



March
2021

Shirley Parish Magazine



SHIRLEY PARISH GUIDE

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SHIRLEY PARISH



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facebook.com/@AdventureinFaithB90

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/ShirleyParishB90>

OUR PARISH PRAYERS



Give to us your people, living God,
A renewed faith and a bold vision
that we may proclaim
the Good News of your Son
with faith that your kingdom will come,
with hope for our community
and with love for Him
who died and rose again
to save us, Jesus Christ our Risen Lord
Amen

God of Mission, who alone brings growth to your Church,
send your Holy Spirit to give vision to our planning,
wisdom to our actions, and power to our witness.
Help our church to grow in numbers, in spiritual commitment to you,
and in service to our local community.
Through Jesus Christ, our Lord.
Amen

WORSHIP WITH US

At home (times suggested however whenever is convenient for you is fine)

Sunday at 10am - Morning Worship on YouTube and on the phone

Sunday at 10.45am - Virtual Coffee via Zoom

Sunday at 7pm (first Sunday of the month) - Reflective Worship on YouTube and on the phone

Saturday at 9am - Parish Prayers via Zoom

Third Saturday of the month - Messy Church

The number to dial to listen on the phone is **0121 270 9089**

Please read the weekly pewslip for updates and additions to the above

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Shirley Parish Spring Raffle - Mothering Sunday 14th March



Raising funds for St John's (maybe for a new garden bench?)

1st Prize ~ £30 garden tokens

2nd Prize ~ Easter Chocolate hamper (with teddy)

3rd Prize ~ Simnel cake

Tickets £1 each available from Kate Crocker

Phone 0121 258 2956 or email kate_crocker@hotmail.com (don't miss the underscore or the email will bounce)

THINKING ABOUT WHAT CHURCH WILL BE LIKE POST-COVID

Stephen Cottrell, the Archbishop of York, used the words quoted below in a letter to Bishops and Diocesan Secretaries about finance. They can, it seems to me, be applied to wider issues than just our finances.

Covid-19 has hit us hard. It has also revealed other shortcomings and challenges that were often unheeded. We are moving into new, uncharted territory. Therefore, there isn't a map. We are finding our way. Many challenges await us. A deep renewal of our life in Christ, and a determination to shape our life around the things we see in Christ, will be the only way we find what sort of church God wants us to be. He is our compass.

As you read this we will have just started our Lent sermon series on what the churches in Shirley Parish might look like in the post pandemic world. How will things change when we can meet together again? Where will our focus for mission and growth be? And most importantly, what does God want for us?

Firstly, we will be going back to basics and asking questions like “What is the church for” and “Who is the church for”. We will then move on to thinking about our key areas of mission – what it means to be the church of the Parish and where should our focus be. How can we live out the kinds of lives God wants us to live? This will, I hope, lead on to looking at what we have actually done in the past and what we should be doing in the future. We will round things off by talking about our worship and how that can help in mission and discipleship.

Can I encourage you to take part in this discernment process. Each Sunday's sermon is being followed by discussion groups on **Wednesday evenings at 7.30pm** and **Thursday afternoons at 2pm**.

These will be over Zoom (link <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4904334906>) and will each last about an hour – the idea is that you join in one or the other. Hopefully together we will be able to sense God's purposes as we plan our way forwards.

As the Archbishop says, there isn't a map for us to follow into a world that will be different from the one we left behind a year ago. But we do have an opportunity to spend time listening to God and prayerfully plotting our route into the future.

(for some alternative ideas on what church could be like, the book reviewed in the following pages by the Book Club – Being Reverend by Matt Woodcock – would be a good place to start)

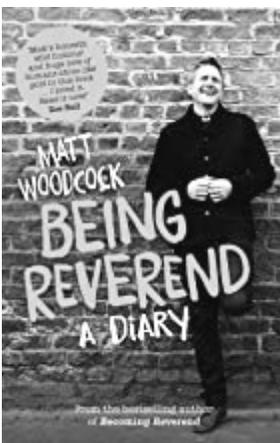
Reverend Paul Day

STRATEGY CREATOR

ROLL A DIE FOUR TIMES TO DECIDE HOW THE CHURCH SHOULD MOVE FORWARD

WE NEED	①	②	AND	③	④
1	A LOT MORE	PARISH PRIESTS	1	TO FOCUS EXCLUSIVELY ON	DISCIPLESHIP
2	MORE	NON-STIPENDIARY MINISTERS	2	A BIT OF AN EMPHASIS ON	ENCOURAGING GIVING
3	ABOUT THE SAME AMOUNT OF	SENIOR CLERGY	3	MAYBE SPEND SOME TIME CONTEMPLATING	WELCOMING ONLINE WORSHIPPERS
4	FEWER	CHURCH BUILDINGS	4	NOT TO BOTHER WITH	SAYING MASS
5	NO	DECENT COFFEES	5	TO CAST ASIDE	LIBERAL THEOLOGY
6	TO HAVE A GOOD THINK ABOUT	FLAGPOLES	6	TO FORM A COMMITTEE TO DISCUSS	JARGON

