucester Academies Trust.

Registered in England Company Number 08149299

**THE PARISH CHURCH OF ST JAMES THE GREAT
DURSLEY**

**St James Church is open each day
between 9.00am and 5.00pm.**

Useful Telephone Numbers

TO BOOK THE PARISH CENTRE.

Clare White Tel: 549280

E-mail: ewelmebenefice@gmail.com

BELLRINGERS

Elizabeth Byrne Tel: 07788 800849

100 CLUB

Sarah Hodge Tel: 545155

CHOIR

Anne Shipton Tel: 07557 784858

David Wood Tel: 545073



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