SHIRLEY PARISH BOOK CLUB



Being Reverend by Matt Woodcock

What follows is a selection of our responses. As you will see, it's a diary written by a young priest during his first placement in Hull. What interests all of us, of course, is that the recent extended lockdown has drawn us into thinking about how our Shirley Parish might develop in the future. This book starts the conversation.

1. I was lent and recommended this book by a friend. The references to shopping for Daim bars and runaway buggies had me laughing. But my overwhelming impressions were about the need to be church where people are, probably not inside some Victorian building, and the way in which the ministry team were used - always playing to their strengths.

Of course that starts with them acknowledging what their strengths are. Some good lessons for the congregation too about their expectations of the clergy!

... continued over the page

SHIRLEY PARISH BOOK CLUB *continued*

2. I absolutely loved the *Being Reverend* book; I had a good laugh at some of his antics and did wonder what our reaction would be if he tried some of his ideas here. The mind boggles.
3. Big church, small congregation, tough community – an epic job to match the size of the church to the size and variety of the community it serves in Hull. I enjoyed Matt Woodcock's diary. It was well-written and engaging about the challenges he faced and his repeated and varied attempts to engage the various communities around his church, whilst at the same time trying to be a good husband and father. An honest account of his life in Hull. I was impressed by his attempts to take the church into the community, to make it meet their needs and to bring the antagonistic and the apathetic towards discovering some sort of faith.
4. I really loved this book and was impressed by Matt Woodcock's intense use of every minute of every day. Reading a diary rather than our usual novels was different and interesting, just as his approach to his surrounding community was different. What stood out for me was how he took the church *to the people*, rather than simply trying to bring the people to the church. Also, the fact that he found it difficult to maintain a work/life balance felt true to life.
5. Matt Woodcock's diary describes the first eighteen months of his ministry in Hull. I think he was taken on, along with two other young clergy, to 'wake up' the church and its surrounding community. What struck me quite quickly was how he saw his community as *everyone* around his church – not least the homeless and those with drink problems. He worked to make his church a really open place where he would talk and share food and drink with anyone, so inviting a down-and-out rough sleeper to join him in church or in the local Wetherspoons was quite a normal thing for him to do.
6. A good deal of what he did in his church was about taking the church out to the community, finding where the people were and taking the church to them – like the local boxing club – and finding ways to make what happens in church tangible and real, like having real animals take part in a nativity procession around the town. Also he works to make the church building relevant to the people of Hull, holding a beer festival and a fashion show in the church. It's a book to get us talking in the Shirley Parish.
7. A moving, heart-warming account by Matt of his life in the early days of his ministry. It gives us all some things to think about in the future.

SHIRLEY PARISH BOOK CLUB *continued*

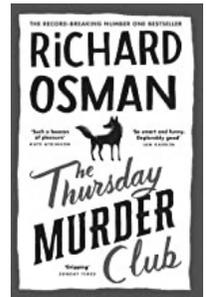
8. I had lots of thoughts on how we can go for more outreach. I thought the Nativity in Matt Woodcock's diary was wonderful. We need to find a way to welcome and bring in a wider cross section of people into our midst. To hear that strangers coming into church find it intimidating, perplexing and confusing, is, I think, very sobering.
9. Not many books make me laugh out loud but this one did twice! Once when he started a sermon by singing 'Red, red robin', the Hull Kingston Rovers anthem which alienated half of the congregation who were Hull FC supporters. The second time was that he didn't want school kids to feel they'd rather be in double maths than engage with church and faith issues (written by one who dished out 'double maths' every day of her working life!).
10. I did enjoy this last book, *Being Reverend*, it was a very easy and enjoyable read. There is no doubting the author's faith and devotion, but he must be a very exhausting person to be around for a long time and goes to some extremes to spread the faith. It certainly has relevance to all parishes in that the church can't just stay doing the same things, singing the same hymns and wait for people to come into the church, that is just not going to happen. It must go out of the church and make the faith relevant to people's lives today. The church in Hull was very lucky to have three members of the clergy so that one could be dedicated to going out into the community, I doubt many parishes are that lucky and so will have to fit their plans to what the clergy and parishioners can achieve. Once we can open up again there must be events in Shirley that the church could be a part of to make itself more visible. My view has always been that in general services should be joyful and welcoming (I did find the idea of church welcomer who didn't believe in God rather amusing), but they must also cater for all parishioners so maybe one service where children can be entertained and one for those that prefer quiet. When I had young children, I loved a service where they were involved now possibly not so much. They should relate to the things that are happening to parishioners and things that they are interested in; sport, jobs or lack of them, family concerns. Prayer is wonderful but it must be relevant.
11. An entertaining account of church life in the difficult centre of Hull. Quite a light read with some interesting insights and sobering problems. Quite challenging to try and link it to our parish situation. Didn't find the diary layout particularly easy to read - never sure what day to finish on!

SHIRLEY PARISH BOOK CLUB *continued*

12. A straightforward read. As a diary it gives a very personal viewpoint. I agreed with him on several points such as C of E services, selection process for clergy and lack of warmth in some churches. As to helping us here in Shirley, it perhaps gives us a starting point for discussion.
13. I know we will all be taken with Matt Woodcock's determination and his energy. His attempts to make his church a relevant participant in the Hull community are impressive and his capacity for taking on new ideas and finding different ways to engage the community are often breath-taking. His mentor, Archbishop Sentamu, when he reviews Matt Woodcock's progress, tells him to calm down and see God in the still small voice. He recognises that the church needs to provide a 'stillness' and a sanctuary, and this needs to be balanced against a desire to make the world listen to what the church has to say. It will be interesting to discuss these two fairly broad purposes for our churches in Shirley. We are in a cluster of churches in Shirley – Methodist, Catholic, Baptist, and Free Church – and they all engage, as we do, with the Shirley community in their own ways. It's a question of finding our own way, where we fit in, how we offer something extra.
14. At one point Matt Woodcock says, 'I'm Sky Sports and Oasis in a world of Radio 4 and Shostakovich'. Which do we want to be in Shirley? Popular or quietly thoughtful? Or both?

Our next book is *The Thursday Murder Club* by Richard Osman – and it's already absorbed and amused several of our members.

Ray Speakman



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PUTTING THINGS INTO PERSPECTIVE

*Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.
(1 Thessalonians chapter 5 verse 18)*

The Church of England Birmingham prayer diary for today contained these words:

Our souls benefit when we spend time focusing on the good stuff in our lives.
Today think of three things you are thankful for and thank the Lord for these.

It's all too easy in times like these to focus on the negative – the things we cannot do, the people we cannot see, the places we cannot go. But the way we see things can change when we remember the positives. Why not try by starting tomorrow with giving God thanks for the good things of life and see how having those thoughts changes your day.

Reverend Paul Day



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SHIRLEY PARISH MOTHERS' UNION REPORT FEBRUARY 2020 TO FEBRUARY 2021



Following our AGM on the 5th February 2020 we only had two other gatherings; Reflections for the beginning of Lent with Rowena Nicholls and then a Coffee Morning at Linda Pitt's home on Saturday 7th March, little did we know then that on the 16th March, we would be told by Government that 'all unnecessary social contact should cease'. Our world turned upside down.

Because of Lockdown, many of our members were confined to barracks. The church immediately sprung to action. We made a list of our Mothers' Union members and we have phoned each one on a regular basis, together with the other members of the congregation. This has not only been beneficial to members but also to those who have been phoning. There are a good number of our Mothers' Union who are not always able to attend meetings but because of the phone calls we have actually had more contact with each other. We will continue to make these calls for as long as it takes. I for one feel very blessed to have these contacts.

Five of our members celebrated their 90th birthdays during this year, Doris Hyde, Pat Coward, Brenda Goudie and Angela Norman. Dorothy Pearce also had her 90th birthday in September. Sadly, Dorothy passed away in January but we will always remember her for her faithful service to the Mothers' Union, especially as a very efficient Treasurer. Bernice Adams has been a Mothers' Union member for fifty years and this is recognised by a certificate which was presented to her.

Many of us have adapted to the Internet and joined meetings on Zoom. Our Council meeting took place on Zoom and under the circumstances was well supported. Thank you to Reverend Paul for arranging our Wave of Prayer on Saturday 16th January, incorporated within the Saturday morning prayers on Zoom.

Who would have thought that we would be SO excited to receive a 'Jab' (I dislike that word), we do not know what the future holds, but we are optimistic, prayerful and trusting that our meetings will recommence, friendships will thrive and we will continue supporting the work of the Mothers' Union Worldwide.

Liz Yates

THE FRIENDS OF ST JAMES 100 CLUB

Congratulations to the February winners

£50 - Brian Hollings £25 - Sarah Penfold

HELPING THOSE IN NEED

FOOD BANK: as you may have seen on recent news items, the numbers for folks using the Food Banks all over the country has dramatically increased and sadly is likely to get worse as the Furlough Scheme comes to an end.

Our own Food Bank, with its satellites, is coping with the increased numbers though there have been times when the bags handed out may not have had all the desired contents on the specified lists. There always seem to be huge supplies of pasta, cereals and tomato soup available but often the staff and volunteers making up the bags are scurrying around trying to find **tins of fruit, meat soups, and long-life fruit juice**. Please help with these items which are in such short supply and spread the word to friends and neighbours who may help too.

When we started at the Sparkhill Food Bank over twelve years ago, we had absolutely no idea that we would be propping up so many families in 2021 through its five satellite food banks. It breaks my heart to see small children standing in line with a parent to get a food parcel – shades of The Great Depression of the 1930's? What long term effect will it have on these Little Ones?

NARTHEX: thank you for the wonderful donations of children's and adults' coats which were gratefully received by the Narthex team and quickly issued. The current appeal is for **strong shoes** (not sandals or flip flops) for children and adults. We are not collecting other items for the time being whilst the Narthex sorts out the huge pile of black sacks donated pre-Christmas – mostly of unknown contents!

ADAVU: ridiculous as it may seem, I have already started to squirrel away items for the Christmas ADAVU parcels! I had a large donation of babies' toys in excellent condition recently - we were very short of those last time when we had seven babies under one year old and Sarah P was desperately searching the charity shops, but we shall be ready for Christmas 2021! Though with my luck we shall have no babies but a glut of men or teenagers and be dashing round finding items for them!

Thank you for your support - sometimes it seems that we are trying to fill a bottomless pit ...

Elizabeth Paice

APRIL 2021 PARISH MAGAZINE

PLEASE SEND INFORMATION & ARTICLES TO THE EDITOR BY

Friday 12th March

THE SONG THRUSH AND THE MOUNTAIN ASH



Some of our readers have found the poem 'The Song Thrush and the Mountain Ash' about a visit to an uncomprehending care resident very poignant. It was written by Simon Armitage, Poet Laureate, and sung by the Huddersfield Choral Society. You can find the words via this link - <https://wellsing.huddersfieldchoral.com>



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SWITCHED ON!

A housewife was helping her aged mother get up the stairs on their brand-new stair lift when the minister telephoned her. He was horrified to hear her say: "I'm so sorry, but I'll have to ring you back. I can't talk right now because I've finally got Mother in the electric chair and I'm eager to press the switch and see if it works!"



DISTURB US LORD

Disturb us, Lord, when
 We are too well pleased with ourselves,
 When our dreams have come true
 Because we have dreamed too little,
 When we arrived safely
 Because we sailed too close to the shore.



Disturb us, Lord, when
 With the abundance of things we possess
 We have lost our thirst
 For the waters of life;
 Having fallen in love with life,
 We have ceased to dream of eternity
 And in our efforts to build a new earth,
 We have allowed our vision
 Of the new Heaven to dim.

Disturb us, Lord, to dare more boldly,
 To venture on wider seas
 Where storms will show your mastery;
 Where losing sight of land,
 We shall find the stars.

We ask You to push back
 The horizons of our hopes;
 And to push into the future
 In strength, courage, hope, and love.

*Attributed — Sir Francis Drake — 1577
 Thanks to Kate Day for sharing*

Thank you so much to everyone who contributed to my milestone birthday fund raiser in lieu of presents. Over £700 was raised which will be put towards the equipment needed to 'live stream' services from St James Church. During March I'll be 'stepping up for Marie Curie' - 10,000 steps a day.

If you would like to support me the link is <https://step-into-spring.blackbaud-sites.com/fundraising/gills-fundraising-page2021>

Gill Hanton



LOCKDOWN OUTING

The day dawns bright and early,
Excitement's in the air,
The frost lies sparkling on the ground;
A lovely day to share.

My phone is pinging constantly
As I relay the happy news,
Then rifle through my wardrobe
Wondering what to choose.

Smart trousers and a T-shirt,
No scruffy clothes today,
I even put on make-up,
What will my husband say?

I'm ready for my trip out,
Pleased I don't look drab,
Where is it I am going?
To have my Covid jab!



*By Maureen Poole and printed in the 'Daily Mail'
Thanks to Lynda McPherson for sharing*

A PRAYER FOR FAMILIES

Dear Father God,
In this month, when we especially think about mothers, we thank you for the families and friends you have given us. You know how hard it has been to have been separated over these past months, how much we have missed and longed for their hugs, their physical presence and fellowship.

As we hold on to the hope of overcoming the pandemic, help us to be strengthened by the power of the love we receive - and to strengthen others by the love we give. May we know that, wherever we are, whatever our circumstances, we and our loved ones are held safe and connected by your unfailing love for us, revealed in Jesus – who is alive - and from whom nothing, no pandemic, no man-made turmoil, absolutely nothing and no-one can separate us, when we put our trust in Him.

Thank you, Father, that we belong to your family. Thank you for the love and security we have in you.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

By Daphne Kitching

ONE YEAR ON

It was just over a year ago that the World Health Organisation (WHO) discussed the coronavirus that was starting to spread around the world. None of us could have foreseen the devastating effect on our world, with over eighty million people infected and nearly two million deaths. How has the pandemic challenged our faith, as we look back over the last year?

Firstly, it has forced us to face up to the **reality of our situation**. We cannot underestimate the health, social and economic effects of the virus on our lives, churches and communities. We have learned how to do church online, but the future shape of church life is uncertain!

As the apostle Paul writes: *'We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus'* (2 Corinthians chapter 4 verses 8-10).

The pandemic has challenged so much of what we take for granted, but also demonstrated that God is alongside to help us in these circumstances.

Secondly, alongside the fear and uncertainty of this year, we have also learned to find **new faith and hope in Jesus**. The experience of Jesus' death and His resurrection provides a pattern for us in facing the future: *'so that His life may also be revealed in our mortal body. So then, death is at work in us, but life is at work in you.'* (2 Corinthians chapter 4 verses 10-12).

During the season of Lent, as we anticipate the events at Easter, it's good to focus on the promise of sharing in the death and resurrection of Jesus. As we consider our present struggles, are we ready to surrender them to Jesus? May the hope of Easter Day take us forward into the coming year.



SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT ...

'The three things I most want to do when coronavirus is over are ...'

Why not share your thoughts with other readers - send an email to shirleyparishmagazine@gmail.com by Friday 12th March for the April issue.

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Call Liz on 0121 744 8193 - she is happy to collect from your doorstep.



If prayer and reading and self-denial are worth doing at this time of year, perhaps we should be doing them all the year round! Christianity is not a blueprint for repression but for joy: for a life of fulfilment beyond our wildest dreams. Jesus said '*I have come that you may have life and have it to the full*'.

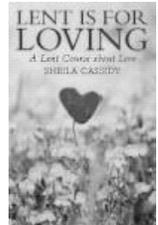
In her book 'Lent is for Loving', Sheila Cassidy considers the word 'LENT' as an acronym for what it really means to live as a Christian today:

L is for LOVE

E is for EMPATHY

N is quite simply for NO!

T is for THANK YOU GOD



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*if it's all getting
too much*

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On **23rd March**, the first anniversary of the first UK lockdown, there will be a **National Day of Reflection** to reflect on our collective loss, support those who've been bereaved, and hope for a brighter future.

You are invited to pause outside, lay a daffodil, and take a moment of silence to remember and celebrate lives lost.

Find out more at

<https://www.mariecurie.org.uk/get-involved/day-of-reflection>



WHAT'S ON



<https://www.wwdp.org.uk>

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER - Friday 5th March

This year it has been prepared by the Christian women of Vanuatu. Programmes of service are available from the Parish Office.

Due to Covid restrictions this year you will not be able to attend a physical church service, however we understand that Knowle and Dorridge Churches are preparing a video service which will be available on YouTube and Zoom. Please look out for more details in the weekly pew slip as to how to access this inspiring service.

JIGSAW SALE

Jigsaws have been very popular during the lockdowns and we are grateful to Linda Pitt for arranging another sale following the successful one last year.

1000 pieces £3.00 / 500 pieces £2.50 - Proceeds in aid of the refurbishment of Church House back garden.

Contact Linda (0121 744 6777) or the Parish Office for more details.



Wednesday 10th March

10.30am

on Zoom (see the pew slip for the link)

Join us for a chat and, as it is Mothering Sunday on 14th, share a story about your Mum



COMPUTER SKILLS FOR THE TERRIFIED

During lockdown, a lot of Parish life (and life in general) has had to move online. We have also kept in touch by phone and mail, but we feel that some people may feel left behind by being unable to get on the Internet.

We plan to offer a very basic computer skills course in Church House when circumstances allow. It will be a social event as well as learning at a gentle pace. Whatever your starting point, there is always something new to find out!



The club will be open to anyone in the area, not just church members, and we are very lucky to have been offered support by Bob Ireland, who runs U3A computer courses in Solihull. I have joined his latest Zoom course and am learning lots of useful tips and ideas.

Maybe you have some equipment but can't use it. Maybe you would like to get some simple kit. Maybe, like me, you can use a computer but are not doing things the best way!

The aim is to have fun and learn together some of the skills that are becoming essential in this strange and difficult world.

To register interest ring Kate Crocker - 0121 258 2956

THE 2021 REAL EASTER EGG

The Meaningful Chocolate Company has launched its 2021 Fairtrade Real Easter Egg range. All Real Easter Eggs come with an Easter story in the box and they provide an opportunity to share the joy of Easter with friends and family.



The 2021 Original Real Easter Egg includes a new 24-page Easter story activity book. It features a rainbow design to remind us of the importance of working together, in amazing and inspiring ways, for the common good. It costs **£4.50** and is delivered in multiples of six or as singles.

These eggs will not be available in supermarkets this year. You can order direct from www.realeasteregg.co.uk or contact the Parish Office before **Sunday 14th March** and we will order for you.

CARRY ON LIVING - PART FOUR

We never knew what Snapchat was and regards the media still don't, but our snap chat is very much alive especially at 1-2-3-4-5 in the morning.

It's as Mel, our palliative care nurse, explained all part and parcel of coming to terms with the fact that one day I will physically not be here.

All my faith in God is there so why when it comes to nighttime am I afraid to go to sleep?

The reason being is I am fully human and it's this thought of going to bed and not waking up keeps me awake.

Its irrational as Denise said "you won't know", but she will and that also bothers me, how will she cope?

It's true she can't answer that.

But it's not just these thoughts that keep me awake it is also the illness too in either making me have some rather unusual thoughts, then the nights when I hallucinate and am getting up every few moments to put the fire out with my clothes - the one that is burning in the centre of our lounge - or ranting about why would the milkman bring cream at such an ungodly hour.

This is when the snap chat begins "Dee" "what" "who's at the door" "No one" "you've not looked" "you're dreaming go to sleep".

"Dee" "Yes" "Cup of tea time yet? "

At this Dee climbs out of bed and I can hear her making a drink. She reappears at three in the morning with a mug of tea and a glass of wine, "isn't it a bit early for wine" "why, who said that has not spent four nights up so I am having my own party ok!". We remain awake but quiet, I go then to have a mooch about, doing what? We both haven't got a grip on this yet as its all random. But I know Dee is watching my every move, as I am unsteady on my feet now.

We do ask God in our prayers every night to help us to have a good night's sleep, but we feel he is teaching us what it's like to be awake, when everyone else is sleeping, like at the garden of Gethsemane when he asked the disciples to watch and pray with him.

So, she puts on the TV and we watch the Sunday service at 4 o'clock. It's amazing and at 5 o'clock I am sound asleep, I hasten to add nothing to do with the sermon we just heard, maybe hearing God words have helped still my mind. ... Continued over the page

CARRY ON LIVING continued

Yes, my mind runs amok at night with the strangest of thoughts where Dee only has one thought and that is what is he doing now!!

Please don't get worried about sleepless nights, it's not something to get hung up on as everyone is different. We have also been reassured that this time will pass, and we will sleep at normal times again.

God bless you all.

Graham Smith (Reader)

People ask how I am doing, if I am coping, and where do I find my strength.

So, I thought I would jot down how I am doing.

Graham needs a hospital bed, one of those with the air flow mattress, and as he can no longer walk upstairs and we have a downstairs toilet, the bed is set up in our lounge. Which at first, before the hallucinations kicked in, was ok. I am a light sleeper so could hear if he called out, but as the calls became closer together, I chose to sleep on an air bed downstairs with him, only trouble was getting up off the floor to see to him saw me crawling over to settee to stand up. Not good on my knees, so as I could see this is now going to be a long-term job, went mad and treated myself to a deluxe folding guest bed with a deep mattress, very comfy.

The first week every day I got up and folded the bed away then it dawned on me - why? Due to Covid we don't have visitors, only the nurses and Graham's brother who pops in just to make sure we both ok, so now the bed stays up as both fit down at the far end of lounge so are not really in our way, who needs more room than this anyway?

This has been really good as I can lay in bed and keep an eye on his nightly walk abouts, I am also there to make endless drinks and hugs when he is having a particularly bad night. Like the night he thought lounge on fire, now to say I was stifling a laugh sounds cruel, but if it had been a real fire, we both would have perished by the time he had mustered up enough strength to beat it out with his jumper!

There are times when, after I have reassured him it's just a dream, we can and have sat and cried with laughter but tonight was not one of them. He needed a hug and a warm drink.

He is always seeing his Mum and when she disappears, he asks where she has gone, to the loo I reply, poor Alice she spends more time in our loo than when she was alive.

CARRY ON LIVING continued

Laughter is the key to getting through a bad night, a sad night, or even just a restless night.

Yes, we get snappy with each other, but we are only human and lack of sleep does that to you.

The main thing is we pray together, we talk about what is happening, we have made funeral plans, made sure our will is up to date and I try to reassure him, as much as I can that I will be ok.

But for the majority of time, we concentrate on living our life to the full and does it matter if I eat another jacket potato with tuna for Sunday lunch or drink a glass of wine at 4am – it's all about coping and not what people think of us, as its both our ways of coping and coming to terms with the fact that one day we will have to say goodbye.

Love and prayers,

Denise Smith (Reader)

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THIS MONTH'S CROSSWORD

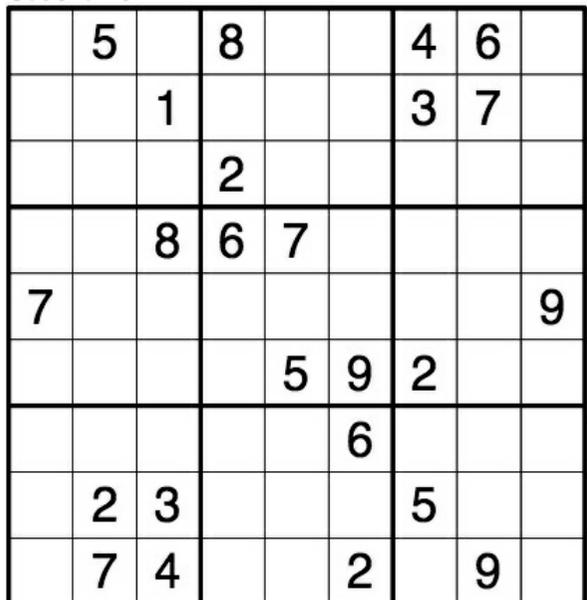
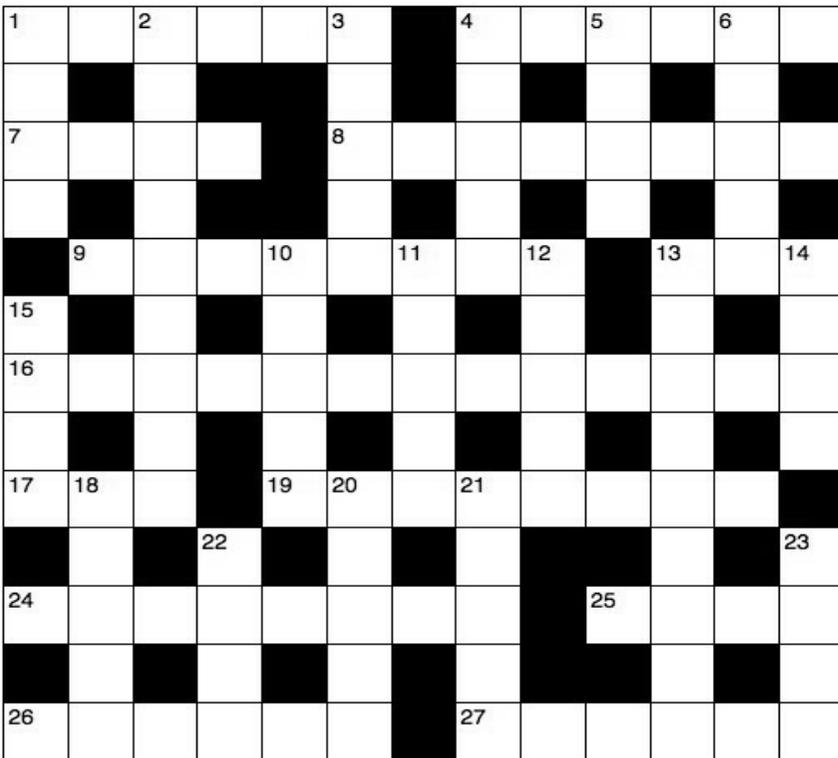
Across

- 1 The earth is one (6)
- 4 'On a hill far away stood an old — cross' (6)
- 7 'I am the — vine and my Father is the gardener' (John 15:1) (4)
- 8 The Caesar who was Roman Emperor at the time of Jesus' birth (Luke 2:1) (8)
- 9 'Your — should be the same as that of Christ Jesus' (Philippians 2:5) (8)
- 13 Jesus said that no one would put a lighted lamp under this (Luke 8:16) (3)
- 16 Involvement (1 Corinthians 10:16) (13)
- 17 Armed conflict (2 Chronicles 15:19) (3)
- 19 Where the Gaderene pigs were feeding (Mark 5:11) (8)
- 24 What jeering youths called Elisha on the road to Bethel (2 Kings 2:23) (8)
- 25 The Venerable — , eighth-century Jarrow ecclesiastical scholar (4)
- 26 8 Across issued a decree that this should take place (Luke 2:1) (6)
- 27 Come into prominence (Deuteronomy 13:13) (6)

Down

- 1 Where some of the seed scattered by the sower fell (Matthew 13:4) (4)
- 2 Sexually immoral person whom God will judge (Hebrews 13:4) (9)
- 3 Gospel leaflet (5)
- 4 Physical state of the boy brought to Jesus for healing (Mark 9:18)
- 5 Tugs (anag.) (4)
- 6 To put forth (5)
- 10 Nationality associated with St Patrick (5)
- 11 Leader of the descendants of Kohath (1 Chronicles 15:5) (5)
- 12 'After this, his brother came out, with his hand grasping — heel' (Genesis 25:26) (5)
- 13 At Dothan the Lord struck the Arameans with — at Elisha's request (2 Kings 6:18) (9)
- 14 'Peter, before the cock crows today, you will — three times that you know me' (Luke 22:34) (4)
- 15 Spit out (Psalm 59:7) (4)
- 18 'When I — , I am still with you' (Psalm 139:18) (5)
- 20 Concepts (Acts 17:20) (5)
- 21 Thyatira's dealer in purple cloth (Acts 16:14) (5)
- 22 Does (anag.) (4)
- 23 The second set of seven cows in Pharaoh's dream were this (Genesis 41:19) (4)

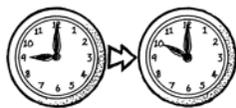
THIS MONTH'S CROSSWORD & SUDOKU



Answers are on page 27

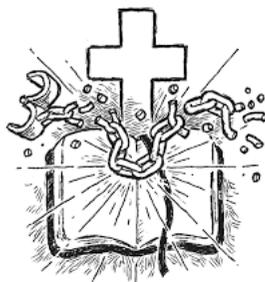
Remember!

**British Summer Time starts on
Sunday 28th March - the clocks go
forward one hour**



WORDSEARCH

Life is full of ups and downs: after blessings, hard times often follow. They are not meant to destroy us but to help us grow spiritually by deepening our faith and dependence on God. The Holy Spirit led Jesus into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil – to give Him the opportunity to stand fast against the enemy. The devil's temptations were based on half-truths, which Jesus rejected by standing firm on the whole truth of Scripture. The truth sets us free!



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DEVIL
FASTED
FOOT
GLORY
HOLY
HUNGRY
IF
JERUSALEM
JORDAN
KINGDOM
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SERVE
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WORSHIP

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*Answers are
on page 27*



Jesus was **loved** by his mother Mary, she looked after him, worried about him and prayed for him. She **cuddled** Jesus when he was born, **cried** when he died and **rejoiced** when he rose from the dead.

SOLOMON
1 Chronicles 3:5

JOHN
Luke 1:57-60

ESAU and JACOB
Genesis 25:24-26

JESUS
Acts 1:14

Who is my mother?
Look up the Bible verses then find the mother's names in the word search

CAIN and ABEL
Genesis 4:1-2

JOSEPH
Genesis 30:22-24

ISHMAEL
Genesis 16:15

TIMOTHY
2 Timothy 1:5

RUBEN
Genesis 29:32

GAD
Genesis 35:26

SAMUEL
1 Samuel 1:20

OBED
Matthew 1:5

ISAAC
Genesis 21:3



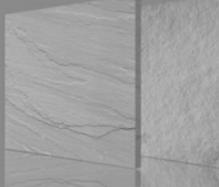
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There are two other words in the word search, can you find them?

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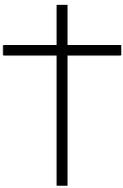
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DOROTHY PEARCE

Dorothy Pearce, a long standing member of St James Church and a dedicated member of the Mothers' Union, sadly passed away on 13th January. Her funeral was held on 16th February. No doubt many have fond memories of her.

Dorothy generously left a donation of £2,000 to St James Church in her will.



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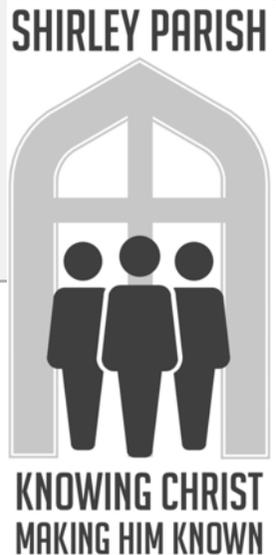
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